

What Lenin Really Said

A STATEMENT attributed to Nikolai Lenin, in an interview with Col. Raymond Robins, is as follows: "The proper application of the Georgan taxation of land values is a tax on the mentality of a people and beyond the capacity of a nation not ten per cent of whom have learned to read. They cannot understand it. They can only understand socialism at present. Some day, with a higher average intelligence, we may adopt the taxation of land values and enjoy economic freedom, but not now."

However, our Canadian correspondent, Mr. Herbert T. Owens, wishing to verify Lenin's statement, communicated with Col. Robins and received the following reply: "I did discuss with Nikolai Lenin, the master-mind of the Soviet Revolution in Russia, land value taxation and the fundamentals of the philosophy of Henry George. He did reply, that the Revolution was made by class-conscious Marxian Socialists, that this was his (Lenin's) philosophy, plus communism and collectivism, that George's program was all right for individualist democracy—but that collectivism was now forced by the machine age. He did *not* indicate any personal sympathy with the teachings of Henry George, but seemed to think that George was among the religious mystics and quoted Tolstoi as his disciple. I do not wish to indicate Lenin gave any serious consideration at that time to land value taxation, he having read 'Progress and Poverty' many years before and decided in favor of the gospel according to Karl Marx."