

Pushing the Voorhis Bill

NEW YORK—The Henry George Legislative Committee, Walter Fairchild, Chairman, 15 Park Row, New York, N. Y., comments as follows on the Joint Resolution (H. J. Res. 338) proposing a Constitutional Amendment to provide for a tax on land values and intangible franchise rights, which was introduced in the House of Representatives July 27, last, by Congressman Jerry Voorhis of California. (The text of the Voorhis resolution was published in the September FREEMAN.)

"The land tax would raise five billion dollars yearly. Congressman Voorhis points out that Congress is now powerless to prevent private holders of ground leases, oil leases, coal, mineral rights and power concessions from reaping the benefit of the tremendous increase in the demand for raw materials due to the war.

"Rents and royalties on private holdings of natural resources have gone up by leaps and bounds. War demands have multiplied the value of private holdings ten, twenty and thirty fold. There is no way to put

'ceiling' prices on land value. Wild cat speculation in land values for sites for Army and Navy encampments, training fields, airports, defense plants, and for homes and business sites adjacent to these locations has become a national scandal. For instance, Virginia farm lands worth \$50 an acre in the farmer's hands, now near a defense plant, are held at \$1,600 an acre by land speculators. This causes inflation of prices and at present is unchecked. Land value speculation absorbs war workers' wages.

"Sales taxes on food, clothing and necessities raise prices and come out of the daily wages of the workers. This reduces their buying power and forces new wage increases. Committees of Congress are seeking new sources of public revenue. The taxation of land values is the answer to their problem."