

*Join with us in declaring yourself.* With such unity we can obtain newspaper space, radio time and the attention of legislatures—without this unity we are looked upon as “nuts,” “visionaries,” “crack-pots,” and educationally and in libraries listed as “Communists.”

The dues of the organization are set at a minimum of \$1.00. This is minimum support for a national organization for action. With it we can be of service in developing local enterprises, with it we can take our rightful place in the councils of the nations, with it we can fight through to success. The movement needs you, your dues, your knowledge of others who are interested. After fifty years of right thinking let's take right action now!

## How to Interest Business Men

**F**ORTY years experience in activity advocating the principles propounded by the immortal Henry George has convinced me that we will never succeed in getting these principles adopted until we learn to interest and convince leaders in business, professions, education and politics.

To do this we must first realize that such people are generally in comfortable circumstances, satisfied with things as they are, inherently cautious and not inclined to approve any material change—especially such a far-reaching and revolutionary programme as that proposed by Henry George.

We must also realize that most influential persons are likely to own some real estate, securities of corporations or insurance policies, and to know that such institutions own real estate. Therefore, they are practically certain to carefully consider what effect any such change in taxing methods would have on their personal interests.

Moreover, as cautious people are usually unwilling to trust their own judgment on such complex subjects as taxation and economics, they are certain to consult their bankers, lawyers or officers of the Chamber of Commerce—who, in turn, know little or nothing about such subjects.

Consequently, we should thoroughly understand our subject, carefully prepare our selling talk and prospectus, make it sufficiently simple, attractive and convincing to appeal to cautious and practical minds, then work harmoniously, diligently and intelligently to interest and convince a few influential people in one state which offers the most promising opportunity.

For the foregoing reasons we must carefully avoid suggesting complex and controversial subjects such as “breaking up land monopoly,” making land cheaper, opening up land for greater production, etc., because most business men believe that there is now entirely too much land in use, and so much “over-production” that it cannot be sold or consumed. Also because it is absolutely impossible, as well as unnecessary, to make any person understand such “far-fetched” theories unless and until he clearly comprehends the principles of political economy.

In my opinion we must present our points and programme in a way that will appeal to the mind of the man that owns land, and believes that it is just as legitimate as owning an automobile or house. And we should remember that he has probably bought that land—under the laws of the land—and, therefore, believes that his action is beyond criticism or complaint. For this reason we must approach such men in another way and, at the proper time, proceed to show them that speculating in land injures and menaces their business, their property and even their personal security.

I have learned by experience that this can be done by first pointing out that our present taxing methods are not only a burden upon all business, but they greatly increase the first cost and carrying charges of homes and apartments and thus seriously impair the buying power of all the people—especially those of small and uncertain incomes.

It is also effective to show that the cost of building sites and the heavy taxes imposed upon materials, personal property and buildings greatly retard—and often prevent—the construction of homes, business structures and other improvements. And that this, of course, creates unemployment and injures all business.

Strange as it may seem I have found many successful business men who will admit they have never thought of these points before, nor realized their importance and direct influence on all business.

After carefully planting these thoughts in the mind of a business man he is usually amenable to reason and ready to consider a practical programme to correct such conditions. He is also already and anxious to assert that there is only one way to find relief from taxation and adverse business conditions, and that is to elect honest and capable men to public office and drastically reduce the cost of government.

It is usually advisable to agree that it certainly would be helpful if such things could be done; also that there are many good and influential leagues devoting their time and money to accomplish these purposes—but there are many obstacles to be considered. In fact it is difficult, if not impossible, to make any substantial reduction in governmental expenditures until the huge public debt, the vast unemployment, poverty and crime, and the preparation for national defense have been considerably reduced.

Moreover, it should be realized that even the most efficient and honest public officials cannot succeed in improving such intolerable conditions, or materially reducing the burden of taxation, charities and debts, while unscientific taxing methods are constantly creating conditions that destroy buying power and business and make government expensive.

I believe it is necessary to make business men realize these facts before it is possible to arouse their interest in any change in taxing methods, because if they be-

ever adverse business and social conditions are caused by governmental extravagance—instead of by land-cost and taxation of improvements, personal property and business transactions—they will not be interested in anything except some plan that promises to reduce the cost of government.

It is also advisable to explain that several plausible proposals have recently been made to reduce taxation on real estate by "broadening the tax base" or substituting taxes on sales, small incomes, securities, personal property and business profits. But it should be considered that any such reduction in real estate taxes would not result in reducing rents of homes or business properties; and it is certain that the imposition of such other taxes would increase prices of commodities and service and further reduce buying power and business.

After the foregoing points are established, the business man is usually ready to hear and consider the following simple plan:

(1) To obtain State legislation that will permit any municipality in the State, by local referendum, to *gradually reduce taxes* on materials, machinery, merchandise and buildings;

(2) To obtain the required public revenue by *gradually increasing the tax rate* on all taxable land value in such municipalities.

Then explain that this simple change in taxing methods will:

(a) Greatly encourage construction of buildings and other improvements.

(b) Materially reduce taxes on homes, apartments and properly improved business properties and farms.

(c) Increase buying power, business and employment.

(d) Attract industries and home-seekers to communities that adopt this system.

(e) Create extensive and enduring demand for land, labor, materials and capital.

(f) Enable owners of vacant land and obsolete buildings to improve, sell or lease their holdings.

(g) Enable those of small incomes to own homes and farms.

(h) Encourage consolidation of suburban towns with cities.

(i) Reduce cost of government by creating opportunities in private industry.

(j) Reduce the burden of taxation upon those now paying more than their share by bringing more land into use, increasing business and employment and enabling many to pay taxes who are now unable to do so.

As evidence that this plan is practical, effective and beneficial we can show official reports and dependable opinions from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and many cities, towns and farming districts in the British Dominions and Denmark, where similar plans have long been in successful operations.

And as evidence that it is possible to obtain the required legislation in New Jersey, this league has enlisted the sincere approval of numerous substantial citizens, several associations and many influential newspapers throughout the State.

A bill originated and sponsored by the Progressive League of New Jersey, received 23 votes in the 1935 session of the State Assembly, 19 votes in the 1936 session (with several members absent who were in favor) and 31 votes in 1938 session which were enough to pass. It did not reach the Senate in time for consideration, although nine Senators had promised to vote for it.

This bill will be reintroduced in the coming session of the legislature, and with the support of many members of the Assembly and several influential Senators, we are confident that it will be enacted.

We are also confident that several municipalities in the State will promptly adopt the plan, and that the results will be immediately successful; this would serve as a demonstration and an inducement for other municipalities to adopt the plan and thus help to inaugurate the great reform for which we have all worked so long and faithfully.

Therefore, I hope all who are interested will do all they can to help us win this important fight. Progressive League of New Jersey, 206 Market St., Newark, N. J.

L. R. BONTA, Secretary.

## The California Campaign

THE election is over and we of the faith find ourselves severely checked, although receiving between 300,000 and 400,000 votes. Never before had such a vote been given for as forward a proposition as we presented. For this reason I use for the word "checked" and not "defeated". To my mind we can never be defeated although we may be postponed.

We fought against such powerful financial and other organizations as have never before been arrayed to oppose the best interests of the people. We begin with the Real Estate Boards, with their thousands of members in every part of the state. These influenced the Chambers of Commerce, who largely represented the financial sinews. These in turn controlled the Parent-Teachers bodies, numbering into the hundreds of thousands, and who were persuaded that the abolition of the sales tax would mean the wiping out of support for the public schools. These refused to see that such belief was unfounded.

In addition we faced powerful official influences, the whole state officialdom being united against us under the lash of the recently defeated governor. These influences included the State Board of Equalization, which could and did convince those from whom it collected taxes that self-interest demanded that it should not be opposed.

On top of all the influences mentioned, and a lot of minor