

knew little and cared less about his country's struggle for independence from the British rule. His rulers, the priest and moneylender, live next door to him. His life and outlook are limited to the village and the land around. Often he never leaves it from birth to death. His hunger, poverty, and physical weakness—these are his life, his world. India's villagers are hungry people. They are born in hunger. They live with it and die with it. They are the hungriest people in the world, and their hunger is a threat to the peace and security of India and the world. India's first Independent Government knows this and is doing all it can to rescue these peasant people from their misery . . .

"India is a land of beauty and misery. But the misery need not and must not be. India's hungry people have seen for the first time the possibility of a different life—without hunger. Perhaps the peace of the world will depend on how quickly they can be given that new life."—DONALD H. MASON in *The Listener*, May 1.

### Pakistan

"In the heart of the Sind Desert, in Pakistan, 250 miles north of Karachi, there is a red brick city that travellers go a long way to see, Mohenjo-Daro. It is as carefully planned as any garden city. Its rows of streets and shops and houses follow a strict geometric pattern, but the place is completely deserted. Its inhabitants fled more than 3,000 years ago. Mohenjo-Daro, the 'Mound of the Dead,' is the site of one of the most important excavations of recent times. It is comparable in antiquity and historical significance to the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. The ruined city lay under a thick mass of alluvial soil and silt washed up by the Indus during its periodical floods . . . My guide and I walked down the wide main street our footsteps echoing on the paving stones. He showed me the houses of the wealthy in one quarter and the cottages of the slaves in another. The spacious bathing pool has survived almost intact, and the well-constructed drains are a notable feature of the city . . . Now that all the relics have been examined and the evidence pieced together, it is possible to reconstruct in outline the kind of life the people led there. They were a highly organised and prosperous agricultural community. Life was strict and well ordered to the point of regimentation. They kept their own domestic animals, and trading links had been established between them and the people of Sumer, a contemporary civilisation in Mesopotamia. They were a cultured people, fond of jewellery and ornaments. They left behind a large number of seals, beautifully engraved with representations of different animals, but the language they spoke has never been deciphered . . . One day disaster came to Mohenjo-Daro. Some of the discoveries point to increasingly disturbed conditions towards the end of the city's 1,000 years of life. Jewellery and precious objects were hidden, construction became shoddy, and the civic administration weakened. All this was a sign of fear. Skeletons have been found lying unburied on a staircase, with other evidence of massacre and the hasty departure of the inhabitants. It is now thought that Mohenjo-Daro was sacked and destroyed by the Aryan invaders who came to India 3,500 years ago."—RICHARD WILLIAMS in *The Listener*, October 23.

## THE SUPREME LAW OF THE LAND Within United States of America

By J. RUPERT MASON

The keen interest and debates regarding the "Land Question" in all nations makes it important that the legal force and effect of the controlling decisions by the Supreme Court of the U.S., be more generally known, read and understood.

Here are some opinions issued by our highest Courts:—

"The private holder of land never enjoys tax immunity as a right . . ." *Petition of S.R.A.*, 18 NW (2) 442; *Certiorari Denied*, 327 U.S. 558.

"Property can have no more dangerous, even if unwitting, enemy than one who would make its possession a pretext for unequal or exclusive . . . rights." *Edwards v. State of California*, 314 U.S. 160.

"It would appear beyond question that the power of the States to create and enforce property interests (in land) must be exercised within the boundaries defined by the 14th Amendment." *Shelley v. Kramer*, 334 U.S. 1.

(The "boundaries" referred to are the "Equal protection" and "Equal rights to life and liberty" commands, which no State can lawfully infringe, since the 14th Amendment was added to the Constitution of the U.S., in 1868.)

"The power to tax is the one great power on which the whole social fabric is based. It is not only the power to destroy, it is also the power to keep alive." *McCulloch v. Maryland*, 4 Wheat. 316. (1819).

The U.S. Congress also possesses the power to levy a direct annual ad-valorem land tax, by simple statute, as it did in the following Federal tax statutes:—

1 Stats. 580, c. 70 (1798); 3 Stats. 22, c. 16 (1813); 3 Stats. 164, c. 21 (1815); 12 Stats. 292 (1861); 12 Stats. 422, c. 98.

The following decisions further interpret and construe the inherent sovereign power of each State and of the Congress to levy and collect direct, annual ad-valorem land taxes:—

*Providence Bank v. Billings*, 4 Pet. 514,560; *Turner v. Smith*, 81 U.S. 553,562; *Pollock case*, 158 U.S. 601; *Fallbrook v. Bradley*, 164 U.S. 112; *Ashton v. Cameron*, 298 U.S. 513; *Brush v. Commissioner*, 300 U.S. 351; *Arkansas Corp. v. Thompson*, 312 U.S. 675, 313 U.S. 132; *Wood v. Lovett*, 313 U.S. 362; *State of Minn. v. Aiken*, 284 N.W. 63; *Henry George v. Braddock*, 18 Atl. 881; *Fairhope Single Tax Colony v. Melville*, 69 So. 466; *Cowan v. Fallbrook*, 131 F (2) 513, 320 U.S. 735; *Loughborough v. Blake*, 5 Wheat. 317; *Mason v. Paradise*, 326 U.S. 536.

**Land Value Taxation in Great Britain:** Parliamentary Survey, 1906—1951. By A. W. Madsen. 1s.

**Our Daily Bread.** By Viggo Starcke. 6d.

**When Australia was Colonised:** Lessons from Early Land Settlements. By Frank Dupuis. 1s.

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