

## M. P. Quotes Churchill on Economic Rent

### R. R. Stokes Attacks Land Monopoly Before House of Commons

In a speech made before the House of Commons on May 23, 1944, Mr. R. R. Stokes, M. P., (Ipswich) accused the government of side-stepping the whole question of what to do with land and land values. Many reports have been made—like the Uthwatt, Scott and Barlow Reports, but nothing has been done, claims Mr. Stokes.

"We have heard a great deal about full employment. What I want is not full employment, but full opportunity. The difference between full employment and full opportunity is the difference between freedom and slavery. To me the great obstruction to full opportunity is the land monopoly whereby the land owners are allowed to control and own the sources of wealth and the raw materials of the world free and unmolested, and to collect their full value for themselves. What is to be done about the land question?"

queried Mr. Stokes. He then quoted a remark made by Prime Minister Churchill in 1907: "Land monopoly is a perpetual monopoly, and it is the mother of all forms of monopoly."

"That is true," said Mr. Stokes. "It is all very well for people to smile and say 'What is the difference between land and everything else?' The great difference is this: Motor cars, houses, arm-chairs and the like are produced wealth. They are all brought about by the effort of man on raw materials. But who creates land values? Not the owner of the land, from his ownership. In so far as he is a worker he does contribute, but the value which attaches to land is created by the community as a whole, and nobody else. Why should not this value be collected for the people?"

Mr. Stokes then continued, again quoting Prime Minister Churchill:

"He, the landlord, renders no service to the community, he contributes nothing to the general welfare, he contributes nothing even to that from which his own enrichment is derived. It is monopoly which is the key note and, where monopoly prevails, the greater the injury to society the greater the reward of the monopoly will be. See how all this evil process strikes at every form of industrial activities. The municipality wishing for broader streets, better houses, more healthy, decent, scientifically planned towns is made to pay, and is made to pay in exact proportion, or to a very great extent in proportion, as it has exerted itself in the past to make improvements. The more it has improved the town the more it has increased the land values and the more it will have to pay for any land it may wish to acquire. It is not the individual I attack, it is the system. It is not the man who is bad, it is the law that is bad."