

Oregon Voters Can Abolish Poverty In This State

By William S. U'Ren.

The Oregon State Federation of Labor and the Central Labor Council of Portland and vicinity have initiated the People's Land and Loan law not only to provide public revenue, but to abolish the evil trinity of land monopoly, unemployment and landlordism.

When this law is adopted it will be easy and profitable for any man to get and keep land in Oregon for his own use and occupation.

It will be altogether unprofitable for any person to own land in Oregon for purposes of speculation or of collecting rent from other persons for permission to use and occupy his land, separate from rent for the improvements.

The proposed constitutional amendment to establish a People's Land and Loan law in this state is intended to provide ample revenue for all public needs; to make the state freer from land speculators and landlords, from poverty and unemployment. It would cause wage workers to be eagerly sought for, as was the case in California in the early days of gold mining.

This proposed law levies a permanent annual tax on all land, equal to the fair rental value, without considering rental value of improvements. This land rental value is to be reappraised every fifth year. Two-thirds of this revenue is for the expenses of state and local governments; one-third is for a state loan fund, for loans to home-makers in town and country.

A loan to one person shall not exceed \$1500. The loans shall be secured by the improvements and shall be made by installments as the improvements progress, if necessary. These loans are without interest for the first five years and the rate shall not exceed six per cent per annum for the following 15 years. The loan fund is available only to persons whose property does not exceed \$2250.

Personal property and land improvements are exempt from tax, except only for local purposes, when the levy is initiated by the people of the taxing district and approved by a majority of those voting.

The law is complete in detail and self-executing, including full definitions of "land improvements" and of "land." If differs from the so-called single tax only in this, that it does not prohibit income, inheritance and license taxes.

Its first effect will be to put out of business all land speculators and land monopolists, and all landlords who collect rent for the use of land, separate from rent for improvements. This will increase the returns to labor and capital and greatly stimulate all business and industry.

Adoption of this amendment will insure to every man possession of his land so long as he pays the land rent tax, which is all that is necessary to insure the best use of the land. It will help the wage worker to make his home; the landless farmer and renter to get land for use and to develop his farm. It will give every man his choice all his life long between making his own employment on the land or accepting a job to work for wages. There will be more jobs than men. It will take for public revenue all that labor and capital in Oregon now pay to a private landlord for the use of the earth. Manufacturers and merchants will gain by the vast increase of sales and a steady demand.

How would the adoption of the People's Land and Loan law, by taking all land rental values (separate from building and other improvements rents) for state and local public taxes, affect the men and women who work? What would be the effect on production? How would it affect mortgages and loans?

In answering these questions we must bear in mind always that all taxes are paid by products of labor, and therefore only the people who work pay taxes. Many people get tax receipts who do not work, but they have some special privilege, granted by law, which enables them to get for their own use the product of other men's labor.

The usual share rent for farms is one-fourth to one-half of the crop. The average is not less than one-third of the total crop, which means that every worker must pay to landlords of various kinds at least as much as 100 days' work, or one-third of what the average farmer produces in a year. At least that much in value is taken by the different land-

I endorse the People's Land and Loan law measure, as written, without reservation or qualification. If the workers of Oregon, who have the power, would adopt this law, it would furnish the most impressive example of enlightened action for the whole country that I could possibly imagine. I firmly believe that it would be the first practical step toward the abolition of involuntary unemployment and the most direct blow at the social crime of poverty which could be delivered.
FRANK P. WALSH,
Chairman of the Industrial Relations Committee.

lords, as a whole, from the gross product of all the men who work.

For public revenue the average family gives at least one-eighth of its working time for state and local taxes. Including the landlord's private land rent tax of 100 days, and the public state and local tax of 37 days' labor, the average family must labor nearly half its working time to pay private and public taxes.

The full rental value land tax proposed by this law will save every family the entire amount now paid for state and local taxes, which is equal to the farmer's production for at least 37 days. Taking all the land rental values for public taxes will about double the state and local revenue, of which every family will get its share in more and better schools, roads and other public service. In addition to that and, far more important, there will always be employment.

It is plain that the effect of this increase will be felt by all useful labor, and especially by those having the smaller incomes. Laborers, clerks, farmers, retail merchants, renters, mechanics, and all those who now get about \$750 a year or less, will find their income increase to be at least a thousand dollars for the year's work when this law is in force.

But of greater value to the community at large than the increased production, will be the certainty of employment and the independence and freedom that comes to every man with the knowledge that employment is always waiting for him, and that he may quit his job as a hired man at any time to work for himself on his own land.

As to mortgages on improved property, they seldom exceed the value of the improvements. Therefore the lender's security will be as good as it is now. In the case of loans on vacant land the lender is a sort of partner with the speculating owner, and must take his chance with him.

This law will add industrial freedom to the political liberty Americans now have. The good effects of such freedom cannot be overestimated. Every man will then have something better than a boarding house or a rented farm to fight for. It will take from every hired man the heart-breaking fear of losing his job.

THE PEOPLE'S LAND AND LOAN LAW WILL MAKE OREGON A STATE OF FREE MEN, INSTEAD OF A STATE OF MIRELINGS AND RENTERS WHO DEPEND ALTOGETHER ON THE PERMISSION AND SUCCESSFUL ENTERPRISE OF OTHERS FOR OPPORTUNITY TO EARN THEIR DAILY BREAD.

WANT LABOR LAW AMENDED

At the first convention of Massachusetts physicians and surgeons ever held in Massachusetts it was decided to urge an amendment to the workmen's compensation law that would permit injured workers to select their own doctor. The act now provides that medical attendance shall be supplied by the insurance associations interested. It was also decided to take a more active part, as a body, in legislation affecting the health and welfare of the people, and a committee was appointed for this purpose.

STAGE EMPLOYERS ADVANCE.

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees has secured a two years' contract with the large play houses of Philadelphia. Conferences made possible recognition of the union and wage increases that totaled in some instances 40 per cent.

Mark Petersen For Constable



M. W. PETERSON
Organized Labor's Candidate for Sheriff

Union men and women should not forget that at the coming election there will be a constable elected for the Portland district, and that Mark Petersen received the nomination for this office, on the Republican ticket. Mark is a member of the Typographical and Musician's Unions and

has been an active and efficient worker for the cause of unionism for many years.

He is a man who possesses the necessary characteristics for a public officer, and we should see to it that he is elected by an overwhelming majority.

WHY VOTE FOR WILSON?

By C. E. S. Wood.

The reason labor should vote for Wilson is the same reason, why all men, who think human rights higher and greater than property rights should vote for him. The struggle of history has been the struggle of human rights against property rights. Kings and aristocracies represented property—the toiling masses represented poverty.

So it is today. There have been some small advances in the protection of actual life and bodily liberty, but not very much. Property still takes the life and liberty of the poor neglected wretch whenever it becomes afraid of him. The eternal fight, human rights against property rights is in this very campaign.

Mr. Wilson stands for human rights compared to which all this talk of blunders in foreign policy is mere whistling of the wind, which will die down and be forgotten.

The reason I am fanatical for Wilson is because I believe he is for the great common people as against the privileged few, not because of the craft of the politician, but because the instinct of his very blood is for the masses. For humanity rather than property. He is intelligently alive to the fact that always and everywhere the Government has been used by the ruling few in their own interest, property interest, and he is desperately trying to show that there is no objection to thrift, industry, brains or any of the elements of human endeavor toward wealth; but there is objection to the great powers of government being used for the special benefit of a few privileged ones, necessarily robbing the great unprotected mass of the fair proportion of wealth they have created, and fairly earned. All men not of the privileged few or hoping to get in on the legalized loot should be together on this great human issue. It is life itself. It affects not only those who labor with their hands in mine, mill and shop, but the clerks, merchants, farmers, doctors, lawyers; all are wage slaves so long as a plutocratic system of privilege prevails; just as all were bleeding subjects, bled to the point of exhaustion by the older and grosser tyrannies of despots and their courts.

I have followed Mr. Wilson's career and I find that at Princeton, he was democratic in its larger sense. He put down aristocratic tendencies, divisions into wealthy and poorer circles, and refused great gifts with aristocracy attached to them. As Governor of New Jersey, he invited in from the outside, experts who helped him frame the best labor laws and laws for the regulation of corporations, then known, and New Jersey from being the parasite upon corporations—became the leader in restriction of unjust privilege.

EVERY TIME WILSON GETS DOWN OFF A FENCE HE GETS DOWN ON THE SIDE OF HUMANITY, regardless of results to himself. Test him out and see. Why didn't he soar and go to war with Germany over the Lusitania affair? As the Allies desperately hoped he would. Because he respected the millions of human lives and homes involved. American homes and German homes, and would not from notions of false clap trap honor plunge us into that terrible conflagration to cure a deed already done, and which could be better and more honorably cured by what all the world is clamoring for—discussion and judicial decision, not war. Yet because he refused to join the Allies, Germans are against him and favor Hughes and Roosevelt who would have done so. Why does he refuse to break with the Allies, because of detained cargoes and mails? Because continually pushing his protests to the last limit—he rests there for future discussion and compensation rather than go to war and involve million of young men and billions of property in a dispute over merchandise, which dispute can be settled better by full discussion and judicial awards. And here no question of life is involved. Why has he been so tolerant with Mexico, adjusting himself patiently to each new situation? Because he knows under all the horrors and brigandage of the revolution is the desperate attempt of the poor peons to become free men in the land of their birth, not starving slaves; their birth right sold by Diaz and Huerta to the Hearsts, Guggenheims, Morgans, Standard Oil and other foreign and American exploiters of their native land.

Does not every one of these decisions show an instinct for humanity, a sympathy for the under dog? So with the Adamson act, which has aroused such fury in some quarters. Yet all Wilson stood for was this: "I will not consider arbitration of an eight-hour day—that has passed into the conscience of the Nation, and is not subject to arbitration—and for this point I will not suffer all the wheels of commerce to stand still, the cattle to starve on sidings and the crops to rot on the ground." Wages, the effect of eight hour time and overtime, he was willing to arbitrate. So of the great Federal Reserve Banking System, the Rural Credit System, the Tariff Commission. What really underlies them all? Sympathy for the under dog. A refusal of legal privilege—humanity against property.

If Woodrow Wilson is turned out of office by the American people, I shall have less hope for the American people. It will be as if Abraham Lincoln had been repudiated and retired in his campaign for re-election. But he was not, and that the American people saved themselves from such disgrace, is my hope now.

Grocery and Provision Clerks' Union, of Boston, Mass., has prepared a new agreement which calls for a minimum wage of \$18 a week and a reduction in hours.

CAUSES OF NEW YORK STREET CAR STRIKE

In a public letter addressed to President Shonts, of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company, whose employees are now on strike, a score of well-known citizens ask:

"Is it true that 14,000 workers who give their lives to this service have no real voice regarding the conditions under which they work, and no means of independent, organized protest against any conditions which their employers have seen fit to impose? A court of arbitration would answer this to the satisfaction of the public.

"Is it true that legalistic intricacies were employed to destroy the contract entered into by the men in good faith? We are told that the conditions which have led to the street railway strike are of long standing; that the street railway employees are paid a lower scale of wages in this city, despite its high cost of living, than in any other large city in America; that the men are compelled to work seven days in the week, 365 days in the year; that they have no day that they call their own, because the traction schedule necessitates seven days in the week work, even to approximate a living wage.

"It is affirmed that the companies have, in effect, declared war on trade unionism; that they subject the men to the degradation of a spy system; that the men have not been at liberty, according to the concepts of a free people, to gather together to discuss their conditions without fear of dismissal. We are told that fear, coercion and espionage form part of the system of union breaking which the company has employed for years. In proof of this assertion, rule No. 23 of the company's general book of rules is cited: 'Any employe disapproving of the regulations adopted for his government or not disposed to aid in their enforcement, is expected to resign or he will be discharged.'

"We feel that we have a right to insist that a full knowledge of these conditions should be laid before the public, which is a partner in the transportation business of New York. The public owns the streets, it owns the subways, it advanced the credit with which they were built. The conditions under which men work on the transit lines are, therefore, vitally a matter of public concern.

"On behalf of the strikers, it is affirmed that the companies apparently admitted the right to organize in the accepted trade union sense, a right which all justice-loving people agree is an indispensable right of labor, if it is to protect itself, but that even while ostensibly agreeing to independent organization, the companies, through the silent pressure of intimidation, forced the men individually to sign private contracts which, in effect, robbed them of industrial liberty and destroyed every

right to be secured for them through independent organization.

"We want to know the facts. Are the traction companies guilty of an actual breach of the agreement of August 6, which the men were constrained technically to violate when they became aware of their danger? Was this technical violation subsequent to and a sequel to the companies' graver violation of the spirit of the agreement?

"Were the men trapped into minor violation of the agreement which the company has previously torn to tatters? Is it true that surveillance of the right to organize was offered the men in the guise of the 'brotherhood,' an organization temporarily effected under the joint coercion of spy system and philanthropy? All these facts we feel we have a right to know not from you nor from any one man personally, but through an impartial tribunal of arbitration."

RAILROAD KEY MEN GAIN

President Perham of the Order of Railway Telegraphers reports that revised schedules on 16 large lines have been secured during the past quarter. President Perham states that the membership is to be congratulated on this record of achievement. The latest gains have been made by Baltimore and Ohio railroad telegraphers who have secured an 8 per cent increase. The United States Board of Mediation and Conciliation assisted in the negotiation.

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