

# The Danish Justice Party

DENMARK is the oldest kingdom in the world. Since the year 930 members of the same family have been kings and queens. Today it is the only country governed by three parties which are all more or less in favor of Henry George's ideas. As early as 1659 there was evidence of a definite movement toward justice in the field of taxation.

In that year the king had to find a method of raising money for a "very expensive war." His method was a proposal that the noblemen pay taxes on their lands as other people did. When they refused, the king turned to the citizens. They decided to close the gates of Copenhagen preventing any nobleman from leaving until he had signed a charter giving the king autocracy. From then until 1903 the landowners, including the noblemen, had to pay a tax fixed upon the productive capacity of the land—not upon the amount produced. There was no tax on buildings.

Until the last few decades nearly 80 per cent of the Danes were farmers. With increasing industry has come the tariff problem which worked a hardship on farmers and made them aware of the fact that a growing population in the cities was entirely free from taxes. As a result of activity by the Farmers party a law was enacted in 1903 with a very small tax on land and buildings as a whole. A tax on property and income was also instituted. This latter tax, though small in the beginning, has increased lustily, as might be expected.

By 1905 people discovered this was a "bad law" and Severin Christensen, in analyzing the problem, discovered Henry George's ideas. He published a book entitled *A State of Justice* and this drew the attention of a number

Mr. and Mrs. Engelhard Harremoës were guests at the Henry George School in New York recently at a dinner meeting of Robert Clancy's class on "The History of the Georgist Movement." Bringing the warmth and hospitality of Denmark with them, Mr. Harremoës, now representing the Justice party at the UN, documented carefully and pleasantly, many little known features of the Danish scene as it reflects the ideas of Henry George. A brief digest of his remarks is offered here.

of Danish philosophers, who, by 1919, decided to form their own party. That brings us to the now famous Justice party, which, following a period of political trials, can now claim nine members in the Parliament.

The Justice party was firmly committed to certain clear aims. They wanted (1) to bring the public finances into order, wiping out the deficit; (2) they wanted free trade restrictions and tariffs to be moved away gradually, but as fast as possible; and (3) they wanted to take a big step forward in adoption of the single tax, with a corresponding reduction of other taxes.

Whatever criticisms or doubts may have arisen within the party or from its interested observers outside Denmark, the fact remains that the economy has not been better for the last twenty years than it is today. Savings and bank deposits have increased considerably, and the balance of payment between Denmark and other countries has changed from a deficit of 500 million Danish crowns to a surplus of 1000 million.

In the efforts toward free trade the progress has been slower, despite the fact that Justice party members believe they can prove that a courageous removal of all tariff barriers would result in lower prices on foreign im-

ports rather than higher prices, as commonly supposed.

Until the Justice party joined the government it was the general idea that they should support every step to promote the full single tax and vote against ordinary taxes, and this goal is slowly coming more nearly into view. As an example, a recent step taken in Denmark has been another 30 per cent raise in the rent of apartments, out of which the owner will retain 16 per cent and pay 14 per cent to the state to reduce the income tax correspondingly for all people.

The next normal election takes place in 1961 and it is hoped that the Justice party will move toward free trade and the single tax, since there is little opposition from the other parties. Many Danes are familiar with the ideas of Henry George — in fact many have devoted their lives to his principles. The success that has been achieved in these few years as a result of this concentration of thought and hard work, suggests that if enough people were willing to "live for it," perhaps no one would ever have to "die for it."

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### "CONSIDER THE LILIES"

Christian Economics, the fourth in the series of booklets by C. J. Ewing, is "inscribed to the religious mind and especially for the consideration of orthodox thought in America." It points out that of three main points taught by the man from whose birth we date our calendar, only two are preached in churches, while the third — economic righteousness — has been overlooked.

This principle of justice upheld by Jesus emphasized the teachings of Moses and Elijah, and was familiar to the Scribes and Pharisees who were the recognized teachers of the period. But they, as the author points out, supported a system of slavery and deprivation for the masses, so quite naturally, they too, chose to soft pedal the economic issue. Among many interesting interpretations is one relating to the lilies of the field — they grow "because they have access to the earth."

This 32-page booklet, which you may have by sending 10 cents to the author, C. J. Ewing, 253 Chidester Avenue, Mobile, Alabama, should furnish surprises, especially, for anyone interested in Biblical history.

### INVITATION TO "BALANCED LIVING"

At Lane's End Homestead in Brookville, Ohio, lives a woman whose name has become well known for a variety of reasons. She is Mildred Loomis, and she mills her own flour, bakes her own bread, teaches classes in Fundamental Economics, and helps get out *Balanced Living*, the monthly journal of the School of Living.

This journal — a forum for sociologists, economists, psychologists, philosophers and nutritionists — discusses topics ranging from such practical matters as solar heating to long range plans for experimental communities. The goal is an attempt to define and practise ways of dealing with all major problems of living. A creative approach examines these problems in dynamic relation to each other in an effort to achieve "wholeness," and to search for truer and more satisfying values. The members are deeply concerned with improvement of human relations, soil and health, government, and the advancement of world peace. Henry George's books are high on their "recommended reading list."

Mrs. Loomis welcomes correspondence from anyone who would like to know more about the School of Living or who would like to receive a copy of the journal. An annual conference gives those who attend a chance to exchange ideas and meet new friends. Three dollars covers the cost of *Balanced Living* and membership for one year in this non-profit organization.

—Ernestine Jaediker