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THE PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE

PROGRESS

An Australian Journal to Advocate the Rights of the People in the Land

POLICY: 1. APPROPRIATION OF LAND VALUES OR GROUND RENT AS PUBLIC REVENUE.
2. THE ABOLITION OF TAXES NOW IMPOSED UPON LABOR AND LABOR PRODUCTS.
3. PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR ALL ELECTIONS.

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LOOKING BACKWARD — AND FORWARD

(By E. J. Craigie)

Following the usual custom, as we enter on a New Year, the daily press interviewed leaders of public thought, seeking their views regarding the year just ended, and the prospects for 1955. The opinions generally expressed by those interviewed was that a satisfactory year had just ended, and that we were justified in being very optimistic regarding the future of the nation. It is pertinent to ask if there is justification for optimism in regard to our future welfare.

With great respect we suggest these leaders have been silent regarding important features which very materially affect our future economic and financial welfare.

With a view to assisting our readers to get conditions in their proper perspective we direct attention to the trend of events in Australia since the adoption of Federation. Although comparatively young as a Federated body, we have in a short time travelled a long way on the road to economic destruction. In proof of this assertion we supply the following facts.

Since Federation

In the year 1900 our population was 3,765,339 as against 9,070,200 at June, 1954. This represents an increase of approximately 140 per cent. during that period.

Federal taxation in 1901-2 was £8,894,312 or £2/12/6 per head. For 1953-4 it was £897,879,585 or £99/8/7 per head. Taxation levied by the six States in 1901-2 was £2,686,605 or 14/1 per head; whereas the amount collected in 1953-4 was £75,562,350 or £8/6/7 per head. It will thus be seen that since the advent of Federation the State and Federal taxes levied have increased from £3/6/7 to £107/15/2 per head of population.

It is of interest to note that of this huge sum of £973,441,935 collected in taxation by Federal and State Governments, for the year 1953-4, only £4,359,028 was collected from a just source — the rental value of land — the balance representing the tax burden imposed upon the industrious section of the community.

We have not been able to secure the complete figures showing the net value of total production for the year 1953-4, hence cannot state the percentage of production that was taken by taxation for the year 1953-4. However, we are in a position to state that for the four preceding years, Federal taxation took 44.45 per cent. of total production in 1949-50; 51.64 per cent. in 1950-51; 47.30 per cent in 1951-52; and 45.76 per cent. in 1952-53.

It should be noted that this exploitation of wealth producers was done by an alleged Liberal Government — one that professes to be opposed to socialism and communism. We are of the opinion that any government that takes approximately one-half of the total wealth produced by individuals is well on the road to socialism and self-destruction.

Government Debts

Details regarding the Public Debt also provide interesting reading. In 1900 our Debt was £203,518,278 or £55/13/11 per head. At June 30, 1954 the Debt had increased to £3,606,802,710 or £400/15/2 per head of population — quite a remarkable increase in such a short period.

With such an increase in the Public Debt it is only natural that our Interest payments must also have increased. In 1900 the Interest on our Public Debt was £7,496,256 or £1/19/8 per head. At June 30, 1954 the Interest payments amounted to £109,120,628 or £12/2/6 per head; plus an extra £5,374,000 exchange on loans floated in London and New York.

With our finances in such a position it is hard to understand why the aforementioned leaders of thought should consider there was ground for optimism concerning our future. Apparently they have completely ignored the fact that we are indebted to the bondholders to the extent of more than £400 per head in regard to our National Debt. Moreover, it has recently been declared that some £200,000,000 is involved

in hire-purchase agreements. It may safely be said that many hundred million pounds are also due as mortgages on homes. To put it mildly the nation is well in pawn, and the future cannot truthfully be declared as bright.

Throttled by Inflation

Warnings have recently been given regarding the possibility of a further drift to inflation. The Note issue would indicate it already is with us. Prior to the war our Note issue in 1939 was £47,530,124, whereas at June, 1954 it was £343,876,680.

The marginal increases recently granted will add many million pounds a year to the pay-roll. Although some professors of economics — who should know better — have declared there is little likelihood of the marginal increases being reflected in a rise in prices, it is certain that consumers will, as usual, pay. The extra payments to government servants will come from increased taxation, and private employers will get their amounts by a rise in the prices of commodities.

Our London funds are being steadily reduced. With our unjust protectionist policy we are pricing our goods out of the world's markets, and our general government interference with private industry will inevitably lead to a reduced volume of overseas trade.

Wrong Men in Parliament.

Unfortunately our mis-representatives in Parliament appear not to be conversant with these economic and financial facts. They demand more hand-outs for the purpose of getting votes, and at the same time ask for reduced taxation. Their attitude would be humorous if it were not so tragic. It is alleged they plan another raid on the National cash box. They contend that as skilled workers are to enjoy marginal rates for skill, they also should participate in an increased salary. They evidently have overlooked the important point they do not possess any "marginal skill," hence it is ridiculous for them to ask for a rise on that ground. These long-suffering members say they cannot exist on the present salary, and if this be true, they should resign and allow others to share the sacrifice with them. History has shown there are many willing to take on the job, and they certainly could not do worse than the present members have done.

The great need of the hour is men with a knowledge of what rightly constitutes the functions of government. Certainly they are not to nurse people from the cradle to the grave. We are overgoverned at the present time, the government interfering with matters they have no right to deal with.

The true function of government is to protect individuals in the enjoyment of their natural rights. The first of these is to see that all have an equal and inalienable right to the earth — the source from which all production comes. This primary right can be secured by calling upon all in possession of land to pay its annual rental value into the public treasury. This rent is really the premium which an individual is prepared to pay to have the exclusive possession of an area of land which has some advantage over

another area. When it goes into the public treasury an equality of opportunity is provided for all.

When an individual has used his labor and capital in the production of wealth, the function of government is then to see that he has the right to exchange his surplus products under free conditions, irrespective as to whether the exchange is made with another producer in Australia or overseas.

This means the adoption of a complete free trade policy. All tariffs, quotas, embargoes, subsidies and exchange controls must be abolished, and the natural law of competition be allowed free play so as to determine the relative values of all services rendered by one individual to another.

A policy of this nature would simplify government and reduce its cost. It will create peace and goodwill between the peoples of the world and put an end to war. It will do this by taking for the community the land value created by the presence of the community, and leaving sacredly to all wealth producers the full result of their labor. Until a policy of this nature is adopted it is a delusion and a snare for public leaders to gull the public with the belief that a bright future lies ahead of them.

THE IKE WE LIKE

We like President Eisenhower when he fights. And he has now joined the battle line for Freedom of Trade. Cordell Hull struck at the shackles on trade as he quoted: when goods are not allowed to cross frontiers then armies will! So the second world war was promoted by Protection.

High-ranking economists in America, such as Prof. J. B. Coudliffe, have urged that the welfare of America can be promoted by freer trade and the Randall Commission reported to the President that international trade is only done on a two-way street.

Following gains by Democrats at 1954 elections, the President, early in 1955, will seek Congress authority to reduce tariffs as much as five per cent. a year for the next three years, a total of 15 per cent. This is based on the principle "If we wish to sell abroad we must buy abroad." Eisenhower standing on that principle is the Ike we like.

Half the Republicans and most of the Democrat members of Congress are expected to support their President but the Republican rump will stage a battle for Privilege. One of their spokesmen, Mr. O. R. Strackbein, avers that "protectionist sentiment is much stronger than has been brought out publicly."

As usual, Labor is divided. National leaders of the trade union movement favor freer trade but local secretaries of protected industrial groups are siding with the protectionists.

The struggle will be fierce and rational Australians will applaud President Eisenhower's proposal to extend the reciprocal trade agreements for a further three years.

Currency and Banking

A Senate report holds that so long as the dollar remains the only major convertible currency, trade and production will suffer. It considers that the primary responsibility of attracting American investment

abroad rests with the countries that need the money. That means Australia. Such countries must abstain from excessive taxation of American investments within their borders.

Trade not Aid

Washington Administration thus seeks to break down excessive protectionism in the United States but is equally insistent that overseas countries should play their part in creating conditions favorable to the free movement of goods and money. Free trade in money means convertible currencies which is one of the benefits which follow on free trade in goods.

All genuine Peace advocates will commend President Eisenhower's measures for 1955.

THAT TRADE BALANCE!

Australia has a credit in England of £500 millions more or less. It has been built up because of our exports. It is there year after year, but earning no interest. Would it not be much better for us to have those assets in Australia?

Australia has a surplus of wool, wheat, meat, etc. because our country is favorably adapted for their production. The surplus is exported to British and other markets. How do our primary producers get paid?

Payment for our wool, wheat, meat, etc., comes back to us in the shape of imports. Strange to say, the Canberra Government objects to our people getting paid for their surplus of wool, wheat, meat, etc. So Canberra puts tariff taxes on the payment in goods! Our debased currency (it takes £A125 to equal £stg.100) operates as a secondary tariff. Then Canberra imposes restrictions by quota of the payment goods and requires licences, that is permits, to receive payment goods.

Now and then we read about Australia exporting more wealth in a month (or year) than she receives goods in exchange. This is called a "favourable" balance of trade! Why then have taxes and restrictions imposed upon payments for our exports thus seriously lessening their value to Australia?

A. G. HUIE, Narrandera, "Argus," 2.12.54.

TRADE TREATIES DISCOUNTED

The impression one gains from Canberra pronouncements is that trade must depend on government. Yet I recall the time when there was a minimum of Government control. Then the merchants, who are trained to satisfy our wants, bought overseas goods with skill, wisdom and success. I have known them send back to countries of origin large shipments of goods not up to sample.

Today, with high tariffs, we get goods of inferior quality because consumers cannot pay the price for really good things, plus tariff tax and plus (on both) sales tax.

In those earlier days trade was not supposed to be done on unilateral, nor bilateral lines, but on a multi-lateral basis. For instance, goods from America, perhaps, were paid for by Australian export to France,

this in turn exporting goods to England, and then England's exports to United States completing the circuit. Bills of Exchange, those marvellous instruments of trade, effected the whole business. Which is more important — for Canberra experts to juggle with paper notions or — take down the barriers and let the merchants do the trade?—F. Howden.

HAWTHORN HAS STERILE LAND

Why spoil the orchards with bungalows? Report of Town and Country planning board gives an example of "sterile" land in nearer suburbs. An area of 37½ acres in Hawthorn has 173 residences. Yet, by the demolition of only one old bungalow and construction of one new road, 64 new building blocks would be opened to home-seekers. All other services — tram, telephone, sewer, water, gas, electricity — are at hand.

There are long frontages and much "sterile" land in best parts of Malvern. The first step is to transfer municipal rates to the site value of bare land, thus to exempt all buildings and stimulate the owner of "sterile" land to consider the needs of home seekers.

FREE TRADE — AMERICA'S OPPORTUNITY

We have received a copy of a most valuable booklet under this title by Leland B. Yeager, published by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York. It is brief, attractively presented, and is built to give the answer to the questions of the man in the street.

It deals very pithily and adequately with the common arguments of protectionists — as will be seen from the sub-headings to the Chapter of Reasons for protectionism, i.e. — Saving Industry — National Defence — Employment and the Home Market — Cheap Foreign Labor — Income Distribution — Cheap Imports — Dumping — Infant Industries and Economic Development — Tariffs for Revenue — The Terms of Trade — Retaliation and Tariff Bargaining — Money and Exchange Rates — Political Reasons for Protectionism.

The title itself limits the booklet to American readers with whom it should prove most successful. Outside that continent it will be read by only the few students — which is unfortunate for its material itself should have wider appeal.

Its argument is not that America would profit by other people lowering tariff barriers (as the title might suggest) but that America should lead the way by adopting Free Trade herself. Perhaps the following extract will make this clear as well as showing the harmful effects of trade barriers.

"... American Free Trade would gain genuine good will for the United States in a way that continued aid could not do. As a Paris newspaper said, 'Europe would prefer to 'earn' its dollars by exporting to the United States instead of continuing to receive them as a gift.'

"The present American trade policy gives foreign countries good cause for dismay. Examples, during the last few years are many. The governments of Denmark, Canada, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand formally protested against new or continued controls

on United States imports of fats, oils and dairy products. Peru protested a bill pending in Congress that threatened to raise the duty on tuna fish, and Secretary of State Acheson disclosed that the situation was menacing American relations with Japan also. The Uruguayan ambassador complained about an increased duty on wool tops from his country. Venezuela is worried about threatened new curbs on oil imports. In a speech in May, 1953, the Chilean ambassador bitterly denounced Protectionist tendencies in the United States as creating "confusion and disorder" in South America. . . ."

"Free Trade would show that Americans practice as well as preach their belief in free private enterprise.

But as things now stand, the Manchester Guardian can justifiably print:

"The next (American) business man who comes here to tell us that we must be more willing to compete will make himself a laughing stock. Willing to compete indeed!"

"The importance of Free Trade as a proof of American consistency and sincerity can hardly be over-rated. Free Trade is an important aspect of a free economy in general. Foreign countries might, in time, copy a dramatic American example, to their own advantage as well as ours."

We will be pleased on occasions to give extracts from this most interesting and valuable contribution.

IN SUPPORT OF OUR PRINCIPLES

THE CALL TO THE NATION

By "CITIZEN"

The major need of we humans today is to bring economic and social relationships into accordance with moral principles. The need for this is highlighted by the looming menace of the atom bomb. The future security of the world will depend not upon the building up of military potential around a pile of atom bombs in any ideological school, but upon the development of a sense of responsibility in public leaders.

It goes deeper than that, for it is empty to talk of developing a better approach in political, economic or military leaders apart from the ordinary run of citizen from the ranks of whom they are drawn.

We need to arouse the ordinary citizen to his responsibilities and get him to seek to apply moral principles to his relations to others — his economic relations as well as personal.

Not so long ago a number of leading citizens prepared a "Call to the Nation" with this objective. It has been widely publicised but should be better known still. It does not solve any of our social or economic problems in itself. But the first step to secure any action with human beings is to get them to want to solve the problems and accept their share of responsibility.

Many of those associated with the "call" were religious leaders. That is quite appropriate for apart from differing creeds and dogmas there is a central common teaching of moral principles put forth by the Christian Churches.

The application of the "call" goes further than simply getting the people to fill the churches again. It needs within those churches a new stress on the need to seek solutions and attack economic and social problems. Above all it needs to stress to the members of those churches and others the need for acceptance of individual responsibility to apply the moral principles of Christianity to those problems.

One of the weaknesses has been that people have absorbed the moral teachings of Christianity but do

not really seek to apply them outside a very restricted personal field. Yet in the fearless application of those principles to our economic and political thinking lies the key to our future security.

In the Golden Rule the founder of Christianity gave a practical principle which was the kernel of his teachings: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

What are the problems threatening future world peace? Do they not boil down in essence to the problems of have and have-not nations — of extremes between the very wealthy and the very poor within the nation — of the existence of unemployment or the fear of it?

Are we prepared to apply the test of the Golden Rule fearlessly to these problems and go where they lead? If we are not then it is safe to say that we have no real claim to call ourselves Christians.

The Golden Rule leads directly to the full policy for which the Georgean movement stands. Applying it we cannot tolerate the spectacle of men willing to work and unable to find employment. That leads us back to why men should not be able to employ themselves or find work when there are natural resources held idle. Surely in accordance with the Golden Rule all citizens should have equal right of access to natural resources. Of course they cannot all operate directly on those resources — some must do other types of work — but their rights are still there. If they forego their right they should have some compensation for doing so. The solution follows that those enjoying exclusive possession of land pay to the public treasury in proportion to the value of the land they hold. This revenue would then be divided among all in the form of public works and services of common benefit.

Similarly the Golden Rule immediately leads to free trade between the nations. The have-not nations can only improve their position by trade. Exchanging their specialties for those of other nations increases the total stock of goods to divide among their citizens,

raising their standard of living and reducing the pressure towards wars. Both parties to trade benefit by the transaction.

What Are We Doing About It?

It is true that the logical application of the "call" to economic and social problems leads to the programme for which we stand. If other people do accept their responsibilities and seriously seek answers by applying their principles they will be with us.

But we in turn must face our own responsibilities in this matter. The question each of us has to ask of ourselves is — are we doing enough in support of those principles?

With some the answer can truly be — Yes. With many more, if faced honestly, it must be — No. Our responsibilities do not end when we know the remedy for social problems in our own minds. We must become more dynamic in awakening others to the principle that the primary source of public revenue should be the publicly created site-value fund and that the results of the individual citizens' effort should be exempt from taxes.

Some of us work hard to develop fortunes with the ultimate objective of doing something substantial for these principles in their later years or by will when they are gone. Yet their aim would be more surely helped and their own personal satisfaction heightened by a modest amount of their time applied consistently all along.

There are several ways in which all can take an important part without unduly loading themselves. The most elementary is to extend the circulation of this journal to bring new people into contact with our principles. For those willing to act as local agents we will send extra copies of the journal to secure further readers. All can engage in letters to the press. Local papers in particular are receptive and are often better read than the dailies.

There are a number of sub-committees on which we need more helpers and would be glad to hear from volunteers. Those able to help in site-value rating campaigns can get solid satisfaction in the visible results of their efforts to apply our principles in practice.

Our principles can only secure practical application as a result of legislation. There is, therefore, a responsibility on all who are members of political parties (whatever the label) to press for action to implement the proposals. Those who have lost faith in the established parties might well throw their weight in with the Henry George "Justice" Party where they can press the programme directly to the public. The chosen line is less important than that we do something positive in support of the principles in which we believe.

Members are reminded that Subscriptions are due from January 1st, 1955. If you are not a member, why not join now? (See last page for particulars.)

RURAL INDUSTRIES AND SITE-VALUE RATING

SALE CITY PROVES REFORMERS' CLAIMS

From Sale comes a most striking and immediate vindication of the claims of site-value rating supporters that exemption of buildings and improvements from rates and the rating of site-value in lieu would encourage establishment of rural industries.

Site-value rating was adopted at Sale by an overwhelming vote last August. Before that poll analysis was made by the Land Values Research Group, at the invitation of the Sale Council, of the statements sent out to ratepayers comparing the rates payable under Nett Annual Value and Site-Value rating on each property. Part of the survey dealt with the effects of the two systems on rural industries.

It was shown that by far the most substantial rural industry in Sale was the Sale Woollen Mills with buildings and other improvements valued at £43,120 and site-value of £3,200. Under N.A.V. Rating the General Rate of 4/- in the £ would charge this industry £463 and the Water Rate of 1/6 in the £ a further £173, making a total of £636 annually. By contrast site-value rates would be £180, General and £67 Water Rates, making a total of £247.

The report pointed out what a crippling burden the heavy rates were under N.A.V. The excess of £389 more in rates under that system was an annual charge equivalent to increasing the capital cost of the business upon which interest would have to be earned at 5 per cent. by £7,780. In other words the N.A.V. rating system increased the cost of the establishment by 18 per cent of the value of the improvements as compared with site-value rating.

It was pointed out that this could well represent the difference between success and failure of an established business and was quite sufficient to prevent new industries being born. The soundness of this view was demonstrated very shortly afterwards when it was announced that the Woollen Mills had taken the knock and would cease operations.

The City was then faced with a desperate situation with the loss of its only really substantial industry. With the carrying of the site-value rating poll the Sale Ratepayers' Association undertook the task of seeking to interest another substantial industry to take over the works abandoned by the Woollen Mills in order to ensure the City had a substantial industry. In this they made a major point of the fact that the City had now adopted site-value rating and that the industrial firm would be exempt from rates on the capital invested in buildings and plant. In these efforts they were strongly supported by the Sale Chamber of Commerce.

They were successful in interesting the firm of J. J. Davies & Sons to take over the Woollen Mills early this year. This firm is a subsidiary of Felt and Textiles Limited, the firm which controls Daylesleigh Woollen Mills. This firm with its synthetic leather and associated plastic fabrics will initially employ between 150 and 160 hands and will have to extend the present

buildings to cope with its needs. Production is expected to commence by July next. Key personnel will be brought from England and supplemented by local labor.

The Company itself has publicly acknowledged the assistance rendered by the Ratepayers' Association as this had a considerable bearing on their final decision to locate in Sale, and also that the adoption of unimproved capital value rating was a vital factor in their decision.

RATE CONCESSIONS TO VESTED INTERESTS

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN NOTES

By E. J. Craigie

The amendments made to the Local Government Act during the session just ended can be regarded as a preliminary move by representatives of vested interests to abolish rating on unimproved land values from the Statute Book. One member of the Legislative Council indicated this when moving his amendment. The Bill came before parliament, mainly on account of the attitude of certain members of the Marion Municipal Council. It will be remembered that on May 1, 1954, a poll of ratepayers in that Municipality was taken, and land values rating was adopted by the splendid majority of 3,085 votes.

Strenuous efforts were made by opponents of the land values principle to defeat the poll. Money was lavishly spent, literature was freely distributed, there was much misrepresentation at public meetings, and absentee landlords were asked to send postal votes in opposition to the land values proposal. Despite all this effort the abovementioned majority decided in favor of the just system of rating.

At a meeting of the Marion Council held July 26, following the victory at the poll, a motion was moved that the rate to be declared should be 5d. in the £ as shown in the tentative assessment, prior to the taking of the poll. This motion was defeated as Councillor Oliver who was elected on the land value principle was absent from the Council meeting. On August 9 another motion that a general rate of 4½ in the £, plus a special loan rate of 1½ in the £ was defeated. A further motion that the rate be 7d. in the £ for Nos. 1, 2, 3 Wards, and 2½d. in the £ for No. 4 Ward, where there is rural land, was also defeated.

Following this inability to get unanimity in regard to the declaration of a rate a motion was carried that the Minister be asked to dissolve the Council. The Minister refused to act, declaring that the fixing of a rate was a domestic matter, and that the Council should do its job. Finally a rate of 6d. in the £ for Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Wards and 4½d. in the £ for No. 4 Ward was carried.

Naturally, the opposition took advantage of this disagreement among councillors. They approached the Government and declared that if a general rate was fixed to deal with all Wards alike, the ratepayers growing fruit and vegetables would be ruined and the supply of those commodities reduced to consumers in the metropolitan area. Much was also made of the fact that a "green belt" was needed around the metropolitan area.

Other Councils rating site value have successfully used the more reasonable rate charges under site-value rating to attract rural industries. Portland Town and Dandenong Shire are noteworthy examples. But it would be difficult to find a better example of the crushing effect of rates on improvements and the immediate beneficial effects of their exemption from local taxation. Other councils seeking to attract industries should profit by the example of Sale.

House of Privilege

Following the approach to the Government a Bill to amend the Local Government Act was introduced in the Legislative Council — the House of Special Privilege — on September 28. This Bill provided for a new clause defining "urban farm land" as a parcel of land more than five acres wholly or mainly used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. On such land within municipalities — not district councils — the general or special rates imposed must be fixed at not more than one-half of the rates fixed on other lands. This clause was designed to give a special privilege to the opponents of land values rating who owned this alleged "urban farm land" in the Marion area.

This lead by the Government played into the hands of the representatives of vested interests in the Legislative Council, and they took full advantage of the opportunity provided. They carried the clause giving the concession to holders of such land in municipalities, and also inserted a new clause to make the 50 per cent. reduction also apply to land outside townships in district councils, and also reduced the area from five to two acres.

It will be remembered that in 1951, in the dying hours of the last session of Parliament, the members in the Legislative Council decided to confer a privilege upon the members of two golf and one polo clubs, owning land in an area where land values rating operated. The House of Assembly rejected the proposal and at a Conference between the two Houses at 3.15 a.m. a compromise was reached whereby the sporting clubs owning ten acres of land were for a period of five years to enjoy a 25 per cent. reduction in rates as against full payment by all other owners.

With the introduction of the amending Bill this session, the vested interests again got to work and inserted clauses providing that these clubs should enjoy a 50 per cent. reduction in rates for all time — not five years — and all clubs with two acres — not ten — should participate in the unjust concession.

The Bill as amended in the Legislative Council came to the House of Assembly and was read a first time on October 25th. The Minister made his second reading speech on November 18, and the debate then adjourned until November 24. It is of interest to note that Messrs. O'Halloran, Frank Walsh and Davis of the Labor Party, and Mr. Wm. Jenkins of the Liberal Party

were the only members, apart from the Minister, who spoke on the second reading of this important Bill. From November 24 until December 9 the Bill was kept well down on the Notice Paper when it was discussed in its committee stage.

It was arranged that when sub-clause (b) of clause 2 which contains the definition of "urban farm land" was being discussed, Mr. Frank Walsh, Deputy-Leader of the A.L.P., should move that this sub-clause should be deleted. However, he overlooked this important move with the unfortunate result the clause was carried without a division.

When the clauses dealing with the concessions to the sporting clubs came before members, the Government opposed the concession of 50 per cent. in rates, and stood for the 25 per cent. reduction granted in 1951. It also opposed the two acres proposal in lieu of ten. As now carried these sporting clubs will enjoy a rate concession of 25 per cent. for all time — not merely the five years as granted under the 1951 Act. The Government also opposed section 14 which made the 50 per cent. reduction in rates apply to all land outside townships in district council areas, consequently that great injustice was deleted.

These alterations were not made without a protest. On our return from overseas, after the Bill had passed through the Legislative Council, we issued a pamphlet exposing the injustice of the amendments proposed in the Local Government Act. Copies of this pamphlet were posted to the 143 Local Government bodies throughout the State, sent to members in both Houses of Parliament and to the city and country press. Members of both Houses of Parliament were also interviewed and matter supplied to assist them in opposing the proposals.

It was disappointing to note that although a majority of members in the Assembly spoke on the second reading of the Lottery and Trotting Bill, only three Labor Party members and two Liberals, including the Minister in charge of the Bill, showed sufficient interest to oppose this iniquitous measure at that stage of the Bill.

During the committee stage a number of Labor members and two Independents voiced their protest against this attempt to confer benefits upon a privileged few.

We understand that action will be taken by the Marion Ratepayers' Progress Association against those councillors who voted for the differential rate of 4½d. in the £ for No. 4 Ward, which was against the policy of the Association.

TYPING ASSISTANCE

We are without the services of a typist at present and would be glad to hear from friends able to get letters typed off draft copies to send to press, councils and associations pending securing a League typist.

SITE-VALUE RATING

Moves for Further Polls

The move to collect the necessary signatures to secure rating polls next August is now in full swing in Castlemaine, Doncaster and Templestowe, Keilor and Malvern.

An attempt was made in Malvern to secure the change by council resolution without the necessity to secure some 1800 signatures. The motion was put forward by Cr. A. B Morgan (who was elected last August on this issue) and was seconded by Cr. Montague.

A stalling amendment was carried deferring a decision until after the council had full details of how the change would operate. As the council had taken no steps to provide the information (which would be available by carrying the motion) this effectively killed the proposal without officially turning it down. Ratepayers are now going about it the hard way by collecting the signatures and it is expected this will be done in time.

Benalla Borough and Broadmeadows Shire are already committed to polls next August. Interest is being shown in Narracanshire where there is a move to form a Borough taking in Moe and Newborough. The "Narracanshire Advocate" has urged consideration of the rating change as a matter that will need early consideration when the Borough is formed.

Now that three years have almost elapsed since the unsuccessful polls in Wangaratta and Bellarine Shire, it is expected that moves will be made to secure signatures to further demands for polls. Petitions there cannot be presented to the Councils until 1st September but it is advisable to canvass the signatures in the summer rather than winter when it is less congenial.

DEVONPORT (TAS.)

COUNCIL REJECTS MOVE FOR SITE-VALUE RATING

At the request of the Devonport Junior Chamber of Commerce and with the co-operation of the Devonport Municipal Council the Land Values Research Group of Victoria conducted a Survey on how site-value rating would affect Devonport.

A summary of the results of this survey was given in four successive issues of the "Burnie Advocate" (December 8th to 11th). Altogether it occupied 190 column inches of news space. In the next issue we will give further details of this survey but now indicate that it showed that 80 per cent. of the house-owners of Devonport would obtain rate reductions totalling £23,493, while the others benefiting under Annual Value rating do so to the extent of only £6,512.

In view of the widespread dissatisfaction at the heavy rates upon householders last year and the most substantial relief which would be given by the change it was expected that the Council would decide to adopt Site-Value rating. However, at its special meeting on December 21st, the Devonport Council carried a motion that it considered the change unsuitable.

Radio Broadcast Session

Conducted weekly by speakers of the Henry George Justice Party from

RADIO STATIONS 3DB & 3LK

Every Sunday at 10 minutes past noon.

LISTEN AND ASK YOUR FRIENDS TO LISTEN

Donations to the Broadcast Fund will be appreciated.

This motion was carried by only one vote. Although the press account we have received does not comment on that fact it appears to have been carried only on the casting vote of the Warden. The reported remarks of the councillors show four in favour of site-value rating and four opposed, while a further councillor was in hospital unable to vote.

This decision has been reached without regard to the general interests of the majority and mainly in the light of the effect upon the pocket of the individual councillors. It is most disappointing that so little vision has been shown.

It remains to be seen whether the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Devonport Tourist and Progress Association (which was pressing for this change) will tamely submit to the Council decision. The obvious course would be to campaign to remove the councillors whose personal interests stand in the way of the common good and to replace them with others making the rating change the direct issue.

Notes from Various Sources

WESTERN QUEENSLAND.—This grazing hinterland 60 years ago developed rapidly because leasehold with annual rental tax allowed the grazier to use his own money and bank credit for development, such as bores down 6,000 ft. for water. And there were no other taxes, hence the entrepreneur held all the profits of his development.—Leader, 5/1/54.

[Ed. Note.—Then came the Federation blunders — tariff taxes, income tax, sales tax, payroll tax. The outback is sinking, homesteads deserted, runs amalgamated.]

CAULFIELD.—Vacant building block, 75 Bambra Rd., between Balaclava and Glencire Rds., 60 ft. frontage by 200 ft. sold for £2,500 or £41/13/4 ft.—Argus, 17/6/54.

[Ed. Note.—O'Malley Money is in plentiful supply from the Canberra printing press, and hence holders of these "notes" bid up price of vacant land.]

"**NUCLEAR SCIENCE** put to work for Industry" was the story of a vital new industry and the widely expanding uses of nuclear science in medicine research and industry given by James A. Schoke who formerly worked on the Manhattan atomic energy project. He spoke at the monthly Commerce and Industry luncheon of Henry George School of Social Science, Chicago, on Nov. 4, 1954.

GUATEMALA.—Descendants of Spanish invaders, and only 3 per cent. of the population owned almost 90 per cent. of the land. The landless farm laborers gave an overwhelming vote for Arbenz.

[Ed. Note.—Our newspapers suppress information showing that basic cause of unrest, and revolt is land-holding. Instead, we are given "news" with human interest.]

CREDIT is, in essence, "time to pay." Whether in its most common form as a personal loan or its complicated form as central bank advances to Government. Time is the essence of the contract. Credit is not evasion of payment by use of a depreciated currency.

MILDURA IRRIGATION.—Vines receive 5 regular waterings each year, mainly in the summer months. Each block must be drained by agricultural pipes laid every 3rd or 4th row, about 5 ft. underground, otherwise the salt would rise to the surface and kill the vines.

The drainage scheme put into operation to give men work during the last depression resulted in areas having a yield as low as 15 cwt. of dried fruit to the acre being revived and the tonnage increased to 30/35 cwt.—Commonwealth Bank Notes, March, 1954.

[Ed. Note.—Double the yield and the income by deep drainage certainly justifies a drainage rate for orchards and for those shop sites which benefit by orchard trade.]

MIDLAND JUNCTION (W.A.).—The greatly increased rate of building at Midland Junction following their adoption of Site Value Rating has caused the early and noisy objections to cease and its evident success has impressed others with the value of Site Value Rating.—Sept. 1954.

NEW ZEALAND.—Voting citizens number 1,250,000. The Rulers have divided these into 76 packets, and each packet is tied up with one member of Parliament belonging to either of the two parties of Rulers. This scheme prevents radical or independent citizens becoming members of Parliament. And so the Rulers enjoy their power by using the old Roman trick "Divide and Rule."

[Ed. Note.—Proportional Representation is the first essential before New Zealand can move toward Democracy.]

NEVER SATISFIED.—Directors of Courtaulds (Australia) Ltd. do not consider the tariff assistance granted as being adequate. There is a duty of 9d. per lb. on viscose tyre and a duty of 9d. per lb. on rayon tyre cord and rayon tyre fabric.—Data from Age, 4/12/54.

OTTAWA (1932) diverted trade into Empire channels by adding to the obstacles in the way of world trade as a whole. It was undoubtedly one of the factors responsible for the lag of world trade behind world industrial production.

A further objection to Ottawa is that it set out to divert trade into an area (the British Empire) which can never approach economic self-sufficiency.—P.E.P. report on Britain and World Trade.

LAND HUNGER.—The general position regarding forest reserve boundaries continues to deteriorate, and is directly attributable to land hunger of an ever-increasing population. Villagers deliberately move the boundary stones, and when prosecuted, challenge the accuracy of the original survey.—From the annual report, 1952/53, of the Forest Department of Jamaica.

CONTRAST.—Columnist John Hetherington notes with interest that V.R.C. vice-chairman Mr. E. A. Underwood has imported a racehorse at a cost of £A26,250, and observes that licensing restrictions do not apply to these animals, 603 of which were imported last year at a cost of £435,129. The contrast with the endless form signing required to import £100 or so of English merchandise is pointed out.—Age, 14/12/54.

COME TO ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual General Meeting of members of the Henry George League of Victoria will be held on Tuesday, 15th February, 1955, at the League Rooms, 18 George Parade, Melbourne.

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE OF VICTORIA.

18 George Parade, (off 113 Collins Street, Lear Russell Street), Melbourne, C.I. Telephone: MF4635. Secretary: Mr. R. N. Collison.

The Annual Membership Fee is a minimum of 10/-.

The subscription to Journal "Progress" is 2/- per annum.

If you appreciate this Journal, you are invited to obtain new subscribers.

Next Executive Meeting, Tuesday, February 15th, 1955, at 6.00 p.m.

Annual General Meeting, Tuesday, 15th February, at 8 p.m.

HENRY GEORGE JUSTICE PARTY.

Committee Meeting, Friday, February 11th, at 8 p.m.

Broadcast Session, 3DB each Sunday, 12.10 p.m.