

irrevocably in ours." This is, unfortunately, all too true. The tentacles of the government octopus reach out in all directions and embrace many functions that are not strictly within its sphere, and, in so doing, encroaches upon the liberty of the individual.

Local authorities follow central government in developing "an expansionist urge." Mr. Dunstan lists many examples, including municipal entertainments (such as an art festival budgeted to lose £25,000 at Camden, London, "within a bus ride of every form of art that this country possesses" as someone hastened to point out). There are municipal "estate agencies," catering establishments, laundry schemes, and even ideas of going in for municipal funerals and filling stations.

The more the state takes on enterprises that used to be privately financed, says Mr. Dunstan, the greater will be the need to conscript the earnings of ordinary citizens to pay for it all. People will have less choice of how to spend their own incomes. He advocates that two tests should be applied to anything the state does or proposes to do. Is it desirable for national security that it should be done by the state? Is it necessary for the state to do it in order to fill a social need which is not being met?

Most people will agree; if intrusion into the lives of citizens spreads much more, there will be precious little freedom left for anyone.

## Why the Peasants Prefer the Viet Cong to the Saigon Government

JOHN T.  
WALKER  
IN  
I. F. STONE'S  
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"TO THE TILLERS belongs the soil." "Destroy the feudal land barons." "Food grown by the people's sweat belongs to the people, not to the capitalist landlord."

Throughout the underdeveloped lands of the world, Communists make powerful use of these and similar slogans in bidding for the popular support vital to any Vietnam-style insurgency.

The figures are subject to challenge, but the Viet Cong claims to have seized nearly 2.3 million acres from prosperous landlords and to have turned them over to the peasants. The power of the slogans is perhaps as great as the "No taxation without representation" that helped turn American colonialists into armed insurgents. One American source argues that the effect of the Viet Cong land reform has been more dramatic and meaningful than "One thousand Boston Tea Parties."

Farmers make up 80 per cent. of Vietnam's population and without their support no meaningful victory is possible. Despite Saigon claims of action in land reform, U.S. officials cite figures to indicate that Premier Ky has turned over only about 20,000 new acres during his

nearly two years in office. The evidence is that little has been done about land reform since Diem fell in 1963 . . .

"What has never been, but must now be, recognised by the Vietnamese Government is that only a real revolution in the countryside can bring victory over the Communists," an American source has commented. Maj. Gen. Thang, head of the embattled pacification program, echoed this and said: "It is no good to try to tell the people that the Communists are bad. We must show them we can do more for them and give them a better life."

Ky is given good marks for intentions by some Americans. They point out that he must battle centuries-old mandarin-style economic exploitation in the countryside. The members of this society are powerful men and pay money in the right places to ensure that reforms don't threaten their way of life. These elements were strong enough to emasculate efforts to write tough land reform legislation into Vietnam's new Constitution . . .

The Communists do not charge for the land, as the Government does, but they tax it heavily to keep their war machine in operation. The Communists in the main do not issue permanent titles. Theirs run for the duration of the war. One implied threat is that the land will be formed into collectives on the North Vietnamese pattern, with state ownership, after the war . . .

Interviews with peasants in an area where the Government recently distributed a batch of titles showed that many feel that land reform is only for those with money or power. Most said they knew of no one who had actually received land. They were certain neither they nor their sons would ever get any . . .

Billions of U.S. aid dollars since 1954 have altered little for the peasants. Half of the seven million acres of farm land are worked by tenants.

## Architects Endorse Land-Value Taxation

*Architectural & Engineering News*

ONLY LAND SPECULATORS benefit from the property tax system in Los Angeles, architects of the area claim. According to the Southern California Chapter AIA, the present tax system has fostered urban sprawl and helped spread slum housing.

As an alternative, the architects urged the city council's Revenue and Taxation Committees to adopt a site tax that would tax land but not improvements. The result would be reduced taxes on homes and higher taxes on unimproved land held for speculation.

Citing as precedents, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and western Canada, chapter president Edward A. Killingworth told the council that "site-value taxation would exert a constant pressure to develop land for its highest and best use."