

## NATURE'S GIFT TO MANKIND

THE EARTH with its raw materials is the free gift of nature to all mankind. No man made or can make them. Therefore no person or group is entitled in equity to debar any other person or group from access to them. The power to do this is not a property but a privilege, seized originally by force and perpetuated ever since by laws passed by themselves for themselves when landlords controlled government, in violation of the common rights of their fellows. Privilege for some means injustice to all. A privilege made by law can be unmade by law. Simple justice demands that it should be.

Natural resources are not wealth, but merely the materials and means by which wealth can be made. Exclusive possession means the power to deny to others the right to use them, by which alone can men live at all; or else to take such toll of their product as leaves them near the hunger line. This power to drain into the pockets of a few from the natural wages of the million inevitably accumulates huge individual fortunes and mass poverty. The *News Chronicle* (14th June) put this truth into a nutshell: "Men cannot have freedom from want and fear while some of them exploit the rest for sectional gain, nationally or internationally." Besides class division and the sense of injustice, mass poverty means inability to buy, which cuts down consumption, reduces production, creates unemployment and the resulting evils this war aims to abolish. Of the many causes to which poverty is attributed practically all others are derivative. This one is fundamental. Unless it is removed no planned economy or state control can prevent undeserved unemployment, poverty, unrest and ultimately revolution at home or war abroad.

### Equal Right to the Common Good

"The earth hath He given to the children of men," says the old book. When it is theirs and not their masters, so that everyone is as free to use it as every other and to possess what they produce, they need no longer fear want nor greatly care within what political boundaries they live. Colonies under the same rule would cease to be an incentive of conquest when freedom prevented enslavement by exclusion from their land of coloured folk by white speculators as now. When land values go to the people, exploiters of natural resources will settle to use, not to monopolize them. So soon as the interests that bar them from nature's resources are down, seekers will find work crying out for them.

When the Atlantic Charter promise of "access on equal terms to the trade and to the raw materials of the world" is extended by each state to each of its inhabitants, then within and between them equity will rule in the economic field, and, by removing the chief cause of strife equity ensures peace. Many statesmen have lately spoken of land reform as essential to the New Order. But none has indicated how to bring it about. They have declaimed against privilege and for equality. This privilege is the bottom cause of inequality. It can be eradicated only by making the holding of land a trust, not a property.

In equity there can be no more property in one form of nature than in another—in land than in sunshine. Nature freely provides both for the use of all, not some. Neither land nor sunshine is wealth; but only the opportunity to make wealth. Opportunity values are really land values, and these are fixed by the law of rent, not the legal law, but the economic or natural law, which cannot be escaped. Control of opportunity by the few means denial of it to the many, which accounts for their dependence and poverty. The value of that control is created, not by any individual but by men in common. In equity it belongs to the community who made it, not to individuals who did not. Its collection by the State and use for common purposes would give every inhabitant his share in the common wealth. It would also kill land speculation by making opportunity unused ruinous. Opportunity no longer withheld by selfish interests and thrown open to all would

come to be fully used, and this would mean full employment, just reward, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

### Production and Trade

Trade includes making goods as well as selling them. The term "Free Trade" is commonly used to denote only the exchange of goods already made. Even this would do much to mitigate poverty, but not to cure it. Removing obstructions to exchange would spread wealth more evenly and cheaply over the world. But it would not touch the deepest cause of inequality and insecurity. Production precedes exchange, in time and in importance. Hindrances to production—really withholding of opportunity—are even more prolific of the wrongs this war aims at righting than obstructions to exchange—tariffs and quotas. Freedom to produce as well as exchange would make Free Trade complete and the economic problem soluble.—H. G. Chancellor in *The Arbitrator*.

## MR ROOSEVELT ON THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

ON AUGUST 14th President Roosevelt sent the following message to Mr Churchill on the first anniversary of the signing of the Atlantic Charter.

"A year ago to-day you and I as the representatives of two free nations set down and subscribed to the declaration of principles common to our peoples. We based and continue to base our hopes for a better future for the world on the realization of these principles. This declaration is known as the Atlantic Charter.

"A year ago to-day the nations resisting the common barbaric force were units or small groups fighting for their existence. Now these nations and groups of nations in all the continents of the earth have united. They have formed a great union of humanity dedicated to the realization of that common programme of purposes and principles set forth in the Atlantic Charter through world-wide victory over their common enemies. Their faith in life, liberty, independence, religion, freedom, and in the preservation of human rights and justice in their own lands as well as other lands has been given form, substance, and power through the great gathering of peoples now known as the United Nations.

"Freedom and independence are to-day in jeopardy the world over. If the forces of conquest are not successfully resisted and defeated there will be no freedom, no independence, and no opportunity for freedom for any nation. It is therefore to the single supreme objective of defeating the Axis forces of aggression that the United Nations have pledged all their resources and efforts.

"When victory comes we shall stand shoulder to shoulder in seeking to nourish the great ideals for which we fight. It is a worth-while battle. It will be so recognized through all the ages, even amid the unfortunate peoples who follow false gods to-day.

"We reaffirm our principles. They will bring us to a happier world."

## A FORCES BRAINS TRUST

Mr T. Jones is in the forces somewhere in Wales. During July, at his encampment, a "Brains Trust" was run for the benefit of the soldiers. Of the twenty-four questions, ten were put in by Mr Jones, five of which were as follows:—

(1) Life is impossible without air, sunshine and land. Why is it therefore that the third is allowed to remain the private property of the few, so that the majority live by permission of the few?

(2) In what way can we make boundaries merely lines on the map and not the cause of dissension between nations?

(3) Is competition a good thing? If so, why do we tolerate monopolies?

(4) Is not the present system of rating a ridiculous method of obtaining revenue since all improvements are penalized by increased rates?

(5) After the war who will bear the cost of any town planning, and who will benefit from such planning?

Mrs Jones writes: "The Brains Trust consisted of four men, one a Director of Education and one a clergyman. One of them (Rev Perkins) in his answers advocated the Taxation of Land Values so that between him and the questioner these five questions were thrashed out very thoroughly. The troops now know something about land values. Mr Jones spoke afterwards with Mr Perkins who said he regularly received our literature."

**Twopence Each.** LAND VALUATION AND LAND VALUE TAXATION IN DENMARK. By K. J. Kristensen, Chief of the Danish Land Valuation Department. THE CRIME OF POVERTY, by Henry George; UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE LAND, by W. R. Lester, M.A.; MOSES, by Henry George; THE NEW POLITICAL ECONOMY, by John B. Sharpe; Also (by Henry George):—SCOTLAND AND SCOTSMEN, THOU SHALT NOT STEAL and THY KINGDOM COME.

**3d.** THE LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL AND SITE VALUE RATING. Debates on the Bill and discussion in the Press.

**1s.** MY NEIGHBOUR'S LANDMARK. Short studies in Bible land laws. By Fredk. Verinder New (fourth) Edition.