



From left, Wylie Young, executive secretary of the Erie Land Tax Association; Dr. O'Regan; John J. Motley, of San Diego, who helped arrange Dr. O'Regan's American tour.

EXPERT SAYS LAND TAX

Will Boost Economy

BY ED WELLEJUS

A land tax system used in New Zealand is a factor in favorable economic conditions which have virtually wiped out unemployment there since 1929, an Erie visitor said today.

Dr. Rolfand O'Regan, of Wellington, New Zealand, stopped at The Times editorial office this morning as part of a full day's activities that will see him speak tonight at a meeting of the Erie Land Tax Association in the Glenwood YMCA. There's a dinner meeting at 6:30 p.m. with Dr. O'Regan's talk — open without cost to the public — getting underway at 7:45 p.m.

Present Pennsylvania law, which offers Erie an opportunity

to institute at least a partial land tax system, is a real opportunity, Dr. O'Regan believes.

"If you approve a land tax plan you will be introducing a very healthy and wholesome program of great potential value to your community," Dr. O'Regan stated.

He explained that he had been in Washington last week, and that on Saturday he had lunch with former Gov. David L. Lawrence. Later he talked with Housing Administrator Robert Weaver and Assistant Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hollomon.

Pittsburgh, of which Lawrence was mayor for many years, has what Dr. O'Regan terms a "partial, partial land tax system." It

applies only to city taxes, not school or county taxes, and is only applicable on a partial basis on city taxes. Even so, the tax is of benefit to Pittsburgh, Dr. O'Regan believes.

"Erie has a real opportunity; I hope you take it," he said.

The land tax is widely used in both Australia and New Zealand and has had proven economic value, the visitor declared. "It's not theory, it's proven fact," he said.

A former surgeon, Dr. O'Regan explained his transfer to advocate of a new taxing system by quipping: "A citizen should be a good surgeon. I've been looking under things and I decided a land tax

was a satisfactory answer to many problems in western democracy."

Dr. O'Regan went on to explain that one of the failings "of your society and our's is a monopolistic tendency."

"The chief difficulty," he continued, "is that ownership of land tends to gather in a relative handful of rich men." He said the land tax helps prevent this because it tends to cheapen the cost of land and thus make it available to more people.

According to Dr. O'Regan, a wide ownership of land is one of the best defenses against Communism.

Dr. O'Regan has written extensively on taxation and has lectured in England, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States. He was last here in 1958 but at that time he only visited California "and that's not really the United States, is it?"

According to the visitor, land value taxation is still spreading "down under" because its economic benefits are seen, and because it helps "re-assert the common rights in land while preserving the necessary individual rights."

Dr. O'Regan inherited his interest in economics and taxation from his father, Judge Patrick J. O'Regan of the New Zealand Arbitration and Compensation Court. Judge O'Regan was at one time a member of the New Zealand Parliament, and was largely responsible, according to his son, for the legislation which gave New Zealand taxpayers the right to vote for untaxing buildings and personal property in local government, the land value taxation which Dr. O'Regan now campaigns for.