

everybody bought land so much wealth would thereby be created that it would be unnecessary to tax anything else to pay for the war. He lectures in a Y. M. C. A. on real estate, and actually believes that wealth is increased when you sign a deed or land contract. These people are incapable of consecutive thinking outside the narrow boundaries of their parasitic business; their predatory instincts are abnormally developed; and they are ridiculously unfitted for dealing with any economic problem. The confidence with which they undertake to settle such questions, however, is almost impudent.

The Economic Condition Of Russia

THE economic condition of Russia continues to improve steadily although not very rapidly. The agricultural production last year reached about 90% of the pre-war level according to Russian statistics. The industrial production does not make so good a showing. Railway fares are low, but freight rates are high. There has been considerable unemployment during the winter. The unemployed in the cities were given shelter by the government, and there has been no great privation. Great numbers of people have been moving to the land just as was the case in the United States as long as homesteads could be had in the West. In many cases free transportation is furnished to organized colonies. Settlers are going from Western Russia to Eastern Siberia and the Saghalien Island. Danish dairy farmers are establishing model farms and dairies near Moscow. Several American agricultural colonies have been established in Southern Russia. One headed by Harold Ware is located at Revier on the Kuban River. This colony I understand is sponsored by prominent Boston people, and that Don Stephens of Arden, Del., will be a member of the colony.

Russia has a stable currency ranking with that of the United States and Sweden. This feat in national finance was accomplished without any foreign assistance and reflects great credit on the organization of the measure.

The production of gold is being encouraged by the government with the object of further stabilizing the currency. There was a great increase in the production of gold last year, and there will probably be a much greater increase this season. The Aldan River gold fields which were opened up last year will be extensively worked this season.

The Land Tax Law has already been changed in some respects in the interests of the peasants. The inequalities and crudeness of this law are no doubt largely submerged by the individual's greater interest in the common ownership of all natural resources.

—W. A. WARREN.

Tax Fight In Youngstown

ORGANIZER ROBINSON, OF THE COMMON-WEALTH LAND PARTY, LEADING A GREAT REVOLT IN THAT CITY

ON July 20th, there will be heard before Judge Gessner of the Common Pleas Court here, an injunction proceeding which will, in a way, be a climax in the fight against the raiding land-owners in Youngstown. The fight was begun in deadly earnest after our National organizer came on the ground. The town was greatly excited at the time over the daily arrests of citizens for failure to pay an occupational tax provided by an ordinance passed on the 12th day of May, 1924.

ARREST OF DELINQUENTS

The recourse to arrest for failure to pay a tax is unusual in American legislation and it gave rise to much discussion of the subject of taxation. The attempt to justify an unusual measure was based upon a deficit in the city's treasury and the tax was levied to meet operating expenses. Investigation as to the cause of the deficiency by your organizer and the local committee resulted in confirming the general knowledge that the cause of these deficits is the drain upon the general fund by land-owners. We found a special case involving \$600,000.00 which contains the following striking features, the publicity of which attracted general attention.

Landowners in the vicinity of Mill Creek had for years urged the City to construct a sewer through the Park. Despite opposition on aesthetic grounds on the part of the Park commissioner, they were finally successful, and the sewer was built. Contractors were paid by the sale of bonds issued by the city in anticipation of the collection of the assessments; but following the shrewd practise that is becoming common, the land-owners, over fifty in number, applied for and were granted an injunction restraining the city from collection. The legal effect of the injunction was to prevent the assessments appearing on the tax duplicate as a lien. The land-owners then capitalized the value of the sewer in the sale price of their land to innocent purchasers who, in the absence of a lien of record, were easily led to believe that the improvement had been paid for.

A veritable scandal arose when it was disclosed that the injunction, which is a legal action which may be summarily tried, was allowed to languish for more than a year. The revelation that some of the Plaintiffs in the case were close relatives of C. W. Osborne, the law director, and of Ralph Miller, the assistant law director, was unavoidably suggestive of collusion. My sudden appearance in the Court of Common Pleas before Judge Gessner on the unusual application to be joined with the city as defendant, furnished the element of dramatic surprise and consternation among the plaintiffs' attorneys and law departments' representatives who hastily put in an appearance.

The learned judge, perceiving that my main purpose was to move to dissolve the injunction, and despite the pleas for further delay, assigned the case for final hearing on next Monday, July 20. As though to preserve the dramatic unities, the mass meeting, previously announced, was held in Moose Hall that same evening, June 29.

A GREAT MEETING OF PROTEST

The hall was crowded, the interest tense, for the happening in court was still vivid in the public mind. The knowledge that for some time Organizer Robinson had been active in the agitation, made his appearance as chairman of the meeting peculiarly fitting. His announcement that the National Committee of the Commonwealth Land party had instructed him to assist in the people's fight was received with warm approval. The action of municipal Judge Heffernan in declining to enforce the occupational tax ordinance had demoralized the forces of the administration and the successful mass meeting forced the city administration to announce that it would never again adopt the occupational tax as a means of raising revenue.

The announcement that 30,000 persons had paid the tax and that but 5,000 were delinquent was found upon investigation to be erroneous, the truth being that 20,000 persons are still defiantly delinquent.

AN ACTIVE PROPAGANDA

Our expectations as to the outcome of the suit on July 20, will cause renewed interest in the matter of taxation and it is the purpose of the local committee to conduct a large mass meeting in the public square on Thursday night, July 25, at which we hope to increase the membership of our organization. To the end of dramatizing our proposition for collecting the rent of land we have secured 1000 copies of *The Pennsylvania Commonwealth*, several hundred copies of "Story of My Dictatorship," a number of the English *Commonweal*. We have also in process of printing a four paged *Ohio Commonwealth* containing a resume of the incidents of the local fight showing the fundamental cause of such financial troubles and presenting the principle of the Commonwealth Land party as a solution. We shall also distribute large numbers of LAND AND FREEDOM.

Among the people associated with us and who contributed valuable help in the fight were attorney Frank Jacobs, J. W. Gottlieb, H. C. Wolf, attorney J. B. Danks, W. H. Sowers, C. L. Covert, Frank Hernan, Margaret Brown, Katherine McCaughtry, F. R. Field, Helena Minich, Attorney W. E. Bachop, Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Blase, Frank Edwards, S. A. Finnie, Edith Morgan, Trevelyan Edwards, Lee Hosmer, E. J. Edwards, Deenie Hosmer, Ruth Scott, Frances Scott, Albert Davis, Chas. Mannen, W. J. Hammond, Philip M. Moore, Solomon Rossman, Bert Williams, Philomen Tavalario, Karl Kleeh, Estelle Assion, Alma Brenner and Julia Hurlbert.

Anent the Mill Creek case, and as I am writing this, Mr. Robinson brings me the evening paper containing clippings which indicate that the law department is preparing to agree to another adjournment. This I shall vigorously oppose and shall appear in court armed with legal authority supporting my claim to be joined as a party defendant in the case so that I may move for dissolution of the restraining order.

ORGANIZER ROBINSON AN INSPIRATION

Our organizer has been a forceful, unique and leading figure in every move. He has been an inspiration to us and has given a fine tone to every note we have struck. Indeed I hardly think we could have succeeded in anything but for his aid. His assistance in briefing of the legal questions has been particularly valuable to me in the different actions in which we are involved.

—GEORGE EDWARDS.

Impressions of an American Journalist in England*

LONDON, JULY 10

LAST night at the Victoria Mansions Restaurant Mrs. Anna George de Mille, daughter of Henry George, was honored by a notable reception and dinner, given by the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, the English League, and the Henry George Club of London.

As Allen McCurdy said on a memorable occasion, "The perusal of the public press is fast becoming an obstacle to the attainment of knowledge," and perhaps because I have spent too much time perusing the public press, and not enough time reading reliable land-tax journals, I had no idea that the philosophy and economics of Henry George had obtained the hold that they evidently have obtained on the mind and conscience of the English people.

Members of parliament, ex-members of parliament, prominent business and professional men, labor advocates, and many of the rank and file of wage workers turned out and filled the large banquet room of the restaurant; and although I have attended many gatherings of Henry George disciples, I have never attended one where his principles were expounded with greater clearness and eloquence or received with greater enthusiasm.

W. R. Lester, M.A., was the toastmaster, and among the speakers were P. Wilson Raffan, H. G. Chancellor, Sir Edgar Harper, John Paul, A. W. Madsen and Louis P. Jacobs. Besides Mrs. de Mille, there were present

*The author of this report is a veteran journalist whose career has been a varied and interesting one. He was private secretary to Governor Sulzer, of New York, and later was associated with Robert M. LaFollette in campaigns carried on by that leader in the State of Wisconsin. He is the author of a work dealing with the reforms accomplished in that state under LaFollette's leadership.

—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.