

call monopolism, and which we know has broken down. The Single Tax, therefore, aims to draw a clearcut line between business, big and little, which you represent, and monopoly, which is now in control of at least half our wealth, but only favors—as their major interest—perhaps 3 per cent of the population.

This monopoly, while having limitless ramifications, such as the administration at Washington is tangled up in, has only three principle divisions in its basic element, comprising the 200 billion of value as estimated. Most familiar to us are utilities; the next are natural resources; these combined make probably half the total; the rest site values in cities.

Monopoly, therefore, should be first considered as basic monopoly; in a sense, monopoly of the earth itself. It yields what is commonly known as “unearned increment” and in the form of economic rent. As such, this is a purely social creation, meaning that it is a creation of the whole people and their activities, especially their governmental activities.

This rent amounts to something like fifteen billions; and you may think it a coincidence that our tax budgets, local, state and federal, are about the same amount. But your business sense should make it clear that in a general way, our expenditures for government reflect these increments or rents—in fact, one creates the other.

Now, is there anything more obvious to a business man than that this great stream of social “profits” should be used to liquidate the equally great costs of government, that go directly to create these same surplus earnings of our collective estate? Is there anything more obvious to every business common or horse sense, than that no individual should be permitted to touch any of this social revenue?

Do any of you business men allow the earnings of your business to run away from it, and then go and beg, borrow, or steal (our government does all of these) to pay the expenses and obligations of your business? Do any of you, having partnership interests or owning stock in corporations outside your own, give any less care to collecting and conserving these profits, then to your individual activity?

The analogy is perfect; consider yourself as one of 130,000,000 people; for every dollar you make individually in wages, salaries, profits, there is another dollar made by you, but as a citizen of your community, state, and nation; and without any of your interference, that dollar is “deposited” in the form of these social or land values rents. The only way of “withdrawal” of this deposit so far found, through this device called the “Single Tax,” but which really is collection of rent.”

Through this process, everyone of the 130,000,000 would get his share of the 200,000,000 of social value which actually earns 15 billions of income called rent. So this is the answer: merge these 1001 taxes that now rest on the consumer, doubling his living costs, and thereby cutting in half his purchasing power, slowing down factories and creating millions of unemployed; merge these taxes that destroy industry into a Single Tax which will destroy monopoly.

I don't think I need to say any more.

WHAT we should do unto others as we would have them do to us—that we should respect the right of others as scrupulously as we would have our own rights respected, is not a mere counsel of perfection to individuals, but it is the law to which we must conform social institutions and national policy if we would secure the blessings of abundance and peace.—HENRY GEORGE.

THE great difference between the democratic theory of equality and the Communistic theory is that democracy aims at equality of opportunity whereas Communism aims at equal rewards.—WALTER LIPPMANN.

## California News Letter

ALTHOUGH it seems to be little realized in the rest of the country there is going on in California—with every sign of increasing severity—a fight for the restoration of the rights of the people to free opportunity to live and produce, which has been without equal in an electoral way for the past sixty or many more years. I shall not rehearse its earlier history and endeavor to confine myself to the occurrences since last reporting to LAND AND FREEDOM.

We are engaged in an effort to present through the initiative a constitutional amendment which will at once abolish the sales tax in California and at the end of nine years all taxation on improvements and tangible personal property. To obtain a place on the ballot it is necessary to secure the signatures of a little more than 186,000 registered voters, whose qualifications have to be passed upon by the registrars of voters of the several counties. To this day the reports to the Secretary of State cover around 171,000 names, leaving us so far about 15,000 names short. These would have been procured several weeks ago but for two circumstances—the weather and the opposition of the real estate boards and the chamber of commerce. As the world knows, the California weather this winter has been what is locally called “unusual,” as for instance, of the first 19 days of March, 16 were rainy. This, continued virtually for two months, has made work by canvassers very difficult and slow.

Entirely without precedent has been the work of the organizations of which I speak. Never before has there been a continuous and persistent effort to prevent a measure from being initiated. This time our canvassers have been spied upon in entering and leaving the offices of those having in charge the solicitation of names, have been followed in their work through the cities, signers have been told falsities as to the effect of their action in signing and urged to have their names withdrawn. Further, the canvassers have been threatened with loss of other occupation unless they abandoned our work, and there seems ample reason to believe that lists they had obtained have sometimes been bought from them.

Frantic full column warnings have been published as advertisements in the papers, usually of the following tenor: “Voters, Beware! Read before you sign. Initiative petitions now being circulated in this county (the solicitors may so soon seek your signature) are in support of The Single Tax Masquerading as a Sales Tax Repeal Act. This vicious proposal is an exorbitant land tax—a tax on your home, your rent, your farm, your business. Why Tax Yourself? California Association Against Single Tax. Denunciations and withdrawal slips have been circulated broadcast.

Despite all of the foregoing we are steadily and surely approaching the position on the ballot for the coming election we are seeking.



In addition to the acts above referred to, the courts have been twice asked to forbid the certification by the registrars of voters of San Francisco and Alameda counties of our lists to the Secretary of State. In each instance the court has refused to so act, and the reports have gone forward. Probably no further action in this regard will be taken, and we know as well as may be that any further like attempt would fail.

Why this determined fight to prevent the people from voting? One can only regard it as the outcome of a certain fear of the result. While chanting loudly that it is too bad that the repose of the people should be disturbed when they have six times overwhelmingly rejected the Single Tax they seem pallid with fear lest the history of the past would not be that of the future. For instance, in a circular letter addressed by a committee of the San Jose chamber of commerce to follow members through Santa Clara county, calling for individual contributions of \$50, the committee says:

"This is one of the most dangerous and misleading measurers ever presented to voters. Its innocent looking phrases, repealing sales taxes and exempting homes and improvements, appeal to the immediate self-interest of great masses of people. Wording of the measure gives no warning that the old Single Tax panacea of taxing land out of private ownership is the real objective. . . . Appeal to voters will be to repeal the Sales Tax and to exempt their homes or personal property from taxation. Anyone can understand that. That is why our fight is going to be so difficult. . . . The very foundations of our state and local governments are in jeopardy. The threat is real. . . . We find it will take many thousands of dollars to do the work."

The sincerest and best help we are receiving is from the labor organizations. The American Federation of Labor has in convention five times endorsed the plan. Only last week at Santa Barbara the Executive Council of the State A. F. of L. instructed its officers to throw their whole weight into the fight. The best part of this is that the officers and council know perfectly well the importance to labor of the proposition and are determined that the rank and file shall as well understand the situation. In addition the State Railway Brotherhoods are endorsing the amendment and there is no reason to doubt that the C. I. O. will be of the same mind. These constitute a potential force of probably not less than 400,000 voters.

Those who should be our friends and supporters throughout the Union are strangely silent, while the few of us, with Labor's assistance, are carrying on a gigantic fight with very strong chances of success. As you have seen our opponents attest this by their actions and utterances.

I remarked a few days ago to a friend that the forces we are contending with were so strong and their resources so vast that it seemed like the old fight of David against Goliath. "Yes," he replied, "but you remember what happened to Goliath."—JACKSON H. RALSTON.

## The Natural Law of Rent

LAND is sometimes classified into marginal, super-marginal and submarginal. These terms are self-defining when it is understood that marginal land is such as will produce common wages; that is, a common or average living, and nothing more, to the occupant, upon the application of the average amount of labor and capital.

Ricardo's Law of Rent may be stated thus: Rent is the excess value or product of any land above the poorest grade of land in common use, or marginal land. It may be illustrated as follows:

If marginal land will produce 25 bushels of corn per acre with the average application of labor and capital, its product constitutes common wages only. It has no rental value.

If other land will produce 50 bushels of corn per acre with the same application of labor and capital, the excess 25 bushels, constitutes ground rent, and is attributable to the quality or location of the land itself, rather than to the labor and capital employed. The excess is a gift of nature. It belongs equally to all men; and since it cannot be apportioned, it belongs to society.

As between landlord and tenant, this excess, or ground rent, is taken by the landlord, since the tenant is entitled only to common or average wages.

Super-marginal land will yield not only wages (and interest) on the labor and capital applied, but ground rent in addition, which is the share taken by the landlord and for which he makes no return. It is a monopoly income; and gives such land commercial value.

It is this that makes land so desirable an investment for those who want an income without effort. Such income is at the expense of the public.

Ricardo's Law of Rent is a natural law. It cannot be outmoded, as some say, nor repealed. As well try to repeal the law of gravitation.

Ground rent cannot be added to the price of corn, for the excess corn is itself the ground rent, and has cost nothing. The price of corn is fixed by the cost of producing it on marginal land.

JOHN HARRINGTON.

I ASK in behalf of the poor nothing whatever that properly belongs to the rich. Instead of weakening and confusing the idea of property, I would surround it with stronger sanctions. Instead of lessening the incentive to the production of wealth, I would make it more powerful by making the reward more certain.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS, BY HENRY GEORGE.

I AM a Single Taxer! The Single Tax would be the means of bringing about the sanitary reforms which I so much desire.

Surgeon-General WILLIAM C. GORGAS, U. S. Army.