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The Japanese Peace Bell and its pagoda at United Nations Headquarters, NYC. [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.5](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/)

THE UNITED NATIONS 2024 EQUINOX EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to invite you to the upcoming March Equinox Celebration, a day for honoring the Earth and highlighting the economics for peace principles and policies originally envisioned in 1968 by John McConnell, the founder and creator of Earth Day. This event has been celebrated annually at the United Nations since 1971.

People will join together at the UN and around the world to acknowledge the exact moment of the March Equinox (3/19/24, 11:06 pm EST) when the ceremonial ringing of the UN Peace Bell takes place honoring world peace and earth rights justice. The Equinox is the time of year when the planet is in equipoise of equal day and night representing worldwide balance and harmony.

John McConnell was an idealist, a visionary and a peacemaker, who coined the term Earth Day. He proposed its celebration be on the March equinox to the City of San Francisco in October, 1969 and announced it in November at a UNESCO Conference. San Francisco hosted the first Earth Day on March 21, 1970.

Since then the Earth Society Foundation, which McConnell co-founded with Margaret Mead, has hosted the annual event where the UN Peace Bell is rung followed by prayer, music and meditation. Margaret Mead, UN Secretary-General U Thant, President Ford, and thirty-three Nobel laureates supported Earth Day. In addition thirty-six worldwide dignitaries signed McConnell's Earth Day Proclamation, supporting Earth Day on the March Equinox as an annual planetary holiday linking people everywhere without regard to politics, culture, national borders or religion.

The theme for the March 2024 Earth Day celebration is *The Earth Belongs to Everyone: Building a Culture and Economics of Peace*. This focus draws upon McConnell's thoughts, work and writings about EARTH RIGHTS. In 1968 McConnell wrote his "Planetary Inheritance Declaration" concerning the "rights and responsibilities of all people with respect to Earth's land, sea, minerals, oil and other natural resources". He urged the UN to establish a "Natural Resources Royalties Pool" that would collect money from any individual, corporation or country that might take an excess of their rightful portion, then distribute those funds to all of Earth's people which would help to eliminate many economic sources of discord that lead to war.

The Henry George Institute welcomed McConnell's message at a May 1996 seminar stating that "Mr. McConnell has long shared Henry George's vision of the Earth as the common heritage of all people and he advocates the public collection of land rent as a way to actualize this all-important relationship." The seminar honored McConnell's co-authorship, with UN NGO Representative Alanna Hartzok of a paper titled [Pennsylvania's Success with Local Tax Reform](#) that described the success this "earth rights" tax reform has had in Hartzok's home state of Pennsylvania.

If you are not able to be at the UN celebration; please consider setting up an event in your neighborhood that works for you. What follows this letter is the registration form that we hope you will fill out to let us know of your interest to endorse our project and/or plan an event to acknowledge the UN's 2024 Equinox Earth Day celebration. Once complete send it back to the address at the end of the form. Additional support materials follow the registration form.

If we can be of further assistance please let us know.

Kindest regards,

Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould

The above information is from Peace, Justice, Care of Earth: The Vision of John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day, a biography by Robert M. Weir and Earth Day: Vision for Peace Justice, and Earth Care: My Life and Thought at Age 96 by John McConnell, edited by John C. Munday. See also The Earth Belongs to Everyone by Alanna Hartzok.

*The UN Center for Human Settlements – HABITAT – is an advocate for **EARTH RIGHTS** tax policies as stated in Action Plans adopted by consensus of all UN Member States. The Vancouver Action Plan section D.1 (a)s is one example that says: "Excessive profits resulting from the increase in land value due to development and change in use are one of the principal causes of the concentration of wealth in private hands. Taxation should not be seen only as a source of revenue for the community but also a powerful tool to encourage development of desirable locations, to exercise a controlling effect on the land market and to redistribute to the public at large the benefits of the unearned increase in land values."*

2024 EQUINOX EARTH DAY ENDORSEMENT & EVENT REGISTRATION FORM

Date of this communication:

I/We are pleased to endorse the 2024 Equinox Earth Day and intend to ring a bell for peace at the exact moment of equinox at the same time that the Peace Bell will be rung at the United Nations (March 19th, 11:06 pm EST) marking the 54th year of this annual event. The date will be March 19 or 20st depending on where I live. Calculate time from where you live [HERE](#). Countdown to the 2024 March Equinox is [HERE](#).

I/We are organizing an event that will celebrate and educate about the 2024 theme – *The Earth Belongs to Everyone – Building a Culture and Economics of Peace*. I understand that a registered event can be as modest gathering with family and friends or as ambitious as a public forum in my community that would include speakers, musicians, poets and perhaps a “pop-up” art exhibit.

Please register the event I / we are organizing on the Equinox Earth Day 2024 website:

(Name of event: If undecided please write undecided.)

Name and organizational affiliation:

Email:

Phone:

City and Country:

Please send me information about how I/We can launch an Economics for Peace project in our community / town / city.

Email the form to EquinoxEarthDay@gmail.com or mail it to Mary Carlin, 238 E. 58th St. #24, NY, NY 10022. The form can be accessed online [HERE](#). To learn about launching EARTH RIGHTS projects contact Alanna Hartzok at EquinoxEarthDay@gmail.com or 717-357-7617

AN INTERNATIONAL DECLARATION ON INDIVIDUAL & COMMON RIGHTS TO EARTH (*Originally composed and declared at a meeting of the [International Union for Land Value Taxation](#) held in 1949*)

We hereby declare that the earth is the common heritage of all and that all people have natural and equal rights to the land of the planet. By the term “land” is meant all natural resources. Subject always to these natural and equal rights in land and to this common ownership, individuals can and should enjoy certain subsidiary rights in land. These rights properly enjoyed by individuals are:

1. The right to secure exclusive occupation of land
2. The right to exclusive use of land occupied.
3. The right to the free transfer of land according to the laws of the country.
4. The right to transmit land by inheritance.

These individual rights do not include:

1. The right to use land in a manner contrary to the common good of all, e.g., in such a manner as to destroy or impair the common heritage.
2. The right to appropriate what economists call the Economic Rent of land.

The Economic Rent is the annual value attaching to the land alone apart from any improvements thereon created by labor. This value is created by the existence of and the functioning of the whole community wherein the individual lives and is in justice the property of the community. To allow this value to be appropriated by individuals enables land to be used not only for the production of wealth but as an instrument of oppression of human by human leading to severe social consequences which are everywhere evident.

All humans have natural and equal rights in land. Those rights may be exercised in two ways:

1. By holding land as individuals and/or
2. Sharing in the common use of the Economic Rent of land.

The Economic Rent of land can be collected for the use of the community by methods similar to those by which real estate taxes are now collected. That is what is meant by the policy of Land Value Taxation. Were this community created land value collected, the many taxes which impede the production of wealth and limit purchasing power could be abolished.

The exercise of both common and individual rights in land is essential to a society based on justice. But the rights of individuals in natural resources are limited by the just rights of the community. Denying the existence of common rights in land creates a condition of society wherein the exercise of individual rights becomes impossible for the great mass of the people.

We therefore declare that the earth is the birthright of all people.

QUOTES FROM EQUINOX EARTH DAY FOUNDER JOHN MCCONNELL

“We need to find ideas that can generate the greatest cooperation for the greatest good on our planet, that’s what I tried to do with Earth Day, the Earth Trustee Agenda, Minute for Peace and the Earth Magna Charta.”

“Environmental efforts by themselves will leave us in ruins unless we stop war, unless we promote peace, and unless we have more economic justice.”

“Among the equal rights of men is the right to an equal share in nature’s bounty a right of each man to his planetary inheritance – his share of land, water, minerals or an appropriate equivalent in food, housing, or other benefits.... No one can, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity, or any other man’s posterity, of the right to his portion of Earth.”

Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould are authors of [*Invisible History: Afghanistan’s Untold Story*](#), published by City Lights (2009), [*Crossing Zero The AfPak War at the Turning Point of American Empire*](#), published by City Lights (2011). Their novel [*The Voice*](#), was published in 2001. Their memoir, [*The Valediction Three Nights of Desmond*](#) was published by TrineDay (2021) and [*The Valediction Resurrection*](#) was published by TrineDay (2022). For more information visit [invisiblehistory](#), [grailwerk](#) and [valediction.net](#)