

The Letter from Brixton Prison from Poplar Councillors (sent to all the school children in the Borough)



Brixton Prison
Sept. 25th, 1921

My dear Boys and Girls,

We have received your kind and most welcome letters and thank you all for so kindly thinking of us, we are all as pleased with your remembrance as with the remembrance of our best friends.

We are very glad you all understand why we are here, we have not done anything we are ashamed of, our action was against bad wicked laws and all good men and women should protest and refuse to obey laws which are unjust and bad.

John Hampden who your teachers have told you about refused to pay unjust taxes and commenced a revolution which took off the head of King Charles. George Washington and his friends would not pay taxes which they considered wrong and this resulted in the establishment of the great Republic in America.

Quakers and other Dissenters that is Christians who do not belong to the Church of England refused to pay rates in support of the Church and so the law asking them to do so was abolished.

We are in prison because our people in Poplar are poor and cannot pay the rates and taxes and we shall not do what the Judges told we must do until Poplar gets money from the rich to help the poor.

We want you to grow up strong active loving men and women we want you never to be contented while there is one single man or woman starving. Do not believe anybody who tells you that God made the rich and also made large numbers of people poor. God and Nature made men and women. It is the selfishness and greed of people that makes poverty.

When you leave school join a Trade Union, do not rush into the Army or Navy, none of you need to do so unless you like even if you are in the Band, the girls are not obliged to go to domestic service either they can choose other trades and occupations, though often service is best at the moment.

When you have joined your Trade Union go to the branch meetings, learn all you can about the Labour Movement, when you have done this you will soon understand that working people, whether they work in an office, a school, in a mine or on a railway, in a factory or on a ship, that all of them together create all the wealth of the world.

Labour is the only source of all the wealth whether it is labour by hand or brain, it is the workers who should enjoy leisure, pleasure, holidays and all the good things of life and as you grow up keeping steadily in your minds the fact that everybody rich or poor that gets something without themselves working, get it at the expense of those who do work. We hope all you boys and girls will live to see the day when there will be no rich, or poor paupers and no millionaires, because you and your fellow men and women will join together to work for each other and by doing so make possible the establishment of Christ's Kingdom on earth which is what you pray for when you say "Thy Kingdom Come" in your prayers night and morning. We have asked that this letter shall be read in each standard and all of you who are 10 years of age and over shall have a copy.

Here's our love and lots and lots of good wishes from yours truly,

S. March, Mayor of Poplar	J.A. Jones	A. Partridge	J.E. Oakes
Henry W. Sloman	T.E. Kelly	J. Russell	George Lansbury
W.H. Green	J.J. Heales	T.J. Goodway	John Scurr
R.J. Hopwood	Geo.J. Cressall	Wm. Farr	Joseph T. O'Callaghan
D.M. Adams	J.H. Banks	C. Petherick	J.J. Rugless
Edgar Lansbury	E.E. Williams	Minnie Lansbury	Susan Lawrence
A. Baker	B. Fleming	C.E. Sumner	Jennie MacKay
			Julia Scurr