

housing, the *West Australian* sending a reporter and giving the discussion a good write-up. The Mayor said that all candidates to the next election should declare which form of rating they stood for and that he had not finally made up his mind in the matter. Outside the Council I cannot find anybody in favour of reverting to the old system."

Thus a reactionary move has been stayed and there is good chance that a permanent victory has been won, vindicating the Rating of Land Values. Mr. Standring is to be congratulated on his timely and effective action.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### A Victory Frustrated

On July 7, in the Encounter Bay District Council area a poll of ratepayers was taken to decide whether to adopt the rating of land values in place of levying the rates on the composite value of land and buildings. The voting was : in favour of Land Value Rating, 335 ; against, 152. Thus there was an absolute majority in favour, but the vote was "invalid" because under the South Australia law it is required that there must be at least a three-fifths majority for adoption of the land values system. (Yet if there was a poll to reverse the land value rating system after it has been in operation, only a bare majority of those voting can do the trick. So is the dice "loaded" against reform). At this poll, moreover, absentee landowners exercised their right to vote by post and their vote was 136 against the change and 62 for the change. This means that while the residents voted 273 to 116 in favour of Land Value Rating, thus exceeding the required three-fifths majority, they were frustrated by the absentee voters. Two unfair circumstances, then, contributed to the defeat, denying to the home-owners and other owner-occupiers the benefits to be derived from untaxing their buildings and levying the rates on the value of land alone.

## JAMAICA

### Land Valuation and Intended Local Taxation Reform

Our correspondent in Kingston writes, May 26, "In the legislative programme of the Government for this year there is provision for the introduction of a Bill providing for taxation on the basis of 'unimproved value.' During the Budget debates several references were made to this by the Chief Minister, Mr. Manley, and by other members of the Ministry." In a later letter, July 8, our correspondent has sent a number of clippings from the Kingston *Daily Gleaner* which show how matters have developed, following the determination of the present government to proceed with measures for instituting the taxation of land values, which require in the first place a thorough-going and thoroughly competent valuation of the land.

*Daily Gleaner*, January 19 : A new valuation officer has been appointed by the Government and will shortly be arriving in the island. The Minister of Finance, the hon. Noel Nethersole, announcing this in the House last night said that the past two valuation officers were allowed (by the previous administration?—ED, L. & L.) to do nothing about the work they were contracted to do. This one would have a chance to do that work. The substratum of all parochial financing was the land rate and it would indeed be a most irresponsible Minister of Local Government who would have attempted to interfere with the rating system at this time without a complete revision of the Valuation Law and without a complete revision of the Valuation Roll both in substance and in method. Every-

body knows that for many, many years that question has been accepted universally: that at least two men have been sent out here, both of whom wasted the entire purpose for which they were sent and went away without doing a thing on this matter of revising the system of land valuation for which they were sent. Now, fortunately, after a great deal of searching, the Government has been able to find an officer who will come here to undertake that work.

*Daily Gleaner*, March 3 : The revaluation of property in Jamaica is scheduled to begin during next month and should become effective in 1958. This was stated yesterday by the Minister of Finance during a conference between the Government and local government representatives. The expert who was recruited by the Government to undertake the revaluation is expected to arrive within the next few weeks and will begin the project immediately.

*Daily Gleaner*, April 27 : Dr. J. D. F. Murray, land valuation expert of Australia, flew in yesterday from New York to advise the Jamaica Government in connection with the Government's policy of introducing a system of taxation based on the unimproved value of land. A former senior land valuer in Tasmania, he is chairman of the Commonwealth (Australia) Federal Valuation Boards. He is author of the work *Principles and Practice of Valuation*, which is a university-level text book on valuation problems. He has advised on land values for the New Guinea and Torres Straits Reparations Commission ; and his services in Jamaica have been recruited under the Technical Assistance Programme of the United Nations Organisation.

*Daily Gleaner*, June 14 : A preliminary report of his findings was submitted to the Government on June 12 by Dr. J. D. F. Murray, the land valuation expert of Australia. During his stay here Dr. Murray and his associate, Mr. John Copes, land valuation expert of Sydney, N.S.W., were attached to the Land Valuation Department and they travelled extensively over the island. Mr. Copes will remain for two years and will carry out the Government's land revaluation scheme. On June 12, Dr. Murray and Mr. Copes attended at the Ministry of Agriculture and there met the Chief Minister, the hon. Norman Manley, Q.C., and the hon. William Seivright, the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Murray briefly outlining his findings. His official report will be available after he has submitted it to the United Nations officials in New York. He is then proceeding home to Australia via London.

Passing through London, Dr. Murray paid a visit at LAND & LIBERTY offices. One was naturally curious to have the contents of his report, but we were advised to await its formal publication.

## AFRICANS ALSO LAND GRABBERS

### A Near Thing in Uganda

The old Adam of acquisitiveness in us knows neither boundaries, race, nor colour. What charges have not been made in Africa against the stealing of the land by the Europeans, but Africans can commit the same crime against their fellow citizens and have been near to it in Buganda, which is in the State of Uganda. We allow the story to speak for itself, as reported in the *Manchester Guardian* :

The Buganda Lukiko has passed a resolution to distribute 154 square miles of land as a gift to certain "deserving" people. Among the beneficiaries are members of the Buganda royal family, members of the Lukiko, chiefs and officials, as well as certain individuals who showed courage during the Kabaka's exile.

The land in question is the area remaining of the eight thousand square miles which was allotted to chiefs and private