

# LAND & LIBERTY

Published by THE UNITED COMMITTEE FOR THE  
TAXATION OF LAND VALUES, LTD.

Forty-First Year. Established June, 1894.

By Post 2s. 6d. per annum.

United States and Canada, 60 cents.

Editorial Offices

94 PETTY FRANCE, LONDON, S.W.1.

All communications to be addressed to the Editor.

Telegrams: "Eulav, Sowest, London." Telephone: Victoria 4508.

Postage on this issue is One Half-penny.

---

MARCH, 1935.

---

## THE CRUSADE AGAINST WAR

Beside many private and generous associations to show the horror of war and the inutility of it, being equally harmful to the victor and to the vanquished, we have two great institutions for the service of peace and international co-operation. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, whose aim is "to unite in common action the members of all parliaments, constituted into National Groups, in order to secure the co-operation of their respective States in the firm establishment and the democratic development of the work of international peace and co-operation between people by means of universal organization of nations." This "Union" has been forty years active in the service of peace, etc.

Another great institution is the League of Nations. Whatever the result of this expensive "Mummy," it is in a double sense the outcome of the big War. It is the fruit of an instinctive and world-wide impulse to create somehow some organization capable of preserving mankind permanently from a recurrence of a like disaster. It was made by fourteen nations and the preamble of the high contracting parties is the following: "In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just, and honourable relations between nations, by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another, agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations."

Coming to the actual moment, we remember that we had the Kellogg-Briand Pact to outlaw war which was hailed as a triumph of peace-making diplomacy. The results? War preparations remain the greatest industry of most of the large and so-called civilized nations which subscribe to this Treaty. The dominant political party which sponsored in the United States this peace gesture is the same which was promoting the building of new battleships, and in the interest of privileged classes proposed new tariff barriers against the friendly commerce of the world.

What about the proposals for disarmament to which so many good and sincere people in every country were attaching so great importance as measures for ending war?

France maintains the greatest war machine. In Italy the armed forces on land, on sea, and in the air are constantly growing. Germany, England, Russia with a most formidable army, and other nations large or small tell us that it is not for offence but for security that these conditions are maintained.

Men may cry "Peace, Peace!" But there cannot be lasting peace whilst the root causes of war are not

recognized and removed; until the people may be simply led by a new and simple philosophy of human relationship, that of equal rights for all, freedom for all, and justice for all. We should not disparage efforts, nor impeach the sincerity of those who labour for disarmament and conciliation. We feel that they are engaged in the most difficult if not impossible task, which, if successful, would but serve as a palliative, not as a cure.

We honour those fine spirits of all the leagues who sincerely labour for peace; nor are we disposed to under-estimate the good work that has been done in strengthening the machinery and broadening the jurisdiction of the World Court for the adjudication of disputes between nations. But these things are of small avail; the most helpful approach to a true and peaceful concert of nations in the interest of permanent World Peace must lie along the road of economic freedom and justice.

Sir Arthur Salter has a sound thought which he gives in his book *Recovery*. "Collective human wisdom will not control the inexorable march of events in the period immediately ahead. Many, perhaps most, of the adjustments which have earlier been made by deliberate policy, with so much less waste and cost, will now come from the pressure of hard facts and the collision of brute forces."

Who will fight the economic forces created by a protectionist system? When the economic life of a country has been built on a basis of tariffs it creates a situation which makes radical reform almost impossible. "Few realize how great, how almost insurmountable, this obstacle is, for none living have been through the experience of changing from a protectionist to a free system."

Now the reader may ask, What then? Shall we sit down and wait for social and radical changes? Here our duty begins. It is useless to cry against the armies, bureaucracy, and other leeches living on the producer's blood. All over the world they are the safety valves of actual economic organization of our society. Disband the armies, reduce the bureaucracy, and you would have "Chinese bandits" for lack of work and employment. And, is the world poor? In Australia they pave the streets with wool, in Brazil they throw bags of coffee into the sea, and the Wheat Conference resolves upon restriction of production, while millions go naked, hungry, or drinking adulterated coffee.

An Italian general travelling in Argentina, whilst cursing war and its horrors, confidentially said to the writer: "My dear Sir, war is not the worst of the human scourges. Life is so bitter for so many people that they find war a relief to the suffering of poverty, chronic hunger, and internal feuds." An army in England or in the United States would be hailed by thousands out of work in any season and at any time. For some people the army, the churches, and bureaucracies are a relief for a mere living.

Priests, prelates, accused as the protectors of privilege of the few against the many, intellectual leaders who hate the idea of war, ought to counsel political education before politics. The awakening of the public mind to a realization of the justice and necessity of a great change and that industrial depressions are but the "intensifications of phenomena which always accompany material progress, and which show themselves more clearly and strongly as material progress goes on . . . where population is densest, wealth greatest, and the machinery of production and exchange most highly developed we find the deepest poverty, the sharpest struggle for existence and the most enforced idleness."



Wealth is as indispensable to mankind for purpose of growth as water is to the soil. It is not the fault of the water if its natural circulation is interfered with; if a certain portion of the land is saturated and other parts left completely dry. Since ancient times wealth in all countries is artificially confined to a certain class. An immense part of mankind is shut off from natural opportunities that can only be enjoyed when land is of free access to labour, therefore an unjust and cruel distribution of wealth.

The restrictions and obstructions to the distribution (wherefore better production) of wealth cannot be removed without destroying the monopoly of land, the greatest evil and the worst obstacle to establishing the true freedom of interchange of wealth. Let society get the values created by social progress and increase in population and the individual the full product of his labour.

"The power to tax is the power to destroy." Society needs taxation, like as the human body needs food. Medicine is useless if the body is poisoned by bad food, in the same way as any reform aggravates the disorders produced by bad taxation. Land values arising out of the association and co-operation of people are essentially a community product. Our slogan is "We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community and leave sacredly to the individual all that belongs to the individual."

We are not so mistaken as to believe that our slogan will be easily accepted. We firmly believe that we have grasped an everlasting truth. Men are groping to find rest. Our civilization is so complicated that we forget that man is a land animal. What difference does it make whether I own the land on which another man must live or own the man himself?

In what did the slavery of Russia consist but in giving to the master land on which the serf was forced to live? Is it strange that many, feeling bitterly the monstrous wrongs of the present distribution of wealth, are animated only by a blind hatred of the rich and a fierce desire to destroy existing social adjustments? When one thinks, this class is less dangerous than those who proclaim that no special improvement is needed or is possible.

In legislation common tendencies are toward socialistic measures—high-purposed but incoherent mixture of truth and fallacy, the defects of which may be summed up in its want of radicalism, that is to say, of going to the root. The first steps can be moved only by the simple formula of abolishing all the burden of taxes on labour, hence on production and distribution, and taxing land values, values attached to land, by social progress and increasing population.

In the international field we aim to teach the world that the highest interest of the people of every land is identical with the interest of the people of that land. If people do not understand peace at home they will not understand peace between nations. Human rights, if trampled on by any nation outside, means that they are trampled on first at home.

These thoughts ought to be the fundamental principle of a regenerating crusade, the only step to uplift the welfare of mankind in accordance with justice and moral law.

FELIX VITALE.

---