

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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CURRENT COMMENTS

STAKING OUT SPACE CLAIMS

It was not altogether astonishing to read in the daily press towards the end of January about the Danish family laying some sort of legal claim to the ownership of the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

It was, however, rather staggering to learn (Sydney "Telegraph," 21/1/57) that in Chicago, James Mangan, self-styled ruler of celestial space, has issued a licence giving the United States permission to launch a man-made satellite (circling round the earth) in the coming international geophysical year. Mangan, it seems, founded "Celestia" on December 21, 1948, and has a deed from the Country Recorder's office to prove it. Previously, Mangan had objected to the satellite project as a violation of his charter to all celestial space. In a letter to Defence Secretary Wilson he said the satellites would be trespassing!

What is not clear at present to anxious prospective space-travellers is whether Mr. Mangan's claim extends beyond the Andromeda nebula.

Surely nothing could show more clearly the arrogant absurdity of claims of absolute ownership to parts of the material Universe, whether throughout the solar system and beyond, or to a few square chains in the heart of a metropolis.

MELBOURNE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY

From the "Age" we learn that because of lack of finance, the Railways Department has shelved the project until after 1960. It will cost millions of pounds, and planning alone would cost about £500,000, and will take about two years.

Sir Arthur Warner has suggested that Melbourne's business community should provide some finance for the scheme. "It would reap a substantial benefit in terms of business and property values from such a railway," he said. The work could be expedited if some other means than loan funds could be found, such as rating city property.

It was extremely unlikely that an underground railway could be made to pay at the present price of

working-men's tickets and second class fares, but the great need for transport over-rides that consideration.

It is refreshing to find a responsible Minister approaching the question of spending millions on a public utility in a way other than by the well-established method of raising the cost by a loan and in the way he suggests. It is clear that the benefits will be obtained largely by city land owners, and, in common logic and justice, they should pay for them.

Later it was indicated that a betterment rate might be struck on city properties to finance the underground railway proposal, and that this could be collected by the Board of Works, in the same way as its present Metropolitan Improvements Rate.

If the "betterment" rate is levied on the unimproved values which will benefit by the planning project, this means of finance is sound. But if levied on net annual values it would be unjust, for it would fall mainly on those who develop their holdings and in proportion to their own improvements, while underdeveloped properties would escape with nominal payments.

FREE TRADE PLAN WILL AFFECT US

Britain's decision to enter a European free-trade scheme will have far-reaching consequences for Australia.

The plan is for Britain and six European countries—Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg—to remove tariff barriers so they can sell to each other more readily.

Free trade would be brought about through a series of tariff cuts over 10 to 15 years.

"Britain's decision to enter a European free-trade strongly supports the plan, and the British Cabinet has now decided to speed up negotiations.

The next step is for Britain and the six European nations to work out a convention.

Although Britain has pledged herself not to touch Imperial preferences or the agricultural exports of the Commonwealth countries, there is a big element of the unknown ahead in Britain's momentous decision.

Australian trade to and from Britain and Europe could become very much involved.

The free-trade area is a compromise idea put forward by Britain and other countries in answer to the challenge of a common-market scheme.

This common-market plan aims not only at a Customs union of the six European countries, but also economic integration and central institutions such as a European Commission, a Court of Justice and a common Assembly.—"Herald," 6/2/57.

OUR COMMENT:

We are glad to see this move in the right direction, although far short of our objective of world free trade.

It is more than 10 years since the war, and practical application of the Atlantic Charter, so far as freedom of trade is concerned, has been less than nil.

Australia's import restriction and licensing policy has been a major contribution towards gumming up world trade.

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Henry George League was held on Tuesday, 19th February. The report for 1956 was read by Mr. R. J. Crowe, who had acted as Hon. Secretary during the year, but was unable to continue.

The meeting decided to seek the co-operation of members and friends to enable us to supplement the present office assistance by appointing a full-time field officer to organize and press campaigns to publicize our principles on a scale not otherwise possible.

It was decided to invite promises to contribute the equivalent of 5/- per week towards this purpose. It would need only 100 willing to help to this extent to enable it to be undertaken.

The annual election of officers resulted in appointment of the following members: Messrs. H. Bell, L. F. Bawden, G. Brooks, E. F. Halkyard, A. R. Hutchinson, J. H. Morris, D. Morse, W. H. Pitt, W. Tindall, Mrs. E. Serpel, L. W. Brown, N. A. Wigmore.

HENRY GEORGE FORUM

It has been decided to commence a "forum" session to discuss public issues, with discussion leaders, followed by discussion from the audience. The session is experimental at present, but if it is found to meet a public need will be continued. First such meeting will be Friday, 8th March, at 8 p.m., the subject being "Should the Federal Government Give Assistance to the Australian Aborigines." The next session is expected to discuss the Melbourne Tube Railway proposals. Members and friends are invited to attend and ensure that they present our constructive viewpoint.

ANNUAL PICNIC AT SEAFORD

Members, families and friends who enjoyed the picnic at Seaford last year are invited to come again on Labor Day Public Holiday, Monday, 10th March. Others unable to be there last year are invited to come this time. Meet at the jetty any time from 11 a.m. onwards. Bring your own lunches. Have a good day at the seaside.

THE PARSON AND FREE SPEECH

Worshippers today in the tiny Methodist Church at Emu Plains (N.S.W.) plan a memorial to the district's "Farmer Parson."

He was militant, individualist William Hessel Hall, a Methodist minister who turned farmer when expelled from the pulpit in 1895 for advocating Henry George's "Single Tax" plan.

In his free speech battle 51 years ago Hall beat the reactionaries who fought him. Twelve years after kicking him out, the Methodist Conference unanimously reversed its vote, invited him in again. But by then the ex-parson was a land man for life. He refused a parish, and stayed on his property at Lapstone Hill, tilling the ground and specialising in strawberries and bees.

A Master of Arts and scientific-minded, he bred a strain of Italian bees noted for their honey-getting qualities, docile temper, and non-swarming tendencies. More than once he refused the post of Government Bee Expert. Instead, he increased the number of his hives, enlarged his home, made it a beauty spot with trees and flowering plants. At 55 he built a swimming pool, ran a stone wall across a creek in a gully-end, taught himself and children to swim.

Forced by age and illness to retire in 1943, he went then to live with his son Machin Hall, Forbes High School headmaster. Although his church had once expelled him, William Hall never missed a service. He was one of the keenest workers for the local Methodist Church. Every night his family read prayers. He was one of the original members of the Blue Mountain Shire Council, wrote the minutes of its first meeting in his clear, scholarly style. Tall, thickset, bearded Hall died November, 1946, aged 85—a Single-taxer to the end.—Sydney "Daily Telegraph."

CONCERNING TAXES

The United States Department of Agriculture issued a booklet "World Import Duties on United States Dairy Products," by W. Bruce Silcox (March, 1956). The booklet pointed out how import duties were a barrier to trade, and gave detailed statistical information on such duties as they affected American dairy products. It is impossible to summarize the data, although it might be remarked that in some cases the duties were astonishingly high, as if some Governments regarded butter like the bubonic plague, cheese like cholera, and milk products like malaria.

In his researches the author came across the following types of taxes: the customs surtax, revenue tax, turnover tax, production tax, animal protection tax, additional tare tax, transaction tax, package tax, stamp tax, primage tax, stowage tax, wharfage and portage taxes, tonnage tax, public works tax, physical culture tax, gross sales tax, and road tax.

There seems no end to the absurd lengths to which rulers will resort in order to raise revenue. One is reminded of the Old Testament king of Judah, Jehoiakim, who imposed a tax "according to the value" (Moffatt's translation) of every man (II Kings 23 : 35). It would not be surprising to learn of the dictionary being opened at random and the last word on the particular page being taken and used as the basis of a tax.

LAND TENURE IN NEW GUINEA

By E. B. DONOHUE

Summary of a Paper read at the Australian School of Social Science
at Newport (N.S.W.) on 25th January, 1957.

Land titles in New Guinea are not derived from the Crown as in Australia. The administration:

- (a) Purchases or leases from natives by mutual agreement.
- (b) Compulsorily acquires or resumes for public purposes.
- (c) Takes possession by proclamation of ownerless land.

The natives own all except 2 or 3 per cent. of all cultivable land in the Territory. There is considerable variation in indigenous systems of land tenure, which are related to the type of social structure in particular communities. Some, for instance, are patrilineal and some matrilineal. Members of clans, villages and larger groups all possess certain rights to land in common with other members of the same groups. There is no such thing as a landless group completely dependent upon employment, and all have the right to claim support from some area of land.

TITLES are provided for under the New Guinea Land Titles Restoration Ordinance 1951. New registers and records relating to land, mining, etc., have been compiled to replace those lost or destroyed during the last war.

In Papua no estates can be held in fee simple, although that was possible prior to 1906, in consequence of which a very small amount of freehold land exists. In New Guinea, however, the Land Ordinance enables freeholds to be granted, but the Administration's policy has been to grant leases only. There are 519,380 acres of freehold land in New Guinea, owned by private non-indigenous inhabitants, which the Australian Government "honoured" when it took over from the German administration in 1915. The total cultivable land in the Territory is approximately 18 million acres, of which about 2½ million acres have been alienated as follows: 519,380 acres is freehold, 600,000 acres leasehold, and 1,400,000 acres are held by the Administration available for development.

SETTLEMENT. Under the established policy, the community native ownership of the bulk of the land is recognized. No land can be acquired from the natives except by the Government, which, after acquisition, makes it available, under leasehold, to intending settlers. Private individuals are not permitted to have land dealings with the native owners.

To avoid the haphazard acquisition of land and waste of labor in investigating individual applications, the Land Development Board was reconstituted in 1954 to determine a land-use plan or pattern for particular areas, and applications for land are dealt with only in the light of these overall plans of development. Leaseholds can be secured only in the "designed areas."

"designated areas."

Standard "optimum" areas are granted to intending settlers, ranging from 200 acres for coffee and cocoa to 1,000 for cocoanuts and 1,500 for mixed farming.

The Administration has acquired most of its land by purchase from the natives, but consideration is also being given to large-scale leasing from the natives, of land which it may be expected the natives will require in the future. The disadvantage of leasing seen by the Government are:

- (a) That once leasehold tenure was established the natives would be generally unwilling to dispose of their land outright, and acquisition would become almost impossible.
- (b) Leasing might be instrumental in building up a race of native landed owners, Europeans becoming the workers, as had happened in Samoa.

LEASING. Two separate Land Ordinances govern leasing in Papua and New Guinea. Freehold estates cannot be granted in Papua, but freehold grants are provided for in N.G., but the existing policy of the Administration is to make grants of leasehold only.

LEASES. AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL leases are granted for any period not exceeding 99 years, without limit as to area. The rental is 5 per cent. per annum of the unimproved value of the land, which must be appraised every 10 years for leases up to 30 years and every 20 years for longer leases.

In both Papua and New Guinea no rent is payable for the first 10 years if the term exceeds 20 years and the area does not exceed 1,000 acres.

Town allotment leases are granted for any period not exceeding 99 years. There is no limit to the area in Papua, but in New Guinea the area may not be less than ¼ acre or more than 1 acre. The rental is 5 per cent. on the U.C.V. in Papua and 10 per cent. in New Guinea. The value is appraised every 20 years. Similar conditions are applicable to—Business and residence leases, and rent-free leases are granted to Christian Missions.

All leases in both Territories are subject to a reservation to the Crown of all mines, minerals, coal, shale and mineral oils and of rights of access for the purpose of searching.

The policy of the administration (as stated by the Minister for Territories, Mr. P. Hasluck, in October, 1954) is to respect the native ownership of land and to ensure that enough land is reserved to the natives to meet their present and prospective needs. Land can be acquired by the Administration only when the natives are willing to sell, and the Administration is satisfied that their present and prospective needs for land are safeguarded.

It is clear that the existing system of granting tenure in land in the Territories does not succeed in securing to each individual his full rights in the soil, which, of course, is the chief aim of this movement. However, I feel that the Government deserves our congratulations for its sincerity, so clearly manifested in its efforts to establish equitable relations in the land between the original inhabitants of the Territory and those who seek to settle there.

Possibly this School should endeavor to put before the Government the desirability of modifying existing policy in regard to some features of the present system, e.g., large-scale leasing by the Administration from the natives, having in mind the fears expressed by the Government that this may be instrumental in building up a race of native landed-property-owners.

Perhaps it is not too much to hope that we may succeed in influencing the Government to recognize the principle that to derive its revenues from treating all land as perpetual leaseholds is the natural course of any society, and justice dictates that we must not permit it to be appropriated by individuals or groups of individuals, native or otherwise.

SCHOOLS BOOST LAND VALUES

That schools are developmental works that tend to boost land values is evident from the text below of a circular letter sent by a Malvern estate agent to home-owners in the vicinity soliciting their properties for sale:

"Owing to the limited number of properties for sale around Malvern Grammar, Sacre Coeur, and Korowa schools, there is an increasing demand in Ashburton within walking distance of the High Street bus."

IN OUR CONTEMPORARY JOURNALS

"Land and Liberty" (Feb., 1957):

An article on the opportunity open in Ghana—the Gold Coast—which will attain political independence with the Commonwealth on March 6. Here land generally is held in trust for the people of the tribal unit.

A splendid article, "An Engineer's Philosophy," by Austin Peake, M.A. Until his retirement in 1945 the author was a university lecturer in engineering at Cambridge University.

An article on the Jamaica Land Valuation Bill which after a three-day debate, passed through the House of Representatives on November 29th last. It is not yet known whether it was accepted. The Bill is a valuation one only, to be followed by a taxation Bill. The proceedings are extensively reported. This reform has been pressed strongly since 1944. It now appears likely to come to fruition.

"Standard" (February, 1957):

Editorial on Our Place in the World, by Charles Ravasz. A very interesting article on "Leo Tolstoy and Henry George" by Victor Lebrun, being a translation from *Terre et Liberte*. Its revelation of the contacts between the two philosophers will be surprising to English speaking readers.

CAUSE OF INFLATION

The current political trick is to blame the wage earner for currency inflation. The falsity of this is shown in the history of previous periods of increasing wage demands. When England became prosperous during her free-trade period last century, wages rose substantially while price levels fell to such extent that England could undersell the world. In Australia the start of this century saw gradually increasing wages yet prices stayed unchanged until the 1914 war!

Wage earners know that if prices rise their wages must also rise unless living standards are to be cut. They know, too, that inflation — too much money chasing too few goods — is not their fault.

The truth is that Government policies are responsible.

Canberra has failed to treat the publicly created site-rents as the public revenue that they are! As a result goods and earnings have been taxed, prices have been raised and production has been deterred. But Governments do even worse! Needing more money but fearing to tax more heavily, they further plunder producers by printing additional paper money. Since 1939, our currency has been inflated from £47 million to £372 million. Per head of population, the increase has been from £5/16/- to £37/8/-, yet obviously the quantity of goods in circulation is not now seven times that of 1939!

Make no mistake about inflation! Wage earners did not print the additional currency. And it is also untrue to assert that they fail to produce the goods. For time spent on actual production, Australian work is quite equal to that in other advanced countries. But lots of good Australian time is wasted over taxes. For alleged failure in production you can properly blame taxation. Income Tax schedules show plainly that increased production is severely penalized. Pay Roll tax, Sales tax and the myriad other taxes all divert labour into unproductive channels, both in the manufacture office and in the tax departments. The effect is that an army of men is wasted on unproductive work. And then Canberra, fearful at the result, blames wage earners for low production and high costs. Just how big can they make this stupid fiction.

The history of past governments and the words and actions of both present government and opposition, shows that Australians must express their opinions very clearly if any notice is to be taken in Canberra. Pressure can be exerted in a minor degree through the branches and conferences of the dominant political groups. But that process is slow and often obstructed. Your most effective action is to join the Henry George Justice Party. Join us in opposing economic malpractice and Canberra will soon take notice.

Our party is making it obvious that community revenue now got by taxes on goods and earnings, could be got by non-inflationary charges on the sites on which the community operates. Put into effect, our policy would encourage production without reducing wages.

Government Revenue would go further and the basic causes of inflation would thus be removed.

(Broadcast) W.H.P.

SITE VALUE RATING

VICTORIA

Demands Lodged for Rating Polls.

Demands for polls to be taken with view to change to site-value rating had been lodged with three councils by the end of January. The municipalities concerned were Shire of Traralgon, Borough of Moe, and City of Northcote. The position for these and other places seeking this change is set out below.

Traralgon Shire

An agricultural township and pastoral district of 199 square miles in the Latrobe Valley 98 miles from Melbourne. This shire borders Morwell, where an unsuccessful poll was taken last year. The demand for the change in Traralgon stemmed from the public discussion aroused in Morwell.

A Traralgon site-value rating league was formed from a public meeting called by the General Council for Rating Reform. The petition was presented with 460 signatures, 300 being the minimum needed.

The shire has already advertised for and appointed valuers to take a general revaluation for the poll.

Moe Borough

Moe and Newborough also border Morwell on the Melbourne side, and distant 80 miles from it. This borough was carved out of Narracan Shire two years ago. The demand here was initiated by Labor Party members, and was stimulated by the Morwell campaign. This was a whirlwind drive commenced within a week of the closing date, and producing over 450 signatures (about three times the minimum needed). Advertisements have already appeared for a valuer.

Northcote City

This city was the only place in Australia to carry a reversion poll after once being on site-value rating. That was in 1950 by a majority of 128 votes in a total of 13,502. The demand for a further poll was signed by 1,827 persons, the minimum number needed being 1,461. However, the demand was not accepted by the council, as it was claimed the number of valid signatures was 21 short of the required figure. The remainder were reported to be of persons not on the voters' rolls, or duplications. There will therefore be no poll here, and ratepayers will have to recommence their demand for next year.

Keilor Shire

This poll was held over from last year, and it is understood the valuation is proceeding satisfactorily.

Wodonga Shire

This council has engaged a valuer, and it is understood its poll will be taken next August.

Broadmeadows City

This council has struck its first rate under the new system, and budgeted to increase its revenue from the previous year's total of £106,865 to £219,829. It has been strongly criticized for this, it being contended a lower rate in the £ should be struck.

Coupled with their insistence on the maximum figure, the majority of Broadmeadows councillors have sought to blame the rate change for the sharp increase in revenue. They seem to be acting in a spirit of pique against their ratepayers' decision. Cr. Rayner had promised, if re-elected, to press for a substantially lesser rate than the maximum. Yet, following his re-election it was he who moved for the maximum rate.

The council attitude was strongly criticized in the local press by Messrs. A. R. Hutchinson, C. A. Housden and E. E. Hughes, the last two being ex-councillors. Cr. Rayner challenged all three to debate the matter to "silence these attacks for all time." The challenge was accepted by the first two, and debated before about 300 ratepayers in Glenroy.

Cr. Rayner gave no explanation for betrayal of his election promises, and the only justification put forward for the high step-up in revenue was that they thought the ratepayers could afford to pay more, since their average payment per head was less than in some other places.

Some publicity has been given in the press to a case cited by Cr. Rayner of a farmer whose rates under site-value basis have increased from £57 last year to £1,500. The facts behind this are worth discussing.

The property is that of a wholesale butcher, and is in Anderson Street, Fawkner. Total area is 168 acres, of which 21 are in the "green belt," valued at £1,470. The other 147 acres are zoned as residential land, with total site-value of £58,000. This works out at about £400 per acre, compared with £1,000 per acre actually realised by this owner on part of the property sold recently. He is holding out for a higher price on the balance.

This property is obviously not a genuine farm, but a speculative holding, already in process of realisation, on the fringe of development. It is quite anomalous that as recently as last year he was paying as little as £57 in rates (equal to payments of only three normal homes).

Heidelberg City

Much publicity has been given to protest meetings held in Heidelberg against steep increases in rates generally. As opponents of site-value rating elsewhere have cited this case, it is well to review the facts.

Revaluations in four of the six wards produced an average of about 65 per cent. increase in valuations. Instead of reducing the rate in the £1 correspondingly council decided to apply the old rate in the new valuations, and thus increase their total rate-revenue to £502,000 compared with £385,000 the previous year. This in turn meant a substantial increase all round in rates payable.

Protest meetings were organized in various centres. That at the Town Hall was attended by over 1,300 ratepayers. The spokesmen stated that the protest was centred on the principle of whether 18 councillors were

masters of 60,000 ratepayers or the ratepayers were masters of the council they elected.

The meeting demanded that the council revise its estimate to produce a surplus of not less than £110,000 which can be applied towards expenditure next year. It proposed that the rate already struck be payable in two instalments, the first amounting to 7d. in the pound, payable immediately, and balance of 2d. be payable on same date as fixed for next year's rate. The next year's rate thus would be struck at 5d., giving an average of 7d. in the pound over the two years., and compares with 9d. as now struck. The reduced rate would still give the council an increase of £45,000 over last year.

The council announced as result of these meetings it was convinced ratepayers did not want the expanded programme it had budgeted for, and agreed in principle to the demands made.

The rating system did not come into these discussions. It was well recognized that if the rates were onerous under the site-value basis, as three-quarters of the homes pay more under the annual-value system, they would be even more onerous to home-owners under that system.

The Heidelberg case will make other councils very wary about making substantial increases in their rates in one year following revaluation. It will therefore have served a useful purpose in showing there is a limit to what ratepayers will take.

Other Protest Meetings

Other protest meetings in somewhat similar circumstances have been held in Camberwell, Moorabbin, Ringwood, Lilydale, Keilor, Whittlesea, Ferntree Gully. It is expected that moves for site-value rating will emerge in Lilydale and Ferntree Gully.

WEST AUSTRALIA

From "West Australian," 28/11/57, we note a special article on the local government rating bill, which provides for site-value rating to be made mandatory instead of optional.

The general tone of this article is highly critical of the proposal, although it purports to give pros and cons. However, the following extract is worth citing:

"How will a change from the annual to the unimproved value system affect the City of Perth? In 1955-56 rating on annual values at 2/- in the £1 produced about £470,000, including nearly £21,000 from Floreat Park, which is rated on the unimproved land value under the City of Perth Endowment Lands Act.

The unimproved land value of rateable land in the City of Perth has been estimated at £50,000,000. This would demand a rate of about 2 d. in the £1 to produce the same revenue as that obtained in 1955-56 from annual value rating.

As the central ward of the city (the main business section) contains about half the total unimproved value of the municipality, under an unimproved value rating system it would pay half the total city rates, compared with 30 per cent. now.

The predominantly residential areas of the north, North Perth, Leederville and Victoria Park wards, would benefit in lower rates because of the higher proportion of the total rates paid by the city proper."

Since then we have heard that the Bill passed in the Lower House and went to the Legislative Council. We have not heard of its reception there.

TASMANIA

Tasmania is the only State without any councils using site-value rating. Attempts have been made in Launceston and Devonport to make this change. The former carried two polls of ratepayers, but these were not binding on the council.

It now appears that Clarence Municipality, adjoining Hobart, will be the first to make the change. The "Municipal Journal" records that Clarence Municipality has decided to change to the site-value rating basis, which it considers more equitable.

This municipality commissioned the Land Values Research Group to make an analysis and report showing how change to site-value rating would affect it. This has now been presented, and we hope to give further details in a later issue.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

ENCOUNTER BAY DISTRICT RATING POLL.

(By E. J. Craigie)

On July 7th, 1956, a rating poll was taken in the district council area of Encounter Bay. The voting was—For land values, 397; against, 288; informal, 11. Although this substantial majority was cast in favor of land values rating the poll was not effective. The South Australian Local Government Act provides that a three-fifths majority must be obtained to make the poll effective. Although the local residents polled this required statutory majority required to win the poll, 136 of the votes polled against land values were cast by absentee landholders, and these caused the total votes to be 14 short of the required three-fifths votes necessary for success.

Local residents, who had improved their land-holdings, expressed themselves strongly against a voting system which enabled absentees to over-rule their decision. A request was made to the Minister for Local Government to amend the Act so that a simple majority might decide the question, but the request was refused.

However, the Council decided to make another attempt to free improvements from rating and to collect rate revenue solely from the unimproved value of land. The poll was taken on February 2nd, 1957, and the voting was as follows:—Votes polled at local polling booths: For land values rating 329, against 192, informal 7. Absentee postal votes: For land values 20, against 141. Total: For land values, 349, against 333.

It will thus be seen that for the second time a statutory three-fifths majority has been polled by local ratepayers—the people who have improved their land holdings—but their wish to change the rating system has been over-ruled by the votes of the absentee land speculators. In seven of the eight polling booths a majority was cast for land values rating, and in the other the majority against land values was only three.

These absentees are not developing their land holdings, but are holding for a rise in value, yet they have been able to defeat the will of the local holders who have used labor and capital in improving their

land, thus assisting in the development and prosperity of the district.

This unfair position is made possible by the refusal of an alleged Liberal Government, led by Sir Thomas Playford, to amend the Act by placing the voting system on a just democratic basis. It is of interest to know that on August 22nd, 1956, the Premier, the Hon. Thomas Playford, speaking in the House on a motion dealing with "Local Government Administration," moved by the Leader of the Opposition, said: "Surely local government means that people in a particular area can express themselves on local government affairs in their own way." (Hansard No. 5, page 363.) Yet, when asked to grant ratepayers that right to "express themselves on local government affairs in their own way," on the important rating question, he deliberately refuses to give effect to the democratic principle he professes to believe in. He supports the continuance of an injustice in the Local Government Act which, in one section gives ratepayers the right to take a poll to determine the method of levying local rate revenue, and then in a subsequent section makes it extremely difficult for the will of the ratepayers to prevail.

Unfortunately, many party political leaders speak with their tongues in their cheeks in regard to democratic principles, and then legislate against the adoption of the principles they profess to believe in. When we note this Dr. Jeykel and Mr. Hyde attitude we think of Robert Browning's poem on "The Lost Leader." Dealing with such leaders Browning wrote:

"Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a ribbon to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others she lets us devote.

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod—
One more triumph for devils, and sorrow for angels.
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!

STIRLING CONSIDERS RATING CHANGE

From "Mount Barker Courier" (23/1/57) we learn that Stirling District Council was to consider change to site-value rating at its next meeting.

The proposal was brought forward by Cr. Trego Williams, who urged this change, suggesting that State Land Tax valuations be used instead of incurring cost of a special valuation.

He gave a very good presentation of the arguments for site-value rating, and was extensively reported.

We have since heard that the council was solidly and most unreasonably opposed to the proposals to change.

This is unfortunate, but the matter has now been brought into the field of discussion, and should be pressed. Cr. Trego Williams has done a public service in raising the matter in council, and we hope he will press it further with the ratepayers' support.

Brave New World: If I were now to rewrite the book, I would offer a third alternative . . . the possibility of sanity . . . Economics would be decentralist and Henry Georgian. — Aldous Huxley.

N.S.W. SUMMER SCHOOL

The 18th Annual Summer School and Conference of the Australian School of Social Science was held at Newport, N.S.W., from 25th to 28th January. There was a good average attendance, and the subjects dealt with were "Land Tenure in New Guinea," by E. B. Donohue; "Trade Balances and Import Restrictions," by H. Kolsen, B.Ec., of the Sydney University of Technology; "The State Land Tax," by C. K. Ravasz (Editor of "The Standard"); "Planned Depressions," by Dr. H. G. Pearce; "Proportional Voting—Pros and Cons," by Fulbright Scholar Geo. Howatt, M.A., and "Reorganizing the School"—a general discussion.

We do not remember attending any Summer School with so many subjects of such importance, all of which were so ably dealt with. Mr. Donohue's paper on "Land Tenure in New Guinea" is summarized in this issue.

RESULTS OF POLLS TAKEN IN VICTORIAN MUNICIPALITIES RATING SITE-VALUES

Below are the collected results of polls of ratepayers taken for the councils now rating site-values. Where more than one poll has been taken the results for the latest are shown. In the cases marked * no polls have been taken, change to site-value rating being effected by council resolution not challenged to a poll. The evidence of ratepayer-satisfaction with site-value rating as shown in these results was an important factor in the recent decision of the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission to change its rating to the site-value basis.

Municipality	Date U.C.V. First Adopted	Date of Latest Poll	Votes For U.C.V.	Votes For N.A.V.	Majority in favor of U.C.V.
Caulfield City	1920	None	*	*	*
Coburg Town (Now City)	1920	None	*	*	*
Essendon City	1920	None	*	*	*
Rosedale Shire	1920	Aug. 1953	1,281	244	1,037
Oakleigh Borough (Now City)	1921	Aug. 1945	1,761	587	1,174
Newton & Chilwell (Now City)	1920	None	*	*	*
Portland Bgh. (Now Town)	1920	Aug. 1920	197	76	121
Yea Shire	1921	Aug. 1921	318	220	98
Dandenong Shire	1920	Aug. 1924	1,808	809	999
Camberwell City	1922	Aug. 1922	3,399	2,690	709
Brunswick City	1922	Aug. 1932	4,120	1,794	2,326
Carrum Bgh. (Now Chelsea)	1923	None	*	*	*
Mordialloc Town (Now City)	1925	Aug. 1925	809	509	300
Sandringham City	1926	Aug. 1931	3,069	1,737	1,322
Hamilton Town (Now City)	1944	Aug. 1944	813	627	186
Box Hill City	1946	Aug. 1946	3,378	2,708	670
Moorabbin City	1946	Aug. 1946	3,384	2,159	1,224
Preston City	1946	Aug. 1946	7,262	3,527	3,735
Kew City	1947	Aug. 1951	6,027	5,348	679
Frankston and Hastings Shire	1950	Aug. 1953	3,112	2,335	777
Echuca Borough	1948	None	*	*	*
Ringwood Borough	1951	Aug. 1951	1,905	1,396	509
Heidelberg City	1951	Aug. 1951	14,211	7,382	6,829
Nunawading City	1952	Aug. 1952	5,801	4,033	1,768
South Barwon Shire	1953	Aug. 1953	3,023	2,284	739
Warrnambool City	1954	None	*	*	*
Sale City	1954	Aug. 1954	1,932	736	1,196
Eltham Shire	1954	Aug. 1954	3,148	3,138	280
Springvale & Noble Park Sh.	1955	None—partition from Dandenong			
Castlemaine Town	1955	Aug. 1955	1,860	1,175	685
Malvern City	1955	Aug. 1955	11,758	6,339	5,419
Broadmeadows City	1956	Aug. 1956	5,575	1,743	3,832
Mildura City	1956	Aug. 1956	4,619	1,276	3,343
Mulgrave Shire	1956	Aug. 1956	10,735	2,302	8,433
Wangaratta Borough	1956	Aug. 1956	2,115	510	1,605

*Adopted by Council resolution without a poll

SUMMARY OF PRESS PUBLICITY

Below is a summary of press reports and letters on site-value rating which have come to our attention since our last report. Figures in brackets are column-inches of space occupied.

(A) REPORTS AND EDITORIALS:

"Progress Press"

30/5 (8) Camberwell city council meeting.

29/8/ (14) Results of Mulgrave S.V.R. poll.

"Broadmeadows and Keilor Gazette"

7/6 (6) Rate protest meeting.

"Kyneton Guardian"

7/6 (3) Woodend Council on S.V.R.

"Woodend Star"

1/6 (100) Woodend public meeting S.V.R.

"Gippsland Times"

8/6 (9) Sale Irrigators Avon meeting S.V.R.

"Morwell Advertiser"

5/7 (2) Re Morwell rating poll.

23/7 (10) Effects of S.V.R. discussed.

26/7 (30) Assessment data for Morwell.

23/8 (8) Voting information for poll.

23/8 (32) A.P.M. supports S.V.R.

23/8 (15) L.V.R.G. analysis, Morwell.

27/8 (23) Results Morwell rating poll.

"Gippsland Mail"

31/7 (32) Valuers' report on Morwell.

28/8 (16) Results Morwell poll.

"Ararat Advertiser."

23/6 (12) Rate system comparisons.

28/8 (6) Council candidates' views S.V.R.

20/9 (6) Council defers change S.V.R.

"Herald"

25/7 (16) Article valuations need control.

5/12 (5) Sutex driven from Tasmania by rates.

"Wangaratta Chronicle"

23/7 (10) U.C.V. notices go out.

24/8 (15) Results S.V.R. poll.

24/10 (22) Water and Sewerage Trust adopt S.V.R.

17/10 (6) Water Trust to discuss S.V.R.

22/8 (24) Neil Stewart, facts on S.V.R.

"Aust. Municipal Journal"

Sept. 56 (3) Results of rating polls.

"Sunraysia Daily"

22/8 (12) Town clerk on S.V.R. for sewerage.

18/8 (8) S.V.R. meeting of Mr. B. S. Nicholls.

22/8 (14) Editorial on effects new system.

8/8 (4) Editorial, rate change likely.

"Benalla Standard"

27/8 (2) Results Wangaratta poll.

1/11 (10) Tungamah Council discusses S.V.R.

"Traralgon Journal and Record"

12/11 (10) South Side P.A. discusses S.V.R.

15/11 (9) Public meeting to seek poll.

22/11 (18) Report of public meeting.

"Broadmeadows Observer"

12/12 (45) Broadmeadows Council discusses rates.

Total column-inches in press reports above (549).

Notes From Various Sources

Planned Economy.—Mr. R. Menzies promoted the Marketing of Primary Products Act in Victoria for he is a "practical" socialist. Here's how:

A Mallee farmer sent 15 doz. eggs to the Egg Board receiving floor at Mildura. (Argus, 16/3/56). He received a statement of account from the Board advising receipt and credit for value, with notice of the sorting charge, the freight, the Board levy, this and that, which showed there was a balance of sixpence which he owed the Egg Board.

The Land Question means hunger, thirst, nakedness, notice to quit, labour spent in vain, the toil of years seized upon; the breaking up of homes; the miseries, sicknesses, deaths of parents, children, wives; the despair and wildness which spring up in the hearts of the poor, when legal force, like a sharp-toothed harrow, goes over the most sensitive and vital rights of mankind. All this is contained in the Land Question.

—Cardinal Manning.

[Ed. Note.—And more if language could describe it. Wouldn't you like to do something to eradicate such a terrible sin that brings so much despair and agony to so many humans?—E.W.C.]

* * *

"That did it," exploded Pa. "You kids will have to find work somewhere else. The farm's gone. All we got left in this world is the house, the barn, the orange grove, and a million in the bank." —Henry George Herald, Jan., 1956.

Radio Broadcast Session

Conducted weekly by speakers of the Henry George "Justice" Party from

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Evening broadcasts have now commenced from

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Wednesdays, 27th March, 17th April, 1st May, at 10.05 p.m.

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Better than Sterling.—The British Government still regards the gold sovereign as possessing the full force of legal tender. It is estimated that at least 100 million, probably over 300 million are at present in circulation all over the world.—Manchester Guardian, 13/9/55.

[Ed. Note.—Without recalling every gold coin it is not possible to "go off gold." What Prof. J. M. Keynes and other planners did was to arrange for Government to alter the ratio between printed paper notes and metallic coins and so inflate the currency.]

Pax Romana.—The might of the Roman Empire has made the world the possession of all; who deny that human life has profited by the exchange, commerce and partnership in the blessings of peace.—Pliny the Elder, N.H., 14/2.

"Shareholders' Funds."—Generally-accepted accounting principles have led to untruthful statements of business profits — with possible dire consequences to the economy. When truth is elusive, how can the executive be sure his decisions are based on bed rock and not on shifting sands?

[Ed. Note.—Arthur Andersen & Co., Chicago firm of certified public accountants sent a partner to discuss this problem with the Henry George School of Social Science, 4th Oct., 1956.]

Planned Economy.—Tie-up between hospitals and lotteries enables many people to convince themselves that they are buying the Tatt's ticket for sweet charity's sake.—Bulletin, 21/9/55.

[Ed. Note.—Land holders prefer to enhance the Tattersall tax so that they are not required to pay more State Land Tax for support of hospitals. Hospital Sunday collections have the same effect.]

**MEMBERS' EVENING at LEAGUE ROOMS,
TUESDAY, 19th MARCH.**

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE

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Next Executive Meeting, Tuesday, March 5, at 6.45 p.m.

Members' Evening, Tuesday, 19th March, 8 p.m.

Henry George "Forum," Friday, 8th March, 8 p.m.

HENRY GEORGE JUSTICE PARTY.

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