

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

We much regret to learn that Mr E. J. Craigie, who has represented the Flinders District in the South Australian House of Assembly since 1930, suffered defeat in the General Election that took place on 29th March. There were three candidates, the election being decided by use of the alternative vote. Opposing Mr Craigie were Mr Pearson of the Liberal and Country League and Mr Poole of the Labour Party. Mr Craigie topped the poll on the first preference vote, the figures being Craigie 1,301, Pearson 1,169 and Poole 958. Poole thus went down. His second preferences were transferred as follows: Craigie 296 and Pearson 662, making the final vote Pearson 1,831 and Craigie 1,597, with majority of 234 for Pearson. An extraordinary feature of the campaign was the collusion between the two parties to prevent the return of Mr Craigie, the Independent. The day after the nominations the list of "How to Vote" was issued by the parties and on both they placed Mr Craigie on the bottom of the list; that is, each told their supporters to vote their No. 2 vote to their alleged political enemies. These instructions went out from the headquarters in the city and not from the local leagues. It is pertinent to ask why the Labour Party which denounced the Liberal and Country Party as being part of the "Octopus or Profit Taking Party" which was sucking the life-blood of the rest of the community, yet told their people to give their second preference to that party and not to Mr Craigie. Similarly it is pertinent to ask why the Liberal and Country Party, opposed to Socialism and National Credit fallacies as it declares to be, ordered its rank and file to give their No. 2 vote to a candidate pledged to these doctrines. The position is that the Labour leaders had no answer in Parliament to Mr Craigie's criticism of their alleged Labour policy and as he could not be answered in Parliament they combined with their political enemy to defeat him. On the other hand, the Liberals, really Conservatives, did not like Mr Craigie's revelations in his speech on "The Tax Burden on Industry" and they agreed to exchange preferences with the Labour Party whose policy they said would ruin the State. Many of the Labour voters afterwards deplored what they had done in obeying the party whip but no regrets could make good the damage. The opposition resorted to other tactics as in the "jamming" of Mr Craigie's final rally at the bandstand at Port Lincoln where he can always get a good meeting but the Liberal and Country Party are never very successful. They moored a boat on the sea at the rear of the bandstand and with a microphone and amplifier they made enough blatant noise to prevent Mr Craigie from being heard. The Town Council gave permission for the loud speakers to be used and could, therefore, be regarded as a party to the disturbance; or could not the Mayor, Mr Poole, the Labour candidate, have used his influence to prevent it? The petrol rationing kept many voters in the rural districts from travelling the 15 or 20 miles to record their votes and another factor was the effort of the churches to keep Mr Craigie out. He had committed the unpardonable sin of speaking and voting against a Bill to introduce Bible reading in State schools and practically every clergyman in the district worked against him, especially among the women.

The South Australian Parliament has lost for the meantime a fearless and devoted servant of the public weal. Although defeated Mr Craigie is not discouraged. It was clear that if the two other parties combined, as they did, he would have to go; but out of Parliament Mr Craigie feels that he will have more time to attend to other matters relating to the Henry George movement and he is permitted a concentration of effort that was not possible when he had his constituency matters to look after.

In the Districts of Eyre and Stuart Mr J. P. Moore and Charles Hobbs fought good fights as Independents on the policy of removing the tax burden from trade and industry and the deriving of the public revenues from the value of land apart from improvements, but they were unsuccessful.

A Free Copy of "Land & Liberty" is an invitation to become a Subscriber. Monthly, 2d. By Post, 3s. a Year; U.S.A. and Canada, 75 cents.

## CHINA

According to the New York journal *Time* (14th April) various internal reforms were adopted at a recent session of the Kuomintang at the instance of General Chiang Kai-shek. Among other things it was agreed that "the Government would henceforth collect taxes on real estate (hitherto a perquisite of the local governments) under an ingenious system by which landowners will make their own assessments, with the Government reserving the right to buy the land if the assessments are considered too low. This will bring to the central Government revenue which it badly needs. It should put the burden of taxation on the class which can best afford it—the landlords, who have been virtually tax-exempt because they control the local governments, who do most of the speculating in grain and who force their peasantry to pay as much as 60 per cent of their crops for rent (including 'protection')."

"Back of these reforms, letter and spirit, one of the strongest influences was the U.S., represented by the bespectacled face of Lauchlin Currie, economic aide to President Roosevelt.

"One of the gravest dangers to Chiang Kai-shek's Government has long been the rival influence of his Communist allies—whose Army he had recently to discipline" *Time* (3rd February). If Chiang and the Communists get to fighting, Free China's goose is cooked. The Communists undermine his power by promising to free the peasants from the oppression of the landlords. Why not, Currie suggested, raise needed revenue and undercut Communist influence by taxing the landlords while feeding and pleasing the peasants?"

It is not clear whether this new taxation is based upon the value of land apart from improvements, which was the policy advocated by Sun Yat Sen, the first president of the Chinese Republic, or whether it is a tax upon land and improvements taken together. We would welcome authoritative information about the details of the legislation.

## THE USE OF PEACE WHEN IT COMES

To the Editor "Land & Liberty."

It seems certain that the great masses of fighting men, who in peace time constitute the workers, both so-called "white collar" men and the manual workers, will hold the power to impose their views to a very great extent. Consequently it is of vital importance that they should have a clear idea of WHAT they want, and WHY they want it.

No stable peace can be established without a re-arrangement of the existing laws relating to the possession of the land, in conjunction with a free commerce between the nations.

Our organizations in the U.S.A. and in Great Britain should lose no time in getting into touch with the leaders of the various organizations of workers, with the object of convincing them (the leaders) of the soundness of our principles and policy, nay the necessity of their being adopted. These leaders, in their turn, should address themselves to their followers with the assurance that they have carefully studied the question and have become convinced that it is right, adding perhaps, that they have no desire to insist on blind obedience to their ideas and are quite willing to discuss the pros and cons with anyone who has the necessary time and inclination to enter into such a discussion.

The measure of the importance attached to a revision of the land legislation and the taxation of land values may be taken by the violent opposition which will be aroused amongst the landed interests.

Another strong argument, and encouraging circumstance, is that both Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill are acquainted with, and have approved of, these ideas. The first-named, "whilst not prepared to go all the way," approves, whilst Churchill in years not so long ago was a whole-hearted fighter in favour of land value taxation.

For obvious reasons neither of these men could be expected to come forward as champions of such thorny issues, in the present circumstances, but the facts remain, and may cause many a man to hesitate before turning down the Henry George philosophy.

MONTEVIDEO.  
11th April, 1941.

Yours, etc.,  
EASTON GARRETT.