

brow at the resistance of the material, he will, as soon as the disturbance is quieted, calmly continue his labour and investigations."

Our reform can only come through the mass of individuals. It can only come with enlightened education. History, uncensored, must be taught in our schools. Among our teachers, the thinker must replace the sergent-major. Men's minds must be trained to think deeply and fearlessly. Whenever they think deeply enough, they can find the Single Tax.

A time may come when the mass of men will see their fear for the fantasy it is. Throwing off their burden of guilt, they will throw off their burden of taxation, and rediscovering the debt, forgotten so long ago, claim a Single Tax for a Single Tax. When the land is taxed to its full yearly value, the great monopoly will be broken and the country thrown open for the people. Then will private ownership of land cease to be a source of profit, and a man live only by his labour. Then will there be work for all and leisure for all, and the great energies of the community will flow ever back to replenish the community.

A Revolutionary Reform

By HON. HENRY H. WILSON

SINGLE-taxers are loathe to acknowledge the revolutionary implications of the socialization of rent and rental values. Our feudal economy is built on the privilege of private ownership of land, and all economic values are based on the power of exaction inherent in such privilege. This value has been capitalized and put under the charges of interest, and this capitalization is the depository of thrift, savings and security. It is represented in the assets and solvency of life insurance, fire insurance, and trusts, and in most if not all of private debts, such as mortgages, judgments, etc. Also a large proportion of corporate bonds and stocks may be included. Therefore to destroy the privilege of private appropriation of land values is much more than a shift in the incidence of taxation. A whole new economy will have to be evolved, and we will have to pay a great price for liberty, at least during transition. The reason single-taxers should squarely face the momentous changes, is that these changes, if not known, are at least sensed by the mass of the people, and I have no doubt that the opposition to the single tax emphasizes these changes, while its protagonists dodge the issue, and thereby lose a certain quality of appeal. The Marxists preach revolution of the disinherited against poverty and oppression. The single-taxers proclaim freedom—at a price, and the real work is to persuade people to pay it.

I believe that there are also other tactical errors into which the single-taxers fall, which give rise to a confusion of thought altogether disconcerting to the uninitiated. One of these concerns assessments. With value gone, what is to be assessed? Nothing but the privilege of occupancy and use, and the fixing of the value of the privilege can only be by governmental fiat.

Another error is in referring to unearned increment as a "fund", conveying the idea that it may be drawn on as a checking account. Taxes, or the costs of government, come out of the products of labor applied to land; they are really paid by the pick and shovel, just as rent is paid. The real objection is to double robbery, taxes and rent. The elimination of taxes, by rent being taken as a substitute, is the idea to be stressed. Every dollar the producer can withhold from the landlord and the tax-collector is a dollar for larger consumption and increasing production.

Again, single-tax is not a mere fiscal system. It is a method of determining the source and amount of government income. It proposes to use as the sole measuring unit the value of land irrespective of improvements. With a given sum to be raised, and site values determined, the tax fixes the contribution. This necessarily means a high tax on land, but in most instances, as where land is improved by homes, a lower total tax. The damage done the speculator will be compensated by the opening of opportunity, stimulation of building, and a general quickening of human life.

And finally, the single-taxers fail to appreciate that, in the last analysis, single-tax is a land question—agrarian at heart. As I understand the teaching, when the land speculator and the forestaller of opportunity have been put to rout, then labor may have some measure of choice between working for itself or for another. Where is he to go to work for himself and at what? The only answer can be on subsistence farms—as in frontier days—the new frontier being the land acquired by government through defaulted taxes. If this is not so, then the relief from the pressure of glutted labor "markets" is a false doctrine. Therefore the single-taxers should strive to foster the agrarian—by transferring values to it from the values of the urban—by supporting policies which directly and indirectly render farm life easier and more tolerable, and by taking the profit motive out of agriculture. The field must cease to be the servant of the factory, and we must return the factory as the servant of the field.

To be sure I am suggesting a large order, but I am convinced that it is the task before us.

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