

Committee have prepared an approximate estimate of the total cost of the scheme. As far as can be foreseen at present, about 6,757 acres are likely to be acquired and 11,988 acres sterilised, and in this case the estimated cost will be £1,029,088. A grant of £308,011 from the London County Council is anticipated."

What gives one furiously to think is that all this is "agricultural land" which was previously paying nothing in local taxation. Enormous gifts have been made to the landowners because of the *oikophobia* which has beset the local authorities, the fear of the human dwellings that are likely to desecrate the countryside—only to raise again the price of land adjoining the preserved green belt, make further fortunes for the landowning elements, and aggravate the housing problem on all hands.

Leeds.—The Church Institute and Some City Land Values. The Leeds Church Institute at the corner of Albion Place and Lands Lane was built in 1866-68. Its cost including the site was about £7,000. It was partly redecorated in 1899 at a cost of about £3,000. An adjoining property bought since the war and improved later cost several thousand pounds. The Institute authorities now value the site and buildings in their assets at a nominal figure of £30,000. The *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 26th February, was informed by an expert that the site and buildings were worth £50,000 and the paper gives this and other instances of the great appreciation in the value of central Leeds sites. Opposite, in Albion Place, is the Y.M.C.A. building

which (with its site!) was recently put into the market and £75,000 was asked for it. Other examples in the neighbourhood are: £42 per sq. yd. paid for the site of the Paramount Cinema in the Headrow; site of Lewis's store in the Headrow, £33 per sq. yd.; site of the Headrow car park, £22 10s. per sq. yd.; and a shopping site in Commercial Street which cost £200 a sq. yd. The last named figure is equivalent to £968,000 per acre.

Harlesden—Surplus Land made an Open Space.

At its meeting on 27th January (*Willesden Chronicle* report) the Middlesex County Council agreed to acquire at an estimated cost of £1,552 9s. 1d. the freehold interest in 0.31 of an acre of freehold land, surplus for road widening purposes, adjoining Harlesden Road for a public open space or pleasure ground subject to the Borough Council paying half of the cost. The price is equivalent to £5,006 an acre—a very expensive pleasure ground.

Walsall—A Cemetery and a Pleasure Ground.

Answering Mr Wm. Whiteley in the House of Commons on 3rd February, Sir Kingsley Wood said that the price of 182 acres acquired by the Walsall Town Council on the Sutton Road side of the town for cemetery and pleasure ground purposes had been £13,315. That figure included the sum of £5,250 paid for 73½ acres comprising Hay Head Farm. Apart from three houses with a total net annual value of £37, the land was agricultural and therefore derated.

THE SITUATION IN CHINA

The Editor, "Land & Liberty."

DEAR SIR,—In your April issue you published a review of *Red Star over China* which might lead some of your readers to peruse this work. Your reviewer evidently does not know China intimately or he would have pointed out that this book is an extremely clever piece of Communist propaganda. It would be impossible for anyone without a wide knowledge of China to read this book without having his view of everything important about China sadly distorted. The vision one gets through this book is about as inaccurate as one gets through seeing films produced from Chinatown in San Francisco, or by looking at Japan by going to see the Gilbert and Sullivan "Mikado."

China is of course suffering like all other countries from an imperfect land system. It is however more important that with the disappearance of the decadent Manchu dynasty the country became an anarchy in which any man with a few troops became the taxing authority of his particular district. China has been taxed like this at the point of the bayonet for nearly 30 years in every imaginable way so that these local lords and bandits could carry on their local wars and often get away with their gains to the port cities where there was some semblance of security and government.

It is on such a background that two forces have been operating. The Communists have used this situation in parts of China in the attempt to produce a Communist collectivist state. They have appealed to the sufferings of the ignorant and by offering land to the landless have secured a comparatively small measure of support. They have also stimulated hatred not only of the Japanese but also of many factors in China. The peasants who support them do not know that the land they are promised is only to be theirs until the Communist Party becomes powerful enough to collectivise it.

The second force operating has been the Nanking

Government, led by Chiang Kai Shek. This man realised that the primary necessity of a people was a Government with honest intentions, personnel and sufficient strength to secure law and order. Since 1927 Chiang has cleared three quarters of China of bandits, chieftains and Communists, and concurrently has built up reserves and a force which it is possible may win out against the Japanese. Knowing the awful horror of a war with Japan, Chiang has used every effort to postpone and if possible avoid it.

The Communists in this book state they are expecting that in the anarchy which the war is likely to bring in its train they can produce the utter revolution they desire.

Chiang Kai Shek and his party, in spite of Dr Sun Yat Sen's teaching, may not I am afraid understand the vital importance of land in economics or its true place and treatment therein. Nevertheless it is a fact that they have enacted land reform legislation which in the main is based on sound principles (see *Land & Liberty*, February, 1935) but in the disturbed state of the country they have not been able to apply it to any considerable extent. They have striven to give China an ordered Government, honest and efficient and we must hope in due course as perfect as Henry George would have it to be.

The Communists by this very misleading book, as well as by their well-authenticated excesses in the parts of the country they have occupied, show how utterly they lack the very basic spirit upon which to build Utopia.

Karl Crow, with a lifelong experience of China and Japan, has just published *I speak for the Chinese*. The opinions expressed in this book are largely confirmed by Vernon Bartlett, who is just back from China.

Yours etc.,

W. H.