

They Even Sell the Skyline

By Lancaster M. Greene

The owner of a vacant lot asked me why he should pay as much taxes as the owner of a home next door to his site. There was no one on the vacant lot who benefited from the view or the use of the municipal improvements, such as the highways or parks, and he was getting no income from it currently. He talked of joining the realty movement for taxation on the basis of income only.

However, when he goes to sell his land to a prospective buyer what will he sell, the fertility, by any chance? Let the sales director of a suburban development corporation answer in his own words.

In purchasing the Heddesheimer farm and parts of the Burkhart and Davies farms in Queens, W. M. Noone, sales director for Green Park Homes, Inc., said recently:

"After carefully investigating all the suburbs, our organization selected Queens County because it has the most to offer home buyers anywhere. The number of transportation, high-

way and recreational improvements established in this section of New York City is drawing the attention of the discriminating one-family-house buyer. We selected these properties because of the nearness to the new Queens-Eighth Avenue subway, Juniper Park, with its fifty acres of recreational facilities and also because of its high elevation overlooking New York City's skyline."

It becomes evident that a vacant lot owner does sell availability of the municipal highways and parks and desirability of the view, the air and sunlight. These are all inherent attributes of the location and benefits from society or nature, not the result of individual production or effort. The seller capitalizes these attributes in his price.

See: "Progress and Poverty," p. 257.