

## LAND-VALUES

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### "OUR POLICY"

"We would simply take for the community what belongs to the community—the value that attaches to land by the growth of the community; leave sacredly to the individual all that belongs to the individual."—*Henry George.*

### THE TRANSPORTATION BILL

The notes on the Parliamentary debates on the Emigration Bill, printed on a previous page, clearly indicate the defects of this measure. It is one of the many restrictions on personal liberty which the war has given an excuse for introducing, and one which is designed to continue long after the war is over. The workman driven from his own country, the land being locked against him, is not to be allowed freedom of choice as to where he shall settle; he is not even to be allowed untrammelled judgment on such a matter—he must obtain his information as to the potentialities of other lands from a Government bureau. This is paternalism run mad.

We quite understand that the pretext of the Bill is to secure the speedy peopling of the Colonies with men of the British race. But those Colonial statesmen who so strongly advocate this have the remedy in their own hands. They have only to make the conditions of the emigrant sufficiently attractive and the tide of emigration will set in with steady flow towards their shores. The petty expedients of bureaucracy will not prevail against economic forces. When emigrants were leaving the shores of New Zealand by the thousand thirty years ago, it might have been within the power of a Government department to hoodwink others into going there, but no power short of physical compulsion could have kept them there. The then Governors of New Zealand recognised this, and they introduced the land tax, cheapened land, and set a check to the growth of great estates, and the tide of emigration soon turned. If the Colonies desire a larger population let them continue with this policy, and carry it still further than they have yet done. But we suspect that this Bill was not solely introduced in deference to the wishes of the colonists.

It is universally recognised that the returned soldier will demand a fuller share of the soil of his native land. If that were granted there would be no necessity for a single man to try his fortune on foreign shores. But do the Government and their supporters wish this? In the Corn Production Act, the Small Holdings (Colonial) Act, and the reports of their numerous reconstruction committees, there is sign only of a determined desire to protect and strengthen the position of the land monopolist in this country. If only those who wish for a share in their native land can be deported to Australia, or some other distant quarter of the globe, the impending revolution will be staved off and the landlords may breathe in comfort once more. This is the sinister motive we see behind the Emigration Bill. It is an attempt to forestall the social revolution which a steadily increasing volume of public opinion demands.

The public which demands a foothold in this country, and has been tricked by a multitude of glowing election pledges, is to be tricked once more under pleas of patriotism and of binding together the Empire to forego its claim to its birth-right. The soldier who has fought to defend this land, if ambitious of cultivating it, is to be hurried across the sea. But the park, the deer preserve, the slum, the "land ripening for building," must at all costs be preserved. What matters if the population of the country decline, if wages are low and unemployment rife after the war, so long as these privileges remain?

And the Irishman, too, is bribed into enlisting by a promise of land—a promise which on closer examination dwindles into nothing more than some form of extension of the Irish Land Purchase Acts (Mr. Samuels in the House of Commons, 11th June). What is aimed at for Ireland is also being attempted in England, says Mr. Bonar Law (House of Commons, 6th June). Does this mean that the policy of land purchase is to be introduced in this country also, after the price of land has been enormously inflated by the Corn Production Act? Plainly, the landlords are entrenching and fortifying their position, and the Emigration Bill is not the least ingenious method that might be adopted.

Such a policy is intolerable. Emerging from a great war, impoverished by an enormous burden of taxation, the soldier is to be faced with the alternative of paying still higher taxation in order to obtain land, or of emigrating to some spot chosen for him by a Government official. It can have but one result. It will end either in ruin or in revolution if persisted in. The fortunes, the happiness, the very existence of a people must not be trifled with in this way. Our politicians forget that while immense progress is being made in the realms of science and industry, the educator and the printing press have been at work. A generation is arising which is questioning the value of this progress which enor-

mously enriches some, but leaves the many poor and overburdened. The rapid growth of the Labour Party is one sign of this, and at the same time a proof of the failure of the Liberal Party to carry out pledges made time and again ever since the days of the Newcastle Programme. There is, too, a vigorous minority which openly doubts the value of parliamentary action, not without some reason, and trusts more in Bolshevism than legislation.

Such are the forces that the new transportation system seeks to withstand. It is a natural, legitimate, and deep-seated need, which seeks satisfaction in the demand for a share of the land of this country. To permit the continued growth and aggrandisement of land monopoly is suicidal. The Empire that allows it will share the fate of the Roman Empire and every other. The medical examination of recruits has shown how far short the physique of the adult male falls short of the perfect standard of health and strength. The mental and spiritual damage is incalculable. Let not our rulers bury their heads in the sand. Even in those gross and concrete measures which they value our present course is the path to ruin, and their measures are but hastening the downfall.

Before we consider colonising foreign countries, let us colonise our own. There is yet ample field for improvement here at home. The millions of allotment-holders have shown what can be done under comparatively unfavourable circumstances; but they have not explored a tithe of the possibilities of this country from an agricultural point of view. They have utilised largely unused building land in and near the towns, but there are immense areas of land beyond which might be used for agriculture or market gardening and are at present unused. All that requires to be thrown open to the hands that are willing to use it before we talk of emigration. For the other primary industries it is the same. We need, it is said, at least half a million more houses after the war. This involves the use of land for the building sites, for the stone, brick, metals, and other materials. The land is there full of all these potentialities. Nothing is needed but to give labour untrammelled access to it and the rest will follow. The same with regard to mining and forestry. Why should the eyes of our politicians be on the ends of the earth? Is it that they do not understand the land question, or is it that they are afraid of it because of the vested interests involved?

**NEW PAMPHLET.**

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**LAND GRANTS AND RAILROAD  
SUBSIDIES IN CANADA**

The Report of the Royal Commission to Inquire into the Railways and Transportation in Canada gives details of the land grants and of the financial assistance which have been made to the various railway systems in Canada.

**The Canadian Northern**

The Canadian Northern had received up to June 30, 1916, subsidies amounting to \$38,874,148 from the Dominion Government, the Provinces and the Municipalities. Land grants from the Provinces have been given extending to 6,555,708 acres. Of that area 3,309,720 have been sold, the amount realised being \$16,603,295. The company appraises its unsold lands at \$19,885,485, present value, and \$17,776,514 have been realised on mortgage. On June 30, 1916, the company had outstanding securities, bearing the guarantee of the Dominion or Provincial Governments, amounting to \$211,641,140; and has had direct loans from the Dominion Government to the amount of \$25,858,166.

The total public assistance, direct and indirect, is as follows:

Subsidies	...	...	...	\$38,874,148
Land grants (sold \$16,603,295; realised on mortgage \$17,776,514)	...	...	...	34,379,809
Cash loans (interest not being paid)	...	...	...	25,858,166
Securities guaranteed	...	\$211,641,140	...	
Less Government guaranteed debentures held as collateral	12,500,000	199,141,140		
				<u>\$298,253,263</u>

The maximum possible cash cost of this system, as far as the Commission has been able to ascertain it, is \$370,302,451.

**The Canadian Pacific**

Some time prior to 1880, the Dominion Government undertook the construction of a road that was designed to be a link in a transcontinental line. In that year the C.P.R. was organised for the purpose of completing the line. The cost of the road and surveys made by the Government was \$37,785,320; this was turned over to the company free of cost. In cash aid the company has received from the Dominion, the Provinces and the Municipalities \$71,135,055, of which \$4,229,574 have been repaid. *The \$71,135,055 includes \$10,189,521 received from the Dominion Government for the purchase back of land previously granted free. The italics are ours.*

The total land grants (excluding land re-purchased) extended to 28,023,188 acres. Of these 16,541,056 have been sold, and have realised \$123,810,124. The unsold lands of the company are carried in its accounts at \$119,250,000.

Further, indirectly, the C.P.R. has had Government aid the value of which cannot be determined, such as the right to take public land free for railway purposes, various loans (since repaid), certain exemptions from taxes, admission of original construction material free of duty, and other concessions.

**Grand Trunk**

The roads now comprised in the Grand Trunk Railway Company's undertaking have received in subsidies from the Dominion, the Provinces and the Municipalities \$13,003,000; and \$15,142,633 many years ago from the Dominion Government as a loan, interest on which has never been asked for nor paid.

**Grand Trunk Pacific**

This Company has received in subsidies and other cash aid \$6,990,036; Dominion Government investment in