

ODENSE CONFERENCE ECHOES

The Eighth International Conference to Promote Land Value Taxation and Free Trade is over. But its work continues and its influence grows. Members have returned to their homes throughout the world and are now engaged in the all-important task of making public the conclusions reached and the resolutions passed at Odense. Through the correspondence columns of newspapers, at meetings, and in other ways, they are broadcasting the message that, given conditions of equal freedom, men and nations will prosper and live together in peace and harmony; that the community-created value of land belongs of right to the whole people who create it by their presence and activities, and is peculiarly the proper source of public revenue; and that the removal of tariff barriers, quotas, licences, managed currencies and other obstacles to trade will do more to achieve peace and prosperity than any amount of armaments and vast international free gift schemes. We give here a first selection of propaganda activity so far undertaken.

Obedying the instruction given by Conference, the Secretary of the International Union has sent the text of the main Conference Resolution (and a copy of the August-September LAND & LIBERTY) through their diplomatic representatives in this country to all those governments which have embassies, consulates or offices in London. Among the many acknowledgments so far received are those from the embassies of the Belgian, Danish, Irish, Japanese, Mexican, Netherlands, Swiss, United States, Western Germany, India and Pakistan governments, the U.S.A. Ambassador remarking that he greatly appreciated the Resolution being brought to his attention.

Mr. Ashley Mitchell's scathing denunciation of tariffs and tariff-bargaining conferences, quotas, licences, state trading, Customs Unions and Exchange controls is assured an influential and much larger audience than that for which it was written. It has been published in New York in the *News Bulletin* of the British Commonwealth Chamber of Commerce in the U.S.A., an organisation which includes the leading American importers and the leading British exporters. Mr. Mitchell writes that he had sent copies of his address to various business associates in New York and that one of them cabled asking for permission for it to appear in the *News Bulletin*. He gave his consent gladly and adds that the free trade message will reach quarters where it is sadly needed. It has appeared also in the October issue of the *Danish Merchants' News*, which has already published in its September issue Dr. Sven Rydenfelt's talk, "The Way out of the Dollar Shortage," and a brief review by Dan Bjørner of the Conference. "International Trade—Without Statistics" also occupies the front page of the October edition of the *Henry George News*, U.S.A.

Mr. Rupert Mason, President of the International Union, on his way home from the Conference to San Francisco, addressed an important meeting of the Easton (Pennsylvania) Rotary Club, attended by members of the City Council and other local dignitaries. The *Easton Express*, August 22, reports that he spoke strongly in favour of a tax system based on benefits received, which he said was the traditional American method and the principle of Thomas Jefferson. The sixteenth amendment to the United States Constitution in providing for income taxes had abandoned that principle and had replaced it with the contrary principle of ability to pay, which Mr. Mason condemned. He praised, as an important first step, the permissive legislation introduced last year in Pennsylvania which enables 47 cities to exempt from taxation buildings by levying local taxes on land values.

The following day Mr. Rupert Mason was the guest speaker at a banquet given at the second annual conference of the Ohio Henry George School of Social Science, held on the shores of Lake Erie. He gave a summary of the progress of land reform around the world, stressing the need for increased application of the principles of Henry George if civilisation is

to survive. An account of the Conference was given to the group by Mr. Robert Clancy.

Flying home from the Conference after a stay of several weeks in London, Mr. W. A. Dowe, Director of the Australian School of Social Science, stopped to address a meeting in San Francisco arranged by Mr. Rupert Mason. Arrived in Sydney he gave a brief account of the purpose of the Conference and the work of the schools in a radio interview with Station 2GB. A full report was given to a public meeting in Sydney, November 5. Mr. Dowe informs us that echoes of the Conference will be heard at a Christmas Gathering to be held December 12, and at the Annual Conference of the Australian School next January—February which is to be based substantially on the programme and papers delivered at Odense. He adds: "The splendid spirit of hospitality shown by the Danes was a tremendous pleasure and uplift to me. It was also a great pleasure to meet so many people in London and to see how strong and enthusiastic the organisation is there. I was delighted with the success of the new Classes."

On his return home from Odense, Dr. Martin Pfannschmidt, the only member to attend from Germany, prepared a twelve-page duplicated typescript report of the Conference in which he draws attention to Germany's crying need for a valuation which would show separately the value of land apart from improvements. Dr. Pfannschmidt has sent his report to a number of members of the Federal German Government and other prominent Germans, as well as to his associates in the German land values movement.

Mr. George Hellick, of Easton, Pennsylvania, a Vice-President of the International Union who was unfortunately unable to go to Denmark, writes that he intends sending a copy of the Conference Paper, by Mr. Noah D. Alper, "The Great American Tax Shift," to every legislator in the State of Pennsylvania. We have already suggested that this paper might well be sent to every Senator and Assembly man in the United States and now that Mr. Hellick is to set the ball rolling we hope that American adherents in other States will follow his example.

At the request of a group of twenty liberals who wrote from Odense to the Editor of the *Liberal News*, that paper published in its issue August 22 the full text of the main Conference Resolution. Among the signatories to the request were Ashley Mitchell and Stephen Martin and prospective parliamentary candidates Harry Pollard and Roy Douglas.

A number of Georgeist journals have been received from various parts of the world, each giving their own reports of the Conference. The September issue of the *Henry George News*, U.S.A., devotes four pages to a report of the proceedings by Robert Clancy, Director of the Henry George School in New York, and prints in full Mr. J. Rupert Mason's presidential address, "Human Rights and State Duties," and the public address by Dr. Viggo Starcke, M.P., entitled "Henry George's Ideas in World Politics." It gives also an article describing places visited in Denmark and some Danish customs and conditions by Miss V. G. Peterson, Secretary of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. *Ons Erfdeel*, the journal of the Dutch Georgeist Union, *Recht en Vrijheid*, publishes a long report covering seven pages of its August-September number, written by Mr. P. Prins, who attended the Conference as

delegate from the Dutch Union. Mr. Prins was so impressed by the progress of the Henry George Schools in Britain and the United States that he plans to start classes in Holland on similar lines. Class material and advice has been given by the School in London. The September issue of *Progress*, published in Melbourne, Victoria, gives a brief account of the first days of the Conference; no doubt a fuller report will appear in the next issue.

As we mentioned in our previous issue, the Conference received excellent notice in the Danish press and from the Danish State Radio. But the fullest reports coming from Denmark are naturally to be found in *Grundskyld*, the monthly journal of the Henry George Union, and in *Vejen Frem*, the weekly newspaper of the Justice Party. *Grundskyld* devotes seventeen pages to Conference matters. In addition to a commentary on the week's proceedings, the text of the resolution, etc., it gives in full the texts of the Presidential address and of the paper by Dr. Sven Rydenfelt, entitled "The Way out of the Dollar Shortage," and a letter from Agnes George de Mille, grand-daughter of Henry George, sending greetings and pledging her support. For three weeks *Vejen Frem* gave detailed reports and reprinted several of the papers delivered at Odense.

At the request of Mr. Noah D. Alper a parcel of Henry George's books was sent to the Headmaster of a North of England Grammar School whom he met on the boat en route to the Danish Conference. In a letter to the International Union the Headmaster writes: "I am interested in the works of Henry George and when the new abridgement of *Progress and Poverty* becomes available in the New Year I will certainly purchase a copy for the library. Thank you also for offering to send LAND & LIBERTY for one year . . . We have an excellent library so that I will certainly see the books and the publications you send are placed at the disposal of the boys."

Electronic tape recordings of addresses delivered at the Conference and the discussion which followed each session have been played to a group of Young Liberals at Ilford, Essex, by Mr. Keith Baynes, and to the Chislehurst Liberal Association, by Mr. Stephen Martin, as well as to various visitors to our offices. It is hoped thus to take the Conference to a number of other groups in the months ahead.