

Political Situation Menacing

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not Stanley Baldwin has been more fortunate and whoever now comes to Downing Street will be in a worse situation than all three of his immediate predecessors.

What Derby Would Face

Suppose that Lord Derby takes the reins of power. He must at once seek Liberal support. In practice he must either win Asquith or Lloyd George. But if he seeks to make a bargain with Asquith then it is far from unlikely that Lloyd George will soon lead an attack upon the foreign policy of Derby, which may be friendly to France and in this he will be supported by a similar Labor offensive. If, by contrast, Derby, in close terms with Lloyd George, will divide his own party perhaps he will ally itself.

But if Poincare, having resolved upon a course of action which might provoke British protest, sees the British Ministry helplessly divided, incapable of making up its own mind, he is hardly likely to hesitate to go along the pathway outlined. Actually you have the foreign policy of the British Empire paralyzed by the most personal and unwholesome considerations, imaginable. Whoever is Prime Minister will represent us to his own party a political organization in the minority in the country and in the House of Commons and therefore will continue only on sufferance.

Lloyd George has now a new opportunity to make his long cherished experiment, the creation of a central party, drawing its strength from the Liberal Tories and the Tory Liberals. His idea would be to create by fusion of a majority of Tory and Liberal parties a new party which would be the ultimate opponent of Labor. He would destroy both the Tory and the Liberal parties and create a new party which would insure him a long lease of power. But it is hard to imagine that either Tories or Liberals would consent to such a transformation at the present moment. On the contrary I believe that enough Tories and enough Liberals would prefer Labor to Lloyd George to prevent such a development now.

Distrust of Lloyd George

In the end it is hard to see how such a combination of the Tories and the Liberals in a new conservative party, conservative by contrast to Labor, can be prevented. It would probably come much more promptly now, if it did not entail the return of Lloyd George to control of what would be at the outset a coalition, even if eventually it led to a fusion. One factor in the British situation which must not be underestimated is the tremendous distrust and dislike of Lloyd George common to the Labor and Tory parties and shared by at least half of the Liberals. Labor will not take him on any terms. Viscount Younger and his majority of De-Hard Tories are equally reserved against any Lloyd George solution and the Asquith Liberals only made peace with George in the hope of regaining a position which was not reconquered in the last election.

How can a great nation, in all its traditions, institutions and political experience habituated to a two party system of government adapt itself to a three party system? Is a three party system in any sense viable while the three parties represent doctrines which are mutually exclusive? There you have the fundamental problem in Britain today. But, by contrast, chaos is inconceivable, paralysis cannot endure without fatal consequences. Thus you have the amazing paradox that England never in her long history so needed authoritative leadership and effective and continued party control and never seemed so utterly condemned to incoherence and chaos.

It is essential to perceive, too, that this British situation is by no means unique. Italy has a dictator precisely because parliamentary government failed to function and the nation despairing of legal dictatorship, Spain has done the same. Germany has moved with unmistakable regularity toward a similar situation. The collapse of the Czarist Government was in no small degree due to the fact that it found itself incapable of directing the Russian nation at war. Only France, of all the European nations, has been able to adapt its institutions to the present world crisis and proceed without a violent break with its past.

Concern for America

Now there is no more interesting problem in the world today, certainly none of more immediate and eventual concern for Americans than that supplied by Great Britain. The fashion in which it meets and surmounts its present problems will have enormous meaning for every country and for ours perhaps first of all. Britain gave the world its present form of representative government, which despite many modifications has been adopted over most of the civilized world. But that system was founded, as I have said before, upon the two party system and now the two party system has broken down.

As a consequence of the present crisis, will Britain turn to that continental variation expressed in government by blocs, by the fusion of

half a dozen groups, differing in detail but united on most of the major issues, such as a bloc supplies Poincare with his enormous majorities in the Chamber at the present moment? Will it less happily follow the German example, where there are many parties but these parties are so divided by questions of major importance, that no strong ministry can emerge and no Chancellor can hold office beyond a few brief weeks?

It may be that we are not destined to witness an intermediate stage. Lord Derby, for example, might hold office for a time, supported by the larger part of the Tories and a certain fraction of the Liberals. Under cover of this compromise there might slowly come about a fusion between Liberals and Tories, the creation of a new party on the ruins of the Tories and the Liberals. But the trouble is that Derby is not of the stature to accomplish this task and the single man who might, namely Lloyd George, is personally repugnant to a majority of the Tories and Liberals who might conceivably share in such an amalgamation.

Dictatorship Inconceivable

That Great Britain will have a dictator is unthinkable; in practice it has had one in Lloyd George and the experience has been disastrous. That there will be any sudden or violent solution of the present crisis is equally unlikely in view of the traditional deliberateness of the British mind and method. The supreme political gift of the race is an ability to advance not by rushes but by compromise and to avoid anarchy when no complete solution is discoverable.

But the one disturbing fact, which must be considered, is the present posture of British affairs. The country needs a strong policy at home and abroad. Its domestic and its foreign problems are not only tremendous but the need at least for some partial adjustment is clamant. If, for example, the present Franco-German agreement in the Ruhr actually comes into operation, England is going to suffer an enormous decline in its coal trade and not impossibly in its markets at home flooded with the cheap products of German industry and perhaps of France as well.

This would mean a new expansion in the intolerable evil of unemployment and a fresh increase of the already well nigh insupportable burden of taxation to sustain the unemployed. It would then mean an acceleration and a swift and very considerable expansion of domestic ill. A government, necessarily weak, resting on insecure foundations and lacking in all authority, would be called upon to face conditions which would call for the exercise alike of great capacity and unrestricted authority.

All things considered it is hard to see how the recent election can be regarded as anything but a supreme calamity for the British people. It was unnecessary. Instead of settling anything it replaced comparative order with political incoherence

which cannot be exaggerated and it decided nothing, save the very slight minor question of protection, which was at best a wholly forced and unreal issue.

And, as I have said, if, as many signs in Washington now suggest, our own Congress and our own administration are about to face something of the same blue problem with some of the same circumstances, British politics for a long time to come will have for the United States a very real and enduring interest.

TEXAS LOOKS FORWARD TO WINTER POLO-PLAYING

SAN ANTONIO, Texas, December 15.—Polo teams from four colleges and a civilian team will make the field of the annual winter polo tournament, starting here December 23 and continuing throughout the Christmas holidays. It is the first time the three branches will compete as a group, the various classes heretofore holding individual tournaments.

Civilian teams from Detroit, St. Louis, Dallas, Kansas City and Des Moines are expected, with the best of the cavalry polo teams along the Mexican border will battle with the civilian and the seven army teams which are located in San Antonio.

The college teams are University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, New Mexico Military Institute, Roswell, N. W.; University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, and Texas A. & M. College Station, Texas.

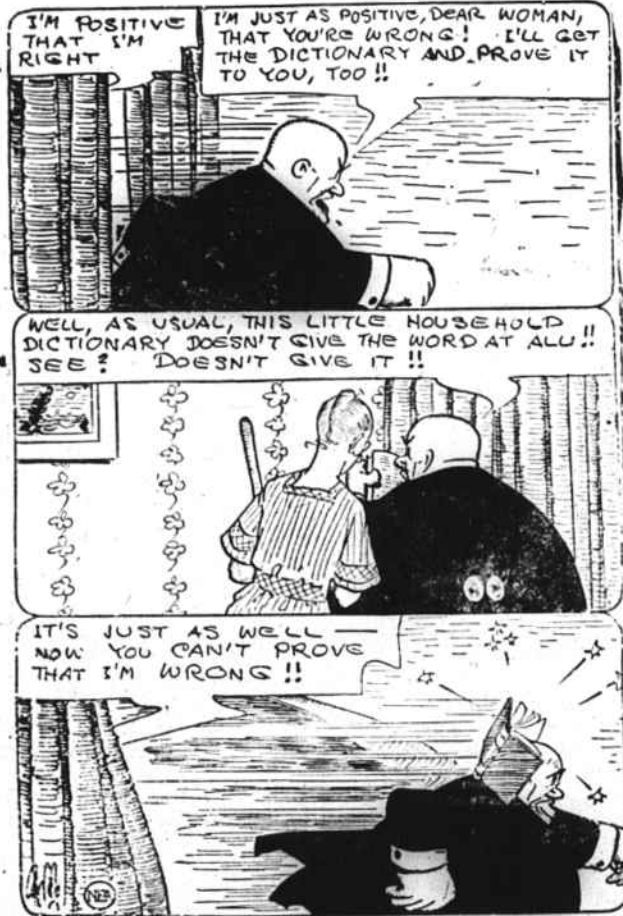
It is planned to have the winner of the college event here meet the champion of the Eastern inter-collegiate tournament at a subsequent event to be staged in San Antonio in the early spring.

Providence township is the location of some of the most interesting farms in the County. Here one may find a number of progressive farmers who are getting excellent results from their crops, their stock and their orchards.

Mrs. Norman Whitehurst has returned from Norfolk where she has been for a short stay.

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