

THE BRITISH ELECTION

June 21, 1945

Tonight it looks like Labor and a good thing it will be for the cause of free enterprise. The problems are so large that it is right that Labor, which has been nipping at the heels of private enterprise in England for the last twenty-five years, should be faced with the responsibility of making good on its promises.

D--- maintains that free enterprise is the losing cause. Capitalism is on the way out --- although many Englishmen feel that this is not applicable to England with its great democratic tradition and dislike of interference with the individual.

I should think that they might be right in prosperous times, but when times go bad, as they must inevitably, it will be then that controls will be clamped on -and then the only question will be the extent to which
they are tightened.

Socialism is inefficient; I will never believe differently, but you can feed people in a socialistic state, and that may be what will insure its eventual success.

Mr. Poosevelt has contributed greatly to the end of Capitalism in our own country, although he would probably argue the point at some length. He has done this, not through the laws which he sponsored or were passed during his Presidency, but rather through the emphasis he put on rights rather than responsibilities - through promises like, for example, his glib and completely impossible campaign promise of 1944 of 60,000,000 jobs.

General Eisenhower has taken a great hold on the bife of all the British people. A typical story they tell: At the fall of Tunis in Africa back in 1943, a parade was held of all the forces that had brought the African campaign to a successful conclusion.

As the orack Eighth Army filed past, the Desert Rats, the Highland Division, the South Africans — all experiences and excellent troops — Eisenhower, as the supreme Commanding Officer, took the salute. He was heard to say after the Eighth had marched past, "To think that I, a boy from Abilene, Kansas, am the Commander of troops like those;" He never lost that humble way and therefore easily won the hearts of those with whom he worked.

Montgomery, on the other hand, while holding a unique position himself, won it the other way. Shortly before he went to take over the Eighth Army in the desert, Montgomery was heard to say, "A military career is a hard one - you win a battle and you are a hero - you lose one and you are disgraced."

The man with whom he talked said, "Cheer up, General, you should do well - you have good troops and fine equipment," "But," said Montgomery with some surprise, "I wasn't talking about myself, I was thinking of Rommell."

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I had dinner with William Douglas-Home, former Captain in the British army, third son of Earl of Home, cashiered and sentenced to a year in jail for refusal to fire on at LeHarve.

He is quite confident that his day will come after his disgrace has passed, and he quotes bord Beaverbrook to the effect that some day he will be Prime Minister to England. Like Disraeli he is extremely confident.

He feels that by insisting on the dootrine of "Unconditional Surrender" instead of allowing Germany and Russia both to remain of equal strength, we made it possible for Russia to obtain that very dominance that we fought Germany to prevent her having. He feels that we had a great opportunity for a balance of power policy.

For my own part, I think that only time can tell whether he was right, but I doubt that William Home will ever meet much success because people distrust those who go against convention. And furth ermore, prowess in war is still deeply respected. The day of the consciencious objector is not yet at hand.

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I attended a political rally this evening at which Professor Harold Laski, Chairman of the Executive Council of the Labor Party and erstwhile Professor at the London School of Economics, spoke. He spoke with great venom and bitterness, and at the conclusion when asked if it were true that he wrote a letter to Mr. Attlee requesting him to resign as head of the Labor Party, he replied with asperity that it was "none of their business."

Odd this strain that runs through these radicals of the beft. It is that spirit which builds dictatorships as has been shown in Russia. I wonder whether a dictatorship of the beft could ever get control in England, a country with such a great democratic tradition. The next few years will answer that question.

These Leftists are filled with bitterness, and I am not sure how deeply the tradition of tolerance in England is ingrained in these bitter and discontented spirits. I think that unquestionably, from my talk with Laski, that he and others like him smart not so much from the economic inequality but from the social.

In speaking of Boston, he said, "Boston is a state of mind -- and as a Jew, he could understand what it is to be an Irishman in Boston." That last remark reveals the fundamental, motivating force of Mr. Laski's life -- a powerful spirit doomed to an inferior position because of his race -- a position that all his economic and intellectual superiority cannot raise him out of.



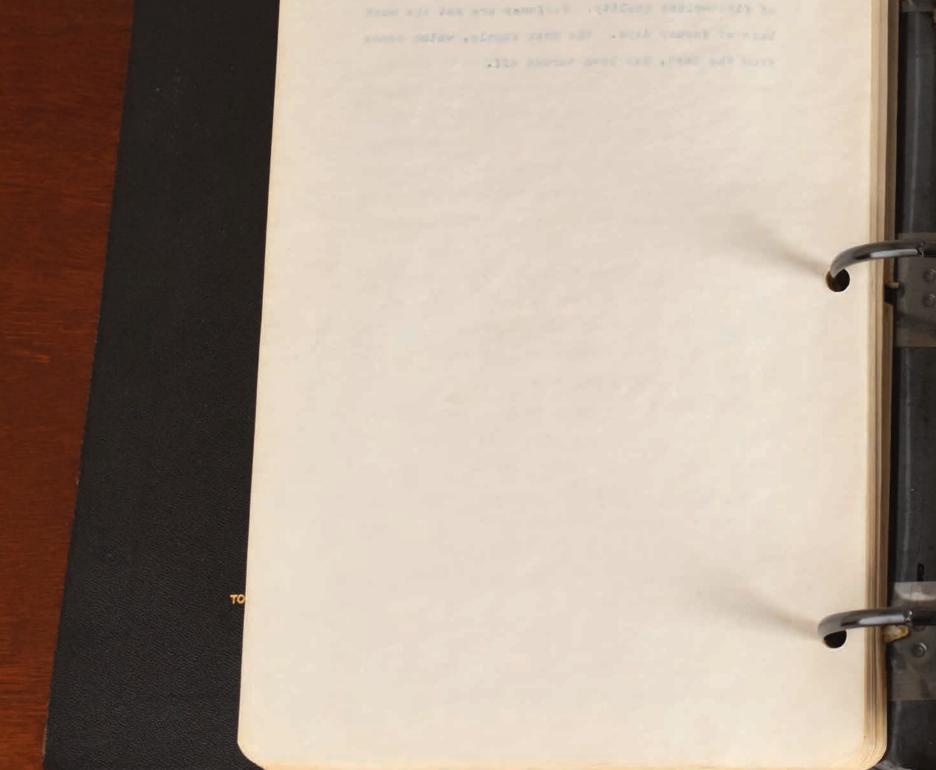
Impressions of Berlin Ruins ----The devastation is complete. Unter der Linden and the streets are relatively olear, but there is not a single building which is not gutted. On some of the streets the stench -- sweet and sickish from dead bodies -- is overwhelming. The people all have completely colorless faces -- a yellow tinge with pale tan lips. They are all carrying bundles. Where they are going, no one seems to know. I wonder whether they do. They sleep in cellars. The women will do anything for food. One or two of the women wore lipstick, but most seem to be trying to make themselves as unobtrusive as possible to escape the notice of the Russians. The Russians were short, stocky, and dour looking. Their features were heavy and their uniforms dirty, Hitler's Reich Chancellery was a shell. The walls were chipped and scarred by bullets, showing the terrific fight which took place at the time of its fall. Hitler's air-raid shelter was about 120 feet down into the ground - well furnished but completely devastated. The room where Hitler was supposed to have met his death showed scorched walls and traces of fire. There is no complete evidence, however, that the body that was found was Hitler's body. The Russians doubt that he is dead.

Here, as in all the rest of Germany, the Army discipline was perfect - a far cry from the laxity of Paris. Outside of the President's house were the plain-clothes men of the American Scoret Service. They looked big and tough and equally as unsmiling as the Russians.

The Secretary talked to the President for a few minutes, and then we drove to a house on the Kleine Wann See -- a beautifully furnished house on a wonderful location along a beautiful lake. It was untouched by bombs, but during the evening as we drove along the lake in a speed boat, many of the houses in this residential section were badly hit.

Notes:

The Russian Army in Berlin now is the second Russian Army to be in occupation. The first army, which was the fighting army, had been withdrawn by the time we arrived. The Russians gave the first army a 72-hour pass after they had taken the city, and raping and locting was general. What they didn't take, they destroyed. When that army had been withdrawn, the second Russian Army was given the same leave and the same privileges, but since that time the discipline has been better. The Russians have been taking all the able-bodied men and women and shipping them away. Prisoners that we released are taken up and sent back to Russia.



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