

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tax on Municipal Elections

From C. Arnold-Baker, Secretary, National Association of Parish Councils

In connection with your article entitled "The Intolerable Purchase Tax" in the March issue of LAND & LIBERTY, I would like to draw attention to the 25% purchase tax on election ballot papers. This remarkable imposition is a logical consequence of the tax on stationery, which includes writing paper, because the making of a cross is writing. Q.E.D.

The cost of parliamentary elections is repaid by the Treasury, but that of local elections (including this tax) is borne by the authority of the area concerned and ultimately by its ratepayers. If the election is not contested, the tax is not payable because it becomes unnecessary to print the ballot papers.

In other words there is a tax on contested local elections.

Can it ever be right that in a professedly democratic country the central government should tax the democratic processes whereby its local authorities are elected?

African Local Self-Government

From F. Dupuis, Assistant Secretary, International Union for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade

We cannot avoid feeling impatient with the intolerant attitude of the European settlers in Africa, but at the same time it is much more important for us to show that we are not blind to the causes of that intolerance which derives quite as much from fear as from greed.

The settlers feel that if natives are given equal rights then Europeans will be swamped, and many friends of the Africans—usually living at a safe distance—put forward political claims for Africans which would have that effect. I do not think that we should ever identify ourselves with the demand to give suddenly one-man-one-vote to all the inhabitants of any Colonial territory—any more than we should support political privileges for any section.

In my opinion political progress can best be attained by gradually extending local self-government through native councils and municipalities while the Imperial Government insists on land and taxation laws that will safeguard equal personal rights. Thus the settlers would never be exposed to any tyranny of the majority, and their superior knowledge and technical skill would always secure its due reward though never at the expense of the natives. And I don't see why municipalities, founded and organized entirely by Europeans in situations where no natives were previously residing, should not be allowed to make bye-laws giving reasonable protection to their own way of life.

The settlers are quite justified in resenting attempts or proposals sometimes made to force them into social equality with natives. Everyone has the right to choose his personal friends and associates. The unspoiled Nyasaland peasant I have often found a good fellow in every way, and I have met some excellent educated Yaos, Angoni and Mang'anya, but there are "educated" Africans who often despise the peasants as much as they resent European superiority and can be neither pleasant nor worthy companions.

The cry of the English "progressive" to grant political power and educational facilities to the more vocal section of Africans does not help the peasant and exasperates the settler. If we show our European friends in Africa that we understand this aspect of their fears, I think they might

be more disposed to entertain our suggestions for equal rights in those things that really matter. To suppose that Africans can make progress only by aping European manners and institutions is a very ignorant view.

HENRY GEORGE SCHOOL SPRING TERM CLASSES

Westminster

At 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1

BASIC COURSE: Beginning April 27 and 29. Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m.

Tutor: K. Critchlow. Thursdays, 7 to 9 p.m. Tutor: G. L. Birch.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE: Beginning April 27. Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m.

Tutor: A. L. Roberts.

Hornsey

At Muswell Hill Branch Library

BASIC COURSE: Beginning April 28. Wednesdays, 8 to 10 p.m.

Tutor: R. R. Blundell.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE: Beginning April 28. Wednesdays, 8 to 10 p.m. Tutor: C. A. E. Aitken.

Welling

At Welling (Kent) Branch Library

BASIC COURSE: Beginning April 28. Wednesdays, 7.45 to 9.45 p.m. Tutor: V. G. Saldji.

Ilford

At Gantshill Branch Library

BASIC COURSE: Beginning April 28. Wednesdays, 8 to 10 p.m.

Tutor: R. J. Webster.

Enfield

At George Spicer School, Southbury Road, Enfield

BASIC COURSE: Beginning April 27. Tuesdays, 8 to 10 p.m.

Tutor: W. J. Cadman.

Messrs. G. L. Birch and R. J. Webster have joined the panel of tutors and are conducting their first Classes this term.

General Activities. On Monday, April 5, Mr. V. G. Saldji addressed the Richmond Branch of the International Friendship League on "Free Trade or Tariff Barriers," and on April 23 Mr. Charles Aitken gave a talk on the work of the Henry George School to the Surbiton Labour League of Youth.

At a well-attended meeting held at Church House, Westminster, on April 7, students of the School participated in an open discussion on "Answering the Critics," an examination of some of the stock objections raised by opponents of Land Value Taxation.

The School's first ramble (all-day discussion session!) of the season was through Waltham Abbey to Broxbourne, Herts., on Easter Sunday.

Birmingham. The class for the study of the Basic Course which opened in January at the University of Birmingham Buildings reached a successful conclusion on April 9. The Class of ten students was conducted by Mr. R. A. Ward, B.Sc., and Mr. C. F. Parker, Lecturer in Law, and included holders of degrees for Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Mathematics and Arts. One of them, Mr. L. Woolfson, B.Sc., who supplemented his weekly reading assignment with much other literature on the land question, is preparing to conduct a class himself in September.

The Director of Studies, Mr. V. H. Blundell, travelled up from London to attend the final meeting of the term, when he addressed the class on the subject of Capital and Interest, also outlining the background of the Movement and giving a brief but comprehensive survey of the progress made throughout the world.

It is hoped to arrange informal meetings among students pending the re-opening of the Autumn Term. Mr. Ward and Mr. Parker are to be congratulated on a fine start.

Manchester. A Class for the study of International Trade conducted by Mr. C. S. Lees will open in the course of the next few weeks. It will be based on Henry George's "Protection or Free Trade" and will last for six sessions.

Four London Students Emigrate. Last month Miss Lucy Pringle left for Australia and Mr. Harry Pollard sailed to Canada. Early in May Miss Betty Walden, former editor of the Henry