



The first essential change in government: Levy no taxes and collect the ground rent for public purposes.

THE PROBE

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NOTICE.

News and advertisements must be left at NOREN'S not later than 5:30 p. m. Thursdays in order to appear the following Monday.

ROOMS TO LET—Three rooms and use of bath and laundry; electric light. Inquire at Noren's. (W. S.)

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COMMENTS

BY NOREN

THIS IS PROPAGANDA, BUT NOT GERMAN

From the Pittsburgh Dispatch, December 6, 1918:

Dr. Samuel Hamilton, superintendent of Allegheny County schools, sent a letter yesterday to each of the county school teachers, explaining the purpose of the celebration, (The British Day). The letter follows in part:

"The Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has set apart Friday, December 6, as British Day, with the recommendation that it be properly observed in all of the schools of the State.

"In the past the children of America, through the study of history, as presented in the text books used by the public school, have possibly not come to look upon the people of Great Britain with the same degree of friendship that has been aroused by joining with them as allies in the world war. It is true that George III was the moving spirit in the oppression of colonies that led to our revolution; but our school children have NOT GENERALLY CAUGHT THE FACT THAT GEORGE III WAS A GERMAN, UNABLE TO SPEAK A WORD OF ENGLISH, AND THAT OUR REVOLUTION was due to the German spirit acting through this Teuton sitting as the English King, more than it was to the real sentiment of the British people."

In his attempt to out-British the British, Dr. Hamilton overreaches himself. This is natural for it is not an easy matter to whitewash those who fought George Washington. At best history is not too truthful. Knowing this, the Superintendent of our schools evidently thinks himself entitled to do a little prevaricating himself.

He might have gotten away with it, too, had he not run afoul of what is to the British the holy of all holies, their beloved Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Says the Britannica: "George III—Vol. 11, page 740. "As the first English-born sovereign of his house speaking from his birth the language of his subjects, he found a way to the hearts of many."

Blame it on George's butler, Doctor. The butler is not in the Encyclopaedia Britannica and you can lay it on thick, and to your heart's content.

AM I A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS?

Am I a soldier of the Cross—
Cross of the New Crusade?
Must only others suffer loss,
Or give their willing aid?

Is there no task for me to try,
No sacrifice to make?
No age old wrong to rectify,
No galling chain to break?

The private ownership of land
On man its curse doth shower.
Must I refuse at its command
To battle 'gainst its power?

Devotion Truth Justice and Right
Stand by my side forever,
And ever guide my mind aright
And help my poor endeavor.

Though men may honor not my name,
Ne'er will my work relax,
Till all men shall, with glad acclaim,
Embrace the Single Tax.

—OLIVER MCKNIGHT.

FOR SERVING HIS COUNTRY

"A boy of sixteen, who had just been discharged from the hospital after an attack of influenza, instead of being allowed the usual five days for recuperation, was set to scrubbing kitchen floors and to guard duty. He protested he was not strong enough to do this work, nevertheless he was continued on guard duty for a longer period than usual. In this condition he

was taken with a chill, went to his tent to get his overcoat and while there sat down on the edge of his cot. He was caught with his head in his hands and was accused of being asleep while on duty. Though he denied that he was asleep and asserted that he only yielded to over-powering fatigue, he was convicted by court-martial and sentenced to twenty-five years in the penitentiary."

From an address of the President of the American Bar Association at a recent meeting.

Now it appears that for a congressman to have voted against the war resolution was the strongest card for re-election. Of the 34 congressmen who voted against war and sought re-election 25 were winners. One other lost to an out-and-out anti-war man. It seems that those congressmen who got elected in 1916 on the peace issue and later voted for war, got a new mandate in 1918—to stay at home where they could be watched.

In Pittsburgh we have a new Morals Court. Part of its duties will be to hear and decide cases of delinquent boys. Something like five thousand of such cases come up each year. The Protestant churches are making a united effort to look after the cases of Protestant boys through the Y. M. C. A. According to The Pittsburgh Christian Outlook they are calling for men to volunteer to look after boys who have come before the Court or are likely to. The Magistrate, we learn, has adopted the following policy in dealing with these boys:

1. "Prevent the boy's return to the court."

2. "Get the boy's companions before the police get them and keep them out of the court."

3. "Hunt down the causes that annually bring 5,000 boys into a subordinate court and remove these causes."

Judging from the third point these men are not afraid of tackling a big job. But evidence is not lacking in their long statement of a program, that they will deal with their self-assumed duty superficially.

The first surprise of the program presented for our consideration is, that they have already hunted down the causes for the boys' delinquencies. They found them in the Court's records.

I quote from The Pittsburgh Christian Outlook:

"The Court's records show that a majority of boys and young men are

Weekly Price List

Read this list carefully, prices revised every week.

PAY NO MORE

Store opens at 8, closes at 6
Except Saturdays.

SPECIALS FOR THIS WEEK.

A lot of small hockey caps for boys.
Small sizes only; value 23c to 39c; price 9c
Paper Napkins, pure white crepe, scalloped edges; value, 20c per 100, price 10c
(Limit 500 to a customer).
Wax paper, pure white, best grade, 20 sheets, 12x15, lots of 10 rolls, value 50c; price for 10 rolls 38c
Envelopes, high grade, heavy paper, pure white, 5, 6 1-4 and 6 3-4 sizes, 25 in a package; value 10c, price 5c
Box of 500 90c
Pigot edging, 4 yard pieces; value 10c, price 5c
Heavy black woolen sox, value 65c; price 43c
Boy's Leather Belts 25c
Rit, washes and dyes 10c
Gilt upholstering tacks, box 10c
Curling tongs 10c
Carpet Tacks, all sizes 5c
No. 2 Tacks for window shades, per box 5c
Iron Holders 15c
Men's Garters 25c, 35c and 50c
Paint Brushes 10c to 50c
"Close Fit" cap shape Hair Nets, black, dark brown, light brown, medium brown and blond, 15c; two Nets for 25c
"Close Fit" Hair Nets in grey, each 25c
Fringe Hair Nets, sometimes called straight; made in France, of genuine hair: full size, 38x40, 10c; three Nets for 25c
Ingram's Talcum Powder 25c
Ingram's Milkweed Cream 50c
Ingram's Zedenta Tooth Paste 25c
Ingram's Therapeutic Shaving Cream 50c
Ingram's Face Powder 25c and 50c
Sewing Machine Belts, long enough for all makes of machines, 30c and 25c
Box Writing Papers, Tablets, Inks, Envelopes, Pens and Pencils, Glue and Mucilage.
Scissors 25c to 50c
Bees Wax 4c
Longcloth 30c
Shoe Polishes, 10c, 13c and 25c
Nye's Sewing Machine Oil, bottle 10c
Diamond Dye 10c
Peroxide 10c
Vaseline 7c

All colors of Crepe Papers 10c
Bromo Seltzer 10c and 20c
Silk Thread, all colors, 50 yards only, 8c; two spools for 15c
Black and White, 100 yards only 15c
Meritas brand, white Oil Cloth, 1 1-4 yard wide, highest grade, yard 55c
Hump Hair Pins, all sizes 5c and 10c
Canton Flannel 39c
Flannelette, white 33c
Flannelette, Pink and White and Blue and White, yard 35c
Grey, extra fine grade, yard 45c
Boys' heavy Stockings, fast black; 59c value, pair 43c
Girls' fine mercerized Stockings; 59c value, pair 45c
Celluloid Knitting Needles, pair 25c
Steel Knitting Needles, 5c each; a set of five for 22c
P. K., extra value, yard 48c
Silk Hose, black, full fashioned, will wear, pair \$2.00
Dark brown Silk Hose \$1.25

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Fancy Aprons 15c, 33 and 69c
O. N. T. Machine Thread, black and white, sizes, 8 to 100, spool 6c
Electric Curlers, 2 for 10c
Snap fasteners 5c
Hooks and Eyes 5c
Gas Globes, Upright and Inverted 15c
Lingerie Tape, white, pink, Blue 10c
Kleinert's Dress Shields 25c

Middy Lacers 5c
Thimbles (silver), all sizes 5c
Pure White Cotton Batting, bat 20c
Flannel: Pure all wool Saxony yarn flannel, 33 inches wide, yard \$1.09
Ladies' pure Linen Handkerchiefs, 30c and 50c
Ladies' Cotton Handkerchiefs, 10c and 25c
Boys' Gloves, Jersey 25c
Girls and Boys Gloves, knit 50c
Fancy Caps and Hockey Caps 23c to \$2.00
Infants' Mittens, white, pink and blue 25c and 29c
Boudoir Caps 29c to 75c
Ladies' Dressing Combs 25c to \$1.50
Longcloth, yard 33c
Lancaster Gingham, yard 25c
Chambray Gingham, yard 35c
Mersey cloth, black, for lining, yard 55c
Cambric lining, white, yard 25c
Pillow tubing, 40-in 40c
Mohawk Sheets, 81x90 \$2.00
Boys' Knee Pants, 60c to \$2.25
Window Shades 75c
Bias Seam Binding, lawn and cambric, black and white, all sizes, 12 yards 15c
Ric Rac, all sizes 10c to 19c
O'Cedar Oil 25c and 50c

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All sizes of Children's Fleece Lined Underwear.

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there from the following causes: (1) Poor home life; (2) Bad companionship; (3) Low neighborhood environment; (4) Uncongenial work; (5) Lack of properly directed youthful energies. That is, Pittsburgh's boys are paying some of the bills for Pittsburgh's industrial greatness."

They hit the nail the first time. It will help us see the point if we print that (1) POOR home life, with the emphasis on the poor. It is poverty in the home that makes the delinquent boy. Not in every case, of course, for

there are exceptions. The exceptions are so few, however, that they would not require special courts and would create no problem. (2) Bad companionship, is merely a repetition of the first; in other words it is POOR home life for the boy's companions. (3) Low neighborhood environment: another repetition, more POOR homes. (4) Uncongenial work: Prosperous people do not engage in uncongenial work. Only the POOR do so. So their fourth class is merely another repetition. It is once more, POOR homes. The fifth classification looks like bid for jobs. We have public playgrounds and hired instructors to learn children how to play. This is a foreign issue to the question under consideration but it can be settled off hand. Fire the instructor and leave the playing children alone.

The remark that "Pittsburgh's boys are paying some of the bills for Pittsburgh's industrial greatness" is not true. Not for Pittsburgh's greatness, but for Pittsburgh's sins.

But having discovered that POOR homes cause boys to become delinquent one would naturally suppose the investigators who had set themselves to remedy conditions would move to make prosperous homes.

Having assumed the task laid out by the Court and found the cause, why do they not follow the Court's further advice and remove the cause?

That's what honest men would do. But these self-assumed guardians of POOR boys are not honest. They know that it is THEIR OWN delin-

quency that makes the boy's home POOR and they are NOT engaging in the task of first correcting themselves. So they drop the CAUSE of delinquency and proceed to give the boy a talking to. Let me quote their own words:

"Under the Morals Court plan the boy must be brought to a full realization of the community's right to expect of him certain standards of conduct and action. It must be made clear why this is necessary for the well-being of the community; that is, for the good of all. Then through this boy, his associates—his gang—must be reached in a campaign for good citizenship among our youthful citizens.

"This is the point of contact, the basis of introduction between the Morals Court boy and the friend and advisor selected for him by the Association. Good citizenship, high civic ideals, respect for the law, must be taught first."

Yes, "respect for the law must be taught first." Yes, even the law that steals thirty million dollars annually from the workers of Pittsburgh, under form of ground rent, and hands it to land owners for nothing. "Yes my boy," say the uplifters, "we gave your father work, we were generous, we gave him twelve hours work when he only asked eight. And we underpaid him, and overcharged him and rack rented him, and made his home so poor that it made you a delinquent. And now then you unruly kid, we want you to respect this law, to obey this law, by which we have done all these things.

"Yes, boy, we can not safely enjoy our own delinquency unless we can control yours. So for Heaven's sake, boy, be good. We will give you all the advice you want. We don't want you in the penitentiary. What good are you to us in the penitentiary? Only contractors skin you there, we do it here. And if you stay outside and play safe and sane you may learn the game, become one of us and live a respectable life."

"That part of the real estate tax which falls on the land stays put. It can not be shifted any farther. Labor has paid it as rent and when the landowner pays it out in taxes he kisses the money good-bye. But if he can get that tax shifted to the corporation he owns, he can at once recover the tax in higher prices for goods or services."—From the Probe of January 6th, 1919.

A friend calls attention to the above as containing an apparent contradiction.

This is due to careless writing. I was of course not thinking of the tax on the corporation's real estate, for then the effect would be the same there, as with other real estate.

What I had in mind was such a tax

as can best be illustrated by assuming to deal with a corporation occupying rented premises. Any tax on capital stock, or stock of goods or machinery will necessarily have to be recovered in the price of the goods. A new tax, or an increase in the old tax, on production acts as a check and forces an advance in price sufficient to include the tax. A tax on land values has the opposite effect. Land is not produced and the tax has a tendency to force it into use; to make land owners seek tenants.

One of the requirements for a soldier to become a farmer, by the grace of the Interior Department is that he must be physically fit. I can see the soldier going back to his maker with a prayer like this: "Please God, give me a better body, they won't let me farm with this one." Tough, ain't it?

Commenting upon various suggestions to draw up a Singletax measure for California that would make a wider appeal than the Great Adventure measure did, and on Mr. Upton Sinclair's proposed "Infinity Tax." Luke North writes:

"In justice to Johnson, and even to Sinclair, it isn't likely that they would seriously propose a 'program' quite so bizarre as the latter has outlined, but they are both looking for 'a way around' and would adapt themselves to the popular misconceptions, in which they share."

It may seem quite beside the mark, but just the same Luke North himself gave real singletaxers many a painful hour by adapting himself to something just as bizarre. And his fatal adaptation lost the Great Adventure, 150,000 votes.

Lest I be misunderstood, or misinterpreted I will say right here that I am mighty glad to know of Luke North's decision to stay on the job and fight the issue out in California. He is the first man since Henry George who has succeeded in making the land question a real live political and industrial issue. It required painful dexterity on the part of the New Republic, the Nation, the Dial, and similar publications to evade the issue. One more such campaign and they

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will all be in the fray, or be worthless to their subscribers. Quite like the plutocrats, these so-called radical papers could this year ignore the Singletax issues in California and Missouri and yet save their lives—by the war.

As for Luke's own adaptation to the war. We know how fatal it was to the Democratic party. It was still more fatal to the Great Adventure. Every piece of literature issued in support of the Great Adventure was an appeal in support of the war. The Great Adventure was super war, super patriotic. No man could vote for the Great Adventure without voting approval of the war. As a result 150,000 of its former supporters stayed away from the polls. They would not vote against Singletax and they would not vote approval of the war. To me and many other singletaxers the war issue did not effect our support. To us the Singletax was the issue and the war, insofar as it entered the California campaign, a mere adaptation. But now we can all agree with North, that adaptations are fatal. We approve his purpose of steering clear of them and to fight it out on the main issue.

General A. Dobrajansky, recently arrived in New York City as representative of a group of united Russians, says:

"As an instance of the calibre of men composing the various Soviets, let me cite a few names of the members of the Soviet of Bagowestchensk. We have the President, Tobelson, a German-spy, ex-jailbird and robber; Mechin of the Executive Committee, a deserter from the Russian army, a counterfeiter and ex-jailbird; his assistant, Tchatskovsky, also an ex-jailbird; Commissioner of Prisons Emilanoff, ex-jailbird and robber; his assistant Nakileff, previously condemned to jail for robbery; the Commissioner of Food, who was convicted of misappropriation of funds; Korovin, Commissioner of Schools, an ex-jailbird; Tillick, convicted of robbery, now Commissioner of Finance; Mithin, Commissioner of Militia, an ex-jailbird, and, finally, we have as Commissioner of Health an illiterate peasant. And these are the men who are at the head of affairs in Russia today!"

That's mighty interesting. If ex-convicts can set up a government towards which the whole world looks with hope, what are we paying "statesmen" ten thousand dollars a year for? Now I see the wisdom of putting the conscientious objectors into the penitentiary. When we get tired of the appalling incompetence that gave us the Hog Island and aircraft scandals, we will release the conscientious objectors and put them to managing public affairs.

We have several hundred Singletaxers, Anarchists, Socialists and other

good people in the penitentiaries for committing the terrible crime of free speech. I know they would like to read the Probe between beatings. I am too poor to stand the expense, otherwise, I would send it to them and say nothing about it. While the Probe is a small paper it is expensive to get out on account of not having second class postage. At the present time it costs \$1.08 for 52 issues. To each dollar I receive for the prison fund I will add the eight cents and mail the Probe to some prisoner for a year. I can secure lists of these prisoners and with the prisoners' permission will send his name and address to the donor. Who will contribute the first dollar or the first hundred?

Bela Low, in the New York Call:

"The Socialists, after getting into power, cannot bring about Socialism in any other way than by first bringing about complete democracy, and letting the whole people decide their own fate. That means, first of all, the calling of a Constituent Assembly, elected through democratic suffrage. The other alternative is rule through bayonets and civil war."

But the whole people can not decide their own fate through a Constituent Assembly. As soon as that begins to function the people begin to lose. The author quoted should go to Washington and watch the doings of the American Congress.

It is a question if the people are better or worse off for having the Constitution that the Constitutional assembly gave them. Certainly the people are not satisfied with the result that the labor of sixty-three congresses have given them since.

How long will it take our Socialist friends to catch up with direct legislation, a better method of securing expression of the popular will than anything they have proposed.

One of the most hopeful of recent signs is the address of B. C. Forbes before the Association of National Advertisers. Mr. Forbes thinks his speech so fine that he republishes it in the daily papers as his own ad in an effort to get circulation for his magazine. The substance of his plea is: For God's sake don't spend any of your advertising money with radical publications. Spend it with me and my cronies.

Mr. Forbes' anxiety arises from the fact that the vast quantity of junk on sale at newsstands is not being read seriously even when bought. Circulation is very deceptive. The millions of copies that ultra respectables subscribe for, as Christmas presents are, most of them, not taken out of their wrappers. The hot house subscription campaigns bring in another lot of non-reading subscribers. All this results in paying for circulation that is

largely wasted. Advertisers, too, are human. They won't waste their own time reading Wall street censored articles and they instinctively hate to pay Wall street's publicity bill. It is a wonder that they have done it for so long a time. The daily plute organs are still powerful and can get advertising. They have no radical competitors save in two or three cities. But the monthlies are becoming a superfluity and Forbes' cry of distress is a sign that advertisers are balking at carrying the useless load. As muck rakers the monthlies made a hit, but as bootblacks for Wall street pirates they present a pitiful sight.

A tax is an impost. A tax collector an impostor. Therefore levy no taxes and collect instead, the ground rent for public purposes

When we change vested interests into bursted interests there will be plenty of change for the rest of us.

The Federal Court at Chicago has convicted Berger and his co-defendants. That will insure their names being classed with other American patriots in our school books fifty years from now.



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