

TOPICS OF THE DAY

THE BRITISH ELECTION: SCOTLAND'S "FORTY FIVE": ATOMIC BOMB PROBLEMS: IMPERIAL HOLLAND AND FRANCE.

AT INTERVALS IN their history the British people decide that the time is ripe for far-reaching changes in their established order, and pronounce their desire for these in unmistakable fashion. The election of 1832, which forced the reform of an archaic parliamentary system, was one such election, and a second was the election of 1906, which ended a long reign of Toryism and gave the Liberal party an overwhelming mandate for a programme of social reform. Now another long spell of Conservative ascendancy has been terminated by the astonishing political upheaval revealed in the voting at the general election held last July. But this time the mandate of the voters has been given to the Labor party, which is definitely committed to a Socialist programme and, since it has 392 regular supporters and can rely upon the cooperation of at least 20 more members of various political stripes in a House of Commons membership of 645, it is armed for the first time in its career with an effective majority to carry out its policies.

The disastrous debacle of the Conservative party was foreseen by very few political prophets. Indeed the common expectation was that the immense personal prestige of Mr. Winston Churchill, and the widespread admiration and gratitude cherished towards him by the mass of the British people for his matchless leadership during the war, would enable him to secure for the Conservatives a small working majority. That admiration and gratitude still survive in abundant measure, but Mr. Churchill must now realize that it was an ill day when he forgave the Conservative party for its scurvy treatment of himself during the pre-war years and assumed its leadership. In the period between the two wars, it had enjoyed a steady ascendancy, as Lloyd George was its prisoner from 1918 to 1923, and Ramsay Macdonald, himself a Tory in disguise, was a transient and embarrassed phantom during two brief spells of power as the Head of Labor Ministries which lacked majorities in the Commons.

But during these doleful years the British people had been involved in a more or less constant economic crisis, to the accompaniment of mass unemployment and the indefensible scandal

of "the distressed areas" for the treatment of whose problems only futile palliatives were applied. They had seen Conservative Ministries betray the dead of the First World War by sabotaging the League of Nations and collective security. They had witnessed these Ministries write some of the most disgraceful chapters in British history by engaging in the shameful business of trying to buy off the villainous dictators with the lives and property of other hapless people, Chinese, Ethiopians, Spanish Republicans and Czechoslovaks. They had been deceived by the false parade of the humiliating Pact of Munich as a harbinger of "peace in our time", and in the end they had been landed in their second blood-bath inside thirty years, with the added calamity of the devastation of London and many of their other cities by aerial bombardment. So they had a grim score of reckoning against the Tory party, and their determination to pay it off was intensified by the mounting evidence that the Churchill Ministry was aiding and abetting reactionary elements in Italy, Greece and other countries, and was subservient to vested interests in its domestic policies. Mr. Aneurin Bevin, perhaps the ablest of the younger leaders of the Labor party, summed up on the eve of the election the damning indictment against Toryism in a brilliant pamphlet entitled *Why Trust the Tories?* About 60% of the voters of Britain took his advice, and voted for non-Conservative candidates.

But, apart from the handicap of the Conservatives' recent record, the strategy of their campaign was grievously mishandled. The stunts, organized to dramatize Mr. Churchill as the savior of the nation, had a flavor unpalatable to a mass of voters, including many Conservatives. Then Mr. Churchill with his personal record of four defeats has never been a good vote-getter in elections, and in this contest he completely misread the prevalent psychology of the mass of his fellow-countrymen.

He and his lieutenants evaded or treated in cursory fashion domestic issues like housing, wages and the derelict coal-mining industry, in which millions of voters were deeply concerned, and devoted their energies to drawing awesome pictures of the terrible menace which Labor's proposals for departure from capitalist orthodoxy held for the traditional British way of life. What they did not realize or forgot was that for nearly six years the British people had been leading very unorthodox lives, and that men and women, who had faced Hitler's blitzkrieg with

unflinching fortitude, were in no mood to be scared by mere words from economic and social experiments, which at least offered some prospect of a better order of civilization than the one which had landed them in two bloodbaths.

It was clearly the conversion of a large element of middle-class voters to this way of thinking that gave the Labor party its huge majority. It had long commanded the allegiance of many of the intelligentsia of Britain, but other middle-class elements like shopkeepers, managing executives, professional men, engineers and clerks had fought shy of accepting Socialism as a respectable creed. However, this Second World War had evidently shaken their faith in the capitalist system, and they flocked in droves to the polls to vote for Labor candidates. Without a huge switch of middle-class votes Labor could never have captured traditional Tory seats like Winchester and the Kelvingrove division of Glasgow.

But the strategists of the Labor campaign made a skilful bid for such votes by securing as its candidates in many constituencies other types than trades union leaders. When men like Lieutenant-General Mason Macfarlane, D.S.O., the Hon. Kenneth Younger, heir to the great Scottish brewery fortune, Mr. R. T. Paget, late of His Majesty's diplomatic service, and well-known Oxford athletes like Mr. A. M. Crawley and Mr. J. P. Mallalieu were ready to run as Labor candidates, the party acquired the kind of reinforcement in personnel that it badly needed. Moreover, so many of this latter type of candidate were returned that they now outnumber by nearly two to one in the parliamentary membership of the Labor party the trades union element, whose natural conservatism has long operated as a brake upon Labor's policies and actions. The British voters also showed a desire for the restoration of the two-party system by showing little enthusiasm for the programme of the Liberal party whose two best leaders, Sir Archibald Sinclair and Sir William Beveridge, were both defeated, and turning their thumbs down upon the minor splinter parties.

Mr. Clement Attlee, who has taken over the office of Prime Minister from Mr. Churchill, cannot be described as an arresting personality like his predecessor. Through his origin in a prosperous middle-class family, and his education at a well-known English public school and Oxford University, he has a conventional background, and in his earlier years was a sound Tory until welfare work in the slums of East London aroused

his social conscience and made him a Socialist. If he had been a more forceful character, he would probably not have secured the leadership of the Labor party, or retained it long if he had won it. But his conciliatory temper, which enabled him to steer clear of the internal feuds of his party and make no personal enemies, made him a balancing force in its councils and brought him its leadership in 1931 when Ramsay Macdonald deserted it. His personal following in Britain is not large, but he has impressed the country as a shrewd politician, who combines a quiet strength of character with sound judgment and a sincere zeal for progressive reforms.

But the Cabinet which he constructed has not aroused much enthusiasm. For his Ministers he resorted in the main to older members of the Labor hierarchy, who had earned their right to high office by long service to Labor, and among the rank and file there was open dissatisfaction that more encouragement was not given to the wealth of ability among the younger members to prove its quality in office. There was some surprise when the Foreign Office was assigned to Mr. Ernest Bevin, whose practical experience in the field of international statecraft was negligible, and the endorsement which he gave in his initial speech on foreign affairs to many of the Churchill Ministry's policies evoked bitter criticism from the Labor back benches. He and Sir Stafford Cripps, now President of the Board of Trade, are probably the two ablest men in the Cabinet, and they are each in key position to mould its international and domestic policies. Few of the problems which these present are susceptible of easy solution, but the new Ministry is being given a fair field. The voters have given it a decisive mandate for Socialist measures like the public ownership of the Bank of England, the coal mining industry and the railways, and, if it does not proceed without undue delay to bring in the necessary legislation for these reforms, it can expect a widespread revolt among its younger supporters in Parliament.

The Conservative party has paid a very heavy penalty for its sins of omission and commission in the years between the wars, but a party which polls over 9 million votes still remains a formidable political organization. Defeat befell an abnormal number of its leaders of Cabinet rank, but Mr. Churchill, who is retaining its leadership, used the privilege of a retiring Prime Minister to bestow peerages in order to create vacancies in safe Tory seats, through which some of the ablest

of his defeated lieutenants, like Mr. Law and Mr. Macmillan, will return to the Commons and reinforce the somewhat feeble debating strength of the Opposition front bench. The natural rôle of the party would be to act as vigilant critic of the policies of the Labor Ministry and to exploit its mistakes, but there is already evidence of a sharp division of opinion inside its ranks about the tactics which should be employed.

Mr. Churchill and Mr. Assheton, the chairman of the party, are credited with favoring unqualified and persistent opposition to every policy and measure proposed by the Labor Ministry. But when they advocated this course at a meeting of the Conservative members of both Houses and defeated candidates, they encountered strenuous opposition from the group known as "The Tory Reformers", whose leaders are Mr. Quintin Hogg, Mr. Peter Thorneycroft and Lord Hinchinbroke. During the last Parliament this group of younger Tories had observed that their party had come to be regarded as the faithful guardian of cartels, monopolies and other vested interests, and under the influence of Disraeli's ideas about Tory democracy they had been battling for the adoption of a genuinely progressive programme. They now contend that the Conservative party will doom itself to years in the wilderness of opposition if it pursues a purely obstructive attitude and does not accept with grace reforms like the nationalization of the Bank of England and the coal mines, for which the voters have given a clear mandate to the Labor party. Since the "diehards" of the party, who are still in the majority, remain impervious to this argument, the young Tory insurgents go the length of threatening to secede into a separate tabernacle and take their own line. The secession of a group of its ablest young members would leave the Tory party in such a hopeless position that Mr. Churchill would probably decline to spend his remaining years in leading it.

THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE of Scots blood in Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada must have some forbear who participated in the last Jacobite rebellion in Britain, popularly known as the Forty-Five. Unsuccessful rebellions, such as it was, are rarely counted worthy of commemoration and, although its failure was an unmixed blessing for the people of Scotland, its flavor of tragic romance has made it a living memory for them through-

out the generations. So its two hundredth anniversary was recently celebrated in an impressive ceremony at Glenfinnan, where Prince Charles Edward raised his standard on August 19, 1745, and the story of its course to the fatal defeat at Culloden has been given fresh publicity in the press.

The time for the adventure was well chosen, as the Scots had many grievances against the English, the Hanoverian monarchy was unpopular everywhere, and the main body of the British regular army was in the Low Countries fighting the French. At one time it came within measurable distance of success and, if the Jacobite leaders had been more resolute and less quarrelsome, they might have penetrated to London and given the British Government a much greater fright than they did. But the cold truth is that the rebellion was doomed to failure before it really started as the result of the political skill of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, who was the ablest man produced by Scotland in the first half of the 18th century. A Whig, who was by temperament a liberal minded reformer and a passionate lover of his country, he was firmly convinced that the restoration of the Stuarts would be a sheer calamity for the whole island and particularly for Scotland, where the foundations of an order of internal peace and reasonable prosperity were still very insecure and might well be undermined by a prolonged civil war. Forbes, as Lord President of the Court of Session, had since 1737 been head of the judiciary of Scotland, and in this rôle was supposed to refrain from political activities.

But, once he realized that another Jacobite rebellion was imminent, he employed with indefatigable industry and persistence his political abilities and powerful influence to frustrate it. Trading on his intimacy with a number of the leading chiefs in the Highlands, he persuaded them that Prince Charlie's venture had no chance of success and that, when it failed, a terrible vengeance would be exacted upon all who had supported the rebellion. Manover he reinforced his arguments with explicit promises of rewards for loyalty to the Hanoverian monarchy in the shape of royal charters for lands, which would transform their recipients from trustees for their clansmen into rent-collecting lairds. So when Prince Charles landed, he was greatly dismayed to discover that numerous clans, upon whose support he had counted on the strength of promises received, were standing aloof from his cause and were actually joining militia corps which the Government organized. Lord Macdonald

of the Isles, Lord Seaforth, Macleod of Macleod, and Grant of Grant all remained neutral or ranged themselves on the Whig side, and the Grants, the Sutherlands and the Mackays followed the example thus set. As a result the Jacobites were not able to muster much more than half the fighting strength of the Highlands, and even some Highland leaders, who joined them, proved traitors in the end. So the Jacobite forces were always hopelessly outnumbered, and their valor in battle could not compensate for the inferiority of their armament.

The suppression of the rebellion left Duncan Forbes the most commanding figure in Scotland, and he used his influence to curb the vindictiveness of the Duke of Cumberland, who commanded the Hanoverian forces, against the rebels. But an excessive fondness for whiskey brought a premature end to his life two years later at the age of 62. However, his work endured as the pacification of the Highlands ushered in peace and security for the Scottish people, and in the next half century the country made remarkable progress towards a high standard of civilization. None of the descendants of Duncan Forbes are known to fame, but not a few of them exist in Western Canada. Through an illegitimate daughter he was the great-grandfather of Sir George Simpson, a famous governor of the Hudson's Bay Co., and through his temporary alliances with Indian and half-breed women this gay old fur trader has transmitted the blood of this illustrious Scot to numerous Canadian descendants.

THE FORMAL SURRENDER of Japan on September 1 marked the termination of the Second World War, after it had lasted six years almost to a day, and involved most of this world in the bloodiest carnage, the greatest material destruction and the severest travail for the human spirit that it has ever known. The complete defeat of the sinister trio of dictatorial states, which had conspired for the destruction of democratic freedom, brought universal joy to the free nations, whose courage and fortitude had prevailed over them. But, if it undoubtedly ended one epoch in the world's history, few intelligent people have any illusions that a new golden age has been ushered in. The war has left in its wake a terrible legacy of racial hate, physical ruin, economic chaos, social confusion, shattered moralities, and the welter of baffling problems created by the urgent need to rescue the broken peoples of Europe from famine or

disease, and to prevent thereby that unhappy continent from sinking into a state of hopeless decadence. This is already straining the resources of the victors. So on the threshold of a new era there are scant signs of the ebullient optimism about the future of mankind which was widespread at the end of the First World War, and which in the end proved so illusory. Moreover, our victory stands in the shadow and light of the atomic bomb, whose discovery not only blots out all existing conceptions of warfare and strategy, but may have general revolutionary consequences comparable to and even surpassing those of James Watt's discovery of the power of steam.

The doom of Japan was sealed when Russia entered the war against her as an active belligerent, but her unconditional surrender was hastened by the use of the atomic bomb for the instantaneous devastation of two great Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Its use was defended by Mr. Churchill and other statesmen on the ground that by shortening the war it saved more than a million other lives, but there was abundant evidence that the extinction without warning of several hundred thousand lives, including many innocent children, was regarded by a large body of opinion in the Allied countries as a form of mass murder, from which their consciences revolted. The volume of protests by individuals in the press of Anglo-Saxondom against the use of the atomic bomb was very impressive, and a responsible Swedish journal delivered the verdict that it placed the victorious Allies in the category of war criminals. Certainly there can be no denial that its employment entailed the abandonment of the last vestige of respect for the lives and rights of non-combatants.

The inventors of an instrument with powers of destruction unsurpassed in history have made a vast dent in the complacency of the victors, because it is quite plain that the monopoly of its secret, which the United States and Britain now share, cannot be indefinitely preserved. The processes and physical elements required for its successful construction are now known in rough outline to the scientists of every nation, and it is only a matter of time when Russia and even lesser powers will be able to duplicate the bomb or even improve upon the original type. Accordingly, if civilization is to survive, the possibility of a competition in armaments on the level of this terrible new weapon must be eliminated by some form of effective inter-

national control over it and other instruments of special destructiveness which may be invented later.

Professor A. V. Hill, the well-known British scientist, argues that in face of the atomic bomb the only hope for mankind lies in the creation of a brotherhood of scientific men with a common ethical standard, who must be given some decisive voice in the framing of international policy. But unfortunately the scientists of the world have not yet adopted any common ethical standard, and they will find it very hard to persuade the politicians to give them anything but the rôle of advisory counsellors in policy at the highest level. However, it is imperative that the politicians should concern themselves with this paramount problem and, since the United States alone possesses now the vastly expensive plant required for the manufacture of the bomb, President Truman and his administration have a very special responsibility in the matter. So consciousness of this fact has impelled him to initiate discussions with Britain and Canada, because they were associated in the discovery, about international cooperation for the control of atomic energy.

But the emergence of the bomb may well have far-reaching political consequences. As the writer pointed out in the previous issue of this REVIEW, the Charter of the United Nations which was drafted and adopted at San Francisco did little more than provide a groundwork for a system of collective security to take the place of the defunct League of Nations, and its fundamental weakness was thus accurately outlined in the *Atlantic Monthly* by Mr. Cord Meyer, Jr., an American naval officer, who was on the staff of the American delegation at San Francisco. He wrote:

I have described these provisions of the Charter because I want to make one point so clear that no one can miss it. The International Authority cannot rely upon its own power and authority for dealing with the most powerful nations of the world, because it has been given none. Behind the facade of what I believe to be genuinely good intentions, there remains the basic condition of anarchy implicit in the existence of absolutely independent nations with huge amounts of armed force at their disposal. The League must grow from League to Union, as the name "United" implies. It must grow and gain authority, first generally through the acquisition of Federal powers, and then specifically through a proper use of this power.

It has all along been plain that the practical value of the United Nations' organization would depend upon the sense of responsibility and restraint shown by the "Big Five" powers which dominate the Security Council and that, if they quarrelled over some major issue and split into hostile camps, the projected new structure of peace would soon share the fate of the League of Nations. These forebodings will now gain force from the deplorable failure of the Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers, which recently met in London to settle a number of pressing problems related to the peace settlement. Sharp divergences of opinion between the Russians on the one hand and the British and Americans on the other resulted in three weeks of wrangling, marked by some bitter recriminations and, when they could not be reconciled, the break-up of the Conference without any substantial achievements to its credit produced despondency all over the world. Each party to the quarrel lays the blame for the collapse upon the other and, while the stiffnecked obduracy of the Russians on certain issues must be assessed a considerable share of it, it would be unfair to lay the whole responsibility upon them. However, there seems to be in both camps a realization of the serious consequences of any permanent fissure between the victorious Allies, and there are indications that at an early date sincere efforts will be made to repair the damage done.

But the debacle at the London Conference, following closely upon the advent of the atomic bomb, has thrown into high relief the weakness of the United Nations' organization, and is stimulating among intelligent people all over the world a demand for immediate moves of a drastic nature to prevent the revival of international anarchy. So support is increasing for the idea that to avert this calamity some genuine world state must be brought into existence, and it is encouraging to find it receiving influential expression in the United States. Mr. Owen Roberts, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and 38 other prominent Americans have addressed an open letter to President Truman, asserting that only a world government can control the atomic bomb and calling upon him to move for its establishment. The signatories maintain that the United Nations are almost mathematically certain not to be strong enough "to prevent battles over atomic power or with atomic power", and the letter concludes thus:

The people are ready for a call to a true constitutional convention for a true world government. If they were not ready before, the atomic bomb has made them so.

A FRESH APPROACH for a settlement of the Indian deadlock, made by the Attlee Ministry with the cordial cooperation of Lord Wavell, who is proving himself a Viceroy of singularly liberal temper, has broken down through the stubborn intransigence of the leaders of the two chief Indian factions, of whom Ali Jinnah, the head of the Moslem League, is the chief sinner. But the door has not been closed for further negotiations, and it is a hopeful sign that the Congress party has decided to participate in the forthcoming elections, which according to the new proposals were to precede the creation of a Constituent Assembly for drafting a constitution for India. If the result of the elections sustains the plea of the Congress party that the Moslem League does not represent the views of the whole Moslem population in India, then the negotiations may be resumed in a more favorable atmosphere.

But the issue of European domination over Asiatic races is no longer confined to the relations of Britain with India and Burma. There is accumulating clear evidence that the now defeated warlords of Japan have left a permanent mark upon the Asiatic scene, and that east of Suez things can never be the same again. The slogan "Asia for the Asiatics" may have been coined by the Japanese to cloak their own sinister designs for ruling all Eastern Asia as a master race, but it made a profound appeal to millions of Asiatics who have for generations been colonial subjects of European powers, and the resentment thus fanned into activity is surviving the termination of Japan's rule. Hence it comes that the Dutch, when they seek to regain administrative control of the rich island of Java and their other colonies in the surrounding archipelago, are faced with a mass demand of the Indonesian people for complete independence. The French are confronted with a parallel revolt in Annam and their other possessions in Indo-China, and it is hard to imagine that the native inhabitants of Malaya will be content to see Britain restore the regime which collapsed so disastrously in 1941.

Even if Holland with a population of roughly $9\frac{1}{4}$ millions had not had her wealth diminished and her national economy seriously dislocated by the German occupation, it would have been quite beyond her resources to cope with a mass revolt of her Indonesian subjects, whose total number exceeds 53 millions, and the French, also greatly weakened by the war, are in exactly the same predicament in regard to their Asiatic colonies. These two countries could regain their old Imperialist

ascendancy in the East only through the help of Britain and the United States, and for different reasons their intervention, except for the protection of their own nationals, is unthinkable.

But even if it were practicable to compel this mass of Indonesian people to accept the restoration of European rule, it would constitute a flagrant violation of the terms of the Atlantic Charter. So in Southeastern Asia there must obviously be drastic readjustments to meet the quite intelligible aspirations of the natives for an effective voice in their own destinies. The extremists among them will press for complete independence, but their intelligent moderate leaders will see the dangers and disabilities of a complete divorcement from all European influence. Colonial administration of the European powers in this region had many flaws, but it had also a substantial credit balance. It has provided the native populations with the physical machinery of modern civilization, it has organized and supplied capital and equipment for the development of their rich resources, it has introduced the rule of law and order, it has laid the foundations of an educational system and curtailed the ravages of disease. Bereft of the administrative gifts, the powers of organization and the technical skills which Europeans can contribute, the Indonesians would soon be involved in immense difficulties and have their progress to better standards of living halted. Such masses of backward people still need a helping hand from the white races. But each Indonesian community now hates the old masters, whom the Japanese expelled or subdued, and will resist strenuously the resumption of their rule. Yet they might quite cheerfully accept some system of international trusteeship, under which the whole organization of the United Nations would undertake supervision of their fortunes and provide them with administrators and technicians. Heretofore the Imperialist powers have bitterly opposed any such plan, but the stern impact of events may soon force them to revise their views about its merits.

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