

LAND & LIBERTY

FREE LAND

FREE TRADE

FREE PEOPLE

Thirty-third Year—No. 388

SEPTEMBER, 1926

6d.

By post, 4s. per annum.

Published by The United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values.

Editorial Offices: 11, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.

Telegrams: "Eulav, Parl, London."

Telephone: Victoria 7323

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Copenhagen, 20th to 26th July, 1926

Of all the international gatherings of a non-official character that Europe has witnessed since the end of the Great War, it is probable that none has surpassed in intellectual quality, and in world-wide significance, the Conference of the followers of Henry George that for a week in the latter part of July, 1926, held forth in the joint Assembly Chamber of the Houses of Parliament at Copenhagen. It was known as the Third International Conference to Promote the Taxation of Land Values and Free Trade; and the records of the British-Danish Secretariat showed that more than 400 representatives of 26 countries had enrolled for the Conference, and members from 17 nations were actually in attendance on the opening day. It was the largest International Conference of the followers of Henry George yet brought together.

Parliament, the Public and the Press

In Denmark, where the philosophy and economic teaching of Henry George are known and accepted more generally than in any other country, the Conference, because of its character and composition, took on the aspect of an event of national importance. The newspapers of the capital city and the provinces carried detailed reports of the proceedings from day to day and pictures and cartoons of distinctive personalities among the membership. Several important German dailies also gave space to the proceedings and noted the findings.

The semi-official recognition of the importance of the Conference by the Danish Government was evidenced not only by the opening of the Parliament buildings for the daily sessions, but by the presence of eminent Members of Parliament and Ministers at various Conference functions, at which these statesmen disclosed publicly their understanding of and sympathy with the economic philosophy of Henry George and the programme of the Conference. In no other country in the world could such a gathering have received a more generous and understanding welcome than was accorded on this occasion by the public men and press of Denmark.

From scores of columns of news and editorial publicity during the Conference we select the following arresting passage extracted from a leading editorial in *Politiken*, the chief Liberal daily of the country:—

"No longer is it a case of a few harmless enthusiasts meeting together with their Georgeist ideas to improve the whole state of society by means of a single tax. That is a stage that belongs to the past. The Taxation of Land Values has now become practical politics, and it is with a true far-seeing vision that the organizers of the great and distinguished Congress, which opened yesterday in the Houses of Parliament, chose for their place of

assembly a city where, as it happens, at this very moment we are busying ourselves with the readjustment of the taxes levied upon real estate. Our revision of taxation takes a form that undoubtedly does not reach out to the full principle upon which the new law is based; but it does indicate a great, an essential, and therefore a decisive step, in the right direction. At this Conference, officially opened in the Parliamentary buildings of our country, there were present the former Radical Home Minister, the former Moderate Liberal Home Minister, while the present Home Minister, belonging to the Social Democratic Party, not able to be present at the meeting, sent a long letter to be read at the Conference wherein he praised the Taxation of Land Values. Here we have an expression of the fact that three of the political parties of this country have now accepted this great and significant tax reform. Without their co-operation it would not have been possible to carry through the law in the last session of Parliament. The Radical Party was the first that gave shelter to the ideas of Land Value Taxation, just as it was the Radical Ministry which was the first to establish the valuation of the land—the bare land. Later on the Social Democrats followed, at first without great enthusiasm, and the party of the Moderate Liberals also came along, although not without a good deal of fighting among themselves. It is only the Conservatives that defy the new ideas and the new time. . . . We greet the Congress, with good wishes for the best success of their efforts."

Letter from the Danish Home Minister

Most important was the letter read at the opening of the Conference from the Government Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Hauge, who had been the sponsor in Parliament for the recent legislation introducing land value taxation for the raising of municipal, country and parish revenues. In this letter, Mr. Hauge indicated clearly the intent of the Government to go forward, as fast as public opinion would support them, with further measures for relieving industry of tax burdens by gradual and increasing concentration of taxation upon land values. "The community," he declared, "should assert its unrestricted right to appropriate the economic rent of land."

The addresses made during the week by the present Finance Minister, C. Bramsnaes; by Ole Hansen, President of the Upper House; by Ove Rode, ex-Minister of Home Affairs and by Niels Frederiksen, M.P., were all significant. The address of the last named, who is President of the Danish Congress of Housemen (small farmers) which was in session during the Georgeist Conference, was an inspiring assurance of the vital fact that the small landowners of Denmark are the chief supporters of the economic policies which the Conference had been organized to promote. At the opening meeting



HENRY GEORGE

there were also in attendance Dr. O. C. Kragh, ex-Minister of Home Affairs and a Vice-President of the Conference; Klaus Bertsen, M.P., an ex-Minister; Col. Parkov, M.P., who officially represented the Parliament, and H. C. Henningsen, M.P., who brilliantly piloted the recent Land Values Act through the Lower House.

The President's Address

A feature of the opening session on 20th July was the inaugural address of the President, the Hon. Charles O'Connor Hennessy, of New York. Not, he contended, from the peace gestures of Locarno, or the futilities of disarmament conferences, could peace and prosperity come to the world, but from the abolition of the monopoly of natural resources and the breaking down of economic barriers that hamper the freedom of men everywhere to work and exchange the products of their labour. President Hennessy's significant address, which made a profound impression on the Conference, was widely noticed in the press.

Greetings to the Conference were delivered by Antonio Albendin for Spain; Wm. Reid for Great Britain; Johan Hansson for Sweden; Alex. Paletta for Germany; Mrs. Signe Björner for Denmark; D. de Clerq for Holland; Sam Meyer for France; V. M. Avendaño-Losada for Venezuela; Dr. J. J. Pikler for Hungary; S. Wielgolaski for Norway, and Pavlos Giannelia officially delegated by the Government of

By HENRY GEORGE

SOCIAL PROBLEMS. Paper covers, 2s.

A PERPLEXED PHILOSOPHER. An Examination of Herbert Spencer's Utterances on the Land Question. Cloth, 1s. 6d.

THE LAW OF HUMAN PROGRESS. Being Chapters I to IV of Book X of PROGRESS AND POVERTY. Cloth, 1s.

THE LAND QUESTION. 3d.

HOW MODERN CIVILIZATION MAY DECLINE. Being Chapter IV, Book X, of PROGRESS AND POVERTY. 1d.

LAND AND PEOPLE. An Address. 1d.

THE CRIME OF POVERTY. An Address. 1d.

"MOSES." An Address. 1d.

SCOTLAND AND SCOTSMEN. An Address. 1d.

From our Offices,

Greece and representing also the German-Austrian Land Reform Union in Vienna. Letters were read from Louis F. Post (Washington, D.C., U.S.A.), Mrs. Joseph Fels (New York), Governor Hans Krüger (Germany), Peter Burt (Scotland); and many others.

Next in size and importance to the Danish and British delegations to the Conference was the attendance from Germany of twenty-two adherents, all active in public life of that country, four being members of State Parliaments.

Radio Talk

On Friday, 23rd July, by arrangement made and well advertised in advance, a special address on Land Value Taxation and Free Trade was broadcast by Mr. Hennessy, through the Government radio station at Copenhagen. The speech was immediately translated and repeated in the Danish tongue by Mrs. Signe Björner. The manager of the station gave the assurance that a great radio audience had listened to it.

Henry George Library in Parliament

Equally significant of great public interest was the ceremony in the library of the Houses of Parliament, where at the instance of Mr. Berthelsen a special section has been set aside and devoted exclusively to the writings of Henry George in many languages besides kindred publications dealing with his philosophy, including complete bound files of LAND & LIBERTY.

Anna George de Mille

Another interesting feature of the Conference was the enthusiastic reception given to Anna George de Mille, the daughter of Henry George, and her daughters Agnes and Margaret. Mrs. Anna de Mille was repeatedly interviewed by the Copenhagen papers and her portrait was extensively published throughout Denmark. She made persuasive impromptu addresses at the Conference meetings, at the Congress of the Danish Small Holders and at the banquet held before the members departed for their widely scattered homes.

Declaration by the Finance Minister

It was at this inspiring banquet that Mr. Bramsnaes, the Danish Finance Minister, showed his deep interest in the objects of the Conference and expressed his belief that the next practical step, following the passing of the recent Land Values Act for local taxation, would be a further national tax on land values.

During the week in which the Conference was in session at the Parliament Houses, important and informing papers on various aspects of Land Value Taxation and Free Trade movement throughout the world were read and discussed, as may be seen from our more detailed "Diary of the Proceedings." The Danish, Swedish, British, French, German and American points of view were all represented. A paper by Lawson Purdy of New York on "Land Value Taxation in the United States" was particularly notable.

Ceremony at the Liberty Memorial

No review of the Conference would be complete without reference to the great outdoor ceremony in the streets of Copenhagen, incident to the placing in the name of the Conference and of the Congress of Housemen (Small Holders) of a floral garland at the base of the historic Liberty Column which stands in one of the city's busiest public thoroughfares. This dramatic event, according to extensive newspaper reports, seemed to strike the imagination of the people of Denmark. The monument was erected about 1792 to commemorate the emancipation of the peasants of Denmark from a virtual serfdom imposed on them by a

cruel system of landlordism. Public traffic was excluded from the square by the police while the delegates to the Housemen's Congress and those from the Georgeist Conference marched to the monument to take part in the ceremony, for which a great crowd had assembled. There the President of the Conference handed the floral wreath to Anna George de Mille, the daughter of Henry George, who placed it at the foot of the granite column, amid immense applause, while women members of the Conference bore the national flags of all the countries represented at the demonstration. It was an inspiring sight. The laying of the garland and the flags, which was under the able management of Mr. F. Folke, president of the Danish Henry George Union, was followed by appropriate addresses by President Hennessy and Andrew MacLaren, M.P., in English; by Ove Rode, M.P., and Ole Hansen, M.P., in Danish; Sam Meyer in French; H. Peus, President of the Anhalt Diet, in German; and Mrs. Harbou Hoff, member of the Copenhagen Magistracy, speaking both in English and Danish. During intervals in the speech-making the Housemen sang some of their uplifting and beautiful songs.

Tour of Denmark

After the sessions in Copenhagen, meetings attended by a large number of the Conference members were held in Odense, at the Housemen's High School where Mr. Jakob E. Lange, translator of *Progress and Poverty*, is the distinguished principal. Then followed a series of meetings in Jutland, fully reported in the local newspapers, in which among others Mr. Andrew MacLaren, M.P., Messrs. A. Barteld, M.P., and A. Paletta, and the tireless Mr. Folke took a prominent part. The press certainly made the most of the visit in that part of Denmark, as in Copenhagen.

The press interviews with the President and others, including Mrs. Anna de Mille, Miss Colbron and Mr. MacLaren, added materially to the success of the Conference in all the extraordinary publicity it enjoyed.

Conference Resolutions

Chief among the decisions of the Conference was the adoption by unanimous vote of an address, reported by the Resolutions Committee of which Ashley Mitchell of England was Chairman, to be transmitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva.

It declared that, until there is a frank recognition of the root causes of international misunderstanding and discord and a sincere and earnest determination to remove them, there can be no permanent peace and progress in the world. The Treaty of Locarno, it maintained, even if ratified, will be ineffective so long as evil economic conditions remain to inspire the envies, hates and fears which are the common causes of war.

A further resolution reaffirmed the declaration of principle and policy adopted by the International Conference held at Oxford in 1923, and declared in favour not only of free trade across national frontiers but affirmed that peace, contentment and prosperity within national boundaries must be sought in the abolition of all legal and arbitrary restrictions upon or impediments to the right of men freely to produce wealth, freely to exchange it, and freely to enjoy the results of their labour.

Formation of the International Union

The concluding act of the Conference was the adoption, after extended discussion, of a resolution offered by Frederic Cyrus Leubuscher of New York to form a permanent International Union to promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, and giving to President

Hennessy and the British-Danish Secretariat the power to appoint a Provisional Committee to carry on the international work until the next Conference which is expected to be held in 1928. The resolution fixed the international headquarters in London, England, and recognized *LAND & LIBERTY*, published at 11, Tothill Street, London, S.W.1, as the organ of the International Union.

* * *

International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade

Headquarters :

11, Tothill Street, London, England

The names of the Provisional Committee thus far designated (September, 1926) are as follow :—

President : Charles O'Connor Hennessy.
Secretariat : John Paul, A. W. Madsen, F. Folke and Abel Brink.

Treasurer : Ashley Mitchell.

Provisional Committee :

United States of America : Charles O'Connor Hennessy, Frederic C. Leubuscher, Louis F. Post, Charles T. Root, Mrs. Anna George de Mille, Chester C. Platt, and Mark Milliken.

England : Charles E. Crompton, F. C. R. Douglas, W. R. Lester, E. J. McManus, Charles H. Smithson, Fredk. Verinder, Ashley Mitchell, John Paul and A. W. Madsen.

Scotland : Peter Burt, Wm. Reid and W. J. Young.

Wales : Eustace A. Davies. *Ireland :* Jos. Davison.

Denmark : Jakob E. Lange, Anders Vedel, S. Berthelsen, K. J. Kristensen, Axel Dam, F. Folke, and Abel Brink.

Norway : S. Wielgolaski and Halfdan Hansen.

Sweden : Johan Hansson and Svante A. Bäckström.

Germany : A. Barteld, Hans Krüger, Otto Karutz, Alex. Paletta, Arnold Schwarz, and A. Schär.

Spain : Antonio Albendin and I. T. Garrido.

France and Belgium : Sam Meyer.

Holland : D. de Clerq. *Hungary :* Julius J. Pikler.

Greece and Austria : P. Giannelia.

Canada : D. W. Buchanan and A. C. Campbell.

South Africa : E. J. Evans and F. A. W. Lucas.

Australia : Louis P. Jacobs and J. R. Firth.

New Zealand : Rev. Mervyn J. Stewart.

Argentine : Juan B. Bellagamba and Andres Maspero Castro.

Brazil : Affonso Aurelio Porto.

Venezuela : V. M. Avendaño-Losada.

Cuba : Erasmo Regueiferos.

Uruguay : F. Vitale and Herrera y Reissig.

You are cordially invited to join the International Union. Membership form for your use is enclosed with this journal.

