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FRANKLIN & OIL CITY, PA

Speaker Asks Adoption Of Land Use Tax Plan

"Let us stop the frustrating practice of taxing people who want to fix up their properties and quit making it hard for industries to expand and increase their plant facilities by taking taxes off buildings and improvements and putting them all on land value."

This was the crux of a talk given by W. Wylie Young before the Industrial Committee of the Franklin Chamber of Commerce Monday noon in the Franklin Club.

Mr. Young, employed by a foundation interested in tax reform, is currently speaking before Franklin area groups to acquaint them with the new Graded Tax Law, recently passed by the legislature.

The law allows third class cities in Pennsylvania to adopt the new taxing policy.

"It is now within the province of City Council," Young asserted, "not only to call off all taxes on mere maintenance improvements such as new roofs, new paint jobs and new furnaces, but to cancel all taxes on all improvements or new buildings."

"It can be done," he added, "by the simple expedient of shifting the tax base from buildings to land value."

The speaker pointed to Pittsburgh where the new tax policy has been applied successfully. The new law gives cities of the third class, such as Franklin and Oil City, the right to go all the way with the plan. Pittsburgh is limited to a 50 per cent use of the plan.

Where land is free from taxation entirely, such as vacant land in England, poverty always reigns supreme, Mr. Young asserted. Such a policy makes rent high and both wages and interest on capital are low, he added.

Aids Industry

The speaker pointed out the

encouragement that such a plan would bring to industrial expansion. "Let industry pay a proper price for the use of land and then let the city stand aside and enjoy the by-products of his success," he told the group.

"The Graded Tax Law will do two things with one fell swoop," the speaker proclaimed. "It will bring the cost of high priced land within the reach of those who want to use it and at the same time will eliminate all taxes on improvements and make it possible for people or firms to build new buildings or increase their plant facilities."

"Why not adopt a law that will give hundreds of ambitious people the green light to go ahead without fear of being taxed unmercifully for wanting to fix up their properties?" he asked.

Mr. Young has been in the Franklin area for two months and has been talking to individuals and groups on the proposed advantages of the new tax plan. He challenged the industrial committee to give the law careful consideration.

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