

William Gillies

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# THE LABOUR PARTY

*Hon. Secretary:*

RT. HON. ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.

*Assistant Secretary:* J. S. MIDDLETON.

TRANSPORT HOUSE (South Block),

SMITH SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1.

*International Department:*

*Secretary:* W. GILLIES.

October 25, 1933.

The Rt. Hon. G. Lansbury, M.P.,  
39 Bow Road,  
Bow, 3.

My dear G.L.,

I enclose a note upon Locarno, which, I think, contains what you want. In view of the existence of the old Advisory Committee Memorandum, I did not write a new exposition of the Treaties.

It will be observed that the Party voted for ratification, but expressed the regret that the Treaties did not contain definite provisions concerning Disarmament, being of opinion that the real test of the Treaty depended upon whether it was followed by disarmament.

Last week there was a general discussion of the situation by the Advisory Committee. Fourteen members were present. They were unanimous in the opinion that the Disarmament Conference should carry on and work out a Convention, with or without Germany. But they decided to make no recommendation to the National Executive. If we had gone beyond this conclusion, we may not have found ourselves in complete agreement. But the discussion will go on. An examination of our obligations under Locarno will certainly be undertaken. It is a serious matter upon which a precipitate declaration might not find universal agreement if there has been no prior discussion. I presume that the subject will be discussed, if necessary, at a later date, by the Parliamentary Party and the National Executive.



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The declarations of the German Government are not without ambiguity. Until we know more clearly what they intend, we shall not possess the information to enable us to come to a decision, even about Locarno.

Article 10 of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee provides that "it shall enter into force as soon as the ratifications have been deposited and Germany has become a Member of the League of Nations."

Does it cease to have any force when Germany has ceased to be a Member of the League of Nations?

I am not a lawyer, but I do not think so.

If the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee ceases to be binding, it might be held that the Arbitration Treaties between Germany, on the one hand, and Belgium, France, Poland and Czechoslovakia on the other hand, also cease to have any validity, as they are Treaties which determine the methods by which, as provided in Art. 3 of the Treaty Mutual Guarantee, a peaceful solution shall be obtained of all questions that cannot be settled amicably between the parties to them. And if all the Locarno Treaties go, and Germany ceases to be a Member of the League of Nations, there is nothing left binding Germany to the rest of the world in peace except the Kellogg Pact and her signature of the Optional Clause of the Permanent Court. But the latter is terminable.

My own opinion is that the Treaties stand whether Germany is a Member of the League of Nations or not. But I am merely an honest amateur. International lawyers, especially German, will spill a lot of ink upon this subject. If Hitler has struck out all the Treaties which pivot upon the Council of the League of Nations, then the outlook is very black indeed.

You will also have observed that the coming into force of the Treaty itself is not made to depend upon the conclusion of a Disarmament Treaty. In the Protocol, (not in the Treaty itself) the signatories declare their firm conviction that the entry into force of these treaties and conventions would hasten effectively the disarmament provided for in Art 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations

There is another point which, I think, deserves mention. The Beaverbrook clan wants us to withdraw

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from Locarno and the League - in fact, to give a free hand to Hitler, hoping that Soviet Russia will be a victim. But the "Daily Mail" both advocates the abrogation of the ambiguous Locarno obligations and points out that the British public will then have to consider whether they will conclude a straight military and naval alliance with France??

It follows from the above argument that if Great Britain withdrew from Locarno, the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee would cease to exist, because Italy would then withdraw, and the ancillary conciliation treaties might also cease to exist.

But can Great Britain withdraw from Locarno? The Treaty contains no provision for denunciation, and it is considered to be subversive of all international law if one party to such a treaty should denounce the treaty because public opinion had changed. Germany cannot withdraw from the Treaty of Versailles. But Sir Stafford Cripps, in his capacity as a lawyer, can give you a better opinion upon this matter than an honest, logical Scotsman without legal training, who knows no Latin. The principles in this matter are all expressed in Latin tags. But there seem to be two schools of thought: those who think that when you have made a bad bargain, you can quit, and those you think that you can't.

Having voted against, you are morally free of any obligation.

Yours sincerely,

*William Gillies*

Wm. Gibbis  
with letter 25 Oct. 1933

LOCARNO

Treaty of Mutual Guarantee.

In the House of Commons, (November 8, 1925)  
the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Austen  
Chamberlain) moved:

"That this House approves the ratification of  
the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, initialled at  
Locarno on 16th October, 1925, and annexed to the  
Final Protocol signed on that date."

The relevant White Paper is Miscellaneous  
No. 11 (1925) Cmd. 2525, 1925.

Mr. Ponsonby, on behalf of the Labour Party,  
moved, to leave out from the word "House" to the end of the  
Question, and to add instead thereof the words:

"while agreeing to the ratification of the Treaty  
of Mutual Guarantee initialled at Locarno on 16th  
October, 1925, and annexed to the Final Protocol  
signed on that date, and while approving the various  
provisions for arbitration in the Treaty and express-  
ing satisfaction at the impending entry of Germany  
into the League of Nations and at the improvement in  
international relations evinced at Locarno, is of  
opinion that the real test of the Treaty depends upon  
whether it is followed by disarmament and regrets  
that it does not contain definite provisions concern-  
ing disarmament; and this House is further of  
opinion that the Treaty should be followed by positive  
steps to secure the adherence of Russia to the League  
of Nations and its participation in European agree-  
ments."

Upon this amendment, the voting was:

For, 130; Against, 332; Total Number of Members Voting, 462.

The question was then put upon the motion by  
Mr. Austen Chamberlain. There voted: For, 375; Against, 13;  
Total Number of Members Voting, 388.

Therefore, it may be presumed that 74 Members  
who took part in the First Division, abstained from voting  
upon the main motion, and that they were <sup>mostly</sup> Labour Members.

The 13 persons who voted against the main



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motion were Hore Belisha, and 12 Members of the Labour Party:

Bromley, Buchanan, Connolly, Cove, Grenfell, Lansbury, Maclean, Saklatvala, Scurr, Wallhead, Wedgwood, Windsor and tellers; Thurtle and Dunnico.

X X X

A Memorandum on the Pact of Locarno, submitted to the National Executive before the Debate, is annexed.

X X X

Some of the observations made by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the course of his speech may usefully be quoted:

British Obligations. "What is the obligation that we undertake? There is no case in which we can be called upon to take military action except in pursuance of the Covenant and the action of the League, or where action is taken by one of the Parties in breach of its obligations which leads to such an immediate danger that you cannot wait even the few days that may be necessary for the meeting of the Council. In that case the British Government of the day remains the judge, and the only judge, of whether that case of immediate danger has arisen.... Each guarantor is judge of whether circumstances have arisen which bring its guarantee into immediate play.."

Violation of the Demilitarised Zone. "Under Art.44 of the Treaty of Versailles, the Signatory Powers are entitled to consider any breach of any provision of Arts. 42 and 43 as a hostile act by Germany against each of them. Any one of these hostile acts might have led to war. Now we provide that immediate war follows only if the act is of such a character that delay becomes dangerous to the innocent party and might be fatal to his safety.... Suppose a siding is constructed for military purposes. That is an infringement of the Treaty. Suppose a fortress is erected. That is an infringement of the Treaty. But these things cannot be done in a day. The fact that some workmen are at work here or there is not a case for war. These are cases which should go through the process of judicial decision and conciliation provided in the Treaty. It is only in cases where any delay endangers the security of any innocent party that we contemplate action before the decision of the Council has been given, and even then we provide that the Council shall still be seized of the matter and that when it does give its decision we will all conform to it."

Wm. Gillet  
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It will be observed that in the first passage already quoted, Sir Austen Chamberlain said that "there is no case in which we can be called upon to take military action except..." The words "military action" are not used in the Treaty. In the case of a flagrant violation of Art. 2 of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, or of a flagrant breach of Arts. 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles, the other Contracting Parties undertake immediately "to come to the help of the Party against whom such a violation or breach has been directed..."

It would appear that in such a case Great would be free to decide whether help in the form of military action was possible or necessary.

with Wm Gilman letter  
25 Oct. 1933

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Private and Confidential.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS      No. 340 A.      JOINT INTERNATIONAL  
AND  
THE LABOUR PARTY.      November 1925.      DEPARTMENT.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS.

MEMORANDUM ON THE PACT OF LOCARNO.

I.

The Pact as it now appears is undoubtedly greatly improved as compared with the kind of agreement which was outlined in the diplomatic Notes published during the summer of 1925. It should be remembered that the discussions of the Advisory Committee were based on those Notes.

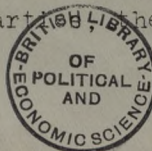
No doubt M. Vandervelde has had considerable influence in introducing the 'League of Nations element' into the Pact. The League of Nations is brought in at every possible point.

(1) Under the Arbitration Treaties between Germany on one side and France and Belgium on the other, (Article III), the League of Nations Council is called in if the recommendations of the Conciliation Commission are unacceptable.

(2) In connection with the British guarantee of the undertakings not to make war (Article II) and of the demilitarisation of the Rhineland (Treaty of Versailles, Articles 42 and 43), the League of Nations Council has to decide whether a violation or breach has taken place - though in the case of "flagrant violation" the parties are to act first and consult the League of Nations Council afterwards, - undertaking to act in accordance with its recommendations, if unanimous except for the parties to the dispute. (Article IV).

(3) The duty of the League of Nations in questions of dispute is not to be restricted by the Pact. (Article VII)

(4) If the Council decides that the League can ensure sufficient protection to the parties, the Treaty of Locarno will lapse. (Article VIII).



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(5) The Treaty will not come into force unless and until Germany enters the League. (Article X). This is perhaps the most important point of all. It is impossible to exaggerate the possible effect of this.

(6) The Pact represents a further stage in the re-conciliation of the Western Powers who fought in the War. Negotiations took place on equal terms, though not more so than in the London Conference negotiations (1924) under the Labour Government.

(7) The Pact was accompanied by certain promises or indications regarding the evacuation of Cologne, and the immediate modification of the conditions of Occupation in the Rhineland - which, however, the Allied Powers refused to reduce to writing.

(8) The actual Arbitration Treaties, albeit limited to groups of States, are entirely in line with Labour policy. They extend and amplify the provisions of the Covenant.

(9) The declaration in the Final Protocol to the effect that the entry into force of the Treaties "will help powerfully towards the solution of many political and economic problems" and will "hasten on effectively the Disarmament provided for in Article 8 of the Covenant", and that the Powers concerned will "seek the realisation" of Disarmament in a general agreement, undoubtedly reflect the spirit of the Protocol, and we have to remember that all the Parties other than Great Britain are still ready to accept the Protocol.

II.

But while these considerations remove some of the objections which the Labour Party has felt hitherto to the proposed Pact, (see resolution of Parliamentary Party, March 18th, 1925, and Labour Party Annual Conference, October 1st, 1925)



they by no means remove them altogether.

(1) The Pact is undoubtedly a "form of limited military alliance or guarantee". Such alliances have been in the past and may be again, used for purposes other than those specified in them. The enthusiasm with which the Capitalist press supports the Pact is undoubtedly due to the possibility of its being used against Russia, at least in a defensive sense. The Pact, it may be added, is not open to any other country to join (like the regional agreements under the Protocol of Geneva).

(2) Among the Powers concerned in the Pact, military action may be taken, without any arbitration procedure being required, in the following cases:-

(a) The Parties to the Arbitration Treaties themselves and also Great Britain as guarantor of the Western Arbitration Treaties, retain altogether unimpaired their "rights and obligations" under the Treaty of Versailles or under agreements which have arisen out of that Treaty.

But all disputes of every kind, and therefore all disputes about the interpretation of those rights and obligations, must be submitted at the instance of any one of the Parties to the procedure of peaceful settlement. France, however, apart from the admitted right of "self-defence", may resort to military action, without arbitration, if she holds that Germany has committed a flagrant breach of the "demilitarisation" clauses "if such breach constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression and by reason of the assembling of armed forces in the demilitarised zone immediate action is necessary".

(b) All the contracting Parties (including, of course, Great Britain) undertake to come to the help of the Party concerned without any arbitration procedure in case of a "flagrant violation" either of Article II of the Pact (the mutual undertakings not to make war) or of Articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles - though the League Council is afterwards to issue its findings, and they undertake to act in accordance with its recommendations, if concurred in by all the members other than those who have engaged in hostilities. This is a very serious and significant loophole in the Treaty. The points to be determined may be very complex ones. They involve deciding whether the violation "constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression" (there is no formal definition of aggression as in the Protocol of Geneva), and whether "by reason either of the crossing of the frontier or of the outbreak of hostilities or of the assembly of armed forces in the demilitarised zone, immediate action is necessary". The Mosul dispute is alone sufficient to show that these questions are not

simple. It should be noted that Art. 42 of the Treaty of Versailles deals with the maintaining or constructing of any fortifications. Could there be a breach of this so "flagrant" as to justify immediate war without resort to any arbitral procedure?

*under the Covenant*

(c) In cases where a dispute comes before the Council and the Council cannot agree, the parties to the dispute have the "right of war". In the Rhineland Pact there is an engagement by France, Belgium and Germany that in the above event, they will only resort to war against the State which was the first to attack. This engagement is included in the things guaranteed by Great Britain in Art. 4. The Party which is the first to attack, if this fact can be established, loses the help of the guarantors. *This is an attempt at improvement of the Covenant procedure.*

(3) Great Britain's obligations are very heavy.

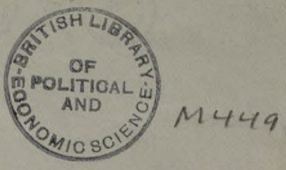
We guarantee the inviolability of the Western frontiers of Germany and the observance of the demilitarisation clauses (Art. 1.), the observance of Art. 2 (undertakings by Germany not to make war on France and Belgium, and vice versa).

But all these guarantees apply only in the cases mentioned in Art, 4 and it is important to realise that we are protected (in the first case under Art. 4) by the rule of unanimity on the Council, and (in the second case, i.e. flagrant violation) by our own right of decision on the matter. We can only guarantee these things by going to war with the Party which we consider to be in the wrong.

It should also be remembered that the subject of dispute, (in which a breach of the Pact has originated), may be "any" dispute that may arise between parties to the Arbitration Conventions (see Art. 1 of those Conventions), and not only disputes about the Franco-German frontier.

Note further that the Dominions do not join in these obligations, though these guarantees must affect Empire defence generally. Serious objections were raised by our military and naval experts to the Protocol; it is hard to see how they are met by the Pact.

The view of the Labour Party has hitherto been pre-



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sumably that such military obligations are so serious that they could only be justified if undertaken in support of a general system of pacific settlement - i.e. for the supreme object of world peace.

(4) No scheme of disarmament is combined with the Pact, though it is vaguely spoken of in the Final Protocol. Nor will so limited a measure of security go far to make Disarmament possible.

(5) The Treaties of Locarno, taken as a whole, cannot be regarded as equal and reciprocal as between Germany and other Powers so long as Germany is disarmed and they are armed. Is it to be supposed e.g. that Great Britain would in fact be as ready to support Germany as she would be to support France or Belgium?

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*John*

[WAR Gibbs 2504.4933]

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British and U.S.A. Proposals  
to the  
Disarmament Conference.

Land Armies

The U.S.A. proposal probably involves no reduction in the numbers of the British Armed Forces.

The British statement says 'so far as His Majesty's Government understands the implication of the suggested basis of calculation'.

There is apparently some doubt on the point? What does H.M.G. understand?

100,000, as is commonly understood, or, as is believed by others (in France), 200,000? by virtue of a decision of the Supreme Council or the Ambassadors' Conference communicated officially to Germany soon after the Versailles Conference?

If the basic figure is 200,000, it is believed that France will agree to one-third reduction of the difference between their standing army and the 'police component' and 'defence component', if other countries do the same. France, too, has a Great Empire.

It is not from France (under Socialist Party influence and threats) that the strongest opposition to the U.S.A. proposals in general will come, but from Great Britain and Japan.

Land Guns

The proposals of the two Governments do not seem to present points of disagreement. Why should they? The British won't abolish the tank, and want new battleships with 11" or 12" guns. Therefore, why not 6.1" guns for countries without great armies of tanks and big navies?



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MAIDA VALE,  
2311.

Mrs. John Foults (Maid)

59, ABBEY ROAD, N.W.

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Dear Mr. Lamb King -

I can't refrain from sending  
these few lines to congratulate you  
on your splendid record for ideas in  
4 days. Eternally yours  
John

"Alas: You certainly are in a  
pretty tough corner, & everyone will  
work you well, & that will  
hurt."

heartily.

I'm trying to see my home &  
come & live in Poplar with us  
children & do some work here  
if I succeed you'll hear more of it!

(with John Foults) Maida Foults

Oct 29.  
[1933]

MAIDA VALE,  
2811.

Ms. John Foulds (Maid)

59, ABBEY ROAD, N.W.

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hear we have been -

I can't refrain from reading  
these few lines to congratulate you  
on your splendid record for ideas in  
4 days. Eternally - yesterday

"Alas" you certainly are in a  
pretty tough corner, & everyone will  
wish you well, & that was!

hearing.

I'm trying to see my home &  
come & live in Poplar with us  
children & do some work here

If I succeed you'll hear more of it!

Your very sincerely

(Wright Foulds) Maud Foulds

Oct 29.  
[1933]

WELBECK 4468  
BROADCASTS LONDON

BROADCASTING HOUSE  
LONDON W. 1

4/10  
Personal  
Sir John Charles Walsham Reith  
1889-

30th October 1933.

PRIVATE.

Dear Mr. Keynes,

I do not see much of what appears about me in newspapers, nor read much of what I see, but someone gave me your "John Bull" article, and I read that. Even when I do read attacks I do not do anything about them, but I am doing something about this - in writing to you - because I am sorry that you should make such an attack. It is quite unjustifiable. There is little in your article which I might not have written myself.

Of course you could not know that I thought I was talking at a private gathering of the Aldwych Club; that I did not decide what to talk about until a few minutes before I began; that I had no notes or connected thoughts in my mind and delivered my address most informally; and that I did not know till two hours later that any reporters were present. But I am sure you do realise that there are things that one can say in a certain style to a certain audience and in a certain atmosphere, which would not give rise to any misunderstandings, but which most certainly would in other circumstances.

I am particularly sorry that you have given a class and political interpretation to some of my reported observations. Not only was there nothing of the sort possible in my mind, but I should doubt whether a verbatim report - if such were available - could reasonably be so interpreted.



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SE John CW Reith

WELBECK 4468  
BROADCASTS LONDON

BROADCASTING HOUSE

LONDON W. 1

30 Oct. 1933

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You say, for instance, that my conception of the working class is ridiculous. I did not mention the working class, nor indicate anywhere what my conception was. On examination you might find it not very different from your own. As to knowing the working man, as I rose at 4.45 a.m. for five years and worked a 56-hour week in a factory with three hours' evening classes in the winter-time in addition, and as I was associated with engineering concerns until I came to my present job, I think I should know something about him, and I have not lost touch with my former associates by a long way. *I said I had much satisfaction in being myself a tradesman fitter.*

I wonder what gave you to suppose that I did not think that a man who worked at cleaning sewers, for example, was not just as much entitled as you or I to a full life? I can find nothing, nor could I suggest such a thing. And did I imply that any work was not honourable work? I am quite as conscious as you that service to the community and to mankind is not to be measured alone in terms of power, but as often, if not oftener, in terms of humble service conscientiously and honourably done; and certainly I am aware that on such service the community must always depend. The fact that I did not happen to refer to this should surely not be taken to mean that I overlook it, still less deride it. I was dealing with a specific point, and a point which I still think needs to be dealt with, and I cannot believe that you do not share my experience of misfits and unhappy lives, often due to want of guidance, encouragement and stimulation during adolescence.

Of course there are people who must have their children earn money as soon as possible, but there are



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Sir John C. W. Reith

WELBECK 4468  
BROADCASTS LONDON

BROADCASTING HOUSE

LONDON W. 1

30 Oct. 1933

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lots of parents who are not so circumstanced, and who could manage to put their children through a proper training so that their later earning capacity and prospects were greater.

It is always easy to flatter people; but good service is perhaps sometimes rendered by saying an unpopular thing if it stirs people up to greater consideration for others and greater effort.

Where did I say that the starving unemployed are without ambition? If I could be read as referring to the unemployed at all, it would be to the effect that they were not responsible for their unemployment, and certainly that a great many who are having unhappy lives are not themselves to blame.

Finally, I see you say that you are quite opposed to me in outlook. I wonder why you say so. Perhaps from what I have said you will not now feel so much certainty in this statement, and I should have thought that there were many things in B.B.C. policy, for which I suppose I am responsible to some extent, with which you would be in hearty agreement.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*John C. W. Reith*

The Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P.,  
39, Bow Road,  
E. 3.

Oct 13

Times

Tel

In Post



*J. B. ...*

Private and Confidential

No. 437A

Nov. 1933

LABOUR PARTY

INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS

DISARMAMENT AND GERMANY

Initial Assumptions

1. Assume, to begin with, that we want to evolve a world Commonwealth assured of peace, capable of justice, and disarmed: that we must therefore restore and strengthen the collective system we have (imperfect though it is), and that general disarmament is an element in that system.
2. Agree, too, that Germany's notice of withdrawal from the League is already very damaging to that collective system: that the timing and manner of her withdrawal were grossly at fault, and were very likely prompted in part by desire to avoid acceptance of supervision; that military training is being developed on a national scale and that hatred and revenge are being poured into the schools; that Hitler was, and presumably is, playing for a situation in which he could represent this breakdown of disarmament as evidence of the unwillingness of the heavily armed Powers to keep faith and level down themselves or to treat Germany fairly as an equal; and that Hitler's moves have probably been dictated partly by tactical calculations as to the need for some conspicuous and popular self-assertion, to divert attention from the failure of his economic policy, the burial of his land promises, the opposition to the Terrorist policy, and the disclosures of the Reichstag Fire Trial.

Agree, further, that the Nazi regime is a brutal tyranny; and that it is not surprising that Germany's neighbours do not feel the slightest confidence in the pacific protestations now offered by the author of Mein Kampf

5. And let us admit that the other Powers, at Versailles and often since, have behaved atrociously and with blind lack of comprehension towards Germany, and that Sir John Simon (e.g., in his speech at Geneva on July 21, 1932, his Note of September 18, 1932) has been amongst Hitler's recruiting agents)

4. Our Problems

Still, the fact remains that, if we want general Disarmament and collective security, we must somehow, soon or late, win the loyal collaboration of Germany as equal partners: that we have at present left an extremely strong case in Hitler's hands: and that if, whilst he has so good a case, we were to crack the whip and order the German dog "back to your Versailles kennel", the dog wouldn't go. The German people, would in this matter be solidly behind Hitler, and we should not only be reinforcing his appeal to his countrymen and rendering still more difficult and



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protracted the future task of recovering the good will and confidence of Germany. To go on with disarmament is obviously perilous now: but to put it into cold storage without having even put forward a draft agreement that could be commended to moderate opinions throughout the world as a fair and substantial instalment of general disarmament - that course would be certainly fatal. It must lead to rearmament, to a strengthening of reaction in France and Poland as well as Germany, probably to coercive measures which would leave a further legacy of embitterment, and perhaps to another invasion.

To offer more disarmament and more equality of treatment is obviously open to objection, for it can be represented as a concession to Hitlerism which we refused to his predecessors. But that is commonly the dilemma of those who delay too long in conceding justice: and the difficulty will not get better but worse if they wait still longer.

Not even the best Convention that we can hope to get agreement on now will be sufficiently drastic in its disarmament or sufficiently prompt in its equality of treatment to rob Hitler wholly of the grievance he seeks to exploit.

The Labour Party's case against Sir John Simon and his government is that by their reluctance to put forward proposals for real disarmament, by their response to such proposals when made by other governments, and by their general attitude towards the whole policy of armament reduction, they have given German militarists a valid case for saying that all other nations regard heavy armaments as desirable in themselves and essential for national defence. They have thus given an overwhelming case to German militarists who hold that it is essential that Germany, in order to protect herself from foreign aggression, should re-arm with the least possible delay. The British government's responsibility for this result is very heavy.

To make the case against them it is sufficient to recall the meagre proposals for disarmament put forward by Sir John Simon in his first speech to the Conference on February 8th, 1932; by the Prime Minister in his press interview in April, 1932, their rejection of the Hoover proposals, and their attitude of obstruction to French proposals for the abolition of Air Forces, the abolition of private manufacture of armaments, etc.

Considering the present situation, therefore, the Labour Party must begin by pointing out the grave responsibility of H.M.G. in giving German militarists a valid case for claiming that all other countries regard heavy armaments as both desirable and essential for self-defence.

Such an attitude is not in itself sufficiently constructive to meet the needs of the present situation. The Labour Party should therefore urge upon the government that they should make such improvements in their present proposals as will rob Hitler and the German government of any colourable pretext for a complete disavowal of disarmament limitations. If this object is to be achieved, the improvements to be made in the present proposals must be very substantial.

5. And the crucial fact which must be realised at once is that the present proposals, as indicated in Sir John Simon's speech of October 14, are even more inadequate as a contribution to general disarmament than the British Draft of March last, and are very much worse as regards Germany's just claim to equality of treatment. It is not in the least surprising that this German Government rejected them: and after careful comparison of them with the proposals of Dr. Bruning's Government, it is impossible to believe that he would have accepted them either. Even if the discrimination which they involve is less than he asserts, they no doubt give him strong ground for his assertion that Germany is asked to accept unequal treatment. They are wholly inadequate as a contribution to general disarmament, and they open a vast field for re-ament a few years hence.

6. Germany's Claim and Our Reply \*

(a) Equality and Disarmament. The essence of the German claim is that equality of treatment should begin forthwith, and the disarmament of the heavily-armed States. These principles were applied, however inadequately, in the British Draft of March; but now, as the Germans justly state, they have been dropped for the present, being postponed and made conditional, in the new proposals indicated by Sir John Simon on October 14. This great change has been made admittedly out of distrust of Hitler: it is a discrimination against Hitler's Germany: and as such it is resented by Hitler's Germany as humiliating.

(b) The Probationary Period. Germany takes her stand on the British Draft of March, so far as it goes: she accepts as reasonable its proposed duration of 5 years: but she rejects the "probationary period" of 4 years (or possibly somewhat less) which has now been interpolated with that Draft. She would have no objection to the Convention being divided into periods "for practical purposes"; but she insists that "equality of rights" should be applied to her during the first period (i.e., the first four years.)

Sir John Simon has given Hitler far too strong ground for his protests against inequality of treatment in this regard.

It is not unnaturally that before the Allied Powers, and in particular France, destroy their heavy material they should desire to have practical assurance that the system of League inspection and control will check the active re-ament and mobilisation for war now being conducted in Germany.

By dividing the Convention, as Hitler himself proposed, into different periods "for practical purposes" it could have been arranged that the system of inspection and control should be immediately established; that the standardisation of armies as short-termed militias (including the French as well as the German army) should be forthwith begun, and that the destruction of heavy material should be carried through

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\*Analysis drawn from the German Government's Proclamation and Hitler's broadcast of October 14; Baron v. Neurath's speech of October 16; Prince Bismarck's statement to the F.O. of October 6 as given in precise terms in the News Chronicle, October 20; and Sir John Simon's speech October 14.

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at dates to be laid down beginning some time after the entry into force of the Convention.

This system would not, as Hitler alleges, constitute more inspection for Germany than for other people. On the contrary, since ex hypotesi the allies have more armaments; it would mean more inspection for them. But if arranged in the form suggested it would avoid the use of the phrase "probational period", the general use of which has given offence to Germany. With ordinary diplomatic skill its use could easily have been avoided.

Nor would it be necessary to include in the Convention any provision that if inspection proved that Germany were re-arming the disarmament of France and others need not begin. For once Germany or any other power were shown in the first period to be exceeding the armament limits which the Convention lays down for them, the obligations of other signatories would, by the whole nature of the Convention, be suspended until the German breach had ceased.

- (c) The Army. Germany would undertake immediately the transformation of her long-service (12 years) Reichswehr into a short-service (8 months) army with doubled numbers, as proposed in the Draft. As for weapons, she deals with them under three heads.
- (d) Weapons to be Prohibited. Germany offers to accept as a volunteer all the prohibitions of weapons proposed in the British Draft, plus all those in the Versailles Treaty, plus any more that can be added, provided only that we do likewise. Hitler explicitly offers to "scrap the last machine guns" if the other Powers will undertake to do so themselves within a fixed period not longer than the Convention.

The British Draft offered to abolish within a fixed period four types of weapon only, viz:-

- (i) Tanks over 16 tons unladen. (The laden weight would be about 20 tons. As Lord Hailsham explained, (November, 1932,) this is exactly the kind of tank our War Office favours, for "conveying infantry, for the suppression of machine-gun posts, without loss of life")
- (ii) Mobile guns over 6 inches calibre. (but not including "coastal defence guns" which may have a calibre up to 16 inches.+) Guns over 4½ inches and up to 6 inches may be kept indefinitely without limit of numbers by those States which possess them, i.e. not including Germany) but may not be replaced: so that unless Germany were permitted to build such guns, her artillery would be outranged for an indefinite period.
- (iii) warplanes over 3 tons, (but not including flying boats and transport planes)++

\* The Germans, Dutch and Swedes point out that this opens the door for evasion on a large scale.

\* \* The Germans contend that this, too, opens the door for evasion. A great bombing plane such as Vickers 163 can be used for bombing or transport; it would remain potentially a bomber even if re-christened a "transport plane."

The Draft also promises abolition of all naval and military aircraft, if certain heavily guarded provisions about control of civil aircraft are fulfilled.

- (iv) Chemical, incendiary, and bacterial weapons.  
These three types of weapons are the only ones which the British Draft proposes for abolition.

The original Draft proposed that we (the Powers other than Germany) should begin the process of abolition forthwith, unconditionally, but Sir John Simon has so presented his revised plan that he appeared to defer even this modest beginning for a further four years (or perhaps somewhat less); and he makes even that deferred beginning conditional upon the probationary period having proved satisfactory.

Naturally Hitler leaps at the opportunity of rejecting such a proposal and probably no other German government would accept it in the form in which it was put forward. For reasons explained above the difference with regard to the so-called "probationary period" ought never to have arisen and could still easily be removed by skilful handling. But there is a much more serious point. How can the Labour Party accept without protest so enormous a measure of re-armament as the proposals envisage. Sir J. Simon says that in the second stage of the Convention (if the probationary period proved satisfactory) there would be "a common list of permitted arms, which would become the same for all countries, and thus the differential positions of the Powers whose arms were limited by the Peace Treaties would finally cease." That is manifestly just as an application of the principle of equality of treatment. But it involves a deplorably inadequate contribution to disarmament unless we add greatly to the list of weapons that are to be abolished within a fixed period. In effect we are saying to Hitler - "Four years hence, if you are good meanwhile, you shall be free to have all the weapons, except poison gas, which we prohibited for you at Versailles."

As has been repeatedly emphasised by this Committee, by the L.S.I. and by the peace movement that is a lunatic contribution to the true security of the world. And Hitler is right, (and Roosevelt was right) in replying - "If you sincerely want true security, undertake now to get rid of these weapons on both sides of the frontiers within a fixed period instead of keeping them on both.

Hitler says to us - "Begin disarming now." We reply - "If you are good for x years. You may begin rearming after that. Meanwhile, we will not disarm at all." That is a disastrous answer. Even if Hitler is wholly insincere we should call his bluff by taking his statements at their face value.

- (e) Weapons to be limited in number. Germany asks what weapons are to be limited, and what limits are proposed. "In accordance with the principle of equality, the arms permitted to other countries, but limited in numbers, must be authorised in Germany during the first period - the actual figures to be the subject of discussion."

Hitherto, in the British Draft, such limitation has only been proposed for three types of weapons, viz. warships of various categories, tanks under 16 tons unladen, and war-planes under three tons.

As regards war-planes the British Draft allowed none for Germany. It allowed 500 each for ourselves and France "in commission", and 125 in "immediate reserve"; but instead of requiring that the remainder in excess of these figures should be destroyed within a fixed period, it merely specified that they should be "put out of commission or otherwise disposed of"!)

We proposed in the original Draft no limitation of numbers for heavy guns (which we might retain, without replacement, up to 6 inches calibre, Germany being excluded): no limitation for field guns, or machine guns or trench mortars, or rifles: no limitation of stocks: no limitation of expenditure.

Thus, we contemplated rearmament for Germany over a wide field: she would have been set free from all the qualitative limitations imposed on her land material at Versailles, and no limitation of expenditure would be put in their place. Now, however, it appears from Sir J Simon's speech that this application of the principle of equality is to be withdrawn.

"In speaking of no rearmament, I do not mean to dispute the reasonableness, as the Reichswehr is transformed into a more numerous short-service army, on a proportional numerical increase in its armaments." But why should the Reichswehr's equipment of field guns, machine guns and reserve stocks, etc. be thus numerically limited if the armies of other countries are to remain wholly unlimited, as the Draft envisages. The Germans reply - "Merely to double the arms permitted under the Treaty of Versailles for the use of the Reichswehr would represent a discrimination that Germany is not willing to accept and which will not satisfy her need of security."

If limitation of such weapons is likely to be reliable in Germany's case we should accept it for ourselves. If, however, it is likely to be unreliable and virtually unverifiable in regard to the smaller weapons (as the British delegation has often maintained) then we should drop it in Germany's case. To retain such a limitation for Germany alone would be discrimination; and to retain it, if it is unverifiable would be asking for trouble.

The Labour Party should adhere to the proposals which it has made in the past, namely, that the only solution for these problems lies in (a) limiting big guns and field artillery by number, (b) limiting other weapons, which are not suitable for numerical limitation by fixing a maximum budgetary appropriation.

- (f) Weapons not limited at all. "As for arms not limited at all" Germany says, "as there will be no limitation for the others, there can be no limitation for Germany." The Labour Party maintains that no weapons should be left without limitation of any kind, but if we will not accept budgetary limitation for ourselves we cannot expect Germany to accept it.



- (g) Supervision. As regards supervision, Germany has previously made plain that she will accept it, but only if it applies to all alike.† Germany has, however, hinted at dangerous reservations concerning the immunity of witnesses. These reservations should be rejected.

7. Conclusions

It is submitted that:

- (1) That the Labour Party should in this matter shape its policy so as to win back Germany in time to a policy of loyal collaboration in the collective system.
- (2) This is impossible unless Labour stands now for a fair deal for Germany, unshaken by the fact that the present spokesman of Germany's claims is Hitler himself. The claims remain just and reasonable.
- (3) "A fair deal for Germany" should include equality of treatment from the outset: but in view of the intense distrust aroused by Hitler's policy, the supervision should be stiffened; and the reductions to be effected by the heavily armed Powers, though they should begin forthwith, should for the most part be liable to deferment till the later years of the Treaty on a steepening scale.

The essential point is that if Hitler intends re-arming we should cut the ground from under his feet by making a genuine offer of disarmament which will achieve real equality for Germany within a time limit laid down in the Treaty and without the re-arming of Germany.

It may be answered that France will not accept that, or this British Government. That is no sufficient reason, even now, why the Labour Party should not publicly and energetically maintain this view.

- (4) Furthermore, the Labour Party should bring out as clearly as possible that the disarmament offered is utterly inadequate from our own point of view and would only give ultimate equality to Germany by permitting her large-scale re-arming. We should present at every by-election, as a big political issue, the questions "Which do you regard as the better contribution to the world's true security against sudden smashing attack:- that heavy guns, tanks, military aircraft, should be retained on both sides of the frontiers or abolished on both?"

"Do you want to see Germany rearm with warships over 10,000 tons, submarines, heavy guns, tanks, naval and military aircraft? The present proposals involve all this rearmament, four years hence, largely because our Government refuses to pay the price of no re-arming by agreeing now to get rid of such weapons within a fixed period."

† cf. Hitler's Reichstag speech, May 17. "Germany would at any time be prepared, in the event of a mutual international supervision of armaments and of equal readiness on the part of the other states, to subject these associations" (i.e. the organisations alleged to be of military character) "to such supervision in order to prove beyond doubt to the whole world that they are of an entirely unmilitary character". cf. also declarations of German delegations at the Conference.

as from  
Sir Stafford Cripps

Disarmament  
103, Pepys Road,

New Cross,

S.E.14.

(121)

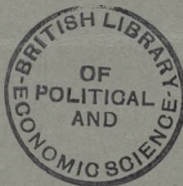
November 5th, 1933.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

Sir Stafford Cripps asked me to send you the enclosed notes compiled by Hoeltermann on Hitler's foreign policy and the question of disarmament. I am aware that they do not cover all the ground but this was impossible in the time.

yours sincerely,

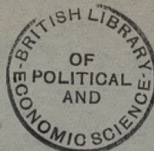
M. L. Thomas



M449

with  
Cripps, Nov. 1933  
Hitler's Foreign Policy.

Written between  
28 Oct. and 5 Nov.  
1933



Hoeltermann [Ems]

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Hitler's domestic and foreign policy can best be understood in the light of his political ancestry. He is the type of German who believes that the war of 1914-18 was a calamity only in the sense that Germany did not embark on it soon enough. He and his followers believe that Germany should have declared war on Russia in 1905, when England would have remained neutral. He is further of opinion that Germany made serious mistakes in the diplomatic preparation of the last war and that, from too tender a consideration for the views of socialists, centre party and liberals, it was not heavily enough armed. He holds that the war need not have been lost on military grounds if the military machine had not been lamed through the vulnerable weakness of the imperial government in its treatment of its political opponents. The potentialities of Germany's military strength were never developed to the full, owing to the fact that at the outbreak of war the government omitted to confine all its previous political opponents (at least, the leaders) to concentration camps. In his book, "My Struggle" Hitler describes how the German government should have treated its opponents at the time of the mobilisation, a description which entirely tallies with the treatment of his opponents after his advent to power.

Hitler was not only a supporter of the old regime: he belonged to the group of All-Deutschen for whom the imperial government was neither sufficiently nationalistic nor sufficiently militaristic. They considered even Bismarck to be a man who was subject to attacks

of sentimental weakness because he, for instance, satisfied himself with 12 years of suppressive legislation against the Social Democrats, instead of stamping out Marxism root and branch. For Hitler and his like all political questions are simply a matter of the most efficacious application of force.

It is not correct to say that there is no basis for agreement with Hitler, but this would be the Peace of Brest-Litowsk. He sees his task in three stages: 1) the seizure of power through revolution; 2) the stabilisation of this power and the winning back as point of departure the position of 1914; 3) the using of this power for purposes of expansion, in the first instance towards the east.

Hitler is quite convinced that his ideas alone have brought him to power. He has simply no conception of the social and economic forces which have used him as their tool. It is Germany's misfortune, and possibly that of the whole of Europe, that these forces should have been clad in the <sup>ideology</sup> ~~zszszszsz~~ of pre-war Pan-Germanism. Hitler's foreign policy aims at finding allies who will enable Germany to arm while at the same time expanding ~~kwazsz~~ towards the east. Originally his hope was England. The idea of a German-English alliance dates from the time when Hitler was employed as <sup>education</sup> ~~training~~ officer to the Munich Reichswehr (1919-20), and held discourses on the Treaties of Brest-Litowsk and Versailles. <sup>an</sup> it is ~~szsz~~ idea that was widely current before the war in Bavarian military circles and found strategical expression in the proposals for the "March to the East". The "March to the East" would have

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involved the throwing of the principal weight of the combined German-Austrian armies against Russia and a purely defensive action in the west until such time as the defeat of Russia made possible an "agreed" peace with the western powers. This view was ousted by that of General Schlieffer, who advocated the "March to the West" via Belgium.

Hitler was introduced to Bavarian military circles by Capt. Roehm, then on the Bavarian General Staff and actual founder and leader of the S.A. The failure of the March to the West appeared after the war to justify the other conception. England's attitude to Soviet Russia and the support given by England to Germany in those years confirmed Hitler in the opinion that it would be possible to form an alliance with England against Soviet Russia. At this time Hitler came into close contact with his later foreign political expert, Rosenberg. This man, a German from the Baltic, endowed <sup>upon</sup> the Hitler movement ~~with~~ his idea of the historical mission of the Germanic race, namely, the erection of a German landlord domination over the "inferior" Slavonic people of the east.

When Hitler became Chancellor and England showed no inclination to throw itself into Germany's arms, when the Rosenberg's journey to London ended so badly, when England even took over the leadership at the Disarmament Conference, other influences obviously gained weight with Hitler (v. Papen, the Foreign Office, the heavy industries.) Since his departure from the Conference Hitler has obviously been attempting to come to an "agreement" with France, i.e. to win France for the role originally designed for England.

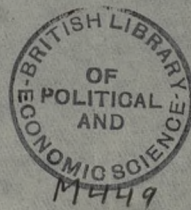
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Mitler wishes at all costs to be able to take advantage of a Russo-Japanese conflict (the constellation of 1905). In order to be able to intervene against Russia, Germany's hands must be free in the east west. If England is not to be won for this policy, he is obviously willing to forget temporarily his "enmity to the death" with France. Mitler speculates consciously on the French fears of a fresh German attack. The shifting of the "superfluous" German forces towards the east - so he seeks to suggest to France - will relieve that country from the Alpine pressure of German aggression.

The Papen group anticipates that the French and German heavy industries together would equip and carry through this "undertaking in the east". In this case the Saar basin would become the most important armament centre. In the immediate vicinity of the Saar coal-mines lie the greatest ~~has~~ iron deposits of Europe, large enough to free Germany from the necessity of importing Swedish ore. This combination, however, first becomes of primary importance when Germany receives the right to possess "Token weapons".



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The Labour Party and Hitler-Germany.

The success of the Labour Party in the parliamentary by-elections and in the municipal elections has everywhere been interpreted as expressing the desire of the English people for peace. It is all the more necessary, however, to ensure that this should not be misinterpreted, as has been the case in the Nazi press. The demand raised in England for the continuation of the policy of disarmament, has been interpreted in the German press as indicating a growing "understanding" for Hitler. Accusations made in England against the allies for not having disarmed are interpreted as expressing justification of Hitler's foreign policy and all that this involves.

The Hitler press seeks to create the impression among the German workers that the policy of the English Labour Party in the question of disarmament spells subscription to the justness of Hitler's foreign policy. This is one of the forms of moral pressure that are being brought to bear on the workers to vote for Hitler on November 12th, not simply from compulsion but from inner conviction.

It seems necessary that a clear stand should be taken against this misuse of an honourable policy of peace. It must be <sup>made</sup> clear to Hitler Germany that the struggle of the Labour Party against injustices under the treaty of Versailles cannot be taken to imply confidence in the present rulers of Germany or the sanctioning of military adventures on the part of Nazi Germany.

If the Germany of Weimar did not succeed in remodelling its economic system, if it fell back into the barbarism of Hi

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Hitlerism, the makers and disregards of the Treaty of Versailles bear an appalling proportion of the blame. They have no right to justify their actions ever since 1918 by the advent of Hitler to power in 1933, (although the knowledge that such a body of opinion existed in Germany all the time and the fear of its general recrudescence, together with the knowledge that secret re-arming began in Germany immediately after the Treaty of Versailles was signed, largely contributed e.g. to the immobility of French opinion.) However no-one has a greater right or duty than the Labour Party to assert before the world that <sup>the</sup> Hitler government itself is German's greatest danger.

It should be attempted to carry on the disarmament negotiations in Germany's absence and to reach an agreement on the basis of the British and French plan, making its application dependent upon German adherence, not because this is an ideal basis but because tactics become a matter of principle. Hitler Germany is convinced that recalcitrance will always produce the desired result. If Germany does not subscribe within a given period then it must be made plain that Hitler himself prefers the Treaty of Versailles. Should Germany herself re-open negotiations it should be clear from the outset that certain conditions must be fulfilled on the part of Germany as well as the other powers if the agreement <sup>is</sup> not to be the merest farce. This decision implies another: the determination of all the governments concerned to elucidate their standpoint with all the methods of propaganda at their disposal, not confining themselves to their



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own people but speaking via the wireless to the German people, who are completely cut off otherwise from foreign opinion.

In this way it may be possible to force Hitler to come into line, either by an increase of insight on his behalf or from fear of internal difficulties. In either case the anti-Hitler elements in Germany would be strengthened. Hitler calculates on the scrupulousness of his genuine but honourable opponents in other countries but has no scruples himself, a factor which must be taken into consideration.

In addition the Labour Party should make plain the terms on which it would stand with a Germany which had freed itself from Hitlerism. The propaganda value of such a programme would be increased if it were to be brought within the framework of a general international agreement. Where Hitler Germany is concerned, if the Labour Party is concerned to supplement the British-French plan in the direction of disarmament, it must supplement it in other directions also and demand ratification by a genuinely elected parliament. In this context Ernst Teller's letter to the Times on October 28th, may be quoted:-

If Herr Hitler wished to discover the real will of the German people he must first see that the following conditions are fulfilled:-

- 1). Re-establishment of the freedom of the Press.
- 2). Re-establishment of the right to hold meetings.
- 3). Repeal of the ban on all suppressed parties and societies (even such an innocuous society as the International Bible Students has been banned).

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4). Return of all confiscated property to the various parties, to the democratic and pacifist unions, and to the free trade unions.

5). Release of the 100,000 or more political opponents of the Hitler regime from the concentration camps where they are now imprisoned, not for any specific crime, but simply because their opinions are inconvenient to the ruling system.

6). Repeal of all discriminating laws against the Jews.



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Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson (Secr.)  
(1863-1935)

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National Labour Club Dinner

The honour which you have done me tonight is influenced, I believe, by my efforts to promote the cause of world peace through disarmament. It seems to be appropriate, therefore, that I should occupy the time allowed me in saying something about the Geneva Conference.

I shall briefly survey the present position in a spirit of realism without being — I hope — either optimistic or pessimistic.

First then may I frankly face the fact that, measured by the greatness of the constructive possibilities, the present position is very far from being satisfactory. The Conference has lasted twenty one months during which time the political horizon has been growing steadily more sombre. When we began, we were faced with the tragic situation in the Far East. The storm clouds have been getting thicker and blacker during the intervening period. There have been political events in Europe by which the Disarmament Conference has been hampered. Nearly a score of changes of governments have taken place, largely as a result of the world economic crisis. Moreover, two Great Powers have given notice to withdraw from the League; one of them remains in the Disarmament Conference and the other has already left it. These events have still further aggravated an already desperately difficult situation. As a result, public confidence in the efficacy of the collective peace system has weakened.

Those who would have us abandon the great adventure of organising peace and who urge us to make preparations for another world war, are trying to obtain by clamour and fear, what they cannot obtain by appeals to reason and conviction. What is most deplorable in this situation is, that a new race in the weapons of destruction has already begun. It may not have gathered as yet such momentum as to attract much public attention, but that it has started is a fact as indisputable as it is grave. This only emphasises the view that, owing to the anxieties and perplexities of the economic crisis, nations are losing the sense of world solidarity and of the essential unity of civilisation. This is deplorable at this juncture, as I am convinced that disarmament by international agreement transcends every other question in politics

but I am sometimes asked, is it right to expect nations to reduce



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their armaments with the world in its present state, and before we have removed the causes of political and economic unrest which induce them to maintain large armaments. To this I reply that there is nothing that could so restore the confidence that is required for recovery as the success of the Conference in concluding a genuine disarmament convention. However paradoxical it may appear, in view of the long drawn out proceedings of the Conference, governments and peoples realise the urgency of the need for a world agreement on the reduction and limitation of armaments. The possible consequences of failure to reach such an agreement have become so grave that no government cares to face them. On the other hand, public opinion is beginning to realise more and more clearly just what has to be done if we are to have disarmament and peace.

May I remind you that the British Draft Convention which has been accepted as the basis of the new convention falls short of the expectations aroused by previous commitments of the Conference. But its authors put it forward as an admitted compromise to meet what they thought to be the largest measure of common agreement. Its weakness may be said to be a measure of the extent to which obstacles have accumulated in the path of disarmament as expressed in the Conference. Despite its limitations, the Draft and subsequent events have exercised a marked influence on public ~~pin~~ opinion, and it may safely be said that there is now a common peace front in many countries irrespective of party, in support of it as the basis of a new convention. The peace movement has concentrated on a programme of reduction because it knows that certain demands must be satisfied if the obligations of governments to disarm are to be honoured.

Public opinion is also beginning to realise that disarmament is only a part, though an essential part, of the larger enterprise of an organised and constructive peace. That is necessarily a slow task for the enterprise of securing disarmament through organising peace is as vast as it is complex. It means breaking with ancient and powerful traditions. It means making what is the most cherished and jealously guarded part of a nation's life a matter of international concern. That is to say, it means subjecting national defence to world control. It

means limiting the sovereignty of governments by subjecting to world institutions and obligations not only the right to fight but the means by which States can fight. That is why it was never believed that the First Disarmament Conference could achieve complete success. Disarmament was always conceived as a progressive enterprise to be accomplished by stages of which the present Conference was only the first. That is why for twenty one months I have given every opportunity, every latitude and unlimited time, for States to get over their difficulties by any means, either public or private, that seemed to them most appropriate. I think I may say that I have not spared either my time or my strength in trying my very hardest, so far as lay in my power, to facilitate agreement on a convention. I believe it is my duty to go on trying to induce the governments to frame and adopt a Convention. I agree with those who consider that more time and more effort are necessary and that the methods followed hitherto have been sound. But there must be a limit to everything.

The Disarmament Conference was meant to provide facilities and inducements to conclude a Convention. It was never intended as a means of enabling governments to put off indefinitely the necessity for coming to a conclusion about disarmament and international security. Sooner or later, governments must assume the responsibility of taking decisions. I do not believe the cause of disarmament and peace would be served by indefinite postponement.

I have already referred to the withdrawal of Germany from the Conference. This has seriously intensified the difficulties. But the problem remains and the governments are under a definite obligation to find a solution. If they believe a policy of isolation is impossible everything should be done to make international cooperation a reality. The German Government has repeatedly declared its pacific intentions. The other powers should give careful consideration to these declarations when framing a convention. If the oft repeated statement as to substantial reductions can be translated into figures to be included in the convention, I do not give up hope that it may prove acceptable to Germany.

May I say one further word in conclusion. I think we must make one great final effort through which I earnestly hope we shall reach clear

and definite decisions, and that without further delay.

I have already pointed out that there is a wide measure of agreement between the peace movement in all countries. But there are certain broader underlying issues to which I would draw your attention. The first is the need to stand by the treaties that are the basis of the collective peace system. Those treaties are the only world law in the matter of disarmament, arbitration and security. They impose the obligation to reduce and limit armaments all round, to settle disputes peacefully, and to cooperate in upholding the law against a peace-breaker. The Disarmament Convention, we hope, will amend and supplement the law relating to disarmament and security. The existing law we know to be incomplete and in parts inequitable. But it does impose the obligation on all Members of the League to reduce and limit their armaments. Until we get a new law we must uphold the old however unsatisfactory it may be, for the one unforgivable political sin, the one deadly danger, is to relapse into anarchy. Standing by the treaties means that increases in armaments must be ruled out.

Increasing armaments means beginning a new race in armaments. Bigger armaments are contrary at least to the spirit if not to the letter of the treaties by which we are all bound. Bigger armaments are morally unjustifiable always and everywhere. Increasing armaments bring with them the danger, and in the end the certainty, of another world war. It passes my wit to understand how any politician or journalist, with the awful experience of 1914 to 1918 still fresh in our minds, can get up and say that big armaments and a free hand will safeguard peace. That is flying in the face of logic and of the lessons of history. It is a mockery of the dead who fell in the last war and whom we still mourn. A race in armaments is not a policy. It is a poker game. The nations keep bidding against each other. They go on raising their stakes and in the end they know that death will sweep the board. An armament race means the bankruptcy of statesmanship. It is the abdication of the responsibilities of government, a confession of hopeless failure. That is why I hope public opinion in all countries will set its face like flint against increasing armaments.

Today we have what did not exist before the war. We have a complete alternative to rearmament. That alternative is the collective peace

system. Loyalty to that system compels us to agree on disarming, not to join in a new race in armaments. I hope public opinion will make it clear that if the Disarmament Conference does not succeed in bringing an immediate agreement on reductions, the alternative is not to give up the collective peace system. We cannot resign ourselves to preparing for another war. A defeat at Geneva, however severe, will leave the armies of peace in the field. It will merely compel them to transfer the fight to the home front. On that front the fight must be waged with redoubled energy. Its immediate objective should be to smash the vested interests and the spirit of international anarchy that prevent the governments from organising peace because they live by war scares and war. The late Lord Grey warned the Country that the race in armaments would end in war or revolution. He said he believed revolution would come first. But two years later what came was the catastrophe of the world war. Today, if we abandon our only safeguard against war, and that is the collective peace system, history is in danger of repeating itself. If those who are pressing for rearmament today, hold on their course, if they succeed in getting another armaments race well under weigh, and in making men believe in the inevitability of another world war, those who stand for peace will become desperate. If they are driven to it their resistance will assume revolutionary forms. I think it is now universally admitted that the advent of another great war would bring down civilisation in revolutions, civil wars, and general chaos. That is what will happen to us if we do not pin our faith to the collective peace system and bend all our energies to making it prevail. Humanity, tortured and embittered in the awful agony of the world war, has been vouchsafed a vision. Millions and millions of men and women have been buoyed up by a great hope, the hope that the world would be purged of war. That mankind would learn to live in peace as one great family. They will not submit tamely to be robbed of this vision, to be despoiled of their hope of peace. They will turn on the would-be perpetrators of this sacrilege. Mankind will spurn them with contempt and hold on its course. We shall not be deflected from our goal, the only goal fit for civilised human beings. That goal is world peace through real disarmament and cooperation.

S. J. CONNER,  
CONSULTING ENGINEER.

TELEPHONE NO. CENTRAL 3070.

20 BLYTHSWOOD STREET,  
GLASGOW. C.2.

9th November, 1933.

Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P.,  
39 Bow Road,  
London, E.3.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

May I remind you of our meeting at Mr. Biggar's house, Lairfad, before your speech at Kilmarnock, and presume on that slight acquaintance to request that you will read the enclosed suggestion for a scheme for disarmament and, if it appears to you to be a good idea, to pass it on to Mr. Henderson with the hope that he may get some of the Powers to move towards real action.

Like you, I believe that the time is ripe for an immediate, complete and unqualified disarmament, but after the reception of the Russian proposals I can see that such an attitude cannot hope to have any support by the great Powers. My scheme is therefore an attempt to arrange a compromise which will satisfy the insistent demands of each and all of the Powers, while making possible a very real measure of disarmament and leaving the door open for a progressive improvement without the necessity of repeated conferences.

I feel that I have got hold of a useful idea, and if it could be developed by the fertile brains of Messrs. Henderson, Cripps, Attlee and yourself it should be possible to get it into an acceptable form.

May I suggest the desirability of suppressing the origin of the scheme, should it reach the length of open discussion, as, while the name of the deviser is unknown, the usual Tory cry "What does he know about the subject anyway?" can not be raised to sidetrack a consideration of the scheme itself on its merits.

I feel that there is no hope of social development so long as international war can be used to disrupt any democratic development, and while I realise that unless economic peace is also obtained, no scheme of disarmament can continue indefinitely, I think that the adoption of my scheme might delay the war issue long enough to make real progress in the economic field possible.

I trust you may have the best of health and be able to preserve a ray of hope for a brighter future to cheer you through the strenuous and reactionary session that lies ahead of you.

Yours faithfully,

S. J. Conner.



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SCHEME FOR GENERAL DISARMAMENT.

By S. J. Conner & with his letter 9 Nov 1933

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The problem of disarmament is one in which every human being, irrespective of race or nation, must be concerned, as practically no individual can hope to escape the consequences of the next war. It does not appear, however, as if the present Conference will make any material contribution to the solution of the problem. It therefore behoves all men of good will to explore every scheme that appears to offer any hope of a solution, and the scheme outlined below is suggested in the hope that if it should not, of itself, prove successful, it may inspire a better one that will.

(a) The essential requirements of a successful scheme are that each country shall be left with a military force capable of ensuring civil order. Such a force is necessary in every country, no matter what degree of democratic development between Communism and Autocracy it may have achieved, as all modern states depend for their very existence on the maintaining of social order. The nature of the force that will satisfy this requirement may, however, vary from a few unarmed police to a well armed Civil Guard, depending on the development of political and social consciousness of the inhabitants, but it is essential that each country should feel that its needs are met before any general scheme can hope to be successful.

(b) That each country shall feel a sense of security from attack by any of its neighbours or combination of its neighbours. A well intentioned Government may, by the foolish insistence on some apparently purely domestic claim, create a situation that may lead to war and involve other countries not directly concerned. The experience of France from two invasions within living memory has created a sincere national demand for a sense of security, which must be satisfied before any scheme of disarmament can receive their approval, but the same desire for a feeling of security is present to a greater or less degree in all peoples.

(c) That each country must feel that its dignity and national integrity are preserved and that no matter what its record in the past may have been, or on which side it may have fought during the last war, no difference has been made in allocating its share of military power. This difficulty is most present to-day with respect to Germany, but none of the other great Powers are free from a risk of resentment being caused on this ground.

(d) That adequate provision shall be left to those countries responsible for primitive peoples who hold religious or moral creeds which condone or extol the shedding of blood, to deal with risings in such a way that the rebels may be persuaded to abstain from the use of force in pursuing their social or religious aims.

(e) That the difficulties in the way of any country wishing to use force as an instrument of national policy may be as great as possible, while the possibility of any country resisting an act of armed aggression may be increased, and also that the co-operation of all other countries to assist in this resistance or prohibit an act of aggression, may be both rapid and effective.

(f) That the feeling of international friendliness may be continuously fostered and that the scheme will continuously lead to a position where armed force will not only prove unnecessary, but appear ridiculous.

(g) That scope should be allowed for variations within the scheme to give expression to national desires without impairing the efficiency of its operation.

(h) That provision should be made whereby any country wishing to reduce its expenditure on armaments, even below the agreed level, may do so without endangering the general security.



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These conditions are undoubtedly exacting, but in examining a scheme in relation to them it is no criticism to prove that their application would reduce the fighting power of a country's armament. If a disarmament scheme is effective it will reduce the requirements of fighting power and the function of all armed forces should eventually develop into police work.

Standards of living and money values vary so much throughout the world that any attempt to base an equitable scheme on them would be foredoomed. Though not at present absolutely the same, by education and within the limits of the scheme outlined below, man power and labour hours are probably the most suitable basis of equality.

In the following suggestions for the solution of the problem set above, the percentages and numbers of men and material are only used to clarify the description and would, of course, have to be the subject of mutual agreement between the nations.

(1) The military department of each country should be defined as including the fighting forces, land, sea and air, the auxiliaries necessary to produce and maintain the machinery, equipment, clothes, food and ammunition of the fighting and executive forces, the executive and recording staff necessary to administer, pay, transfer, engage and discharge all members of the department. The staff necessary to make the machines, which make the tools for producing guns, ammunition, equipment and clothing and for the building and maintenance of all factories, barracks, fortifications, ship yards and all other stations or buildings used by the department.

(2) The total man and women power of the department should bear some fixed relationship to the total population of the country, say 5 per thousand, with a maximum of 105,000, which would be the strength for all countries with a population of from 21,000,000 inhabitants upwards.

(3) The time of service for all members of the department trained in the use of arms should be not less than twelve years, this would ensure that at any time the average period of service of any squad would be about six years, and that in consequence they would be steady in the face of excitement and not so liable to provoke an "incident" in the event of their use in case of civil quarrels, riots or other disturbances. Shorter periods of enlistment also mean that larger numbers of trained men are in reserve, which is not desirable.

(4) All members of the department, with the exception of the one man who is absolute Chief, would be transferrable for six months out of each period of two years to a similar position in the department of another nation. In no case should an exchange be effected, but a man from country A should go to country B, his similar number B go to C, C to D and D to A. This would mean that at any one time one quarter of the department would be transferred to all other countries and that every fourth member of the department would be on loan from some other country.

This is the most important provision of the scheme and is intended to allay international suspicion by making the secret preparation of aggressive military preparation impossible and by giving every nation the confidence that they know they are impossible for every possible aggressor. It would demand that each member of the department should be able to speak two or three languages in addition to his own and for all but the smallest nations would mean the despatch of twenty five thousand ambassadors to all the countries of the world to mix intimately in the life of the nation and to prove to its nationals that there was little difference, and none that mattered, between the thoughts, aims and ambitions of the men of one country and another.

It would probably have the further result of letting the visiting members find what was good in the customs and habits of his hosts and, by comparison, what was bad in his own and if, as is possible, it led to a greater uniformity of habit and custom throughout the world, there should/

should be a reasonable chance that this uniformity would be gained at the expense of the bad and acceptance of the good differences.

(5) The requirements of the different nations, certainly at first and probably for all time, would vary according to their geographical and political make-up and relations. A country with a long coast line would be interested in sea power, a country with dense population and similar neighbours, in land forces, and countries with large areas and widely scattered populations, in air force. Some ratio of maximum of say, one vessel to every hundred miles of coast, one aeroplane to every fifty square miles of territory, and one gun to every ten miles of frontier should not be difficult to work out when the limits of paragraph 2 are remembered.

No country would dream of using big guns if they had to lose man power to provide men to make the huge forging presses, turning lathes, tempering pits and buildings necessary to make one of these monsters. As the danger of piracy, smuggling, and civil disorder which may occur in times of international peace, will dictate the construction of the nucleus of the department there should be little difficulty in international adjustment on the balance of ships, guns, planes etc. It is obvious that a universal pattern of all military equipment would be essential to make the armies effective and this would further facilitate adjustments. An equal number of working hours would also have to be agreed.

(6) Some prohibition would be both necessary and expedient, but the provisions of Versaille for Germany would appear to have determined this point, and no anxiety could be felt as to the danger of these provisions not being carried out when there were twenty five thousand interested parties in each large country with special opportunities of seeing every omission.

(7) A permanent International Committee at Geneva or some other suitable place, with an adequate staff, should be constituted to receive, investigate and report to the League of Nations, or some other agreed body, on all international differences of opinion, to arrange, record and supervise the transfer of men on loan to the different countries and arrange that the people of every country are kept in touch with all important international events by wireless or other means.

(8) Provision should be made at least once a week for the broadcast of home news direct from each country to their nationals on loan to every other country, and for a weekly international broadcast from the Central Committee. By this means the men on loan to any country which determined to become aggressive, would be immediately advised either by an actual statement or the suppression of all statements from home.

(9) Provision should be made so that a nation deciding to reduce the personnel of its military department below its quota shall effect a reduction in the armies of the rest of the world equal to one third of its own reduction, without reducing its representation to the armies of other countries, this proportionate reduction being divided over the other armies in the same proportion as their loan representation to the country.

One of the great disturbers of international peace is alarmist propaganda, but how long could such a scare about Britain be carried on in, say, Germany, if the people had by wireless the assurance of the Dutch Chief of the British Air Force confirmed by the German third or fourth highest officer in the British Navy, that it was obvious that Britain showed no signs of aggressive preparation.

Assume an occasion of international difference of opinion. Take the classic example that the British Government does not approve of the cut of the Spanish President's beard; wars seem to have been fought in the past on much less provocation. Britain makes representation to the/

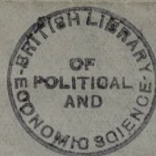
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the Central Committee of her case and an International Commission is sent to Spain to investigate the question, which reports that nothing appears to be wrong with the cut of the beard of the President, and in any case, the interference of the British Government has no justification. The British Government is indignant and intensive propaganda is at once devised to raise the national indignation, and when this is sufficiently fermented, war is declared. But the first result is, that 25% of the British military machine, (the foreign section) goes on strike and destroys its arms and plant, while Spain, with the full approval of the Central Committee, locks up the four or five hundred Britishers of her military department and those holding important offices are immediately replaced from the nearest neighbouring country. Result - a weak aggressive army attacking in a foreign country a strong homogenous army fighting in their own land.

Two serious difficulties only seem to stand in the way of the universal application of this scheme. First, that one of the major powers might decide to stand out. The natural reply to this would be the severing of all economic and political relations by the rest of the world, and if, after a reasonable period, this did not have the desired result, combined military pressure could be used.

Secondly, in the event of two or three nations standing out, the scheme could be applied by the combination of all the other nations, modified to give this group a combined military strength in excess of those outside the group and, as the security and international trade prospects of those in the scheme would be greater, and their expenditure on armaments less, the outlaws would soon find it worth while to come in.

The above outline has not been complicated by the consideration of many important details, which would take much thought and negotiation to adjust, as the highly skilled staffs now engaged on design of new methods and machines for war and on secret service work, could more easily do this than their present work, which would have no further value.



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*acknowledged*



Rev. Austin Lee

H.M.S. "Cumberland" in China waters

HONG KONG, November 14th.

[7933]

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I have a very slight claim on your attention, because I was John Groser's curate at Christ Church, Watney Street, and we all held you in very great esteem and affection! But I write to you as a Christian as well.

I have had a letter from the Mother of a stoker whom I know very well. He is a charming kid, and has no streak of criminality in him. His name is Douglas Woolven, and he is 18. Last September he joined up as a stoker in the Navy, and after training at Chatham was drafted to H.M.S. "Valiant" in the Home Fleet in February of this year.

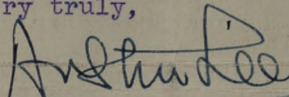
From a tearful letter I have received from his Mother (Mrs. Prosser, of 15, Stansfield Road, Stockwell, S.W.9), I understand that at Torquay on September 24th. when the "Valiant" was "showing the flag", he went for a joy ride in a car, and has been given six months hard labour. Could you look into this? It seems an excessive and savage sentence, although I know that he had trouble previously with the police about a bicycle. But I am positive that the idea of a "joy ride" suddenly bit him, as it does so many of these wretched youths who are today unable to enjoy the pleasures our civilisation has gained for the few, and that he had no criminal idea of stealing. I feel partly responsible, because I taught him to drive a car in the first place.

I know that property must be respected, and even those who do not enjoy its advantages must be taught the meaning of citizenship, but to turn a high spirited youth into a gaol bird is surely as criminal as the act for which he is committed. I should be very

grateful indeed if you could get someone to look into the matter for me. I will myself try and arrange for him to get a job where he can be looked after when he comes out.

His conduct in the Navy, by the way, was "Very Good" for the year in which he served, and I can only stress the fact that in personal contact with him I found him open and honest, and that what he has done, had it been done by an Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate, would have been looked on as a prank, or, at the most, rewarded with a small fine.

Yours very truly,



AUSTIN LEE

Clerk in Holy Orders  
M.A. Cantab.

I understand that Woolven is serving his sentence in Plymouth. Could the Probation officer look into it? I might add that although he is extremely fond of his Mother, he does not get on very well with his step-father, but he has uncles and a grandfather at Hunton Bridge near Watford who would look after him.



M449

Copy

*Labour Party*  
10 Downing Street,  
Whitehall, S.W.1.

J. R. Macdonald *5*  
*Emergent Strata 1884 -*  
*Miners' Fed. of Gt. Britain* ; Sec., 14th November, 1933.

My dear Edwards,

I have your letter of the 27th October and if the Executive Committee feel that a discussion with me would be useful at the present time, I shall be glad to meet them. But it is, I think, desirable that we should have before us some definite proposals to form a basis for discussion. There have been in the past so many deputations which have been entirely unproductive because proposals were brought forward which did not offer a basis for practical action. That was particularly the case during the Labour Government. Such deputations do no good; they do not assist the industry, nor any section of it.

I have myself been considering the various questions. As regards wages, which the President and yourself discussed with me in May, no reductions, as I assured you, were asked for in July, nor has there been any suggestion of their being asked for since; and in Warwickshire, the only district in which no agreement had been operative since 1931, an agreement has since been reached.

As regards national machinery, the Government would welcome most heartily the establishment of national relations between the Federation and the owners on wages as on all other questions affecting the industry. I can repeat that assurance. But, as you know, the owners are not as yet prepared to co-operate in setting up any voluntary type of national wage machinery, and it has so far been impossible to find an effective alternative which does not involve some form of compulsory arbitration - a system to which, I understand, the Federation is opposed. Mr. Ernest Brown has told me of his recent meeting with you, when you put forward proposals which aim at "strengthening" the National Board by a measure of compulsion backed by penalties for non-attendance. But surely this offers no hope of a solution for the problem? The National Board was never designed as anything more than a framework for voluntary co-operation. You may remember what the late Mr. William Graham said in introducing the Bill in the House of Commons:

"Hon Members have recognized, and the Members of the Miners' Federation and miners' Members recognize, that if we cannot ~~xxx~~ cross the border line into compulsory arbitration, this Board must rest on the basis on which the Government have placed it in this Bill."

The fact that the National Board has not been as effective as we hoped is a matter of great regret to us all; but to graft upon it a measure of compulsion - especially when, even under your own proposals, it is still to have no power of making decisions which are binding upon anyone - could, I am afraid, only result in making the Board an object of ridicule.

We have also to remember that we should not be serving the interests of the mining community if we did anything to imperil the existing good relations on the various District Conciliation Boards.

Will you think your proposals over ~~again~~ in the light of your discussion with Mr. Brown?



14 Nov 1933

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I know that your primary anxiety in this matter is to improve or at least to safeguard the miners' standard of living. This is also the Government's aim, and our policy is bearing fruit. The employment position in the industry is showing definite improvement, and when the various new trade agreements have become fully operative the resulting benefits to the coal export trade ought to be considerable. The basis of progressive improvement is, as I think you will admit, an increasing volume of trade and an absorption of a large number of the unemployed. That is the guiding idea of the Government policy.

Yours very sincerely,

J. RANSBY MACDONALD

The Secretary,  
M.F.C.B.



See vol. 28a, fols. 199-201 for = letters of  
Sir Richard Stafford Cripps, dated Dec. 1933.

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Ivan Mikhailovich Maisky  
(1884-)



8th December 1933

My dear Lansbury,

I have just come back from the Soviet Union and I send you my greetings on my return to London. I hope to see you before long and to have a chat with you on various topical questions.

I am very glad to inform you that Ha-Gaon Eliahu Shocher Rav of Pahost, on whose behalf you wrote to me on the 19th June of this year, is allowed to leave the U.S.S.R. and go to Palestine if he applies to the Soviet Authorities for permission. There are no objections on their part to his leaving the country.

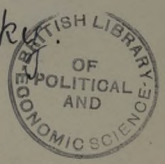
On my return, I found your letter of the 24th November asking if there are any means of forwarding some books to Violet. If it is not too late, please send them to me and I will see that she gets them.

With all good wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

*J. Maisky*

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



TELEPHONE  
CATERHAM 36.

Sir George (Wm.) Paton  
(1859-1934)

PORTLEY,

CATERHAM-ON-THE-HILL,

SURREY.

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December 9<sup>th</sup> 1933.

Dear Mr. Lansbury

My wife & I were so  
grieved to hear of your serious  
accident and send you our  
warm sympathy. — We trust  
you are not suffering too much  
and that you will have a speedy  
recovery. — Yours sincerely

Sir  
Geo. W. Paton

Shell. Hon. George Lansbury M.P.

**URGENT**

*H.M. King George V and Queen Mary*

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From

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To

THE INFORMATION OVERLEAF WILL INTEREST YOU.

*Re Hon Geo Lansbury  
39 Bow Rd E 3*

*The Queen and I are so sorry to hear of your  
unfortunate accident and we trust that  
you are not in great pain. I hope that you will  
be able to send me a favourable account of  
your progress*

*George R I*



*M449*

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146  
House of Commons,  
Westminster, S.W.1.



"BALTIC HOUSE"  
215, QUEENS ROAD,  
PECKHAM, S.E.15.

147

Sir Arthur Leonard Bateman  
1879 -

? 10

Copied M. File 859

9th December 1933.

Dear Uncle George;

I read with dismay your serious accident, and hasten to extend to you, divine and brotherly sympathy to trust you will make progress to complete recovery to carry on your work in the House, where you are so well known and respected by parties of all shades and colours.

My Father who is 78 and lives at Yarmouth Norfolk was up last week, when you were in the House, and I pointed out your notable figure to him, you were at that time busy at the lobby or I should have felt honoured that you had met my father. With every good wish for Xmas and in the New Year prosperity and peace. If I can be of some service and you would be prepared to let me visit you, please tell your Secretary, the pleasure will be mine

Very sincerely.

The Rt Hon Sir George Lansbury.

M.P..P.C.

Manor Hospital.

Golders Green.

N. London.

Arthur Bateman

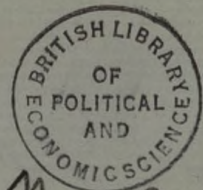
Mrs. Frederick Cavendish-Bentinck  
(n. Ruth St. Maur)

Dec 10  
1933

78, HARLEY STREET, W.

TELEPHONE,

2626 LANCHAM.



M 449

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Dear Mr Lausbury  
I am so sorry &  
read of or accident  
& I can only hope you  
are not too uncomfortable  
for it is a horrid  
thing & happens so often,  
but you can be sure  
that all the time  
many old friends will  
be thinking of, and



38 HARLEY STREET W.

feeling for you, many  
whom you may not have  
come across for years,  
who yet follow your career  
with interest and hear  
of your misfortunes with  
sorrow.

Yours truly  
Ruth C. Bentinck

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John Bromley  
(1876 - 1945)

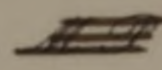
[say 10 Dec. 1933]

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J. Bromley,   
GENERAL SECRETARY.

9 Arkwright Road,  
Hampstead, N.W. 3.

P.T.O.