

## Are Progressive Real Estate Men Beginning to See the Light?

WE ARE pleased to quote from the *Real Estate News*, of Chicago, a sentiment which seems to show a disposition to revise extreme views as to the status of real estate interests. The author, Mr. Leo Day Woodworth, Secretary New York Council of Real Estate Interests, after criticizing the present craze for paternalism in government, adds:

"As the various visionary phases become squeezed out, we obtain new realization that there are problems to which real estate interests should address themselves at once; that the right of protection to ownership of land and the need of government to preserve its value, involve certain social obligations to our fellow citizens; that failure to recognize this social obligation may cause more extreme reaction than is consistent with maintenance of values or than the situation actually warrants."

As real estate owners come to realize that the accumulated effect of our medley of tax burdens falls finally upon real estate, the inquiry as to the equity of the fiscal distribution, or as Mr. Woodworth calls it, 'social obligation,' will be stimulated. It is an encouraging sign that this issue has been raised in such a representative journal as the *Real Estate News*. As the issue becomes clearer by discussion, we may expect progressive owners to resent more and more vigorously the fiscal premiums enjoyed by their unprogressive neighbors.

A further hint of the realization of a solidarity of interests between industrial and progressive real estate interests may be found in the fact that the *Real Estate News* and *The Nation's Interest* the official organ of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, both quote with approval the following words from a recent speech of Senator Curtis, of Kansas, before Congress:

"The whole world gropes for the proper method of getting land into the ownership of the people," said Senator Curtis, of Kansas, before Congress recently.

Land settlement problems are a particularly serious issue in the Western States. A proper solution cannot be found without due consideration being given to every phase of colonization, including land values, markets, transportation facilities, living conditions, climate, and many other important issues.

It is not sufficient simply to reclaim a few thousand acres of land by irrigation, drainage, or stump removal. A reclaimed acre has no value but its productive value. For it to produce it must be used. The use of the acre implies man labor by owner or employee. If the man for the acre is not already there, most serious thought must be given to the problem of getting him there and his coming must be on such a basis that he can stay.

The federal government and the Western States have jointly and independently handled various projects, the ultimate success of many of them being very doubtful. Most of the government land openings have been unsatisfactory because of the class of people attracted by the lure

of getting something for nothing and the attending evils that go hand in hand with such a quest."

The anomaly and scandal of idle ownership of land, combined with its special immunity from social and fiscal obligations, should be perceptible to the meanest intelligence—all the more so to the keen intelligence and balanced judgment of business men and progressive land owners.

## More of Mayor Creamer's Activities

AT a recent hearing before the Massachusetts legislative committee on taxation, Mayor Creamer advocated amending the constitution of the State, which now requires all property to be taxed in the same way, so that taxes on industry and its products could be reduced, and the burden shifted to the owners of valuable sites. He showed the committee a full page advertisement in a Boston newspaper calling upon Massachusetts industries to locate in Baltimore, where machinery is exempt from taxation. Mayor Creamer also told of his efforts to make a fairer adjustment of the tax burden under existing law. By his direction, the assessments of buildings in Lynn have been reduced by more than \$2,000,000 since he became mayor, and the valuation of land has been increased \$10,000,000; while the tax rate has been reduced from \$23 to \$21.80 per \$1,000.

Commenting on this hearing, the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican* says:

"There can be no doubt that a reduction of taxation on industries—manufacturing, farming, merchandising, etc.—would stimulate industry. The opposition comes chiefly from speculators in sites and other natural resources, profiting from increase in value of their sites as the State increases in population and industry. However, a growing resentment to speculation in necessities of life is apparent all over the country, and there seems no good reason why this State should favor speculation in the fundamental necessity—the earth—at the expense of productive industry."

## A New Statement of The True Laissez Faire.

TRUE statesmanship consists in discovering the way God is going, and then moving things out of the way for Him."  
DR. FRANK GUNSAULUS, Chicago.

SAYS A. B. Garretson, president of the Order of Railway Conductors:

"It is the fashion now to denounce Bolshevism, but when you consider the underlying causes that make for Bolshevism they are an indictment of the whole social structure."

Labor conditions in England gave Mr. Garretson an opportunity for comparison.