

this comes the matter of constant letter-writing to the papers, to whose columns we must constantly resort.

To carry on our offices and to do all the work so roughly outlined calls for every dollar of assistance any friend can give from any quarter. The scene of our fight is California—the significance of it is universal as the world. We have a right to ask help, and are glad to say that our friends in the East are gradually waking up to the importance of the occasion. But time is short and the demands heavy.—JACKSON H. RALSTON.

LETTER FROM JACKSON H. RALSTON GENERAL
CHAIRMAN OF THE SALES TAX REPEAL
ASSOCIATION TO THE STATE BOARD
OF EQUALIZATION.

Gentlemen:

ON March 10, removing the State Capitol so far as you are concerned (at whose expense?) from Sacramento to Death Valley, at the latter place you passed resolutions broadcast throughout the State "vigorously opposing" what you termed a "Single Tax initiative" on the November ballot. You have also resolved that the repeal of the State sales tax would deprive this State of such an amount of money during the next biennium as would threaten the "integrity of our public school system and require the levying of a ruinous ad valorem tax on property."

I would be the last to question the constitutional right of any one or all of your members to proclaim as loudly as you might care to do so your want of acquaintance with economic law and its inevitable workings. When, however, you gentlemen gathered together as a state board of equalization undertake to do the same, several questions arise in my mind which I submit to you for solution with as much respect as the circumstances of the case permit.

Is there anything in the laws of the State of California which make you an advisory commission to the voters of the State upon the subject of taxation? Is there any reason why you should enforce upon the people your more or less ill-digested opinions in the hope that, dazzled by the prestige of your office, they will be led to vote against the interests of the immense majority?

Are you able to cite a single recognized authority upon the subject of sales taxation who will defend such a system?

Do you know, individually and collectively, that even the Controller of the State has declared publicly as well as in correspondence, that the sales tax is not helpful to the small home owner, as of course it is not to the non-property owner, while he at the same time says that it is beneficial to the large holder of lands?

What excuses have you, collectively, for undertaking to advise the less fortunate classes of the State of California to vote against their own interests? Might not such advice be called a piece of simple impertinence?

Again I am inclined to wonder whether you know the meaning of the words Single Tax which you so glibly, and I may properly add, so inadvisedly, denounce. If you know the meaning, then you know that the amendment in question, while supported by many of the arguments which favor the outright Single Tax, does not propose the taking of all land values for public uses, but only such as are necessary, to replace taxes withdrawn from improvements, tangible personal property, and objects needed for public consumption.

Is it any part of your duty to attempt to excite prejudice against such a measure as this, which will relieve every non-property holder who, nevertheless, is and must be a taxpayer, and practically every one of the small householders of the State, transfer the burden of taxation which is crushing them, to the great owners of landed wealth created by the whole community and amounting to very many billions?

Is there any justification whatsoever for your allowing your statistical bureau to create hobgoblins as to the loss of property to ensue upon the adoption of the amendment for the purpose of persuading the immense majority of the people of the State to vote against their own interests? Why should you allow its chief to be a little Orphan Annie Kay to deceive the superstitious?

Are you not conscious that the measures you have taken as a body and through your so-called statistical bureau have been aimed at conserving the interests of the great landed wealth of California in the hands of its rich owners?

Are you excusable, much less justifiable, in undertaking to use the time which belongs to the State to engage in propaganda against the best interests of the community as a whole?

Have you not learned that the schools have created and are maintaining land values far in excess of school costs, and that these and not business, necessities and industry of the people should pay the expenses of education?

I refer again to the first question, and desire earnestly to know by what authority you as a board are undertaking to advise the voters, denying at the same time your right to give any advice as a board, whether in accord with my own ideas or opposed to them.

I ask information in the foregoing respects as at least an appreciable taxpayer in the State of California, and would be glad to know if it is not time for you to resume your administrative duties, rather than undertake to act in an advisory capacity to people whose needs you so manifestly do not understand.—JACKSON H. RALSTON.

Henry George School's Campus Now Covers 66 Cities

(SPECIAL TO LAND AND FREEDOM)

New York, April 1, 1936

STATISTICS just compiled by John Lawrence Monroe, field director of the Henry George School of Social Science, show that the School is now established in sixty-six cities of the world.

In the last semester classes were held in fifty-two cities. The gain, thus far, is fourteen. The total may be slightly larger, Mr. Monroe said, for reports are being awaited from cities abroad which have plans for launching classes in other cities.

Sixty-one of the cities are in the United States. The remainder are in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico. These do not include the countries in which Georgeist groups, with the cooperation of national headquarters in New York, are making preparations for launching extensions.

There are now twenty instructors at national headquarters and ninety-two extension instructors throughout the world. All volunteer their services as a living endowment.

Since Sept. 1, 1933, when the School, after several years of preparation, was established at headquarters by the late Oscar H. Geiger, there have been 3,624 students enrolled in 191 classes in the basic course in fundamental economics and social philosophy. Fifty-one classes have been held at headquarters, 140 at the extensions.

The School was chartered Sept. 15, 1932. That fall classes were held at Pythian Temple, with extensions

we have arranged with Wilson & Company (chief distributors to libraries) to maintain four traveling displays of "Progress and Poverty" and three other Henry George books. These displays are taken from one large city to another and shown to purchasing librarians—to the buyers in big department stores, and to the best of the local book dealers.

Through the kindness of Mrs. Benjamin Burger, about 600 translations of "Progress and Poverty," and of "Protection or Free Trade," in Chinese, were donated to this office. In examining our file of people whom we have interested in China, we found several who could in all probability start an extension class, with the use of these books. We therefore sent the books to Mr. Monroe, the extension class leader, who will undertake to organize classes in China.

There is much to be done in acquainting the new students who are coming into the movement through attendance in extension classes, with the things already accomplished, and the facilities at hand for the furtherance of George's principles in this country. Pending a more complete report, albums have been made up containing sample copies of all of the pamphlet and leaflet material available to people for distribution. Letters accompanying the album were sent to sixty extension class leaders for their own use and information, and for the purpose of passing the books around to the students at a convenient time during the school term.

Time has been spent in the last few weeks going over likely names for new extension class leaders so that Mr. Monroe, field director for the Henry George School, might be able to circularize a choice group of people whose interest has been developed by this Foundation to the point where they are ready for class work. One thousand people were chosen who were presumed to have sufficient background, built up by the literature which they have received from the Foundation, to "carry on" in their own city or town under the guidance of the extension class system. Not all will respond, of course, but a very fair representation may be looked for from this special list.

As has been stated before in these columns, the Foundation receives from a press clipping bureau, a daily average of ten to fifteen clippings mentioning Henry George, or some phase of the Single Tax question. In the past we covered the following activities with relation to these clippings:

Where editorial comment was unfriendly, or the statements untrue, we wrote the editor setting forth the facts.

Where an outsider appeared to be in sympathy (through his letter to the paper), we made note of the name, and followed up by sending him literature.

Where Single Taxers wrote good letters to the newspapers, we commended them and told them which newspapers were carrying their letters. This is helpful, as in the case of Mr. E. B. Swinney of Los Angeles, who has conducted a most remarkable letter-writing campaign,

in which at times we have counted thirty-six major newspapers that have printed his letters.

The Foundation will continue to subscribe to the clipping service, but it will turn over to the new Henry George News Service at the School, the daily receipt of clippings, with memos or suggestions, from time to time.

The News Service will use these clippings in organizing letter writing campaigns, and in carrying out the above work under an extended programme.

ANTOINETTE KAUFMANN, Executive Secretary,
Robert Schalkenbach Foundation,
11 Park Place, New York.

Charles H. Ingersoll and Lowell Thomas

Lowell Thomas recently put on the air some misleading information on a very important subject; he spoke slightly of Mayor McNair of Pittsburgh, as representing an improved system of taxation in vogue there, and he also referred to the greatest economist and statesman this country has ever produced, as being "unknown:"—We refer to Henry George; he also said the reform movement initiated by Mr. George over fifty years ago is now dead.

If Mr. Thomas is only concerned in outward appearances and purely tabloid impressions, perhaps he is warranted in such comment; but if he desires to show some appreciation of the magnitude of the subject he treats so lightly, that of taxation, and to entertain and to give attention to the serious phases of that question, which goes to the cause of our economic distress, he should be a little more respectful of some very well authenticated facts; the fact that in all the mess we have been in for five years, no one has even attempted to offer a cause and cure except either Communists or Georgeists, should make it all the more interesting to consider the alternative of using social values to pay for social expenses, when taxation is everywhere considered to be the one impoverishing force;—Mr. McNair was elected because he put across the Pittsburgh Plan of taking taxes off industry and putting them on monopoly or economic rent; Henry George has made the only modern contribution to economics, which must save civilization, if it is saved; and if this movement is dead, then Mr. Thomas may as well put on his white robe and get ready for the end of broadcasting.

Mr. Ingersoll also wrote to Mr. Lowell Thomas as follows:

"Enclosed please find copy of a broadcast to be made over a number of stations, in which I have referred to you. I hope I have not misrepresented your position.

"I should be very glad to hear from you regarding the subject matter, and any other comments you may care to make."

To which Mr. Thomas replied:

"Many thanks for the copy of your radio talk. I enjoyed it immensely. As a matter of fact, I didn't exactly say that the Single Tax idea was dead. I was merely joshing the Mayor of Pittsburgh about another matter, and his habit of passing out booklets was a side reference."

Mr. Ingersoll not to be outdone in courtesy then wrote to Mr. Thomas:

"I highly appreciate your gracious acknowledgment of my comments on your reference to the Henry George element;—and I must frankly acknowledge that your note shows rather 'better nature' than mine, which was based on hearsay.

"As the record stands, some measure of apology to you seems in order, which I am conveying."