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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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A. R. Hutchinson, B.Sc., Editor.

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HENRY GEORGE COMMEMORATION

will take the form of a dinner at
AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION HOUSE

45 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Thursday, September 2nd, at 6.15 p.m.

Commemoration address by Hon. E. L. Kiernan

Modest Charge

Reserve the date

CURRENT COMMENTS

FEDERAL ELECTION REFLECTIONS

The elections for the House of Representatives are now over and the leaders of both parties are patting themselves on the back and claiming victories, and public support for their policy.

The Liberal-Country Party was returned with its majority of 14 reduced to 7. Its cause for elation is difficult to see except on the basis that it expected to lose more seats.

The Labor Party leaders played into the hands of their opponents by making the abolition of the "means test" in regard to old age pensions one of the main issues.

While it cannot be denied that such a means test does penalise the thrifty and those who have contributed to superannuation schemes as compared with those who spend their pay as they get it the cost of its abolition in terms of increased taxation was stated to be about £140,000,000 annually.

This party also indicates that it proposed extensive reductions in taxation without curtailment of defence expenditure. The two programmes were incompatible and this was seized upon by the Government.

There were several disquieting features in Dr. Evatt's policy speeches as we see them. On several occasions he went out of his way to bang the drum of protection of our industries by tariffs.

When one realises the pressure now being brought by vested interests for further tariff protection this has an ominous ring. One remembers the early thirties when some of these important manufacturing interests contributed substantially to Labor Party campaign funds on the basis of anticipated benefits under its "high tariff" policy.

Another most disquieting feature of the Labor Party policy as expounded was the utter absence of any reference to the previous promises to restore the Land Tax on election. Dr. Evatt had stated in Parliament during the Land Tax debates that his Party would restore it if returned to power.

Such an important issue should certainly receive mention in policy speeches. When one considers the many less important matters that were dealt with in the policy speeches the absence of this vital issue in Dr. Evatt's presentation makes one cynical. It is true that several individual members did indicate their intention to restore this tax, notably Mr. Mullens. But this does not compensate for the silence of the leader and only radio spokesman.

If Labor leaders were unsatisfactory, what shall we say of the Government? It presented nothing constructive. It relied first on the communist bogey until the Labor leaders gave it the "inflation fear" stick to whack it with.

Both parties are busy with post-mortems and are trying to juggle figures to show that each has had a wonderful victory. Both are ignoring the all-important factor that the electors voted under compulsion, and that however little they thought of the policy of each Party, they had to vote for one or the other. There were only the two parties to vote for apart from communists.

This election has clearly demonstrated the need for Proportional Representation in the election of members. That would at least have given the supporters of each party an opportunity to say which of a number of candidates bearing their label they preferred.

Another evidence of the depths to which the party machine has sunk is the fact that both parties helped themselves liberally to radio time on both national and commercial stations at public expense. The fact that only the leaders, Mr. Menzies and Dr. Evatt were the speakers means that other candidates have become ciphers. Elections have come to depend on the utterances of the two figureheads. If it be right to have any free time granted at national expense on radio each candidate should be entitled to his share. It has been computed that the total free radio time, distributed properly, would have given each candidate a quarter of an hour.

AUSTRALIAN RAILWAYS UNION

A Sound Conference Decision

At the Conference of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Railways Union held at Unity Hall, Bourke Street, Melbourne, 5th to 7th May last, the following agenda item was moved by Mr. V. Brady representing the Rolling Stock Division, seconded by Mr. V. Blake of Officers' Division and was carried:

"That State Conference request the Government to investigate the reflection of values of Public Utilities in the unimproved value of land, with a view to drawing on same to assist railway finances."

A highly commendable recognition of the fact that public utilities are in difficulty because the public values they create are allowed to go into private pockets instead of meeting the costs of those utilities.

It needs to be followed up with the demand for a State Development Fund to be established financed by a development rate on land values with regrouping of State Accounts. Railway freights and fares should be reduced and the amount of the reduction balanced by the yield of the Development Rate.

MELBOURNE TUBE RAILWAY

Pressure is being brought in certain quarters for the construction of a tube railway in Melbourne. It would have its exits in the less salubrious parts of the city and would relieve pressure on the Flinders Street Station.

The proposal may be commendable enough, but there are several points that need consideration to which no attention has yet been given. This tube railway will cost a lot of money. The construction bill for the Victorian surface railways built mainly last century at much lower cost levels was some £70,000,000.

Tunnelling is vastly more expensive than surface construction. The cost was responsible for the deferring of the Degraes Street subway for at least thirty years. The length of that section is less than a hundred yards. The cost of that section is to be met by Melbourne City Council ratepayers.

The tube would run away with several millions. That would not matter if the proposal is sound. So long as the right people pay for it.

This tube would open up and increase the demand for land in the more squalid portion of the city traversed by it. It would enormously increase the value of the land near the exits. The owners of those sites

benefited are the only ones that would benefit specially through its construction. They are the ones who should be called upon to meet the construction costs and track maintenance costs.

This should be done through a development rate based upon the unimproved capital or rental value of the land. A Development Fund should be established, not merely for this undertaking, but to cover the previous undertakings for railways, roads, irrigation and other Developmental works. This project should be treated as simply one of those works and the costs met from this fund.

Under this arrangement those benefiting in the city areas adjoining would contribute most substantially to the cost. Many of these owners are now making quite inadequate development of their properties. The Rate would encourage them to develop the properties adequately instead of holding the business community to ransom. The tube railway would tend to draw more customers in from the suburbs to the central city area. That would tend to reduce land values in the suburbs and increase them in the city.

The pressure being exerted at present for this tube railway is on the assumption that the general taxpayer will bear the cost. Unless the site owners who will benefit by millions of pounds through its construction are prepared to pay for it the scheme should not be undertaken.

BEATING THE TARIFF DRUM

VICTORIAN CHAMBER OF MANUFACTURERS SPONSORS INCREASED TARIFFS

A very illuminating exhibit was tendered at the Tariff Board inquiry into applications for increased duties on imported toys early this month. This was a letter sent out by the Chamber of Manufactures on 25/3/54 to all toy manufacturers seeking to arouse their support for an application for increased duties. The letter is given below:

Dear Sir,

TARIFF PROTECTION — TOY INDUSTRY

All members of the Toy Section of this Chamber have been notified of the Tariff Board Inquiry to be held approximately May of this year into the question of what rate of duty should be imposed on toys under Tariff Item 310 (B).

A meeting was called for the 19th instant, and only 9 attended. This is considered to be a poor response and it is felt that a number of members do not realise the seriousness and significance of the reference before the Tariff Board.

A number of manufacturers representing each of the following groups should be prepared to submit evidence before the Tariff Board, viz., plastics, metal, wood and soft toys. If your support is not forthcoming there is the very real danger of the Board deciding to reduce the present duties and protection.

You are therefore requested to advise this Chamber in writing, within one week, the following:—

- (a) whether or not you intend to support the forthcoming Tariff Inquiry;
- (b) will you be prepared to give evidence in person;
- (c) what groups of toys you manufacture.

Another meeting will be called in the near future, and it is expected that all manufacturers concerned will send along a representative. In the meantime, you are requested to obtain as much information as possible concerning comparable prices of imported toys, whether landed costs, wholesale or retail.

Yours faithfully,

C. F. O'SULLIVAN, Tariff Officer.

It was disclosed to the Tariff Board in evidence that this letter had been sent to 92 toy manufacturers,

only 9 of whom were sufficiently interested to attend. The further meeting was also similarly poorly attended.

Only those at this unrepresentative meeting gave evidence in favor of the increased duties and one toy manufacturer (Mr. L. J. Hutchinson) gave evidence against the increased duties.

It will be seen that support engineered by the Chamber of Manufactures in this way for tariff increases is quite unrepresentative of the wishes of the industry as a whole. Doubtless similar procedure is followed with other secondary industries. So the vested interests of a few greedy and anti-social persons jack up the price structure against the consumer.

MYXO MEANS MONEY

Canberra Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported Australian wool production for season 1952/53 as record, 1,280 million pounds clip. By clearing rabbits, Myxomatosis allowed more sheep to eat more grass and so it is estimated to have added about 17 million pounds to the clip. This greasy wool was worth nearly £24 million. A further £10 million was added to graziers incomes from the additional sheep and lambs.

The C.S.I.R.O. arranged this biological control of the rabbit pest by myxomatosis and so deserves credit for estimated addition of £34 million to the value of Australia's pastoral output in one season. As much or more in the following seasons and how much in ten seasons?

With this result: since a greater profit can be got by grazing sheep when rabbits are under control the men taking up this line bid a higher price per acre and the vendor departs with the capitalised value of scientific research. The vendor seizes the increment he did not earn: the scientists' battle to win a better salary although they did earn this increment of land values. Perhaps, someday trained research scientists will reach that conclusion.

ONE AFRICAN COLONY HAPPY

HOW DO BELGIANS DO IT?

Trouble today in Uganda, the green heart of Africa. Tribal mutterings in Nyasaland. The clamor of political passions in Nigeria and the Gold Coast. In Kenya, under the fear of the Mau Mau, terror is breeding terror . . .

What has gone wrong in British Africa? Where have we failed? Why is it that westwards from Uganda, beyond the fabled Mountains of the Moon, all is quiet and peaceful? What is it that the Belgian Colonial administration has got that ours has not?

These are questions to which Harold Walton, foreign editor of the London Evening News, has been seeking answers. Here are some of his views as published in an article in the Melbourne "Herald" of 16/12/53.

The Belgian Congo

Things are not better in the Belgian Congo because they have more self government there. To all intents and purposes they have not any.

It is not that the natives are more humanely treated for (except perhaps for the recent explosions in Kenya) whatever charges may be laid against the British in

Africa, inhumanity and cruelty are not among them.

What then are the possible reasons?

No Pressure

In the first place there is no white v. black struggle as such in the Congo. There is no white settlement threatening the native's title to his land as in, say, Kenya or the Rhodesias.

Of a total population of some 12 million in the Congo there are only 75,000 Europeans, and not all of these by any means are Belgians.

And the entry of further Europeans, at least in any numbers is sternly discouraged. No Belgian can emigrate to the Congo unless he has qualifications to do a special job.

In fact it is almost as difficult for a Belgian to emigrate to his own colony as it is for him to get into the United States.

The result is that there is no pressure on "living space". There are no "White highlands" such as there are in Kenya.

No European can come along and buy himself a parcel of native land. Many of the tribes, in fact, have four times more land than they actually need, yet no part of it can be used by a European enterprise until the Belgian Government is satisfied that the natives will never require it.

Thus land hunger (or the fear of it) which has caused so much discord in parts of British Africa and so much racial antagonism, is unknown.

The native, too, is encouraged to take skilled and regular work. The way is open to him to become a mechanic — an engine driver or a foreman in a mine for instance — earning the same wages as a European and therefore having no sense of bitterness or frustration . . .

TRIBUTE: Mr. A. H. NOAR

Since the toll taken by increasing years prevents Mr. Noar coming to our meetings, let this profile show what one man has done, what others can do.

Alfred H. Noar belongs to that privileged band who heard Henry George speak in Melbourne Town Hall in 1890. Being convinced by George's great message, Mr. Noar has for above 60 years, devoted his gifted mind to the establishment of righteousness.

Mr. Noar's esteem for Max Hirsch arose from personal knowledge gained by working with that great man on publications. Mr. Noar also wrote a number of pamphlets which were clear and persuasive.

As a business man in Port Fairy, Mr. Noar served the citizens as a councillor; he was the first Australian born citizen to become the Mayor and occupied that honourable chair three times. He also stood as a candidate for Parliament.

Moving to Northcote, Mr. Noar became an active worker at rating polls to exempt buildings from municipal taxes and in one campaign walked many miles for the single handed delivery of 20,000 leaflets.

Many a good cause of Church and State was assisted by his active participation and his friends tender this tribute to a Georgian greatheart as a token of their appreciation of a really charming colleague.

NATIONAL FARMERS' UNION

HOTLY CRITICISES TARIFF SUPPORT

The Research Officer of the National Farmers' Union Mr. G. D'A. Chislett vigorously criticised applications by Imperial Chemical Industries of Australia and New Zealand and Timbrol Ltd. for exceptionally high tariff duties on products of the chlorine industry at a Tariff Board hearing in Sydney.

Most of the applications were for duties between 50 per cent. and 95 per cent. on imports from Britain, with an additional loading of 12½ per cent. on imports from the Continent and America. The chemicals concerned constitute the active ingredients of a very large proportion of the weedicides, pesticides, sheep and cattle dips, fumigants, fungicides and insecticides used in Australian primary industries; such that practically every primary producer would be affected.

Well Known

Some of the more commonly known chemicals on which duties were requested are D.D.T., Benzene, Hexachloride (BHC) 2,4-D, 2,4,5-T, M.C.P.A., Carbon Tetrachloride, Chloropierin, Copper Oxychloride, Hexachlorobenzene and Pentachlorophenol.

In opposing the applications Mr. Chislett said that applicants had failed completely to make a case as to why there should be any advantage to other local industries either primary or secondary, in the production of I.C.I.A.N.Z. or Timbrol Ltd., being protected against imports, at prices in some cases 200 per cent. above the cost of imported materials.

Drenching Cost

Three examples quoted by the N.F.U. as to the increased cost which the duties would mean for primary industries were the cost of drenching sheep in fluke infested areas for one year with Carbon Tetrachloride, at least £70,000; increased cost of clearing one quarter of the Brigalow country of Queensland with 2,4,5-T, £2,300,000; increased cost of spraying 100,000 acres against Skeleton Weed with 2,4-D, £15,000. Further examples showing the effect on products used by horticultural and vegetable industries were quoted.

Mr. Chislett contended that the duties requested were so prohibitive that they would virtually exclude imported materials and that this would have the effect of giving I.C.I.A.N.Z. a monopoly of the trade as the other local formulators would become dependent on the local manufacturers, dominated by I.C.I.A.N.Z., for their raw material requirements, and that they could not hope to maintain competition under these circumstances.

Proposed Duties

The National Farmers' Union evidence concluded that the effect of the granting of the proposed duties would be the redistribution annually of a large amount from the income of primary producers to shareholders in companies of the chlorine industry. This would cause hardship and disadvantage and could not be justified within the framework of Australia's current political and economic policy, which gives food production equal top priority with defence production, and acknowledges that there are definite limits to the diversion of resources from export industries.

The hearing was adjourned to Tuesday, 13th. —
Wangaratta Chronicle, 15/6/54.

FAIR DIVISION OF COSTS IN MUNICIPAL RATES

By A. R. Hutchinson, B.Sc., A.M.I.E., Aust.
Research Director, Land Values Research Group
(Article published in "Age" 17.3.54)

We hear frequently of protest meetings and evidences of ratepayers' dissatisfaction at the municipal or water rates they are called on to pay.

Usually they are provoked by revaluations of properties or substantial increases in the rate in the pound which bring increased charges.

Consideration of the article in "The Age" (Municipal Rates Lack Logical Basis, 18/2) should surely lead to closer examination of the equity of the charges demanded under the rating systems.

That the rating system used has a great deal to do with the amount of opposition to increases in rate revenue is evident from the experience of Heidelberg.

In 1950, after revaluation, that council decided to increase its rate revenue from the previous £99,908 to £178,296.

This produced a monster protest meeting, with as many ratepayers unable to gain admittance as there were within the town hall. Demands were made that the council resign in a body.

Yet next year the Heidelberg council increased its revenue by a further £25,000, and there was no outcry.

Why? Simply because the city had changed its rating system from the net annual value to the unimproved capital value basis in the interval, and most householders were paying substantially less in rates than before.

Perhaps it is significant that the protests now being made against excessive rates on householders after revaluations in Benalla, Broadmeadows, Eltham, on-caster-Templestowe, Malvern and Narracan are all from areas rating net annual value. Let us see how the two alternative systems work.

—:—

The net annual value is most commonly used in Victoria.

This system has no pretensions to rating in accordance with the value of the service rendered to the ratepayer.

It frankly rates the citizen according to the value of his house, farm buildings and other improvements he has placed on his site.

On this system the municipal rates on a house are usually 10 to 20 times those on an adjoining vacant lot of equal frontage, although the services offered to each by the council are identical.

The alternative rating system is unimproved capital value (or site-value) rating. This is in a minority in Victoria, but is now the dominant system over the Commonwealth.

Under it the rates are based on the value of the site alone. No account is taken of the value of the improvements made by the citizen on his site, and these are exempted from local taxes.

The site value itself is created and maintained by the municipal and other public services, and not by the individual owner.

It is high in the centres where these services are concentrated and low on the outskirts, where there are few services provided.

The following statistics for councils on the edge of Melbourne are most significant when considering grounds for dissatisfaction in rating systems.

All of the councils listed at present rate on net annual value.

The source of the figures is the Municipal Directory for 1953.

Council	No. of Assmts.	No. of Dwell-ings	No. of Vacant Lots App.	Proportion Vacant to Total Lots
Broadmeadows shire .	25,000	4,000	21,000	84.0 p.c.
Doncaster and Templestowe	4,268	1,250	3,018	70.4 p.c.
Eltham shire	6,400	2,670	3,730	58.3 p.c.
Fern Tree Gully shire	24,716	7,247	17,469	70.5 p.c.
Flinders shire	22,000	5,000	17,000	77.5 p.c.
Keilor shire	11,229	2,117	9,112	81.0 p.c.
Mornington shire . . .	5,400	1,893	3,507	61.2 p.c.
Mulgrave shire	10,715	3,026	7,689	71.8 p.c.
Sunshine city	18,483	6,188	12,295	67.0 p.c.
Werribee shire	15,700	2,600	13,100	83.5 p.c.
Whittlesea shire . . .	3,469	1,165	2,304	66.5 p.c.

Reasons for dissatisfaction are not hard to find in the light of the above figures.

In each case there are more vacant holdings than there are homes. The vacant lots pay only a few shillings in rates under net annual value, and as they are so numerous it means that householders must pay heavy rates under that system to make up for the share avoided by the vacant holders.

In such areas a general doubling of valuations on built and vacant lots, while maintaining the same rate in the pound, would have the effect that the charge, previously about £10 on houses, would be increased to £20.

The charge on vacant lots would be doubled too, but as they were paying only about 10/- the new charge would be only £1.

It is not surprising then that councils meet hostility and opposition from their resident ratepayers to programmes involving increased rates under N.A.V.

When vacant holders pay their fair share as they do under the site-value basis, the burden on house-holders is reduced. Increases in total revenue, being spread over double the number of effective contributors, are not onerous.

It is significant that almost two-thirds of the area of Greater Melbourne has now changed over to the site-value basis of rating.

For water and sewerage rates the special act under which the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works operates does not permit site-value rating to be used.

Yet it should be obvious that the capital and maintenance costs on the reservoirs and pipes are the same to the board in passing vacant lots as for built lots. Here the site-value principle of charging in accordance with frontage is clearly appropriate and the gross disparity in rates now charged on built lots compared with vacant lots is indefensible.

A site-value rate combined with a meter charge for water drawn in excess of a specified minimum appears the logical system. Early amendment of the act under which the M.M.B.W. works to provide for this is called for.—“Age”, 17/3/54.

LUNCHEON TO Mr. E. J. CRAIGIE

The Executive and Members of the Henry George League of Victoria recently had the pleasure of entertaining Mr. E. J. Craigie of South Australia at a luncheon in the League Room.

The President, Mr. J. H. Morris, greeted the Members, and spoke of the outstanding work done by the Guest of Honour, Mr. Craigie, over very many years, particularly for Site Value Rating. In appreciation of that work, the President then handed Mr. Craigie a Cheque as a token of regard from members of the League and to signify their recognition of the sterling worth of Mr. Craigie.

In reply, Mr. Craigie outlined the work which had gone into the campaign in the Marion Municipality, and which culminated in an outstanding victory at the Poll on 1st May.

Mr. Craigie sailed per “Morton Bay” for England, for a well earned holiday, but whilst away he hopes to investigate, in Denmark, the progress of the Georgian Movement.

AMERICAN VISITOR

The Members' Meeting on 18th May was addressed by Mr. George Howatt, a Fullbright Scholar investigating Australian Electoral Methods.

He spoke on American Electoral practices in an interesting and colourful manner. There seem virtues and drawbacks in both countries, with the balance probably in Australia's favour.

The “Australian Vote,” as it is described in American educational works, is probably this country's greatest advertisement, there reaching almost every High School student.

From Mr. Howatt's description, their mechanical vote recorders seem to work well, and could be adopted to handling a P. R. Count with the utmost expedition.

THE LIBERAL ASSEMBLY

The Liberal Party Assembly, meeting at Ilfracombe, April 9 to 11, accepted the principle of the gradual abandonment of guaranteed prices and assured markets for agriculture, called for the collection of the unearned site value of all land in place of the development charge, urged the repeal of industrial rating and reaffirmed its faith in free trade.

The Executive Committee's motion on agriculture was moved by Mr. James Lewis, of Reigate, a tenant farmer who works 300 acres. It called for revision of the arbitrary right of the Minister of Agriculture to dispossess owners or occupiers of farm land on grounds of bad management, the termination of county agricultural executive committees and agricultural land tribunals and the gradual abandonment of the guaranteed price system. There was a sharp division of opinion between the unrelenting free traders and those delegates who saw in the motion a threat to the growth

of home agriculture, which resulted in the motion being somewhat watered down. As passed the resolution called for the full maintenance of security of tenure for efficient farmers, maintenance of the county agricultural executive committees' advisory service, but no sanctions against people without recourse to the courts, and gradual abandonment of price and market control and of restrictions on free imports of feeding stuffs, fertilisers and farm machinery.

The resolution on free trade reads: "This Assembly reiterates its belief that Free Trade is the only sound fiscal policy for Britain, irrespective of the attitude of any other State. It recognises that the conquest of inflation and the restoration of the convertibility of sterling are essential to the fulfilment of the Free Trade programme. It further urges firstly that protective tariffs be progressively removed on all other ranges of products and that quantitative restrictions be likewise abolished." The resolution called for the repeal of the McKenna Duties Act, 1915, the Safeguarding of Industries Act, 1921, the Safeguarding Duties Act, 1925-28, the Import Duties Act, 1932, and the Ottawa Agreements Act, 1932.

The resolution on site values as passed after amendment reads: "This Assembly urges the Government to include in its promised Town and Country Planning legislation full provision for returning to the community the unearned site value of all land in place of the inequitable and cumbrous development charge." It is unfortunate that this resolution as worded conveys the impression that the rating and taxation of land values is a substitute for the development charge.

"Land and Liberty", April, 1953.

LIST OF PLACES IN VICTORIA OPERATING UNDER SITE-VALUE RATING AND METHOD BY WHICH ADOPTED.

Year Council	Status	How Adopted
1920 CAULFIELD	City	Council Resolution
1920 COBURG	Town (now city)	Council Resolution
1920 NEWTOWN AND CHILWELL	Town (now city)	Council Resolution
1920 ESSENDON	City	Council Resolution
1920 DANDENONG	Shire	By Poll
1920 ROSEDALE	Shire	Council Resolution
1920 PORTLAND	Borough (now town)	By Poll
1921 OAKLEIGH	Town (now city)	Council Resolution
1921 YEA	Shire	By Poll
1922 BRUNSWICK	City	Council Resolution (endorsed by Poll)
1922 CAMBERWELL	City	Council Resolution (endorsed by Poll)
1923 CARRUM	Borough (now Chelsea City)	Council Resolution
1925 MORDIALLOC	Town (now city)	By Poll
1926 SANDRINGHAM	City	By Poll
1944 HAMILTON	Town (now city)	By Poll
1946 MOORABBIN	City	By Poll
1946 BOX HILL	City	By Poll
1946 PRESTON	City	By Poll
1947 KEW	City	By Poll
1948 ECHUCA	Borough	Council Resolution
1950 FRANKSTON AND HASTINGS	Shire	Council Resolution (endorsed by Poll)
1951 HEIDELBERG	City	By Poll
1951 RINGWOOD	Borough	By Poll
1952 NUNAWADING	City	By Poll
1953 SOUTH BARWON	Shire	By Poll
— WARRNAMBOOL	City	Council Resolution not yet effective

GENERAL COUNCIL FOR RATING REFORM

The General Council for Rating Reform met on Thursday 10th June to consider the campaigns in those areas with polls forthcoming next August as well as those in which there is local action towards changing to site-value rating next year.

The polls next August are to be held at Benalla Borough, Eltham Shire and Sale City. It is expected that the comparative statements which the councils must send to each ratepayer showing the rates payable under the two systems will be going out very shortly now.

New affiliations accepted this year were from Eltham South Riding Tenants' and Ratepayers' Association; Chadstone Citizens Association; Glenroy Progress Association; Garfield and District Progress Association.

It was reported that the following councils had indicated their intention to discuss change to site-value rating this year. Ballarat Shire; Rutherglen Shire; Wodonga Shire; Woodend and Newham Shire; Mansfield Shire; Healesville Shire; Glenelg Shire; Kowree Shire. The matter may have been already decided, but the results are not known yet. Wonthaggi Borough, Queenscliff Borough; Broadmeadows Shire considered motions for change but these were not carried.

Action has been taken in the following areas by local citizens towards collecting the signatures necessary for a petition for polls to be taken during 1955:—

Broadmeadows Shire; Doncaster and Templestowe Shire; Maffra Shire; Malvern City.

Letters on this subject have recently been published in the local press at Kyneton, Shepparton, Yarrowonga, Benalla, Wangaratta, Rutherglen, Castlemaine, Mornington.

WARRNAMBOOL CITY Rate Studies Distributed

Warrnambool Council in December, 1952, carried a resolution to change to Site-value rating. It was not possible to obtain a valuer in time to comply with the requirements of the Act to make the change operate during the year 1953/54.

The valuation conducted by Mr. Steele is now complete and the rate statements have been sent to ratepayers comparing the rates payable on their properties under either system.

These statements were accompanied by a copy of the printed study conducted by the Land Values Research Group. These copies were distributed by the Council so that citizens would be well-informed on the effects of the change.

The notice of intention to adopt Site-value Rating has been published and a month is allowed in which dissident citizens can demand that a poll be taken before proceeding with the proposal. It is not yet known whether a poll has been demanded.

The following are some particulars of the most recent valuation as compared with that of 1949 upon which the Research Group study was based.

	Year 1949	Year 1953
Capital Impvd. Value ..	£3,125,141	£7,775,051
Unimpvd. Capital Value	1,044,122	2,061,393
Value of Improvements	2,081,319	5,713,658
Nett Annual Value ..	166,708	394,683
Total Assessments . . .	3,412	4,093
Total Built Lots	2,086	3,344
Vacant Land	562	749

The valuations now are more than double those at 1949. The rate in the £ of Nett Annual Value struck for 1953/54 is 2/8 which will require a rate of 6.112d. in the £ of Unimproved Capital Value to return the same revenue. The water rates at present are at 1/- in £ and the sewerage rate 9d. in the £ of N.A.V. It will be open to Warrnambool Council to levy these rates also on the Site-value basis.

We since learn that no demand has been presented for a poll of Warrnambool following the distribution of the comparative rate notices and that site-value rating should now come into operation from October next. Congratulations to the progressive Councillors of the city. We shall watch its development with deep interest.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOLS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

We have received a copy of the Annual Report of the Henry George School of Social Science from United States. It makes most inspiring reading. The success of the School since its establishment by Oscar H. Geiger in 1932 is remarkable.

The School is free and derives the funds to carry on and extend its work from the voluntary donations of those who have been through its courses. There are various courses in economics commencing with that on Fundamental Economics. That students do not find them dry as dust affairs is evidenced by the number that continue with more advanced courses after going through the initial ones. Henry George's classic work "Progress and Poverty" is the basic text book for discussions. The students educate themselves by discussion. The classes do not work on the normal school or university basis of "cramming" and copying set lectures.

The School headquarters are now a five storey building in New York. It has extensions in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Connecticut, Illinois, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Grand Rapids, St. Louis, Newark, St. Johns, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Washington, in United States and Montreal and Ottawa in Canada. It runs a comprehensive and well edited monthly paper "Henry George News."

The report we review has 24 pages full of activity. We can only spare space to refer to some of the main indicators of scale of the operations of the main centres. New York

Classes in Fundamental Economics held in New York did better in 1953 than 1952. There were 1,978 enrolments and 783 graduates. Of the latter 636 were from classes at headquarters and 147 from regional classes throughout the city's boroughs. There was also an increased attendance in advanced courses, a total of 788 having enrolled and 510 graduated.

An occupational breakdown of graduates of the basic course in 1953 showed that 28 per cent. were business and professional people, 46 per cent. were in clerical and skilled occupations, 2 per cent. manual and unskilled workers and 24 per cent. non-commercial (housewives, students, etc.). More than half had some

college education. Slightly more than half were women. An age survey showed that 6 per cent. of the graduates were in their teens, 27 per cent. in their twenties, 23 per cent. in their thirties, 23 per cent. in their forties, 17 per cent. in their fifties, and 6 per cent. sixty and over.

The correspondence courses conducted at Headquarters produced 1,957 enrolments in the basic course, 1,254 copies of "Progress and Poverty" sold 608 first lessons submitted and 209 graduates. There were 132 enrolments for advanced correspondence courses and 79 graduates. The School was accepted as a member of the National Home Study Council. Chicago

Of a total of eighteen study groups started during the year, thirteen had completed the basic course by the end of the year; five of the groups, with an enrolment of 84, carried over into 1954. There were about 350 students during the year.

Although organized with the aid of the materials and counsel of the School, all the groups were initiated by sponsors outside of the School. Sponsorship was as varied as the Amalgamated Clothing Works of America and the Republic Women Volunteers, in addition to industrial corporations. A study group of Methodist ministers and laymen, begun in 1952, finished early in 1953 with seven graduates. Philadelphia

Total enrolment in the basic course was 298, and there were 198 graduates. Boston

Four terms of the basic course in 1953 yielded 287 class enrolments and 141 graduates. For correspondence courses there were 59 enrolments and 32 graduates. Ohio

Classes were held in 9 towns and cities with combined enrolment of 148 students in basic and advanced courses. The basic course was completed by 60 and advanced studies by 27 students. St. Louis

Two terms of basic course produced 16 classes, 116 enrolments and 59 graduates. Hartford

Of 50 enrolled in basic course 33 completed it. Most of the students were secured by newspaper advertising.

Summarised the year's activity in all centres resulted in more than 2,300 new graduates of the basic course in Fundamental Economics. This brings the total to about 75,000 since the School was founded in 1932. Truly a most remarkable development in such a short period.

This shows what can be done with proper planning and enthusiastic co-operation. A similar Australian School of Social Science exists with headquarters in Sydney. There is a Melbourne section at present conducting correspondence courses which would welcome new students, and is prepared to conduct the discussion classes where sufficient students are found. Those interested in similar action here should write to the School of Social Science at the League Rooms, George Parade.

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"Wherever party spirit shall strain the ancient guarantees of freedom; or bigotry and ignorance shall lay their fatal hands on education; or the arrogance of caste shall strike at equal rights; or corruption shall poison the very springs of national life, there, Minutemen of Liberty, are your Lexington Green and Concord Bridge."

by George William Curtis

From an address at the centennial celebration of Concord Fight, 1875.

I feel quite sure that these Minutemen of Liberty sang the Song of the Vermonters of 1779.

"We owe no allegiance

We bow to no throne,

Our ruler is law

And the law is our own"

Surely it was a great privilege to fight and even die for a great cause like the Civil War and our War of Independence. But, on the other hand, I believe it is a close second to live, strive, suffer and give your wealth, thought and speech for a great cause. As H. G. says, that too has its own independent and rich reward. We may not be called to die but surely it is a privilege to be a living sacrifice for righteousness, justice and freedom. —E.W.C.

Notes from Various Sources

International Union. To stimulate in all countries a public opinion favorable to permanent peace and prosperity for all peoples, through the progressive removal of the basic economic causes of poverty and war, as these causes are demonstrated in the writings of Henry George.

Kensington.—Block of land, 66 ft. frontage at 78 Hardiman st. by 116 ft. deep with 32 ft. galvanised iron store sold for £2,900. —Sun, 27/11/52.

[Ed. Note. Money borrowed by Government thus appears again as land values. Hence a levy on land values should be made to amortize the Government loan.]

Greed Promotes Disease.—Hookworm affects the native people of East Africa. According to medical reports, cheap Japanese shoes had done more than all the efforts of the Health Department to counteract this scourge. The Ottawa preferential trade system wiped out this market for cheap shoes; native people went barefoot; the ravages of hookworm were multiplied. —The Standard, 15/7/53.

Arbitration.—Economic decisions should be made in the market place as the result of thousands of individual decisions in a free economy, not by five or six judges, no matter how learned. Arbitration is a monster threatening to destroy the national economy. —Mr. F. M. Hewitt, Builder. "Sun," 21/11/52.

Welfare State.—Excessive taxes and Government overspending in the mistaken belief that only Governments provide for the welfare of the people — could lead to the drying up of enterprise and complete domination by the State of every aspect of social and business life. —Mr. M. McIlraith.

Planned Economy.—No stabilisation plan yet devised for primary industry had satisfactorily stood the test of time. —Mr. McEwen, Federal Minister for Agriculture.

[Ed. Note.—And so Mr. McEwen's trained agronomists are busy devising another long term "wheat price."]

Toorak. Vacant building block Bruce st., 70 ft. by 75 deep received a bid of £3250. —Age, 24/11/52.

[Ed. Note.—Pahran City Councillors arrange especially low rates for the vacant blocks, but charge punitive rates on houses.]

Lilydale.—Springhill East, estate of 323 ac. on main Lilydale-Healesville highway received a bid of £54 an acre. —Age.

[Ed. Note.—Lilydale Shire is being re-valued. It will be interesting to see whether the valuer takes note of this market price.]

Meenae Ponds.—Block of land 33 ft. by 132 at 608 Mount Alexander rd. with small factory, sold at £1,050. —Sun, 9/12/52.

[Ed. Note.—Capital value is thus £32 a ft.]

Quo Vadis.—Roman Patricians banded together against the Christians not on religious grounds but because Christianity was a political force which threatened the social foundations of wealth and privilege. —Alan Nicholls. Argus, 8/1/53.

Aspiration.

The Georgean way, the Justice way,

Is one that should appeal;

To usher in a brighter day

For all the Commonweal.

—F. T. Bell.

Geelong.—Supporters of Site-value Rating which operates in the Newtown-Chilwell municipal area need to be alert on proposed plan to amalgamate as Greater Geelong where rates will be levied on the buildings.

Counting Votes.—Ivanhoe result is an example of the vagaries of the preferential voting system. For Lucy (Labor) 14,803 votes. Against Lucy 18,857 votes. Lucy won the seat because more anti-Lucy votes went to Block who at that stage of count couldn't win than to Leonard, who could have won. —Bulletin, 24/12/52.

[Ed. Note.—Only proportional representation gives true results.]

Perth, W.A.—Wellington st., city, was formerly marshy land. In 1870, Mr. J. J. Elsegood bought an allotment for £2,000. That area is now in heart of the city and Boans Ltd. have bought the same block plus 3-storey building for £100,000. —Argus.

[Ed. Note.—Vendor has decamped with the loot — unearned increment.]

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE OF VICTORIA.

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Next Executive Meeting, Tuesday, July 6, 1954 at 6.45 p.m.

Members' Evening, Tuesday, July 20th, at 8 p.m.

HENRY GEORGE JUSTICE PARTY.

Committee Meeting, Friday, July 9th, at 8 p.m.

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