

and error the bright side. That in special privilege there is, for example, the germ of its own destruction, and that this has the stamp of justice under natural law, may not be clear to many.

I do not say that war is profitable, but I do know that almost every active cause that leads to war is profitable, according to our definition of profit. War is the balancing of the account. So if it is not a logical or rational thing—as it is not—we must look back of it also for wrong.

We have thought to find a profit where there is no profit, and upon it we have built a prosperity that is not prosperity. Why? Because our laws are permitted to run counter to natural law, and at the end of the course of disobedience to the latter, stands war, as a retribution. If governments did not find, as they suppose, a way to make the laws of God of no avail, nations would escape their decline and fall.

ECHOES FROM THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

(For the Review)

By **BENJAMIN F. LINDAS**

OLD DELUSIONS RE-SHATTERED

Probably never before in the history of our nation have so many labor disturbances arisen at one time. The whole industrial world is in a turmoil. Thousands of people are out of work from one cause or other. What are some of the glib explanations? We have too many people; there are not enough jobs to go round; our resources are not sufficient to assimilate all the people who are seeking to make America their home. And the peculiar part of it is that men will ride for days through a fertile country with scarcely a house or tilled farm to break the landscape and swallow these explanations, hook line and sinker. What is to be done? Economize, say some, mostly the bankers; restrict immigration, cry out thousands of others. The war hordes of foreigners will deluge the Atlantic coast, and the wily Oriental will creep in from the Pacific and undermine our civilization.

Here are two reports just recently issued that completely shatters such delusions:

On March 7th the comptroller of the currency made public these figures: Total resources of national banks, \$13,838,000,000 an increase of \$2,271,000,000 or 20% within a year.

Surplus and undivided profits of \$1,031,278,000, an increase of \$18,000,000

The increase in resources within the past 12 months alone, the comptroller adds, exceeded the entire resources of the Reichsbank of Germany, and the aggregate resources of American national banks exceed by \$3,000,000,000 the

aggregate resources of the Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank of Russia, the Reichsbank of Germany, the Bank of the Netherlands, the Swiss National Bank and the Bank of Japan.

"It is conservatively estimated" reads the statement, "that the surplus reserve now held by the national banks would be sufficient to give a further loaning power of three billion to four billion dollars should the growth and development of commerce, agriculture and industry call for so huge an enlargement of credit."

The other report was a study of the world's food supply by William Joseph Showalter of the National Geographic Society. Here is an illustrating extract from his report:

"Many men are inclined to sound a pessimistic note as to the adequacy of the world's food supply for future generations, and like Malthus a hundred years ago, are inclined to predict that the day has at last come when the human race must cease to expand its numbers or else face inevitable hunger.

"But when one considers the possibilities of future food production it is difficult to have much faith in the prophecies of pessimism of these twentieth century successors of Malthus. For instance, in the United States we have 935,000,000 acres of arable land, only 400,000,000 of which are under cultivation. Even with the land now under cultivation, if we produced as much wheat per acre as England or Germany, we could supply the world with two-thirds of its flour. If we produced as much corn to the acre, we would double the world's supply of that product. Were all our arable land under cultivation and producing only according to our present standards, which is less than half as high as that of western Europe, we could add enough cereals to take care of an additional population the size of Europe."

Then the trouble is not "insufficient products to go round," is it? The trouble isn't "that too many people are here?" What then is the trouble?

The people have been driven from the land by the speculators who wish to gamble on its ever-increasing value. Break up this gambling by taxing their ill-gotten profits into the public treasury; loosen the strangle-hold on our natural resources so that they will be open for the use of labor and capital, and May-day riots, immigration scares, fear of insufficient food, and all the other familiar bug-a-boos would fall into the same category with the grinning pumpkins of Hallow'een.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE LAND QUESTION

A few weeks ago representatives from practically every live-stock producing association in the country appeared before Congress and demanded a sweeping investigation into the whole live-stock and meat business of the United States.

It was declared by these representatives that the price of meat was steadily rising; and the price of live-stock going down; and they charged the responsibility for such a condition of affairs to a combination of packers and stock-yard corporations.

"The whole world is awakening to the fact that the biggest economic problem of our time is distribution," declared Walter L. Fisher, former Secretary of the Interior, and counsel for the National Live Stock Association.

Distribution is the biggest problem of our time, undoubtedly, but it cannot be solved by puerile governmental investigations; it cannot be solved by anti-trust acts or by withering tirades against soulless corporations. Consider the stock-raising industry. A short while ago millions of acres of magnificent grazing land were available for stock-raising purposes. These lands are still available but are unused. Why? They are too expensive to be used for that purpose now. They have been cornered by the speculators greedy for the unearned increment. Suppose we taxed these lands back into use again? What would be the result? There would be such a vast increase in the production of live-stock that packing industries would spring up over the country like mushrooms.

The plentiful supply of meat would mean fair prices for all concerned. The demand of the competing packers for live-stock would mean fair prices for the stock-raiser. I suggest this to the Live Stock Associations as a remedy worthy of their consideration.

While the stock-raisers were thus pulling Congress by one sleeve, numerous individuals, all "het up" over the rise in the price of gasoline, were unceremoniously yanking it by the other. These also demand an investigation, where they could indulge in the doubtful pleasure of pulling the beard of the oil trust and denouncing it in a variegated assortment of epithets.

I wonder if a tax on the unused oil lands, heavy enough to make even the many-headed, many-named and elusive oil barons squeal, would not go a long way to restore reasonable prices, either by forcing the unused oil lands into the hands of others, or by bringing so much more of it into use that a greatly increased production would be certain to lessen the price.

THE OLD, OLD STORY

In the State of Virginia, a few miles below Washington, is a listless village by the name of Quantico. Scattered farmers worked spasmodically on the not-too-good soil and a few merchants eked out an existence in their faded little stores. Some thirty years ago Quantico had its first thrill of temporary excitement. Capitalists from the north were to establish a steel plant there. A large city was to be built. Real estate climbed into the dizzy blue. Fortunes were made in a night. Then, somehow, the unstable boom was punctured and Quantico settled back into the old rut. Now, contrary to the old adage, lightning has struck twice in the same place, and another boom is on in Quantico. Large steel mills employing thousands of men are to be built. The work has already been started. The following are some of the "tidings of great joy," sent by special correspondents to the Washington papers:

"Property values have increased from 800 to 1200 per cent since the

development work has begun. Lots which sold for \$300 or less before the steel project was launched, are now selling for \$2500 and very few owners are willing to sell for that price.

Several Alexandria, Washington and Baltimore merchants have purchased lots for \$3,000 which their former owners admit having paid only \$280 for before the boom."

And what does this mean? That the land values have been advanced to a point where the rental will absorb every cent of surplus of the wages that will be paid to the working men. It means that the much heralded prosperity of Quantico is simply another opportunity for the ancient graft to work in a virgin field. It means prosperity for a few lucky landowners, and poverty, slums, and hard times for those whose prospective earnings have already been capitalized and made the basis of speculation.

NEWSPAPER ETHICS

Last month the Daughters of the American Revolution held their annual convention in Washington. Contrary to the advice of George Washington, whom they revere as their "Patron Saint," they plainly favored a programme of "preparedness" that is very apt to embroil this country in foreign conflicts.

At one of the sessions, the guest of honor and chief orator was Hudson Maxim, munition manufacturer, inventor of war-machines, and co-producer of that grossly exaggerated and contemptible libel upon millions of peace-loving Americans, the "Battle Cry of Peace."

In his address he launched what the papers gleefully and prominently announced as a withering broadside against Henry Ford. He compared him to Attila, both of whom he declared neither loved literature, music, art, or the finer things of life.

"If Ford succeeds," he shouted, "it will take a million of the finest American boys to repair his mistakes."

The very evening, however, when these mental emanations of Maxim were flaunted in the papers, a little dinner was given at the Ebbit House by the Women's Single Tax Club, to Mrs. Mary Fels—it wasn't a little dinner, either, for a score of congressmen, several senators and a number of others, prominent in the political life of Washington, were present, and the orator of the evening was William Jennings Bryan.

The dinner was held the day following the address of President Wilson on the submarine controversy, and as the entire city was in a condition of tense expectancy the remarks of Mr. Bryan could not, of course, be ignored, and he was given considerable publicity.

Another address was made, however which, in its earnestness and simplicity rivalled that of the former Secretary of State. It was made by Mary Fels. In that winsome, appealing style that charms everyone who has the pleasure of listening to her, Mrs. Fels indicated the character of Mr. Ford. She pointed

out the absurdity of the reports that had been circulated by the newspapers regarding the Ford Peace Party. She did more than that. She gave an insight into the real Ford. She showed him to be a man actuated by the highest ideals, a real democrat, a lover of his fellowman. "In his desire to help his fellowman, in his real democracy, Mr. Ford reminds me" she concluded, "more than any man I have ever met, of Joseph Fels." What more delicate tribute could be paid than that?

And the newspapers never reported one word of this address.

It is not liberty the *press* needs so much as it does conscience.

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH

One of the many visitors in Washington during the past month was F. H. Monroe, President of the Henry George Lecture Association, of Chicago. I spent several evenings with him and heard a most interesting account of a trip that he had just completed through the Southern States.

"The most impressive part of the trip," he said, "was the splendid quality of the men who are taking a growing interest in the Single Tax. Not only are they individually favorable to the movement, but in numerous places, such as Rome and Atlanta, Ga., Columbus, S. C., and a number of other places, the nucleus of effective organizations are being formed."

Mr. Monroe showed me articles that had appeared in the papers published in the places visited by him, giving really accurate accounts of the Single Tax movement—several of the articles having display headlines, and occupying several columns.

Altogether I gained the impression that the South will soon be heard from in Single Tax work.

AN IDEA

An idea much in the mind of local Single Taxers, and one that is frequently brought up by many Single Tax visitors, is that of establishing a National Single Tax bureau in Washington. Such a headquarters could be a rallying place for visiting Single Taxers who throng Washington in ever-increasing numbers; could be made a place for the distribution of literature, and a convenient place for holding frequent meetings.

This is the Capital of the nation. From one year's end to the other it is crowded with persons interested in political questions. An accessible headquarters would go a long way towards increasing the influence and effectiveness of our propaganda work.

Every one of the political parties keep offices here the year round. The Socialists have a headquarters. The D. A. R. have erected a magnificent building. The American Federation of Labor is now erecting a handsome structure for their use. Washington is getting to be the convention city of America. Should not the Single Tax be represented?

I am making this merely as a suggestion. I am confident that Washington Single Taxers would do their utmost to make such a scheme effective.