

the viewpoint as to practical action of the English group associated with the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, will be appointed by that group: and that another International Committee will be formed by the Commonwealth Land Party of England and their friends in Denmark and elsewhere.

So long as there are the present divergent views in regard to the best method of presenting the gospel of Henry George to the unconverted public, it seems to us that the formation of two distinct international committees is a wise move, and perhaps an inevitable one. Better for each group to present its own views to the public in its own way, than to waste time and energy in attempted compromises which would probably result in little or no action of any kind. Men are of many minds, and different methods of presentation all have their uses.

With the friendly rivalry that will come from each side seeking to do its best, there is a double opportunity of reaching the multitudes who are still uninformed of any aspect of our philosophy. And nothing will please the editor of LAND AND FREEDOM more than to have so much real news from all sides and both sides that the paper will have to be enlarged.—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.

Land Values Taxation Land Restoration

ENGLISH COMMONWEALTH LAND PARTY
STATEMENT

THE one thing certain about the Third International Conference to promote Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade, held at Copenhagen, Denmark, July 20-26th, 1926, is that it was not in any sense of the word a "Conference." Those in control, The United Committee for T.L.V., London, saw to it that no opportunity for an exchange of opinion, or for any discussion, was permitted. It was clear from the start the intention was to secure, if possible, that no word of criticism of the terminology and method to which land-taxers are wedded should be heard; and this notwithstanding certain prominent taxers have declared that "taxation of land values is the wrong name for the right thing"!

As in the case of the earlier "Conference," that held at Oxford, England, in August 1923, members of the Commonwealth Land Party attended under the impression that they, as Georgists whose only crime, if crime it be, is that they are making public opinion for the immediate application in full of the principle for which Henry George gave his life, would be welcomed as co-workers, who, while differing as to method, seek the same end—viz., the economic emancipation of all men the world over. We had hoped to see an agreement upon a formula that would have united Georgists everywhere, and led to their fighting the common enemy instead of fighting each other. To this end we had submitted a Declaration of Principles, which we were assured would go before the Conference. This assurance

came in writing from the Danish Committee, and with it an invitation to the present writer to speak at the opening session. That the Danes were sincere in this matter is not to be doubted; but they were overruled by the United Committee, whose object is the promotion of taxation of land values; the advocacy of a political expedient—not the assertion of a moral principle.

The difference between the two points of view is fundamental. On the one hand the Commonwealth Land Party everywhere seek to assert the equal right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and with them are the Danish League of Justice (Retsforbundet.) They demand the immediate restoration of the land, and without any payment whatever. The method being the collection in full of all the rent of all the land right now. In opposition to this forthright demand for economic freedom the land-taxers advocate the partial, step by step method of taxation, a method with which Liberals, Tories and Laborites in English politics can agree, since it leaves to them power so to control the application in practice as to prevent any taxation being imposed. Again, the taxation of land values in practice now is being denounced as a failure by many prominent and sincere advocates of that policy who, after more than 30 years experience in Australia and New Zealand, have been convinced against their will. With both logic and experience against them, the land-taxers persist in opposing all suggested change in method, being enslaved to an out-of-date and incorrect terminology.

So fearful were the taxers lest a straight vote on the question should leave them in a hopeless minority that an attempt was made to secure a pledge. One excited official of the United Committee, flourishing a form in his hand, roundly asserted that those who ventured to differ had "no right to be present for every member of the Conference has signed this pledge to support the taxation of land values." The gentleman was mistaken. No pledge was asked of the C. L. P. members, nor would they have consented to be bound. They went as free and unfettered members of a conference having on its badge the word "Liberty!" But it was not long before they learned that "Liberty" was only for the badge.

As a concession to the protest of the American and British C. L. P. members at Oxford, a Resolutions Committee was appointed this time, but the value of the concession was discounted by the fact of the Committee being nominated by the President, not elected from and by the Conference. Later it was discovered quite by accident that some addition to the committee had been made without mention to the Conference; the chairman having unguardedly stated the figures of a certain vote.

The Resolutions Committee rejected the Declaration of Principles, and refused to allow it to come before the members for discussion. This caused them to abandon the Oxford Declaration, which the U. C. had thought to get re-affirmed, and so a fresh resolution had to be found.

This was drawn up hurriedly just before the close of the proceedings, and submitted to a gathering the members of which had no copy in their possession, and consequently, could not possibly know what they were being asked to commit themselves to. Something was declared carried, but until the official report appears it will not be known what it was. Readers of *LAND AND FREEDOM* will be able to judge of the value of any "Declaration" made in such circumstances. Similarly, they will be able to appreciate the true position in regard to a resolution to form an International Committee for Taxation of Land Values which was passed just as blindly. A few copies were in typed manuscript for the use of the platform; no one else being supplied. As these documents may yet be published to the world and action sought to be taken upon them, we think it only right that the actual facts should be recorded. At best they have the support of a minority of a Conference which did not confer, and only voted in confusion, and without clear information upon which to form an opinion.

A number of interesting papers were read, but no discussion took place upon them. A certain liveliness arose on a motion to adopt the concluding paragraph of one of the papers as a resolution of the Conference. An amendment to substitute the words "Collection of the annual value of land" for the words in the original: "taxation of land values," was moved, and gave rise to an excited debate, at the conclusion of which a vote was taken. The amendment was lost, 19 voting for and some 40 odd against. Encouraged by this success the dictators became more confident, and more intolerant. Having prevented the chairman from calling upon the present writer to speak at the opening session, a flagrant attempt at "suppression"—their own word—was made when, later, his name was upon the printed programme of the day for an address upon "Landholding in England." He was second on the list; and was to be followed by the Assistant Secretary of the United Committee. This gentleman, who was really responsible for the treatment meted out to the critics of the taxation method, did not wait to be called by the chair, but jumped to the desk the moment the first speaker had concluded, and commenced his talk on "Land Values Taxation in Practice." It was much upon the lines of his paper at Oxford, where he was promptly corrected by delegates from the United States in possession of the facts. He is concerned to promote the T. L. V. and in his zeal omits to mention the growing evidence of the failure of that method now accumulating on all hands.

In his eagerness he overreached himself for, by rushing in before ourselves he provided us with an opportunity of correcting him, and supplying information on the other side of the questions. Thanks to the intervention of Danish friends, the chairman had his attention directed to the programme, and we were called upon in spite of the determined effort of those concerned to shut us out. The action was noted and had its effect upon fair-minded members

who were there to seek truth rather than bolster up some pre-conceived notion.

So bitter was the feeling against the C. L. P. that the official in question did not hesitate to charge that we "had only come there to cause trouble." A childish and petulant accusation, the absurdity of which would be apparent to all the Conference, for, had it been true, the "trouble" easily would have arisen much earlier in the proceedings. To criticise, he would appear to think, is evidence of a desire to cause trouble. With this, we can quite imagine the Moscow triumvirate and their fellow-Socialist Dictator, Mussolini, would be in complete agreement. But, after all, principles are more than persons, and the great truth that Henry George served so well will triumph in spite of the mistakes and even the opposition of some of his followers.

The next exciting incident occurred in the final session. Here the issue was virtually the same—"collection of rent" versus "taxation." An amendment was proposed but was ruled out by the chair, who suggested that an appeal from this ruling could be taken. This was done and the Conference decided by a very close vote, indeed, to sustain the ruling and so no discussion took place. Then followed a division on the question of deleting certain clauses from the Resolution to form an International Committee for Taxation of Land Values. Here the conduct of the controllers in preventing all discussion was seen to have had the inevitable effect. Instead of a vote of 19 the figures were 38-38. The platform was alarmed and after a hurried consultation the chair declared no figures, saying the secretaries could not agree. A second vote was taken and once more the figures were 38 each way. A further consultation while the audience awaited the declaration of the result and the President said: "The chair declares an equal vote; the chair will not vote." A Ballot was called and we of the C. L. P., convinced of the futility of forcing our view upon an incurably hostile minority decided to let them get the vote; the writer with several friends abstaining from voting. The result of the ballot was for the amendment 45, against 47.

There was no resolution against Land Purchase. At Oxford, it was only on the motion of the C. L. P. of America and Britain, in face of the official opposition of the United Committee, that an expression of opinion condemning a proposals to purchase land was carried. This time we left it to the U. C. to go on record that they do not oppose.

What comes of the Conference? Two vitally important things!

First: The closer co-operation between the Danish State of Justice Party and the C.L.P., whose policies are identical. This, alone, was worth going to Denmark to secure.

Second: The formation of an International to promote Land Restoration on our lines.

This latter step was taken only after it was clear that the United Committee would not depart from its terminology and method of "taxation." Our readers will be afforded

fuller particulars in due course, as soon as the provisional Committee charged with the duty of making necessary preliminary arrangements, and upon which the C. L. P. has representation, is in a position to report. We anticipate great things from this step, and only regret we could not persuade all Georgists to come in with us. Since, however, it is clear that some are concerned to promote the taxation of land values and not to demand liberty through justice, our ways diverge, and each group must be free to work in its own way.

J. W. GRAHAM PEACE.

BOOK NOTICE

"Orphan Island", by Rose Macaulay, is a taking tale, and most valuable for conservatives as propaganda on the land question (though it offers no solution): and of moderate philosophic anarchy. It is the story of a group of fifty slum orphans and their nurses wrecked and marooned on an inaccessible South Pacific Island. The head nurse, Miss Smith, makes herself queen, appropriates the land and makes "Smith" a title of aristocracy.

Rose Macaulay works it out with her accustomed vigor and philosophy; without a great deal of imagination, she has some very beautiful and poetic epigrammatic descriptions, some of which however need "the poet's industrious file."

BOLTON HALL.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE ENTERING WEDGE OF THE TRUTH

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

There are Municipal Reformers, and even Realtors and Efficiency Experts, who would fight at once if you suggested that land ownership was a special privilege and not a right, who can be made to see that it is a detriment to production and to civic improvement to permit valuable land to remain idle or under-improved. If even such a little mustard seed of truth can be planted in their minds it is good work. We can hope that it will sprout and get them started thinking how to stop it—then they must come to land value taxation.

There are Single Taxers who denounce such approach as "pussyfooting" and not worth while. Such people must pursue the methods which most appeal to them—perhaps they can work best along lines which appeal to their minds. But for myself, I am not perturbed by "pussyfoot" or other epithets. I think it good work. You can rarely overcome evil or crooked thinking by smashing frontal attack, but "Overcome evil with good"; displace errors with truth. If a man gets a few fundamental truths in regard to the land question in his mind, and thinks a little further, error is overcome by simply being submerged and lost sight of.

HENRY B. TAWRESEY, Philadelphia, Pa.

LAND AND FREEDOM QUOTED IN CUBA

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Herewith I am sending you a translation of one of your most excellent editorials in Land and Freedom. This article appeared in two daily newspapers and will probably be published in the Havana papers.

The Cubans are apt to consider any occupant of the White House as a great man and I thought it advisable to have them read a true and fearless opinion of Mr. Coolidge.

Your editorials in last number of Land and Freedom are admirable and should get wide publication.

I have been able to interest a small group of able men in my town and we may be able to form a nucleus for a new party to advance the

Georgian principles in Cuba—a small beginning may result in a big ending.

My sincere congratulations for your splendid work in Land and Freedom.

EVARISTO MONTALVO Y LEBLANC, Cienfuegos, Cuba

THE NAME SINGLE TAX

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

I was gratified to note in your article in the November Libertarian that you say "The name Single Tax has been a real obstacle to a better understanding of our principles." There is no doubt about it. At the outset we put forth so many claims of benefit (all of which however were justified) that it was too much for the general run of minds and consequently they ridiculed the whole philosophy and closed their minds to it. That condition will continue so long as any of the present generation continues to use the term. Another point, we all agree that we need and must have the support of the farmers, but so long as we continue to talk of taxing Land value heavier he will balk. But I do believe that if we emphasize that site-value exists in the centers of population and that there is very little if any in rural farms he will the more quickly grasp our proposition. That sounds much better to him than land-value.

ALFRED N. CHANDLER, Newark, N. J.

A WOMAN'S VIEW OF THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Perhaps some few of your readers may like to skim some impressions made upon one observer and participator in the Conference at Copenhagen.

The meetings were held in the Danish Parliament House—the mere fact of our cause receiving such governmental recognition giving an inspiration to the gatherings—in a large, well-lighted and stately room, or rather hall. Mr. F. Folke presided at the opening meeting with grace and dignity until Mr. Charles O'Connor Hennessy took the chair to which he was predestined, after which he conducted the conferences with charm, decision and almost unflinching impartiality.

A noticeable and most encouraging factor was the large number of young men present at many of the gatherings, while some even more juvenile folk belonging to Danish and British families showed an interest in and intelligent following of the meetings to which, I fear, few in our country could or would measure up favorably.

The general average of the papers read might be called "safe, sane" and unusually sound as far as they went, but the guarded, cautious note was more frequently sounded than I had expected. To this there were a few exceptions which, because they were plainer-spoken, more daring and more pregnant of the actual issues involved, stirred the auditors deeply. It might seem invidious to name all, but the Hungarian delegate, Mr. Pikler, and Mrs. Signe Bjorner spoke very much to the point, as well as Mr. Gaston from Fairhope colony, and Rev. M. J. Stewart's address, which was the most interesting paper read.

The Map giving statistics of the landholdings in England by the "County gentry" shown and spoken to by Mr. J. W. Graham Peace of London, was a striking feature, and Mr. Gaston's exposition of the founding and working of the Fairhope colony in Alabama made a pleasant diversion.

One fact was noticeable. Except for Mrs. Bjorner, whose name was among the ordained addressers—for she speaks with as much cogency and persuasiveness as she thinks clearly and constructively—there was no other woman so recognized. This attitude amongst the conveners was so extraordinary—in a movement which has always enlisted women as enthusiastic workers—that it could hardly fail to seem ill-advised. The day for that particular discrimination has gone by, and when practised it is generally self-defeating. Fortunately, the programme makers' bite was better than their bark, for Mrs. de Mille presided and spoke during one session with womanly charm and a rare