

Eureka!

by JAMES PETERSON

TAXES, taxes, taxes! Like the weather, taxes are something people are always talking about but, unlike the weather, the ridiculously high, unnecessary and unfair taxation we have today can-and-should-be lessened if not completely removed!

How many of you reading this have said to yourselves or to someone else when you have received your pay envelope or check, "Oh, my God! Look at that tax taken out of my pay"? Everyone who earns an income feels the tax pinch but the common laborer, that is, anyone who exerts his energy in the production of a commodity or, let us include even those who render services, however, excluding those "professional" people who may have means of off-setting or shifting the tax—these people feel it most.

We have federal taxes, state taxes and municipal taxes. From the moment we are born and all during our lifetime until death—no!—even after death, we are taxed. Almost all of us pay taxes. We grumble, yell, complain, but however, we still pay. Some of us pacify ourselves by saying taxes are necessary for the stability and maintenance of our country. This is a black lie! We absolutely do not need taxation to the degree which it is applied, if we need it at all.

We all know that taxes breed liars, crooks and thieves, and make basically honest and decent citizens the victims of "guilt complexes" because they have chosen, not what conscience tells them is right and just, but instead have done what circumstances demand. I was about to say that our present system of taxation is for the birds but, I am certain, that if our system of taxation could be so imposed, the

James Peterson is a new Henry George School student in Brooklyn. Though he never wrote anything for publication before, he read *Progress and Poverty* and then felt an uncontrollable desire to "let people know." His first article was sent to his union paper, but he feels he did not convey enough of Henry George's philosophy, so he will keep trying. "Eureka," in a somewhat longer version, was used as the editorial in the December-January issue of *The Amalgamated Foundry Worker's Bulletin* which reaches nearly all the United States and Canada.

birds would immediately, swiftly fly to some place in the world where the taxation was more to their liking.

Ever since I can remember I was concerned about the "tax" situation. I often wondered too, why there had to be so much heartache, misery, trouble and poverty in the world. Although I thought about these things I never could find any answer. Also; I am not the most religious guy in this world but I do believe in God. I often said to myself, "If there is a God, and He is good and kind and fair, how can He let so many people in this world suffer without helping them?" Then one day it happened! I had found the answer. I read a book named *Progress and Poverty*, and I said eureka!

Because of the limited space I can not explain the feeling that raced through me. Here, in this magnificent book I found not only the answer to the cause of industrial depressions, poverty, misery and heartache but, an idea of taxation dug out of the files of history which exposes our present-day system of taxation for what it is: an ever increasing cancer that lives off wages of the poor while the unaffected rich get richer!

Of course at this point you must be

wondering how could we possibly eliminate our present system of taxation or at least 90 per cent of our taxation and still maintain all that we do in the United States plus what we do abroad. Here is the idea. Eliminate all or as many of the taxes we now have to cope with as possible, and substitute just one tax, just a single tax! Apply a tax to the *value of land*, irrespective of improvements and 90 per cent of our social problems are solved.

Questions will come into your mind like, "if this idea is so good why hasn't it been done before," and, "What about the people who OWN the LAND upon which the tax will fall," or, "even if this tax on the VALUE of land could be legally applied where would all the money collected go and again would we collect enough tax this way to meet all our expenses"?

The reason we have industrial depressions, low wages, low interest, unemployment, poverty, misery and enormously high rent is because of *land monopolizers*—people who hold land out of use until the value of land goes sky high, then, either they sell their land at an enormous profit, or they rent or lease it at rates that are so high that the entire country is ultimately adversely affected. Hard to believe? Just stop and think about it! Is there any land in your community not being used? Why??

I contend that the answer to our tax problem is contained in the book *Progress and Poverty*, published by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 50 East 69th Street, New York. I emphatically recommend its purchase and I am certain you'll cherish it always.

Hall of Fame Elections

This year, besides a Presidential election, there will be an election of prominent Americans of the past to the Hall of Fame. The name of Henry George has been placed in nomination. It would help if you would write a letter endorsing his nomination and telling why you think George should be elected. Send your letter to the Hall of Fame, 53 Washington Square South, New York 12, N.Y.

Henry George was born in Philadelphia on September 2, 1839 and died in New York on October 29, 1897. This information is requested on the form.

DETROIT CONFERENCE—1960 MODEL

The 16th Annual Conference of the Henry George School of Social Science will be held in Detroit, Michigan from Wednesday, July 6th to Sunday, July 10th, at the Pick-Shelby Hotel. There will be an interesting program, fragments of which will leak out gradually in HGN. Put a circle right now around the dates on your calendar and around Detroit on your big U.S. map, and make your plans to be there.

NEW YORK ELECTS NEW TRUSTEE

Levi E. (Lee) Bottens, a New York attorney in charge of the Certified Life Underwriter Training Council with headquarters in Washington, D.C., has been elected to the board of trustees of the Henry George School. He took the courses in Fundamental Economics and Science of Political Economy in 1954, after having been indoctrinated informally over the luncheon table by Lancaster M. Greene. The following two years he taught the basic course at New York headquarters. He will teach a class in Fundamental Economics in Silver Spring, Maryland, next month.

The resignation of Dr. Geoffrey W. Esty of Princeton, New Jersey, long a valued member of the board of trustees of the Henry George School in New York, has been accepted with regret. He is president of the New Jersey Henry George School.