

obsolete buildings by undertaxation than there is for subsidizing speculation in vacant land by undertaxation.

"It is just plain nonsense to suggest that heavier taxes on land would lead to higher slum rents. All respected economists from Adam Smith to Colin Clark have agreed that the land tax is one that cannot be passed on. Except under rent control slum rents are already all that the traffic will bear.

"It is also nonsense to suggest that heavier land taxation would encourage intensive development everywhere. On the contrary, the more intensive use of central land it would stimulate would almost certainly siphon off de-

mand from the farther areas of suburban sprawl and thereby lessen the likelihood of premature subdivision.

"I agree with you that we need better zoning and better planning, including better metropolitan planning. But Van Ettinger of the Baucentrum in Rotterdam said a mouthful when he said: 'It is impossible to make good land planning effective in the face of land speculation.'"

[It might be noted that, while Henry George would probably not expect the rent of land to pay for the entire cost of government "at today's lavish scale," he did—and his followers do—anticipate that the cost of government would drop sharply once the single tax were instituted.—R.C.]

More LVT for Cleveland

The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer of November 13th carried a rewarding headline, "New Valuations Reflect Single Tax Ideas," and boldly connected the new tax with the ideas of Henry George and the late Mayor Tom L. Johnson. The County Auditor, Ralph J. Perk, has been supervising this reappraisal, and says the Cleveland tax rolls will include decreases in home values and increases in the value of all classes of land. In this valuation, which is still to be approved, an LVT increase of 25 per cent over 1963 is assured.

City homes will show value reductions resulting from a \$35 million increase in residential land values, and a decline of \$41 million in the appraised value of the homes. Mr. Perk attributed this to an "economic depreciation factor" which "allows a lower rate for residential property located

close to industry, freeways and non-residential construction. The over-all duplicate will show an increase of \$100 million over 1963 — over-all building values will decrease from \$1,432 billion to \$1,375 billion."

Auditor Perk explained that where the previous taxation policy was to lean heavily on buildings and less on land, the policy now is to lean heavily on land and only lightly on buildings. He said, "this is a move in the direction of the 'single tax' ideas of Henry George and Mayor Tom Johnson, who believed that larger taxes on land encourages owners to develop their land rather than hang on to it. It discourages land speculation."

The Cleveland extension director, Ivan Dailey, who sent the above information, has kept HGN readers informed on this reassessment program.

In Nassau County, New York, property valuation is up 4 per cent, reflecting a drop from the normal growth rate on improved property and a 2 per cent vacant land increase, initiated by County Executive Nickerson. A "considerable burden of taxation" has been lifted from homeowners' shoulders and county general and police funds will benefit greatly.