

then the basic "truth" of the creed; and, quite suddenly, he realised that the maldistribution of wealth did not necessarily prove that private property was wrong in itself "but only in its distribution."

This was the death knell of his faith in Communism and after a period of instruction he embraced the Roman Catholic religion. Mr. Hyde nowhere claims to have found the answer to his question but in the closing chapter of his book he quotes, with approval, from

Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* which was, in fact, written in justification of the private ownership of land. Here, to the Single Taxer, in the *private appropriation of the rent of land*, is the undeniable cause of the maldistribution of wealth. It is apparent that Mr. Hyde was quite unaware of the existence of Henry George's *Condition of Labour* which provided, not only an answer to the Pope, but also to Mr. Hyde's own question.

W. E. BLAND.

INDIA, PAKISTAN AND THE KASHMIR CONFLICT

By A. Daudé-Bancel

(In the Paris journal "La Revue Socialiste"—Translation by F. D. P.)

After three years of investigation, discussion and intervention the Security Council of the United Nations' Organisation has given up the Kashmir dispute in despair—or, more exactly, it has relegated the matter to the International Court of Justice, but that is no more likely to find a solution. The complex political data of the dispute appear more obscure than ever and the obscurity is not lessened by the fact that the investigators and mediators either cannot or will not put their finger on the real evil.

Broadly considered, the Asiatic problem appears first as a political problem. Influenced by resentment, occasionally justified, against Europeans—and carefully cultivated by both Indian and Pakistani Nationalists—the Asiatics want, first and foremost, to expel the Europeans from their continent. They would rather be badly governed by themselves than well governed by Europeans. Forty years ago my old friend and master Charles Gide said to me, with his shrewd smile, "If the British were clever, they would leave India and then the Hindus would call them back." The British having left in good time, under their own steam, the expected has happened. The Indians, both nationalists or just anti-foreigners, have stopped hating the British and turned their destructive rage against each other. At the cost of massacres and frightful expulsions they have separated into two hostile countries: India, properly speaking (capital, New Delhi) and Pakistan (capital, Lahore). Thus their racial and religious nationalisms stand opposed and will remain so until intelligence and toleration, aided by education and greater comfort (this to come) have triumphed over poverty, ignorance and unsociability.

As the British declined the invitation to arbitrate in their conflict, and as the interested parties claim to be politically mature, India and Pakistan are under an obligation to show themselves capable and worthy of "liberty at last regained." Their leaders, especially, must show themselves competent to assure the well-being of their respective populations, "British domination" as it appears having previously prevented them from so doing. The first condition of this well-being must be that, "as in Western countries," not a single person in this ex-Empire, "liberated by the nationalists," can die of hunger.

But calculations have gone far astray. The late Mr. Patel was the strong man of the situation, the man to establish prosperity and justice in this "India at last redeemed." He annexed the 600 native states to India, carefully preserving the landholding privileges of the rajahs and maharajahs and guaranteeing them against any reduction in their sumptuous incomes. But Mr. Patel did nothing to improve the condition of the poverty-stricken Indian people. In Pakistan, despite the

unending palavers of Lahore politicians, the food situation of the under-nourished remains unchanged. Thus, in the ex-Empire of India, "swept clean of the British," pauperism, hunger and malnutrition continue to seethe side by side of the lords territorial and industrial. Will Pandit Nehru succeed any better where the strong man Patel failed—even if the French and Portuguese coast towns are brought into the Indian lap?

In the economic sphere things are the same as they have been for centuries past; land remains the property of the landlords and the masses of the two sister nations remain victims of landlords and moneylenders.

The country of Kashmir is divided into two parts which the politicians of Lahore and New Delhi are now contending for. The dispute could easily be settled, at their expense, if their fellow stranger-haters, the Chinese, came one fine morning from Tibet to Kashmir, and to the Indian peninsular afterwards, to "liberate" the under-nourished and poverty-ridden masses. But in Kashmir the moneylenders and the owners of feudal land privileges are no better than their counterparts in new India and Pakistan. Quite recently they were exploiting the poor peasants in the same way. While the international investigators and other mediators were babbling, poverty continued to rage, just as in India and Pakistan. Then Sheikh Abdullah applied himself to the crucial problem of Kashmir and to solve it had recourse to a rather drastic measure. He dispossessed the landowners, without compensation, divided their properties into holdings of 20 acres and granted them to peasants who had been deprived of the means of production.

The international investigators are embarrassed. If they supported land reform in Kashmir they would be supporting its eventual realisation in the ex-Empire of India and, *horresco referens*, in the whole world. It would mark the end of feudal land privilege on the earth and would be considered a catastrophe by the monopolist owners of rural and urban land everywhere.

In any case, it will be natural enough, (such is human nature) that the solution adopted by Sheikh Abdullah will arouse the opposition of all interested in the land and financial system of the ex-Empire of India and neighbouring countries, where, for centuries, the peasants have been shamelessly exploited. But, if only the investigations and attempts at conciliation continue in Kashmir for a few more years, and if only Sheikh Abdullah can resist the attacks of the Kashmir landlords and moneylenders, then whatever may be the authority which intervenes to settle the Kashmir problem, it will in all probability have to bow before the cardinal and decisive fact of the allocation of Kashmir land to new proprietors.

To meet the immediate situation and the famine which threatens most Asiatics, Sheikh Abdullah's solution is the least objectionable—so long as the privileged landlords leave their land uncultivated or continue their cruel exploitation of the peasants who cultivate it.

Agrarian reform, suitable for all peoples and all latitudes, does not consist so much in the brutal expropriation of large landed proprietors as in laying upon them the obligation, through an appropriate fiscal system, of cultivating their unused land and allowing them as cultivators to enjoy in peace the fruits of their exertions and enterprise. If they decided to leave their land waste they would find themselves obliged to sell it cheaply to those who wanted to cultivate it. Let us assume that the value of land, rural and urban, has been assessed by experts and that taxation is progressively transferred upon the value of land, apart from improvements. If the owners cultivate or build on it they profit thereby because improvements, crops and consumable goods are all relieved from taxation. But if the landowners neither cultivate nor build upon their land they will very soon

get tired of paying the tax on its value and will sell cheaply to those who want to use it.

If, instead of making a violent revolution, the Bolsheviks had been wise enough to introduce Georgeist land reform the Russian people would have been spared the bloodshed and hardships which have fallen on their unhappy country and by repercussion on the world.

Sheikh Abdullah's agrarian reform is less efficacious than it appears at first sight, because it is summary and violent. Nothing resting on force is advisable or good in itself. In matters of social reform—especially land reform—we must always have time on our side and remember the celebrated maxim of Auguste Comte, "Profound revolutions are never violent, and violent revolutions are never profound."

(Mr. A. Daudé-Bancel, editor of *Terre et Liberté*, also contributes much to other periodicals. His recent articles have appeared for example in *La République Fédérale*, on the gold standard and free trade; also on the Persian oil and agrarian problem; *La Journée Viruëole*, the economics of synthetic rubber; *L'œuvre Libre*, evils of indirect taxation; *Le Coopérateur Suisse*, Co-operation and Georgeism.)

ASIATIC AND AFRICAN LAND TENURE

A Selection of Important Assertions and Admissions

Justice William O. Douglas, of the United States Supreme Court, is among the most influential of the authorities who insist that a rapacious landlordism is the cause of the misery and social upheavals in the Asiatic countries. Nothing short of far-reaching land reform can remedy matters or meet the onslaught of Communism. Two vain ideas must be abandoned. One is that Communism can be overcome with shot and shell, the other, that capital investment and development schemes can lift a land-monopoly-ridden people out of its distress. Justice Douglas made intimate acquaintance with conditions in a recent tour to the Middle East and Southeast Asia and he set forth his impressions in a powerful article which appeared in the journal *Look* of January 16. Every peasant, he says, who raised a hoe against a Maharajah and every tenant who defied the money-lender and his extortionate interest was expressing the rebellion that has long been smouldering throughout Asia. These peoples are in the midst of revolutions founded on specific complaints, including ownership of land by a few, a system of taxation under which millionaires pay little or nothing, and governments that are corrupt. The system of tenancy leaves the tenant barely enough to live on *Money is not so much needed as ideas. The need for money will come only after the political revolutions have been effected and new democratic regimes stabilised. Money spent before reforms have been launched will be largely wasted; without them the money will go largely to enrich the classes at the top, hastening the day the Communists take over. Industrial and irrigation projects could under proper management increase productivity, bring greater prosperity and produce a land that could support additional millions of people. But unless it is done under a programme of reform it will work only to increase the hold that a few hundred men already have on these countries.* (The italics are ours.) In fine, as Justice Douglas asserts, if we openly undertake to manage these revolutions and direct them we will at once enlist the enthusiasm of the peoples of this area; we will for the first time be identified with them in their struggles for liberty, not in words but in action.

India's Greatest Need

"In the centre of Kashmir is the lovely 'Vale' with its capital Srinagar, lying in splendid country, where every fruit and flowering tree grows to greatest perfection. This is the most famous of all holiday resorts in India. The neighbouring countryside is populated with some of the poorest and most exploited people in the world. They are greatly skilled in handicraft, they make Kashmir shawls, textiles, beautiful furniture and metal work . . . India is proud of having saved the Vale from being sacked by the tribesmen and having set up a democratic government under a popular Muslim leader [Sheik Abdullah]; progressive Indians also welcome his promise of social reforms—above all, the land reform which is the greatest of all India's necessities."—Kingsley Martin, broadcast on February 13, reported in *The Listener*, February 22.

The Philippines

In a leading article dealing with the poverty and social unrest in the Philippines to-day, the *Manchester Guardian*, April 28, quoted the following extract from the current number of the American quarterly review "Foreign Affairs":—

"Americans who have assumed that in the Philippines we did a model job of starting a colonial people toward independence and prosperity are now experiencing a rude shock, and there are others to come. Less than five years after the establishment of the new Asian nation our hopes—and those of the Filipino people—have been met with the emergence of something acceptable neither to us nor to them. Mismanagement, corruption, and failure to enforce needed reforms have destroyed public confidence in the Government and contributed to a breakdown in administrative and economic life. Possibly more than anywhere else in the Far East society in the Philippines is coming apart at the seams."

The author of this article, Mr. Ravenholt, traces the trouble to a social system which the Americans, in the days of their power, left unreformed. He says that the United States, on taking over the Philippines, in some