

Then larger buying power in the hands of the community would be at once followed by larger demand for *all the things folks use*, houses, furnishings, clothes, foods, sports, cars, and hosts of other things. This would set to work *all the present* unemployed, and would bring back into the home thousands of wives, daughters and sisters of men whose incomes would then permit them to keep these at home from industries. These things would raise the already raised wages.

Men would then be able to *choose* their occupations. There would be movements of men from lines in which they had been, more or less, forced to work, into the lines of their choice; from shops of other people to shops of their own, from city to country, and from country to city; from the less desirable to the more desirable occupations,

Instead of men having to fight a way through crowds of applicants for a job, there would be several jobs chasing each man. The true wage of labor—"THE WHOLE VALUE OF THE PRODUCT"—would be the scale of payment. Prices would be built up of WAGES ONLY. An eighth or tenth of price would be the wage of the community, "THE TRUE ANNUAL VALUE OF SITES;" the rest, THE TRUE WAGE OF LABOR:—

PRICE OF GOODS	LABOR'S WAGE
	COMMUNITY'S WAGE

G. R. HARRISON.

The Real Source of A Boss' Wealth

MR. MURPHY'S wealth was often a topic of discussion among his friends. He had business interests of importance but was secretive about his private affairs. Those closest to him believe it will be found that he died possessed of only a moderate fortune. He made many men rich by giving them advantage of his knowledge of forthcoming political developments which would react on real estate values by reason of public improvements. Whether he profited to any extent by his foreknowledge probably never will be known. Lawsuits in which he he figured over money matters disclosed that he was not a very astute business man.

—N. Y. World

"UNDER all forms of government the ultimate power lies with the masses. It is not kings nor aristocracies, nor landowners nor capitalists, that anywhere really enslave the people. It is their own ignorance."

—HENRY GEORGE.

Has The Single Tax Theory Made Progress?

(Joseph Dana Miller in *Dearborn Independent*. Reprinted by permission.)

WHEN Henry George died in 1897 at the close of a dramatic campaign for mayor of Greater New York, it was felt by many that the progress of the cause to which he had given his life, and in the advocacy of which he was so impressive a personality, had suffered a serious interruption.

The years immediately succeeding must have seemed to justify such impression, for a period of inactivity followed, and the Single Tax ceased to be talked about as it had been in the lifetime of the author of *Progress and Poverty*. But the persistence of the agitation was nevertheless a fact, and its revival has kept it constantly if not prominently before large numbers of the people in almost every country.

What is the essence of that teaching? It is that the rent of land, or land value, belongs to the people and should be taken by the taxing power in lieu of all taxation on improvements and other products of labor. What progress has been made in the carrying out of this principle in legislation?

DENMARK

Perhaps no event in the direction of the Single Tax has been more notable than the new law enacted by Denmark on August 4, 1922, taxing land values for national purposes at the rate of one and five tenths mills. Heretofore there has been a tax on land and building, (the ordinary real estate tax) of one and one tenth mills. Improvements worth less than ten thousand Kronen (about two thousand seven hundred dollars) are now exempt from this tax; while improvements in excess of that value are taxed only one and one tenth mills, the same as before the new law. So the tax on the higher priced improvements is now approximately only two thirds of the rate that is levied on all land values.

Denmark is the first country in the world to apply a national land tax, and with its exemption feature this act is therefore the nearest approach made by any nation as a whole toward the Single Tax. The government which passed this bill for national taxation has announced its intention to enact legislation for local purposes in which similar discrimination will be made between land values and improvements.

It has been thought that the farmer constituted the greatest bulwark of defense against any proposal for the taxation of land values. But it is to be noted that Denmark is a country of small farmers, and that the greatest organized force working for this reform was the band of 120,000 small cultivators who have been demanding this

legislation in their conventions since 1902. For twenty years the resolutions passed at these conventions have been a bold embodiment of the Single Tax philosophy, and on this they have based their demands.

Turning now to our own country, there is today perhaps in every state in the Union, and certainly in the greater number of them, a larger proportion of land values taken for public purposes than at any time in our history.

NEW YORK

Let us now take some of the states in which the more notable instances of progress may be indicated. Twenty years ago during the administration of Mayor Low, real estate assessments in the city of New York were put on a full value basis and for the first time vacant lots were assessed for what they would bring, "as between a free buyer and a free seller." Later the tax department of the city had as its president the Hon. Lawson Purdy, and during his incumbency the tendency was to take an ever-increasing amount of land value through the strict and honest appraisal of the very valuable land of New York—the most valuable land in the world save in London.

In September, 1920, confronted by the severe housing shortage, the lawmakers of Albany borrowed a leaf from the book of Single Tax and passed a permissive act by which new dwellings might be exempted from taxation for a period of ten years. New York City and six other cities of the state immediately availed themselves of the permission. Of course, there is little in common between the Single Taxer's proposal to take all the rent of land, or even as much of it as is needed for government expenses, and a measure which seeks to relieve the housing shortage by the exemption from taxation of new dwellings. Still, Single Taxers were encouraged by the practical recognition of so much of their teachings, and were glad to welcome an illustration in the great city of New York of the stimulus afforded to one great industry by decreasing the tax burdens.

The effect of this exemption has been marked. *The Real Estate Record and Guide*, of New York, is authority for the statement that "more construction is now under way than ever before in the history of the city." Reports of the superintendents of the building bureaus show that on June 30, 1922, there were under construction in the city of New York 7,504 one-family houses, 6,366 two-family houses and 998 apartments to accommodate 23,791 families, a total of accommodations for about 40,000 families, capable of housing the entire population of a city the size of Atlanta or Omaha. These totals do not include dwellings built as a result of the stimulus of tax exemption and completed after assessment day, but before June 30.

PITTSBURGH

The Pittsburgh half rate on improvements, which was inaugurated with a ten per cent. exemption that has now reached forty per cent. and is to continue until a fifty per

cent. exemption is reached, is another notable experiment on Single Tax lines. The Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce and the Allied Boards of Trade of that city have given it unqualified endorsement.

NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota in 1917 provided for the assessment of land at thirty per cent. of its value, and improvements on farm land at five per cent. of their value, which would result in such improvements paying only one-fifth of the tax paid by land of similar value. Cities were permitted to adopt a similar plan if they choose. In 1919, however, a new law was enacted providing that land, railroads and other utilities and business buildings should be assessed at one hundred per cent. of their actual value; buildings used for homes on city lots, live stock, personal property and farm machinery generally, to be assessed at fifty per cent. of value, while farm buildings and improvements are exempted entirely.

MINNESOTA

In other states there have been advances which have passed almost unnoticed by press or persons outside those states. Minnesota is a case in point. From 1881 to 1897 the valuable iron mines of that state paid nothing in taxes for local or state purposes. But in the latter year these lands were subjected to taxation by unanimous vote in the house, and only four negative votes in the senate, despite the efforts of a powerful lobby. Since then they have paid several millions for schools, roads, township, village, county and city improvements. In 1921 the legislature passed another bill that will give to the state an additional four million dollars—all land value, no tax on capital or mining operations, but just the land value in the ore.

CALIFORNIA

Mention should not be omitted of the method by which the maintenance and operation of the irrigation systems in California are paid for. The irrigation law of that state as originally adopted provided for the taxation of both land and improvements. But in 1909 the law was amended limiting assessments in all new irrigation districts to land values only and permitting the five irrigation districts then existing to adopt the new system by a majority vote of the resident land holders. Today more than 1,500,000 acres of California land located in the most fertile valleys and the richest section of the state, is operated under the Single Tax system. This is so extensive an application of the principle of land value taxation and exemption of improvements (the Single Tax) that it deserves more attention than has been given to it.

CANADA

Crossing the border into Canada, we find that that country has made many important advances toward the

Single Tax. In 1911 the city of Vancouver, British Columbia, abolished taxes on improvements. This was heralded far and wide as the Single Tax in operation. Of course it was not. The low taxes on land values still permitted speculation in land, and exemption of improvements caused a building boom which further increased land values. The war called for additional revenue, and the Vancouver council then resorted to the taxation of improvements, though a partial exemption still continued.

The Vancouver experiment has been pointed to as a failure of the Single Tax in practice. But this is a superficial view of what was done. The building boom that resulted from the exemption of buildings was, in fact, a demonstration of the stimulus given to industry by the removal of tax burdens. Had there been any real knowledge of the effects of this mode of taxation, or any disposition based upon such knowledge to make an adequate trial of the system, the result would have been different. As it was, it left us with no available data on which to base conclusions.

But happily Canada did not need such evidence. The city of Edmonton had already made somewhat halting advances toward the same system; Victoria has abolished all taxation of improvements; the smaller cities of Alberta province, Medicine Hat, Alberta and Lethbridge, entirely exempt improvements and levy taxes for local purposes almost entirely on land values.

Municipalities in Manitoba obtain their revenues mainly from a tax on land values. In Winnipeg land is assessed at full value, and improvements at two-thirds value. The cost of its water supply, more than \$15,000,000, is made up by a special tax on land values.

In Alberta and Saskatchewan provinces the rural municipalities derive all revenues for local purposes from land values alone; the towns, cities and villages derive some revenue from improvements, but mainly from land values.

The principle of the Single Tax has been recognized in levying taxes for purely provincial purposes. Manitoba exempts farm stock and improvements; Saskatchewan levies an "unearned increment" tax; Alberta, in its first charter, provided for a general tax on land values to the exclusion of improvements, but modified by business and income taxes. These last have been abandoned, leaving the land tax to provide the necessary provincial revenues.

When the war came, and new sources of revenue seemed to be needed, there were instances of the return to the taxation of improvements. But these were not many or important. And in no case was the full assessment of improvements restored. That system is dead in Canada. The whole course of her legislation is heading toward the complete liberation of industry, and Single Taxers of the Dominion believe that the goal to which they are traveling is almost within hailing.

AUSTRALIA

Looking toward Australia for examples of Single Tax progress, we find Sydney, with a population of 800,000, and called "the New York of Australia," comes first in importance. This city wholly exempts improvements, nor is there any tax on personal property.

In Queensland since 1902 the policy of land value "rating" has been in full operation; in South Australia in thirteen municipalities for about ten years.

NEW ZEALAND

The movement in New Zealand received its early impetus from Sir George Gray, first Governor of New Zealand and one of the most remarkable men of the century. Sir George was deeply impressed on reading "Progress and Poverty," and he fathered legislation designed to prevent land speculation. Succeeding administrations repealed much of this. Graduated land taxes intended to break up the great estates were only partially effective, since "dummy holders" were easily substituted.

In its local taxation, however, New Zealand has made the greatest strides toward the Single Tax. More than 167 local authorities "rate," as they say, on land values.

ARGENTINA

The Argentine is one of the few countries where the Socialist leaders accept the Single Tax as the basic reform the settlement of which is regarded as a prior condition to the development of any plans for a reorganized society.

In the province of Cordoba, in the Argentine, the bulk of the state revenue is collected from a land value tax. For many years the "real property tax" in Uruguay outside of Montevideo and other municipalities, has been levied on land values exclusively. In Montevideo an admirable system of property valuation exists under which land values and improvement values are kept distinct. Under the late government a bill was brought in with official support exempting improvements entirely. The present president is credited with the intention to revive this proposal.

BRAZIL

The state of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, claims to have been the first instance of the municipal Single Tax in operation in South America. Exemption of improvements exists in the city of Garibaldi, in that state.

The state government of Sao Paulo, Brazil, has initiated at the request of the Sao Paulo Agricultural Society, the study of the methods of assessment and taxation of land values in Uruguay, with a view of adopting measures necessary for the shifting of taxes from improvements to land values exclusively. The president of the state of Sao Paulo is a Single Taxer.

TRANSVAAL

In the Transvaal, in South Africa, land value taxation has prevailed in most localities since 1916.

GERMANY

It should be noted that the new constitution of the German republic declares that "All the increase in land values not due to the expenditure of capital and labor must be used for communal benefits." This clause, going beyond a merely permissive declaration, is the first instance of such a statement in the organic law of any nation. No step has yet been taken to make this declaration operative.

I have purposely made this article a record of achievement. The time when the entire rental value of land will be taken for public purposes may be yet a long way ahead, but events are crowding one another and nearly every country in the world is making some favorable gesture toward the principle.

(Through the generous gift of Mr. Harry H. Willock, of Pittsburgh, we are enabled to offer this article in pamphlet form for free distribution in quantities on the payment of postage alone.—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.)

Shall There Be Another International Conference?

IN view of the great importance of The International Conference on the Taxation of Land Values last August in Oxford, in calling general attention to our ideas and strengthening international cooperation for freedom and justice it has been suggested by different parties that these international gatherings be continued.

At the conference in Oxford it was proposed by Senor Antonio Albendin from Spain, that the next conference should be held in Copenhagen, 1926. The delegates were in sympathy with that proposal, and the Danish conveners appreciated the honor and promised to bring the proposal before the friends in Denmark.

Such a great undertaking as an international convention, however, can only be carried on by strong and united cooperation and careful preparation. Therefore the delegation has secured the support of the different Danish organizations working for the taxation of land values or the collection of the economic rent of the land, namely:

The Danish Henry George Union (den danske Henry George Forening) the Danish Smallholders Organizations, (de samvirkende danske Husmandsforeninger), the Christian Social League (kristeligt socialt Forbund) and the League of justice (Retsforbundet). Those organizations were in hearty agreement with the proposition and desired to aim at having the conference already in August 1925, as that time was considered most opportune for the cause in Denmark.

The four organizations named appointed a committee to make the preparatory arrangements.

In behalf of those organizations we wish to communicate with our friends and cooperators singly or as representatives for their respective organizations and put to you the following questions:

1 Does your organization intend to send a delegate to the third international Conference on the Taxation of Land Values to be held in Copenhagen 1925 or in 1926?

2 Does your organization wish to participate in a financial guarantee in order to secure the considerable expenses incurred by such an undertaking?

3 What time do you wish the Conference to be held?

4 Would you kindly inform the Secretary of other existing organizations in your country, which also work for the taxation of land values and from which participation in the Conference may be expected?

If the Conference meets with general approval and the necessary accession is secured, it is supposed to last 8-10 days. Part of the time will be used for lectures and discussions, and part of it for excursions to places of interest to the delegates.

The committee suggests, that each country by itself ought to appoint its official speakers and after the opening of the Conference an international committee is to be elected, which is to conduct the proceedings of the Conference.

With faith in our cause and hope for its victory for the benefit of the suffering humanity, we greet you as friends and co-workers.

INGENIOR F. FOLKE, President of the Henry George Union.

REV. CHR. NORLEV, Secretary of the Christian Social League.

M. HENRIKSEN, Secretary of the Danish Small Holders Organizations.

FRU SIGNE BJORNER, Vice president of the League of Justice.

ABEL BRINK, The Secretary of the Conference.

H. A. Clausensvej 25, Gentofte, Danmark.

From The Condition Of Labor

WE propose leaving land in the private possession of individuals, with full liberty to give, sell, or bequeath it—simply to levy on it for public uses a tax that shall equal the annual value of the land itself, irrespective of the use made of it or the improvements on it. And since this would provide amply for the need of public revenue, we would accompany this tax on land values with the repeal of all taxes now levied on the products and processes of industry, which taxes, since they take from the earnings of labor, we hold to be infringements on the rights of property.

This we propose, not as a cunning device of human ingenuity, but as conforming human regulation to the will of God.—HENRY GEORGE in his Answer to the Pope.