

gation; to take occasion to deal with the connected problems of valuation and the relative positions of title-holders and mortgages during and after the change; and to indicate its effects with respect to the distribution and use of the land and the reduction of taxation on industry.

The Commission consists of twenty-four members. The Chairman is Mr. Magne Nöhr, ex-M.P., Radical Liberal and Editor of the *Randers County Times*. The Vice-Chairmen are Mr. Hans Hansen, Social Democratic member of the Upper House, and Mr. Oluf Pedersen, ex-M.P., member of the Justice Party. For the rest there are nine members from the Lower House, representing the various parties; six from various ministerial departments, including Mr. K. J. Kristensen, the chief of the Central Valuation Board; and six special members, including representatives of smallholders, farmers, the land-owners' and the tenants' associations.

On this mixed body both the "ardent supporter" and the "violent opponent" have a place so that a unanimous report is not to be expected. But it is safe to say that the majority opinion, if not for the full policy, will recommend legislation promising a long step forward. The reports will be awaited with exceptional interest and the hope is that the Commission's deliberations will not be protracted—that action will not be delayed by what so often happens in such cases where Governments leave matters for committees to decide upon.

THE DEFENCE OF LIBERTY

DEAR SIR,

To the Editor, LAND & LIBERTY.

The recent action of the Government in taking steps to remove from confidential positions men who are known to be Communists has caused much perplexity to many lovers of Liberty even amongst the Government's own supporters. Such people are afraid that it is an infringement of the liberty of the individual and a misuse of the power of the State. A careful analysis shows that it is the exact opposite and is in accordance with the Duty of the State to maintain the liberty of the individual unimpaired.

Some years ago the Liberal Liberty League issued a Declaration of their philosophy of Liberty in which they asserted the limits of individual freedom and of the use of State power. This reads as follows:—

LIBERTY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

"The unselfish, objective attitude which produces brotherhood, utterly denies the right of any individual, majority or sovereign power to use force to coerce another *except to prevent such misuse of Liberty as will restrict the liberty of others*. By nature man has been given the priceless freedom of choice only limited by the duty of respecting that of others.

POWER

"Therefore, the question of the right use of Power, by individuals, majorities or nations is whether it is used aggressively or defensively.

"The Aggressive use of power (whatever the motive) to coerce the neighbour and restrict his freedom, is immoral.

"The Defensive use of power to preserve and protect the freedom of the neighbour is a moral obligation."

Whatever qualities Communism may have, individual liberty is certainly not its product. The thirty year

history of Communism in Russia and the repeated publication of Communist instructions to its fifth columnists in other lands shows that direction of labour, direction of thought, control of publicity, control of the substance of education of the young are all involved in that system. Overseas Communists are instructed to profess what pleases their listeners, but by all possible means to seize power and to purge the land of those who think differently. Thus, they may be correctly described as spies and traitors to their neighbours' liberties. As such they come under the heading of "Misuse of Liberty as will restrict the Liberty of others."

In this respect they are an outstanding case where the Power of the State should be used Defensively, as a moral obligation, to preserve and protect the freedom of the neighbour.

This defensive power should be used in these circumstances even more widely and resolutely than is proposed by the Government. It is a protection of the liberties of the individual and not a contravention of what our fathers fought and died for.

WILFRID HARRISON,

Joint Treasurer, Liberal Liberty League.

[This letter is of considerable interest when read in conjunction with the article on Germany by a correspondent who was recently there and who objects so strongly to the use of State Power to coerce and restrict the lives of its citizens by Planning and Currency Management, which he contends is aggressive and immoral. In these days it is more than usually important that the ethical foundation on which our policies are based should be clearly and truly understood. As Norman Angel states: "The cure for the dangers of Power is to know its proper function."—Editor, L. & L.]

HOLLAND

The Journal, *Ons Erfdeel*, organ of the Dutch League for Justice and Freedom, is in regular publication month by month under its Editor-in-Chief, Mr. A. Sevenster. Its articles are always instructive in their exposition of the Henry George philosophy and its practical application. In the January issue first place is given to the "Open Letter" addressed by Mr. J. Buma to Secretary of State Mr. Marshall, showing and why the aid from America can at best give only temporary relief, and that unless the causes of the maldistribution of wealth are removed, Europe will lapse back to the conditions which the "Plan" of providing aid is attempting to alleviate. The letter is a well-stated vindication of Free Trade and exposition of the Freedom of Production, which requires the end of privilege. "If we are to cure a patient of his illness," Mr. Buma writes, "we must first discover the cause of the illness; when we know the cause, only then is there a chance of recovery. . . . Our society is based on a great injustice, namely, the private appropriation of the rent of land. That rent is either a gift of nature (greater fertility or favourable situation) or the result of the collective activity of the community." Taking that as his keynote, Mr. Buma points to where the salvation of Europe and, indeed, of humanity alone lies.

Address of *Ons Erfdeel* is: A. Sevenster, St. Anna Parochie, Holland. Annual subscription is 5 florins, and we cordially commend the journal to all Georgeists acquainted with the Dutch language.

"The Communists have a wonderful organization and the Western Nations have only a negative policy. The only possible policy which might hold Communism is ours, and if the Western Nations will not accept it, they will fight a losing battle."—C. E. CLARKE, Bewdley.

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