

TOPICS OF THE DAY

GERMANY IN DEFEAT: THE CANADIAN ELECTION: CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS: ADJUSTMENTS OF "RIGHT" AND "LEFT."

THE LONG AND BLOODY travail of the war in Europe is now at an end. Germany's puissant *Wehrmacht*, outfought, outmanoeuvred and starved for essential supplies through the destruction of German industries by the aerial bombardment of our air forces, has bowed to the inevitable and made unconditional surrender. Hitler, Himmler and other sinister chieftains of Nazism are dead, perishing in many cases by their own hands, and most of the rest of the evil gang with their stool pigeons in other countries are safely behind prison bars. The whole of Germany is under occupation by allied troops to whom different zones have been assigned and, since the German Government has dissolved and there is no immediate possibility of filling the vacuum which has been left with a satisfactory governing authority, the military leaders of the Allies have been entrusted with responsibility for the administration. But they are finding the problem of coping with the chaotic conditions now prevailing in the Reich as difficult as the actual waging of the war against the Nazis.

Never had a great nation experienced such wholesale and humiliating debacle as has now befallen Germany. A century and a half ago Mirabeau, the French statesman, declared that war was the national industry of Prussia, and after Prussia under the leadership of Bismarck and the Hohenzollerns had gathered all the Germans outside Austria into a compact unified state, war remained the national industry of Germany. For more than half a century now, the avowed aim of the militarist clique in Germany, which has always held the real power, has been to subjugate the whole world and impose Germanic Kultur upon it. This has been pursued with the relentless efficiency characteristic of the German race. The first armed aggression in the century for attainment of this objective was finally foiled after more than four years of grim warfare, but defeat so little cured the Germans of their arrogant lust for world domination that, after they had contrived an amazing restoration of their national strength during twenty years of an uneasy truce, they were ready to respond *en masse* to the misguided leadership

of the paranoiac Austrian corporal, Adolf Hitler, when he ordered them to make a second bid for the mastery of the world.

It has failed, after a bloody struggle marked by many vicissitudes, but the second suppression of Germany has once more strained to the limit the combined resources of all the free nations. It was their good fortune to have available in their hour of need three leaders of superlative quality in Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, each of whom combined great political skill with an aptitude for planning effective war effort of their nations and a gift for mobilizing their peoples behind them. There also emerged in time on the democratic side some military commanders of outstanding ability, such as Eisenhower, Montgomery, Alexander, MacArthur, and naval leaders of parallel ability like Cunningham and Nimitz. But all the admirable leadership which Providence vouchsafed to the cause of freedom might have availed nothing, if the plain folk of the free nations, feeling the terrible danger which confronted them, had not justified the claims made for the system of democracy by cooperating in the team-work required for the achievement of victory and enduring tremendous labors, burdens and sacrifices till it was won. Once more it has been demonstrated that war, with all its train of sorrow and destruction, has some compensating features, inasmuch as it brings forth a flowering of the qualities of heroism and self-sacrifice which the peaceful pursuits of money-making and industrial expansion can never produce.

This time the task of conquering the German war machine has been well and thoroughly done, and stern precautions will be taken to prevent its reconstruction. For years to come, the Germans will be a people under strict surveillance, regarded as pariahs by the rest of the world. They will have to find new leaders and apply their energies to the rehabilitation of their ruined national economy together with the rebuilding of their devastated cities. The revelations of sadistic cruelties practised in the prison camps of Germany have for the moment strengthened the hands of Lord Vansittart and other advocates of a Carthaginian peace for Germany. But a horde of embittered and poverty-stricken Germans, ruled in perpetuity by an allied army of occupation, would certainly prove a cancer in the heart of Europe and doom the western half of that unhappy continent to final decay. So policies must be devised which will visit

appropriate penalties for their misdeeds upon the German people, and prevent the resurgence of their military power, but which will also leave them with hopes of readmission to the comity of civilized nations, once they have given definite evidence that they have forsworn forever the doctrine, long cherished as a state philosophy by them, that "might is right", and have abandoned their fanatical belief in the superiority of the Teutonic race over all others and its heaven-appointed mission to rule the world.

MR. MACKENZIE KING has only to retain reasonable health for another eighteen months to wrest from the shade of Sir John Macdonald the distinction of having held the office of Prime Minister of Canada longer than any other occupant of it. But the mandate which his government secured in the general election held on June 11 was far from decisive, because the Liberal party secured through its official candidates less than a moiety of the 245 seats in the House of Commons. Even at that figure it is over-represented, since it polled only 39% of the total popular vote. But the government can rely with reasonable certainty upon the support of 8 Independent Liberals elected for seats in Quebec, whose only serious quarrel with Mr. King arose over what they regarded as his grave backslidings in the matter of military conscription. Messrs. Cardin, Pouliot, and their associates may constitute a somewhat turbulent foreign legion in the Liberal army, but they can be relied upon to go into action cheerfully against the Progressive-Conservatives and the C.C.F.

The gains of the Progressive-Conservatives were substantial only in Ontario, and even there they fell short of expectation. Mr. Bracken scored a personal triumph by winning a seat in Manitoba from a popular Liberal member, but the theory that his reputation on agricultural problems could hardly fail to rally the western agrarians to his banner proved completely illusory, for his party carried only five seats in the three prairie Provinces. It is now plain, however, that he committed a major error in not securing a seat in the House of Commons soon after he was chosen leader of his party, and demonstrating to the country his quality of parliamentarian. It did credit to his courage, and helped to revive standards of integrity in political

controversy, that he boldly raised the issue of the inadequacy of French-Canada's contribution in man-power to the national war effort, and pledged himself to send the balance of the "zombie" army to the war in the Pacific if he secured office. But this forthright pronouncement sealed the fate of his rather meagre contingent of candidates in Quebec, of whom only one carried a seat. Yet the campaign of the Progressive-Conservatives was not managed with conspicuous skill. In a number of constituencies candidates of inferior quality were allowed to secure nomination, and in others the emergence of veteran political warhorses conveyed the impression that the party had not moved with the times. It is also very doubtful if the speeches delivered by Premier Drew in Winnipeg and Vancouver on the eve of polling did the cause of his party any good. No community takes kindly to the invasion and exhortations of an outside politician who makes a pointed personal attack upon the good faith of one of its prominent citizens, and many votes in Manitoba are said to have been lost to the Progressive-Conservative party when its local organ, the *Winnipeg Tribune*, felt it necessary to repudiate Premier Drew's assault upon Mr. Victor Sifton, the President of the *Winnipeg Free Press*, on the basis of his own recollection of a private conversation whose accuracy Mr. Sifton denied.

The Progressive-Conservative poll was lowered in many constituencies by the decision of many business men of Conservative outlook to support the Liberal party. Reverses suffered by the C.C.F. in the provincial election in Ontario apparently had not diminished apprehension about its possible victory in the federal field, and a calculation was that the surest bulwark against this dread contingency would be the return of the Liberal party to power. Evidence that the great majority of the French-Canadians were ready to rally once more behind the Liberal party convinced these business men that here lay the best chance of supplying their great desideratum, a stable Ministry with a working majority, and that such a Ministry, if anchored firmly to Quebec, could be relied upon to shun rash radical courses. Indeed it is now quite plain that as long as the Progressive-Conservative party cannot tap with any success the great basic reservoir of Conservative sentiment which exists in French-Canada, it cannot hope to muster to its banner all the Conservative elements in the English-speaking provinces, and

is doomed to exclusion from office, unless some drastic realignment in our politics takes place. But it is equally plain that as long as the Liberal party draws the greater part of its fund of popular support from the same reservoir, it will perforce walk very slowly along reformist paths.

For the C.C.F. party the result of the federal election was a great disappointment. They repeated their triumph of the last provincial election in Saskatchewan by winning 18 out of the 21 seats in that province, and they made some gains in British Columbia, but elsewhere their candidates fared badly, and they were completely washed up in Eastern Canada, where they managed to retain only a solitary seat—in Cape Breton. They suffered undoubtedly from the inadequacy of their press support, and the poverty of their campaign chest, but in general their campaign was not conducted with skilful vigor, and their leaders' attitude towards the war in its early stages was a black mark against them, not easily removed. Their worst setback occurred in Ontario, and for it they have largely to thank Mr. Jolliffe, their provincial leader. His prestige had been growing steadily until in a foolish moment he suddenly decided to make common cause with Mr. Mitchell Hepburn and the *soi-disant* Communists, now disguised as Labor-Progressives, for the purpose of challenging the Drew Ministry's right to office. Thousands of voters, who had supported him in 1943, regarded this move as a piece of cynical opportunism which deserved punishment, and they could not be lured back into the C.C.F. during the federal campaign. Moreover, after charging in very extravagant language the Drew Ministry with maintaining a local Gestapo out of public funds, he was unable to produce at the moment convincing evidence to support the validity of his charges. Time, however, may be on his side, as the Royal Commission which is now investigating the charges made by Mr. Jolliffe has already turned the searchlight of publicity upon some very strange proceedings. Meanwhile, however, as the result of its failure to carry any seats in Ontario, the C.C.F. will remain a minor group in the federal House of Commons, but it can derive some comfort from the considerable evidence that it has retained the allegiance of a majority of the younger generation of all classes in the English-speaking provinces.

The Social Credit party held its own in its great stronghold of Alberta, but it failed to make many converts to its pet panacea

for the nation's financial and economic ills in any other province, and the chief effect of the intervention of Labor-Progressive candidates was to take votes away from C.C.F. nominees. Prophecies that the demagogic abilities of the redoubtable Mr. Camillien Houde, the Mayor of Montreal, would enable the *Bloc Populaire* to carry numerous seats in Quebec were falsified by its failure to win more than two, and its hopes of surviving as an effective party must now be dim. But, although the minor parties elected among them only some fifty members, a degree of political restlessness, not to be expected normally in times of economic prosperity such as Canada has been enjoying, is revealed by the tabulation of the popular vote which shows that roughly 37% of the voters of Canada were in this election outside the corrals of the two historic parties.

From the result of the election several beneficial results will flow. There will be a healthy reinvigoration of the House of Commons, which since the war began had degenerated into a rubber stamp for the decisions of the Liberal Government, and had often neglected to act as a vigilant guardian of fundamental national interests. The overwhelming ascendancy of the Liberal party has been terminated, and in the coming sessions the King Ministry will have to face the first formidable opposition which it has encountered since 1935. Its various sections are so far apart in their views and policies that there is no hope of their combination in an alliance which would offer the prospect of an alternative government, but among them they should contain enough parliamentary talent to hold the government to strict account for any wrongful policies or administrative errors. There will be no lack of troubles for the government in the post-war years, and it has made a long list of exuberant commitments which can be fulfilled only if it solves the problem of keeping our export trade at a high level and preventing a disastrous fall in the national income.

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APROMISING BEGINNING with the political reconstruction of this battered world was made at the Conference of the United Nations recently concluded at San Francisco. It would be superfluous to recapitulate the details of the International Charter which emerged from it, but despite a number of obvious flaws and demerits it provides the basis for a new organization

for world security to take the place of the defunct *League of Nations*. The preliminary plan formulated at the earlier Conference at Dumbarton Oaks was subjected at San Francisco to critical analysis in free debate, and the changes agreed upon represent a great improvement upon the original draft.

Under the leadership of Mr. H. V. Evatt, Australia's Minister for External Affairs, the middle powers, among which Canada was included, put up a strenuous fight to secure more effective representation on the Security Council and to diminish the somewhat arbitrary domination which the quintette of Powers, popularly known as "The Big Five", aspired to exercise over its decisions. They managed to extract from the "Big Five" certain valuable concessions, such as suspension of the veto of the Great Powers on the consideration of any dispute up to the point when it became necessary to contemplate action by force of arms. But the Russians, while conciliatory on most other points, remained adamant about the retention of the individual veto of each Great Power in regard to the armed enforcement of collective security. Apparently the British and American delegates were prepared to abandon the veto, but they would not run the risk of seeing the Russians contract out of the new organization as they threatened to do, if the veto was completely eliminated, and so they supported its preservation. The result is that while the provisions about enforcement provide a groundwork for collective security, their practical effectiveness will depend in a very large measure upon the sense of responsibility and restraint shown by the five permanent members of the Security Council. If they fall out over some vital issue and divide into hostile camps, then the projected new structure of peace will collapse even more rapidly than the League did.

One of the most valuable improvements wrought at San Francisco was a satisfactory widening of the powers of the Assembly which ought to become a great international forum for mankind. And not the least important feature of the new Charter is its provision for the establishment of a Social and Economic Council as one of the principal organs of the United Nations. The most potentially fruitful aspect of it is the clause which pledges all nations to work together to ensure higher standards of living everywhere, and provide jobs for all who want to work. To a Russian delegate belonged the credit of drafting

a "full employment" pledge clause which proved acceptable to the delegates who at an earlier stage on the Conference opposed its inclusion. If honest efforts are made to live up to this pledge, many of the social and economic evils which are the fundamental causes of wars should be alleviated if not removed. The Charter has been formally subscribed to by the representatives of 46 nations, and it will remain in suspended animation until it is examined and endorsed by their legislative bodies and ratified by their governments. Since a substantial number of the United Nations lack legally constituted parliaments and governments, some time must elapse before the new world organization can begin to operate with full authority.

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FIELD-MARSHAL SMUTS, who was one of the chief architects of the League of Nations, has pronounced the projected new world organization to be greatly superior to its predecessor, but it contains one very dangerous flaw in its perpetuation of the absolute sovereignty of the member states, whose prerogatives are being jealously safeguarded by their governments. Among these, four different types are represented, namely, (1) Democratic; (2) Communist; (3) Dictatorial and (4) Transitional regimes, whose final orientation will be determined by free elections. Steps should be taken to ensure the disappearance of the third category, and the fourth type will (after popular verdicts have been delivered) be ranged with one or other of the first two classes. It is the harmonious coexistence and the cordial cooperation of these two classes which is indispensable for the preservation of peace. The San Francisco Charter and the agencies established by it can be regarded only as potential instruments whose value and efficacy will depend upon the general peace settlement. If the five Great Powers, whose voice will be decisive in this settlement, can achieve a firm concordat in their policies for the solution of the world's political and economic problems, and on this basis can build a just and lasting peace, then and only then will the new world organization have a prospect of effectiveness.

Fortunately the outlook for such a concordat, which seemed very dark in the early summer, has materially brightened. There was for a time very grave danger of a clash of ideologies in connection with the problems involved in providing new

governments for the liberated countries. Conservative elements in Britain and the United States are obsessed with a dislike of Russia and her ways, and filled with apprehension about her designs and policies. So the British Foreign Office, with the backing of the State Department at Washington, instead of working out a common policy in agreement with the Russians and formulating some compromise between capitalism and socialism in countries where it is necessary, apparently set itself to build up in Western Europe a system of power which would serve as a counterpoise to the system which the Russians seemed bent upon creating in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. It was this absurd notion which was responsible for British armed forces being made available to place in power in Greece a clique of reactionary Rightist politicians who are treating their political opponents with cruel harshness, and for the extraordinary tenderness shown in Italy towards the discredited royal family, whose members had been cheerful accomplices of Mussolini. Such a policy was egregious folly, and fraught with grave peril for the ultimate interests of Britain, because it would have involved her in bitter odium with the Leftist elements in all the liberated countries, and would have impaired her prospects of recovering in them the export markets which are so essential for her economic salvation.

It was, however, always doomed to failure, and has already broken down completely in Italy. There the valiant rôle played by the partisan army of democratic patriots, in liberating the northern regions of Italy from the grip of the Nazis, made it impossible to deny their claim to strong representation in the government. Accordingly the feeble Ministry of Signor Bonomi has resigned, and its place has been taken by an administration headed by Signor Narri, a prominent Leftist leader. Italy is now under the control of a Ministry which will be responsible to the demands of the vast majority of the Italian people for drastic social and economic reforms, and for the elimination of the House of Savoy.

Greece may remain under Rightist control for some time, but in all the other liberated countries, east of a line drawn from Trieste to Danzig, Leftist forces provide the ruling governments. The accusation is being made that Russian power has been exercised ruthlessly to assure their dominance in countries like Roumania and Bulgaria, and that oppressive

measures are being practised against people of conservative views. But, on the whole, the Russians have shown a disposition to pursue reasonable policies, and take cognisance of the desires of their allies. Undoubtedly it was their influence which induced Marshal Tito, who heads the government of Jugoslavia, to withdraw from a rash adventure which, if persevered in, would certainly have involved him in hostilities with the allied troops stationed on the northeastern frontier of Italy. Again the government, which was constituted in Austria under Russian sponsorship, consists of six Social Democrats, three Communists, three Christian Socialists and several non-political members.

J. A. S.