

## Large Crowd Attends Fuchs' Tax Meeting

Over 100 citizens and taxpayers of Comal County and New Braunfels braved rain and cold to attend a meeting called by 22nd Judicial District Judge John R. Fuchs at the Courthouse Thursday night, at which the ad valorem tax problem was discussed.

The prominent local jurist, advocate of the Henry Georgist "single tax" school, spoke on the urgent need for revising, adjusting, and improving our state's outmoded and inequitable ad valorem tax assessment system. He stressed the fact that progress in solving this problem can best be accomplished by petitioning the state Legislature to pass legislation which will grant to counties, cities, and other taxing units of the state the right to adopt by local option elections an ad valorem tax assessing system which will correct existing injustices.

Petitions asking for such legislation, addressed to the Texas Legislature and Governor Price Daniel, were provided and 65 taxpaying citizens signed them by the time the meeting adjourned. Copies of the petitions are available for study and signing at the Comal County Chamber of Commerce office and at the County Courthouse.

Following Judge Fuch's address, a question and answer period drew interested response. A movie depicting the effect of present ad valorem tax laws on young married couple establishing their own home was shown.

Judge Fuchs was introduced by A. D. "Pete" Nuhn, Chamber manager and former city clerk and mayor of New Braunfels. Nuhn pointed out that during his term of office as city clerk, the city instituted its system of 60 per cent assessment on land and 40 per cent on improvements. He said that a study of the building permit records since that time reveals that this system has given a strong impetus to building growth in the city.

## TO ALL REALTORS!

"Give me land, lots of land, don't fence me in!" The undersigned is in the market for a piece of land not "real estate." (The latter term includes improvements, and is a legal term.) And I do not want improvements; they just take more taxes and more upkeep. I want vacant land, for the very obvious reason that it gets the best tax-break. (See House and Home August 1960 issue.)

This land I want must have the usual assets you stress in your sales talk. Such as: That it is on or near a good street; that it is near a school or near one that will soon be erected; or near a highway that is contemplated; that it is accessible to the public utilities, etc., etc. and never to be overlooked that it is in a good neighborhood.

You can therefore see that you are not selling me land. Not at all. But let that not bother you. What then are you selling me? Surely it is population, public services paid for by the hard work and out of the savings of all the people. Moreover you and I did not create the land nor its value. You know that the people created its value and you know who created the land. But have no fear we are absolutely within the law — the Man-Made Law. We can harvest our "unearned increment." We can reap even though we did not sow. What better gamble do we want?

Furthermore the Supreme Court is behind us. It says land is an "article of commerce." Is it? By man-made's law, yes. But what about the Law of Nature and the divine law?

If land is an "article of commerce," I wish the Court would tell me how I could move an acre, bought for perhaps \$100.00 in the hills, into the heart of our town. If so I would become rich over night.

Is land, an article of commerce, just like a car? We should, and I hope, know better. It is the intangible assets created by the whole people which attaches to the land with which you and I are speculating at the expense of the public.

We better do this trading before the people wake up and assert their God-Given inalienable right to Mother Earth. Because when we, the people through their government, start to collect, in lieu of taxes, what is known as Ground rent, the annual value of the bare land, and gradually repeal the income tax, exempt all homes and houses and other personal property from taxation, then land will have no trading value. But it will have the same use value as always. In fact its real honest true value to the owner will be greater, for then he can make use of it more readily, because he can obtain the improvements and machinery needed for much less than now, with all the direct and hidden taxes.

Now a few personal words. Through the years you real estate men have been my best friends. You are tolerant and good fellows, and have learned in the school of hard knocks. You did not win your title "realtors" in any college. But I know from talking to many of you that you, best of all people, understand that the system I advocate is for the good of all, and not for or against any one class. Many of you have admitted to me, that under the system proposed, you would do more real trading in houses and improvements than now in high priced land, and what is of far more reaching importance is that intelligence that is now merely wasted for speculation would be used for productive purposes.

Let's remember never is anything ever settled until it is settled right.

In the meantime get me that land and I promise you now, and put you on notice, that the money I will make on it I will use to promote the system I advocate, and which can be put over only with your help.

J. R. Fuchs