

The formula once more appeared, as the only statement on land policy, in a joint programme issued on behalf of the Independent and the Coalition Liberals in the House of Commons. Others may interpret it as a proposition to tax land values with all that the Taxation of Land Values implies. We refuse to be so blind. It is a formula for land purchase which trades on sentiment in favour of something very different. We await a declaration from Mr. Asquith, from Sir Donald Maclean or any front bench Liberal, which will save us the trouble of reading oracles—which will affirm, without equivocation, that the Party stands for Taxation and Rating of Land Values. Let them, if they like, turn their formula inside out and say that "the value for taxation and for rating shall be exactly on the same scale, not a penny less, as the market value of the land." Then we shall know where we are, what support we can give Liberal leaders, what, in fact, the original formula really meant.

If, on the other hand, the Liberal Party (which is shortly to have its Annual Session in Birmingham) is to be advised to use the Finance Act valuation as a basis of purchase instead of, as was intended, a basis of taxation and rates, what then is Sir Charles Starmer's attitude? As an advocate of the Taxation of Land Values, with faith in Liberal leaders and with a pen ready to come to their aid, he will, we hope, criticize, and his criticism will be of interest to us.

We agree that the Labour Party in the House of Commons played a feeble and reactionary part in failing to denounce the Land Acquisition Bill. To us, to Sir Charles Starmer, to all Independent Liberals, and we are sure to the Labour Party outside Parliament, it is indeed a Landlords' Endowment Bill. Let Mr. Asquith join in this chorus, as he has not yet done. He has not spoken in that sense and Sir Charles Starmer will, perhaps, allow us meantime to place him in the witness box along with the weak-kneed and accommodating Labour men, who now sit in the House of Commons.—
The writer of the NOTES in question.]

RUSHOLME (MANCHESTER) BY-ELECTION

The result of this keenly contested election is a victory for the Government candidate with a minority vote. The polling was as follows:—

J. H. Thorpe (C.)	..	..	..	9,394
R. Dunstan (Lab.)	..	..	..	6,412
W. M. R. Pringle (L.)	..	..	..	3,923
R. B. Crewdson (Nat. Party)	..	..	..	815

Conservative majority over Labour	..	2,982
" " " Liberal	..	5,471

Both the Labour and the Liberal candidate supported the Taxation of Land Values. In his address to the electors, Dr. Dunstan advocated "The Taxation of Land Values, so as to secure for communal purposes, within a reasonable time, the total value of the land."

Mr. Pringle said: "Free access to land for housing, for land settlement and for industry can only be secured by the Taxation of Land Values."

The Taxation of Land Values was the main plank in Dr. Dunstan's programme. With the support of Messrs. Wedgwood and Outhwaite, and Dr. MacDougall of the Manchester League, the campaign recalled the days of the Hanley election of 1912.

OUR GOVERNMENT AND EAST EUROPEAN LAND

Aristocrats and Landlords

(By COLONEL WEDGWOOD, M.P., in the *Glasgow Forward*, 25th October)

If you try to disentangle the British policy in the East of Europe you discover always the preservation of landlordism. Who touches private property in land is a "Bolshevik." That is the crime of "Bolshevism." The re-establishment of Czarism and monarchy is not the main object of our Foreign Office—or Lord Curzon and his catspaw, Mr. Churchill. Their real object is the preservation of a so-called civilization based on robbery.

Tchernoff, the Socialist, before the day of the Soviet Government of Russia, took the land from the great landlords and gave it to the peasants. In North Russia, where villages held land communally, the new land is mostly communal. In South Russia, where individual ownership of land by the peasants was the rule, the new land was shared among individual peasants. Denikin, K.C.B., Koltchak, and Yudenitch, either with their tongue in their cheek or knowing that the men behind them will call the tune, may deny that they wish to re-establish Czarism; but they will not even deny that the recovery of a least part of their land by the landlords is their object and the reason of their very existence.

Why the Emigres fight with British Arms.

They will never deny it seriously; the British Foreign Office will not deny it, not even to add one more to the list of "terminological inexactitudes" of which they have been guilty. If the peasants are to retain the lands of the emigré nobles, what on earth is the use of British tanks and gas and uniforms and officers. The peasants will not work for masters if they have enough land of their own to live on. The factories and concessions will not get "hands." This must be stopped at all costs. It might spread. This is Bolshevism—the terror of the sleepless nights of the capitalists and aristocrats of all the world.

How Hungarian land was taken

Look at Hungary. Before the day of the Soviet Revolution there, Michael Karolyi ruled. He, too, expropriated the landlords of Hungary. They were to be paid the pre-war value of their land. As the Austrian crown has fallen to one-tenth of its pre-war value, the landlords would have got the land value in depreciated currency—one-tenth of its value. The Act was passed to give this land to the peasants. Before it was actually put into operation Karolyi's Government fell and the Soviets ruled. All land was then declared State property; and the peasants in time overthrew that Government, accepting the Roumanians as the least of two evils.

The new Government, supported by Britain and the Roumanians, have not only wiped out the Soviet decrees: they have held up the Karolyi Land Law too. I asked a question about this, and in time the answer came from Buda Pesth. They said the Karolyi Law had not been actually put into operation, and that it would not be put into operation till it had been reconsidered by a new Parliament. There is no sign of a new Parliament; and when there is, the landlords in power are past-masters in the act of rigging the elections to that body. Landlordism is saved in Hungary. The British Foreign Office is satisfied.

In Roumania, too, we have preserved the Boyars against all Socialist and agrarian revolts. But the best and most beautiful example comes from the Baltic

States. There the British Fleet and the Baltic Barons co-operate.

Why we do not recognize the Baltic States

Superficial people think that we refused to recognize the independence of the small democracies in the Baltic States because we were really anxious for the re-establishment of a big Russia under Koltchak—that we had to sacrifice the independence of Latvia, Esthonia and Lithuania because Koltchak, Denikin, and Co., would not fight the Bolsheviks unless we promised to restore the Baltic and Transcaucasian lands to Russia. That is nonsense; Denikin, Koltchak, and our friend Sazonoff in London, would have accepted any terms in exchange for armed help to get back their lands. No; Lord Curzon was not forced to sacrifice the independence of the Baltic States, Kuban, Georgia, etc. He did so for a good, and to him sufficient, reason. The Baltic States had an agrarian policy. They proposed to expropriate the Baltic Barons at an inadequate price. These new democracies were attacking the sacred caste.

Save the Baltic Barons!

What are these Baltic Barons whom we arm and support? You will observe that the Baltic Governments are democracies representing the peasants, the people of the country. The Baltic Barons are the Prussian landlords of the country, a survival of the feudal ages. They are the Prussian garrison, who have long ruled Russia with backward glances at Potsdam. They have German troops fighting for them—men to whom they have promised more land, less as a reward for their services than as a bulwark for existing German landlords for all time. Just at the moment it is true, in attacking Riga, they have gone too far. We cannot openly appear as Germany's allies against small peoples. It is too soon. But protest after protest has come from the Baltic Governments that we will not recognize or support them against the Germans. They know, and have stated, that it is because of their land policy. For in those countries there is only one desire—to get rid of Russian rule and Prussian landlords.

Our agents out there, our Generals, they all report back to the Foreign Office that we should support the Baltic States against the Prussians, that we should recognize their independence. It is in vain; they are recalled. The Foreign Office knows better. Landlordism must be supported at all costs. One is too apt to suppose that the rulers of Great Britain are merely anxious to restore monarchies in Eastern Europe. They would like that, no doubt. But it is landlordism that is in danger—civilization based on robbery.

Hence the war that was to end Junkerism ends by the whole might of Great Britain being used to preserve that institution. What a debt of gratitude we and the whole world owe to our aristocracy entrenched in their Foreign Office.

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AT CALCUTTA AND BOMBAY. —British firms intending to open offices in Calcutta or Bombay are advised by H.M. Trade Commissioner to make arrangements in order to secure adequate office accommodation and residences for their staff. There is at present a serious shortage of housing accommodation for Europeans in these cities. Speculation in land and houses has been active in recent months and great profits have been made. The result is that in order to secure an adequate return on capital rents have been increased in many cases by 50 per cent. and over, and householders are obliged to pay as it is impossible to secure accommodation elsewhere.—*The "Board of Trade Journal,"* October 23rd, 1919.

"COMMODITIES"

In an economic discussion "land" connotes the earth and all the natural opportunities provided by nature; "labour" connotes any useful service performed by man's hand or brain; "wealth" connotes the "commodities" suitable for man's enjoyment, which are produced by labour applied to land or to materials drawn by labour from land. "Capital" in an economic discussion, is that part of wealth which is devoted to aiding labour in the production of further wealth; it connotes tools and stocks in the widest sense of those words. In addition to "commodities" labour provides useful services. After reading the Prime Minister's speech at the Guildhall, I submit that he is confusing thought on economic issues when he uses the word "commodities" to include "land" and "labour" in addition to its proper connotation of "wealth." He is reported to have said: "Once you have got two principles—that a man is not entitled to hold up the community unjustly in order to extort an unfair price for whatever commodity the community needs; and the second, that when the community needs any commodity, land or labour, it will pay a fair price—you must get these two things into the minds of the whole of the people, then from that will spring co-operation."

It is under cover of a smoke-cloud of confusion of terms that the former land campaigner would retreat from his former advanced Radical position, marked by his champion's challenge that "The land belongs to the people," and by his attempt to assert through the Budget, by taxation of land values, the people's rights to the value that accrues to land by the growth of and development of the community. There was a day, not far distant, when Mr. Lloyd George was proud to assert that land values are morally public values, and that land and commodities are on the opposite sides of the line dividing rightful public property from rightful private property. Land and commodities are essentially different.—*Percy McDougall, in a letter to the "Manchester Guardian,"* October 9th.

PROFITEERING AND PRODUCTION

The secretary of the Yorkshire and Northern Land Values League, Mr. F. Skirrow, of Keighley, says (*BRADFORD DAILY TELEGRAPH, October 16th*): Now that the Board of Trade has already appointed one thousand five hundred of the two thousand or more committees which are to deal with profiteering—that many people imagine we are nearing the end of excessive prices. To our correspondent's mind there is a vain hope, because, unless given the power to eradicate the evil, their labour will be futile. To prevent profiteering we must increase production, and so cheapen supplies, which can only be done by removing taxes from industry and bringing the land—the source of all wealth—within the reach of labour and capital, which, applied to it, would result in increased production. In 1915 we had a potato famine, during which prices soared from 6d. a stone to 6d. a pound. Profiteering in that case was ended by the fact that many thousands of men and women were permitted to employ their labour to the production of this kind of food. Without the opportunity of increasing the supply of potatoes all the wisdom of the Government could not have got rid of the scarcity which rendered profiteering in potatoes possible.

So it is, says our correspondent, with other things. It is the land famine—due to land being withheld from use—which produces scarcity or famine in all other things. It is land monopoly which lies at the root of all the evils from which we now suffer, and must continue to suffer, even though fifteen hundred committees be