

can visitors go sight-seeing; they do not remain in their hotels for their meals," he said. "Yet the restaurants they go to are to receive no financial help, while the hotel restaurants will. It is scandalous that restaurants, which are probably responsible for more dollars than the hotels, are to be excluded from the scheme."

Latifundia in South Africa

The ownership of land in South Africa is concentrating in fewer and fewer hands. The dangers of this development are remarked in an outspoken article by the Rev. T. C. de Villiers, of Ottosdal, in the December issue of *Die Kerkbode*, organ of the largest Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. Big landowners who buy up farms they do not require and keep out people who need the land are condemned. There are enormous stretches of land owned by a single person from which the man of smaller resources who longs for a bit of land to work are excluded. . . . In the Transvaal 34 per cent. of farm occupiers are no longer owners and in the Union the tenancy amounts to 36 per cent. The census shows that in the Transvaal the number of owners who own between 10,000 and 20,000 acres is 175; the corresponding number over the whole Union is 2,420. Those who own more than 20,000 acres each is 41 in the Transvaal and 866 in the Union. . . . From the Bible, Dr. de Villiers deduces: "You may own as much land as you can use to the advantage of your fellow man; but if you use it selfishly for yourself alone, you are acting against the will of God. If you own land you do not need and keep your fellow man out of it, thus forcing him directly or indirectly into poverty, you are doing wrong." Dr. de Villiers adds that whether to compel big landowners by taxation or legislation to let others have their surplus is a question for legislators, but it is for the Church to indicate clearly the spiritual dangers and obligations.

A leading article in the *Johannesburg Star*, December 15, supports the stand taken by the country clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church as they watch wealthy farmers continually adding to their broad acres. One result of the wool boom has been to concentrate an ever-growing proportion of the Karoo into the hands of a few wealthy owners. "This kind of process," the paper says, "has happened elsewhere long ago. The Romans tried in vain to stop it in Italy. They gave it the name of *latifundia* which was revived in England to describe the same change in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In both countries it had profound social and economic consequences, some deplorable, as Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* bears touching witness."

Recognition of a False Lead

The first number of the non-political magazine *The Middle Road* (January, 1951), an independent journal with strong Liberal sympathies, carries an amusing and penetrating article by Harold Goodwin, formerly Liberal Party Press Officer. The burden of his argument in "Did Beveridge set us barking up the wrong tree?" is that instead of Lord Beveridge joining the Liberal Party, in effect the Party joined Beveridge. In accepting his Social Security Plan Liberals committed themselves to espousing State intervention.

During the first world war, Mr. Goodwin writes, we dreamed of a land fit for heroes; in the second war it was necessary to produce blue-prints for post-war Britain. The plan for a dream-world objective of Social Security,

commissioned by a Socialist Minister of the Coalition Government, provided a morale-raising tonic and propaganda stunt for home and abroad. During the 1945 General Election, Socialists claimed responsibility for its inception, while a specially created group of Young Tories joined the Conservative Party's support for the Plan. Britain was never persuaded of the wisdom of "planning." Blunted by years of controls introduced for the prosecution of the war, Liberals spent their critical faculties on appraising one plan against another instead of debating the desirability of the "planning" concept. Every Party explicitly embraced the loathsome, utterly un-Liberal assumption that men should be mere units in a State game of planning society.

Mr. Goodwin urges Liberals to think again about Beveridge-ism for it revels in State intervention which they must at all times regard with suspicion. It is a weapon, he says, which must sometimes be used but only with caution, never with gay abandon.

Those with an Obsession

A sentence in a brief review of "Discussion Method" (published by the Bureau of Current Affairs) in *The Liberal News* caught our eye. "It throws out hints on how to handle the too talkative, the silent, the incoherent, the slow-thinking, and the 'obsessional' (among whom it classes the Land Taxers)." The deduction to be made from this classification that Georgeists are good conversationalists, quick-witted and capable of well expressed consecutive thinking appealed to us. Believing that to be forewarned is to be forearmed and desiring to see ourselves as others see us, we obtained a copy of the book reviewed. Alas, we read that the "obsessionalist" frequently to be found in discussion groups tends to be talkative and awkward. If he doesn't preach Land Tax—which we take to mean Land Value Taxation—he goes in for Marxism or Gloom. However, tedious though he may be, he is often useful in provoking and enlivening the other members of the group. He should be treated with tolerant good humour, and a private word with him may well suffice to hold him in check!

We recognise that this criticism is not without some foundation and rejoice that we are sufficiently well known to deserve mention though to lump us together with Marxists and apostles of Gloom seems needlessly harsh. Where so many are apathetic and devoid of any ideas on Social and economic matters we single-minded Single Taxers are well above the average. We are not ashamed of our obsession with justice and the means whereby it may be secured. If the derisive label "obsessionalist" sticks we shall not be surprised if it may yet be as respected as are those that were intended to disparage "The Quakers" and the "Old Contemptibles."

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