

**COPENHAGEN
EDITION**

**The police
want digital
surveillance
to track
your online
behaviour**

**Cartoonist
Stine Speds-
bjerg on
body hair,
dating &
depression**

**Ole Ege's
nudes ush-
ered in the
golden age
of pornog-
raphy**

ISSN 2246-6150



The radical defector

Jens Rohde condemns the lack of European leadership and compassion for refugees

THE MURMUR

BIODIVERSITY is vital to sustaining human life on the planet. But, more often than not, our policy-makers choose short-term economic gain over long-term ecological stability. That's the case with the government's new agriculture package.

Denmark is the most intensively farmed country in Europe, but the agricultural lobby argues that strict fertiliser legislations is limiting yields, productivity – and profits.

In a concession to their supporters in the agricultural industry, the Liberal Party (Venstre) government is allowing farmers to increase their fertiliser use by 20 percent. The package was put forward by agriculture minister Eva Kjer Hansen and has been slammed for its potentially destructive environmental impacts. Experts agree that it will increase the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus fertilisers escaping into waterways. Both encourage the growth of algae, which can grow so rapidly that it uses up the available oxygen in seas, lakes and rivers, killing animal life. Oxygen levels in some Danish fjords have been so low, the waters were declared dead.

Ramping up fertiliser use also threatens groundwater. Aarhus City Council estimates that they will have to spend an additional 28 to 95 million kroner a year to keep their water drinkable.

Despite repeatedly stating that the new regulations would provide a net benefit for the environment, Hansen couldn't get any experts on her side in an embarrassing public hearing last month.

"The efforts to re-establish the natural conditions on land and in the rivers, lakes and the sea, risk being thrown out with the bathwater," Hans Henrik Bruun from the Department of Biology at the University of Copenhagen, told videnskab.dk.

We often don't realise the services the natural world provides, until it's too late. Bees and other pollinating insects, for example, are vital in ag-

riculture. But the combination of the destruction of natural areas, with widespread pesticide use in agriculture, has resulted in colony collapses. Around the world, farmers now rely upon companies to bring bee hives to their farms to make sure their plants are pollinated, because natural levels of pollinators have hit such lows.

According to the Danish Society for Nature Conservation (DN), the degradation of Denmark's biological diversity is now tantamount to an ecological crisis, and the impact will be felt by society at large. Natural areas are too small and isolated to sustain populations of endangered species. The new agriculture package only increases the pressure on vulnerable species, especially now that the government has abolished the ten-metre buffer zones to waterways, which are no longer protected from the use of fertilisers or pesticides.

The government hopes voluntary programmes for farmers to establish new wetlands and forests will offset the increase in fertiliser use. But organisations such as DN say there's no guarantee these initiatives will pan out. In the meantime, increased fertiliser use will only degrade the Danish environment further.

At the heart of the discussion is the conflict between the human demand for food and land, and the natural world that sustains our wealth. While the government hopes the new agriculture package will increase profits for farmers by up to 1.6 billion kroner, what price do we put on healthy trout and salmon stocks, or on providing meadow habitats for skylarks and bees?

Pity the natural world. Pity the trout whose spawning grounds are destroyed as farmers dredge the small rivers to improve their flow. Pity the birds whose food disappears from the deoxygenated fjords. Pity us, who will ultimately suffer as the wealth of the natural world is depleted.

The Murmur

I think I
had depression
for longer than
I realised. I
thought that
if I wasn't
suicidal, and
I wasn't in
a bad mood
all the time,
then it
couldn't be
depression!

STINE SPEDSBJERG,
P26

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SPROG

MONTH IN REVIEW

Dane wins Silver Bear

Trine Dyrholm became the first Danish actress to win the Silver Bear at the 66th Berlin International Film Festival for her role in the film *The Commune* (Kollektivet). But she was upstaged at the press conference by the movie's director Thomas Vinterberg, who said that he was ashamed of being Danish. His comments, which drew a long applause, were in response to a journalist's question regarding the migrant crisis.

WIND POWER RECORD SHATTERED

Copenhagen is having difficulty finding green alternatives for its investments, Bloomberg reports. Copenhagen mayor Frank Jensen has placed a strong emphasis on green energy solutions and spearhead a move to make Copenhagen the first CO2 neutral city in the world. But Jensen argues it is a pointless ambition as long as the city's 6.9 billion kroner investment portfolio includes stakes in the fossil fuel industry.

Finding suitable investments has proven difficult, however, not least because there is no agreed-upon standard for a fossil-fuel-free investment. Many investments managed by banks are bundled together, meaning they contain stocks and investments in a mix of businesses including fossil-fuel companies.



Martin Abegglen / flickr

HOPES DASHED

FC Midtjylland took home a surprising 2-1 win over Manchester United in the first leg of the Europa League match up. But they couldn't repeat the success away at Old Trafford the following week, where they were thrashed 5-1. Manchester United are through to the next stage with an aggregate score of 6-3, where they will meet Liverpool.

Natasha Jessen-Petersen



Lost passports stoke terrorism fears

Increasing numbers of Danish passports are going missing, 44,000 last year alone, raising concern that they are being bought by document forgers and people smugglers. 34 million passports went missing in the EU in 2015 according to Interpol. At least two of the terrorists involved in the November 13 Paris attacks were in possession of stolen passports.

"Document forgery is an important catalyst for organized crime and terrorism," Alexandru Niculae, a Europol spokesperson, told Berlingske, which reports that a Danish passport costs 22,000 kroner on the black market. A new Swedish law has been passed that will prevent citizens from ordering more than three passports over a five-year period. MP Pernille Skipper from the Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) argues against replicating the Swedish law, and instead would like to see more focus on investigating criminal smuggling networks.



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STUDENTS STRUGGLE TO REPAY LOANS
The number of students who are unable to pay back their student loans has increased from 5,000 in 2010 to 8,000 in 2015. Overall, Danes owed 29 billion kroner in student loans last year compared to 21 billion in 2010. This increase reflects the current high levels of unemployment among recent university graduates. The students are expected to pay a low interest on the loan, which earned the state 2.5 billion kroner between 2011 and 2016. Political parties The Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten), Socialist People's Party (SF) and Danish People's Party (DF) have all requested that the Minister of Finance revisit student loans, arguing that it is not fair for students to pay high interest rates on their loans.



Rasmus Degnbøl

Racism fine for Islam outburst
A court in Helsingør found Ole Flemming Nielsen guilty of racism and fined him 1,600 kroner for a Facebook post in which he compared Islamism with Nazism.
The post read, "the ideology of Islam is every bit as loathsome, nauseating, oppressive and dehumanising as Nazism".
Nielsen criticised the sentence as an impingement upon his freedom of expression and speech. In the post from 2013 he also wrote that the immigration of 'Islamists' to Denmark was "the most devastating thing that Danish society has had to suffer in its recent history." Nielsen will not be able to appeal the fine.



Geranium earns three Michelin stars
Copenhagen-based Geranium has become the first restaurant in Denmark to receive an elusive third Michelin star. The restaurant is one of just 116 eateries in the world to obtain the prestigious rating. Geranium's top chef, Rasmus Kofoed (left), opened the bio-friendly and gastronomic restaurant in 2007. In the days that followed, the restaurant received seven reservations per second. Before the announcement, Geranium received between 50 and 80 bookings a day.
Noma kept its two stars, failing to gain a third, despite having been voted the best restaurant in the world four times by Britain's Restaurant magazine. AOC also earned two stars, while Restaurant Frederikshøj, Gastromé, Substans, Grønbech of Churchill, Relæ, Den Røde Cottage, Søllerød Kro, Era Ora, Kiin Kiin, Kokkeriet, Formel B, Kadeau, Clou, Marchal, and Studio earned one.

GOING IT ALONE
There have never been more single people in Denmark than there are today. Figures from Danmarks Statistik show that by the end of 2015 there were almost 1.6 million people living alone, equating to 37% of the adult population. The proportion of singles is highest among those under 30, with singles constituting 58%. The number of singles has, however, declined in the number of those aged 60 and above. In 1986, 45% of those aged 60 and over were single, compared to the 38% in 2015.

Claus Bech Poulsen



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CITY



The 'La Tour Tower', designed by 3XN Architects

Aarhus gets new skyscraper

Aarhus City Council has approved the construction of a 31-floor and 95-metre-tall skyscraper on Randersvej in the northern part of the city. 'La Tour' will consist of 300 apartments, which according to the architects, are mostly aimed at housing the city's growing student population.

"La Tour Tower's flats will primarily be affordable 3-bed apartments suited for students and young professionals," Kim Herforth Nielsen, founder and director of 3XN Architects who designed the tower, told DR News. "The plan is that two students can live in each flat, paying a

price equivalent to that of a dorm room."

The skyscraper will be located on Aarhus' highest point and once completed, will stand 185 metres above sea level. It falls just one metre shy of Aarhus' tallest building – the city's cathedral.

The building will be shaped like a snail shell, with some units facing inwardly to others. The shape will help block out noise, explained Herforth to DR.

"The shape is soundproofing in itself. What's more, the side facing Randersvej will have a glass façade, which will take the noise away from the flats. The flats will also be the highest placed housing units in Den-

mark," said the architect.

Jens Richard Pedersen, owner of Hotel Royal which in turn owns La Tour, is excited by the project.

"We have to build something that will leave a strong impression. It is great to build something special. Why? Because it is a cool thought that this building will be unique to Aarhus. And if you are going to build a skyscraper to be seen, then this is the place to do it. When the weather is clear, you'll be able to see Funen from the top of the tower," the hotel owner told Jyllands-Posten.

If all goes to plan, construction of the skyscraper will commence this year, as soon as the hotel which currently occupies the site is torn down.

3XN Architects

Great halls

Time is running out to chow down on quick eats at Copenhagen Street Food on Papirøen (Paper Island). The area, which is officially known as Christiansholm, is a trendy post-industrial site by the waterfront, just south of Copenhagen's city centre. It currently houses the city's only street food market in its large concrete halls. But all this will now be torn down and built up again, after Arkitektforeningen, the Danish Association of Architects, selected a winner from a competition to find a new master plan for the area.

The winning design, Københavns Haller (Copenhagen Halls), is the brainchild of Copenhagen architecture firm COBE and will replace the existing structures with a row of new, modern halls. Residential apartments will be perched on top and the centrepiece will boast an inner garden space known as the "green hall". Almost all the apartments will have a waterfront view, and the idea is to appeal to both locals and tourists alike. It's not yet known exactly what the halls will be used for, but food markets and art galleries have been floated as potential options.

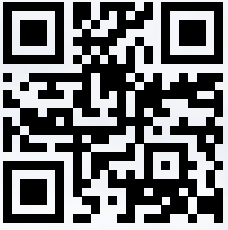
As one of the last available construction opportunities to build in the inner harbour, Christiansholm is a prized area for developers. Immensely popular, it's attracted creative companies like Copenhagen Street Food and the Experimentarium, both of which have enjoyed great success in the spot.

COBE competed against seven teams, each submitting a proposal that incorporated residential facilities, businesses and venues for public use. They also had to include a swimming pool in the design, and the option for cultural activities to continue at the location.

By & Havn (City and Port), the urban development organisation behind the competition, praised the design.

"The winning project is a strong and visionary take on a new neighbourhood with the proposed swimming facility, urbanisation, housing, and unifying boardwalk," said By & Havn's administrative director, Jens Kramer Mikkelsen. **M**

Joshua Hollingdale &
Natasha Jessen-
Petersen



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GET STUCK IN

Not quite Noma

Like a television network in desperate need of a hit, Copenhagen restaurants just can't stop launching spin-offs.

The guff is always the same – 'this is our edgy baby brother, our sassy little sister' – but the subtext is clear. "Can't afford the borage we've foraged or the sorrel we've sourced? Then this place is for you. We've turned up the music, let down our hair, slashed the prices – and the seats to boot."

Leading restaurant AOC has No. 2, Formel B's got the slightly-more-imaginatively-titled Uformel, and Kadeau claims two offshoots: Poney and Eldorado – the latter sounding more like an Istedgade strip joint than a restaurant in Christianshavn.

Hardly underexposed, Noma now has a spin-off of its own. While head chef René Redzepi and his team spend the year in Australia, they've handed the keys to the kitchen over to Kristian Baumann, who spent three years as Christian Puglisi's sous chef at Relæ.

The name of his pop-up restaurant is 108, and is situated on Noma's premises until mid-April, before moving around the corner to 108 Strandgade. (Noma, of course, will be reopening on the fringes of Christiania, where its much-hyped urban farm should help offset the carbon emissions belched out by hedgefunders jetting into town for the latest in weeds.)

On a recent Friday night, four friends sunk into sheepskin-smothered benches around a trestle table laid for six. The other spots were later taken by Pippa Middleton – sister to British princess Kate Middleton – and a brooding companion.

The uncomfortable seating – this isn't a place to take your in-laws – is typical of 108's aggressively casual mien. As 'Born to Run' bled into 'Burning Down the House', a lurching waiter misplaced orders, spilt wine and grappled with the menu ("I guess you could call it carpaccio", he conceded about a dish described as "sheets of raw lamb", as if penned by Hannibal Lecter).

A selection of a dozen, primar-



Pork belly from 108.

Thomas Degner

James Clasper

ily French, wines accompanies the menu – a dry red from Languedoc, bursting with blackberries, won plaudits. A longer list is available for those with deep pockets and plenty of imagination.

The menu eschews division, and dishes are listed en masse. The starters include cured squid in bacon broth with mirabelle plums – a watery grave of a dish – and lumpfish roe with green strawberries, too saline and insufficiently tart to be truly satisfying. Better was a chunk of salt-baked celeriac, pleasingly vegetal, with a meaty bite.

But a linseed pie was a flat-out failure. Warning bells sounded with

its appearance: a dense layer of crumbled cauliflower caked the pie like day-old foundation. Beneath it lurked a sludge of braised sunflower seeds, grey and slimy like debris caught in a drain. It's a strange concoction, the sort of dish a nursing home would be ashamed to send out – and its 185 kroner price tag was impossible to justify.

Puddings were variable, too. Drowned in egg cream and yuzu granita, sweet potatoes were neither "caramelized" nor "crisp", but as soggy as day-old chips. The stand-out dish was an ice cream made with rausu kombu, a seaweed usually used to make dashi, the Japa-

nese broth. Toasted barley cream and blackcurrant wood oil gave it a lingering smokiness.

108 may be Noma's baby brother, but that only means it's got some growing up to do.

108 at Noma

Open Wednesday to Saturday, from 17:30

Kitchen closes at 22:00

Wine bar closes at midnight

Strandgade 93, 1401 KBH K

108.dk

Food shopping with a conscience



DENMARK IS FAST becoming synonymous with the fight against food waste. Every year, Danes chuck out more than 700,000 tonnes – but that figure is dropping, thanks to organisations such as Stop Spild Af Mad (Stop food waste) and apps like

Too Good To Go, which steers hungry diners towards restaurants selling bin-bound dishes at rock-bottom prices. The latest effort to tackle food waste can be found on Amagerbrogade, WeFood, which describes it-

self as a social supermarket that sells surplus food that other shops have deemed commercially-worthless. Princess Marie did the honours of opening the supermarket, a nod to the movement's growing recognition. In one corner lurked the aesthetically-challenged: knobbly apples glistening alongside bruised bananas. In another lay the seasonally redundant or thoughtlessly-overproduced: fridges bulging with boxes of Fastelavnsboller (pastries whose popularity peaks around the Fastelavn holiday in February) and packets of pepperoni and salami. The staff are volunteers and the food is donated by restaurants, cafes and Dansk Supermarked. Profits go to the Christian charity, Folkekirkens Nødhjælp, which helped launch WeFood. For the sake of equal opportunity – and to avoid kicking the can down

the road – the supermarket limits how much customers can buy. As shoppers scrambled for bargains – a fistful of rocket for two kroner, a Raw Bites energy bar for ten – WeFood's manager, Bassel Hmeidan, savoured the moment. "Come here if you want to fight surplus food," he beamed. "Or if you just want cheap food." Still, during an afternoon lull, a volunteer tasked with restocking shelves dropped a packet of Basmati rice – one of dozens incorrectly labelled as 'porridge rice'. She gasped as the grains scattered across the floor. Despite WeFood's laudable aims, some waste is always inevitable.

Wefood

Open everyday, 15:00 – 20:00
Amagerbrogade 151,
2300 Copenhagen

We-food.dk

Vin sans snobisme

COPENHAGEN has wine bars to suit every taste these days. From chic spots such as Den Vandrette and Faler-num, to raffish joints like Sabotøeren and Vinhanen, you're rarely more than a pedal stroke or two from a punchy pinot. To that list add Sauvage, a cosy joint on the corner of Nybrogade and Knabstræde, with Instagram-friendly views of Christiansborg. It opened last year as a shop specialising in wine from small production houses, before branching into delightfully-boozy tasting events – for 250 kroner, you get to try at least 16 wines and stuff your face with bread, cheese and charcuterie. From late March it'll open as a bar on Friday and Saturday nights. According to co-owner Werner Nymo, who has worked as a sommelier around Europe, "it won't be at all snobby." The focus will be on interesting wines, a range of grapes, and value for money. About a dozen bottles will be open, with glasses costing 50 to 75 kroner – competitive for Copenhagen. Though Nymo says he'll gladly pour from any bottle a customer eyes up. "Sauvage" has several meanings, among them "wild", a nod perhaps to their decadent location: several doors down from the evergreen cocktail bar Ruby and a short walk from Ved Stranden, the city's classiest wine bar.



Yet the latter's proximity doesn't faze Nymo. "I don't think we'll be in their way, or they in ours – and it may be that people go there and then come here," he said as he opened a bottle of Languedoc. "The more wine bars, the better."

Sauvage

Fri-Sat, 17:00 – 02:00

Nybrogade 14,
1203 Copenhagen

Sauvage.dk

POLITICS ROUNDUP

High cost of decentralisation

The decentralisation of 3,900 government jobs will cost around a billion kroner, or around 250,000 kroner per job. The jobs will be moved from Copenhagen and other major hubs to smaller towns and cities around the country, in an attempt to bolster growth in the regions.

"The decentralisation of state jobs is not an exercise in saving money, but a political prioritisation designed to create wealth and jobs across Denmark," finance minister Claus Hjort Frederiksen said in a press conference.

The government had initially only set aside 400 million kroner in this year's budget for the initiative, which was shown to be insufficient after Politiken published a leaked document from the Finance Ministry, which put the cost at a billion kroner. Frederiksen's press conference later confirmed Politiken's report.

Among the state agencies and organisations that will be decentralised is the Immigration Service, the Danish Maritime Authority and the Nature Agency. The state-funded, but independent, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) is also scheduled to move to Aarhus. They oppose the decision.

In an open letter, DIIS director Nanna Hvidt (below) and chairman Laurids S. Lauridsen, wrote that decision-makers and the Danish population should be concerned by the decision to move DIIS away from Copenhagen.

"DIIS' role is to follow international developments with the goal of fa-



Unless we make an active effort to support refugees in Denmark, we risk that them joining the 'black' labour market and contribute to pressing down wages and working conditions for 3F members.

PER CHRISTENSE,
CHAIRMAN OF THE
UNION 3F

Peter Stanners

cilitating the sharing of information and making recommendations about Denmark's foreign and security position," they write, adding that it is important to be close to government ministries and security agencies in Copenhagen.

"The documented loss of knowledge that has impacted agencies and institutes that have left Copenhagen will be acutely felt by DIIS whose most important product is, precisely, knowledge."

Labour negotiations start

Getting asylum seekers into work is a major goal of the government, which wants to reduce the financial burden of the 30,000 that arrived last year.

Unlike most countries, minimum wages and working conditions in Denmark are not set in parliament. Instead, they are decided in tripartite negotiations between the government, unions and representatives of employers.

As the negotiations opened this month, prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen said getting refugees into work was a major goal.

"Every time a refugee is employed at a minimum wage, we become 200,000 kroner better off a year," Rasmussen told Berlingske. "If we don't increase their integration into the labour market to the same level as non-Western immigrants, we will be 2.5 billion kroner worse off in just a few years."

The government wants better Danish language education in businesses, more focussed integration programmes, and better systems for determining the skills that new refugees possess.

The employer's association DA are hoping the negotiations will reduce the number of government-subsidised work-programmes and benefits, which they argue do not encourage full-time employment. They also hope to reduce the employee costs on businesses, which total around 22.5 billion kroner a year according to DA director Jacob Holbraad.

Per Christensen (above, right), chairman of the union 3F, argues that the government's focus on using



the negotiations to get refugees into work ignores the fact that government policies are largely to blame for the low labour market participation of refugees.

"The first integration law was passed by parliament in 1999 and despite 20 new initiatives for better integration from subsequent governments, the problem has not been addressed," Holbraad wrote in an op-ed for Altinnet.

He added that Danish collective bargaining agreements have been under serious pressure in recent years through the exploitation of foreign labour from countries with lower standards of living and different labour market cultures.

"Unless we make an active effort to support refugees in Denmark, we risk them joining the 'black' labour market and contribute to pressing down wages and working conditions for 3F members."

Tackling radicalisation

Prisons are designed to serve as a deterrent to crime and to keep dangerous people separated from the general population, but they fail to serve their purpose if prisoners leave them as a greater threat to public safety than when they went in.

Last month, the government passed two new laws intended to combat radicalisation in prisons. Radicalised prisoners can now be separated from the general prison population, while authorities will have better tools for sharing information about the risks posed by prisoners.

"Inmates with extremist views should not be allowed to influence others with their extreme views," justice minister Søren Pind wrote in a press release. "Danish prisons should not be places where people can freely spread extreme and radical beliefs."

The Justice Ministry wrote that the goal is to combat dangerous subcultures in prisons by limiting the spread of extreme views.

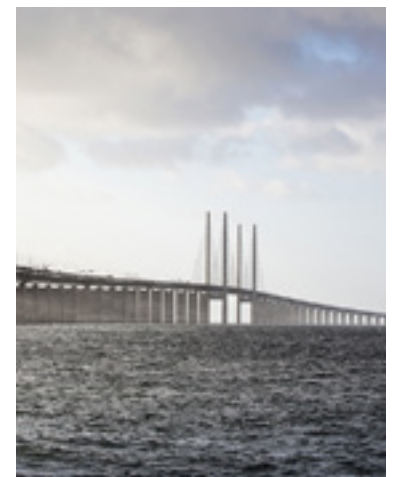
Border control extended

Travellers to Germany will still have to show their passports at the southern land border, at least until March 4, after the government extended border control checks for another ten days.

The temporary border controls were introduced on January 4. They have been repeatedly extended by the government, which has argued that there is still pressure on the border due to the continuing arrival of undocumented migrants to Europe.

"The government considers the continuation of border controls as necessary for maintaining law and order in Denmark," immigration minister Inger Støjberg wrote in a press release. "We need to know who is travelling in and out of the country, and we want to avoid large numbers of refugees and migrants being trapped in Denmark."

Støjberg is referring to the fact that refugees and migrants can no longer travel freely on toward Sweden, after they introduced border controls with Denmark. The government has stated their intention to reduce the number of refugees seeking asylum by making Denmark a less attractive country to seek refuge in. **M**



Racism law under scrutiny

A majority in parliament wants to investigate whether the so-called 'racism law' is effective at combating hate speech. While some argue the law is being applied too broadly, others maintain the law is necessary to protect minorities from discrimination



Mogens Camre
@MCCamre

Om jødernes situation i Europa: muslimerne fortsætter hvor Hitler sluttede. Kun den behandling, Hitler fik, vil ændre situationen

24/07/14 18.15

Mogens Camre's tweet that resulted in a guilty racism charge.

"WITH REGARDS to the situation of the Jews in Europe: the Muslims are continuing where Hitler left off. Only the same way we dealt with Hitler will change the situation."

This was the tweet that got Danish People Party (DF) member and former MP Mogens Camre sentenced for racist and hateful speech last year, a verdict the Eastern High Court confirmed last month.

Camre was found guilty of breaching article 266b of the criminal code, commonly known as 'the racism law'. Originally created in 1939 to protect Denmark's Jewish population from "false rumours or accusations", which could lead to persecution, it has recently become the crux of a debate on whether the state is going too far in regulating free expression.

UNDER REVIEW

In addition to Camre's sentence, another man named Ole Flemming Nielsen was found guilty last month of comparing Islam to Nazism. The two cases sparked a national debate and now a majority in parliament wants to examine whether the law is being used effectively.

"We would like to look into the benefits and the downsides of the law. As it stands today, Denmark is a place where we can't have a truly free debate, because some opinions are not permissible and I find that problematic," DF justice spokesperson Peter Kofod Poulsen told Jyllands-Posten newspaper.

The proposal enjoys broad cross-aisle support, with the ex-

Freedom of speech has never been absolute – like our other freedoms – and the racism law is not the only limitation.

PERNILLE SKIPPER, ENHEDSLISTEN

Elias Thorsson

ception of the far-left Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) and the centrist Social Liberal Party (Radikale). Explaining her support for the bill, SF's justice spokesperson Lisbeth Bech Poulsen told Jyllands-Posten that its interpretation had become too "stretched" and that a discussion was needed.

Camre agrees with Poulsen and believes that the law has been misused and disproportionately aimed at certain views.

"The law keeps being expanded and understood more broadly. Views become criminalised and this is primarily the case for statements that can be interpreted as being critical of Muslim immigrants or Islamic culture," he claims. "But many statements made by certain elements in society seem to get off scot-free."

Camre believes that the law is used to pacify "Islamists" and argues that politicians are afraid of speaking critically due to recent terrorism attacks. Furthermore, he fears that, as it stands, the law could be interpreted to cover what is published in books as well.

"I have written four books and if the judges interpret the law in such a way, I might have to be more careful of what I write," he says.

LEGAL DIFFICULTY

In a column for Berlingske newspaper, Jacob Mchangama, director of the legal affairs think tank Justitia, wrote that police are increasingly charging Danes with violating 266b. He argues that there needs to be a debate about how the law is applied, however, given that so much debate is moving from private circles to online social media services.

"We are confronted with two choices: either we charge everyone who makes statements that violate the law, even comments from ordinary citizens. This would mean a dramatic rise in the number of cases, but also a large degree of arbitrariness in terms of charging practices, given that the police and prosecution do not have the resources to investigate and charge all of the countless comments that are generated daily," he wrote.

"Otherwise we need to consider a model in which we adapt to take into account the dark side of the internet and social media – which has otherwise provided us with enormous opportunity," he wrote, adding that it would be preferable for the authorities to focus on statements that are reminiscent of systematic propaganda, rather than spontaneous outbursts on social media.

A NECESSITY

Pernille Skipper, the deputy chairman of Enhedslisten, has a different view of the law. She maintains that it is a vital tool for fighting discrimination, rather than a discriminatory constraint.

"We have a number of fundamental freedoms that are essential to our democracy and one of them is the freedom of speech," she says. "But we also have freedom of association, of assembly and the right not to be discriminated against due to race, religion or sexual orientation. And that is the right the article is meant to protect."

According to Skipper, the law is needed to protect minorities from hate and discrimination and that the "slippery transition" from "words to actions" means that certain limitations on speech are necessary.

"Freedom of speech has never been absolute – like our other freedoms – and the racism law is not the only limitation. It is illegal to threaten people, to incite people to violence and to defame individuals. DF are big supporters of the defamation law and I sometimes wonder if their opposition to the racism law has less to do with freedom of speech and more to do with what they want to be able to say."

A QUESTION OF INCLUSION

Kashif Ahmad, chairman of the National Party (Nationalpartiet) and a Hvidovre councilman (right), has had personal experience with the law. In 1998 he reported a teacher for racist remarks aimed at him and his brother.

"We were waiting for a friend when he called us 'a bunch of mon-

keys' that were unable to express themselves. The state claimed that it didn't violate the racism law, but we appealed to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which ruled in our favour."

Ahmad, who is a Muslim, says the law is a necessary tool in the fight against the sad prevalence of racism in society. Abolishing it would be a bad idea.

"Just two years ago me and a friend got a letter from FC Copenhagen that our tickets had been cancelled because we had 'foreign sounding names'," he says. "It is important to protect minorities from discrimination and if you are allowed to say what you want against them, then that becomes that much harder."

He argues that the law is especially important in today's tense climate when high profile individuals, such as Mogens Camre, make racial or prejudiced remarks in public.

"When you say that being a gay is a disease, or that all Muslims are rapists, it has an effect. At the moment, influential people can get away with saying terrible things because they hide behind freedom of speech. Maybe this is also a question of what kind of society we want to live in – if we want to have it based on respect and making people feel included, or not." **M**



Kashif Ahmad, chairman of Nationalpartiet

Pape provoked by political pigswill

The leader of the Conservative People's Party, Søren Pape Poulsen, withdrew his support for the agriculture minister over dodgy data that supported new agriculture initiatives. The move unleashed a crisis in the government and the threat of a new election

FOR A MOMENT, it looked like Danes would be heading back to the ballot boxes. The agriculture minister Eva Kjer Hansen was accused of lying to parliament, and a vote of no confidence was scheduled.

Liberal Party (Venstre) prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen was left with a difficult decision: dismiss his minister, or risk a parliamentary vote of no-confidence, which would end his government. He decided to dig in his heels and stand behind Hansen.

"I understand the positions, but will it make me dismiss my minister? No," he said at a press conference. "The more likely consequence is a new election."

The political deadlock was surprising, not least because it was Venstre's historical ally the Conservative People's Party (Konservative) that prompted the crisis. Konservative leader Søren Pape Poulsen accused Hansen of deliberately misleading parliament about the environmental impact of new agriculture regulations and withdrew the party's support for the minister.

"The minister did not provide accurate information to neither the public nor to parliament," Pape wrote in a press release. "It's a question of being able to trust each other, and the information we share with each other and the public. I am not afraid of an election."

It was a high stakes game. A new election could easily result in a left wing government who could swiftly overturn the agriculture package, perhaps even the widely condemned refugee laws.

Days before the vote of no confidence was scheduled, Hansen stepped down. The crisis was averted, but the split between the parties could damage their future cooperation.

"Even though [the PM] has not been strengthened by this incident, it's made the right wing party leaders aware that they need to improve coordination, otherwise the government won't survive," Berlingske political editor Thomas Larsen wrote.



Werkzeugendagen / flickr

The government just lost its second minister, this time because of misleading data that supported their agriculture package. The law still passed.

HELP FOR FARMERS

The root of the conflict lies in the environmental impact of the government's new agriculture regulations. Historically, Venstre has been supported by the farming community, which contributes 148 billion kroner a year to Denmark's GDP and employs around 140,000 people. A majority of right wing parties signed up to the deal, which the ministry estimates will add a billion kroner to GDP by 2021.

When she presented the initiatives in December, Hansen guaranteed that they would not only improve the economy, but also benefit the environment.

"Denmark now has a food and agriculture package that lays the foundation for growth in agriculture and green improvements for the environment. The package does away with old-fashioned rules and introduces modern regulations, previously unseen in Denmark. I hope farmers and banks will feel safe investing in the fu-

ture," she said after the package was presented.

TWO BIRDS ONE STONE?

It seemed counterintuitive that the new guidelines would improve the environment, however, given that they would allow farmers to increase their fertiliser use by 20 percent over the coming years. Excess fertiliser, which is washed out to sea, can reduce oxygen levels and harm animal life.

The ministry argued, however, that the total use of fertiliser would drop already this year as a result of new initiatives. These include voluntary programmes in which farmers can receive financing to establish wetlands and forests, which reduce fertiliser use. They also showed that the overall level of fertiliser will reduce each year due to a so-called 'baseline effect'. These include the reduction of farmland in Denmark, and the transition of farms from conventional to organic production.

The counterintuitive calcula-

tions got journalists digging, and in mid-February Berlingske newspaper launched a large-scale investigation into the data. Hansen had repeatedly told parliament that the new initiatives would benefit the environment, and in her documentation showed that nitrogen emissions would start dropping as soon as 2016.

But Berlingske found that the only way to reach that conclusion was through some very creative accounting practices. The 'baseline effect' reductions the government's calculations showed for 2016, were actually the sum of reductions from 2012 to 2015.

Even the figures showing sum reductions seem highly inaccurate. The data insinuates the government's new agriculture package will cause the reductions, but Jørgen E. Olesen, professor of Agroecology at the University of Aarhus claimed that was false.

"The only reason total fertiliser output is not shown to increase is because they included

Peter Stanners

in the calculations effects which have nothing to do with the package," Olesen told Berlingske. "They have also included negative effects from previous years. The public has a right to know this. The law might be a good solution, but I had hoped they would be honest and admitted that the environment will suffer the first few years."

Brian H. Jacobsen, a senior researcher at the Section for Environment and Natural Resources at The University of Copenhagen, concurs with Olesen and claimed the data was misleading.

"The political package will damage the environment," he told Berlingske.

NO TRUST

While the opposition immediately demanded the re-examination of the data, discontent was also brewing in Konservative, which supported the law – one of their primary conditions being that it would not be harmful to the environment.

An open hearing was held in the Agriculture Ministry to clarify the situation – and it didn't go well for Hansen. Seven researchers were called in to testify and none of them could support the ministry's calculations. The same evening, the Konservative leader withdrew his party's support for Hansen.

"The minister gave the public the impression that the environmental impact was better than it was," Pape told TV2 News. "The minister has not lived up to her responsibilities despite repeated demands from our side that she do so."

When a party, which provides the government with its ruling majority, withdraws its support for a minister, the minister traditionally steps down. But for the first time ever, Hansen hung on to her job. Prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen maintained his support for Hansen and held emergency meetings with the leaders of the government's support parties.

While the Konservative voted to pass the controversial bill, they maintained their opposition to Hansen and promised to support a vote of no confidence that had been tabled by the opposition. Five days before the vote, Hansen stepped down.

EU COMPLAINT

It seems odd that Konservative would still vote in favour of the law, given its



Former agriculture minister, Eva Kjer Hansen.

environmental impact.

A number of environmental organisations have expressed great concern about the increased environmental pressure it would cause. One of the organisations that have publicly expressed opposition is the Danish Society for Nature Conservation.

"They are an attack on Danish nature and environment that cannot stand unopposed," wrote director Susanne Herfelt. "More fertiliser and pesticides and less nature – as a result of the removal of buffer zones – is damaging for the water environment, fish and plants."

Helfelt assesses that the new regulations might violate the Water Framework Directive, and in late February the organisation sent a complaint to the EU.

One of the government's most vocal critics throughout the crisis was environment spokesperson for the Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) Maria Reumert Gjerding. In an interview with TV2 News after Hansen's departure, she praised De Konservative for standing by their convictions regarding Hansen.

"I think [Hansen's resignation] is the only logical outcome. It's been a chaotic situation and I think the prime minister has been immature by making threats after a majority in parliament has expressed a lack of faith in a minister who for several months tried to mislead parliament," she said, adding that Hansen's resignation would not close the issue.

"We need to get to the truth." **M**

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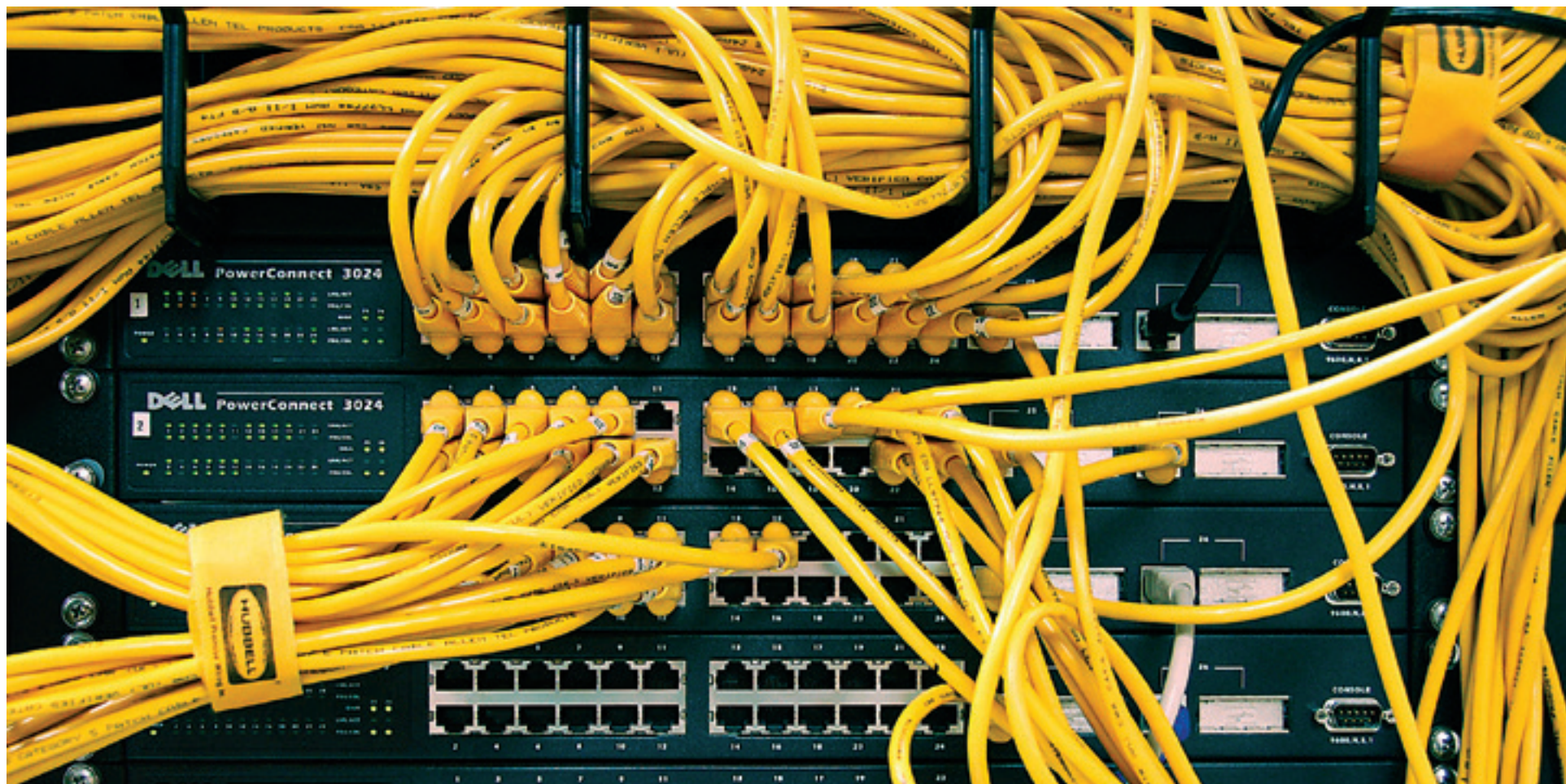
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**CLOSE TO
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The return of mass online surveillance

It was shelved in 2014 because it did not help police fight crime. But session logging, which tracks our online behaviour, may be reinstated. The government argues that a tweaked version will allow police to better monitor the online communications of criminals, but it faces heavy opposition from civil rights groups and parliament



Dave Herholz / flickr

THE INTERNET has propelled economic, social and scientific development. Information is at our fingertips, knowledge can be shared instantly. But for all its benefits, there exists a dark side.

Terrorists, criminals, people smugglers and child pornographers can easily hide their communications using encrypted messaging services, while ordinary citizens can use anonymous browsers, such as TOR, to shop for illegal products on the so-called 'Dark Web'.

In a bid to equip police with better surveillance tools, the government has announced its intention to introduce so-called 'session logging'. The new law, which is in the process of being written, is designed to enable the police to track who we communicate with online, which websites we visit, as well as our movements.

"Session logging is a central tool for the police and intelligence

agencies," justice minister Søren Pind wrote in a comment for Berlingske.

"We currently register which phone numbers call each other and at what time, but if people used internet services such as Messenger, Skype, or iMessage, the information is not logged. That is not acceptable in the times we live in. We, therefore, need to modernise the rules about logging, and we will do it together with the industry."

The national police, Rigspolitiet, supports the government's initiative.

"Crime is increasingly moving from the physical to the digital world," Rigspolitiet's Police Commissioner Jens Henrik Højbjerg told Berlingske.

"The police are facing new challenges and our abilities are weakening in relation to the ability of criminals to communicate over the internet. Old tools and methods don't have the same power they

once did and we need access to the same information as is now available for ordinary telephone communications."

NEW AND IMPROVED

While the specifics of the law have yet to be released, an outline was presented to telecommunication companies and think tanks in February. Internet service providers (ISP) will be required to register every online communication sent by internet enabled devices. They will be mandated to store the sender's and recipient's IP addresses and port numbers, the number of bits exchanged, the time the data session started, as well as mast data if the communication was made through a mobile device. ISPs will have to store the data for six months and the police will only be able to access the data with a warrant.

The data should provide a detailed oversight of which websites,

services and servers users interact with. But police will not be able to find out the content of online communications, just who communicated with whom, when and where.

It's not the first time this type of surveillance has been used in Denmark. In 2007, the government introduced session logging of internet and phone use. Mobile phone communications were stored for a year, while a sample of communications between computers and websites – every 500th datapacket – was stored.

In 2012, Rigspolitiet found that the sampling of internet communication was essentially useless in crime fighting efforts. In 2014, then Social Democrat (Socialdemokraterne) justice minister Karen Hækkerup announced that session logging would no longer be mandatory.

EU COURTS OPPOSED

Hækkerup and the police insist-

Peter Stanners

ed that the old logging regulations were scrapped because they were useless. But the decision was made soon after the EU Court of Justice declared the EU's Data Retention Directive – which formed the basis of the Danish law – invalid.

"The directive interferes in a particularly serious manner with the fundamental rights to respect for private life and to the protection of personal data," the court ruled in April 2014.

The court found that the retention of internet communication could genuinely be in the national interest in the fight against serious crime and for protecting public security, but in practice the directive was too far reaching and "exceeded the limits imposed by compliance with the principle of proportionality".

The Justice Ministry maintains Hækkerup's line, that the decision to abandon the old rules was because it didn't prove helpful in fighting crime, not because of its questionable legality.

EASY TO AVOID

The new law faces much opposition. In February, 21 organisations, including Amnesty International, signed a letter to the justice minister expressing their concern over the wide-reach of the law, as well as the haste surrounding its implementation.

"The proposal is legally questionable, based on an unclear foundation and will involve massive surveillance of Danish citizens and businesses," Amnesty International wrote.

Amnesty International also pointed out that it is questionable

that the government could pass a new law, given the ruling by the EU Court.

"The logging and surveillance that has been proposed will go much further than the invalidated directive, and would constitute mass surveillance of an entire population, which is hard to unify with the rights of citizens and the fundamental principles of rule of law."

The internet policy think tank Bitbureauet was also a signatory to the letter. Co-founder Christian Panton identifies a number of issues with the new proposal, including how easy it would be to avoid being traced. Libraries and universities, for example, will be exempt from logging their users, while users can route their internet traffic through so-called VPNs which hide the origin of internet communication. It would even be possible to avoid phone surveillance by using public wifi connections.

Furthermore, it is unclear whether the logging will reveal who is communicating through digital messaging and voice services. Only when a connection is made directly between two parties, p2p, would police be able to determine its source. But often the communication is routed through a central server, which masks the identity of the communicating parties.

Even if the logged information shows which websites a person has visited, Panton says it is unlikely to prove useful to the police. He makes an example from the logs of his internet communication, which he was delivered after a right of access request.

"It showed that I had visited the Socialist Youth Party's web-

site, when all I was doing was unsubscribing from their mailing list. But the police could use this information to paint a picture of me that isn't real," he says.

"The data can say a lot about our daily cycle. They want to log location and time at the same time, which is the most invasive aspect. You can't hide it easily on your mobile device with apps that are running and communicating with servers in the background. But this is what they want, to know where we are and when."

EXPENSIVE

While Panton is primarily opposed to the law's breach of privacy, others are more concerned about the costs. ISPs will have to invest in new hardware that allows them to log and store their users' internet communications.

"They need to put the new proposals back where the sun doesn't shine," says Jakob Willer, director of the Telecom Industry Association (TI).

According to TI, the new rules could end up costing the industry a billion kroner.

"They want us to log the communications of each individual customer, which means that operators have to purchase technical equipment able to pick up all the traffic. It will be extremely expensive."

Willer fears that the costs will end up being transferred onto consumers and will delay the rollout of faster internet connections, such as high speed 4G mobile networks.

"No operator has a budget for implementing session logging, and we will have to take money from investment budgets to spend on supervi-

We live in a liberal democracy and we should maintain the fundamental principle of respect for privacy. This cannot be reconciled with mass surveillance of citizens who have done nothing to warrant suspicion.

CHRISTINA EGELUND, LIBERAL ALLIANCE

sion. The big issue is that rural areas will have to wait even longer for investment in digital infrastructure, as it would be the easiest place to cancel investments. We have to make sure rural areas have digital infrastructure, but this proposal damages that ambition."

POLITICAL OPPOSITION

The government expects to present the law to parliament by the end of March and, so far, only the Danish People's Party (DF) has openly come out in support. Opposition leader Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne) have said they intend to wait for the proposal to be laid out before taking a position.

The remaining six parties oppose new session logging laws. Liberal Alliance (LA) MP Christine Egelund says session logging violates personal freedoms.

"We live in a liberal democracy and we should maintain the fundamental principle of respect for privacy. This cannot be reconciled with mass surveillance of citizens who have done nothing to warrant suspicion," Egelund told BT.

René Gade, IT spokesperson for the Alternative (Alternativet), argues that it is unlikely the proposal would prove useful in combatting terrorism.

"I find the proposal a symbolic gesture that will be an enormous violation of privacy. If the police have a valid suspicion of criminal action, the next step is to acquire a warrant before surveillance can take place. But here we are talking about a total mapping of the digital behaviour of all Danes, and that is a step in the wrong direction," he wrote on Facebook. **M**



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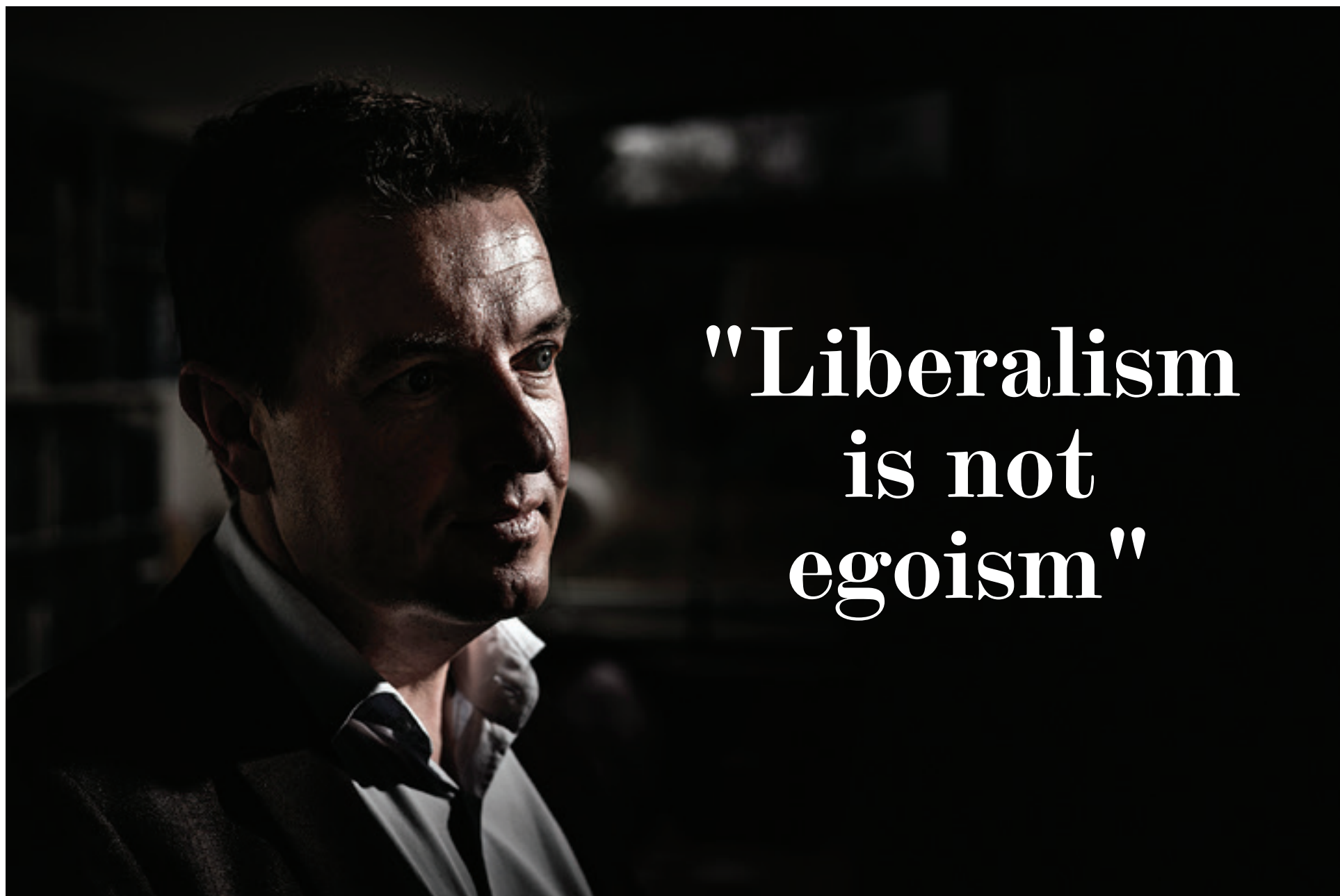
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"Liberalism is not egoism"

Jens Rohde thinks his former party Venstre has lost its way, having abandoned internationalism for Euroscepticism and 'tough-on-refugees' policies. After 22 years together, Rohde divorced from the party in December. The European Parliamentarian argues the party's departure from its founding liberal principles is a reflection of growing populism and xenophobia, which risks undoing the wealth and prosperity provided by the European project

Jens Rohde used to sleep beneath an EU flag, and the twelve stars were printed on his socks and ties. It was the early 1990s, and enthusiasm for the European project was soaring. Germany had just been reunified and the inner market was stimulating economic growth and prosperity. While Rohde's flag has long been packed away, his commitment to the European project remains intact.

But late last year the European Parliament member (MEP) found himself standing alone. He had represented The Liberal Party (Venstre) since 1998, elected first as an

MP before joining the European Parliament in 2009. Over the years, his party has adopted an increasingly Eurosceptic position, unwilling to join EU cooperation on refugees, and demanding restrictions to in-work benefits for EU residents in Denmark.

In December he finally left Venstre and joined the pro-EU Social Liberal Party (Radikale). It was a high profile defection that many saw coming, as over the preceeding months, he'd increasingly taken to Facebook to openly condemn the government's restrictive immigration and refugee policies.

"Should I have stayed in the party to fight for a return to its liber-

al and international outlook?" he asks himself rhetorically in his home in Viborg, central Jutland. He pauses for a moment.

"No, Venstre has reached a point of no return."

THE EUROPEAN LOCAL

Rohde's exit from the party is indicative of a major shift in Danish politics. Waning enthusiasm for international cooperation has taken hold following almost two decades of growing anti-immigration sentiment, a major financial crash, and the upheaval sparked by the ongoing refugee crisis.

But while his former party is looking inward, Rohde still be-

lieves that the answers to many of Denmark's problems lies with more, not less, European collaboration. The question is how to reinvigorate belief in a project that, while imperfect, has brought Europe wealth and stability.

"Everyone benefits from the welfare and jobs created by the EU. We have created a more stable Europe by cooperating instead of fighting. But politicians continue to focus on the negative stories about the EU and migration."

While Rohde is a half-German Europhile MEP, he remains deeply rooted in Viborg, where he also serves on the city council. At age 14, he started as a sports report-

Words:
Peter Stanners

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

er on the local radio station after the then-state monopoly on the airwaves finally ended. His involvement in European politics began at 19, hosting radio shows about the workings of the European Parliament.

In 1993, aged 23, he joined Venstre, inspired by its then-leader Uffe Ellemann Jensen.

"He had a pro-EU approach and dared to put forward arguments based on the premise of the community, and not simply the national base – that there was something bigger to work for than you or me."

Rohde adopted a liberal position at a time when state monopolies were the norm and there were plenty of freedoms to fight for. As those monopolies broke down and the economy liberalised, the challenges facing liberals shifted, he argues. Now, the biggest struggle is to be respected and treated as an individual.

"I often tell my former party buddies 'you have forgotten what we stand for'. Liberalism is not egoism. That's what's going wrong, liberalism's social element. The understanding that everyone has a right to be treated as an individual has gone. They now talk about 'masses' of people coming to Denmark, and fail to see people as individuals. It serves their interests to dehumanise refugees."

His former party's suspicion of immigrants extends beyond refugees. In February, the UK negotiated a concession on their EU membership, which included restricting child benefits for foreign EU workers whose children don't live in the country. Danish PM Lars Løkke Rasmussen saluted the concession, telling DR: "We have solved the massive problem caused when Danish child benefits are sent to Romania or Bulgaria."

Rohde is unimpressed. "Romanians and Bulgarians are paying the same taxes as everyone else, so why shouldn't they be able to get the same benefits? It's discrimination. The government wouldn't want to discriminate against Swedes or Brits, but Eastern Europeans are fair game."

He says there's hypocrisy at play:

"That upsets me because they come here and take jobs that Danes don't want. If these workers hadn't arrived in Denmark when unemployment was very low in the early 2000s, we would have experienced incredibly high inflation. But now, because of the refugee and financial

crisis, we want to discriminate. It's a disgrace."

ALIENATING THE OTHER

Rohde is concerned that negative generalisations about groups have become the norm in the Danish political debate, and that Muslims are most often at the receiving end. In July 2014, Venstre MP Inger Støjberg (who became immigration minister the following year) penned an editorial in Berlingske arguing that anti-democratic beliefs are strong in Muslim communities, the natural result of Islamic philosophy.

"We shouldn't be naïve, of course immigration brings huge challenges and costs money," he says. "But you cannot integrate people if you first marginalise them and categorise them as a group outside the mainstream. How can we tell people to adopt our values if our values justify the creation of second-class citizens? That's a huge mistake."

While immigrants and their descendants, particularly from Muslim countries, are overrepresented in criminal and unemployment statistics, he blames that on Denmark's failure to accept new arrivals into mainstream society.

"Of course we can integrate people, but first we have to address our former mistakes, such as housing new arrivals in ghettos rather than distributing them among local communities. We have to bring back their dignity by respecting them and telling them we want them to work and we will do whatever we can to help. The failure of integration is not just a question of people from certain cultures being difficult – the question is whether we want integration ourselves."

Finding a place in the labour market is vital if integration is go-

ing to work. This challenge is particularly acute given the surge in the number of refugees. While the government has launched a programme to encourage the private sector to hire refugees, there is concern among some economists that refugees don't have the necessary skills and qualifications to demand the basic minimum wage.

Denmark has no official minimum wage, instead salaries and working conditions are agreed in tripartite negotiations between the government, unions and the employer's association Dansk Arbejdsgiverforening (DA). These negotiations are set to reopen this spring, and one proposal is to create a new, lower minimum wage for refugees.

Rohde is sceptical of the proposal, however, as it risks transforming Denmark into a low-wage economy.

"Denmark was spared the worst of the crisis because of the stability and the high level for basic wages. But it's also because of trust in the negotiations that set working conditions, in which the unions and employers are equals. This is why some people accepted cuts to their wages during the crisis. This trust has created one of the most stable societies in the whole world. We don't have many strikes because of the balance and everyone knows the system would be undermined without it."

PLAYING DF'S GAME

In a November 2015 Eurobarometer survey, 76 percent of Danes said immigration was the most important issue facing Europe. And during last June's elections the populist and anti-EU Danish People's Party (DF) surged to become the second largest party in parliament.

DF's influence on Danish politics began in earnest when in 2001

You cannot integrate people if you first marginalise them and categorise them as a group outside the mainstream.

they started ten years of cooperation with the minority Venstre and Conservative (Konservative) government. DF supported the government in exchange for tightened immigration regulations, and over the years their support among voters gradually increased.

The rise of DF has shaken up Danish politics. Both the former ruling Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne) and Venstre have adopted tougher positions on immigration and refugees in a bid to keep voters.

Now the largest party in the right-wing bloc, DF wields enormous influence over the Venstre government in exchange for their continuing support.

"DF is a monster. Their opinions are exactly as legal and valid as mine, but they are still a monster because Venstre and Socialdemokrater are so scared of them that they feel forced to mirror DF's policies. This is a huge problem."

He recounts how the shift towards DF accelerated during the 2009 European Parliamentary elections. Despite taking a more Eurosceptic position, Venstre still lost votes to DF.

"My analysis is that we should have stopped positioning ourselves closer to DF and their dream of a more sheltered Denmark. They will always win that battle. We can only try to convince Danes that we need Europe and to push the focus towards a strong single market and a common foreign policy so we can play a role in this globalised world. We should be strong on defence and strong on the Euro. The EU doesn't have to deal with women quotas in boards and school milk programmes."

EU SLOW TO ACT

One million asylum applications were filed in 2015. Germany and Sweden were the primary recipients and, in effort to reduce the pressure on the two countries, the European Commission attempted to establish a common redistribution and settlement programme. Many member states, including Denmark, chose not to take part, instead focussing on implementing border controls and weakening provisions for asylum seekers.

Rohde was appalled that the Danish government refused to join the EU proposal – despite a Voxmeter poll showing 78 percent of the population to be in favour – and openly condemned the ►





new refugee laws that allow police to confiscate valuables. In his view, Lars Løkke Rasmussen's reaction has been hysterical.

"The prime minister said we were facing the biggest crisis of the century because 30,000 refugees arrived in Denmark. That's beyond any historical or reasonable thinking. It is completely out of proportion. Do they really think even 50,000 refugees or migrants can tear this society apart? If you think that, then your faith in Denmark must be almost non-existent. I don't understand how anyone can say something like that. If this is a catastrophe, then I don't want to see what the future holds. He's definitely not the right man to solve the challenges we are facing."

Rohde also objects to the allegation that the refugee crisis is the result of EU inaction. He contends, rather, that EU leaders were forewarned, but failed to allow the EU to act. He was a member of the Committee for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs in the European Parliament, which published a report in 2011 that drew attention to the problems facing Europe's outward borders.

"This is more of a solidarity crisis than a refugee crisis," says Rohde. "We saw that Greece and Italy were losing control. We tried to tell national leaders that unless

we do something now, the refugees will turn into illegal migrants and will have nowhere to go. But their reply was, 'that's their problem'. So when Lars Løkke said the situation came as a surprise, I thought, 'no, the problem is you didn't want to listen'. We were trying to address these huge problems that everyone saw coming, but the only response we got at the time was, 'you guys in Brussels are living in a bubble'."

MORE EUROPE

It is undeniable, however, that the EU has been slow to respond to both the financial and refugee crisis. But Rohde argues that the problem lies in a lack of automatic sanctions and measures to manage predictable issues. Without these automatic mechanisms, he worries that the EU will continue to lurch from one crisis to the next, with its focus almost entirely on damage-control rather than strategy.

"Over the past six years I can't remember an EU summit that was not an attempt to put out a fire. It's always urgency, never strategy. The summits in the 80s and 90s were strategic, now it's about crisis management," he says.

"We have a Europe that, on cross-border problems, is not strong enough to take care of its citizens and prevent crises because we aren't integrated enough.

If you shit-talk the EU for years, then enter into a two week campaign asking voters to support the EU, how on earth do you think people will follow you?

We can't prevent a Euro crisis when a small country like Greece – which represents only around two percent of the continent's economy – gets into trouble because nobody wanted to have the discussion beforehand. No one wanted Eurobonds and automatic sanctions."

REINSTATING FAITH IN EUROPE

Since the 1992 Edinburgh Agreement, Denmark has had several opt-outs from EU policies, which have kept the country from being fully integrated into the European project. Last December a referendum was held on whether to abolish the Danish opt-out on EU justice and policing cooperation. Danes voted no.

That the Danish people voted to maintain the status quo is in part related to the lack of Danish politicians who speak up for the EU. This lack of leadership articulating the benefits of EU membership, argues Rohde, is the major hindrance in moving Europe away from crisis management and toward strategic planning.

"If you shit-talk the EU for years, then enter into a two week campaign asking voters to support more integration, how on earth do you think people will follow you? It's extremely arrogant," he says.

"Voters know our leaders are

singing a false tune. They know that leaders say one thing in Brussels, and another when they return. Our leaders need to be honest and to dare to invest their own credibility in the European project. Voters would respect that, it's reasonable."

Rohde says the traditional parties are faltering in the polls because of their lack of vision and honesty. Voters, disenchanted with the focus on pragmatism over substance, are moving toward the wings, polarising the political debate even further.

THE SOLUTION?

"We need the spirit of Uffe Ellemann Jensen, not only in Denmark but within Europe as a whole. Otherwise [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel will stand alone. I admire her for taking responsibility for Europe's future. Germany is trying to find the coalition of the willing, which will remain the core of the European project. But if the Brits leave the EU, it will only increase Germany's power. We don't seem to realise how dangerous it is not to join Merkel in finding a common solution for Europe. If the Germans think they are the only ones taking responsibility for Europe's future, they will eventually say 'forget about it', and won't vote for another Merkel. Then we're all in trouble." **M**



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CAPTURED

The Conservative People's Party (De Konservative) celebrated their 100-year anniversary this February. Prime minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, from the ruling Liberal Party (Venstre), spoke at the occasion. But little did he know that the following day De Konservative would issue a statement of no confidence in his agriculture minister, Eva Kjer Hansen, propelling the government into a major crisis, and leading to Hansen's resignation.





Cutting to the bone

Cuts to further education means that the University of Copenhagen was forced to lay off 534 staff members. With courses closing and fewer hours of teaching, the international reputation of the university is at risk

ON THE MORNING of February 9, employees of the University of Copenhagen sat nervously at their computers awaiting their fate. Deep budget cuts by the government meant that positions had to be eliminated across the board. Nobody was safe from the layoffs – everyone from tenured professors to part-time employees were at risk. They knew job cuts were coming, they just didn't know who would have to go.

By 9:15 on the morning of the ninth, 209 University of Copenhagen staff members were told to find work elsewhere.

Natasha Jessen-Petersen

In total, the university was forced to cut 7.4 percent of its staff, with 323 voluntary redundancies added to those who were fired.

The government's budget cuts will force the University of Copenhagen to trim its budget by two percent a year over the next four years – around 300 million kroner annually. From 2019 onwards, it is estimated the university will need to save 500 million per year.

The impact of the new budget is significant – larger classes, fewer group lessons and less course variety. The intake of PhD students will be reduced by ten percent, and

programmes such as Modern India Studies, Ancient Greek, and Hebrew will not admit any students in 2016.

Students and professors have held demonstrations and collected petitions protesting the cuts. In an article on the university's website, Rector Ralf Hemmingen said the loss of staff and reduction of PhDs cut "into the vital research value chain", which will significantly affect Denmark's research capabilities in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, the cuts could potentially undo the university's rep-

utation as an international institution. Last year it dropped from 45 to 69 in the QS University Ranking, and with the loss of valuable teaching staff it is at risk of going even further down the list

FIRED PROFESSOR

One fired professor from the humanities department, who agreed to talk to The Murmur anonymously, expressed his frustration with how the situation was handled. The university gave him no explanation for his termination.

"I find the institutional hypocrisy and lack of transparency to be

very problematic. I have little faith in the objectivity of the selection process. I am aware of many extremely prestigious scholars who have been let go, professors who are objectively top researchers and internationally recognised," he said, adding that he was concerned about the future.

Under Danish law, public employees who have been notified of their dismissal have 14 days to submit comments. But because of this procedure, professors are not allowed to comment publicly on the lay-offs.

"It is scandalous that in a modern democracy, a huge institution is allowed to target individuals and basically not be accountable for their decisions," he said.

In Denmark, employers can lay off people and provide only general reasons for their termination. According to our source, fired staff were informed of professional or personal qualifications or difficulties in carrying out a task as reasons for their firing, the list altering in slightly varying orders.

"This is going to have deep repercussions on the quality of teaching we can deliver. It feels like people are jumping off a sinking ship. A lot of good people who can move, will move, because it is not clear what the future holds."

Following the impersonal email, which notified him of his termination, the professor was invited to a brief meeting. He was given a folder containing information on how to use Denmark's job portal. Other than that, the information he was provided was insubstantial.

"I find this top down management, the huge amount of power concentrated in heads of institutes, basically without any checks and balances or forums for dialogue between staff and management disturbing. There is a feeling that management acts on its own without consulting or taking into account the feelings of the employees."

Budget cuts in recent years have already increased his workload, making it nearly impossible to carry out meaningful research, and this recent round will make the situation worse.

"There is a lot of administrative red tape. Class sizes are also increasing and the amount of individual contact is going down. I find that contact invaluable to teaching and it is very concerning that we will be doing mass teaching."

The university does have world class researchers now, but people are going to be thinking very seriously about leaving.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR MARTYN BONE



Maria Ravn

Associate professor Martyn Bone said the day of the dismissals was "one of the grimmest days of my professional career."

STUDENT DISSATISFACTION

Casper Andersen studies Modern India and South Asian Studies at the University of Copenhagen. His programme is among those that will stop admitting new students this summer. Considerable investment was put into founding the programme just four years ago and students and faculty fear their work has been for nothing.

"So much investment has been put into establishing this new study, just to potentially close it down. It doesn't make sense to close a study that has such great potential for Denmark," he says.

Although the programme is only supposed to halt admissions temporarily, Andersen fears that the effects will be felt in the long-term.

"The risk is new students won't have any tutors because students who are further along will be in In-

dia when they come in. The social environment will basically die," he says, adding that if the programme were to readmit students the following year, substantial investment would be needed to reinstate tutors.

"The programme gives us a broad area of competencies that is needed in the business world and for Denmark's interaction with the world, such as acquiring a deep understanding of India and South Asia. This degree is important for companies that are in India, both for established and growing businesses."

Andersen echoed a sentiment reflected by many students The Murmur spoke to when he suggested that it would be better to save money by reforming the education grant, SU, rather than closing down courses. Another solution

could be to allow Danish universities to collaborate to preserve smaller studies.

"The universities could say that for the next couple of years only Aarhus and Copenhagen should offer History. You don't necessarily need to close the small studies. Closing small studies is the easy way out."

Nathalie Kold-Hansen, a Polish Studies student at the University of Copenhagen, also defended the value of her education.

"A humanities bachelor with specialisation in a country gives a combined insight into the cultural, historical, political, and linguistic skills that other educations cannot provide. These are important skills for international negotiations in a globalised world."

Her degree is among the many language programmes that ►



Rasmus Degnbøl

University of Copenhagen students. Cuts will mean, for some, fewer hours and larger classes.

have been cut. Graduates of these programmes often go on to work as translators and cultural mediators, careers that are harder to obtain without the language skills acquired through these degrees.

Andersen was keen to emphasise that enrolment numbers often poorly reflect a programme's value.

"The size and cost of a study does not necessarily equal its importance."

UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONALISM

Associate professor Martyn Bone from the University of Copenhagen's Department of English, Germanic and Romance Studies, said February 9 was "one of the grimmest days of my professional career".

He has worked at the department on and off since 2000 and stresses that the dismissals jeopardize the university's international reputation.

The size and cost of a study does not necessarily equal its importance.

CASPER ANDERSEN

"We are at a level of crisis that has been unprecedented – the sheer scale of the firings. People who have tenure are being fired," he said, adding that the lack of transparency has resulted in a sense of unease, with staff unaware of who has been cut or voluntarily made redundant.

"There has been a broader sense of crisis since around 2003, when it was also a Venstre led government, who were instituting university reforms. And there has been a constant sense that we have to cut back. So much of the money is dependent on the state – there are few alternative resources and that is the big difference with the private system. It is a big problem that we are so susceptible to the policy changes of successive governments."

Of the eight universities in Denmark, only the University of Copenhagen and Roskilde University have had to lay off staff as a result of the cuts. Other universities, such

as the Technical University of Denmark (DTU), have adopted a more conservative budget and encouraged researchers to seek funds abroad and from private foundations.

"How can state institutions like the University of Copenhagen compete with the top Ivy League American universities or Oxford or Cambridge, who have these huge amounts of money, when your money is coming only from the state, and the state is constantly cutting back?" he asked, calling the impact on the university's reputation, 'the elephant in the room'.

"If we are going to cut back this often and this much, at what point do we go down the British route? The only way that we can keep going and provide a quality education is to charge fees. And that goes so against the Danish welfare model."

According to Bone, an unstable work environment could dissuade top researchers from joining the

University of Copenhagen staff in the future.

"You are also going to see a brain drain. The university does have world class researchers now, but people are going to be thinking very seriously about leaving. Obviously you have just lost colleagues, working conditions are worse, what is the appeal of staying? The best people will find work elsewhere, there is no reason for them to stay."

If the university struggles to attract world class replacements, the international perception of the university will inevitably drop, both for future staff and students.

"While the financial incentives are there, many EU students came here to study because they saw the University of Copenhagen as an internationally renowned institution. And they expected a certain level of education. The sheer nature of the cuts is going to make them think that this is not what they signed up for." ■

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Drawing your emotional baggage

Fans mourned when Stine Spedsbjerg took a hiatus from her cult comic strip 'Stine Stregen' due to depression. Now she's back with a new series of awkward adventures. The cartoonist talks mental illness, underarm hair and how broadcasting your emotional baggage online can ruin a first date

I almost miss Stine Spedsbjerg in the café. We decide to meet in a dimly-lit joint packed with bearded hipsters and clusters of sleek women sipping cortados. I'm hunting for my mental image of the cartoonist – a round shape with a bun atop her oversized head, framed by black lines and with two dots for eyes. Instead, I'm waved over by a svelte, three-dimensional Scandinavian.

That's how hard it is to separate the cartoonist from her eponymous creation – Stine, the awkward, plump heroine of the Danish-language online comic strip 'Stine Stregen.'

"People always think I'm fat in real life," says Spedsbjerg with a big laugh. She's wearing thick-rimmed glasses and an oversized earring. The bun on her head wobbles as she talks, quickly and animatedly – the same iconic hairdo sported by her hand-drawn alter ego.

"I don't draw how I look, but more how I feel I look. I guess I never feel like a tall Danish blonde, but more like a chubby nerd. Not in a bad way though, I don't hate how I look!"

It's this raw honesty which helped build Stine Stregen's enormous fan base during its eight-year run.

Some fans even have Stine tattoos. "One engineer dude messaged me a picture of the Stine inked on his forearm," she says, scrolling past the Instagram picture.

Powerfully relatable, Stine Stregen portrays both the funny side of gut-wrenching experiences like depression and heartbreak, while also celebrating the mundane. Break-ups, baking mishaps, and the effort of shaving leg hair are some of the themes Spedsbjerg has transformed into little stories of helplessness and hope.

She's landed design work off the back of that success, and currently serves as head of the Danish Comics Council – not bad for someone who professes that she started out as a "really bad amateur" at drawing.

However, Spedsbjerg pulled the plug on Stine Stregen last year after relocating to Copenhagen from Aarhus, going through a break-up and being diagnosed with depression. It doesn't mark the end of her career, just a shift in direction – she wants to focus on healing, release a book, and focus on her new English-language series, 'Perfectly Grim'. But when you've made a career out of narrating the embarrassing details of your life to strangers on the internet, can you ever just detach?

DEPRESSION

Readers have been touched by her willingness to depict depression in the comic, and many have reached out with messages of support or to share similar experiences.

"When you use yourself in your stories, you have to give something from your core – some honesty. But at the same time I'm not just pouring my

**Most of my
life I walk
around
with mas-
cara run-
ning from
my eyes to
my tits.**

Lena Rutkowski

heart out – I turn my emotions into stories that people can mirror themselves in. I'm technically a terrible artist, but I channel emotions, I guess."

Spedsbjerg says it's important to clear up misconceptions about the illness and open it up to discussion.

"I now think I had depression for longer than I realised. I thought that if I wasn't suicidal, and wasn't in a bad mood all the time, then it couldn't be depression! That must be because it's not discussed enough in the public forum. A few media personalities have written me emails telling me how brave I am for talking about it, and shared that they have depression too – but they just don't talk about it."

Even when we discuss her struggles with the illness, Spedsbjerg is cracking jokes. It's a testament to her ability to use humour to dissect tough issues, which explains how the cartoonist's woes became a comic series.

"In a way, it's kind of embarrassing that I have depression. A good mood and a good life is the most valuable asset. I want to be able to say, 'I'm not that person, I'm cool!' she laughs.

"But ultimately, I want to be the kind of person who stands by their emotions. I imagine that's what readers get out of reading about my life – knowing they're not alone."

STOP LIKING MY SALADS

Stine Stregen resonates strongly with women in particular, in part because of its warts-and-all portrait of a woman struggling to live up to modern beauty standards. Spedsbjerg paints the reality that is buried beneath everyone's stylised Instagram pictures, one that involves underarm hair and wobbly body parts.

"I get so annoyed with myself when I take part in lying with my own instagram posts. 'Oh look, I'm eating a salad!' Come on, I do that like once a month. But that's what gets the most likes – pictures of my cat, or me with a fun shirt. Or pictures of coffee and salads. But it's not an accurate picture of real life. Most of my life I walk around with mascara running from my eyes to my tits, or in bed with a cat who bites me all the time. He's such a douchebag."

EX-BOYFRIEND REVENGE

When you're the lead character in your own narrative it can be hard to balance sharing your emotions with the need to respect others' privacy, especially ex-boyfriends on whom you might want to exact revenge.

"I try not to tell other people's stories and talk about them when it's about my own emotions towards them," says Spedsbjerg, who admits she's been tempted to yield the power of her fan base when it comes to break-ups.

"There have been a couple of dudes where I was like 'I COULD ►



TELL PEOPLE THINGS ABOUT YOU...and everyone would be on my side!" she laughs, shaking her fist.

"It is hard to restrain yourself from turning thousands of readers against someone who hurt you. There's a common misconception that I'm the nicest person in the world, because I've held my tongue, but I'm not. I'm just trying to be fair in a space where I hold all the power."

I point out that it probably isn't fair when they don't have the same skills to draw their own version of events.

"Actually, one of my ex-boyfriends used to draw! At a comic festival two years ago, he and I were the final battle in a draw-off. I won because I exploited his weakness. We had two minutes. I spent one minute drawing and the rest staring at him, because I knew he can't draw under pressure. It was very satisfying, everybody should have a 'HA, EAT IT' moment with their ex.

"See?" she pauses. "I'm not that nice."

DATING IS AWKWARD

There won't be any obvious references to ex-boyfriends in her upcoming book – a series of drawings depicting the cycle of heartbreak. She says she's too proud for that.

"I don't want any of my exes to recognise themselves in the boyfriend character!" Spedsbjerg says. "That's why I designed a generic guy with a top-bun hairdo – a man-bun – because I've never even kissed a guy like that. So none of my exes will pick it up and say 'Oh yeah, this is about me – she never got over me!' That's my biggest fear, them standing in a bookshop, feeling smug with their friends or new girlfriend."

Moving forward, Spedsbjerg says putting her life online has added an extra layer of awkwardness to first dates.

"I have to start out being really honest about everything because the guy can look me up and will know I'm not cool and that I have hairy legs most of the time. On the other hand, some men do idealise me a little bit, because the comic is a nicer, funnier version of me. But it's not the whole truth about me," she says.

"Although I do draw some of the bad stuff, it's not like I draw about every single time I'm not able to get out of bed, or shower, or being left with no choice but to go downstairs and buy new underwear because I've run out and can't bring myself to do laundry."

It is hard to restrain yourself from turning thousands of readers against someone who hurt you.



DIARY ENTRIES

Spedsbjerg didn't originally intend for Stine Stregen to be an all-access exhibition of her life.

"It's not like my life is special in any way – my emotional rollercoasters are just really normal," she says, adding that drawing her little world has provided her with unique psychological insights.

"It became more of a diary entry as it went on. It's a good way to look at my life from the outside. Like when you have visitors over and you can borrow their eyes to see your own apartment and think, 'oh my god, I haven't cleaned this place in three weeks!'"

"I also created an alter-ego, the ninja avenger, who does imaginary angry things when I'm feeling angry. At the time I thought it was just a bit of fun, but looking back I realised I had a big problem with expressing anger. That was such a 'whoa' moment."

"I actually stopped using the character, because it was so obvious that I was just trying to escape having those emotions. This is an example of me being bad at things."

BORING OLD LIFE

'Perfectly Grim' is a positive departure from Stine Stregen, says Spedsbjerg, who calls it a chance to start afresh in a new language. But while most fans have been supportive, not everyone is thrilled.

"I got an email from someone who said she doesn't recognise me anymore and hopes I'll find myself again. It was basically like 'you've changed, man.' It felt like a break up in way."

As for Stine Stregen, Spedsbjerg is reluctant to transform the series into a book and maintains that it's best left in its current digital-only format.

"If every drawing was a page in a book then you would soon be REALLY bored because life tends to go in a circle. If people went back to the start and read the whole comic from the beginning, they'd be like, 'Jesus Christ you're the most boring person I've ever met!' And they'd probably be right," she laughs, throwing her hands up in the air. "But that's okay!"

And that's why, time and time again, readers return to Stine Stregen – where a little, two-dimensional shape reminds them that no matter how overwhelming life gets, it's all going to be okay. **M**



Peter Stanners

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Ole Ege was one of the original pioneers of pornography, and helped bring about its legalisation in Denmark – the first country in the world to do so. He never saw porn as smut, however, but rather as an erotic expression of liberty

Give me PORN or give me DEATH

The unmistakable whiff of dense cigarette smoke invites you into Ole Ege's apartment on Amager.

"Do you want a beer or a tonic?" he asks. I opt for the tonic – it might be Friday, but it's barely noon.

Above his kitchen table hangs an art deco poster of a shape that either resembles a woman with a sizeable set of breasts or a manful erect penis. The text underneath reads *Bordellet* (The Brothel), the title of his widely-released hardcore pornography-cum-comedy, which was released in 1972.

Ege belongs to a story that few outside Denmark know or remember – a story of how the country made history when, in 1969, it became the first in the world to legalise the production and distribution of pornography.

Today, pornography is a \$97 billion global industry that has penetrated the mainstream to such a degree that it is an acceptable motif in big blockbuster films and music videos. According to Canadian porn site Pornhub, Denmark has the tenth highest click rate per capita in the world, just behind neighbouring Sweden. A 2014 Yougov survey found that 52 percent of Danes regularly watch porn.

PARAGRAPH 234

In his living room, surrounded by scrap books, erotic iconography and memorabilia from his long life, 82-year-old Ege recounts a world

**I was charged
with what
was called
'speculation in
the sensual'**

Words: Elias Thorsson

Photos:
Rasmus Degnbol

where producing and owning pornography wasn't just a hushed-up taboo, but a serious criminal offence – even in written form.

"When I started in the mid-50s I wasn't dealing with sex or even spread legs, just pictures of naked women. But in '57 I had my first run-in with the police when I was charged with what was called 'speculation in the sensual', which was 'stark verboten'," Ege says laughing while lighting a cigarette and making a German gesture.

"They confiscated everything I had and slapped me with a hefty fine."

Ege had been running an illegal mail order company that allowed customers from around the country to send envelopes with money in return for pictures of naked women.

This was a grave violation of the notorious paragraph 234 of the criminal code, whose purpose was to protect the decency of the population by banishing all that was lewd and immoral. The law stipulated that anyone who either published, produced, or even publicly discussed degenerate materials, would face fines or, in more serious cases, up to six months imprisonment.

For Ege this meant that even getting his pictures processed was problematic.

"You couldn't just give your films to Kodak as they would confiscate them and notify the police. The companies shouldn't act as judges of morality, but they did. So I had to learn how to develop my own pictures."

A two-year stint in the military meant that Ege's photography aspirations had to be put on hold, but in 1960 he got a job at one of Denmark's leading photography magazines as an editor. His history in pornography followed him, and the tabloids Ekstra Bladet and BT ran stories about the young pornographer who was now working at "an established publication".

After a serious dressing down from his boss he was allowed to keep his job, but in order to save the magazine from disrepute, his name would no longer appear anywhere in the magazine.

After three years at the magazine he left to start a publication in direct competition with his old employer. It lasted under a year, the result of a saturated market and lack of outside investment. But, during the publication of one of the last issues, Ege had an epiphany.

"The November issue was the only one that sold out, and on its cover was a picture of a naked woman, but in an artful way. So I thought to myself 'there must be something to these girls'. I shut down the magazine, got a small studio and started a large scale production of nudes."

It was at this time that Ege started making 8mm films as well as photographs. Silent 8mms were mainly black and white, but Ege found an amateur film enthusiast who was able to produce colour films for him. He later moved on to shooting with a 16mm camera, allowing him to make ten-minute long movies with sound, instead of the three minutes the 8mm could fit.

"It was then that I really started to make good money. The biggest profit was in selling movies to all the large hotels, who then sold them to their guests under the table. The three minutes had not been enough to, you know," he says, gesturing with his hand and smiling. "They were really expensive, about 1,000 kroner in today's money, but the tourists didn't care about that. The only things they wanted to bring back home was porn and replicas of the little mermaid."

THE FINAL ASSAULT

Ege's business flourished throughout the '60s, but in 1967 the police conducted the most extensive pornography raid in Danish history, involving over fifty police officers in several police districts, hitting numerous porn producers simultaneously.

"There I am," says Ege as he points to a cut-out newspaper clipping in one of his scrapbooks with the headline "The top six porn producers". He is noticeably the youngest of the six. ►



Ole Ege in his apartment in Amager. He has kept extensive scrapbooks from his days making pornography.

On the facing page is another clipping with the headline "Major raid: the police's battle against pornography seems hopeless". The article proclaims that the "porn industry is worth 250 million kroner in exports", equivalent to 2.3 billion kroner today.

I remark that the articles are strikingly similar to how the media would cover large-scale drug busts today. Ege smiles as he lights another cigarette.

"It is. They came to my mother's apartment at around six in the morning. Three towering police officers. They took everything I had and slapped me with a hefty fine of 100,000 kroner. I know that [one of the other producers] Leo Madsen had been tipped off beforehand. He had ordered thirty cabs to take his entire stock to Sweden before the raid. So when they came to the antique shop where he stored his stock they found nothing but empty shelves."

"The police viewed it all very seriously, but I also think they were really fascinated by it. It's not like I was running around shooting people."

The raid in 1967 would turn out to be the last major police action aimed at pornography. The following year the authorities' battle against 'speculation in the sensual' would be signed out of existence.

ART VS PORNOGRAPHY

Around the time of the raid it was becoming clear that the criteria for defining art and pornography, as far as nudity was concerned, was both absurd and arbitrary. One criteria used by the police to judge the pornographic quality of a photograph was the distance between a model's legs. More than 20 centimetres was a violation of paragraph 234, anything less than 20 was art.

I wanted my work to be about celebrating women, the most beautiful thing that exist.



It was this question of art versus pornography that had been at the heart of the legalisation of written pornographic material which came into effect in 1967. Four years earlier, publishing house Thaning og Appel intended to publish a Danish translation of the novel *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* by the eighteenth century novelist John Cleland. The book, popularly known as *Fanny Hill*, tells of a young girl's erotic journey from the English countryside to a high-class brothel in London. It was originally published in 1748 to such a scandalous reception that its publishers were arrested and charged with "corrupting the King's subjects". Cleland was forced to appear before court and renounce his work. The book had also been banned in Denmark since its publication, but Thaning og Appel intended to test the waters and gain a bit of notoriety in the process.

Despite some of the country's biggest writers attesting to its literary value, the authorities confiscated all copies and, in 1964, brought about one of the most high profile court cases of the era.

The Supreme Court ultimately ruled that the 200-year-old novel was not a threat to the public and had sufficient cultural and literary merit to escape the classification of pornography. But more importantly, the book sparked a heated debate in society about immorality and the state's right to regulate how the public used its free time.

CLASS WAR

According to Morten Thing, professor emeritus at Roskilde University, and author of *Pornografiens historie i Danmark* (The history of pornography in Denmark), the legal community in the post WWII era was becoming in-

creasingly aware of just how complicated the ban on pornography was.

"Sexuality and the view on what could be classified as pornography had changed with time. Nudists, for example, had been allowed to print and sell their magazines that included nude pictures."

Parallel to the legal complications of the ban ran a host of new radical ideas that were finding a voice in the burgeoning social democratic state. Politicians such as Else-Merete Ross from the Social Liberal Party (Radikale) claimed that the ban was just another example of class warfare conducted by the upper classes against the poor – the wealthy elite using the criminal justice system to force its morals upon the population.

On the issue of pornography, the Danish parliament was split down the middle. The left argued in favour of legalisation, while the right wanted to preserve the prohibition. Despite this political divide, it were two consecutive justice ministers who were responsible for the legalization of written pornography in 1967, and visual pornography in 1969.

The latter decision would go down in history as one of Denmark's most interesting political miscalculations. Interest in written pornography plummeted immediately after, leading justice minister Knud Thstrup to predict that the same effect would happen with the legalisation of visual pornography.

How wrong he was. In 1969, Denmark became the first country in the world to legalise pornography.

NAZIS, NUDISTS AND THE NEW-LEFT

The same year the Danish Supreme Court ruled on the legality of *Fanny Hill*, a corresponding trial took place in the UK with the



opposite outcome. It would be a further seven years before *Fanny Hill* appeared on British bookshelves.

According to Thing, there is no simple answer to why Denmark was the first country to legalise porn. But he claims that some of the reasons lie in the 1930s when a prominent movement started to fight for a more open debate about sexuality.

"Certain radical thinkers started to claim that sexuality was natural and that it was wrong to hinder it in any way. Doctors started to perform illegal abortions and the illegal publication *Sex og Samfund* (Sex and Society) sought to educate the population about sex. At the forefront of this movement was the architect and critic Poul Henningsen who believed that pornography had an educational value. He claimed that women grew up without having any knowledge of sex and then were shocked on their wedding night when they were expected to be with their husbands."

Thing also claims that the Nazi occupation had a notable influence.

"During the occupation the idea spread that being as opposite to the Nazis as possible was a form of resistance. But I also think that Denmark's history of receiving religious minorities played a role. For instance, Denmark had a Jewish population one hundred years before Sweden, and allowed persecuted protestants from France and Germany to settle in the country."

INTO THE MAINSTREAM

The news about legalisation spread around the world and, overnight, Denmark came to represent a rapidly changing world. The Woodstock music festival took place the year before and around the world young people were rebelling

against their conservative parents—growing out their hair and protesting the Vietnam War.

Denmark's new permissive laws seemed to encapsulate this new reality and international newspapers sent bewildered journalists to visit and document the promising new country. The New York Times claimed that sexual assaults had fallen due to legalisation, and readers of The Guardian could read letters about how everyday life functioned in this strange pornographic society. Mirroring the 2016 US presidential race, a federal commission was established to discuss possible legalisation in the US by using Denmark as a case study.

For porn producers like Ege, the change was rather more direct.

"Mainly I got the police off my back".

MILLIONAIRES & MISOGYNY

The fact that a ban remained in place in all the neighbouring countries meant that Denmark had cornered a valuable market. Pornographers went from facing prosecution, fines and public shaming, to becoming celebrity millionaires.

Ege explains that even finding models became easy.

"In all of society the atmosphere was booming. The fashion, the music, people's views on life was changing and this translated into pornography. Women felt liberated and they wanted to explore their boundaries."

Legalisation also meant that the production quality of Ege's movies increased, and in 1972 he premiered the big budget movie *Bordellet*. The movie featured mainstream actors, a professional crew and took six months to make.

He shows me a newspaper clipping featuring himself, his producers and his girlfriend

I can't help but miss the joyfulness of the sixties, the hippies, the Beatles and the hash. Everything is boring now.

popping a bottle of champagne at Bordellet's opening in Cannes. On the next page are pictures from the afterparty, which would end up becoming more notorious than the film itself.

Denmark's most famous eccentric and womanising millionaire Simon Spies had crashed the party and started to have sex with several of the performers in front of journalists and photographers. In an act of politeness, the press would undoubtedly not show today, one photographer asked Spies whether it was okay if they snapped pictures of him in the act, to which he replied "I don't think anyone will die of seeing that I also have this little thing that gives life to us all".

It turned out that *Bordellet* would be Ege's last hurrah in the world of pornography. Being a pornographer was a burdensome label to carry, but he was also disturbed and unsettled by the turns taken by the industry he had helped pioneer.

"I wanted my work to be about celebrating women, the most beautiful thing that exists, and I wanted to do it aesthetically and properly. But increasingly the industry was treating women as cattle and representing oppression."

Pornography is now a multi-billion dollar industry, but Ege regards its legalisation as representing something more undefinable—a sense of liberation.

"With the refugee crisis, Syria, Putin and a faltering EU, you can't help but think 'does the world never get any smarter?' I can't help but miss the joyfulness of the sixties, the hippies, the Beatles and the hash. I just think that everything is so boring now because there doesn't seem to be anything but politics and money. Did that answer your question?" he says, laughing. **M**



Sea urchin is on the menu at KOKS restaurant in Torshavn, the Faroe Islands. But you're unlikely to find it in Copenhagen.

The foods we DON'T eat

It took a Danish restaurant in Sydney to shine the spotlight on Indigenous Australian food and it remains hard to find a Greenlandic or Faroese meal in Copenhagen. Does the absence of certain cultures' foods reflect an uncomfortable relationship with the colonial past?

Last month, Australia's largest city buzzed with excitement when top Danish restaurant Noma uprooted its staff from wintry Copenhagen to set up shop in Sydney Harbour for ten weeks. Tickets to Noma Australia sold out almost instantaneously, while 27,000 hopefuls signed up to the waiting list, speaking volumes of Sydneysiders' zeal for fine dining and keeping up with international culinary trends.

In cosmopolitan Sydney you'll find Polish dumplings sandwiched between Nepalese curry joints and Mexican fajita bars. But Indigenous Australian fare – food produced with ingredients native to the Australian landscape and prepared by Indigenous communities in unique ways – has been largely absent from the mainstream Australian food scene.

Confined to a remote corner of the globe, many Australians are obsessed with attracting international recognition (and shaking off *Crocodile Dundee* stereotypes). So it's odd that most Aussie chefs haven't embraced their natural fauna

and history in order to create a culinary identity, which could set Australian dining apart.

Enter Noma. Celebrity head chef Rene Redzepi, a pioneer of the 'New Nordic' movement, which champions local and seasonal ingredients, has incorporated native Australian food into the pop-up restaurant.

"I'm drawn to this unique landscape; it's so different to what we have at home. The ingredients are so different and the diversity is huge," the chef told public broadcaster SBS Australia last year, after hiring three apprentice chefs from the National Indigenous Culinary Institute.

At Noma Australia, Redzepi draws on local herbs like wattle seed and lemon myrtle, and fruits such as lemon aspens and kakadu plum. One happy patron snapped an Instagram picture of a dish laced with crocodile fat.

It's a nod to what Indigenous Chef Mark Olive calls "the diversity of Australian meats". The host of the TV series *The Outback Café* reels off a list, which includes emu, possum and wallaby, each with their own preparation and cooking process.

Australia needs to see Aboriginal culture as an asset, not a liability.

**LUKE PEARSON,
FOUNDER OF INDIGENOUSX**

Lena Rutkowski

But while the international attention is an undoubtable boost for Indigenous cuisine, it begs the question – why did it take a Danish restaurant to put 'bush tucker' on Australia's radar?

CULTURE-STARVED

Olive says that 'bush tucker' has long been undergoing a revival and Noma is simply catching the tail end of the trend.

"Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal chefs, myself included, have been exploring, researching, experimenting and using this food for decades in Australia, but I think a lot of chefs around the world will see these foods and ingredients as 'new'."

But Jennice Kersh, a former Sydney restaurateur who spent 20 years serving up native food in a fine dining setting, has a more cynical take. Native cuisine, for all its richness, has historically been a hard sell in the Australian culinary context.

"Australian chefs have lacked a sense of their own identity. Foraging only became popular here

recently because a world-famous Danish chef started foraging in Denmark," she said to food magazine Munchies last year.

AUSTRALIA'S DARK HISTORY

For activist Luke Pearson, founder of the Twitter platform IndigenousX, the fact that Australians aren't tucking into native fare says a lot about the country's disengagement with its own history – a history that still has repercussions for Indigenous communities. According to 'Closing the Gap', a recent government report, Indigenous life expectancy, employment rates and literacy levels are still below that of non-Indigenous Australians.

"Mainstream Australia finds it threatening to embrace its Indigenous cultural heritage. The invasion by the British – and the massacres and systematic oppression of Indigenous Australians that ensued – is a lot easier to stomach if you keep up the myth that there was nothing on this land, no culture, before white people arrived," he says.

"It's very hard to think about the violence when you're trying to commemorate the country's 200-year-old history. It creates a kind of cognitive dissonance where it's easier just to sweep Indigenous Australian history under the rug and not think about it."

"Indigenous Australian culture is internationally recognised as one of the oldest living continuous cultures, but it doesn't have the mainstream recognition or platform it deserves. Australia needs to see Aboriginal culture as an asset, not a liability."

When Indigenous cultural artefacts are seized upon by the mainstream, however, it raises concerns about which group ultimately benefits when food traditions are appropriated and transformed into a commercial product.

With a new generation of Indigenous chefs emerging, Olive says it's important that Indigenous communities are included in the food revival.

"I just hope that the right thing will be done so that Aboriginal communities can participate and benefit economically from this new trend, and the supply and demand of these native foods. That means acknowledging intellectual property and the chefs themselves giving back to those they receive their knowledge from."

GREENLANDIC INSPIRATION

While New Nordic principles have promoted the flavours of the Australian bush, the chefs behind the movement were originally inspired by another indigenous food culture, closer to home.

Greenland came under Danish rule in the 18th century. It has since achieved the status of an autonomous territory with limited self-rule, although it is still dependent on Danish financial subsidies. Together with the Faroe Islands, also a former Danish colony, the three countries make up Rigsfælleskabet, or the Kingdom of Denmark. The historic relationship between the Indigenous Inuit people of Greenland and the Danish kingdom is a troubled one, which saw Denmark confiscate land and forcibly remove children from Inuit families.

Greenland's culture hasn't had a major presence in mainstream Denmark, nor does Copen-

hagen offer any Greenlandic cuisine. But that hasn't stopped Danish restaurants, including Noma, from paying homage to the country's culinary traditions. Claus Meyer, fellow New Nordic trailblazer and co-founder of Noma, was inspired by Greenland's 'water-to-plate' philosophy.

"Meyer was appraising the freshness and seasonality of Greenlandic cuisine before developing the New Nordic Food Manifesto," says Søren Askegaard, professor at the Department of Marketing and Management at the University of Southern Denmark, referring to the culinary doctrine established by a group of leading Nordic chefs in 2004.

TRANSLATING FOOD

Although it might not be immediately obvious, Askegaard also says that Greenlandic food has left its mark on Danish cuisine.

"It's likely that the ubiquitousness of prawns in Danish food is due to Greenland's prawn stocks, since the ones found in Danish waters are more difficult to use in a variety of situations."

He points out that Greenlandic food doesn't easily translate to modern culinary culture or travel well, which is mainly why we don't tend to see it on the streets of Copenhagen.

"The ingredients are highly localised, like seal and sea birds, which we either can't hunt, or don't have here in Denmark. Those meats wouldn't have the same quality here if they're not as fresh. Greenlandic cuisine is kind of like a tropical fruit that doesn't travel – as soon you pick it, you have to eat it," Askegaard says.

"Greenlandic food developed as a matter of survival in harsh conditions. It lacks a certain degree of refinement, particularly for the modern food consumer."

Askegaard adds that Europeans have also been fed "horror stories" about Greenlandic food.

"Before the introduction of the modern idea of 'freshness' in Greenlandic food, there was little or no positive food mythology about it, only the stereotype that it's "disgusting." Which probably stems from classic practices like fermenting puffin meat in the blubber of dead seals for months, eating foods like raw cod gills, or eating the stomach content from reindeer and other animals."

New Nordic principles, on the other hand, are trickling northwards, inspiring a 'New Greenlandic Cuisine', which aims to adapt traditional dishes to a fine-dining format.

"Local chefs have been inspired to develop culinary versions of traditional dishes, for example by trying to make whale and seal more palatable to non-Greenlanders, and further experimenting with local ingredients, like mushrooms and seaweed, which are not historically part of Greenlandic fare."

ARCTIC HERITAGE

Greenlandic culture is also attracting more attention in Denmark overall, says Kirsten Thisted, associate professor at the University of Copenhagen who specialises in the North Atlantic region. She says the relationship between Denmark and Greenland is shifting from paternalism to partnership.

"Denmark wants to maintain Rigsfælleskabet, as without Greenland, Denmark would

10 to 15 years ago, the most exotic or interesting food you could get in the Faroe Islands was a steak with a pineapple on top.

POUL ANDRIAS ZISKA



KOKS head chef Poul Andrias Ziska

have outplayed its role in the Arctic. Therefore Greenland is now treated much more as an equal partner after it was awarded self-government," she says.

"Moreover, Greenlanders themselves are speaking up about stereotypes. This was rarely seen before, and it seems to have come as a surprise to the Danish media, but now its tone is shifting from one of paternalism to showing more respect."

TORSHAVN TO COPENHAGEN

Meanwhile, the Faroe Islands are also making their way onto the Danish culinary map. This month, award-winning Faroese restaurant KOKS is opening a pop-up restaurant in Copenhagen.

KOKS, which is based in the Faroese capital Torshavn, won The Nordic Prize for best restaurant last year. Translating Faroese landscapes to the plate, Copenhageners can expect to ingest some new flavours based on centuries-old practices.

"In the Faroe Islands, we have a long history of preserving food through fermentation," says head chef Poul Andrias Ziska. "What's special about the Faroese approach is that we don't add salt to the process, we simply ferment meats, anything from fish to lamb, by hanging them from wooden bars in a barn, with a three-centimetre gap between them, so the wind can pass through and ferment them. That's only possible in the Faroe Islands."

Despite its long history, it's doubtful Danes know much about Faroese food. But as Ziska points out, fine-dining is still relatively new to the archipelago, which has a population of just under 50,000 people.

"10 to 15 years ago, the most exotic or interesting food you could get was a steak with a pineapple on top."

Ziska hopes KOKS' moveable feast will help Danes rethink their attitudes to Faroese food culture.

"Danish people have traditionally not been very fond of Faroese food, probably because they're not used to the intense flavours of fermented foods. What we offer is a fine-dining style, so it won't come across as too intense." **M**

Freya McOmish



COLUMN

What our studies say about us

Danish university curriculums have some major gaps. It's not possible to pursue a master's degree in gender theory, and the only university programme dedicated to Greenlandic culture might be forced to close. It sends a bad message, and Denmark is the worse for it

ACTRESS EMMA WATSON – aka Hermione in the Harry Potter franchise – recently announced that she's taking a year off to home-school herself on gender theory. While I'm envious of her personal-development sabbatical (can't we all get one?), I have to laud a celebrity who is taking her activism seriously and willing to acknowledge the complexities of a discourse she's been asked to publicly represent. You can't learn gender theory in a day, and if you could, maybe fewer people would misread it as a thinly-veiled conspiracy to really, really hate on men.

For the rest of us mere mortals who don't have stacks of cash against which to prop up our copies of *The Second Sex*, there's always good old higher education. But while Scandinavian countries are recognised as leaders in gender equality, a cursory glance at Denmark's educational landscape suggests that the options for gender studies here are pretty bleak.

While our Nordic neighbours in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland all offer two-year Masters degrees in gender studies from their leading universities, Denmark doesn't offer such a stand-alone program at all. Students at the University of Copenhagen can incorporate subjects from the Centre for Gender Studies into their Humanities or Political Science Masters, or can otherwise come up with crafty ways to work a gender slant into their final thesis. Other universities offer similar options.

Aalborg university does offer a Masters in Global Gender Studies, which discusses gender in the context of development studies and international relations. The course description promises some national analysis, but the program's website shows a picture of what looks like a

How are we supposed to engage in Arctic politics without a generation of graduates who understand Greenlandic society?

Lena Rutkowski

beleaguered woman in a war zone or conflict space, suggesting that sexism is one of those problems to be located and dissected 'out there', packaged in with our international development work.

Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that we're less likely to riff gender politics compared to our Nordic neighbours, and more likely to roll our eyes at the term 'feminism'.

Last month, I wrote about Denmark and Sweden's bizarre PC standoff over feminism. I discovered that more Swedes identify as feminists than Danes, despite the two having relatively similar egalitarian values. While I'm not claiming that Sweden is an ultimate feminist utopia, let's look at what it does do. It has a feminist political party, a national blog dedicated to discussing gender and intersectionality called 'genusfolket', which is financed by the unions and attached to a major Swedish newspaper and a whole string of male voices actively participating in the conversation.

In Denmark, there's a much bigger binary dividing men over gender politics. As Noa Redington put it in Politiken last month, men have two options in the Danish debate – to slam feminism as a leftist conspiracy, or to feel ashamed of their penis. Learning about gender theory means appreciating its nuances, so we're less likely to turn the issue into a bloody battlefield and force people to pick sides.

It's a chicken-or-egg scenario – do Danish universities shy away from offering gender studies because talking critically about gender is 'so three decades ago' now that we've locked-in anti-discrimination laws? Or are we having fewer conversations because we're not churning out enough gender stud-



The only course in Greenlandic culture has now closed.

Travel Greenland / flickr

ies graduates to spark the debate?

Either way, it speaks volumes about what we value learning about – and what we don't. And it sends the message: "our work here is done, feminists, you can pack up and go home. Or take an extra-curricular class for fun."

CUTS TO ARCTIC STUDIES

While the big gender-studies-shaped hole in Danish universities reflects Denmark's uneasy engagement with feminism, the likely closure of the Eskimology and Arctic Studies Bachelor says a lot about its relationship with Greenland – a former colony which became a self-governing territory in the Kingdom of Denmark in 1953.

The University of Copenhagen's decision to axe the program comes after deep budget cuts to higher education. Although it's expensive to run and has a small uptake, it is the only course in Denmark to examine Greenlandic language, culture and society. Which in itself, is telling.

I fear that the closure risks resurrecting the one-way cultural exchange which occurs between countries with colonial histories – one where the coloniser leaves an un-

mistakeable footprint on the colonised culture, but doesn't take the opportunity to learn from, promote or place value on that culture in turn.

It sends an explicit message to Greenland: "sure, the two of us have an economic relationship, but don't expect us to care about your way of life". How are we supposed to engage in Arctic politics, an increasingly important region on the international scale, without a generation of graduates who understand Greenlandic society?

Moreover, Greenland has a rich and unique history, one which deserves a platform – and if not here, then where? Denmark risks writing the presence of Greenlandic culture out of Danish society, making life tougher for the Greenlanders who live in this country, and already have to deal with stereotypes about themselves and their culture.

Yes, funding limitations are an issue for public education, and we can't teach every program in the world. But where we choose to invest our money is a major indicator of what we value as a society. If we don't teach the important stuff, we are the ones who will suffer. **M**

COLUMN

100 years of conservatism

The political establishment is dying. Out go the bland suits, and in come the libertarian sociopaths and co-op communists. The message is: "make politics great again!"

LAST MONTH, The Conservative People's Party (De Konservative) celebrated its 100th birthday. The old top hat of Danish politics, the traditional enemy of the working classes, had survived two World Wars, the Great Depression and the Cold War. But on the back of the party's worst ever election result last June – when it secured a paltry 3.4 percent of votes – you would be forgiven for thinking we were witnessing a deserted funeral, rather than a celebration of a party that at one point boasted 140,000 card-carrying members

Even most of its old aristocracy decided to stay away. Former chairman Lars Barfoed "forgot" to RSVP, former foreign minister Per Stig Møller had to give a speech in Birkerød, and former dynasty heirless Pia Christmas-Møller "wasn't even invited".

It seemed the people had forgotten, or at least stopped caring, about De Konservative. The world had moved on, they had not.

Last year, while watching the election results roll in, I had a similar thought. The broadcast jumped between election parties. Liberal Alliance celebrated in the Stock Exchange, where grown men – who know the price of everything, and the value of nothing – toasted champagne bought for its price and not its quality. Delirious over their historic election result and biting their tongues to abstain from chanting "USA! USA!" giddy with excitement and ready to stuff miserably-failed American ideas and economic models down the throat of the welfare-state.

The Red-Green Alliance (Enhedslisten) celebrated their equally impressive election result in a building that seemed a fitting metaphor for the party – a magnifi-

The political establishment is losing out to the fringes, to idiosyncrasies, or people like Trump who seem to talk without restraint in a stream of consciousness.

Elias Thorsson



Rasmus Degnbøl

cent white wooden palace in central Copenhagen nicknamed the 'chlamydia palace'. A TV reporter tried to squeeze past fire-breathing hippies the type who believe veganism will save the world, and that everything will be fine if we all got degrees in queer theory.

The Danish People's Party (DF) seemed to have scoured Denmark to find their most normal looking supporters. Despite this, everyone seemed to look like melted marshmallows left on the dashboard of your car which, like their politics, smears acidic white goo over everything it touches.

The Alternative (Alternativet) held their party, of course, at Copenhagen Street Food. They are, after all, a party of hipsters who are happy to pay 200 kroner for a mini hamburger and think good conversations are a mixture of semi-obscure pop culture references and narcissism.

But then the broadcast switched to Copenhagen Jazzhouse, where De Konservative had gathered. The camera zoomed in, taking in a scene that was the physical em-

bodiment of conservatism. Old, white men, their champagne glass filling with tears. Despite increasing irrelevance, they couldn't comprehend why the 21st century didn't care about God, King and Fatherland.

But the fall of the conservatives could, in fact, be seen as a microcosm of what is happening across the West – voters are abandoning mainstream parties. While Alternativet, LA, Enhedslisten and DF moved forward, traditional right wing leaders, like the Liberal Party (Venstre), lost significant ground.

Abroad, Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom is predicted to win the next Dutch elections. It is possible that either Bernie Sanders or Donald Trump will be the next President of the US. The Republican establishment threw 130 million dollars into getting another Bush into the White House and, despite his mom and brother pitching in, nobody cared. Poland has started goose-stepping, Hungary has been for a while.

The Guardian published an article last month, which touched up-

on the increasing polarization of politics. Former British PM Tony Blair was asked about the American presidential elections and the rise of Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn. He confessed to not understand politics anymore before claiming that "selecting someone who is electable is really important because otherwise you can't help people; you're powerless".

Blair inadvertently managed to capture the problem without realising it. People seem to have had it with the Blairs, Bushes, and Clintons – people who change accents depending on where they are, and whose primary policy seems to be: 'get elected'.

Across the West, the political establishment is losing out to the fringes, to idiosyncrasies, or people like Trump who seem to talk in a stream of consciousness, without political talking points and PR vernacular.

The future of politics most likely doesn't lie with the big traditional parties in the centre – it lies with LAs, Enhedslisten, DFs and Alternativets of the world. Some are hopeful, others terrifying, but all seem to offer new solutions to the world's problems that the establishment has failed to take notice of.

This is why De Konservative's latest gambit takes on increased significance. When they withdrew their support for agriculture minister Eva Kjer Hansen, and engineered a government crisis that could have resulted in a new election, they did something new and creative. It was either the last stance of a dying dynasty, or a bold assault into the emerging radical spectrum.

Happy 100 birthday Konservativ. **M**

WHAT'S ON • MARCH



SENSORY ART
Louisiana Museum's new spring exhibit 'Eye Attack' takes its viewers through a visual experimental laboratory, designed to provoke the senses.

Louisiana
Gl. Strandvej 13, Humlebæk
Louisiana.dk
All month

ALL MONTH

ARKEN ART SCHOOL
ARKEN art museum is hosting an Art School for Adults, going in-to depth with ARKEN's two exhibitions featuring Gerda Wegener and Niki de Saint Phalle.

ARKEN
Skovvej 100, Ishøj
arken.dk



RADICAL ART SHOW
ARoS showcases Jani Leinonen's work in an exhibition titled School of Disobedience, in which Leinonen addresses the relationship between art and political activism.

ARoS
Aros Allé 2, Aarhus
aros.dk
All month

3

OPERA IN AALBORG
Aalborg's annual Opera Festival brings the city together in celebration of opera, which is performed city-wide in a variety of forms.

Aalborg Congress and Culture Centre
Gammeltorv, Aalborg
aalborgoperafestival.dk

4

FIRST HATE
After a European club headliner tour, Denmark's First Hate are return home to perform their new EP "The Mind Of A Gemini".

Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk



FESTIVAL OF THE CENTURY
The annual Festival of the Century is a knowledge festival uniting intellectuals from diverse backgrounds to stimulate a debate about the world in which we live.

Skt. Clements Idé Butik
Skt. Clements Stræde 1, Aarhus
aarhundredetsfestival.dk
March 4-13

10

CELEBRATE THE BUILT WORLD
Copenhagen Architecture Festival shows the public how architecture characterises and affects our lives.

Locations in Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Aalborg
cafx.dk
Ends March 20



Take a family tour of Copenhagen's Zoologisk Museum to see where the giant dinosaur "Misty" lived and get a behind-the-scenes look at a conservator's workshop.

Zoologisk Museum
Universitetsparken 15, KBH
zoology.snm.ku.dk
March 12



UNDERSTANDING TORTURE
Ahlam Chemlali, a Program Manager at DIGNITY, the Danish Institute Against Torture, looks to answer the question "Why do States Commit Torture?"

Studenterhuset
Købmagergade 52, KBH
studenterhuset.com
March 16

19

BEATLES TRIBUTE
The ultimate Beatles tribute show will be performed at the Concert Hall Aarhus, featuring many of the band's famous hits and unravelling the story of one of the world's most famous rock groups.

Musikhuset Aarhus
Thomas Jensens Alle 1, Aarhus
musikhusetaarhus.dk



NEW NORDHAVN
Sail north with the Danish Architecture Centre (DAC) to find out more about new major development projects and Copenhagen's world-renowned architecture in the harbour.

Danish Architecture Centre
Strandgade 27B, KBH
dac.dk
March 20

21

BODY OF WORK
Glyptoteket's new exhibit "From Block to Body" explores 1800-1950 French and Danish Sculpture, celebrating the human story through representations of the figure.

Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek
Dantes Plads 7, KBH
glyptoteket.com

Natasha Jessen-Petersen

WHAT'S ON • APRIL

1

DRAG EXTRAVAGANZA

America's premiere drag show, RuPaul's Drag Race, is bringing its Battle of the Seasons 2016 Extravaganza Tour to Copenhagen

Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk



GET STUCK IN

The food market at Vesterbro's meatpacking district is finally back, so keen foodies can stock up on supplies or enjoy a meal out.

Købbyens Mad & Marked
Flæsketorvet, KBH
koedbyensmadogmarked.dk
April 2

10

ELECTRO HEAVEN

Moderat, an electronic music duo from Berlin, are performing at a sold-out show in Copenhagen's Vega venue.

Vega
Enghavevej 40, KBH
vega.dk



ALL HAIL CHARLES BRADLEY

American soul phenomenon Charles Bradley is bringing his powerful voice to Denmark, touring his highly-anticipated third album 'Changes'.

Amager Bio
Øresundsvej 6, KBH
amagerbio.dk
April 13

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A woman with dark hair in a ponytail, wearing a pink and white plaid shirt, is looking towards a whiteboard. The whiteboard has the Danish words "Stumt d" and "Hund" written on it. The word "Hund" has a double underline under the 'd'.

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