

INTERNATIONAL UNION NOTES AND NEWS

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: E. J. CRAIGIE DEFEATS OPPONENTS—GERMANY: DR. PFANNSCHMIDT'S BOOK—HOLLAND: ECONOMIC STUDY CLASSES PROMOTED—SPAIN, ITALY, NORWAY AND NEW ZEALAND: SUCCESSFUL PRESS PROPAGANDA FOR THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICAL PROPOSALS ADVOCATED BY THE UNION—PAKISTAN: REPORT FROM OUR RESIDENT CORRESPONDENT—UNITED STATES AND CANADA: DR. VIGGO STARCKE'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Triumph and a Welcome

South Australian opponents of land value rating constituting themselves as a "Municipal Association" and led by Messrs. Shephard, Burnell and Lewis have had to realize that their agitation has collapsed. They had striven for an amendment in the local government legislation whereby it would be mandatory on all local authorities to levy their rates on a composite basis, that is on the capital value of land and buildings taken together. This would have meant that the option allowed to local authorities (and exercised by many of them) to levy rates on the value of the land alone, exempting all buildings and improvements, would be abolished and all local authorities now rating on land values would be compelled to abandon the system so favoured by them.

The agitation of the "Municipal Association" was successfully countered by the vigilant action taken by Mr. E. J. Craigie. The Association was canvassing the support of the 143 councils concerned. To all of those bodies and to the members thereof Mr. Craigie sent his circulars branding the Association's proposals and upholding the principles and practice of land value rating.

In the result, the response to the appeal by the Shephard-Burnell-Lewis "Municipal Association" was as follows: In favour there were 8 municipalities and 18 district councils, 26 in all; against, there were 28 municipalities and 57 district councils, 85 in all; not taking the trouble to reply were 32 councils. This is the third time that the Association's proposals have been rejected and the fourth time that Mr. Craigie and his friends contacted the councils to oppose it. The campaign has been an arduous one and it is good to know that all the work entailed has not been in vain.

It is somewhat significant that this hostile Association has now turned in its traces. It is admitted with regret that "due to an earlier oversight" the composite method of assessment was not made optional to the councils, a factor that "undoubtedly affected" their replies! An audacious post-mortem avowal, since the chief speakers, Shephard and Burnell and Lewis, have consistently from all their platforms declared that their composite system would be mandatory and that land-value rating would have to cease.

Furthermore the Association now proclaims that it does not desire to interfere with the councils that have elected to rate on the (capital) value of land apart from improvements. As for the old "annual value" system (of rating land and buildings together) which elsewhere still persists, the Association is impressed by the opinion of many councils rating under that system that "vacant building blocks in their areas do not contribute an equitable amount to local government revenue"; and it is actually prepared to submit an amendment to the law, towards rectifying that state of affairs. All this indicates that the Association has decided to throw the towel into the ring, and the effort to abolish land-value rating is OFF.

The Local Authorities in South Australia that levy their rates on land values, by virtue of the option available under the law, include eight Adelaide metropolitan

municipalities (although not Adelaide City itself), ten country municipalities are nine country district councils.

In prosecution of the campaign to bring other local authorities "into the fold" these are some of Mr. Craigie's recent activities: On September 17 he addressed the annual meeting of the Mid-North Local Government Association at Riverton, with 50 delegates present from about 24 district councils in the area. On February 4 he went to Clare, 90 miles from Adelaide to debate with Alderman A. R. Burnell; resolution was adopted favouring a poll of ratepayers, and the local paper, *The Northern Argus*, gave a whole page report. On February 12 a public meeting addressed in Payneham where petitions are in circulation demanding a rating poll. Various visits, as to Campbelltown, Marion and Unley, considerable correspondence and, on occasions as they arose, advertisements in newspapers and the sending of printed matter to every ratepayer in a district. Rating polls are now about to be held in Clare and Marion and Payneham and Mr. Craigie will be exceptionally busy till the moment of his departure on his voyage to Europe.

Most Welcome Visitor. Coming for the 'rest and recreation' he so well deserves, Mr. Craigie sails from Melbourne by the "Moreton Bay," on May 6, due to arrive in Southampton on June 13 or 14. He will be staying in England for several months.

A German Author's Work

In his new book *Die Bodenrente in Raumwirtschaft und Raumpolitik*, Dr. Martin Pfannschmidt has made an exceptionally brilliant contribution to the study of the Rent of Land as a factor in the economic structure of society and as indicator of the fiscal and financial policy which being pursued would, through the wise and unhampered use of land, redound to the welfare of all. He deals, if we can fairly translate his sub-title, with "space economics" and "space politics," that is to say with all that relates to the standing place or working place that men must have if they are to live and provide for their sustenance. That leads to the recognition of the rent of land, namely the greater or less *natural* advantage which one piece of land affords as compared with another owing to its situation or its inherent qualities, and there follows the proof of the dominant part that land-rent plays in the destinies of society, making for weal or woe according as it is rightly or wrongly handled.

The book comprises 230 pages with an appendix of 26 pages containing 60 graphs, diagrams, maps and illustrations. The bibliography of authorities consulted occupies 12 pages and it is interesting to note to what extent the author (himself a Vice-President of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade) has drawn upon no fewer than 60 of the papers presented at the International Conferences in Oxford, 1923, Copenhagen, 1926, Edinburgh, 1929, London, 1936, New York, 1939, Derbyshire, 1949, and Odense, 1952; and the files of *LAND & LIBERTY* have been an unailing source of information. Among the writers cited are Henry George, Alfred Marshall, John Stuart Mill, David Ricardo

and Adam Smith. But impressive to the German reader will be the reference to the host of German historians, economists and specialists including most notable perhaps of all—the great physiocrat Johann Heinrich von Thünen, author of *Der Isolierte Staat (The Isolated State)*, who, writing in 1826 and clearly expounding the Law of Rent, threw a light upon it as revealing as that which shone in *Progress and Poverty*.

Dr. Pfannschmidt looks at the history of the land question in ancient Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages, in the colonial systems that obtained in India, Malaya, Australia, New Zealand, Africa and Canada, in the American Colonies, in Russia and China, in the development of Germany, Austria and Denmark. Then coming down to modern times he pleads for the emancipating policy of Land Value Taxation demonstrating its beneficial effects on agriculture, manufacture, housing, family life and the state of the community as a whole. Description is given of the progress made on the lines of Land Value policy in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Pennsylvania and Denmark. The practical side of the question is well attended to, a large section being devoted to the technique of valuation and the procedure for giving effect to the taxation of land values. Finally, Free Trader as he is, Dr. Pfannschmidt calls for the liberation of the world economy. With all that may be said in favour of the technical progress of the Western nations, the peoples in the undeveloped or underdeveloped lands are no longer willing to buy it at the expense of their economic freedom and the right to enjoy the fruits of their labour. The logical and historical antithesis of the "capitalism" of the past is a humane capitalism through which the rent of land is returned to the community that has created it. That closing thought serves to illustrate the truth in a quoted passage from one of Sir Winston Churchill's famous orations, when he said, in 1907, "There are only two ways in which a people can acquire wealth; there is production and there is plunder; production is always beneficial; plunder is always pernicious and its proceeds are either monopolized by a few or consumed in the mere struggle for possession."

Dr. Pfannschmidt's book is given special distinction and influence by being issued as one of the treatises fathered by the Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung which is concerned with the study of town and country planning. It makes volume 25 of the series. In a preface, the president of the Academy, Professor Kurt Brüning writes that the line of thought followed in this research has since the beginning of 1952 been the subject of exhaustive discussion among the leading minds in the

Academy. All who took part were unanimous in the conviction that the material compiled by the author should be published and, with the author bearing the sole responsibility for the work (and the opinions expressed), the Academy has the more gladly placed it in the hands of the public because it is satisfied that discussion, for or against, will show what is of practical service in these ideas and will stimulate economic students to further research in the matter.

The book is published by the firm Walter Dorn in Bremen, price 8 marks. Correspondents wishing to obtain a copy through our offices should send us 15 shillings to cover cost and postal charges.

Toward a New Dutch Manual

The Journal *Ons Erfdeel (Our Heritage)*, monthly organ of the Dutch Union of Justice and Freedom whose policy is Land Value Taxation and Free Trade and which is affiliated with our International Union, announces a correspondence course of study. It is being conducted by a special committee formed for the purpose, over which Mr. P. Prins (a vice-president of the International Union) presides. The chosen text-book is *Economics Simplified*, by Bowen and Rusby. There are ten lessons and the comprehensive "notes" for the students are appearing in each successive issue of *Ons Erfdeel* from January, 1954, forward, occupying some three pages of each issue. It is intended that when the course has been completed these comprehensive notes will be bound in book form and thus the Dutch movement will have a new and valuable addition to its literature, for a wide circulation among the general public. But appeal is made for the necessary funds to cover the costs and we hope there will be adequate response. Secretary of the Dutch Union and editor of *Ons Erfdeel*, is Mr. A. Sevenster—Address: St. Annaparochie, Holland.

Spanish Writers and Teachers

The February 13 issue of the weekly periodical *El Espanol (The Spaniard)* contained the report of a long interview with the public notary Julio Senador-Gomez, the famous author of *Al Servicio de la Plebe (at the Service of the Common People)*, *La Tierra Libre (Free-land)*, *Castilla en Escombros (Castile in Ruins)*, *La Ciudad Castellana (The Castellian City)*, *El Impuesto y los Pobres (Taxation and the Poor)*, *Los Derechos del Hombre y los del Hambre (The Rights of Man and the Rights of Hunger)* and several other books on Spanish economic and social problems. Senor Gomez, who is a cripple and an octogenarian, has the keenest lucidity of mind. In this interview he stated and warmly praised the doctrine and economic solution of Henry George and was able to announce the early appearance of another book to be entitled *El Hueso Mondo (The Core of the Matter)* which will likewise be an exposition of the Georgeist philosophy. He has long been a close associate of Baldomero Argentine, he who has translated all George's works into Spanish.

The Madrid weekly *Nueva Economia Nacional (the New National Economy)* has published an article by Mr. Paluzie-Borrell entitled *Los Progressos del Georgismo* which is a documented statement of the practice of land value taxation in South Africa, Kenya, Tanganyika, Rhodesia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Pennsylvania and Denmark.

On March 21 at the Holy Shepherd's Home for Labourers, in Barcelona, Mr. Paluzie opened a study-

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To stimulate in all countries a public opinion favourable to permanent peace and prosperity for all peoples, through the progressive removal of the basic economic causes of poverty and war, as these causes are demonstrated in the writings of Henry George. Specifically, towards the realization of these objects, the Union favours the raising of public revenues by taxes and rates upon the value of land apart from improvements in order to secure the economic rent for the community and the abolition of taxes, tariffs, or imposts of every sort that interfere with the free production and exchange of wealth.

Membership is open to all persons, irrespective of sex, race, or nationality, who in good faith sign a written declaration of adherence to the objects of the Union, and pay a minimum annual subscription of 10 shillings sterling or \$2 U.S.A. and Canada. Cheques, etc., may be made payable to Ashley Mitchell (Hon. Treasurer), 4 Great Smith Street, London, S.W.1.