

Whether you are a tenant or property owner you pay in real estate taxes about \$30 a room a year. Five dollars of that pays for the land tax; \$25 pays for the building tax. If the building tax were eliminated but your land tax doubled, you would have to pay only \$10 tax for each room yearly—a saving of \$20 a room. In other words, if you rent a three-room apartment, the landlord could afford to reduce your rent \$5 a month. If you are the average home owner, with a six-room house, you would save about \$120 in taxes each year.

It is high time tenants and home owners awoke to the fact that they are being burdened with an undue part of real estate taxation. They are paying too-high taxes because unproductive land speculators are not paying their fair share of taxes. The high tax payments of tenants and home owners help make more valuable the land monopolized by speculators who pay low taxes. Home owners and tenants are paying taxes which should be paid by the land monopolists.

Throughout the nation people are coming to the conclusion that the way to increase our national income is to produce more goods. But, if we want to produce more homes, if we want to give jobs to many hundred thousand building workers, we must have land. And the land we need for those homes is being held for high prices by land speculators. They hold more than half a billion dollars worth of vacant land in New York City, in addition to many acres of land worth millions which is improperly used and therefore improperly taxed. Every penny of taxes paid by home owners and tenants helps make that vacant land more valuable. As that land becomes more valuable, speculators become more miserly and refuse more definitely to let their land be used in return for a reasonable price.

But we can help those land exploiters change their minds. We can provide them with an incentive to let their land be used in return for reasonable payment. We can do this by passing the Belous-Quinn Graded Tax Bills. These would result in the land taxes being almost doubled. When land speculators have to pay three millions in taxes for their vacant land, they will do everything within their power to get a return from that land through use of it. And what land they themselves cannot use, they will be glad to sell at a reasonable price to someone who wants to use it.

The passage of the Belous-Quinn Graded Tax bills will stimulate the building revival. With lower land prices it will become more possible to build low cost, and therefore low rent housing. Lower land prices combined with elimination of building labor taxes will spell the end of the slums. Lower land price plus the real estate monopoly tax will result in large-scale building and re-employment of building trades workers now on the relief rolls; and for every two building trades workers

who get jobs it is good to remember that three others in related industries also get jobs.

However, what may interest you and me most is that passage of the Belous-Quinn Graded Tax bills will mean that we will pay \$5 less each month to the landlord.

NOTE.—Acknowledgment is made for assistance in research made by Mr. Bernard Haldane.

H. G. S. S. S. Activities

ANOTHER of the scheduled programmes of the School's Public Forum was held on Sunday, May 7. A very interesting lecture was delivered by Mr. Walter Fairchild on the "Economic Aspects of Land Titles." Mr. Fairchild is well qualified to discuss that subject because of his various affiliations with organizations interested in promoting a wider dissemination of a simple solution to the examination of land titles. He is a member of the New York Bar and President of the New York Torrens Title League. He is also an experienced lecturer, being connected in that capacity with Cornell University, Yale School of Law, New York University Law School, Brooklyn Law School and St. Lawrence University. Mr. Fairchild's lecture at the Public Forum was accompanied with about 100 natural color slides, showing contrasts in development of apartment houses, old tenements, large commercial buildings and rookeries. Parks, play grounds and vacant lots were shown to emphasize the contrast between the beauty and the blight of a great city. All the slides depicted conditions within the confines of New York City. The Forum was well attended and many remarked upon the exceptional artistry of the photography as well as Mr. Fairchild's presentation of the subject.

There are no lectures scheduled to be held during the summer months. For the coming fall season, there is now in contemplation a programme providing for Forum meetings, one each week, instead of monthly as heretofore. All of the Public Forum meetings held thus far have been so well attended and so well received, that it is not at all surprising that the demand for more frequent meetings should be so universal. Mr. Herman Ellenoff, under whose direction these meetings have been held, deserves a great deal of the credit, not only for their inception, but also for the high standard he has set in the subjects for discussion and the quality of the lecturers.

It is also of interest, though belated, to speak of the very successful social function held on April 22 at the Palm Garden, 306 W. 52d Street, New York City. This affair took the form of an entertainment and dance, which was sponsored by a committee of the school's graduates, headed by Mr. Burt Levy as chairman. The Master of Ceremonies, on the stage, was Mr. A. B. Thomson, who,

in a very creditable manner and to the amusement of the audience introduced the various acts. His ability as a Master of Ceremonies was supplemented by his rendition of several songs in an excellent voice. More than five hundred attended. The receipts were very encouraging. The profits were contributed to the School funds. A sight to warm the hearts of "Old Timers," was the great preponderance of the young new adherents to our Cause.

Albert Jay Nock, noted essayist, author of "Our Enemy, the State" and a number of other well-known books, addressed the spring graduating classes and their friends at the exercises held at Engineering Auditorium, 29 West 39th Street, June 6, at 8 P. M. His subject was "The State."

Francis G. Goodale of the Boston faculty, spoke on "The Way Toward Freedom," and Michael J. Bernstein of the New York faculty, on "Socialism vs. Democracy." Mrs. Signe Bjorner, visiting from Denmark, reported on the excellent progress being made in her native land. More than 600 students were graduated.

Thirteen thousand announcements of the summer classes have been mailed out to New York City High School students, and an additional twenty-five thousand have been mailed to other prospects. Classes in Fundamental Economics will be conducted from Monday to Thursday, at 3 to 5 in the afternoon, and at 7 to 9 in the evening. Special classes for high school and college students will be conducted in the mornings at 10 to 12 and in the afternoon at 1 to 3. These classes will cover the course in six weeks, two sessions each week.

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On April 26 a resolution "authorizing the Postmaster General to issue a commemorative stamp in honor of the one-hundredth anniversary of Henry George" was introduced in the House of Representatives by Mr. Sweeney. The resolution, which eulogizes George's contribution to socio-economic thought, concluding with the well-known estimate of his place in philosophy by Dr. John Dewey, is now in the Committee of Post Office and Post Roads. A number of Georgeists have written to Postmaster General James Farley, to their Congressmen, and to President Roosevelt, urging the issuance of this stamp. Persistent effort of this kind will be helpful. Write at once!

How It's Done in The Antipodes

EVIDENCE of the existence of oil fields in New Zealand has been recognized for years, yet, nothing was done about it, for a number of reasons. In the first place, oil operators were reluctant to reveal such deposits on *occupied land* because, under the law, developers possessed no interest in the land. Secondly, the oil country is situated, in part, in the most valuable dairy sections of the Dominion. The treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840, between the Maoris and the British Crown gave the

rights to all minerals beneath the land to the native owners of such lands.

The desire to develop the oil resources of New Zealand and the attendant objections on the part of the developers, caused an impasse. In August, 1938, the Labor Government introduced legislation in the Dominion Parliament to give the Government ownership of all mineral oils found. The bill provided for exploitation to be by private corporations, subject to the payment of a 5 per cent royalty to the Government, and compensations to private land owners for all surface damage. Considerable opposition was advanced by the National Party; a strong effort was made to obtain at least 50 per cent of the royalty payments for the private owners of the land upon whose property the oil was produced. To support their contention, the National Party invoked the Waitangi Treaty, but, without success.

The principal argument, culminating in the final passage of the Labor Government's Bill, was advanced by Patrick Webb, Esq., the Minister of Mines for the Dominion. He succeeded in maintaining, that, unlike other minerals, oil deposits are admittedly migratory. Geologists have been able to prove, beyond doubt, that oil drawn through a bore, does not necessarily proceed *only* from directly beneath the drilling location. Therefore, the Waitangi Treaty was not applicable, inasmuch as a fair allotment was not feasible. Mr. Webb, proceeding along this line, held that it was *more equitable that the entire community should benefit*. It should be added that two of the four Maori representatives in Parliament supported the Minister of Mines in defeating the National Party amendment, and declined to undertake *any* distribution to private land owners. Their attitude in this respect is greatly to their credit, since they might have been expected to defend a questionable provision directly affecting their own constituency, however unfair it might be to others.

With the impasse abated, The New Zealand Petroleum Company was organized with a capital of about one million and a quarter dollars, for the purpose of developing the oil resources of the Dominion. About one-half of the capital has been contributed by American interests. The directors include some Australian business men, who are also associated in a similar venture in their own nearby homeland. Presently, the principal source of supply of oil is from the Netherlands East Indies. In 1937 New Zealand imported oil to the value of about fifteen million dollars. The Australian oil needs are likewise supplied, principally, from the same source.

If the exploration work, now in progress, proves as promising as is now believed, the resultant benefits to the sister Dominions should be of inestimable value. It is not presumptuous to believe that their production of oil may well exceed their own needs. In that event they will be in a position to export the surplus, a highly desirable commodity, the demand for which is annually