

Revival Of British Liberals Watched With Interest

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LONDON—The drastic political change in favor of Labor, started at the time of the Suez crisis, has been halted. This is the summing up of opinion on the results of the by-elections held in British constituencies. The by-elections have brought about a change in the party fortunes. The three Conservative candidates remained Conservative, and only one of them was there with a substantial decrease in the number of votes. The two seats remained Labor, with a substantial decrease in its majority in one case, and an increase in the other.

Analysis of the election figures, however, indicate that the Socialists received a definite setback in the five elections. The Liberal revival continues, but Liberal candidates, in the three elections which they contested, won more votes away from the Socialists than from the Conservatives.

SMALL VOTE

The Conservatives fared worst in the suburban London constituency of Ealing. Their majority was reduced by 6,159. Labor made a gain of some 2,000 votes while the Liberal candidate improved his position by 1,800. But it is significant that there were 9,000 more votes cast than in the 1955 general election, which would account for the drop in the Conservative vote.

In the Wigan by-election in Lancashire, the Labor candidate was successful, retaining the seat by a majority of 17,167. In the 1955 election, the labor majority was 14,872. In this highly industrial riding, the third candidate was a Communist. He polled only 1,000 votes out of a total of 38,635. In the 1955 general election, the same Communist candidate received 1567 votes.

In St. Helen's, another Lancashire seat, the labor candidate won by a majority of 11,994 in a tight two-party fight, but his majority was 3,889 less than that secured in the 1955 general election by Sir Hartley Shawcross, former Labor attorney-general. In this election, Labor secured 9,900 votes fewer than in 1955, while the Conservative vote dropped by 5,400. This result gave the Conservatives some mild cause for jubilation.

The election in Weston-Super-Mare was also very satisfactory to the Conservatives. They won 5,976 votes, a drop of only 1,000 over 1955. In the election, however, there were two candidates. This time the Liberal entered the field and got 10,588 votes, only 700 below the Laborite. The Labor vote dropped by 6,000.

In Argyll, a Scottish rural constituency, the Socialists received a worst setback. Conservative candidate was elected by a majority of 5,166, with 12,541 votes. The Liberal candidate came second with 7,375 and the Labor man in last place with 6,884. In the 1955 election it was a straight contest between the Conservatives

and Labor, with a 10,000 Conservative majority.

ARE CONFIDENT

On the face of it, there does not seem to be too much doubt that the strong wave of Socialism has subsided and the Conservatives are creeping back into popular favor. The election results have already caused a great resurgence of spirit in the ranks of the Conservative party. They are now confident that with continued recovery of Britain economically, the party fortunes will continue to rise.

The Socialists, on the other hand, are suffering from drastic divisions of opinion among their leaders. Gaitskell is the subject of attacks from within his own party. Party policies are being challenged by leading Labor members and officials. This is not conducive to continued success at the polls.

The Liberal revival is being closely watched. While in these elections the Liberals did not secure the high percentage of votes noted in the recent Torrington and Rochdale by-election, they are still gaining support wherever they have candidates in the field.

Perhaps it was because of this Lord Hailsham, at a rally of Young Conservatives held after the election results were known, directed most of the fire of his invective at the Liberal party rather than the Socialists. He described the Liberal platform as "that politically illiterate dog's breakfast of ill-assorted, inconsistent, ill-digested, unoriginal ideas emitted by a little group of people."

He summed up his attack on the Labor party by saying, "It is our business to defeat this grotesque alliance of obscurantism and gloom and to restore belief in the validity of our way of life, and in the prospects, future and mission of our country. We have had enough of defence, withdrawal, concession and defeat."

It is his hope, and the hope of all Conservatives, that given anything like a decent break in domestic and international affairs in the next few months, they will again be on the march.

Former U. Church Missionary Dies

TORONTO (CP)—E. Gertrude Tweedie, a retired United Church of Canada missionary worker, died in hospital Wednesday.

A native of New Brunswick, Miss Tweedie went to Japan in 1903 and pioneered evangelistic work in several major cities.

Retired in 1942, she returned to Japan for a five-month visit in 1957 at the invitation of Japanese friends. Surviving are three sisters, Miss Jennie Tweedie and Mrs. Charles Harvey of Dover-Foxcroft, Me., and Mrs. J. A. Freeman, Charley, Mass.



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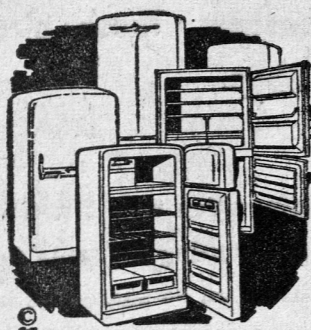
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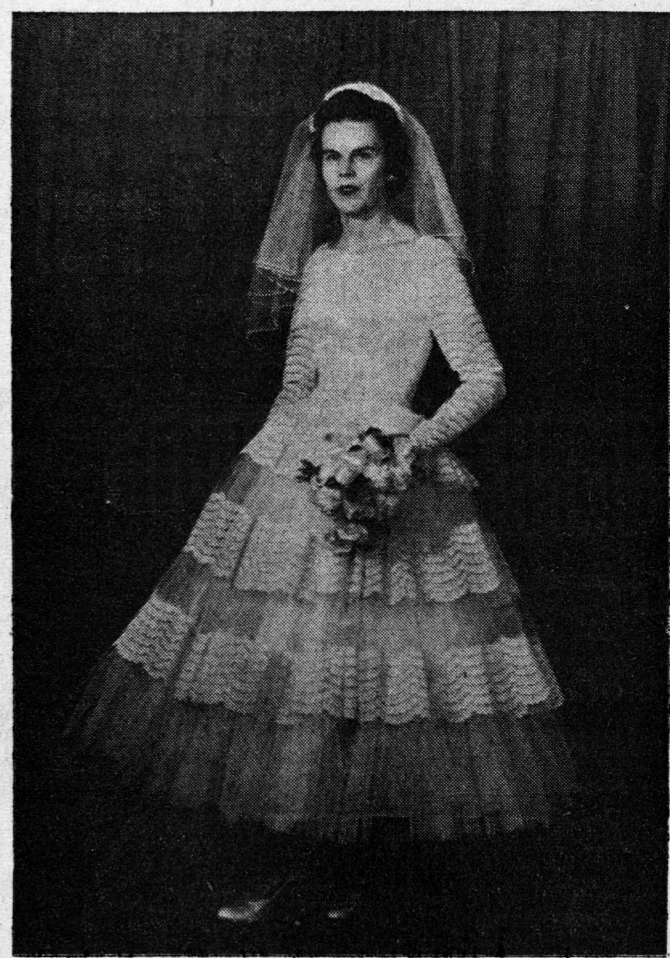


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