

individual, would give to the community the same benefits as though the land were owned by it.

Land has two values, a sale value and a use value. The use value is always inherent, and can be used for whatever purpose it is available. The sale value comes only when more than one person desires it, and the two or more persons are willing to bid against each other for the privilege of using it. The highest sum which is bid by these two or more becomes then the rental value, or, if they wish to purchase, then the rental value capitalized. If, instead of two persons, a thousand persons desire to use the particular plot, its rental and sale value will consequently be enormously augmented, and where, as in some of our metropolitan areas, tens of thousands need a plot, there is almost no limit to the amount of the rental and consequent sale value.

This value, therefore, is not created by the person who happens to be the owner. It would retain this value, no matter who owned it, because of the need for it by the public and the population gathering about it.

Nothing can be fairer, then, than to insist that this value, created by the public, should go back to the public, for the purpose of defraying public expense.

For this reason Mr. George proposes that the land only be taxed its full rental value, leaving to the owner all his improvements, and giving him all benefits to which he is entitled, merely making him give up to the community that which the community and not he has earned; that is, the increase in the value of the bare land. The only person who could suffer by this would be the one who has purchased large areas of land, not with a view to using them, but with a view to holding them until the demand for them would bring him profits which he has not earned. This, then, is the great proposal, to defray the entire expenses of government by absorbing the ground rental value, and by taking the burden of all other taxation from industry.

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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## A BOY'S ESSAY ON THE SINGLE TAX.

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(Following are extracts from the concluding speech of a joint debate on the Single Tax between "teams" of the Wichita and Wellington (Kansas) High Schools, in which the former upheld the Single Tax. The speech from which these extracts are taken was delivered by James J. Carney.)

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One of the most important and beneficial of the reforms accomplished by the Single Tax will be the elimination of land speculation and speculators. The Kansas merchant, manufacturer, and farmer must employ men to operate their respective concerns, or these enterprises will cease to live—the land speculator hires no men, loses no money on account of it, letting his land lie idle and undeveloped until the laborers are forced to work at his price or starve, while in the meantime he reaps as his reward for his oppression the benefit of

the community's growth in the increase in land values. The land owner who allows his property to lie undeveloped and unused, denying to his fellow man at the same time his equal right to make a living on that natural resource, the speculator in land who buys and then holds his purchase idle and beyond the community's use, are the parasites on commercial society who lessen the demand for labor. The man who produces and hires labor and laborers, who puts his capital at the disposal and use of the community, is taxed under the present system for the blessings he brings to humanity, and the man who appropriates the natural resources of nature for himself is rewarded by the community's growth for the curse he brings to society. It is true that under the Single Tax one man or a coterie of men could own large areas of land in Kansas, as they do now, but under the Henry George theory it would be impossible for them to own that land and allow it to remain idle, because the tax on it would pauperize them. This tax will, therefore, eliminate the disastrous evil of land speculation and the gaining of individual fortunes from the results of the community's labor and growth. It would destroy land monopoly and benefit labor, because these men would of necessity build improvements on that property worth much more than the land itself, the construction of those improvements would increase the demand for labor, the use of those improvements when finished would mean employment for hundreds, the added population would provide a larger and readier market for the products of the Kansas farmer, and the wealthy man and land monopolist would not be putting in his coffers the increase in land value and the economic rent from that land which belongs to the community and which the community has produced!

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God has provided for us a storehouse from which all means of life is produced—and as long as a certain class are owners of the earth and the largest class live on it only by the permission of the few—as long as men are denied access to this storehouse, no reform will relieve the present condition; yet our worthy opponents support and uphold a system which denies to the majority of men all right of access to this storehouse we call land; but—were that storehouse open, as the Single Tax would open it by the elimination of land monopoly, the natural demand for labor would keep pace with the supply, and the laboring men and farmers would not be compelled to sell their labor and products in the cheapest market and buy in the highest as they are forced to do under the present system. There is but one kind of real property—that is land; and but one distinction between property of any kind, natural resource or gratuitous property, and earned property, and therefore the tax should fall lightest upon earned property to encourage its production, and heaviest upon natural property, or land, because it is given to all, must be used by all, and a tax will not decrease its area.

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My worthy opponent has endeavored to put us in the class of Socialist propagandists by telling you that the Single Tax would deprive man of the

individual right to land and its production; also that private ownership of land is a root of our civilization and necessary to our modern existence. We know full well that if a man had no security or assurance of a permanent location on earth and a guarantee to all the products of his labor, there would be no incentive to use or cultivate the soil because he would not be sure of the results. My worthy opponent has tried to convince these honorable judges that if the Single Tax means the confiscation of private property in land that such insecurity would result. Do not confuse the wrong of private ownership with the right of private possession! The Single Tax does not mean the confiscation of land, because a man under that system would have secure, and if he desired it, *by using it*, permanent possession of the land with the right to buy, sell, give or bequeath as he sees fit. It *would* mean the abolition of exclusive private ownership of land, a thing as fundamentally wrong as private ownership of any natural resource, water, air, or sunlight, as wrong and as indefensible as ownership of slaves; but it would not do away with private possession of land for it would secure and guarantee to a man **all** the fruits of his labor on that land, to which and only to which he is entitled, which the present system does not do, and it would give to the community, as we have stated, what belongs to the community—the rental value and increase in site value of the land. A man is justly entitled to all the fruits of his labor and the present system deprives him by taxation of a share of his production, and a man is not entitled to exclusive ownership of land to hold it in disuse—a thing that the present system permits.

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## A WORD ON SOCIALISM.

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ADDRESSED TO SOCIALISTS AND TO THOSE WHO MAY BECOME SO.

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By GUSTAV BÜSCHER, of Zurich, Switzerland.

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(Translated expressly for *The Single Tax Review* by L. H. Berens.)

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### Chapter VI.

#### SOCIALIST POLITICS —(Continued.)

If we turn to other countries we find much the same condition of things as in those we have already briefly reviewed.

In great Britain some six years ago a few dozen labor representatives dusted with socialism were returned to Parliament. The term "dusted" is advisedly used, since for the most part they were returned as Liberals or owed their seats to the liberal votes, and the socialism of the majority of these members is very easily brushed off. However, on their election the socialist trumpet resounded throughout the world. In all socialist and semi-socialist