

clear to his reader¹ that a monopoly of a labor product is an economic impossibility. The immediate effect of a "corner" or an attempted "pegging of price" of any commodity is an immediate increase in the production of that very same article. England tried it for rubber, Brazil tried it for coffee, Japan tried it for raw silk, pit traders have tried it for wheat. All failed, disastrously to themselves. The U. S. Government is now trying it for cotton and agricultural products. Its failure is already upon us.

Therefore, as Henry George points out, "if speculation be the cause of these industrial depressions, it must be in speculation in things not the production of labor, but yet necessary to the exertion of labor in the production of wealth—of things of fixed quantity; that is to say, it must be speculation in land."² Henry George does not argue for the equal distribution of the production of all wealth. What Henry George stands for is the establishment of economic freedom; that is, equal access to natural resources and an equal sharing in the product of social growth and government. Differences will remain, but they will be differences in individual character, desires, and achievements, which are personal and which he would sacredly preserve to the individual.

Pittsburgh Progressing in Economic Education

CONSTANT activity, both in the educational and legislative field, characterizes the situation in Pittsburgh in recent weeks. The Pittsburgh branch of the Henry George School of Social Science is going forward with its classes in a highly encouraging manner and, in addition to the large class conducted by Richard E. Howe, on Friday evenings at the University of Pittsburgh rooms, George E. Evans, President of the Henry George Foundation, has recently organized another strong class, which meets on Saturday in the City County Building. Both classes are making good progress and arrangements are now being made for a graduation banquet to be held about April 26, in which speakers of prominence will participate. Robert C. Bowers is acting as chairman of the committee promoting the interests of the School.

An Economic Discussion Club, recently organized under the leadership of Percy R. Williams, is holding regular meetings at dinner every Thursday evening at Chapin's restaurant with a growing interest and attendance. While this group was formed primarily for the discussion of economic problems, it is also serving as a clearing house for reporting and discussing various kinds of activity relating to economic advance, including legislation, educational classes, public meetings, etc.

MAYOR McNAIR'S SPEAKING TOURS

Mayor William N. McNair continues to devote a great deal of his attention to public speaking and is in constant demand for public gatherings of all sorts in churches, clubs, schools, colleges, conventions, etc. In addition to numerous local appearances, Mr. McNair has recently addressed important gatherings in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Reading and Greenville, Pa., and at the present time is planning an eastern tour to include Rochester,

New York City, Boston, Bridgeport, Conn., Wilmington, Del., and Washington, D. C. During the early part of May he expects to visit a number of important cities in the Middle West, presenting the Pittsburgh Tax Plan and also discussing fundamental social and economic problems confronting the country at the present hour.

STATE LEGISLATION

Two important measures for the extension of the Pittsburgh Tax Plan have recently been introduced in the lower house of the Pennsylvania State Legislature. House bill 315, introduced by Representative John L. Powers on Jan. 28, embodies Mayor McNair's "Five-to-One" Tax Plan, which has been the subject of much discussion and publicity. This measure provides for the reduction of the building tax rate from fifty per cent of the land rate to twenty per cent, or one-fifth of the land rate, the shifting from improvements to land values to be accomplished over a period of four years beginning in Jan., 1936, and reaching its ultimate point in Jan., 1940. This would cut the present city building tax in half and would require one-fourth increase in the present land tax rate to raise the same amount of revenue now obtained.

House bill 753 introduced by Representative Alfred Tronzo, would apply the present graded tax system to the levying and collection of school taxes in the Pittsburgh school district and would give very substantial relief to the owners of improved real estate. These measures have been referred to committees in the lower house and may come up for action in the very near future as a number of representatives from Allegheny County have pledged their support.

Meanwhile, there has been a great deal of agitation concerning the "ripper" bill recently introduced in the State Legislature, which would abolish the office of Mayor and substitute a City Commissioner for Pittsburgh. While strong political pressure is being exerted in behalf of this bill, two Pittsburgh newspapers have recently conducted straw votes on the question, which have shown very strong majorities against the ripper legislation and such prominent organizations as the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, North Side Chamber of Commerce and Allegheny County League of Women Voters have passed resolutions strongly opposing this bill. Present indications are that the bill will probably be defeated in the State Senate.

Lenin on Taxation of Land Values

THE proper application of the Georgian taxation of land values is a tax upon the mentality of a people beyond the capacity of a Nation not ten per cent of whom have learned to read. They can't understand it. They can only understand socialism at present. Some day, with a higher average of intelligence, we may adopt the taxation of land values and enjoy economic freedom, but not now.—Lenin, as quoted by Raymond Robins after an interview following the war.

Globe Democrat, St. Louis, Jan. 27, 1934.

Hold the Destinies of the Community

The subject upon which I have been asked to address you is at the root of every social and economic question. We have innumerable organizations which are engaged in advocating specific social reforms—all most admirable. But they will all fail until the land question has first been settled. There is no economic or social question which is not at the bottom a land question. Land is essentially different from every other material property. It is from the land that all human needs are supplied, and if that original source is monopolized, if there are a few individuals who can control that supply, then they hold the destinies of the community in their hands.

LORD SNOWDEN in an address in London before the Women's National Liberal Federation.

¹ "Progress and Poverty," p. 267.

² "Progress and Poverty," pp. 267-268.