

Why Living is So Costly

Congestion of Cities.

Millions Go For Rents and Car Fares —Double Freight on Manufactured Articles Swells Price.

The recent New York census, which places it as the second largest city in the world, calls forth some talk from B. C. Morse, a congestion expert, who has studied conditions in the United States and Europe. He says:

“The increased cost of living is directly traceable to the tremendous jump that has taken place in urban populations all over the world. We have concentrated in cities, particularly large cities, persons who could provide for themselves on a farm, but barely meet the cost of their living expenses in a great city.

“We will have to stop land speculation and eliminate the cost of transit if we wish to reduce the high cost of living, for they are two fundamental matters which make life expensive for urban dwellers.

Consumer Pays Two Freights.

“Then, again, our centres of production are enormous distances from our centres of consumption. We have in New York City, roughly speaking, one-eighteenth of the total population of the country. The raw material for the goods we produce is shipped here from all parts of the country and then shipped back again.

“Somebody pays the freight, and it

is the consumer in the long run who is made to pay for the expense of shipping goods two ways.

“A very important reason for the high cost of living is in its relation to land speculation. That creates capitalized congestion values. That means enormously high rents for decent housing conditions.

Cut Down Car Fare.

“We are housing the poor uneconomically. If we could distribute factories and population so that toilers could walk to their work, New York could cut out \$10,000,000 a year in car fares and still provide better housing than is provided to-day, and also save billions of hours' time.

“Then the taxes in large centres are inclined to be much higher than in small communities, because large cities have been woefully behindhand and real estate speculators woefully ahead of time. That is, the city has remarkable hindsight and the speculator great foresight.

“In conclusion I would say that cheap land is essential for good housing, and good housing, with cheap rent, is essential if the worker is to be helped.”

To make land cheap, tax it, whether used or not, on its full selling value. Make the speculator sell.

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