

ON THE DOLE

The *Daily Herald* (19th June) had a striking special article by Mr Francis Williams, its Financial Editor.

There has, he says, never in history been a Government so blatantly ready to use the money of the State to the advantage and profit of powerful vested interests.

The business of subsidizing industrial vested interests has been done cleverly. Many of the subsidies given do not appear as a direct charge on the Budget; for several of them complete figures are difficult to obtain.

It will come as a surprise to most people to realize that this Government, which is so anxious to keep down expenditure on the social services and which cannot find adequate sums for slum clearance, is handing out to landlords and farmers something like £52,000,000 a year.

That money is distributed in the form of relief under the De-rating Acts, which alone represents a gift at least of £12,000,000 a year to these interests, in the beet sugar subsidy, the cattle subsidy, the guaranteed milk prices, the wheat deficiency payments and in other ways.

The beet subsidy alone is calculated to have put into the pockets of the various agricultural and factory interests no less than £45,000,000.

Moreover, the subsidy, even under the new scheme merging the sugar beet companies, is to continue indefinitely, and will take, it is estimated, about £2,940,000 during 1936.

Cattle dealers are getting about £3,000,000 a year as a result of the beef subsidy, milk grants total close upon another £2,000,000 a year, and wheat deficiency payments amounted in the last financial year to some £6,750,000. This last represents a payment to cover the difference between the average price received by the grower and the guaranteed price fixed under the Wheat Act, and it is borne directly by the consumer, and particularly by the poorer sections of the community.

In addition to subsidies, the big agricultural interests have, according to estimates made by Dr Venn, the Cambridge scientist, benefited by between £15,000,000 and £17,000,000 a year by a rise in prices for their goods brought about by the Government's policy of restricting imports from abroad.

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We would only add that Mr Williams fails to point out how large a proportion of most of these subsidies finds its way sooner or later into the pockets of the landed interest.

CAST DOWN YOUR BUCKET

The presence of population with its demand for land must necessarily give value to the land. What could be more natural than to recognize this value as belonging to all, as being the scientific source of revenue for the group as a whole? The increasing tax load on industry is as unnecessary as it is burdensome. You Congressmen and tax commissioners who are burning the midnight oil trying to find new products or services to tax—cast down your bucket where you are! There is no need to look further than to the ground beneath your feet. If the services of government have created a value there, take it to pay for those services. Keep in mind that this is a tax on land according to its value, not its area. If the value isn't there, there will be nothing to take; if it is, the owner can afford to give it. This is true taxation according to ability to pay.—*Tax Facts*, Los Angeles.

BULGARIA

Mr B. Guduleff writes from Sofia :—

I have pleasure in sending you specimens of the new pamphlet *The Fight Against Poverty* which our friend Yord. Kovatcheff has written. It is an edition of 4,000 copies and already the sale has been very gratifying. It is a large edition for our country, as pamphlets of any kind are seldom printed here in larger quantities than 2,000. We contemplate publishing a series of pamphlets, both original (by Bulgarian writers) and translations, and the first of the latter will be Henry George's *Crime of Poverty*. An important new adherent of the movement is Mr St. Stefanoff, one of the former leaders of the Bulgarian Agricultural Party. After reading *Progress and Poverty* for the first time, he was deeply impressed by its clarity of thought and saw in it the solution of our grave economic and social problems. He procured and read all the other works by Henry George that have been published in Bulgarian, also the French work *La Rente Foncière* (Economic Rent) by V. Precy. He is now engaged in special research with a view to drafting a Bill providing for the Taxation of Land Values in our country.

"FREEDOM FOR MOTHERS"

BY JOHN O'KELLY SMITH

Shows what the State owes mothers, and presents a definite, practical plan for paying the debt.

The "Ottawa Citizen," Canada, says :

"The problems of this time, or of any past or future time, manifest themselves in the relations of mother and child to each other and to society in general. But such problems are so tremendous in the study they call for and in the organization needed for their right solution that the would-be reformer usually is content to confine his work for the improvement of human conditions to one phase of the subject. But the author of this book faces this whole complexity of problems and makes his definite proposal for reform.

"The Author's plan is 'a provision by the State to give all mothers equally an income for life.' Nor will he allow such considerations as have ruled in making the mothers' pension laws of many States of the American Union to modify his plan, for he says, 'My understanding of the subject does not recognize that the length of the child's life or the size of the family has anything to do with this recompense.'

"Of course, he faces at once the question that all subsidy proposers must face—where is the money to come from? Evidently he was convinced of the soundness of his plan before he had found an answer to the financial problem involved. He is satisfied that a complete answer is found in the single tax as proposed by Henry George. Undoubtedly Henry George believed not only that a tax on the one item of land values would yield ample income for all the proper purposes of government, and also that a single tax so applied as to absorb the entire current value of land would automatically open opportunities for all workers and would raise wages in proportion with the increase of wealth in the community.

"It is not shown in the present book that George proposed a government pension for all mothers. But it is shown that the Single Tax was put forward as a cure of economic ills, and certainly the economic problem of mother and child is one that no Utopian system may leave unsolved.

"*Freedom for Mothers* is an original book and well worth reading."—ED. RUTHVEN.

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