

**TO GEORGISTS IN CONFERENCE ASSEMBLED,
CHICAGO, SEPTEMBER 10th-12th, 1928:
GREETING!**

The Commonwealth Land Party of Britain are not expecting to send delegates to your Conference, but they desire to express the hope that from your gathering may go forth a clear call for the acceptance of the pure doctrine of the Master.

The C.L.P. stand for the collection in full of the annual rental value of the Earth, and the abolition of all taxation. So do all Georgists. We addressed the Conference at Copenhagen, in 1926, urging the formation of an International body to issue a new Declaration of Principles, founded on the Henry George doctrine.

We now address you, and offer for consideration the following reprint of the matter we sought to have discussed at Copenhagen. We are convinced that halting advocacy of partial taxation gets nowhere, and that it is now more than ever necessary that a bold and complete demand be made, and made in the field of politics. Conditions are most favourable for active political work in Britain, and the C.L.P. are anxious to receive increased support from friends in the U.S., and Australia. Our experience proves that people everywhere are ready to receive and act upon the great Truth we and you advocate, and we therefore urge upon your Conference that the Declaration of Principles issued by the British Section of the International Commonwealth Land League be subscribed by every member.

We hope that the circulation of THE COMMONWEAL may be increased so as to put us in a position to contest elections to the British Parliament as these occur. In this way we could force the issue to the forefront in Britain, and this would react on the situation in the U.S., and the rest of the world. With that circulation raised 25/30,000 weekly, the Executive of the C.L.P. will guarantee to give subscribers not only the paper devoted to the Cause of Liberty, but to contest elections and give the people of Britain a real chance of expressing their opinions on the subject.

We know Georgists in the U.S. have troubles of their own in prosecuting our common Cause, yet we feel bound to make this appeal, believing that more rapid progress can be made by a bold and new policy here in Britain than is possible elsewhere.

You will not question the sincerity of our desire to help spread the light of the Gospel of Henry George. Whether you agree with us or not, we hope your Conference will be productive of great good, to the enlightenment of mankind in the economic gloom in which it is at present immersed.

Yours in the Cause of Human Emancipation,
For the C.L.P. Executive,
J. W. GRAHAM PEACE,
Secretary.

WHO IS FOR LIBERTY ?

Who is for Liberty? Perhaps at no time in recent history was it more urgently necessary that this question should be asked and answered by every citizen. Look out over the world in any direction we may, and it would almost seem as if tyranny were triumphant on every hand. Italy, with its traditions of Garibaldi, lies under the heel of a ruthless dictator, who stops at nothing to complete the political enslavement of his fellow-countrymen. Press, Parliament and Platform all are muzzled, and Trade Unions are not permitted, except they conform to the pattern approved by the ex-Socialist now in the saddle, whose vain-glorious boasting and mad Imperialism constitute a grave danger to the peace of the world.

Poland, again, has passed under the domination of a military dictatorship, in which all possibility of peaceful progress is sacrificed to the insane dream of "a strong military State." The common people the while crushed to earth under the burden of taxes imposed upon them in order to provide dividends for international armament firms, ever ready quite impartially to supply munitions of war to the armies on both sides. Spain, in turn, is bleeding to death under a similar burden. Military dictator succeeds military dictator; the condition of the people steadily growing worse. Someone has to pay for all these military establishments and, since soldiers, while they may *earn* the pay they get, in no case produce the wealth from which it is drawn, it follows, once more, that it is the plain, common people who are ground down under the weight of ever-increasing taxation.

Russia affords another example of suppression of individual liberty by a merciless dictatorship which rides rough-shod over all considerations of natural right. That it is said to be a "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," meaning to imply that the common people have a voice in their affairs, makes not the slightest difference to the fact that the elementary right of every human being to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is denied by a small handful of persons who, while prating of Liberty in theory, rigidly exclude her in practice. There is nothing to choose between the tyranny of Mussolini and that of Moscow; both constitute a denial of Liberty.

Turning to the Liberal nations, we see in America a growing tendency towards the suppression of freedom of speech. To-day hundreds of her citizens lie in prison for no greater crime than that of having criticised the powers that be. A tendency towards the inevitable militarism, which is the bulwark of all tyrannies, is also to be observed, while the recurring cry for intervention in Mexico, inspired by Wall Street financiers, who see in an Imperialist policy the way to bigger dividends through the "annexing" of that State, at the cost of life and limb of the sons of the common people, is a portent of future evil which all who love their country should strive to prevent. Industrially, too, the same tendency to brutal suppression of "labour unrest" observable nearer home is manifest in every strike. The workers are treated as though of a coarser clay, pre-destined, it would seem, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for those of finer grain.

Here in England, long famed as the home of Liberty, it has with sorrow to be recorded that now there is actually less liberty permitted to the common people than was enjoyed by them so recently as the year before the war: the war, by the way, which was said to be a war for liberty! The significant and ugly thing to-day, as we see it, is the sneering references to "Liberty," so common with many of our politicians; Labour, Liberal and Tory alike. The once great, powerful Liberal Party, the especial custodian of individual liberty, has almost passed away. So much—or little?—of it as remains is permeated with the anti-Liberal notions and spirit of Socialism; and in all its proposals of recent times we see the same paternalism, the same plans for control and interference with the right of the individual to manage his own affairs common to all schools of Socialist thought. It is a gloomy prospect! To what is it due?

As we see it, it is the inevitable outcome of the fundamental injustice at the base of all civilisations. The truth that all men are born with an equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, is ignored, and in practice denied. A false philosophy of ownership, which fails to distinguish between what is by nature *common* property and, therefore, cannot properly be held as *private* property, and that which is by nature *private* property and, therefore, cannot properly be held as *common* property, lies at the root of these present discontents. We who have seen the great truth that Henry George made so clear to the world, know the cause of the evil conditions—conditions which cannot do other than grow steadily worse because their cause still operates—know, also, the remedy. To us is given the high privilege and responsibility to seek, to the extent of our ability and opportunity, to carry the message of deliverance to a tortured world whose peoples everywhere are rightly struggling to be free. It is

our mission to proclaim Liberty to the captives in this modern Egypt; to tell these bond-slaves that there is no need to ask of the Pharaoh that he should let them go, for the reason that the doors of the economic compounds in which the slaves are herded swing *inwards*, and can be opened by the prisoners themselves whenever they will.

Who is for Liberty? Liberty that is not limited—for that would not be Liberty. Liberty that must come all at once, not by stages, for, again, that would not be Liberty. The acceptance by the slaves of anything less than immediate and full Liberty would be a danger tending to prolong their enslavement at the hands of Privilege.

As followers of Henry George, we know that the cause of the economic slavery at the base of present-day society is the fundamental injustice of the private "ownership" of land. We know, too, that where land is free, men are free also. That where land is half-free, men will be half-free, which is the same as being wholly enslaved; for a freedom that is even 99 per cent. free is still less than freedom and, therefore, slavery. If it should be argued that Liberty can be gained by compromising with the slave-owners, we reply that Liberty can never be the subject of bargaining. Each man owes it to himself to demand his right to life; not to go cringing cap in hand to some other man to beg of him a little more freedom. He who would do that is unworthy to be free. So, seeing as we do that the claim to "own" land is at the root of our enslavement, we refuse to discuss anything short of the immediate restoration of all land, and without any compensation. Liberty cannot be bought, for it is priceless.

The C.L.P. are for Liberty, and resolutely decline to entertain any suggestion for moderation or compromise, believing that:—

He either fears his fate too much, or his deserts are small,
Who fears to put it to the touch, and win or lose it all.

J. W. G. P.

UNEMPLOYMENT UNNECESSARY.

Employment is just the use of land.

Unemployment is the non-use of land.

Men are not out of work because there is no work, but because
they are not allowed to work.

Now, think of it!

TAXATION.

The late Lord Morley said that taxation and religion were always two fruitful causes of revolution. He probably meant that intolerance about religion led to disturbance. Most people would agree that a complete tolerance and freedom in religious opinion should replace intolerance, and one fruitful cause of revolution be removed, but we believe that taxation—the more fruitful cause, should be abolished also. There are no willing taxpayers, none who would not be delighted to feel that what was rightly theirs was secured to them, free from any depredations of burglar or of Governments. Taxation is the taking of private wealth. Governments exist mainly for the purpose of making life and property secure from the burglar or thief. They do it by taking the property from its possessor to any extent deemed necessary—necessity which, as we all know, knows no law, being the defence. Very few believe there is a quite moral and legitimate method of collecting the wealth necessary for the maintenance of “law and order,” and for the provision of the public services, the management expenses of those things which are the common concern of all. Most people seem quite ignorant that there is a community-produced value ready at hand for this purpose now being collected privately—hence the defence “necessity” is accepted as valid until taxation deprives citizens of too much of their property and revolution threatens if it does not actually break out. A worse system of raising revenue for public services could not be devised than that now operated by all so-called civilised communities. It was not devised, unless that religious sect which believes that Satan was given charge of the world some thousands of years ago, is right. Only some arch-enemy of man could have consciously devised a system so calculated to lead to man’s undoing. It was not devised, it grew up out of man’s ignorance, and remains because of his ignorance. Mr. Lloyd George, speaking at Rhyl on July 9th, is reported to have said that our civilisation is founded on injustice and cannot last. The Bishop of Salisbury is reported as saying that the nation must be “driven” to prayer before the existing conditions will be improved. The bishop suggests that we close our eyes and hope for the best. Foolish advice, even if he believes Satan does rule the world. Mr. Lloyd George is correct and repeating truism. It is a pity he did not specify the injustice on which he believes society is founded. He well knows that it is the private ownership of the Earth. It is not so clear that he knows that it is also the evil thing that must follow the private ownership of the Earth, viz., the insecurity and theft of private property in the wealth produced from the Earth. It seems reasonable to suppose that as some portion

of the wealth produced must be used to maintain those who are set apart to manage the public affairs, to keep the people's accounts, to plan and make the people's roads, to light and police them, that it makes very little difference, if any, what system is employed. The wealth will have to be taken from the producer of it. That is a lazy conclusion, and until the people take the trouble to examine the question a little more closely and with a greater desire to substitute Justice for Society's foundation, instead of the injustice of which Mr. Lloyd George speaks, there can be no alteration of any consequence.

It makes all the difference how the public revenue is raised. If it cannot be raised without the unblushing denial of the right of private possession of wealth, it ought not to be raised. There can be no excuse for failure to follow fundamental moral law in this matter, and no escape from the penalty. This society is suffering and will continue to suffer as long as the offence continues. Chancellors everywhere proceed according to precedent. Attempts at laying down canons of taxation have been made by economists for generations—the most generally accepted being the particularly foolish one, that it should be based on “*ability to pay*.” The argument is interminable. Is direct taxation—the open forcible extraction of the citizen's money—if he has any ability to pay, or indirect taxation the best method?

Your money or your life in the one case, or as the article in the Encyclopædia puts it, “The process of bleeding to death.” Which do you prefer—that you should be robbed by force, or be the victim of a sneak thief of whose operations you are not fully conscious?

Look at the United States, the richest country on Earth, and probably the furthest from revolution. Its citizens, compared with those of England, are said to be lightly “taxed.” Yet we cull from the press from every part of the country severe criticisms and complaints as to taxation. To say nothing of the confused inheritance tax situation, in which all considerations of morality are thrown to the winds, writers speak of the present business taxation as a “*plague*.” Not so much so on account of the amount collected, although that “challenges the best thought of legislators.” They won't accept the challenge, however, until the citizens are more unitedly determined to compel them to do so.

The 48 States in the union each have their own taxing power, and there is, of course, endless variety in the methods and forms to be returned by the victims.

There is no variety, however, in the principle observed, which is the same everywhere; find out how much wealth the victim has, and take as much of it as you require without driving him to falsehood and tax dodging. Don't go to extremes, or he may get wise and rebellious, and imagine that

he has a right to keep his money, if it is honestly his, and this would be the beginning of trouble. One case is typical. One corporation filed over 200 reports for itself and subsidiaries doing business in more than 25 States. A special tax department has to be maintained to deal with the returns which must be made, including franchise, license, excise, capital, stock returns, annual reports, lists of stockholders, and all information as to transfers of stock. It had to file in addition, in various States, lists of employees, and in some cases had to act as tax collector of personal income tax required by the States and federal authorities from its employees.

Accountants, statisticians, lawyers (of course) and engineers are employed by many companies to prepare returns and to make them as little as possible within the limits of the law. It is stated that many of these departments often cost several hundred thousand dollars, in addition to the taxes, which are finally paid—sometimes after years of arguments. They are rich in the U.S., but thus is their substance taken from them and largely wasted.

Land values have increased from around \$50,000,000,000 in 1876 to more than \$170,000,000,000 in 1926. The suggestion is that 5 per cent. annually on the value of the land in the U.S. would produce \$8,500,000,000. As the U.S. federal budget is around \$4,000,000,000, it is seriously suggested that the annual rental value of the bare land is enough to provide all the public revenue necessary for both the Federal and State authorities.

Why don't the citizens insist upon sweeping away the immoral, unscientific and oppressive system of taxation based upon the claim of the State to take what the Government likes from the citizens, and the substitution of the just, scientific and beneficial system which it is the glory of perhaps the greatest American who ever lived to have explained to the world? Because they do not know about it, and politicians there and everywhere else are also blind or ignorant of the true method of raising the public revenue.

When it is remembered that the rental value of land is the creation of the community as a whole, and not the creation of any single individual, it ought to be clear that its collection is not a tax robbery of private property—is not open to any of the objections urged, and rightly urged, against "taxation."

X.

TAXATION IS THEFT.

Land Rent is Nature's Budget:
Collect it All and
Stop State Stealing.

“THE REAL ISSUE”

A Paper that was not read at Copenhagen.

For the International Conference at Copenhagen, the Commonwealth Land Party had prepared the following address on “The Real Issue,” for delivery and consideration of which the Danish Committee had assured us time would be found. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to present it, and we think it desirable that our friends should be reminded of our exact position with regard to the “Real Issue,” which has still to be presented to the Peoples of the World. Hence the publication of this undelivered address.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Before proceeding with what I have to say, let me express, on behalf of the members of the C.L.P., our satisfaction at being present at this International gathering, which has for its aim the spreading of the Gospel and Doctrine of Henry George; and our sense of responsibility for our part in the proceedings of the Conference.

Let me refer for a moment to the position as I understand it in this country of Denmark. As we came through the country, we could see partly how it is the Danish agriculturists have been able to produce so much and sell so much of their surplus production to England and other countries.

The system which has divided the country into small holdings, the careful and scientific use of the land, and perhaps particularly, the system of co-operative marketing, accounts for much. I understand that none of this development has been due to any taxation of land values, and much of it undoubtedly due to the absence of taxation on the imports you need to turn into the higher-priced products of your live stock. I understand also, that after many years' agitation on the part of the Danish followers of Henry George, the Legislature has recently passed a Bill, taxing, to a limited extent, the values of land (*all* of which value is the result of the presence of the Danish people, and *all* of which belongs to *all* the people) and untaxing proportionately the value of improvements—the work of the individual, to whom, of course, they *all* really belong. You may consider this an advance towards your definite objective, and be inclined to congratulate yourselves on what you think is a victory. That it is only a skirmish and that you will so regard it, is, I think, certain.

The question that now arises in Denmark is: “What is the future of our cause now that a beginning has apparently been made?” Your Legislature has agreed to a step taken in Australia thirty years ago, and adopted a practice which

has been in operation for many years there. In England, the landowners of the 17th Century legislated for the taxation of rental values of both land and houses, which taxation remains to this day on the old valuation, with the exception of those holdings for which the owners paid a lump sum in exchange for perpetual exemption from the operation of the tax.

All over the world the principle of the right of the State to tax land values is admitted and practised. The real issue to which I am going to draw your attention has not yet been fully discussed. What, then, can be the "future" of the Cause we represent, and how can this Conference promote it? There is great danger that the future will continue to be occupied in mere attempts to induce privilege to give up more by way of taxation. Those who have opposed us in the past, will continue to oppose any further "Taxation" in the future and so, in spite of apparent successes, the cause is just exactly where it was; and its future may be to keep on fighting for the application of the remedy in full, with the disadvantage that we shall now be regarded, more than ever, as advocates of and agitators for a mere fiscal reform; a juggling with instruments and machinery of "taxation," postponing indefinitely the discussion of the real issue.

So long as we accept this position without energetic protest, this is deliberately, and in the view of the C.L.P., mistakenly, to *mis*-represent ourselves as agreeing with the general principle that the Earth can be privately owned, and that the State has the right to "tax" anything; it is to take the edge off the protest we ought to make as forcibly as we can against the wrong methods of taxation now employed.

To "take" Land Values is not "taxation," that should be clearly understood; to "take" a portion of land values is not wrong, it is merely inefficient, and less than the justice that might be done, but to "take" all land values is surely right, and must be done before the "Remedy" we advocate can effect a cure of the evils that afflict us. When the object is to raise the permanent condition of a people, small means do not merely produce small effects; they produce no effect at all.—John Stuart Mill. I expect this Conference will agree readily with all these statements. It is certain that so long as any portion of the land values can be collected for private use and gain, there will be those who will speculate in land-owning. The recent land boom in the United States, where land values are "taxed," is one illustration. The speculative fever was just as evident in New York, which taxes land values considerably, as in Florida, where the taxation of land is not so high; and poverty exists in all parts of the great U.S. in a period of prosperity and wealth-production in the world's richest country, such as has never been known. We are, therefore, convinced by what we see, as well as by Henry George, that the "taxation" method, gradually applied, will not produce, has not produced, the effect we all desire.

Let me quote from Henry George's "Land Question : What it Involves, and How Alone it can be Settled." Writing on the Irish Land Question, after recognising the difficulty of solving the problem in the field of action where ignorance, prejudice and powerful political opposition would be met, George says :—

" I understand all this. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the Irish Land Movement would gain, not lose, were its earnest leaders, disdainng timid counsels, boldly to avow the principle that the land of Ireland belongs of right to the whole of the people of Ireland and, without bothering about compensation to the land-holders, to propose its resumption by the people in the simple way I have suggested," *i.e.*, by the collection of the economic rent. Timid counsels prevailed, and the question is still unsettled in Ireland.

I am well aware that George knew that it would be *urged* that political progress must be by short steps, rather than by great leaps, and that he seemed to believe that to demand a little at first is often the surest way to obtain much at last. With the greatest admiration for Henry George in his clear and unanswerable economic arguments, I do not agree with him in this. It was a "timid thought," a weak admission, such as he had previously deplored. It was not "advice," and if it had been, I, for one, would reject it as not being suitable to the necessities of the case either then or now. In any case, whatever George's thoughts about the method of advocacy of the great reform he proposed were, or are, we are here charged with the duty of doing everything in our power to get the true principles of it adopted universally, and I suggest that only by "disdainng timid counsels and by bold advocacy of our principles," shall we advance our Cause.

That George considered the solution a simple one and easy of application by a sufficiently enlightened people, we may judge from the following :—

" The only true and just solution of the problem, the only end worth aiming at, is to make all the land the common property of all the people. This principle conceded, the question of method arises. How shall this be done? Nothing is easier. It is merely necessary to divert the rent which now flows into the landlords' pockets, into the Common Treasury of the whole people."

Not a small portion of it, but all of it, is the C.L.P. demand for Justice.

Though it is really immaterial what Henry George thought or might think now about the method to be employed to restore the Land (and Liberty) to the people, I agree entirely with that suggestion, indeed, it is, I think, the only method that can be successful. It is, as the chapter is headed, " The Only Way—The Easy Way," and we, the C.L.P., advocate walking therein. It is, therefore, our business and privilege to urge

that all we advocates of Henry George's "remedy" for the social injustice of his day, and ours, shall abandon half-hearted, illogical advocacy, and, to quote George again:—

"To take our stand frankly and firmly upon the principle that the youngest child of the poorest peasant has as good a right to tread the soil and breathe the air as the eldest son of the proudest Duke, and by a clear demand for *complete* justice, to put our fight on the right line."

"The only end worth aiming at," is for complete economic Freedom through Justice, and the C.L.P. agree entirely with George that there can be no compromise in the matter. So far there has been no compromise. Not only can there be no compromise, but there should be no suggestion of compromise from our side. I urge that this Conference keep clear of any discussion of it. What measures of taxation of land values have been adopted, have been passed by our opponents as a sop to keep us Georgists quiet. Shall we remain quiet? I think not. We should still continue our agitation—for what? Shall it be for another small instalment of the amount of the people's property, that shall be collected for the public benefit and returned to the whole people in the shape of the common services managed by the servants of the people—or for the collection of *all* the economic rent? Shall we beg for some of our rent, or shall we demand it all?

Will you agitate for Justice by instalments or "Justice" with qualifications? "We honour Liberty—which means Justice—in name and form," says Henry George (p. 387). "But we have not fully trusted her. She will have no half-service."

Shall we not trust her? He says in a noble passage:—

"Liberty calls to us again. We must follow her further, we must trust her fully. Either we must wholly accept her or she will not stay." (P. 389.)

This is the lesson of the centuries—this is the lesson we can learn from the untrustful attitude towards Liberty in the partial application of the principle of Liberty and Justice everywhere. I urge the Conference to trust her fully; to give full service, that she return to the world from which she has been driven.

This Conference stands to-day overlooking a world in which the "Great Iniquity" of private ownership of the common means of life still persists. As George finely says, it is the spirit of "Justice herself that demands of us (who know what alone will do it) to right that wrong." Justice that will not be denied; *that cannot be put off*—Justice that with the Scales carries the Sword. Shall we ward the stroke with liturgies and prayers? Shall we avert the decrees of immutable law by partially "*taxing*" Land Values? I think not.

We hope the Conference will range itself unreservedly on the side of George, and demand in no uncertain tones the doing of complete Justice, so that Liberty may "*return*" to

a world which is gradually but perceptibly sliding towards the slavery of Socialism.

This Conference will, in my view, have failed to accomplish its mission if it fails to send out to the world a clear statement of the real issue, and a clear call to all Henry George men to get together in a spirit of determination to answer the question as to the "future of our Cause," and to meet the *real issue* with a demand that "Freedom," political and economic, Justice with regard to man's relation to the Earth, be restored to the peoples everywhere, in full and at once.

What is the real issue? Let us not talk about the Great War and the altered conditions, and all the devices used by politicians to obscure the truth for which we stand—the future of which is in our care. If there is anything to be learned clearly from that great and foolish event, it must be that humanity has been brought to its present unsatisfactory condition, in which it will remain, through the operation, by those who thought, and still think, they rule or govern mankind, of two wrong ideas.

1. That private collection of rent of the Earth, privately owned, is legitimate and just.
2. That the right of the producer to his produce is **not** legitimate, and must give way before the demands—not of the State, be it noted—but of the Governments which, be it also noted, nowhere represent a majority of the people.

These twin errors are at the very base of the thing called "Socialism," and, as Henry George men all know, are responsible for the present distress, the present inequitable distribution of wealth, as well as the niggardly production of wealth. They are responsible for involuntary proverty, and I take it there is no need to argue about it at this Conference. The one denies the right to Life; the other denies the right to Property.

The C.L.P. earnestly desire to have this Conference contribute to the clarification of the thought of the world, by not only denouncing these twin errors, but by putting before the world, in some clear statement, their opposites. Until the true theory of George is accepted and applied in full, there can be no real change.

Clearly, so long as the Politicians adhere to these pernicious errors, which have produced such a dire effect, they can do nothing but muddle along towards the complete slavery of a Socialism which might eventually include public ownership of the Earth as well as public ownership of the products of labour. To continue to act upon the errors which have produced such results, is to continue the results and to make them worse. To appear to be willing to acquiesce in the refusal of complete Justice is to delay her coming.

That the world will quietly agree to be reduced to such

a Slavery as Socialism would mean, it is not possible to believe. Indeed, a very superficial examination will show that the world will not be pushed along the road to complete Socialism very much further, without serious things happening. Russia wouldn't travel that way; Italy (or should I say Mussolini?) knew it was the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Germany and France halted. England, too, finds its self-styled Socialists hesitating to apply the creed of which Karl Marx was the real author. The Socialist Principle applied, as it is, in part only, accepted by Conservatives, Liberals, Labourites, Reds, Blues, Rights, Lefts and Centres, is what keeps the world in a ferment of unrest and undeserved involuntary poverty, and this Conference will do well to make this very clear. It is the Socialism which denied ownership of labour products by the producer which we have to oppose, as well as the private ownership of the public property—the Earth.

The opposites of these twin errors I take to be, the twin truths:—

1. THAT THE EARTH IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF ALL MANKIND ;
THAT EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IS THE RIGHT OF
EVERY MEMBER OF THE HUMAN FAMILY.
2. THAT TO THE PRODUCER BELONGS THE PRODUCT.

These are the two principles in the Charter of Human Liberty advocated by George and this Conference. The first calls for the collection into the Public Treasury of the annual rental value of the bare Earth, to be expended for the public good. The second calls for the abolition of all enforced taxation or the re-establishing of the sacred right of property now completely denied.

The real issue is, therefore, between the " Slavery " of the present economic condition, founded upon the twin errors I have mentioned, and the " Freedom " which can only be won by the substitution of the twin truths made so clear by the great man in whose name and to carry on whose work we are now met together.

May I ask the Conference to refrain from sending out into the world any statement which will give our opponents a chance to say that the Henry George men do not agree amongst themselves. Do not let us allow ourselves to refer to " taxation " when we do not mean " taxation." Let us stand before the world for the abolition of all enforced " taxation " after the rights of man have been recognised and conceded. Let us be true Socialists about the only thing that can be safely and justly socialised—the *Rent of the Earth*, and individualistic, strongly and aggressively so, about those things called wealth, which the individual labour of man produces from the Earth.

If I were asked how best could the future of our Cause be secured, I should say, without hesitation, by the unification

of the Henry George men everywhere; their inclusion in an International Body which would select and send out Missionaries filled with the same spirit that animated our Great Leader, to preach the Gospel of Freedom—to exhibit the “ Real Issue,” to convince and rouse the people everywhere to the necessity and expediency of political action.

I am well aware of the educational work which has been so devotedly done, but I hold it to be true that a new presentation of the cause is required, as well as renewed effort on different lines. I believe the “ Word ” spoken in the Political Forum would now do more to consolidate public opinion on our question than anything else.

I am of opinion that the thought atmosphere would be now more easily fired by the direct spark of the spoken living word, than by any other form of propaganda. This means the expenditure of a good deal of money, but I would be very hopeful that a call for funds by an International Body would meet with an immediate and generous response, if the real issue is kept clear and precise in the way the C.L.P. has endeavoured to indicate.

Difficulties! I well know there are plenty of them, but that they are insurmountable I do not believe. The world is ready to receive the Gospel of Liberty—everywhere the people are suffering from restricted opportunity and predatory taxation. The time is ripe for a great Crusade preached by men and women inspired by a great ideal, which might be made immediately practical and real.

Let this Conference appoint a Committee—International in character—to meet regularly to devise ways and means to go into the political field in an attempt to get elected to the legislatures, men who know what is wanted and who will not be afraid to demand Justice for all. Let us prepare a great missionary effort. True, a Leader is wanted—such a Committee will find him, the hour always brings the man. Funds are necessary—the Committee can find them. Workers are wanted—that is the principal difficulty, because most of us are busy getting a living and cannot spare much time. But that they would rally to a new and simple presentation of the Henry George philosophy by an International Body, I, for one, believe firmly.

I trust I have made clear what is the real issue we are called upon to meet, and that the suggestions I have ventured to make may be favourably received and acted upon by this Conference. The time is at hand. A united effort on simple lines, and the world may accept Henry George in full, and the legislatures everywhere address themselves to the task of bringing the laws into harmony with the great law of human progress elucidated by the Prophet of San Francisco, *viz.*, Association in Equality.

M. WARRINER.

To
The International Conference, Denmark,
July 1926.

To the delegates to the International Conference for the promotion of the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade, at Copenhagen, July 19th to July 30th, 1926. Greetings.

The C.L.P. of England, together with the delegates from the C.L.P. of the United States, are proceeding to Denmark full of hope that they can contribute something towards the unification of the Henry George movement, and to the establishment of a true Internationale.

The delegates have one great regret, and that is that, owing to ill-health, they do not number amongst them R. L. Outhwaite, who has done so much with voice and pen to forward the Cause of Freedom.

The conveners of the Conference state as the reason of the Conference the desire of the followers of Henry George to promote the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade. In the statement, adopted by the International Conference at Oxford in 1923, and now issued for the guidance of Conference Members, this declaration was made:—

“That until measures are taken to stop the private appropriation of the rent of land, all remedies currently relied upon for improving social conditions are incapable of achieving their purpose.”

With this statement the C.L.P. are in full agreement; also with the following recommendation advocated as a principle of universal application:—

“That the equal right to land be established and the *full* fruits of industry be secured *to* industry by devoting the rent of the land to the uses of the Community and by abolishing the enforced tariffs, the taxes on improvements, and other fiscal burdens which penalise the production and exchange of wealth.”

It was pointed out at the Conference at Oxford that this statement covered the Henry George doctrine, and it was urged that they were expressions of principles to which every Henry George man would fully agree.

The C.L.P. endeavoured to point out the importance of using the correct words to express the ideas they were seeking to promulgate. Experience has shown that, presented as a taxation problem, a mere fiscal reform, the issue is confused, and the appeal to the sense of justice which must be made before the reform can be instituted properly, largely fails. As the President of the English League for Taxation of Land Values says:—“It is the wrong name for the right thing.” The C.L.P. attach very great importance to plain language being used to express the Henry George doctrine.

Dr. Dundas White, in a recent book, has shown how the collection of the economic rent of land, which is what is meant by the "taxation of land values," is not the operation of a tax at all, and the use of the word "taxation," as well as the recommendation that was made, that such taxation should be dual in its character, and be levied by both National and Local Authorities everywhere, is declared by Dr. White to be a confusing and inefficient policy. Indeed, Dr. White goes so far as to say that it is extremely probable that the use of this word "taxation," which does not correctly represent the thought that is in the minds of the users, has hindered the progress of the cause everywhere. No one believes, or says, that those who advocate and promote the taxation of land values do not earnestly desire to stop the private appropriation of the rent of land; they publicly declare they do, and we believe them. They have worked too devotedly for 40 years endeavouring to interest people in the Henry George doctrine as a taxation problem, and the C.L.P. fully recognise that the world, through their efforts, has had its attention drawn to the fundamental principle that private property in land is an immorality of far greater hurtfulness than private property in chattel slaves.

With all this in mind, and having in mind also the actual fact that so long as there is a speculative value left in land there will be those who will speculate in it and perpetuate the evils we seek to destroy, and as a result of over seven years' practical experience trying to spread the gospel of Henry George among the people of England, the C.L.P. have long arrived at the conclusion that at this juncture in the world's history it would be highly desirable that the International Conference in Denmark should issue a new statement to which no such exception can be taken. The C.L.P., therefore, have prepared, and had signed by various local bodies of Henry George men, a statement setting forth what in their opinion are the true rights of men. In the great and noble Declaration of Independence issued by English Colonists, in what is now the United States, the self-evident truths of the equality of right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness were stated in a manner which has held the imagination of the world. It is not necessary to go into reasons, but the C.L.P. are of opinion that the inference from the assertion of equality of right to life has not been drawn correctly, and has been disregarded entirely by those politicians who have undertaken to rule and govern the world. They consider, therefore, that the inference should also be plainly stated. Equality of life without equality of access to the means of life is a meaningless mockery.

The C.L.P. earnestly desire the Danish Conference to come out plainly on this question, and to make no reference whatever to any problem of taxation. Whatever taxation of land values has been established anywhere in the world, is the work of

legislatures which have not been wholly convinced, and speculation in land is still as great an evil as it was in the days when Henry George first denounced it.

With the elimination of the words " Tax " and " Taxation," and the substitution of " The Economic Rent," the C.L.P. would find themselves in complete agreement with the declaration made at Oxford, and our delegates are proceeding to Denmark in the hope that what we consider an error will be rectified by an International Conference animated by the spirit of brotherhood and thoroughly agreed on the two great principles which Henry George laboured to make clear, *viz.* :—

1. That Private Property in land is immoral, and the private appropriation of its rent must be stopped.

2. That the sacred right of personal property, the result of the labour of man's hands, should be secured to everybody.

The other declaration of man's rights, made by the French Assembly in 1789, is not complete and has never attracted the attention that the American declaration did and does.

The C.L.P. urge this Conference to make a third declaration of rights, and suggest the model. They are persuaded that every possible point that can be urged is treated in that declaration, that the principles upon which society can endure and prosper peaceably are there stated clearly and unmistakably. The Declaration makes no reference whatever to many things which are of great interest, such as War, Banking, Free Trade and other usual subjects of discussion, believing that once the Declaration is understood, and private property in land and all taxation abolished by the collection in full of the economic rent of the land everywhere, the other questions referred to will settle themselves naturally and justly.

The C.L.P. have been told again and again, " You are clearly right, but it will not settle everything." The reply is : " The establishment of Justice we urge will settle every problem that has arisen as the result of the injustice upon which the present social order is founded ; that is all the C.L.P. claim for it."

The C.L.P. declare as emphatically as possible that they have no quarrel with any man who believes in and is working for the acceptance of the Henry George principles. To collect the economic rent, they wish to urge, is not to " Tax " ; to collect a *part* of the economic rent is not something which is wrong, but for Henry George men even to seem to acquiesce in partial Justice is most decidedly to delay its coming. They repeat again that their earnest desire at this International Conference in Denmark is to get a thoroughly harmonious but clear expression of the truths for which we all stand, and for which we are all working, and to leave all reference to taxation to those who will continue to oppose any instalments of Justice as strenuously as they would oppose the demand for complete Justice.

We, therefore, put before this Committee a new statement which has been signed by our colleagues in the United States, and also in New Zealand, and which has a number of supporters in Australia, and a copy of which is appended hereto.

In this connection, and with a view to securing its friendly reception at the hands of the Conference, the C.L.P. venture to quote from that passionate lover of freedom and devoted worker for the Cause of Henry George—R. L. Outhwaite :—

“ Force, the agent of disharmony, by the private appropriation of the Earth, has made economic slavery almost universal and brought desolation upon the world. The Evangel that the peoples need is one that will harmonise with Natural Law, that of the brotherhood of mankind delivered to the world two thousand years ago. *Such an evangel was given to the oppressed by Henry George*, but the message of deliverance which he gave to the people has already suffered the fate of Christianity. It has been taken from the people by the pundits and politicians, leaving those to whom it was delivered bereft of hope. The peoples sit in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death in life. *The hour has come to rear for them the beacon light of Truth*. All unavailing is the tallow-dip in the storm. A beacon fire is needed which the storm that is coming upon the world will not put out, but cause to burn the brighter to guide the shipwrecked into haven. The truth that Henry George proclaimed has been verified by the passage of the years; the prophecy that he made has been fulfilled in the reversion of the world to barbarism. The world awaits a new Declaration of Emancipation to complement the old which affirmed that all men are born with ‘ an equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ For the fulfilment of which it needs to be added that ‘ and all men are born with an equal right to the Earth.’ Through the denial of this inherent right, Empires and civilisation have fallen, as their records show that have been rescued from the dust.

“ Only by the assertion of this right can the people avert the similar fate that is now in the making for themselves. When man-made law no longer subverts the Natural Law, when the common heritage wrested by Force from mankind is restored to mankind, then, and not till then, will man come by the fulfilment of his desires. Then, and not till then, will his feet be set in the broad way to his high destiny. Then, and not till then, will he come by Happiness. To proclaim this simple truth is to bring hope to the disinherited and the oppressed; and with the restoration of Hope all can be accomplished.

“ Those who will the end must also will the means of accomplishment. If the end aimed at be the emancipation of mankind from slavery, the means must accord with that high aim. This great cause must be lifted out of the political gutters, taken from the priests and pundits who seek to make

its presentation accord with the convenience of politicians. It is vain to think that the day will be won by cunning. The slave-owners will not be placated by such tactics, the slaves will be disheartened. Faith should not be placed in the guile of politicians, but in the yearning of man for Freedom, in the fierce resolve that will one day come to burst out of the torture chamber. These are days in which Europe is being recast. In every direction triumphant reaction is busy seeking to secure that in the aftermath of war the foundation-stone of slavery shall be better and more truly laid. This the people dimly realise, but in their impotence consent with the passivity of despair. But now is the hour to raise the standard of Freedom. Now is the hour to demand justice unqualified. Now is the hour to proclaim the Natural Rights of Man and to secure their assertion in full through the Restoration of Man to equal partnership with Nature."

The C.L.P. earnestly hope that this representative, important International Conference will take this view of the necessities of the case, and proclaim to the world as clearly and forcibly as R. L. Outhwaite has proclaimed it, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Great Britain :—

H. J. BULLIVANT.	J. W. GRAHAM PEACE,
E. J. COOPER.	<i>Secretary.</i>
H. H. W. DRUITT.	GERTRUDE L. A. PEACE.
T. C. FRANCIS,	E. MARY PEARSON.
JOHN E. GRANT.	RICHARD E. PEARSON.
J. W. MARSH.	S. VERE PEARSON.
LETTICE NEWMAN.	E. RICHMOND.
R. L. OUTHWAITE.	M. WARRINER.
WM. C. OWEN.	F. A. WILMER.

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Ohio, U.S.A. :—

JAMES BRUCE LINDSAY, *Chairman.*

For the Commonwealth Land Party, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. :—

R. C. MACAULEY, *Chairman.*

CHARLES J. SCHOALES, *Secretary.*

For the Commonwealth Land Party, New York State :—

LAURENCE W. TRACY, *Chairman.*

GEORGE LLOYD.	M. VAN VEEN.
CHARLOTTE O. SCHETTER.	WM. J. WALLACE.

For New Zealand :—

R. H. CHAPPELL.	HENRY J. NIGHTINGALE.
GEO. FOWLDS.	RALPH E. TAYLOR.
C. H. MCLEAN.	J. JULLEY THOMAS.
G. N. FOWLDS (JR.).	WM. WHITE, J.P.
C. H. NIGHTINGALE.	

COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

Twice, after successful revolutions, Declarations of Independence and of the Rights of Man have been made.

Now, after an upheaval of the world which has left the minds of men confused, the Commonwealth Land Party address the following Declaration to men of good-will everywhere, as indicating the foundation upon which alone Society can be made secure.

The COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY DECLARE, following the statement of the Declaration of Independence of 1776, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man by the French Assembly in 1798, that:

1. Every human being, by the mere fact of "being," has an equal and inalienable right to life (and therefore to access to the means of life), and a liberty bounded only by a like liberty of every other human being.
2. No legal enactment can deprive any human being of these inalienable rights, even with the consent of the individual; they are always and forever inalienable.
3. No human being, therefore, can have or obtain any exclusive right to ownership of the Earth, the source of all sustenance, the mother of all wealth. It is always and forever the inalienable property of all its inhabitants.
4. Security of tenure and exclusive occupation (**not ownership**) of portions of the Earth are necessary for the better production, transportation, and exchange of those things (wealth) upon which mankind depends.
5. Security of tenure and exclusive occupation of portions of the Earth can be in conformity with the natural inalienable equal rights of all, only if:

The value of such exclusive occupation is taken annually by the Community, and expended in the service of and for the benefit of the whole Community. This value is **Rent** (or economic rent), and the measure of it is the difference in desirability, from any cause, of any portion of the Earth, as compared with the least desirable portion.

6. This **Rent**, or value of the bare site, appears as the result of the presence of human beings, and grows with the growth of the population.
7. The collection of this **Rent** for private use (as at present) is a denial of the right of access to the means of Life:

a denial of the justice of equality of opportunity: and has no sanction in equity or in natural (or moral) Law. It is, in fact, the assertion by some of a greater right to Life and Liberty than that right which should be enjoyed by all.

8. This denial of the equality of the right to Life has led to a denial of the real right of property in the things produced by labour, viz.:

The imposition of unequal, unjust, arbitrary taxation on Industry, to meet public needs, on the principle that "Necessity knows no Law," which is the denial of the right of the producer of wealth to retain it for his or her own use. This denial of the right of property, together with the failure to collect for public use the annual value created by the public, is the real cause of wars, revolutions, involuntary poverty, and most of the disease and crime of the world.

9. The **Rent** created by the Community is sufficient in normal times, under just conditions, to meet the expenses of the public services, and to enable the managers of the public business to take care of the incompetent and the old, not as charity or benevolence, but as mere Justice.
10. No generation can bind a following one, and it is the right and duty of the living to do Justice, even if some who profit by unjust conditions suffer hardship.
11. No legislative enactments of the past that are contrary to the natural Law of simple Justice can be regarded by the living as valid; if there are any such, they should be ignored or repealed.
12. No human being can purchase or otherwise acquire any valid title to the right to exact toll from other human beings in exchange for permission to use the Earth. All claims to such, or for pecuniary compensation on the part of individuals claiming to "**own**" the Earth, for loss of power to confiscate public rent, as above defined, should be denied.
13. Whoever exercises labour on land after opportunities are equalised by the collection of the **Rent** of the bare land for the public Treasury, has an exclusive right to all the products of such labour, free from any arbitrary, confiscatory deductions by officials.
14. Proposals for the control of human activities by the State or Government are in the direction of economic slavery; any such, and any interference with the right of the individual to self-development and self-sustenance, are no substitutes for a freedom based on the foregoing principles and leading to a natural and voluntary extension of the co-operation under which alone Society can peacefully endure and prosper.

The COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY realise that the obstacles to the establishment of a just relationship between man and the Earth, and therefore between the individual units of Society, can be removed in an orderly, reasonable, just, and constitutional manner, only when and if the Electorate in sufficient majority see the principles upon which Society must be constituted; and, recognising that the only true and just solution of the Social Problem is to make all the land the common property of all the people, by diverting the rental value, which now flows into the pockets of the Land Lords, into the Common Treasury, call for support for an attempt to return Members to Parliament pledged to carry out, at the earliest moment, the Will of the people to Freedom, through Justice and equality of opportunity.

The COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY invite all interested in the proper solution of the questions which now vex us, to join up and make a united effort to carry into effect the principles clearly defined and urged upon the world by HENRY GEORGE.

For further information address:—

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