

You can take advantage of this instrument at hand, get into this party, and officer it with men faithful to your purposes.

You are to be warned against those in your own organization who even now show a tendency to accept what appears to be inevitable—the refusal of the Republican administration to consider any means at all for the payment of the bonus. This inclination on the part of some of your leaders may arise from want of knowledge that a source of payment can be opened to you, or it may come from the more ignoble motive of ambition for political preferment. But whatever the motive, you will overcome all possible machinations that may be attempted to defeat your purposes by joining the Single Tax Party and making the bonus demand out of the ground rent one of its integral principles.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO A SHARE IN THE LAND RENT

Senator Myers has said in the Senate that this offer of a bonus is "an invitation to the ex-soldiers to put their hands in the treasury." If so, theirs will not be the only hands in the Treasury; some infinitely dirtier hands are already there, deep to the arm-pits. Not the arms of honest soldiers that shouldered guns in time of the nation's need, but the claw-like hands of the profiteering birds of prey, chief of whom, though least regarded because the least obtrusive, the rent lords of the land. The loot is myriad-handed. And let Senator Myers refrain from condemning the ex-soldiers for thinking the services they rendered the country are worthy of recompense. They are, and if recompensed in the way we suggest, criticism of the sort Senator Myers makes is disarmed, for they have a right to share in the rent of the country they have saved. Let them say, "Pay us our bonus out of the land rent of the country we fought for." And then let them organize to get it.

JOSEPH DANA MILLER.

Regulation versus Freedom

CORRESPONDENCE WITH SAMUEL UNTERMYER

HON. SAMUEL UNTERMYER,

DEAR SIR:

My admiration of the ability with which you have conducted the public's case and the results already achieved, cause me to regard you as a practical minded man. Hence I wonder if you can be serious in proposing to remedy the evils which you have been exposing by the creation of a State Board of Control. I am moved to parody the old lines:

"Big boards have little boards
Upon their backs to bite 'em,
And these boards have other boards,
And so, ad infinitum."

Has the experience of the public in attempting to regulate monopolies been such that you can have any confidence in its success in a complex case like the present one?

Is not the centripetal force in modern business among both employers and employees so strong that centralization must go on, unless you can set up an equally powerful natural force to counteract it? And do you think that a State Board will do it?

I might refer to the scheme as socialistic, but we have already gone so far in that direction that one new government interference, more or less, will not count one way or the other. I don't criticise it because it is socialistic, but because it will not work.

If you could show the workman how to make a decent living without his union, he wouldn't belong except in rare cases. If the employer could stay in business without "belonging" he wouldn't either. Both of these are compelled by a power external to themselves. If you could determine what this pressure is you might find an effective remedy, but otherwise I fear disappointment awaits your plan.

Now what drives the laborer is not hard to see. He has no right to be in the world at all, except such as he can buy by selling his labor, and he pays for permission to live on the installment plan just as he buys his furniture, and when he ceases to make payments the people who are able to sell him permission to live take it back, just as the installment man takes back his unpaid-for furniture. So it is easy to see why he goes into a union and stays there. It is the custodian and protector of his job, and his job in the last analysis is the most precious thing in the world, for on it his life and the life of his family depend.

Now the ordinary employer is in much the same plight, and he knows that unless he clings to his association he, too, will lose his meal-ticket, and he, like his employee, does things he knows to be mean, contemptible and unworthy; while listening to you holding up some of these worthies to scorn, I wondered whether you would have done any differently had you been in their shoes.

Now do you really think your Board of Control is going to materially affect this situation? You simply can't. You are only proposing it because you can't think of anything else. There *is* a way out, but you do not seem conscious of it—a way of emancipation both to employer and employee from the *impasse* in which both find themselves. If this way were open, then the man who acted meanly, cruelly or oppressively might properly be pilloried for his acts. But at present his freedom of action is as circumscribed as was the freedom of contract before even the courts began to make fun of it.

At present a man owning no land upon which he can live and work, must find an employer or starve. But no man is under any recognized moral or legal obligation to employ him. True he may throw himself on the State, which treats him as a semi-criminal on the quite fanciful ground that if he sought work he could find it. Clearly this state of pauperism is beset with so many penalties and disadvantages that men fly from it even to the point of suicide. The spectre of penury is the most hideous

ghost which the mind of man has conceived. "This is the respect that makes calamity of so long life."

Unless every man's inherent right in and to the earth is recognized, and as long as some are put in a position to farm it out to others, cruel, conscienceless combinations, like that which you are trying to break up, are as inevitable as tomorrow's dawn. It is the denial of this right and the recognition of this wrong which huddle men into panicky crowds where they trample each other down in the holy name of self-preservation. It may be that you cannot see that the assertion of this right and the denial of the wrong are practicable, as civilization stands, but if so I say to you that you will strive in vain to save this civilization from perdition. Your palliatives will fail as all such devices have failed, because ultimately they aggravate the disease that they were devised to remedy. How much forwarder are we for all the Sherman Acts and Interstate Commerce Commission?

I would not write you at this length and presume so much upon your crowded time, were I not convinced that you are inspired by a very real indignation by the social wrongs which you see about you, and that you would like to remedy some of the evils which have impressed themselves on your mind. When I see a fair-minded man of high ideals treading a path which can only lead him, as it has led so many others, to disappointment and despair, can I do less than point out that he is headed in the wrong direction, and that when he reaches the end of the road he will find himself staring at a sign-board which reads, "Futility."

With renewed assurances of my esteem,

Sincerely,

JOSEPH DANA MILLER.

REPLY BY MR. UNTERMYER

MY DEAR SIR:

Owing to constant engagements in court up to the time of my leaving New York for this place, my correspondence has been entirely neglected and your letter of January 21st has just been called to my attention, which fact I trust you will accept as a sufficient apology for my apparent neglect in not having sooner acknowledged the receipt of your communication.

The interesting economic discussion to which your letter invites me is one of which I would be glad to avail myself if time and opportunity permitted, but it opens such a wide vista for controversial discussion that I must resist the temptation.

The proposal for State regulation and control of competitors who may care to avail themselves of the opportunity to enter into agreements regulating prices and output in a given industry, as a model for federal regulation, is not offered by me as a panacea for all ills that flesh is heir to. If presented for legislative action it will be offered as a more practicable economic policy than that which is embodied in anti-trust laws that experience has proven are incapable of enforcement. It has been tried in other coun-

tries with a fair measure of success. It may be, as you say, that

"cruel, conscienceless combinations...
are as inevitable as tomorrow's dawn"

but I am not yet prepared to admit that this is true. I have more faith in the efficacy of legal restraints when intelligently applied than you appear to have and those proposed by me are at least within the range of accomplishment.

I have been for years deeply interested in the Single Tax problem and have given it some study with the result that I believe it contains great possibilities. It has, however, made very little headway during the generation or more in which I have watched its progress, and I am looking for comparatively prompt results, even though they be not quite so comprehensive as those toward which you are working.

Your suggestion of my purpose in making the recommendation to which you refer is quite unworthy of a man who is engaged in the great task to which you are apparently devoting yourself and I feel sure that on further reflection you will agree with me on this point even though we may differ on others.

Very truly yours,

SAMUEL UNTERMYER.

The Law of Wages

"A Social Reformer" writes:—"In the search for light on social and labor questions, which in the situation which has developed in Scotland are the principal topics of discussion, permit me to state that I have wandered into many meetings. I have listened to Anarchist-Communists, to I. L. P. orators, British Socialist Leaguers, in fact to almost every phase of thought, and recently have taken to hearing Catholic Study Club speakers. In the main their plea is to never forget that man was created to serve God, the servile State is denounced, it is argued that under present conditions the worker does not, in the main, own the products of his labor, and arguments are put forward against the nationalization of all industries, and we are told that the ideal state would be one where the worker owned the products of his labor, but the way or the means of this state is not suggested. Being not an idealist of nationalize everything under the sun variety, and desirous of seeing a state of society of the kind suggested, might I point out that the principal barrier to men owning the products of their labor is the present land system? I note that many miners who have taken to working outcrops of coal were free to sell the products of their labor. Does it not follow that if men had readier access to land they could employ themselves?"

If workers were free to employ themselves, no one would work for an employer for less than he could earn by employing himself.

J. O'D. DERRICK, in *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner*.