

# Workers' Breadnought

NOT AUTHORITY ; BUT CO-OPERATION.

Vol. X. No. 29.

October 6, 1923.

WEEKLY.

## The Big Stick in Poplar

### Who Called in Police to beat Unemployed ?

Upwards of forty people badly hurt, hundreds of slightly wounded cases

Much has been said and written of love and hate and violence in Poplar. One thing stands out clearly : it is that the result of working-class representatives taking part in the administration of capitalist machinery, is that working-class representatives become responsible for maintaining capitalist law and order and for enforcing the regulations of the capitalist system itself.

The Labour Guardians, who hold all the seats on the Board save two, have deducted the 1s. 6d. a week coal allowance, and are contemplating a reduction in the scale of relief, though the winter is approaching and the cost of living rising rather than falling.

#### The Deputation.

On Wednesday, September 26th, a deputation of the Unemployed Workers' Organisation waited

upon the Guardians to ask for the restoration of the coal allowance and an increase in the scale of relief to single men and women.

#### Relief to be Reduced.

The Guardians refused both requests, and Mr. Edgar Lansbury, Chairman of the Board, told the deputation that a reduction in the scale of relief is being considered in order to reduce the call on the ratepayers by £85,000.

#### Guardians Locked In.

Thereupon the Unemployed locked the main doors of the building and told the Guardians that they must remain for the night unless they would reverse their decision.

This is not the first time the Unemployed have taken such action. Guardians have been

locked in many times before in Poplar and in other Boroughs. The Unemployed officials declare that Mr. George Lansbury and other members of the Board have in the past expressed approval of such tactics ; but if that is so it was no doubt in the shape of platform perorations not intended to be taken too literally. Certainly the Board resented the locking in on this occasion, and, though some of them are members of Parliament, accustomed to all-night sittings at Westminster, and others hope to be, they were not willing to make this sacrifice of comfort to oblige the Unemployed.

Some two hundred Unemployed were in the building, and about twenty were inside the Board-room with the Guardians. A few were in the public gallery. The rest of the two hundred were downstairs in the entrance hall of the Guardians' offices.

A crowd of men, women, and children were outside.

At this time it seems that the Board meeting came to an end and that it was decided there should be no further business done by the Board that night. The Labour members, who form the great majority of the Board, remained wrangling with the Unemployed.

#### Police Refuse to Enter.

The Unemployed assert that Mr. George Lansbury went downstairs and broke a fanlight, saying that that would be the signal for the police to break in. The police did not come in. The "Daily Herald" and the rest of the press assert that the police refused to enter without a written order from the Guardians.

#### The Ambulance.

Comrades Bellamy, Johns and Gape spoke to the crowd outside from the Board-room window. Presently a London County Council Ambulance drove up. The summoning of the Ambulance was a gruesome act, whoever was responsible for it. It proves that the local authorities expected—and also intended—that people should be wounded. This is a borough "where Labour rules!" Noske and his tactics are undoubtedly to have their counterpart also in this country. It is strange that the lesson should first be given in Poplar. Seeing the ambulance, Comrade Bellamy said, "We don't want that yet"; but the police began to beat the crowd of men, women and children with their truncheons.

#### Who Sent for the Police?

Meanwhile certain Labour Guardians were clamouring for the police to be sent for to break into the building, release the Guardians, and clear out the Unemployed.

As to what happened then there are different versions. The "Daily Herald" says:

"When the police arrived, in response to a telephone call, they declined to force an entry to the building, without written authority, and some time elapsed before the Guardians decided to give this."

The "Daily Telegraph" report agrees with that of several other papers. It states that Alderman John Scurr, Mayor of Poplar, a magistrate, and a Guardian, took the chair, "and it was decided to give the police requisite authority."

The members of the Unemployed organisation say, as the "Telegraph" does, that Mr. Edgar Lansbury was willing that the police should break in the doors, but not that they should enter the building. The Board meeting, they say, came to an end, and Mr. Lansbury left the chair. Then the Labour members of the Board



BROTHERLY LOVE.





Workers' Dreadnought

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Our View.

THE BATONING of the Unemployed in Poplar is the first instance of the Labour Party being brought into forcible conflict with the labouring population in defence of the capitalist system. In the second dock strike the Labour leaders merely backed up the capitalists...

THE BISHOP of NORWICH at the Church Congress said: "It is far more common that those who have gone wrong in the country eventually come forward to be married—though what a ghastly thing it is to think that our lovely marriage service is again and again read over to those who have already disgraced it."

A large source of unnecessary sorrow and cruelty will be removed when the point of view thus expressed has been altogether eliminated. Neither legal nor religious forms can make the mating of men and women either right or wrong.

THE INDEPENDENT LABOUR PARTY is organising a campaign for what it describes as Socialism. This, as explained in its circulars, constitutes a number of piecemeal reforms, which are supposed to be leading to the socialisation of industry at some time.

We cannot too often explain that our own goal is a free Communism, in which there shall be no money and wages; neither shall there be barter or any form of buying and selling. The land, the means of production, distribution and transport shall be held in common.

There shall be no State Government, or Parliament.

The organisation of production, distribution and transport shall be by those who do the work, organised on a voluntary autonomous workshop basis.

THE ALLIANCE between the South African Labour Party and the Nationalists is on both sides purely an expedient for gaining power, because neither party is powerful enough to overcome the South African Party on its own account.

THE BREAK-UP of the German Reich, and the break-up of the present political economic system in Germany seem only prevented because many different parties are fighting for different sorts of separation from the Reich, and different sorts of political and economic change.

The Parliamentary Communists of the Third International are supporting the Government in its efforts to prevent the German Reich from being broken up; its various components becoming independent entities.

The Left Wing Communists, workshop movement, Syndicalists and Anarchists, on the other hand, welcome the breaking up of the Reich into independent republics. They observe the assistance which the French are giving to the Separatist movement.

The people with property interests to protect are fighting in their various ways to safeguard those interests. Those who think their special interests will thus best be served are endeavouring to get their property into an independent State under French protection.

THE REPORTS in the press and otherwise coming over from Germany seem to indicate, on a superficial view, that the people who have property interests in the existing system are more prepared to fight, than those to whom the present system is growing continually less tolerable.

It must be remembered, however, that the propertyless have not had the opportunities to arm themselves that have been open to those who have a stake in the existing property system.

So long as it is a question or organising unauthorised armies, the proletarian forces are heavily handicapped, both by their lack of money and by the sharp vigilance which the Government, the army, and all the capitalist forces preserve against them.

and in the various departments of civil service and political government.

Yet in spite of all this, the people who have no stake in the existing system possess a power immensely greater than that of the various interests which exist through the system; for it is the propertyless who man the armies, navies and police force, and, what is more, who carry on production, distribution and transport.

When the working masses seriously revolt against the private property system it must immediately end.

The progress to the realisation by the propertyless workers that they should arise to destroy the system seems long, interminably long. Yet in the great theatre of evolution events are moving with much relative rapidity in these days.

We had thought, perhaps, that the great struggles, catastrophes, and sufferings of Germany would have brought the end of Capitalism long ago, and some are heard to express impatient disappointment with the German people.

A monarchist revolution may come in Germany, a Fascist reaction may cover Europe, before the triumph of Communism is won.

A GRADUAL CHANGE in social standards is taking place in Germany, long the most orderly, disciplined and State-ridden of nations.

For the political offender room is always found in the prison, but the thieves are too numerous and too little condemned by the social consciousness for stern measures to be taken against them.

IS IT POSSIBLE that a people, which has advanced so far towards freedom as the Germans, that has suffered and struggled so much, and seen the artificiality of money exposed and the power of the hereditary monarch destroyed in a single day, will allow itself to be yoked to a harsher, more blighting authoritarian reaction than that which existed in Germany before the war.

ONE OF THE PURPOSES of summoning the Imperial Conference at this time is to revive British trade, by stimulating the development of Imperial resources

The Imperial Conference and confining the resources and markets of the Empire more closely within the Empire itself. Measures of protection and tariff reform will inevitably result from this conference, whatever the Free Traders may say about Mr. Baldwin's

election pledges. The Free Traders will submit very thankfully to anything, if it will but stimulate British trade.

Another purpose, perhaps the principal purpose of summoning the conference, is to secure the co-operation of the Dominions in Empire defence, and to inform them that Empire defence, which in practice means Empire aggression is becoming a pressing problem.

Preparations for the next war will play an important part in the present Imperial Conference, as was indicated, clearly enough, by Mr. Baldwin's guarded references to France, to European militarism, and to the air force.

IT SHOULD BE NOTICED that whilst the military forces of Bulgaria have been limited by the Allies under the Peace Treaty, the Bulgarian Government, during its recent contest with the Communists, applied to the Allies to be allowed to enlarge its army.

Herr Stinnes and the Ruhr Adventure

(Specially written for the "Workers' Dreadnought" by our German Correspondent.)

Germany is very rich in coal, but very poor in iron-ore.

France, on the contrary, is very rich in iron-ore, but very poor in coal.

Both these facts make plain to every one of common sense the cause of the quarrel between France and Germany.

Before the war, Germany imported 14,000,000 tons of iron-ore each year. Before 1913, France stood third in furnishing this mineral to Germany.

Sweden stood (and stands) first on the list of exporters of iron-ore for Germany. The most important iron-ore mines Germany possessed before the Treaty of Versailles are situated in Lorraine and in the Saar district.

Political frontiers separating men from men are not made for the great capitalists. The capitalists know no frontiers. If the frontiers are in their way, they cut them and make others

which will suit them better and secure their profits.

Germany is rich in coal. But to turn the coal into money iron-ore is needed. In order to get control over all iron goods, price dumping is necessary until all the sources of iron and coal are in the possession of a few magnates.

After working with great efforts for years and years, keeping the wages as low as possible, building up by the best and most modern forms of organisation, there was at last but one way of dumping the production on the world-market—to cheapen the iron-ore.

Besides cheapening the iron-ore, there is another way to raise prices in the world market. If the production is very short, the value of the product must rise.

Why should the industrial kings produce 225,000,000 tons of hardware if they can get the same money for 125,000,000 tons? Why should the united German-French industrial magnates buy expensive iron-ore from Sweden and Spain—expensive because of higher costs for freight—if the magnates are able to produce the 125,000,000 tons of hardware from raw material from German and French mines?

To settle this business the amalgamation of the German and French magnates is necessary. Since about the year 1900 the above-mentioned magnates have been working to this end.

The great war—which both these parties did their best to make—has cleared up the situation and opened the way. For this purpose it did not matter whether the Germans or the French won the war. In either case the result would have been the same in every respect.

Remember the result of one of the first attacks of the German army after war broke out was the occupation by Germany of the rich iron mines of Longwy and Briey, situated near the Franco-German boundary and geographically belonging to Lorraine!

From these basins, through the war, the Germans took all the iron-ore they needed for producing their ammunition, when the import from Spain was stopped by the British blockade.

Why was it that France and England throughout the war made no effort to take these two important iron mines from the Germans? If unable to take them, why did they make no attempt to destroy them?

What was that contract? At first nothing, but the longer the war the better the business. The business of all the international capitalists, in particular the German and French capitalists.

Do not forget the best buyers of iron and the best payers for iron are the armies in war. In no time is iron more wanted than in wartime or when war is in view.

Even when Germany seemed on the verge of winning no effort was made to take this basin by the Entente. No effort was made to destroy these mines by bombing them.

On the other hand there were the coal mines in the Basin of Bruay, in the department of Pas-de-Calais, belonging to France, the most important coal mines of France. If Germany had taken these mines, France, and also the Entente, would have lost the war.

Because of the existence of this contract mentioned above between German and French capitalists. Poor men had to pay for this contract

and this business with their lives and their blood.

Who are the proprietors of the iron and coal mines? On the German side: Herr Stinnes, Herr Thyssen, and the firm of Krupp and Herr Wolf. On the French side: the family of De Wendel, and the ammunition plant of Schneider and Cie. The banker of this Committee is the international banking family, Rothschild.

Do you know how strong in the League of Nations the power of the proprietors of iron and coal mines is? They have a majority—75 out of 100. Perhaps more; certainly not less.

Thus you will understand why the League of Nations is unable to prevent a war. The League of Nations is only an instrument for concealing the real cause of the next war.

So long as we have capitalists and a capitalist system, the world will never have world peace.

FROM THE PUBLISHERS

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THE RUHR. By Ben Tillet, A. Creech Jones and Samuel Warren. Labour Publishing Co. 9d. Views cannot be recommended.

THE BULGARIAN REVOLUTION.

The "Klassenkampf," a German Communist newspaper, of September 27th, reported that the whole of Bulgaria was in the hands of the peasants and workers with the exception of Sofia, which was besieged by them.



**Karl Liebknecht's Letters.**

Luckau, 20th May, 1918.  
 . . . . In July, in three week's time, it will be your visiting day again. Two months already since your last visit. I hope then to get all the news in detail, and to hear more about your relations with the Russian "deputation." You know what I think about it.

I was very pleased to hear Helmi's account of the new turn of affairs in Rostow. Do they expect a regular correspondence to be kept up on both sides? I have put in a couple of lines, anyhow, but it is impossible to write anything, not even to our "ally" Ukraina.

As to what you say about the money question and similar problems, of course it is not desirable to accept assistance from any but one's near relatives. I neither can nor will hang myself from all sorts of moral ropes in the future.

Certainly you will take care of all my papers, manuscripts, and everything. But you must not think they are all equally valuable; only a few parts of them are useable, and I should like, if possible, to do something with them. You brought a MS. with you in April to be corrected. Of course, heaps of other things occurred to me at once, things to be completed or corrected.

You will find somewhere a chapter on "The Dilemma"; please insert the following passage in it:

"In the social struggles of all countries and peoples, class opposition, which is not to be confounded with the constant class war, is often reciprocal, is often found below the leveling influence of capitalistic and proletarian migration, and does not abolish the international character of capital and labour, but on the contrary stimulates the tendency to demonstrate it."

Towards the end of the chapter you must put in something like this:

"Expansion comprises both production and distribution. It takes place in a double and ever-broadening spiral, etc."

At the end of the chapter please insert this:

"Thus, imperialism, if it is not first overthrown by social catastrophe, leads automatically to an economic catastrophe, to its own annihilation by the social forces which will crush it, annihilation by the abolition of its own reasons for existence; so is its doom doubly sealed."

Now a word or two of business. So far, the newspapers have always come punctually, but the last twice I got them two or three days late. This is really much more important to me than the parcels of food which I care about much less. You complain that you cannot understand from my letters whether I have sufficient or not. But my dearest Sophy, I have plenty, plenty, really. Please believe me. I do so wish you would keep most of these things for yourself, for yourselves. . . .

How is Rosa? Have you seen her lately? Remember me kindly to her every time you see her or write to her. She must take care of her health. Now I want to talk about you again. . .

Not long ago, in looking for the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, my eye fell on the seventh chapter of the Proverbs. They are like wild hissing flames in form and style. There is nothing that surpasses them.

My present tremendous flow of thoughts is overwhelming—indeed, it makes my work very difficult. I have so little time for myself now, although these are the longest days of the year. But I am not slacking down.

Kurt looked very well. You wrote me that he was stationed in a small hamlet away from the front. Unfortunately, such is not the case. He is as near the front lines as it is possible for a doctor to be. You must know that we have been intimate friends from our earliest years. I was his master in many things, especially in the rearing of butterflies, which formed a large part of our youthful happiness.

The newspapers have just arrived, early, and with Saturday's included. Many thanks. I have had a **dirty bath**—phew!

My dear child, I often wonder if you are strong enough to bear the daily attacks of the

present on all that is good, noble, sacred, and to bear the sight of the daily triumph of cowardice, meanness, bestiality, servility, of everything that is low and vile. This is the greatest hardship of the present day. But you will not quail. The consciousness of superiority and the firm faith in future victory are the best helps in similar hardships. A reasonable survey of what is happening, of its causes and its action, is the best support, in these times, for it transports our participation in the events from the stormy atmosphere of passion to the cool heights of rational observation.

My cardboard business interests me more than you think. I meditate on the psychology of invention, on the conception of human capabilities. You will laugh at me, and certainly such experimental psychic research has often been made, and accounted for scientifically. But only careful personal observation can give one a clear idea. Every smallest movement of the body, or even of one member, its mode of action, the smallest modifications in the use of the senses, especially of sight and touch, the part played by the spiritual functions and by mental states, by the kind and class of material and the continual repetition of analogous movements, the rhythm of manipulation, the observation of others and learning from them, as well as by one's personal experience, innumerable peculiarities and trifles of all sorts, from all these things spring finally one of the most important laws of movement in human development, a law which applies equally to the greatest things and the least.

But scientific theories notwithstanding, I have never yet succeeded in completing my allotted task. Time and again I have to return to the directions of Mephistopheles—I can demonstrate with beautiful clearness that it must be done so—but still I have not yet become a satisfactory weaver. But I still hope. The work is so easy that even a numskull like me must learn it in time, partly by practice, and partly by watching the others, and such an opportunity can only be found in prison.

To-day is the 590th day of my sentence and there are 870 more yet. I have been shut up for 775 days. When you come to see me in July, it will want two or three weeks to the half of the time, from my arrest to the end of the sentence. The serious things that I have in my heart I cannot write you. Last year you were thinking of settling in Luckau. You had even looked for a house, so the rooks whispered to me. But you are still a long way off. What will you do this year? I leave it to you. Good-bye, my sweetheart, my dearest; think of yourself a little more now you have settled all the others—and think of me. Love to you and many kisses. Your KARL.

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**COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT.**

*Outdoor Meetings.*  
 Friday, October 5th, 8 p.m., Paragon St., Hackney.—N. Smyth and others.  
 Friday, October 12th, 7.30 p.m., The Grove, Hammersmith.—N. Smyth and others.  
 Sunday, October 14th, 3 p.m., Peckham Rye.—N. Smyth and others.  
 „ Mile End Green, 7.30 p.m.—N. Smyth and others.  
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