

"Our Bourbons" in England

MAYBE THE BRITISH are more civilized than we are; there is a presumption in favor of that view in the difference between their sane attitude toward the war, as expressed in their press and the sophomoric chauvinism which characterizes some of our journalism.

They have been in a life-and-death struggle for over two years, yet never have they had their eyes off the home front. They are thinking of personal liberties, of their traditional individualism, of the post-war reconstruction, even though their main attention is perforce on the battlefield.

British reactionaries, of course, are scheming to retain or increase their position of power as a result of the war, but they do not have the field to themselves by any means, and they are being watched and shown up unmercifully by the guardians of British freedoms. It is a lesson America might well use in the coming years.

This thought comes to mind as we read the editorial headed "Our Bourbons" in *Land and Liberty*.* It starts:

"The watchdogs of landlordism were well on the prowl in the debates that took place in the House of Commons on the 9th and 14th of October. The bill is one of the successive measures to provide financial aid to agriculture at the public expense. (AAA?) It was naturally welcomed from the landlord side as the way to maintain an artificially high level of rents and land prices. In effect, these grants and loans enrich those who hold the land and it is they who in the end pocket the increased rents and land prices."

The provisions of this Agricultural Bill prove that economic education is as deficient on the other side of the Atlantic as it is here and indicates a similar trend toward socialism for the benefit of the landowners: continuation of a lime subsidy for fertilizing purposes and an increase in grants for drainage.

The British speculators are as smart as our own, and the buying of land thus subsidized is accelerated by the fear of inflation. The real estate columns of the newspapers—which, by the way, in their news and editorial pages rail against land speculation—

are full of offers of land with all the attractions explained.

Such stuff is not news to Americans. But it is heartening to see our contemporaries lash out at the iniquitous system in such terms as these:

"It is terrible to contemplate what is happening today in the creation of those new vested interests on top of the old and the crushing power being placed in their hands to hold all industry at ransom—military war to be succeeded by economic war, the country barricaded and blockaded by the high cost which its own people will have to pay for access to its own natural resources—an enemy in our midst, land monopoly, which will have to be fought as vigorously and beaten off as any that has threatened these shores with fire and destruction."

Nor does "Our Bourbons" spare the government, and least of all the Tory backers of the bill. It is a refreshing bit of journalistic courage, and we hope to emulate it in the trying days ahead of us.

*We commend this publication to our readers. Subscription price, \$75 per year. Agents: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 32 East 29th Street, New York.

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