

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

P.R. IN TASMANIA

Following the last State election Mr. Townley (leader of the Opposition) stated that he hoped that that would be the last election under the Hare-Clark system of P.R. Mr. Cosgrove (the Premier of Tasmania) was also reported as in favor of single member districts. It, therefore, appeared that a concerted move was to be made to abandon P.R.

It was soon evident that this suggestion would be strongly opposed by members of both parties. Mr. J. G. Breheny, M.H.A., Liberal, indicated his views very forthrightly as reported in the "Advocate," 26/2/55, as follows:

"Under no circumstances will I support the proposal to abandon the fairest and most democratic electoral system in the world, to revert to the injustice, malpractice and anomalies inseparable from the single electorate system, with which electors have been so painfully familiar in the Labor States of N.S. Wales and Queensland for over a quarter of a century . . . Single electorates would be a boon to the indolent, the professional handshaker, the baby-kisser, and the parish pump politician whose vision would be restricted to the boundaries of his pocket borough."

It was soon evident also that any such proposal would find strong opposition among Labor Party members. The Minister for Lands and Works (Mr. Reece) at the declaration of the poll for Darwin said that multiple electorates still had a part in the life of Tasmania and the matter should be seriously considered before any change was contemplated.

Later developments suggest that the Premier was misrepresented in regard to favoring single member districts or opposition to P.R. At all events the upshot was that when the matter was considered at the Tasmanian A.L.P. conference at Burnie on 24th March, the suggestion to abandon the Hare-Clark system was rejected by a very substantial majority.

Several other decisions in the right direction were also taken by that conference. One was a liberalising of the choice of candidates for Senate elections. It was decided that at ordinary Senate polls five candidates could be endorsed instead of three, and in the

event of a double dissolution eight candidates instead of six.

Conference also deleted the previous rule that candidates names be placed on the ballot paper in the order in which they were endorsed. It was also agreed that in future all Senate candidates could solicit for No. 1 votes at elections. This means that Labor voters will have full freedom of choice of a number of representatives of their party and will not have to vote a ticket "blind."

This freedom of choice is logical because under P.R. the increased range of candidates will not affect the party prospects.

A further proposal for increasing the number of members per district from six up to seven was defeated narrowly. This is a pity because it would have removed the only ground of criticism of the present system, i.e. that it did not give a majority to one party or the other.

We noticed several good letters in the Tasmanian press on this subject from Messrs. L. J. Hutchinson, G. Forster, A. G. Huie, and Royden Powell.

TARIFF EFFECT ON INDUSTRY

The Chamber of Commerce conference on 30/4/55, at Hobart, urged that the Federal Government conduct an independent investigation of the effects of tariffs and other devices designed to protect Australian industries.

Mr. K. F. Coles (Sydney) said that tariff protection, when given too readily led to complacency regarding costs and resulted in a serious decline of exports. The belief that tariffs should be used to promote full employment at any price was unsound.

FREER TRADING PLEA RENEWED

President Eisenhower said yesterday that the United States would lose the ideological contest against Communism "unless we make it possible through enlightened methods for the free world to trade more freely."

He took the opportunity of a talk to the Advertising Council, a group of private businessmen who

handle advertising campaigns for government projects, to renew his plea for his administration's programme to lower tariffs.

The House of Representatives has approved a bill which would extend the Reciprocal Trade Act for three years and grant the President authority to cut tariffs up to 15 per cent. over that period.

The bill in encountering some strong opposition in the Senate.

Mr. Eisenhower said yesterday that the peoples of Asia had to have a sound material basis of physical welfare if they were to appreciate the spiritual values of democracy. A liberalised trade pattern would be a means to this end, he said.

If the doctrine of freer trade was adhered to, there would be "no more chance for Communism in this world than for one of us to take off and fly to the moon without the aid of science."

A liberalised trade plan was not just a means of opening markets to other people, but had its genesis in enlightenment and United States interests. If the United States were to prosper, other countries must have the means to buy United States products.

The United States could not achieve its world economic or political aims without some acute pain being felt by one locality or by one group.

Of course there would be pain, Mr. Eisenhower said, just as pain was necessary in an operation for the restoration of a broken leg. The United States was not going to get the things it wanted without paying a price.

—"Advocate" (T.), 24/3/55.

MORE IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

The Government has again imposed cuts in import quotas and imposed quotas on goods previously freed from quotas. This is again claimed to be due to a heavy drain on our overseas credits due to heavy imports.

Our economic advisers now profess to be deeply worried because our overseas credits now stand at some £300 million whereas in 1950-51 they stood at £1,064 million.

The wonder is that commercial interests are so ready to fall in behind and accept these cuts as "necessary evils." It all adds up that these business men do not understand the basis of their own livelihood. They have surrendered their own judgment to economic advisers who are as much in the dark as themselves.

These gentlemen have got themselves into a maze because they have forgotten that trade is exchange of goods between individuals in one country with other goods owned by other individuals in another.

Our overseas credits simply record the value of the goods which our citizens who have exported can draw in payment for their products. Those credits are useless to anyone until they are drawn upon and brought into the country. To draw upon the credits they must come into the country in the form of imports. In essence, we export in order to be able to import — not just to build up a book entry of credits in overseas clearing houses.

We don't have to have a large credit balance overseas in order to trade. We didn't have one before the war and we don't need it now. Our build up in credits in 1950-51 was fortuitous due to our graziers getting a windfall of an extra £320 million that year over the previous year. Next year they only got the normal figure for their clip. It is significant that the extent of excess of imports over exports in 1951-52 which caused the original panic import cuts was £378 million — just about the amount of that windfall wool clip. Imports would not have continued at that rate in the absence of any cuts.

It is plain crazy for any government to panic as soon as imports exceed exports substantially in any one year or month. That they are self corrective will be plain from the following record of total overseas trade for Australia extracted from Commonwealth Year Book No. 40, 1954. We trace it in five-yearly periods:

Total Overseas Trade: Australia

Period	Value in £'000		Excess of Exports (+) or Imports (—)
	Imports	Exports	
1921/22 to 25/26	124,404	134,545	+ 10,141
1926/27 to 30/31	119,337	131,382	+ 12,045
1931/32 to 35/36	73,798	120,958	+ 47,160
1936/37 to 40/41	123,553	157,610	+ 34,057
1941/42 to 45/46	211,514	163,955	— 47,559
1946/47 to 50/51	2,246,365	2,856,149	+ 610,784
1951/52	1,053,423	675,008	— 378,415
1952/53	514,109	871,272	+ 357,163

Over a period of a few years exports will be a little more than imports because part of those exports are used in payment for transport which is done in overseas vessels and in returns on investments of overseas capital in Australia. The larger scale of the figures in recent years reflects depreciation of currency rather than increased volume of goods.

The import cuts do not effect any beneficial result. They establish a vicious circle that will attack ourselves. By cutting down imports through these quotas they also restrict our exports. For instance substantial unemployment has now arisen in Lancashire to which these cuts are contributory. That curtails purchasing power of those unemployed and means less demand (and hence less price) for our wool, wheat, and butter. Hence less exports or lower return for same. There will be less real wealth to distribute in both countries and hence lowered living standards.

The stupidity of the attitude that looks to a permanent excess of exports over imports as good and panics as soon as it reverses for a year should be evident in regard to investment in plant machinery, etc. Many overseas firms have established branches here and there is constant effort to attract such firms. But this capital they introduce comes in the form of machines and plant. The only way it can come into the country is in the form of imports. Hence in seeking to attract such firms we seek further imports which will in turn cause the government to panic and impose import controls. It is high time men of commerce spent a little time on getting at fundamental principles of their business and not just taking whatever is put over them by the government.

UNHAPPY STATE OF FRANCE

There are deep seated differences on all aspects of domestic and foreign affairs as in other lands. Yet the once-great France is a sick and dithering country. With present constitution members of the National Assembly can eject a Government without even considering what is the alternative Government. That is just left to an over-worked President. This irresponsible attitude arises because deputies do not have to face the risk of an election back in their own districts.

One basic reform of the French constitution which would promote stable government is the granting to a defeated Premier of the right to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country, so that citizens judge his policy. This means also that citizens would judge the actions of each deputy, removing the irresponsible members from their seats in the Assembly.

The second basic requirement is a sound system of counting the votes. The constitution refers to proportional representation, but, except for some districts in Paris suburbs, P.R. is never practised. And as to method, the French only know the bastard "scrutin de liste." The Hare-Clark method of counting votes is the genuine system for proportional representation.

The severity of the latest crisis has jolted thoughtful Frenchmen and spokesmen recognise that shuffling has been carried on too long. We trust that French leaders will now rectify the wrong election methods in the French "way of life."

DEVONPORT MUNICIPALITY (TAS.)

Site-value rating discussions continue to occupy public attention in Devonport. Following the visit of the Research Director, Land Values Research Group, to address a public meeting at the request of the Chamber of Commerce the council of that body decided to take a poll of its members as to whether they should take up and press the campaign for site-value rating or drop the matter.

Its council decided to ask the Junior Chamber of Commerce to prepare a case for site-value rating for distribution with the questionnaire, the result of which would guide the council as to its future actions.

Following this there was a deputation to the Chamber of Commerce from interests opposed to site-value rating, the deputation comprising Messrs. M. Jarman, A. R. Parkes, J. Leary, P. Williams, and R. A. Yaxley. They pressed for a further public meeting to be convened by the Commerce Chamber to be addressed by Mr. Lillico, M.L.C., against site-value rating on his return from New Zealand.

This is despite the fact that a speaker against site-value rating had been given equal opportunity to speak at the previous meeting addressed by Mr. Hutchinson. The subject is arousing a great deal of press controversy. Opposing writers are mainly anonymous. Good letters have been noted favorable to site-value rating from E. Metcalfe, "Wide Awake," A. Simpson, R. Billett, A. V. R. Aloha, A. Hutchinson, A. G. Huie, A. W. R. Wood.

THE EVERARD LETTERS

And the Lesson they Teach

By E. J. CRAIGIE, Adelaide.

Australian history is gaining recognition. Readers will remember that Sydney was founded by shiploads of convicts guarded by soldiers. The army officers, such as MacArthur, received large, free grants of land and convicts were assigned to work these farms. In his "Letters from Sydney," E. G. Wakefield objected to this system of convictism and proposed his theory of colonisation. Wakefield urged that the new lands should not be given by the Government, but should be sold "at a sufficient price" to pay the expense of bringing out labourers to work for the landholders.

One well-to-do Englishman attracted by the Wakefield plan was Dr. Charles C. Everard. As ship's surgeon, he received a free passage for himself and the sum of £20 to stock the medicine chest. There would be good opportunities for a medical practice in the growing colony. He set out with his family and in a magazine issued by the Electricity Trust of South Australia there appear two letters written by the worthy Dr. Everard to his sister, Mrs. Lucy, and sent back to her in Gloucestershire.

The first letter was written "on board the Africaine," off Deal, on July 2, 1836, and intimated that the ship had cleared out of the London Docks, bound for Australia. It was stated there were "98 souls on board—our accommodation is good, our provisions excellent. I pay the passage for my family, £168, and receive a free passage for myself and £20 for the medicine chest." The family consisted for Mrs. Everard, three sons and one daughter.

Allotment of Adelaide Land

The second letter, written on May 29, 1837, after the arrival of the ship at Holdfast Bay, S.A., deals mainly with conditions in the new colony. It contains one paragraph of special interest to students of Henry George. It states:—

"I have ten acres of the town, five of which were mine by priority of choice, the remainder I bought at a public sale, and the average price was £6 per acre. I would not sell one of my first for less than £200. I do not expect we shall get our country sections for 12 months to come, we have such a paucity of good surveyors."

For the benefit of readers who may not understand the reference to the five acres which came to Dr. Everard "by priority of choice," some information on this will be acceptable. When the development of South Australia was proposed in England, land orders were offered for sale at £81 each. The purchasers of each land order were entitled to 80 acres in the country and one city acre. There were 437 of these orders sold and they were known as preliminary land orders.

On March 23, 1837, a meeting of landholders or their agents was held in Adelaide to decide the order in which the choice of city acres was to be made, hence the "priority of choice" mentioned by Dr. Everard.

After the choice had been made by the holders of the preliminary land orders, the balance of the land was then offered at public auction. It is interesting to record the fact that the 1,042 acres which constitute the City of Adelaide were sold for £3,856/8/-, the highest price received for any acre being £14/14/-, whereas the unimproved land value of the same area in the 1950 assessment for State Land Tax was £19,434,590.

Being in possession of five land-orders, Dr. Everard was entitled to five choices for his city acres. His first selection was the ninth choice on the list, according to the arrangements made at the meeting on March 23, and he selected acre No. 303 at the corner of Victoria Square and Wakefield Street, almost in the centre of the city. This acre is now used exclusively for Government offices and its present value would not be less than £180,000.

Dr. Everard's next choice was the 22nd, and he selected acre No. 17, corner of King William Street and North Terrace. This is now a very valuable site, owned by the Bank of New South Wales, the Shell Company, the Adelaide Club and the firm of D. and J. Fowler. Its unimproved land value for State Land Tax at the assessment in 1950 was £213,188.

The doctor's third selection of a city acre was the 82nd choice, when he took acre No. 71 at the corner of Hindley and Morphett Streets. This is now a very valuable business site and the unimproved value of the acre is approximately £50,000.

The selection of the fourth acre represented the 90th choice, when acre No. 343 was taken, on the south side of Wakefield Street. This is one of the central streets in the city. The fifth acre was the 144th choice, and the selected acre was No. 370, on the north side of Angas Street. These two acres are the only ones now showing in the Land Tax office books as the property of Everard Acres Ltd., and their unimproved land value is given as £49,068.

It will be noted from Dr. Everard's letter that, although he paid only £1 each for these five acres, he stated: "I would not sell one for less than £200." The land was then in the same state as when the doctor purchased it, so, apparently, he had all the qualifications of the modern land speculator, and was prepared to exploit any legitimate user who desired to buy any of it by charging £200 for an acre which had cost him only £1.

Auction of Adelaide Land

An investigation of the original plan of Adelaide and research in the books at the State Land Tax Office reveal the following facts relating to the sale by auction.

The five acres mentioned by Dr. Everard as being purchased "at an average price of £6 per acre" are as follows:—

Acre No. 533, north side of Halifax Street, purchased for £6, valued at 1950 assessment at £3,448.

Acre No. 534, also north side of Halifax Street, purchased for £6, 1950 valuation £3,318.

Acre No. 555, north side Sturt Street, price paid £5/10/-, land valuation £3,782.

Acre No. 556, also north side Sturt Street, price paid £5/15/-, land valuation £2,926. This lower valuation is due to the fact that only a portion of the acre is taxable, being owned by W. H. Burford and Co., the balance of the land being held by the Commonwealth Government and the Catholic Church Endowment Society, therefore being exempt from taxation.

The above four acres are in the residential section of the city of Adelaide.

The fifth town acre was No. 955, situated at Barton Terrace, North Adelaide. The price paid for it was £3/3/-, and the 1950 land tax valuation was £3,500.

It will thus be seen that these five acres sold to Dr. Everard for £26/8/- are now valued at £16,974 for State Land Tax. To this must be added at least another £1,000, being the value of the land owned by the Commonwealth Government and the Catholic Church Endowment Society on Acre No. 556, for which no official valuation is made.

Australian Way of Life

Before summarising the facts relating to the land orders, reference to another paragraph in Dr. Everard's letter will be of interest. In that he says:—

"I am now, with William's assistance, only felling and grubbing up the trees upon one acre preparatory to building our town house. I have lost my labourer. He would not work for me longer, although I had agreed to give him 12/- per week, but he could earn more, he said, and if I did not choose to advance him, he would leave, and accordingly did. In England he did not earn on an average, more than 6/- per week, and did not taste meat from one week's end to another. Here he got meat every day and less than a bottle of rum a day was not enough for him. . . . Therefore, William and I are obliged to work hard, but we enjoy it, as we know it is all for our comfort and prosperity."

It is pathetic to read that Dr. Everard and his son William were "obliged to work hard," even though they "enjoyed it." Most pioneers who are true to name expect to work hard. Development work cannot proceed without hard work.

The fact that the labourer would not remain with the doctor, even though he generously offered to double the 6/- per week wages he was paying him, plus the daily meat and bottle of rum; makes it abundantly clear the statements Georgists have made for many years, "that where land is easy to obtain and workers have a chance of alternative employment, exploitation of labour is impossible." We have stressed this important economic truth for a long period, but Labour leaders apparently are still unaware of it. If they read the letters by Dr. Everard it should prove to them that the freeing of natural resources by the collection of land values for public purposes is a more logical method of providing a just return to all who toil, than the illogical scheme now made manifest by the so-called "marginal increase" which is making for inflation of prices.

So much for so little

To summarise the position, this is what we find. Dr. Everard, as the purchaser of five land orders in

1836 for £405, was granted the choice of five acres in the city of Adelaide and 400 acres in the country. The five city acres, obtained at a cost of £5 had in 1950 an unimproved value of £492,256. We cannot give the value of the 400 acres of country land, as only a long search in the Land Titles Office could reveal where that land was situated. The greater portion of it would be near the city, therefore, very valuable.

The additional five acres in the city purchased by public auction cost Dr. Everard £26/8/, and the latest available valuation of this land shows it to be worth £17,974. In other words, the 10 city acres and 400 country acres were purchased for £431/8/-, and the value of the city acres alone is £510,230.

The official records of city land in the Land Tax office show that Everard Acres Ltd. are still in possession of city acres Nos. 343 and 370. These are assessed at £49,068 unimproved value. Most people would agree that these two blocks give a reasonable profit on the original investment of £431/8/-, without taking into account the profit made on the other 408 acres, details of which could only be discovered by lengthy research in the records of the Land Titles office.

The lesson to be drawn from the Everard letters is that Dr. Everard and the other landholders were in no way responsible for the increment in land values since the foundation of the State. The increased land values arise because of the presence of the community and the provision of necessary public utilities such as roads, railways, water supply, harbours and other social services required by a growing community. Seeing no individual is responsible for an increment in land values, no one has a moral right to take any part of land values for private gain. Justice decrees that land values be taken into the communal treasury to defray the cost of the services provided for the community. When this is done there will be no need to impose direct and indirect taxes upon wealth producers as is done today.

Those citizens who wish to follow this fascinating topic may secure for one shilling from our office the booklet, "Land and Wages" — study of the colonisation schemes associated with the Swan River settlement in Western Australia and the foundation of South Australia.

SITE RATING AND COMMERCE

A notable advance for our work may come through the Junior Chamber of Commerce. That body invited one of our speakers to address their recent conference on the subjects of valuations and rating systems.

As a result their civic affairs section is announced by their Journal as initiating action for full support from the Chamber for Site Value Rating.

This development will be watched with interest, particularly as every application of our reform reacts directly to benefit all sections of commerce.

tations on these two amendments should write, Mr. A. W. R. Wood, Hon. Secretary, General Council for Rating Reform, G.P.O., Box 955 G, Melbourne.

GENERAL COUNCIL FOR RATING REFORM

Report of Meeting

A meeting of delegates of the General Council for Rating Reform was held in the Board Room at Kelvin Hall on Monday, 4th April. Affiliation of several further associations was approved.

A draft was considered of a brochure explaining the aims, methods and organisation of the General Council for Rating Reform and containing a list of affiliated bodies, together with general information on site-value rating to answer points on which many people were not clear.

It was decided that the officers further edit the draft and arrange for it to be printed.

Several matters were raised concerning recent or proposed legislation, requiring action by those supporting Site-Value rating. First was the representation by the disgruntled Eltham councillors to the Municipal Association seeking an amendment of the Local Government Act to permit owners of vacant land valued at less than £5 N.A.V. to vote at polls on proposals to change to Site-Value Rating. They are annoyed that site-value rating was carried by some 200 votes at Eltham. There are approximately 6,400 holdings held by 5,800 ratepayers. But there were only about 2,800 buildings in the shire, so that the difference between this and the 4,367 voters on the roll is the number of vacant lot holders who had votes, i.e., about 1,500. Not satisfied with this very substantial loading against change to site-value these councillors want even more. They don't worry about the interests of the local residents who sought the change — only of the vacant holders; largely absentees.

The Municipal Association Executive has decided to take up this proposal and seek amendment of the Local Government Act. It was decided that the co-operation of municipal councils and local associations be sought to defeat this proposal. It is considered rather that voting should be restricted to local residents or owners of built property if there is to be any change.

A further matter in recent legislation requiring action is the Town Planning Bill just passed making the Board of Works the Planning Authority with power to make and levy a "Metropolitan Improvement Rate," not exceeding twopence in the £ of nett annual value.

This is considered to be a misnomer since the use of nett annual value as the rate basis will be charging citizens according to the improvements which they have themselves made on their sites instead of in proportion to the general increase in value of sites due to the improvements of the planning or other public authorities. It was decided that assistance of councils and progress and other associations be sought to have the basis amended to the site-value for this "Improvement Rate."

Reports were received of the position in the places taking polls on site-value rating next August and also of interest shown in site-value rating in Otway Shire, Rodney Shire, Maffra Shire, and Devonport in Tasmania.

Other bodies not already affiliated with the General Council but willing to co-operate in the represen-

AIR-RAIL-ROAD TRANSPORT

A few weeks ago it was announced that the State Minister for Transport (Mr. Coleman) had refused to issue a permit to operate an air transport service between Echuca and Melbourne. There was no question that those who had already incurred financial outlay on the project had the ability to run such a service safely and efficiently.

The reason given for refusing to issue a permit was frankly declared to be a policy of shielding the public railways from competitions. This policy has already been pursued ruthlessly to destroy competition from road transport and was now to be applied to stifle air competition.

There are several important principles involved that need more discussion than they have yet received.

First, this is a revival in modern times of the opposition met last century against development of modern transport. To protect the horse-coach transport industry legislation provided that any power-driven means of transport was to have a man walking in front carrying a red flag. Had that legislation survived there would have been no railways industry to protect.

If air transport meets a public need for more rapid transport then the public is entitled to that service irrespective of its effect upon other forms of transport.

Next, it is interesting to note that the policy of strangling road and air transport to preserve rail transport from competition is in direct opposition to the principles claimed as policy of the Labor Party of which the Minister is (or was) a member. That Party claims to be opposed to monopolies. Now the only way to prevent monopolies is to promote competition. We maintain that full competition by road, rail, and air services is essential and that departure from it makes a mockery of the principles of opposition to monopolies which his party claims to champion.

While advocating full competition between these three services we must recognise that the State railways are under a real disability from which they should be freed and for which strangling of competitive forms of transport is not the remedy. The Railways are being expected to cover their whole costs by fare and freight charges paid only by those who actually travel or transport goods by rail on the assumption that these are the main ones to benefit from rail services. This basis completely overlooks that the provision and continued running of the railways has increased the value of the lands over the whole State to many times the value they would have if the railways ceased running. The Victorian Railways have capital investment of a little over £100 million but have added at least twice that amount to the State land values. These increased land values are now going into the pockets of private landowners many of whom are not using the railways because their properties are under-developed and speculative holdings. On the other hand the much more restricted number of rail users are being expected to meet the whole rail costs.

The commonsense and equitable solution is to levy a development rate upon these land values created

and maintained by rail services and use this revenue to meet the interest, sinking fund on the capital investment and the maintenance charges on the permanent way and to substantially reduce the charges in freights and fares to actual users. This would put the railways in a proper position to compete with other forms of transport. It would also lessen the costs of primary producers who are developing their holdings, for their savings on transport would be many times greater than their payments under the development rate. On the other hand holders of under-developed holdings would be paying the rate without using the services and would have an incentive to put their holdings to better use or sell them to others able and willing to use them.

There are other developmental public services such as irrigation, power supply, roads which also bring increased value of land and costs of which should be met from the land values they create.

We advocate establishment of a State Development Fund financed by a Development Rate based on the unimproved land value of the State the proceeds to be allotted to these various public works.

Upon this policy the Henry George "Justice" Party will be putting up four candidates at the next State elections. The candidates and electorates are:

L. F. Bawden, for Balwyn; I. A. Robinson, for Burwood; W. H. Pitt, for Hawthorn; and L. J. Hutchinson, for Pascoe Vale.

Please write to us at George Parade, Melbourne, if you are willing to help in any of these electorates.

—From a broadcast in the "Justice" Party session, 3DB-3LK on 10/4/55.

OVERSEAS GEORGIST PUBLICATIONS

RECEIVED

Judging by the increasing flow of publications received here there is a widespread growth of interest in the principles of drawing public revenue from charges upon land values in lieu of other taxes.

Much of this stems from the growth of the Henry George Schools of Social Science in America. We regularly receive the "Henry George News" which is the common medium used by these schools. But in addition we receive periodically less elaborate publications from local centres. Occasionally we republish items of interest from them.

Among these are "The St. Louis Georgist," published by the "Henry George Women's Club," and "The Inquirer," from the San Francisco School.

A new publication in our mailbag recently is a well-prepared 16 page booklet "Sage" published in alternate months by the Society for the Advancement of the George Economy.

Another body from which we receive very interesting material from time to time is the National Decentralist Institute, which appears to be widely organized since 10 offices are listed on its publications each located in different states.

A new organization from which we received very good material recently in a booklet on "Truth About Taxes," is the Public Revenue Education Council, St. Louis.

Other bodies from whom we receive printed matter are the Schalkenbach Foundation and the Henry George Foundation of United States.

Of a different type are a series of pamphlets forwarded by C. Le Baron Goeller, Henry George Tract Society, Endwell, N.Y. We have made use of several of these in our columns on occasions.

From Canada we regularly receive "The Square Deal," published by the Henry George Society, Toronto, monthly. The most comprehensive publication of all is the English journal "Land & Liberty," of 16 pages with good coverage of happenings in various parts of the world.

We also receive the French quarterly journal, "Terre et Liberte."

RATE CHANGE SOUGHT

Cobram Chamber of Commerce Has Sponsored a Move to Change the Rating System in the Shire.

The chamber, which successfully sponsored a petition for the severance of the North Riding of the Shire of Tungamah, to form the Shire of Cobram two years ago, has made a demand on the Shire Council for a poll to decide whether the net annual valuation rating system should be changed to the unimproved value system.

The poll must be conducted by the council by August.

President of the Chamber of Commerce (Mr. K. A. Evans) said the move was necessary because of the rapid development of the district under closer settlement.

It was increasingly difficult to induce secondary industries to set up in an area where improvement rating was in operation, he said.

—"Shepparton News," 31/1/55.

NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

St. Andrew's University, Scotland.

14th to 20th August, 1955

Already more than 140 supporters of our principles from many parts of the world have notified their intention of coming to St. Andrew's to attend the Conference of the International Union to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade.

There is still accommodation available at the excellent Students' Residence Halls at remarkably moderate terms for board and lodging — seven nights as from Saturday, 13th August. Fully qualified membership entails membership of the International Union (minimum fee 10/- a year) and special contribution of £1 towards the Conference expenses — payment any time before the Conference meets.

Those readers who are unable to attend the Conference are earnestly invited nevertheless to enrol as supporters, incidentally receiving the Conference documentation and adding their names to its representative list of adherents.

Those interested should write to, 4 Great Smith street, London, S.W.1.

HENRY GEORGE "JUSTICE" PARTY

REQUESTS YOUR FINANCIAL AND PERSONAL HELP FOR FORTHCOMING STATE ELECTIONS. CAN YOU DISTRIBUTE LITERATURE, CANVASS, OR OTHERWISE HELP IN THE FOLLOWING ELECTORATES:

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ESSENDON CITY

In 1950 the Land Values Research Group completed a survey of the properties in Essendon according to whether they carried lower or higher rates under site-value rating. Essendon has operated under site-value rating since 1920. The results are recorded below and will be of value in other places.

They classify each person entitled to vote according to type of property for which he is enrolled. The number of distinct properties is less than shown to the extent that joint-owners each are enrolled for the same property.

Type of Property	Rates Lower Under	
	Site-Value	Annual-Value
	(U.C.V.) Nos. (%)	(N.A.V.) Nos. (%)
Dwelling Only	9006 (70)	3856 (30)
House & Other Bldgs.	27 (38)	44 (62)
House & Vacant Land	46 (26)	129 (74)
Shop & Dwelling	206 (68)	96 (32)
Shop Only	277 (63)	160 (37)
Miscellaneous Business ..	90 (50)	90 (59)
Vacant Land	-	989 (100)
Total	9652 (64)	5364 (36)

It is interesting to see that the proportion of houses benefiting under site-value rating is greater than for any other type of property. The Ascot and Moonee Ponds Wards are predominantly working class areas with smaller frontages than in the Essendon and Aberfeldie Wards. The details for dwellings are therefore given below and show that the proportion benefited is greater in the working class areas.

Ward	Dwell. Rates Lower Under	
	Site-Value	Annual-Value
	(U.C.V.) Nos. (%)	(N.A.V.) Nos. (%)
Ascot Vale	2647 (80)	639 (20)
Moonee Ponds	1896 (76)	590 (34)
Essendon	2521 (61)	1624 (39)
Aberfeldie	1942 (66)	1003 (34)
Total	9006 (70)	3856 (30)

Of the miscellaneous business properties those carrying lower rates under the site-value basis comprised: Factories (23-14); Theatres (4-1); Hotels (14-0); Offices (9-5); Garage & Service Station (8-6); Bakeries (3-1); Halls (2-0).

Miscellaneous business properties carrying higher rates on site-value rating comprise: Banks (9-7); Stores (7-1); Stables, Woodyards, Bottleyards (17-1); others (30-18).

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Notes from Various Sources

Planned Economy.—75 per cent. of our eggs have to be exported at a loss and this deficiency has to be met (i) by extra levies on producers and (ii) higher charges for eggs to consumers. Surely economically unsound practices require investigation (i) whether it would be necessary under any system of competitive selling to ship this huge quantity of eggs abroad at a loss and (ii) whether the Egg Board has failed in its duty to supply Victorian consumers with eggs of good quality.—E. Serpell, Age, 4/9/54.

Bad Housing Breeds Disease.—The Clinical Research Unit of the Children's Hospital has found in an investigation that a high proportion of children admitted to the Royal Children's Hospital suffering from infectious diarrhoea came from sub-standard houses and emergency housing camps. A signifying substantial proportion of cases came from unsewered areas.—"Now!"; September, 1954.

Los Angeles Slums.—In this American City, 50 per cent. of all arrests derive from slum areas, 55 per cent. of juvenile delinquency, 60 per cent. of tuberculosis, 50 per cent. of all diseases, 45 per cent. of major crimes, and 35 per cent. of fires. Yet slums represent less than one third of the population (which is surely bad enough). Blighted property in Los Angeles slums yields a bare 8,000 dollars a year in tax revenue (which shows the need for adopting site value rating in that city).—Data from "Now!"; September, 1954.

Butter Bother.—The president of the Victorian Dairy Farmers' Association, Mr. E. Roberts, stated that margarine was a threat to the dairy farmer who, he claimed, had a right to protection by margarine quotas and excise on its ingredients, just as the manufacturer received tariff protection.—Age, 29/9/54.

[Ed's Note.—More privileges are sought and more pressure groups created, while the consumer gets hit from all directions.]

57 Nations.—Financial leaders of 57 non-Communist nations met at Washington to discuss freer world trade. It was generally felt that the American tariff barriers constituted a big obstacle.—Age, 29/9/54.

Printed Paper Plethora.—Since 1951 the total of public issues of Treasury Bills has been increased from £108 million to £225 million, thus giving an impetus to the depreciation of the currency in terms of purchasing power and, therefore, to the intensification of inflationary forces.—From a report to shareholders.

Thought.—If it is criminal to steal a man and make him work for nothing, it is equally criminal to steal from a free man the fair reward of his labour.

Absurdity.—Ballarat branch of the Labor Party wants a ban on erection of new factories within 20 miles of Melbourne so as to force factories into the country. Yet the Victorian Labor Government has raised railway freights and fares and imposed punitive restrictions on road transport. And our high tariff policy which forces labor and materials into overcrowded cities away from rural areas has consistently received Labor support. Too many people ignore fundamental economic and social laws; their only way of dealing with the resulting chaos is to introduce more restriction and regimentation.

Mernda is 15 miles N.E. from Melbourne on Whittlesea Rd., cnr. Mason's land. 312 acres of grazing country sold at £53 an acre.—Age 16/8/53.

[Ed. Note.—Having paid £16,536 as a preliminary to primary production the new owner will expect "farm relief" in some form or other"]

Pertinent Question.—Has Mr. Menzies forgotten the rayon tariff which he approved to the satisfaction of Mr. Foletta and other rayon weavers, by setting aside a Tariff Board recommendation? A recommendation for protection which would have cost the Australian consumer only one third the amount approved by Mr. Menzies?—News-Weekly, 9/9/53.

Parkdale.—Vacant site for shop, opposite railway station, 16 ft. 8 in. frontage to Como Pde. x 300 ft. deep sold at £2,000 or £120 a ft. bare land value.—"Argus," 14/1/54.

City West.—Sir Isaac Pitman's property, 61 ft. frontage at 540 Lt. Collins St., nr. King St., and 217 ft. along Gallagher Pl. with 4 storey building sold to wool buyers for £80,000.

—Argus, 20/5/54.

Japan.—In Parliament, a member stated that Hozen Keizai Kai (a mutual finance organization) had donated Yen 30 million to the Liberal Party, Y20 million to the Progressive Party and Y10 million to the former Hatoyama Liberal Party. The Hozen organization recently went bankrupt, thus destroying the savings of millions of small-scale Japanese investors. This disclosure caused an uproar.

[Ed. Note.—Substantial gifts to each of three political parties follows the Australian pattern — quite impartial.]

Sales Tax Removals.—A £70 bedroom suite would be reduced to £64, a typical English car selling at £1,679 would come down to £1,457, a Holden would be reduced from £1023 to £895 and a 37/6 garbage tin to 34/3.—"Herald," 10/7/54.

Taxation Effects.—Our revenue laws as a body might well be entitled "Acts to promote the corruption of public officials, to suppress honesty and encourage fraud, to set a premium upon perjury and the subornation of perjury, and to divorce the idea of law from the idea of justice."—Henry George in "Progress and Poverty."

Scale of Values.—Sales tax on legalised gambling is less than that on equipment for campers, hikers, girl guides and boy scouts. Examples.—Racing saddles, jockeys' clothing, trotting harness, exempt; greyhound rugs, leads and muzzles, 12½ per cent. On the other hand, sleeping bags, scouts' haversacks and packs 16-2/3 per cent.; tents, 12½ per cent.—From letter to "Herald," 21/8/54.

Psychology Invoked.—Prof. J. M. Keynes detected a "Money Illusion" in the attitude of Labor which resists cuts in money wages even though it would be prepared to accept an equivalent reduction in real wages occasioned by rising prices. Labor stipulates (within limits) for a money wage rather than a real wage.

[Ed. Note.—Most writers seem agreed that this hunch of Keynes was sound.]

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE OF VICTORIA.

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HENRY GEORGE JUSTICE PARTY.

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Committee Meeting, Friday, 13th May, at 8 p.m.