



Road building is often held up through inability to acquire the necessary land for new highways, according to headlines in *The Advocate* in Barbados, West Indies. An old two-lane winding coach road extends the length of the island, 21 miles, and because of heavy traffic the taxi fare is often as much as \$28 from the airport to the northern tip.

The Barbados government decided that valuation of land must be done professionally, and a nine months course started on January 22nd, taught by John M. Copes, United Nations Adviser On Land Valuation and Wilfred W. Chang, Commissioner of Valuation in Jamaica, on loan through the U.N. Mr. Copes specializes in city valuation and Mr. Chang in rural valuing.

"Land looms large as a factor of production upon which capital has been invested," Mr. Copes said at the opening session, and the Prime Minister, Errol Barrow, said owners would have a right to appeal, and the government must look for a valuation section to advise them on properties where owners are reluctant to sell at a reasonable price. If we have a taxing and valuation system which discourages people from improvements and progress it is bad for the country, he said.

Tourism has developed on the west and south coasts, with soaring land values, as a result of the mild, soft climate. *The Advocate* says this must be the concern of the government, both from the view of taxation and "pricing" the citizen out of the opportunity to acquire homes in the desirable sections.

It is hoped professional valuation of

spiralling land values will result in the best locations paying a fair and rising share of the burden of public services. Professional schools for valuers are important to the future of Barbados, but they are even more needed in the U.S.A.

As Perry Prentice observed in Barbados last year, the present system of taxing improvements does harness the profit motive in reverse. By taxing location values and exempting improvements the society would use the profit motive to encourage new progressive features for the island in the sun.

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[Mr. Chang, who was present at a Lincoln Foundation meeting in Hartford, thought his students would like to know more about the principles of property taxation. He therefore invited Mr. Greene to address the class. He cheerfully accepted and referred them to a symposium published by the University of Wisconsin on taxation, resources and economic development. At the completion of this, the first school of its kind in Barbados and well publicized in the island press, the students, many of whom are government employees, plan to take correspondence courses from the HGS in New York.]