

was necessary to discharge about eight hundred clerks and examiners in the income tax department who had been corrupted by the conditions and opportunities of the service.

The land and natural resources of the country, belonging to the people, have become the particular objects of private plunder.

The first duty of the state is to establish justice and to enforce it and to protect the property of the people, but in the income and inheritance taxes the Government sets the example, to its employees and to the people, of rapacity and extortion sanctioned by law.

Many methods of obtaining wealth were formerly tolerated which are today illegal, as piracy, slavery, lotteries and commercial trusts. It became evident years ago that the rapid accumulation of wealth by some of the people was not because of their greater ability, skill or application, or on account of any great service they had rendered, and to correct this it is necessary for us to know from what source it is obtained. Every method of obtaining wealth without work should be examined to determine whether it is entitled to the revenue it receives.

The purpose of this party is to call the attention of the people to the land of the country so that they may know whether the great revenue that goes to land owners is properly earned.

The land question, like all fundamental questions, is a very simple one.

Land was not produced by man but was created by God. It is essential to life.

All men are equally entitled to the opportunity to make a living for themselves and can do so only by obtaining their food, clothing and shelter from the land.

There cannot be equal opportunity for all when the land is privately owned by some, who charge others with rent for the privilege of using it.

So inequality of opportunity begins and grows greater and greater as the rent of land increases.

Men have not equal abilities, but they should have equal rights.

Land rent does not come from any service that the land owner gives the community but from the need of the people for land to carry on the business or industry by which they make a living.

Land rent is the value of a privilege which the land owner has unjustly obtained in violation of the equal rights of all other men.

These equal rights can be preserved only by paying the rent of land to the Government, as the trustee of the people, to be used for Governmental expenses and the common welfare. This would equalize opportunity, make every one equal owner of the land by becoming equal sharer in the land rent every member of the community helps to create.

We insist upon the Government taking the revenue which belongs to it and not permitting it to be taken by land owners who have no right to it. We also insist upon the Government discontinuing the confiscation of incomes and property of the people to which it has no moral right.

Our fathers established political liberty, of which we are justly proud, and we have a Government which is responsive to the public will, but they had a very imperfect knowledge of what gives economic freedom and did not provide for it in the constitution they gave us. Every age has its own problems to solve. The distribution of wealth seems to be particularly ours. We have tinkered with it in various ways, particularly in the income and inheritance tax laws which leave the source of illegitimate and unearned incomes undisturbed while active and useful businesses are crushed under the burden of taxation, supervision, interference and expensive professional advice.

In this country the people can secure their rights by voting for them and do not deserve to have them if they do not vote for them.

Every intelligent man knows that land rent is available for the support of the Government in place of taxes and that the people would be much better off if it were so used.

The Commonwealth Land Party will be on the ballot in thirty-five states in which the people will have the opportunity of voting for its candidates. Our members are enthused with the prospects of a large vote by the increased public interest in the principles of the party.

ADDRESS OF HON. J. C. LINCOLN, OF OHIO

The most important question before the American people today is the just distribution of wealth. The feeling is general that the present distribution of wealth is unjust.

The ordinary discussions of the subject assume that there are two factors in the production of wealth—Labor and Capital. Many who work with their hands believe that they are not getting a fair share of the wealth their labor helps to produce. Many employers believe the only way to increase profits is to decrease the wages paid to their employees. About 1880 there arose a man, Henry George by name, and we can all be proud of the fact that he was an American, who thought this problem through and got the solution. He emphasized the fact that there are three factors in the production and not two and these three factors are Land or natural opportunity, Labor and Capital.

In the production of a ton of coal, it is obvious that there must be Labor to remove the coal from the ground and put it on the cars. It is just as clear that by the use of capital in the shape of mining machinery and locomotives and tipples, that production is greatly increased, but the coal in the ground is neither Labor nor Capital; it is part of the bounty that the Creator has provided for the use of his children and is included under the term "land."

Consider what happens in the production of a bushel of

wheat. Labor is required to plow the ground and plant the crop and later to harvest it. This labor is made much more efficient by the aid of capital in the shape of horses and plows and harvesting and threshing machines but the primary factor in producing this wheat is the land, again part of the bounty provided by the Creator for the use of his children.

No one would think of trying to describe the size of a house by using the length and breadth only. A house has three dimensions—length, breadth and height. In the same way that it is impossible to get a correct idea of the size of a house, unless all three dimensions are considered, so it is impossible to get a correct idea of the production of wealth, unless all three factors are considered—Land, Labor and Capital. As there are three factors in production so the product of industry is divided into three parts—ground rent paid for the use of land, wages paid for labor, either of hand or brain, and interest paid for the use of capital.

On the average, the amount paid as wages for human activity, either of hand or brain, is less than the amount added to the general stock of wealth by the labor.

On the average, the increased production made possible by the use of capital is greater than the interest paid for its use. But when we consider ground rent, it is evident that there is no addition to the general stock of wealth by its collection. One as a laborer adds to the general stock of wealth, by the product of his labor, one who loans capital for use in industry aids production, but no one would claim that anything is added to the general stock of wealth by the collection of ground rent or by the land owner.

For example, I happen to be a director in a bank in Cleveland, Ohio. In accordance with the terms of our lease, in a few years we shall be paying almost \$1000.00 per foot per year for the use of the ground. No one would claim that the one who takes this \$1000.00 per foot per year for the use of the land has added anything to the general stock of wealth.

It is just as clear that the rest of us must produce this \$1000.00 per foot per year without getting anything for it.

Land value is ground rent actual or expected capitalized and is a community product.

The \$1000.00 per foot per year is produced by the presence of about 1,000,000 people in Cleveland.

To put it another way—land values is the worth of the legal privilege of collecting the values produced by the community and appropriated by the individual.

The value of this privilege of collecting ground rents produced by the community is about \$100.00 per year for every man, woman or child in the U. S. On the average each family pays to some one in some way \$500.00 per year for use of land, the value of which is created by the presence of the people.

The Commonwealth Land Party proposes to take for the use of the community by taxation most of this ground

rent. If this were done, it would be possible to abolish the taxes that now hamper the production of wealth. Our present method of tax collection is communistic in that it takes by taxation from the individual simply because he has it.

The Commonwealth Land Party holds that the land as well as the sunlight and air and rain are gifts of the Creator to his children and that each of his children has an equal right to his gifts.

The Commonwealth Land Party holds that the only way to realize this fundamental right is to take the ground rent produced by the presence of the community for the uses of the community by taxation, for if this were done, the selling price of land would tend to sink to O.

The Commonwealth Land Party holds that only when the community takes the ground rent produced by the presence and activity of the community for its own uses will it be possible to abolish the 1000 and 1 taxes that now burden industry and raise the cost of living.

The members of the Commonwealth Land Party are willing to be considered cranks if they can call attention to the fact that there can be no just distribution of wealth if community created values of \$500.00 per family are taken by those that did little or nothing to produce them.

The members of the Commonwealth Land Party believe that public attention can best be directed to this fundamentally important question by the formation of a political party and by political action.

MOTION PICTURES OF THE NOTIFICATION

A motion picture was taken by Mark M. Dintenfass, and this striking and interesting reel will be shown in many moving picture houses in the country. It was shown at the Branford Theatre, the largest motion picture house in Newark, N. J. Shown four times a day to an audience numbering about 2,000 at each performance, this reel therefore met the eyes of nearly 40,000 persons during the week. This striking slogan flashed upon the canvas was read by that number of people:

The Earth is the Birthright of Mankind.

The Rent of Land Belongs to the People.

It is the First Duty of Government to Collect It.

The day was notable as one of the few fine days of the Spring season. Those who attended were amply repaid by the enthusiasm of the occasion.

The local newspapers featured the notification, and the speeches were widely printed.

THE Massachusetts Federation of City Planning Boards in their *Bulletin 13* under "Housing" say:

Labor, cost of materials, land values, many things are credited with being the obstacle in the way. Most of them are mere incidents. Land values are potent, but our system of taxing land values is far more potent. As long as a man can carry idle land at a nominal tax, as long as the use value of land is recognized as taxable only when it is in use, so long will there be a housing shortage.