

promotion of some major activity, but in this connection it may be well to state that no contributions will be made toward local campaigns of any kind.

For the benefit of those who did not know of Mr. Ingram, it should be mentioned that he was one of the fathers of the Parcels Post system which has proved such a valuable adjunct to the U. S. Post Office.

For a busy, practical man of affairs, Mr. Ingram devoted a large part of his time to public problems of such a nature that he could expect neither public acclaim nor reward, and it is unfortunate that there are not more of our business leaders who can see the wisdom of trying to reach an intelligent understanding of some of the reasons for "Progress and Poverty."—A. LAURENCE SMITH.

Miscellany

TAXES AND RENT IN HANDLING FOREST FIRES

The Town of Mashpee is located on the southern shore of Cape Cod. The population is small and composed mostly of mixed Indian and Negro blood. The inhabitants own very little property, the most valuable consisting of cranberry bogs, which furnish some employment to the local people, and a magnificent beach and undeveloped shore front some six miles in extent. Most of the bogs and the shore front are owned by non-residents.

This matter of land ownership involves a social problem that has a direct bearing on the fire. Why should the inhabitants of Mashpee slave and raise the tax rate on their humble homes to protect the property of absentee land speculators?

The cheapest method of handling a forest fire, or rather one that places the least tax burden on the local inhabitants, is to burn out the entire block in which a fire occurs from some natural boundary or fire stop. This method, of course, is very destructive to the forest, but being a simple and easy way to get a fire under control, was the one that the town fathers wished to employ.

As a forester and a state official, I felt it my duty to put out the fire, with the least destruction to the forest even if the cost was to be borne, in part, by the local tax payers and the chief benefits accrue to the absentee landlords.

LINCOLN CROWELL, Forest Warden in *Fire Fighting* for July.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

Sir: Mr. H. L. Mencken writes that the New Deal "sucks in the discordant perunas" of a large number of persons, among whom he names Henry George. I challenge Mr. Mencken to cite even one utterance, let alone a single act, of the New Deal which fulfills the doctrine of George. Indeed, I challenge him to cite anything in the record of the New Deal which is not the antithesis of George's principles.

After all, even a subscriber to a magazine has some rights. When he spends 50 cents and several hours of his time on a magazine he earns the right to kick like hell when defrauded by a confidence man, whether the crook be Mr. Mencken or Mr. Roosevelt. He has the right to demand that, even if the authors can't be expected to know what they're writing about, they should exercise some effort toward accuracy in elementary facts. It is clear that Mr. Mencken either did not read George, or he did read George and didn't understand him, or else he deliberately lied. Whichever it was, he defrauded your readers.

Mr. Mencken ought to go to school to Mr. Nock. By the way, I want to congratulate you on printing something by Mr. Nock each month. I'm surprised that you have enough sense to do it. It's tough, though, on cheapjacks like Mencken, to have to appear between the same covers with a thinker and writer like Mr. Nock.

KARL B. MICKEY in *American Mercury*.

WHY BUSINESS MEN GO INSANE

As we have pointed out in our first article, the revenue act of 1936 imposes five taxes on corporations, viz:

1. Normal Tax.
2. Surtax on Undistributed Profits.
- 3a. Surtax on Improper Accumulations (or)
- 3b. Surtax on Personal Holding Companies.
4. Capital Stock Tax.
5. Excess Profits Tax.

Daily News Record.

WHO OWN THESE LAND VALUES?

If taxes are for the benefit of the public, then they should be assessed against that value which is publicly created and to the exemption of labor, energy-created values.

This quoted clause from the Constitution of Ohio has fattened the few in the great cities of the state and to figures beyond the comprehension of the average person and at the expense of the farmer and industry generally—employer and employed.

The land value of Cleveland, for instance, now equals one billion dollars; it is held by less than eight percent of the population, and one-third of it is owned by only 125 families.

In Cincinnati, there are three families holding 75 million dollars of its land values.

All this publicly, legally created and privately taken value is the result of that uniform tax clause quoted from the Constitution of Ohio of 146 years ago—rewarding land speculation by a fine collected from industry.

DAVID GIBSON in *Lorain (Ohio) Journal*.

Causes of Fear

EXTRACTS FROM ADDRESS AT LONDON CONFERENCE

By S. VERE PEARSON, M.A., M.D., M.R.C.P.

FEAR is a state of mind induced as a protection against danger, real or imaginary. There are terrible apprehensions about now-a-days producing armaments and wars. But fear is not the primary cause of war, for behind the fear is danger, chiefly danger of want and loss of liberty. Even stronger than the fear of want and of actual destruction is a fear of degradation of freedom. People are apprehensive lest foreigners should cramp their self-development and creativeness even more than they are hampered at present, but are blind to the basic causes of present lack of freedom. When justice gives equal opportunities to all at home such fears will go; discussions on disarmament will also end; for a foreigner can do no harm in a country where true justice reigns. Civil wars arise because of the fears fed by the injustices so rife in society, and rulers can distract the workers from destitution and discontent by leading them to wars abroad. They easily arouse fears of over-population, of foreign competition, etc. "Unable to fill empty bellies with bread, the leaders aim instead at filling empty heads with collective hysteria,"* to the accompaniment of brass bands, flags and verbiage. Once war has begun, anger over the inevitable slaughter boils up. Indignation can be intoxicating especially if it be righteous even in imagination. Mob hatred can be pleasurable and, unfortunately, persistent.

Pacifists too often, through not understanding the causes of war and the economic conditions lying behind most anxieties, appeal to ethics. Many believe with Roosevelt that "any social, political or economic problem would melt away before the fire of a spiritual awakening." This overlooks the fact that the spirit is crippled by fears and by economic straits. From the time of the proposals for a league of nations during the Peloponnesian War down to the present century all efforts to establish peace by resort to disarmament discussions and courts of arbitration have proved futile. From the time of Isaiah to the latest European treaty most of the covenants built on foundations of that kind have proved merely "bargains with

*Aldus Huxley *Beyond the Mexique Bay*.

death, and compacts with hell." Too often do such discussions and so-called leagues act as a smoke-cloud obscuring the forces constantly tending to produce strife, envy, fear and hatred. These forces will vanish only when economics and its natural laws are recognized. Selfish and unselfish people alike use the multiplication table; similarly they use the laws of physics to make a steam-engine of an aeroplane. Discussion about these laws ceases so soon as they are widely apprehended. We gain advantages from our acceptance of and obedience to these laws, regardless of the ethics which influence individuals. So it will be when the laws of economics are understood.

The crowd is made up of individuals. Hence the crowd psychology cannot be entirely separated from the instincts and psychology of the individual. The reactions which affect the human crowd are in some particulars the same today as amongst primitive peoples, while in other respects they are definitely modified by the conditions prevailing in these times. Fear is a mental state more likely to be morbid and less likely to be useful in the crowd than in the individual and today than in ancient times. Religious feelings are based partly upon fear (Urfurcht is the German word), the fear of what is outside ourselves. There is also the life-instinct (Lebenstrieb) which may be associated with fear. Man is actuated by the three sets of instincts associated with the three words sustenance, sex and society, the three "s's." Fears enter sometimes into each of these domains and they may be interwoven in the individual's and in the crowd's mental state.

There are, today, peculiar forces tending to produce group fear. People are herded into and within cities more than ever; they are divorced from the land, from mother nature, and from the influence of the soil and the growing things thereon. They are led to think that certain countries are over-populated and that they cannot promote self-development so readily as in former times. Land monopoly and taxation are at the root of these retrogressions. If all taxes were abolished and the public's only proper revenue, the land rent from occupants of sites were collected, then everyone could hold in full the products of his labor and get the interest on his capital. The natural initiative, industry and creativeness of man, in other words, self-determination would then be fostered. Hindrances to production and exchange and to international friendliness would disappear; and people would be better distributed on the ground and in occupations. But eyes to see these things are blinded. For people's minds are darkened by superstitions, and biased by early training and environment. The worst superstition constituting the greatest iniquity of all ages is particularly hard to root out; it is, that anyone can own the earth. The cloud of this iniquity is perceived from time to time hanging over society; but the means of dispelling it are not easy to learn. For example, the Communists of Russia have done much towards getting rid of private property in land; and they have accomplished a great deal the bring about self-determination of individuals and races. Consequently, they are not aggressively-minded towards their neighbors. But they have not banished fear. They have built vast armaments and have developed frightful preparedness for wars. This is because they have not discovered the necessary measures to banish the great iniquity and to ensure freedom. The vital law of rent is not known to them. They still have taxes, particularly those covertly extracted by profits on State monopoly enterprises. Therefore, Communism is based on bloodshed and has cause for fearing neighbors. It has been founded on slaughter and is a dictatorship. It is no antidote to Fascism.

To study briefly the mental development of the individuals who make up the herd:—The psychology of the individual is largely determined by the influences which act at a very early age. In spite of modern teaching few young children can grow up in an atmosphere of freedom. They are seldom even looked at with unbiased eyes, for adults are blinded by the prejudices and pre-occupations they have themselves acquired. Those who do not understand what freedom

is are very apt to blame human nature for society going askew. Similarly, few indeed are those persons throughout history who have taught that the child may be right. At last people are beginning to learn that not only the small difficulties of the child and the great ones of adult life, but also that social unrest and chaos are just mistakes which better knowledge can rectify. A child is handicapped by his parents finding themselves unable to give him the necessary materials and understanding for his work. Again, a youth is often forced to take up an occupation for which he has no liking. Creative ness and self-expression are thwarted.

The Open Forum

Under this heading we shall print from time to time, usually without editorial comment, short contributions on controversial points. In this decision we are abandoning our resolution to exclude discussion on points that seem to us to be painfully repetitious. But it now appears that our readers think otherwise, and LAND AND FREEDOM is their paper, and we are willing to accord our policy to their wishes.

—Editor LAND AND FREEDOM.

CONFUTES J. B. ELLERT

EDITOR LAND AND FREEDOM:

Congratulations upon the symposium, "Step by Step to Nowhere, and other good features in your last issue.

Inasmuch as my views are referred to in two separate articles, I feel that your readers are entitled to be protected against misrepresentation regarding them, particularly as the misrepresentation on page 125 follows a similar misrepresentation in your last issue, page 93. You are doing good work in helping your readers to get their economics on straight; let me help by correcting Mr. Ellert.

On page 93 in your May-June number he says:

"I see that Mr. Beckwith does not approve of our tax plan in Milk River. I am at a loss to make out what he advises us to do; he seems to think that to increase our taxes on land value is wrong and to gather the land rent through our system of taxation is wrong."

Those of your readers who take my bi-weekly, *No Taxes*, know that there have stood in the title page of that paper from the very first issue, more than four years ago, these twenty words:

"We pay it all in our rent. Take for the public all the rent and collect not a single tax."

If more evidence is needed to show the inaccuracy of Mr. Ellert's statement, it will be found in the article "Milk River Passes the Test," page 3202 in *The Forum* and page 505 in *No Taxes*. In that article I commend Milk River for voting against lowering the village levies on land, even though they are bringing in nearly twice the revenue necessary. Further commendation of Milk River for this course will be found on page 3220 of *The Forum*; and this will appear in an early issue of *No Taxes*.

On page 125 of your last issue, Mr. Ellert says:

"Mr. Beckwith's idea of putting all taxes on present land values, or taking the rent on speculative values, etc. . . . Mr. Beckwith and Mr. Jorgensen are both trying to solve the Single Tax by our present unnatural land system. . . ."

Your readers may not be interested in my views; but if they are you want these views correctly presented in your columns. Otherwise the good work you are doing in helping readers to get their economics on straight will be hindered.

I was notified by a government telegram that I was scheduled to appear before the U. S. Senate Finance Committee at the hearing on the tax bill, May 6. As I could not go to Washington, I filed with the committee a statement made up in the form of questions and answers exactly as such a hearing might be conducted. The following quotations from that will not only correct Mr. Ellert with respect to my views but will add to the excellent symposium upon the subject suggested by Bolton Hall. I quote as follows from the seventy-four questions and answers:

*See my book on *The Growth and Distribution of Population*. (Geo. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., London, and J. Wiley & Son, New York, 1935).