

## The Key to Vancouver's Reaction

A SMALL group of property holders in control of the municipal franchise in matters financial passed the by-law which relieved improvements from local taxation and made Vancouver famous. A few years later, when the building boom had come to a climax and war conditions increased the burden of city government, this same small group, who had fallen behind in their own tax bills, and endangered the city's credit, started in to shift local taxation back upon the men whom the promise of tax exemption on enterprise had lured to Vancouver. The trick is a very simple one, but possible only under an unfair restricted franchise system that reflects no credit upon Canadian democracy.

An editorial of *The Kitsilano Times*, of Vancouver, of June 26, 1920, puts the facts clearly and forcibly. We trust Single Taxers will give these facts the widest possible circulation. Their omission from recent ex-parte propaganda against the Single Tax is a fair gauge of the unfitness of the writers as guides of public opinion. The editorial mentioned reads as follows:

### MONEY BY-LAW A COLOSSAL JOKE

The spectacle of a handful of property owners throwing a monkey wrench into the municipal machine of progress, is one for gods and men to laugh at.

Out of some 125,000 inhabitants, 3,354 property owners decide the destiny of this city by the Western Sea.

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The need is apparent to all, that this city must, without undue delay, broaden the voting power where money by-laws are concerned.

It is the rankest kind of injustice to withhold the franchise from citizens who contribute monies to the city treasury.

Property owners are not the only ones who pay taxes. If they were, there would be some justice in their present stand.

But they are not. In absolute fact these same property owners pay but a very small percentage of the taxes. The vast bulk of the taxes are paid by the tenants. Rentals are based on taxation plus other charges.

Who ran this city in the hole to the extent of \$35,000,000? The property owners!

Who would be the sole beneficiaries of this iniquitous scheme? The property owners!

The owners say they will block the progress of the city until such a time as the non-owners pay all obligations incurred by the owners in their insane money-grabbing boom saturnalia of a few years ago.

The non-owning class have been forced to pay their just share of taxation. But the owning class have diverted these funds to their private interests, hence the \$5,000,000 unpaid taxes.

Legislation compelling owners to pay into the municipal treasury excess rentals above legitimate charges on investment, etc., would alter the situation materially.

In the meantime all those who pay direct levies should have the privilege of voting on capital expenditure.

At the same time economy should be practiced in school

affairs. Those who receive tuition beyond the legal requirements should be made to pay for it.

In the meantime the property owners say they will furnish an explanation of their action. We don't need anything of the sort. What is needed is, "Representation with Taxation."

## The Churches and Social Unrest

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the announcement of a new record of net earnings of the United States Steel Corporation, of \$43,155,705 for the last quarter, the New York press publishes the Report of the Interchurch World Movement upon the steel strike of Sept. 22, 1919, to Jan. 7, 1920. The Report should be carefully read by every American who has at heart the peaceful economic evolution of this country. It is an outspoken, carefully worded, courageous document. Its revelation of the wage conditions in the steel industry and of the arbitrary, intolerant conduct of the Steel Corporation in its relation with its employees must cause grave concern to every thoughtful American citizen. One is forced to accept the conclusion of the Report:

"All the conditions that caused the steel strike continue to exist. We feel that, unless changes are made approximating to the findings here presented, further unrest is inevitable and another strike must come."

The Report does not touch upon the economic causes of the strike, but deals entirely with what may be termed the social and administrative defects and mistakes which at all times and under all circumstances will occur and cause friction and disorder. Nowhere in its Report does the Committee of the Interchurch World Movement indicate its realization of the basic economic maladjustment which vitiates the functioning of our whole industrial system. Surely at this date it is plain that the closing or obstruction of access to natural opportunities—the result of our perverse and irrational laws—forces labor and capital into an unfair, unnatural and mutually destructive conflict, while creating an unproductive, rent-exploiting class, for which in ethics and economics there is no justification whatever. The courage and honesty of the Committee, combined with its undoubted intelligence, lead us to expect interesting developments as it proceeds in its investigation of the causes of our social unrest.

I NOW expect, as I have anticipated for many years, a war with Europe which may even outlast the century—with occasional lulls; and I suppose the results must be, after a dreary chaotic interval, a discarding of the existing worn-out methods of government, and probably the establishment of society under a wholly new idea.... The leading feature of any such radical change must be a deep modification of the institution of Property—certainly in regard to land, and probably in regard to much else.

—HARRIET MARTINEAU, writing 64 years ago.

PREMIER DRURY'S bill for local option in taxation has received its third reading in the Ontario legislature.