

There Is Something You Can Do

—J. RUPERT MASON

IN THESE days press and radio are giving extensive publicity to the many richly supported international organizations, and their efforts to agree on fundamental economic, sociological and political principles. It is significant, therefore, that so little notice has been taken of the profound Declaration of Principle which received unanimous approval by the delegates from two nations at the conference in England of the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade.

The basic recommendation made by this conference reads: "We advocate that the equal right to land be secured by collecting the rent (value) of land and devoting it to the uses of the community, thus assuring to the producer

the full fruits of his efforts." [See Page Four.]

The conference also voted to repeal all tariffs and other taxes which confiscate wages, and which directly or indirectly increase living costs. Some sixteen pamphlets have been printed, containing the most interesting and important parts of addresses delivered to the conference. They, together with the Declarations of Principle, are contained in a handsome case, and are obtainable from Arthur W. Madsen at 4 Great Smith Street, London, S. W. 1, England, or from the Schalkenbach Foundation, 50 East 69th Street, New York 21, N. Y.

The papers explaining the history of Denmark trace the adoption of land value taxation, and its great benefit in promoting housing and

enterprise generally. It is clear why the nations in Western Europe are looking more and more to the example set by Denmark. There farm tenancy is only about four per cent, slum blights in the cities are at a minimum, and the people, by intelligent use of their votes, have done a splendid job keeping bureaucracy and regimentation out. The general welfare is everywhere advancing under Denmark's just system of taxation.

In England, and several other European nations, the private holders of land, as such, are allowed tax immunity, there being no tax at all on even the most valuable sites in city, or country, if withheld from use. Those who understand the fundamental difference between direct and indirect taxation will realize what a loophole this leaves for speculators in land, and what an impossible burden this tax immunity places on all tenants, and all those struggling to produce and distribute the things man desires.

The taxes imposed on everything consumers buy has cut the buying power of every person in England as a consumer. For example, the taxes on pipe tobacco make one ounce of Virginia tobacco in England cost as much as sixteen ounces in the United States. Nearly everything is still being rationed, and owners of automobiles are allowed gasoline sufficient only for about three days' driving a month. Persons wishing to leave England are allowed to take out only £5 or about \$20. Rebuilding on the bombed sites in England is at a standstill, and their much publicized "Town and Country Planning Act" adopted several years ago, has proven more an aggravation than a cure.

Some of us hoped the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill would address our conference, or at least send us some message. His book, *Liberalism and the Social Problem* (Hodder & Stoughton, Publishers), advocates free trade and the taxation of land values. He wrote that book forty years ago. Two world wars have been fought. The fundamental principles which he then advocated and urged upon the people are wholly consistent with those advocated in 1879 by Henry George in *Progress and Poverty*. They are re-affirmed by the recent conference, and I urge every Georgist and others who would protect their inalienable rights, to get copies of these Declarations of Principle, and give or mail them to persons with influence, many of whom are as confused and timorous in this global crisis as a child in a dark room.

Our students and graduates understand the basic problems. Those eager to "do something about it," are urged to adopt the suggestion above. With full cooperation from readers of The Henry George News, this conference will have accomplished its true purpose.

J. Rupert Mason lives in San Francisco where he carries on a campaign of vigilance against infringements of the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. He retired from the investment field in 1926 and has since done a vast amount of research in law libraries studying court decisions relating to public vs. private rights in land, land tenure and taxation. He was a member of the Central Valley Project of California Committee.