

the Henry George News

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Kenya Calls

by K. B. SHARMA

EVERYWHERE in Africa you can see a few natives straining to lift a big load or push a heavy obstacle. In spite of their efforts, it does not budge. Then one of them shouts "Harambee" repeatedly, and with their combined force applied all at once, it yields. This spirit has been instilled by Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, since the attainment of "Uhuru" (freedom) on December 12, 1963. With all Kenyans striving together to build the country in peace, Kenya takes her rightful place among the three other countries of East Africa, namely: Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

"As a community realizes the conditions which all civilized communities are striving for, and advances in the scale of material progress, so does poverty take a darker aspect. Some get an infinitely better and easier living, but others find it hard to get a living at all." It seems that when Henry George wrote this he was writing about the conditions in East Africa during the colonial era. To a great extent, the countries developed economically, but this entailed dire suffering on the part of the indigenous people who graduated from a barter system to a modern economy.

The immigrant Asians and Europeans—hardly five per cent of the total population—earned most of the in-



come. Very little of this percolated down to the Africans. The standards of living of the three races could not even appear on the graph—so different were they. The greatest challenge to these newly independent governments is a more equal distribution of wealth.

Within the last three years these young governments have manfully tackled this problem. Hardly a month after becoming free, the coup d'état which upset Zanzibar started a chain reaction throughout East Africa. Since January, East Africa has seen one revolution and four mutinies.

East Africa experienced these troubles because the indigenous people with a low standard of living, face unemployment, and only a few have enough land to provide food for them. Undoubtedly land is the problem facing East Africa, where the best land was taken over by the Europeans for huge plantations on which to grow export crops. No doubt they developed and produced cash crops to replace

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subsistence farming, but many Africans were deprived of their most important asset—the land.

More than anywhere else in the world, the people here must be made to realize that land is the common property of the whole community. Thus emergent Africa must be told of the method by which this may be accomplished without bloodshed. Africa must be told about the ideas of Henry George *now* before it is too late. The young Africans whose thirst for knowledge is insatiable must be made aware of the great lessons that the Georgist philosophy holds for them, and the solutions it provides for their difficulties.

The potential future rulers of the new Africa must be informed, educated and presented with the Georgist ideas. Kenya has taken a few steps in the right direction. About one million acres of the good farming land has been bought by the government from the white settlers and distributed to the African yeoman farmers. These settlement schemes are helping the country a great deal. Land valuation is the prime function of the lands department, and a course on land valuation and surveys has been started at the Royal College, Nairobi, as part of the University of East Africa.

Unfortunately this is not enough. We hope to establish a branch of the Henry George School in Nairobi with free courses in Georgist economics for educated Africans. A few articles about Henry George have already appeared in local papers but we lack the facilities and funds for following them up with correspondence courses, seminars and conferences to introduce the single tax—the tax to end all taxes. In East Africa where foundations for social, economic and political structures are now being laid, the Henry George ideology has the greatest chance of being practised. This is an opportunity that must not be missed. On behalf of our future Georgist followers I appeal to Americans for help in showing Africa the path to progress and annihilation of poverty. We feel that the United States—the home of Henry George—owes it to Africa to light up this continent with the ideas of her great political economist.

Mr. K. B. Sharma of Nairobi writes that facilities for starting a Henry George School are available there at the New Era College, and that local personalities and institutions are ready to cooperate. An article on Henry George by Robert Clancy of New York recently appeared in the New Era magazine published by this college. Five thousand copies have been distributed and many readers mentioned the Henry George article as the feature which interested them most.

The program for the international conference to be held in New York from August 30th to September 5th, is taking shape and scope, with discussions on the agenda from Hawaii, England, Germany and other countries. Reservation at the Henry Hudson Hotel, 353 West 57th Street, New York, will insure all conference visitors a roof over their heads during the World's Fair. Rates range from \$5 to \$9 a day.

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