

# LAND & LIBERTY

Editor

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TWO SHILLINGS

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## World of Unrest

THE students' revolts in many countries, the widespread disruption in France sparked off by students and taken up by the unions, the general dissatisfaction of peoples with their so-called democratic governments, are all symptoms of a general disease.

In all the sciences, except one, man has learned to co-operate with natural laws, and the results have been unprecedented advance. In the social sciences, however, man has sought to make his own laws. That there are such things as moral laws may be in dispute, but the lip service paid to them in almost every speech on social reform clearly shows the awareness of moral principles as clearly as it reveals the lack of will and wisdom to implement them.

The desire for compromise, the fear of change, the pressures of sectional interests and the love of power, continue to corrupt the science of political economy. Wrong measures are taken and persisted in; when repercussions disturb the *status quo*, new measures are devised. Statute after statute is heaped on to our already overburdened system of law and when these fail to achieve their purpose yet other laws are promulgated.

Obsessed with and bedevilled by the problems of their own creation, governments resort to more regimentation, as though sheer obstinacy and defiance itself could prevail against natural forces.

The way out of the malaise in which the world is living lies not in political and economic gimmicks, nor in all-powerful state paternalistic or oppressive measures, but in a return to first principles.

The "Prophet of San Francisco" was a prophet indeed when he warned of the consequences of failure to administer justice and equal rights:

"Where there is anything like an equal distribution of wealth the more democratic the government the better it will be; but when there is a gross inequality in the distribution of wealth, the more democratic the government the worse it will be, for while rotten democracy may not in itself be worse than rotten autocracy, its effects upon national character will be worse . . .

"Forms are nothing when substance has gone, and the forms of popular government are those from which the substance of freedom may most easily go. Extremes meet and a government of universal suffrage and theoretical equality may, under conditions which impel the change, most readily become a despotism. For there despotism advances in the name and with the might of the people. The single source of power once secured, everything is secured. There is no unfranchised class to whom appeal may be made, no privileged orders who in defending their own rights may defend those of all. No bulwark remains to stay the flood, no eminence to rise above it . . .

"If we trace out the laws that govern human life in society, we find that in the largest as in the smallest community they are the same. We find that what seemed at first sight like divergencies and exceptions are but manifestations of the same principles. And we find that everywhere we can trace the social law, it runs into and conforms with the moral law; that in the life of a community, justice infallibly brings its reward and injustice its punishment."

To where should we look for the way out? We need first to remind ourselves that the roots of our very existence are in the land, and that the land tenure system of any country ultimately determines the economic condition of its people. This is no over-simplification of the problem; it is a fact attested to not only by history but by the world around us today. Particularly is it observable in those predominantly agricultural countries where the landless, and consequently poverty-stricken populations are driven to communism because no other way out is offered.

We need also to remind ourselves that the division of labour, the advance of industrialisation and the building of tower blocks and space ships in no way weakens our dependence on land. Those whose living depends upon the indirect application of their labour to land are no less

#### PROGRESS MEANS POVERTY

**D**ESPITE years of national progress, the plight of the poor is worsening. Jobs are on the decline as a result of technological change, schools North and South are proving themselves more and more inadequate. Medical care is virtually out of reach of millions of black and white poor. In Mississippi, children are actually starving, while large land owners have placed their land in the soil bank and receive millions of dollars annually not to plant food and cotton.

—Peace News, April 19

#### London Bridge Down —Land Prices Up

**L**ONDON BRIDGE, sold for £1,025,000 to the American McCulloch Corporation for reconstruction in Lake Havasu City, is expected to make at least a 600 per cent profit.

Sales of land in the Arizona resort have more than doubled—from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 a week—since the news of the purchase.

—Morning Star, May 11

victims of the private appropriation of its rent than are the peasants of Sicily or India.

The foundation of injustice begins with land monopoly. The setting up of landed and landless classes provides the foundation for privilege in other forms, extending into the fields of industry and Press and government.

Restrictions on trade and on industry and subsidies and grants to the politically powerful follow inevitably. The non-privileged hit back by banding together in unions and in turn seek and secure their own privileges to the detriment of the community as a whole. Class is set against class and man against man. Pressure groups seek only their own advancement, regardless of the consequences to others, and their philosophy of "look after No. 1 and never mind the rest" is regarded as an attitude of sheer self-defence.

This is all history, but from history we can learn if only we will. "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." We must not count ourselves among them.

#### EXTENT OF INFLATION

**A**T THE END of 1967 personally owned funds in Britain on deposit in banks, in National Savings, with building societies and local authorities, etc., amounted to £22,034 million or £400 per head of population.

At the end of 1964 the figure was only £17,725 million or £328 per head of a smaller population.

These figures are taken from the April issue of *Financial Statistics*, a monthly publication of the Central Statistical Office.

Thus monetary demand was increased by £4,309 million or 24 per cent over this three year period, while gross domestic product (measured at constant prices) rose only 5.3 per cent.

And people still argue about the cause of inflation! They need ask themselves only one question: Who is in charge of the nation's money supply?

#### WELFARE STATE

**A** MAN who had a turnover of £29,000 in a year as an exhibition decorator ran his business from his council flat in Parliament Hill. He was recently fined £25—for failing to keep proper books of account.