

Clerk to the Council wrote as follows on 3rd October to the Rating Reform Campaign:—

“My Council deprecates the inequities which result from the present rating system as a source of local revenue which takes no account of such matters as the ability to pay and, therefore, would prefer to see the whole rating system reviewed with the object of remedying the shortcomings. The Council therefore, whilst it appreciates the objects thereof, does not consider that the rating of site values as an alternative to the present rating system is of itself an entirely satisfactory solution of the wider considerations involved of which it would form only one aspect.”

During recent months at least fifteen municipal Councils have expressed themselves as being in favour of local rates being levied *exclusively* on the site value of the land (apart from buildings and improvements). Two others favour the introduction of a land value rate to supplement the present rates on buildings.

FULHAM SAYS IT AGAIN

FROM the *Agenda Paper of the Fulham Metropolitan Borough Council, September 24*: “Rating of Site Values. We beg to report the receipt of a letter (2.7.60) from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government acknowledging the Council’s resolution on 22nd June last (p. 40) reaffirming its support for the introduction of legislation aimed at the levying of local authority rates exclusively upon the site value of land, and drawing attention to a reply given by the Minister to a question in the House of Commons on the subject in which he indicated that the rating of site values had been examined by a succession of Committees and

Commissions since the beginning of the century and reported against by each one of them; and that the Minister saw no reason to reject their advice.

“In this connection we have now to report that following an approach by the Greenwich Council the Metropolitan Boroughs’ Standing Joint Committee have asked the constituent Councils for their views on whether the representations which the Council made in 1947 in favour of the rating site values should be renewed and we have informed the Standing Joint Committee of the Council’s resolution of 22nd June.”

Mr. Charles Morley, retired after 40 years with the United Committee, sent the foregoing. The document is open to the public in the Fulham Public Reading Room where he noticed it. The action taken by Fulham and Greenwich Councils is in response to a request addressed to them by the Rating Reform Campaign.

RECONSIDER SITE VALUE RATING

From the *Kilburn Times*, October 7.

LABOUR Cllr. Ernest Wistrich urged Hampstead Finance Committee during the council meeting last week to reconsider their recommendation not to make representations in favour of the rating of site values. The committee had been asked to consider the desirability of this by the Greenwich Borough Council in July. Said Cllr. Wistrich: “I do not support the Greenwich system of exclusive site value rating, but I do think there are good grounds for using it as an *additional* method to the present system.” He gave three reasons for its use: (1) tax on land encourages its most efficient use; (2) it acts as a deterrent against those who buy land for speculative reasons; (3) it brings into the

WHO'S WHO IN THE RATING REFORM CAMPAIGN

Major Gilbert Treen

Representative for Bognor Regis

Major Gilbert Treen first read the case for rating land values last November in the *People's Guardian*, the official organ of the People's League for the Defence of Freedom. Now aged 62, he retired recently after more than 40 years spent in the Army, at the War Office and on service with the Foreign Office in Upper Silesia.

Twice Mentioned in Despatches during the first World War, he was serving as a temporary Lt.-Colonel under Field-Marshal Montgomery when the second ended. He has the distinction of having helped to form two new Corps—the Army Catering Corps (as a result of which he is well-known in first-class hotels all

over the world) and the Royal Army Nursing Corps—as well as three regimental associations. Still later he became responsible for all Army printing at home and abroad. He was well known also for his extra-regimental activities, particularly with live entertainment, for the troops in Great Britain and B.A.O.R. At one time he owned one of London's little theatres which gave new plays to the West End—notably the world premier of “The Late Edwina Black” with Katherine Lacey in the lead.

Politically independent, Major Treen confesses to “a tendency to Liberalism”. At an election he



sends each candidate a Questionnaire and votes for the one who undertakes to support what he wants! He claims to be a “ginger group” of one; with hundreds of letters to local newspapers his pen constantly flashes to expose stupidities, lunatic spending and dictatorial methods of politicians and councilors alike.