

countries could be hard hit because much of their industrialisation up to this juncture has only been possible because they could dispose of a large percentage of their limited range of manufactures in the West. Quotas and high duties are now proposed.

V — CONCLUSION

THE apparent move towards free trade via the Common Market is limited to capital and management, and it will not result in the internationalisation of labour or consumption. If for no reason than this, therefore, the U.K. cannot join the Common Market.



A Seed Took Root

By JOHN R. FUCHS

A Circuit Judge of New Braunfels, Texas, our contributor was recently elected President of the Henry George Foundation of America. Author of *Liberation from Taxation* and *Constructive Taxation for Free Enterprise*, he is petitioning the Texas State Legislature to appoint a special committee to study Land Value Taxation and to investigate the possibility of amending the State's Constitution so as to authorise land values to be taxed and personal property and improvements to be exempted.

WE ALL EXPERIENCE events that we never forget. Vividly, I recall such an occurrence in my life. Go back with me to the very end of the nineteenth century. I was in my thirteenth year — a mere lad. With my father and mother I was visiting in a community settled by my mother's relatives in the early days of Texas. They had come to America seeking liberty. They stemmed from the educated class and the older ones had received their education in Europe. These were often referred to as the Latin Farmers.

One evening as the whole clan had congregated at the home of an uncle a very animated conversation took place among the elders. Current events and the latest books were discussed. Of these I remember only one: "Progress and Poverty" by Henry George. I then understood little of the conversation. It was rather the fervour with which my uncle Bernard Romberg advocated the Henry George philosophy that made the lasting impression on my immature mind. Yet all this might soon have been forgotten by one who was at the time more interested in stories like Robinson Crusoe and Tom Sawyer if it had not been for a remark made by one of my cousins a littler older than I. The conversation had assumed a running debate between my uncle and my father. The latter, although later himself a convert, took the negative side, mostly in the form of questions. Just as the discussion waxed the liveliest

As regards the future economic policy of this country the way ahead is clear. It is increasingly apparent that the country is in danger of being outstripped by its rivals. In this race the danger is not that the country will suddenly sink, but that it flounder like a water-logged raft. The deep structural defects within the economy, which are responsible for this threat, must be remedied and the forces of competition alone will ensure this.

Hence a return to free trade is imperative. And whether this can come through a multilateral approach, such as working through the G.A.T.T., or whether it means going it alone, is of secondary importance.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING — 19

I heard one of my cousins whisper to one of his brothers, "the Old Man," referring to my father, "owns too much land." This was the cut—though long since forgiven—which left a deep wound. It was then and there that I resolved that someday I would find out just what my elders had really been talking about.

It is true that my father did own a fairly large ranch, but as compared to Texas ranches of that day a place of 5,000 acres was not considered large. As illustrative and proof of George's thesis, I can point to the facts that my father paid from fifty cents to one dollar per acre for this land. In recent years it has sold for as much as \$75 to \$100 per acre, the largest increase coming in the last two decades.

As a boy a public career was my ambition, and I thought to attain this I had to become a lawyer. So in 1905 I found myself in the Law School of the University of Texas. Through two of my Romberg cousins who were attending other departments of the University, I there became acquainted with Louis Post's, *The Public*, which I read as long as it lasted. Nothing interested me more than the debates on Land Value Taxation, which took place in Great Britain during 1909 and 1910. These were given at length in *The Public*.

However, one of the greatest thrills I experienced was when I read Blackstone, which was one of the required

courses during the first semester in the Law School. Here to my great surprise and satisfaction I found the great Blackstone in his Commentaries on "The Rights of Things" saying "there is no foundation in nature or in natural law, why a set of words upon parchment should convey the dominion of land." In the language of the campus, I got a big "kick" out of this. And I made good use of it in the so-called "Bull Sessions" with my fellow students. Many of them felt, as I had originally, that land value taxation would destroy the attachment to the land. I soon was convinced of my mistake. Just the contrary is true. When you exempt from taxation the products of labour all the improvements on the land and all the livestock on it, possession for use becomes more secure.

Upon completion of my college days, I entered the practice of law. While the duties of my profession kept me busy I always found time to keep up my study of political science and economics. The first books I bought were not law books, but a complete set of the Works of Henry George. During all the years I have kept up with the Henry George Movement.

For the first two decades after 1908 the activities of the Georgeists were rather local, but not without excitement. In Cleveland, Ohio, Tom Johnson kept the pot boiling and in Houston, Texas, Tax Commissioner Jos Pastoriza, later Mayor, was scaring the life out of the land speculators. When Pastoriza lowered the rates on personal property and improvements he was threatened with an injunction. The constitutional question of equality in rating was raised. Then Pastoriza came back with his trump card, "If that is what you want you shall have it." "No! NO!" cried the objectors, "that would ruin us," and they gave him full reign.

Locally, while I was city attorney of our little city, I was instrumental in securing separate assessments for Land and the Improvements, and a lower value on the latter. Subsequent administration abolished this, but there is a movement to reinstate it.

Now and then I am asked why I give my efforts to a "forlorn cause." I point out the fact that in recent years the movement has made real strides and it is not forlorn. It is very much alive. The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation is effectively functioning in New York; the Henry George Schools are in operation in the United States, in Great Britain and other parts of the Free World; and the Henry George Foundation of America is not idle.

One of the richest rewards that one receives in working with others for a common cause is the staunch friends one makes. I have attended a number of the conferences of the Henry George School of Social Science. Each has been worthwhile. In 1929 I attended the Conference of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade in Edinburgh, Scotland. I cannot mention all the fine people I met, but one stands out predominantly. I refer to the late lamented

A. W. Madsen. Many of his letters I have in my possession and preserve as treasures.

A letter I just recently wrote a friend was published in our local paper. As it expresses my sentiments, I can do no better than give the letter in substance; it is written in response to his question:—

"Why do you exert yourself with a problem which can cause you nothing but work, worry and trouble, when you could take it easy, and enjoy the rest of your years in peace?"

I replied: "As to the cause I espouse, let me tell you my dear friend, that for me to quit now, would be the rankest kind of treason. I would be untrue to my deepest convictions entertained for over fifty years. To stop now is impossible; it would make me miserable. Surely you expect no retreat from me.

"If it were a mere matter of fiscal reform—just another tax—then I would not lift my hand nor raise my voice. But it is far more than that. Basic moral and even philosophical principles are involved. It is a matter of right and wrong—a matter of justice. It involves the question of what is 'public' and what is 'private' property; what is 'Mine' and 'Thine' and 'What is Ours'?

"The solutions of these questions will determine the future course of our Nation. Will it be Socialism or Individualism? It involves the very life of our Nation. If this country ever commits suicide—God forbid—taxation will be the dagger.

"But listen, my friend, it is not all black—every now and then people come and tell me, 'we are convinced you are right.' I did not convert them; they did that.

"You say, but it is still a 'cry in the wilderness.' You are correct, but only partly. However, some day the people will see the way out of our present tax jungle, and when they do they will take the right road. Until then we must not give up fighting for he who gives up is lost. Ultimately the Truth will prevail.

"Quitting now would give no peace. I must go on. I am reminded of the words of one of the greatest Reformers of all time: 'I can not do otherwise.' He meant, of course, that he had to be intellectually honest."

MR. CHARLES W. J. MORLEY

With sorrow we have to report the passing of Mr. Charles Morley. Aged 71, he succumbed to a sudden heart attack on December 3. For more than 47 years he served the United Committee loyally and efficiently, at first as office boy and from 1919 until his retirement in December, 1957, as office manager. Strongly individualistic, he was held in great esteem for his brisk industry and kindness: his encyclopaedic knowledge of the history of the international Henry George movement and of its leading personalities made him an interesting companion. He will be sadly missed by his colleagues and his many Georgeist friends at home and abroad on whose behalf we tender sincere condolences to his widow, son and daughter, adding our own.