

350,000,000 ACRES OF FARM LANDS ARE IDLE

While People Are Plowing Up Lawns for Gardens, Speculators Are Holding Almost Half of Agricultural Land Unimproved to Reap Unearned Increment—Congress Acts.

(By Gilson Gardner, Washington Correspondent.)

WASHINGTON, June 14.—There are approximately 350,000,000 acres of idle land in United States farms, according to latest census figures, those taken in 1910.

Less than three-fifths of the land in farms is improved. In 1910 a little over half the land in farms in the United States was improved—478,451,750 acres out of a total of 878,798,325 acres.

This is how private ownership of land for speculative purposes results in land being held out of use.

Get Land Into Use.

It is one cause of present high prices of foodstuffs and the difficulty of raising enough food to meet the needs of the nations warring to put down German autocracy.

How to get this land into use is one of the government's war problems. There is no use plowing up lawns and tennis courts when half the best farm lands are untilled.

Why not tax them into use?

This thought occurred to some members of congress looking for ways to raise war revenue. The speculative value of unused land is a fine untapped source of revenue, and the effect of such taxes, unlike taxes on industry and improvements, would be to stimulate production rather than discourage it.

More food would be raised, the farmer would get better prices, because the speculator would get less in rent and holding price and the consumer would get food cheaper.

Committee at Work.

All this has been urged on the senate finance committee which is mulling over the revenue act. A committee has been formed to help work out the food and land problem with Chas. H. Ingersoll (of watch fame) at its head and containing such men as Frederick C. Howe, immigration commissioner; John J. Hopper of New York; Stiles P. Jones, Minnesota; Lucius F. C. Garvin, ex-governor, Rhode Island; J. J. Pastoriza, Texas; C. B. Kegley, Washington state.

It is urged that a tax of this character would produce large revenue and cheapen necessities and tend to check the tendency of farm lands to drift into monopoly. Nineteen per cent of the farm land in the United States, about 170,000,000 acres, was in 1910 in tracts of a thousand acres or over and 9 1/2 per cent was in tracts of 500 to 999 acres, about 85,000,000 acres, a total of approximately 255,000,000 acres.

Kept Out of Use.

The United States commission on industrial relations reported:

"More than four-fifths of the area of the large holding is being kept out of actual use by its 50,000 owners while 2,250,000 farmers are struggling for a bare existence on farms of less than 50 acres."

All of which results in high rents as well as high-priced land. In 1916 the department of agriculture reported the average value per acre of farm lands, exclusive of improvements, was in north Atlantic states \$36.71; in south Atlantic states \$23.79; in north central east of the Mississippi \$74.95; north central, west of the Mississippi, \$59.68; south central, \$24.09; and far western, \$58.40; for the United States as a whole, \$45.55.

By the same authority it is estimated the average value of a farm, with its land and buildings alone is \$7,121.

Public Land Useless.

It is true there are nearly 280,000,000 acres of free public land, but most of it is arid or rocky, not available for farming without outlay of large capital.

Five per cent charged as ground rent for farm land of the United States at present census value would amount to \$2,195,000,000.

The present tax rate on land value does not average over 1 1/2 per cent, including tax levied by direct tax, state and local, and amounts to only about \$425,000,000 a year.

War taxes this year will approximate \$25 per capita or \$150 for a family of six, while in many states local income tax will make the individual burden greater.

So long as capital can find refuge in land investment while a prospect of doubling the investment every ten years wealth is escaping its share of the war burden and all forms of productive activity are being discouraged.

KEEP FIGHTING SHAW'S ADVICE TO THE RUSSIANS

Bernard Shaw, World's Foremost Socialist, Maintains That Russian Radicals Should Prosecute War With Vigor—"America's Entry Strengthens Their Hands."

BY KENNETH W. PAYNE.

LONDON, June 14.—"If I were to give my advice to the Russian revolutionists it would be to keep the war going at all costs! And if peace soon brings an end to this war I would tell them to start another war right away!"

Thus spoke George Bernard Shaw in an interview today.

The Russian socialists have repeatedly indicated their desire to work for peace at the earliest moment possible without indemnities or annexations. But Shaw, the world's greatest socialist thinker, tells them in-

stead to keep on fighting if they know what's good for them.

"A nation like the United States hold together in time of peace," he said today, "because its constitution is a going thing. Russia in revolution has thrown over the restraint of long established government. In peace now Russia would probably fly apart. Continued carrying on of the war is the link to hold her together."

"The man in the street hardly realizes the position of the successful revolutionists. They are men of modest walks of life who are suddenly thrown into positions of unlimited power. They have not the restraint of past experience, and all around them are tempting opportunities for graft."

"To hold their position and opportunities, they have to struggle against new groups rising from the populace and seeking control. Some one of these groups proves stronger than the existing government, and so we have the spectacle of successive groups coming to the top, forming new governments, and then having their heads lopped off to make way for still other governments."

"That is what happened in the French revolution. That is what we might call the usual course of revolution."

"But Russia has a nice war with Russia conveniently on her hands. Let the war keep up, and the Russian people feel that unless they go on resisting, the Germans are going to

come over, devastate their fields, burn their homes, ravish their women; then you will have the usual chaos of revolution somewhat checked by the necessity of keeping up a central authority strong enough to wage the war successfully."

"But if the Russian socialists now and the war outside their borders, they will simply be throwing open the door to war within their borders. Of course it suits us over here for them to keep the war going, but it is their own interest as well."

The effect of the Russian revolution on America's entrance into the war has been widely discussed. Shaw in his interview today pointed out that America's action had in turn effected the Russian revolution.

"During the French revolution there came a time when the people might have taken the bourgeois back on the throne if the bourgeois hadn't been too stupid to accept the changes brought by the revolution, such as the land distribution," he said. "Today we would see the reactionaries of Europe trying to put the Romanoffs back on the throne of Russia, if it weren't for the fact that America has strengthened the hands of the revolutionary leaders, by coming into the war on the side of the allies with insistence on the principles of democracy."

Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Dillstrom returned to Yreka Thursday morning. They have been visiting with relatives at Applegate.

BASYE'S FAMILY HERE FOR FUNERAL

A beautiful young woman, gowned in deep black, sobbing as if her heart were broken, and leaning heavily on the arms of her husband and a friend arrived on train No. 43 from Portland Thursday morning. The young woman was Mrs. V. C. Bartlett, who formerly was Miss Zeptha Basye, of Jacksonville, a daughter of the respected pioneer, Charles H. Basye, county jailer, who died shortly after the infliction with a clothes iron, of a half score ghastly head wounds at the hands of J. L. Ragsdale, a prisoner, Tuesday afternoon. Ragsdale committed suicide after being surrounded by sheriff's deputies and I company guardsmen, dying about the same hour as his victim.

Arrangements for Basye's funeral, as announced in Wednesday's Mail Tribune, will stand. After brief exercises in Perl's chapel at noon Sunday, the burial will be at Missouri Flat cemetery at 2 o'clock, with services at the grave. The arrangements are under direction of the Odd Fellows.

Ragsdale will be buried at 10 o'clock in the I. O. O. F. cemetery, Medford.



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In good order. Cost \$1025.00. Fully equipped, self-starter, electric lights, one new tire with patent wire safety tread. Cash, \$350.00. Reason for sale, owner leaving city. Box 1125, Medford Post office, or telephone F. H. Cowles, 127 Central Point.

AT THE OLD STAND

I have returned to Medford and will be found at the old stand on South Riverside, where I will continue to do expert horseshoeing and all kinds of blacksmithing.

Tom Merriman, Proprietor

Ashland and Medford Choral Societies

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CONCERT PROGRAM

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Prices—35c, 50c and 75c

Association Labor Bureau

All laborers desiring orchard work should register at once at the office of the Rogue River Fruit & Produce Association, West Main street.

No charge to the laborer for securing position

A. S. V. CARPENTER, Labor Manager.



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And here's a little bit of advice to you. Always carry a few packages of Adams Pepsin Gum and chew it often. It will keep your stomach in perfect trim and will help you keep a cool head in the thick of battle. Your job will be here, when you come back, Jack.

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