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WE ARE AS MUCH TO BE BLAMED AS ANYBODY.

Review of World Affairs & Peace Conference Plea.

SPEAKING to the most crowded political meeting held in Kettering for a considerable time, Mr. George Lansbury, pacifist and former leader of the Opposition, appealed in the Kettering Central Hall on Sunday evening

For the immediate calling of a World Peace Conference, which should remedy the injustices of the Treaty of Versailles;

Give fairer access for all nations to the colonial countries; and

Initiate a genuine policy of disarmament.

Mr. Lansbury pointed out that Britain, in common with other powers victorious in the Great War, must share a good deal of responsibility for the hatred and war fever in the world to-day; and appealed to his audience to have faith that even at this late hour world war might be averted.

The meeting was organised by the Kettering Group of the Peace Pledge Union, an organisation whose members undertake not to participate in war in any circumstances whatever.

Another speaker, Miss Ruth Fry, warned her audience against the policy of so-called "collective security," which, she said, simply had the effect of ensuring that little wars became big wars, and enabled our own Government to re-arm and have a clear conscience at the same time.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH ITALY.

Mr. Lansbury opened by pointing out that there was particularly great danger of confusion arising in peoples minds on the question of peace and war. Everyone wanted peace, but unfortunately the issues were normally put before the public in so tendentious a way that the ordinary man became confused.

There was an excellent example of this at the present time. Many people were denouncing the negotiations between the Government and Italy. But why shouldn't they have negotiations?

Negotiations were better than war. He was still as much a Socialist as ever he was; but because of that, he was a pacifist, and preferred negotiation and co-operation with anyone rather than conflict and war.

When the plans for a League of Nations were being made in 1919 he had tried to convince President Wilson and Col. House that the first essential, if such a League was to succeed, was that it should concern itself with the remedying of grievances.

This, in his view, should have been the cardinal function of any League of Nations, but in actual fact the revision of treaties had been put low in the list of the League's functions, and had rarely been employed at all.

BIG SLICE OF COLONIES.

In the world of industry no employer was so foolish nowadays to refuse to negotiate with his employees on the remedy of grievances. But in the world of international politics this principle was not recognised.

If you looked at the map it was obvious that countries such as Britain and France had a great share of the colonial possessions in the world.

They had to remember that within his lifetime, two countries, Germany and the U.S.A., had risen to the status of world powers. More recently still, Japan had learnt from us all that we could teach her about industry, and had changed from being a backward Eastern country to being a great power, with a population which could not be accommodated in so small an island.

AUSTRIA A "TORSO."

In the Peace Treaties, in 1919, the victors had made Austria, for instance, a "torso" without any head or limbs. Vienna, formerly a capital of a country of 47,000,000, had been left the overgrown capital of a country of 6,250,000.

Even the economic unity of the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been forbidden by the conquering powers.

If the victors in the Great War had been willing to let Austria and Germany unite before Hitler came to power there might never have been a Hitler at all.

But we had refused this; and so Hitler came and achieved the unity in his own way.

WHAT HITLER ASKED MR. LANSBURY.

Recently he had interviewed Hitler and had been asked why Britain had refused to agree when the majority of other Powers were willing to internationalise civil aviation. He had not been able to give him an answer.

THE REAL REASON WAS THAT OUR GOVERNMENT WISHED TO RETAIN THE USE OF AEROPLANES AS AN INSTRUMENT OF WAR IN ORDER TO CONQUER OR HOLD COLONIES.

People did not realise these things. We conquered colonial territory sometimes, and the people of this country did not even know it was being done.

Likewise, how could the Government protest with conviction against the bombing of Barcelona when we used bombing ourselves against native tribes?

In short it had to be recognised that the trouble was within ourselves as much as it was within others. In the Treaty of Versailles, and in subsequent colonial and armament policy, we had committed injustices which had to be recognised.

What he wished to see was a World Peace Conference called at once for the friendly discussion and settlement of these differences. It was not only Italy, Germany or Poland with whom he wanted negotiations, but a peace conference for the whole world so that we could remove the ills which at present were endangering peace.

WAR DANGER INCREASING.

It was no use waiting until after the Spanish war had been settled before we tackled this question. The longer it was postponed the more dangerous it became.

"I do not think war is inevitable," he said, "but while armaments are piled up the danger is steadily increasing."

"All statesmen," he went on, "are agreed that after a next war there will be no winners. There will be chaos and losers everywhere. Are we pacifists doing anything wrong, therefore, in opposing the war? People say you must be willing to die for democracy, but I say live for democracy."

"Although the world looks as if it is plunging rapidly towards destruction, I am going to preserve my faith that my fellow countrymen will not allow this to happen. Co-operation and comradeship will lead us to life, but competition and war lead to death."

STARVATION AMID PLENTY.

Speaking before Mr. Lansbury, Miss Ruth Fry pointed out that in the world to-day there were millions of people who lacked the bare essentials of existence. In 1933, for example, it had been estimated that 2,500,000 people died of starvation,

and 1,200,000 committed suicide through stress of economic circumstances.

And yet in that self-same world, there were the possibilities of the boundless production of wealth, and food was actually destroyed.

Internationally, too, there was suspicion and hatred. We had treated Germany abominably after the war, making it inevitable that she would "bounce" up again as she was doing to-day. It was impossible for Germany to feel friendly to those who had starved her children, as we had starved them in the Great War. War and hatred in short always engendered the spirit that led to more war.

In particular they had to guard themselves against the fiction of collective security.

This was one of the worst problems that faced the pacifist. The Government wished to retain its big guns and to keep its conscience clear at the same time.

As Aldous Huxley had pointed out, "collective security" simply meant war on a bigger scale than ever before.

"LET'S MAKE WAR AWKWARD."

Experts frequently stressed that it would be vitally important in future war time that the entire population should be behind the Government. It was said that even five per cent of the population could make it very awkward for the Government if they opposed it in time of war.

"Well, let's make it awkward," said Miss Fry, amid applause.

EVEN MEN LIKE HITLER.

Why were many people opposed to pacifism?

In the first place, they must always remember that there was always opposition to new ideas. They must have faith in their ideals. They must have an absolute faith that it was indeed possible to bring what was good out of men—even out of men like Hitler, by treating them as we would be treated ourselves.

In the East men like Ghandi were winning wide support for the ideal of non-violence. They must take encouragement from this, and believe that the spiritual power of goodness was the only force in the whole world which freed humanity from the terrible scourge and crime of war.

ALL SIDES GIVEN A CHANCE.

Mr. Percy Walls, who presided, in introducing the speakers, said that their minds would go back that evening to the Rev. Dick Sheppard, who gave his life in the cause of peace, and they would hope that his work would prove ultimately not to have been in vain.

The Rev. W. H. Cauldwell (minister of Toller Congregational Church), who made a number of announcements, mentioned that a manifesto drawn up by the Peace Pledge Union had been sent to the various national newspapers, none of which had published it.

It seemed, he said, there was almost a boycott on this manifesto, but Mr. Cauldwell said that he would like to pay tribute to the manner in which the "Evening Telegraph" published all sides of a question in its correspondence columns.

Also on the platform were Messrs. B. Tavener, S. Seamark, of Northampton, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Sawkins, Mr. F. Ransom, and the Misses Coles, of Wellingborough, Mrs. Evans, of Market Harborough, Councillor J. C. Dempsey, of Rothwell, and Mrs. A. A. Woodward, Mr. H. Taylor, Mr. A. E. Buckby, and Mr. K. G. Nichols, secretary of the Kettering Group of the Peace Pledge Union).

Vocal items were rendered before the meeting began by the Co-operative Male Voice Choir, conducted by Mr. C. Adams.

During the afternoon Mr. Lansbury addressed a crowded meeting in Rothwell Methodist Church, organised by Rothwell Men's Adult School. Councillor J. C. Dempsey (a vice-president of the Adult School) presided and Mr. W. Holmes (president) thanked the speaker and the church for the loan of the hall. An overflow meeting was held in the Methodist Schoolroom.

In the evening at Kettering Mr. Lansbury's speech was relayed to the overflow gathering in the Co-operative and Labour Institute.

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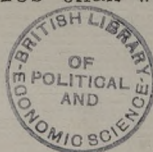
Memorandum by Mr. George Lansbury for the information of Herr Hitler in connection with the interview proposed for Monday, April 19th, 1937.

May I first of all thank you for kindly granting this interview. I come to you representing a mighty public opinion on behalf of peace. I am able to say from personal experience, gained in Europe and the United States as well as in Great Britain, that many millions of people are daily working, longing and praying for peace, a peace based on the great saying of Jesus Christ, "Do to others as you would that they should do to you." I come to you with the same message. You and I disagree fundamentally as to methods of government, but I am quite sure this fact will not prevent your giving full consideration to the message that it is my purpose to deliver.

In all countries that I have visited I can truthfully tell you there is no trace of bitterness or hatred against other nations, even though there is very wide difference of opinion as to how nations should be governed. In Great Britain there is a very sincere desire to reach agreement with all peoples, including the German nation, such as will ensure a lasting peace.

I do not minimise or excuse the difficulties and evils which the penal clauses of the peace treaties imposed on the defeated nations. I would, however, ask you to believe that many people in all countries opposed those treaties; and to-day there is throughout the world, including Great Britain, a large number of people sincerely desirous of removing every disability that any nation is suffering. All they ask is that the removal of one grievance should not cause another, and that any changes needed should be discussed and settled by friendly negotiation with mutual respect and goodwill. All who took part in the Great War on either side, and many of those who helped to frame the treaties after the War, have learnt the lesson that all wars teach, that force is no permanent remedy for any evil and that vengeance in any form only produces "Dead Sea fruit". Many of us have also learned that no nation can claim self-righteous exemption from responsibility, that in fact all have sinned. This was brought home to many people when some years ago a Japanese statesman at Geneva flung out the challenge to his colleagues, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

The world must make a new start and all must determine to use their influence to secure a real peace by goodwill and mutual concession. Everywhere I have been, and among all classes of people, I have found almost universal acceptance of the proposal that an entirely new world conference should be summoned, a conference at which all nations must be represented and all attend as equals. I have asked President Roosevelt to summon such a conference. I think he might see his way to do so if he could expect a response from the other great powers. Statesmen are often, like other people, not too anxious to take the lead in a great piece of work unless they are sure of success. I am, however, not betraying anything said to me privately when I say that I am convinced that every leading man I have talked with has agreed that such a conference should be called. And if those attending came together in the spirit of goodwill, conciliation and co-operation, the minds of statesmen and nations would be turned away from the belief that armaments alone can bring peace, and instead would understand that, at this period of the world's history, it is possible to find a more excellent method of solving our difficulties than war and universal slaughter.



The first question this conference must discuss is a truce in the armaments race. I believe that if statesmen come together in the spirit of goodwill which animates ordinary people in all lands it will be quite easy to arrange a standstill agreement, leaving all national armaments just where they are when the conference opens. There may be some suspicion and distrust which if necessary could be overcome by inspection, though I should hope the spirit of the conference would be such that the pledged word of each would be acceptable to all.

The main business of the conference would be to consider how to deal with the causes of war. The members would be asked to treat these causes as man-made. As such they could by man be removed. My belief, strengthened by my conversations with statesmen of many nations, is that there is a general recognition of the fact that imperialism as a national policy is finished. It is now no longer possible for two or three great powers to dominate and control the major portion of the world. These powers, aptly described by Sir Samuel Hoare as the "Haves", must be prepared to share with the "Have-nots".

As to the precise methods by which freedom of access to non-self-governing portions of the world can be obtained, these must be worked out by international commissions, fully representative of all nations. It must be recognised from the start that an effort must be made to treat the world as an economic unity, all nations understanding that the prosperity of each means the prosperity of all. International capitalist monopolies are able to sink all national differences in order to secure profit for themselves. Our new conference will, I should expect, take good care to see that no private money-making monopoly, whatever its nationality, should hinder in any way international control of undeveloped territories, raw materials and organisation of markets. We are living in a most wonderful age, an age of abundance, a period in man's history when the only fundamental question before all people is how to share the abundance which nature and scientific discovery has put at our disposal. I do not propose to argue about ownership of colonies because I am quite certain that all nations owning colonies and mandated territories must be willing to pay a big price for peace, even if, subject to guarantees to safeguard the interests of the original inhabitants, it means putting some possessions and mandated territories under international control. The main question, however, is much simpler and can be more easily adjusted. That is, how to organise the world's economic resources and unsatisfied markets in such a manner as to give to all nations equal opportunities for trade.

At this moment, it is possible for us to see on the continent of America a great effort by Mr. Roosevelt and his Secretary of State, Mr. Cordell Hull, to establish economic unity on that great continent. Right away from the frozen North to the sunny South they are endeavouring to show the world how economic co-operation will make the path to peace both certain and durable. Both the President and his Secretary of State have publicly expressed their desire to open wide the opportunities for trade. Mr. Hull has said, "nations must trade or perish". I say to you what I have said to every statesman I have met; it will be an everlasting crime against humanity if, knowing all the facts concerning the results of another great war, the responsible statesmen in all countries refuse to come together and by real conference to seek a way out of the chaotic plight in which we find ourselves. The authorities of Great Britain, France and Germany are now co-operating to take care of the graves of the honoured dead who fell in the Great War. This agreement has given much satisfaction in Great Britain. Surely if we are able to agree rightly to honour the dead, we should be even more willing to prevent the catastrophe of war in the future.

I have only touched the fringe of the questions facing us all; but you will have gathered that my desire is that you should give a public pledge that, if such a conference is summoned, Germany shall be represented and her statesmen shall direct their best thought and energy towards finding a peaceful settlement of all outstanding questions.

May I say this also. I should very much hope that out of this conference there would be evolved a real league of all nations, whose first duty would be to discuss and remove the difficulties and grievances which may arise between nations. My conviction is that once our minds are turned in the direction of removing the causes of war, disarmament will be a possibility and the horrible bestial weapons of war, such as bombing air-planes and poison gas, would by mutual agreement be abolished. I should also hope that national armaments would disappear.

Some of my friends have told me that this is not the right moment to ask for a conference and that in any event much preparation must be made through private negotiation before such a conference as is proposed could meet with any hope of success. This, however, is to misunderstand the whole object of my peace mission. As I see the world, it is like a huge factory, almost on the point of destruction by fire, or like the imminence of an epidemic of plague. No municipality would wait for the fire to spread, but on the first sign of conflagration would set to work to stop it. There is no Government in the world that would hesitate to take the most drastic measures to avert a plague.

The situation in Spain, with all its terrible consequences to the people of that great country, is clear evidence of how near the world is to disaster. So I beg you when considering my proposal to think of it as one of immediate urgency. There is very great sympathy with the suffering children, women and men in Spain; and much indignation that an ancient, honoured race should be in such a plight. We all want an end to that slaughter, not an extension which would involve all Europe and perhaps America. You will, I am sure, agree that a conference animated by an entirely new spirit of mutual co-operation would be willing to assist the Spanish nation to settle themselves, without outside interference from any quarter, how they wish to be governed. This is the inalienable right of peoples, no matter how much we disagree as to the methods by which nations choose to be governed.

May I conclude by repeating that I come to you solely in the cause of peace, peace secured not by war or force but by each nation agreeing to pool knowledge and resources for the service of one another. The days when one nation or even a group of nations could control the world are past and gone. We have now a God-given opportunity of inaugurating the age declared to be the ultimate goal of the human race; that golden age when reason shall rule us, and all nations find their fullest life in co-operation one with another. However much we disagree on questions of government, I do not believe that it is the wish of any statesman to sacrifice the youth of to-day to the establishment of barbarism. I know that neither the British Government, nor any other Government, has any such desire. But all Governments fear one another, and fear is the greatest enemy of mankind, an enemy which all history proves cannot be overcome by war, an enemy for which the New Testament has given us the remedy in the words, "Perfect love casteth out fear". It must be a love of our children, our homes, our own people, but also a love which compels us to recognise as the law of our life and the only means of peace and security the command, "Do to others as you would that they should do to you".

Memorandum von Herrn George Lansbury für die Unterredung mit Herrn Hitler am Montag den 19. April, 1937.

Darf ich Ihnen zunächst danken, dass Sie mir dieses Interview freundlicher Weise gewährt haben. Ich komme zu Ihnen als Vertreter einer mächtigen öffentlichen Meinung, die den Frieden will. Ich kann aus persönlicher Erfahrung, die ich sowohl in Europa und in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika als auch in Grossbritannien gewonnen habe, sagen, dass viele Millionen täglich für den Frieden arbeiten, sich nach ihm sehnen und für ihn beten, einen Frieden, der auf dem grossen Worte Christi beruht: "Wie Du willst, dass andere Dir tun, so tue ihnen auch." Mit der gleichen Botschaft komme ich zu Ihnen. Sie und ich haben grundsätzlich verschiedene Auffassungen über die Methoden, wie man regiert. Aber ich bin sicher, dass Sie dies nicht verhindern wird, die Botschaft, die ich Ihnen bringe, ernsthaft zu erwägen.

Wahrheitsgemäss kann ich Ihnen berichten, dass ich in keinem der Länder die ich besucht habe, eine Spur von Bitterkeit oder Hass gegen andere Völker gefunden habe, selbst wenn erhebliche Meinungsverschiedenheiten darüber bestehen, wie Nationen regiert werden sollten. In England besteht ein tiefes und ehrliches Bestreben, mit allen Völkern, auch mit dem deutschen, zu einer Verständigung zu kommen, die dauerhaften Frieden verspricht. Ich will die Schwierigkeiten und Leiden, die die



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Strafsbestimmungen der Friedensverträge den unterlegenen Völkern brachten, weder verkleinern noch entschuldigen. Ich möchte Sie aber bitten, mir zu glauben, dass in allen Ländern viele diesen Verträgen widersprachen; und dass heute in der ganzen Welt, einschliesslich Grossbritannien, sich sehr, sehr viele ernsthaft und ehrlich darum bemühen, jede Beschränkung zu beseitigen, unter der irgend eine Nation leidet. Alles was sie verlangen ist, dass die Beseitigung einer Unbill nicht eine neue verursacht, und dass jede notwendige Änderung im Wege freundschaftlicher Verhandlung und im Geiste gegenseitiger Achtung und gegenseitigen guten Willens erörtert und geregelt wird. Alle Teilnehmer des Weltkrieges auf beiden Seiten, und viele von denen die an der Gestaltung der Friedensverträge beteiligt waren, haben gelernt, was alle Kriege lehren, dass Gewalt kein endgültiges Heilmittel für irgend ein Übel ist, und dass Rache in jeder Form nur "Tote Früchte" zeitigt. Viele von uns haben ferner gelernt, dass keine Nation in selbstgerechter Weise Freispruch von aller Verantwortung verlangen kann, dass vielmehr alle gesündigt haben. Das wurde vielen klar, als vor einigen Jahren ein japanischer Staatsmann in Genf seinen Kollegen die Mahnung zurief: "Wer von Euch ohne Sünde ist, der werfe den ersten Stein!"

Die Welt muss einen neuen Anfang machen und alle müssen beschliessen, ihren Einfluss zur Sicherung eines wirklichen Friedens zu gebrauchen, herbeigeführt durch guten Willen und

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gegenseitiges Entgegenkommen. Wo auch immer ich gewesen bin, da fand ich, dass alle Klassen der Bevölkerung fast ausnahmslos dem Vorschlag zustimmten, eine ganz neue Weltkonferenz einzuberufen, eine Konferenz, auf der alle Nationen vertreten sein müssen und die alle als Gleichberechtigte besuchen. Ich habe Präsident Roosevelt aufgefordert, solch eine Konferenz einzuberufen. Ich glaube, er würde einen Weg dazu finden, wenn er annehmen könnte, dass die anderen Grossmächte einen solchen Vorschlag günstig aufnehmen würden. Staatsmänner sind oft, wie andere Menschen auch, nicht so sehr darauf erpicht, die Führung einer grossen Sache zu übernehmen, wenn sie des Erfolges nicht sicher sind. Ich verrate aber kein Geheimniss wenn ich der Überzeugung Ausdruck gebe, dass jeder führende Mann, mit dem ich gesprochen habe, zugegeben hat dass solch' eine Konferenz einberufen werden sollte. Und wenn ihre Mitglieder im Geiste guten Willens, versöhnungsbereit und willig zur Zusammenarbeit zusammen kämen, dann würden Staatsmänner und Nationen von dem Glauben bekehrt werden, dass allein Rüstungen Frieden bringen können. Statt dessen würden sie einsehen, dass es in diesem Augenblick der Weltgeschichte möglich ist, eine viel bessere Methode zu finden, unsere Schwierigkeiten zu lösen, als Krieg und allgemeines Gemetzel.

Die erste Frage, die die Konferenz diskutieren muss, ist ein Rüstungswaffenstillstand. Ich glaube, dass wenn Staatsmänner in dem Geiste guten Willens zusammenkämen, der gewöhnliche Leute

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in allen Ländern beseelt, es ganz leicht sein wird, ein Stillhalte-Abkommen zu Schliessen, durch das alle nationalen Rüstungen gerade auf dem Stande bleiben, auf dem sie bei Eröffnung der Konferenz stehen. Es mag einiger Verdacht und einiges Misstrauen vorhanden sein, das nötigenfalls durch Kontrolle beseitigt werden könnte, obgleich ich hoffe dass im Geist der Konferenz das Versprechen eines jeden von allen angenommen werden würde.

Die Hauptaufgabe der Konferenz würde in der Erörterung der Ursachen des Krieges bestehen. Die Mitglieder würden aufgefordert werden, diese Gründe als von Menschen verursacht zu betrachten. Als solche könnten sie auch von Menschen beseitigt werden. Es ist mein Glaube, der durch meine Unterhaltungen mit Staatsmännern vieler Nationen bestärkt worden ist, dass nach allgemeiner Erkenntnis der Imperialismus als nationale Politik erledigt ist. Es ist heute zwei oder drei grossen Mächten nicht mehr möglich, den grösseren Teil der Welt zu beherrschen und zu kontrollieren. Diese Mächte, von Sir Samuel Hoare glücklich als die "Haves" beschrieben, müssen bereit sein, mit den "Have-nots" (Habenichtsen) zu teilen.

Die genauen Methoden, durch die Freier Zugang zu denjenigen Teilen der Welt erlangt werden kann, die sich nicht selbst regieren, müssen durch internationale Commissionen, in denen alle Völker voll vertreten sind, ausgearbeitet werden.

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Von Beginn an muss anerkannt werden, dass ein Versuch gemacht werden muss die Welt als ökonomische Einheit zu behandeln, in dem alle Nationen einsehen dass das Wohlergehen einer Jeden das Wohlergehen aller bedeutet. Internationale capitalistische Monopole sind fähig, alle nationalen Gegensätze beiseite zu schieben um ihren eigenen Profit zu sichern. Unsere neue Konferenz wird, wie ich hoffe, entschieden dafür Sorge tragen, dass kein privates Monopol, gleichgültig welcher Nationalität, in irgend einer Weise eine internationale Kontrolle über unentwickelte Gebiete, Rohstoffe und Marktorganisationen hindern wird. Wir leben in einem ganz wunderbaren Zeitalter, einer Zeit des Überflusses, einer Periode der Weltgeschichte in der die einzige fundamentale Frage für jedermann ist, wie wir dem Überfluss, den Natur und wissenschaftliche Entdeckungen zu unserer Verfügung stellen, gerecht verteilen können. Ich gedenke nicht, hier die Frage des Besitzes von Kolonien zu erörtern, weil ich ganz sicher bin dass alle Staaten die Kolonien oder Mandate besitzen, bereit sein müssen einen hohen Preis für Frieden zu bezahlen, selbst wenn das heisst dass unter bestimmten Garantien für die Sicherheit der Interessen der Eingeborenen, einige Besitzungen und Mandate unter internationale Kontrolle gestellt werden. Das Hauptproblem aber ist viel einfacher und kann leichter gelöst werden. Es besteht in der Aufgabe, die wirtschaftlichen Kräfte der Welt und die unbefriedigten Märkte in solcher Weise zu organisieren, dass alle Nationen gleiche

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Möglichkeiten für ihren Handel haben.

Im gegenwärtigen Augenblick können wir beobachten, wie in Amerika President Roosevelt und sein Staatssecretär Cordell Hull am Werke sind, eine oekonomische Einheit aus diesem Kontinent zu machen. Vom kalten Norden bis zum sonnigen Süden versuchen sie der Welt zu zeigen, wie wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit den Weg zum Frieden sowohl sicher wie auch dauerhaft machen wird. Beide, der President und der Staatssecretär, haben öffentlich ihren Wunsch ausgedrückt, die Wege für den Handel weit offen zu halten. Mr. Hull sagte, "Nationen müssen Handel treiben oder untergehen." Ich sage zu Ihnen, was ich zu jedem Staatsmann sagte, den ich traf: Es wird ein ewiger Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit sein, wenn sich die Staatsmänner aller Länder, im Kenntniss der Folgen eines neuen grossen Krieges, weigern würden zusammen zu kommen, um auf eine wirkliche Konferenz einen Ausweg aus der chaotischen Notlage zu suchen in der wir uns alle heute befinden.

Die Behörden Englands, Frankreichs und Deutschlands arbeiten heute zusammen, um für die Gräber der im Weltkrieg gefallenen zu sorgen. Diese Zusammenarbeit hat grosse Genugtuung in England erweckt. Wenn wir uns vereinigen können um die Toten zu ehren, dann sollten wir bestimmt noch mehr willens sein, der Katastrophe eines zukünftigen Krieges vorzubeugen.

Ich habe die Fragen denen wir gegenüberstehen, nur oberflächlich gestreift, aber Sie werden aus dem, was ich gesagt

habe, meinen Wunsch herausgehört haben, von Ihnen eine öffentliche Zusage zu erhalten, dass, wenn eine solche Konferenz einberufen wird, Deutschland an ihr teilnehmen wird, und seine Staatsmänner ihre besten Gedanken und ihre Energie daran wenden werden, eine friedliche Lösung der ausstehenden Fragen zu finden.

Darf ich noch dies hinzufügen. Ich hoffe sehr, dass aus dieser Konferenz ein wahrer Bund aller Völker herauswächst, dessen erste Aufgabe in der Erörterung und Beseitigung der Schwierigkeiten und Leiden besteht die sich zwischen Völkern ergeben können. Ich bin überzeugt, dass Abrüstung möglich wird, sobald sich erst einmal unsere Gedanken der Beseitigung der Kriegsursachen zuwenden, und dass die besonders grausamen Waffenarten, wie Bombenflugzeug und Giftgas, dann auf Grund gegenseitiger Übereinkunft abgeschafft werden würden. Ich möchte ferner hoffen, dass die nationalen Rüstungen dann aufgegeben werden würden.

Einige meiner Freunde haben mir gesagt, dies sei nicht der rechte Augenblick für solch eine Konferenz. Jedenfalls sei im Wege privater Verhandlungen viel Vorbereitung notwendig, ehe eine Konferenz wie die vorgeschlagene mit einiger Aussicht auf Erfolg zusammentreten könne. Das aber heisst die Aufgabe meiner Friedensmission missverstehen. Für mich ist die Welt im Augenblick gleich einer grossen Fabrik, die in Gefahr steht vom Feuer zerstört zu werden, oder wie der drohende Ausbruch der Pest.

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Keine Stadt würde warten, bis das Feuer sich ausbreitet, sondern würde beim ersten Anzeichen Gegenmassnahme ergreifen, um es zu löschen. Keine Regierung der Welt würde zögern drastische Schritte zu tun, um den Ausbruch der Pest zu verhindern.

Die Lage in Spanien, mit all' ihren schrecklichen Folgen für die Spanier, ist ein klarer Beweis dafür, wie nahe dem Unglück die Welt bereits ist. Deshalb bitte ich Sie meinen Vorschlag, wenn Sie ihn erwägen, als sehr dringend zu betrachten. Viel warmes Mitgefühl besteht überall mit den Leiden der Kinder, Frauen, Männer in Spanien, und viel Unwille darüber, dass sich eine alte angesehene Nation in solch' trauriger Lage befindet. Wir alle wünschen dass das Gemetzel dort ende, nicht, dass ganz Europa und vielleicht Amerika hinengezogen werde. Sie werden mir sicherlich darin zustimmen, dass eine solche Konferenz, belebt von einem neuen Geist gegenseitiger Zusammenarbeit, bereit sein würde, der Spanischen Nation zu helfen, ihre Regierungsform selbst zu entscheiden ohne irgendwelche Eingriffe von aussen. Dies ist ein unverkäusserliches Recht jeden Volkes, ganz gleichgültig wie sehr wir persönlich von manchen Methoden abweichen, nach denen Völker wünschen regiert zu werden.

Darf ich zum Schluss wiederholen, dass ich zu Ihnen komme nur und ausschliesslich nur des Friedens willen, eines Friedens, der nicht auf Krieg oder Gewalt beruht, sondern auf der Übereinstimmung der Völker, ihre Kenntnisse und ihre Mittel gegenseitig

für einander nutzbar zu machen. Die Tage, in denen eine Nation oder eine Gruppe von Nationen, die Welt beherrschen konnte, sind vorüber für immer. Eine Gott-gegebene Gelegenheit legt vor uns, das Zeitalter heraufzuführen, nach dem die Menschheit von jeher strebt, das goldene Zeitalter, in dem nur die Vernunft regiert und in dem alle Völker ihr vollstes Leben in gegenseitiger Zusammenarbeit finden. Wie sehr unsere Meinungen über die verschiedenen Regierungsformen auch von einander abweichen mögen, ich bin überzeugt, kein Staatsmann wünscht die Jugend zu opfern, um die Barbarei wieder heraufzuführen. Ich weiss das weder die britische Regierung noch irgend eine andre derartiges wünscht. Aber alle Regierungen fürchten sich vor einander, und die Furcht ist der grösste Feind der Menschheit, ein Feind der, wie die ganze Geschichte lehrt, nicht durch Krieg überwunden werden kann, ein Feind zu dessen Überwindung nur das Neue Testament durch das Wort verhilft: die vollkommene Liebe kennt keine Furcht. Es muss die Liebe sein zu unseren Kindern, unserer Familie, unserem eigenen Volk, aber auch die Liebe, die uns zwingt, als das Gesetz unseres Lebens und als einzige Grundlage für Frieden und Sicherheit den Befehl anzuerkennen: "Wie Du willst, dass andere Dir tun, so tue ihnen auch."



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NOTES ON GEORGE LANSBURY'S INTERVIEW WITH HITLER, 19.iv.37.

It was not anything like what people said it would be. I spoke for seven or eight minutes at the start, elaborating the dangers, and Hitler replied; then I spoke again. Most of the conversation was in the form of question and answer. There was no long speech from him. It was a real conversation. We discussed the whole gamut of subjects over two hours and a quarter. The whole talk was as satisfactory as those with Blum and Roosevelt. Hitler treated the interview very seriously. I think he really wants peace.

Reference was made to the memorandum sent to Hitler in advance. Hitler objected to its publication, complaining that memoranda had not been sent to the other statesmen visited and that I did not tell him exactly what the others said. I agreed not to publish the memorandum.

Hitler at one time took the position of the injured innocent, saying that he had offered disarmament, first down to a hundred thousand, then to two hundred thousand, and then to five hundred thousand, but there had been no response. Now armaments were piling up. But probably armaments would be a guarantee for peace, since everybody was afraid of using them. I replied that Bernard Shaw had said the same thing two years ago, but that any incident might cause war to break out.



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Hitler referred to the case of Abyssinia as proof that no country could afford to go unarmed, but I quoted Hitler against himself. He had said that Europe had warred for a thousand years, frontiers being shifted back and forth, but that finally the peoples must live together. Hitler had said that the time had come to find a better way. He agreed again that this was true.

Hitler said that Germany had given up Alsace and Lorraine. Germany wanted only Germans in the Empire and did not want to impose the Nazi regime on other countries. The Nazi system was not suitable to England. There was no question that Germany would go to war about. I pointed out that Lloyd George had said the same thing shortly before the War; then came the Sarajevo assassination. An incident on the Czechoslovakian border would send everything up again in a blaze. We had a great argument on that point and I beat him to a stand.

Hitler declared that he could not take the lead in calling a conference. Nobody trusted him, and if he attempted to take the initiative it would spoil the chances of a conference.

Hitler asked whether Blum or somebody else would call the conference. A difficulty arose on the word "pledge" used in the memorandum. I had asked him to "give a public pledge that, if such a conference is summoned, Germany shall be represented and her statesmen shall direct their best thought and energy towards finding a peaceful settlement of all outstanding questions".

On the question as to who should attend the conference, the name of Russia was mentioned. Hitler declared that Russia wanted to turn everybody Bolshevik and revolutionary. I replied that the world could not be divided simply into two parts under Bolshevism and Nazism; neither theory suited the whole world. People liked to live under different forms of authority. England, Germany, Russia and Italy all had their different ways, but all wanted to trade with one another. Germany could not afford to be self-contained. Hitler agreed that he did not believe that it could; he had never said so. It was certain that Germany must trade and have international relationships with the Bolsheviks. I pointed out that Luther imagined that he could kill off Catholicism, but that did not happen. Instead, the Counter-Reformation occurred under the leadership of Ignatius Loyola, and Catholics and Protestants were obliged to live side by side trading in peace.

Hitler declared that Russia was making mischief. I responded that they had modified their position and wanted peace as much as any other country. Hitler was sceptical, but he did not raise the question of excluding them from a conference.

Some ten or fifteen minutes were given to the question of prisoners. I asked whether Hitler would not consider an amnesty. Hitler asserted that the Nazi revolution itself had been the greatest amnesty in all history; a hundred thousand people had been set free. People now in prison were only those

who had committed offences. I said that in England we were told that that was not so, and asked whether I might send him a list of names. Hitler said that they knew the names and the offences and that the cases were constantly reviewed and that now and then people were sent out. It was an internal matter for Germany alone. I did not question that. I had already said that it would create a good spirit in England if a step like an amnesty were taken.

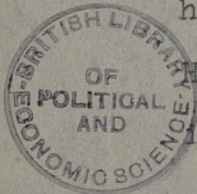
The discussion was quite a triumph, and the whole visit was well worth paying. But the task now is to get our own Government to move.

Copy of letter dated 11th May 1937.

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from G.L. to Reginald Clifford Allen
(1st Baron Allen of Hurtwood; 1889-1939)
[see letters 17 Jan. to 7 Feb. 1949 between Lady Allen & R. Postgate]
39, Bow Road,
E.3.
Dear Clifford Allen,

I am sorry that all my week ends for June are booked up. Otherwise, I would have attended the Oxford gathering. Some one sent me a line about yourself and others who in various ways were good enough to write and speak in support of a settlement with Germany on terms of mutual good will. You have talked with Hitler so know as much of him as me. He is as simple and clear cut as was Lenin and as sure he is right as was Lenin and as determined to stand by German independence as Lenin for International Revolution. Most fanatics are sincere, but they make lots of trouble, even so, a soft word, a tiny recognition of Hitler's position, by diplomats would make all the difference. He is a very lonely man and has no spiritual background to fall back upon, except that he believes he has saved Germany and is determined she shall not slip back again. He is ruthless and quite cynical with everything that seems to stand in his way. He will not go to war unless pushed into it by others.



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He knows how a European war will end. He is a good conversation-
list and did not monopolise more time than I did.

Best wishes,

George Lansbury.

Mr. George Lansbury's Visit to Rome, July 8th-15th, 1937.

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GREECE

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Mabel Violet Wanliss

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Hotel Savona

Trieste

Italy
July 12th / 37

To

Mr. George Lansbury. M.P.

Dear Sir

Excuse a stranger addressing you but I have never forgotten the grand way you behaved over the Italian - British question about two years ago, when you refused to join in the hymn of hate against this Country which those who know it, love so much; and that you resigned your position to prove your principles.

I was so delighted & interested to read you were going to Germany & then coming to Italy & felt I must write & say I felt sure it would do so much good, the personal touch, which is a thing so many of our

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M.V. Wankiss

12 July 1937

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politicians do not seem to understand, & I have never forgotten how the Prince of Wales sent over the British Legion to Germany, & I suppose it was this act of friendship that Herr Hitler remembered & would not have anything in his newspapers during the week preceding the abdication, which I think was very nice of him.

I did mean to write to London but I have had so much illness with lumbago & sciatica etc I find it hard to do what I want, & I saw read you were leaving for Rome, & it struck me a few few minutes ago to try & write to you care of the Government at Rome.

If there were more people in ^{our} Parliament like you I am sure there would not be such a fear of war nor so much money wasted on fear of it. I do not know if you know Italy, but to know it is to love it, & I only wish that any of our people who have not seen it could come & then the very thought of



TELEGRAM-ADRESSE:
COSMOPOLITE, KØBENHAVN
TELF. CENTRAL 80

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HOTEL COSMOPOLITE
KJØBENHAVN

Arthur AWH Ponsonby
(1st Baron Ponsonby; 1871-1946)

den 26. VII 1937

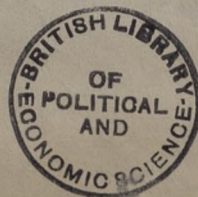
Dear George

How glad I am you put that statement in your pocket! I absolutely sympathise with you in your resentment. But I felt you were overestimating the importance of de Ligt, Bing, Laot & Co; but far more than that underestimating the great value of the splendid work you are doing which must not be interfered with by the petty bleatings of stupid individuals.

In the last laps of your life you are doing bigger work than you have ever done yet and I shall continue to stamp on anybody who says anything to the contrary.

Thank you for the too kind things you said about me. I am a second line man but I am not dismayed that even from that position one can sometimes do something.

Yours ever
Arthur



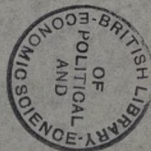
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ADDRESS GIVEN AT THE I.F.O.R. CONFERENCE, LUNTEREN,

by

THE RT. HON. GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P.

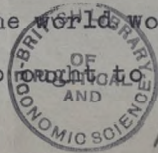


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I consider it a privilege to take part in this International Conference of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. During this week I have also been given the opportunity of meeting my comrades and friends of the War Resisters' International; although we meet under the banners of different organisations we are all united both in our ideals and in our common desire to find the best means of preventing war between individuals and nations. The situation in the world today is in many ways terribly depressing. Everywhere the forces making the world safe not for democracy but for destruction and ~~bestiality~~ seem to be triumphant. Every nation is armed in the fullest manner possible. New ~~methods~~, new theories for carrying on war have now been invented. To the age-long and barbarous methods of blockade and bombardment our generation has added the new horror of aerial and submarine warfare. All authorities tell us - as indeed Abyssinia, China and Spain prove ~~is~~ the case - that modern warfare means that civilians, children, women, aged and infirm will be among the first to be attacked and slaughtered. We must not allow our fellow citizens to forget that although "Air Raid Precautions" loom large in the defence programmes of all those governments described as Christian and ~~civilised~~, the cold fact attested by military and scientific authorities remains absolutely true. The bombers will always get through; and as a consequence my own nation and

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fight about trade and industry and also how to use all the detestable machinery of modern warfare. And in Spain, within a few hundred miles of where we meet, horrible carnage and slaughter is being carried on. An international war in the guise of a national revolution is destroying the lives of thousands of Spaniards and bringing about wholesale destruction of property. We who believe in appeasement and reconciliation are not blind to these horrors; our shame and indignation are as sincere and intense as that of others. We wish to aid the victims to the best of our ability and use every ounce of influence we possess on behalf of a settlement through goodwill. We are, however, firm and insistent in our conviction that the active intervention of alien powers would result in an extension of the area of the strife and in an outbreak of just that world war which is the avowed object of all statesmen to avert. The situation in Czechoslovakia as I write is still difficult. We hope the outcome of the negotiations now going on will bring a settled peace. We are convinced that the economic factors in that situation are even more important than the historical and psychological. Czechoslovakia cannot expect to live by herself. The special problem of the Sudeten area is at least in part attributable to the setting up of the new frontiers in the post-war treaties. But it is evident that Czechoslovakia as a whole as well as its German-speaking portions needs economic relations with Germany on the one hand and with the rest of the old Austria on the other. Germany can be under no misapprehension as to what the attitude of the world would be if she tried to annex Czechoslovakia. But we too ought to recognise that whatever the



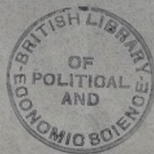
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theory of government on this side of the frontier or on that, our interest in the maintenance of the peace of Europe and the development of the life of all its peoples should lead us to ask for plans for the expansion of trade, not only throughout this region but also in every part of the world to the advantage of all peoples concerned. We need a new slogan, "Peace follows mutual economic cooperation". And as Englishmen we believe that, subject to proper safeguards, our Government ought to be willing, again in the interests of peace and prosperity for all, to take the lead in helping to make available the international finance necessary for development of this kind. Whether the present negotiations will open the way for this kind of advance no one can say. One thing is certain: another great war would leave Europe in an even worse plight than now.

This brings me to a general consideration of the international outlook. We shall not understand the situation in Europe if we fix our thoughts simply on Germany, Italy and Russia. No doubt there is a great clash of principle between these countries, or perhaps I should say, a clash between the rulers. But neither Fascism, Nazism nor Bolshevism is the sole cause of disruption in Europe and the world.



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Neither can we lay all the blame on what is described as the Peace Settlement. We are witnessing the birth of a new political and economic era. Side by side with the evils arising from the political division of Europe into a number of competing national states, there has arisen a desire among all nations for a fuller, juster and more equitable life.

We shall not understand world problems properly unless we try to realise the consequences which come to nations when first they are able through education to open the eyes of their intelligence and see the world as it is. There are few nations in Europe, not excluding all Russia, where the people are now entirely uneducated. The small nations created after the war all spend much more on education than ever before. Kemal Pasha in Turkey as well as Mussolini in Italy knows the value of an educated people. We know the education is not in some important respects what we should approve. Even so, we may be quite sure once the minds of any of us begin to work and develop no power in the world can stop the movement toward obtaining more knowledge, wisdom and understanding. So it is the peoples in Hungary, the Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Roumania and everywhere else that refuse to accept as true the comfortable doctrine of richer and more powerful governments, either their own rulers or any others, that poverty is an evil which must be borne even though it is now possible to supply the needs of all.

The conflict between democracy and dictatorship is complicated by



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personal antagonisms and the prejudices, cruelties and persecutions of some rulers; but if we study the persecution of Jews and Christians in any country we shall find the foundation on which such frightful persecution rests is the result of economic and social causes. It arises from the fact that people who feel they are suffering grievous evil must be given some reason, even if a false one, why they are forced to suffer in the midst of plenty, or when they could have the means of supplying all their needs if only the stupid social and industrial system they live under could be changed. The world we live in is so marvellous in respect to all things material that we ^{scarcely} ~~cannot~~ appreciate the vastness of ^{the} possibilities available for the service of mankind. Ordinary people of the same upbringing as myself ^{are aware that} ~~understand~~ ^{scientific} ~~this~~ great ^{has been made; but} advance. At present they, like the rest, do not see how to change the system of life they live under; and as a consequence they become for the moment seekers after truth, and, as is usual in all such periods of human history as this we are living in, seek truth first in one camp of advisers and then in another.

But over us all is the terrible grim reality of war. Sometimes it seems as if only a miracle can save us. No one of us dares to minimise the tremendous dangers which confront us; most certainly I have no intention of trying to lull anyone to sleep with soft words and vague assurances. Europe and the world is living in great danger; and yet there is some hope the still small voice of Reason will even yet be heard and acted upon. The Spirit of God is not in the earthquake,



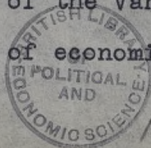
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[?c. 28 July 1937]

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storm or fire but is in that part of man we think of as conscience. May it not be that out of the terror of consequences a new spirit will arise? For some time now it has seemed to me that all governments are tentatively striving for time - time some say to build up more powerful forces. May it not be that at the same time they are also endeavouring to find a way out? In Great Britain there is no statesman or party who thinks of war as anything else but a crime. Above our party squabbles and fundamental disagreements, there is the simple truth that whether Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Attlee is in power the whole nation will support every effort for peace.

There is righteous indignation over intervention in Spain or elsewhere, from whatever quarter such intervention comes. The vast majority of people in Britain will, however, heartily support every effort for peace, not because they have become soft, or pacifists as we are - I wish they had done so - but because public opinion is convinced that war is a ghastly futility and could not settle the difficulties either in Spain or any other part of Europe or the world. We may also take a tiny bit of comfort from the fact that all nations still trade with each other, that governments in Berlin, Rome, Paris, London and Moscow still negotiate treaties between each other, and in spite of everything the press may say, the work of economic appeasement is going on. In common with many other people of all nations and parties I deplore the shelving of the Van Zeeland Report. This document does not cover the whole field of economic disorders, or contain more



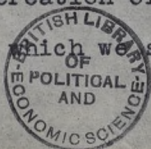
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than an approach to world economic problems; it does contain the proposition - "Come, let us reason together". It is this great proposal we must all support. It is rather insane that a world of men and women which can expend thousands of millions of pounds worth of human skill, knowledge and labour preparing to destroy itself utterly cannot call a halt to such madness and commence to build such an economic way of life as is consistent with our present standards of knowledge and understanding.

What then is our message to the world? We meet as men and women who believe that the religion of Jesus contains the promise of this life as well as the life to come. How shall we put our message before our fellow citizens? First of all, speaking for myself, we must put away all thoughts of self-righteousness. We are frail, sinful men; if we are able to see Christian truth and practice rather more clearly than we think others do it is our bounden duty to proclaim our faith wherever we are able to gain a hearing. We have a message to give to ourselves and the nations - a message of love and peace. ~~We stand for~~ ^{the we stand for} truths ~~which~~ have not ~~yet~~ been defeated; ~~simply~~ because they have not ~~yet~~ been tried. The simple words of the Master ring clearly, distinctly and truthfully down the ages: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul". This is the truth we all must learn, "Haves" and "Have nots". We do not ask for more imperialist nations or the creation of more empires. We desire to see the love expressed in deeds ^{which we} sing of ^{in words}:



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"I lay in dust, earth's glories ^{dead,} ~~shed,~~
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be."

Never forget our Lord's life was one of action, and He has left us the great task of repeating His message to the world. We must not be ashamed to glory in His teaching; no matter how often we fail to live up to the best and highest we know; we must ourselves be born again of His Spirit, the Spirit which gives courage, faith and endurance; and however much or however often our hearts may fail us for fear, let us always take courage from the fact that in the darkest and the brightest hour we are never alone, and whatever evil befalls us and however often we fail, He never fails us. I do not know why there is evil in the world. I cannot argue why God, who is all powerful, permits mankind to go on its muddle-headed hateful way. This I do know: neither God ^{nor} Nature is responsible for man's inhumanity to man, and this age of "new wonders" every day proves to all who possess reason how possible it is to start building on the sure foundations of love and cooperation that Kingdom of God which is within each one of us waiting to be expressed in the common life of all peoples.



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From Karl Walter, 33 Via Lunga, Bordighera, Italy.

July 30, 1937.

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Dear George Lansbury,

I was in Rome for a couple of weeks, arriving just after your visit, of which some of the echoes I heard may interest you, especially those which are not likely to reach you through other channels. For the impression of your visit was more widespread than you perhaps know. It ^{had} given a great impulse to the discussion of your immediate purpose everywhere I went; but I will stick to two quarters in which it had some consequences.

First, the Labour people. Although I know them well and know their good faith, I was surprised by the warmth with which they spoke of your visit, and of its international purpose. I had long talks with the president and other officials of the National Federation of Industrial Workers. Cianetti, the president, is a workingman, elected by his fellows to their provincial council and by it to the national council, a person of splendid physique and rugged mind, very highly regarded by Mussolini, and by his associates as a possible Duce ~~III~~ II. He asked me to tell you that they quite understood that you had to concentrate on your high mission, but were also disappointed that your visit was too short to give them an opportunity of meeting you, which they hope to do the next time you come this way. They feel rather keenly the need of a renewal of understanding with foreign Labour movements, now that their achievements warrant it; and the strong position of their syndicates in the state makes it desirable from many points of view. Your visit, in fact, brought it home to them that, although their power and position at home has grown out of all recognition in the last few years, their foreign reputation remains questionable.

"They do not know us," Cianetti said. "They even go on



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30 July 1937

Rod Walter

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repeating that we have suppressed the class war! The class war, yes, - that we have abolished, but not the class struggle -- it is our mission everywhere to incite the class struggle, to put all the weapons in the hands of the workers -- except the weapon of force, the strike -- and teach them how to use them."

I said that although I knew by daily observation that that was true, not one in a thousand in England would believe it. "How can they," he said, "unless they come and see for themselves?" He hoped that your visit might foreshadow a break in the long estrangement ~~xxx~~ between the workers of the two countries. He found it difficult to understand that English/Labour anti-Fascism could be anti-(Fascist)-Labour, and was very down on Mosley (as most of them are anyhow) on that account. "What can we do, now that Lansbury has broken the ice?" he asked. I told him I was very diffident about such matters since my experience with Henry May in 1934 when I conveyed friendly overtures from the Italian Co-operators, but that I could at least let you know privately how they felt about it. We discussed, but considered premature, the possibility of inviting an informal party to come and see what they are doing. More possible seemed to be the publication in England of a small book on Italian Labour such as I did on Italian Co-operation; but I fear the latter aroused more animosity than interest, and I am too much out of touch with England now to judge whether it would be opportune. Obviously somebody trusted by Labour would be a better person to write it than myself.

The other quarter I will mention, in which your visit also stirred the desire for better Left Wing understanding, was at the National Institute of Fascist Culture, where Valitutti, who wrote the Introduction to Mussolini's book, The Fascist Doctrine, edits the leading political monthly of Italy for which I occasionally write.



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30 July 1937 3.

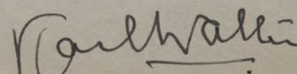
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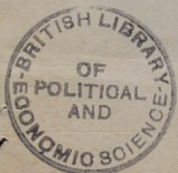
He took the view that one of the main roads to your goal needing repair is the international relations of the Left, and asked me to write a long article on the subject, comparing pre-war conditions with those of today, present difficulties and the importance of overcoming them, and so on. No new "International" or revival of old ones is contemplated, I need hardly say -- organic relations rather than institutional -- they want to get over sectionalism much as you did in going to Berlin and Rome; those visits indicated, (at the Institute) they thought, an outlook not unlike their own/regarding the international scope of Labour. They hold that the class struggle, within the limits of peaceful action, is a necessary element of domestic progress for the workers; but cannot be projected into the international field, excepting in so far as the I.L.O. provides an arena for it, with any advantage, because the workers in each country must win their own way at home. International emulation, therefore, rather than class organisation across the frontiers, which inevitably becomes ideological and antagonistic.

I should not write at such length unless I thought you would feel it has some bearing on your own purpose. Anyhow your visit let me in for this rather difficult article I must write, so I venture still further to ask you to tell me of any book I could get about international relations of the Left before and after the war, and for any suggestion you might care to make about what might usefully be said.

With very hearty good wishes from us both,

Yours sincerely,


Karl Walter.



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Sir (Francis) D'Arcy Godolphin
Osborne (1884-)

BRITISH LEGATION
TO THE HOLY SEE.

20, VIA QUATTRO FONTANE - ROME (5)

August 5th, 1937.

Order sent 11/8/37

My dear Mr. Lansbury,

I duly forwarded your message to the Pope, through the Secretariat of State, and have now received a letter from Monsignor Pizzardo, the Under Secretary of State, of which the translation is as follows:-

"I did not fail to transmit to His Holiness the sentiments of respectful confidence which Mr. Lansbury, when he was in Rome, was good enough to address to His Holiness through your intermediary.

The Holy Father was deeply touched by Mr. Lansbury's delicate thought and by the sentiment in favour of peace which inspired it. I beg Your Excellency so to inform Mr. Lansbury and to transmit to him at the same time the Pope's paternal thanks and warm good wishes."

I am afraid that this reply, for all its grateful appreciation of your message, makes no reference to your suggestion of an appeal by the Pope to all nations.

Yours very sincerely

D. G. I. Brown

The Right Honourable
George Lansbury P.C., M.P.
House of Commons.

P.D. 11/8/37 in line marked on page 28



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E. H. M. S.

Lizaso, José T. de

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AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT OF EUZKADI

(Basque Govt.)

9th. September 1937

LONDON DELEGATION,
SPANISH EMBASSY,
24, BELGRAVE SQUARE,
S. W. 1.

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

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I am most grateful to you for your attention giving me the opportunity of the meeting we have had to-day, in which you agreed so kindly with our wishes.

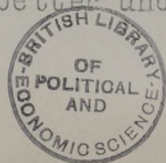
I have pleasure in enclosing copy of the cable which has been already sent and hope you will find it correct. At the same time I should much appreciate from you the sending of the letter in confirmation of the cable.

I sincerely hope that the full support you have so generously granted us will secure the release of these hundreds Basque prisoners, which the Basque People and the Basque Government will never forget.

Let me also tell you of mi admiration to your efforts for the cause of universal peace and a better understanding of humanity.

I remain, yours sincerely,

José T. de Lizaso



M449

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GH
to Count Ciano [with Zigasos
of 9 Sept. 1937]

COPY

1.
COUNT CIANO MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROME

IMPLORE YOU TO USE YOUR GOOD OFFICES WITH GENERAL FRANCO TO SECURE
RELEASE OF LEADING CIVILIAN POLITICAL PARTY MEMBERS MILITARY OFFICERS
AND BASQUE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO SURRENDERED TO GENERAL MANCINI
AND OFFICIALS UNDER CONTROL OF CORONEL LEUTENANT CERGASI AND CORONELS
PARINA AND PIESCH ON SUNDAY AUGUST 29 STOP THE SURRENDER FOLLOWED
AN AGREEMENT CONTAINING THREE CONDITIONS THE SECOND OF WHICH WAS TO
PUT IN SAFETY ABROAD THESE PEOPLE STOP GENERAL MANCINI HAS MOST
HONOURABLY FULFILLED HIS PART OF THE AGREEMENT BUT THESE CIVILIANS
AND OFFICIALS ARE STILL DETAINED AT SANTOÑA AND LAREDO WHICH IS A
BREACH OF THE AGREEMENT STOP HERE IN BRITAIN VERY GRAVE FEARS ARE
ENTERTAINED CONCERNING THEIR PRESENT AND FUTURE SAFETY STOP I AM ASKED
BY A LARGE BODY OF PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY TO MAKE THIS APPEAL THAT YOU



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Gh to Count Ciano
[with Liaso of 9 Sept. 1937]

-2-

WILL DO YOUR VERY UTMOST TO SECURE THAT THE PLEDGE GIVEN BY GENERAL
MANCINI SHALL BE HONOURED AND THESE PRISONERS ALLOWED TO LEAVE
THE COUNTRY AS AGREED TO STOP I SEND THE APPEAL BELIEVING THAT IF YOU
ARE ABLE TO USE YOUR INFLUENCE IN THIS WAY AND THESE PRISONERS ARE
ALLOWED TO ENJOY FREEDOM WHICH GENERAL MANCINI AGREED SHOULD BE
THEIRS SOMETHING WILL BE DONE TO MITIGATE THE HORRORS OF THIS
TERRIBLE CONFLICT

GEORGE LANSBURY

9th. September 1937



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GL to Count Ciano

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39, Bow Road,

Bow, E.3.

London, England.

PERSONAL.

[10] Sept. 1937

This note is an informal, private one, which I am sure you will accept in the spirit in which I write it.

I have just sent you a telegram as follows:-

Count Ciano Ministry Foreign Affairs Rome.

" Implore you to use your good offices with General Franco to secure release of ^{Spanish} Civilian Political Party Members Military Officers and Basque Government Officials who surrendered to General Mancini and Officials under control of Colonel Lieutenant Gergasi and Colonels Farina and Piesch on Sunday August 29th. The surrender followed an Agreement containing three conditions the second of which was to put in safety abroad these people. General Mancini has most honourably fulfilled his part of the Agreement but these civilians and officials are still detained at Santona and Laredo which is a breach of the Agreement. Here in Britain very grave fears are entertained concerning their present and future safety. I am asked by a large body of people in this country to make this appeal that you will do your very utmost to secure that the pledge given by General Mancini shall be honoured and these prisoners allowed to leave the country as agreed to. I send this appeal believing that if you are able to use your influence in this way and these prisoners are allowed to enjoy freedom which General Mancini agreed should be theirs, something will be done to mitigate the horrors of this terrible conflict. "

GEORGE LANSBURY.

May I say, in confirmation of my wire that here in London there is a very strong volume of public opinion which is sincerely desirous of seeing the Spanish War with all its

/ horrors



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G.L.
to Count Ciano

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[710] Sept. 1937

horrors speedily ended simply for the sake of the brave fine Spanish people and without any thought of what may or may not happen elsewhere. It seems to us the suicide of a people. Those who think this way are convinced that if the relationship which should exist in times of war can be restored and prisoners on both sides receive honourable treatment one from the other, the chances of ultimate agreement and peaceful settlement will be very considerably increased.

We are terribly worried about these prisoners who surrendered on terms which the Generals who signed on behalf of General Franco have so honourably kept, may, because of their continued detention, in spite of the Agreement be put to death, or forced to endure very severe punishment in prison.

We think their safety entirely depends upon their being given permission to leave the country as agreed when they surrendered.

I will not bother you with further words except to express the most sincere hope you will be able to intercede with General Franco and that he will give instructions to the Authorities under him to honour the Agreement both in word and deed.

Thanking you in anticipation of your help and that the efforts now being made to ensure good and lasting friendly relationships between the peoples of Europe and the world.

I remain,

Count Ciano,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Rome.

National Conference of Friendly Societies

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H. GOODSPEED, United Order of Total Abatinent Sons of the Phoenix

SECRETARY

STANLEY L. DUFF, C.B.E., 17 Russell Square, London, WCI

Nat. Conference of Friendly Societies
16 + 17 Sept. 1937

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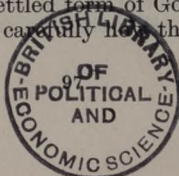
ADDRESS BY
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P.

During the morning session of Friday, September 17th, the Conference was addressed by the Right Honourable George Lansbury, M.P. He was welcomed by the PRESIDENT, who reminded the gathering that the aims and objects of the Friendly Society Movement, with its advocacy of thrift and brotherhood, had had the support of men and women of all classes, creeds, and parties. The Movement was born of the people and those concerned with it claimed that by it and through it men and women had been inspired to serve their fellow-men. The Conference in the past had had the pleasure of receiving eminent speakers. On that occasion they had with them the Right Honourable George Lansbury, M.P., whom it would be a presumption on his part to introduce to the Conference. All knew and respected him already, and it was a great pleasure to ask him to address the members of the National Conference which represented the Friendly Society Movement throughout the country.

The Right Hon. George Lansbury, M.P., who was received with hearty applause, said—Mr. President and Friends—I would like, first of all, to express my appreciation of the privilege that has been accorded me of coming to address this most representative Conference. It is a privilege which I value very highly indeed. I do not know how many years ago it is since I first had anything to do with the Friendly Society Movement but, as you probably may have heard among the various remarks that are made about me, I have spent rather a rough and tumble sort of life getting my living in various devious ways and taking part, mainly in my leisure time and later nearly all my time, in social and political work. But I have always had a very high regard for the men and women who in days long ago first founded the Movement that you represent.

I want this morning to talk in as non-controversial a manner as it is possible to do about the quest for peace. Everybody wants peace. Everybody talks of peace. No one thinks that it is right that any of us should go to war. When I was in Germany Herr Hitler said this, and he said nearly the same thing the other day, that Great Britain could not be compared with countries abroad because we had built up a social and political life over a long period of years almost without any revolutionary violence, certainly for over 200 years with very little if any violence. He thought that that fact should always be remembered when we were considering countries like Germany (and I interpolated Russia) and France and Europe generally, where for centuries there had not been one settled form of Government and administration. If we consider carefully that has arisen we shall

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find that somehow, not because we are better or worse than other people, but perhaps because we live on an island, we have been a little more fortunate than other people. But it is a fact that government and administration of the people of this island has come not from above but from below. It has worked its way up, and amongst the forces that have helped to bring it about is this Movement, which has grown from the days when the monasteries, the religious houses and the churches, many centuries ago founded in our country, also considered that their duty was not only to men's souls but to men's bodies, and who initiated and brought into the parochial life of the people every form of service for the sick, for the aged, for children and widows, and so on. Out of that, slowly but certainly surely, there has grown up this great Friendly Society Movement, great in every sense of the word—in numbers, in influence and in power.

The important factor to-day is that since 1911 those engaged in the work of this voluntary Movement have become collaborators with the State. We in Britain have an extraordinary faculty for combining voluntary effort with State effort. Work on our local authorities has been carried on in a voluntary manner, sometimes wisely, sometimes unwisely, but always there has been that contact of service on behalf of the community voluntarily given by men and women like ourselves in days gone by who have laid the foundations, which I think 1911 cemented, of a partnership between State action and voluntary action.

To-day you are meeting here as representing some 7,000,000 of one side of the Friendly Society Movement and 5,000,000 of the other. That to me tells the story very clearly of why it is we are able to go from one condition of affairs to another without slaughtering and without violence. We have been able to do that in an extraordinary manner not because we were theorists; probably if we had a lot of theories we should have talked too much about the theories and not practised anything at all; we started, I think, without any theories. In a way we are like Topsy; we just grewed. And no particular person can claim any sort of right to say that he or she was the originator. This Movement has sprung, first, out of the religious life and has been carried on as a result of the social life that grew from that, until we are, as we are this morning, met together to do business, to consider how further we can make the State do its part of the work and how we can continue successfully to do ours.

There is another thing that has grown out of that. This is perhaps an exaggeration, but I have tried, since I agreed to come here, to think this out. I believe that there are nowhere in the world, except perhaps in the British Dominions, men and women more tolerant of one another than we are. That is typical of this

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Friendly Society Movement and to almost the same extent of the Trade Union Movement and certainly of the great Co-operative Movement. If you consider the Co-operative Movement and the Friendly Society Movement you will find that men and women of every phase of political and religious thought, meet together and forget whether they are Catholics or Protestants or Communists or Socialists or Tories or Democrats or Monarchists or Fascists. You do not think about that because you have a piece of work to do that binds you all together. That piece of work is common service for the good of the individual and for the good of the community of which he is a part.

Having said that, I want to try to apply it. I think that mankind is in danger just now of being driven either into that pen or this pen so far as thought is concerned. We are being, as it were, dragged by forces to declare ourselves on one side or the other. I am not now thinking of pure and simple Democracy or pure and simple Fascism. What I am trying to ask you to think about is the effort that is being made to divide mankind into what some people call by a very ugly word, Ideologies. We invent words nowadays. For instance there was Poplarism and now it is Ideologies. You can dissect the word. I cannot. But the point I want to make is that mankind in Europe tried to divide itself at one period into Catholics and Protestants, but history and natural conditions forbade that. It could not be done, with the result that Protestants and Catholics now in most countries—there are exceptions here and there—live together, forget what each other believes and think only of what each other does—which is much more important. I do not care, and you do not care, what a Friendly Society member believes if he is a good member of his Friendly Society. That is the only test. And, in the end, the only test of any nation's belief must be what effect that belief has on its relationships with others. Any attempt in this world to say that mankind shall be governed by any particular form of Government is, I am sure, bound to fail. Each nation must work out its own salvation in its own way. There is a saying which a friend of mine continually used, that the sacred right of going to Hell in your own way is something that nobody can ever take away from you. The sacred right of going to Heaven is just the same. We have each, individually and nationally, to choose our way, and then follow it.

I have spent most of my life in the Socialist Movement and I do not profess to have been consistent. Indeed, any of you who prate about consistency make a great mistake. You will never be consistent till you are dead. That means that we are all very human; the worst of us and the best, if there are any best. I say one other thing in that connection, that nobody, not even Herr

Hitler, is as bad as his enemies say he is, or as good as his friends think he is. That is true of all of us. Therefore, when I am thinking of my lurid past I do not bother myself very much, except to ask myself what all of us ought to ask each other, namely, what was the object we had in view. What is it you have been trying to help forward ?

Well, when I first met Tom Lewis who is now sitting near me, he was younger and so was I, but not so much younger, not younger than he. What I mean is that we were then both rather young and we pulled down fences and preached larceny in low and high places against landlords and other people. We have since travelled a long road and, looking back, the only satisfactory thought that possesses me is that all my life I have been stupid enough, if you like to think it stupid, to be an absolute rebel against war. I have never been able to stand up and justify war. So when a year or two ago I went, as it were, into the wilderness, not the wilderness that separates one from fellowmen and women but the wilderness of thought into which one had, as it were, to hide oneself from one's friends, I did so, because as an old man I have come to the conclusion that mankind is at the parting of the ways, that we are living close up to one of those great crises in the history of mankind. Over and over again in the history of the world there have come times when great empires have gone down or transformed themselves into something better. Nearly always they have crumbled, and they crumbled because they had not learned how to live without war and force and domination. You can trace the story of Chaldea and of the great empires of the past. They decayed at the centre because, just as with individual men and women, it is impossible for nations to perpetuate for ever a parasitical life lived on those who are kept in subjection.

To-day there are two forces struggling for mastery in the world, and we need not think that on either side there are all paragons of virtue or all people thoroughly iniquitous and evil. These forces get hold of men and nations and sometimes overwhelm them, but we have this advantage to-day, that there is more learning in the world, there is more knowledge in the world than ever before. We know more of the past and we can, if we will, learn the lessons of the past. It is marvellous to think that this little microphone could carry my words to the ends of the earth. It is marvellous to think that instead of being glad that someone makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, we now take it as a matter of course that the fruits of the earth are being increased abundantly everywhere where production is carried on and brought by wonderful means of transport, fresh from the ends of the world for men and women to enjoy. We

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have reached a point at which it is no longer necessary for men to fight in order to get the means of life. We are meeting under conditions in which science and invention and Nature conspire together to lay bare to us such a table, not of necessities only but of luxuries.

Well, my friends, in the midst of that, all that mankind, stupidly, can do at this moment is to make ready to destroy it all. To me that is a most paralysing thought. I sometimes cannot believe that it is true. But with all the knowledge we have we cannot develop understanding. Knowledge, wisdom, understanding. The one gift to pray for to-day is understanding. Why is it that with all these means of happiness, so far as material needs are concerned, we are in the position we are to-day, with £1,500,000 worth of human labour being flung into the furnace in preparation for war ?

I have travelled America and Europe and have seen the leading men in the countries I have visited, sometimes prime ministers, sometimes presidents, and this is the paralysing thought left with me. They all tell me that they do not want war. That the world has never been benefited by any war for any length of time and that every war has left the seeds of future wars. I should have thought, and I told them just what I am telling you, that the recognition of that fact would have made every statesman say to the other—We are the men who are responsible for the position the world is now in; we know that we are preparing for perdition. What are we going to do about it ? But they do not say that. What strikes me further is—and do not let anyone think that I have weakened one bit in my faith in Socialism which to me is co-operation for service, nothing more nor less than that—that each one of these men, whether dictator or president of the United States or prime ministers in Scandinavia or our own statesmen, are all personally most charming, and in spite of all the public jangling and quarrelling they all say—this is the thought that overwhelms me—they desire peace and each one declares it is not his fault that it is not achieved, it is the fault of the other nation, that if only every other nation was like theirs there would be no war and no need to prepare for war. When I discuss Spain each Government (not merely the Central Governments, the German Government, or the Italian Government, but all of them) declares that it is somebody else's fault, that somebody else started the trouble, with the result that we see the Spanish people passing through the most fearful sufferings. I am not saying that you would not have had civil war in Spain anyhow, but the terrible plight of to-day has certainly come because some nations have considered that if one form of Government succeeded they would be

losers economically and others have thought the reverse, or thought that it would be a good job if the others did suffer in the way they feared. I want to say to you this morning that you will not settle the Spanish question by brute force whichever side says that it has won a great victory. Peace cannot be won that way.

I said in a very sketchy way at the commencement of my remarks how I thought peace had been maintained in our country. I am confident that at the present moment peace in Great Britain is an attitude of mind. I deny altogether that the Police preserve peace. They deal with one who breaks the peace here and there, but what keeps the great mass of the 40,000,000 people in order? Something inside them, something intangible, which impels them, without thinking, to give way to one another where it is necessary to do so. And if we do think about it we know it is better it should be that way. It is not force. That is the point I am making. And neither in Spain nor anywhere else will you get a victory for peace by sheer force. The idea of enforcing peace in the way a general did in Poland who wired to the Tzar "Order reigns in Warsaw" is not the way to get peace. Order reigned because his guns and his soldiers had massacred all those who were in their way. I say again that is not the way to get peace. If we are to have peace we must pay the price of peace. You have to pay in meal or malt for everything. You cannot have peace unless you are willing to concede to one another. In your Conference to-day and yesterday you could not have had peace if you had tried to shove something down one another's throats, even with your tongues. You would not have peace. You know you are bound to carry on your discussions and your determination in the spirit of compromise with each other, of helping each other to find a solution for any particular difficulty that might come in your way.

In following the line for peace just remember we are the greatest imperialist nation the world has ever known. This far-flung Empire that we speak of has been built up in various ways which I will not discuss this morning. But there it is. How are we going to transform our relationships of power into the relationships of comradeship? You may have to give up prestige. That is a horrible word. Some of us go mad about our personal prestige. I have never been able to get hold of it. It is an intangible something which has eluded me but I would like to say to you, and I can only in the time at my disposal just fling it out, that you may have to give up prestige. You may have to give up power. You may have to give up the pleasure which comes from thinking of the might and majesty of your ships. Your ships, your guns, your aeroplanes, your poison gas, your

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mechanised arms and all the rest of the modern paraphernalia of war. The nations of the world sooner or later must agree to abolish national armaments. They must meet as a reconstituted League of Nations to work together for the removal of grievances and for the sharing of the world. I think that last is something very British. In Parliament we often grumble at what we think is the waste of time over what are called Supply Days. But those Supply Days embody a principle which has come down from the days since Parliament first existed, and that is that before any monies are voted grievances shall be dealt with, grievances of the individual, grievances of the community. Our political life, nationally, is built on that principle that grievances go to the High Court of Parliament and there shall be dealt with. We may fail to do it, but the principle remains that grievances shall be discussed before money is voted for any service.

Well, I think that when you talk of collective security you must first have collective justice. You cannot build security simply on a gun. You cannot build security until you have got just and equitable relationships between people. Hitler has said that war is not inevitable. His first question to me when I met him was—Why did I think war was inevitable? I said in answer that "I do not think it is inevitable if commonsense and reason can be brought into the counsels of international statesmen; but", I added, "Europe is full of combustible material that at any minute may cause an incident which will throw us all into the inferno of universal war". His answer to that was quite simple. He said—"No; I think there is no statesman in the world who will wilfully light the match that will set the world on fire, for the perfectly simple reason that there is not one of them who does not know that another great war must end in barbarism, must end in no victors. All will be vanquished." That was an amazing thing to say privately, but he has said it publicly also. Mussolini has said it publicly. Lord Baldwin has said it publicly. All the generals who speak say it. What I cannot understand—it really leaves me almost thoughtless and speechless—is that statesmen, knowing that and admitting that, should calmly and almost without a word go on the terrible rake's progress to perdition that is involved in the piling up of armaments.

I do not believe that this is going to be the outcome. I think that whatever be the Government, Fascist, Democratic, Bolshevik, Monarchical, they must all join together and they must each admit that within the nation every nation has the right to determine its own way of living. But when it comes to international relationships Great Britain, America, France to a smaller extent, and Russia, if you take a map and see where their

flags fly, own and control, together with our Dominions, most of the world.

Mr. Cordell Hull has repeatedly said to the world that the root cause of war is not armaments but that other war which we call the economic war; the struggle of nations for territory; the struggle of nations for markets, for raw materials. Again and again—only yesterday was the last occasion—Mr. Cordell Hull has called the attention of the world to that. I want Great Britain to call upon the world to call a halt in armaments. I know that Mussolini's word will be challenged, but I know that he has publicly said what he said to me privately, that he would be quite willing, and I am quite certain that Germany would, too, because of her economic condition, to call a halt at this moment. But you must couple it with this, that the statesmen of these great Powers shall come together not to discuss primarily armaments, but to discuss how to reorganise a new world, how to get rid of all these economic and territorial difficulties which have afflicted not only the large countries but the whole of south-eastern Europe. You can take Europe, from Germany right to the Black Sea, and find peoples, Hungarians, Austrians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Yugoslavs, Greeks and the rest, all living in a state not of semi-starvation but at a level of existence which is a disgrace to modern life. Europe, led by Britain and France and, I should hope, with Germany, could go as a trinity to those other smaller nations and together hammer out a new economic order. In the United States of America there are fifty odd states which give up the sovereign right to levy tariffs against each other. They give up the sovereign right to go to war against each other. Europe must do that. Somebody must give the lead for that. I want Great Britain to give the lead and I want that because we are the most powerful and the richest nation in the world and we can do it if we have the will to do it.

If you talk of the freedom of the seas, there is no need for all the stations that we think are necessary to-day except when we have got the conception of war in our minds. It is only in times of war that there is danger on the high seas. We now, with the beautiful invention of aviation, have the terror of war from the air. Unless wisdom prevails we shall be soon fighting in order to control the air routes of the world. I have gone round the world and while I have the opportunity I shall keep on. And whatever statesmen will listen to me I shall go on saying it is a bankruptcy of statesmanship, it is an abdication of the rôle of statesmanship and a crime against humanity that they are not turning their attention to dealing with the new forces that have come into the world, primarily forces of abundance, but are instead turning their minds to the old-fashioned method of

armaments to secure peace. When I think of the world, of China and Japan, of Spain and Europe, I want to take the statesmen of the world and put them in a room and say to them, "Stop there until you can find a method by which you can live together in peace in a world of abundance which Nature and God have given."

My friends, you are living in wonderful days, days which if they can only be turned to a right end will enable you to advance to the Golden Age. You like reading about the Golden Age. Men have thought of it in the past. But it is not in the past. It is ahead of you right here. You are on the threshold of it, but the one danger is what is holding you back. I want that you, the Friendly Society members, shall think of these problems as you think of the problem of disease, as you think of any problem concerning the life of the people. How shall we prevent disease? There is no man here who thinks the only duty of a Friendly Society is to pay out money when disease comes. You want to prevent disease. Surely to God it is only commonsense to ask that the peoples of the world, especially the Democracies, shall stand up and say to the statesmen of the world—We want not that you shall perpetuate war by waiting till it comes, but that you shall unite to sweep away the causes that make wars come. (Prolonged Applause.)

THANKS

Bro. J. E. Tomley, the President elect, felt sure all present would wish to convey to their friend George Lansbury sincere thanks for his genial and cheery presence and also for the admirable, encouraging and stimulating address in which he had given so much food for thought. He had traced in the history of the country how the peace which had been achieved had been largely contemporaneous with the progress of Friendly Societies. His appeal would not fall on deaf ears so far as the cause of peace at home and international peace were concerned, because those concerned with an organisation which had in its title the words "Friendly Societies" could never be inconsistent enough to long for anything more deeply than they longed for peace. All present affectionately knew "George Lansbury"—they never heard him spoken of as "Mr."—as a veteran statesman. Wherever one went in any part of this land the name of George Lansbury was respected. (Applause.) All knew, quite apart from any question of sect or creed or party, that George Lansbury was sincere in his view. In him his colleagues in the House of Commons had a champion, on behalf of their fellow-men, in whatever campaign they had to carry on. It was with sincere regard that they offered George Lansbury their hearty and warm thanks for his attendance and his wonderful address. (Applause.)

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Bro. H. W. Townley, the Vice-President elect, said it was a great privilege to have an opportunity of seconding the vote of thanks and of personally testifying sincere admiration for one whose sincerity of purpose in a long life of effective advocacy for the improvement of the conditions of his fellow-men was admired in every part of the country. Those who had listened to the address would realise that they had that day had an education. They would be wise to remember what had been said and spread it amongst their constituents.

The President, in supporting the proposition, felt sure all would agree that the Right Honourable George Lansbury was too big for any Party; his doctrine was appropriate to all parties and to all nations. If the doctrine to which they had listened was embraced by the nations of the world it would transcend all barriers, not only national but international and racial barriers. They could best thank their speaker by rededicating themselves to the advocacy of the great doctrine of peace, so that the men and women they tried to help might through their influence serve the nations of the world and the Father of them all.

The vote of thanks was accorded amid hearty and prolonged applause, the delegates rising in their places.

The Right Hon. George Lansbury, in returning thanks, said that if he were much younger he would probably have been carried away by the kind remarks that had been made. However, as he grew older he grew a little more humble than he used to be. It had been good to be at that gathering and to be received in such an overwhelmingly kind manner. He could not express his gratitude except to say that those present had helped him to believe that there was some good in being able to go among such people as they were and preach one's view. He knew that at present only a few held the view he did, but somewhere and some time that few would spread and grow and their grandchildren and his great grandchildren would see the dawn of a new world. William Morris wrote of the great movement he helped to inaugurate—

“Known and unknown, all live in us,
One and all they need your care;
Every toil to count as nothing
Every sorrow to forget.”

In them all there lived all the known and unknown work of men and women of days long gone by. If they had within them the spirit of idealism they, too, could feel that in the days to come, because of their lives, because of what they had done, others would right all wrongs. He thanked all present a thousand times for their great kindness. (Applause.)

(Arthur) Neville Chamberlain
(1869-1940)

11, Downing Street,
Whitehall, S.W.

29th October, 1937.

My dear Lansbury,

I am just writing a word to thank you for your very kind references to me in your Speech in the House of Commons. I appreciate them all the more, as they come from such a doughty opponent as you have been in the past, and I am glad to think my misdoings have not dried up your human sympathies towards me.

Yours sincerely,

A. Chamberlain

The Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, J.P., M.P.



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"Peace-lover"

[? Oct. 1937]

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Dear Mr. George Lansbury,

I wish to write to you as one who for many years now, have been a fairly flamboyant, and thoughtless "flag waver", very scornful of pacifism, and all it stood for. However the events of the last week or two have altered my few opinions, which were evidently ~~to~~ based on untried conviction only.

I wish to thank you very sincerely for the way in which you upheld the Premier in the House of Commons, and also for the absence in your speeches of any hatred toward Germany.

This ghastly torment of the past weeks has shown me, at any rate, that unless we can follow our Master's teachings, and forgive our enemies, and try to see the other man's view point, we are doomed. Only by God's help can we try

to build a better world; and by following his Will.

I, for one, am going to hope, pray and work for the continuance of the better spirit towards countries of whose methods of government one may not approve.

What possible hope of lasting peace can come by snubbing and mistreating a great nation like Germany, or Italy? If we were to show our trust and friendly feelings towards them, who can say, with God's help, what untold good could result? It might, and indeed, undoubtedly would, make for a better and happier form of government in their own countries.

Even Soviet Russia, which to me is a thousand times more guilty than either Germany or Italy, she may well repay with kindness and understanding from those of us who have hated her so intensely.

The main object of my letter is, as a peace offering, to thank you for your

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efforts to ensure peace among the nations, and to say how I, at any rate, now this night mare is over, will do all I can to help the cause of peace.

By trying to get a better feeling towards Germany, and building the foundations of peace, on the One True Foundation, the love and pity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that one day soon we may in literal truth beat our swords into plough shares. It has been shown us what the power of prayer can do, in the face of impending danger, what could it not do to build the Kingdom of God on earth, if we gave it the chance.?

You, I know, are trying your utmost to bring about a brotherhood of nations, and goodwill toward men.

May you have many long years, to fulfil your mission, and one, at least of your former critics, will now be - a
PEACE-LOVER

[Pic Navis Dec 1937]

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George Lansbury was born in Halesworth, Suffolk, in 1859. he was twenty he was a supporter of the Radical movement in the East End of London; after that he became one of the earliest members of the Social Democratic Federation. He went to Australia in 1884 as an emigrant, but returned next year and has since lived and worked in the East End of London.

He has filled almost every office in the local Government of Poplar, from Guardian of the Poor, which he became in 1892, to first Labour Mayor in 1919. He ~~was first elected~~ was elected Member of Parliament in 1919, but resigned his seat voluntarily to fight on the Suffrage question in 1912, ~~but~~ and lost it. He was re-elected in 1922. He has served two terms of imprisonment: in 1913 when he was sentenced to three months imprisonment for sedition during the Suffrage movement - he had declared at a meeting e in the "Royal Albert Hall, London, that "human life was more sacred than property" - but was released after three days under the Cat and Mouse Act, owing to hunger strike; in 1921 with the rest of the Poplar Borough Council.

He helped to found the Daily Herald, the only Labour paper, in 1912. In 1913 he became editor, and continued editing the Herald (a weekly) during the war, and after the war again edited the revived Daily Herald, when it was taken over by the whole movement. Since then he has run Lansbury's Labour Weekly which some years ago was amalgamated with the New Leader. *He held the position of the Cabinet as first Commissioner for the last labor Government*
He was elected leader of the Labour Party *when the last labor Government came into office* in 1931, and resigned in 1935 on the question of Abyssinia and Sanctions. Since then Mr. Lansbury

has devoted his life to the cause of peace and peace propoganda. He was invited to the United States last year in order to help inaugurate a great peace campaign in that country, and addressed meetings in twenty-three towns during a three week's tour. He has interviewed President Roosevelt, Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini on this question, and proposes to visit other countries for this purpose in the near future. He is the author of many books which have had a wide sale, the most recent being "My Life", "Looking Backwards and Forwards", and "My England". A new book, entitled "My Quest for Peace" is in preparation.



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[say 13 Dec.] 1937

Mr. Lansbury's Programme.

Monday, December 13th:

- 5.30 p.m. Monsieur Beck, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 8.15 p.m.: Dinner at the British Embassy
- 10.00 p.m.: Reception at Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
(No Decorations)

Tuesday, December 14th:

- 11.a.m.: Marshal Smigly-Rydz, Belvederska.
- 2.00 p.m.: Lunch, Monsieur Beck. Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 5.00 p.m.: Prime Minister at Praesidium
(Next to Hotel Bristol)

Count Czapinski

Wednesday, December 15th:

- 2.00 p.m.(?) Motor to Spała to see President.
- Alternatively 17.10 p.m. Leave Warsaw Central for Vienna
- 19.15(?) Catch Vienna train at Piotrków.

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P R A G U E

Dec. 1937

Rev. Henry Carter's dictated Notes,
of Interviews with Ministers.

Dr. Hodza, (Prime Minister):

Welcome to G.L. Value of G.L.'s approach - frank, free and honest. "Doing very good work". Effect of raising standard of life on national and world trade. Example of Roumanian peasant. In slump could only get enough to eat, not buy textiles; now able to buy things to wear.

Went on to series of Danubian agreements, Austria, Jugo-Slavia, Roumania and (in process) Hungary. Relations with Hungary were much improved, and Hungary was now looking more to Danubian economic unity than to support of Germany. Less progress with Bulgaria. In answer to questions, said certainly felt economic understanding must extend to Germany and Italy. Both had been approached from July onwards. Definitely intended to continue this policy.

Agreed value of Van Zeeland's, Frere's and Leopold's work. Idea of initiative of the smaller powers not, however, taken up.

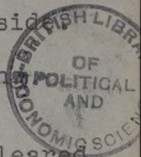
Dr. Krofta, (Foreign Minister):

G.L. raised question of Ukraine and former national movement there. Krofta answered that with economic advance of Ukraine and cession of cultural rights nationalist movement less prominent. Said Germany needs world trade. What was said about self-sufficiency was only for home consumption. So long as approaches are made in terms safeguarding her pride she will be eager to come out into world markets. Krofta said no danger of war in Central Europe.

In Sudeten area part of problem with the Germans on own side. Rise of Henlein party to some extent directly due to economic condition of N.E. area, partly to propaganda, partly to feeling for success of "strong" man.

Notable that no trace of active anti-semitism. Ghetto cleared away because (statutory) narrow streets, unhealthy. Chains of gates taken to Council Chamber. M449

Communism merely in name. Divided within itself. No clearness as to what it was. No communist issue to worry about.



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P R A G U E

George Lansbury's dictated Notes
of Interviews with Ministers.

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Helpful and democratic. G.L.'s case for conference of the nations accepted by ministers. Czechoslovakian ministers more optimistic than others. Quite agreed about economic causes of social and political unrest, nationally and internationally. Also agreed with ministers who did not meet him and with British ministers who did with Corder Catchpool's analysis of economic plight in Sudeten area, which suffering considerably at present. These distressed areas are, as ours, very largely but not entirely due to world depression. Many small factories, which will make all proposals for dealing with situation rather hard to carry out. There seems to be real appreciation of difficulties connected with German and other minorities. They understand difficulties that arise between two nationalities, Czechs and Slavs, and are therefore determined to do their best to reconcile the grievances represented in all departments.

The President was anxious to make it understood that when it was charged against the Government that they made promises and did not carry them out, it only meant that it was impossible without causing other grievances; they had to move slowly. Must remember, extremists on all sides. In his view, biggest outstanding question with large majority of Germans is that of Government jobs. Germans desire 20 per cent. Government posts. This impossible to carry out immediately. Only possible gradually, and is being done.

Armament expenditure would make work, but burden to real industry and takes away what ought to go to raise general standard of living. This Ministers' argument also.

As to political prisoners; this in minds of everybody one speaks to is real obstacle to peace. We have had more references to this universal grievance than anything else. There is also among large classes genuine fear of political Germany and rather a dread that she might become strong enough to be equal to other powers; but few imagine it to be possible for Germany alone to break her way through to Ukraine, Roumania and on to Asia, though some in authority have said this a real possibility. Their fear arises also from uncertainty of all kinds, Bulgaria, Hungary, Jugoslavia. The chief people, including the President, who is strongest on this point, agree that there is no such danger. Germany would not embark on such a venture unless France was quite incapable of action.

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As to Russia, there is little real faith in her as ally without Great Britain and France. The President was at some pains to insist that the treaty with Russia could only come into operation under the condition that France was attached.

The proposals of Corder Catchpool about help to distressed areas were supported; but doubts were expressed as to the new industries that might be started and as to markets, and further difficulties with Italy and Germany, who might feel left out. But assured all efforts at economic unity in Danubian states was not intended to exclude either, but earnestly hoped both would join in.

DR. ZOLTAN SCHÖNBERGER

WIEN, IX., PORZELLANGASSE 22

TEL. A 16-5-91

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*Committed
to include this in your letter
Personal*

George Lansbury Esq,
Hotel Imperial
16, Kärntnerring,
Vienna I.

Dear Sir,

Being the leader and founder of the Austrian Freeland League - Jewish Territorial Organisation in Austria I T O - I take the liberty of sending you this letter. However, I beg to point out and should like to ask you to consider this letter as entirely privately written.

You will certainly know from your journey to Poland how Jewish matters stand there and in Middle- and East-Europe. The situation of these Jews has become nearly unbearable and the larger part of them will be condemned to die of starvation unless we will succeed in freeing them in the last hour of the trap of Middle- and East-Europe.

It is the idea of the Jewish Territorial Organisation in Austria to find an oversea territory for those Jews, with a climate bearable for whites, who cannot find their living in Europe and on account of want of room and the desperate situation in Palestine cannot settle there, and the Austrian League especially wants to train young people for agricultural purposes

It would take too much of time to go into ~~further~~ details and therefore I want to submit to you the request to kindly report to your London party-friends about the distressed condition of all the Jews in Middle- and East-Europe of which you will certainly have heard during your last journey. Please try to influence and to convince your friends that it is of high necessity to reserve one of the British Dominions for the immigration of Jews ~~only~~, without considering their nationality.

It is not only for the fact that certain British Dominions will certainly be in want of new settlers and some new capital, but (you will of course have a better knowledge of the conditions there) the situation in Palestine will change at once.

I am convinced that a certain part of the Jews will think badly of me, however, I am of the opinion that the Jews are simply choosing Palestine because they consider it the only possibility to escape the European hell. It is the idea of immigration the Jews welcome first of all and the question of the land has become of secondary importance.

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only print was sent



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Zoltan Schönberger

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George Lansbury Esq,
Hotel Imperial, Vienna .

Perhaps you will find an immigrating and farming possibility for Jews in one of the British Dominions (for instance Australia). Please try to effect a facility in the immigration for Jews or, if possible, try to further this idea, whereby of course, a strict selection of people regarding their political and moral qualities will be made and you will see that with the new farming-possibility the importance of Palestine, which is very much over-rated by all the Jews, will be brought back to its former extent.

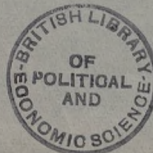
I can give you the assurance that the Dominion offering help to the persecuted Jews in the above mentioned way will be in a position to count on these immigrants as the faith-fullest and most loyal people at any time.

Thanking you in advance for the trouble I have caused you and hoping that you will be in the position to place this letter before your party-friends and the respective other personalities I beg to remain, Dear Sir,

Your obedient servant

Zoltan Schönberger

End of
1937



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