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# This Letter Explains Our SINGLE TAX WORK In Colorado

BARNEY HAUGHEY, Atty.  
DENVER, COLORADO

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Room 6, 1605 Larimer Street,  
Denver, Colorado, October 19, 1928.

Percy R. Williams,  
Secretary of the Henry George Foundation of America,  
1306 Berger Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Dear Mr. Williams:

I received your kind letter of Sept. 26th in which you advise me that at the annual meeting of the Henry George Foundation of America I was elected a member of its National Advisory Commission.

At your request I gladly accept this place as an active representative of the Single Tax movement in Colorado.

I feel that it is a great honor to be associated with the able men whose names appear on your letterhead as members of the Commission and I promise to do all I can to aid them in advancing the great work we are all engaged in. Some of the men I know personally and I know nearly all of them by reputation or by their writings and I hope that we can build up a strong organization that will enable us to use scientific methods in carrying on the work. The need for the use of such methods is indicated in the enclosed copy of a letter I wrote to the "Commonweal."

I realize that in order to place our educational and political work on a scientific base a lot of research work will be required. Fifty years ago Henry George laid down the irrefutable economic principles upon which our work is based, but in order to hasten their adoption, which is all we can hope to do, as in time they will be adopted anyway—we must put to the best possible use our educational and political machinery whenever and wherever we can.

The first thing to do therefore, in my opinion, is to find out exactly what shape this machinery is in now in the various cities and states. Then we will know the best places to work and the best methods to pursue. To hire experts to conduct

the research work would require considerable money and as that does not seem to be available just now the only thing I can suggest is, that you request each and every member of the Advisory Commission to send you a fairly complete report of the industrial, educational and political conditions in their respective cities and states—especially in how many of them the people can make their own laws and the methods that must be used in doing it. As a starter I will point out the opportunities that are open to us here and the use I try to make of them.

#### OPPORTUNITIES IN COLORADO

In 1910 we secured the right to make our own laws in Colorado and ever since, at every election, I have been trying to induce the people to use that right. I do it by putting up third tickets and Singletax bills, which is an easy thing to do. I have been at the work so long now that nearly every acquaintance I meet asks me what kind of a petition I want him to sign? Sometimes I prepare my Singletax bills as straight out and sometimes as step by step propositions.

Experience has convinced me that it don't make much difference how the bills are drawn. For no one seems to read them and one kind will arouse as much opposition and discussion as the other. The big papers of course will fight either kind just as hard. The main thing is to get a good ballot-title for the bills. When I prepare them as amendments to the City Charter I generally call them Lower Rent Bills and when I try to submit them to a state-wide vote as amendments to the state constitution I call them Old Age Pension Laws. I do this because in this state it seems the only thing the people care about the bills they vote on is the names of them. Of course some people read the Singletax literature we hand out while we are circulating petitions for our laws but most of it is thrown away or merely glanced at. So, all the people really know about the bills is what the newspapers tell them.

It is true the few thinkers who read our literature are convinced by its logic and everyone who really reads Henry George is touched by his eloquence. For example on Henry George's birthday we started to reorganize our Denver Singletax Club. A friend who is a good reader read to us extracts from Henry George's writings compiled by Harry Gunnison Brown and when he got through there was hardly a dry eye in the group. I think therefore that we should pass out our literature wherever we can, for we always stand a chance to reach a few and every vote counts.

Our opponents, however, can be relied upon to throw all the obstacles they can in our way. During our last city campaign they got an ordinance passed that forbids us to pass out our pamphlets on the streets or put them in automobiles. Therefore the only way we can now put them out is through the mail or behind screen doors in the residential districts. Our opponents are aware of the fact that much of our literature is thrown aside or misunderstood. They know as well as we do that most people are poorly informed and pushed for time.

In fact, they know that in these piping times most people are compelled to think in slogans. Therefore, their chief concern is to prevent us from getting suggestive ballot titles on our bills. For instance four years ago the ballot title we chose was "A Bill For Lower Rents." Our opponents knew that title would make a strong appeal as rents were then very high in Denver, so they got their tools, the Mayor and the City Council, to change the title into: "A Bill For A Modified Form of

the Single Tax." I knew that was a flagrant violation of the law, for under our Charter the people have full legislative power in all local and municipal matters and choosing a ballot title is a legislative act.

Nevertheless when I appealed to the court the Mayor and the City Council were sustained. Our opponents, of course, were jubilant over that decision for they thought it would confuse the voters. But Gerritt Johnson gave me \$600 to make the campaign and with a like amount I happened to have myself I was able to tell a good many of the people what our bill meant, so in spite of the \$23,500 spent by our opponents and their crooked election judges nearly thirty per cent of the votes were counted for our bill. This convinces me that a good many people in Denver are beginning to understand what the Singletax means.

And, that big investors are beginning to think so too is shown by a strange thing that happened here this year. It was this. Denver is about to build a new court house on the Civic Center at an estimated cost of \$5,000,000 and to raise the money the Mayor and the City Council are trying to sell our old Court House square. Last spring they advertised it for sale but not a single bid was offered. This looks like a strange occurrence, for most people thought that the square was worth about a million and a half dollars and that many rich men would be glad to gobble it up at that price. And now that no one seems to want the land at any price the people are wondering why. When my opinion is asked I explain that it is because the Singletax got 30 per cent of the vote at the last election and that big investors are afraid that the next time it will get 51 per cent when, of course, the selling value of the land in Denver now estimated at \$300,000,000—will be practically wiped out. This view of the thing perplexes a good many people but it sets them to thinking and I know that the peculiar situation now existing here has opened a good many eyes to the real meaning of our Singletax vote.

#### OUR LAST CAMPAIGN

To open the minds of more people to our great truth I started another campaign last winter.

Sid Eastwood agreed to print the bills so I prepared two of them. One was for straight Singletax and the other for Old Age Pensions. As I expected it was hard to get anyone to circulate the Singletax petition without pay, but I found a good many old people who were eligible for pensions to circulate the other one. The voters they solicited for signatures ignored the fact that the pensions were to be paid out of land values and for a time the names came in pretty fast. Indeed, for a time it seemed we really were going to get our pension bill on the ballot, though I never did have much hope that we would get our straight Singletax bill up unless we could raise money enough to pay a nickle apiece for the names. I was unable to do that, as you know, though I sent out a lot of begging letters. About 25,000 names are now required to put any measure up to a state wide vote and after six months of steady grind we got 16,000 names on our Old Age Pension petition and about 3,000 on the one for Singletax. At the same time we distributed throughout the state, mostly in Denver, about 50,000 pieces of Singletax literature. All the money we could raise for the work was \$317 so although our campaign fizzled out I do not think it was a complete failure, for it aroused a good deal of discussion and it disseminated a lot of valuable information, in

the most effective way, on the most important and interesting question now before the people.

#### OUR NEXT CAMPAIGN

To keep up the interest and drive the truth home I am now preparing to again submit our proposed amendment to the Charter at the City election next May. It will require only 5,000 to do it and by starting early I think I will be able to get them. I have left over from the last campaign quite a number of the Singletax pamphlets you sent me besides a lot I got from James Bell, Will Atkinson, Ed Boeck and Harry Gunnison Brown. The trouble will be, of course, to get them distributed properly for nowadays it is hard to get anybody to do anything without pay. I am Secretary of the Hobos' Union in Denver and as we are sure to have a big army of the unemployed here this winter I may be able to get some of the "Bo's" to hand out our bills, but as a rule the Hobos are not very dependable so I suppose that, as usual, I will have to do most of the work myself.

#### OUR OPEN FORUM

One good place to spread the light is in the Liberal Church. You ask me to tell you what kind of a place it is. Well the shortest way to tell you is to say it is Denver's Open Forum. Bishop Frank H. Rice started it here seven years ago and as he is a pretty clever man and a hard worker he has kept it open ever since. The church is now duly incorporated and the Bishop has appointed me and a lot more as Doctors of this, that and the other thing to help carry on the work. All the candidates for office like to talk to the crowd in our Church and sometimes we have real scientific speakers. But, of course, as you probably know, when the Spiritualists, Communists or Socialists get the floor they never know when or where to stop. Every once in a while I get a chance to talk Singletax to the crowd and now the Bishop and some of the Directors understand it, or at least they say they do. When we started to reorganize our Singletax Club here a few weeks ago the Bishop wanted to call it the Singletax Church. His argument is that it will be much easier to get contributions for a church than for a club or a league as most people form judgments not on the merits but on the names of things. There was considerable opposition to his idea, however, so the question was left undecided. Now I would like to have your opinion on the question as well as the opinions of Mr. Evans and Mr. Ewing for the Bishop just told me that he has conferred the degree of Doctor of Economics and Philosophy on all of us.

I suppose our research workers can find Open Forums much like the Liberal Church in nearly all of the cities. Also the kind of made to order meetings that our Singletax speakers can get into, such as schools, churches Labor unions, Rotarians and the like. In our former campaigns in Denver we held many big meetings on street corners and we had good speakers like John Z. White and Herbert Bigelow, but now the automobiles make so much noise that successful soap-boxing is out of the question. Anyway we have not had any big Singletax speakers here for a long time. The reason is that since the war we have not had any live Singletaxers or a strong organization to arrange meetings for them. I am sorry to say that most of our old timers have either lost interest, they have gone away or they are dead. About the only ones left are

John McGauran, Jim Smith, Sid Eastwood and myself and we are now trying to build up an organization out of new recruits.

#### OUR LIVE PERIOD

Thirty years ago when the Populist party was in power here the people of Colorado seemed to be much more progressive than they are now. I then lived in Colorado Springs and we elected our old Singletax friend Mel Sinton a County Commissioner. He gave me and another man a contract at 20 per cent to look up tax dodgers. In about a year's time we collected about \$25,000 from men who loaned money on mortgages and who failed to list the notes for taxation. To head us off the tax dodgers got our present revenue law passed that exempts mortgage notes from taxation. In the legislature that passed the law there were four live Singletaxers, including Senator Bucklin and they forced a provision into the law that "All land shall be listed, valued and assessed each year separate and apart from personal property and the improvement thereon."

The county assessors now obey this law, but the big interests slipped a joker into it which provides that Public Utility Corporations may be assessed as "Unit" values. The result of that joker is the Tax Commission assesses railroads at about \$35,000 per mile and the other companies in like proportion to real value. Bucklin and I intended to take the question into court and have corporation franchises assessed separate and apart from other property, but Bucklin, who was our great leader, died and shortly afterwards a Public Utility Commission was appointed to fix rates, so I let the matter drop.

Our Singletax work went right on, however, until the great war put a damper on it. Our first campaign was for the Bucklin bill in 1902. Then we started a long hard fight for the Initiative and Referendum and in 1910 we won it. Two years later Bucklin won his great fight for Home Rule in taxation in Charter Cities. The next year George Knapp started to use that right by putting the Singletax up to a vote in Pueblo. The following year the Sinton boys submitted it to a vote in Colorado Springs and since that time we have put it up four times in Denver.

Now I would like to tell you how I enjoyed these long, hard fought interesting campaigns, but if I attempted to do so this letter would be a mile too long, so I will simply tell about some of the mistakes we made and the lessons we might learn from them. One of our mistakes is to expect any help from state legislatures, city councils or school boards. We often try it but even if we get a friendly member of one of these bodies to make a speech for our bills they are always pigeonholed. However, the newspapers often speak of our bills while they are pending, so I keep on trying.

#### OUR MISTAKES

Another mistake is to make our bills too long, especially as we have to explain them to voters who sign our petitions. I have been at it a long time now and I know how hard it is to get the average voter to see what we are driving at. In fact I am inclined to think that Harry Willock is right when he says that "A constitutional amendment of only about ten lines is necessary—making all taxes unlawful until the full rental value of all land has been taken for the needs of government—state county and city." Putting it up to the voter in that plain simply way saves a lot of time, but of course it don't settle the argument. For the voter is apt to come back

at you with "Full rental value, what does that mean?" Whenever they come back that way it gives you a chance to explain the law of rent, but the success you have in doing it depends on the kind of a man you are talking to. As a general thing he won't understand you at all, so that the best you can do is to get his name on your petition and hand him a piece of of literature. Sometimes though in the course of a long day's work you get 75 or 100 names, and you will meet quite a few who are intelligent enough to understand. And even when they go away with a bewildered look on their faces they often promise to get registered and vote for our bills. You know, in this state qualified electors can sign an initiative petition whether they are registered or not.

#### CHURCH PROPERTY

Another question that often comes up for discussion is, what should we do about the value of the land owned by churches. Some think it ought to remain exempt the way it is now and others think we ought to tax it. A Rationalist Association to which I belong decided last summer that church property should be taxed, so I prepared petitions for the purpose and started them out. I took one myself, but I had an awful hard job to get anyone to sign it. Even those who thought the churches ought to be taxed seemed to be afraid to sign it. The other circulators had the same kind of luck I had, so after a few weeks trial we saw we were getting nowhere and we quit. I would like to know what our other researchers think of this church proposition for it seems to me it is only a question of time when we will have to face it.

#### WHAT ARGUMENTS SHOULD WE USE?

Still another question, and a very important one is, shall we make our appeal to the economic or to the moral motives of the voters. On this point some think one way and some another. For example here is what an old time Singletaxer wrote me last summer: "I have come to believe that advocacy of Henry George's solution of our social hodge-podge, as a mere financial measure, can never prove triumphant. I do not know whether the intelligence and moral purpose of the race has yet reached a plane which will make possible the advocacy of this truth from an ethical viewpoint with any hope of success, but I am convinced that until it can be attacked without regard to its fiscal implications any apparent success must prove illusory. Until mankind are willing to do this thing because it is right, any attempt to put it over by showing people that they can more easily provide a living can accomplish nothing even if successful."

That is one view. The other view is exemplified by the good work John Z. White and Otto Kuhleman did in our Pueblo campaign in 1917. They went to work on the theory that men are mainly controlled by enlightened self interest. White, who conducted that campaign, employed expert accountants to make a complete transcript of every tax schedule in the assessor's office. He then prepared slips which showed every taxpayer in Pueblo the exact amount of taxes he paid that year and the exact amount he would have to pay if our Singletax amendment to the City Charter was adopted. The slips showed that 85% of the taxpayers would save money. I was one of the crew that delivered the slips at each house and explained them to the taxpayers. Nearly all of them said they would vote for our bill

and we felt sure it would get a big majority. But imagine our astonishment and dismay, to find on election day, that the Singletax got less than one-third of the votes.

This result, as you know, was like the ones we reached in most of our former campaigns. In Delaware, Oregon, California, Missouri and other places the methods we used were similar to the methods used in Pueblo and in Denver and the results were about the same. With the limited resources at our command we got all the voters we could reach to sign our petitions, listen to our speakers, and read our literature but, except in a few instances, we never got more than a small fraction of the votes. As a general thing our failures were attributed to three different causes. First to the bitter opposition of the land monopolists and their big papers. Second to the fact that we could never raise money enough to make strong campaigns, and third, that anyway, a great majority of the people don't know how to think and are governed chiefly by custom and habit. I suppose our research workers will examine these explanations and if they prove to be correct they will find some way to meet them.

#### WHAT IS THE SOLUTION

To offset the powerful opposition of the big newspapers in our future work, I would suggest a vigorous pamphleteer campaign and a corps of good speakers. In regard to raising money for the work I have no suggestions to make, for there are many others who can make better suggestions along that line than I can. I am an old bachelor and live cheap, but it keeps me rustling most of the time to pay my bills. As to whether the people can think or not I admit it is a puzzling question. Sometimes I think they can and sometimes I think they can't. To get anywhere with our work, however, we have to assume that at least a majority of them can think, for we all know that it takes quite a little reasoning power to understand the law of rent and all of its implications. It also requires some close observations and clear thinking to understand our political machines; how they are financed, and how they run the government. Good Singletaxers—especially those who circulate our petitions—should understand all these things, so they will know how to change the habits of voters who simply look up their party labels when they go to the polls. It goes without saying, of course, that wherever possible we should have a Singletax bill of some kind on the official ballot, so that every voter who is willing to take a chance can vote on it. That, it seems to me, is the easiest, quickest and best way to make the Singletax into a political issue. Anyway that is the way the prohibitionists worked and at last they won their fight. Of course the work we are engaged in is quite different, and far more important, than theirs, but I see no way to improve on their strategy or their tactics.

Now in this cursory survey of our work I don't want you to think that I underestimate its importance. Far from it. Indeed I think we are trying to solve the most important problem that now confronts the civilized world. To find a solution for it I think that each and every phase of the gigantic problem must be critically examined by experts. All I have attempted to do here is to call attention to a few phases of the work that has fallen under my own observation. Naturally, like everyone else who has studied the question, I have reached certain conclusions. One of my conclusions is that in order to sell the Singletax to the people, we must give them a chance to vote on it. I admit that as yet, comparatively few people are able

to vote on it understandingly, but I believe that the best way to educate them is to put the proposition up to a vote whenever we can. As near as I can learn that can now be done in five or six states that have the Initiative and Referendum in a workable form. Colorado, I believe has this great tool of democracy in a more workable form than any other state, and I have tried to show what poor use we have so far made of it. Time and time again I got out petitions to submit the Singletax to a state wide vote, but I could never raise money enough to pay a nickle apiece for the names. Senator Bucklin put it up here once, but for the most part he had to pay for the names out of his own pocket. In Missouri things were different.

I put in a year circulating our petitions there in the rural districts and four good organizers—Vernon J. Rose, Carl Brannan, Ed Boeck and Frank P. Walsh—raised money enough to pay all expenses. Luke North and Lona Ingham Robinson led the work in California and in Oregon Wm. U'Ren was our great organizer. Of course many other friends helped in the good work, but here I mention only a few.

All of these state campaigns, as you know, aroused a good deal of discussion and furthered our cause immeasurably. Even when we failed to get our bills on the ballot, the mere fact that our petitions were in the field kept up the interest and the hostile press showed the common people how bitterly the "Big Interests" oppose the Singletax. It is in the cities, however, that our work is most effective, for where people live close together they can easily exchange opinions. And that the opinions formed are not all unfavorable is shown by the fact that our vote is steadily growing. All that is needed here now is a little money and good salesmanship. A few years ago Gerritt Johnson looked the ground over here, and he said that if his health was good he could sell the Singletax to Denver in one year.

#### OUR PRESENT ADVANTAGE

Besides the large body of favorable Singletax opinion that thirty years of hard work has built up in Denver we will now have another advantage in our coming campaign. That advantage is this. The fact that no one wants to buy our Court House square is arousing city wide curiosity and by skillful management that curiosity can be made state wide or even nation wide. The only thing needed to make it so, is money enough to print and distribute leaflets, which will show the people the only reason why no one wants to buy the best three and one-half acres in the heart of the city, is fear of our Singletax vote. This will give us the advantage of crowd psychology, which in turn will set our big opponents wild, and bring the common people out to vote for our bill.

Anyway to make the experiment we will get our petitions and leaflets out for the spring election as soon as we can.

#### OUR ORGANIZATION'S CHANCES

Opportunities like this will no doubt be open to us from time to time in various other communities as well as in Denver and we should always be prepared to take advantage of them. To be prepared we need an organization like the Henry George Foundation of America to keep us informed and to guide our action. Many of our members are known to be good organizers, in their own particular fields, and now I feel sure that we are getting in shape to do good work. Co-operation is all we need and I think we all know how. We can co-operate because we all want the same thing and the thing we want is a square deal for everybody. I don't know how our organization work

is planned, but I suppose every member will carry on the work in his own community, in his own way, and report what he is doing or intends to do to his fellow members through headquarters in Pittsburgh. Naturally, too, our members will send in money along with their reports, to keep our central office functioning, for no organization can last long if its members do not keep it alive. I don't know how the central office functions, but I suppose that as in similar organizations the bulk of the work falls on the Secretary and that all important decisions are made by the executive committee, with right of appeal. I suppose, too, that the Committee often finds it hard to decide what to do with the various reports and appeals for

help that come in. At least I know that is the way the thing works in the Old Age Pension League I organized here, and it was the same way with a farmers' union I organized about twenty years ago in the southwest corner of this state. I think though in looking over the list that the decisions of our committee will be fair and impartial and that in most cases they will be final.

I also think that the time for an organization of this kind has arrived and that it is bound to grow in strength and influence. Many field men like myself in all parts of the country have been waiting a long time to be organized, and now that you have made a good start I think that isolated members and groups in many places will be ready to act in concert on any field that our executive committee decides is a good one. I know I will. I would like to have conditions in Colorado looked into very carefully, but if the Committee decides that other places look more promising and that I can be of any use I will go any place they want me to go if I have to ride there in a box car. I know that I won't be of much use as a speaker or a writer but, although I am 69, I still claim to be the champion petition circulator. In fact I just finished putting up three third party Communist, Socialist and Farmer-Labor tickets and I would get one up for the Commonwealth Land party if I had a little more time. You know it takes only 300 names to put up a state ticket here, but the petitions must be filed thirty days before election. My purpose in putting up these third party tickets year after year is not so much to make the little money I get for doing the work as a Notary Public, but because in these reactionary times I am trying to keep alive the spirit of Democracy.

Another thing that makes me believe that the time is ripe for our organization is the rapid changes that are taking place in our industrial system. Machinery is beginning to do all the work and our politicians will soon have a big unemployment problem to solve. I think a good many of the big fellows now see that the Singletax is the only way out, but, of course, they will not try to change our tax laws until a majority of the people want them changed. The biggest problem that now confronts the enlightened therefore, is how to change public opinion on the so-called land tax question. Up to the present time we have gone about it in an individualistic haphazard way but now when thinking people see that an organized effort is being made, they will be likely to lend it strong support. They will do this because most people now know that the only way to get results is to organize.

We all know that our organization will not amount to much, or last very long unless it can show that it is getting results, that is, that it is inducing or compelling more people to give this great question serious thought. To get results of

course, the organization will have to use scientific methods. Fortunately in dealing with some phases of the work that will not be hard to do. For instance, in any public library our research workers can easily find the tax and the election laws of every city and state. They can also find out what the people in various places work at, and what shape they are in. Then when our executive committee examines the reports sent in by the researchers they can decide in what place or places our educational or political work is likely to be most effective; and as they will be in constant touch with us field workers they can let us know what conclusions they have reached and what they want us to do. As near as they can of course, they will pick out men who are adapted to the particular kind of work they want done. If they want a legislative body to pass a law they will have one of our lawyers draw it up and find some good lobbyists to steer it through. If they want a Singletaxer elected to office they will find men of our faith among his constituents who are willing and able to electioneer and get out the vote. If they want speechmakers they will send good speakers, and if they want written explanations of our philosophy they will have no trouble in finding good writers. That we have plenty of men in our ranks who are capable of doing such work is proved by the fact that Senator Bucklin, Lawson Purdy and their co-workers had laws passed that require land to be listed, valued and assessed separate and apart from other property. And that it is not impossible to elect Singletaxers to office was shown by the election of Judge McGuire, Tom Johnson, Joe Pastorisa and a good many others. It is true, they are likely to be in a hopeless minority and therefore will be able to do very little even when elected, but it is always some advantage to have our trustworthy friends in places of power. It, at least, gives the public notice that able men no longer shy at our idea, and for that reason a great many people will be induced to look into it.

#### HOW OUR WORK SHOULD BE DONE

And my long experience in circulating Singletax petitions has convinced me that quite a few people can understand our proposition if it is properly explained to them. Of course, as I said before, a great many cannot be reached at all and for the last few years I have been trying to find out why they can not. When I ask a working man to sign my petition I carefully note the questions he asks and the remarks he makes. I do the same thing when I meet a woman, a business man or a professional man, and then I compare results. Briefly stated, my conclusion is that the opinions most people form on the Singletax question are largely determined by their education—using the word in a broad sense—and more particularly by their economic condition and their social status. In other words the so-called educated rich people who live on Capitol Hill are less likely to vote for the Singletax than are the poor people who know how to read and write, but who live in small homes, or rooming house—always barring, of course, the penniless plutes.

On these conclusions that I have reached after years of experience I base my work as president of the petition circulators' union. When I get a contract to put up a radical ticket or a radical bill I advise my fellow workers to go into the slum districts. When the contract is for a big corporation bill, like the one just put up here for a sixty million dollar bond issue to build good roads I advise them to go up on the hill to get the names. But I find that I am often mistaken in this advice,

for sometimes, just for a joke, the swells on the hill sign for a radical bill, and quite often the poor people will sign petitions for bonds because they think it will make more work, and that anyway the burden will fall on the big taxpayers. When such things happen I often doubt if Herbert Spencer was right when he said that "Human conduct is prompted by feeling and guided by intelligence." I know the feeling is there all right, for in circulating petitions, especially the ones for Singletax, I often have pretty hot arguments, but the way most people talk and vote makes me wonder where the intelligence comes in.

However, I hope that all these difficulties will be ironed out when our organization gets settled down to its scientific work. Henry George and other able writers have told us all we need to know about political economy and from practical experience we know a good deal about politics, but when it comes to psychology we are still up in the air. Whenever I get time, I go to the library and read up on the subject. In fact, I once spent three years in college trying to find out what the human mind is and how it works, but I didn't learn very much. About all I learned was, that we have nervous systems that respond to stimuli, and that we are natural born imitators, who are governed mostly by habits and not by reason. As far as I know that is about all most of the psychologists know about the mind yet, although they claim they have made a good deal of progress since I went to school. Maybe they have, but after reading Dewey, McDougal, Phillips, James, Martin and many more, it seems to me that psychology is in about the same stage of development that Herbert Spencer left it in.

#### SOME HOPE IN BEHAVIORISM

John B. Watson says that the reason why psychology has not advanced is because its students are full of religious superstition, and use words that are meaningless. For instance, he says they admit that some nerve stimuli is carried to the brain, but they claim that a thing called a mind, or a soul, sits in the brain, to interpret the stimuli and send out orders. Watson says that is all superstition, that all we can observe is behavior, and that all we can know about the human animal, is how he is stimulated and how he responds. Therefore, he is trying to reduce psychology to an objective science, and to study it in the same way that we study the other physical sciences. I don't know how far he will get with that method but if his idea proves to be the correct one it will be a big help in our work. Therefore, I suppose the experts in our headquarters will carefully look into it.

If Watson's method proves to be scientific, it may be a help to us in several ways. First, it will tell us why so many minds seem to be impervious to our great truth, or for that matter to any other great truth, that is new. For, according to him thinking is nothing but subvocal talking. Therefore, when people constantly hear and spoken of as real estate, property, etc., they seem to be unable to think of it as a thing separate and apart from the buildings and other things that labor has placed on it, which go by the same names. Socialists, as you know, are especially apt to respond to all such words in that way. They generally call the land and about everything on it "Capital" and claim that the whole works belongs to everybody.

Therefore, if Watson is right all we need do, is to get the right words and their correct meanings into the heads of a majority of the people. For example, in some way we must get them to see that the word "land" includes everything that was here before man. That the word "land-ownership" means



the right to exclude others from land. That the word "tax" means an obligation imposed by law, and not a debt incurred through contract, etc., etc. What we call the powers of comparison and reflection will do the rest. Or, as I understand Watson, all of these words, and the meaning we attach to them are nothing but nerve stimuli, that are some way joined together in the brain in logical order, and frequently issue forth in rational actions. Now, if this is true all we have to do to win an election is to define our terms and get people to see what they mean. For instance, if we can get wage workers to see that by allowing speculators to put our ground rents in their pockets, the speculators can grow rich by holding about one-half our land out of use, and boosting rents, while millions of men have to stand idle or work for low wages. If we can get business men to see that times are dull, because so many people can get no money to buy things, and the real reason why they can't, or if we can get the people generally to see that most of the poverty, misery and crime in the world is due to the fact that we treat the value of land as private property, they will all begin to see what Singletaxers mean when they say that Community values should be taken for Community use, and that everything else should be exempt from taxation. They will also see that when our Singletax system is put into force, natural opportunities will be open to all and that every man who is able and willing to work can stand up straight, and make an effective demand for all he earns. Therefore, if Watson is right and we can get the people to see the real meaning of the word "Singletax" all we need do to win an election is to write the word "Singletax" on a card and hand it to the voters when they are going to the polls.

Then everyone, except the land speculators, and the few they can bulldoze or bribe—will no longer take the card with a bewildered look, a contemptuous laugh or an angry frown, but they will read it with pleasure and with a determined look on their faces, they will go into the polling booth and make their cross mark in the right place on the official ballot. They will also sign our petitions, and chip in to help get our bills on the ballot.

Now my dear friend I want to apologize for making this letter so long. When I started I intended to merely tell you how proud I am to be a member of the advisory board of our great organization and a few things about our work in Colorado. But you know how it is when you get to talking or writing about Singletax. One thing leads to another and you never get through. I remember though that I said that we ought to send some money along with our reports, so I am enclosing five dollars. That is all I can afford just now. Later on I will try to send some more.

If you don't object I will send a copy of this letter to all the friends who helped in our last Colorado campaign, for I think they want to know when we are going to start again and what prospects we have to win. I would also like to mail a copy of it to every other Singletaxer whose name and address you can send me, for our old friend Clyde Robinson who does my typing, now has in the headquarters of our Singletax and Old Age Pension League, a mimeograph machine that he can put letters through without much cost.

And now wishing you the best of luck and with very best wishes to all our friends, I remain

Cordially and sincerely yours,  
BARNEY HAUGHEY.