

LABOR PARTY AND LAND MONOPOLY.

Land monopoly has been the curse of Australia. Man can no more live without land than he can live without air; but the ownership of a great part of the best lands of Australia has, after a little over a century of the white man's occupation, drifted into the hands of a very few people.

The effects of these unnatural conditions have been widespread and disastrous. The growth of population has been retarded, the resources of the country undeveloped, the population forced into the great capital 'cities'. In not one case but many country towns in the most fertile districts have been literally strangled by the iron ring of land monopoly drawn tightly around them.

A country like ours wants many relatively small, flourishing towns, surrounded by living farms, orchards, and settlements, rather than a few huge, overgrown, congested cities and a deserted countryside. But while one or two men own all the land round about our country towns such a policy is in most cases, impossible.

The Labor Party is against Land Monopoly, for Land Monopoly means that the few are able to block the opportunities which should be open to all. This is one of the greatest countries on earth, its resources are the richest and most varied, but in order to develop them there must be access to land. Therefore, when the best lands are held by "a few, 'development of our resources is impossible. The industrial and general -progress of the nation is reduced almost to a standstill.

The facts show that there never was a more all-round successful piece of practical legislation in our history. Never was a great-problem more boldly, yet- sanely, attacked. Never have the prophecies of our opponents been so completely falsified.

The Fusion Party said that the effect, of the tax would be to absolutely ruin land-, holders and make land a drug in the market. Time has most effectively disproved this. Land has not become a drug on the market; it was never more sought after. What the Federal Land Tax has done is to steady the price of land, which, with the greatly increased demand for land consequent upon the general prosperity and the increase of immigration (three times as many people have come here during the Labor regime than in the twenty years previously), would have be come too dear for the average man to buy. The tax has stimulated transactions In land. Land sales were never so numerous. Bona-fide land settlement never progressed so rapidly.

WHAT THE LAND TAX HAS DONE.

In every State the Progressive Land Tax has caused great estates to be cut up. Further aggregation has been checked, and the tax will continue to act in this direction. Think what this blow at Land Monopoly means. Remember that the Land Tax has not only placed Australians on land, where they can get a decent living, but has been the means of putting 1,134,718 more acres under cultivation, and has attracted and is attracting an ever increasing number of the right kind of immigrants who desire to settle on the land and develop its resources.

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