

# Regimented Farming and Transport

*Freedom to produce, to exchange, and to travel are basic human rights. These typical press reports show how they are subverted by privilege-conferring sectional legislation*

## Is Tomato Growing A Crime?

Market gardener Harry Wright, who rebelled against an £80 Government-backed levy on his plants, wants the Tomato and Cucumber Board to sue him—or clear his name. Said 42-year-old Mr. Wright, who tends 80,000 tomato plants under glass at Cottingham, near Hull:—

"More than a month has passed since the Board wrote to me saying that if I did not pay up by July 6 they would sue me. They know I won't pay. And if it goes to court I'll welcome the chance to show how unfair its powers to levy these charges really are. But all this time has passed and I've heard nothing. If they aren't going to take legal action then they had better do some explaining. I've had my name banded about like a debtor when really I'm fighting for a principle. I wanted to write a challenge letter to the Board, but my lawyer advised me not to. He says that the longer they wait the more difficult their case will be."

Mr. Wright has won the support of growers all over the country in his fight against the Board's annual demands of 10s. per 500 plants, irrespective of whether crops are good or bad. The money is used to finance the Board's scheme for "orderly marketing." Mr. Wright was told by letter to pay the levy after he walked out of a disciplinary committee meeting in London.—*Daily Express*, July 31.

## "Neighbourly Act Must Stop"—Milk Board

A few yards from Mr. Ray Ollerenshaw's farmhouse at Derwent in Derbyshire, stand three forestry workers' cottages. For years the Ollerenshaws have provided the families there with milk fresh from the pail. Now comes an official waving a copy of new milk regulations and telling Farmer Ollerenshaw he must build a proper dairy and bottle the milk for the three families.

Said Farmer Ollerenshaw to me yesterday: "It just isn't worth it for three pints of milk. I'm no dairy farmer. I keep only one milch cow for my own use, and providing the milk for the cottages has just been a neighbourly act to save them a long journey."

So now somebody from the three cottages must make a 20 mile round trip to the nearest village, Bamford, every day for the milk. Expensive milk with petrol at 4s. 6d. a gallon! But what does that matter so long as our Whitehall moles are kept snug—to the extent of 1,170 Ministry of Agriculture "officials" at £1,000 per annum, and another 4,500 at £520—supported by the taxpayer so that they can busy themselves enforcing legislation *ad absurdum*.—*Daily Mail*, August.

## Farmer Grew Too Many Potatoes

Farmer Fred Whitehead who was ordered to quit his farm because he grew too many potatoes, is to stay there after all.

[LAST APRIL his landlord, Mr. Roland Cottingham, gave 64-year-old Mr. Whitehead notice to quit Binbrooke Farm, Lincs. Lincolnshire Agricultural Committee and the Ministry of Agriculture agreed he must go because of his "bad farming methods." He had grown potatoes twice in six years instead of once in four, as recommended. Mr. Whitehead protested

then that the potato-planting rule was aimed at reducing eelworm—and he had no eelworm.]

He said yesterday that he had in fact improved the 122-acre farm. After his appeal had been upheld Mr. Whitehead said, "I am very pleased. It is a blow struck for the small farmers. You have got to fight back over these things."—*News Chronicle*, September 15.

FOOTNOTE: Britain suffered a serious potato shortage this summer. Prices rose to five and six times their normal level—Ed., L. & L.

## Bus Company Forced to Raise Fares

Recently a private motor coach company, Brimblecombe Brothers, of Reading, was instructed by the South-East Area Licensing Authority to increase its fares to equal those of its rival. The company objected to the increase on the grounds that it was not justified, but the chairman, Mr. H. J. Thom, said that the Authority was acting in order to prevent "wasteful competition" and "in the public interest."

## Airmen Forced to go by Train

The same monopoly-mentality was evident when the South Wales Licensing Authority on September 28, rejected an application for a bus service to enable thirty airmen living in various surrounding towns to return later to camp from week-end and annual leave. The South Wales Transport Company had been willing to provide the service but the application was opposed by British Railways, which maintained that there was an adequate train service. Mr. C. R. Hodgson, Licensing Authority chairman, said that the application was a weak one and that the men were lucky to be stationed so near home. Whether they were "regulars" or had been conscripted to defend "freedom," was not reported.

## Illegal to Share Cost of Petrol

A similar instance was reported in the *Manchester Guardian* on October 9. The West Midlands Traffic Commissioners were considering an application by a Mr. Ogle to run a new express coach service from Polesworth to the Armstrong-Siddeley works at Ansty. He said he ran coaches to the Parkfield works, but workers were being transferred to Ansty and some of his former passengers had been using cars and dividing costs. The chairman, Mr. W. P. James said: "There is too much of that going on. It is quite illegal."

These three instances throw light on how "Conservative Freedom Works" to the advantage of privileged groups and the detriment of the individual who is denied the right to do as he pleases so long as does not transgress the equal rights of others.

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