

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

WHOSE WORLD

BY

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F A C T S

that mean

PROSPERITY or CHAOS
in World Affairs

WHOSE WORLD



“ONE WORLD” is the planet Earth. It is a spinning ball on which we travel some 68,000 miles per hour. Inhabiting this one world, are a small number of human beings (just over 2 billions) who are entirely dependent upon the earth for food, clothing, and shelter, no matter on what part of it they live, and regardless of their color, race, speech, creed or customs. Each of these human beings occupies the earth for a short period of some seventy or eighty years.

The resources of this earth are so abundant, that with the aid of science, these few human beings are now able to produce far more than the necessities of life. They may have luxuries as well. Their needs can be lavishly provided for, if only mankind has freedom of access to the earth.

It is only a step then, to the problem of why millions of these human beings cannot procure everything they need, and why they are so shut out from the resources of the earth that they cannot obtain even the necessities of life.

Let us look around today. Our material progress has been amazing. The radio flashes news around the world in a matter of minutes. An aeroplane dashes around the globe in two or three days. Human beings seem to have conquered the sea and air; yet

they have not conquered unemployment, poverty, depressions, strikes and wars. We know that whatever may be the cause, happiness, peace and plenty are generally unattainable by the majority of the two billion human beings inhabiting this spinning earth.

I believe we can correct this state of world affairs. I believe that the monopoly of the God-given resources of this earth and the man-made, unnatural trade barriers are fundamentally responsible for the present world situation. One writer put it this way: "We know that private ownership of a single acre of land gives the title-holder the power to say who may come on this acre, how long he may stay there, what he may do while there, as well as how much of his production he must part with for the permission to be there and work. It is obvious that if one man owned all the earth, he would have the power to regulate the lives of all the rest of humanity."

At this point I should like to quote from a speech by the late Sir George Fowlds of New Zealand. It seems to throw much light upon the danger of the present situation. Sir George said: "It is estimated that when Persia perished, 1 per cent of the people owned all the land; Egypt went down when 2 per cent owned 97 per cent of all the wealth; Babylon died when 2 per cent owned all the wealth and Rome expired when 1,800 men possessed all the then-known world." What do we find in the Twentieth Century, A.D.? Whose world is this?

GREAT BRITAIN

There has been no official Government record of land valuation or ownership in Great Britain for many years. Lloyd George's government began work on this, but his successor discontinued the program, and all succeeding governments have ignored it.

Graham Peace in his book, *The Great Robbery*, published in 1933, shows that when the last survey was made, some 40,000 persons in Great Britain (one tenth of 1 per cent) owned nearly three-quarters of the country. The remaining one-quarter was held by about 2 per cent, while the rest of the people (some 44 million) owned no land whatever.

In Scotland, 96.4 per cent of the population owned no land. It was held by 3.6 per cent.

In Ireland, the same survey showed that 1.4 per cent owned all the land (some 20 million acres), while about five million inhabitants "held not a single inch of land that they could call their own."

Mr. Peace further states: "Small wonder that between May, 1851 and December, 1920, no less than 4,388,199 natives—the real owners of Irish soil—emigrated for permanent residence abroad. The great majority went to America."

May I again recall the figures? Scotland, 3.6 per cent owned all the land; Ireland, 1.4 per cent; Great Britain, 2 per cent; Egypt, 2 per cent; Persia, 1 per cent; Rome, 2 per cent. These figures have an ominous and startling significance. They recall Pliny's statement: "Land Monopoly ruined Rome."

We see this same trend in our present civilization. In his book *Progress and Poverty*, the American economist and philosopher, Henry George, wrote: "Whoever will look may see that though our civilization is apparently advancing with greater rapidity than ever, the same cause which turned Roman progress into retrogression is operating now."

Those who hold titles to land in Great Britain seem to have been quite successful in escaping taxation on their holdings. Land that is held out of use, even today, is exempt from taxation. In London and many other cities, buildings are also exempt if they

are not producing a revenue. Is it any wonder that industry and business, food and clothing, gasoline and tea and almost all commodities are taxed so heavily that people are finding it impossible to carry the taxation load? In spite of its obvious injustice, this system of exempting land from taxation is being advocated by certain interests in America.

There is no secret about the large estates in Great Britain and how they were acquired. In 1938 the Marquess of Bute sold his estates, said to be valued at £40,000,000, and which included half the City of Cardiff—some 20,000 houses, 1,000 shops, several theatres, a huge steel works and numerous factories. These estates are said to cover 111,000 acres. From his coal royalties alone, the Marquess' income amounted to £109,277 or over a half a million dollars a year. In testifying before the Coal Commission, the Marquess said that the property had been granted to his ancestor in the year 1547 or 1550. One of the Commissioners pointed out that King Edward VI. died at the age of fifteen, and that this "ancestor" who was one of the "guardians" of the King, had in effect "granted himself" enormous areas of land which were at the time in possession of the Crown.

One of the leading newspapers commented on the sale of these estates as follows: "While every Welshman sings 'Land of My Fathers', a Scots Marquess, with a long and doubtful pedigree sells half their proudest city to an English syndicate which expects to find the enterprise a good investment. A good investment it will be, but not for Wales!"

I should like to say here, that I am not condemning individuals. Landlords are no more responsible in this matter than are other members of society. The private appropriation of economic rent and the monopoly of the earth's resources is not an individual wrong; it is a social wrong.

In 1937, a bill was passed, providing for £66,000,000 (about \$330,000,000.00) to be paid to owners in compensation for their

titles to the coal mines of Great Britain. One Member of Parliament pointed out that in ten years, royalty owners, or those holding title to properties, had received over £50,000,000 (\$250,000,000.00) and the mine operators £19,000,000 (\$95,000,000.00). This man said that he himself had worked in the mines for twenty-two years, and during that period had faced great dangers, run great risks, and was sometimes brought home brutally injured. He drew during that whole period, less than £2,000. (This would average about \$450 a year, which is less than \$40 a month). He pointed out that the mine operators furnished capital, the coal miner furnished his labor in the production of the coal, and the land owner, who did nothing, was awarded this huge sum (\$330,000,000.00) for ceasing to rob the people! (I wonder if the people realize that they themselves must pay this \$330,000,000.00 and so the robbery is perpetuated through taxation).

In Scotland, twenty-five landowners claim to own one-third of all the land in their country. It is said that in one glen from the inhabitants of which Wolfe in the eighteenth century raised a whole regiment of fighting men for Quebec, there is now only one family, that of a game-keeper. Is it any wonder that (except in war time) there is unemployment in Great Britain or in other parts of the world, when men are so shut out from the earth, the source of all wealth?

In fairness to these landowners, I want to say that some of them are apparently unselfish and foresighted enough to see the injustice of the system, and make an effort to correct it. During the war thousands of acres were loaned for the purpose of growing crops and gardens. So far, however, I have seen little evidence of the landowners relinquishing these properties. I was told that one Scottish laird, who owns some thirty or forty thousand acres, had the courage to broadcast a speech in which he told his listeners that he realized the large estates in Scotland must be released, just as those in Denmark had been released some years ago.

Early in 1944, Sir Richard Acland, leader of the Common-

wealth party in England, returned to the nation two big estates valued at one million dollars. These estates, which included the four villages, Selworthy, Allerford, Bossington and Nucombe, had been "owned" by his family for four hundred years. Sir Richard stated that it "troubled his conscience" to continue his ownership of these great natural resources, of British land.



GERMANY

Hitler repeatedly stated that the land of Germany must be released for use, but it would seem that nothing of a really constructive nature was done. In fact, legislation was adopted to prevent the free sale and purchase of land holdings, and to restrict the number of owners of land. It is increasingly evident that it was through the assistance of the landowners that Hitler achieved his power. Dr. Bruning and General Kurt Von Schleicher were forced out of office because they recognized the necessity for land reform, and while Hitler clamoured for "Lebensraum" the 1938 statistical yearbook showed that the ex-Kaiser was still the largest landowner in Germany, with 240,000 acres; that 16 former noblemen owned from 60,000 to 75,000 acres each, of which more than two-thirds was uncultivated forest and wood land, and that these landlords, taxed on what is called "Yield Value" rather than "Selling Value" bear a very small proportion of the extremely high taxes. Figures for 1933 show that while 400 landowners held an average of 13,000 acres each, one million owned only six and one-half acres each and many more millions owned no land whatever.

ITALY

Italy is in somewhat the same position as Germany. More than two-thirds of all Italy is owned by less than 4 per cent of the people. A total of 1,267 families own over 2,000 immense estates, some of which exceed 24,700 acres. These estates are cultivated under methods of tenure that are particularly objectionable. The nobility holds a predominant position in the large real estate companies, which own more than 2,500,000 acres. Fifteen Italian aristocratic families, among whom are to be found the most notable representatives of the Fascist regime, and of Italian finance, own 374 large estates with a total of 1,500,000 acres. Seven hundred and seventy-one members of the nobility hold shares in real estate companies representing a total capital of 1,000,000,000 lire or \$56,200,000.00.

Among the families who occupy high positions in the financial world are Count Pavoncelli, who owns more than 150,000 acres; Marquis Trigona, a close friend of Mussolini, who owns a large estate in Sicily; and the Prince Raspoli, large estate owner in the Rome district and elsewhere. A recent report states: "The noble families and financial connections are those most closely attached to the Fascist regime, whereas the purely territorial aristocracy has its ties with the Vatican."

For the year 1935, official statistics show that about one-half of one per cent of the landowners possessed 47 per cent of all the cultivated land. Some 12,000 men possessed almost as much as the remaining 2,465,922 put together. This situation existed in a country where there are some 350 persons per square mile, a total of 43,000,000 with 40,000,000 owning no land whatever.

I hear again the words of Sir George Fowlds: "Rome expired when 1,800 men possessed all the then-known world!"

HUNGARY

In Hungary, in spite of the so-called "Land Reform" of 1920, 30.3 per cent of all the cultivated land, as late as 1939, consisted of estates of more than 1,400 acres, owned by 1,200 proprietors. The biggest of these was the Esterhazy Estate, its area of 223,287 acres including not less than 159 villages.

One is reminded of the centuries these estates have been controlled by individual families, when it is recalled that Hayden was a musician at the Court of Count Esterhazy nearly 300 years ago, and this is still "Esterhazy" land!

In contrast to these large estates, there were some 1,500,000 small holdings up to five acres, totalling 11.0 per cent of the cultivated area owned by 864,403 people. Farm hands (including their families, in all, about 3,000,000 persons) or one-third of the population, owned no land whatever.



POLAND

In 1937, a report concerning Poland read as follows: "Of Poland's 34,000,000 people, 70 per cent are peasants. These unfortunate people live, or rather exist, in appalling conditions. Their poverty is almost incredible. On the other hand, one Polish aristocrat has an estate of 100,000 acres, and it takes three weeks for him to travel around his property on a tour of inspection. Another nobleman owns 340,000 acres.

In 1942, a report from The London Daily Telegraph referred to the return to London of Major General Carton de Wiart from Poland where "For the last 20 years he has lived eight miles from the Russian border, on a 300,000 acre estate lent to him by one of the Radziwell family. It has some of the best wild fowl shooting in the world . . . Prince Radziwell's property is, indeed, a sportsman's paradise. In addition to its feathered game, it has elk, wild boar, wolves, lynx and bear."

The Times of London, England, stated: "In these Eastern Provinces, the relations between manor house and village were tense in the last 20 years. The Russian armies now entering these Provinces need little encouragement from Moscow, Kiev, or Minsk, to make the White Russian and Ukranian peasantries sieze the estates of the Polish big, or merely substantial landowners."

It would seem clearly evident that the great distress of the Polish people has been a land question, which must sooner or later receive the attention of those who desire peace and happiness for Poland.



CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In recent years, great strides were made toward a more equitable distribution of the natural resources. A land reform administration was appointed to function until 1936. It was then absorbed by the Department of Agriculture, having completed its work of rendering small farms more important in the National economy. Between 1921 and 1930, this administration had increased the number of small farm owners (5 to 25 acres) by 12 per cent. The

25 to 125 acre farm owners had increased 8 per cent. The number of 200 to 1,250 acre farms had increased by 69 persons. Their total acreage, however, was reduced by 775,000 acres or 27 per cent. These figures indicate that a very large proportion of the land of Czechoslovakia was held by a few people.



FRANCE

After the revolution the bourgeoisie was able to appropriate for itself a great part of the estates of the nobility and clergy. Giving this land to the peasants did not achieve the desired results. It aggravated land speculation. A few years ago, the peasants possessed less than one-twelfth of the French soil. Out of 49,000,000 hectares they occupied less than 4,000,000.

In 1939, 96 per cent of the holdings were less than 125 acres each. With a very large proportion of the holdings now in small units, there are many beneficiaries of land speculation. Correction of the system in France would therefore be difficult.



RUSSIA

Prior to 1930, small peasant farming predominated in Russian agricultural economy. By 1936, more than 18 million peasant households or 89 per cent were combined into 250,000 collective farms. In 1928, collective and state farms accounted for 3 per cent of the farm acreage. By 1935, they included over 90 per cent.

Some writers maintain, however, that the Soviet Government has made grants of land in perpetuity. This would indicate a return to the feudal system but reports on the situation are difficult to substantiate.



SPAIN

In Spain a war between the landless and landlords has been fought. Just before this war, 1 per cent of the people owned 51.5 per cent of the land; 14 per cent owned 35.2 per cent of the land; 20 per cent owned 11.1 per cent of the land; 25 per cent owned 2.2 per cent of the land; 40 per cent owned none at all.

One writer says: "Three million agricultural workers, toiling for absentee landlords worked from 12 to 16 hours a day for miserably low wages. More than half of the country was owned by big landlords numbering scarcely 50,000 in a land of 24,000,000 people . . . 9,600,000 (40 per cent) had no land, and a total of 15,600,000 (65 per cent) owned only 2.2 per cent of the land."

The London Evening Standard recently said: "There will be no peace in Spain until the land problem has been satisfactorily solved."

I met a young woman from Spain whose family lost all their possessions. Some of them lost their lives. We talked for hours about the advisability and justice of collecting all ground rent for the public treasury and thus avoiding the evils of land speculation. This method would bring all good land into use and would create "jobs" for millions of people. She had never heard of the idea before, but at the end of our discussion the young woman said: "If only this system had been instituted in Spain, my country would never have been at war."

CHINA

A system of survey and valuation of land was in progress in China in 1936, but for centuries this country has been held by a comparatively few landowners. The Voice of China, a journal advocating the collection of ground rent for revenue and the abolition of taxation on commodities, stated in July 1937, that a committee had been at work for four years and had produced a program for abolishing taxes on commodities and for collecting all land rent for the public treasury. This would not mean the socialization of land or the abolition of titles to land. Some 1,200 delegates were to have met at Nanking in September, 1938. The Japanese invasion frustrated this, and the first building destroyed was the publication headquarters of the Voice of China. Dr. Sun Yat Sen fully understood the evils of China's land system. Whether his followers will correct the system as he would have done, remains to be seen. It is reported on good authority that Chiang Kai-shek has pledged himself to adopt a better land policy.



JAPAN

In regard to Japan, an article states: "It is claimed that Japan must have foreign outlets for its people. Actually, the density of population in Japan is little more than half that of Belgium and only half that of England. But the Japan Year Book, 1936, shows that one-half the arable land in Japan (7½ million acres) is owned by 1,000,000 people or about 1½ per cent of the total population, while some 33,000,000 get their living on rented agricultural land. Of these, 22,000,000 are trying to exist on approxi-

mately one acre per household. Not only must they pay a high rent for that small area, but they are also heavily taxed on the land and on commodities in every day use. It is this that causes the poverty and all the so-called overcrowding or over-population. The cure for these evils and the lack of markets for the Japanese people lies in remedying that situation."

In 1938 I talked with a woman who had spent twenty-five years in Japan. She is a social worker, and she said this: "We used to think that Japan needed more colonies—that she had more people than could be supported on that small area of the earth. Then for a time we thought it was a matter of birth control. The population was growing too rapidly; but lately most of us have decided that the real trouble in Japan is economic. When we see whole families trying to exist on an acre of land upon which they must pay rent and taxes, we have felt that this awful war may be a blessing in disguise, because it will so increase the taxes, that the people cannot submit, but will take steps to obtain more land for themselves, not in China but in their own country!"

Someone said: "More can be made out of man by owning the land he lives on than by owning the man."


Think of twenty-two million people, trying to eke out a living and produce their food, clothing and shelter from one acre of land per family, and paying rent and taxes on that!

The ghastly result of land monopoly in our "One World" is illustrated by the fact that in Japan in 1938, there was an average indebtedness of \$290.00 on every farm. This appalling debt situation is responsible for the fact that Japan's numerous houses of prostitution are largely populated by farm girls who have been sold into virtual slavery to pay farm debts. Their land monopoly is seen again in the spectacle of thousands of Japanese families floating around on sampans all their lives. They cannot pay the price demanded for a place to live on the earth.

NORTHERN NIGERIA (North Africa)

The man who succeeded in instituting what the London Times described as "the most far-seeing measure of constructive statesmanship West Africa has ever known," was the Canadian-born High Commissioner, Sir Percy Giruard. This gentleman recommended "a declaration in favor of the nationalization of the lands of the Protectorate." It was incorporated with native laws—that the land is the property of the people—held in trust for them by chiefs, who have not the power of alienation. This policy was adopted by the Colonial office, and the natives were secure in the possession of their land. The Government imposed land rents instead of taxes.

One of the newspapers stated: "The exclusion of the European land speculator and the denial of the right to monopolize land, was held by the authorities to be essential for the moral and material welfare of the inhabitants." I wonder why other British High Commissioners, or Statesmen, fail to deal with the land question in this way? It seems evident that "The moral and material welfare of the inhabitants" of other parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations could be greatly improved by the same method. I should like to see it tried in India.



AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND

Some effort has been made in this part of the world to restrict the monopolization of land. The following report is significant: "Throughout all Queensland, all New South Wales (including

Sydney) 14 Victorian Municipalities, parts of South Australia and West Australia, also a great part of New Zealand including Wellington, they have adopted municipally this reformed system of raising their revenue. (i.e. Land Value Taxation). All improvements on the land are therefore free from taxation, and so building can go on unrestricted."

The report further states: "In every case the system was adopted without friction except from land speculators, and so just and beneficial is it in practice, that all attempts to revert to the old system of rating improvements have been overwhelmingly defeated by the votes of the ratepayers."

Louis Wallis, in *Burning Question*, (Chicago-Willett Clark & Co., 1937, 75¢), refers to land value taxation in Australia, as follows: "The new method has not been put into exclusive use on a National scale, but it has been employed far enough to prove that it functions effectively, and that the principle is sound." Forty-three per cent of New Zealand's municipalities which include 57 per cent of the population, raise their revenues from land value taxation.



SOUTH AMERICA

Some progress in collecting ground rent for the community has been made in Brazil. Although the rate is very moderate in amount, a number of states have adopted some measure of the policy. There is a strong public support for the Land Value Policy in the capital city of Rio de Janeiro, where a systematic valuation of land has been made in all areas.

In Argentina definite progress has been made in the Province

of Cordoba. Cordoba City introduced a land value rate of taxation in 1927. A number of towns in the northern part of the country have also adopted this policy.

Katherine Carr (Magazine Digest, December 1939) says: "The Government of Argentina is still controlled by the landowners. Land taxes are kept down to practically nothing, while corporation taxes mount. The plight of the peon in the camp, with no land, no school for his children within miles, a mud hut for a home, no sanitation and no medical care, is ignored by a Government run by and for the landowners."

In his book, "Latin America", published in 1936, Stephan Duggan, Director of the Institute of International Education, has this to say: "Estates of from 100,000 acres to 500,000 acres exist today in some of the Latin American countries. The owners of many of these estates spend most of their time in the capitals of Europe, some of them visiting their estates only at intervals. The more progressive statesmen look forward to the breakup of these estates as a result of increasing taxation and advanced legislation."



MEXICO

An article written by the Reverend John O'Brien, Chaplain of the Catholic Students, University of Illinois, gives us some very pointed truths about the situation in Mexico. Reverend O'Brien says: "Mexico, too, has an important lesson and warning for us in America. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the wealth of the church was truly enormous. Such an eminent Catholic historian as Aleman states that the church owned more than half of all the land in Mexico, while her holdings in urban property and

in money were tremendous. She was the chief money-lending agency of the age. Meanwhile, the natives were living in abject poverty, working as peons for a few pennies a day. The National Revolutionary Party now in control of the government makes its appeal to the workers, promising to secure for them a living wage and a fair division of the land among the natives."

"Let it be remembered that as late as 1910, 2 per cent of the population owned 70 per cent of the land, while in the State of Morelos, 2 per cent owned 98 per cent of the land." (We hear again the echo of Egypt . . . 2%; Persia . . . 1%; and Rome).

"The facts of history, past and present, give added emphasis to the words of Pius XI, as to the only effective method of combating Communism, namely, by correcting the gross inequalities of distribution of the goods of life."

The Mexican Government earned the wrath of the Catholic Church by expropriating her lands; similarly it brought down the wrath of European and American holders of oil and farm properties. Expropriation of titles to land with the capital structures built on them has no basis in jurisprudence or social justice. How much better to have preserved diplomatic tranquility by simply collecting the full economic rent of land for the public treasury.



THE UNITED STATES and CANADA

The United States has one-twentieth of the land area of this planet. Canada has another one-twentieth. Together we represent one-tenth of the land area of the world.

Up to the present, we have adopted the land tenure systems

of the European countries and Great Britain. Our ancestors left those countries to escape from the system which had brought them to widespread unemployment and poverty.

They should have been wiser than to set up the same system on this side of the Atlantic. Unemployment was unknown here as long as the frontiers reasonably accessible to markets, were still open, but we have reached the end of the frontiers. Now we must either find a way in which our vacant lands and natural resources can be made available for use, or continue to make the same mistakes that other countries have made, following their course, toward wars, poverty, and national decay. At present, in Montreal, the largest city in Canada, there are a greater number of unimproved lots than improved. There is a farm within the city limits; yet before the war many of the unemployed, with their families, were sent hundreds of miles away, to eke out a living on poor land upon which they could not possibly exist. How much better to have made available to these disinherited people the unused land in Montreal.

In a current publication, I found this comment which I think describes the unemployment situation very well: "When the Pilgrim Fathers landed in America in 1620, they didn't have to run around looking for a boss. They found jobs for themselves with a few simple tools, on the free land, which nature had provided for that very purpose. There is plenty of land left, and all our unemployed could do the same today, were it not for the fact that the land speculators had got in ahead of them." One need only attempt to make use of the vacant land in any of our cities, to find how firmly entrenched are the speculators and landed interests.

Statistics will suffice to point out the general picture in the United States. In California wholesale dispossession of Indians marked the early acquisition of lands by expropriators. Great mountain areas plentifully supplied with timber, mineral and oil were

largely in the control of the Walker interests (owning 17% of the timber lands), William Randolph Hearst, Miller and Lux interests, the Southern Pacific Railway (owning 18% or 900,000 acres), and other great holders. In fact, ten owners possessed nearly 80 per cent of all the timber in California. The aggregate of these interests is so colossal that any program of land reform seems almost hopeless. Possibly nowhere in the United States are landed interests so intermixed with government politics. A number of these great landed interests are known as "The Associated Farmers of California."

The following figures were published a few years ago;

One half of the state of Florida is owned by 182 men whose combined holdings amount to 16,900,000 acres.

In Kansas, a British land company owns 300,000 acres.

In Mississippi, Lady Gordon and others own 2,000,000 acres.

One-twentieth of the entire land area of the United States is owned by 1,694 proprietors of timber lands. Sixteen of the 1,694 own 47,800,000 acres—an average of nearly 3 million acres each!

We see, therefore, that the evils of land monopoly are as great here as in Europe. They will eventually bring the same disastrous results as they have in Europe.

A 1938 report states: "Three-quarters of the farmers in the United States do not own the farms they work. The properties are mortgaged, or the farmers are tenants. Among the one-quarter 'owning', are millionaires on one hand, and poor farmers on the other, whose land will not produce more than the barest living. Tenant farming increased 300 per cent between 1880 and 1935."

The same story is told in city land monopoly. The area of the City of New York is about 315 square miles, or 203,000 acres, embracing a population of 7 million people. Of the population, 11.7 per cent own the land of this area. Land values of the other boroughs are enhanced by the proximity of Manhattan.

Thirteen, out of one million one hundred thousand families in New York, are owners of nearly one-fifteenth of the island of Manhattan, besides possessing great holdings in other boroughs. These thirteen families are: The Astors, Vanderbilts, Rhinelanders, O. B. Potter properties, J. P. Morgan, E. H. Van Ingen, Wendels, Goelets, Ehrets, Gerrys, Charles F. Hoffman Estate, William R. H. Martin, Eugene Hoffman,

New York City is no exception. Any city in the United States would show the same concentration of land ownership.

As already stated, Canada comprises one-twentieth of the land area of this planet. Her early settlers, in many cases granted excessive areas by the King, have perpetuated the system of land monopoly so firmly entrenched in Europe; so that Canada's economic problems are as acute relatively, as any other part of the world. A railroad, intended to unite the provinces and develop the natural resources of Canada, was given land grants covering millions of acres. These acres stretched for miles on both sides of the proposed rail lines. The early settlers hoped through this arrangement by their government to make rapid headway in production and exchange. They discovered that the necessity of purchasing or leasing these railway lands, which they had given away, brought them face to face with land speculation. The rents and prices charged by the railway companies for these lands took almost everything that was produced on them.

High prices were demanded for farms adjacent to or near the railway, since the shipment of grain and all commodities was facilitated. Sites for factories, homes, and other buildings in towns and cities springing up along the railway lines were sold or leased at high prices. The rewards for developing new territory, which should have accrued to all the people, were taken by the owners of the land. Again, may I say, this is not a criticism of companies or individuals. The system is unjust, unwise and inequitable.

Grants of large areas of land were made to others, includ-

ing the Hudson's Bay Company, and as in the case of the railway and other grants, the cost of purchasing or leasing these lands has made the use of them by Canadian citizens next to prohibitive. American citizens are handicapped by the same system.

Various groups are at work for the introduction of a more equitable system in both the United States and Canada.

Let us keep in mind that we can with little difficulty institute a just and equitable system of Rent Socialization in these two countries which make up one-tenth of the land area of the world. This would not mean the socialization of land as in Russia. Titles to land would not be disturbed. We could, by this truly democratic system, prove to the rest of the world that there is a just and permanent solution to the economic problems of unemployment, depressions, poverty, strikes and wars. With an up-to-date land policy private enterprise would operate so that the rewards of industry and invention would accrue to all the people who produce, instead of to those few who now "own" our natural resources.

DENMARK

Because of the progress made in Denmark, previous to the invasion of 1939, I shall outline some observations made there two years earlier.

Denmark had practically the same history of landlords and large estates that we find in Great Britain, the United States, Canada and other parts of the world. The Danish people have known feudalism in its worst sense. They have been through wars, unemployment, discouragement and wretched poverty; but fortunately some of their people were wise enough to see that their

country could not survive under the old system of land ownership. They realized that if special privileges were continued, their little country was doomed, and be it said to their honor, a few land-owners, with large estates, were the first to urge the King and the government to institute land reforms. This meant breaking up their own estates and releasing the natural resources of Denmark to the people. It took away from private individuals the advantage of collecting ground rent which rightly belonged to all the people. The former owners retained sufficient areas for their own use.

In 1938 there was celebrated in Copenhagen, the 150th anniversary of the emancipation of the peasants, through the abolition of the feudal system. During these 150 years the country had taken slow and gradual steps toward a better social system. I can best summarize their progress in the words of their former Minister of Home Affairs, who in 1928 referred to their progress in these words: "From social freedom arose in Denmark, political freedom; and out of that will grow one day, for society, the economic liberty under which free and independent citizens will enjoy the full fruits of their labor, while the community will receive what it creates." (It creates land value).

The policy of taking ground rent (they call it "ground debt") for the public use has been taught in Denmark through the folk schools. At one of these schools, the Principal stated at a lecture I attended in 1937, that the ideas of that great American, Henry George, had influenced Denmark more than any country in the world. Before the war, there was a large measure of rent socialization in effect, with a gradual reduction in the taxation of buildings and improvements. In some cases, this taxation had been entirely eliminated. Denmark, before the war, was considered by many economists, the social laboratory of the world. By taking ground rent for the public use, the slum problem had been eliminated in Copenhagen. Families were developing the suburbs where they could have better living conditions, homes and gardens. There was no tax on buildings up to 10,000 kroner, or about

\$2,500. A small home could be built for \$3,000, so the taxes were very low. As one social worker reported: "The problem of how to make room for those without shelter has simply ceased to exist." "Slum clearance" was no problem there. Given the opportunity, families cleared themselves out of the slums.

The general state of happiness and well-being among the people was noticeable to a visitor. They knew how to cooperate with one another. They knew that when the government spends money, this money doesn't come from Santa Claus, but from the people. Their educational system was such, that there was no illiteracy in the whole country. Eighty-five per cent of the farm homes were electrified. There were paved roads everywhere (with a special narrow strip of pavement for bicycles). Practically every home had a good library. There was one radio to every six or seven persons; a telephone to every ten persons; a motor car to every thirty. I should imagine there was a bicycle for every one. No poverty existed in all of Denmark.

At a meeting in Montreal, I spoke of these conditions. Afterward, a Danish gentleman in the audience said: "I am so glad to hear all these things about my country. I left Denmark fifty-eight years ago. At that time thousands of us left because we couldn't find work. The unemployment and poverty were terrible. Many of us came to Canada and others went to the United States. We decided there were more people than Denmark could support. At that time the population was a million and a half, and now with three and a half million, I am happy to know that slums have disappeared and that everyone can make a good living."

To me, this was just another proof that a better land system, giving the people access to natural resources through the collection of ground rent, can accomplish miracles. Instead of large estates, 66 per cent of the farms were less than 37 acres; 32 per cent were between 37 and 150 acres, while only 2 per cent were over 150 acres. Only 5 per cent of the farms were held by tenants.

(As already stated, in the United States, 75 per cent do not own their farms).

A man in Copenhagen said to me: "So many of you come over here from America to study our Cooperatives and Folk Schools. Don't forget that had it not been for our land reforms, the Folk Schools would not have been possible and the Danish Cooperatives would never have come into being."

Previous to the invasion by Germany, it was an inspiration to visit Denmark and observe at first hand the results of Danish land reforms and to see the practicability of taking the publicly created ground rent for the public treasury, thereby abolishing other taxes. It is to be hoped, when the war is over, this sound economic system will make the Danes once again leaders in world affairs and that other countries, including ours, will copy it.

CONCLUSION

As we look around the world today, surely we should all realize that in future years our minds and energies must be devoted to the task of making this "One World" of ours a world in which every human being will have the necessities of life. The only place from which these necessities can be obtained is Mother Earth. When Mother Earth is monopolized, human beings have no other alternative than to work for the lowest wages that monopoly dictates. We have noted the results of this monopoly in the coal areas of Great Britain; in the demand for "living space" from the people of Germany, Italy and Japan; in the poverty of Hungary and Poland; in the miserably low wages in Spain; in the appalling plight of Argentinian peons and Mexican natives. The sharecroppers and the migratory workers, the breadlines and the relief centers in our own country are evidences of the same situation that has brought Europe to her tragic state. We have seen that where ground rent is taken for the public treasury and the monopoly of land even partially corrected, conditions have improved. When men are prevented from reaching into the earth's storehouse because others claim the sole right to that storehouse, we reap the consequences in world chaos.

If the earth were open to them on equal terms, men would not have to look for jobs; jobs would be waiting for men. Taxes as we know them would disappear. Free enterprise would flourish. Wages would increase as production increased, and once again men would be free to carve out their destinies as our forefathers did when they found "free land" in America.

Surely we can see the importance of making this "One World" available on just and equal terms to the few human beings who inhabit it. We should remind ourselves that:

"The Earth has He given to the children of men."

Psalms 115-16

"The world is God's bequest to mankind.
All men are joint heirs to it."

Herbert Spencer