

IT'S TONGUE in cheek week, folks, with a few cases of what's good for me isn't good for you.

We start with a soft shoe shuffle from the British Footwear Manufacturers Association, which has been lobbying MPs recently. The shoe makers are upset about the dastardly tactics of Third World countries which, as members of UNCTAD, were able to get 14 million pairs of shoes into the UK in 1972 - duty free. These countries may be economically under-developed, but it seems that the Federation is able to single out certain of them as having developed shoe industries. Which means that they aren't wielding their primitive tools in grass huts.

And the British shoe manufacturers don't like the competition. It's quite unfair, don't you see, old boy? The UK shoe makers want the EEC system operated, under which a quota system imposes ceilings on duty-free imports. But when it comes to exporting shoes to Japan, it seems that the proverbial shoe is on the other foot. The shoe makers want the Government to persuade the inscrutable Japanese to remove their quota barrier on UK shoes!

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EEC farm ministers acted to prevent their unscrupulous sugar producers from making "speculative profits" by exporting on to the world market via the UK. It's not that EEC producers couldn't grow enough for domestic needs; we don't know what the current stockpile is yet, but Agricultural Minister Joseph Godber forecasts a surplus of 1.2m tons from the forthcoming crop. It's just that if they don't want it, the others still can't have it.

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LAND VALUES slump when a government department builds a motorway at the bottom of the garden or an airport in the neighbouring field.

Cars zoom by day and night, planes roar overhead, and you have to lump it and like it. The nuisance created by the use of these public facilities is something for which the user does not pay and for which the

Thin end of the wedge

— BY FRED
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sufferer receives no compensation.

Justice, the British Section of the International Commission of Jurists, has published its proposals on how to deal with the problem. They make curious reading.

Justice wants "a greater justice" than the *ad hoc* measures which make compensation possible to those whose land values are depreciated (e.g., British Airport Authority payments to protect houses from noise and vibration under the Airports Authority Act 1965).

States their report: "We believe it to be a sad commentary on the present law that an owner of land in an area through which a motorway is to be constructed should prefer that the motorway takes the whole of his property rather than go near to it."

Compensation, therefore, should not be limited to damage arising from the construction of the works, but should include damage caused by their subsequent use.

The report recommends a statutory listing of public works and activities as actionable nuisances which attract compensation. The list would include "highways, airports, railways and hovertracks, sewage works, power stations, penal institutions and possibly institutions for people of unsound mind."

A Personal Column

BUT NOWHERE in the report do we find the suggestion that landowners should pay the comm-

unity for the rise in land values which result from public expenditure.

If my country cottage was next to a motorway, I wouldn't be able to sell it; but I would watch with envy as my neighbours' land values rose rapidly, now that they were able to tap a new market at the end of the motorway.

Thanks to the sewage works, main drainage makes the farmer's land convertible from cow grazing to high-density house building.

The airport forces me to live with the roar of jumbo jets, but it brings



with it a fabulous growth in land prices as new homes, industrial sites and service sector companies spring up in the area.

Nowhere in their report do the august members of Justice suggest that justice to the wider community would be served by compensation from the individual landowner who has benefited from the expenditure of money raised out of taxes on the pay-packets of the miner or farm worker or dustman.

But then, it seems to me that the people who drafted and endorsed the proposals are not interested in justice (which implies a responsibility to take everyone into account), only in putting a little more money in the hands of landowners. For they fail to recommend a system of cost-benefit analysis which, if one were instituted, would indeed produce uncomfortable results.

Compensation, yes. But let's not limit it to a handful of allegedly aggrieved people.

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Amin's Africanisation programme is working splendidly: ten hospitals are now reported closed down following the departure of the Asians. But while the peasant suffers, breathe freely - it's reliably believed that the President's own medical needs are not being neglected.

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