

THE RIO DE JANEIRO PLAN

Senor Rubens do Amaral, member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, has written under date October 26th to Rogelio Casas Cadilla, of Cuba, with the following greetings:—

"General Angelo Mendes de Moraes, Prefeito (Mayor) of Rio de Janeiro, the Federal capital of Brazil, presented to the Chamber a Bill which institutes very timidly an 'imposto fundiario' (land value tax) in gradual replacement of the 'imposto predial' (building tax) based on rental value. The buildings, constructed in 1949, will begin to pay under the new method in 1950. In 1951 or 1952 properties that changed hands during the previous year will also pay thus. Only with time will the system, little by little, become general.

"Notwithstanding such timid gradation, the Bill is still meeting with strong opposition from the landowners, from the learned in their service and from those ignorant in the matter. The Georgeists of Sao Paulo—Octaviano Alves de Lima, Antonio de Queiros Telles, Jose Maria dos Santos, Luiz Silveira and I—will send to the Mayor and to the Chamber messages of support and encouragement. On the 17th I went to Rio de Janeiro and there I gave an address along those lines and it was broadcast over Radio Globo.

"A message from you addressed to the Mayor and to the Chamber of Rio de Janeiro, and from other prominent men in the United States and Cuba, would have great results. Can we count on your very valuable co-operation?

"The messages, letters or telegrams may be addressed in care of Dr. Americo Werneck, Junior, rua Conde de Baependy, 59, apart 2, Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, and he will cause them to reach their destination, giving them due publicity."

[The Bill for the Rating of Land Values in Rio de Janeiro was fully described in our November and December issue, and an appropriate message has been sent to the Mayor, who, we are sure, will be pleased to hear from our colleagues and co-workers in other countries.—EDITOR, L. & L.]

TITO AND MOSCOW

In *La Cité Nouvelle*, Rouen, September 11th, M. Paylos Giannelias had an interesting note on the "military confines" or borderlands which from the year 1526 to the year 1881 formed the bastion of the empires of Central Europe against the power of the Turks. It was a belt of territory running from the Adriatic to the Danube and was the dorsal spine of the countries now constituting Yugo-Slavia.

As reward for their military obligations the inhabitants enjoyed an inalienable right to the land, the Emperor being the supreme overlord. Exempt from all other taxation, they were required to pay a tax based on the quality and fertility of the soil. They had the rights to the forests and the communal pasturages, and in the midst of these "wildernesses" (as these parts used to be called) they could proudly say they had "No illiterates, nor beggars, nor distress, nor vagabonds without shelter."

This physiocratic legislation has left its indelible traces in the Yugo-Slav laws, which assure to each peasant a hereditary holding of 2 to 5 hectares, which cannot be sold or mortgaged, confiscated or distrained.

It is not surprising, therefore, that after the liberation, Tito, who proclaimed the forfeiture of the large estates which still remained after the land-distribution of 1920, should have been acclaimed as "the liberator." It is also natural enough that "his people" should continue devoted to him while it is realised that the risk still remains that the large landed estates of Central Europe may be replaced by another overlordship (invisible and remote and under some new and strange name) which would leave to the peasants much less right to fruits of their labour than they had under the grand seigneurs of former days.

"SPOTLIGHT ON THE MIDDLE CLASSES"

Our attention has been drawn to the fact that the quotations in our paragraph under the above heading, appearing in our November/December issue, were taken from a report of the Nuffield Trustees, quoted by the *Daily Telegraph*, October 14th last, and not of the London School of Economics. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, work for the survey began in 1947, but the School has not yet published a report.

OVERSEAS ITEMS

Mr. Povl Skadegaard, who is Deputy Chief in the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and one of the leaders of the Danish Justice Party is travelling to Austria by invitation of the Austrian Government and is acting as one of those who belong to the exchange of Danish and Austrian students and academic teachers, who last summer were respectively in Austria and Denmark. His tour is also under the auspices of the Danish Red Cross, of which Mr. Skadegaard is the President. The Austrian Minister of Social Affairs has promised Mr. Skadegaard that he may study any Austrian Social Institution which is of interest to him. Therefore, Mr. Skadegaard will be visiting the Universities of Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck, lecturing there on Danish Social Politics and at the Danish High School in Payerbach, near Semmering. His tour may take him also to Switzerland and Italy, and there is a possibility that he will visit Budapest. We have been pleased to give Mr. Skadegaard introductions to a number of Georgeists on his route and it will be particularly gratifying to learn from him that he has been able to bring our greetings to Dr. J. J. Pikler in Budapest.

Early in January, Mr. Ole Wang, of Norway, one of the Vice-Presidents of our International Union, spent several days in London. It was pleasing to have a visit from him and to learn of his recent travel to Spain, of his call upon and talk with Mr. Baldomero Argente in Madrid, which gave much happiness. Mr. Argente, the eminent scholar and philosopher and translator of Henry George's works, bade Mr. Wang convey his greetings to fellow-Georgeists in all countries; and he held out the hope of being able to arrange his journey to England next August so as to be present at our forthcoming International Conference.

In the *Bergen Times* there has been discussion on the taxation and subsidy policy of the Norwegian Government. A long article was contributed by Mr. Halfdan Hansen answering the contentions of a young economist, Jahn Halvorsen, in favour of reducing direct and increasing indirect taxation. Mr. Hansen showed how subsidies merely increase the price of land, giving new privilege to the proprietors of the best situated sites and are doing the gravest harm to the working peasant and farmer. Then followed a most instructive statement on the taxation of land values. We are pleased to learn from Mr. Hansen that he looks forward to being present at our International Conference at Swanwick, Derbyshire, next August.

After her two years' travels in Europe, during which she has hitch-hiked over most of Great Britain, spent a time in Denmark, walked or cycled in Norway, Sweden, France, Switzerland, Holland and Belgium, Miss Elizabeth Riley has returned to her home in Celista, British Columbia. Setting off with only \$60 in her pocket, this young, courageous traveller determined to see the world as a "land girl," working her way as she went, made her journeys also a missionary adventure, urging upon whomsoever she met the truths that are taught by Henry George. Her story has been told in Press interviews on both sides of the Atlantic, and most impressively, on her return, in the *Montreal Evening Star*, the largest daily evening paper.

HENRY G. RAE

The Scottish Land Value Taxation League has lost one of its ablest and most devoted supporters in the death of Mr. H. G. Rae (at his home, 51 Rupert Street, Glasgow), which we deeply regretted to see reported in the *Glasgow Herald*. The Press tribute to his memory spoke of the leading part he took in the activities of the Scottish Liberal Party and of his life-long advocacy of the principles of land value taxation. In this he was ever closely associated with the late William Reid, who often spoke of his gratitude for that assistance. Mr. Rae was candidate for Parliament in 1935, and twice, but unsuccessfully, stood as candidate in the municipal elections. His funeral was attended by a large number of friends, among whom Mrs. A. McGrouther and Mr. Charles Morgan represented the Land Value Taxation League. We extend to Mrs. Rae and the bereaved family our sincere sympathy.