

# LAND & LIBERTY

MARCH & APRIL, 1975



*A Phoney Tax Reform  
Orwellian Free Enterprise  
Rates and the Layfield Committee  
A Nibble at the Housing Question  
Radicalism's Finest Hour  
Lesson of Languedoc*

## **Conservatives' Road to Serfdom?**

**T**HREE of the most important and damaging pieces of legislation to be introduced for many years are the Capital Transfer Tax (confiscation of the capital of both rich and poor) the Industry Bill (covert nationalisation) and the Community Land Bill (the nationalisation of all building land) - all now under various stages of discussion.

Taken alone these measures are frightening enough but when seen as the prime pieces fitting into the picture of a fully socialist Britain - more frightening still.

Many voices have been, and still are, being raised in protest at these latest moves towards state monopoly. But the protests fall on deaf ears. Conservatives cannot really object to this legislation, Labour argue, did they not themselves lay the foundations of the Industry Bill? And did they not themselves introduce a development gains tax? They did indeed. They really should not complain if Labour's socialism moves faster than Tory socialism.

Hard on the Tories? Perhaps on some, but not on most. Many Conservative members of Parliament have bowed to expediency, jettisoning their advocacy of the free market in favour of state control and direction of the economy for the sake of political power. Rather late in the day, many are regretting it - though not all for the same reason. Perhaps a greater danger to libertarian ideas, however, are those Tories who have become converted to socialism and have advocated and supported socialist measures from their own party.

Under the leadership of Edward Heath, Conservatives had little encouragement to

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stand up for libertarianism, non-government intervention and the principles of a free market economy.

Perhaps the most revealing of all the statements of belief made by Mr. Heath was that published in *The Daily Telegraph* the day before his resignation (February 3) as one of the series on "My Kind of Tory Party." In it he said:

"Harmony, I believe, is a fundamental Conservative word. This shifting role of ours means that we are the despair of naive analysts who demand a simple answer to the question, 'What do you stand for?' To that question the true Conservative does best to put his tongue in his cheek and say, 'That depends'".

Many expect things to be different under the new Tory leadership. Time will show.

Why have you gone all right wing? asked a correspondent recently. We haven't. Anyway we don't care for the horizontal and ambiguous scale of political value known as "right wing" "left wing" "moderate". We prefer to think in a different dimension.

Free enterprise and the market economy are not enough to make a whole political philosophy. But it is the essential framework upon which one can be built. Without it all is dark. Liberty in all its manifestations must be defended, for the problems of our time can be resolved only in a climate of liberty. As the land is the base from which all economic activities stem and are ultimately governed, so is liberty the base from which all social progress must proceed.

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