

THE BRITISH WORKER

OFFICIAL STRIKE NEWS BULLETIN

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No. 7.

TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 11, 1926.

PRICE ONE PENNY

ENGINEERS TO STOP TO-DAY

Shipyards Also Orders
Welcomed

STRIKE SPREADS

So far from "dribbling back," as Mr. Churchill pretends, the men on strike are standing like a rock, and more are coming out.

To-morrow another section of the Movement will be called into action, the order having gone forth that the engineering shops and shipyards are to stop to-night.

The order applies to all unions in the engineering and shipbuilding trades affiliated to the Trades Union Congress.

It does not apply to men engaged at the Government dockyards, Admiralty establishments, or Government engineering works.

The men have awaited the instructions impatiently, and all over the country they received their marching orders with enthusiasm and a sense of relief.

In addition to the men obeying this call to reinforce the gallant "first line," others are out, either because of

MORE UNIONS OUT

The Amalgamated Moulders, Shipyard workers, and members of the Amalgamated Engineering Unions as well as General Engineering Unions will not start work to-morrow.

refusal to work with blacklegs, or because the pressure of the strike is closing down the factories.

Some of the very small percentage of N.U.R. members who hesitated at first have now joined up.

"Not a single area has weakened," is Mr. Cramp's report.

At Bradford 7,000 operative dyers ceased work yesterday because of the introduction of blackleg transport.

Twenty-five thousand operative dyers are now out in Lancashire and Yorkshire.

The general position in Preston is unchanged, the men remaining confident of winning the fight.

NO SLACKENING

Cabinet's New Tactics Defeated by Indisputable Facts

The Cabinet and its supporters have dropped Mr. Churchill's "Revolution" stunt.

The "Times" says to-day in a leading article: "No one suggests for a moment that any considerable number of men on strike are animated by revolutionary motives."

That marks the end of Mr. Churchill's foolish and dangerous gamble. Now the Cabinet's tactics are changed. Now the official gramophones are grinding out the statement that strikers are going back to work.

This is as much a fabrication as the other. The number of strikers has not diminished; it is increasing. There are more workers out to-day than there have been at any moment since the strike began.

They will stay out until they are instructed by Headquarters to return to work.

THE REAL TRUTH OF THE COAL NEGOTIATIONS

Chairman of General Council Replies to Sir Douglas Hogg

In the Government publication, the *British Gazette*, of this morning, appears an article by the Attorney-General, Sir Douglas Hogg, which purports to state the truth of the coal negotiations. As one who has been directly associated with those negotiations, I claim the right to speak with a degree of authority on this matter which neither the Attorney-General nor anyone else with second-hand information can possibly possess.

The initial cause of the deadlock was the mineowners' arbitrary attitude in refusing to conduct national negotiations as recommended in the Commission's Report, and their action in giving notices to enforce a general reduction in wages.

From the moment the mineowners issued lock-out notices to their workpeople, the question at issue, so far as the General Council was concerned, was the withdrawal of those notices as a condition preliminary to the conduct of negotiations. From that we have never receded.

The Government representatives insisted that the mineworkers must first declare themselves definitely as willing to accept a reduction in wages.

In these circumstances, and in view of the inevitability that there would be a stoppage throughout the coalfields on May 1 if the notices and demands of the mineowners were pressed, the General Council decided to call a conference of the responsible Executives of the unions

CONTINUED ON PAGE FOUR

FIVE RAILWAY CRASHES

Sequel to Blackleg and
"Voluntary" Labour

FOUR DEAD

The attempt to work the intricate mechanism of the British railway system by "volunteer" and blackleg labour has already had a tragic sequel.

No fewer than five serious passenger train accidents occurred yesterday and this morning—two of them resulting in loss of life.

The worst occurred yesterday afternoon on the L.N.E.R. at St. Margaret's, Edinburgh.

While a number of wagons were being shifted from the up to the down main line a passenger train from Berwick, manned by a volunteer crew, crashed into them.

Three people were killed, 16 injured. About the same time the "express" train from Edinburgh to King's Cross jumped the line between Annitsford and Cramlington. The engine and five coaches overturned and caught fire. No one was killed.

At Bishop's Stortford a goods train from Cambridge crashed into a passenger train standing in the station. The goods engine and two passenger coaches were derailed and the station partially wrecked. One body has been recovered from the wreckage.

This morning an electric train from Selhurst, running into Victoria Station, failed to stop in time and collided with a stationary coach.

At Hull on Monday night a "volunteer" ran his engine into some stationary wagons. He himself was severely injured.

These accidents—all within the space of 24 hours—are a grim commentary on the claim of the companies and the Government that something like a "normal" train service is being restored.

"Accidental death" was the verdict returned to-day at the inquest on C. A. Moon, a young engineer's draughtsman, living at Guildford. He volunteered to act as a passenger guard on an electric railway, stepped on a live rail, and was instantly killed.

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PASS THIS ON OR POST IT UP

No Breach In Our United Front

WINSTON, THE SUPPRESSOR

Commons and Appeal to the Churches

PAPER FOR "B.W."?

The Government's official newspaper came in for criticism at Monday's sitting of the House of Commons. Why, members asked, had the British Broadcasting Company and the *British Gazette* suppressed the appeal made by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other leaders of

LOCAL TRANSPORT COMMITTEES

The General Council asks all local Transport Committees that have been set up, to forward the name and address of their secretary, and place of meeting to the National Transport Committee, Unity House, Euston-road, London, N.W.

the Churches after the Lambeth meeting last Friday? Mr. LLOYD GEORGE especially pressed for an answer to this question.

Mr. CHURCHILL, as editor, said it was not to be expected that the *British Gazette* could be conducted under present conditions without many mistakes. The paper had to be set up slowly by amateurs. He disclaimed responsibility for the B.B.C.

The "British Worker"

Would newsprint be rationed impartially? M.P.s asked. Would the publication of the *British Worker* be permitted?

The publication of the *British Worker*, Mr. Churchill replied, was a matter for the Home Office. As for newsprint, the embargo had fallen on the *British Worker* as on other papers. When supplies were better, the *British Worker* might have some consideration.

The wages paid to special constables were the subject of a breezy interchange, Government supporters asking why miners could not join the "specials," and Labour supporters retorting that the others should go and work in mines.

N.U.R. SOLIDARITY

"Reports from every centre indicate strength fully maintained; no signs of weakening," is the official summary, based on messages from hundreds of branches, of the position with regard to the National Union of Railwaymen.

Reports that men have returned to work at different centres have proved to be entirely without foundation.

MORE DISASTROUS

Disastrous as the General Strike may be, it is the symptom of something more disastrous—the unequal distribution of wealth.—Dr. Gregg, the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, in a sermon yesterday.

STRIKING SNAPSHOTS

Little Views and Reviews of Position All Along the Line

A remarkable revelation of the cheerful determination of the rank and file to hold on for victory is afforded by the latest of the daily reports received at the headquarters of the various unions, and by reports from our own correspondents, which are summarised below.

Consolidation expresses the position at Southampton. Every sector on this united front is being firmly held and strengthened.

Nowhere is there the slightest sign of weakness, and the strikers are enlisting public sympathy in an ever-increasing degree.

Not a single liner has been moved in the docks.

Oxford University Labour Club has collected over £60 for strike relief.

Wimbledon Strikers' wives will hold a mass meeting in St. Andrew's Hall, on Thursday, at 2.30.

All is peaceful in the Aberdare Valley, where not a single case of disorder is reported by the police.

At Abertridwr and Senghennydd (South Wales), where all is quiet, concerts of a high standard are being given daily and largely attended by the miners.

Northampton boot trade is beginning to feel the effect of the stoppage. One factory closed on Monday, and others are expected to cease work during the week.

An open-air meeting in the middle-class area of the Queen's Park, Glasgow—where there is not even one trade union branch—resulted in a collection of £15 for the miners.

All the men arrested in connection with disturbances at Preston on Saturday proved to be non-strikers. The local Strike Committee is printing a daily sheet, and the *British Worker* is being eagerly read.

Transport workers throughout the whole country are a united army, and from the various areas wonderful enthusiasm prevails. Out of 40,000 passenger workers in the metropolitan area not one has returned to work.

Boilermakers and coppersmiths have joined the stoppage at Southampton.

The Co-operative Society at Crewe is making arrangements to benefit the strikers.

A large number of non-unionists at Sheffield have enrolled in their appropriate union and joined the strikers.

The proprietor of the Abbey Picture Palace, Merton, has placed that hall at the strikers' disposal for daily meetings free of charge.

"We are digging in deeper than ever" says the secretary of King's Lynn Local Trades Council, where concerts, dances and football matches are in full swing.

A motor-cyclist who travelled 400 miles, from Hull to London and back, for copies of the *British Worker*, reports "everything satisfactory all along the line."

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council, which has a Labour majority, is going to deal with the feeding of school children. Communal kitchens have been set up.

The B.B.C. statement that tramway-men at Bradford had gone back to work is denied by the Trades Council, the secretary of which body says that the situation is as "sound as a bell."

The position at Lincoln could not be better. Special constables recruited from the Labour Movement are on duty, and concerts and cricket matches are held daily. At Sleaford unmarried men have given their strike pay to married men with large families.

The wives of strikers at Swindon are holding social gatherings and assisting in various ways. Football, cricket and various other forms of recreation are arranged for the men who are out. Wills' tobacco factory and other firms have had to close down.

The General Council does NOT challenge the Constitution.

It is not seeking to substitute unconstitutional government.

Nor is it desirous of undermining our Parliamentary institutions.

The sole aim of the Council is to secure for the miners a decent standard of life.

The Council is engaged in an Industrial dispute.

In any settlement, the only issue to be decided will be an industrial issue, not political, not Constitutional.

There is no Constitutional crisis.

MOVING FINGER WRITES

Local Election Poll Gives Victory for Workers

CHISWICK'S CHOICE

An indication of the remarkable swing of public opinion in favour of the strikers is forthcoming from Chiswick, where, in a by-election on Monday for the Urban District Council, Mr. A. R. Brown, the Labour candidate, won, by 1,041 votes against 377 for a Government

CARS WANTED

Although those members of the Movement who have motor-cars have responded wonderfully to the appeal which was made at the beginning of the dispute, still more vehicles are required if the work of the General Council is not to be hampered. Offers of assistance should be made to the Transport Department, at T.U.C. Headquarters, 33, Eccleston-square, London, S.W.1.

supporter. The vacancy was caused by the death of Mr. T. A. King, who was also a supporter of the Government. A third candidate polled 133 votes.

The late Mr. King, when he won the seat, polled 994 against a Labour candidate's 522.

Monday's result, therefore, reveals a substantial movement of public opinion away from the Government and in favour of the workers.

The result is all the more significant in view of the fact that this area is not wholly, or even predominantly, of a working class character.

FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY

Mr. Vernon Hartshorn on Nature of Strike

Several meetings were addressed in the mining districts of Glamorgan yesterday by Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, who declared that there was not an atom of truth in the suggestion that the strike was revolutionary. It was a grand protest against the attempt to impose slavery on the miners.

BUILDING TRADES AND THE STRIKE

For the purpose of dealing expeditiously with matters as they arise, the General Council have asked the Executive of the Building Trades Federation to advise on the issuing of orders; dealing with interpretations and any other questions in connection with the Building Trade. This Advisory Committee will report daily to the General Council.

All queries should be addressed to them at Federal House, Cedars-road, Clapham, S.W.4. Telegrams: "Enefbeto Clapcom," London. Phones: Latchmere 5991/2.

A Triumph of Organisation

MISTAKE WOULD MEAN DEATH

Man Who Winds Miners Into the Pit

OFFERED 46/- A WEEK!

One of the most responsible jobs at a coal mine is that of the winding engineer who works the giant machinery that moves the cages of men and coal up and down the pit.

He must not make a mistake. The lives of men are at his mercy as the cages hang suspended in the pit. An error may mean swift death to 60 men. No wonder that "the winder" is usually a grave-faced man, slow of speech and deliberate of action.

And his wage? In Durham, for example, his present rate is 11s. 6d. a day. For a full week's work that means 63s. 3d. Not exactly a Cabinet Minister's salary!

The mineowners want to pay him 8s. 5d. a day, equal to 46s. 3d. a week, a reduction of 17s. a week.

33s. 9d. FOR JOINERS

What of other skilled craftsmen who work at the pit top? Here are some Durham figures showing the present wage of the owners' terms for a full week:

	Present	Owners'
	Wage.	Terms.
	s. d.	s. d.
Loco. Drivers	49 0	35 9
Loco. Firemen	42 2	30 8
Blacksmiths, Joiners, Plumbers, Masons, etc.	46 2	33 9
Blacklayers	42 4	30 11

The Coal Commission gave the wages of craftsmen in the building industry as 73s. 5d. to 73s. 10d. a week. No one can regard these figures as high, but they help to show the depths to which similar workers at the mines would be plunged if the mineowners had their way.

"SPIRIT WONDERFUL"

Transport Workers' Branches Cheer Reports

"All solid-spirit wonderful-conduct of the men leaves nothing to be desired," is the purport of messages which continue to pour into the headquarters of the Transport and General Workers' Union from branches throughout the country.

The reports afford remarkable instances of the underhand means which are being adopted by the authorities in the hope of defeating the strike.

Pickets in the South of England report that many lorries labelled "Food-stuffs" have been found to contain blacklegs or material other than food, while at Hull the introduction of black-leg labour has led to safety men coming out on strike.

The Secretary of the Liverpool Trades Council says that the position in that city is splendid.

WEATHER

Cold and showery generally. Moderate south-westerly winds. Thunder locally. Bright intervals.

BUSY SCENES AT STRIKE HEADQUARTERS

How the Day's Work is Dealt With Rapidly and Efficiently

One of the most wonderful features of the strike has been the rapid development of the central organisation.

Eccleston-square, where the offices of the T.U.C. are situated, has been transferred from a sleepy residential square into one of the busiest spots in the country.

Every few minutes despatch riders are arriving or departing, bringing and taking news, instructions and information to the different areas. Cars with deputations, officials, members of committees and volunteers, are also going to and fro in continual procession.

Everything is quiet and orderly, everyone doing his or her job without confusion or complaint.

Calm and Collected

All this organisation has been developed since the first actual day of the strike. Volunteers have poured in, offering their services, their cars, cycles, and motor-cycles.

Within the building the General Council, the supreme body of the control of all phases of the strike, conducts its business with the same methodical precision and coolness.

For convenience and administration, the General Council has been organised into various committees. Most important of these from the point of view of the strike is what is known as the "Strike Organisation Committee." Mr. Ernest Bevin and Mr. A. A. Purcell, M.P., are in charge of this committee, and they deal with all questions from the areas and with strike conduct policy.

The reports that are continually arriving from all parts of the country are first handled by an intelligence de-

partment, which prepares from them a bird's-eye view of the whole situation for the information of the full General Council.

Closely linked with Intelligence is the Publicity Department, which prepares from the reports summaries for the frequent "Bulletins" that are issued; also matter for use in the *BRITISH WORKER*, and for reference and propaganda purposes.

The transport section works in close conjunction with these two sections, and, in addition to handling the incoming and outgoing despatches and communications, is responsible for the transport of staff, officials, and others on strike business.

The hundreds of people who are continually arriving for advice, assistance and instruction, are sorted out by an Interviewing Committee. Often this committee is able to deal with the questions raised; if not, the visitors are sent to the appropriate committee or official.

Smooth Working

Last, but perhaps the most important, is the Negotiating Committee, presided over by the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Arthur Pugh. This committee deals with the questions of high policy that arise; its work is carried on in consultation with the Miners' Federation Executive and the full body of the General Council.

The complete and smooth running organisation is a wonderful tribute to the ability of members of the General Council, especially when it is remembered that they were organised for peace and not for war.

Strikers throughout the country may be confident that their affairs are in safe, sane, and capable hands.

700 MILES TRIP: "ALL QUIET"

American Correspondents' Impressions

TRIBUTES TO MEN

An American correspondent has sent to one of the leading newspapers in Chicago an account of a 700 miles trip he took at the weekend through England's chief industrial districts. He found all quiet.

Many owners of factories frankly admitted to the correspondent that they never believed the men would obey their unions to the extent they did.

"When the strike was ordered," stated the manager of the Wolseley Motor-car Factory, "all the men downed tools and walked out. Many who have been employed by us ever since we started had tears in their eyes. They shook hands, saying they hoped for the sake of everybody that the strike would soon be over, but they felt it was their duty to obey orders from headquarters and to help the miners to win their fight."

"We refused the offer of the police to guard our factory," stated the manager of the Randall shoe plant, "because we know our own men will see that no harm is done."

"Church attendance," says the correspondent, "in all industrial towns was greater than usual. The attitude of the Church of England is undoubtedly encouraging for the strikers."

Another American correspondent wrote:—"The pleasant winding roads of England are lined with attractive country houses and beautiful ancient manor houses in well-kept large gardens, which indicate the presence of gardeners, assistant gardeners, valets, grooms and butlers."

"Between these beautiful estates there are industrial towns with gloomy, poor, dirty-looking two-storey stone or brick houses sheltering thousands of poor but not unhappy looking workmen."

"They have all abandoned work and they seem determined to carry on. So far as I can gather from what I have seen up to now English industrial life is at a standstill."

BOOT-MAKERS' RALLY

Great Leicester Meeting on Thursday

A great rally will be held in Leicester on Thursday of all boot and shoe operatives.

A procession headed by brass bands will leave the centre of the city at 6 p.m., and march with banners to the De Montfort Hall.

The meeting will be addressed by Mr. T. F. Richards, general president of the union; Mr. J. H. Baum, and Mr. D. McCarthy (union organisers).

GET TO GRIPS

Congratulating the Trade Union Movement on its firm stand, the Cambridge University Labour Club urges that the Government should advance actively negotiations between the parties.

RIGHT TO STRIKE

K.C. Cannot Understand Sir John Simon's Reasoning

"The right to strike is now recognised by lawyers as part of our common, as well as statute, law, and is firmly embedded in our constitution." In these words Mr. Craigie Aitchison

Typists and other clerical workers can assist us by typing and duplicating contents of "British Worker" to secure widest possible publicity.

son, K.C., replies to Sir John Simon in the Edinburgh strike bulletin.

Declaring that this is a right irrespective of the number of strikers, Mr. Aitchison says he cannot follow the reasoning of Sir John Simon.

FOR THE MINERS

A collection of £32 was realised for the miners' fund at a Clapham Common demonstration

SPREADING THE NEWS

An Inspiring Motor Tour in the West Midlands

During a four days' motor tour over a large area of the West Midlands (writes a correspondent), I found everywhere an intense hunger for news. The spirit of the trade unionists was wonderful, their solidarity unbelievable; but they simply ached to know how things were going elsewhere.

I was one of a pair of speakers travelling from town to town to spread the news of the strike. No evangelist ever had warmer receptions.

Perhaps the most extraordinary incident was at Crewe, where we were met by a mile-long procession with bands and banners and the streets were lined with people six or eight deep. An immense audience filled the football ground completely.

A FULL NEST

Thousands of people took part in a demonstration on Norwich football ground. Mr. W. Smith, one of the speakers, jocularly referred to the gathering as a record for "The Nest," the nickname of the ground.

Real Truth Of Coal Negotiations

SKELETON SERVICE

The Body of Labour, of live flesh and blood,
Was driven too hard, and fell flat with a thud;
And when the State lacked the full power of its hand,
A Skeleton Service appeared in the land.
There was Skeleton Service of tramway and train,
A Skeleton Bus-Service rattled again;
The Bones of a system were seen here and there,
But the sinews and strength of the Body were where?
The body of men, for the Body of Man,
Stood firm while the Skeleton Services ran—
For the Body of Labour was asked to engage
Its sinews and strength at a Skeleton Wage.
And who that has fathomed the lean shifts which lurk
In the struggle to rear a man's body to work,
Can blame him for blunting the Capital Knife
That would pare him to Skeleton Service for life?

TOMFOOL.

WIRELESS AGAIN!

N.U.R. Branch Contradicts Food Ships Story

It was stated on the wireless on Sunday that six food ships had been discharged at Immingham Docks and that 14 others were waiting in the river to be discharged.
In contradiction of this rumour the local branch of the N.U.R. has wired to Unity House:—
"No ships are in dock and none are in the river. The only ships that have entered the dock since Monday are the s.s. Lab, with a cargo of iron ore, the s.s. Whitwood, which is waiting for coal at No. 3 hoist, and one vessel that has been at Immingham for two weeks awaiting repairs."

Transport and General Workers' Union

(Message from the Executive Council and Officers to Our Members.)

The might of Governments cannot defeat men who are in the right.

Remain calm and undaunted. Do not be provoked to disorder. Our passive resistance is inviolable.

We shall continue steadfast in our stand for justice and right.

Hold fast. We must see the miners through.

(Signed)

HARRY GOSLING
ERNEST BEVIN

MR. A. PUGH'S STATEMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

affiliated to Congress to take their decision upon the course to be adopted in supporting the miners to resist the demands made upon them.

The decision of the Conference held on Thursday, April 29, was one of supporting the miners and instructing the General Council to proceed with negotiations with a view to an amicable settlement, but subject to the condition that the threat of a lock-out must be removed so that negotiations could be carried on under proper conditions. It was under these instructions that the Negotiating Committee of the Council proceeded with its efforts on the Thursday evening, and continued during the following day.

It is significant, in view of the statement of Sir Douglas Hogg as to the Government's excuse for breaking off final negotiations, that the General Council Committee persisted in its efforts until nearly midnight on Friday, April 30, despite the fact that, while this was proceeding, scores of thousands of men throughout the coalfield had already been locked out. The Committee failed to induce the Government to get the notices withdrawn, or to depart from their attitude of demanding, as a preliminary condition to negotiations, that the miners must definitely agree to a wages reduction.

Despite the request that had been made by the miners in their earliest discussions with the Mineowners' Association that they should be informed of what was proposed in the form of reductions, it was not until the afternoon of Friday, April 30, when the lock-out was actually operating, that proposals were received through the Prime Minister, which involved a substantial all-round reduction of wages and an increase of hours to eight per shift.

REFUSAL TO WITHDRAW NOTICES

Our Conference of Trade Union Executives was kept waiting hour after hour during the whole of Friday. At midnight we had to report that, notwithstanding all our efforts, it had been found impossible to give effect to their resolution to get the lock-out notices withdrawn. Negotiations had completely broken down, and as the majority of the men had already been locked out, nothing remained but to give the fullest support to the miners in resisting the atrocious demands which had been made upon them under the pressure of the lock-out. The Conference on the following day decided on a course of definite action in support of the miners. At the same time the General Council intimated to the Prime Minister that, even at that stage, they were ready to make a further effort at negotiations.

The result was a meeting of our Committee with representatives of the Government on Saturday night, and in the early hours of Sunday morning the Government representatives submitted the following formula for our consideration:—

"The Prime Minister has satisfied himself as a result of the conversations he has had with the representatives of the Trades Union Congress that, if negotiations are continued (it being understood that the notices cease to be operative), the representatives of the Trades Union Congress are confident that a settlement can be reached on the lines of the Report within a fortnight."

The Trade Union representatives agreed to arrange to discuss the situation with their full body as well as with the Miners' Executive. Owing to the latter having left London to be present in their districts to advise their members in consequence of the lock-out having come into operation, not expecting anything to transpire that would require their presence during the Sunday, our Committee found that the Miners' Executive were not available, but immediately telegraphed to them to return to London.

SUNDAY NIGHT'S ULTIMATUM

Meanwhile, the discussions with the Government representatives were reported to the General Council, and consideration given to the formula referred to. This having been done, an intimation was sent to the Government that our Committee desired a further meeting to discuss the situation. The meeting took place on Sunday evening, and we intimated that while we could accept the formula in principle, there were certain of its terms which our General Council required should be further considered.

Arising from this many exchanges of opinion took place as to a suitable formula. As the miners' representatives were now present in the building we left the Government representatives so that we could consult the miners, and were actually making an arrangement when, without warning, we received the ultimatum of the Government that in consequence of what had transpired with the *Daily Mail* newspaper, and that, as certain of the Unions had advised their members with regard to a strike, negotiations were broken off.

I desire to make special reference to the statement by Sir Douglas Hogg, which reads as follows:—

"In the course of a two hours' discussion, the Trade Union leaders dictated what they stated to be the utmost they were prepared to submit to the miners. It was in these words:—

"We will urge the miners to authorise us to enter on a discussion with the understanding that they and we accept the Report as a basis of settlement, and we approach it with the knowledge that it may involve some reduction of wages." With this resolution in their pockets the Congress representatives went off to consult with the miners, who by this

CONTINUED IN NEXT COLUMN

PRINTERS STAND FIRM

What Natsopa Says About It

Members of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants (Natsopa) are remaining steadfast all over the country (writes Mr. George A. Isaacs, general secretary). Frantic efforts are being made to get some of them to return to work. Higher wages and a job for life are some of the inducements held out. Government protection is eagerly offered to them, but without avail.

One member only in London has ratted and gone to work.

Stories are circulated that our Clerical Section members are returning to work in large numbers. It is not true. Our Clerical Section is as loyal and determined as all other sections. Although the last organised they are in the fight with the same spirit as the rest.

Carry on, comrades! Wear your Natsopa Badge and be proud of it.

Continued from previous column

time had got back to town, and the Ministers on their side returned to report to the Cabinet."

The foregoing statement, I have no hesitation in saying, is a gross misrepresentation of the facts. While, as I have indicated, the matter was explored by the meeting, no such formula was ever dictated by the Trade Union representatives, nor assented to by them or in their possession.

The only formula was that written by the Government representatives, quoted above and handed to us in the early hours of Sunday morning. It was this which we proceeded to discuss with the miners, and upon which we were making progress towards an arrangement when the Government's ultimatum put a stop to the proceedings.

I repeat, and I defy contradiction, (1) that the breakdown of the negotiations was, in the first instance, due to the failure of the Government to obtain a withdrawal of the lock-out notices, and its insistence upon a prior agreement by the miners to accept a reduction in wages as a preliminary to giving effect to the terms of the Commission's Report by negotiations; (2) that the second attempt on the part of the General Council to get negotiations on foot was defeated by the action of the Government in closing the door to negotiations while we were actually discussing arrangements with the Miners' Executive—and this because of the action taken by the printers in regard to the *Daily Mail*, an action which was quite unknown to our representatives while we were in the Government building, and which was promptly repudiated as soon as the facts were brought to our notice.

I leave it to the public to decide whether, in the statement which appears in the Government publication, Sir Douglas Hogg has justified the title to his article "The Truth of the Coal Negotiations." ARTHUR PUGH.

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