

TELEPHONE  
MUSEUM 2887.  
W. THORNE, C.B.E., J.P., M.P.

Will Thorne  
(1857 - 1946)

300

5 ENDSLEIGH GARDENS,  
LONDON, W.C.1.

PERSONAL:

29th May - 1935.

My dear old friend,

It was with very deep regret I read in the press of the death of your dear son Edgar, and I am sure that his passing is a great blow to you.

In the name of myself and family, I hasten to send you our sincere condolences in your sad bereavement, and I trust that time the great healer will help you to bear the blow that has befallen you.

I am,

Sincerely yours.

*Will Thorne.*

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



M449

# NATIONAL TRADE UNION CLUB

BT/T

LIMITED

Hon. Treasurer :  
GEORGE HICKS, M.P.

*Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers  
and President National Federation of Labour Clubs*

Telephones : HOLBORN 4166 | Members'  
4167 | Office

President :  
W. KEAN

*Chairman, Trades Union Congress General  
Council*

Chairman :  
BEN TILLET

*Transport and General Workers' Union*

(1860 - 1913)

Secretary-Manager :  
W. ARTHUR PEACOCK

*National Union of Journalists*

Bankers :

BARCLAYS BANK, British Museum Branch

24/28 New Oxford Street  
London, W.C.1

29th May, 1935.

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

My dear Comrade George,

It is dreadful to have to lament  
the death of your goodly and gracious son - with you the  
great Father and man of the People!

It is so few years since Edgar was  
the alert lad and the enthusiastic worker for the people,  
for you, for the cause of labour, for humanity, and the  
world's good-will.

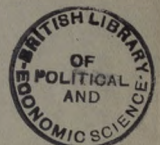
I shared with you a little of your own  
torture of body - which you braved with heroic fortitude -  
and now another stern demand is made on your patience and  
faith. The years make life so gracious, so beautiful,  
when service is given and the life lived is useful and  
helpful - like you have lived, like your boy was living -  
like the Mother of your bairns was living, and it is a  
good thing to remember all the glorious example of family  
felicity and loyalty which your own household has shewn  
at all times.

God love you and give you Grace to  
endure in loving loyalty to your boy, the Mother who bore  
him, and all the kindly remembrances of his loyalty to  
you lying close to your soul.

Yours, in deep solicitude and condolence,

Ben Tillet

W. Arthur Peacock



M449

Jim Twitchell

302

29 Maryland Rd.  
Shorten Heath  
Surrey.

May 29. 1935.

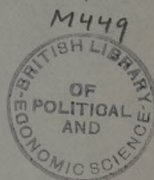
My dear Uncle George.

Betty and I just want to say how sorry we are to hear of Edgus' passing, and to give you and yours our love and sympathy. We hope you will still find strength to carry on.

all good wishes

Your affectionate nephew

Jim Twitchell



HAM 5862

6 South Mansions  
Gondar Gardens NW6

303

Horace W. Weston

May 29th/35

Dear Mr. Lausbury

I was deeply pained this morning to read of the passing away of Edgar.

During the past few days when you have been at his bedside you have both been very much in my thoughts & I have been recalling much that I knew of him in his bright & happy boyhood. The memory of you & your family in those days is always a joy to me & it deepens the sorry I feel for you in your bereavement. In such times circumstances, words seem very poor & inadequate to express what one feels for you. But believe me

Yrs Very Sincerely & Affectionately  
Horace W. Weston



M449

Rev. Harry Williams

# BOW CENTRAL HALL METHODIST MISSION, BRUCE ROAD, BOW, E.3.

Deaconess :  
SISTER HONOR,  
12, WELLINGTON ROAD,  
Bow, E.3.

Superintendent :  
REV. H. WILLIAMS,  
41, ADDINGTON ROAD,  
Bow, E.3.

Tel. ADVance 4283.

May 29<sup>th</sup> 1935.

My dear Mr Lansbury.

All our people are joining me - in  
Sending our heart-felt sympathy to  
you in the loss of Edgar. How grieved  
it all is - none but yourself can  
really know - but we have learned in  
Bow - that if one home is stricken -  
all our homes are stricken - and  
our love come to help you to bear this  
Sad bereavement.

The Good Companions - and the  
women's own wish especially to be  
remembered to you - & they wish me to  
say that they are standing with you -  
and - as far as they can - helping  
you to bear the blow.

My wife - Sallie - & myself send our  
love to you - ever sincerely,  
H. Williams.

### Some of our Activities.

- GOSPEL SERVICES.
- SUNDAY SCHOOLS.
- BIBLE CLASSES.
- SUNDAY SOCIAL HOUR.
- WOMEN'S OWN.
- BLANKET CLUB.
- SAVINGS BANK.
- SECONDHAND CLOTHES.
- GYMNASIUM.
- BOYS' CLUBS.
- GIRLS' CLUBS.
- MID-WEEK BIBLE READING.
- YOUNG PEOPLE'S CIRCLE.
- REGNAL CIRCLE.
- BOYS' BRIGADE.
- GIRL GUIDES.
- BROWNIES.
- CINEMA EVENINGS.  
(For Children and Adults.)
- THE GOOD COMPANIONS.  
(Older Men.)
- NEIGHBOURS' PARTY.
- SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.
- OPEN-AIR WORK.
- VISITATION OF THE SICK.
- Etc., Etc.

Sir Herbert (Geraint) Williams  
(1884-)

305

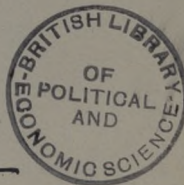
29/5/35

My dear Lansing,

Please accept my  
deepest sympathy in your  
sad bereavement, which  
befell you so much sooner  
than seemed possible.

You will have the  
sympathy of all of us in  
the Home.

Yours very truly  
Herbert Williams



M449

ST. OLAVE'S  
AND ST. SAVIOUR'S  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOUNDATION.

TELEPHONE: HOP 5398.

(306)

ST. OLAVE'S,  
TOWER BRIDGE,  
S.E.1.

Henry George Abel

(1875-1945) 30.V. 1935

My dear Gene Laubman,

I have followed  
you for many years  
and too sympathetically to be  
callous to your last blow.  
Please accept my sincere and  
affectionate sympathy and my  
prayer that God may give you  
the comfort that passes man's  
siring. I hope your children  
& grandchildren will be good

to you and render the best &  
best consolation. God give you  
strength too for the political  
battles you are waging. My  
thoughts are with you, believe me.

Yours very sincerely,

H. G. Abel



M449



(307)

# CHISLEHURST DIVISIONAL LABOUR PARTY

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Prospective Candidate: W. T. COLYER  
6, Wricklemarsh Road, Blackheath, S.E.3

---

Chairman :

W. C. LUCK

Treasurer :

A. PERRY, J.P.

Financial Secretary :

A. CHIVRALL

"Clavigera,"

Sunningvale Avenue,  
Biggin Hill.

Hon. Secretary :

W. J. TARRY

Garden Villa,  
Derry Downs,  
St. Mary Cray,  
Kent.

30 May, 1935.

Dear Comrade Lansbury:

May I just say how very deeply  
Amy and I feel with you over Edgar's death? We always  
think of him in connection with the splendid help he gave  
us a number of years ago in the campaign which led  
for a short while to our having one Labour Guardian  
for Holborn. Both he and Charlie Key spoke for us in  
the Club Hall, not defending but advocating "Poplarism".  
He lives on in that spirit which our movement is now,  
I think, once again recapturing.

For yourself, the love we all feel towards you  
makes anything which hurts you hurt us also. We know  
that no one else can take the place of him who is gone,  
but

but we do offer you our share ~~of~~ that great mass  
of affection which your unfailing kindness to  
others has created for you in our movement.

With sincere affection,

Yours,

Tom Colver.

---



M449

TEL:  
WANSTEAD 2695.

H. E. Dennis

308

38, DRAYCOT ROAD,  
WANSTEAD,

E. II.

30 May 1935

Dear Mr Lansbury

Please accept this  
expression of our very deepest  
sympathy in your great loss.

The promise for the future  
contained in the extreme ability  
Edgar showed so clearly in political  
life can now never be fulfilled  
and there are so few with this  
ability that the Country is poorer  
for his passing

But your loss is the  
personal one & we hope that  
in your grief you may be  
sustained by the sympathy of  
us all

Yours very sincerely  
H. E. Dennis

309

# The International One-Act Play Theatre



DIRECTORS:  
FLORENCE WALLER      ELIZABETH EVERARD

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

Mr. Clifford Bax	Miss Marjorie Bowen	Mr. C. B. Fernald	Miss Gwen John
Mr. Leon M. Lion	- Mr. Miles Malleson	- Mr. Louis McQuilland	
Mr. John Palmer	- Mr. Edward Percy	- Mr. C. B. Purdom	
Mr. Arthur Waley	- Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth	- Mr. Brendan Williams	

9 Wardour Street,  
London, . . . W.1

Tel.: GERrard 4918

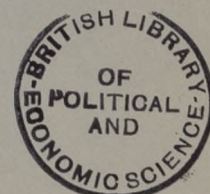
May 30th 1935.....19

Dear George Lansbury,

Please accept ~~my~~Everard's and my  
deepest sympathy in your great and very sad loss.

Yours always sincerely,

*Bessie Everard.*



Rev. John Augustus  
Mayo

310

• TELEPHONE •  
• BISHOPSGATE 6163 •

• THE RECTORY •

• WHITECHAPEL •

• LONDON • E •

May 30/35

My dear Mr Lambury

I read, with

much regret, of your  
loss, and I can readily  
understand what a

grief such a loss must

be to you.

If the Sympathy of thousands is any support - believe me, you have it! For who of us does not think of you with loving respect!

GOD Keep you.

Yrs always sincerely,

John Mayne

Rectr



M449

Robert O. Mennell  
(of R. O. Mennell & Co. Wholesale Tea Dealers)  
TELEPHONE : MANSION HOUSE 6772.  
TELEGRAMS : ROMEXPORT, FEN, LONDON.

311  
41, EASTCHEAP,  
LONDON, E.C.3.

Dear Friend.

In this great affliction you will not be able to bear many words even from your closest friends. I only want to join the great company who are surrounding you now with their love.

For Edgar himself there can be nothing but rejoicing. He has crossed the threshold into boundless life. No other belief seems tenable.

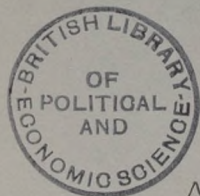
But for you here is the sense of greater loneliness or it is on this account that your friends draw closer than ever in affection.

And I want just to say what a privilege I feel it to be to be associated with Dorothy Shurtle. She is a fine person in deed, a delightful colleague. But for

her, our Dryton Concern would have  
foundered long before this. She is a  
daughter to be proud of. & one to  
lean on.

Your sincere friend.

Robert S. Sennell



M449



Telephone : WILLESDEN 3166-7.

*Harold Myers*

Over 50 Branches  
London and Provinces.

(312)

# STEVENS VALET SERVICE

Proprietors : S. V. S., Ltd.



**ART DYERS.**

:::

**DRY CLEANERS.**

Head Office : ~~MINERVA WORKS,~~ 61 Bow Road, E.3.  
~~MINERVA ROAD,~~  
~~PARK ROYAL,~~ ADV. 1432.  
~~LONDON, N.W. 10.~~

Our Ref. ....

Your Ref. ....

Date *May 30th* 1935.

HOUSEHOLD  
FURNISHINGS  
French Cleaned  
By Patent Process.

*Mr. George Lansbury,  
Bow Rd. E.3.*

ART DYEING  
All Shades.

*Dear Mr Lansbury,*

CARPETS  
Shampooed, Dyed  
or Beaten.

*I was shocked to hear of the untimely  
death of Mr. Edgar & I want to extend to you  
my deepest sympathy.*

HATS  
Cleaned, Dyed,  
Reblocked.

*I knew your son when I was in the timber  
trade & because of this, appreciate the great  
loss you have sustained.*

CLOTHING  
Beautifully  
Renovated.

INVISIBLE  
MENDING.

*My staff join me in this expression of condolence,  
& I will follow Jewish custom by "wishing  
you long life" & hoping this will be the last  
of your troubles.*

STOCKINGS  
REPAIRED.

TAILORING  
REPAIRS.

MOTOR CARS  
Upholstery and  
Covers Cleaned.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Harold Myers*

*Manager  
Bow Branch.*

BOOT & SHOE  
REPAIRERS,  
OWN FACTORY.  
Only Ex-Service Men  
Employed.



M449

Rev. M. J. Rosenfeld

adv.  
PHONE: EAST 4297.

23 Harley St.  
483, MILE END ROAD,  
BOW, E.3.

313

LONDON, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1935

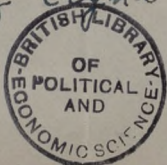
The Rt. Hon. G. Lansbury M.P.  
39, Bow Road E. 3.

Sir,

It was with a grievous shock that I learned of the death of Your Son. I am sure that all of us who respect & admire Your great work for the common good share Your bereavement with the deepest & sincerest sympathy.

It is hours such as these that put our courage & faith to the severest test. But who are we to question the ways of the Lord?

May God sustain you in your trial.  
"The sun shall no more go down neither shall the moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thy everlasting light and the days of thy mourning shall be ended,"



Yours Sincerely,  
M. J. Rosenfeld

George W. Cadbury

(314)

AVENUE 718V2  
2216.

Museum 3878.

TOYNBEE HALL,

28, COMMERCIAL STREET,

LONDON, E. I.

Mr. George Lansbury,  
39, Bow Road,  
London E. 3.

31st  
May  
1935.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I was very sorry indeed  
to hear of the sad loss you have  
sustained in the death of your son.

Please accept my very  
deepest sympathy in your bereavement.

Yours sincerely,

Geo W. Cadbury



M449

Charles Alfred Cripps  
(1st Baron Parmoor;  
1852-1941)

Faded

(315)

Parmoor  
Henley-on-Thames.

[say 31 May 1935]

My dear friend

It is very trying that my  
duties will not allow me to  
go ~~down~~ down stairs, visiting  
or quiet, & a special prohibition  
on talking. We are both  
thinking much of you to-day,  
one of the days which makes  
it difficult to pray "They will  
be done". Remember also  
how important your health is  
just now, but only in England;  
but that you may give your  
influence to the Cause of  
world peace & kindness

We are hoping that it  
may be possible to have you  
with us for a day before long

Yours very sincere friend  
& ally

Parnon -



M449

FROM

Robert George  
REV. R. G. LEGGE.

'PHONE: AMHERST 3019.

(316)  
ST. MARK'S VICARAGE,  
VICTORIA PARK,  
LONDON, E. 9.

31<sup>st</sup> May/35

My dear Mr Lousbury

I need hardly assure you of the loving sympathy of us all for you and the members of your family in respect to the passing of our brother Edgar. My own consolation in bereavement is to think of the reunion on the other side rather than the parting on this. Bunyan's depiction is very beautiful of the delighted crowd of loved ones on the further side of the river; they simply cannot wait but rush out into the water to lend a helping hand. Also Psalm 23<sup>4</sup>

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they

comfort me.

Deepest love from my  
wife, myself and all friends here to you  
all

Yours affectionate  
R. G. Legge



FROM:  
E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

BUCKHURST  
2633.

"WEST-DENE",  
CHARTERIS ROAD,  
WOODFORD GREEN, ESSEX.

317

E. Sylvia Pankhurst

May 31st, 1935.

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

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I want to write a word of sympathy to you in your bereavement. I know how much Edgar was to you, and it seems very hard that he should have died so young and left a little family behind.

With great sympathy,

Yours sincerely,

E. Sylvia Pankhurst



M449



318

# The Metropolitan Borough of Poplar.

TELEPHONE NO EAST 6876.



Reference.		
M	B	28

*Finance Department.*

*154, High Street.*

*Poplar, E. 14.*

GEORGE E. MARTIN, F.S.A., F.I.M.T.A.  
BOROUGH TREASURER  
AND ACCOUNTANT.

31st May, 1935.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I am very sorry indeed to hear of the passing away of Mr. Edgar Lansbury, and on behalf of the staff of the department, as well as personally, I should like to express our sympathy with you and the other relatives in your sad loss.

We have many happy recollections of him, particularly during the year when he was Chairman of the Finance Committee. He was very helpful to us in that year when Mr. Knibbs died and the department had a difficult time in re-organising for new conditions. We are all very sorry to hear of his passing away.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

Borough Treasurer & Accountant.

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



M449

Sir William (Henry) Prescott  
(1873-1945) METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD.

(319)

TELEPHONE NO.  
CLERKENWELL 3300.



CHAIRMAN'S ROOM,  
NEW RIVER HEAD,  
ROSEBERY AVENUE, E.C.1.

31st May, 1935.

My dear Lansbury,

I am deeply grieved to learn the sad news of the death of your Son. I am most reluctant to add in any way to your feelings of sorrow in the great loss which you have sustained, but I do want you to know that you have the deepest sympathy of an old friend in this heavy blow which has fallen upon you.

I sincerely trust that you may receive every comfort in your sorrow and bereavement.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

Chairman.

The Right Honble. George Lansbury, M.P.,  
39, Bow Road,  
E. 3.

*L.W. Prescott*



TELE. WILLESDEN 1083.

Will Sherwood  
(1871-)

320  
151, BATHURST GARDENS,  
WILLESDEN,  
LONDON, N.W.10.

31st May - 1935.

Dear friend Lansbury,

It was with very deep regret I read in the press of the death of your dear son Edgar, and in the name of Mrs. Sherwood and myself, I hasten to send you our sincere condolences in your tragic bereavement.

At such times as these it is difficult to express in mere words the true sympathy one feels for a friend, and I trust that time the great healer will help to soften the blow that the casting hand of affliction has laid upon you and your family.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

Will Sherwood.

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



M449

Sir (T.) Drummond Shiels  
(1881 - 1953)

321

31 May 1935

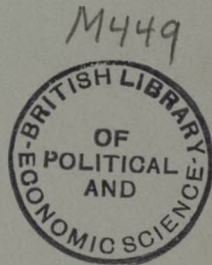
Dear Mr Lausbury,

I have been laid up  
or would have written earlier to condole  
with you on Edfair's loss. Your fine courage  
is being tested grievously, but I know you will  
carry on in the cause which needs you so much.  
All my sympathy!

T. Drummond Shiels.

159, Kent Horse Road,  
Beckenham,  
Kent.

31.5.35.





Sir Montague Burton  
(1885-1952)

322

64, KENT ROAD,  
HARROGATE.  
HARROGATE 2626.

1st June, 1935.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I join your many friends in expressing sincere sympathy in your sad bereavement.

I realise that nothing I can say can lighten the burden of your grief, but I want you to know that your friends share your sorrow.

Yours truly,

MONTAGUE BURTON,

The Right. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P.  
39, Bow Road,  
LONDON. E. 3;



M449

David Kirkwood  
(1st Baron Kirkwood); (1872-1955) Tolleross,  
Glasgow.  
1.6.35.

323

Rt. Hon. George Lansbury, M.P.

My Dear George:

There are times when even a letter seems a presumption. You know already how deeply my thoughts are mixed with yours at this time, but I must send you a few lines to tell you of it.

I, too, know what it is to lose a son in the prime of his manhood and so can understand your sorrow perhaps better than others who have not passed through that valley.

There is only one thing to do, to act as courageously in this as you have in every other crisis in your life.

Yours very sincerely  
David Kirkwood.



M449

James Joseph ~~Mallon~~

(324)

AVENUE 718 1/2  
2216.

(1875 - )

TOYNEBEE HALL,

28, COMMERCIAL STREET,

LONDON, E. I.

June 1st  
1875

Dear G L

I have been away from  
London for some days

May I now be added to the  
million who have expressed

Sympathy with you? You

have experienced in your  
amazing life all manner  
of ups & downs & every kind  
of triumph, vicissitude — so  
much so that you are steeled  
against ordinary mutation  
and adversity.

Yet I know that Edgar's  
death will pierce the  
centre of your tough but

affectionate heart & shake &  
distress you

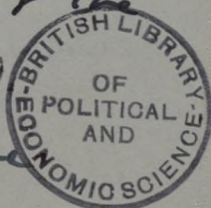
My vision of Edgar is of  
long ago when he was young  
& for him life ran  
merry as the sparkling  
"Thames" then -

Pleasing vision such as  
one likes to dwell upon  
in the twilight

Well for you, dear  
Ed, that you robust  
& fresh faced smiles  
you to be undaunted  
in loss & to see meaning  
in the "shadows & the  
sunshine" M449

Everything in me  
condoles with you

Jenny Malton





Sir Edward (Louis) Spears  
(bt Bat; 886 -)

(325)



1. vi. 35

Dear Mr ~~Lewis~~ Lewis

May I express to

you my deepest sympathy  
in your great bereavement?

Yours sincerely

E. L. Spears



M449

[? H. Sutton (of Lake & Sutton)

326

25, Buckenbury

24, FOUNTAYNE ROAD,

E. C.

N. 16.

and

GLISSOLD 0010.

2<sup>nd</sup> June 35

Dear Mr Lambury,

It was with  
It was with  
very much regret that I read of  
very much regret that I read of  
the death of your son Edgar,  
the death of your son Edgar.

It would be true to say that  
It would be true to say that

P we only knew one another in  
we only knew one another in  
business, but nevertheless it gave me  
business, but nevertheless it gave me

an opportunity of getting to  
an opportunity of getting to  
know him, and I am sad that  
know him, and I am sad that

I shall not look upon his like  
I shall not look upon his like  
again.

again.

24 FOUNTAIN ROAD  
N. 16.

Chicago 0010

of your recovery from your  
of your recovery from your  
accident. <sup>The blows have</sup> The blows have  
accidents. The blows have  
fallen rather heavily upon  
fallen rather heavily upon  
you in the last few years.  
You in the last few years.

You must never forget that your  
You must never forget that your  
family is a very large one  
family is a very large one  
and that you have endeared  
and that you have endeared  
yourself to tens of thousands.  
yourself to tens of thousands.

Just at this time remember  
Just at this time remember  
all those who have a very  
all those who have a very  
real affection for  
real affection for

I followed the vicissitudes of his  
I followed the vicissitudes of his  
career with more than ordinary  
career with more than ordinary  
interest and from time to  
interest and from time to  
time the veil was lifted  
time the veil was lifted  
sufficiently to get a glimpse  
sufficiently to get a glimpse  
of the man, and that is  
of the man, and that is  
why I mourn his loss.  
why I mourn his loss.

I extend to you my  
I extend to you my  
very sincere sympathy in  
very sincere sympathy in  
the loss you have sustained  
the loss you have sustained  
as well as the other  
as well as the other  
members of your family.  
members of your family.

Now may I say how  
Now may I say how  
pleased I was to learn  
pleased I was to learn

327

~~For you the Great Man of the  
House of Commons~~  
House of Commons

With sincere sympathy

Very truly yours

H. Kim

The Rt. Hon George Lansbury M

Allbrook



M449

TELEPHONE:  
LANGHAM 3232.  
TELEGRAMS:  
"ANASTOMOSE, WESDO, LONDON."

Sir Gordon Gordon-Taylor  
(Who's Who 1954)



(328)  
Sunday  
2 June 1935  
21, HARLEY STREET,  
W.1.

Dear Mr Lansbury I am writing you a  
line of sympathy in your sad loss. I  
cannot grieve that the poor fellow was  
taken, but I do indeed deplore the  
tragedy of a brilliant man cut off by

a misery, which from the very first  
must have held out no hope whatever,  
with deep sympathy.

Believe me  
Sincerely yours

G. S. Taylor

M449



Rev. E. A. Weaver

14, SOHO ROAD,  
HANDSWORTH,  
BIRMINGHAM, 21.

329

Dear Sir.

June. 2. 35.

My excuse for writing you is when on a Journey some time ago I met your Son. It was in North wales. In the Train we discussed many things. I was interested in Politics in th days of John Bright, Gladstone & Sir William Harcourt.

I have spoken with the late Joseph Chamberlain from ~~uer~~ Platforms in Birmingham before the Home Rule affair.

I am still with the Liberal Party. Your Son greatly interested me in many things we disscussed. He was proud of his Father & I feel I should let you know.

I have preached for the Methodist Church 55. Years & am still so engaged. I have always been delighted with the ability & tone of your Speeches & though not of your Party my admiration compels me to write you.

Please accept my Sympathy with<sup>1</sup> you in your loss, & convey to the bereaved my happy Memories of their Dear One.

Yours Sincerely.

E. H. Weaver

P.S. Age 95. Perhaps explains.



M449

(330)

# ROMAN ROAD & OLD FORD COSTERMONGERS' & STREET-TRADERS' UNION.

NON-POLITICAL.

MALE & FEMALE.

*Headquarters*: MORGAN ARMS, COBORN ROAD, E.3.

Hon. President:

The Rt. Hon. **GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P.**

Hon. Chairman:

G. LEWIS, Esq.

Hon. Vice Chairman:

H. COLLINS, Esq.

Hon. Treasurer:

C. TUPLIN, Esq.

Collector:

M. VanGELDER, 46, Merchant St., Bow, E.3

Bankers:

Barclays Bank Ltd.

All communications to be sent to

Secretary:

J. COON, Morgan Arms, Coborn Rd. E.3

2nd. June, 1935

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

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

I am instructed to you the deepest sympathy of my Officers and Members in your recent sad bereavment.

The late Mr. Edgar Lansbury, was well known to, and greatly respected by, all of us, and his passing has come as a great shock.

We trust, Sir, that the passage of time will soften the blow that has been dealt you, and that you will live many more years to enjoy good health and the companionship of your family.

I am Dear Sir,

*J. Coon*

Yours faithfully,

Secretary.



M449



W. J. Miller

331

WIMBLEDON 2068.

36, BATHGATE ROAD,  
WIMBLEDON COMMON, S.W.19.

June 3rd, 1935.

Dear Mr. Lansbury,

It was with profound sorrow that I read the unhappy news, and I hasten to offer my deepest sympathy.

Your loss is a source of sadness to the whole country, and in particular, to the members of the Party.

We realise to some degree all that you have done for us; we also know how steadfast and loyal you have always been to the ideals and principles upon which, under your leadership and inspiration, a virile and united Labour Party is being built.

It is for these reasons, and knowing how very much the Movement is in your debt, that we are so distressed to think that the man who has accomplished so much for the happiness of others should be called upon to bear

M449



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such a heavy personal loss.

I can only hope that the Movement will continue to make its constant demands upon your time and energies, and that this activity, combined with the affection and loyalty of all within the Movement, will help you to bridge over the present sadness.

With deepest sympathy, and gratitude to you for what you have done for us all

Yours fraternally  
and sincerely

*W. J. Miller*

Barbara  
 TCHAYKOVSKY  
 0706 HARROW.

LANGHAM HOUSE,  
 5, ST. JOHN'S ROAD,  
 HARROW.

3. VI. 25'

My dear George

I must send my deep  
 sympathy in your precious love, still  
 for how many times I'm praying  
 for you all ever since I heard of  
 Edger's illness.

Be my comfort. I can see you in the  
 and my own tribulation for all the help he  
 gave me in the colder days of the North  
 March 1912, when every night after  
 his long days work, he wd. come to me  
 to the happy sleep in Acephe  
 and, & willing with that speed

London and that of  
"Lending about wherever &  
however needed"

Typing, & being used to the  
handpaper of the tea and night-  
with my appeal which he had  
had mentioned with his <sup>typing</sup> machine

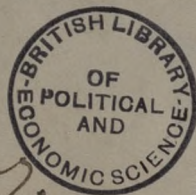
etc: These come back so vividly.

And how cheap he was in his  
laugh & build & greeting!!

May his wife & children stay  
in you & receive your personal

support in your loveless way  
to comfort one another. *even*

T. Bay



M449

William Whiteley  
(1882)

Moorecroft 334  
Durham Moor  
Mr. Dearham Coley  
3/6/35.

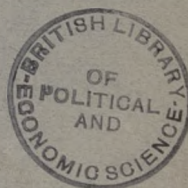
My Dear Lausbury

My wife and I extend to you our very  
heartfelt sympathy on the loss of your son.  
It seems tragic for one to be cut off from  
usefulness at so early an age.

In this further bereavement, we pray that  
added strength and faith may be yours and  
that you will find solace in service to human  
kind which has been so beneficial to the masses  
of our people during your life.

May God's blessing be with you  
throughout the days.

I remain yours  
William Whiteley



M449

David Margesson  
(1st Viscount Margesson; 1890 - ) (335)

June 14.  
— 1935

My dear Esq.

I've been  
meaning to write to you  
ever since I saw the  
sad news to tell you  
how deeply I sympathise  
with you in your loss.  
I've been thinking of you  
so often and how what



a blue ~~the~~ you have  
sustained.

Please do not think  
of answering this.

Yours sincerely  
David Margesson.



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# World Fellowship of Faiths

## LONDON BRANCH

(With which is incorporated the Inter-Religious Crusade)

For the realization of Peace through mutual understanding among Peoples of all Faiths

Chairman  
Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND,  
K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

Vice-Chairmen  
Mrs. M. A. St. CLAIR STOBART  
Sir ALBION BANERJI  
Mr. RHYS J. DAVIES, M.P. (2. Boulton)

General Executives  
KEDARNATH DAS GUPTA  
CHARLES FREDERICK WELLER

Hon. Executive Secretary  
Dr. HAR DAYAL

Hon. Secretary  
Mrs. J. M. WILLIAMS

Hon. Treasurer  
Mr. H. B. SIMPSON

Grotrian Hall,  
115 Wigmore Street,  
London, W. 1.

June 4<sup>th</sup> 1935

Dear Mr Lansbury,

I am writing on behalf of the Committee of the ~~W~~  
F, of Faiths & also on my own account, to express to you our deep  
sympathy in the loss you have sustained. by the passing of your son.  
I can personally feel for you very truly, having myself lost both my  
sons in the prime of their manhood. We also wd like to extend our loving  
sympathy to your sons' wife . Here again, I can truly sympathize, having also  
lost my husband & I know the blank there will be in her life. Fortunately  
in these days we know that they who pass from this earth, are only trans-  
ferred to a more glorious & a fuller life, & that thought keeps us from  
a grief which wd savour of egoism, - of pity for ourselves. But the loss  
of the earthly presence is hard to bear & our loving thoughts go out to  
you all in your sorrow.

Yours very sincerely

M. A. St. Clair Stobart



M449



114  
C.L.  
re L. Green

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7. vi. 35.

Dear Private Secretary,

You may remember that I wrote to you on April 26th enclosing a letter from Mr. L. Green of 38, Ivy Street, Hoxton, N.1. concerning his son's discharge from the army.

Mr. Green has now received a letter from the Infantry Record Office, Warwick in which he is informed that the amount required to purchase his son's discharge is £47. 15s. Od. which sum is, unfortunately entirely beyond his means. He is therefore appealing to Mr. Lansbury, through Mr. Ernest Thurtle the ex-Member of Parliament for the division, to intercede with the authorities on his behalf for a reduction of the amount required; and Mr. Lansbury has therefore asked me to send you enclosed letter from Mr. Green to Mr. Thurtle, which he would be glad if you would put before your Minister for his sympathetic consideration.

Yours faithfully,

Private Secretary.

The Private Secretary,  
The War Office,  
S.W.1.



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(338)

GL to  
Sir Wyndham Deedes

26. vi. 35.

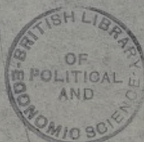
Dear Sir Wyndham Deedes,

Thank you for your letter of the 24th June. I certainly will put in a word with the PoplarBorough Council. I have always wanted those pieces of land dealt with in a proper manner. The answer to me has always been that we are only the lessees - but I think that is no answer at all; and now that your Society has taken up the matter I shall be glad to support your proposal..

I have done a little for the London Garden Society, but life is so very short and mine so very busy; but if you get a branch going in Bow, or at any time hold a meeting there to help in this kind of work, I shall be glad to give whatever assistance is in my power.

Yours very truly,

Sir Wyndham Deedes,  
47, Whitehall, S.W.1.



M449

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G.L.

26. vi. 35.

Dear Dennis,

The untidy condition of the land round the Library and Baths has attracted the attention of the London Garden Society, and I understand they are asking the Council to give them authority to tidy up the place and plant it with flowers and flowering shrubs.

Perhaps the Council will remember that years ago, not once but on several occasions, I tried to get this done.

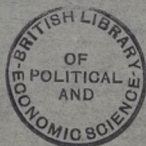
I think we ought to have made a little garden there, with a seat or two on which people could sit. I know they have to cross the road, but they have to do this to get to the library and the baths. We ought to have a few amenities on such a spot as that; and I hope if there are any other odd places, the Council will not wait till some people outside call our attention to them, but that we ourselves will just put in a few shrubs and flowers - of which I think we already have abundance, or anyhow could easily obtain some.

I am not wanting to criticise my fellow councillors because I know they are, like me, very busy, and pass through the streets full of their thoughts; but I certainly am a little concerned that a society outside Poplar must take this little job in hand.

Yours very truly,

H. Dennis Esq.,  
Council Offices,  
E.14.

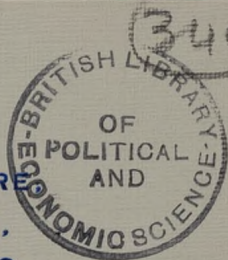
[Poplar]



M449

UNIVERSITY HOUSE,  
17, VICTORIA PARK SQUARE  
BETHNAL GREEN,  
LONDON, E.2.

Sir Wyndham  
Deedes (1883 →)



~~Deedes~~

M449

June 28  
1935

Dear Mr. Lonsbury

Allow me most warmly  
to thank you for your  
very kind letter.

My Committee will

LONDON  
BETHNAL GREEN  
VICTORIA PARK SQUARE  
UNIVERSITY HOUSE

be very much encouraged  
to learn that we may  
count on your support.

For myself I count your  
support more valuable  
than that of any one else  
in London. I remain  
Yours very truly  
Wm. Ham Deedes

# London County Council.

H.C.C. 5.6.

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Telephone:  
HOP 5000  
Extension 575

REPLIES  
TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
THE CLERK OF THE COUNCIL.

IN ANY REPLY PLEASE  
QUOTE



The County Hall,  
Westminster Bridge, S.E.1.

13th June, 1935.

E.

Sir,

Administration of the Road Fund.

I am directed to forward, for your information, a copy of a joint report on the subject of the administration of the Road Fund which was submitted to the Council on 14th June, 1935, by the Finance and Highways Committees. The Council adopted the Committees' recommendation.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Clerk of the Council.

The Rt. Hon. G. Lansbury, J.P., M.P.,  
House of Commons,  
Westminster, S.W.1.



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# London County Council.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE ROAD FUND.

(Report submitted to the Council on 4th June, 1935.)

### Joint report of the Finance Committee and the Highways Committee.

9th and 22nd May, 1935.

#### Administration of the Road Fund.

1.—The Council on 20th March, 1934 (pp. 508-9), under standing order 80, on the motion of Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cecil Levita, seconded by Sir Angus Scott, resolved :—

That it be referred to the Finance Committee and the Highways Committee to consider and report as to :—(i) the total amount received by the Road Fund from (a) vehicle licences, (b) drivers' licences, in Great Britain for the last five years for which figures are available ; (ii) the amounts collected in the administrative county of London and the proportion of the total for Great Britain ; (iii) (a) grants made from the Road Fund to authorities within the administrative county of London as compared with total grants made for the same five years, and (b) money diverted to other purposes ; (iv) the cost incurred by (a) the Ministry of Transport, and (b) the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee, in the Administration of the Fund for the same five years ; and (v) whether a saving both to the Fund and to the expenses of local authorities could be effected by the substitution of a capitation grant to local authorities on an equitable basis, thus avoiding duplication of work.

We have had the advantage of hearing the views of the mover and seconder of the motion.

#### Receipts from vehicle and drivers' licences.

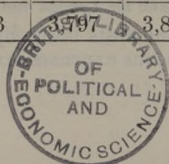
As regards items (i) and (ii) of the reference, the total receipts from duties on vehicle licences and drivers' licences in Great Britain and London respectively may be summarised as follows :—

	Twelve months to 30th November.						
	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
Great Britain ... ..	22,950	24,944	25,539	27,049	27,237	27,598	28,315
Administrative County of London ... ..	3,493	3,797	3,853	3,979	3,920	3,823	3,831
London's proportion of total... ..	15·2	15·2	15·0	14·7	14·4	13·9	13·5

Seven years are given in this and other tables, although the Council's reference calls only for five, partly because the additional figures have become available while the report was in preparation and partly because 1927-28 is an interesting year for Road Fund finance.

The division of the above figures between vehicle licences and drivers' licences (so far as it is available) is given in the following table :—

	Twelve months to 30th November.						
	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
<i>Great Britain—</i>							
Vehicle licences ... ..	22,819	24,831	25,583	27,081	27,410	27,693	28,423
Drivers' licences ... ..	587	632	672	703	685	700	737
Total ... ..	23,406	25,463	26,255	27,784	28,095	28,393	29,160
Less rebates, refunds, etc. ... ..	456	519	716	735	858	795	845
NET TOTAL ... ..	22,950	24,944	25,539	27,049	27,237	27,598	28,315
<i>London—</i>							
Vehicle licences ... ..	3,518	3,826	3,933	4,090	4,088	3,938	3,929
Drivers' licences ... ..	56	60	63	64	62	62	65
Total ... ..	3,574	3,886	3,996	4,154	4,150	4,000	3,994
Less rebates, refunds, etc. ... ..	81	89	143	175	230	176	163
NET TOTAL ... ..	3,493	3,797	3,853	3,979	3,920	3,824	3,831



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11 June 1935  
(with letter 13 June 1935 above)

It should be pointed out, that under the system of central registration numerous large undertakings having their headquarters in London (e.g., railway companies, oil companies, large and small road transport companies, etc.), effect registration in London of vehicles located throughout the country, many of which never appear in London at all. To this extent, therefore, the figures shown for London's proportion of the total are overstated. It is not possible to ascertain to what extent the London figure is thus increased.

*Grants to local authorities.*

As regards item (iii) (a) of the reference, a division of the sums paid from the Road Fund to London and other authorities is not readily available. The following table shows the amounts promised on schemes submitted to the Ministry—payments of the amounts promised in one year may be spread over several years :—

	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
<i>Total amounts (Great Britain)—</i>							
Grants made in respect of maintenance and minor improvement—							
Roads and bridges in classes I and II ...	9,782	9,228	12,517	9,925	9,512	8,272	8,143
Scheduled unclassified roads (counties only) ... ..	1,661	1,913	1,940	—	—	—	—
Grants made in respect of works expedited to relieve unemployment ... ..	2,631	1,025	3,372	15,447	6,254	1,784	490
Grants made in respect of other purposes...	3,757	4,648	7,409	5,690	3,900	3,060	4,105
Totals (excluding item below) ...	17,831	16,814	25,238	31,062	19,666	13,116	12,738
Grants made by Unemployment Grants Committee in respect of loan charges ...	999	943	810	740	673	579	420
Total grants made ... ..	18,830	17,757	26,048	31,802	20,339	13,695	13,158
<i>Grants promised to London authorities—</i>							
In respect of maintenance, minor improvement of roads and bridges in classes I and II ... ..	407	442	695	1	—	—	—
In respect of works expedited to relieve unemployment ... ..	—	—	6	58	—	7	1
In respect of other road purposes ... ..	39	105	355	220	397	504	300
Totals... ..	446	547	1,056	279	397	511	301
<i>Division between authorities—</i>							
London County Council ... ..	52	88	380	90	304	429	217
City of London ... ..	—	19	45	46	9	8	5
Metropolitan Borough Councils ... ..	394	440	631	143	84	74	79

Grants for maintenance of roads and bridges now paid out of the Road Fund are limited to the provincial counties, those formerly paid to London and the county boroughs (and grants paid to counties in respect of unclassified roads) having been discontinued since 1st April, 1930, under the Local Government Act, 1929. It is, therefore, only possible to give comparable figures for the seven years in respect of grants other than those for maintenance (including minor improvements). The proportions of these grants made to London are as follows :—

	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Grants for major improvements, etc.—</i>							
Percentage of London grants to total grants for Great Britain ... ..	0.6	1.9	3.3	1.3	3.9	10.5	6.6

The discontinued grants were merged in the General Exchequer Grants (the "Block Grant") and a sum corresponding thereto, amounting to about £3,500,000 a year, is paid annually out of the Road Fund to the Exchequer, together with an additional annual sum of £3,000,000.

It should perhaps be added that the proportion of grants coming to London would be altered—to some extent in the past, but more particularly in coming years—had grants for Charing Cross and/or Waterloo Bridges been receivable.

*Cost incurred by the Ministry of Transport and the London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee.*

As regards item (iv) of the reference, the costs borne by the Road Fund in respect of these bodies and the other administrative and miscellaneous expenses (excluding costs of collection of licence duties) borne by the Fund were :—



	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
Ministry of Transport (Roads Department)...	113	114	130	155	281	194	195
London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee ... ..	21	22	20	19	27	17	16
Other administrative expenses ... ..	10	11	12	13	2	1	4
Road Traffic Act, 1930—Traffic Commissioners	—	—	—	17	204	201	213
Motor patrols ... ..	—	—	—	30	40	108	97
Other items ... ..	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
Traffic census ... ..	—	14	15	—	13	2	—
Sundry expenses—							
Compensation to local authorities under Road Traffic Act, 1920 (for hackney carriage licences) ... ..	47	54	71	83	77	20	18
Experimental work ... ..	19	16	27	22	15	13	32
Surveys and petty expenses ... ..	(cr.)—2	—	18	2	—	1	1
	208	231	293	341	660	558	577

The particular costs referred to in the Council's resolution are the first two items in the above table, which amounted in the year 1933-34, to approximately £211,000. The expenses of the Roads Department of the Ministry of Transport have increased rapidly during the last few years, although the cost in 1931-32 was exceptional, as it included charges amounting to £84,778, in respect of superannuation, etc., dating back to 1919, when the Road Board staff was transferred to the Ministry of Transport. A sum of £9,940, for a similar purpose, is included in the expenses of the Advisory Committee for 1931-32.

Some part of the administrative expenses referred to above is in respect of maintenance grants, involving particularly the examination of accounts, but it may be assumed that the greater part of the expenses relates to grants for improvements.

The expenses for the last four years include those of the Area Traffic Commissioners appointed for the regulation of public service vehicles under the Road Traffic Act, 1930. These expenses are covered by the receipts from licence fees, etc., charged under the Act.

*Summary of receipts and payments of the Road Fund.*

The following summary of the accounts of the Road Fund shows the sums received into the Fund and the amounts paid out in each year:—

	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
<b>RECEIPTS.</b>							
From Consolidated Fund in respect of motor taxation ... ..	19,666	21,131	21,882	22,866	22,519	22,910	25,512
Licence fees, etc., under Road Traffic Act, 1930	—	—	—	2	215	224	228
Interest, etc. ... ..	360	82	200	120	17	12	6
Miscellaneous ... ..	—	—	—	—	14	4	9
Total Receipts ... ..	20,026	21,213	22,082	22,988	22,765	23,150	25,755
Less—Cost of collection ... ..	410	437	474	482	542	524	525
Net receipts ... ..	19,616	20,776	21,608	22,506	22,223	22,626	25,230
<b>PAYMENTS.</b>							
Payment towards General Exchequer Contribution under Local Government Act, 1929	—	—	—	5,071	6,469	6,463	6,459
Transferred to Exchequer under section 49 of Finance Act, 1927 ... ..	12,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
To Irish Free State ... ..	200	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grants—							
Maintenance and minor improvement of Class I and II roads and bridges ...	8,586	8,368	10,041	9,327	8,644	7,936	7,571
Maintenance of unclassified roads in rural areas ... ..	1,587	1,777	1,811	625	(cr.)—2	—	—
Major improvements and other purposes...	3,103	3,414	3,860	4,560	3,990	2,063	2,025
Special road programmes for relief of unemployed ... ..	4,256	2,259	2,625	5,727	8,309	4,937	2,244
Works recommended by Royal Commission on Cross River Traffic ... ..	—	—	371	773	246	639	375
Unemployment Grants Committee—Loan charges ... ..	999	943	810	740	673	579	421
Salaries, etc., of authorities' surveyors ...	212	240	251	260	355	387	377
Traffic regulation ... ..	—	—	—	—	47	51	93
Administrative expenses, etc. (as in previous table) ... ..	208	231	293	341	660	558	577
Interest on Exchequer Advances (section 36, Finance Act, 1931) ... ..	—	—	—	—	—	258	347
	31,151	17,232	20,062	27,424	29,391	23,871	20,489

*Money diverted to other purposes.*

As regards item (iii) (b) of the reference, the money diverted to other purposes in respect of the years under examination can be summarised as follows:—

	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
<i>Amounts retained by Exchequer—</i>							
(a) For payment to Local Taxation Account under section 2 (2) of the Roads Act, 1920	600	—	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Under section 42 of Finance Act, 1926...	4,251	4,226	4,920	4,926	4,961	5,000	5,200
<i>Paid out of the Fund to the Exchequer, etc.—</i>							
(c) Under section 49 of the Finance Act, 1927 ... ..	12,000	—	—	—	—	—	—
(d) Payment to Irish Free State ... ..	200	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total amount of "money diverted to other purposes" ... ..	17,051	4,226	4,920	4,926	4,961	5,000	5,200
There is also the following item, of a somewhat different category, which it is convenient to refer to under this head—							
(e) Towards General Exchequer Contribution under Local Government Act, 1929	—	—	—	5,071	6,469	6,463	6,459
	17,051	4,226	4,920	9,997	11,430	11,463	11,659

The following notes state the occasion of the various diversions:—

As to (a)—This was a continuation of the original deduction made annually since the inception of the Road Fund of an amount equal to the proceeds of carriage licence duties in the year 1908-09. The sum was paid to the Local Taxation Accounts for distribution as part of the Assigned Revenues under the Local Government Act, 1888.

As to (b)—This diversion was authorised by section 42 of the Finance Act, 1926, as representing the luxury or pleasure aspect of motoring. It is one-third of the net proceeds of the duties on private motor-cars and motor-cycles and is retained by the Exchequer.

A sum of £7,000,000 was also paid out of the Road Fund to the Exchequer under section 43 of the same Act in 1926-27. This may, perhaps, be regarded as an ante-dating of the above diversion by about two years, being equivalent to a payment of £3,500,000 in each of the years 1925-26 and 1926-27.

The Finance Act, 1934, under which the duties on private cars and motor-cycles are reduced, provides (section 26) that the amount diverted to the Exchequer shall not be less than £5,000,000 in each year.

As to (c)—The Finance Act, 1927 (section 49), provided that the balance of the Road Fund on 1st March, 1927, not exceeding £12,000,000, should be transferred to the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to this in his budget speech as follows:—

"It is the working balance on the Road Fund. Owing to the fact that two-thirds of its revenue is collected in the last quarter of the financial year, while expenditure flows out evenly throughout the whole year, it has hitherto been the practice to carry over a substantial balance to finance the Department until the full flood comes in January.

By every rule of sound finance national balances should, as far as possible, be pooled, and the Exchequer, with its immense resources, should act, as it does for every other Department of State, as the universal banker. This £12,000,000 will play a far more useful part in national economy if it be handed over to the National Debt Commissioners than if it is maintained as a separate reserve behind a particular department whose revenues are quite sufficient to meet all proximate obligations. The £12,000,000 is, therefore, transferred to the general funds of the State, and the Exchequer will in return assume the responsibility of financing the expenditure of the Road Department in the regular manner throughout the year."

The transfer of the sum of £12,000,000 to the Exchequer not only deprived the Road Fund of its reserve but reduced its annual income by a substantial amount in respect of interest on investments. Thus its income from this source fell from £588,599 in 1926-27 to £5,391 in 1933-34.

These diversions of revenue were criticised strongly by the Royal Commission on Transport, whose Final Report (1930) includes the following paragraphs:—

245. As we have said, two raids have been made on the Road Fund resulting in the transfer of £19,000,000. We are not here concerned with the merits or demerits of assigned revenues; nor are we concerned whether a promise or undertaking was given that the entire proceeds of motor taxation should be devoted to highways purposes, or whether, if given such promise or undertaking is binding for all time or what time. But we are deeply concerned with the fact that two raids have taken place practically without warning, and that two very large sums of money, collected for a certain purpose and definitely hypothecated for that purpose, should have been diverted to other purposes. And we are concerned, too, with the possibility of similar raids taking place in the future.

246. In our opinion, these raids present no redeeming feature; they are bad finance since the ever-present fear of a recurrence makes it quite impossible for any Minister of Transport to formulate with any degree of confidence a firm policy to be followed in years ahead, and adds greatly to the difficulties of highway authorities.

It should be noted that it recently became necessary for the Road Fund to borrow from the Exchequer and that the Exchequer charges interest on these loans, which would not have been necessary had the diversions referred to above not been made.

The amounts of the loans and the amounts of interest paid to the Exchequer each year were as follows:—

	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34
	£	£	£
Loans advanced to Road Fund ... ..	6,000	1,210	—
Interest paid by Fund on loan ... ..	—	258	347
Loans repaid ... ..	—	—	1,760

It is proposed by the Finance Bill of 1935 to transfer a further sum of £4,470,000 from the Road Fund to the Exchequer. In connection with this proposed transfer the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated in the House of Commons on 15th April, 1935, that the balance of £4,470,000 in the Fund was not required as "in the near future the income of the fund, both present and prospective, will be amply sufficient to meet all the calls that will come upon it."

The Chancellor further stated that "if, in fact, during the course of the next year or so, more money should be required for roads than the Road Fund can supply, he [the Minister of Transport] will, in my opinion, be entitled to ask for consideration."

As to (e):—Under section 85 of the Local Government Act, 1929, grants for maintenance of Class I and II roads ceased to be paid to London and to county boroughs and grants for maintenance of unclassified roads in counties ceased to be paid. These discontinued grants were merged in the block grant and under section 87 of the Act and section 54 (k) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1929, a sum corresponding thereto is paid annually to the Exchequer towards the cost of the block grants, and in addition an annual sum of £3,000,000.

The block grant is to be distributed among local authorities ultimately on the basis of "weighted population"—i.e., estimated population increased with regard to the ratio to population of the number of children under five years of age, rateable value, number of unemployed, and (for counties other than London) length of roads. During the first seventeen years from 1930, however, part of the total sum is distributed on the basis of the amount of the discontinued grants received in 1928-29 (adjusted, in the case of grants from the Road Fund, to the higher rates of grants in force in 1929-30), and the loss of rates due to the partial exemption from rates of industrial and freight-transport hereditaments and the total exemption of agricultural land, the proportions of such losses to be made up to individual authorities being—for the first 7 years, 75 per cent.; for the next 5 years, 50 per cent.; for the next 5 years, 25 per cent.

*The estimates of the Road Fund for 1934-35.*

The figures already given in this report relate, as the Council's reference requires, to the past; but the figures of recent years have been much affected by the economy measures of 1931 and their consequences. For present purposes it is perhaps more to the point to consider the following figures relating to the transactions of the Road Fund:—

	Commitments entered into prior to 31st March, 1934.			Year 1934-35.			Total estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimate of total commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.	Actual payments 1933-34.	Actual payments 1932-33.
	Estimated commitments outstanding as at 31-3-34.	Estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimated commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.	Estimated commitments.	Estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimated commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.				
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
<i>Statutory and other charges—</i>										
Costs of collection and registration (Roads Act, 1920, s. 3 (4) (a)).	255	255	—	577	322	255	577	255	496	491
General Exchequer Contributions (Local Government Acts, 1929, s. 87 and s. 54, Scotland).	1,373	1,373	—	6,459	5,086	1,373	6,459	1,373	6,459	6,463
Irish Free State Administration (Roads Act, 1920, s. 5 (4) (c); Roads Improvement Act, 1925, s. 6; Road Traffic Act, 1930, s. 87 (3) and s. 115; Road and Rail Traffic Act, 1933, s. 22 and s. 24).	150	—	150	—	—	—	—	150	—	—
	61	61	—	724	657	67	718	67	588	569
Compensation (Roads Act, 1920, s. 3 (4) (b)).	18	18	—	20	2	18	20	18	18	19

	Commitments entered into prior to 31st March, 1934.			Year 1934-35.			Total estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimate of total commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.	Actual payments 1933-34.	Actual payments 1932-33.
	Estimated commitments outstanding as at 31-3-34.	Estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimated commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.	Estimated commitments.	Estimated payments in 1934-35.	Estimated commitments outstanding at 31-3-35.				
	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000	£ 000
Interest on Exchequer Advances (Finance Act, 1931, s. 36 (2); Finance Act, 1932, s. 28 (2)).	—	—	—	240	240	—	240	—	347	258
Loan Charges (Unemployment Grants Committee).	—	—	—	350	350	—	350	—	421	579
Total charges...	1,857	1,707	150	8,370	6,657	1,713	8,364	1,863	8,329	8,379
<i>Grants—</i>										
<i>Annual Budget—</i>										
Maintenance and minor improvement of classified roads in counties.	4,022	2,360	1,662	8,500	5,100	3,400	7,460	5,062	7,571	7,936
Salaries and Establishment expenses of surveyors to local authorities.	5	5	—	380	375	5	380	5	377	387
Improvement schemes	5,053	2,240	2,813	4,000	800	3,200	3,040	6,013	2,025	2,063
Regulation of traffic, etc.	279	150	129	250	125	125	275	254	93	54
<i>Special programmes—</i>										
1920-25 programmes	189	150	39	—	—	—	150	39	2,244	4,937
Trunk roads (1919-30)	668	400	268	—	—	—	400	268		
Five years (1929-30)...	1,670	800	870	—	—	—	800	870		
Special London and Greater London Scheme.	635	493	142	—	—	—	493	142	375	639
Total grants ...	12,521	6,598	5,923	13,130	6,400	6,730	12,998	12,653	12,685	16,016
Grand total ...	14,378	8,305	6,073	21,500	13,057	8,443	21,362	14,516	21,014	24,395

The Road Fund held investments at 31st March, 1934, costing £2,916,050, and owed £5,450,000 to the Exchequer for advances. A further repayment of £2,920,000 was made to the Exchequer in April, 1934, leaving a balance still owing at 31st March, 1935, of £2,530,000.

In view of the fact that the sum received from duties on vehicle licences and drivers' licences amounted to so large a sum as £28,315,000 in 1933-34, it may seem somewhat remarkable to find from the above statement that the Minister of Transport is not in a position to promise more than £4,000,000 in the year 1934-35 in respect of grants for road improvement (counties, county boroughs and London taken together). The fact is, however, that when account is taken of the various charges on the Fund, referred to above, the amount available for such grants is not much in excess of £4,000,000. The amount payable to the Road Fund after allowing for cost of collection of the revenue and the amount payable to the Exchequer, was about £22,500,000 in the three years 1930-31 to 1932-33, although larger in 1933-34. Out of this sum the following charges are met (the figures being approximate) :—

	£
Payment towards General Exchequer Grants ... ..	6,500,000
Administration and sundry expenses ... ..	950,000
Maintenance grants to counties (other than London) ... ..	8,500,000
Grants for sundry purposes ... ..	980,000
	<u>£16,930,000</u>

On the above figures, the balance available for grants for major improvements is about £5,500,000. The estimate of total commitments for 1934-35, however, is only £21,500,000, and it may be that the income is estimated at less than the amount raised in recent years, owing to alterations in the rates of duty.

*Question of an alternative method of distribution of Road Fund.*

The question referred by item (v) of the Council's reference is "whether a saving both to the Fund and to the expenses of local authorities could be effected by the substitution of a capitation grant to local authorities on an equitable basis, thus avoiding duplication of work."

So far as *maintenance* of roads is concerned, it is only in the case of grants to county councils (other than London) in respect of Class I and Class II roads that maintenance grants are still made. As London does not receive any grants under this head the Council, presumably, would not wish to suggest any alteration in the basis of these grants. At the same time, it may perhaps be pointed out that the provincial counties get an advantage (as compared with London and the county boroughs) in as much as they not only continue to receive these maintenance grants (based on a percentage of cost) but their General Exchequer Grant is calculated on a basis which is "weighted" in relation to the length of roads in proportion to population.

As regards road *improvements* there is little doubt that, if it were not necessary for the Ministry of Transport to examine and pass local authorities' proposals under this head, the Ministry's charge on the Fund for expenses would be much less and possibly local authorities would be saved the expense they now incur in satisfying the requirements of the Ministry. These improvements have to be considered individually by both the local authority and the Ministry, involving much duplication of work, frequently protracted discussion and generally much delay. This procedure involves additional expense in administration.

On the other hand, it might be urged that the Ministry's scrutiny secures that each local authority's scheme is considered as part of the general plan of road development in the various parts of the country; and, further, that a local authority which embarks on a grant-aided improvement scheme has the assurance that the scheme commends itself to a central authority to such an extent that that authority is prepared to bear a large part of the cost.

At present the principle governing the distribution among authorities of grants for major improvements provides broadly for their distribution in proportion to approved expenditure on particular types of road works, and the fact that London's proportion of the total grants is low (6.6 in 1933-34) is mainly due to this basis of distribution. The proportion would, however, have been higher but for the operation of the grant formula, which, as we indicate below, affects London disadvantageously as compared with other areas. It should also be added that applications for grant have on occasions, principally during the period of economic crisis, been met with the reply that there was no money available in the Road Fund.

The Minister of Transport has recently invited highway authorities to submit a programme of improvements which they propose to undertake over the next five years, and in the Circular 419 (Roads), dated 5th February, 1935, making the request, an extract is given from a speech made by the Minister at Birmingham, which gives some indication of the future policy to be followed in connection with the recognition of schemes for grant, as follows:—

The National Government has decided on a five-year plan for the roads . . .

Henceforth highway authorities will be able to lay their plans in the knowledge that a comprehensive view will be taken of their requirements and that their projects are not likely to suffer from the disabilities inseparable from a hand to mouth policy with all the uncertainty which that entails. Nor will they suffer from the disadvantage of being kept in suspense for decisions until too late in their own financial year.

Our five-year programme will make provision for the improvements which highway authorities, thinking ahead and arranging ahead, can reasonably be expected to carry out in the period.

Within five years the Government aims at eliminating all those weak bridges in the possession of railway and other statutory owners which most seriously limit the free flow of traffic, and wherever the traffic conditions require, at providing dual carriageways, footpaths and cycling tracks; at removing blind corners, circumventing the dangers of cross roads, reducing camber and effecting super-elevation . . .

Grants will be made contingent on such approved works being undertaken on an adequate and modern scale.

We also intend to increase the allocations for unclassified rural roads for the benefit of the agricultural community.

There is, of course, a number of long term schemes such as the Mersey Tunnel, which, by reason of their high cost and of the complexities surrounding their execution, must necessarily be spread over some years. The Government feel that for such projects special provision is necessary on their merits as and when they arise . . .

We do not propose to embark upon an undefined and unlimited expenditure without any clear idea as to the needs to be provided for, but to direct the resources of the Road Fund to the support of those schemes and classes of work the execution of which is demanded by considerations of safety and of traffic necessity whether it be to meet the requirements of industry or to facilitate convenient movement of the population.

The question whether an equitable scheme embodying an alternative method of distribution, such as that referred to in the reference, could be devised so as to save administration expenses is one of difficulty. It appears to us that any equitable method of distribution of a national fund for road improvements must have regard to the actual requirements for improved traffic facilities in each area considered in relation to a general plan of road development in the various parts of the country. This consideration postulates the need for a central co-ordinating authority, and in these circumstances we do not feel able to suggest an alternative method of distribution. There is, however, one important respect in which the present scheme of grant is, in our opinion, unfair to London and requires adjustment within the general principles at present governing distribution as prescribed by the Minister of Transport.

*The present grant formula and its operation.*

The Ministry of Transport Circular 420 (Roads), dated 5th February, 1935, states that the normal rate of grant to works of major improvement and new construction affecting Class I roads and bridges will be 60 per cent. and for other roads and bridges the normal rate will be 50 per cent. If the work is in a built-up area, however, and it appears from the Ministry's decision in a certain case that this

would apply to the whole of London, the site value or the net cost of property, *whichever is the less*, is the basis of the grant in respect of property.

"Site value" means the estimated cost of acquiring compulsorily the land required for the scheme, assuming that buildings on the land are non-existent other than boundary walls and fences. This not only excludes the value of buildings, trade compensation and, in certain cases, reinstatement, but also loss arising from rehousing persons of the working classes in the occupation of buildings which have to be demolished.

This basis was introduced for the first time for the grants for 1933-34. The grants of 60 per cent. for class I roads and bridges and 50 per cent. for other roads and bridges were first made for the year 1929-30, and were calculated on the actual cost. Later, in 1930-31, the Council, in common with other local authorities, was given the option, as regards roads in built-up areas, of choosing between (a) a grant of 60 per cent. of cost of road works plus site value of land for class I roads and 50 per cent. for class II roads and (b) 50 per cent. of cost of road works plus net cost of land for class I roads, and 33½ per cent. for class II roads. The Minister then stated that this decision placed the Council on equal terms with all other authorities in the matter of grants towards the cost of property. This continued until March, 1933, since when the basis has been as indicated in Circular 420 referred to above.

It is clear that the basing of the amount of grant for property on the site value operates unfavourably in London, as the bulk of the improvements in London are necessarily in built-up areas, often in localities where the cost of acquisition of property is very heavy and forms a large part of the cost of the improvement. The attention of the Minister of Transport was called to this loss of grant at a conference held on 19th May, 1933. The Minister then stated that it would not be possible to place the Council upon a different basis from other authorities but that exceptional schemes of unusual magnitude might be submitted for special consideration.

The Minister's attention was again directed to the point by the Chairman of the Highways Committee at the conference with the Minister on 3rd May, 1934.

As a rule the net cost of acquiring property, including rehousing, is far in excess of the site value of the land to be added to the highway. In order to give some indication as to the working of the formula we submit below figures which make a comparison of the grants which would be paid if calculated on the basis of (a) net cost of property, including re-housing and road works, and (b) site value and road works. The figures have been based on known facts relating to specific schemes which have been, or are proposed to be, put in hand, but, as in certain cases it is undesirable that the names of the individual schemes should be made public, they are indicated by a letter. It should be clearly understood that the examples are put forward merely as indications of the working of the formula, and it must not be inferred that the grant paid by the Minister is or will be the grant indicated in basis (a), or (b), or either. In fact the Minister, in certain of these cases, which have been recognised by him as being of a special character, has agreed to grants on a basis higher than that provided for in Circular 420:—

Scheme.	60 per cent. of net cost of property (including rehousing) and road works.	60 per cent. of site value and road works.	Actual percentage of figures in previous col. to total net cost.
	£	£	
A	69,000	27,000	23½
B	210,000	117,000	34
C	86,400	26,400	18½
D	31,500	11,100	21
E	320,400	168,000	31
	(Not including rehousing).		
F	22,772	4,754	12½
G	8,551	2,731	19
H	8,438	2,948	20

It will thus be seen that a grant described as being 60 per cent. may, if the formula is applied, only represent, as in the case of scheme F, 12½ per cent. of the net cost, whilst in the illustrations given above it in no case exceeds 34 per cent. of the net cost. In the case of grants described as being 50 per cent., the actual percentages to total net cost would be proportionately lower.

Thus in considering the incidence of cost of road improvement schemes recognised for grant described as 60 or 50 per cent. from the Road Fund, it would be fallacious to assume that only 40 per cent. or 50 per cent. of the net cost will fall to be borne by local funds. When allowance has been made for the fact that in many cases no part of the cost relating to compensation for buildings and trade interests, re-instatement and re-housing is allowed to rank for grant, the result may be, as indicated in the extreme case mentioned above, that as much as 87½ per cent. of the net cost of an improvement is left to be met by local funds.

It should be observed that by confining the limitation in regard to site value to built-up areas, the Minister is giving a preference to agricultural areas, and to developing areas which can look to a rapidly growing rateable value to ease the burden of the cost of improvements. The basis of grant now proposed by the Minister may well prevent the Council from going forward with as large a programme of improvements as would be possible with a more favourable grant. The new terms will be most onerous in regard to the large schemes, affecting traffic in important respects, which will be of direct value to a much wider area than the County of London. These call for a larger rate of grant than usual and not smaller.

The limitation to "site value" affects all built-up areas in the country but London undoubtedly suffers more than other areas by reason of the high values of property and trade interests. The effect of this limitation is that the ratepayers of London have to bear an unduly high proportion of the cost of street improvements. In our view the "site value" formula is entirely illogical and indefensible.

We can see no reason why any part of the expenditure which a local authority is obliged to incur, if a widening approved by the Minister is to be effected, should be excluded from ranking for grant.

- *Conclusion.*

We are of opinion that the facts indicated above abundantly justify the claim that London does not receive equitable treatment in the matter of grants from the Road Fund, and, in view of the request made by the Minister for a five-year programme of road improvement schemes, the time appears appropriate for raising the question at once with the Minister. Moreover, having regard to the appropriation provided in the recent budget proposals of a large surplus in the Fund and to the observations of the Chancellor with respect thereto as set out in the earlier part of our report, it would appear that the case for increased grant can hardly be refused on the grounds of lack of funds. The matter is of such importance, especially to London, that we think the Council should place its case before the Minister by deputation. We recommend—

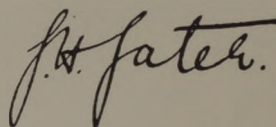
1 That, in relation to the grant formula prescribed in the Ministry of Transport Circular 420 (Roads), dated 5th February, 1935, the Council is of opinion that its operation is inequitable and detrimental in its application to London and does not provide the Council with a reasonable share of the grants payable out of the Road Fund; and that the Minister of Transport be informed accordingly and be asked to receive a deputation on the subject.

CHARLES LATHAM, *Chairman of the Finance Committee.*

G. RUSSELL STRAUSS, *Chairman of the Highways Committee.*

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The recommendation contained in the report was agreed to.



*Clerk of the Council.*

THE COUNTY HALL, S.E. 1.  
11th June, 1935.

# THAMES PASSENGER SERVICE LTD.

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A. D. HERBERT

MAJOR S. W. BEEMAN, D.S.O.  
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E.C.4.

June 22d 1935

George Lansbury Esq M.P.  
House of Commons  
Westminster S.W.1.

Dear Sir,

We have noted with great interest the part which you took in the recent debates about the £40,000,000 to be guaranteed to the LPTB and the Railway Companies for the improvements in the North London connections.

We note that there no mention of the question :Will it pay ?

We also note that there is no mention about other means for the relief of rail congestion or road traffic.

Since memories are short we would like to put the following points before you. It is just a year ago that the public inquiry was stated which was to determine the desirability and the practicability of a modern Thames Passenger Service.

The report on the evidence produced by this inquiry took five months to come out. It advised against the Government's support by guarantee or otherwise, on the ground that it seemed doubtful whether "it would pay".

In March 1933 the writer wrote a letter to the Times which appeared March 15th 1933, to argue that a guarantee would in every conceivable event be an advantage to the Government; in the event of the enterprise having to call for the guarantee of interest, the unemployment relief saved on 450 men employed would still be more than £10,000 more than the guarantee.

It is interesting to note that this point was completely ignored in the evidence and that the LPTB 's doubt whether a Thames service would pay was taken over by the Traffic Advisory Committee in their report ; the LPTB's doubt being based on a statistical assumption completely inconsistent with the points submitted by the writer in the evidence.

Since this report the Minister of Transport and the L.C.C. have refused to intervene and matters for obtaining capital are at a complete deadlock. The LPTB have succeeded in making it impossible for this Co. to obtain capital and kept for themselves the opportunity, when it will suit them to start a Thames Service themselves, although we have repeatedly and in the evidence shown our desire to cooperate with them.



M449



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Thames Passenger Service

GL"/2

22 June 1935

Our reason for putting these matters before you out of a clear sky, as it were, is to ask you for an interview in which the grim history of the above effort could be put before you in more detail, with all the written evidence.

Sir George Hume, Mr Mander, Mr Russell Strauss and many other members of the Commons have tried to help our efforts whenever requested. We have waited on the Minister of Transport in January, had Mr Mander ask questions of him in March this year. All to no further purpose than to produce the said deadlock.

The vast amount of research and statistics, design and propaganda worked into this effort appear to have been done in vain. The LPTB have the upper hand and the support of the Traffic Advisory Committee's report.

It would be our intention to ask you whether it would not be possible to tack the small guarantee which we require to obtain instantly the capital required, on to the huge amounts to be guaranteed on the Railway improvements.

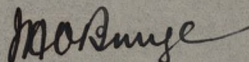
Their capital is to be £ 40,000,000 ; ours £600,000.

We contend that we have far more ground to say that the proposed Thames Service would pay, than the LPTB have to make the Railway improvements pay. In fact Lord Ashfield replied to the Ilford delegation in April 1934 that he doubted whether the six millions to be spent for communications in NE London had a chance to prove remunerative within the next few years.

We enclose printed matter full of factual statistics. For the evidence in the public inquiry of June-July 1934 we refer to the verbatim report by H.M. Stationers and the Traffic Advisory Committee's report, which we were never put into a position to challenge.

We will be glad to hear that you can receive a delegation from this Company, formed for the purpose of representation and application for the necessary pontoon sites; eventually for issuing the necessary capital.

Yours very truly:



Director.

See vol. 28. a, fo. 206 for a letter to  
James Smith Middleton, dated July 15<sup>th</sup> 1935.

# THE LABOUR PRESS SERVICE

Issued by the Labour Party Press and Publicity Department, Transport House (South Block) London, S.W.1  
Secretary: W. W. HENDERSON

No. 851.

July 24th, 1935

## A MESSAGE OF DESPAIR

"This vote is a message of despair to the people of this country, and to the peoples of the world."

Thus Mr. George Lansbury expressed the feeling not only of the Labour Movement but of great masses of people irrespective of party, about the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, which was debated in the House of Commons on July 22. Mr. Lansbury rightly said that in approving this Agreement the "National" Government, with its huge Tory majority, admitted the failure of the Disarmament Conference, the League of Nations, the Versailles Treaty and the Great War. That War, we were told, was fought to end war and stamp our militarism. The disarmament of Germany was to be the prelude to general disarmament.

Today, after four years of "National" Government, all the talk is of "the next war". Instead of general disarmament, we have the re-armament of Germany, the British Government actually a party to a breach of the disarmament clauses of the Versailles Treaty, and another mad race in armaments which puts the clock back to the days before 1914.

Nobody seeks to blame the Government for all that has happened in the past four years. But there can be no doubt about the fact that the Government must bear a large share of the responsibility. When the world looked to Britain for leadership at Geneva, it looked in vain. Instead of courageous leadership there was a lack of initiative, a lack of faith in the principles of the Covenant of the League, a failure to give whole-hearted support to practical proposals for disarmament put forward by other countries.

So it has come about that in the Anglo-German Naval Agreement the "National" Government has thrown over the whole principle of collective action, ignored the League and the Disarmament Conference, and entered into a bilateral agreement which at one stroke increases the naval power of Germany by four times that which was allowed by the Versailles Treaty. As Mr. George Hall pointed out in his attack on the Government's policy, this does not mean limitation: it means "re-armament with a vengeance."

Even Mr. Churchill was among those who criticised the Government for not referring the question of Germany's naval armament to the League and using the further breach of the Treaty by Germany as a means of gathering together those who stand for collective security among the nations of the world.

On the same day the House of Commons approved the supplementary estimate of £5,335,000 for the increase in the Air Force. The debate on this vote was equally depressing. The Air Minister said the full programme of expansion would involve another increased amount next year. The armaments race in the air has begun. But no matter how many millions are spent, there is no guarantee of security for the people. And the recent circular issued by the Government makes it clear that the civil population is expected to take what steps it can, at its own expense, to protect itself when the bombs begin to drop.

There is no way out of the present tragic situation other than that urged by the Labour Party: that of getting back to the League and collective security, and a determined effort to stop the arms race before it is too late.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND MALNUTRITION.Callous Reply to Labour's Plea for the Children.

"What is wanted is advice and instruction so as to secure that the right food is taken, and not only that the right food is taken, but that it is properly cooked, which is very material. My view is that if in Durham or any other area you gave 10s. per head to the families in cases of mal-nourished children, it might work little good."

That was the callous reply given in the House of Commons on July 17 by Mr. Shakespeare (Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health) to Dr. Addison, who drew attention to the serious malnutrition among children of the unemployed.

"We have had four years of national economy at the expense of the unemployed and we are beginning to have some dreadful evidence of the consequences", said Dr. Addison, who quoted a number of extracts from reports of medical officers in the depressed areas.

The medical officer for Breconshire examined 2,000 children in 15 schools during July, 1934, and found that the children of five years of age classified as under weight from depressed areas numbered half as many again as those from areas not regarded as depressed.

The report of the medical officer for Preston contained the following statement:

"Put scientifically, the industrial situation has deprived people of first-class proteins, fats and vitamins. In plain words, bread, jam, margarine and tea have taken the place of milk, meat eggs, and fresh fruit. In the districts where unemployment is most marked the results of poverty are very definitely reflected in every class of the school. Taken as a group the children are undersized, pale, listless, flabby and mentally dull."

Many similar extracts were quoted by Dr. Addison, who also challenged the Government to publish the report of the Royal Society and other scientists made to the Government last year on the subject of malnutrition. If that report were published, he said, it would justify every word of Labour's indictment of the Government's policy and knock the bottom out of the family means-test.

Mr. Shakespeare said the report could not be published because it was "confidential". After insulting the wives of the unemployed with the statement quoted above, he declared that there was no general serious decline in health due to unemployment.

Relief Cut Where Children Get School Meals.

Another sidelight on the Government's economy policy was given at a meeting of the Manchester Education Committee on July 15, when a resolution was carried unanimously protesting against the practice of the Unemployment Assistance Board in taking into account meals given by the Education Committee to school children.

Labour M.Ps. have raised this question in Parliament, but the Minister of Labour has given no satisfactory reply. These deductions are also being made in other towns and are the result of a circular sent out by the Board to its officials.

This meanness follows on the equally mean action of the Board of Education in demanding that free milk and meals should be given only to children certified by a doctor to be suffering from actual malnutrition. The Association of Education Committees has unanimously protested against this demand, but the Government refuses to withdraw its instruction and allow local authorities to revert to the previous practice of providing meals on a poverty basis.

So the children of the unemployed must be reduced to a state of malnutrition before they can get free meals, and then the Unemployment Assistance Board steps in and deducts an amount from the family income in respect of the free meals, thus making the rest of the family go short.

Commissioner's Tragic Disclosures

No impartial reader of the first Report of the Commissioner for the Special Areas in England and Wales can come to any conclusion other than that the report is a grave indictment both of the "National" Government and the present system.

The first eight pages of the Report are taken up with an implied criticism of the misleading speeches made by members of the Government during the passage of the Bill which appointed the Commissioners. "There has been much misunderstanding as to the extent of the powers vested in the Commissioners", writes the Commissioner, "perhaps partly due to statements made by members of the Government." He then quotes a number of these statements.

Mr. Oliver Stanley (Then Minister of Labour) declared that the Government would leave the Commissioners "unhampered" so that they "will be able to act with speed and decision". The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Government was "going to give the Commissioners a very wide discretion." The Paymaster-General said the Commissioners would have "very wide powers which they can freely exercise." Other Government spokesmen made similar speeches suggesting that the Commissioners would be able to spend money as they desired on any schemes likely to help the depressed areas.

No Real Powers to Provide Work.

But the Commissioners were given no such free hand. Mr. Malcolm Stewart shows clearly that his powers are severely limited. He points out at the beginning of his report, that "the Commissioner is not directly charged with the duty of relieving unemployment by the provision of work". He could not give local authorities in the areas any financial assistance towards the construction of roads, bridges, canals, etc. "One serious effect of this embargo", he says, "is that, in the schemes which have been initiated for site improvements with a view to industrial development, it is impossible to give any grant towards the roadways, which are an essential part of the scheme."

The Commissioner reports that one of his statutory duties is to make suggestions to and co-operate with Government Departments. But he adds: "I am more and more convinced that the major problems of the Special Areas cannot be isolated and left to one small Department; they must be tackled by the Government as a whole and there is hardly a Government Department which cannot and should not help. It is clearly uneconomic and inefficient for the Commission to initiate activities which can better be performed by existing Departments already possessing the necessary machinery and experience."

Dealing with the suggestion repeatedly made, that one of the causes of the unwillingness of industrialists to set up new industries in the depressed areas on the alleged ground of "industrial unrest", the Commissioner says:-

"The facts scarcely warrant the attitude adopted...Most industries in these areas have been exceptionally free of labour troubles, and I am satisfied that no employer, who is prepared to offer fair and reasonable conditions of employment, need hesitate for one moment to establish a new factory in these areas for fear of industrial troubles. Trade Union leaders and the unemployed are anxious for opportunity to show the spirit of co-operation."

No Hope under Existing Conditions

The Commissioner declares that to bring unemployment in the areas down even to 25 per cent. the mean between their average figure of unemployment and that of England and Wales would be a considerable achievement. "But, frankly, I see no prospect of any effective reduction under existing conditions." He adds:-

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"The facts must be faced, and, above all, brought home to the unemployed themselves. Measures of relief must be founded on hard facts and not on fond hopes. I feel that too many of the unemployed miners, knowing that the coal lies beneath their feet and seeing the winding gear ready to turn, cannot realise that nothing can be done to put them back to work to bring the coal to the surface. Habit of mind influences them. They cannot believe that they have had their last daily tramp in good weather and bad, summer and winter, to work in the pit where they have won their bread.

If they now live in despair it is still despair tinged with expectation of something turning up from somewhere. Investigations are being made, reports issued and Commissioners appointed, but no one tells them whether the pit in which they and sometimes their fathers before them have spent their lives in hewing coal is to be silent for ever.....

In one district I visited, particularly hard hit by closed mines and works, I met the local representatives. They were convinced something could be done to restore prosperity. Could not the Government establish factories or the Commission take the situation in hand and reopen pits and works? I told them frankly the first thing to be determined was whether their district was on or off the industrial map, and if they were off, there was probably no power that could in their lifetime restore its industrial activities."

Rarely has such an overwhelming indictment of the present system been contained in a State document.

Commissioner's Recommendations

Among the Commissioner's main recommendations are the following:-

State ownership of mining royalties; reorganisation of sales machinery of coal industry; State assistance for large-scale processes for dealing with coal at the pithead; reorganisation of iron and steel industry and scrapping of obsolete plant; survey to decide policy of transference and possibility of emigration; appointment of resident Commissioners; a "cautious" development of land settlement; useful national works if expenditure can be afforded; re-establishment of apprenticeship system.

The Commissioner turns down the raising of the school leaving age, but recommends that all boys and girls should be taken out of industry up to the age of 16 and given compulsory practical and physical training. He also advocates attractive retirement pensions at 65 on a contributory basis; a shorter working week, with Government assistance to employers; consideration of a compulsory week's holiday with pay; and encouragement to young men to join the Services.

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WHERE UNEMPLOYMENT IS "PERMANENT"

A Merseyside Survey

A crushing indictment of the capitalist system is implicit in the report on trade and employment on Merseyside just published by the Social Science Department of Liverpool University. The compilers of the report calculate that about one-third of the total unemployment on Merseyside, representing 8 per cent. or 9 per cent. of the insured workers in the area, must be regarded as "normal" in the sense that it is about the proportion of unemployment one might expect in any area of the same industrial structure as Merseyside, "even supposing there was a complete recovery to normal conditions for the staple industries as well as others." Here is a tragic illustration of the capitalist assumption that a substantial degree of unemployment is inevitable even in times of "prosperity".

Unemployment on Merseyside has increased 70 per cent. in ten years. In Liverpool, the total annual cost of maintenance of the able-bodied unemployed is estimated at £4,000,000.