

LAND and LIBERTY

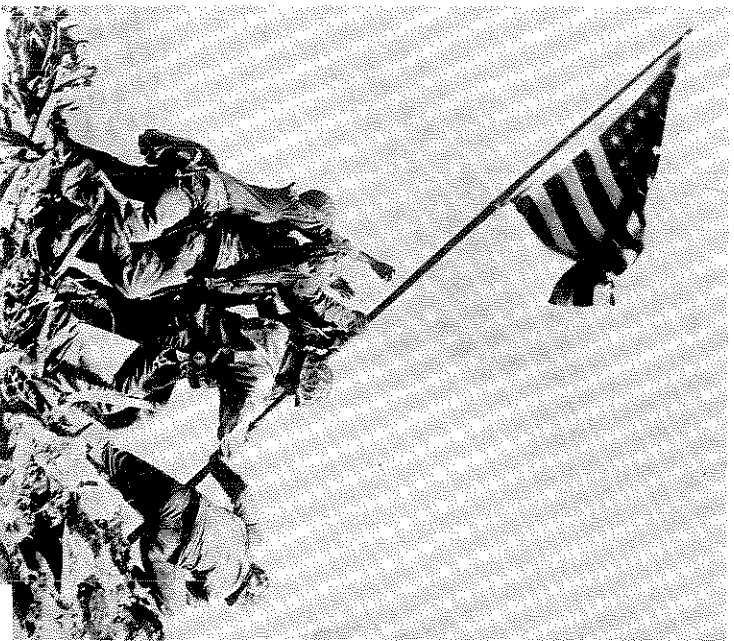
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● War — the instrument of dictatorship . . . brings misery for the majority . . . short lived glory for the few . . . and the constant threat of annihilation



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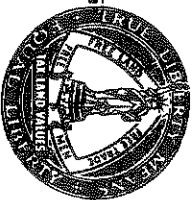
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War and peace

EXTINCTION stares us in the face.

Past wars led to mass murder: future wars promise the destruction of the species.

It is against this reality that we ought to be analysing the problem of punishing wars forever.

All we get, however, is diplomatic posturing

● Mikhail Gorbachev, the new boss in the Kremlin, offers to freeze the build-up of SS-20 missiles.

● Ronald Reagan, in Washington, fondly contemplates his Star Wars plan while trying to work out a political response to the Russians.

And their negotiators spar with each other in Geneva clarifying points about the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks.

Meanwhile, the Russians have added 378 new SS-20 missiles to their stockpile, and the Americans have begun deploying the first batch of 464 Cruise missiles.

All of which is getting us closer to carnage.

For no-one is talking about bridging the ideological divide.

Instead, the "thinkers" are trapped in a vicious circle of mutual antipathy: it is in their interests to deepen suspicions and reinforce fears.

Result: little intellectual work is performed on ways in which the conditions for permanent world peace can be created.

For to do so would entail a radical critique of the social and economic systems on BOTH sides of the Iron Curtain.

It is far easier to carry on stockpiling the weapons of death, allegedly because this creates mutual respect for the other's power—a balance, alas, as President Reagan recently noted, that can now be tipped by the smallest of nations:

"I just happen to believe that we cannot go into another generation with the world living under the threat of those weapons and knowing that some madman can push the button some place. It doesn't even have to be one of the

superpowers. A war could probably be triggered, as nuclear weapons proliferate, by someone else doing it."

Empty words, unless the ideologues are forced to work out the details for a new social system that eliminates the need for militarism.

THE STARTING point must be the nature of man himself. There is little evidence in the anthropological record to support the view that man is biologically disposed to executing senseless deaths.

The law of the jungle is an invention of "civilised" man.

Yet people today are generally resigned to the notion that it is natural and necessary to maintain a permanent war-like posture.

Individual acts and group displays of aggression are to be found among tribal peoples. But war, as we know it—the orchestrated arrangements for countless deaths of large numbers of people—is a cultural invention, and as such it can be eradicated.

How?

By identifying the economic and political conditions that turn strong and sane people into plastic puppets, malleable in the hands of the tyrants who seek solace in the acts of collective madness.

What do we find?

Land disputes are at the heart of all wars. Clothe these conflicts in the garb of religion or race, as you may, but when we peel off the outer garments, we find people fighting over land.

● DID they go to war because they were originally deprived of their legitimate rights to land?

● WOULD a new world land ethic prove to be a sufficient condition for permanent peace?

These are the fundamental questions which the peace-makers should be addressing. Before it's too late.



'Access to land' a root cause of war

THROUGHOUT the ages, people have pondered on the causes of war. Many bizarre explanations have been given: the caprice of deities; the ineradicable nature of man; the peculiar wickedness of some particular individual or society; and a great cluster of different economic theories.

The more closely the historian looks at the run-up to any particular war of the past, the more difficult he finds it to identify any single cause.

Indeed, what do we *mean* by "causes of war"?

Consider the war which is vivid in the memory of many, and in the tradition of everybody in our own society – the Second World War. What "caused" it?

● The act of Germany in crossing the Polish frontier on 1 September 1939?

● The fact that Britain and France had both executed treaties obliging them to go to war in Poland's defence?

● The fact that the Nazis organised the German state as a vehicle for war during the 1930s?

● The attitude of governments of the Democracies towards other acts of international illegality during the same decade?

● The decision of President Hindenburg to appoint Hitler Chancellor of Germany in 1933?

● The economic dislocation deriving from the Great Depression which began in 1929?

● The Peace Treaties after the 1914-18 war?

● The works of writers like Nietzsche, which stirred the atavistic romanticism of the Nazis?

● The pernicious economic doctrines of List?

● The contributions of Thyssen and other industrialists to the funds of the Nazi Party?

All of those factors, and many more, played a part in the genesis of the Second World War, in the sense that if they hadn't happened, it is difficult to see how the war could have broken out at the time and in the manner that it did.

Michael Howard is one of the greatest living authorities on modern wars, and when he writes a book entitled *The Causes of Wars*, this



● The Second World War caused the deaths of millions: but what caused the war?

● ROY DOUGLAS (pictured above), in this article, argues that there is no simple answer. Dr. Douglas, a lecturer at the University of Surrey, England, is the author of a number of authoritative books on the war.

● On p. 64, PAUL KNIGHT contends that the war was inevitable, once Hitler secured the reigns of power: his philosophy dictated a strategy of territorial aggrandisement.

work necessarily commands the attention of any serious enquirer.

Unfortunately, the book turns out to be a collection of essays by Professor Howard, only one of which is spot on the title, although most of them are to a greater or less extent relevant to the theme. Thus we do not receive what would be really invaluable – an in-depth study of a transcendentially important question by this perspicacious, lucid, and honest man.

'People assumed that because fascism was so evil it had to be met head on'

Instead we receive a lot of bits, every one of them well worth reading, and liable to spark off plenty of ideas in the reader's mind, but without a consistent theme running through them.

On second thoughts, perhaps there is a theme.

As the "blurb" at the beginning declares, "all of (the essays) carry the hallmark of Professor Howard's mind, a refusal to accept comfortable simplicities in a field where, if one does not understand the complexities, one understands nothing".

This is a very important message indeed.

Another message which runs through the book is stated by the author at the end of his Introduction: "Those who do not change their minds in the course of a decade have probably stopped thinking altogether". Michael Howard has the very rare capacity to pronounce those exceedingly difficult words, "I was wrong".

THE TROUBLE with simplistic explanations and simplistic answers is that they are not just academically faulty, but they often lead to behaviour which is profoundly counter-productive.

During the 1930s, many people rightly identified "fascism" as an evil and dangerous thing which it was necessary to combat by one means or another.

Unfortunately, they often went off to assume that *because* fascism was so evil and dangerous, the only way of fighting it was by meeting it head-on. Thus they missed the chance of driving wedges between Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese militarists which might well have averted war altogether, or greatly reduced the scale of suffering in the war.

What many people wanted was a *Welanschauung* which would enable them to identify goodies and baddies at a glance; and the real world just isn't like that.

As a result, a quite unnecessary coalition of enemies emerged: people whose ideologies were not really very similar to each other at all, and whose interests were often profoundly at variance. Forty or fifty million people died; and then, in the aftermath, the world was shocked to discover that the "Big Three" alliance was as artificial as the coalition of its enemies, and fell apart even before the fighting had stopped.

● Turn to p. 65

Recipe for future war

HISTORIANS will quarrel for a long time over the causes of the Second World War, but the problem may not be quite as intractable as some of them suggest.

The initial difficulty relates to the question of why the German people voted Adolf Hitler into power in the first place.

It is insufficient to say that the Weimar Republic failed to provide people with a secure social and economic environment, and that it was this climate of uncertainty (and economic hardship after the Wall Street Crash of 1929) which worked in Hitler's favour.

● **WHY** was the mighty German industrial machine unable to generate full employment?

● **WHY** was the construction industry unable to provide sufficient houses to meet the needs of the people?

These are some of the fundamental economic questions that have to be resolved if we are to explain the origins of the Nazi rise to power. And since economists today cannot satisfactorily explain the deep-seated slump of the 1970s, we should not be surprised that they cannot explain the causes of the depression of 1929-33!

ONCE in power, however, there can be no doubt about Hitler's intentions. The cause of the Second World War, seen from the years after 1933, is easily explained.

Hitler was going to go on a land-grabbing spree.

BY PAUL KNIGHT

He told us all about his plans in Chapter 14 of *Mein Kampf*, in which he states:

"The foreign policy of a People's State must first of all bear in mind the duty of securing the existence of the race which is incorporated in this State. And this must be done by establishing a healthy and natural proportion between the number and growth of the population on the one hand and the extent and resources of the territory they inhabit, on the other. That balance must be such that it accords with the vital necessities of the people."¹

But Hitler's theory of proportion was not developed in the interests of scientific understanding: he was out to mobilise Germans behind his ideology.

He condemned previous leaders for allowing the country to lose out in the quest for political power. As far as he was concerned, the size of the nation's territory – which dictated the size of the population – was proportionate to its power in the world.

So Hitler decreed the need to expand eastwards, forcing back the Slavonic peoples and re-settling the pure Aryans, the better to breed a larger population of superior people.

Territorial expansion, he explained, was not dictated by current exigencies or agricultural productivity in relation to the size of the population, "but also from the political and military standpoints."

Frontiers, in his view, were not determined by biological or ecological considerations. "The German frontiers are the outcome of chance and are only temporary frontiers that have been established as the result of political struggles which took place at various times."

GIVEN the history of the formation of the other European States, few leaders could argue against this logic from a standpoint of political superiority. The ensuing conflict arising from Hitler's ideological perspective could not be settled in the debating arena, but –

**'We continue to
recreate conditions
that could give rise
to another Hitler'**

following the logic of Western political history – had to be resolved militarily.

It was all going to boil down to a simple test: might is right.

Hitler also wrote:

"Never consider the Reich secure unless, for centuries to come, it is in a position to give every descendant of our race a piece of ground and soil that he can call his own. Never forget that the most sacred of all rights in this world is man's right to the earth which he wishes to cultivate for himself and that the holiest of all sacrifices is that of the blood poured out for it."²

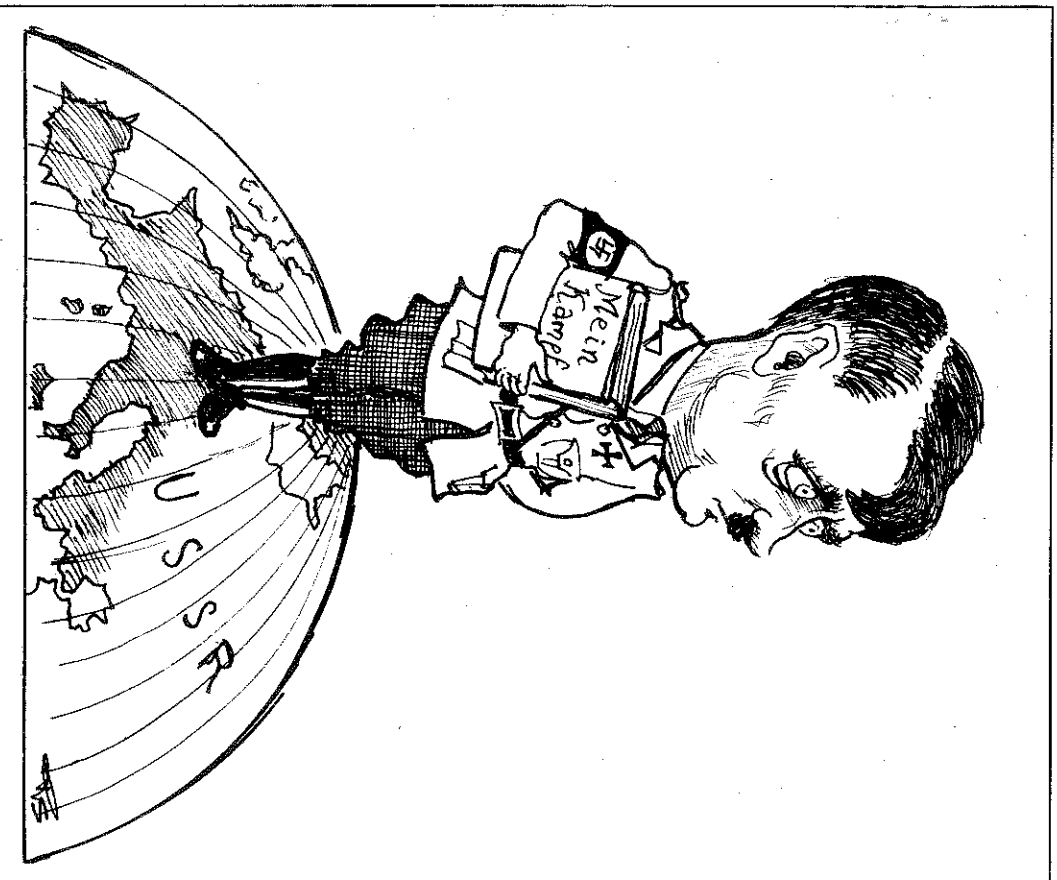
Hitler's theory of property, alas, would not have enabled the Third Reich to achieve this goal – even if it had lasted for 1,000 years.

But are we, today, any nearer the goal of defining a system whereby the rights of access to natural resources can be equally secured for all men and women on the basis of both economic efficiency and social justice?

I fear not; which is why we continue to recreate the conditions that one day might permit the rise of another Adolph Hitler.

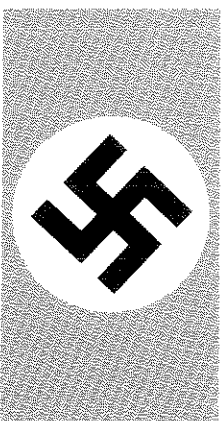
1. English translation published by Hurst and Blackett, London, 1939, p.523.

2. *Ibid.*, p.541.



People in Britain were amazed to find that the benevolent "Uncle Joe" of their dreams was really one of the most formidable monsters in history, who quietly swallowed up half Europe, and came very close indeed to swallowing the remainder; while the British Empire, which had seemed to be developing towards a genuine world-wide partnership of free peoples, fell to pieces because Britain had overstrained her economic resources in fighting the war.

That's the kind of thing that happens when people take a simplistic view of complex matters.



ONE USEFUL message which the historian has for the non-historian – about the causes of war – is that in most of them, there has been an enormous element of misunderstanding on both sides. The upshot has seldom corresponded with the wishes or anticipations of either side, even when that side has achieved a total victory.

Wars become possible when lots of people on both sides persuaded themselves to believe what their common-sense tells them is false: that it is worth sustaining infinite inconvenience and danger oneself, and inflicting infinite suffering on others, in order to sustain some vaguely-stated objective – political, religious or economic – which not one man in a thousand can explain.

We are all very shocked when some maniac with a bomb blows up

'Major decisions about war are usually taken on little more than somebody's hunch'

innocent people at the behest of the IRA or in some other abstruse cause; but is that maniac one whit more lunatic than most of the war heroes whom we applaud?

One place where I really would take issue with Professor Howard is

where he declared that "wars begin with conscious and reasoned decisions based on the calculation, made by both parties, that they can achieve more by going to war than by remaining at peace".

When wars come, it isn't just that people miscalculate, but that they deliberately omit from the equation some of the most important factors.

That is just what is worrying about the present state of the world.

Everybody who bothers to think is fully aware that a war-like exchange between the modern Super-Powers would produce destruction and suffering on an unimaginable scale, and perhaps extinguish the human race itself. Even if these terrible forecasts proved wrong, nothing remotely like the political and economic system favoured by any of the belligerents would survive the ordeal.

Everybody is equally aware that none of the major powers has "ambitions" which are in any sense vital to its own survival. What is frightening is not that somebody will make a miscalculation, but that people won't calculate at all.

To the best of my knowledge, none of the major belligerents of World War Two invited their own military, economic and diplomatic experts to make a dispassionate joint forecast of what would happen from start to finish if they went to war, and I much doubt whether any major government has invited its experts to engage in a similar exercise in the present situation.

All experience suggests that secondary decisions are often taken with great care and foresight, but the primary decisions are usually taken on little more than somebody's hunch.

YET IT is important – and here again we are reminded of the original stricture of Professor Howard – to avoid permitting our pre-occupation with the apocalyptic character of modern warfare to dispose us towards simplistic "solutions", gut reactions, if you like, which are not really solutions at all.

We are all worried, and rightly worried, about nuclear weapons. This concern can easily lead to disastrous panic reactions, such as to be so pre-occupied with this one danger that we pay inadequate attention to other developments of warfare techniques which may prove no less terrible.

Another panic reaction is to assume that we can somehow contract out of the nuclear age. This is impossible. Even if all governments could be persuaded to dispose of all

their nuclear weapons (which might not even be physically possible), the cat is out of the bag.

There are today literally thousands of people who possess enough knowledge of atomic physics to be able, granted the resources, to "re-invent" nuclear weapons.

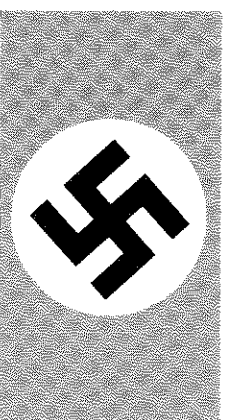
If war occurred, it would simply be a race to get in the first, and decisive, nuclear blow.

The danger is not nuclear war, but any war. People who concentrate their attention on the abolition of nuclear weapons may be performing a profound disservice to their own cause, because their hearers are likely to assume – wrongly – that this abolition would make the world perceptibly safer than it is.

'First lesson of the inter-war years: if goods cannot cross frontiers, armies will'

SO WHAT do we do about it? Do we just conclude that there are no solutions, and hope that politicians and soldiers will behave a lot more rationally in the future than they have behaved in the past? I don't think so.

We return to the point mentioned at the beginning: the long and convoluted chain of events which has led to past wars. If one link is struck from that chain, the chain is broken. There is no way of stopping a potential Hitler being born. Still less is there much chance of stopping some neurotic poet *mangré* from writing well-phrased nonsense.



What may be possible, is to strike at economic factors which appear to have played a large and essential part in the genesis of both the Second and the First World Wars: restrictions to international trade and to access to land.

I have never found out who first said "if goods cannot cross international frontiers, armies will" – but it is one of the most cogent statements to emerge from the inter-war years.

● Turn to p.66

If we cut through all the rhetoric and rot which accompanied the various challenges to international order during the inter-war period, one thing is very clear. A great many ordinary people sought in one way or another to break across existing economic barriers.

● Landless Japanese peasants, whose cottage industry of silk weaving was wrecked by the Depression, wanted to start a new life in Manchuria.

● Impoverished Italians hoped in some way to benefit from trading or settling in Abyssinia.

● Many Austrians and Sudeteners thought that by becoming incorporated in the German Reich, they would be able to buy and sell goods more easily than they could in two tiny, land-locked, tariff-ridden, states of Central Europe.

The militarists and dictators who proposed their own perilous "solutions" had plenty of willing hearers. What was the clamour for *Lebensraum* but a crude statement of land-hunger? Why did people wish to trample down national frontiers, save that those national frontiers were economic barriers as well?

If these problems existed in the 1930s, are they not similar to problems which threaten the world today? Are there not still landless and starving peasants in Asia, Africa and Latin America? Are the existing trade barriers one whit less dangerous than those of the past?

The most complex, the more technological, the more densely-populated the world becomes, the more important and urgent it becomes that these problems should be solved. As so often happens, we return to the old and familiar problems of land and of international trade.

Are we in danger of falling into the very pitfall of which Professor Howard warned us: of creating another simplistic solution and then discovering later that the world does not fit this convenient model?

Yes, there is such a risk. Even if we identify one link in the chain which leads to war, it may not be enough to strike out that link. The most acute phase of inter-war economic misery had long passed when the 1939 war broke out. An economic solution of the Sudetenland problem might have been possible in 1930; it certainly wasn't possible in 1938.

Getting our economics right is a necessary prerequisite for an enduring peace: but it is not, of itself, a guarantee that peace will be preserved.

CYPRIOTS

WARFARE is a double-edged sword for landowners.

For those who are driven off by a conquering army, the outcome is catastrophic: total loss of the life-giving resource.

For the victors who share out the spoils, new land becomes the basis of greater wealth.

But this profit-and-loss calculation based on the ebb and flow of power at the territorial boundary over-simplifies a far more complex response to the outcome of military conflict.

The dislocation of population brings huge rewards for those who retain their land.

For under the present system of taxation and property rights, refugees who are forced to migrate inwards to

BY
FRED HARRISON

safer territory have to pay for the security that they gain.

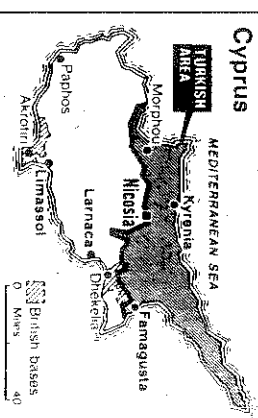
This demographic pressure is inevitably reflected in an accelerated increase in the value of land. Cyprus, the tortoise-shaped island at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, offers a dramatic illustration of these lessons.

TURKISH troops invaded Cyprus in 1974. They landed on the northern beaches, and 200,000 Greeks fled south.

In terms of the U.S. population, the number of displaced persons was equivalent to 83m people. The corresponding figure in the U.S.S.R. was 98m, in Britain 22m, and in France 20m.

By the time the truce was called, Turkey had staked a claim to 37% of Cyprus – the most productive, fertile third which accounted for 70% of the island's economic potential.

Cyprus



The Cypriot government received generous foreign aid, and began the arduous task of rebuilding the economy. Today, the *per capita* income of the 530,000 Greek Cypriots is U.S.\$5,000.

In the north, despite the rich resources, the *per capita* income of the Turkish population – supplemented by about 50,000 Turkish settlers from the mainland – lags at \$1,400.

These figures illustrate the extent of the boom in manufacturing and tourism since the invasion: what happened in the land market?

WAR brought the growth in land prices to a dead halt.

Before the invasion in July, 1974, prices were buoyant. As with all the other growing economies, the early years of the 1970s offered rich pickings for landowners.

Speculation was a social and economic problem.

Land needed for the tourist industry produced the highest returns, with rises between 15% and 20% (Table 1).

The invasion caused a slump in land values. People were running for their lives (22,000 emigrated to other countries), and they could not pack land in their bags.

The value of land that was suitable for the tourist industry dropped the most – by between 30% and 50%.

But once the new territorial borders had been set – a "green line" now

Table 1
Cyprus land values, 1970-1984
Percentage changes

	Agricultural land	Residential land	Tourist land
1970-73	8	15	20
1974 invasion	-10	-30	-50
1975-78	2	10	30
1979-80	10	20	150
1981-84	8	15	30

A divided land

dissects the island, patrolled by UN forces – people needed land to rebuild their lives.

The data in Table 1, which was provided by the Land Registry in Nicosia, tells the story of what happened.

● There was a modest increase in prices in the early years. Again – because of the need to attract foreign currency – the emphasis placed on the tourist industry provided lucrative opportunities for people who owned land near the warm waters of the Mediterranean.

● Land on the western coast near Paphos, worth £300 an acre before the invasion, now costs £30,000.

● By 1979, the rate of increase in land prices had regained its pre-invasion pace. Many poor peasants were suddenly rich. The price of inland agricultural fields – going for £30 a donum (= 0.302 acres) – was multiplied by a factor of 10.

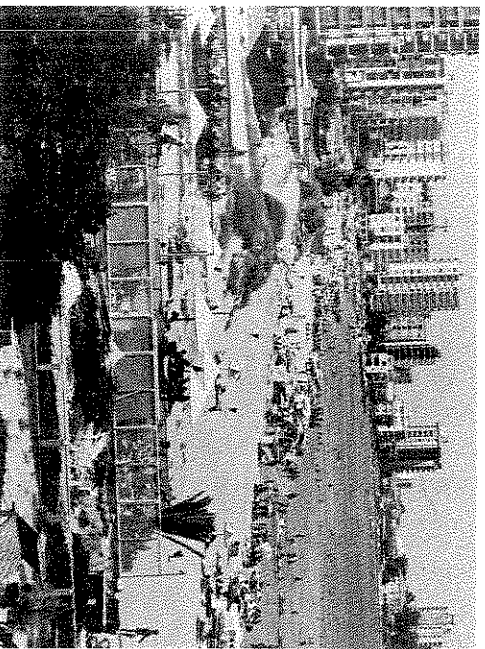
● The government's ambitious programme to rehouse refugees was successful, and this tempered the demands on the land market. Even so, land values out-paced the other costs of construction (Table 2).

THE LESSONS of this tragedy ought to be clear.

At a time of large-scale social calamities, the special status of land is thrown into sharp relief.

It is recognised as a national resource, which ought to be used for the benefit of the whole community.

It certainly ought not to be an economic weapon which a small minority can use against fellow citizens.



● FAMAGUSTA, prosperous tourist centre . . .

But in Cyprus, the invasion provided landowners with the means for extracting an increasingly disproportionate part of the wealth which the population created in its vigorous efforts to rebuild the economy.

Is this socially just? Hardly.

Nor is it economically sensible (for the impact on house-building, see the article on p.69).

In 1977, the Cyprus government reviewed its property taxes. Owners were asked to assess the market value of their assets, and a small tax was imposed.

Table 2 Housing construction % change in prices, 1977-1981	
Land	400
Site development	100
Labour and materials	62

Properties worth less than C£35,000 were exempt, and tax rates rose from 2.5% (on property values between £35,000 and £100,000) to 3.5% (for property values over £200,000).

This action was intended to curb speculation. The Property Owners Association were angry, but their general secretary, Thassos Catsourides, recalled for *Land and Liberty*:

“Property price increases were phenomenal. That’s a normal thing to happen, because there was a shortage of houses and buildings and land.

“This was because of the refugee problem and the fact that 27% of the territory was under Turkish occupation.”

Then, in 1983, the government decided to revise its tax rates. The tax provisions on immovable property

were changed last year. Property values up to £35,000 (based on 1980 values) became liable for a 1.5% tax.

And, said Mr. Catsourides: “For the first time, this law applies to vacant land and church land.”

The property owners hit back hard, arguing that it was unfair to administer a system of rent controls and tax the value of what they collected.

But would the property tax really retard development, as the association claimed? Said Mr. Catsourides, speaking in his office in Nicosia: “That’s the official view. And that’s the aim of the government.

“The government in Cyprus thinks that investment in property, except for tourist purposes, is not one of the priorities. They don’t consider it as a productive investment. They are trying to deter it.

“They have forbidden banks to give loans, or these loans are limited under strict regulation by the central bank.

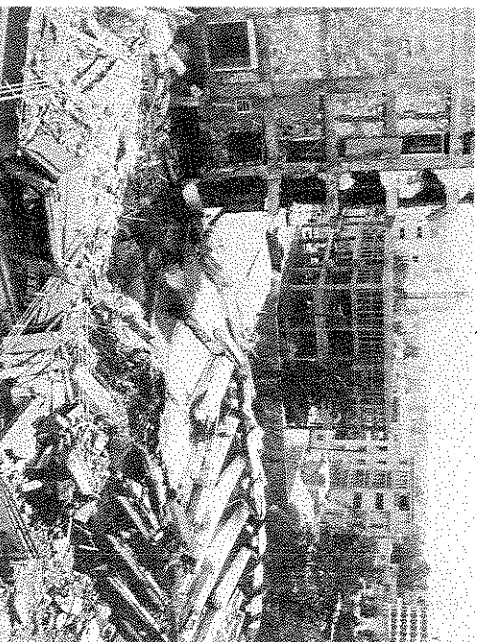
Immediately after the invasion, they provided incentives to help rebuild the economy. In the last two years, they have withdrawn all incentives and are imposing disincentives.”

SOCIAL justice requires a higher rate of tax on land values.

Why should individuals, who were fortunate not to be touched by a war, be legally free to exploit the misfortunes of others?

In fact, the rental value of land is the primary source from which a nation ought to finance the reconstruction of its war-torn economy. After all, rent is a flow of income

● Turn to p.68



. . . until the invasion brought devastation

● From p.67

generated by the presence and united efforts of the community, *not* the isolated efforts of deedholders.

But property owners do have a case when they say that a tax that falls on their capital investments – the improvements they make to the land – deters construction.

Cyprus needs an unimpeded flow of construction, if it is to maintain its high level of economic activity.

A sensible reform of the property tax would make a major contribution to alleviating the social and economic pressures on the island.

The tax ought to fall on the unimproved value of land. This would deter people from holding vacant land for speculative purposes, when it is needed for current use; and investors would not be deterred from sinking their resources into new structures, which would serve to hold back the rate of increase in rents and land prices.

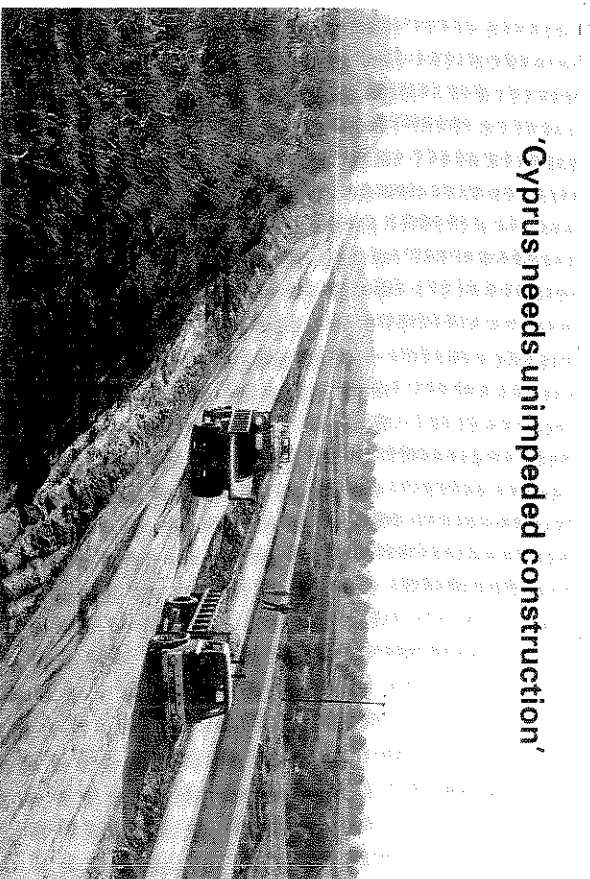
ABOVE all, perhaps, the land value tax might make a contribution to peace.

It would be seen as a unifying principle capable of overriding ethnic – and territorial – boundaries.

Could such a fiscal reform constitute one of the pillars of a peace pact with the Turkish population?

The territorial re-unification of the island is the major obstacle to peace, with squabbles over who should have what. The fiscal solution is a simple one. The land belongs to *no one*.

'Cyprus needs unimpeded construction'



● Motorway construction – in pursuit of economic recovery

TURKEY appropriated one-third of Cyprus in 1974 – but the region produced 70% of the island's gross output.

● Now, 30,000 troops have dug into Cyprus, and the Turkish community has declared itself an independent sovereign state.

● Washington's criticism of the invasion was muted by the fact that Turkey has strategic importance in the global chess game with Moscow.

● Turkey's border with the Warsaw Pact countries is longer than any other NATO country's. She has over 660,000 men under arms (the second largest NATO army after the USA).

● The Kyprianou administration in Nicosia says that the Turkish minority (18% of the population) should settle for 25% of the land, and should agree to a federal constitution.

individual, class or community: it belongs to *everyone*, equally.

Individuals would continue to hold and use their tracts for so long as they paid their dues to the community for the benefit of holding land. Thus, the rental value of the whole island would be shared out equally among the population through exchequer expenditures on socially necessary projects.

This would enable the government to reduce the tax burden on working people and their capital investments, which would in turn increase consumption, investment, employment and real living standards.

With the rise in prosperity, the flames of old jealousies and animosities would die out, thereby diminishing the risks of future civil and military conflict.

Land tax and the dowry

THE DOWRY is a major reason for land-hoarding in Cyprus. Traditionally, parents provide land and a house for a daughter when she gets married.

Even the humblest citizen regards it as his duty to provide this wedding present.

The financial burden, however, can be crippling for low-income families, which is why many of them buy plots of land 10 or 15 years ahead of need, while their daughters are small children.

Their logic is rational: while they can barely afford to buy land today (when family costs, such as the need for education, are high), the cost will be much higher tomorrow.

So they sink themselves into debt and pay-off in instalments.

Complementing this private cost is the social cost of distorting the process of urban growth. The outward expansion

onto fertile agricultural land is accelerated, and towns are pock-marked by vacant sites.

A reformed property tax – switching the emphasis on to the unimproved value of land – would have a major impact on both economy and society.

● Land would be properly developed within towns, thereby reducing many private costs (such as transportation), and *ipso facto* increasing the living standards of those on the lowest income scales;

● Land values would be reduced to levels proportionate to current economic activity; gone would be that portion of the price of land that can be attributed to land hoarding (whatever the motive).

Thus, wage-workers would be able to save more money over the family life-cycle, and so they would be better placed to finance dowries nearer to the time of the wedding.

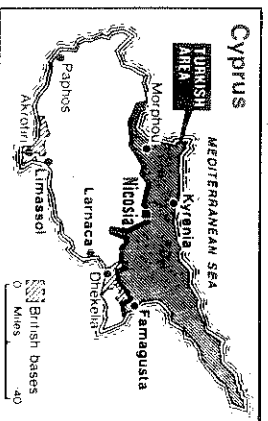
GONE would be the traditional need to tie up income in the form of idle land 10 or more years before the wedding.

DOWNS would go the proportion of family income needed to buy land.

Land value taxation, in fact, would reinforce the wishes of many poor families, and the emerging women's rights movement, that the importance of the dowry ought to be down-graded.

For if the tax rate was near 100% (which a sensible property tax on the unimproved value of land would be), the family would not have to lay out a large capital sum to buy land. There would just be the annual rent to find (payable to the exchequer), a cost which the newly married couple could easily meet.

Parents, then, would be relieved of a major part of the financial costs: they would have to meet only the expense of the house.



Turkish invasion highlights land value

CIVIL WAR in the Lebanon has imposed severe strains on the housing market in Cyprus.

Arab refugees have fled the desimated city of Beirut by the boatful, and the Cypriot ports of Limassol and Larnaca have been their safe havens.

But these merchants of the east, homeless but often rich, have forced rents sky-high.

One result is that Cypriot families have been priced out of the rented sector in the towns along the southern coast.

So the island needs renewed growth in construction of private sector housing.

There is evidence, however, that the authorities have made the common mistake of misreading the economic signals.

Normally, the house-building cycle would have serious macro-economic implications for the rest of society. This is not so in Cyprus, however, where exceptionally low unemployment rates of 1% - 2% are normal.

Nonetheless, the house-building cycle does have an influence on the quality of life of island residents. And that cycle is determined, in the main, by price trends in the land market.

CONSIDER the evidence in the table below. The number of dwellings completed rose continuously except for 1980.

But how do we explain this dip in growth?

Not, it seems, on the basis of the rent index: Cyprus law regulates the rents of many dwellings, and these

have not risen as fast as the costs of labour and materials.

The peak year for construction was 1979. The official explanation for this is as follows:

"The structural changes that were recently observed in the construction sector continued to a certain extent and into 1982. Construction in housing reached a peak in 1979 when it amounted to 63.5% of the total output. As the pressure for housing the refugees eased off, its share declined gradually to 54.0% in 1982."

Report by FRED HARRISON

So here we have the argument that the heavy post-invasion demand for housing had been largely satisfied, so there was a cut-back in private sector construction.

The competing explanation, which is fully documented elsewhere,² is that the price of land was so high that people's aspirations for new homes could not be fulfilled.

In the case of Cyprus, this is the evidence.

The price of building land rose by 5% to 10% in the years 1974 to 1978. Then, between 1978 and 1980, it leaped by a record 20%, easing off to a 10% to 15% rate of increase in the first years of the 1980s.

CYPRIOTS prefer to buy land and build their homes, rather than enter the rented sector.

It would appear, then, that the

downturn in construction in 1979-80 can be attributed to the remarkable increase in the price of residential land.

Further evidence for this argument can be gleaned from research conducted by William Doebele, the Professor of Advanced Environmental Studies at Harvard University.

In June 1981, he flew to Cyprus as a U.N. consultant, to advise the Cyprus Land Development Corporation on its operational strategies.

The objective of the C.L.D.C. is to lower the costs of land and housing for moderate-income families who were excluded from the private market.

Professor Doebele found that, between 1976 and 1981, the index of earnings for government employees had increased by almost two-and-a-half times.

The cost of site development had doubled to C£1,500 per donum (= 0.302 acres), while the index of construction costs (labour and materials) had increased by about 62%.

The cost of suitable sites, however, had increased by a massive four-fold.³

A U.N. report published in 1977 found that C£2,000 was a reasonable average figure for land that could be purchased by the C.L.D.C. In July 1981, that figure had leapt to between C£8,000 and C£12,000.

Surely there can be little doubt that the drop in house construction in 1979-80 was due to over-priced land, rather than the satisfaction of consumer demand?

DESPITE the presence of an occupation army, Cyprus remains one of the safest countries in the Middle East.

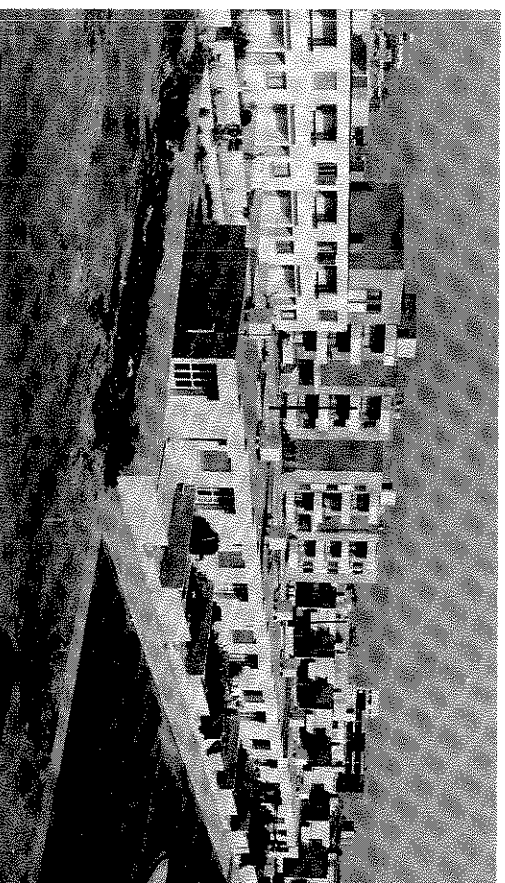
It is socially stable, and has now regained its pre-invasion economic prosperity.

So the island will continue to offer a refuge for people driven from their homes by wars in the neighbouring Arab countries.

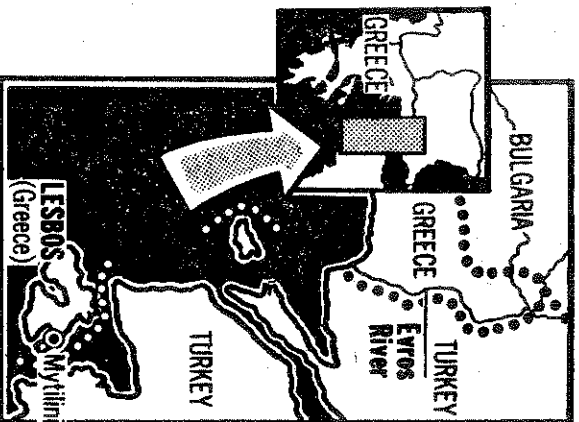
That is why the government in Nicosia ought now to pay special attention to the construction industry, and particularly the way in which land is used.

For quite apart from the demands that will continue to be imposed on the island by migrants, the Cypriot preference for large residential plots needs to be re-examined.

According to Professor Doebele: "The historic standard plot of 5,600 sq ft. (almost 1/8th of an acre)



● New homes — but at what price?



THRACE has always been Greece's borderland between Europe and Asia: today, it is the flashpoint between Greece and Turkey. Almost all of Greece's Muslim population, 120,000-strong, is located in this region. Discrimination against the Muslims could be the excuse that Ankara needs to launch an attack similar to the Cyprus operation in 1974.

TERRITORIAL disputes are at the heart of the Graeco-Turkish conflict.

The smallest local quarrel assumes major diplomatic significance in Athens and Ankara.

The damming of a river is interpreted as part of a long-term strategy for conquest: that's why the Evros river is watched with anxiety by the two powers.

The Evros marks the Thrace border. At the village of Dilofoi, it passes a wooded island called Tsiplak.

● CYPRUS — from p. 69

may be inefficient for moderate-income housing under modern conditions. It may be an excessive use of land, requiring longer roads, drainage, water, sewers, electric and other service facilities.

"It leads to a relatively spread pattern of urbanization, causing longer journeys to work, shopping and recreation, and greater energy consumption."⁴



● Prof. William Doebele

These social costs are normally associated with land speculation: in Cyprus, this is not the usual motive, but its impact is still the same.

More compact urban environments result in higher living standards and lower infrastructure costs.

In a free market society, this can be best achieved by reforming the property tax: if everyone had to pay the full economic cost of his land-holding to the community (with reciprocal reductions in other forms of taxation), the size of house plots would be tailored to actual need.

The Turkish invasion has reminded Cypriots (both Greek and Turk) that land is a precious resource: the most precious resource.

It therefore needs to be conserved and used economically, to the best advantage of the whole community.

Before many more acres are needlessly wasted under concrete, the government of Cyprus ought to re-evaluate its fiscal policy and town planning procedures, to see how it might improve its goals of a prosperous — and united — community.

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2. Fred Harrison, *The Power in the Land*, London: Shephard Walwyn, 1983.
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4. *Ibid*, p.5.

RENT, LABOUR AND MATERIALS: prices indices, 1973-1982

	Rent	Labour	Materials	Dwellings completed (private sector)
1973	100.0	100.0	100.0	—
1974	103.4	118.4	126.6	—
1975	101.1	112.6	129.4	—
1976	101.3	114.0	137.7	1,698
1977	104.5	130.6	143.9	2,400
1978	113.3	172.7	151.6	3,952
1979	125.5	211.0	173.1	5,496
1980	138.7	265.3	200.3	5,286
1981	149.0	316.6	227.5	5,429
1982	154.4	356.1	238.8	5,604

SOURCE: *Construction and Housing Report 1982*. Nicosia: Ministry of Finance, Dept. of Statistics and Research.

A few years ago, the Turks dammed the river on their side and claimed the island as Turkish territory. Local Greeks fear that this kind of provocation could lead to military manoeuvres that would end in a full-scale war.

The most likely cause of military conflict, however, is the way in which Greece treats the Turkish-speaking Muslims of Thrace.

Everyone in the region agrees that relations between Muslims and Christians are good. Discrimination, however, is not difficult to recognise.

● Muslim houses tend to be smaller, older and in poorer condition compared with the modern blocks of flats owned by Christians.

● The law does not treat both religious groups equally. Muslims complain that it is difficult for them to get drivers' licences for tractors.

● Local administrators do not respond to the needs of Muslims as quickly as to the needs of Christians.

BUT THE starkest evidence for discrimination is to be found in the law relating to land ownership.

A law passed in 1938 regulated land deals in border regions.

Until 1965, it seems, this caused no ethnic problems. Then, according to one mufti, the trouble began. "We are not free to buy and sell land. A Muslim can't sell any immovable property to another Muslim, but he can to a Christian. I believe the government is trying to throw us out slowly."^{*}

Thracians claim that relations between Muslim and Christian have deteriorated since the conflict over Cyprus.

TURKEY, however, believes that the Greeks have adopted a punitive stance towards Muslims — which is why they sent their troops into Cyprus in the first place, to defend the Turkish-speaking population against the threat of a coup inspired by Greece.

GREECE, on the other hand, argues that Turkey still aspires to territorial aggrandisement — as evidenced by her claim on islands in the Aegean sea.

With claim and counter-claim, the original cause of the disputes (the desire for land) is lost in the prejudices of religion.

*E. Hadjipetros, 'Thrace: A Glimpse at the Borderland', *The Athenian*, February 1984.

Marxism & Militarism

ANALYSIS by INSITE

WARFARE specialists who study the men, their weapons, and their strategies, are often so close to their subject that they fail to accord due weight to economic imperatives. And the detached, scholarly approach is often distorted by ideological sympathies.

Take, for example, the statistics known as "force ratios" – the number of full-time military personnel per 1,000 population (see table).

● Marxist countries, of which there are now 34, have a clear propensity to militarise their populations.

● Of the 32 countries for which there are statistics, the average force ratio is 13.3. This is double the ratio for 109 non-Marxist countries (6.1).

● The force ratio for the eight European Marxist countries is 13.8, compared with the 7.6 for 17 European non-Marxist countries.

How do we account for this?

Not exclusively in terms of a theory which claims that Marxist countries wish to dominate the world. For why should Mongolia, sandwiched between Red China and Russia, have a force ratio of 21.2?

So far as we know, Mongolia has no aspiration to conquer her giant neighbours. Nor does Romania (10.5) or Yugoslavia (10.9) or Bulgaria (19.7), countries which do not need to maintain a high state of readiness for war because of the threat of attacks from Western countries.

An explanation has been offered by James Payne, a professor of political science at Texas A & M University. Military might, he wrote on April 10 in the *Wall Street Journal*, is an expression of their basic character:

"The ruling parties in Marxist regimes reach for military power to validate their ideological view of a world locked in perpetual struggle. They have, as Henry Kissinger put it, 'a vested interest in tension.'"

This sounds more like an expression of the ideology of the analyst than a theoretical formulation that explains the facts.

When it comes to militancy, Western countries are every bit as keen to get in on the act as Marxist countries.

Is there an economic explanation for the statistical divide between the two ideological blocks?

Marxist countries are economically inefficient: centralised planning cannot provide everyone with a job, or meet the aspirations of their citizens for decent and rising living

standards. But Marxist ideology does not accept the possibility of unemployment in a post-capitalist society. So what better way to mop up unemployment than to conscript workers into the army?

Non-Marxist countries, however, are little better at sustaining full employment. They deal with the problem in two ways:

● The borders of capitalist countries are open. Unemployment is shifted around the globe in a way that is unacceptable within Marxist countries. Thus, Pakistanis and South Koreans migrate to Saudi Arabia; Turks end up as "guestworkers" in West Germany; the British settle in Australia; Mexicans go over the fence to California.

● The welfare state provides a safety net, to diffuse the risk of overt social rebellion.

If we add the military personnel to the army of the unemployed in non-Marxist countries, we get "force ratios" similar to those in Marxist countries.

The lesson: basic defects in the structure of both economic systems lead to social discontent and/or militarisation. And both trends dispose people to aggression which in the end makes war seem like an attractive proposition.

FORCE RATIOS: full-time military personnel per 1,000 population

MARXIST	NON-MARXIST
U.S.S.R.	U.S.A.
East Germany	West Germany
Poland	Norway
North Korea	South Korea
South Yemen	North Yemen
Cuba	Colombia
Nicaragua	Guatemala
Laos	Pakistan
Albania	Argentina
Bulgaria	South Africa
Mongolia	El Salvador
16.3	9.1
14.0	7.8
11.9	9.0
38.0	14.7
12.5	3.9
23.5	2.6
27.8	2.3
15.8	5.2
19.3	6.0
19.7	2.3
21.2	5.4

● Communist Party Secretary Hu Yaobang disclosed, early in May, that China – now in the throes of adopting free market principles in industry and agriculture – would reduce its 42m-strong army by 1m men. The workers are needed to meet the demands of a burgeoning economy.

Land, war and peace

● **WARMONGERS** usually have to first gain political power before they can lay their hands on military power. To this end, they are helped by the civil discontent that is a product of an inefficient economic system. Hitler – and, more recently, many dictatorships – have emerged via this route.

● **PEACE** requires the elimination of the economic barriers to prosperity: full bellies, a decent home and access to education and recreation are major obstacles against those who lust after the power which they wish to exercise in illegitimate ways.

● **CAN** we define an ideal economic system which would help to minimise the conditions that tempt people into war? **JASON CHANG** (pictured right), who is Civilian Professor at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, has thought about this problem for a long time. In his view, there is such a system.

A VIABLE tax structure is vital to a nation and its citizens. It affects the economy and every aspect of the individual's pocketbook. A sound tax structure should encourage production: it should certainly not lead to inflation and unemployment.

Such problems as cost-of-living adjustments or labour strikes should not exist.

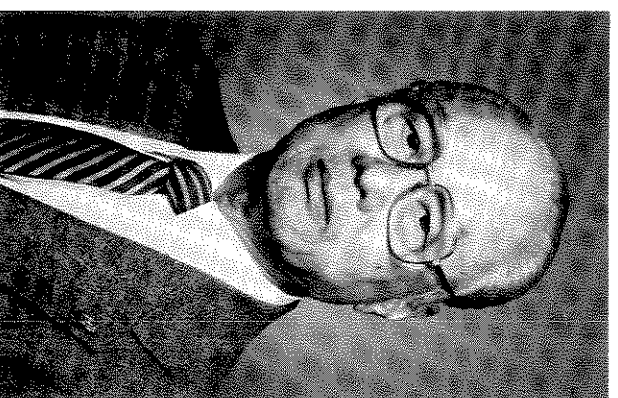
The ideal system should not be complicated and beyond our under-

standing, but rather, fair, reliable, easy to administer, and yet productive of revenue.

After decades of studying tax problems, I have come to the conclusion that the United States could benefit from a tax system which would fall increasingly upon land values only.

A land value tax system is, as the term indicates, a tax structure

● Turn to p. 72



primarily on the value of land; yet it is essentially different from the customary taxes levied on real property.

As applied to the land value tax system, the word "land" means, as Alfred Marshall pointed out, "a free gift of nature". It excludes all kinds of improvement, whether the improvement be so modest as a drainage ditch or as imposing as a sky-scraper.

We would do well to understand Sandburg's wisdom: "All we need to begin with is a dream that we can do better than before; all we need to have is faith, and that dream will come true; all we need to do is act, and the time for action is now."

I do not suggest that we abruptly change our present tax structure into a system of taxing land values only, but that we should accomplish it gradually. The transitional period might take five to ten years or more.

The main point, however, is our decision to act.

THE SOCIALLY created value of land, known as economic rent, is growing day by day.

This truth was discovered originally by David Ricardo, the English economist, but was comprehensively developed by Henry George, an American economist, in the late 19th century.

Especially since the last world war, this truth has become more and more evident.

Manhattan Island, in New York City, was originally bought by the Dutch from Indian leaders with only 24 gold dollars. Its worth has grown to astronomical figures. It has grown so fast not because of the efforts of the individual owners but mainly because of the steady increase in demand for the land. This situation is true not only in New York City, but almost everywhere; the difference is only a matter of degree.

The price of anything else, such as machines, cars, tools, buildings, even planted trees, is decided by the law of demand and supply. If we levy a tax on a product, it would drive up its price.

The price of land, however, is decided by the situation of *demand* only, because we can neither increase nor decrease the supply of land. The only thing we can do is utilize or improve the land.

Increased population, transportation, the quality of environment, and particularly land speculation, constantly increase the price of land. This is why land price grows higher and higher, and speculatively-held lots are not utilized.

This is why slum areas exist in nearly every city, and why housing is in short supply everywhere, because the cost of available lots is beyond what people can afford.

IF WE levy a tax on land values only, and not on improvements or buildings, the land price would go down (proportionate to the economic rent being taken away) instead of climb. This is the *vitality important point* we should keep in mind when we seek to change the tax laws.

Should we gradually levy an increasingly heavier tax on land value, public revenue would grow and would eventually be sufficient to support government expenditure at all levels.

This is a mathematically certain consequence that has been overlooked by most economists.

Because we could derive enough revenue from land values only, we could decrease or, in due time, even abolish other taxes levied on capital, buildings, machinery, etc. This would pave the way to reduce the price of all consumer goods and allow the public, in general, to enjoy relatively inexpensive products. At the same time, it would be equally important that, with cheaper production costs,

**"Underdeveloped countries
— most of their lands
are monopolised
by privileged groups"**

this system would enable the United States to export products much more readily.

When we reduce the taxes on capital in general, we automatically reduce the cost of investments, thereby providing more incentive for small or marginal investors to invest. With more available capital for production, we would eventually be able to increase the supply of all kinds of products at lower cost. This is the most dependable way to reduce the price level.

Furthermore, under this tax system, we would be able either to reduce or, in due time, even to abolish the personal income tax system, which has gradually become the backbone of the tax structure for the United States since 1913.

The income tax system was originally inspired by what eventually became Karl Marx's idealistic theory: "To each according to his need and from each according to his ability." But, nowadays, the income tax system has reached a point where

fewer people desire to work hard and more people want to hide their incomes. If we can develop something better, and abolish the income tax system, it would naturally enable each of us to anticipate a bigger pay cheque. Consequently, most Americans would be able to enjoy more and live better. We would not need cost-of-living adjustments and disruptive union strikes.

CONFRONTED with these proposals, the tax specialists, especially government officials in Washington, will immediately cite the Constitution which prohibits the Federal Government from touching any revenue sources belonging to the states or local governments.

This situation could be easily handled through the revenue sharing programme, and in so doing, all states where such a system is in practice would have priority in the revenue sharing.

We should apply such a system in Washington D.C. first. Within a reasonably short period, we would see slum areas disappearing, speculative lots being developed, and businesses prospering.

Someone might ask, why and how? The answer is simple: the owners of speculative lots, or slum areas, would have to pay very high taxes, but they would develop those areas without the threat of additional taxes. If they could sell to other people, the new owners would develop — otherwise they would not buy the land.

This far-reaching policy could also be applied to advantage in the foreign aid programme.

Underdeveloped countries have one vital fact in common — most of their lands are monopolised by privileged groups, and the vast majority of the population is denied adequate resources for a decent life. Yet, they constantly ask for aid from the United States.

When they approach Washington again, we should tell them: "We like to help those who have helped themselves first — with a good tax system on land values."

At the International Meeting on Cooperation held in Cancun, Mexico, in October 1981, President Reagan said the best way to help a hungry man is to teach him how to fish, instead of giving him a fish. The former would help him forever and the latter would cause him to be hungry again soon after he ate the fish.

A land value tax system in an underdeveloped country is just as important as teaching that hungry man how to fish.

● Throughout the world, BIO-REGIONALISM is emerging as the focus of new political movements which promise to break down the structure of the modern political nation-state. In the U.S., there are about 20 bio-regional organisations now at work.

● According to Kirkpatrick Sale, author of *Human Scale*, bio-regionalism "is more an attitude

than a construct, more a way of learning to think than an ideology". But he says that, in the U.S. at least, bioregionalism offers the prospect of political change.

● The philosophy underlying bioregionalism promises to establish a new harmony between Man and Nature, which ought to remove many of the causes of organised conflict between nations.

But so far, the emergent movements have failed to define practical ways in which the resources of nature can be used to establish and maintain harmony between men.

● In this article, ALANNA HARTZOK defines some basic principles which could transform the state of mind into practical reality.

Natural State or Nation State?

BIOREGIONALISM is an emerging new perspective from which to view North America and the rest of the planet as well. Instead of the usual boundaries separating huge nations and tiny nations, huge states and tiny states, areas are defined by natural formations and contours of the earth itself – the mountains, rivers, watersheds, and deserts.

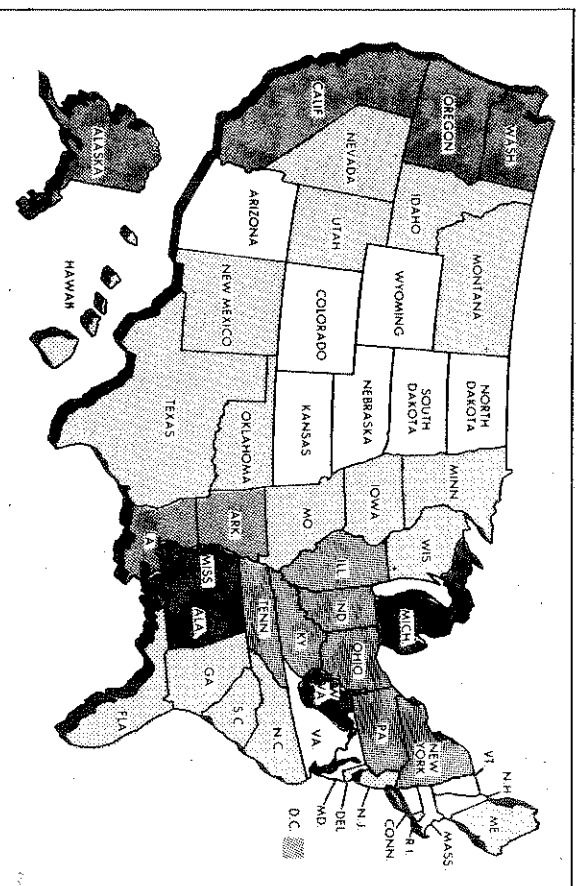
The lifeforms of these regions have had their unique identities formed and imprinted by the particular work of Nature herself. Even in a culturally homogenous nation like the USA, dialects and customs, diet and culture vary from region to region.

Bioregional identity can be on different scales. One might identify oneself as being from Appalachia on the larger scale and the Cumberland Valley on the smaller. The significant perceptual shift is that one becomes *eco*, or whole earth conscious, rather than *ego*, or nation state conscious.

The eco-logical, unified earth consciousness that perceives the patterns and harmonies of naturally contoured bioregions is a quantum leap from the ego-separative, linear way of conceiving the world that stakes out straight line boundaries like so many squares on a chess board.

Ecological consciousness seeks to integrate the human kingdom with the other kingdoms of nature and sees the human purpose and responsibility as that of caretaker of the earth. Ego centred consciousness fights and squabbles over these lines of merely human demarcation and seeks to conquer, exploit and dominate the life forms therein, including the more unitive, earth centred people, the traditionalists and natives throughout the world.

A BIOREGIONAL form of governance has emerged over the last few years in the Ozarks, a very distinctive region currently com-



● Will the ruler-straight lines on the map drawn by politicians eventually give way to new communities within boundaries set by nature?

posed of parts of five different states. The coordinator of the Ozark Area Community Congress (OACC), David Haenke, refers to the work of a bioregional congress as "ultra green" politics. This is their task as he sees it:

Green politics is the process whereby the actual political process gets in line with and is reinvested with earth power, the trans-human forces that actually run the planet. We are taking the human centre out of politics, and putting human beings as a species back into perspective – one species cooperating with others under the paradigm of natural bioregional law.

OACC has been meeting for five years and involves representatives from nearly 200 organisations. More than a network, the congress is patterned along lines similar to the ancient Iroquois Confederacy and maintains 12 standing committees including education, health, energy and economics.

Consensus resolutions developed in the committees become the constitution which is then activated both inside and outside of the established political structures. OACC sees its task as building a bioregion run under ecological law, or a biopolitical unit

run according to the politics of ecology.

More than simply environmental defence, political ecology is defined as "sustainability under ecological law". As a Congress, it serves to empower individuals and organisations who are working to attain a sane and harmonious way of life.

While OACC has not yet developed a clear land tenure and tax policy, we can see a prototype of the path lying ahead in the work of the Appalachian Alliance with its excellent six state study, *Who Owns Appalachia?* and who pays (and doesn't pay) the taxes. Awareness of the inequities highlighted in this report has led to various grassroots land and tax reform efforts, notably the Kentucky Fair Tax Coalition.

As people become more conscious of the economic forces operating in their various regions, more attention inevitably will be paid to the vital issues of who owns the earth.

The old egocentric attitudes have been mirrored for many centuries now in our institutionalised land tenure system.

● Turn to p.74

The right to secure possession of the products of one's labour has for past ages been extended to include exclusive possessory control by the individual to the earth itself, with land either under-used or mis-used while millions starve for lack of access. The consequent maldistribution of material wealth has jeopardised our political democracy more than any other factor.

Few can conceive how the accumulated wealth of the Rockefeller family can exceed the sum total of all that can be claimed by poor whites and non-whites in the whole country.

This excessive wealth and the resultant control over politicians and the political process has made it impossible for the U.S. government to respond to the needs and desires of the people.

The United States is unwilling to cooperate on the international level as well. For example, performance by the U.S. at the United Nations has been a great embarrassment. While 117 nations voted for the Law of the Seas, thus affirming that the deep sea minerals belong equally to all, the U.S. was one of only four votes against it.

With 111 nations voting to end nuclear testing, *only* the U.S. voted no.

While Reagan may be the most blatant evidence that something is deeply wrong with our democracy, it is difficult to feel hope that any other president would meet the challenge of the present crises as long as the underlying economic structures remain intact.

And it is even more difficult to imagine that the fundamental restructuring of our economic system would occur without the transformation of the United States as a national entity.

SIGNS that the nation state as currently recognised has served its term are most clear among the bioregionally-identified groups that are springing up throughout North America and the rest of the world.

Global bio regional consciousness is a great aid in dissolving our artificially constructed nation-state identifications. A much deeper, more authentic identity extends from the family to community to bio regional to planetary levels.

Our consciousness and our institutional structures can break through the nation state identity both ways – by centralising to the planetary level through appropriate functions (global resource agency, world court, peace-keeping, for instance), and by decentralising to the bio regional and

local levels.

Political power and decision making, aided by proper use of mass media and communications, must be coordinated throughout the various levels. Taxation policy and human rights need to be based firmly on the equal birthright of all to the earth itself.

Ralph Borsodi, a holistic philosopher, proposed that the various functions on the different levels be clearly defined and funded from an appropriate source. He proposed that local communities should collect the value, or ground rent, of the surface lands, bioregions should be funded by subsurface mineral values, and that global functions should be financed by the first two plus the deep sea resources and whatever materials might be used from outer space.

What maintains the nation states in their present form, outside of our identification with them, is our material support through the various tax systems. We feed the nation state with our labour, four months out of each year in the USA.

While many millions will now march for peace, write letters for peace, and pitch in at local non-profit peace centres, how many are really ready to cut the cord and refuse to continue to pay for the bombs we no longer want? What are we really most afraid of, the BOMB or the Internal Revenue Service?

OUR FEDERAL tax system is no longer effectively supporting the welfare of the people on any level.

Our constitutional rights have been eroded decade after decade until it is often hard to distinguish the power of the president from that of a dictator.

Of what real use is a pledge of allegiance to the centralised power structure in Washington D.C. with its ever increasing numbers of miserable and impoverished citizens?

A respect for and determined commitment to values of life, liberty, and

the pursuit of happiness, freedom of worship and expression, production and exchange is one thing: blind adherence to fossilised political structures quite another.

Why, for instance, should those on the West Coast have any more affinity to the European colonised North Atlantic Coast than to the Asiatic Pacific Rim?

We need to affirm basic human rights – economic *and* political – throughout the world, and support those institutional structures which are working to restore and extend those rights. To assert that any of these human rights rests with the continued existence of any particular nation state (i.e., political, individual rights with the USA, or economic, social rights with the USSR) is a neanderthalian world view.

Equally archaic is a position that equates a particular nation state with either the devil himself or God's kingdom on earth. Immature people who have not recognised the complexity of life project all good or all bad onto the super-power conflict, thereby fuelling the fires of alienation and separation. A better way is to affirm the common dimensions, needs, and aspirations of people throughout the world.

The new world view would encompass and transcend the highest values of both Right and Left. It would affirm political *and* economic rights as complementary, valuing the earth as the common heritage of all while acknowledging individual rights to the products of one's labour on this earth.

This philosophy simply extends to all of the earth's land and resources the basic principle of common heritage which has already been affirmed by most of the global community in its endorsement of the Law of the Sea Covenant. As such, it is an appropriate ideological tool to build the emerging new world order on a fair, firm and peaceful foundation.

LAND & LIBERTY

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Land plan to end the Arab-Israeli war

"If only the Israelis and Palestinian Arabs could live together in peace".

Such a wish is often expressed by people of good will, but wishes only lead to frustration and failure if the underlying causes of the conflict are not understood.

The struggle between the Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs is not just a clash of ethnic groups or religions, but a battle for territory.

When two nations claim the same land area, they will go to war unless some means is available to resolve their claims with justice.

Plans offered so far for Israel have consisted of creating a Palestinian state or autonomous region made up of the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and the Gaza Strip. The problem with these solutions is that they are unacceptable to both sides. Mere autonomy would not satisfy the Palestinians and statehood would be unacceptable to the Israelis, who would fear that a Palestinian state would threaten them, regardless of international guarantees.

Plans offered for Jerusalem, such as making it an international city, have also been unacceptable to the Israelis, who demand nothing less than full control over the city, while the Arabs have also pressed claims at least to the pre-1967 part of Jerusalem.

The problem of land claims may be too complex for the relatively simple solution of partition into Palestinian and Israeli states. Complex problems often require complex solutions. The place to start is the land itself.

Who is the proper owner of the land of Israel?

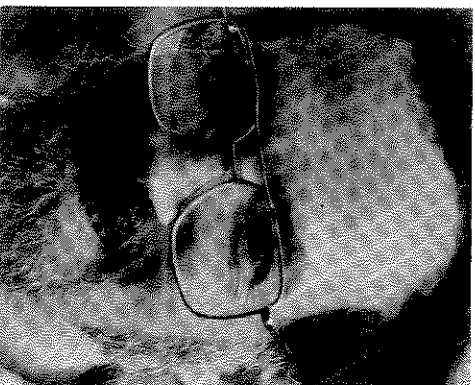
JEWIS claim ownership from Biblical days, but Arabs claim centuries of possession before the State of Israel was established, and individual Arabs have claims against Israel. Israel might justify its claim as the latest victor at war. Indeed, if one were to trace any claim to the land one would eventually trace it to conquest by force.

The sad fact is that the land of Israel has been conquered or controlled again and again, by the Ancient Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabs, the Crusaders, the Turks, the British.

● **ARABS** make up just 17% of the population of Israel: but the figure would be larger, had the Palestinians not fled in their great exodus of 1948.

● **LAND** rights are at the source of the conflict between Jew and Arab. Even the bedouins, who support the state of Israel, feel aggrieved because of land expropriations.

● **PLANS** to resolve the running conflicts are noticeable by their absence. Everyone seems to be resigned to a solution that would finally emerge through the barrel of a gun.



● **FRED FOLDVARY** (above) presents for discussion an imaginative solution to the age-old hatreds between Jew and Arab. Its implementation would require imagination – and goodwill; the kind of goodwill that is absent today. But unless the combatants seek out and create that goodwill, they will all finally be the losers...

The fact is that the current residents are there, and for almost all, whether Moslem, Jew, or other, there is no other home.

The most just solution would be to give each resident an equal share of the land. This would be in harmony with the recognition by most of humanity of the equality of humankind, that no one group of persons has any moral right to have superiority over others.

If we recognise in principle an equal claim to the land by all inhabitants of Israel, there is no need to impose any arbitrary partition from outside authority. There is no need for any physical redistribution of

land. As Henry George pointed out in his book *Progress and Poverty*, the benefit of land ownership is reflected in its land value, which is also manifested as "economic rent", or the amount that the land would rent for in a free market, excluding any human-made improvements such as buildings and canals.

By collecting all the land rent and then dividing it among the residents, the "profit of the land" (as expressed in Ecclesiastes 5:9) would be equalised. All land now controlled by the State of Israel, including land owned by the government, could then be subjected to an assessment of land rents.

But to whom would the rent be paid?

The Confederation of the Levant

THE TERRITORY now held by the State of Israel would come under the jurisdiction of a new government, the Confederation of the Levant. This confederation would be made up of three states: Israel, Palestine, and the Canaan Free State.

One of its functions would be to collect land rent from both private and government land owners. The confederation would turn over 50% of its land rent revenue to the three constituent states according to their population.

Each person in the confederation would choose to become a citizen of one of the three nations, contracting with one of the national governments for terms of seven years. Most Jews would likely choose to belong to Israel and most Moslems would choose Palestine.

What would be the boundary lines of these nations? After all chose their nationality, the territory of each nation would consist of the land possessed by the individual citizens plus government-owned lands.

● Canaan would own no land as a state other than sites for its government buildings.

● The government of Israel would be given possession of any state-owned land within its pre-1967 territory and the Golan Heights, while government lands in the West Bank and the Gaza would be given to

● Turn to p.76

Palestine.

● Privately-owned land in either territory would be a part of the nation of the owner's choice.

Thus there would be a checkered pattern and the three nations would be fragmented throughout the confederation.

The reason for the third nation, Canaan, would be to allow those who do not wish to live under Israeli or Palestinian control to have a third option. Some Christians, Druze, Bahais, and non-religious persons would likely choose the Canaan Free State, which would be created with a constitution providing for a minimal secular government.

In Canaan there would be no taxation, no government schools, and no state enterprises, not even a government post office, in order to minimise any friction caused by favouritism or bias. Its government would consist only of a legislature, courts, and an executive branch with a police force. This would permit the Christians, Bahais, Druze, and other groups and individuals to set up their own institutions with no interference from the government other than protection from force and fraud.

The Confederation of the Levant would retain 14% of the total land rent for its administration. It would have three basic functions:

● **The collection of land rents.** This would include making annual land value or rent assessments. All land in the confederation would be subject to rent paid to the confederation as trustee of the land, but the confederation would impose no land use restrictions or regulations.

● **Peace and Justice.** Disputes among the three states would be resolved by the Supreme Court of the confederation, and there would be lower courts where citizens of the three states could bring disputes that they had with citizens of one of the other states. Confederation police would enforce laws and there would be a confederate legislature and executive to carry out these minimal functions. However, there would be no confederate economic or welfare agencies, as those would be functions of the states.

● **External affairs.** The confederation would have defence forces to protect the area from external threats – the states could only have domestic police forces. Probably U.N. troops would be used at first. Representing the contiguous territory, some diplomatic and other foreign relations would be conducted by the confederation on behalf of the states, but each of the three states would have seats in the United Nations and could have

trade agreements with other countries. The confederation could have non-voting observers at international organisations, but actual voting membership would be retained by the three states as sovereign, though confederated, countries.

The other 36% of the total land rent would be split equally among the three states, so each would get a fixed 12%, regardless of its population. This would be a counterbalance to the domination of the confederation by any state.

For example, suppose the extreme case where Palestine came to have 90% of the people of the confederation. It would get .9 times .5 of the land rent, or .45, plus .12, for a total of 57% of the total land rent. If Israel then had 8% of the people, it would get .08 x .5 + .12 or 16% of the land rent, and Canaan would get 13%. Thus the smaller the portion of the population, the greater the land rent revenues per capita it would receive, which would help it to strengthen its protective forces and also make it more attractive for residents so that the populations would be induced to equalise on economic grounds.

Though 36% of the land rent would not be equally distributed by population, it would be equally distributed to the constituent states and provide a counterbalance to any one state's becoming dominant through immigration.

Each of the states would govern its domestic affairs as it saw fit, with the provision that in Canaan there would be a minimal government. In addition to the land rent received, Israel or Palestine could have other sources of revenue and government involvement in the economy as they chose. Each state would elect representatives to the government of the confederation on the basis of population and also with a fixed number per state, again protecting the interests of the smaller states.

Israel and Palestine would have their own currencies, while Canaan would have no national currency or central bank, and the residents would be free to use any currency they wished, avoiding the imposition of any one cultural standard as well as any possible inflation or controls that the other two could be subject to – again a safety valve.

There would have to be some authority above the confederation at first, to keep the three states at peace and help the confederation become established. An International Commission with representatives from the U.N., the U.S., and other parties could act as a court of appeal and have a peace keeping force to defend the confederation during an interim

period. This would be for a number of years, after which the International Commission would be phased out.

Justice and Land

IF THE confederation idea were to work at all, it would not be due to any International Commission, but to the inherent justice of the plan. From the point of view of the average Israeli, the loss of state territory would be compensated by the establishment of peace.

He would still possess his house or store or farm. He would still be a citizen of Israel, even if he lived in Samaria or Judea – for those Jews living in the West Bank would be free to remain there. All that would be required of him would be to pay rent on the land he possessed, as payment for his share of the common heritage of the Levant. Those who owned no land would gain the common benefits of the land rent.

Idle land owned by absentee owners would be let go to avoid paying the rent, making land available to those who wished to use it productively.

Most importantly, the political struggle for land would be transformed into an economic marketplace where land would be available to anyone who would use it productively, in a free and open market.

An Israeli might feel resentment that his neighbour may now be a citizen of Palestine and the land next to his no longer Israeli. Equally a Palestinian Arab might not welcome the sight of an Israeli across the way from him. Yet a feeling of justice would permeate the land, for each was paying equally for the benefit of land holding, and both paying to the same Confederation.

The true source of resentment and hatred is the feeling that another is enjoying a privilege, an unfair advantage, or a position of dominance. When all would be equal, such feelings would subside and then and only then would cooperation and friendship be possible.

From the point of view of the average Palestinian, he could now be a citizen of a Palestinian State. The lack of a contiguous territory would be compensated for by the inclusion of Arabs and their land within the pre-1967 Israeli borders.

Those who did not wish to be subjected to Palestinian (and possibly PLO) authority, or to Israeli rule, with its religious laws, would be free

to join Canaan and live in a libertarian secular state where one could pursue one's culture and religion free from any state controls on personal conduct other than laws against using force.

United, Yet Apart

UNLIKE the situation in Lebanon, the confederation would have everyone living together, yet under diverse authorities. In Lebanon, there was an attempt to have one government for everyone, with shared power, and that failed. The confederation would provide with separate governments for the Israelis and the Palestinians, with a confederation to keep the peace among them, to coordinate foreign policy, and to act as the common land trustee, collecting and disbursing rent. It is important that individuals and the states would pay their land rent directly to the confederation, emphasising the fact that they were living with the other nations on common land. Yet the people would contract with a government of their choice for a number of years, to freely associate with the nation of their choice.

Since the contracts between the people and the states would be set for seven years, the residents of the Levant could switch nationalities periodically, providing a further check against oppression or corruption in any of the states and fostering competition among them for citizens. Finally, unlike Lebanon, the equalisation of land ownership would provide for justice, combining the equalisation of land with individual possession and initiative of enterprise. In Canaan there would be no taxation or restriction on labour and capital, giving enterprise the full freedom to prosper and allowing various cultures to express themselves freely.

The confederation would serve as a model for other torn areas, such as Lebanon or Northern Ireland, wherever two or more groups are fighting for a common territory.

I'm not claiming that a confederation would be a Utopia, but that it would go a long way towards rectifying the injustices that have built up for centuries in Israel/Palestine.

Land is the key to economic justice and peace, and until the equal right to the land is recognised, no peace plan can work.

With economic justice in place, peaceful co-existence becomes, at least, possible.

CANADA

Premier battles to give 'outcasts' new land rights

Paul Knight
writes from
Toronto

the country's 500,000 aboriginal peoples.

At a summit meeting of the ten provincial premiers in April, Mr. Mulroney secured majority support for his action.

The group representing Treaty Indians — the Assembly of First Nations — opposed the wording of the amendment and the Inuit leaders wanted time to consult some Eskimo communities.

But Mr. Mulroney is confident that he will make progress.

He offered to personally lead negotiations on land claims for the Metis, the descendants of Indian women and French-Canadian fur traders.

Several premiers opposed the constitutional changes because they did not like the statement of entrenched rights to self-government being coupled with a constitutional obligation on provinces to negotiate specific rights.

They feared a series of legal cases on jurisdiction, land and resources which could take policy-making out of their hands.

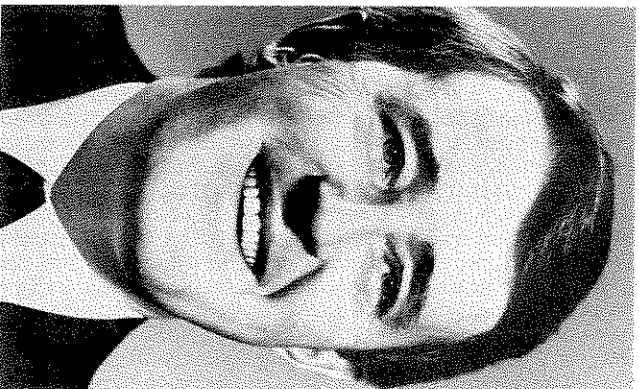
But Mr. Mulroney, by profession a lawyer specialising in industrial relations, succeeded in finding a solution.

And Indian Affairs Minister David Combe says: "We are on the cutting edge of talks about aboriginal rights to self-government".

The diffusion of political power based on the right of direct access to natural resources ought to strengthen rather than weaken the political State.

But the essence of that strength is the system's ability to respond to the changing needs of people, while guaranteeing every individual's right of access to land.

PRIME MINISTER Brian Mulroney has come close to entrenching in the Constitution the right to self-government of



● Prime Minister Mulroney

The value of land is created by the community . . .

Land and liberty and the nuclear campaigners

PEACE movements, if they are to make progress, must realise that the success of their cause is tied up with the right of the individual to enjoy equal right of access to land.

Evictions from peace camps in England, like the evictions in civil rights disputes in the U.S.A. illustrate the point.

The story of Greenham Common in England began in 1981, when ten women and children set off from a nuclear weapons plant in Cardiff, Wales, for the USAF base – one of the sites chosen for the installation of 96 Cruise missiles.

The media ignored the women, who decided to set up a "peace camp" on the common.

It was a new way to work for peace. Tents, teepees, constant cold, damp, dismal surroundings, greasy lukewarm washing water did not deter them from their vigil.

The goal of the women was an enormous one. One woman said: "What we want to change is immense. It is not just getting rid of nuclear weapons, it's getting rid of the whole structure that created problems of nuclear weapons. If we get rid of nuclear weapons, and yet retain the same political structure, we're going to end up with something just as bad."

But the local Newbury Council did not agree. The Mayor found these "invaders" a nuisance. "We have had a good relationship with the military until these women came", he said.

When questioned by a PBS reporter from America, the Mayor could comment only that the women were "dirty, lived under disagreeable conditions", and that they had brought disfavoured on the character of the community.

By May 1981, the council convinced the authorities to evict the camp. The main pavilion was destroyed by bulldozers. One hundred police and six bailiffs helped to pull down the camp. Five women were arrested and were fined £25 (\$30) or a week in jail.

A new camp has now been established on land out of the jurisdiction of the eviction order, but only a few yards away from the old camp.

ROBERT SCROFANI
writes from
San Francisco

The camp is under the constant threat of eviction and on occasion, the police have come to clear the area. But the women constantly return.

Their liberty is linked to the land.

ROBERT Tideman, a San Francisco educator and economist whose daughter taught in a Mississippi Freedom School, tells a story that illustrates the relevance of the land question to the civil rights and peace movements.

He says: "Look what happened to one of our local girls, Gretchen Schwartz". She was arrested twice in two days in Drew, Mississippi during the 1960s. She was attending a rally outside the Holly Grove Baptist Church. Police arrived at the rally with a deacon of the church, who ordered them to leave.

"They then moved to a nearby vacant lot, whereupon the police brought the white woman who owned the property, who told them to leave. When the group moved into the street, they were arrested.

"Of what value is the right to assemble peaceably if there is no access to a spot of land on which to stand and be heard?

"The equal right to use 'public'

facilities – for which we all pay taxes – is clear. Whatever challenge may be made on grounds of private property, this challenge cannot be made where the property is publicly owned".

There are many people who say that neither the Negroes in the South nor the 800 young "freedom riders" who poured into Mississippi that fateful summer in the 60s should have been there. Or, they argue, that they were interfering in a distant and complex problem.

There are many in England who agree with the Mayor of Newbury, that the women of Greenham, who come from all over Europe, are a "nuisance" and should not be there.

"I do not share that view", says Tideman. The only way to gain and hold one's rights is to exercise them. When the right to travel and speak is challenged, the only remedy is to accept the challenge, go there and be heard.

When a contemporary of Tom Paine said "Where freedom is, there is my country", Paine responded "Where freedom is not, there is mine".

In the spirit of Paine, the young freedom riders of the American Civil Rights Movement and the women of Greenham have taken up the challenge.

WHILE Tideman supports these challenges to freedom, he believes that these issues call for a sharper focus on the land question.

The price of protest

CIRCUS ponies graze on 1.6 acres on the edge of Molesworth cruise missile base, in Cambridgeshire, writes Ian Barron.

As the grass grows under their feet, so the price of the land has increased by leaps and bounds.

The sale of the site has led to civil action in the British High Court, as the Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has sought to stop the Church of England selling to the Ministry of Defence.

Christian CND, which is trying to outbid the Ministry, wants to use the site as a place of witness against cruise missiles.

This is how *The Guardian* chronicled the escalation in price:

● On March 9, the Defence Ministry's bid was reported to be £1,400, which was £700 less than that of Christian CND.

● On April 9, the Ministry's bid had risen to £3,385 – with the Christian campaigners offering a munching that grass.

... it is our common inheritance; it belongs to us'

"After the Negroes won their right for equal access to the streets and sidewalks, they still remain locked out of most of their own state. The vacant lot next to the Holly Grove Baptist Church is only one of the 146,000 vacant lots in Mississippi from which they could have been evicted by the police on the call of the landholder.

"And beyond the vacant lots are vast underpopulated and underused areas, withheld from meeting the legitimate needs of both blacks and landless whites".

The common from which the women of Greenham were evicted is but a fraction of the land in a country where unemployment is over 13% and where vast tracts of urban land remain locked away from the people.

The civil rights and peace movements must realise that confiscating money from the poor by way of sales taxes, or from the industrious by way of income and other taxes, is as much an invasion of liberty as it is to close a public park, street or commons to the people.

The value of land, which is created by the community, is our common inheritance and belongs to all of us. It should be used to relieve all of us from the arbitrary tax burdens on labour and trade.

Only then will we have liberty and the prospect of world peace.

● The author is chairman of the history department, Berkeley High School, California.



● Police clear the area – but the women return.

Photo: KEITH HAMMETT

Cruise and land values

THE EBB and flow of land prices in response to military policies is nicely illustrated by the property market around Greenham Common, Berkshire, one of the Home Counties west of London.

An anonymously published pamphlet, *At Least Cruise is Clean*,* chronicles the way in which landowners gain and lose as a result of the subtle shifts in military strategy.

● In February 1978, the citizens of nearby Newbury were told that the airbase was to be home of the KC135s, the military version of the Boeing 707.

These giants act as flying petrol tankers – and they cause ear-splitting noise when taking to the air.

House prices at the top end of the market would collapse by 20%, according to one report, with forecasts of a £1m drop in the value of houses.

A side-effect of a high noise corridor would be that the planning authorities would be obliged to restrict the construction of new houses – thereby hitting local land speculators.

PROPERTY owners were furious, and the KC135s were eventually banned from Greenham Common.

● In June 1980, the good folk of Newbury were told that Cruise missiles would be flown in from the United States and located on the nearby base.

The then Defence Minister, Francis Pym, announced that over £16m would be spent in Berkshire in connection with the programme.

Land values soared. For the area around the base would no longer be subjected to large-scale flying by the noisy planes.

The speculators went to work, buying up tracts in areas where the USAF personnel would have to live.

Landlords charged American families rents of £225 to £300 a month for houses – well above customary levels.

To try and meet local housing needs, the council was forced to pay £4m to speculators for land that they had cornered.

The price of an acre of building land in West Berkshire is now over £250,000 (£300,000). This is £20,000 on the price of

a first purchase house, which is four times higher than the price of land in, say, Milton Keynes, one of the New Towns near London.

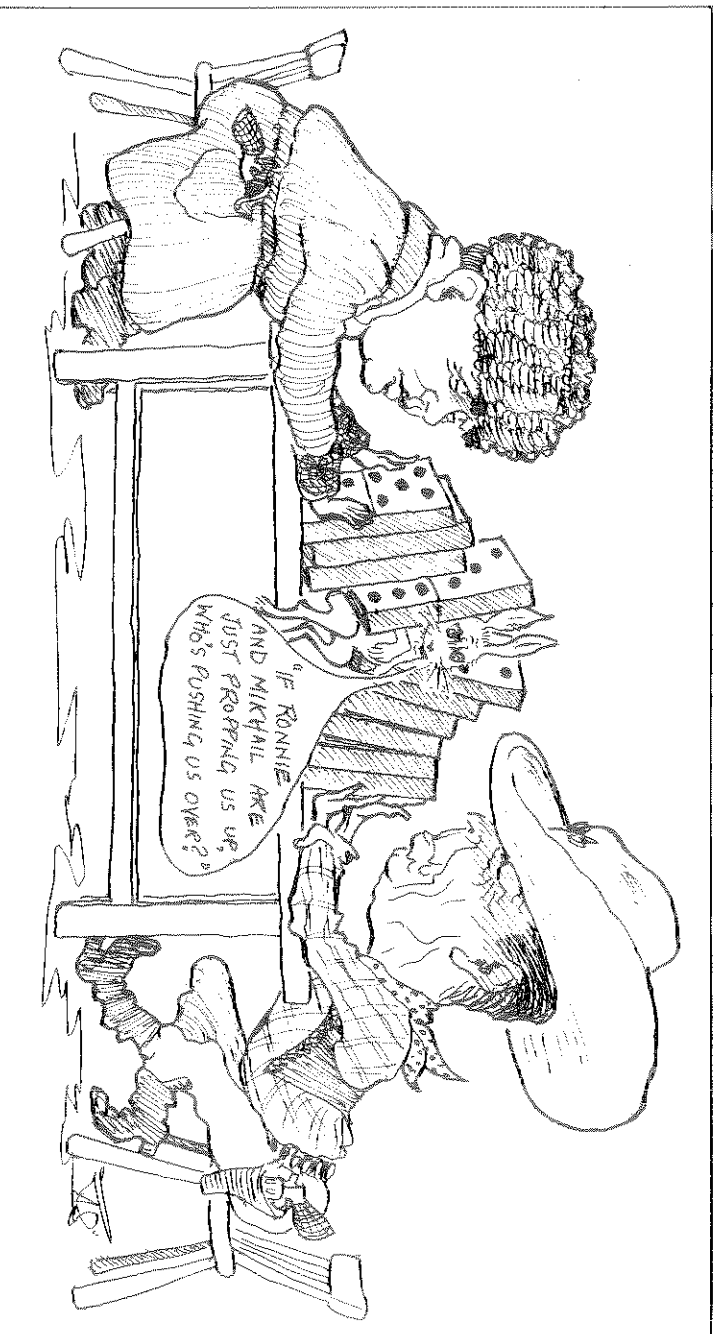
ONE BLOT on this landscape, however, was the arrival of the women who decided to camp outside Greenham Common in protest at the missiles.

Local homeowners decided that this reduced their property values by 20%. The local authorities appeared to agree with them, for nine homeowners had their property tax reduced by up to 7½%.

Overall, however, property owners have done very nicely out of Cruise. As Lynchcombe, the anonymous author of the pamphlet, put it:

"A few bucks were made on the construction works, but the real money was to be made in property. All that extra demand for property, which remained at the same level of supply.

"How our local landowners, estate agents and speculators wallowed in it..."



Dominoes — the wrong game!

DOMINOES didn't fall, when the last American chopper took off from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, writes *Ian Barron*.

A theory fell with South Vietnam, but President Ronald Reagan has now resurrected it for the purposes of foreign policy in his own backyard.

Speaking at a dinner in aid of Nicaraguan refugees in April, he said that failure to support the Contras — the guerrillas seeking to overthrow the government — would "give the first Communist stronghold on the North American continent the green light to spread its poison..."

With the decision in May to launch an economic blockade against Nicaragua, Washington gave up the moral argument and decided to use coercion to win the war for people's minds in Central America.

In doing so, President Reagan exposed the gap in the intellectual arsenal of foreign policy analysts, exposing a chasm into which many dead bodies will be dumped.

SEMANTICS are as important as military hardware in the war of ideologies.

So far as Washington is concerned, the forces that oppose the government in El Salvador are "terrorists".

To bolster the government, U.S. taxpayers poured \$280m in economic aid and \$240m in military aid into the country last year.

Nicaragua is out of favour in Washington, however, so the Contras become "freedom fighters" — even though the government was democratically elected. Twenty-nine deputies represent the three parties of the Right in the National Assembly.

The Reagan Administration's contradictory approach to geopolitics will do nothing to strengthen the West's advocacy of democracy or capitalism.

For U.S. policy encourages leaders in the Third World to conclude that the fair test of an acceptable social and economic system is not one based on eternal verities, but rather, whether their system is acceptable to the latest intellectual fashions in Washington.

Political expediency, however, has never been a sound guide for social reform.

REFORM is the name of the game. Or at least, it ought to be.

An objective analysis would reveal that the civil wars of Central America stem from the economic distress caused by the maldistribution of land.

In Nicaragua, for example, Anastasio Somoza's family owned most of the best arable land. This turned the citizens into serfs, who eventually decided to break the chains.

But the Sandinistas who came to power have not appropriated privately-owned land; they merely redistributed the Somoza holdings to the landless

peasants. About 60% of the economy is in private hands, which compares favourably with most European capitalist economies.

But the Managua government was bound to incur the wrath of President Reagan, because its spokesmen strongly advocate the need for reforms in such areas as education (they mounted a massive literacy campaign), and they talk vociferously about the need for social and economic justice.

All of which smacks of communism to a president who views the strengths of capitalism in terms of comic-strip concepts.

Which is why we cannot expect enlightened foreign policy in Washington until the analysts provide the president with a realistic diagnosis of the causes of mass discontent.

From such an appraisal would flow fresh policies that would raise living standards, enhance liberties — and automatically diminish the attractions of the communist philosophy.

Equity would have to be at the heart of an effective reformist programme; equity in the distribution of job opportunities and in the share-out of natural resources.

This alternative strategy has a built-in propensity for peace.

There is one difficulty with it, however: citizens of the non-Marxist West would wonder why the principles of such an approach could not be implemented for their benefit, as well.