

NO MORE EXPLOITATION BY LANDLORDS

Declaration by Mr Philip Snowden

"Whether taxation is a burden on industry," writes Mr Snowden in his new pamphlet expounding Labour's Financial Policy,* "depends upon the way the taxation is raised, and upon the purposes to which the revenue is devoted. A Chancellor of the Exchequer in levying taxes must always look as to the probable effect upon industry. It is from industry alone that wealth is derived, and it would be suicidal to impair the productive power of the nation. Mr Churchill's new taxes have all had the effect of imposing additional burdens on trade. His petrol tax, for instance, is a tax on production. The appropriation by the landowners of the social value of land is a very heavy burden on industry."

LAND VALUE TAXATION

Mr Snowden re-affirms his pledge to tax land values in these words:—

"NO MORE EXPLOITATION BY LANDLORDS.—The Labour Party would certainly put an end to the scandal of the social increment of Land Values going into the pockets of the landowners. It is amazing that the public should have so long tolerated this robbery of the community.

"Land Values are rising all over the country owing to the development of motor transport and the overflow of the population into what have been rural areas. Land which recently had a purely agricultural value becomes 'eligible land for building purposes,' and its market rises ten, fifty or a hundred times.

"The landowner has done nothing to create this increased value. When the land is needed for building purposes the community have to spend huge sums of money from the rates in making roads, drainage, building schools, and providing all the necessaries and amenities of urban life.

"We have no definite figures of the economic value of the land of this country, but if we base an estimate on the comparison of foreign countries where there is a valuation of the land, we should arrive, on a very modest estimate, at the figure of £5,000 millions as the capital value of the land of this country.

"A Budget tax of 3d. in the pound on that capital value would bring in a revenue of over £60 millions a year, which alone would enable a Labour Government to do a good deal in the way of reducing indirect taxation and financing social reforms."

FREE TRADE

Referring to the increases of indirect taxation which have been imposed since 1924 by Mr Churchill, Mr Snowden writes:—

"No Chancellor of the Exchequer has imposed so many new taxes for about a century. People's memories about such things are short, so I will enumerate some of Mr Churchill's achievements in this sphere.

"He has put heavy duties on silk and artificial silk, on lace and cotton embroidery, on buttons, on gloves, on gas mantles, matches, pottery, cutlery and knives and sharp tools, on wrapping and toilet paper, kitchen and cooking utensils, cars and motor cycles and tyres, films, clocks and watches and musical instruments, hops, tobacco and bets, and upon the component parts of scientific and optical instruments, and last of all on

* *Wealth or Commonwealth*. Published price 1d. (by post 1½d.), by the Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1.

petrol, which is used not only for 'luxury' cars, but for public vehicles and for commercial purposes. He tried to tax paraffin oil, but the outcry compelled him to abandon the tax. In addition to the above list of new or increased duties there are the duties on sugar and tea and dried fruits and cocoa and coffee, which amount to about £25 millions a year.

"The declared purpose of the Labour Party is to abolish all taxes such as these as soon as possible.

"It may take more than one Labour Budget to undo all the mischief Mr Churchill has wrought; but a Labour Government, backed by a Parliamentary majority, will set to work to restore our national finances and to establish a fair and just system of national taxation."

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

Ask One or More at Every Meeting

(General Election Leaflet G.E. 37, issued by the United Committee.)

1. If elected will you press for including in the next Budget a uniform national tax on the value of all land apart from improvements?
2. Will you support Local Rating Authorities in their demand that local taxation be levied on the value of land whether used or not, so to obtain the local revenues and take rates off houses and other buildings and improvements?
3. Do you agree that the land belongs to the people and that land value should go to the community as the just and proper source of public revenues for both national and local purposes?
4. Do you support land value taxation, and the removal of tax burdens on the products of labour as a means to deal effectively with housing and unemployment?
5. Are you in favour of repealing at once the protective tariffs and the duties on all articles of food?
6. Do you agree that the ultimate effect of subsidies from the Treasury to reduce local rates is to benefit landlords by raising the rent and the monopoly price of land?
7. Would you pay the cost of road building and upkeep out of a tax on land values so to get rid of the petrol duty and other taxes on transport?
8. Do you agree that the Government's De-rating Scheme is to be condemned because it fails to rate or tax land values and because its intended relief to farmers and manufacturers at the public expense will ultimately go into the pockets of landowners?
9. Are you in favour of a true measure of De-rating which will exempt all buildings and improvements while securing to the nation and the local authorities their proper revenue by taxing and rating the value of land?
10. Will you, if elected, join the Land Values Group in the House of Commons and take active part in its work?

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