

The Answer to Your Question

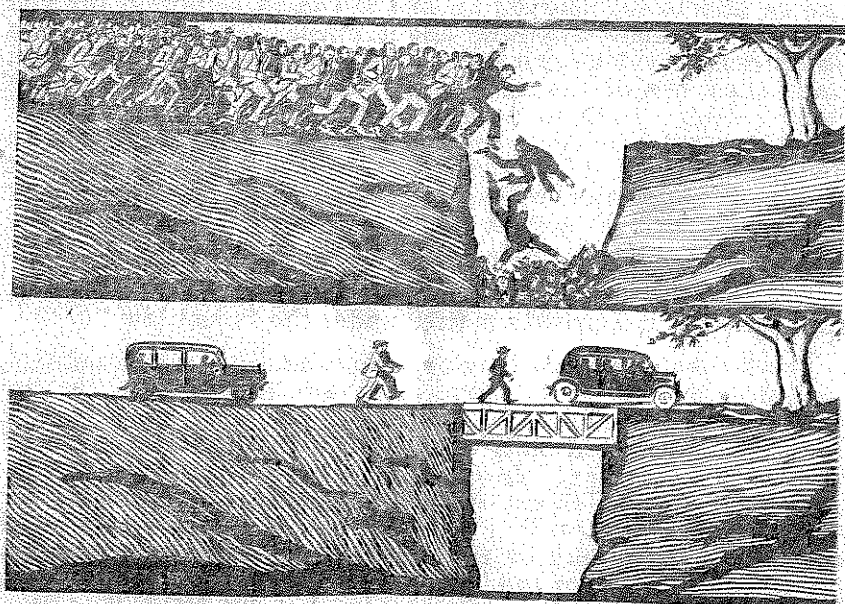
If You Do Not Find Here The Answer To Your Question,
Send It To The Author, The Editor Of The FORUM
And NO TAXES, Stockton, California

On the evening of April 18, 1934, with President Knoles presiding, the editor delivered a lecture in Anderson Hall, at the College of the Pacific, the lecture, "A New Approach to Civic and Political Problems", was delivered at the invitation of President Knoles, who also invited the public to attend.

An audience that was complimentary in numbers, personnel and in the attention it gave this revolutionary lecture was held for ninety minutes with but one fleeting moment of relaxation. That came when the Socialist plan of relieving the poor at the expense of the rich was likened to choking those who are well to relieve those who are short of breath.

The close attention given for so long a period tended to defeat the attention that might otherwise have been given the question period. For that reason and for the sake of those not present, 125 possible questions are answered here.

Unless the argument of that lecture can be upset, the Academy, our Churches, our Press, our Bar and our leaders generally must stand convicted of the grossest misconception of our civic and political problems and stand convicted of leading humanity into a sunken road more awful to contemplate than that into which Napoleon's cavalry plunged at the Battle of Waterloo. (See The Forum, page (corrected) 2740.)



HERE IS THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION!

If the statements found below are to stand, the resulting revolution in public thought will outrank all those of the past.

Q. "I understood you to say that considerations of justice and humanity have no interest for the economist; that they have no place in economics. Do you mean that?"

"I mean exactly that. The manuscript of my lecture has been presented to the College Library, together with a copy of these answers. It is indexed. That statement is on page 13."

Note. Succeeding questions will be suggested by the replies.

"All I say is that such considerations as you mention, justice, humanity, etc., have no more place in economics than they have in mathematics, chemistry, or physics. Economics is a science as exact as any science and must be treated as a science. But saying that justice has no place in economics is not casting one's influence against justice. You would not say that, because a woman objects to cream or coffee in the sugar in the sugar bowl, that she casts her influence against cream and coffee. That is not logical."

"Did you notice that my subject is 'A New Approach To Civic and Political Problems'? The point is that Civics and politics turn on **economic issues and economics is a science**; and that, therefore, civic and political problems must be solved scientifically. That being so, considerations of justice and humanity are out of place in discussions of civics and politics."

"Justice may be the result of one's effort, even though it be no part of the purpose. A man may know all about radios and be able to set your set up and get good reception for you and yet not know anything about music. He may not care about music; yet he can set up the instrument by which you pick music out of the air. What you want in that case is a radio expert. It means nothing to you that he is not musical, nor interested in music. So in this case, what is needed is an understanding of economics. The trained economist can set up a government that will secure justice to all men, regardless of his own lack of interest in justice—even regardless of the fact that he may be, personally, a very unjust man."

"Certainly, we would still be interested also in personal virtue; but that is a private matter under the moral law."

"No! The **moral law** is not a safe reliance in civics, politics, or statecraft, nor in industry. It is insufficient even for the relatively trivial matter of paying the monthly grocery bill; for we cannot pay it until we first call in **Mathematics** to tell us how much to pay! In civics, politics, statecraft and in industry we are dependent upon the science of **Economics** for the technique of our task. We must call in **Economics** to build the bridge at the end of the moral road. **Morality** furnishes the urge, the spirit of the law; but it cannot supply guidance, the letter of the law. It tells us why, but not **HOW**."

7
"No! The moral law does not apply to politics or civics."

8 (See 5)
"The moral law applies only to individuals; politics and civics concern men in the mass and come under natural law."

9
"By the moral law I mean the standard by which each man determines what is for him proper conduct. (Page 1.)

10
"Yes, the natural law is very different. That is the manner in which, on careful observation, Nature is found to behave."

11 (See 6)
"That is just the point! It is because men differ in their judgment of right and wrong that we make no progress in civics and politics by appealing to the moral law. But natural law is not a matter of opinion; that is fixed."

12 (See 7)
"No, I am not pulling the foundation of morality from under our present system. I cannot pull from under that system something that was never there."

13 (See 11)
"It would be a hopeless outlook, if the moral law were all society had to depend upon; for as our social conditions become more complex we are more and more dependent upon the whims of individuals who, as society grows more complex, become constantly more helpless to do as they would like."

14 (See 6, 11)
"Yes, men have always thought that; just as they thought at one time that the world is flat. But thinking so, does not make it so."

15 (See 7, 12)
"Yes, we thought morals the foundation of our social system and wasted time on that mistaken theory. I have wasted the most of my life seeking civic and political ends by appeals to the moral judgment. The moral law does apply to the individual, yes! But not to society; for there can be no moral responsibility where there is no control. Men are not held morally responsible for earthquakes. So here society has no control; for everything done is done by some individual on individual impulse. Society has no control—no knowledge until after the event! Hence society cannot be held to be morally responsible. Moral law applies to individual relations; it does not apply to mass relations like civics and politics."

16 (See 8)
"Oh, yes! Most certainly, you, as a citizen are morally responsible for your part in determining the attitude and conduct of your fellow citizens; but the only thing you can do to control the attitude and conduct of others is to STUDY ECONOMICS, so as to be competent to determine what conditions will best bring to bear NATURE'S OWN CONTROL; for society has no control over any one." (See pages 2 to 6.)

17
"Certainly, we could have proper public relations, even if men remained personally selfish, or even dishonest. We make good automobiles and good airplanes without reforming men. Nature does her part, no matter how we behave; two and two still make four and the pull of gravity is the same, regardless of our conduct—and so is the law of rent." (Page 11.)

"Not at all! What difference would it make who held office? What could a public official or a Congress or a legislature do that would make any difference with the law of gravity? Or with the multiplication tables? Or with the natural laws of economics? So long as the natural laws of economics are obeyed, public officials could do society no harm!"

19 (See 5, 8)

"Oh, yes! That's true, they could still beat their wives, or steal or commit adultery; but those are private matters under the moral law. They are not economic matters; economics is limited to the principles governing **public conditions**." (See 2.)

20

"Oh yes, dishonest officials might steal our tax money; but public money is protected by bond, we would recover from the bondsmen. Besides, theft comes under the moral law."

21 (See 7, 14)

"Yes, exactly that! Society is not answerable under moral law; **society is governed by the natural law**."

22 (See 7, 8, 16)

"Oh, but consider! As a citizen, you are responsible of course, for you are under the moral law; but not so the city!"

23 (See 7)

"Because the city does nothing! In all the years that you have been interested in civic and political matters, you have never known a case in which the city did anything at all."

24 (See 14)

"But that was not the act of the **city**. What happened is that **individual citizens** voted to have that done. Each vote was cast **individually** by citizens who voted **individually** upon their own **individual** responsibility and who are **individually** responsible under the moral law. The **city** did nothing."

25 (See 7)

"But the act was performed by an **individual** official. The **city** did nothing; the **city** cannot act; it neither knows nor acts. Everything known is known by an individual; and everything done is done by an **individual**; that excuses the **city** from moral responsibility." (See pages 2 to 6.)

26 (See 6)

"But the city cannot control them; it cannot control any one. It can only punish people **after** the deed. (See page 2.)

27 (See 11, 12)

"No, we are not left to chaos; for there is the natural law of economics to fall back upon. For the shifting sands of **morals and opinion**, we must substitute the sure foundation of unchanging and unchangeable natural law." (See page 9.)

28 (See 11, 13)

"But, when you depend upon the moral law, you are at the mercy of unpredictable reactions of individual wills. On the other hand when you depend on the science of economics, you bring to bear the deep-seated instincts implanted by Nature herself for the control of society." (See pages 9 to 19.)

29 (See 15)

"Very true! But that is between them and their God! And while we may be concerned as friends about the effects of their conduct on their own souls; we must think also of society. The principle of the greater good to the greater number governs in civics and politics, in industry and statecraft.

Our **economic duty done**, we can then take up with these people these private matters and help them there, if we can."

30 (See 6, 10, 15, 16, 27)

Nature protects the clam against irritating foreign substances by casting these in pearl. She has a similar method of protecting society against irritating private misconduct."

31 (See 27)

"One instrumentality is the **gregarious instinct** that is in men as it is in the bees and the beaver and would, if given a chance, produce the same degree of **harmonious operation** in human society that characterizes a bee-hive or a colony of beaver. Then there is the law of rent, the "law of gravity" of the economic world. Properly understood, it binds peoples together as the law of gravity holds the stones of an arch in place."

32 (See 11)

"Oh yes, of course! But in this matter we have a chance to secure agreement and cooperation; for **this does not mean that people must agree with each other, but only that they agree with Mother Nature.** No one is asked to yield anything to any one else. And besides, **this way we are not antagonizing people by accounting for the ills of society by laying them to the meanness individuals.**" (See pages 5, 8, 27.)

33 (See 27)

"What else would you call it? How can you escape that conclusion? So long as you proceed under the moral law and appeal to the moral judgment in civics and politics, the implication is unavoidable that failure to respond is evidence of failure to live up to the proper moral standard—or in plain words, that our opponents are **off-color morally!** That is equivalent to a charge of meanness. This disrupts society by arousing resentment and stirring up strife." (See page 5.)

34

"No, economics is not taught in the schools as a science—not yet. There was a time when the science of electricity was still unrecognized. But the science of electricity existed just the same; and so does the science of economics now, in spite of the fact that it is not recognized. (See page 20.)

35 (See 10, 27)

"No, I do not! **Selfishness** is no more harmful in the social world than fire or electricity in the physical world; yet we do not seek to destroy them to protect ourselves. Instead, we insulate them and use them. We can do the same with selfishness. (See page 51.)

36 (See 5, 8, 29)

"True! But the effect of selfishness on the soul is matter of the **inner life** and a matter for the attention of the **church**; it is not an economic issue, not a matter of politics or of civics; the economist is not interested." (See pages 13, 40.)

37 (See 30)

"How? Well, first of all, there are only three ways to get wealth. These are to get it as wages, or as interest, or as rent. By collecting the rent instead of taxes, we limit men to wages and (or) interest. Secondly, while it is true that one may steal another's wages or interest, **it is impossible to get wages, as wages, without doing the work one's self; and impossible to get the interest, as interest, without making the investment one's self.** Denying men rent makes it impossible

for one man to get anything in the course of business, or by political strategy, or by the tricks of statecraft, or by war at the expense of another. That means that every man gets all that is his due, and that means justice—automatic justice, automatically maintained, regardless of the character of individual men.” (See page 53.)

38 (19, 20)
“Oh, certainly! Liars and thieves would be liars and thieves still—if they chose; but they would then have no excuse for such conduct; for, regardless of individual conduct our civic, political and industrial system would be just. Economics is a science and we can have industrial justice and clean politics without waiting to reform men just as we can have good automobiles and good airplanes without reforming men.”

39
“By rent the economist means the return on land value.”

40
“No! What you pay for a building is interest, not rent.”

41 (See 34)
“Yes, they might; just as people who know better keep on saying that the sun rises and sets. But we would understand.”

42
“Yes, some people call it ‘ground rent’; but that is as unscientific as the term ‘labor wages’.”

43
“We would collect every cent of the rent! Why not? Only wages and interest may be claimed by private initiative.”

44 (See 34)
“It will be clear to you, if you will accustom yourself to look upon this matter as a **partnership between Labor and Capital in the company known as The Public**. Labor puts in all the work and is entitled to all the wages; the other puts in all the capital and is entitled to all the interest. When they are both paid off in full the rent is still left for the company.”

45
“Oh, certainly! The partners, Labor and Capital, have an interest in the company; they own it. They would get their return in the form of service dividends; as the rent fund would finance the schools, streets, parks, fire and police service, etc., and they would get this all this automatically apportioned.”

46 (See 39, 40)
“You say that you are now paying \$25 a month for a house and that \$5 is for the lot and \$20 for the house. In that case, as you are holding no land yourself, all you have would be exempt; your landlord (really a **houcelord**) would pay that \$5 per month (\$60 per year) into the public treasury.”

47
“The amount would be determined the same way your \$25 is determined, by supply and demand.”

48 (See 43)
“Correct. Your landlord would get nothing for the money he buried in the lot. He would get the \$20 a month as interest on his investment in the house. He is entitled to that; for he built the house; but a public collector would take the \$5.”

49
“But he didn’t make the lot.”

50
“Yes, he loses the \$500 he put in the lot! But that was

gone, any way. He could not spend it and have it, too! He parted with that \$500, when he traded it for the lot."

^{51 (See 44)}
"His investment? You mean his labor and capital? If so, he has his wages for one and his interest for the other. What more can he ask? That is all he has coming."

⁵²
"Certainly, he had the lot in exchange for his money; and would still have it. The public would have no use for the lot, unless it were to put a school on, or for some such purpose. The public does not want the lots; it wants them **used**."

^{53 (See 48)}
"Yes he would! He would get this out of it—that he would have a place for a house which returns him an income of \$240 a year. He couldn't hang his house in the sky; and if he did, you would not rent it. He must have the lot in order that he may have this chance to put his money to work; for just as men can work only on land, so can money work only on land."

⁵⁴
"No, he would get no return on the \$500. Like any other gambler who loses, he is out that much."

⁵⁵
"Yes, I know that he bought it in good faith; but he is a victim of **land gamblers, dealers in jobs** who control us by controlling the land and so selling us our opportunities to employ ourselves and our capital.—job middlemen, they are."

⁵⁶
"It is a loss to this extent, that he does not get his \$500 back; but there are compensating advantages."

^{57 (See 54, 55)}
"What else was it but a gamble? You say he paid \$500 for the lot and that he charged you \$60 a year for it in addition to the \$240 for the house. A return of \$60 on \$500 is 12%! on \$500. And that was good while it lasted."

⁵⁸
"Well, suppose the lot levy was \$30; still he got \$30 a year on \$500; for he charged you \$60. That margin of \$30 is 6% on \$500. That is 6%. That, too, was good while it lasted."

⁵⁹
"Let us see whether this is confiscation! Do you agree that the lot is worth the \$60 a year that you pay for it? Yes? Very well, why do you consider it worth \$60? Would you say that it is because of the location with respect to the schools, parks, etc., and because of the fire and police protection? You agree. Then, according to your testimony he has **been selling you \$60 worth of our public service and turning in only \$30**. If a clerk in a store were caught doing that with his employer's merchandise he would go to jail. If there is any confiscation here, this lot owner is the guilty party. **Instead of complaining, he should be grateful that we do not compel him to pay back the \$30 a year that he has been taking as a rake-off on the re-sale of the service you enjoy and which he buys at the tax office for \$30 to sell to you for \$60.**"

^{60 (See 52)}
"The only difference between this case and that of a vacant lot is that this man will pay the higher levy to protect his investment in the house; but **the gambler with the vacant lot**

would retire from the game and write off his loss."

61 (See 48)

"His loss would be complete only in case he did not want a lot. But if the time should ever come that he wanted a lot, he could get one for the taking. Then he would have no cause for complaint; for though he charged us with \$500 for the loss of his lot, he would have to credit us with \$500 for making it is possible for to get another lot without having to buy it."

62 (See 55)

"Well, for one thing, there would then no reason for men to get lots before they need to use them and to pay levies on them for years while waiting to perfect their plans; nor would men lose, as is so often the case now, because, being compelled to buy in advance of needs, they had to guess far in advance which way the city would be extended. Instead they would get lots only when they needed them and they get them where the conditions at the time might dictate."

63

"No, not the slightest danger! There will always be lots and acreage enough; and the beauty of it is that these can be got close in. Any one wanting a location would need to go only just beyond the last improved place. It would not be necessary as it is now to go far out past undeveloped areas and beyond the reach of community service; for all the land would be developed systematically and thoroughly—leaving the back country as a game reserve. This prospect should delight the sportsman and win his enthusiastic support for the plan. Then, too, the fact that settlements would be compact would reduce the cost of pipe lines, electric lines, telephone lines and paving; and reduce the cost of police and fire patrols and the cost of postal service. That is an additional advantage, as it would make it possible to render better service."

64 (See 43)

"We know the rent would be sufficient for all public needs because the whole is always greater than any of its parts. Only part of the rent now paid and collected is for publicly-financed advantages, the rest is for privately-financed advantages, such as theaters, churches, markets, etc., without which people would not stay in any locality."

65 (See 43)

"Exactly! It would not matter how high the rent might rise, the public would take it all; the holder of the lot would not get a cent of it. This would effectually kill speculation, for why hold more land than one needs, if there is no way to profit by doing it? As a result of this all unused land would be unclaimed land and open to any one who wished to use it."

66

"I am glad you mentioned zoning. That would take care of itself. Cities would zone themselves automatically."

67 (See 55)

"Why? Because no one would have any money tied up in land and all would be free to move whenever a change in the character of the neighborhood occurred. Those dissatisfied with that change would move out, because they could get another location for the taking. Those satisfied with the change would remain. That would zone the community automatical-

ly, not only with respect to business, but with respect to the races. We would then have a **voluntary segregation** much more complete than the police could enforce." (See page 53.)

⁶⁸
"One would not have to ask any one for land; if it were unclaimed—that is, if no one were paying the rent on it, it would be available to any one. All he need do is to move on."

⁶⁹ (See 63)
"No one would own the unclaimed land."

⁷⁰ (See 59)
"No, the State would not own it! The State has no use for it; the State is not in the land business. It is in the business of furnishing public service. If no one were on the land, and no one were holding the land, then no service would be delivered there and the lot would be like a riderless pony on the merry-go-round. The conductor (tax collector) would pass it by, not even looking at it. He is looking only for passengers. They are the only ones who pay fares."

⁷¹ (See 55)
"No, certainly not! Why should a man who sinks \$500 in the purchase of a lot be entitled to a return on that money the same as a man who puts invests \$500 in a building? How is society benefitted by that money sunk in a lot? He has employed no labor; he has purchased no material and contributed nothing to our buying power; he has built nothing and done nothing! On the other hand, by claiming that lot and holding it for a price, he has kept others from using it and from employing labor and from purchasing materials or in any way helping to build up the community."

⁷² (See 55, 59, 63)
"Certainly, he has held out for a rise, to make money; but, if his new price is justified, it is because some one else has done development work in the neighborhood, in which case he is sponging on them; and if his new price is not justified, he is guilty of a plain hold-up."

⁷³ (See 59)
"No, money put into land is not capital; the owner is not entitled to a return on it. And anything that he might be paid is not paid for anything he has done, but for what others have done. If those who pay him that return get a value in return, it is a value that others supply. In such a case he is a middleman, buying our public service at the tax rate and selling it back to us at the market rent rate. If money is worth 6%, the landowners, as a whole, can charge \$6.00 per year for every \$100 the community has invested in public betterments. As taxes average about \$4.00 per \$100 and assessments average about 50%, it means that their levies are only about \$2.00; so that they buy our public service for \$2.00 and sell it back to us for \$6.00. We lose \$4.00."

⁷⁴ (55, 72)
"Oh no! They do not all win! Many of them lose, as must be the case in any gamble. Only a small number of landowners win. They are the ones who laid wagers on choice inside mercantile locations, or on good waterfronts or at the favored terminals, or in popular residential districts—and got in early! The losers greatly outnumber the winners. And

as business continues to be centralized in large cities, there will be more blanks and fewer prizes in this lottery."

75

"No! As long as rent goes into private pockets, wealth and power will concentrate in the hands of the few. Landowners naturally conspire to make the most of their ownership. The Socialist plan is not a remedy; Socialists only step in as meddlers after the mischief is done and seek a redistribution."

76 (See 59)

"Why? For the reason that the owners of land, conspire to make as much as possible out of it. And as rent is the only thing they can get, they devise anti-peddler ordinances, and import tariff charges, and zoning ordinances and NRA regulations to confine the business as much as possible in those sections where they collect rent. As the collectors of the high rentals are the strongest in this game of grab, it follows that these regulations are always framed to favor the high-rent district—and to impoverish the out-lying sections. The better these devices work, the more rapidly do these high-rent Crusoes accumulate and the more rapidly do the smaller landowners sink into poverty."

77 (See 59)

"Suppose I grant that these NRA regulations are good and help conditions; you will have to grant that any good they do is done in the territory where they are in force and that those who wish to enjoy these benefits must either buy or rent land there to secure them. Any good done by these devices enriches landowners at the expense of the landless."

78 (See 37)

"Oh, yes there is! This can be corrected by collecting the rent instead of taxes and limiting men to wages and interest; so men could get only by being useful. Then we would have competition in good works, and an aristocracy of worth."

79 (See 37)

"We do not need to do anything about those who have these great fortunes. They cannot eat them—nor can they make anything out of them unless they invest their money. That we should encourage."

80 (See 37)

What if they have got millions, or even billions! They cannot hurt us! What difference does it make to you that a man has a greater chest expansion than yours and breathes more air than you do? There is air enough for you both! What is there to worry about? And so with these immense fortunes; for if we collect the rent instead of taxes, these rich men can get nothing but wages and (or) interest—their wages and interest! You will have yours!" (See page 39.)

81 (See 34)

"Yes, people have that idea. That's true. There was a time when people thought the world flat; but what people think does not affect facts of science."

82 (See 14, 33, 79)

"I know, I know! That notion that we should "soak the rich" is wide spread; but it is the result of our stupid notion that civics and politics are matters of morals, and that the way to correct conditions is to restrain the guilty. That sort of thing creates bad feeling and makes trouble. (See page 24.)

83 (See 37, 44)

"But, if we collect the rent instead of taxes, he cannot get anything but wages and (or) interest—and these he has to earn himself. He is entitled to them. Any way, they do not come out of you; for he must give the world work to get wages and must put his money to work for us to get interest."

84

"Certainly he is entitled to interest! If he is entitled to the product of his labor, he is entitled to interest on his money."

85

"How so? By the logic of human rights, by the principles of the square deal." (See page 31.)

86

"Yes, and by the logic of science, by the decrees of Nature. Suppose a man goes into the forest and cuts firewood. You agree he has a right to use that firewood to support his life. But he cannot wear it and he cannot eat it. The only way he can use it for food and clothing is to exchange it for them. His right to use his product for the support of his life includes the right to exchange that product for different products produced by others. If, now, another producer should give his attention to the raising of bees or cattle or poultry, his products would increase in value and multiply in number naturally. The two men may have equal ability and equal character, and work equally long and hard; but one gets cordwood that does not increase nor multiply naturally and the other raises poultry or cattle or bees that do increase and multiply naturally. It follows that the one who raises bees and cattle and poultry gets interest on his capital by reason of their natural increase. But this the man who produces cordwood does not get! However, he has the right of exchange; and he can exchange his cordwood for bees or cattle or poultry. But if we denied men interest on investments in other things, we would find that people would not invest in them, nor exchange for them (unless they were allowed a premium); and one of two things would happen—either we would not have enough of those things like cordwood and machinery which do not increase or multiply naturally, or we could get them only by paying a premium. But this premium, if it were paid, would really be interest in disguise. We are obliged then to conclude that interest is natural and just and that Socialists could not abolish it if they came into power."

87

"There is no Money Power, for the reason that there is no power in money, which is but the symbol, token or shadow of wealth, the product of Labor. It is illogical to imagine that the shadow of a substance has power over the producer of that substance." (See page 13, 25, 26.)

88 (See 59)

"The only power the **Political Machine** has is the power men enjoy who are permitted to collect the rent that results from political activity. Take the Machine that protects the **vice racket in Chinatown**. It is maintained on the fancy rental that can be collected there from those who want the protection of the **segregated district** for their illicit operations. That Machine could be put out of commission in twenty-four hours

by the collection of the rent instead of taxes; because that would deny to these manipulators the fruit of their manipulation, kill their interest, stop the contribution of campaign funds and destroy the Machine, which would collapse of itself."

89 (See 55)

"Yes, the collection of the rent would solve the red light and white slave problems. It would do this by making it unnecessary to tax Labor and Capital. This would enable men to have for themselves every cent of their wages and interest. This would enable every normal man to support a wife and family. This would provide for an equal number of women the opportunity of wifehood and motherhood. This would do away with the unattached men and women who now are the source of the incentive of these activities." (See page 42.)

90

"But the inequality in the number of the sexes is not natural. It results from the killing of males in war and industry."

91 (37, 55)

"Yes, the collection of the rent instead of taxes would end war; because no one can profit financially and individually from war unless he is in a position to share the rent resulting from the shift in trade and population that results from the war. Denied rent and limited to wages and (or) interest, men would all prefer peace. There would be no one to stir up the war spirit." (See page 57.)

92

"Foreign nations would want our trade and our friendship."

93 (37, 55)

"No, their peoples would not be crowding in here, because, once they observed how the collection of our rent instead of taxes prospers us, they would collect their rent instead of taxes and then they would not feel the need for more land, but would use their own land. They would rather live among their own people in their own country. (See page 56.)

94 (See 55)

"No fear of that! Remember that, once men are denied rent and limited to wages and (or) interest, there would be no longer any excuse for secret diplomacy and the papers would be free to tell the truth. The people would then know what would be going on. They could not be tricked into war hysteria." (See pages 53, 57.)

95 (37, 55)

"Crooked politics would be but a memory! Denied rent and limited to wages and (or) interest, there would be nothing that a crooked political machine could do for one; with nothing to gain and much to lose, no one would contribute funds to finance a political machine. The Machine would collapse of its own weight." (See page 45.)

96

"Crooked contractors would need then, as they do now, the help of the Machine; but there would be no Machine. And there would be a free press. Crooked contracting would be too risky. It would die out." (See page 58.)

97 (See 55)

"Teachers and preachers and editors would be free to seek Truth; schools would become educational institutions and the churches would recover their lost spiritual leadership."

"Marriage would be stabilized and divorce would be rare. All this follows because the grind of earning a living would be eliminated. People would have time to mate wisely and money to finance their homes properly. Women would no longer have to go out to work. Homes would be better housed and better kept, children would be better born and better reared. Life would be more natural and happier. We would live better, have better health and be better natured."

99

"No! Certainly not! How could men be any less dependent on land now than before? Suppose they do pile their buildings higher and use land more intensively, what of it? Their cities still stand on land. Men still live on and from land—nor can they live otherwise! All they eat and wear comes from land; their water comes from land. Indeed, as Henry George said, they are "little chunks of land". No! Certainly not! We have not, will not, and cannot become less dependent upon land; for land is to man what water is to a fish—there is no substitute." (See page 40.)

100 (51, 54)

"No, land is not capital. It is not even wealth. Capital, you know, is wealth devoted to the production of more wealth. Land isn't wealth and so cannot be capital."

101

"Land is not wealth, for the reason it is not produced. It was here before we were here to do the producing. Wealth is produced—and produced, by the way, from land; but land is not produced; it is not wealth."

102

"Oh, certainly! A condition of fertilization may be produced in land by our labor and that, while it lasts, adds to its value. That condition is wealth; but that is not the land."

103

"Certainly an increase in land value is indicative of an increase in our wealth; but that value is not wealth. It is only a reflection of the wealth which is invested in buildings, orchards, highways, factories, etc."

104

"Try this: try looking at it this way and remembering that nothing can be wealth that does not add to the total possessions of mankind. The fact that you buy a piece of land, that you 'invest', as we mistakenly say, in land adds nothing to the possessions of mankind. That land was here before."

105 (48, 51, 54)

"So would you have had \$10,000 in it, if you had thrown the \$10,000 down a well on the place—and that would be an 'investment' just as truly as your act of tying that much money up in the purchase of the land."

106 (See 34)

"Perhaps not! You couldn't see, at first, that it is down only as far as the center of the earth, and that a brick falling through a hole in the earth could fall only as far as the center and that, after that the brick would be 'falling' UP! But your failure to perceive a truth does not disprove that truth."

107 (100, 101, 104)

"One reason why your purchase of land cannot be called an investment is that the land was already yours—just as

much your own property as it was the property of the seller."

108

"But that title gave him only as much right in the land as the man had of whom he bought it. No title can convey a better title than the seller has. And the first seller merely seized the land; he had no title at all, unless we agree that murder constitutes purchase and blood consecrates a title."

109 (14, 15, 34, 41)

"Custom! Bah! What power has custom to change a fact? And how long must you hold a poor title till it becomes a good one? After how long a time does a counterfeit coin become a genuine coin of the realm?"

110 (50, 102, 105)

"Not at all! If that argument were good, then it would be in order for me to sell you your breath, let us say, by the week or month, or year. Suppose you pay me \$1000 a year for the right to breathe. Would you go about telling people that you had that much invested in breath—knowing that the air you breathe is as much yours as mine? Or would you complain that you had been robbed?"

111

"Oh, yes! And in the days of slavery, slaves would sometimes earn money on the side and buy their freedom. Suppose you had been a slave and purchased your freedom at a cost of, say, \$2,500; would you say you had \$2,500 invested in yourself? Or would you feel that you had been robbed of \$2,500?"

112 (55, 72, 102)

"But don't you see the difference! When a man spends \$2,500 to educate a boy he has really added something to the boy. He has made a real purchase—he gets for his money something that was not already his; but in the case of a slave's purchase of his freedom, he is merely buying back something that had been wrongfully taken from him—he is robbed. It is the same with the so-called 'investment' in land, the purchaser is merely buying back his freedom of access to that land—a freedom that had been wrongfully taken from him."

113

"No! A land levy cannot be passed on! A tax on Labor or on Capital can be passed on; because Labor or Capital can refuse to function unless we assume the tax; but we do not need the landlord on the job. In fact, the reason we pay rent is to get him out of the way. It would do the landlord no good to "strike" and refuse to go on owning land; because we do not need to have any one to own the land we use—all we want is the land! If the landlord refused to pay his levy and tried to make us pay it, he would lose the land and we would get it for the levy. The only way he could pass his levy to us would be to pass the land to us, also."

114 (See 44)

"No! Not at all! We do not hold that all men or any man has the right of free access to all land or to any particular parcel of land that you may hold. On the contrary, our system grants you exclusive privacy in your home and work and protects you there against all comers, even tax-collectors."

115

"I said TAX-collector, not rent-collector. The payment of the full rental value would give one a private monopoly of

land. The principle is the same as that where sons, equal heirs in an estate, occupy farms of various sizes and values. The administrator collects from them various amounts of rent and then divides the total among them equally."

116 (73, 100)

"But the Socialist plan of giving all families houses of the same type would not mean equality; for some houses would command better views of the park than others, or be nearer the school or nearer market. Equality there is impossible."

117 (101)

"No, money is not capital. It is merely a token or coupon or certificate. It is an order on the public for its products; just as your check is an order on the bank for money. You cannot count both the check and the money against which it is drawn; neither can you count both the wealth and the money which represents it in the transfers of the market. Checks, notes, bonds mortgages, etc., are credit items for those who hold them, but they are debit items to those who have signed them. The debits and credits cancel each other. They add nothing to the wealth of mankind. **TITLES TO LAND ARE THE SAME**; for the the credit claims of the owners are off-set by the rental obligations of the rest of us, who are as much poorer as they are richer. The landowner's title is a due-bill that entitles the owner to that much of our product—for the delivery of which we get nothing!

118 (See 55, 72)

"Suppose he did earn honestly the money paid for the land! So did he earn honestly the money that fell out of his pocket into the sea! But that does not alter the fact that it is lost."

119

"What if these land speculators do lose their chance to get that money back? That is only a case of the biter being bitten! Weep when they win, not when they lose. Like other gamblers, they joined the game to get the other man's money."

120 (See 52)

What else is he, if not a gambler? He didn't need the land! He bought it in the hope of drawing a prize in unearned increment. He went into the game to get without earning what you and I have to earn. Besides, the dog-in-the-manger tactics of those who hold land out of use to run up the price do incalculable harm by preventing development and progress."

121

"Oh, if he is using the land, he will not lose it! He will pay the rent and keep it; no one could take it away from him."

122

"Land gamblers are worse than the operators of gambling houses, for the operators of gambling houses furnish the quarters, the equipment, the light and heat, and sometimes, they furnish music and drinks. But landlords furnish nothing! Yet they demand a percentage of what we furnish."

123 (See 77)

"No! Landowners pay no levies at all—not as landowners! The reason that they think they pay taxes on their land is that they give us back a part of what they **TAKE FROM US**. They charge us the market rental rate to play in life's game on 'their' earth, charging us \$6 (if money is worth 6%), for what they buy of us for \$2. They pay nothing themselves. They

are tax-gatherers, not taxpayers, and fatten at our expense."

¹²⁴
"I say they pay \$2.00 on the \$100, because assessments are usually 50% and the tax rate is usually about \$4 on the \$100."

¹²⁵
"Nonsense! Lifting the taxes off landowners to relieve real estate is like lifting the expenses of Crusoe's island from Crusoe and putting them on Friday; or making the patrons of a gambling house finance its over-head and thereby permitting the operators to have their rake-off as a clear gain. Permitting the owners of earth to shift their expenses to us who must play the game of life on their earth raises the selling price of their land and encourages speculation in jobs."

¹²⁶
"They would be easily paid off. We issued those bonds because of treasury shortages caused by the private appropriation of our rent—moral embezzlement, although legally permissible. Once that misappropriation is stopped, we can soon pay off these bonds and stop borrowing." (See No. 64.)

¹²⁷
"But, all the more expensive government activities would be discontinued. We would disband the army and navy and the marine corps, discontinue all military education and preparation, disband the customs service, the diplomatic service and the internal revenue service; discontinue the income tax bureau and the inheritance tax bureau, and discontinue all the meddlesome regulatory commissions, such as the Interstate Commerce, the Railway and Utility commissions, and disband the NRA and stop all that extravagant meddling."

¹²⁸
"Oh, yes! We would still need to have some policemen; but when it is made easier to earn a loaf than to steal it, there will not be much for the police or the police courts to do."

¹²⁹
"How to begin? The first thing to do is to understand the situation! Begin by subscribing for *The Forum* or *No Taxes*, local and national publications, respectively. (*No Taxes* is not sold in Stockton.) These are the only newspapers in the world devoted to teaching economics as a science.

If you cannot find here the answer to your question please send it to me at the address below; and let me know if any of these replies are not clear and satisfactory. L. D. BECKWITH.

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