

PROSERPINE Guardian

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District Inspector: R. E. HORNE. PROSERPINE AGENT: G. W. JUPP

RUSSIA TO-DAY

—FREEDOM OF THE BROWN—

—VISITING OFFICER'S VIEWS.

"It is amusing to hear street corner and domain orators in Australia espousing the communistic cause, about which their knowledge is evidently gained from books," declared an officer on board an overseas ship, reports the Brisbane "Telegraph".

"I have recently returned from Russia," he said, "and there saw with my own eyes just how the people live there. Freedom is practically unknown. From the time a ship reaches Russian territory armed guards are near the whole time. They come aboard the ship, search it, and will not allow cameras or undeveloped films to be put out of hand for fear the film will record just how things really are in the so-called land of equality.

"It is necessary for everyone on board a ship," he said, "to have his passport handy. Even if he just steps off the gang-plank to look at the side of the vessel the guard desires to see the passport. My passport was examined so much that it is almost necessary for me to secure another.

"Children growing up in Russia do not know what freedom is and all the children who have grown up since the Revolution are in the same category. They are afraid to accept gifts of food from visiting ships because of the presence of the armed guards and afraid to go to the shops because of the rising generation of Russians live in distrust of the rest of the world."

"During my stay in Russia I saw men and women loading ships with lumber. The wharves are equipped with the most modern appliances for quick despatch of vessels. While I was there a vessel was loaded faster than any previous ship that season, and the authorities had placards placed on the ship's side, and all those who participated in this effort were made the guests of the authorities. A special tugboat was chartered to take the loaders to a theatre, preceded by a band playing appropriate airs.

"The ships are loaded throughout the 24 hours of each day, each gang doing eight hours. After five days' working a day's respite is taken. Sundays are unknown in Russia.

SKY-SCRAPERS.

"At the time of my visit Moscow was having a sky-scraper building constructed that would outstrip any in New York. It was said by many that it would be necessary to repair the cellars of the structure before the top story was completed."

JAPAN AND RUSSIA.

The visiting officer does not consider that Japan will go to war against Russia because she knows full well that Russia of today has one of the best, if not the best equipped armies in the world. There are arsenals placed at various parts of the country in readiness for any happening.

SNAKE IN TROUSERS POCKET.

Mr. W. Engle, an employee of Mr. R. E. Freeman, a Murrumbidgee River farmer, had an amazing escape from being bitten by a snake. Engle had been working in sugar cane and sat down to smoke. On feeling in his trousers pocket for his pipe lighter, he found one pocket full. This he thought strange, and to his horror found that the pocket contained a black snake. Despite the risk of being bitten, he grabbed the pocket and tore his trousers off. Then, with a howl, he attacked the pocket containing the snake which was found to be nearly 3ft. long.

Australian Trade Delegation

—TO LONDON—

—TO COST £10,000—

After a Cabinet meeting last week the four Federal Ministers and several officials began the final preparations for the departure of the Australian trade delegation to London. It is estimated that the total cost of the delegation, including travelling allowances, will be approximately £10,000.

The Prime Minister will be accompanied by Mrs. Lyons and the delegation will include two confidential (by lists, Miss M. Grosvenor and Miss M. O'Brien. The Ministers who will be official members of the party will be the Minister in Charge of Trade Treaties (Sir Henry Gullitt) and Assistant Minister, Mr. H. V. Threlby.

Departmental officers who will advise the delegation will be the Chairman of the Tariff Board (Mr. H. McConaghy), the Chief of the Tariff Revision Branch of the Customs Department (Mr. A. C. Moore), the Prime Minister's private secretary (Mr. F. McKenna), the Commonwealth Government Publicity Officer (Mr. Irvine Douglas), and the Chairman of the Queensland Meat Industry Board (Mr. E. F. Stumpers).

The Attorney-General (Mr. R. G. Menzies) will leave the same liner, but as he has legal business to transact in London he will be of his own party later.

MR. LYONS' FIRST TRIP.

Mr. Lyons will be making his first trip overseas. Although he has been in politics for 25 years he has not previously visited London. Miss Grosvenor will be making her second official trip overseas within a year, as last year she travelled as confidential stenographer with the Latham delegation to the East. Sir Henry Gullitt was a member of the Australian delegation to the Ottawa Conference in 1932, and Mr. Moore was one of the departmental officers.

Mr. Douglas will be married shortly before the party leaves for London and will take his wife with him.

Dentist: Have you seen any small boys ring my bell and run away?

Police-man: They weren't small boys—they were grown-ups!

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MOTORING.

FEDERAL AID ROADS AGREEMENT.

There is in existence at the present time what is known as the Federal Aid Roads Agreement. Under the terms of this agreement the Commonwealth Government imposes a tax of 7½d. per gallon on every gallon of petrol used in Australia. Out of the receipts from this petrol tax the Commonwealth Government makes available to the various States certain sums of money for road construction and maintenance purposes. This arrangement between the States and the Commonwealth authorities will expire next year and unless it is renewed in its present or in some amended form there is the danger of motorists being compelled to continue paying this heavy impost on petrol without receiving any corresponding benefit. For this reason the R.A.C.Q. is co-operating with motoring organisations in other States with the object of securing a further extension of the agreement for a period of five years. As this is a concrete instance of direct class taxation the various motoring organisations are making an appeal for a reduction in the amount of the tax. Unfortunately there does not seem to be any prospect of such a desirable objective being attained in the near future so the various motoring organisations are endeavouring to secure an arrangement under which a definite proportion of the money collected by the tax will be available. In this connection it is significant to remember that for the year 1933-34 the Federal Government collected £5,757,399 by means of the petrol tax. Out of this only £2,394,121 was returned to the States to be expended on the roads, leaving a balance of £3,363,278 to be passed into Federal consolidated revenue to be expended on general purposes.

The R.A.C.Q. rightly feels that this is motorist's money and therefore should be used only for some purpose which will directly benefit motorists as a body.

In furtherance of this the argument is advanced that motorists pay their share of all other taxation and ought not to be called upon to pay an additional sum of over three million pounds to meet consolidated revenue expenses. Here at least is a strong argument for a reduction in the petrol tax.

To further secure to motorists a greater share for expenditure on pay in this taxation the R.A.C.Q. and kindred bodies are making representations to the Federal Government asking that two-thirds of the total receipts from the petrol tax should be remitted to the States for road purposes, one half of the present basis of allocation and one half on the basis of the volume of petrol consumed in each State.


On the basis of the amount collected last year this would mean that £3,835,296 would be returned to the States for use on the roads, leaving a balance of £1,922,103 to be disposed of as the Federal Government may see fit. This would give the States slightly more than one and a half million pounds to spend on roads in excess of the amount granted during 1933-34.

In making this effort to secure a greater share for expenditure on roads the R.A.C.Q. feels that it is definitely fighting the motorists' battle in a just cause. It is only by unity of operation that motorists can hope to secure a reasonably fair deal in such a matter and the one organisation in Queensland which provides the means of that united action is the R.A.C.Q. Consequently it is the duty of every motor owner in the State who wishes to strengthen the hands of the R.A.C.Q. by becoming a member of that organisation.

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