

taxation imposed on the middle classes by the Social Democrat Government and may perhaps find its parallel in the success of Poujadism in France and of the various middle class organisations that have sprung up recently in Britain.—*The Times* leading article, May 16.

*Tendentious and misleading. Is "The Times" afraid of the words "tax land values"?*

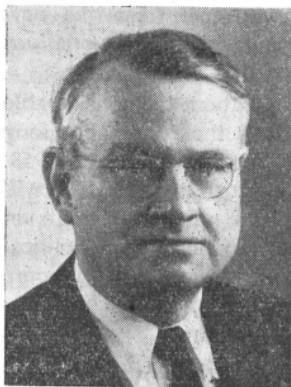
The eccentric Single Tax party, whose members cling to the principles of Henry George.—*The Economist*. May 18.

*Sound principles to which to cling!*

There remains a party peculiar to Denmark, advocating the single tax theories of Henry George. With nine members against six in the old Folketing, it has now won a key position, thanks perhaps to its particularly forthright protests against inflation.—*Manchester Guardian* editorial, May 16.

*Silly and untrue. What made the M.G. change its tune? "Legality" is a mistranslation; "eccentric" is inept.*

A NEW LAND VALUES BOOK—BY A TEXAN JUDGE



JUDGE J. R. FUCHS

## “Constructive Taxation for Free Enterprise”

*In the dock stand two figures representing the American system of land tenure and the Federal system of taxation. They are charged with placing America on the highroad to Communism. But it is not to those two figures alone that the Prosecuting Attorney points his accusing finger . . .*

JOSEPH STALIN, as every schoolboy knows, had his own method of weighing the strength of a Movement. Told that the Pope opposed him, he enquired, blandly, “How many divisions has he got?”, and the words have since passed into the phrase-book of materialism. But if moral force can still sway the minds of men the Henry George Movement does not lack divisions, and every day their number increases as the frontiers of enlightenment are pushed steadily forward. But the newcomer to the Henry George philosophy can perhaps be excused if he should pause for a moment and wish that those divisions could boast of a little more heavy artillery. If only, he might sigh, some of the outstanding public figures of our times had shown the grasp of the social problem that Henry George showed in his. If such men, with their dynamic energy and unquenchable enthusiasm had led a great crusade in the early years of the century would the British economy be stumbling from crisis to crisis in the ‘fifties? Would America have known the bread-lines of the ‘thirties? Would Russia and China be Communist-run today?

For those who sigh for what-might-have-been a new book *Constructive Taxation for Free Enterprise* will provide adequate food for speculation. For in this work the author mentions some of the notable personalities of the last 70 years who at some time in their careers have actively campaigned or declared their support for reforms based on the teachings of Henry George. And among them appear the names of—yes—Winston Churchill, Lloyd George, Philip Snowden, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Leo Tolstoy and Sun Yat Sen.

But these flash-backs to the events of the recent past will account for but a fraction of the interest which this book will arouse. For here, from the earnest, persuasive pen of a Texas Judge is a survey of the factors which, in this Century of the Common Man, prevent that common man from achieving social justice. On the subject of justice a Judge is surely qualified to speak. And like his fellow jurist—F. A. W. Lucas, Q.C., of South Africa—whose pamphlet *Can Taxation Be Constructive?* has become a “best-seller” overnight, Judge Fuchs speaks his piece with firmness and conviction. His words are addressed primarily to the American public but they apply, in no less degree, to almost every country in the world.

Right from the first page the reader is left in no doubt that here is no slavish advocate of the Welfare State. And any idea that justice is simply a matter of taking “from each according to his ability” and giving “to each according to his need” will hardly penetrate the dust-cover. Such arrangements, says Judge Fuchs, are mere State paternalism; the sort of spoon-feeding which petrifies the natural initiative and enterprise in man, leads to the growth of pressure groups pleading like spoiled children for special privileges and favours, and ultimately to that destruction of individual rights and liberty which we see today under Communism. Nor does he see the “grasping capitalist” and “militant trade unionism” as the twin jaws of the nutcracker between which man’s economic liberty is crushed. For this book is dedicated “to Industry and to Labour,” and to place either in shackles would manifestly be contrary to the author’s ideas of free enterprise society.

*Land & Liberty*

A book on the social problem which attacks neither Labour nor Capital is, in these times, a refreshing rarity, but what constructive proposal does the author make? To leave these two mighty forces to their unrestricted interplay in accordance with natural economic law may sound attractive to some, but would it not mean a return to old-time *laissez-faire*? To the free-for-all of the 19th century, with its poverty, squalor and child labour? In clear, simple, everyday language the author gives his answer. What he wants, he says, is for the social problem to be tackled at its root. And the root—the great mal-adjustment of our times—is that wealth which belongs to all the people is allowed to flow into private pockets, while wealth which rightly belongs to individuals is taken by Governments in incentive-destroying taxation.

What is it that rightly belongs to all the people? Nothing but the very land itself. American statesmen, apparently, have seldom been under illusions as to the true owners of the land around them. At page 19 Judge Fuchs quotes Abraham Lincoln as follows:

“The land, the earth, God gave to man for his home, sustenance and support, should never be the possession of any man, corporation, society or unfriendly government any more than air and water, if as much. Any individual, or company, or enterprise acquiring land should hold no more than they have in actual use . . .”

Yes, the land of America surely belongs to its people, but the great tragedy of 180 years of American independence is that when the new Republic threw off the yoke of British monarchical rule it retained its most vicious feature—the old feudalistic system of land tenure under which the monarch had granted titles to absolute ownership instead of mere possession of land. In short, the people's land had been given away to a privileged few. Of those who would not have approved, clearly Abraham Lincoln was one. Another was the untutored Indian Chief Black Hawk who said:

“Who am I that I should sell the land; I might have the right to sell my interest in the land, but who am I that I should sell my children's and my children's children's right to the land?”

Under their Constitution Americans are “created equal.” But if some men own the land of America—the very basis of life itself—while the rest are born as trespassers in their homeland, can there be true equality? The great monarchical tree had been felled but its feudalistic roots still flourished. The Stars and Stripes had replaced the Union Jack but behind it still lurked the skull and crossbones.

Can the people of America regain their rightful heritage? Yes, says Judge Fuchs. Not, of course, by dividing the land into individual strips reminiscent of the Open Fields

CONSTRUCTIVE TAXATION FOR FREE ENTERPRISE. *A Study of What is “Mine, Thine and Ours”*, by JOHN R. FUCHS, with an introduction by J. RUPERT MASON. 159 pp., \$3. Exposition Press Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N.Y. Obtainable also through the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, New York, and from our offices, price 21s. 0d.

June, 1957

of Mediaeval England, but by collecting for the community what rightfully belongs to them—the economic rent, or annual value of land.

With many well-chosen quotations from economists and others, the author demonstrates convincingly that a tax on land values cannot be passed on to the users of land and thus raise the cost of living, but that, on the contrary, competition for tenants between landlords seeking to put their tax-liable land to productive use, would drive down its price, reduce the general cost of production, and raise the standard of living.

But this would not be the only benefit. With the State collecting, as revenue, the annual land value, the stage would be set for the wholesale revision of the present Federal tax system which Judge Fuchs calls Communistic and regressive. Communistic because it takes from individuals the products of their private industry while the vast fund of collectively-owned land value remains untapped. Regressive because, in levying taxes on the fruits of man's labours, it dampens initiative, strangles enterprise and puts a powerful brake on progress. Inevitably must such a system become an arbitrary and patchwork one with some groups being favoured at the expense of others, with friction and class warfare ensuing, and with penalties for evasion or omission making criminals of us all. Economic injustice, he says, has caused the destruction of every civilisation. America's tax system which consists in taking private wealth into the public treasury and then doling it out to a pampered and softened people, places her already upon the slippery slope.

Here then is Judge Fuch's case for a constructive system of taxation. To present it he steps down from the Bench and takes the floor of the Court as Prosecuting Attorney. In the dock stand two figures representing the American system of land tenure and the Federal system of taxation. They are charged with placing America on the highroad of Communism. But it is not to those two figures alone that the Prosecutor directs his accusing finger. He points also to those many millions who regard the present tax system as sacrosanct. To those who believe that income tax is “the fairest tax of all.” And to those who accept that “the ability to pay” is a just basis for taxation.

In Judge Fuch's literary courtroom the reader of this book is the jury; and juries must be neutral. But if the cap should fit the reader must surely wear it. And so far as those two figures in the dock are concerned, the cap is clearly a black one.

B.W.B.

#### SURPLUS STOCKS — SPACE NEEDED

We have a number of Georgeist books and pamphlets in excess of our current requirements and as space is urgently needed we are disposing of many of them for just the cost of postage.

Write for list.

United Committee, 4 Great Smith St., London, S.W.1