

Why not? Couldn't he raise his rent?

The rent is fixed by what people will pay. If renters were willing to pay more, suppose the tax collector just taxed him that much more. There'd be no point in holding land.

He'd sell?

Yes, for whatever he could get, the quicker the better.

And you mean we could buy cheaper?

I mean more than that.

Well, I'm getting tired of thinking, but what more do you mean?

I mean that under those conditions we could get a home site without paying out any capital, by just assuming the ground rent and using our capital for building.

And not own the land?

Sure, like these ninety-nine year leases, and again, if our government was smart, we wouldn't be fined for building.

Fined?

I said fined but I meant taxed—it's the same thing. . . .

No tax on the house?

Exactly. When you put your car at a parking meter you don't pay more for a big limousine than you do for a jallopy. So if you pay the government for the space why should it cost you more—the better the house you built there?

But with our money, the house would cost too much anyway.

Suppose the land, oil, hard minerals, forests and water brought the government all the income it needed and there was no tax on building material, contractor's equipment, worker's wages and my pay, a house could be quite inexpensive.

I think you're talking nonsense.

You're not alone in your opinion. That's why we'll stay right on in this little apartment.

Oh goodnight, I'm going to bed.

A new voice at the Vancouver City Hall is that of a consulting town planner, Robert Williams, partner of Mary Rawson. His election to the City Council was a surprise. He handled his own campaign at a cost of \$850, and flooded the city with homemade signs which he and his friends made in a basement, at a cost of about \$100.

New surprises will come along for council members when they discover that he favors taxation of land values with a total exemption on improvements to encourage property owners to beautify their homes. He is not popular with the real estate people, and ran into opposition when he moved to rezone large tracts of undeveloped land from residential back to agriculture. He is soft-spoken but destined to jolt his colleagues often during the next two years. He has a plan for downtown redevelopment and other issues which differ from the council's majority opinion.

Lawrence Rathbun of Concord, New Hampshire, reports that his city has announced it will go on a 100 per cent property valuation, "which is a step in the right direction and follows the constitutional requirement. Forest land is more nearly at 100 per cent than other land even now."

News from Ivan Dailey of Cleveland, Ohio, is that County Auditor Ralph Perk has been set back in his efforts to get higher assessments on industrial and commercial property (which would have meant higher assessments on vacant land, too). The Ohio Board of Tax Appeals has ruled that these higher assessments must be reduced to the same level as residential property. This leaves Cleveland with a tax shortage of \$3.2 million, which some propose to make up with a city income tax. Perk is now requesting a one year stay on the board's order.

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