

To abolish Land Monopoly—
Cause of Poverty, by the Single
Tax on Land Values.

The Great Adventure

The Voice of 263,000 California Patriots.

Western Division of the National Great Adventure for Single Tax.

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An Army of Life

The Story of the Great Adventure

The Great Adventure began in the call of one man, Luke North, in the pages of his magazine, *Everyman*, November, 1915. What it shall become is not yet apparent. But in Los Angeles, its birthplace, in California, its first field of action, in these United States, Canada, Australia and Great Britain, it already claims the hearts of many hundreds of thousands of the men and women to whom the nations must turn at last for leadership and redemption.

Among the earliest contributions to *The Great Adventure* was one of a thousand dollars from England. Toronto and Melbourne know it, have cheered and supported it. Chinese students visioning a new commonwealth in old Peking have hailed it. One and twenty provisional state committees, a national assembly officered by such men as signed the Declaration of Independence, nine journals, two million distributed pieces of propaganda, and, in California, two hundred and sixty-three thousand voting adherents, attest its vitality and powerful oncoming.

When the world first shook with the trampling of eight and twenty nations in arms; when international socialism seemed to have been swept away; when pacifists were wildly deploring, the economists and philosophers busily explaining; when the mind of the mass lay stunned before the Thing that had happened, came *The Great Adventure*—a true child of the War.

It had an explanation of the War, a new

religion, philosophy, politics—Purpose, based every one on the deep facts of the human spirit—revealed by the War.

It said in brief: You cannot stifle healthy contest without sooner or later provoking bloody conflict. The deepest craving of the human heart is for that exhilaration and emotional release which is afforded only by contest in the service of a bold Ideal. Land Monopoly and Privilege have turned life from a great adventure to a lock-step, have barred the earth against man, have denied him free contest with his fellow in his chosen field, have hedged him about with legal and economic limitations, have broken him with poverty, disemployment and lack of opportunity, have made him an outcast, the dull slave of another's routine, and the great eagle-spirit of contest in him has turned in wild, unconscious revenge to a spirit of conflict, and in its aimless reactions has deluged the earth with blood. Yet even so, and tremendous is the pathos—and hope of it, man still needs the sanctioning grace of the Ideal; and with heroic savagery ravages his fellows beneath the insignia of "Kultur and Welt-Politik!", "The rights of small nations!", or "Democracy against autocracy!"

This Fact, aflame with import, *The Adventure* preached to a stricken time. It called upon the shut eyes of men to open and see what a marvellous thing is this human spirit of ours, that denied heroic, satisfying contest for a saving Ideal, will,

rather than live wholly meanly, plunge into bloody conflict—for a shibboleth but half-believed. And it shouted across the forty-nine states and to far England and Australia: "Repent—of your ignorance and dull unfaith. Believe—in man. That grand craving of his spirit for heroic, self-surpassing action, which, perverted by Land Monopoly, made war possible, is the Power which shall overthrow Land Monopoly and clear the path for a more glorious world than pacifists dream of. Led by understanding, audacity and faith it shall yet surge forth and find its true expression in a Crusade as swift, vast magical and tremendous as the Great War itself—against all that Hinders man from his full and free ongoing... Life which free is great adventure shall be set free by the great spirit of adventure."

And there sprang from the new Insurgency a slogan "Against all that limits man," a new religion, of faith in the human spirit and in the immediacy of world-redemption, a new philosophy—"of Splendour," declaring that the human spirit is essential glory, needs but to be free from Hindrance—the fear of Want and the greed of Gain born of the social conditions imposed by Land Monopoly—to blossom in sweetness and light; and a new politics—"of Genius," laying hold of the master motive of men, their passion for contest in the service of a lofty Ideal, their sympathy and love of justice, as the one worthy and powerful way of arousing them to the great Abolition.

Preaching its evangel in the pages of *Everyman*, *The Great Adventure* went into action, calling upon the radical leadership of the states to unite under its flag, in the spirit of the new truth, to do

One Thing—Now. "Labels,"—isms,—ologies, creeds, parties and factions it brushed aside with laughter, strove only to unite man to man by the simple nexus of the heart for the simple but tremendous job of abolishing Land Monopoly and Want—immediately. It attempted no separate organization; spoke of itself, indeed, as "not a new organization but a new spirit"; and dealing not with organizations or officials as such but with men as men, it enlisted in its support socialists, anarchists, labor unionists, industrialists, progressives of all shades—and single taxers, and framed in two lines an initiative Demand for the immediate abolition of Land Monopoly in California by the levying of all public revenues upon land values—in fine, by the Single Tax.

Opposition stormed about it. The forces of Tax reform tradition and philistinism came against it as "unorthodox," "hasty," "irresponsible"! The landed interests, those who fatten by the sale of the earth, the mortgaging of human lives, dumfounded by this daring Crusade which preached the gospel of Henry George not as a fiscal theory, but as a world-panacea and in the spirit of religious passion, spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to defeat it.

Without trained speakers or adequate funds. *The Great Adventure*, still nothing but an unorganized rally, rode on; and finally on November 7, 1916, swept one-third of the voting population of California to the polls in support of its demand for the immediate Abolition of all that Hinders men.

The campaign was more than a political tour de force; it was the beginning of a powerful current in human affairs.

The New Phase

On November 7, 1916, election day, the first phase of *The Great Adventure* came to an end. It had been, in its immediate aspect, a spirited foray upon Land Monopoly, by a host of workers without formal organization.

Now came signs of the new Truth at work. The forty-nine states had watched, in the pages of *Everyman*, the on-sweep

of the California campaign. The result shocked them into emulation and action. Texas launched a *Great Adventure* campaign; Missouri followed with the boldest measure yet framed east of the Rocky Mountains, led by Frank P. Walsh, chairman of the Federal Committee on Industrial Relations, Carl Brannin, Tom Johnson's brilliant aide in Cleveland's fight

for public ownership, and Wm. Marion Reedy of "Reedy's Mirror." Mississippi led by Hon. Robt. S. Phifer, of the legislature, followed with a similar campaign. The Single Tax Society of Philadelphia, headed by Robert C. Macauley, editor of The Single Tax Herald, James H. Dix and James A. Robinson, called a conference of the eastern states with a view to putting the Great Adventure spirit to work on a large scale. To this Luke North was invited as guest of honor. Groups in other states also expressed a wish to be present. The scope and purpose of the projected conference began rapidly to broaden until, finally, a new call was issued, this time to Great Adventurers everywhere to meet in Atlantic City for the purpose of launching a national movement.

On April 6, the United States government declared war on Germany. On April 13, 14, 15, over two hundred representative Single Tax advocates gathered from twenty-one states to the St. Charles Hotel, Atlantic City, and there resolved themselves into the National Assembly of The Great Adventure for Single Tax.

Paying tribute to Luke North and the California campaign, the Assembly upheld the faith and evangel of The Great Adventure and its demand for the immediate abolition of Land Monopoly, passed a resolution calling upon the President as a war measure to declare all idle land open to use and raise all revenues for the war from a tax on land values, drew up a simple constitution and launched the national organization with the following provisional officers: William J. Wallace, president; Luke North, vice-president; James H. Dix, secretary;

Charles H. Ingersoll, treasurer; James A. Robinson, field secretary; Robert D. Towne, chairman of finance. Twenty-one state committees were also elected.

In these men the Great Adventure has found true national leadership. They present a most remarkable and significant combination of qualities—faith and audacity, the understanding of social forces and human psychology, the trained mind of the editor-in-chief, and the capacity of the powerful business executive. Social reform in the United States has shown but little of these qualities hitherto. Yet each of them is vital to the success of a great mass movement. The Crusade against Land Monopoly stands now fully equipped for such action as writes a new chapter in history.

The committee chosen by the National Assembly to represent California: Lona Ingham Robinson, Herman Kuehn and Edgcumb Pinchon, immediately began the democratic organization of The Great Adventure forces within the state. Their first step was to call into consultation some forty representative workers in the previous campaign. These were chosen on a simple territorial basis with a view to giving every important locality in the state some representation.

The State Assembly thus summoned met at Hill Top club, Los Angeles, on Memorial Day and launched the state organization based upon the principle of free groups with representation on the state committee.

So passed the unorganized rally of 1916 to the organized insurgent army of 1917—The Western Division of The National Great Adventure for Single Tax.

The Cleavage

There remains a negative side of The Great Adventure which must be dealt with. To quote from the writer's own words when The Great Adventure was but just beginning.

"The economic cleavage in society is superficial and horizontal. It runs between employer and employee, between land owner and proletarian, between privileged

and unprivileged. But the spiritual cleavage is deep as the universe itself—and vertical. It runs sheer thru every strata of society from the topmost to the downmost and thru every personality in that society.

"It is the line of cleavage between the man in us who does not very vitally care for human liberty and the Abolition of

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all that Hinders the splendour of the race, and the man in us, who vitally and supremely Cares; between the man in us whom John Bunyan satirized as Little-Faith, who leans timidly upon mechanical tricks and externalities in striving for his objective, and the man in us who believes with a keen, driving faith in the innate power of the human spirit to realize its boldest dreams of good; between the man in us who wants freedom—according only to standardized and accepted procedure, and the man in us who wants freedom by all means; between the man in us who is Commonplace, who worships the obvious, whose reasoning springs from the shallowest impulses, and the man in us who is the Genius, the seer, who worships the Unseen, whose faith is deep-fast in the Power not ourselves which makes for freedom, whose reasoning springs from deep and mighty impulses, which, maybe, only occasionally awake within us, but which, when thus awake, are flaming angels to our guidance, to be derided at our soul's peril, to be obeyed in faith and a vast understanding."

The cleavage then discerned as being "deep as the universe itself," has now become apparent. Latent or apparent, and soon to be apparent everywhere, that division exists in the entire radical leadership of the whole forty-nine states and the world. It is fundamental. It comes dividing brother against brother, father against son, wife against husband, dividing man against himself. It comes bringing not peace but a Sword; for it is a phase of the eternal exfoliation of Truth, the beautiful yet bitter burning of the Thing-that-shall-be from the womb of the Thing-that-was.

What more needs to be said? This human Renaissance, The Great Adventure, boldly projecting a new religion, philosophy, politics and Purpose into the world has cleft the conscience and reason of men asunder. The fight is on now, here and wherever are men grappling with world-change. Either It or the Thing-that-always-has-been will survive to the destruction of the other. No compromise can avail. Only Life itself, speaking in the hearts of the People, shall decide.

The New Program

The provisional committee has set its face towards, not simply the taxation of land values as the sole source of public revenue, but the 100% taxation of land value by additional initiative legislation for:—

- (1) State loans on long terms and low interest to settlers;
 - (2) State ownership of the power resources controlling one hundred and ten cities;
 - (3) Pensions for aged and widows.
- Each incident upon the tax on land values

Such a bold and complete Demand for the immediate Abolition of all that Hinders men, proposed by a great representative group of the people to all the people, and carried to victory by the hearts and dimes of the people shall shake the world and found a New Republic—for the glory of men, in this state and these states.

Let all those who catch the rising splendour of the dawn join with us in unshakable fellowship till the Day break and the shadows of poverty, misery—War, flee away!

The Great Adventure Single Tax Measure

Article XIII of the Constitution is hereby amended by the following section:

On and after January 1, 1920, all public revenues, state, county, municipal, and district, shall be raised by taxation of the value of land irrespective of improvements thereon.

The intent of this Single Tax amendment is to prevent the holding of land out of use for speculation and to apply the land values which the community creates to community purposes.

All laws in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.