

Letter from Ness

(Concluded from page one)

The farmer party must not be confused with the Nonpartisan League, or the farmer-labor party here. There is no comparison between the two. The interests of the farmer and the laborer are not the same, and in Norway no pretense of this is made. There the labor parties are the socialist and communist while "bondepartist" is made up of the conservatives and is working in harmony with the conservative "helre" opposing state ownership.

"Bondepartist" has come as the result of the activities of "landmands forbundet" a non-political organization somewhat equivalent to the Farm Bureau. This organization has existed for over thirty years in Norway and has worked on the "balance of power" idea backing certain candidates who it was thought would work in the interest of the farmers. This, it was found, met with little success, however, because they all more or less adhered to the party line and voted in the Storting according to the party policy—or as it would be termed here "big biz."

The principal feature of the farmer party platform is protective tariff. The farmers sense a danger to their industry in having to compete with foreign countries in the production of dairy products, especially Denmark, and in pork production, especially America, and are demanding an import duty high enough to make the price of imported goods equal to the cost of production, including interest on investment, on similar articles at home. At present no duty is wanted, by any class, however, on grain.

"Helre" is working for the manufacturing interests of the country and by trading of votes can work together with the farmer party.

The radical parties are naturally opposed to this. They are for free trade, higher wages, state ownership and the inevitable higher taxes. And it must be stated that in regard to higher taxes they have succeeded admirably well. In the places I was the income tax ranged from 11 to 16 per cent with no definite exemption. If a single man, for instance, earned \$1000 during the year he paid in Stavanger \$160 income tax.

The state is owning the railroads, the telephones and telegraphs, and the postal department. Postal rates have been doubled and are now for a letter 20 are domestic and 40 are foreign. Still the department has a 17 million kroner deficit for the last year. This deficit must be raised by taxation and will cost in taxes about Kr. 7.00 for every man, woman and child in the country.

Freight rates and passenger rates have been increased. Passenger rates for short rides are about equal to or a little above American rates, but if you can afford long distances you ride a little cheaper than here. The deficit of the railroads the last year, without adding new roads or new equipment, was 19 million kroner, which must be made good by taxation, another item of Kr. 8.00 in taxes for every man, woman and child in the country.

All grain is imported by the state which has it milled at its own mills or contracted out to the private mills that the state couldn't buy when its borrowing power became less good after having borrowed immense sums for its various enterprises. It was the general opinion among the people I met that the flour now obtained is of a poorer quality and costs more, but the party in power want it so, and most millers have made common cause with the government because the state is liberal in paying.

A new industry which has gained a foothold in Norway in recent years is the moving pictures. In Stavanger, a city of about 50,000 people some six or seven moving picture theatres were built, and all made profits. It became a promising undertaking and the city soon stepped in, confiscated the theatres, put in men in broadcloth uniforms with brass buttons, who had no other interest in their work than the monthly pay check. Expense became greater than the income and the admission fee was increased. Fewer people attended, three of the theatres were closed and the people are paying the deficit at the others in higher taxes.

Some of the numerous water-falls were developed by private interests. Power plants of almost unlimited extent were acquired, thousands of people were given employment and the promoters made big profits. This was a thorn in the eye of the ne'er-

do-wells and the socialist and communists being in control a novel scheme was hit upon to stop this. All water-falls of some importance were taken over by the state or its subdivisions, money was borrowed for this purpose, interest has to be paid and must be paid by higher taxes.

This taking over various industries by the state has served one purpose—the curtailment of industry. Unemployment resulted. The pang of hard times were felt and had to be relieved. To help the situation public work of various kinds are started, the unemployed are given a few days' work now and then and the cost of this work is raised by higher taxes.

The latest joke along these lines was the work of a commission appointed by the Storting to survey the mountains and reclaim for the state the snow-capped peaks. It seems that disputes had arisen between certain counties as to the exact boundary lines which runs along the highest mountain peaks. To end the dispute the above-named commission was appointed. Money was spent by the thousands, the boundaries established and the perpetual snow on the mountain peaks was saved from the ravages of private capital.

My impressions of the present government of Norway was that its greatest efficiency consists in levying taxes.

In a later article I shall discuss some other factors entering into the political-industrial life of Norway.

G. K. NESS

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North Dakota Judging Team Wins National Honors

A team composed of three students representing the North Dakota Agricultural College won first place in judging all dairy breeds at the collegiate student livestock judging contest, National Dairy Show, St. Paul, Oct. 7 to 14, in competition with teams from 19 other states. The boys, Harper Brush, Lisbon Obert Skref, Glyndon, Minn.; and Burton Oederkirk, Fargo, were accompanied by J. R. Rice, head of the dairy department at the college.

North Dakota's team also won first place in judging Ayrshires and third in judging Jerseys and Guernseys. A senior in the school of agriculture, Harper Brush, was second high man in the contest, first in judging Jerseys, second on Ayrshires, eighth on Guernseys, and was awarded a special scholarship prize of \$400. At the dairy congress recently held at Waterloo, Iowa, Brush was tied for first place among all individual contestants.

The victory at St. Paul is the second recent inter-state championship won by a judging team trained at the North Dakota Agricultural College. At the recent inter-state contest at Sioux City, North Dakota's boys and girls club team won the inter-state live stock judging contest, which club teams from nine other states were entered.

Occasionally you hear of some body who is said to have killed himself by overwork, but there is danger of its becoming a favored form of suicide.