

question in Palestine, my friend on the train informed me that two-thirds of the Province of Galilee is subject to absentee landlordism. It is not easy to compare areas in the old country and the new. The drive from Haifa through Nazareth across Galilee to Tiberias is about like the drive across an average county in most of our states. Roughly speaking I think we may say that the size of Galilee is about two-thirds that of an average county in Virginia.

—J. H. DILLARD in *The Washington Post*.

## New Zealand and the Recent Vote

OVERSEAS readers of *The Commonwealth* will be well advised not to jump to the conclusion that the people of New Zealand have gone over to Socialism, for that interpretation of the general election results would be far from the truth.

Our version of what happened is this:—The electors, for the most part, came to the conclusion that they had to choose one out of two evils—Socialist soothing syrup, or castor oil and concentration camps. In these circumstances they plumped for the soothing syrup, and in so doing they were keeping company with one of the clearest-headed of the older eminent English political economists, John Stuart Mill. Readers of his "Principles" may recall that Mill, in dealing with Communism, said that if it were a choice of Communism or the present state of affairs, where parasites reap the greatest rewards and the useful people the least, Communism would be infinitely preferable. Fascism is an attempt in the first place to stabilize the unjust conditions prevailing, though it later becomes solely the political tool of the political gangsters in office.

The writing is on the wall; if the people of means and education will not fight for the Justice the Cooperative Commonwealth League stands for, then the end will almost certainly be a triumph in New Zealand for Communism. Free cooperation is the only alternative to some form of collectivist slavery, such as Socialism, Communism, Fascism, and the like. Fight for the Cooperative Commonwealth!

Jan.-Feb. *Commonweal* of New Zealand.

HAVING accepted his appointment as Minister to France, Jefferson went to Paris before the revolution began there. He was well received from the start. The tall slender American was an impressive figure. "You replace Dr. Franklin, I hear," said the French minister of foreign affairs. "I succeed him," Jefferson replied, "nobody could replace him."

ON July 23 last, Benjamin W. Burger spoke over radio station WBIL on *The Elements of Democracy*. He advised his listeners to buy George's books.

## The WPA Strikes

By STEPHEN BELL

It is hard to say which is the more absurd—the WPA strikes or the WPA programme itself. Here we have a great, rich country with unmatched natural resources which, intelligently handled, might be made a garden, a land of happy, prosperous homes, but which by mishandling and maltreatment has been made a land of *disemployed*, unhappy and miserable people.

We boast of being a land of the free, while ten to twelve millions of us are not free to make an honest living, for, with all our boasting, our thinking and planning are aimed at domination and control, the very opposite of freedom. Thus have we brought about a condition in which these matchless resources have been made the private property and possession of a comparatively few, who utilize and develop them only as it is profitable or suits their private purposes.

That the nation and the world is suffering the natural consequences of destructive taxation is no secret. There is scarcely a man or woman in the country who will not admit that vicious and mischievous taxation is in some way connected with this the greatest and most prolonged depression in our history. Yet what does our government do about it? Astounding as it may seem, it *increases* the amount and variety of the already multitudinous and multiform taxes which *caused* the depression, in order to raise funds to cure or alleviate it and bring about business recovery. It even "borrows from the future" to raise funds for this purpose and has thus added more than twenty thousand millions of dollars to the national debt.

It has created no new purchasing power by such means, at best it has only shifted purchasing power from the people to the government, and much of it has been lost in the process.

Of the public works projected and carried through to "make work" for the unemployed, such as those of the WPA, many of them have been economically useless, and I fear that most of this "work" has benefited only those who owned lands taken for, or adjacent to the improvements. Especially is this true of the great motor highways which have been and are being constructed.

That the whole system of relief, both direct and by way of "made work" is reeking with "graft" is a matter of general belief if not of general knowledge. Never yet have governments provided opportunities for "graft" without attracting an army of grafters to work it for all it is worth, and the opportunities for graft inhere in the system. Our recent labor legislation has provided further opportunities along this line, and some of our labor unions have taken full advantage of them. No doubt they are motivated by a desire to get "theirs" too. Our whole fabric of morals and honesty is being shot to pieces.

The crowning absurdity, it seems to me, is the action of certain of the "WPA" unions in invoking the "strike" to maintain and strengthen their grip on the system. Utterly failing to see that business has been crippled and paralyzed by taxes in order to maintain "made work" ideas, they wish to perpetuate the absurdity. In what are essentially charitable employment enterprises, they will not accept the "employment" except at "regular" rates!

Such a state of mind is the outcome of the so-called liberal view of things. But who and what are the "liberals" of whom we hear so much? They are a nondescript collection of people who think "liberal" means "generous," and are extremely generous—with other people's money.

It would be interesting to know in what direction these "liberals" have extended human liberty. Certainly they have not extended economic liberty, the liberty to earn an honest living and enjoy what one has earned. Nor will they while the masses regard as "liberals" those who use the name to wage new restrictions on economic liberty. They live on other people's earnings and strike for more.

Where will these folks be at the day of reckoning? It is evident they have no heed for the morrow, when retrenchment comes, as come it must.