

World Socialism

BRITISH LABOR AT THE POLLS

By HERBERT ZAM

As the election campaign in England develops, more and more of the members and followers of the Labor Party are coming to the realization that the sanctions policy was a terrific blunder. The international situation is the burning issue of the election, and as a result of the sanctions policy, the Labor Party finds itself in agreement with the National Government on all but secondary questions. And the leaders of the Labor Party are finding that it is impossible to campaign to turn out a government when all they can promise is to carry out the very same policies if they are returned to power. If the present policy is to be carried out, it can surely be done better by those who have been doing so than by untried people! The present situation has been pictured in a humorous vein by a cartoon in **PLEBS**, the organ of the National Council of Labor Colleges. It shows Mussolini gazing at a united front of Tory, Labor, Church and Communist and remarking, "I started out to make a totalitarian state in Italy, but it seems I made one in England."

The first retreat from the policy as adopted by the Trade Union and Labor Party Congresses is indicated by resolutions now being adopted in various cities by the local trade union and party organizations. These resolutions in general repudiate the idea of military sanctions. Readers of the **CALL** will remember that the policy adopted at the Labor Party and Trade Union Congresses included military sanctions and Walter Citrine then insisted that financial, economic and military sanctions were inseparable. While there is no doubt that logic is on the side of Citrine, the present resolutions must be regarded more as an effort to abandon a bad course, than as themselves a correct course.

No Military Sanctions

Typical of the new policy is the resolution adopted by the Edinburgh Trades and Labor Council, which generally sets the tone for the Scottish Labor movement. It reads:

"That this Council pledges its support in all measures **SHORT OF WAR** necessary to prevent aggression and restore international peace. It calls upon the Government to declare at once its clear and unambiguous support for the immediate imposition collectively of an economic and financial embargo, and to require from the other Governments of the world a definite answer as to their respective countries' co-operation in such matters. The Council further calls upon the people of Edinburgh to refuse to take part in any action or proceeding which can assist the aggressor or further the cause of war."

It can readily be seen that this resolution contains all the errors of the general policy of sanctions, and can therefore not possibly be the policy for the labor movement. But it sees the danger of pledging to support all measures of the government, including war, as was done previously. And now we come to an amazing part of the story. An amendment was introduced to delete the words "**SHORT OF WAR**" from the resolution, and this amendment was supported by the Communists. The **Daily Worker**, which had previously taken us to task for insisting that sanctions logically lead to war, will have a difficult time of it trying to explain this position by the British Communists.

Another amazing incident occurred in the same city. On the eve of the meeting of the Council,

an effort was made to whip up pro-war sentiment and stampede the Council into adopting a pro-war resolution. A big "united front" demonstration was held for this purpose and the speakers were: Mr. Guy, the Tory candidate for Central Edinburgh, the Moderator of the Kirk of Scotland, and Harry Pollitt of the Communist Party!

Will Not Change Policy

It is very unlikely, however, that this last-minute effort to undo the great damage which has already been done by the sanctions policy will bring any results. In the first place, these efforts are purely local. The national leadership of both the Labor Party and the Trade Union Congress still firmly adhere to the Citrine policy. In the second place, the situation has advanced too far for any retreat to be effective at present. The National Tory Government has played its cards very cleverly, in contrast to the criminal bungling of the Labor Party, and the moment it had the Labor Party safely trapped on the sanctions policy, the general election, not due for another year, was called. Having deprived the Labor Party of what could have been its real weapon, the imperialist policy of the Tory government, that government could safely proceed to place itself in power for five more years.

It could even ask for the expenditure of a billion dollars for building up the navy without fear that the Labor Party would be able to utilize it as an effective issue, for the demand for increased armaments follows logically from the policy of sanctions. Having disarmed the Labor Party, the Tory government can now proceed to dicker with Mussolini, and that this is what it has in mind is indicated by the setting of November 18 as the date for the sanctions to become effective; that is, not until after the general election will England even make an effort to apply sanctions—and after the elections, it may come to an agreement with Mussolini.

Will Suffer Defeat

All this means that the Labor Party will suffer a severe defeat in the coming election. It will undoubtedly have more seats than it has at present, many more seats in fact. But the overwhelming swing to the Labor Party, which had been indicated by all the by-elections of the past two years, has not only been halted, but actually reversed. The Tory Government will have a smaller, more easily handled majority, but a safe one, while Labor will remain "His Majesty's Opposition." The municipal elections have already shown the trend of events.

If the British workers learn from this defeat, however, it will have been well worth while. And not only the British workers, but the workers throughout the world must take warning against trying to beat imperialism and militarism at their own game.

1,500,000 IN CCC

WASHINGTON—One and a half million young men have been enrolled in Civilian Conservation Corps camps and subjected to the CCC military atmosphere since April, 1933, when the projects started, according to figures announced by officials here this week.