

ECHO OF THE DANISH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The Justice Party Vindicated against Violent Socialist Attacks

At the Danish Municipal Elections on March 14 (at which *Retsforbundet*, the Justice Union or Justice Party and "Henry Georgeists," captured 50 seats in the Towns and 12 in the Counties, besides over 80 in the Parishes) the Socialists lost their majority in the Council of the Borough of Randers, in Jutland. They had lost by a bare margin of six votes and the result was so close that they appealed to the Ministry for a new election. The Ministry conceded the request and that new election took place in Randers on May 9. It was, in fact, a campaign deliberately and violently conducted against the Justice Party who had won two seats which, with eight seats won by the Conservatives, left the Socialists with only nine seats and therefore took from them the control of the Council.

The determination of the Socialists to defeat the Justice Party which, because of its "economic freedom" policies, is regarded as the Socialists' worst enemy, was marked by the way in which they brought all possible forces to the spot, including Ministers of State and extensive publicity. The local (Socialist) daily paper refused to give the Justice Party any space and the latter was therefore deprived of the chance to advertise its meetings. Here are some of the attacks made upon the Justice Union from the Socialist camp: "The economy stunt is the menacing danger . . ." "The Justice Union will give us dearer rye bread . . ." "They will compel the Conservatives to use the axe if their coalition wins the fight on May 9 . . ." "The old, the sick and the unemployed—your living conditions for the next four years are at stake . . ." "Keep the reactionaries out of Randers Town Council . . ." "Do not forget that the Justice Union worships the principle, 'Each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost' . . ." "Do not forget that by reducing public expenditure the Justice Union will hit our schools, our hospitals, our social and cultural institutions . . ." and other similar declamations and abuse. On the eve of the poll the Socialists held a huge torchlight procession with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Commerce at the head, but the people took most notice of the small motorcar at the tailend, hailing it and shouting "Look out, Goliath, here comes David"! It was the car of the Justice Union with its slogans upon it.

It can be fairly said that the methods and passions of the Socialists exhibited one of the most disgraceful episodes yet seen in Danish electoral experience. This probably reflects their frustration that in the elections of March 14 the Justice Union captured the votes of very many working people who had formerly voted Socialist, and who have awakened to the virtues and benefits of a free economy in contrast to the restrictions and controls accompanied by heavy and unbearable taxation. Easy accusations are flung at the Justice Union as demagogues, reactionaries, even fascists, although also the Conservatives will link them with the Communists. Thus, "bringing not peace but a sword," has been preached the principle and policy and promise of the Henry George philosophy. And surely Prime Minister Hedtoft (Socialist) went beyond all bounds in a recent debate in Parliament by his sneering reference to Dr. Starcke as a "charlatan"; even worse, he had the audacity to say that he had not, since the days of Goebbels, met with an agitation that could be compared with Starcke's. It

did not help matters that the Minister tried later to clarify what he meant. Such a comparison with Goebbels could not but be felt as a personal insult by any honourable man. It was a monstrous indiscretion to come from one in Mr. Hedtoft's high office. *Can it be true that the Socialists do so hate or fear individual freedom and the equal rights to land which will liberate mankind?*

To return to the Municipal election in Randers on May 9, the result was to confirm the election of March 14. The voting for the Justice Union on May 9 being almost precisely the same as on March 14. This gave the Justice Union its two seats, the Conservatives eight seats and the Socialists nine seats, losing control of the Council. The whole of Denmark has echoed with that result. The two representatives on the Randers Council are journeyman Niels P. Jacobsen and Superintendent Johannes Wille. Part of the venom against Mr. Jacobsen may be that he is an artisan and was therefore in Socialist estimation "deserting his class." Mr. Wille, if we mistake not, is the J. Wille, the author of the Danish book (1927) *William Booth—Henry George* comparing their life's aims, in which an eloquent appeal was made to the Salvation Army to recognise that poverty had a cause and it was our duty to uproot *the cause* rather than be content to deal with its effects.

Addressing electors after the poll, Mr. Wille said that despite the terrific display of daily repeated rancorous attacks on the Justice Union and the series of untruthful assertions on the part of the Socialist press, the Justice Union had its 2,000 voters, among whom were undoubtedly many working men who had the presence of mind not to allow themselves to be kissed. The re-election in Randers had shown that these voters had opened their eyes to the truth that only the policy of the Justice Union could form the basis of a permanently happy society. They had understood the arguments of the Justice Union which had been all the more potent when considered in the light of obvious defects of the "planned economy" and the practices of the special interests which give a lead to the other parties. The first and immediate matter was a "tax-stop" by cutting down politically dominated municipal extravagance, and by sensible economy in the administration of essential social services. They must also attend to their object of transferring local taxation upon the value of land, exempting buildings and removing the local income tax, as soon as widened powers of local self-government made that possible.

A. W. M.

4s. THE CONDITION OF LABOUR. On the rights of property and justice in the distribution of wealth, with explanatory introduction and appendix containing the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, statement by the Rev. Dr. McGlynn and extract from Bishop Nulty's Essay "Back to the Land." By Henry George.

2s. 6d. THE THEORY OF HUMAN PROGRESSION. By Patrick Edward Dove, abridged by Julia N. Kellog.

7s. 6d. THE SCIENCE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY. By Henry George. The meaning of Political Economy; The Nature of Wealth; The Laws of the Production and Distribution of Wealth; Money and its Functions.

1s. 6d. HENRY GEORGE—A BIOGRAPHY. By Professor George R. Geiger.

FORM OF BEQUEST

I bequeath, free of duty, to the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values, Limited, the sum of £.....