

PROGRESS

An Australian Journal to Advocate the Rights of the People in the Land

POLICY: 1. APPROPRIATION OF LAND VALUES OR GROUND RENT AS PUBLIC REVENUE.
2. THE ABOLITION OF TAXES NOW IMPOSED UPON LABOR AND LABOR PRODUCTS.
3. PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR ALL ELECTIONS.

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Current Comments

IS PRAHRAN SINKING?

PLANNERS PONDER ITS PLIGHT.

The city of Prahran, three miles south-east of the G.P.O., Melbourne, was created in 1855. With an area of 2320 acres, it includes Armadale, Hawkesburn, South Yarra and Windsor, as well as a large part of the exclusive residential suburb of Toorak.

Its population is now over 60,000, it was valued at £1,430,000 in 1947-48, when Prahran councillors, using the long-discredited system of annual value rating, raised a revenue of £155,442. Penalty rating on good buildings is the practice at Prahran.

Thirty years ago the elite of Melbourne shopped in Prahran's famous Chapel Street; the city looked as if it would flourish indefinitely. But the early promise was not fulfilled. Today huge unfinished buildings stand waiting for the expansion that was planned. Chapel Street, whose emporiums once attracted half Melbourne, is only a shadow of its former glory. Fast electric trains to Melbourne and changed routes of electrified trams have a bearing on this matter. But on valuable land there are congested divers industries, while in "depressed" areas people are herded into "blighted" houses. Yet in Toorak long frontages are frequent and Annual Value municipal rates are a bonus for inadequate utilization. For it transpires that the density of houses varies from 1.4 per acre in parts of Toorak to more than 8 per acre in "depressed" areas.

Seven out of ten houses in Prahran are over 25 years old; 32 per cent. of all the dwellings are dilapidated, or in need of repairs. Substantial repairs are promptly followed by re-valuation and a rise in rates.

Planners Given a Chance

Prahran councillors became worried. So they called in three Departments of the Melbourne University (Architecture, Psychology and Social Science), and gave them a grant of £2,300 to conduct a survey. The terms of reference have not been disclosed.

Staff and students in these Departments spent six months in collecting information, interviewing people, and making observations. Statistics on church attendance were collected, entertainment facilities

were investigated; the housing situation was examined; prices and shopping facilities were studied; while health, parks, schools, weekly wages and numerous other topics were subjected to detailed inquiry.

All very interesting. But the type of survey seems to be not so much diagnostic as fact-collecting. A newspaper man in touch with the planners, states: "In 1950 Prahran sprawls in confusion on valuable land; a city congested with small industry, a place of poignant contrasts and strange anomalies, . . . of dilapidation and grandeur."

WILL JUSTICE BE DONE?

NORTHERN TERRITORY LAND TENURES

Military roads opened up fertile portions of the vast Northern Territory. Some pastoral land undeveloped after many decades of lease at very low rentals has been resumed by Government and subdivided.

On Barkly Tableland a recent lease granted in 1949 by N.T. Land Board for the new "Dalmore" station has been followed by speedy development, artesian bores sunk for water, earthen tanks excavated for water storage, stockyards built and 1,000 head of cattle on the holding within a year.

Here They Are

Instances like this show what could be done if more and larger areas of pastoral land, left undeveloped on peppercorn rentals, were resumed from big "estates" and thrown open for selection. The "Age" correspondent (2/9/50) notes that several thousand square miles of land east of Darwin, at present under grazing licence to buffalo shooters but believed to be ideal cattle country, has not yet been determined for resumption.

There They Are.

Several thousand square miles of good pastoral land was resumed by the Chifley Government several years ago. But it has not been thrown open for selection because the Federal Government at Canberra has not yet formulated its policy on N.T. pastoral land tenures. Pastoralists and Government officials both say this delay in determining Government policy is seriously retarding development of the Northern Territory.

Ministry of Development.

Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey, Federal Minister for Development, is flying by plane over Australia spotting wonderful potentialities and planning to increase Government debt burden on the citizens by £250 million for the Socialistic development of these "potentialities." Let him come down to earth. Private enterprisers are willing and waiting to develop such areas in Northern Territory and pay rentals to reduce Government debts if only the Menzies-Casey Ministry will let them make a start. What hinders the Menzies-Casey Ministry from formulating a just system of leasehold tenure for Northern Territory? Where is the hidden hand? Does it stretch out from the big city board rooms of the "estates" and grip the Ministry? Will Justice be done?

Problem Solved

Right at Mr. Menzies' door there is a tested and proven solution. Canberra itself is the answer. This Federal Territory of 900 square miles is mostly rural. Under the Act of 1910 none of this land can be sold as an estate in freehold but is leased (under Ordinances 1918-25) for agricultural and grazing purposes for terms not exceeding 25 years. Of course this re-appraisal period is too lengthy. The leasehold rental should be set for the first period of 10 years with re-valuations at intervals of five years. Western Queensland grazing leases are operated very successfully on a similar plan. Portion of the capital is not absorbed and sterilized by purchase of "land values"—all capital is available for productive improvements.

How should rentals be fixed? The British system in parts of India shows one way. Set up a Court of Lease under the Judge. For the next five years' lease of "Eshcol," Government officers appear pleading for a rental of, say, £2,000 a year as a just return to Government and the citizens for their contribution to the opportunity at "Eshcol." The lessee appears offering a rental of, say £1,600 and stressing his hardships. The Court will then determine the rental. Justice will be done.

Darwin Also.

N.T. capital and port is Darwin, where land is valuable. Bombed by the enemy, some of its slums were destroyed. Some of the land was resumed. Glorious opportunity to plan the town on modern lines. Surveyors sweated and architects gave their best thought so that a fine model of Australia's Front Door — Darwin — was on show at Melbourne Exhibition Building. Where is it now? What has happened regarding land tenures? Have private landholders defeated the Menzies Government? Perpetual leasehold may be granted by the Crown for town sites at rentals which should be revised by the Court every five years. At Canberra banks and even churches are built on land with 99 years' lease. Every growth of air-line traffic, every increase of beef production inland, all defence preparations at our northern area, boost site values in Darwin Town? Such unearned incomes rightly belong to the present Menzies Government to be used for public purposes in place of regressive taxation.

Will Justice be done?

—Anthos.

"THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE"

Victory For Site Value Rating

The above newspaper headings from the "Ringwood Mail" of 31/8/50, record the culmination of the campaign for site-value rating in Ringwood. There has been a positive ferment in this Borough during the last six months on this issue, due to the widespread complaints of excessive rates upon built properties as compared with those on vacant holdings. An attempt was made through the council itself to secure a change this year but this move failed. As a result Mr. E. D. Rourke, one of the leaders of the Rating Reform League decided to nominate in opposition to one of the sitting councillors opposed to the change.

This councillor, however, decided to retire and it at first appeared to be a straight contest between Mr. Rourke and an independent candidate. Shortly before nominations closed, however, those opposed to site-value rating put forward a candidate and from then on the campaign became very willing.

Mr. Rourke made site-value rating the issue both in his manifesto and in newspaper articles. A sensation occurred when Cr. E. T. Purser resigned as returning officer for the East Ward to associate with two other councillors in answering some of the points made by Mr. Rourke.

The "Ringwood Mail" account of the election runs as follows:

"The election of E. D. Rourke for East Ward and A. D. Patterson for South Ward in the Ringwood Borough Council Elections is really a victory for site-value rating. There were no other controversial issues. Rourke, a comparative newcomer to Ringwood, made site-value rating his main plank and he topped the poll.

Patterson, while he did not push site-value rating with any enthusiasm as a main plank of his platform, was known as an advocate of that system of rating."

The results of the election were as follows:

East Ward:

Rourke 305, Tann 248, McNamara 204. As none had an absolute majority the lowest candidate, McNamara was eliminated and on transfer his votes made the final result Rourke 405, Tann 352. In this Ward 76 per cent. of the local residents exercised their votes.

South Ward:

Patterson 406, Wademan 308. Majority for Patterson 98. In this Ward 52 per cent. of the local residents voted.

It may be noted that Mr. Patterson was the mover of the motion previously before the Council that a change be made to site-value rating by council resolution. The motion was then defeated but it is expected that now that public opinion has been tested a move will again be made to adopt through the Council and, if this fails, that a petition will be lodged for a poll.

Congratulations to both Crs. Rourke and Patterson. The result shows that site-value rating can be an election winning issue.

BERTRAND RUSSELL HALTS

Bertrand Russell, well-known British philosopher, was reported in the "Argus," 31/7/50, for his views on the conflict in Asia. He said, "the lot of the peasant in S.E. Asia is a very hard one. He is ground between the land owner and the money lender, and is reduced to the lowest level of poverty compatible with survival.

"The Communists offer to emancipate him from his double thralldom: he does not know what happened to the Russian peasants who listened to the promises of the Bolsheviks.

"It must be said that the Western powers are in part to blame, since, owing to the fear of Communism, they have tended to oppose even the most necessary land reform. It was through this mistake that they lost China."

This is well known and very true. But what are the "necessary land reforms." Here the eminent philosopher halts. As the recipient himself of unearned income, there may be economy in the disclosure of the truth.

For the peasant pays twice: land rent to the landlord and then taxes to the Government. The two propositions which are necessary land reforms are (1) all land rents should go to Government for revenue, and (2) all taxes should be abolished. Prompt action on these lines would save the rest of Asia from Communism. But Colombo Conference found Australia's Mr. Percy Spender avoiding the real issue, and joining hands with patrician landlord Jahar Lal Nehru, to put a patch of new cloth on the rotten system of Asia's degradation.

LAND REFORMS IN EGYPT.

Plans for rural reform aimed at ensuring a more equitable distribution of wealth and money are being discussed in Egypt.

Discontent on the present land system frequently takes a very active form.

Clashes between officials and peasants over the collection of revenue, for example, are common, while there are long drawn-out conflicts about land occupancy.

Yet the condition of the peasant is nothing short of medieval.

The peasant, his wife and children toil from dawn to dusk under the hot African sun for a mere pittance.

In their villages they often share huts, which are their homes, with animals.

Sanitation is almost unknown, and water is drawn direct from the Nile and canals.

Some 12 million of Egypt's population of 20 million are peasants, tilling land so rich that it yields two and sometimes three crops a year, but never getting a fair deal themselves.

About 90 per cent. of the land is owned by a small, privileged class, amounting to not more than 10 per cent. of the population.

A surplus rural population totalling between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 is forcing down the rural standard of living and making a reform of the land tenure system imperative.

—"Adelaide News," 12/6/50.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Cr. J. H. Morris on his reelection in Coburg, and on his election as Mayor of that City. Cr. Morris is a strong advocate of site-value rating and is a Vice-President of the General Council for Rating Reform as well as a member of the Henry George League.

THE H.G. SCHOOL IN AMERICA

Two booklets published by the Henry George School of Social Science from its headquarters at 50 East 69th Street, New York, tell an encouraging story of its expansion and progress. Impressively, they are illustrated with the picture of the college buildings which in themselves are testimony to the status the School now enjoys, since its inception in 1932, when its rooms were but two at the home of its founder, the late Oscar Geiger. One of the booklets describes the courses of study, these including the basic course on Fundamental Economics, the second course on International Trade and Social Problems, the third course on the Science of Political Economy; added to which there are a number of Advanced Courses, such as those on a Critical Examination of Socialism, the Philosophy of Henry George, the Philosophy of Oscar Geiger, American History, European History, the Land Question, the Law of Property, Monetary Theory, Practical Writing, Public Speaking, together with certain continuation courses. There is also the special department of the correspondent course. The other booklet is the 12-page printed Annual Report for 1949, giving account of the studies conducted, and of other activities; at headquarters and at the extensions in Chicago, Boston, Ohio, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, San Diego, Hartford, Albany, Montreal and elsewhere; and announced is the new extension in San Francisco, for which funds were pledged and plans laid for launching the work in 1950. The report states that during year 1949, the total number of those who completed the basic course (**Progress and Poverty** as text-book) in all the extensions (including New York and the correspondence course) was 2,971; and from the details given of the various extensions, we count 1,083 students who passed through and completed the various continuation and advanced courses. The faculty of the Henry George School is composed of volunteer tutors; men and women selected from the student body and trained for the purpose of teaching without remuneration. The School is supported by the voluntary contributions of those who believe that education in economic fundamentals merits support. Speaking for the Henry George School of Social Science here in Victoria, we congratulate our fellow-workers in the United States and Canada on their successful efforts in this good cause.

SOCRATES DEFINES JUSTICE

Justice is the institution of a natural order in which a man can produce food, buildings and clothing for himself, removing not a neighbour's landmark, practising one thing only, the thing to which his nature is best adapted, doing his own business, not being a busybody, not taking what is another's nor being deprived of what is his own, having what is his own and belongs to him, interfering not with another, so that he may set in order his own inner life and be his own master, his own law, and at peace with himself.

—Collated from the "Republic" by Francis Neilson in "The Eleventh Commandment."

Henry George League of Victoria

THE COMMEMORATION FUNCTION

The Annual George Commemoration was held on the 5th of September in Scots Church Hall, Russell Street. We departed from our customary dinner and reverted to the Social. Mr. Pitt the younger was in the chair. Mr. Craigie, who came specially from Adelaide gave the address and, as was to be expected, it was a masterly effort. He contrasted the Georgian idea with others looming up, particularly the great Frankenstein with feet of clay; and made plain how so much of our modern legislation is creeping Socialism. Mr. Craigie struck a blow at the Malthusian head which is bobbing up again, especially in certain clerical quarters. If folk would read Progress and Poverty they would see that George dealt devastatingly with the subject. Mr. Craigie dealt with the functions of Government showing that if Governments stuck to their true and legitimate functions we would soon arrive at our goal, viz., freedom.

We were besides delightfully entertained firstly by Mrs. Marshall, whose songs, and her singing of them, were alike most pleasing. Also by Mr. Alex Duncan who whistled so thrillingly that one could wish he had been heard by a certain eminent Melbourne musician who likes all forms of music except whistling.

It was a good gathering. Three at least of us who had heard the great George were present.

Mr. McDonald, our soundest economist and one most devoted to the cause, pluckily got there and we were all delighted to see him and his niece.

Supper time afforded opportunity for social intercourse.

MR. CRAIGIE'S ADDRESS

Mr. Craigie said we were gathered together to do honor to one of the great benefactors of the human race. Henry George was born on September 2, 1939. He started life as an office boy, but after many adversities he undertook newspaper work and commenced to write and speak on public questions. Henry George gave his life for the cause he had at heart and his followers must be prepared to make sacrifices. Their duty is to use their energies in spreading the doctrine which they know will make for the establishment of the brotherhood of man.

In 1866 Henry George was engaged in newspaper work, and was soon called from the printer's case to the reporter's desk. Because of his great ability within six months he rose to the position of managing editor. It was the great contrast of poverty with wealth witnessed by Henry George during a visit to New York in 1868-69 that was the primary cause of the formulation of his philosophy presented to the world in his great book "Progress and Poverty." Though engaged in the work of establishing a telegraphic news service George found time to study the problems which beset mankind. In his spare time he studied social conditions and found that special privileges were obtained by the few, whilst others huddled in filth and misery. Then an unknown man of 30 years, he refused to believe that what he saw was the natural order. Without advertising the fact he set himself the task of finding the laws governing the production and distribution of wealth.

That his resolution to do this was not an idle one we all know. He believed that poverty was a crime because nature had not been niggardly, but had provided plenty for all. In "The Crime of Poverty" he showed the cause of poverty must be a common one, because irrespective of the form of government, poverty was common to all countries. He found this common cause was the appropriation by the few of that natural element that all must have access to if they are to exist.

In denouncing land monopoly George met fierce opposition. This did not trouble him, but the apathy of the people did. This is evident from the illustration he gives in "Protection of Free Trade" of the bull winding the rope about the stake until he was unable to reach the rich grass all around him. This illustration might well be applied to many wealth producers today. Instead of demanding access to natural opportunities and working for greater freedom they demanded all kinds of palliatives and restrictions which merely fastened additional parasites on their backs.

Realising that men could not be driven to freedom, Henry George tried to lead them. He examined orthodox political economy and rejected many of its theories. He exposed the fallacy that Capital employed Labor and advanced the wages of labor, and showed that production was always the mother of wages. He rejected the Malthusian theory that population pressed upon subsistence, and showed how man by his knowledge and inventions overcame the pressure by increasing production. He investigated the Law of Rent, and showed how rent rises with the lowering of the margin of production, and that wages correspondingly fell with the lower margin. He showed that when land was held out of use the effect was to force the margin back, thus increasing rent and decreasing wages and interest.

Henry George's study of the social problem led him to see that man was a land animal, getting his food, clothing and shelter from mother earth, and that production of these things could only be secured by the free use of the earth. He found that opportunities to produce were limited by artificial means. People wanted work and the things which work produced, while the land on which their labor could be employed was kept idle or only partly used. He saw that the problem demanding attention was to explain why in modern society we had want amidst abundance. This same problem confronts modern society, and the solution can only be found in the philosophy of Henry George.

And what are the underlying principles of Georgian philosophy? George saw that everyone was born with equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That these rights carried with them a further right -- the equal right of all to enjoy free access to land. Everything needed for the satisfaction of human desires came by labor applied to land.

Others besides George had glimpsed this truth, but it was left to him to unfold the true relationship of land to the labor question. George made it clear that equal rights to land did not mean parcelling out the land in equal portions, as some had suggested. Such action did not make for social justice. Certain

areas were worth more than others, either because they were more desirable for business or residential sites, or by reason of greater fertility.

Henry George made it clear there was no need to divide the land in the manner suggested, and that equal rights could be secured by easier means. He saw that justice could be done by the simple policy of collecting rent for public purposes. He recognised that land varied in value, and only by the free operation of the Law of Competition could its value be determined.

He saw that certain land with a given expenditure of labor and capital on it would return 20 bushels of wheat per acre, while other land with the same expenditure would yield only 10 bushels. Naturally every one desired the land of greatest fertility and with the best situation and social services, and the Law of Competition indicated the premium people were prepared to pay to have the exclusive possession of the more favoured sites. When this premium, or rent, was taken for public purposes and used to defray the cost of public works and social services, justice was done to all sections of the community.

Those living in the areas adjacent to the social services or where productivity was high, would pay the highest amount of rent into the public treasury, and other occupants would have their payments graded according to benefits received from social services. In this manner those on less favoured sites would be compensated for the disability they suffered, and through the payment of a lower rent the principle of equality of opportunity was assured to all.

Henry George showed that rent was sufficient to meet the cost of all NECESSARY government, consequently there was no need for the taxes levied on wages, or on the necessities of life. He showed that a policy of this nature would lower the cost of production, thereby encourage production and development to the fullest extent, reduce the cost of living and give all wealth producers the full earnings of their labor. He also made it clear that the application of his principles would put an end to war. When rent went into the public treasury there would be no desire on the part of privileged interests to "grab" the natural resources of any other country. The removal of tariffs, quotas, embargoes, currency manipulation, and all other restrictions from trade would produce peace and goodwill among the nations of the world, instead of the strife engendered by present restrictive policies.

When George discovered the remedy for social ills he set forth to preach it. He addressed meetings in U.S.A., Great Britain and Australia. In 1877 he stood for the Californian legislature but was not successful. In 1886 he was nominated as candidate for the Mayoralty of New York. He polled 68,110 votes, or about 8,000 more than was polled by Theodore Roosevelt, who was one of the candidates.

His last fight was one for social purity, but the strain of the campaign proved too much for him, and he died, as he probably would have wished to die, in a struggle to realise the principles he held dear.

Henry George gave to the world a number of splendid books dealing with all phases of the principles he expounded. No bookshelf should be without them,

as they give a clearer view of economic principles than any other books written.

Of Henry George it may truly be said: "Though his body lies mouldering in the grave, his soul goes marching on."

And so tonight we gather to revere his memory, and throughout the world, wherever two or three are gathered together for righteousness' sake, there will the name of Henry George be held in reverence. The bright example of his noble, self-sacrificing life will act as an inspiration to all his followers and give them strength to continue the glorious work done by him for the alleviation of suffering and the emancipation of mankind.

COMMEMORATION AT KIMBA, STH. AUST.

On the evening of August 25th, the Kimba Branch held its Annual Dinner to commemorate the birth of the great apostle of Social Justice, Henry George.

Mr. A. C. Frick, President, presided over a gathering of about 75 people, who sat down to a fine repast convened by Mrs. W. Harris who was ably seconded by other ladies of the Branch, all sterling workers for the cause.

In his opening remarks Mr. Frick extended a welcome to those present, and while inviting everyone to thoroughly enjoy themselves, pointed out that the serious aspect of the function must not be overlooked; that while we rejoiced in the birth of Henry George we should also rejoice in his great works and objectives and soberly reflect upon them.

The toast list opened with the Royal Toast, and was followed by: The League, given by Mr. Stan Frick, who outlined the work done in the past by the Sth. Aust. Branch when Mr. Craigie was Secretary, and he referred to the reason for the temporary recession of that office. He spoke at length on the need for whole-hearted support for the League and stressed the fact that it is due to the endeavours of this movement that so many local governing bodies are now adopting the only democratic system of rating—unimproved land values.

"Kindred Branches" was in the hands of Mr. E. J. Hackett, who, speaking on very short notice gave an interesting outline of the operations of branches not only in Australia but in other countries, naively remarking that only in those bodies could be found the foundation of a true Christian civilisation.

The Commemoration was delivered by Mr. J. P. Moore. On this occasion the speaker departed from the usual biographical dissertation and confined his remarks to the fulfilled prophecies of the philosopher. In referring to George's chapter, "How Civilisation may decline," politicians and alleged political economists who suggest the heretical Malthusian theory and birth control, as a means of over-coming our self made economic chaos, were severely castigated. He said the people had, in their economic lives "chosen a Barrabas," and must pay the penalty. The address occupied 35 minutes.

The Silent Toast was then given by the President and all stood for one minute in impressive silence.

"The Visitors" was given by Mr. J. A. Sampson, immediate Past President, who stated that the Branch

was always delighted to see visitors at the function, and he hoped that by contact with Georgians they would realize how important it was to scrap current political and economic humbug if the nations were not to be destroyed. For their benefit he used the most important of the master's teachings and strongly condemned land and trade monopolies, the existence of which caused the suffering and tribulations of the present time.

"The Ladies" was proposed by Mr. A. Schubert, who dealt comprehensively with the indispensable co-operation of the ladies of the League to further the propagation of our principles; the names of many famous women from Mrs. George and Anna George de Mille to our present day co-workers were mentioned. Special tribute was paid to the ladies of the local Branch who do so much towards ensuring the success of our annual function. Their enthusiasm in the battle for a just social system was not expended on one annual commemoration, but maintained its high level always.

"Pioneers of the Movement" was very ably delivered by Mr. H. J. Sampson. During a carefully considered speech the speaker traced the individual operations of men who realised the iniquity of private ownership of land, dating so far back as to the Land giver of the Israelites, Moses. Among those mentioned were the Physiocrats of France, Dove, and many others. He then dealt with the cohesion of some great minds under the leadership of Henry George, who became the more modern pioneers of the movement. He appealed to all present not to let unselfish sacrifices of the pioneers to become nullified by our careless apathy, but for each to become monthly disciples, and follow in their footsteps.

In his closing remarks the President expressed thanks for the attention paid to the speeches, and paid tribute to the speakers and Secretary. He also urged people to read the literature of Henry George and other authors whose books were on display and for sale.

The evening was a fine success, subscriptions were gathered in and an appreciable quantity of literature sold and distributed.

HAMILTON CITY

Develops Under Site Value Rating

In 1944 the citizens of Hamilton decided by their votes at a poll to change to the site-value rating system. Since then there has been marked increase in the rate of development of this Town. The tempo of development is indicated in itself by the rise of the Town to City status five years after the change.

The most tangible evidence of development in any municipality of course is building activity. Statistics on this are not readily available in provincial centres as they are in the metropolitan areas where building permits are regularly tabulated and published in the State Year Books. Efforts have been made to obtain statistics direct from the council concerned but pressure of demands for other services and staff shortages preventing collection of the figures have been referred to by the municipal staff.

However, official data has been obtained which gives an idea of the growth from the permits granted as recorded by the records of the State Building Directorate and Commonwealth Statistician since 1946. These figures are given below:

Period	New Buildings		Other		Alterations and additions	
	No.	Value	No.	Value	No.	Value
		£		£		£
1946 July-Dec.	38	44,952	—	—	16	3,293
1947 Year	53	74,134	—	—	28	7,927
1948 Year	50	75,208	1	600	16	5,128
1949 Year	80	141,870	5	20,350	45	14,150

Comparisons of the values of building development prior to site-value rating are not available but the dwelling construction numerically can be compared. The State year books show that the total number of dwellings increased from 1513 in 1936-37 to 1652 in 1943-44.

Thus over the eight year period before the change in rating system the dwelling construction totalled 139. As dwelling construction ceased in 1942 during the critical stages of the war it is reasonable to consider this growth as that over six normal building years instead of eight giving an average pre site-value rating growth of 23 per annum.

Comparing the development above it will be seen that since changing to the site-value rating basis the dwelling construction rate has doubled in any of the years above and nearly quadrupled in the last year. It is important to note, too, the recent growth in 'other buildings' and 'alterations and additions.' The record is impressive and confirms the claims of our supporters that the exemption of improvements from local or state taxation does find people responsive and releases the springs of production.

We commend the experience of Hamilton to the majority of our Boroughs and Towns which are finding the going heavy with a local taxation system that works to favor decadence.

LETTER TO RIGHT HON. R. G. MENZIES

Dear Sir,

I duly received your communication of 3rd inst. The "reason" given for the imposition of increased duty on rayon is unconvincing. It shows that your Government is unable to take any but a superficial, selfish, and short-sighted view of the matter, very much like that of that remarkable individual, the "average" Australian.

As to the importance, in time of war, of a local rayon, or any other industry, it should be obvious that, in the recent war, all of Australia's protected industries, without American aid, would not have saved us. On the whole, it would seem that your Government's policy will eventually disgust our friends as well as our enemies. Then, where shall we be?

I have also the authority of Sir Frank Clarke for saying that the Australian customs tariff is contrary to the principles laid down in the Atlantic Charter, a charter accepted in time of war, when we were ready to agree to anything, if only our precious skins could be saved. It is the old story — "When the devil was ill," etc.

—ALFRED THODEY.

GENERAL COUNCIL FOR RATING REFORM

At its last meeting the General Council for Rating Reform considered the programme of prospective rating polls for next year and the possibility of reversion polls being demanded in several districts this year.

It decided to make an appeal to supporters of rating reform for donations to enable effective assistance to be given in any of the districts needing it.

We commend the appeal to our readers and those desirous of helping should send any contributions to the Hon. Secretary, General Council for Rating Reform, G.P.O. Box 955 G, Melbourne.

DANISH LOCAL ELECTIONS

Striking Gains of the Justice Party

In the Danish local elections which took place on March 14, Retsforbundet (the Justice Union) scored successes which have not only surprised and gratified its adherents, but have astonished the other parties and the press as well.

First as to the Borough elections. In the Metropolis and in the 38 Provincial Towns, where candidates were put up, 50 seats were captured, being a net gain of 49. These seats include 6 in the Copenhagen City Council, and the rest were spread over 23 other boroughs. In 47 of the 85 provincial towns, the Justice Union did not stand.

County and Parish Councils. Twenty of the 25 Counties were contested and 12 seats were secured—net gain, 10 seats. Members of the Party stood also in 60 of the small and very numerous Parishes and on these councils some 80 seats were secured—that is, so far as count can be made from the reports given in Retsforbundet's journal *Vejen Frem*.

By the increase in the number of votes cast, which are given for the boroughs and counties, the growth of public support for the Justice Union's policy is particularly striking. At the 1950 municipal elections, the Party put up candidates in 41 of the Boroughs and 20 of the Counties and achieved a total vote of 133,800. In the same constituencies, at the Parliamentary election in 1947, its vote was 85,400, a more than 50 per cent. increase in three years. Significant also is the comparison between the 1946 and the 1950 municipal elections. In 1946, the Party stood in 16 Boroughs and 7 Counties and its vote then and there was 9,190. In the 1950 elections, its vote in these constituencies rose to 50,490.

The standing of the Justice Union vis-a-vis the other parties is shown in the following total vote given in the 1950 elections—

Socialists	697,800
Moderate Liberals	404,800
Conservatives	374,900
Radical Liberals	144,800
Justice Union	133,800
Communists	75,800
Various other parties and lists	51,100
	1,883,000

The Conservatives had a considerably increased vote, regaining positions that were lost on the pre-

vious occasion. The Socialists only just held their ground. The Moderate Liberals (the "country party") and the Radical Liberals fell back somewhat. The Communists suffered a severe loss. In the 55-member Copenhagen City Council, for example, their representation fell from 11 to 6 and their vote declined, from 62,800 to 39,100; in the Provincial Towns they had a net loss of 27 seats and are now represented in only five of those Councils as compared with 23 before the election.

The real "victor," generally acclaimed as such because of the great proportionate increase in its vote, was the Justice Union. Its capture of the six seats on the Copenhagen City Council, and with 42,100 votes where it had not stood before, caused a sensation. The newspapers have made much of it, although not without partisan comments that this may be just a "passing fancy" in which voters have indulged, only to swing away on the next occasion—but something must be allowed for party-political envy and the superior attitude of the sceptics who smile upon those they deem Utopian.

A great rally of the Justice Union victors was held at Parliament House on March 26, where more than 100 Councillors attended and spent some seven hours upon discussion of municipal problems. Typical was the publicity given to this by the *Billed Blad*, the Danish counterpart of illustrated papers like *Picture Post* and *Illustrated* in Great Britain, wherein were three pages of photographs and much interesting descriptive matter of the Party which sprung such a surprise. And from the Copenhagen daily paper "*B.T.*" we give the following extracts from a contribution of one of its own correspondents:—

"The Justice Union has so stolen the limelight that many are asking what exactly is this party and by what spell has it captured the popular imagination? If you talk with an adherent for barely a minute—no matter on what subject—before the minute is over he has pronounced that word, the magic word, *Grundskyld* (the Ground-due, Land Value Taxation). The leader of the Party, Dr. Viggo Starcke, maintains that its fundamental idea goes far back in Danish history, for in his opinion Denmark is the country which has most often solved the land question. In the time of Canute the Great and Valdemar the Great, Denmark was in that regard a Just State. The Party claims Reventlow, the liberator of the peasants in 1787, as a party member, but what was done to abolish the bondage to the soil was as nothing compared with the changes in land tenure which Reventlow brought about by means of the "Land Due," the later "Hartkorn" assessment, now translated and transformed into the magic word *Grundskyld*, a definition of which is given in the recently published book 'The Political Parties' by the writer Knud Geddes:—

"Everyone who disposes over land shall pay its naturally and socially created value fully to the community. In that way the advantage the landholder has over the landless will disappear and all citizens will enjoy the equality in economic condition. Further, it is said that . . . the revenues the land value taxation will produce shall be used to

abolish the present taxation system. The Justice Union's final aim is the complete removal of all taxes on income, accumulated wealth, consumption and exchange.

"The watch-words of the Justice Union are Land Value Taxation, Free Trade and Democratic Franchise.

"The Party began as a club. About the beginning of the century, the Henry George Union was founded by, among others, J. L. Björner, Jakob E. Lange (who knew Henry George personally), and Sophus Berthelsen. Henry George was the American economist who upheld the people's right to its land, and his book **Progress and Poverty** can be genuinely regarded as the Bible of the Justice Union. But from the founding of the Henry George Union to the coming of this new Party is a long jump. There were many developments in the interval. In 1902 the Housemen had demanded the full taxation of land values and the remission of taxes on buildings, work and consumption. The 'Koge Resolution,' as the programme of the Housemen (the crofter-proprietors) was named, has, however, not yet been carried through.

"In 1905 the Radical Liberal Party (breaking away from the old-established Liberal Party) was founded, and among its founders was the late Professor C. N. Starcke (father of Dr. Viggo Starcke), who later, with others including Mrs. Signe Björner, helped to found the Justice Union. That was in 1919. Five years had to pass before the Justice Union broke out as a separate political party, and two years thereafter it succeeded in electing two members to Parliament, namely Dr. Dam and Pastor Willesen. But until after the 30's the general public had little but a smile for the Party. After the liberation, the Justice Union gained some following. At the General Election in 1945, it returned three members to Parliament and at the 1947 General Election its representation was increased to six.

—Land & Liberty, May, 1950.

Notes from Various Sources

Global Exchange.

"Trade is fundamental to the prosperity of nations as it is to that of individuals. We have tried often to protect some special interest by excluding the goods of strangers from competition. In the long run every one has suffered."

—F. D. Roosevelt.

Method.

"The philosophy of Henry George needs political action. No one knew that better than George himself, as made clear in Chapter 19 of 'Social Problems.' And George left a specific programme as to how this should be brought about."

—Charles Johnson Post, New York, U.S.A.

Cobden.

"Clevelly farm of 193 ac. at Jancourt was recently sold by the Melbourne bookmaker owner for about £17,950, about £93 an acre." "Argus" 25/8/50.

[£93 an acre is mostly capitalized value of the unearned portion of the income obtainable from this land.—Ed.]

Ballarat.

407 Sturt St. 2 storey bk. shop on land 10 x 120 ft. let at £6 wk. sold at £5350. "Argus," 25/8/50.

[Streams of shoppers pass this location, hence an income can be secured readily, hence site-value is high. Ed.]

Townswal.

Morocco East sheep station with a nine mile frontage to Murrumbidgee River, consisting of 14,000 acres freehold plus some improvements sold at auction for £139,363 or £9.9 per acre. "Age," 2/9/50.

[This sale should be a guide to Federal Land Tax valuations for current basis of collections of Federal revenue to meet extra costs of Defence against Communism. Ed.]

40 Years Experience.

The Hare Clark system has proved an almost infallible way of obtaining proportional representation. While the system is in operation there need be no fear that the people will not be properly represented.

—Mr. Connolly, Tas. Leg. Council, 6/6/50.

Prosperity and Imports.

In U.S.A., in 1929, per capita imports soared to 35.14 dollars. By time the bottom of the depression was reached in 1932, after the passage of the Smoot-Hawley "protective" Tariff Act of 1930, they had dropped to 10.44 dollars. Then in 1937 after the upswing the figure went to 22.96 dollars. With the 1938 recession, it fell to 14.74 dollars. By 1941, it had risen to 23.77 dollars.

It is also noteworthy that in 1937 in the group of industries which complained to Congress that the Hull system (free trade) was bad for American living standards, wages averaged 54.3 cents an hour. Other industries which had expanded their export trade owing to reduced tariff rates reported hourly wages of 75.2 cents.

Protectionists should note. For world prosperity cannot be achieved by lowering home standards of living, or by preventing other nations from prospering.

—(Data from "International Conciliation," November, 1946).

Tax on Knowledge

Finland imposes a 10 per cent. purchase tax (virtually an import duty) when books are imported, then a second 10 per cent. on the selling price, including the first 10 per cent., when books are sold in shops. Portugal taxes books by weight as if they were potatoes.

Sir Earle Page, Socialist.

Federal Health Minister, Sir Earle Page proposes to provide half a pint of milk daily to children up to the age of twelve. How soon will it be before breakfast, dinner and tea are likewise being provided?

If producers received the full value of their labour or services, such palliatives would be unnecessary. But perhaps Sir Earle Page and his party are afraid to grapple with the radical causes of economic troubles.

How to be a Millionaire.

"Ninety per cent. of all millionaires become so through real estate. —Andrew Carnegie. He was speaking from personal experience.

Fleeced.

Australian people are taxed £5½ millions annually to pay less than £1 million in the local hot house concerns engaged in the protected rayon industry.

—Standard, July, 1950.

Protected Agriculture.

In 1949 British taxpayers had to provide £12 millions for the purpose of buying potatoes from farmers at high prices and then selling them back at low prices. Despite numerous similar instances of spoon-feeding, the average prices of farm products had doubled their 1940 figures. Where there is protection, there will inefficiency be.

HENRY GEORGE LEAGUE OF VICTORIA

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Next Executive Meeting, Tuesday, October 3rd, 1950, at 6.45 p.m.

Next Members' Evening, Tuesday, October 17th, 1950, at 8 p.m.