

opened up the country. Johannesburg is sometimes thought of as being a second edition of Wigan. It is nothing of the sort. It is like a gigantic sea of trees from end to end. They have an intelligent scheme, and they have the revenue. But do not let us think it is impossible to get it here too. Let us have the valuation now.

MR BOSSOM (Maidstone—Conservative): As to the question of the land, we have to face the fact that ultimately the Government will have to purchase and be the owners of large areas of land. When they do that I hope they will do a rather novel thing. I hope that they will lay it out and then turn it back to private ownership, taking the profit that will thereby accrue when it goes back into private ownership, and when that land is resold again, if that should occur, the Government will then take any further profit that accrues in the form of a tax. Do not let us take away entirely individual interest in property. I live on a piece of Crown property, and I cannot even put a bush in my garden without some bureaucrat saying whether I shall or shall not.

THE MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (MR ARTHUR GREENWOOD—Labour): The House has shown its great interest in this problem of planning. Planning is a word which may become a shibboleth. By planning I mean the pooling of our knowledge and experience

so as to concert measures which will ensure that the limited land of our small islands is used to the best in the national interest, and that our other national resources are conserved and maintained for the public advantage. I mean by planning the preservation of those beauties which, once gone, can never be restored. I mean by planning a proper relationship between industry and agriculture. These are enormous tasks which we have now to face.

At this stage I do not want to raise any controversial issues, but it is clear—and it has been so expressed by every speaker—that you cannot plan unless you have some solution to the land problem. I am not pretending to put forward an answer at this stage. I am only saying that a planned economy of the land means some form of control of land use. That matter is now under active consideration by the expert Committee which was set up by my Noble Friend Lord Reith under Mr Justice Uthwatt, to probe into the very complex questions which hitherto in our legislation we have not solved—questions of compensation and the difficulties which may arise from speculation in land values during the war. That seemed to me at the time to be a workmanlike way of beginning our consideration of this very large and difficult problem, and one hopes that the report will be received without undue delay. Indeed, I understand that the Committee has made very extensive progress with its investigations.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

I. Theory

The protective theory implies the opposition of national interests; that the gain of one people is the loss of others; that each must seek its own good by constant efforts to get advantage over others and to prevent others getting advantage over it. It makes of nations rivals instead of co-operators; it inculcates a warfare of restrictions and prohibitions and searchings and seizures, which differs in weapons, but not in spirit, from that warfare which sinks ships and burns cities.

That unscrupulous men, for their own private advantage, break laws intended for the general good proves nothing, but that no one really feels smuggling to be wrong proves a good deal. To make that a crime by statute which is no crime in morals is inevitably to destroy respect for law; to resort to oaths to prevent men from doing what they feel injures no one is to weaken the sanctity of oaths. Corruption, evasion and false swearing are inseparable from tariffs.

The only indirect taxes from which any considerable revenue can be obtained require large and expensive staffs of officials and the enforcement of vexatious and injurious regulations. So with the collection of indirect taxes upon imports. Land frontiers must be guarded and sea coasts watched; imports must be forbidden except at certain places and under regulations which are always vexatious and frequently entail wasteful delays and expenses. But in spite of prohibitions, restrictions, searchings, watchings and swearings, indirect taxes on commodities are largely evaded, sometimes by the bribery of officials and sometimes by the adoption of methods for eluding their vigilance, which, though costly in themselves, cost less than the taxes. All these costs, however, whether borne by the Government or by the first payers (or evaders) of the taxes, together with the increased charges due to increased prices, finally fall on consumers.

From "Protection or Free Trade," by Henry George.

II. Practice (On the Irish Border.)

What are described by worried Ulster and Eire police and customs officials as "reciprocal smuggling rackets" have now started along the Irish Border—on such a major scale that special measures are being taken by the authorities to stop the trafficking.

It is alleged that powerful smuggling combines are working on an organized system of ration "sabotage"

in both Eire and Northern Ireland, endeavouring to pit their smuggling skill against all the precautions of the Irish authorities.

"Fair exchange is no robbery" might well be their business slogan, for police investigations have revealed that huge quantities of sugar and other foodstuffs have been secretly "exported" illegally from Eire into Northern Ireland territory—in exchange for flour supplies transported "South of the Border" from Ulster.

Smuggling along the Fermanagh-Monaghan, Tyrone-Donegal and Londonderry-Donegal frontiers has become so acute that it has been found necessary to maintain a small-size "standing army" of police, special constabulary and preventive men in these three areas.

Smuggling ingenuity manifested itself in one Ulster-Eire district recently during the blackout hours when a large party tried to slip past the local patrols.

They were caught, but NOT red-handed, for they carried no smuggled goods at all—their feint had merely been to divert police attention from another part of the frontier, close by, where a few smugglers—laden with smuggled goods—got through successfully.

Customs men recently chased a smuggler—who was carrying a bag of flour—so hotly that he jumped across a river into Northern Ireland territory, first throwing the bag into the water. Attempting to follow suit, one officer fell into the water and had to be rescued by his colleagues. They seized the flour, however, and conveyed it to Clones!

From "Reynolds News," 2nd February.

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