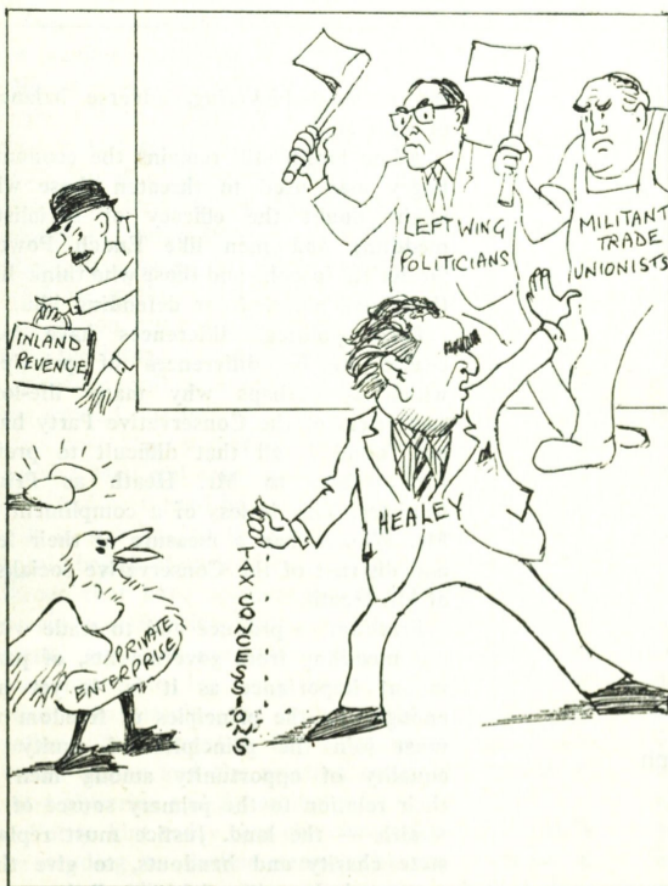


LAND & LIBERTY

JANUARY & FEBRUARY, 1975



*Britain Meddling Through
Land-value Rating in South Africa
A Case for "Monetary Correction"?
Land Nationalisation No Answer
Origins of Land-use Problems
Menace or Promise?*

A Plague of Meddlers

THE Meddlers had a busy year in 1974. They continued to meddle with the currency, debasing our once proud pound sterling. They meddled with housing and virtually put an end to the market for rented accommodation. They meddled with the markets in merchandise and in money and created uncertainty and frustration by meddling with taxation and dividends. The list is endless.

And what are we promised for 1975? More meddling with land use, with prices and incomes, with the people's rights not to join a trade union, with the freedom of the press and with national and international trade generally.

We are being groomed for placid acceptance of membership of a Community which will meddle with almost every facet of our daily lives and place us at the mercy of powerful political overlords and sectional interests.

Voices from a variety of sources have been raised in protest at much of this government meddling; for the meddling has been of the wrong kind, or there has been too much of it or too little; it has been too early or too late. Above all, others — particularly the Opposition in Parliament at the time — could have done the meddling far better.

Alas there have been too few voices calling for government to get out of industry, trade and finance and out of the economy at large.

But of course this would never do, for the alternative to meddling is the dreaded *laissez faire* which brings unemployment, homelessness, rising prices, bankruptcies,

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international bickering, adverse balances of trade etc.!

Adam Smith still remains the economic bogey man used to threaten those who might doubt the efficacy of socialistic meddling and men like Enoch Powell, Sir Keith Joseph, and those who think like them, are pilloried for defending him.

Party political differences have long ceased to be differences of principle, which is perhaps why many life-long supporters of the Conservative Party have not found it all that difficult to prefer Mr. Wilson to Mr. Heath as Prime Minister. This is less of a compliment to Mr. Wilson than a measure of their fear and distrust of the Conservative socialism of Mr. Heath.

Freedom to produce and to trade without meddling from governments, of paramount importance as it is, is yet not enough. To the principles of freedom we must join the principles of equity — equality of opportunity among men in their relation to the primary source of all wealth — the land. Justice must replace state charity and handouts, to give that corrupted phrase "social justice" the meaning it should rightly have.

Unprincipled is not too strong a word — indeed it is semantically accurate — to describe the political and economic meddling that has increased over the years and now threatens to overwhelm us, as desperation drives politicians to ever more excesses in their "management" of the economy. And ironically, this meddling has created problems far more complicated and interlocking and far more intractable than those it professed to solve.