

Volume 16

Section I

1938

(fols. 205-336)

end of
Vol.
16

TELEGRAMS.
SHULBREDE, FERNHURST.

Arthur A. W. H. Ponsonby

(2nd Baron Ponsonby; 1871-1946)

13. 1. 38

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SHULBREDE PRIORY,
LYNCHMERE,
HASLEMERE.

Dear George

Of course you may quote anything
you like of mine, although I doubt its being
of much value. Your book ought to be most
interesting. Your direct contact with these
people will present them to your readers
as human beings at any rate not as ogres
or people far removed from all human contact.

Unlike you, I am not of a cheerful disposition
although I constantly explode with internal
laughter. Apaty is my enemy not despair,
because I am quite convinced the future is ours
though we may not live to see it.

Do you know your example always hovers
round me! Your marvellous energy, your single-
minded determination and your disregard of
place, position & applause act as a sort of
model which I know I cannot reach but
which after my experiences in public life, I
admire & respect most.

Things anyhow in Europe look a bit better
for the moment.

All good wishes

Yours ever

Arthur P.



M449

Return this

I have acknowledged

See vol. 28. a, fo. 228 for a letter to
Raymond William Postgate, dated Jan. 16th. 1938

31.1.38.

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—The report presented by M. Van Zeeland and its recommendations as to possible steps towards the removal of barriers to international trade will be very warmly welcomed by all who, working for world peace, have felt that the problem of reconstructing European relations can best be approached from the economic side. Its author and his collaborator, M. Frere, are to be heartily congratulated on a document which evokes admiration for its terse comprehensiveness and for the capacity with which the realities of the situation are handled.

But the question vital to peace and human welfare is by what practical steps the report can be implemented, difficult and deliberate though that process must be. It will be generally recognized that every country, perhaps Germany and Italy particularly, must take time to consider how and how far the transition from a restricted economy to a freer system can be safely accomplished, and those measures taken which the report regards as indispensable to raise the standard of living among impoverished populations. The danger is that the task may be deemed too difficult and complicated, the report allowed to fade into the background, and the new hope of peace through international economic collaboration lost through inaction.

May we therefore urge that it is for the people of our own country, since Great Britain is in the best position to follow up the initiative represented by the report, to press the Government not only to give careful consideration—as indeed Sir John Simon has already promised that it will—to the whole of the document, but also to take early steps to bring together the representatives of the principal economic Powers for the preparatory work contemplated by M. Van Zeeland in his closing recommendations? We are convinced from our contacts with Ministers abroad that the Scandinavian and East European countries would welcome and loyally support action of this kind.

Some fear that financial facilities for the re-establishment of international trade would be utilized to increase the burden of the world's armaments. We are convinced, however, that if Great Britain and the United States of America would propose a standstill in armaments the rest of the nations would respond. Nor can the wars in Spain and the Far East be considered a reason for postponing action: they are rather an added argument for a practical attempt to establish a basis for general appeasement.

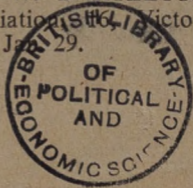
Yours faithfully,

GEORGE LANSBURY.

HENRY CARTER.

PERCY W. BARTLETT.

Embassies of Reconciliation, 116, Victoria Street, S.W.1, Jan. 29.



M449

G. Lansbury

DURRANT'S PRESS CUTTINGS

St. Andrew's House, 32 to 34 Holborn Viaduct,
and 3 St. Andrew Street, Holborn Circus, E.C.1.

Telephone: CENTRAL 3149 (TWO LINES).

Time and Tide

32 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1.

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23 JUL 1938

Cutting from issue dated.....193

Time and Tide BEST BOOKS 23 July 1938

SIR,—The response to p. 957 in your issue of July 9th: *The Rains Came*, by Louis Bloomfield, and *Helen Keller's Journal* (published 1938).

I am, etc.,
E. VERNON.

25 Mervern Place,
S.W.5

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SIR,—The best book I have read this year is *Orientalisms*, by Sir Ronald Storrs. A most salutary book for people with Left views—it makes one realize what the world might miss if the Workers of the World really did unite and "liquidated" an entire class.

I am, etc.,
D. E. BELL.

Ashridge Cottages,
Little Gaddesden, Berkhamsted.

SIR,—So many books are being written to maintain a point of view, Left, Right, Upside-Down, Green, Pale Pink and Mauve that literature is being strangled with a gorgeous hued pen-wiper. So few authors are really writing that such outstanding monuments (and I use the word with care) as James Hanley's recently published *Hollow Sea* and George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* knit themselves close into the mind, sit and nest there.

As a reader I am sure that no other book published this year will compare with these.

I am, etc.,
PAUL WOLFF.

2a Onslow Road,
Fairfield, Liverpool, 7

SIR,—In reply to Four Winds in your issue of July 9th, I was more deeply impressed by the following two books than by any others I have read this year.

(a) Non-Fiction: *My Quest for Peace*, by George Lansbury. I am neither a pacifist nor of Mr. Lansbury's political persuasion, but for simple wisdom which is independent of cleverness (and apart from all considerations of Christianity) commend me to this book as a more likely solution to the world's troubles than any other that has been propounded.

(b) Fiction: *Towers in the Mist*, by Elizabeth Goudge, evocative of the beauty, truth and peace which reside now as in the sixteenth century under the governance of one city, and that give to the permanent values of Oxford an importance that cannot be lightly assessed in the horribly shifting world of 1938.

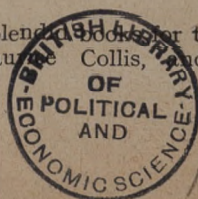
I am, etc.,
DOROTHY BOWERS.

Westbury House,
Monmouth

SIR,—Two splendid books for the holidays are *Trials in Burma*, by Maurice Collis, and *Baghdad Sketches*, by Freya Stark.

I am, etc.,
M. T. GUIRITTE.

Plaisance,
Surbiton



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G. Lansbury

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St. Andrew's House, 32 to 34 Holborn Viaduct,
and 3 St. Andrew Street, Holborn Circus, E.C.1.

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East End News

97-99 East India Dock Road, Poplar, E.14.

Cutting from issue dated.....*27 May*.....1938

27 May 1938 Mr. LANSBURY VISITS SCENE OF ACCIDENT



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Mr. George Lansbury on Sunday re-visited Gainsborough and saw the step which on December 11th, 1933, caused him to break his thigh.

He was attending the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the Unitarian Church, which is associated with the Pilgrim Fathers.

During the day Mr. Lansbury visited the Town Hall, where the accident happened, and had a look at the spot—and the step—where he fell.

Discussing the matter later Mr. Lansbury said he certainly thought he fell down two steps, but apparently there was only one.

Mr. Lansbury later visited the John Coupland Hospital where he was taken after his accident and thanked all who showed so much kindness to him while he was a patient.

Mr. Lansbury was later conveyed to London and was a patient of the Manor House Hospital for eight months. "During that time," he said, "I wrote 160,000 words, including two books, 'My England' and 'Backwards and Forwards.'

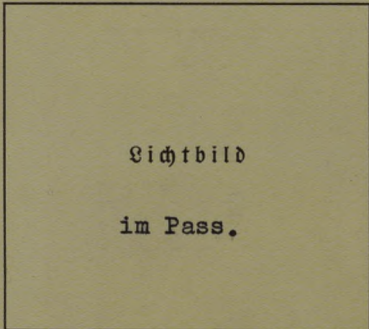
"Possibly, after all, my accident was a good thing, as it enabled me to write two books which I might otherwise not have had the chance to do."

21 July 1938

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Grenzempfehlung No. 279.

Die deutsche n Grenz Zollstelle n in -----
w e r d e n e r s u c h t , d e m I n h a b e r ----- dieses, -----
----- The Right Honourable George L a n s b u r y -----
----- Mitglied des englischen Parlaments -----
----- britischen Staatsangehörigen,



Sichtbild
im Pass.

Unterschrift des Inhabers

der sich in Begleitung des Reverend
H. Carter und Mr. P.W. Bartlett -----
----- in der Zeit
vom 21. Juli 1938
bis 20. Oktober 1938
von England
über Beliebige Grenzstellen
nach Deutschland und den Nachbarstaaten
und zurück über Deutschland
nach England ----- begibt,

Please sign here!

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----- Sicherungen zu gewähren.
----- britischen Paß
----- des Ministeriums des Äußern

in London ----- vom 26. August 1935 ----- bei sich.

L o n d o n , den 21. Juli 1938

Der Deutsche Botschafter



W. D. ...

Diese Grenzempfehlung berechtigt weder dazu, zoll-
pflichtige Gegenstände ohne Zollentrichtung, noch ein-
oder ausfuhrverbotene Gegenstände - auch Zahlungs-
mittel - ohne Genehmigung ein- oder auszuführen!

Abzugeben an die Grenz Zollstelle!
Bei der Wiederausreise nach England.

21 July 1938

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3295/1938 szám.



NYILT RENDELVÉNY.

A londoni Magyar Királyi Követség felhívja az összes illetékes m. kir. hatóságokat, hogy

The Right Hon. George Lansbury
brit parlamenti képviselő urnak, aki the Rev. H. Carter és P.W.
Bartlett urak kíséretében Magyarországra

utazik, szabad és akadálytalan közlekedést engedjenek, őt a fennálló törvényekkel és rendeletekkel összeegyeztethető mindennemű könnyítésben és szükség esetén teljes védelemben és támogatásban is részesítsék.

London, 1938 évi julius hó 21-6 n.



m.kir. követ

Érvényes 365 napig.

Figyelmeztetés. E nyílt rendelvénnyel tulajdonosa személyazonosságát a szabályszerűen kiállított és az összes láttamozásokkal ellátott útlevéllel tartozik igazolni.

21 July 1938

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Legatiunea Romaniei
în Anglia

No. 1860

Autoritățile române de la frontarie sunt
rugate să binevoiască a înlesni intrarea în țara a
Domnul George LANSBURY, Membru al Parlamentului Bri-
tanic, fost Ministru și fost Șef al Partidului labourist,
care merge în România, într'o misiune specială însoțit
de Rev. H. Carter și Domnul P. W. Bartlett.-

Acest documentul este valabil pentru 3 luni și dusul
și întorsul
dându-i tot concursul potrivit cu legile și cu
regulamentele în ființă.

Londra, în 21 Iulie 1938

ș. Trămisul extraordinar și Ministru plenipotențiar.

Matita Ghyska

Autorităților române de la frontarie.

Alfred Salter
(1873-1945)



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25/7/38

Dear G.L.

re. Dr Friedlander

You will remember that you very kindly saw the German Ambassador about this case, and you gave certain assurances to him that if Dr Friedlander was released he would be received and cared for if he came to England. I have been in touch with some of his immediate friends who will make themselves responsible for his reception and maintenance if they are advised when he is likely to land.

The lady who has been acting as the active agent of his friends is :

Miss Joan Glegg,
Antioch House,
LEWES. SUSSEX

who will be at this address till August, 7th. (when she goes away).
Thereafter Dr Glegg (a well-known medical man) will be at Antioch House till August, 25th. (when he goes away).

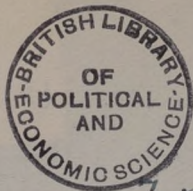
At any time Dr Richard Zeigler, 188, Lower Addiscombe Road, Croydon, Surrey, will act as intermediary.

Yours sincerely

Alfred Salter



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Antioch House

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Lewes

Sussex.

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7. xii. 38.

[with Alfred Salter of 25.7.1938 above]

Dear Mr Lausbury,

Yesterday I received a letter with the wonderful news that Dr Ernst Friedländer has been released from Dachau & ordered to leave the country within a fortnight. I do want to thank you for all your efforts on his behalf, & it is so splendid that they have been successful.

From Dr Friedländer writes that they now only have to

wait for his permit in
England which they are
expecting from a Colonel
Wedgwood. I wrote to
Colonel Wedgwood M.P. last
night, in case, for some reason,
the news of Dr 7's release
had not reached him, one
does not take any chances
when time is so short. Of
course there may be two
Colonel Wedgwoods, in which
case I may have written to
the wrong one. I only

hope the permit arrives soon,
so that the poor things may
be spared further anxiety.

With very many thanks
Yours sincerely
Joan Gless

There is no need to answer this.

[Post 15 Aug. 1938]

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Copy of note handed to Mr. George Lansbury by the head waiter of the Splendid Park Hotel at Bucharest, August 1938:

The personnel of the Splendid Parc Restaurant extend their welcome to you and wish you every success in the pacifist ideal which you serve.

T GLIGOR



M449

and {K. Nicoloff
St. Stanoff

THE TEMPORARY COMMITTEE
of the MACEDONIAN BENEVOLENT BROTHERHOODS
3, Sveta Nedelya Square
Sofia.

20th August, 1938.

The Rt.Hon. George Lansbury, M.P.
Hotel "Bulgaria",
Sofia.

Dear Sir,

The Macedonian Refugees in Bulgaria are happy to extend a most hearty welcome to you on your visit to Sofia. There is something touching and noble that you, at your age, have undertaken this visit, as a Messenger of Peace, to exchange views with our statesmen and public leaders in respect to the grave problems with which Europe is to-day faced. In these conversations inevitably you will touch upon the ill fate of the Bulgarian Minorities living at present within the boundaries of our neighbours, as a result of the Peace Treaties of Paris.

It may be well known to you, Dear Sir, that the above Treaties have most sensitively affected the Bulgarian element in the land of "Endless Sufferings" - Macedonia, which is the cradle of Bulgarian culture and national strength. Yugoslavia and Greece, after taking possession of this land, deprived the subjected Bulgarians from all achievements of their culture during the last ten centuries. Thus under the new regime the Bulgarians in Macedonia have lost:

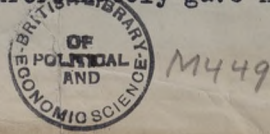
- 7 Bulgaria Archbishops,
- 1310 Priests
- 1331 Churches
- 294 Chapels
- 73 Monasteries
- 13 Gymnasiums (High Schools)
- 87 Public Schools
- 1273 Elementary schools
- 2266 Teachers
- 72354 pupils

as per the Statistics of 1912.

All the above, in the face of Cultured Europe, the League of Nations, and inspite of the Peace Treaties, was chased away and put to an end. Priests and Teachers were imprisoned and deported, replaced by either serbian or Greek, while schools, churches and monasteries were appropriated. The Bulgarians were denied the right to speak in their own language, to pray God in their own language and a campaign of denationalization was put in full sway. All those who would not speak the language of the conqueror were persecuted, imprisoned and life was mad impossible for them. Sad is the plight of the Bulgarian population in Macedonia, patiently waiting and praying @he Almighty for its deliverance.

Equally bad is the plight of the refugees from Macedonia who left their homes and cherished lands and came over to Bulgaria or migrated to U.S. of America and Canada, waiting for the moment when they can return to their fatherland and continue to live their peaceful lifes.

All the complains made before the League of Nations from the Bulgarian living in Macedonia, or those scatered all over the world, unfortunately gave no resluts at all.



Macedonian Benevolent Brotherhood

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Page 2

20 Aug. 1938

Knowing of your noble interests in suffering humanity, we, the Macedonian, sheltered in brotherly Bulgaria, take this opportunity of your visit to Sofia, to acquaint you with our sad plight and solicit your noble assistance in defence of the long suffering Macedonian Bulgarians, who ask and pray for the right to pray God in their own mother's language. To whom should we open our hearts if not ^{to} men like your goodself, who fight and work for more justice and fair play in this world.

To-day when the question of Minorities ^{is} is one of the most actual questions of international affairs, We, the Macedonian direct our view toward the Great British people from whom we have always receive justice and sympathy. In your person we see a God sent messenger who has come to us with the great mission of Lord Rounsman in Prague, to examine and heal the open wound of the Macedonian tragedy.

England is the first great Power which declared that there will be no peace in Europe until the Minorities ~~quest~~ question is settled. This fact has encouraged us, Dear Sir, to most humbly appeal to you, to take at heart the sufferings of our people in Macedonia, that at last the rays ~~awn~~ of liberty shall dawn over their native homes.

We, the Temporary Committee of the Macedonian Benevolent Brotherhoods, make a most hearty appeal in the name and in behalf of the 500,000 Macedonian refugees living at present in Bulgaria, that you, ~~should~~ on your return to London, will be an interpreter and defender of our rights and most humane and just desire to live freely in our native land - Macedonia.

We are, Dear Sir,

Your Obedient servants

President: *K. Nicoloff*
K. Nicoloff, General on the Reserve

Secretary: *St. Stamatoff*
St. Stamatoff, Colonel on the Reserve



G.I. interviews 1938 (26 Aug. - 14 Sept.)

folo.
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to
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King Carol of Rumania, and others,
26 - [? 27] Aug. 1938.

Stojadinovic, P.M. of Jugoslavia,
28 Aug. 1938.

Admiral Horthy of Hungary, 1 Sept. 1938.

Prince Paul of Jugoslavia, 4 Sept. 1938.

King Boris of Bulgaria, 14 Sept. 1938.

GL
26th August, 1938. 218

Secret and not for publication

Dear Mr. Farquhar,

On Tuesday last I was received by King Carol. Our interview lasted about fifty minutes. He was exceedingly pleasant, treating me as a friend. I think he is one of the wisest and most understanding of the many statesmen and rulers I have met. He had the keenest appreciation of the part our country must play in world affairs, and is convinced that the British Commonwealth must adopt a more expansive economic policy not only with the Balkans but with the whole world, and that just as nations must plan internal economy so also must they unite in planning world economy. He appears to have thoroughly mastered the Van Zeeland Report, and in spite of political difficulties, which he considers are very great, is most enthusiastically in favour of a world conference, and agreed to consider asking King Leopold of Belgium to join with him in an appeal to the Great Powers that such a conference should be summoned. He does not agree that Germany and Italy would refuse to attend.

King Carol thinks there is too much hate propaganda in the world and is not sure that speeches such as Cordell Hull and Roosevelt make do any good. It is always easy to prove evil against those you disagree with. My contention all through was that as these two American statesmen agreed that economic causes are largely the cause of war, they should be challenged to make an effort to remove those causes. With this he agreed; but he went on to say once more that the British Commonwealth must also make its full contribution.

He was insistent that the internal administration of a country was its own business and had nothing to do with trading arrangements. He was against all persecution because of race or creed, but said this tolerant policy was only possible of enforcement by the people and government of the country itself.

As to the immediate danger of war, his views are interesting and important. In his opinion there is danger of a knock-out blow being attempted by Germany if she finds herself pressed too far. He seems certain that this attempt would succeed. But he seemed also to agree with Winston Churchill that Britain might be badly mauled and yet come safely through. There was not, however, the complete faith in British superiority one hears of elsewhere. He refused to accept the view that war was inevitable, because



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GA
26 Aug. 1938
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everyone knew the consequences; also no country, with the possible exception of Britain, could sustain a long modern war.

As to the Balkans, the Salonica agreement was the first step along the road to final peace and co-operation. The Balkan peoples will never again be the storm centre of Europe. The outlook of these nations toward each other had entirely changed. Minority problems remained; but in Roumania and elsewhere great efforts were being made and will continue to be made to adjust all grievances and to enable people holding various opinions to live their own cultural lives and use their own languages. As to Jews, this was a most difficult problem; there are too many Jews in Roumania and only the Great Powers can find a solution by finding a real new home for them. But while he ruled in Roumania a Jew would be treated on equal terms with a Gentile. He declared himself to be a true democrat. He had taken supreme power in order to save his country from ruin.

As to the conference at Bled, which was ending the day I saw him, this conference signified the determination of the Balkans to keep out of war. He was at pains to assure me that the masses in Roumania would be very reluctant to enter another war except for sheer self-defence. He was full of regrets concerning expenditure on armaments and laid the blame at the door of the Versailles Treaty and the failure of the big countries to disarm. Speaking again of the Bled discussions, he was careful to say that the Hungarians were in a very difficult position, being so near Germany. No one had any right to complain of their hesitancy to take sides; but he was confident that the Balkan states would not fight among themselves or voluntarily take sides in a war. On the question of trade he was very emphatic that in the past France and Britain had not taken sufficient interest in the Balkans. Germany had courted trade with Roumania and sold goods which this country needed on good terms and had also bought from Roumania at good prices. Great Britain needed petrol and other oils and wheat. If she took a large part of the surplus wheat that Roumania had to sell it would be but a tiny addition to her international purchases. In this and other respects the Dominions should lend a hand. Roumania and her neighbours did not wish their trade monopolised by any single country or group of countries. Economic penetration, which led to monopoly, would lead ultimately to political control. So while very anxious to continue their profitable trade with Germany and Italy, Roumania would like to extend the scope of buyers and sellers. He was most emphatic that there could be no question of encircling Germany or excluding Italy. Except for his complete disagreement with power politics and racial and other persecution, King Carol is all for good relationships with all nations.

Running through this discussion and many others my colleagues and myself have had with rulers and statesmen, especially with King

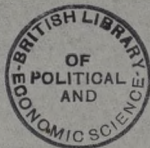
G.L. 26 Aug. 1938

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Carol, is the assumption that small nations living near powerful ones must spend huge sums of money on armaments, as they claim, for defence. I did not argue this question; but I would beg whoever reads this to remember the semi-starved peasantry of the Balkans live in a permanent condition of dire poverty, penury and want. King Carol wants his people's standard of life raised. Masses eat no bread. Very little meat and only a little milk is consumed. Houses of all sorts are needed, and sanitation, roads, schools and everything that modern conditions should make it easy to supply. With genuine feeling King Carol denounced this condition of affairs, and once again brought me back to the basic fact that if the world economic conference we are advocating is to be held we must bring pressure to bear on the Great Powers. For his part he would endeavour again to see M. Van Zeeland and consider in a sympathetic manner what approach he could make to his cousin, King Leopold, with regard to issuing a joint appeal to the nations to stop the trend toward war through the use of the conference room instead of war.

This statement is written from memory and is not a verbatim report, but is in every respect true as to matters of fact and is, as is said in the Foreign Office, so far as I am concerned, "most secret" and not for publication.

My colleagues join with me in thanking you very warmly for all the courtesies and helpfulness shown to us by yourself and Mr. Reed.



G.L.

[say 27 Aug 1938]

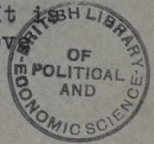
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The Embassies of Reconciliation peace mission to the Balkans, Mr. George Lansbury, the Rev. Henry Carter and Mr. Percy Bartlett, left Bucharest for Belgrade on a Danube river steamer on Thursday, August 26th. Mr. Lansbury had had an important private talk with King Carol on the question of implementing the conference proposal contained in the Van Zeeland Report; and the whole group had talked with the principal members of the Government. On the last day of their stay they were received by the Patriarch-Prime Minister, Miron Christea; and the following communique was issued:-

Friday

The Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, the Rev. Henry Carter, C.B.E. and Mr. Percy W. Bartlett, representing the British peace group Embassies of Reconciliation, have during the past few days been received by the Patriarch-Prime Minister of Roumania and other members of the Government. In these conversations the present international situation has been discussed with the earnest hope that God will preserve the world from further war. The members of the Roumanian Government declared among other things that the whole policy of Roumania had no other aim than permanent peace and harmonious collaboration, both with immediate neighbours and with the whole world. If Roumania continues to provide funds for an army it is for the purposes of defending her territory and national interests and without aggressive intentions towards any other nation. The evidence of this fact is found, in these parts of Europe, in the Salonica agreement and in the discussions with Hungary held at Bled, which show the earnest and sincere determination of the Balkan peoples to exclude the use of force from their dealings one with another and to collaborate as friends in the development of their mutual relationships. It was confidently hoped that these political agreements would be followed by cultural and commercial arrangements. The new Minorities Statute is a reaffirmation of the rights accorded to minorities by treaty after the war, and will, it is believed, provide more efficiently for the material well-being and progress of the peoples concerned.

In the course of an interview with some forty directors of Roumanian newspaper, also held on the last day, Mr. Lansbury said: "We do not think that the democratic form of government is necessarily and under all circumstances the best for other countries than our own; but we do sincerely hope that as the days pass there will arise out of the difficulties a growing power of expression for the mass of the people, because we think that civilisation depends on the power of the masses to speak freely. We hope that the new constitution will develop, as the British constitution developed, to the forms best suited to the country and without violence and without bloodshed. We are distressed that small nationalities here in the Balkans should feel obliged to spend so much of their substance on military preparations. It is a crime that when the Balkan nations are endeavouring to remove



M449

[say 27 Aug 1938]

all the causes of difficulty between themselves, the disagreements of the Great Powers should force them to arm in self-defence. We come hoping that through the King of Roumania a co-operative effort may be made to call the nations to reason. And we are going home to tell our people that we must do our utmost to assist the development of the Balkan countries. There is room for Germany and Italy as well as ourselves if the needs of the peasants are recognised. If all the great nations would call a halt in armament and spend twenty per cent of their war expenditure on economic development, they would save the world from war."

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ПОД ПОКРОВИТЕЉСТВОМ Њ. К. В. КНЕЗА ПАВЛА.

Управе Енглеско-америчко-југословенског Клуба и Удружења пријатеља
Велике Британије и Америке имају част позвати Вас

НА ЧАЈ

који се приређује у заједничким просторијама Клуба и Удружења
Добрињска 10/II у суботу 27 о. м. у 17 часова

у част

Г. ЂОРЂА ЛАНСБЕРИЈА познатог британског политичара
и ранијег вође радничке странке у Великој Британији.

say 27 Aug. 1938

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF H. R. H. PRINCE REGENT PAUL.

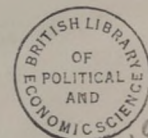
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The Committees of the Anglo-American-Jugoslav Club and the Society of
Friends of Great Britain and America, have the honour to invite you to meet

MR GEORGE LANSBURY, the well-known British politician and former
Leader of the Labour Party,

AT TEA

on Saturday August 27th at 5.30 p. m. in the joint premises of the Club
and Society, Dobrinjska 10/II.



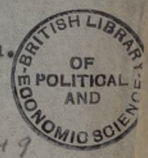
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[Say 29 Aug. 1938]

Memorandum of a conversation between George Lansbury and M. Stojadinovic, Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, 28th August, 1938.

The Prime Minister, who is also Foreign Secretary of Yugoslavia, gave me an interview of just over an hour on Sunday morning, the 28th of August. He gave me a most cordial welcome, and as he speaks English we were able to discuss together freely and alone the questions which perplex Europe and the world. M. Stojadinovic claims to be the successor of Raditch, the famous radical leader of long ago. He considers himself the son in a political sense of that Serbian nationalist leader. In appearance they are very different. From photos of the older man I remember that he wore long whiskers. His face was long and thin and there was an air of the intellectual about him, though he was born a peasant. M. Stojadinovic is fine, sturdy, well-built, with a fine head, open countenance, good eyes which look you inquiringly in the face and on occasion meet your questions with an assenting or dissenting twinkle. He is an optimist, and so far as war is concerned seems to adopt, without saying so, the principle "Trust in God and keep your powder dry." He was extremely friendly and kind in reference to myself. He said he had read with complete agreement what I had said in Bucharest and on arrival here. He is very pleased with the Salonica and Bled agreements. He thinks both of these meetings open a new chapter in Balkan history. Like others he says that it is not the words on paper that are most important, but the spirit of determined good-will which was so much in evidence during the discussion. As to Hungary, no one could blame them for their hesitancy; but even so he was convinced that the fact that all the Balkan states, with Czechs and Hungarians, could and did meet and agree not to fight about minority or other questions and resolved to settle them by discussion, was indeed a great step forward. He was very careful to point out that no agreement had been made concerning military unity or united action against any other power.

We discussed at some length the internal condition of Yugoslavia. He did not minimise the difficulties. The greatest opposition to the Government came from Croatia, where indeed the only organised opposition existed. The Croats demand a new federal constitution consisting of assemblies or complete local autonomy cantons of Croats, Slovenes and Serbs, with a federal parliament - I think, rather on the lines of the U.S.A. He is strongly opposed to this and thinks the country is too small for such an expensive form of government. He contends very strongly that the present Government is giving freedom of speech and education and all cultural and religious rights, and that the Roman Church has nothing to fear from the present constitution.



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As to the economic position of Jugoslavia, this was improving. He did not understand why Britain and to a smaller extent France left Germany and Italy a free hand. Both these countries were good customers and good salesmen. Jugo-Slavia had nothing to complain of on that score. She got and gave good value. One part of old Serbia was in a bad way - the south; people there could never get a living because the land was too poor. It was a very difficult problem, as the Government had to send food. This reminded me of the discussions on the N.W. Frontier of India and the Hebrides in Scotland. We agreed that all governments were now devoting themselves to national planning. And Jugo-Slavia was in the forefront in this. Soon they hope to get a national electrical supply from two or three centres - partly from water power - and also a national water supply. He is very proud of the peasants and is determined to do all possible to enable them to raise their standard of life, which, he says, is very low indeed. He is also proud of the Co-operative Movement, and looks on this as we do as the remedy for most economic and political evils.

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We found ourselves in entire and absolute agreement about/Van Zeeland report. He will do everything in his power to back up any move by Leopold and Carol. He thinks it is Leopold's job and that Leopold would be listened to. I found myself going very warily when speaking of Carol, though nothing was said against him. The essential thing is that M. Stojadinovic thinks with us that the conference should be held now and that the big powers should move. He sees clearly the absolute necessity for international planning and accepts our contention that it is hungry men and their families who create conditions leading to violent revolution and war.

As to the possibility of war about Czecho-Slovakia, we must bear in mind that these two states, Roumania and Jugo-Slavia, have big minorities who clamour for treaty revision. Naturally their sympathies are with the Czechs. Even so, M. Stojadinovic was emphatic that the German and other minorities in Czecho-Slovakia presented a unique problem, one which it was scarcely possible to solve except on the lines of cantons. Although this is the case and in his opinion the position is highly critical, he still thought peace would be preserved. The German machine was terrific, with a population of 70 million. The rest of Europe was either against them or neutral. Italy might join in; but Mussolini and Hitler knew the risks and the end. It would mean universal ruin - no victors, all losers. He was loud in his praise of British policy and of Runciman's mission, and louder still of British rearmament. But he came back to the fact that the greatest safeguard against war was its proved and acknowledged futility. He was extremely careful to say that Jugo-Slavia has no treaty or agreement of any kind to go to war if France is attacked. She has only her League of Nations Covenant agreements. I am not sure, though, what the attitude of these nations would be if Italy joined in. At present the slogan appears to be, Keep the Balkans out of war; and this I am certain is the feeling of the

G.L.
masses everywhere.

[say 29 Aug. 1938]

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The Balkan peoples were changing. The old fighting spirit is still latent in them all, but the centuries have taught them that there is a better way of life. Also the memories of 1914-18 are still very vivid. The merciless massacres on all sides, the terrible loss of property, the suffering and disease, can never be forgotten. Please God this will never happen again. We now know there is room for all; and by goodwill and co-operation all could live.

We talked for a few minutes about the Nazarenes and about a visit to Prince Paul. He appeared to want the N. question postponed for the Prince, but gave no real answer. It seems to be a sore point with them.

This is not a verbatim report, but a summary, largely in his own words, of what the P.M. said. It was one of the most friendly of all discussions.

P.S. I must add that M.Stojadinovic was very emphatic that the Great Powers should solve their own difficulties. The Balkan peoples may have fought between themselves and with the Turks; but it was the clash between German and British imperialism that precipitated the Great War and all its tremendous horrors and evils, though some Balkan states appeared to benefit. These rivalries, with the added rivalry of Italian imperialism, may and will, if war comes, wipe out all the apparent gains. I tried to make him see that this was inevitable result of all gains secured by violence. I think he saw our point of view; but he is not willing as yet to face the consequences of doing so. I think it is a good thing small states should begin to understand that they are only pawns in the wars between the great states.

There is no Jewish problem in Jugo-Slavia. Neither the Prime Minister nor anyone else referred to the question; and in reply to me, the Prime Minister said that no Jewish or any other racial or religious problem was incapable of solution.

Discussing democracy and totalitarianism, etc. he said, and I heartily agreed, that it was impossible to govern all nations alike. "One man's meat was another man's poison," expresses his point of view. He made a remark which we patronising English may take to heart: "People ask me to give them an Englishman's constitution. I reply, Give me Englishmen to live under it and to administer it. England, he said, repeating Hitler, has grown into what she is. Give the Balkans time and they will evolve a true democracy. For their life's blood is democracy, however imperfectly it may at present show itself in action."

31 Aug. 1938

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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
LÉGATION DE FRANCE EN HONGRIE

Chargé d'Affaires

Le ~~Ministre~~ de France en Hongrie

recommande particulièrement

le très honorable George LANSBURY

membre du Parlement Britannique

ainsi que MM. CARTER et BARTLETT qui l'accompagnent

aux Autorités Douanières Françaises et les
prie de vouloir bien leur accorder toutes les
facilités compatibles avec l'exécution des règlements
pour l'entrée en France de leurs bagages.

Budapest, le 31 août 1938

Chargé d'Affaires

Le ~~Ministre~~ de France.

Chernay



Signature de porteur

No passeport.



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ПОСЛАНСТВО КРАЉЕВНЕ ЈУГОСЛАВИЈЕ
У МАЂАРСКОЈ

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Yugoslavia

Пас.бр. 1171

Будимпешта ^{August} 31 августа 1938. године.

Краљевским пограничним властима.

Посланству Краљевине Југославије у Мађарској част је молити Краљевске пограничне власти да г. г. ЖОРЖУ ЛАНСБИРИУ, ХАНРИ КАРТЕРУ и ПЕРСИ ВАЛТЕРУ БЕРТЛЕТУ

који путују за Краљевину Југославију, преко њене територије и обратно учине све олакшице законом допуштене.

Важи: ШЕСТ /6/ МЕСЕЦА



За Отправника послова,
Секретар,

Stjepan...

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31 Aug. 1938

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Confédération Suisse

Le soussigné, *Ministre de Suisse*..... en Hongrie.....
.....recommande aux bons offices de Messieurs
les Fonctionnaires des Douanes fédérales le porteur
de la présente *The Right Honourable George Lansbury* qui
.....voyage accompagné de Mr. Carter et de Mr. Bartlett

.....
qui se rend ent. en Suisse.....
par.....
et les prie de lui accorder, pour l'entrée en Suisse de ses
effets et bagages, toutes facilités compatibles avec les
prescriptions en vigueur (circulaire de la Direction
générale des Douanes du 29 décembre 1922).

Budapest..... le 31 août..... 1938

Le Ministre de Suisse.

Par ordre:

L. S.



No. 148.

*Le présent laissez-passer, valable pour
un seul voyage, sera retiré par le Service
des Douanes à l'entrée en Suisse.*

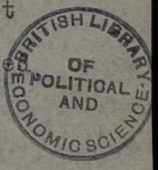
[Budapest, Hungary]

Memorandum by George Lansbury, 1st September, 1938.

Admiral Horthy received me in a most hearty and genial manner. He speaks and understands our language quite easily. From first to last he was at pains to express his admiration and respect for Great Britain and his great regret that Hungary and our people should ever have fought against each other. He also has a great respect for the German nation, and strongly rejects the idea that they alone were responsible for the war. I can best describe his opinion in the words: All nations were to blame; no one really wanted a war; but a set of conditions precipitated the calamity. The charges against German soldiers of murdering children and women, nuns and others, were wicked propaganda and created hatred which has not yet died down. He spoke bitterly of the imposed peace terms, saying that such a scene as that which took place when the German envoys were called in to sign the Versailles Treaty had never taken place before. He expressed it thus. The Germans were called into the room. No one spoke to them. They were ordered to sign. They signed, and were shown out without a word. Clemenceau's day of triumph had come and was consummated. As to Hungary, Tsza, their Premier, did his best to avert the war. He was a patriot loving Hungary passionately. He also loved and respected England. When the Trianon Treaty was signed there were still no negotiations. They were just told to sign. They wished to make such conditions that no state should become strong except under the guidance and control of France. I did not argue about these questions or remind him of Brest Litovsk or of the Bucharest Treaties. His view expressed with great sincerity, is that the discussions and gentlemen's agreement at Bled cannot work until the Czech-Slovak situation is cleared up. It is a bitter pill that a million or more Hungarians are under Czech rule. The Czech figures are not accurate as they exclude many people who have had to change nationality. The Czechs have never begun to try to carry out the promises made by Masaryk and Benes. Hungarian workmen were thrown out of work to be replaced by Czechs; and there was a general refusal to allow Hungarians to continue as municipal or civil servants. Admiral Horthy felt that there could be no true peace without "revision."

In regard to minorities in Roumania and Jugo-Slavia, he and others are not so intransigent as in regard to the Czechs. He was insistent that the Czechs are to blame for the incidents which may lead to war. He was equally certain that the Germans through Hitler want peace. But it must be a peace based on justice which means on full national autonomy. I think he meant autonomy within the Czech state.

As to war, he was depressingly frank, and particularly depressed at the thought that this part of Europe should once again be swept into the inferno of slaughter. He puts the entire blame on the treaties, and on the Czechs as the immediate cause. He is dismayed



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that Great Britain should ever contemplate a war in order to save the absurdities of the imposed division of territories. He hoped and prayed for peace. But some Powers must give a new lead. He would like to see the five great Powers meet and determine what should be done. It was impossible to say what Hungary's position would be, because others might not allow her to be neutral. I think his view of the immediate future may be expressed thus: the situation is dangerously critical; daily incidents may compel the Germans to march into Czecho-Slovakia; and then no one could foresee the end. Again and again he expressed his amazement that Great Britain should allow herself to be dragged at the heels of France. It was not a question of democracy or nazism. It was impossible to imagine humanity divided into two political camps, and he asked: where is the democratic state in Europe? There is only one, Great Britain. I gathered that he was determined in case of war to keep out, but felt that like America his people would be dragged in. Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Poland ought to agree to act together. Hungarians are lovers of peace; but the peace treaties were cruel and devastating to the Hungarian people, who during the war never interned a single foreigner.

As to the Van Zeeland Report, he expressed his entire agreement that something should be done on those lines, and asked me to consult the Prime Minister, M. Imredy, whom he described as a great economist.

We discussed briefly his own government and administration. With all his bluff friendliness, he is a very strong man, firm for law and order and desirous of freedom of speech and association within the framework of the constitution. As to minorities, he recognised that if Jugo-Slavian or Roumanian Government were to agree to give back even a portion of the territories and minorities their own people would kick them out. He thinks that the Bled conference did good work in this respect in providing for conference and conciliation in future dealings concerning minorities. The position is entirely different in Czecho-Slovakia; because there the problem is economic and because political and racial antipathies come in.

He would do his utmost to preserve Hungary from Nazism. He will give freedom of expression within the constitution and would put down any attempt at a coup d'etat by Nazis or anyone else. He has a great opinion of Hitler, whom he regards as working for a free and independent Germany, capable of holding her own in the world as an equal with the other great Powers. The Admiral is neither Fascist nor Nazi. I think his political position is a blend of Socialism and Toryism.

He voluntarily brought up the question of the Nazarenes and spoke of them as some of the finest people in the country. His Government tried to meet their objection to military service by offering them Red Cross work or alternative service.

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1st September, 1938.

Draft of suggested letter to the President of the U.S.A.

(Franklin Delano Roosevelt)

I am deeply concerned by the fact that Europe appears to be drifting once again into war, a war which will end in catastrophe for all nations. Much discussion has taken place in connection with the Czechoslovakian difficulty. Very little progress appears to have been made towards a permanent solution. Under these circumstances I feel impelled to ask Your Excellency whether you will immediately consider the wisdom of yourself asking the leading ministers of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Poland to meet together in an informal conference together with yourself or your Secretary of State, for the purpose of discussing how a satisfactory basis of peace might be found. I make this appeal to you as the head of a great State who has repeatedly declared your horror of war and your belief in conference and goodwill as the means by which peace can be established.

I represent a nation living in the centre of an area likely to be affected by another war. My people suffer great hardships owing to causes beyond their control. Even so, we are determined to live at peace if it is humanly possible to do so. But when war starts none can tell where it will spread or when and how it will end. Therefore I trust this appeal will be listened to by your good self with sympathy, and that without delay you will take such action as seems to you appropriate.



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Ljubliana. 4th September, 1938.

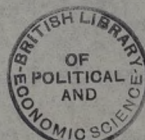
As we are leaving for home to-morrow morning, we should like to say "Au revoir" to all the good friends who have been so kind to us during our short visit to this beautiful country of Jugo-Slavia. We do not presume to pass judgment on the government or administration; we may however be allowed to say that we are convinced that His Royal Highness Prince Paul and his colleagues are doing their utmost to preserve good relationships between all the citizens of this united kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. We outsiders do not desire to express any opinion on any question that may divide. We are however certain that the Prime Minister and his colleagues are determined to co-operate with the Regents and all the nation in creating such conditions as will establish true peace and harmony based on co-operation and goodwill.

These wonderful Balkan states need help from the more wealthy countries. There is no need for us to discuss which nations should give this help. There is scope enough for all.

As to the relationships between Jugo-Slavia and her neighbours we repeat what we have said previously: the Salonica and Bled conferences are a shining example to all Europe as to how international difficulties should be dealt with; and we sincerely hope that as the days pass this example will be followed as regards peace making by all the Great Powers.

We are also very glad to record the fact that in Jugo-Slavia the whole Government is determined to support our proposal that the Van Zeeland Report should be discussed at an international conference to be held without delay. We appreciate the fact that in this country, as elsewhere, all statesmen realise that hunger creates discontent and revolution, that the economic problem is fundamental, and that if they wish for peace statesmen must give up thinking of war and must devote their energies to the imperative task of planning an international economy, which will bring to the service of mankind the blessings of abundance that the mercy of God and human skill provide. We wish Jugo-Slavia and all her neighbours and indeed all Europe and the world, peace, progress and prosperity.

GEORGE LANSBURY
HENRY CARTER
PERCY W. BARTLETT



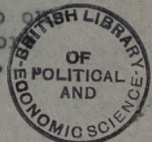
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Memorandum by George Lansbury, 5th September, 1938.

Our stay in South-East Europe was prolonged by three days in order that we might meet H.R.H. Prince Paul, one of the Regents of Jugo-Slavia. Before the meeting on Sunday, September 4th (at 12.30) I often wondered whether such a long wait would be justified. Now that we have met him I am more than satisfied that it was worth while and that we have made contact with one of the most clear-headed and wisest of the rulers in the Balkans. Prince Paul spent his youth and early manhood in England, and was an undergraduate at Christ Church, Oxford, and a fellow student with the present Earl de la Warr, for whom he retains feelings of the very highest esteem and admiration. He was called upon to take the leading part in the government of his country quite suddenly when the late King Alexander was assassinated at Marseilles in 1934. M. Barthou, the French Prime Minister, was killed at the same time. This king had ruled as a dictator, pure and simple. Without Prince Paul's knowledge, he had in his will nominated the Prince and his two present colleagues as Regents. These colleagues are leading citizens in Belgrade and according to the will they possess equal powers with the Prince. It is obvious from all we heard from ministers that Prince Paul is looked up to by the majority of the people as leader of the country, in much the same way as the late King George was looked up to in England.

This young man - he looks under forty - has I feel sure been actuated by no other motive but that of preserving his country from revolution at home and war abroad. He was quite unprepared for high office when without warning he was called upon to take over the reins of government. When we met he told me this whole story, because, as he said, he wished me to understand what a gigantic piece of work was imposed upon him. This country, he said, had been ruled by the iron hand of a dictator; and conditions had been created which threatened the whole future of the nation. National unity had been secured after the war so far as words were concerned; but in fact turbulence prevailed, in many parts. His voice seemed full of sadness as he protested against what he described as the cruel propaganda waged against himself and his government in the British press. More than once he exclaimed: "Why do they write about me in this way?" "What do they hope to gain?" He then went on to say that chaos was the only word to describe the situation he was faced with internally; how could democracy function under such conditions. Slowly, very slowly, order was restored; and to-day he could claim that the country was well governed and on the road to as full and complete a democracy as any country in the world. He is very pained and sore because some influential sections of the British press say that he cannot leave his residences without armed guards and that sometimes indeed he is escorted by machine guns, whereas he drives out unattended by any military escort and only with police, just as do the Royalty at home. We saw along the road at various points the sort of police or soldiers who direct traffic when he is out driving.



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Prince Paul declared that the object of all his efforts is to be able to hand over to the young King when he comes of age in three years time a kingdom united and at peace within its borders. The Great problem is a difficult one. The great peasant leader, M. Macek, wished the Jugo-Slav kingdom to be divided into three; and he has spent many hours at the Castle trying to convert the Prince to his point of view, without success. The Prince seems very confident that his policy of a united kingdom as at present will win, as he is determined that every legitimate grievance shall be removed. On the question of freedom of thought, religion and political opinion, he was emphatic. There is no discrimination between Catholic and Orthodox, but perfect equality. On the political side there is freedom to agitate constitutionally and through Parliament.

The Prince went on to speak of peace and declared that I was right in being a pacifist and with some feeling said that he could not follow my example while remaining the ruler of such a people as those in Jugo-Slavia, who loved freedom and would die to maintain it. He did, however, work for peace and had done so with some success. When power was thrust upon him, Jugo-Slavia was surrounded by enemies. The murders almost precipitated war with Hungary. Coming fresh into the sphere of government, he was able with patience and the help of God to avoid the disaster of war; and now peace prevailed. He was friendly with Italy and Germany, both of which countries were actually neighbours on his frontiers. How could anyone expect him to be otherwise? His first duty was to safeguard his frontiers; and in this he was thankful to know that he had succeeded. He was also at peace with his other neighbours, Bulgaria, Roumania and Hungary, and claimed that the Salonica and Bled agreements had been made possible only because he had taken the lead in bringing about better relations between Turkey and Greece, and later had been instrumental in bringing Bulgaria into good relations with his own people. His object in all this talk about his own work was to convince me that he realised, no one better, the complete futility of armaments and war, and understood as clearly as myself that only through conference and goodwill could peace come to the peoples of the world.

From this we came to my own special work; and he assured me he thought most highly of all we were trying to do through our visits. He said, "You can reckon on me to support any and every effort made by any responsible statesman to bring about a conference at the earliest possible moment." Unless such a conference was soon held the financial strain caused by armament would itself wreck the nation. He had read and thought over the Van Zeeland Report and he hopes very much that King Leopold will move in the matter. He was intrigued by the proposal we have put forward for an international pool formed by a percentage contribution from all nations administered by a truly representative international commission. Jugo-Slavia with its 16 million people, Bulgaria with its 6 millions, possessed fine territories that needed developing. There was no other way than through economic co-operation. We talked a little more on

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this subject; but it is all summed up in what I have written. He is a pacifist quite convinced of the folly of armaments and war, but is ruler of peoples who are not pacifists and who will not agree to live, as they say, defenceless; so he remains directing a peace policy, which, he claims, has succeeded and is succeeding. He is asking for all minorities, not only for Croats, equal rights and equal duties.

We then discussed the question of conscription. He does not admit the case I presented to him. He first assured me that he had within the last few days signed an order for the release of some of those in prison, and when assured me that he would personally go into the whole question again. He understood British opinion on such subjects, especially cruelty to prisoners and differential treatment imposed on men in prison for conscience sake. He was not master in this matter of the Nazarenes and other conscientious objectors. The military were afraid that unless such men were penalised many others would find it easy to escape military service. I did my best to defend our position, and I think he will do his best and will undoubtedly try to be among those who treat these men reasonably. Taking this interview in relation to others, I must say it was one of the most frank and unreserved of all. He evaded no difficult question and did his best to make his opinions and policy clear. He assured me of his support for a new conference and of his willingness to do what is possible for Nazarenes and C.O's.

After this interview he asked me to lunch, and asked Percy Bartlett and Henry Carter to join us. I am very sorry they were not in at the interview. The lunch was a most homely, friendly gathering and gave me an opportunity for a short talk with the Duke of Kent. All the Royalties were unaffectedly kind and without any effort made us feel at home.



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TELEGRAM. 26th September, 1938.

His Excellency, Herr Hitler.
Nuremberg.

As a private Englishman, respectfully beg you give new lead for permanent peace. You have often said "Another great war will smash civilisation and leave the world in chaos and ruin". As an Englishman who dearly loves his own native land and earnestly desires well-being of others, may I urge you to invite leading statesmen of Europe to meet you in conference and face to face discuss not merely how to avoid war, but to get rid of the conditions which make wars possible. All the world is faced with new economic conditions. There is room enough for all and tremendous undeveloped markets. The genius and skill of your great nation, coupled with the long experience of my countrymen, will, if used in co-operation and goodwill, not only save the world from ruin but give a lead to mankind away from the spirit of war and start us along a road towards peace and security.

This appeal comes from an "old man" with whom you kindly discussed these questions in Berlin eighteen months ago. I have travelled the world seeking peace, urgently trying to find a Statesman who would give the a new lead. You are speaking to the world on Monday. All will listen. Not because of physical fear, but because everyone understands as you do the horrible deadly loss war will mean to everybody. Europe is still reaping the hideous results of the last war. These evils can only be cured through goodwill and cooperation. I beg you give this appeal your immediate and favourable consideration. These days are too serious and too dangerous for delay. Call European statesman to the Council chamber. Throw out a new challenge. Bid them join you in giving up reliance upon armaments, violence and war, and together join in a mighty effort to build international relationships, on the basis of cooperation, common sense and truth.

"Blessed are the peacemakers" -- May you be one.

GEORGE LANSBURY.



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G. L.
[R. c. 15 Sept. 1938] (239)
Memorandum

King Boris of Bulgaria asked me to call and see him on Wednesday, September 14th, at the Ritz Hotel. We spent about fifty minutes together and discussed his own problems of government and the world situation. In some ways he appears the most modern and simple of the rulers I have met. He dresses very quietly, talks with an ease and freedom which reminded me of some of the working people with whom I talk. He has, however, a quite natural dignity, takes his work very seriously indeed, is a firm believer in democracy. He says freedom is in the blood of all Bulgarians, but the full expression in terms of government administration cannot yet, if ever, be the same as in Britain. He is not very anxious about the form of democracy. In effect he said, as did Prince Paul, "The letter killeth, the spirit maketh alive". He is a firm inflexible unashamed Christian, member I think of the Greek Orthodox Church. He confesses quite simply the older he grows the stronger is his faith. He looked at my pacifist button and was impressed by "We say no", which gave me a chance to put in a word for C.O.'s. He puts the blame for rearmament on the Great Powers, is certain the Balkan States will not go to war about minorities or revision, though he hopes some concession will be made of territories, but this will not cause war. He knows Herr Hitler quite well and thinks a great mistake has been made by everybody who has talked at him. He condemns the persecution etc., but thinks we all should remember what conditions produced "Nazism". On his way home he is going to see his father, who is dying in Germany, and then intends seeing Herr Hitler and hopes to help the work of appeasement. He has known Herr Hitler for many years and is sure he has no ambition but to help Germany become strong and powerful. He is quite certain he knows the end of war, and is of opinion that France, Germany and Britain could lead the world. This, as some who read this may remember, was the view of our American friend in Paris.

The outstanding thought behind all references to Germany is that Germans and English are all of one root, now very mixed, but still the two nations are much alike. Each has something to give to a new and better civilisation, and if war again came - which God forbid - it would be a defiance of all the laws which should govern human relationships. I don't know if he knew while talking with me of Neville's projected visit - I think he did. I did not. But when the news came out I remembered how insistent he was that personal contact is the one way of discussion which is effective with the Fuehrer. He seemed to know all about my visit and the impression left behind me. As to our visit, he was unfeignedly delighted, because, as he said (not I, please!), we did really gauge - or as he said, weigh up - the situation of his people accurately. We had tried to understand the past and were content to see Bulgarians as



M 449

[P.S. 15 Sept. 1958] (240)

as they are, turning their fine courageous spirit to the enormous task of developing life. He was distressed that any amount of capital could be had for armaments, but very little for national development. He had heard of our big meeting, and thought the mere fact that an Englishman thought it worth while to speak in that way in Sofia must help his people. Of course they in Bulgaria have a long way to go before they truly break with the past. As in Roumania and Jugo-Slavia, the memory of the terrible struggles of the past when the Turks held the Balkan peoples in bondage cannot be wiped out. All the same, Moslem, Jew and Christian were living side by side without persecution, racial or religious. There was a lot more of the same sort.

I can best close by saying: he is a true lover of England, and thinks we are the one people to lead the world. We must, however, be givers as well as takers. He knows not merely believes that religion is the only true foundation on which a life which will last can be built. He is a true opponent of armaments, but his people won't disarm until Europe is quieter. He thinks peace between Germany and Britain and the world is not only possible but must be brought about. The Czech difficulties are principally the fault of the treaties, which blindly tore nations into pieces. If Britain, France or America had minorities on their frontiers as Germany has, there would be no peace till these were restored to the bigger powers. The Balkans were different. None were powerful enough to call in question the injustices of the peace treaties, and none now wished for war to right the wrong, because it is impossible. He will work hard day and night thinking and working to give his people a fuller life.

Finally, he was extremely kind in his references to myself and my journeys, and said what Baldwin once said - There must be something inside you which enables you to hold on. I am very glad to have been able to meet face to face these four rulers and discover how human each in his own way is. All are different in many ways one from another, but all are united in hatred of war and in a firm determination to work for the good of the people committed to their charge. None claim to be governing according to our view of democracy. I fancy if driven into a corner they would declare that counting ignorant heads is not democracy, but that the spirit which enables people to unite round a leader is as good an expression of the popular will as is shown in our American or British general election.

GEORGE LANSBURY.

241

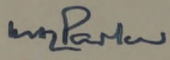
HOME OFFICE
WHITEHALL,
S.W.1.

16th September, 1938.

Dear Sir,

I am desired by the Home Secretary to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th September with regard to the case of Herr Siegmund Heine and Frau Erwina Heine, which shall have attention.

Yours faithfully,



Private Secretary.

The Rt. Hon.
G. Lansbury, M.P.



M449

THE CRISIS OVER CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Statement by Mr. George Lansbury, M.P., to his constituents on
September 20th, 1938.

We are meeting in hard and difficult times, especially for pacifists. My faith, however, remains sure and certain. I am an unrepentant, determined opponent of war. There is nothing in the world which can excuse or justify the ruthless slaughter still taking place in China and Spain. If these wars are extended, European civilisation will be smashed.

The Great War slaughtered and maimed in body and mind over a hundred million men, women and children. We shall never know the cost in human misery and suffering of any war. But we do know the Great War did not save democracy, did not abolish militarism, but laid the foundations of evil upon which has been created the world situation facing us today. The Franco-German war of 1870-71, the Russo-Turkish war in 1876, the Balkans wars in 1912, all created conditions which led up to the Great War. And now today all Europe is again armed to the teeth, prepared for another universal blood-bath.

Since the last General Election over a period of three years I have travelled all Europe and a large part of America, imploring statesmen to act before it became too late and come together in a conference of all nations and discuss the problems connected with peace and war, and by goodwill and common sense find a way out of the muddle and mess caused by the so-called peace treaties. All statesmen said "Yes, such a conference must be called", but none took any steps to call it, until last week Mr. Chamberlain courageously decided himself to go and see Herr Hitler and endeavour to find a means by which present difficulties could be solved. Everybody of all sections of people who care for the future of the race earnestly hope these discussions will lead to a just, real and lasting peace. I have the most profound respect for Dr. Benes and Dr. Hodza and also for their colleagues and nation. They know my views about war and peace, because I gave a lecture on Pacifism in Prague last December. We in Britain, whatever our opinions may be, who at the moment are living in safety, dare not advise any small people to accept war as an alternative to proposals now being considered. Many good people advised the Emperor of Abyssinia



G.L.
20 Sept 1938

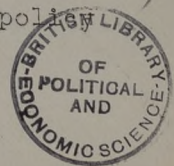
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as to his policy; we all know the result.

Do not let us deceive ourselves. The choice before Europe is an effort to secure a lasting peace, or universal slaughter, with a complete loss of a thousand years of progress.

I want to make you clearly understand my objection to war. My conviction is that war is an offence and a crime against God and humanity, that is, a crime against the laws of God; and because it is this, war has always failed and must fail to give mankind peace and security. It is this terrible truth embodied in war and its ghastly futility which the Czechs and the world must face. Everybody who believes in right and truth and justice must and does sympathise with small nations when they are oppressed. Many of us have given our sympathy to the people of Ireland, India and elsewhere. But always we declared our faith, "Force cannot outlaw force, evil cannot conquer evil". Do not forget that all South-Eastern Europe is honeycombed with minorities, most of whom desire changes in the settlements imposed upon them by the futile folly of the old men who made the peace treaties. Before a settlement of any of these minority problems can be reached much discussion, much patience and goodwill will have to be exercised. I know from what I heard during my recent visits with my colleagues that the Balkan States are doing their utmost to face the situation before them through the methods of cooperation and goodwill. Everyone desires the Czech difficulties should be settled in that way; but the decision on these matters is not in our hands. We pacifists hate persecution, tyranny, and the mailed fist, by whomsoever it is used. We are, however, convinced that if the present crisis ends in universal war our last state will be worse than the first. It is not fear of our own lives, but the horrible fact that when the slaughter is over nothing is gained - everything is lost. I have seen people like ourselves in every country of Europe and in many parts of America; all of them long for peace just as we do; they ask nothing from life but the right to earn their daily bread. Unless all statesmen are mad they will, even at this eleventh hour, come together and with one consent determine to find a way out. The deadly disease of power politics, economic rivalry, financial jugglery, all must be eliminated from international life. The peoples of the world must unite to secure a new approach, the Christian approach, to these problems, such an approach as will lead the world away from the unreason of war to the way of life, through justice, common sense and reason.

And please, all who read this remember: our pacifist policy has not yet failed: it has never yet been tried.



244

SECRETARY :
W. H. BUCKLER,
50 MATLOCK ST.

WYCLIFFE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
COLLEGE STREET (END OF PREBEND STREET), LEICESTER

TREASURER :
MRS. W. H. BUCKLER,
50 MATLOCK ST.

MINISTER: THE REV. SEAWARD BEDDOW, B.A. 108 LONDON ROAD
TELEPHONE: LEICESTER 65374.

Sept. 26th. 1938.

Mr. George Lansbury, M.P.
House of Commons,
London, S.W.1.

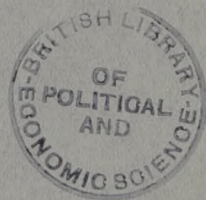
My dear Mr. Lansbury,

The enclosed resolution was passed unanimously at Wycliffe Congregational Church last night (Sunday) by the members and congregation. You will perhaps remember Wycliffe as being the Leicester Church that has welcomed you on more than one occasion. We all thought we should like you to have the terms of the Resolution to encourage you in your mission seeking to bring about a Conference of an international kind. God bless you. We thank God for you.

My wife joins me in all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Seaward Beddow



M449

see above, letter 26.9.38 from Rev. S. Bettow

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Copy of resolution passed by members and
congregation of WYCLIFFE CHURCH, LEICESTER,
Sunday, Sept. 25th, 1938.

" This meeting urges the Government
to take immediate steps and call into
council the leaders of all European
states, including Russia, to deal with
the economic, racial and frontier disputes
now endangering the peace of the world.

This is believed to offer a sane,
statesman-like and Christian way out of
the present armed rivalries now dividing
the peoples of Europe, the majority of
whom have no desire for war!



M449

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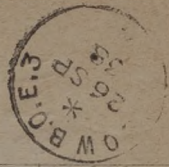
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(Thomas) Edmund
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From

To

GEORGE LANSBURY 39 BOW RD LONDON E 3 =

Amph
Bm 5022

WILL YOU CABLE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT URGING HIM TO
CONVENE IMMEDIATE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATES FOR
PEACE SETTLEMENT? APPEND IF YOU THINK FIT OTHER
NAMES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT = EDMUND HARVEY 52453

LEEDS

+ e repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form and, if possible, the envelope.

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M449



G. L.

247

to Edward Benes^v
(1884-1948).

39 Bow Road
London, E.3.

26th September 1938.

My dear Dr Benes

The world's peace may now depend upon your accepting further sacrifices and giving way before the further demands, backed by the threat of force, thus letting force appear to win the victory.

This is the sacrifice Christ made, an unconditional sacrifice. "He that smiteth thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also, and he that taketh away thy cloke let him have thy coat also".

General war is the worst evil of all. To accept the German terms now may be the greatest, strongest act possible to statesmanship, releasing new spiritual forces. Not law now, but only grace, is strong enough. Friendship to aggressors, without limit, is the way of Christ.

My friends and I here, who cannot share this sacrifice with you, would ourselves wish to meet all tyranny in this spirit, and if war came, to meet all its sufferings in a like way.

Will you please allow me to ^{express to} you and to your people my deepest sympathy in this time of terrible difficulty, and to wish you from my heart a happy issue.

Our prayers are with you. God is with you.

Yours truly

George Lansbury

His Excellency the President of the
Republic of Czechoslovakia.



M449

G.L.

COPY.

248

TELEGRAM.

26th Sept.1938.

President Roosevelt.
Washington.

Warm thanks for your splendid appeal. Beg you
consider following up by asking European Statesman to
meet you round Conference table.

GEORGE LANSBURY.



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From

G 13 10.20 FLAMBOROUGH 71

To

GEORGE LANSBURY M P BOW LDN =

BRITISH LIBRARY
OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCE

M449

WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO WITHDRAW GERMAN AND CZECH TROOP
20 MILES APART TO AVOID INCIDENTS AND REPLACE Y
INTERNATIONAL POLICE FORCE INCLUDING LARGE CONTINGENT OF
QUAKERS PEACE PLEDGE UNION AND OXFORD GROUP TO RUN

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From M

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To _____

M449

George Lansbury.

CANTEENS AND DO EVERYTHING TO CREATE FRIENDLY FEELING
THIS WOULD GIVE BREATHING SPACE TO BE FOLLOWED BY
THOROUGH REVISION OF VERSAILLES TREATY CANNOT SOME
GESTURE BE MADE = SPENCER HURST WHALEYBRIDGE +

* 20 * repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form
of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form and, if possible, the envelope.

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H. Williams

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10.56.
From RA

To _____ m

GEORGE LANSBURY MP 39 BOW ROAD LDN E 3 =

BELOVED SIR . THE WHOLE OF GREAT BRITAINS CIVILIAN
POPULATION IS UNPROTECTED AGAINST AIR ATTACK . AIR RAID
PRECAUTIONS ARE ONLY IN THEIR INFANCY AND AT PRESENT
ARE PRACTICALLY USELESS . EVERY TRUTHFUL LOCAL
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL WILL CORROBORATE THIS STATEMENT . c
PLEASE BRING THIS HOME TO PRIME MINISTER MINISTER OF

Charges to pay

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H. Williams

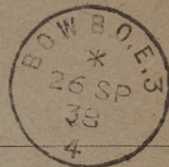
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10.56p

m

D19 10.4 Lincoln 101

From

To

DEFENCE AND PARLIAMENT WITHOUT DISCLOSING INFORMATION
TO FOREIGN POWERS. HOW CAN ANY GOVERNMENT GO TO WAR
TO PROTECT ANOTHER COUNTRY AND LEAVE ALMOST COMPLETELY
UNPROTECTED THEIR OWN CIVILIAN POPULATION. MAY GOD
BLESS YOU IN YOUR EFFORTS FOR PEACE. = H. WILLIAMS +

CT 39 3 +

...ion of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form
ery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form and, if possible, the envelope.

B or C

Presbyterian College,
Camarthen
27.9.38

W. D. Glyn Evans

Dear Sir,

253

I hope you will co-operate with the G. L. P. in forcing a division in the House on this war issue. Just to show it is not unanimous. No doubt you feel as most of us here feel, that the G. L. P. does give us fascists the moral backing we need in this difficult time.

Please make your voice heard to-morrow in the House immediately the opportunity arises in debate.

We feel the official

2.

27.9.1938

254

Rev. D. Glyn Evans

Labour Party has chosen
the path of chief publicity
at the expense of consistency
principle.

Please plead for the
right of liberty of conscience
& free speech as our privileges
are endangered in the event
of war. Fascism prevents these
in the interest of the State.
It will be in the interest
of the State in time of war
they will be prevented here.
Please plead for this. If they
want to fight fascism -
let them at the same time
guarantee here - what the
fascist refuses - free speech
& respect for conscience.



M449

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Central Telegraph
Office, E.C.1.

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GW D

From _____

League of Nations Union:
Lochaber Branch

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TELEGRAM

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9 8.30 FORTWILLIAM 29

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To _____

GEORGE LANSBURY HOUSE OF COMMONS =

THE PEACE OF THE WORLD CAN BE SECURED BY YOUR TEACHING

USE YOUR POLICY AND LEAGUE ACTION TO FULL ADVANTAGE

= LOCHABER BRANCH LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION +

For free repetition of doubtful words telephone "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form and, if possible, the envelope.

B or C
C

COPY.

27th Sept. 1938.

Telegram sent by Muriel Lester to Lord Halifax.

(Edw. Fred. Lindley Wood, 3rd Viscount Halifax)

We assure you of our sympathy and constant spiritual co-operation and, inspired by the memory of Gandhi-Irwin Pact, still believe neither men nor nations are impervious to active and persistent goodwill and that the time of deepest anxiety may be the time of greatest opportunity. Is the Government prepared to make a courageous public statement acknowledging mistakes of Versailles Treaty? Will it broadcast from London in various languages an invitation to all nations to meet in conference, and submit to sincere examination all grievances? Must not we as well as Czechoslovakia make sacrifices for peace? This may be the moral lead for which the world is waiting.

MURIEL LESTER.

(This was sent personally and not as representing any particular society)

His Excellency, Chancellor Hitler.
Berlin.

Sent 12.45 p.m.
28th Sept. 1938.

Implore you respond favourably to Roosevelt's appeal and give yourself honour of saving world from disaster.

GEORGE LANSBURY.



M449