Eight pages as usual next week. ONE PENNY.

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR GOING TO THE ROOT.

Vol. XI. No. 5. April 19th, 1924. WEEKLY.

Shall Unemployment be a National Charge?

The Evictions Bill Fiasco.

Government Refuses to Use National Funds to Prevent the Eviction of the Unemployed.

You know, fellow worker, that the organised unemployed make one demand. It is that work for the unemployed or maintenance for the unemployed shall be made a national duty and a national charge.

You know, fellow worker, that the Labour Party has adopted the same demand. You know that the Labour Party claimed your vote on that account. You voted for the Labour Party last election for that very reason; did you not, fellow worker?

Some people told you that the Labour Party went too far, some that it did not go far enough; but you decided to vote for the Labour Party because it promised to make the work or maintenance of the unemployed a national charge.

You expected when the Labour Government took office that great schemes of work for the unemployed would be started.

You were disappointed in that, fellow worker. The Labour Government said you must wait for trade to revive, and you thought to yourself it was because the Labour Government had not got a majority that it had not put in hand the employment schemes you expected.

Failing the employment schemes you would have liked to see improved maintenance for the unemployed.

You considered the Labour Party was quite right to advocate that the maintenance should be made a national charge; were you not, fellow worker? You saw plainly enough that the local rates would not bear any further raising in working class districts. They are far too high as it is in your opinion; are they not, fellow worker?

You waited with confidence for unemployment to be made a national charge. Some people told you, fellow worker, that the Labour Government would not be able to do it because it had not got a majority. You said you were sure the Labour Government would go to the country on that issue if it could not get a majority in Parliament for making unemployment a national charge.

Some people grumbled that the Labour Party was slow in making a beginning, but you answered: "give them time."

When the Government introduced its Evictions Bill you were enthusiastic. You had witnessed a few evictions, fellow worker.

Perhaps you had been yourself through that sad and cruel experience. As child, or as man, perhaps you had known the suffering and the indignation, the tears and the curses that rise when a family is thrust out of its home.

You were pleased that the Government was going to tackle the evictions question. You were glad, fellow worker, when you heard that the Labour Government had decided to stop the eviction of people who cannot pay their rent because the breadwinner is unemployed.

You were disappointed in the terms of the Evictions Bill when you heard them, fellow worker. You knew that in a large number of cases the unemployed worker is purely the sub-tenant of another worker who cannot afford to pay the rent of the whole house. In such cases the court would most likely decide that it would cause more hardship to allow the unemployed to live in the house without paying rent than to evict the unemployed, and so the eviction would take place just the same.

That solution did not seem at all a practical one to you, fellow worker; but when you read Mr. Wheatley's assurance that the individual landlord was not to be made to suffer and that what the Government desired was to let the unemployed stay in their homes, you thought to yourself that the Labour Government had another card up its sleeve, and that at least it was going to make the payment of the unemployed rents a national charge.

You were greatly surprised; were you not, fellow worker, when you discovered that the Labour Government had no such intention.

You were annoyed when the Prime Minister announced that the charge would fall on the local rates.

Mr. MacDonald said it would play havoc with the honesty of the Poor Law Guardians if the Government were to recoup them for paying rent to stop evictions.

That might be all very fine, you thought, fellow worker; but that sort of talk would not bring down the rates. You said to yourself that you would be one of the evicted too if the rates should go up any higher.

You grumbled a bit, fellow worker, but at least you thought a stop might be put to evicting poor people who cannot pay their rent through being unemployed.

Some of us were a bit sceptical even of that, fellow worker.

We do not forget that even Mr. Wheatley has given Poplar to understand it must cut down its expenditure. We did not see how, in necessitous areas, the Guardians would be got to find more money for the unemployed, since even the Labour Government is complaining that they have been finding too much.

Some of us were sceptical, and you also became sceptical, fellow worker, when Mr. Wheatley distinctly stated that the Guardians have no power to pay arrears of rent and that the Government Bill would give no power to compel either English Boards of Guardians or Scottish Parish Councils even to pay the current rent.

All that the Government Bill did was to say that an eviction order could not be granted until time had been given for the unemployed to apply to the Poor Law Authorities for help, and for the Poor Law Authorities to consider the application.

Between ourselves, fellow worker, there is generally plenty of time for the tenant to apply to the Boards of Guardians. The business of falling into arrears and getting turned out is a long and painful one, like a slow dry rot, in which the spirit is bended until it breaks and the energies are benumbed.

The Court will in most cases be quite satisfied that the unfortunate tenant has had time, and time to spare to apply to the Poor Law for relief.

And if relief be refused?

Then, fellow worker, says Mr. Wheatley, the court will know that the Guardians have considered the case of the applicant and adjudged him unworthy to receive relief.

Mr. Wheatley said many poor people do not know how kind-hearted the Guardians are and that it would be a good thing to have the people who are in arrears with their rent sifted by the Guardians, in order that the deserving may be divided from the undeserving.

You have heard that before; have you not, fellow worker?

It was not from a Labour Government that you expected to hear that sort of talk.

The well-to-do may think it a very proper thing that the characters of the poor should be investigated by the Guardians, but the poor have naturally a very different view of such investigations.

You were astonished, fellow worker, when the Labour Government refused to bring the National Exchequer to the relief of the unemployed breadwinner who is facing eviction.

You would have thought the refusal due to the pressure of Liberals and Tories, fellow worker; but there was the curious spectacle of both Liberals and Tories taunting the Labour Government because it had put no money in its Bill to save the evicted. You had Mr. Asquith declaring that the Government should have the Second Reading of its Bill if it would make the payment of those rents a charge on public funds.

You had Mr. MacDonald expressly replying that he would not make the payments a charge on the national exchequer.

You had Mr. Wheatley adding that the Government would not compel the local authorities to pay.

Why did the Labour Government refuse to make this help for the unemployed a national charge?

Because the Labour Government did not want to alter the Budget.

An extra £2,000,000 for the air force, but this little aid is refused to the unemployed.

It is a strange situation, fellow worker.

Some people will say the Labour Government is right. The landlord ought not to be able to come to the national funds to secure payment of his rent.

But what about those unemployed comrades the Labour Government has pledged itself to help? There has been a great big noise about those evictions, fellow worker. We have been told by the Labour Government that they are very numerous and very serious, but all the promised help for the evicted seems to have ended in smoke.

Mr. MacDonald said the Bill was an emergency Bill, and asked the Liberals and Tories to help the Labour Government to make a workman-like measure of it. That is not what you expected of the Labour Party when you voted for it last election, fellow worker.

You thought, fellow worker, that the Labour Party was going in to knock spots off the Liberals and Tories and to show the way in matters affecting the interests of the workers.

You are disappointed with the Labour Government, fellow worker; but you ought not to be disappointed.

You ought to realise that the system is at fault.

Inside the capitalist private property system no government can do much. So long as the system lasts we shall always have rich and poor and the Haves will always be stingy, superior, and censorious towards the Have Nots.

Moreover, fellow worker, do not leave your affairs to the mercy of any government whatever it calls itself. Get busy and attend to your own affairs.

No one else can do it for you.

THE SEARCHLIGHT.

Official Report of Parliamentary Debates for sale from 1914. Apply box 50, Workers' Dreadnought.

Workers' Dreadnought

Founded 1914.

Editor: SYLVIA PANKHURST.

All Matter for Publication — To THE EDITOR.
Business Communications — To THE MANAGER
WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT,
152, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

SUBSCRIPTIONS. Post free.

Three months (13 weeks) ..... 1s. 7½d.
Six months (26 weeks) ..... 3s. 3d.
One year (52 weeks) ..... 6s. 6d.
Subscriptions can start from any week.

Vol. XI. No. 5. Saturday, April 19th, 1924

Our View.

The following members of the Labour Party and I. L. P. are circulating the attached petition :

Rose Witcop. (Mrs. Guy Aldred);
Marjory Allen (Mrs. Clifford Allen);
Frida Laski (Mrs. H. J. Laski);
Joan Malleson (Mrs. Miles Malleson);
L. L'Estrange Malone (Mrs. Cecil L'E. Malone);
Dora Russell (Mrs. Bertrand Russell).

"We, the undersigned, believing the limitation of population to be a matter of vital importance to the community, hereby bring to your notice the large and growing demand among working mothers that information as to the methods of birth control be frankly, and decently given by public authority. We hold the opinion that our social system, however we seek to improve it, will remain unstable and exposed to the menace of desease, so long as the problem of population is not honestly faced.

We therefore most earnestly request:—

(1) That the Ministry of Health should permit Public Health Authorities to provide, for those who desire it, information on the subject of birth control;

(2) That, in cases where local Health Authorities desire to give such information, the Ministry of Health should not, on that account, withhold the usual grants.

"Our social system, however we seek to improve it, will remain unstable and exposed to the menace of disease, so long as the problem of population is not honestly faced." That phrase reveals a sad lack of faith in Socialism.

For our part, we stand for the widest possible distribution of knowledge. We desire that every man and woman shall have the benefit of all the facts, all the advice, all the skilled assistance that is forthcoming. We regard knowledge as power and desire everyone to have free choice as to how to use it.

We are sensible of the hardship of poor parents, and especially of poor mothers, under economic pressure. We desire people to have all the aid in their struggle that is possible.

Yet those words about the problem of population honestly arouse our hostility. The world has no problem of population which cannot be met by mutual aid and production for use.

We refuse to give any countenance to the view that the growth of population is the cause of the poverty from which the masses are suffering. We refuse to give any countenance to the view that poverty, unemployment and other social ills, arising from the production for profit system can be dealt with by reducing the population or by checking its growth.

That view is the anti-Socialist view. That view is the view of the apologist for capitalism who would have us believe it unnecessary to strike at the root of the system, and who argues that, after all, the system is a very tolerable one, and that all we need do is to introduce a few adjustments, here or there.

That is the view we must altogether break down before Communism will be accepted. We must establish the belief that capitalism must go, that Communism full and complete must take its place.

It is depressing to see only the relatively few who belong to the proletarian movement willing to work steadily for the abolition of capitalism, whilst the many are going their several ways in quest of this or that palliative reform.

The reason of this is obvious. The struggle to secure a fundamental change is more difficult than to obtain some slight adjustment that makes little or no challenge to vested interests.

Yet once the necessary impetus can be given to the movement to destroy capitalism, it will receive a far wider measure of support than any of these piecemeal palliatives which will make no great fundamental sifference to any of us.

The problem is how to obtain for the fundamental movement the necessary momentum, when Anarchists, are found chasing single tax and birth control, Communists concentrate on wages movements, and I.L.P. Socialists place their faith in the Capital Levy and Government guarantees to aid capitalist trading.

Once a movement gains a certain impetus its momentum rapidly increases. How is the necessary impetus to be given to the movement for Communism?

This can only be given in the first instance by the right sort of educational propaganda, by creating in the minds of the average person a vision of Communism — a vision desirable.

For this purpose no better books can be found than Kropotkin's Conquest of Bread and William Morris's News from Nowhere. Deluge the Socialist-Labour movement with these two works; see that every man, woman and young person in the movement has read them, and you will have built up a vision of Communism in the movement which will provide a basis on which to build.

Add also the production of new literature, both in theory, fact and imaginative fiction, in which the Communist vision shall be manifest. Then we shall have a living creative impulse from which will germinate great and far-reaching results.

Strike at the root of the system, comrades, and fix your ideal upon the great objective.

The spring is come. The summer lies before us. Let us work with a glad confidence and a sure faith in the new movement which to-day is needing its pioneers. Let us be out in the parks and the streets with our message. Let us take the news to the workshop.

THE ANGLO-SOVIET CONFERENCE

The speech of Mr. MacDonald to the Russian delegates was made as the representative of the British Government — a capitalist institution. As such it meets with our unqualified disapproval, save for some general expressions of pacific intent. Mr. MacDonald said the British Delegation desired consideration of the following British claims :

(1) Claims of British holders of Russian Bonds.

(2) Claims of British subjects whose Russian property has been taken away by the Revolution.

(3) Claims of British subjects who have suffered personal injury.

The first and second claims cannot be viewed with sympathy by the opponent of capitalism who wishes the land, the means of production, distribution and transport to be held in common.

To insist on returning the properties which have been socialised or their equivalent, is to erect a barrier to Socialism. Mr. MacDonald and his Government in acting as the mouthpiece of the private property claimants are taking the capitalist side in the contest.

Mr. MacDonadl further stated that the treaties contracted between the Tsarist Governments and Britain are still binding on Russia and on this country. The mass of treaties must now be put into shape, he said, and those which are no longer applicable must be pruned out.

A Commercial Treaty must replace the Trade Agreement.

Propaganda by Russia in British territory must be stopped, said Mr. MacDonald, and insisted that Russia must desist from :

"Anything that smacks of an attempt to carry on among the people of this country, either at home or abroad, a propaganda which, when internally inspired, may be legitimate, but when controlled and even financed from abroad is not legitimate. It is my duty to make it plain that the people of this country will require more on this head than formal undertakings, and, as you know, I mysef have too intimate a knowledge of international movements to be deceived by false distinctions. This will have to be discussed firmly, but I hope in the most amicable spirit and, I also hope, settled in the same spirit."

The phrase "false distinctions" of course refers to the contention that the Third International and the Red International are independent of the Soviet Government. Mr. MacDonald will seek to prevent Russian funds reaching the branches of those bodies in this country. That he will endeavour to prevent Russian propaganda in any shape or form reaching this country, or other parts of the British Empire, we have also no doubt. In that attempt Mr. MacDonald will be playing the capitalist game. The great international capitalist and Church organisations carry on their operations in all countries and the governments, including the British, have also their agents and their propaganda everywhere.

At the same time we must observe that the Russian propaganda carried on in this country is so futile and ineffective in character, that even should Mr. MacDonald succeed in suppressing it, the suppression would be of very slight importance indeed. It is purely a propaganda for increased wages and for Russian trade; it is not a propaganda for the abolition of capitalism, national and international.

Mr. MacDonald, always taking his cue from capitalist propaganda went on to declare that the Russians during their revolution had resorted to "methods which aroused the utmost fears and resentment everywhere." The Russian methods of government, he added, are not the same as the British. He was anxious to emphasise that point particularly.

Mr. Rakovsky's reply was couched in a loftier strain than the nationalistic and mercenary speech of the British Premier. He referred to the solidarity with the British people which the Congress of Soviets had expressed. He urged the need for international disarmament, and, whilst indicating that Russian does not view the League of Nations as the British Government does, he declared that Russia desires to associate herself with "a plan of international organisation which shall exclude measures of coercion and reprisal."

Such a desire as the last may be utopian under capitalism, but it is an objective towards which we all should be working. Mr. Rakovsky was right in giving prominence to it. He further urged the revision of the Treaty of Versailles and the other treaties connected with it, and the revision of frontiers on ethnographic principles, applying plebiscites where necessary.

Most important of all, Mr. Rakovsky urged that **"the elimination of war is only possible on condition of a Socialist organisation of economic life."** The Soviet Government shares, he added,

"the view of the British Government that mutual non-intervention in internal affairs is one of the indispensable conditions for the creation of confidence between the two States. The principle of non-intervention is for us a guarantee against attempts which might be made in another form to make us give up the basis of our Socialist organisation — the nationalising of land, the nationalisation of large-scale industry, the monopoly of foreign trade—and also to make us renounce our Socialist legislation.

The peoples constituting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are determined to hold fast to the conquests of the revolution—conquests which constitute the raison d'être of the existence of the Soviet Government, and for which the toiling masses of the entire Union have fought against the coalition between the internal enemy and foreign Governments. With that frankness which must characterise our relations, I must remind you, Mr. Prime Minister, that former British Governments also took part in that foreign intervention in Russia."

The speech of Mr. Rakovsky was, in short, a rebuke to the Prime Minister who had inferred that the British Government has substantial grievances against Russia, whilst ignoring the war which the Government of this country made on the Russian Revolution.

Unfortunately we fear that Mr. MacDonald has neither the perspicacity not the humility to profit by Mr. Rakovsky's most timely correction.

THE SHIP YARD LOCK OUT

The Ship Yard Lock Out again reveals the urgent need for the Workshop Councils. Once again the workers find themselves opposed by their union officials. The Shipwright's Society has even gone so far as to expel its Southampton members. The only possible retort is the formation of a new organisation by the expelled members. Let us hope that those members will not follow the unwise course taken by the London stevedores in forming merely a new union on the old lines, but that a Workshop Council will be set up.

The fact that the Mauretania was able to sail to Cherbourg for overhaul is a striking instance of the need for sympathetic action by workshop councils in all trades.

THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The demand of the Court of Inquiry that there shall be compulsory arbitration in disputes in the public services is the logical outcome of the attitude of the Trade Unions officials towards important strikes. As soon as a strike in which the workers have the power to make the lack of their services generally felt is threatened, the Trade Union leaders begin to raise cries of alarm, declaring that the fortunes of the nation are at stake and that the public must be protected at all cost. An absurd fuss was even made by Mr. J.H. Thomas and his colleagues over the little strike at Wembley. The Trade Union leaders now behave as though to strike is a crime. The workers in industry must reply by rank and file management of their affairs, and workshop council defence of their right to strike.

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

* * *

LAND FIT FOR HEROES.

(1918.)

Sing of the beautiful land
Beyond the gates of the grave,
But an inch of the country where you were born
It's a deadly sin to crave;
The few have possessed the land,
The many are landless swine,
The many drink from the poisoned wells,
The few from the red, red wine.
Take up your arms at the king's command,
At the bid of the senate—fight;
But woe to the man who asserts his strength
In the battle for Truth and Right;
You were created to die like flies
On a foreign and distant plain;
You have secured gold for the few,
So your death has not been in vain.
There is a land, a beautiful land,
Fit for heroes to dwell;
The price of that land is to live and die
In the depth of the deepest hell;
The Wizard arrange with the bloody priest
To promise a land of Peace,
To the heroes who fought for oil and gold,
Who think and labour as they are told,
And do as the rulers please.
The way to the beautiful land
Lies in the slime and the mud;
Sing as you march to the promised land
Over the fields of blood;
The City of God is built
With the blood and the sickly stench;
For so, my comrades, you were told,
By the rulers of earth and the priests of gold,
For so you were told in the trench.
You live in a wonderful land,
You fought for its very clods;
In the army they tamed the lions,
In the temples they crucified Gods;
So cheer the wizard till you are hoarse,
And shout his name like hell;
Isn't he wonderful! Isn't he grand!
Hasn't he promised a wonderful land,
Fit for heroes to dwell?

T. E. Nicholas.

* * *

INDIAN PERSECUTIONS.

Indian persecutions continue unstayed. News reaches us that Mr. Gupta charged as "nominal editor" and Mr. Choudhany as "Reported to be actual editor" have been arrested by the Ajma Government under section 124a for publishing two articles in the weekly journal "Farum Rajusthar."

SPICE

Embarrassing for Uncle Arthur

Police theatricals at the Rehearsal Theatre.

They never fail who die in a great cause.
The block may soak their gore,
Their heads may sodden in the sun;
Their limbs be strung to city gates and castle walls,
But still their spirit walks abroad.

Lord Byron.

Broadwood Grand Piano for sale, or exchange for a smaller one.

A MIMIC BOMBARDMENT OF LONDON.

The "Boston Herald" says of the Wembley Empire Exhibition:—

"The British Empire seen as through a shop window is the phrase in which the Prince of Wales describes the exhibit, and there is much in it to suggest the halcyon days of peace. But the picture will turn its other side for a grim reminder of war when the air ministry treats visitors to the promised mimic bombardment of London. Here is the spectre which hangs over the British metropolis and will not down.....

All the while her inventors are bringing in new devices for meeting a possible enemy in the skies. Henceforth, London is to be guarded by a new gun which sends forth a high explosive shell weighing fifty pounds to a height of six miles. Another gun designed for use against hostile airplanes, and to be mounted for inner defences of the big city, is capable of firing small explosive shells at the rate of more than a hundred a minute and can be made to maintain "terrible barrages at various levels up to about three miles beyond city limits." A third weapon for aerial war is an improved and extremely powerful type of machine gun planned for dealing with low-lying bombers, with a range of nearly two miles, it will send up streams of bullets at the rate of 800 a minute. All this, remember, is in twentieth century London, with its "empire exhibition" organised to please the eye, to stir the esthetic sensibilities, to arouse wonder and to inform the mind.

And Britain is surely not alone in either the pride of national accomplishment or in the need of protecting it. Are France, Germany, Italy, Russia, to be 'left defenceless'? What of the United States? If the prophets are right, how glad the world will be for even ten years' relief from war. Then what?"

CORRESPONDENCE.

Redlands, California.

Dear Editor,

Your article on foreign policy thrilled me. I am quite of your opinion.

Let us leave the national and sectional squabbles policies to the capitalists.

Let us rise and keep aloft the banner of Internationalism and the universal strike with the mottoes:

"No interest."
"No rent."
"No profits."
"The tools to the workers."
"The products to the producers."
"High-toned and Low-toned Loafers must go."

Please accept the enclosed trifle to aid your grand work.

fraternally,

Sij. Dan.

COMMUNIST WORKERS' MOVEMENT
Sunday, April 27th at 7.30 p.m.
LEONARD'S ACADEMY, HIGH ROAD, LEYTONSTONE.
SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Read EIRE The Irish Nation
Weekly Review of Irish Republican Opinio
PRICE TWOPENCE
On Sale Saturdays

THE "ONE BIG UNION BULLETIN"

The One Big Union seeks to organise the workers on class lines. Read about it.
10/- per year; 5/- six months.
Plebs Buildings, 54 Adelaide Street, Winnipeg, Canada.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

Workers' Dreadnought Banned.

Our Parliamentary Extracts and cmments are based on the Official Verbatim Reports.

Mr. Lansbury asked whether the "Manchester Guardian" the "Daily Herald" "Foreign Affairs" "The Crusader" "The Freeman" of America are banned in India and whether he will get the censorship stopped.

The Under Secretary for India replied that that there is no general censorship of the press in India and that if any cases with the circulation of newspapers is reported to him he will inquire into them.

The papers mentioned by Mr. Lansbury may perhaps circulate freely in India, but the Workers' Dreadnought is banned in India and we are bringing that fact to his notice and to that of the India Office.

Mr. H. H. Spencer asked Mr. Ramsay MacDonald "whether he has discovered any secret treaties or undisclosed engagements entered into by previous governments."

Mr. MacDonald replied:

"The answer is in the negative."

Mr. Spencer: "Are we to understand that the policy of His Majesty's Government, so far as secret treaties are concerned, is just the same as we have always persued in this country?"

The Prime Minister: "No, certainly not."

This is important.

WHAT WE PAY FOR RELIGION.

The tithe which is the tax leased for the church, was in 1910, £910 in Sible Hedingham in 1923 it had risen to £1,980, the difference being made up out of the rates.

LEAD POISONING.

Martha Porter, a pottery worker, died of chronic lead poisoning, which ended in cerebral haemorrhage. She was certified as A.1. by the certifying surgeon.

Lead glaze is only used because it is more economical to use than other glazes.

ANATOLIAN AND BAGDAD RAILWAYS FROUGHT WITH MENACE OF WAR.

Mr. MacDonald in reply to a question said:

"An option on a majority shareholding in the Anatolian Railway Company was acquired last year by a British group, negotiations between representatives of the company and the Turkish authorities are at present proceeding at Angora, with the object of obtaining possession of the line which is at present being worked by the Turkish Government, and of readopting the Anatolian Railway concessions to the new economic conditions.

"With regard to the Bagdad Railway Company, the majority of the shares which were held by the Germans before the war, have been transferred to the Reparations Commission. Their ultimate disposal remains to be determined. No change has taken place in the disposal of the non-German shares.

"Part of the line from Konia to Bozanti is being worked by the Turkish authorities and the portion from Bozanti to Nishibin by a French company.

"The Bank für Orientalische Eisenbahnen of Zurich, holds no shares in the Bagdad Railway Company, and the Anatolian Railway shares held by the bank are failing any claim to the contrary by the Reparations Commission, regarded as neutral property."

RENT RESTRICTIONS BILL.

Mr. MacDonald in explaining the attitude of the government towards recouping the local authorities for paying rents of the unemployed said:

"There is no more objectionable way of sovling the problem of the relations of Imperial taxation and local rating than to begin to do that by a series of undefined, unlimited, uncontrolled and uncontrollable doles that will simply play havoc with the honesty of those who have the care of local administration.

The situation that the government never meant in connection with this Bill to impose this charge upon taxation is perfectly clear, was perfectly clear, and will remain perfectly clear."

The policy of the Labour Party before it took office was that the burden of maintaining the unemployed must be a national charge.

WHAT DID THE LIBERALS MEAN TO DO?

Mr. Asquith replied:

"As I said last week we should be very glad to co-operate in any attempt to deal with this matter which would not impose a burden upon a particular class, but would impose such burden as was reasonably incident to the circumstances upon the community. I was very careful not to say upon what fund or from what source the money should be derived—a very serious and a very difficult question, and one which is not to be confused as the Prime Minister sought to confuse it, with the general question, which may be settled sometime about the Greek Kalends of the relation between imperial and local taxation.....

"The fact is that these words, whatever they do mean do not impose—I say it advisedly—upon the local authority any burden at all."

The words Mr. Asquith referred to in the government proposal are:

No order shall be issued until a tenant has had a reasonable opportunity to apply to the local poor law authorities for relief and that authority has had an opportunity of considering any such application."

Did Mr. Asquith mean that the Liberals support an exchequer grant for the purpose?

Mr. Wheatley admitted that the Poor Law Authorities are not entitled by law to pay arrears of rent, but only the current rent. Moreover the Government Amendment would not even oblige the local authorities to pay the current rent.

A C.O.S. VIEW.

Mr. Wheatley contended that it is "sound social policy" to bring the unemployed in touch with the Poor Law, in order that the Guardians may repair to "the really hard and honest case" from those which are held not to be deserving. That is Charity Organisation Society view of the masses and their misfortunes. It is a narrow view, a self-righteous and unbrotherly view; it will disappear with the advent of plenty for all.

The Government was defeated on its Amendment by 221 votes to 212.

ANOTHER GOVERNMENT DEFEAT.

The Government was again defeated later in the evening on a matter of minor importance.

After the defeat of the Government Evictions Bill, a Bill introduced by Mr. Simon, a Liberal Member, passed the Second Reading without discussion. As the rules of the House prevented the Government introducing another Bill of its own, the Prime Minister announced that the Government would take up and alter the measure of Mr. Simon.

In reply to questions Mr. MacDonald said that the Government had "no intention" of making the rent of unemployed people a charge on Government funds. The intention was to make it a charge on local funds.

WOOLWICH EVICTIONS

Sir H. Kingsly Wood (Con.) complained that the First Commissioner of Works in the Labour Government (Mr. F. W. Jowett I.L.P.) has issued a number of summons for eviction. In one case the defendant has been unemployed two years, and when working earned £3 a week. He has now got work at £2-19-6 a week. He owes £18-2-1 rent and £4-8-0 costs. Another had been unemployed 18 months; when working he earned £2-19-6. The six other defendants were similarly circumstanced.

There are 3.954 tenants on the estate 1.900 of whom are in arrears with rent. A striking evidence of working class hardship to-day. Mr. Jowett said that orders for possession had been obtained in certain cases, but would not be pressed if something were paid off arrears each week.

EVICTION FIGURES

Actions for possession and ejectment in County Courts in England and Wales.

August 1st 1923 to March 31st 1924

Actions entered	35,001
Actions heard	24,271
Orders made	21,326
Warrants issued	3,835

	1920	1921	1922
Actions entered	21,659	24,790	26,841
Actions heard	14,292	16,311	19,553
Ord. for possession	8,374	11,335	14,182
Warrants issued	1,565	2,388	3,553

M.Ps, RAILWAY PASSES

A vote of £70,000 to provide M.P.s with first class railway passes was carried.

We do not know why the proposal was not that the railway companies should be compelled to give free passes.

NECESSITOUS AREAS

Having refused direct financial assistance to the local authorities in necessitous areas, the Government refused to reduce the interest on loan to such authorities.

INSURANCE BENEFIT

A Bill was introduced to extend the unemployment insurance benefit to 41 weeks.

Hon.: Members called each other "parrot" and "Jackass."

The Speaker protested.

Men's benefit is to be raised to 18/ per week; women's to 15/; boys between 14 and 16 years are to get 5/ a week; girls 4/; dependent children 2/. Persons thrown out of work by trades disputes but not participating in them are to get benefit — a sop for not joining the sympathetic strike.

AIR SERVICE DISPUTE.

Mr. B. Smith stated that according to the Government agreement with the British, Foreign and Colonial Corporation giving a 10 years monopoly to the company, the company was to operate the Air Services not later than April 1st, but everything is at a standstill because no airmen have been re-engaged and the lower grade of groundsmen have been suspended. The airmen were in receipt of salaries varying from £500 to £550 a year with 10s. per hour flying time. The company only proposed to pay them £100 a year with 2d. per mile flown. This was an attempt to force them into the air not only at the risk of their lives but at the risk of the lives of the passengers" said Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith said that the management under which their men have been asked to place themselves has been responsible for four fatal flying accidents across the channel and since the departure of that management no fatal accident has taken place between 1920 and 1924. 21 pilots out of 37 were killed. The air mechanics are only being paid £2-19-6 a week and no additional rate. The Super-Marine Company pay £3 a week minimum wage and if they go half the journey and have to come back not a penny of remuneration.

The Under Secretary for Air said the Air Ministry is not the employer of the people concerned in the dispute. It has two directors on the new company, but they have not taken their seats.

SECRET SERVICE FUND

£180,000 this year.

SAFEGUARDING OF INDUSTRIES ACT

The Government will let it lapse on August 19th.

Published by E. Sylvia Pankhurst, at 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4, and printed by the Agenda Press, Ltd. (T.U.), at 1, Pemberton Row, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.