

much like decreeing that boilers shall not burst. As long as the economic conditions of war are retained, no artificial arrangement like a League of Peoples can permanently guarantee the maintainance of peaceful relations.

To the political autocracy that is fast being destroyed, as well as the Bolshevism now threatening so many of the countries of Europe, Single Taxers have the only answer. Socialism shades into one or the other; it is all autocratic or all Bolshevik. If socialism were a tenable economic theory, if a stable society were possible under State socialism, with its inevitable tyranny over the individual, socialism might provide a refuge from both autocracy and that strange form of disintegration which we have learned to label Bolshevik. The rule of the Huns and vandals of our cities which Henry George indicated as a danger to civilization, and who include great numbers of the disinherited, might involve the ruin of the world. Such ruin could be postponed but not definitely halted by a socialism with an army to keep in check the violent disciples of disorder.

For Bolshevist and socialist are alike in this, that to neither is there a philosophy of a natural order. To the socialist every ill requires a law, and as these ills appear to be countless, the remedies must also be countless. Bureaus and departments of control, regulation and adjustments, everywhere multiplied, until the individual staggers into limbo, lost in the State! This, or Bolshevism, make your choice!

Happily there is yet another choice. Single Taxers would trust the natural order. But they would first open the earth, and they would remove the burdens under which industry staggers. They would abolish that form of privilege on which nearly all privilege rests, and from which—as Karl Marx in one of his lucid moments declared—all exploitation proceeds. What is the use of all these laborious artificial social adjustments that are proposed if the earth be not free to man? And how little need for them with a free earth!

Bolshevism is not a phenomenon of the viciousness inherent in men; it is not born of the malformed intellect of minds like some of the Russian leaders. It is a manifestation of energy misdirected by poverty, insufficient food, and lack of opportunity. It is the consciousness of the disinherited let loose in anger. It is the anger of the propertyless against property—but of men made propertyless through no fault of their own, but by reason of institutions. Let us not forget that. The product of this anger is Lenine and Trotsky—the Marats, not the Dantons, of the economic revolution. And let this be remembered, too,—we are preparing the soil for other and more dangerous Marats than these questionable figures that dominate the Russian situation. They are the Vandals from within whom Henry George prophesied might come.

What should Single Taxers do, and do at once? We must first declare a policy of aloofness, standing aside from the

political squabbles and contests over non-essentials. We must declare our political solidarity. We must fight for our own—*politically*. In States where it is possible State-wide Single Tax measures must be introduced. These must in all cases make our demands *in full*. Let not the timid fear. We are not likely to win with these. But they will call out the full strength of the movement, and will enlist new strength. Where the vote is large, as it is certain to be after a few contests, measures conceding some degree of our demands, will originate in the legislatures of the States. For their is nothing politicians fear so much as votes, and there is nothing else they so much respect.

In the national field we should urge the adoption of a Federal Land Valuation Act. We have been told that there are seventy-five Single Taxers in Congress. Let us know who they are—since their identity seems not to have been disclosed to date. Voting as a solid body they would be enough to secure for us what even newer countries like Australia have and what Great Britain started out to do when the war interrupted.

We should ascertain what is their stand on Lane's Land Settlement scheme for the returned soldiers, and we should keep up a continuous fire on this and like plans to camouflage the great social question. Whether there are five or seventy-five Single Taxers in Congress their influence can be exerted. We refrain from what might seem like an unkind comment that at a time when there were only six Single Taxers in Congress they made a noise like seventy-five—not the seventy-five silent ones we hear about.

This should be our immediate programme in State and nation. Everything else should be subordinated to it. That there are at the same time means and methods of propaganda goes without saying, and in another column we summarize some of these. It will give enough to occupy the thought and activity of every worker. But these are only means to feed a movement that must be considered from now on as *political. and which if not political, is nothing.*

A Word with Mr. Gompers

WASHINGTON is reported to be greatly agitated over the declaration of Samuel Gompers, as President of the Pan-American Labor Conference at Laredo, Texas, on Nov. 16th, that American labor would defend the economic advantages it had gained during the war. It is significant that Washington was not at all agitated by the declaration, two days before, of William H. Barr, President of the National Founders' Association, that the eight-hour day would have to be abolished and wages materially lowered from their present scale. Washington lost an excellent opportunity for anticipating Gompers in his defense of the interests of labor, and thereby justified the prompt and energetic challenge of the labor leader.

The incident has revealed Washington for what it really is, reactionary and out of sympathy with economic readjustments in favor of labor and all productive forces of the nation. We fervently trust that the leaders of the labor

movement will not, on their side, lose another opportunity, viz., that of associating in their struggle the productive forces just mentioned, which unfortunately are seldom classed with labor in its organized expression and which yet suffer from the same economic and fiscal disabilities. Has organized Labor no clear conception of what these fundamental disabilities are? To go into the final struggle for economic justice with such paltry devices as the eight-hour day and the standard wage is to handicap the movement unfairly. A larger, more comprehensive strategy is necessary, embracing the fundamental economic forces, to which such items as hours of labor and rates of wages are irrevocably subject. May we not expect that, in this great crisis and opportunity of service to humanity, the responsible leaders of labor will consider well the task they have undertaken? History has so often written in colossal disaster the final judgment, "*Weighed in the balance and found wanting*," upon the leaders of great popular uprisings.

Let us put the matter plainer: Will Mr. Gompers allow a controversy over superficial, fictitious and unstable economic effects, such as nominal wages and hours of labor, to camouflage and prejudice the real issue, that of fundamental causal forces, such as the fiscal and other relations of labor in all its forms to its final and only essential opportunity—the land? Only with a right adjustment of these relations, can labor attain to its right and only equitable wage, viz., the full product of its free, unhampered effort.

The Fiscal Basis for Germany's War Indemnity

WE commend for consideration by the American representatives in the approaching Peace negotiations a suggestion advanced by Mr. Leonard Tuttle, in a letter appearing in the New York press of the 15th of Nov. Dealing with Germany's liabilities to the countries which have suffered from her intolerable assault, Mr. Tuttle makes the following suggestion:

"All real estate in Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Turkey should be seized and the rents collected by the Allied governments until the full war costs are paid. The landlord junker class in those countries were the real war makers, who hoped to enrich themselves still further by the plunder of a conquered world. It is only fair and just that they should be compelled to pay fully for all the damage done, both financial and physical, to people and governments of the nations allied against them.

"It would make no difference to the German workman or farmer whether he paid his rent to a German landlord or to the Allied governments. If an indemnity of a hundred billions were collected in that way, it would fall largely on the junker property-owning classes who caused the war and, therefore, ought to pay for it."

The suggestion of Mr. Tuttle is quite in line with fiscal opinions already advanced by responsible German authorities, when considering the case of the recently conquered Russian provinces. Take, for instance, the proposals of

Dr. Bernhard Dernburg, former Imperial German Secretary of State for Colonies, published in the *New York Times* so recently as June 2 of this year, when the German dream of world conquest seemed, to the German mind, assured.

After referring to the German project of settling in the ex-Russian province of Courland some million and a half German farmers who had previously been scattered over Russia, and to the offer of the Courland nobility to cede one-third of their possessions at pre-war prices, in anticipation of the advantages certain to accrue to them from the opening of the German market and the construction of roads, railroads, etc., Dr. Dernburg continues:

"These considerations show the enormous increase in value which the Courland possessions will experience as a result of the new order of affairs, connection with an export territory for agricultural products, such as the German Empire; safety in the country, the disappearance of chicanery, well-ordered administration, higher prices for products of the field, forest and fisheries, represent manifold increase in Courland land values. If, then, a third of the large private land holdings is ceded at pre-war prices, this not only does not represent a sacrifice, but there even falls into the lap of the landed nobility a tremendous 'unearned' increment. . . .

"The unearned increment in value has, under German law, frequently in the past been counterbalanced by cession of land in favor of the State. The colonial law—and here similar conditions obtain—declares that the individual owners must cede as much of their land holdings as is represented by the increased value due to the establishment of public institutions, railroads, etc. This healthy principle should be accepted by the law-making corporations of Courland also. . . . From all this it follows that, before cession of land in return for unearned increment, there must first of all be established from land a fund for cultural purposes, the returns of which are to be available for the exploitation of the land through railroads, roads and public institutions. Upon the strength of such a land fund, it would be easier, too, to bring about the necessary furnishing of moneys, inasmuch as then it would require a shorter exchange credit."

It needs very little modification of this German plan of Dernburg for the development of the new German-Russian colony, in order to insure the settlement of liabilities of another and more pressing order which must have a prior claim on the economic resources of the German Empire. Just as the land of Courland was to bear the burden of the development of the new State, so now the same "healthy principle," as Dernburg terms it, should be the basis of the plan for assuring the liquidation of the just bill of damages soon to be presented by the Allied powers. The proposal to make a first lien on what Dernburg calls alternately unearned increment and land values has the great advantage, from the creditor nations' point of view, that it does not lessen, but rather stimulates the productive capacity of the debtor nations. Any other derivation of the huge payments to be made by Germany can only weaken her and imperil her solvency.