

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

THURSDAY, 1st SEPTEMBER, 8 p.m.

at
WOMEN'S SERVICES' CLUB
53 Market Street, Melbourne

Speaker: Mr. E. F. HALKYARD, B.Sc.

Subscription 7/6

PERTH (W.A.) PLANNING

The early settlement of Swanland is sketched in "Land and Wages" by E. J. Craigie. Copies from this office at 1/-. Gold discovery made the first big change. Today the Kwinana Oil Refinery and other factories have brought the major change.

Capital equipment is being imported by ship-loads. Migrants are being imported in boat-loads. Competition for favoured business sites in Perth has pushed up land values to unprecedented levels. Hence the planners are active in advocacy of Government borrowed money in millions being poured out to boost land values and increase public works, such as new railway from Midland Junction across the Swan River, then south of the city, with large goods yard and depot near Welshpool, then on to the coastline south of Fremantle. What scope for speculation and unearned profit.

Sound View

But some citizens are sound. "West Australian" letter of 8/7/55, from Mr. P. Pardom, Glen Forrest, reads:—

The replanning of the Perth region will involve considerable public expenditure and land values will rise sharply. It is a matter of great importance that

these increases should be ploughed back into the districts concerned for further improvements. If the total land values of the metropolitan area could be brought under public ownership the financial difficulties involved in implementing the plans would quickly be removed.

TARIFFS HINDER PUBLIC WORKS

The Tariff Board was told on April 27 that the costs of large civil engineering projects would be increased if it refused an application to admit Euclid rear-dump waggons duty free. It was said that refusal to admit the waggons duty free would force contractors to use equipment quite unsuited to their requirements.

The application was supported by the Queensland Public Works Department and the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission, as well as by contractors for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority.

Thus progress in important public works projects is impeded and their cost unnecessarily raised because of vested interests in local secondary industries, while freedom of choice to the buyers of the equipment is needlessly restricted.

As usual you, the taxpayer, suffer.

Data from The Age, 28/4/55.

NORTHERN NATIONS CO-OPERATE

Scandinavia Moves to Freedom for Trade

Sweden and Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland comprise Scandinavia. Though languages are similar, these Nordic peoples are separated by mountains and by seas.

These Northern countries are now working extensively and harmoniously together in a manner to which there is hardly any parallel among sovereign States in the world today. Since it is a matter-of-fact, business-like co-operation, it seldom stirs the emotions and so does not appear in the newspaper headlines.

Nordic Council meetings were held at Oslo (August, 1954) and Stockholm (January-February, 1955). Council adopted recommendations made by its Economic Committee requesting the Scandinavian Governments

to (i) begin preparations for the establishment of a common market for the largest possible number of goods; (ii) investigate the possibility of eliminating inter-Scandinavian customs duties and trade restrictions, with the ultimate aim of introducing a Scandinavian customs union. (Current Notes—March, 1955.)

Steps Forward

Thirteen American States — the stripes in the U.S. flag — had separate tariff tax imposts on each other. But Jefferson urged and federation secured the abolition of these hindrances to trade and welfare. Then the Washington Government carried this free trade policy forward to new frontiers each time a new State was added to the Union. Georgia was set free from Spanish tariffitis and Louisiana from French. Today 170 millions of Americans have the blessing of interstate free trade.

Germany was held back for centuries by over 30 States — Bavaria, Saxony, Halle, Hanover, Wurtemberg, Prussia — which had tariff hostilities against one another. Then in 1871 these States entered a Zoll Verein or Customs Union, which established internal freedom for trade. The great potential was unleashed and Germany's progress was startling. Interstate free trade was one reason.

Another great free trade victory was won in Australia at federation in 1900. Section 92 of the Constitution provides that "Trade and Commerce between the States shall be absolutely free." Thus enlarging the home market has been a great help to manufactures.

Benelux was another step forward. Belgium, Netherlands and Lux-emburg made a step forward which has since been checked by the parties of selfish privilege.

Scandinavia has now moved into greater freedom for citizens to trade. There are still many defaulters such as Spain-Portugal. Here is a geographical region, Iberia, defined so clearly that no planner could miss its unity, yet perverse rulers sow discord between citizens. Hindustan and Pakistan both live within the Indian Peninsula and yet have feuds over tariff taxes at the boundaries.

These matters need earnest thought, for, as Brig. Spencer Weston, D.S.O., has said: "I believe that mankind will either trade or fight."

BALANCE OF TRADE

We note Mr. A. G. Huie is still carrying the fight for economic sanity in New South Wales. From a recent letter in the "Armidale Express" he dealt with the bogey of "unfavourable trade balance." "Suppose," said he, "some New England pastoralists had an idea. They decided that instead of sending their wool to local auctions they would send it direct to London for sale, and export, say, £100,000 worth. That would be so much wealth, the product of their labour, leaving Australia. It gets to London, is sold, and realises the £100,000. The money is paid into a bank.

"Now that £100,000 in London won't provide the things that these pastoralists need, and enable them

to pay wages. It has got to come to Australia. It can only come in tangible form — imports. Suppose that those pastoralists thought that they would turn their money over. They bought tractors, farming machinery, cars, and so on, with the £100,000. When their payment for their wool arrived in Australia they would be bailed up by the Customs — your money or your life!

"By the time the machinery, etc., reached the intending users of it the price would be greatly increased. Australia would be denied the benefit of the exchange.

"A £100,000 worth of goods from Britain would be worth more by the time it got to Sydney. There would be freight, insurance, etc. Say it was £110,000, in current jargon, 'an unfavourable' balance of trade. Would it be unfavourable to those exporters of Australian production?

"On the other hand, suppose the goods were seriously damaged in transit, and were only worth £90,000 on arrival; then the transaction would be hailed as a 'favourable' balance of trade. Wealth amounting to £100,000 going out of Australia — exports. Wealth coming into Australia — imports in payment, £90,000. Would that be regarded as favourable to the New England pastoralists?

"I am afraid your readers, or some of them, might think I owe them an apology for putting such kindergarten matter before them. But it seemed necessary in replying to your correspondent."

—W.A.D.

STACKS OF PAPER MONEY

Between June 1945 and June 1953, the volume of "money" increased 28 per cent. in Britain, 39 per cent. in the United States, 75 per cent. in Canada, 86 per cent. in New Zealand, and, crescendo, in Australia by 93 per cent!!

And as a more or less direct result, retail "prices" written as paper "money" pounds (Australian) increased to a much greater extent than in other countries. Automatic arbitration, that great Australian discovery, sends wages climbing after prices on the paper money stairs.

Hence, between June 1945 and June 1953, nominal wages in Australia rose by 153 per cent. compared with 69 per cent. in the U.S., and 57 per cent. in the U.K. Australia leads the world in the global money race for paper stakes.

Wages constitute 50 per cent. to 80 per cent. of the nominal "cost" of most manufactured products, and Australian goods are being "priced-out" of external markets.

Popular Demand

Suppose that the stack of printed paper money was the result of the production of real wealth. Then there would be an equivalent asset to this pile of Canberra I.O.U. In some degree this is so. But most of the "money" is the record of Government debts; of expenditure made to purchase election success. There has been a continuous speeding up of the Federal print-

ing press to satisfy popular demand. Citizens are to blame for being so stupid. Education has failed to make them realise that paper "money" in itself has no real value. Yet the educated suckers still want more of this alcoholic economy.

Government Debt Burden

From £1,347 million debts (£194 per head) at June 30, 1939, Australian "governments" have loaded citizens with £3,590 million debt (£410 per head) by June 30, 1953.

Over the same period Government has "touched" the citizens' pockets and pulled out the taxes to meet Government liability for interest payments of £51.5 million in 1939 (say £13 for every man, woman, child and babe, or £42 per family).

Hypnotise the Victims

There is no sustained moan from the victims of government imposition, because by steady process of printing Canberra paper money with automatic arbitration there is a greater wad of money tokens in the pay envelope. The "national intake" of paper padding (technically called the "national income") has risen so fast that the time lag (in the short run) shows that tax demand as a proportion of national income, fell from 6.6 per cent. in 1939 to 3 per cent. in 1953. And so the rulers console themselves with hollow optimism.

Yet it is a complete fallacy to contend that the mountain of government debt "does not mean a thing." As a matter of fact DEBT is the most profound factor of our economy. For decades to come citizens will be fleeced of a large part of their earnings by our bloated governments. Armed with that awful power to operate the money-printing press and so to manage the currency means that inflation of currency, of prices and of land rentals will continue.

Freedom Movement

Reader, these are some of the steps to freedom. Production to be increased by the stimulus which a land rental tax applies to dilatory entrepreneurs. At the same time, the receipts from land rental tax to be matched by a simultaneous abolition of taxes which punish production.

Sound money to be established on a gold basis. And that depends on you.

—CHRONOS.

SAVINGS BANK SLOGAN

There's a sign painted on a New York bank building that would have startled our grandfathers, but apparently goes unnoticed in this age of taxes. It exhorts the citizenry to save and ends up, in letters five feet high: "Remember, PART of ALL YOU EARN BELONGS TO YOU."

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Bushranging Linked With Land Monopoly

A book titled "The Australian," by Bill Wannan, has some interesting comments showing how closely land hunger was connected with bushranging in early Australian history.

He points out that the first group of bushrangers were mostly escaped convicts, but the second group had a different origin. "The period dates from the early sixties of the last century, when alluvial gold had largely petered out and gold-diggers, unable to afford the expense of quartz mining, turned to the land for a livelihood. Under public pressure, the legislature of New South Wales introduced a Land Act in 1861, with the object of unlocking the lands to small farming. The squatters, holding the best lands as sheep runs, resented this intrusion on their preserves. They opposed the new 'selectors,' the small-scale farmers, with every weapon at their disposal.

"They employed 'dummies' to buy up the blocks of land — the 'selections' — as they were put up for sale. With enormous reserves of capital at their disposal, they were able in large measure to defeat the intentions of the Robertson Land Act, and to ensure that only the poorer, 'stringybark' type of country went to the farmer of small means.

"Besides their wealth, the squatters had beside them the power of the legislature in which they were overwhelmingly represented. They fenced the small selectors in with a variety of repressive measures. The police force was generally of poor calibre, and showed little sympathy for the lot of the farmers.

"Traditionally, then, the selectors as a class were opposed to the big land-holders, and the troopers who policed their law. With few exceptions, the bushrangers of this period and up to the time of Ned Kelly's death in 1880, sprang from this class; . . . various motives for turning to robbery . . . but in each case an underlying hatred of the squatters seems to have been involved.

"The background was set a few years earlier than this period when the squatters tried to continue the convict system to have cheap labour. Then gold was discovered in the fifties. Squatters attempted to keep these discoveries quiet, but failing in this, put every obstacle in the way of the diggers, fearing loss of labour and encroachment on their lands.

"Squatter-controlled legislatures in the two States devised a licensing system by which the miner had to pay an exorbitant monthly fee for his 'right' to dig, whether he struck gold or not. This and other harsh measures led to revolts of the miners on several of the diggings. The culmination of the struggle took place at Eureka Lead, Ballarat, in December, 1854."

THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

Adelaide Investor Knows How

By E. J. Craigie

The sale of the Y.M.C.A. property on 22nd June aroused considerable interest. The building consisted of a basement, ground floor, first and second floors, in which were five shops in Grenfell Street, seven shops in Gawler Place, the Victoria Hall, as well as Show rooms and Offices.

The assessment of the land in 1922 when the building lease was taken by the Y.M.C.A. was £33,210, and the State Land Tax then paid £69/3/9. The 1950 land tax assessment was £112,368, and is the latest available. Following the repeal of the Federal Land Tax in 1952 the State Government increased its land tax rates to gain some of the revenue which previously had gone into the Federal Treasury. The rate which affected this site provided that for £80,000 of values the tax should be £1,401/0/10 and all values above that amount should pay 7½d. in the £, thus making the tax on this land site £2,412/10/10.

The bidding for the property started at £150,000 and advanced by £10,000 bids to £240,000. Then there was a bid of £5,000 and the property was sold for £245,000. This was a very reasonable price, especially when it is remembered the land alone was assessed at £112,368 in 1950. This does not represent £1,000 a foot frontage in Grenfell Street, and values have advanced since 1950.

There is an interesting history associated with this property which we now present so that the general public may be conversant with it.

On 3rd July, 1922, a public announcement was made to the effect that the Young Men's Christian Association had completed arrangements to purchase the premises occupied by them at the corner of Grenfell Street, and Gawler Place, Adelaide.

Some details regarding this area of land are of public interest. It is part of Town Acre No. 106, and the whole acre was purchased by Mr. Robert Gouger for £8/2/- at the Government Land Sale in 1837.

The portion of this acre measuring 123 feet frontage to Grenfell Street and 148 feet frontage to Gawler Place now the property of the Y.M.C.A., was purchased by William Paul Featherstone, and we understand the price paid by him was £500.

The improvements upon the land were erected by the Y.M.C.A. under a building lease from Mr. Featherstone. The terms of that lease were that a ground rent of £1,600 per annum be paid for a period of forty years, and buildings to be erected to the value of £25,000. The Y.M.C.A. to pay all rates and taxes and keep the improvements in good order and repair, and at the expiration of the lease the land and the improvements on it revert to the Featherstone estate without any payment.

Prior to the expiration of this lease the Trustees of the Y.M.C.A. were concerned about the future of their Association, and considered whether they should build headquarters elsewhere, or endeavour to purchase from the Featherstone estate the property they had already paid for.

After consultation with the representatives of the Featherstone estate, the Y.M.C.A. became the owners of the property by the payment of a further £56,000 and an agreement to pay an annuity of £300 per year during the life of the three beneficiaries under the Will of the late William Paul Featherstone — the youngest beneficiary then being seven years old.

It will thus be seen that during its forty years lease of the land the Y.M.C.A. paid £64,000 in ground rent, spent £27,000 in erecting and furnishing the property erected on the land, paid all rates, taxes and repairs, and then £56,000 more to secure the freehold title. This made a total payment of £120,000 to the Featherstone estate to secure occupation of an area of land that Featherstone has secured for about £500.

In addition to these payments there was the annuity of £300 a year to the three beneficiaries under the Will, but we understand that at a later date this annuity was cancelled.

Apart from the annuity the above facts demonstrate that this total payment of £120,000 made to the Featherstone estate, enabled it to collect approximately £3,000 per annum for 40 years, although its outlay on the land was a mere £500.

Legal Power to Exploit Land Users

Here we see a typical example of the power possessed by land monopolists. The Y.M.C.A. was rendering splendid service to society by providing facilities for developing a high moral and physical standard in connection with the youth of the nation, yet under an unjust land system they were penalised to the extent of £120,000, plus the rates, taxes and repairs which must have run into many thousands of pounds.

On the other hand William Paul Featherstone did not render any service whatsoever for the money he received from the Y.M.C.A., yet the law permitted him to exploit the needs of this very fine institution.

The Psalmist tells us:—"The Earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof," and in the Bible it is also stated:—"The meek shall inherit the Earth," yet, despite the fact that Parliament sittings are daily opened with the reading of a prayer to direct members to do God's Will, those members still permit land monopolists of the Featherstone type (he is only one of many) to get rich without working, and unjustly penalise those who render services of many kinds to society.

Although the Bible makes it clear that "The profit of the Earth is for all" yet all political parties are guilty of allowing the major portion of that profit — the community — created land values, to flow into private pockets, and then add insult to injury by imposing a heavy taxation burden upon the industrious members of the community who use their labor and capital to assist in the production of wealth.

How much longer is this unjust system to continue?

LETTER TO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

Undemocratic Municipal Association Proposal

[Below is the text of a letter sent by the General Council for Rating Reform to the Mayor or President and Councillors of local government areas in Victoria.]

The quarterly meeting of the Executive of the Municipal Association decided to sponsor a suggestion received from Eltham Shire that in polls on proposals to adopt unimproved land value rating, owners of vacant land with a nett annual value of less than £5 be entitled to vote.

We consider this decision has been reached too lightly and without proper consideration of its effects. In many districts it would completely remove from those who live locally all power to determine their rating system for themselves and place it in the hands of absentee vacant lot holders whose only interest in the district is speculative.

We set out below for your consideration examples showing how the proposal will affect municipalities. The table shows the voters with homes and those owners of vacant land who already have the vote because the land is more than £5 N.A.V. It then shows the additional owners of vacant lots less than £5 N.A.V. who would receive votes under this proposal. The figures are based upon the details given for the municipalities in the 1953 Municipal Directory.

Municipality (1)	Dwellings (2)	Number of Voters Now Receiving Votes For:	Prop. Addi- tional Voters
		Vacant Lots over £5 N.A.V. (3)	for Vacant Lots under £5 N.A.V. (4)
Sunshine City	6,188	1,180	6,110
Broadmeadows Shire	4,060	5,980	10,020
Keilor Shire	2,117	838	2,924
Ferntree Gully Shire	7,247	3,670	6,958
Corio Shire	2,200	486	2,814
Werribee Shire	2,600	1,610	6,290

The number of vacant lot holders who already have votes as shown in column (3) is large in proportion to those who have homes in the district as shown in column (2). Already quite a number of polls have failed because the majority of local home owners

favoring adoption of site-value rating have been out-voted by the vacant lot holders, combined with a minority of local residents. In others no proposals have ever been presented for polls because the present voting strength of vacant lot holders foredooms them to failure.

Surely your council will not support such a travesty as in the proposal to give vacant lot holders the additional votes shown in column (4)?

You will agree that those who have their homes in the municipality are contributing to its progress and more entitled to determine the rating system to be used than vacant lot holders. The tendency of the times is rather to restrict the vote to those who live in the district. Analyses have shown that generally more than 75 per cent. of vacant lot holders do not live in the district at all.

The extra vacant lot holders who would receive votes under this proposal on an average figure of £3 N.A.V., contribute a maximum of 12/- per annum to council revenue. This is inadequate to more than cover the cost of preparing the assessments, let alone a real share of council costs. Such lots under unimproved value rating would pay about 36/-. This is more reasonable but still low. It would be grossly unjust to give vacant holders paying these nominal amounts the same voting strength as local residents paying up to £10 annually.

There is also a definite administrative weakness since normal Voters' Rolls would not be applicable. It would be necessary to prepare a special roll of owners of vacant lots of less than £5 N.A.V. as well as the normal rolls.

We feel sure you will agree the proposed change in voting is inequitable and ill-advised. We therefore request that you advise the Municipal Association accordingly and that you consider no action should be taken by it to seek any amendment of the Act to give votes to vacant holders below £5 N.A.V. at such polls.

SITE-VALUE RATING

August Campaigns Reach Climax

The tempo of the rating campaigns has now quickened in Malvern, Castlemaine and Cobram, where polls are to be taken on Saturday, August 27.

Malvern City

The most intensive campaign is in this City, where there are 17,576 voters on the rolls. Malvern has an area of 4,022 acres and population of 46,875. There are 12,264 distinct buildings in use as dwellings, with 14,012 dwelling units. There are 823 shops and other buildings, while there are 929 vacant land assessments.

The Unimproved Capital Value of land was £13,318,592; Capital Improved Value, £44,541,393; value of buildings and other improvements, £31,222,801; and

the Nett Annual Value £2,230,866. Rate in £ of annual value was 2/6, to which 5.025d. in the £ of U.C.V. is equivalent in revenue yield to the Council.

The East Ward is the most remote from Melbourne and least settled. Here the demand for site-value rating had its commencement and main drive. Councillor Arthur Morgan was elected on this issue last year in that Ward. The Chadstone-East Malvern Progress Association is sponsoring a candidate against Cr. Montague. The latter in 1948 had his name on a pamphlet opposing site-value rating. He now does not declare an attitude, but urges people to vote according to their conscience. Mr. Armstrong is forthright and unequivocal in advocacy of site-value rating in his election pamphlets and press reports.

There is an election also in the North Ward, where the centre of opposition lies in the large frontage mansions of Toorak, the Glenferrie Road business site-owners and a goodly number of sub-standard buildings.

The Malvern Rating Reform League has brought out a pamphlet now being distributed to householders. It is a very good pamphlet and should be valuable in its effect in educating voters.

Castlemaine Town

This Town has 5,760 acres. The total assessments for 1951/2 were 2,400, of which 1810 had dwellings on them. There were thus about 600 vacant lots. The valuation is complete, the figures being: U.C.V., £611,000; C.I.V., £3,102,478; value of buildings and other improvements, £2,492,478; N.A.V., £155,223. A rate of 10½d. in £ of U.C.V. will yield the equivalent revenue to last year's rate of 3/6 in £ N.A.V.

We have not heard of much intensive public campaigning here, apart from a few letters in the press. But ratepayers have now received the statements which the Council must send, comparing rates payable on their properties under the alternative systems. They can therefore make an informed choice.

Cobram Shire

Here the valuation is complete and notices have gone to ratepayers. Reports are scanty, but opposition has been met and ex-Councillor Breen has been asked to address a meeting there for N.A.V. Cobram is on the Murray bordering New South Wales, and its distance prevents much direct help from Melbourne.

However, Cr. J. H. Morris is also going along to put the case for site-value rating.

DEMAND FOR SITE-VALUE RATING IN WANGARATTA

A monster public meeting took place in Wangaratta on Friday, August 3. It was convened by four ex-councillors, Messrs. Neil Stewart, J. P. Larking, W. J. Smith and W. J. Whitten. The purpose of the meeting was advertised as "for those who wanted to demand a change to site-value rating and also to demand that the present council resign and face the electors."

It was estimated that the huge crowd which overflowed St. Patrick's Hall totalled more than 1,000. In a borough of some 2,500 total dwellings this was an amazing response.

The only speakers were the four ex-councillors, who called the meeting. The resolution on site-value rating read:

"This meeting requests that a petition be presented to the Wangaratta Borough Council demanding a poll to be held to determine whether unimproved land value rating be adopted."

The second resolution was:

"This meeting of over a thousand ratepayers expresses its complete lack of confidence in the present council in view of the fact that councillors have not

honoured their promises to reduce rates. We demand the immediate resignation of all councillors."

At the meeting a committee to organise the petition and present it to council was formed comprised of Messrs. J. C. Collier, N. S. Payne, A. J. MacKay, L. Gales, J. W. Graham, A. Thrush, L. W. Greenwood, L. J. O'Keefe, J. A. Larkings, R. J. Lowe and B. Kerr.

The necessary minimum total of 300 signatures of ratepayers to the petition was obtained over the weekend, and the petition will be presented to council on September 1, this being the earliest date it would be acceptable.

The meeting was fully reported in "Wangaratta Chronicle" of 9/8/55. Mr. Neil Stewart spoke for about an hour, and the others for shorter periods. The whole account was absorbingly interesting, occupying more than a complete issue of our journal "Progress."

It is impossible to give space in this journal to a detailed account of the meeting. However, one interesting disclosure made by Mr. Stewart was that a road to be run in from Reid Street into the main Murphy Street centre would chop up nearly all the Clark Estate block and give a frontage of 150 feet to the block owned by McCormick and Cr. Nolan. It would then run out into Ovens Street directly in front of Cr. Nolan's shop.

The Nolan-McCormick vacant land in the heart of Wangaratta has retarded the proper development of this Borough for many years. It is not surprising that both gentlemen are so strongly opposed to a more equitable system which would make them pay their fair share in rates.

Both resolutions were carried with hardly a dissentient.

All four conveners had stated they were not candidates themselves for council.

Three councillors retire automatically and come up for re-election this month. They are Councillors Petty, Tilson and Richards. Additional nominations at closing date were from Mr. R. J. Lowe and Mr. Kavanagh, a farmer. We do not know Mr. Kavanagh's views on the rating issue, but Mr. Lowe is a strong advocate of site-value rating.

FIVE BOB A WEEK ON A CERTAINTY!

With today's currency of so little value, thousands of persons venture a weekly 5/- in "Tatts." The odds against a "win" are heavy. The vast majority of investors, week after week from their slender finances, and with no real prospect of reward, make sacrifice to Lady Luck.

Due to the present economic set-up, Georgists' finances are also slender. However, in the certainty that good effort always bears good fruit, certain of us are contributing 5/- per week (and more) to finance Georgist work. Will you join them?

The work already yields good fruit. Without the alleviating effect of Site-Value Rating, now used so

extensively throughout Australia, and of other preventative work by Georgists, economic conditions would be far worse. Along with the others, Georgists therefore get a personal return from Georgist work.

Therefore I ask that you re-invest this return by

adding your name to those who already contribute at the rate of 5/- or more, not to the gamble which is Tatts, but to the Certainty which is this movement.

W. H. PITT, Hon. Treasurer.

HENRY GEORGE FOUNDATION TRUSTEE PASSES

MR. HARRY PITT

The death of Henry Arthur Pitt, O.B.E., takes from us one whose Georgist history goes back to the days when crowded debating societies had George's writings to discuss, each as it came from the press. Harry Pitt—as he was known to most—and his brothers were considerable debaters and George's visit here in 1890 would have been a more than ordinary interest to them.

Mr. Edwin Pitt, younger by a year or so, tells how a little time earlier they had both been captivated by Bellamy's "Looking Backward," the socialist theories of which they, with the full knowledge of sixteen and seventeen years apiece, had decided would inevitably be in full operation a few years thence. However, they had two elder cousins, Willie and Frank Pitt, each a redoubtable name in our movement, and joyous fellows. These saw the humour of the youngsters being deluded by a socialist, young Harry being a brilliant scholar, and promptly introduced "George" into the discussions. Did it well too, for Mr. Ernest Pitt, a brother younger again, recalls that he was as good as born a Georgist, never hearing anything else in the home.

Harry Pitt rose to the top; as a Georgist committee member and Foundation Trustee; as Director of Finance in the State Public Service; then in "retirement" as the Co. in Ian Potter and Co., the spectacular Melbourne brokers; in sport as president of the Lawn

Tennis Association. From all these fields he will be sadly missed.

While Director of Finance, he was part of a delegation to urge our principles on his Premier, Sir William McPherson. The latter conceded the truth of the case, particularly as put by his Finance Director, but was politically impotent to adopt the proposals.

Rarely an over propagandist, Harry Pitt seldom missed opportunity to point out how useless were non-Georgist suggestions. And even amongst ourselves he had a quiet laughing way of showing up the weak approach. Not so many years back, when Federal Parliament was deadlocked, a group of Georgists were arguing it, all from different angles. But this all stopped, when he quizzically enquired whether so much of Governmental action being in opposition to our principles, would it not be preferable were the deadlock to continue. He preferred to leave well alone.

That attitude may have shown the keynote to his character. Not to meddle, where it could do no good, left him time and energy for the things that could be accomplished.

To his son and daughters who, with several grandchildren, survive him, go our sincere condolences on the passing of a more than ordinary man.

SUBTLE ENCOURAGEMENT TO PRODUCTION

In his message to the people of the United States last May, President Eisenhower said that he would recommend a completely revised programme of taxation in January, 1954. He stated that studies were under way by the appropriate committee and declared:

"Our system of taxation must not only provide our Government with the resources to be strong for freedom's sake, but also enable our people to apply their initiative and industry fruitfully in an economy that is itself free and strong.

"This means taxes so adjusted as to fall where payment is least harmful and so planned as to create jobs and expand the income of the mass of the people."

In view of the constant efforts of the various units of government to find new sources of revenue, and in view of the burdensome taxes which are being carried by the people of the country, it might be well to examine the revenue-producing provisions of the Irrigation District Act of California and to weigh their impact on the situation.

Specifically, the Water Code provides that directors of Irrigation Districts can levy an assessment on the land, exclusive of improvements, sufficient for fixed obligations and for other specified purposes.

Thus, the burden of the tax falls on the land and not on the orchards, the vineyards, the farm structures, nor the equipment which are a necessary part of the agricultural enterprise. The man who uses his capital and his labour to improve his place is thereby not handicapped — he is actually assisted, for he knows that his Irrigation District cannot tax the fruits of his endeavour.

The provisions in the Water Code which establish this procedure have brought about some noteworthy changes in the agricultural development of California. Many big farms have been broken up into small farms when the original owners found the taxes on their extensive holdings burdensome. The owners drew their own conclusions that they might well dispose of their holdings to persons who would improve them. This is recognised as advantageous to the economy of the State.

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The question, therefore, is raised: Is this important means of obtaining revenue antiquated and out of date? Is it still being used? The most recent report of the State Division of Water Resources on activities of Irrigation Districts contains the answer. It is this:

In 1950 the Irrigation Districts of California raised over 7,000,000 dollars through assessments on the land. The same districts collected water tolls amounting to over 8,000,000 dollars. This appears to be conclusive and inescapable evidence that the assessment of the land is still an important means of raising the revenue necessary to carry on the affairs of the districts.

Therefore, the subtle encouragement to the men of production is still operating — most certainly it can be said that this tax "enables our people to apply their initiative and industry fruitfully." — An editorial in the "Western Water News" (San Francisco), January, 1954.

NOTES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Westali is a new railway station between Clayton and Spring Vale. Australian Paper Manufacturers have bought farm land 4½ acrs. in Westali Rd. opp. Queens Ave., with 6r. timber house for £2,750, almost £1,842 acre cap. imp. value.—"Argus," 16/6/55.

[Ed. Note.—Allow £1000 removal value of house then bare land value of £161 per sq. chn. has been imposed on a new industry giving employment.]

Toorak—St. George's Rd., vacant home site, N.W. corner Edzell Ave., 70 ft. x 113 ft. or 7910 sq. ft. received bid of £6,000; £85/10/- ft.—"Argus," 24/6/55.

[Ed. Note.—£3,300 per sq. chn. of bare land value is the measure of effective demand for purchase of amenities and services provided by other citizens.]

Escalator—Pay roll tax on wages extracts £40m. a year at point of production, but adds something between £80m. and £100m. to the final selling price of the goods. Thus pay roll tax directly inflates costs and is one of the tax burdens imposed by Harold Holt on consumers.—Figures from Financial Review, 23/6/55.

[Ed. Note.—Thus the H. H. payroll tax kicks still more value out of the printed pound note as part of the Menzies-Holt plan to make Australia "strong."]

False Alternative—If the restrictive policy on imports is not to remain with us indefinitely, Australia must take immediate steps to increase her export trade.—Hon. W. S. Kelly, former member Tariff Board.

[Ed. Note.—Marching on left foot, right foot illustrates overseas trading by imports, exports, more imports, more exports, and so on. Both must rise or both will fall.]

Planned Economy—Commonwealth Bank policy prevents suburban street construction for new housing areas in outer Melbourne with no prospects of relief because Councils cannot, by Federal policy obtain an extension of bank overdraft.

Approaches to the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) had proved fruitless.—Mr. J. Fagin, Sec. Municipal Assn., "Age," 2/7/55.

Welfare State—There is a tendency to substitute "protection" for "enterprise." A Government is under no obligation to bail out a weak business — or guarantee a man a living just "because" he says he is a farmer. I am a small business man myself and the only "protection" I need is from monopolies.—Mr. C. D. Johnston, Chamber of Commerce, U.S.A.

[Ed. Note.—Uneconomic industries are pampered by tariff "protection" and these factorians put pressure on Government as they form monopolies.]

Melbourne—Australian Church, Russell St., next State Theatre, on land 54 ft. frontage by 120 ft. deep, with shell of old 2 storey building has been sold to Council of Adult Education for Culture at £30,000.—"Herald," 9/7/55.

[Ed. Note.—Allow £5,000 for old shell, then the cost of "opportunity" for more Culture begins at bare land value £16,800 per sq. chn. The culture medium for seeds of Freedom is recognition of the fundamental right of citizens to the site rental of all lands.]

Ceylon—"Development Budget" reduces import duties on machinery and other articles for promotion of industries and agriculture. The export duty on copra and cocoa has also been reduced.—"Age," 9/7/55.

[Ed. Note.—Good — as far as it goes. Severe poverty in Ceylon can only be cancelled by full collection of revenue from land rentals and abolition of all taxes on workers' wages. Otherwise the Communist enemy gains influence.]

RATING POLL RESULTS

MALVERN Carried 11,758 to 6,339

CASTLEMAINE Carried by Margin 650

COBRAM Lost by 816 to 1096

Details next issue.

TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

Commencing with the meeting on Tuesday, 16th August, the members' evenings take the form of a discussion group based on the book "Progress and Poverty."

The next discussion on Tuesday, 20th September, will be on the second chapter. Please make a note of the date, bring your friends. If you have not already got one, you can obtain a copy of the abridged edition used, for 7/6, at the League Rooms, 18 George Parade, Melbourne.

The meeting will commence at 8 p.m.

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE OF VICTORIA.

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Next Executive Meeting, Tuesday, 6th Sep., 1955, at 6.45 p.m.

Members' Meeting, Tuesday 20th Sep., at 8 p.m.

HENRY GEORGE JUSTICE PARTY.

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

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