

MR MACDONALD : Similar legislation has been passed in one or two other British territories at any rate, and in principle the legislation is the same.

(The Petroleum (Production) Act, 1934, vested the property in petroleum deposits in this country in the Crown, and empowered the Board of Trade to grant licences to search and bore for petroleum upon such terms as to royalty and otherwise as it thinks fit. No compensation was payable to the owners of land in which petroleum might be found.)

ARGENTINA

The Real Rulers of the Republic

From the beginning of Argentine history there has been a sharp conflict in ideals and interests between the city of Buenos Aires and the Argentine countryside—the "camp," as the rest of Argentina is always called. Buenos Aires was opened to commerce in 1776 by the Spanish king. Desiring freer trade and closer cultural relations with Europe, Buenos Aires had been the prime mover for freedom from Spain, and the camp was willing enough to follow, but when Buenos Aires attempted to rule in Spain's place, the camp revolted. After almost three quarters of a century of internal conflict, Buenos Aires was made a federal district and capital of the Republic.

Argentina's physical appearance meanwhile underwent some change. The large landowners introduced wire fences, and found that they could keep their own herds, fatten and breed them. At first the hides were the principal product, but in 1876 the first refrigerator ship came to Argentina—an event far more noteworthy than a dozen revolutionary battles. From then on the trade in frozen, and later in chilled, meat expanded until Argentina reached her present position as chief meat supplier to the world.

The landowners grew rich, and turning their backs figuratively as well as literally on the broad plains of their own country, looked to Europe for culture, literature and music. They remained, however, profoundly aware that the best way to make money was to buy land and not stocks and shares.

The government of Argentina is still controlled by the landowners, and since these gentlemen make their money from wheat and meat and corn, they see to it that the government takes good care of agriculture, with official boards to oversee the meat and grain businesses, to watch that good prices are paid for cattle and that the foreign-owned "frigoríficos" are well controlled. Land taxes are kept down to practically nothing, while corporation taxes mount. The plight of the peon in the camp, with no land, no school for his children within miles, a mud hut for a home, no sanitation and no medical care, is ignored by a government run by and for landowners.—Extract from *South American Primer*, by Katherine Carr (Regnal & Hitchcock, New York), and taken from *Magazine Digest* for December.

The Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 32 East 29th Street, New York City, has produced an artistic Wall Calendar for 1940 with coloured reproduction of the oil painting of Henry George and a quotation from his writings for each month of the year. We are indebted for the complimentary copy which Mrs Anna George de Mille has sent. Readers desiring this calendar should send us 2s. to forward, but would of course have to wait some time before they could get delivery.

ITALY

The review *Lo Stato Operaio*, in its fifth and succeeding issues, gives interesting particulars of the status of the territorial aristocracy with respect to landed property, high finance and the political situation in Italy.

The official records of the Italian nobility show that there are 41,853 individuals belonging to 7,750 noble families. The author of this investigation, using the official data, has been able to establish the fact that 1,928 aristocrats belonging to 1,267 families own 2,019 immense estates of which several exceed 10,000 hectares (24,700 acres) in area. It is mostly in the central and southern parts of the country that these large estates are to be found and they are cultivated under methods of tenure that are particularly objectionable.

The total area of the territorial estates of the nobility covers 3,000,000 hectares, which is about a third of the land held in larger estates. The nobility further holds a predominant position in the large real-estate companies which own more than 1,000,000 hectares. Fifteen Italian aristocratic families own among them 374 large estates with an area of 500,000 hectares, and among them are to be found the most notable representatives of the Fascist regime and of Italian high finance.

There is a close association between these territorial aristocrats and high finance, as is shown in the following figures: 771 members of the nobility belonging to 586 families hold shares in the real estate companies representing a total capital of 1,000 million lire.

Interesting particulars are also given as to the relations of the aristocracy with the Fascist regime, with the monarchy and the Vatican; as to the political influences that govern the aristocratic outlook; and as to its connections with large international trusts, such as Sofina, Cidro, Chade, etc. And there are interesting facts about the most powerful of the noble families (Volpi and others) and the associations that the Mussolini-Ciano family has been able to establish with the territorial aristocracy.

Among the families that occupy high positions in the financial world one can mention: Count Pavoncelli, who owns more than 50,000 hectares in various parts of the peninsula and who is a director of the Credito Italiano and of numerous loan and improvement societies; Marquis Trigona, very close to the Duce, interested in the Italian heavy industry, owner of a large estate in Sicily, and administrator of the Terni trust; the Princes Ruspoli, large estate owners in the Rome district, in Umbria and the Marches, related to Count Volpi and connected with his electrical and colonial undertakings; Marquis del Monte, estate owner in Umbria and a Fiat shareholder; Marquis Negrotto di Cambiaso, estate owner in Liguria and Piedmont, etc., one of the conspicuous persons connected with the shipping industry and closely related to the Ciano family; Count Sagrarnoso, delegate administrator of the Breda, etc.

The noble families with financial connections are those most closely attached to the Fascist regime; whereas the purely territorial aristocracy has its ties with the Vatican. From all this it appears that the Fascist regime, like the Nazi regime, consolidates the position of the large landed estates and has nothing whatever of socialism in it.

Translated from *Terre et Liberté* (Paris), September, 1939.

FORM OF BEQUEST

I bequeath (free of duty) to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Limited, the sum of £.....