

# JOSEPH FELS FUND BULLETIN

BLMYER BUILDING

Monthly Information for Contributors to THE FELS FUND and Single Taxers Generally

PUBLISHED BY JOSEPH FELS FUND COMMISSION

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## HOW TO HELP A CAUSE.

July 15 has been selected by our **Socialist** friends for their financial day. Socialists willing to give money to their cause will contribute to the campaign fund of their party's congressional candidates as much of their earnings of that day as they will be allowed to get. Socialists willing to give their lives, will perhaps feel themselves excused from giving money. In the meantime their comrades will feel justified in considering them as already dead.

On August 15 our **woman suffrage** friends will be called upon to make sacrifices for that cause. Those wishing to live for the cause will refrain from purchase of things they want and contribute the money instead to the movement. Those willing to die for it will perhaps defer contributing while awaiting with marvelous patience the call for the one service they are so willing to perform.

**Single Taxers** have not adopted the plan of a sacrifice day, although we too have our members who live for the movement and those who profess a willingness to die for it. Yet no man has ever actually died for any cause who did not live for it as long as he could. There is cause to doubt the willingness to die for a movement—however great the need—of the man or woman unwilling to sacrifice thereto as much of his or her life as is represented in such contributions as a day's wages, or the price of some self-denied pleasure or luxury.

Any one who has seen the benefits that will come from adoption of a reform can easily wish success to the movement to gain it. No exertion is necessary for that. It involves no trouble or sacrifice. But to pitch in and help get it. That is different. It is a fine thing to feel for a good cause in one's heart. But it is still finer to feel for it in one's purse. It is only when this splendid impulse extends from the heart to the pocket that one can be sure that it exists at all.

What is the application of all this? If it is not self-evident then it is useless to try to make it clear. How about it, Mr. Croasdaler?

A Croasdaler is one who answers William T. Croasdale's definition of a Single Taxer. One who does something for the Single Tax.

## BEAR IN MIND.

If you have not yet sent in your pledge or contribution, even though you get no further notice, you are still remembered as one who has not done as he should.

## PUEBLO PLUNDERBUND REBUFFED.

Pueblo's plunderbund has met another defeat more disastrous than the one of last fall when Single Tax was put into the city's charter. Home rule in taxation is restricted in Colorado to cities having a commission form of government. In order to get rid of Single Tax in an underhanded way the plunderbund interests decided to submit the question of abolishing the commission form and returning to the old plan of Mayor and Council. The plan was suddenly sprung and an election called for on June 30, in the hope that the vote would be but light and the proposition carry through lack of interest. How badly they were fooled is shown by the following from the Denver News of July 1:

Pueblo, June 30.—By a vote of the people, commission form of government in Pueblo, the present commissioners and civil service commission were sustained today, 5,219 to 1,689. Considering threatening weather conditions, the vote was heavy, totalling 6,908. This probably was responsible for the one-sided result. Opponents of the charter, who aspired to restore the mayor form of government in Pueblo, counted on casting 2,000 ballots and hoped that the vote would be light.

The count of ballots was the quickest ever made in Pueblo and the result of today's election was known one-half hour after the polls closed. An hour later the final count was announced.

## BUT ONE PROPOSITION.

There was but one proposition submitted to the voters—that of adopting a proposed amendment to the city charter, which would have ousted the present city and civil service commissioners and paved the way for the election of a mayor-at-large and eight commissioners from wards. But one cross on a ballot was required of each voter.

The election was quiet. The police though watchful for election frauds, found nothing to do, and no arrests were made. Neither were there charges of dishonesty at the polls.

Early in the day the light vote led to the belief that there was a lack of interest and that the charter might be overthrown. In the afternoon different commercial organizations be-

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came active and personally saw to it that the voters visited the polls. The result was a degree of activity at the polling places towards the closing hour that raised the total to a higher point than was generally expected.

#### SEVENTY PER CENT VOTE.

Today 70 per cent of Puebloans registered, voted. Last fall when a proposition to reduce the number of city commissioners from five to three was before the people, only 57 per cent visited the polls. The amendment on that occasion carried and two commissioners were removed.

The vote on the Single Tax amendment last fall was 2,711 to 2,171. Assessments for the first year of Pueblo's new tax law are now being made. During 1914 fifty percent of improvement values will be exempt. In 1915 and thereafter 99 per cent will be exempt.

#### MAKING LAND MONOPOLY DENOUNCE ITSELF.

Laurie J. Quinby, of Omaha, is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for State Senator. Mr. Quinby is an active Single Tax worker of many years standing. He is also a landowner and believes in making his vacant lots work for the Single Tax, as is shown by the following, placed conspicuously on a sign board at Thirtieth and Taylor Streets, Omaha:

#### I WOULD ERECT A BUILDING HERE

But If I Did, The

#### CITY, COUNTY and STATE WOULD FINE (TAX) ME

My neighbors, by improving theirs, will make  
my Land Valuable, then I'll sell it

**SINGLE TAX** Would Encourage the Builder  
not the Speculator **LOOK INTO IT**

Read "Sunshine Comes to Omaha." At all Bookstores. **L. J. QUINBY**

Commenting on this the Omaha News says: "Here's Quinby's argument in favor of Single Tax. Can any one beat it?" It is safe to say that no one can.

Fay Lewis, of Rockford, Illinois, is another Single Taxer who combines land speculation with propaganda. He too has a sign board on his lot on which he states the case as follows:

**"EVERYBODY WORKS BUT THE VACANT LOT.** I paid \$3,600 for this lot and will hold it till I get \$6,000. The profit is **unearned increment** made possible by the presence of this community and enterprise of its people. I take the profit without earning it. For the remedy, read

**HENRY GEORGE.**

Yours truly,

Fay Lewis."

To further spread the truth he thus makes clear, Mr. Lewis has had photographs of lot and sign board printed on postal cards so that all who correspond with him may learn.

Messrs. Quinby and Lewis are thus working very much after the fashion of J. J. Pastoriza, of Houston, who years ago did much to educate the people of that city by using the sign board method to call attention to his own vacant lot industry.

#### JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

Joseph Chamberlain was a man whose claim to fame must rest entirely on the achievements of his earlier years. **The glory of his work as a radical reformer in the city of Birmingham is great enough to let one forget his record of the past 28 years as an ally of England's landed interests.** As the following comment in the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune shows it was rather to honor the old Joseph Chamberlain, the radical who really passed away as far back as 1886—that the voters of Birmingham continually returned to Parliament Joseph Chamberlain, the Tory agent of oppression:

*Forty years ago the cities of Great Britain were even worse than American cities in the age of their almost total depravity. Mr. Chamberlain acquired a competency in business and when still in his thirties turned his attention to the reformation of Birmingham. If he did not imitate Augustus, who is said to have "found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble," he did more. He converted Birmingham into a model municipality as far as Parliamentary interference would permit.*

*He found Birmingham a dirty, ragged, corrupt and all but bankrupt city. He was elected to the town Council and later made its Mayor. Then he began those great undertakings, slum clearance, municipal ownership, creation of municipal tenements, improved water supply, scientific sewer system, street widening, parks, playgrounds, health regulations and others.*

*Birmingham led the way in acquiring public utility enterprises by the city. Mr. Chamberlain was convinced of the wisdom of this policy by the budget necessities of Birmingham. He it was who first said it was foolish for the city to do the non-revenue producing things and leave in private hands the profit earning things. So he took over the street railways and other public service companies and they are now earning at low charges a large profit that goes to pay the cost of such things as street improvement, parks, sewers, police and the like.*

**Mr. Chamberlain was the first conspicuous public man to advocate the taking by taxation of the "unearned increment" of land values.** *When a great thoroughfare was to be constructed he acquired the abutting land, what is called in this country "excess condemnation," and thereby gained for the municipality the increased value given by the public improvement.*

*So immense were the benefits that his policies conferred on Birmingham, it is recorded, that no man ever contested a public office with him when in latter life he repeatedly "stood for" Parliament he was always unopposed.*

**MEXICO'S GREAT NEED.**

GEORGE W. STONE, in *Los Angeles (Cal.) Outlook*.

It is worth while to know that in Mexico there is no tax on land. The public revenues are collected from sales of merchandise, rents, contracts, and other sources for which stamps can be used. The holders of enormous tracts of land are not subject to any tax on account of such holdings. Taxation is so contrived that it falls on the laboring and business classes, chiefly. One may own a million acres of land and pay no tax on it. If one of these great land owners sells, say a hundred head of cattle, he is supposed to pay a certain tax to the government. But in practice it is not so. He may pay for a tax for a hundred, and really sell a thousand head, provided he has made a gift to the tax collector. This practice is so common that it attracts no attention, much less any interference. There is no limit to graft in that unfortunate country. \* \* \*

There are about twelve or thirteen million Indians, called peons, in Mexico and from one to two millions of Castilian origin. Once the peon owned land but when this practice of graft became so profitable to the officials, the peons were deprived of their land upon the pretext that they could not show a title for it. Upon this pretext the land was confiscated by the government and distributed among its favorites. \* \* \*

President Wilson has already stated in a published interview, that the trouble in Mexico is so closely related to land owning that the remedy must be reached through equitable land laws. This may remind us that land titles are merely rights of possession, not of ownership. The land was here before men came. Men took possession of it and in the interest of society it has been considered necessary that such right of possession should be legally recognized. If there is to be an effective development of land it must be kept in possession sufficiently long to bring it into a state of productiveness. Hence land titles, which have assumed the character of permanency. Personal possession of land on which to make a home, is essential to social welfare, as society is now constituted. If a whole class is denied this privilege it thereby becomes an outcast class. This is precisely what has happened in Mexico. That is to say, eight out of every ten of the population belongs to this outcast class. Unquestionably President Wilson is right in his opinion that new land laws are an indispensable necessity in Mexico.

Surely some land tax is needed.

**PROHIBITIVE LAND PRICES.**

Prohibitive land prices, based upon speculation, are the Pacific Northwest's great handicap. This fact was impressed upon the men who attended Spokane's immigration conference by E. C. Leedy, immigration agent of the Great Northern Railway.

Mr. Leedy said there had been a decrease in immigration to this section in comparison with the record of a few years ago. He attributed the falling off to prohibitive land prices caused by the activities of speculators. Mr. Leedy said:

"You can buy the best grade of land back in Illinois for \$250 an acre. One man from there looked over propositions here at \$200 an acre and said: 'What is the use of me going eleven miles from a railroad, away from neighbors, to pay as much for land as I would at home, where I have churches, schools, a street car line, all the advantages of civilization?'"

In Kansas and Nebraska land is selling at \$125 to \$150 an acre, and the people are looking for cheaper land. In Minnesota last year the Great Northern hauled 1,500 car-loads of settlers to cheaper lands. With but 30 days' leeway for advertising, 40,000 persons were induced to try for the 300,000 acres given settlers in the Fort Peck, Montana, reservation.

Mr. Leedy said he had never heard of a chamber of commerce out here that had protested openly against land schemes whereby the homeseekers were fleeced. The chambers have not protested, he said, because many of their members have been interested. He declared that land exploiters make a mistake when they assume that people are bound to invest in Pacific Northwest land, irrespective of price.

Such an indictment of land speculation, coming from such a source, is worthy of consideration by everybody having the interests of the Pacific Northwest at heart. If prohibitive prices are turning farmers away from this section, as Mr. Leedy says, the remedy is to place prices where they belong.—*Portland (Oregon) Daily Journal*.

This is one of the penalties that Oregon can not avoid paying for voting down the Single Tax. It is easy to vote a just measure down, but it is impossible to escape the result. The only remedy is to correct the error.

**DEDICATION TO JOSEPH FELS.**

On the occasion of planting a tree in memory of Joseph Fels by the National Farm School at Vineland, New Jersey on July 4, the following remarks were made by Professor Earl Barnes, of Philadelphia. It follows:

It is most fitting and proper that the National Farm School should plant a tree today in memory of Joseph Fels. This school is firmly based in the belief that young men facing life should turn toward the land as the base from which not only all wealth of the world is drawn but from which leadership has always come to men. Mr. Fels, living in the midst of the greatest city in the world, where six millions of people are crowded together, seeing the struggle for existence under its bitterest, most artificial and most hopeless conditions, realized that for the regeneration of present peoples and in order to secure the largest opportunities for generations to come, the land must be set free.

In every direction he saw great estates, monopolies of coal and iron and oil, all the available sea-front owned and exploited; and meantime around him he saw millions of homeless creatures who could reach the blessings of the earth only as they filtered through selfish and soulless monopolies. Himself rich and enjoying all the advantages of success, he turned away from the ease and luxuries which his money could so easily bring him, and gave his time, his efforts and his money to secure equal opportunities for every child born into the world to avail himself of the fruits of the earth.

He worked unceasingly; no day was long enough to accomplish the work he tried to crowd into it; he traveled untiringly over Europe, Africa and America, seeking everywhere to arouse men and women to a realization of their birthright and of the forces which were robbing them of it. For years he doubled all the money raised in the United States, England, France, Denmark and Sweden, to propagate these ideas. He ate poor food and traveled in the cheapest way that he might have more means with which to convince men that they should help, not crush, their brothers. He was a Jew, and with the vision of his race he dreamed of a new world free to the men and women living on it and a redeemed civilization.

In the midst of these labors he fell ill, and in a few days passed to his long home. Mrs. Fels is continuing his work, and his means will go far toward realizing his dream. But it was not as a rich man that we are honoring him today. It was as a lover of his fellows, a seer of visions, a worker for ideals, that we remember him and pass his name down to future generations through the planting of this tree.

**DISTINGUISHED VISITORS COMING.**

Mr. George W. Fowlds of New Zealand, former member of Parliament and of New Zealand's Cabinet, will visit the United States and Canada this month, stopping in a number of cities. Mr. Fowlds is well known to Single Taxers throughout the world.

Another distinguished visitor is George A. Taylor, of Australia, who while here will deliver talks telling of what is being done in that part of the world in municipal government and town planning. Mr. Taylor is one of the ablest assis-

tants and co-workers of **Walter Burley Griffin**, the Chicago Single Tax Architect, to whom was assigned the commission by the Australian government of laying out the city of Canberra, the new Capitol of the Commonwealth. The Single Tax will be applied to this city from the start.

### PROPOSED OHIO TAX AMENDMENT.

Editor Ohio State Journal:

Collier's for June 27 states:

"If we read the stars rightly we will find President Wilson, if he is permitted to go on in his present course, sooner or later using the army and navy of the United States to introduce into Mexico some kind of reform of land tenure which will be more or less like Single Tax."

Had Mexico adopted Single Tax, it could have duplicated New Zealand conditions of a country without a millionaire or a pauper instead of developing a revolution. If we take stock of industrial conditions in Colorado, West Virginia, Michigan, Montana, etc., it is easy to see we are shortly coming to the time when this country will have the choice of revolution or abolishing the yearly tax fine levied upon manufacturers and consumers in the tax on every article labor produces; all of which taxes combine to make a gigantic bonus to the speculators in unused lands, resulting in depopulation of the country with intensifying congestion in cities, with competition of housing, raising rents, and competition for employment, cutting down wages, while reduced and ever lessening acreage cultivated increases cost of living.

At this time petitions are, we understand, in circulation for the securing of a constitutional tax amendment to prevent city residents using their tax credit beyond 1 per cent, or with restrictions which amount to this result. Mr. O. K. Shimansky, speaking before the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, claimed for this proposal it would prevent adoption of the Single Tax in Ohio. He did not, however, explain the more immediate purpose of preventing municipal ownership of public utilities. Citizens of cities restricted by a state constitution to using but 1 per cent of their credit would have no money to establish municipal ownership of lighting, power, water or street railroad service. Franchise seekers could get new grants upon their own terms and citizens would be taxed many hundred per cent to pay dividends upon oceans of watered stocks and bonds.

Daniel Kiefer.

Cincinnati, June 26.

### WHAT EDMONTON IS DOING.

At a dinner given on July 1 by New York Single Taxers to Mayor Wm. J. McNamara, of Edmonton, Alberta, Mayor McNamara said in part:

"Edmonton has grown most remarkably. In 1910 the population was only 24,000 and today it is about 72,000. We have never taxed buildings in Edmonton, but up to 1912, there were several business licenses and a tax on

floor areas graduated according to the value of the business transacted. The tax on a jeweler's floor space was much higher than on a butcher's for the same area. These taxes were abolished and the increase in the tax rate on land was very small. Land is assessed at nearly full value, while the tax rate is only \$1.60 per \$100. Until recently it was only \$1.45. With the rapid increase in population and the relatively low tax rate on land values there has been heavy speculation in land. It is difficult to determine to what extent the abolition of the small taxes on business and floor areas have reduced rents. I am an ardent single taxer myself, and realize that we must secure for the cost of government a great deal more of the ground rent than we do at present, in Edmonton.

We own our street railways, but were handicapped and put to great expense by the existence of a tract two miles by one and one-half miles in the center of the city owned by the Hudson Bay Co., and we were obliged to run around this tract.

Labor cost is about a third higher in Edmonton than in the East of the United States. Materials, cement, copper rails, etc., cost about twice as much as in the East.

### A REQUEST FROM MRS. FELS.

To facilitate preparation of a biography of Joseph Fels, Mrs. Fels requests those of his friends who have in their possession letters from him, to kindly forward them to this office. This request should meet with a prompt response.

### A LABOR ORGAN'S OPINION.

The home rule in taxation amendment has been indorsed by twenty-five city councils in the State. With the numerous other indorsements of the measure, the indications are it will carry by a large majority, but this fact should not result in apathy on the part of its friends.—San Francisco Labor Clarion.

### HOW TO GET THE LANDS BACK.

The decision of the United States Supreme Court, by which some railroads get title to about \$500,000,000 worth of oil and mineral lands, would not jar The People so much if we had Single Tax. And if we had Single Tax the railroads wouldn't want those lands.—San Francisco Star.

### A GROUNDLESS RUMOR.

It is not an easy matter to correct all newspaper statements. Recently some papers have been publishing a report to the effect that American Single Taxers are about to start a Single Tax campaign in Mexico. Of course the statement was absurd. Mexico needs the Single Tax badly and American Single Taxers have not hesitated to mention that fact many times. But that is an entirely different thing from starting a campaign. Mexicans should do all the reforming needed in Mexico. Neither the Joseph Fels Fund Commission nor any other American Single Tax organization is likely to do any campaigning there, without being invited, and Mexicans are hardly in a position at present to confine themselves to peaceful agitation.