

(reprinted from *LAND & LIBERTY*, March issue). The Barcelona monthly journal *Obra Mercedaria* has published a full report of the Eighth International Conference held in Denmark last summer. *LAND & LIBERTY*, May, 1953, mentioned the clever way in which a member of the Georgeist group in Barcelona had employed the pages of the Bulletin of the Society for the Protection of Animals and Plants to publicize the Henry George philosophy. Mr. Paluzie-Borrell writes that a further article making known the land-value policy has appeared in a recent issue of the Bulletin, consisting of a broadcast talk by Mr. José Soler-Corrales about the woodlands of Spain. We do not know whether Mr. Soler-Corrales was responsible for the two previous articles in that journal but the same method is used of taking from George's writings a passage which comes legitimately within the Society's sphere of interest and using that as a foundation on which to build the case for taxing land values. On this occasion the well known story of Mohammed Ali and the tax on date trees was used. It was an excellent piece of skilful propaganda.

## THE DANISH ELECTION

### Losses Sustained by Justice Party

One of the features of the new Constitution for Denmark adopted this year was the establishment of Single Chamber government. The Upper House (*Landstinget*) was abolished and the Lower House (*Folketinget*) is now the sole Chamber, "Folketinget" and "Parliament" now being synonymous. In the former Folketinget, the number of members was 149; in the new Parliament the number is 175 for Denmark plus 4 for the Faroe Islands and Greenland which now have direct representation for the first time. The voting age was reduced from 25 years or over to 23 years or over and thereby 125,000 persons were added to the voters' roll in Denmark.

The adoption of the new Constitution and the election to Parliament in conformity with it required two General Elections, one held on April 4 and the other on September 22. The results were as follows:—

	April, 1953		September, 1953	
	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats
Social Democrats ... ..	836,329	61	895,038	74
Radical Liberals ... ..	178,906	13	168,794	14
Conservatives ... ..	358,720	26	365,270	30
Moderate Liberals ... ..	455,200	33	499,975	12
The Justice Party ... ..	116,322	9	75,201	6
Communists ... ..	99,024	7	93,706	8
Danish Group (S. Jutland)	16,162	0	—	—
Independents ... ..	—	—	58,522	0
German List ... ..	8,438	0	9,734	1
Greenland and Faroe Islands	—	—	—	4
		149		179

The six Justice Party members in the new House are: Dr. Viggo Starcke, Hans Hansen, Søren Olesen, I. M. Pedersen, Oluf Pedersen and Knud Tholstrup. While congratulating these friends on their return, we much regret that the Party has suffered such a set-back in the number of its representatives in Parliament; a further set-

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back, indeed, to that suffered in the April election, previous to which the Party had 12 members and a total vote of 168,784. The Party had swung forward during the time when it was taking a powerful lead in opposing the many restrictions and controls and in some respects its success in bringing about a real approach to liberation and a free economy has been that unthinking voters have regarded its mission as fulfilled. On the other hand, the one real issue at the election was whether Denmark was to be ruled by the Moderate Liberal—Conservative coalition (led by Erik Eriksen) or by the Social Democrats (led by Hans Hedtoft); the campaign was one between the big battalions and much was heard about the folly of "wasting votes" by not plumping for one or other. This did definitely affect the fortunes of a small party like the Justice Party which in any case was greatly handicapped by not having any press of its own and by lack of campaign funds such as other parties have at command.

The composition of the Danish Parliament is made up partly of members directly elected in the constituencies, if on the first count, they have a sufficiency of votes in the respective constituency; and of such constituency seats there are 135; and partly by the distribution of 40 "supplementary" seats which (with the 135 constituency seats) are distributed to the parties under such rules as result in each party having representation in proportion to the total number of votes cast for that party. But the new constitution has heavily weighted the chances against the smaller parties and has erected a barrier that new parties may find difficult to surmount. Formerly, any party that had a total vote of 10,000 or more was given its proportionate share of the "supplementary" seats. That limit has now been raised to 60,000. Furthermore, no party can have a share of the supplementary seats, unless it *either* achieves that quota *or* unless it gains at least one seat by the direct constituency vote. Already there are loud protests in Denmark at the way in which this kind of thing has worked out and an early amendment of the law is more than likely. Consider for example how the new "Independents" have fared. They were led by Knud Kristensen who although a leader of the Moderate Liberals broke away from them. He and his party had their votes so "spread" over the country that nowhere did they win a constituency seat; but over the whole country they had 58,522 votes; that is, below the limit of the 60,000 and they therefore forfeited any representation at all. On the other hand the "German List" gained a constituency seat with no more than 9,734 votes and its leader Hans Schmidt was elected.

The General Election was such a "tie" that it took some negotiation to form the new Government. The late Government of Moderate Liberals and Conservatives, Erik Eriksen, Prime Minister, could not get assured allies to command a majority over the Social Democrats. On the other hand, the Radical Liberals having given assurance that they would withhold support of any vote of no confidence in the Social Democrats, the latter have assumed power with Mr. Hans Hedtoft as Prime Minister.

## VICTORIA

### Land Value Rating Confirmed

Again the opponents of the system under which local taxation is levied on land values with complete exemption of buildings and improvements have tried to upset it. They have been soundly defeated.

Polls were demanded in Frankston and Hastings Shire (which adopted Site Value Rating in 1949) and in