

England's Foreign Policy

"BAD SIGN"

British armament shares were booming at such rate last week that Labor's irate, pacifist London 'Daily Herald' was able to cite 13 leading issues which have risen an average of 207% since His Majesty's Government started the boom with their \$1,500,000,000 program of new armaments. Urged to dampen this speculative rise by promising that His Majesty's Government will by law curtail armorers' profits, Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin said: "Great as the power of government is, I am afraid we can't control the speculator, and it would do no good to give him advice."

This, if anything, increased the boom, and London Stock Exchange gigolos—the well-born young Englishmen with wealthy women friends who get 5% commission on orders they put in the way of regular brokers—were chided by the financial editor of Lord Beaverbrook's patriotic 'Daily Express'. Wrote he: "I hear that the 'half commission boys' in the West End are speculating in aircraft shares on behalf of their clients, the ladies. This is always a bad sign."

Favored by the ladies and their boys as leading aircraft-armaments stocks are Rolls-Royce, Fairey and Hawker-Siddeley. Last week Rolls-Royce was so preoccupied with producing aircraft engines that swank motorists eager to plane down £1,850 (\$9,250) for the new 12-cylinder Rolls-Royce "Phantom III" were told that they cannot expect delivery before February 1937.

Even more spectacular has been the jump in shares of British shipyards, recently down and out, now all set to build warboats. The disgusted 'Daily Herald', after first severely warning its Labor readers that they will probably lose their shirts if they jump into the market now, tantalizingly explained that a nest egg of

\$2,500 invested one year ago in three ship-building and two aircraft stocks would today have become a tidy little fortune of \$25,500.

In excited political circles talk was veering around from the urgent rumors a fortnight ago that "Bumbler Baldwin" could not much longer remain Prime Minister, to the opposite notion that the Arms Boom is creating an elated situation in which, no matter what he does or says, he will be as popular as Herbert Hoover was in 1928.

PIGS IN POLICY

The boldest stroke of British policy since the War is the "Eden Diplomacy" of His Majesty's Government in filling the seas around Italy with warboats and naval aircraft. This cramming of weapons into the Mediterranean had the effect of making the League of Nations loom big with new prestige because at Geneva handsome young Anthony Eden gave the impression that if only a few more ships were knocked off the League's shoulder by Italy then Britain would fight. Last week the Mediterranean was still full of British warboats when the House of Commons was startled to learn that the cost of such "Eden Diplomacy" is \$160,000 per day.

The grand total is \$35,000,000 spent during the past seven months for "special measures" undertaken by Viscount Monsell, First Lord of the Admiralty, War Secretary Alfred Duff Cooper and Air Secretary Viscount Swinton solely because of "Eden Diplomacy."

All three Ministers rose in the House to ask still more money for their departments. Meanwhile last week Foreign Secretary Eden replied to the recent Italian note in which Ambassador Dino Grandi argued that the British naval demonstration in the Mediterranean is not justified under any part of the Le-

ague Covenant and asked His Majesty's Government how they account for their "unilateral action" which Italy protests.

Replied the British Foreign Office last week to Ambassador Dino Grandi: "Mr. Eden has the honor to inform His Excellency that..... His Majesty's Government.... do not feel that any useful purpose would be served by prolonging the correspondence on the subject."

This indication that Mr. Eden favors maintaining the tension between Britain and Italy spurred Labor M.P.'s to ask him whether His Majesty's Government are in earnest about sooner or later screwing up the League of Nations to the point of hurling really drastic Sanctions against Italy. In his first formal speech to the House of Commons since he became Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden this week left this point unsettled but he gave most of his time to an ingratiating sales talk for the League of Nations. Exclaiming sorrowfully that "eighteen years after the war to end war, we find ourselves confronted with the same problems dreadfully similar in character and portent to those before 1914," he went on to point the Conservative moral that "whichever course events may take, one element which appears essential for every course is that Great Britain must be strong".

As for Sanctions, Mr. Eden explained, "there has come to be attached to oil sanctions in certain quarters something of a symbolic quality.... To my mind oil is a sanction like any other."

"PUBLIC LIABILITY No. 1." Meanwhile in several London newsgangs deep rumblings in regard to Anthony Eden had begun. The Independent Conservative 'Evening News' called him roundly "PUBLIC LIABILITY NO. 1" and remarked that His Majesty's Government are "bribing" the Government of Yugoslavia to "pretend" to support Sanctions by more than doubling the number of Yugoslav pigs permitted under British quota restrictions to be sold in the United Kingdom weekly.

"This bribing of other nations to blockade Italy economically in the name of the League of Nations is a gross and unprecedented breach of the laws of neutrality," continued London's 'Evening News'. "The Garden of Eden, as everybody knows, was ruined by a snake. The sanctoners' Eden, it would appear, is to be saved by a pig—and a Yugoslavian pig at that.....

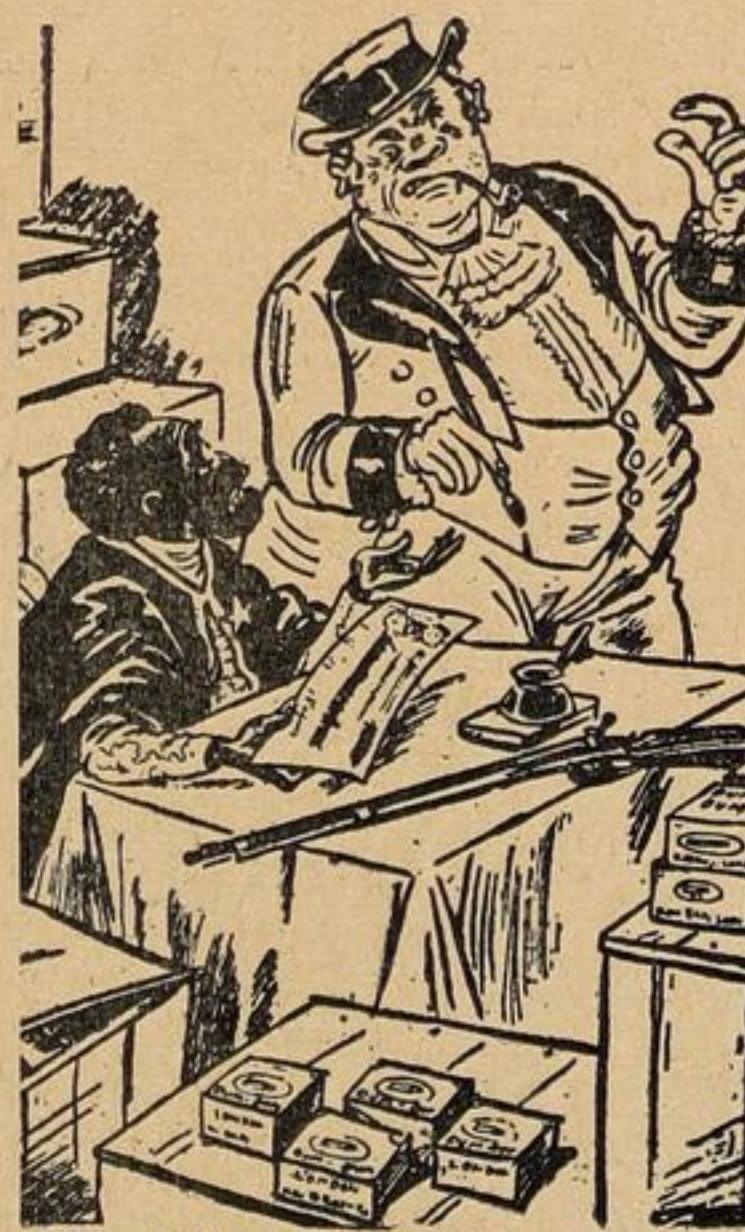
"We have seen our ancient friendship and our valuable trade with Italy disappear, never to return. Who knows what else Mr. Eden is up to? Who knows what meddlesome trouble Public Liability No. 1 is hatching in the seclusion of the Foreign Office? What may he not be saying to this Ambassador or that? What folly or danger is there into which the egocentricity of a somewhat superior person with no discretion and a sharp tongue cannot plunge us?"

"Can we afford dangerous Mr. Eden with the European situation rapidly deteriorating? At a time when it is absolutely vital that we should have at the Foreign Office a Minister whose coolness and discretion—qualities which Mr. Eden's greatest admirers will not claim for him—go hand in hand with detachment, experience and a profound knowledge of the mind and temper of his own and other nations, is Mr. Eden the man for the job?"

MATTER FOR INDIFFERENCE. Meanwhile at the Foreign Office last week Anthony Eden faced the startling fact that Benito Mussolini had somehow obtained and made public in Rome a confidential report to the British Government on the Ethiopian situation made last June by six expert British civil servants: two from the Foreign Office and one each from the Admiralty, Air Ministry, War and Dominions Offices. These experts were chairmanned by Sir John Maffey and the official character of the document was so self-evident that the British Foreign Office was constrained to admit its genuineness, although deprecating it as "old".

The gist of the report by Sir John Maffey & experts was that absolutely no occasion would exist for filling the Mediterranean with British forces, even in the event of successful conquest by Italy of Ethiopia. In the dry and dispassionate words of Sir John Maffey & experts: "From the viewpoint of imperial defense an independent Ethiopia is preferable to an Italian Ethiopia but the threat to British interests seems very remote and would become real only in the event of war between Britain and Italy, which is an eventuality that presently seems very improbable."

"The chief British interest in Ethi-



L'Inghilterra ha fatto un prestito di \$30,000,000 all'Abissinia. Di questi, \$15,000,000 servono all'imperatore per sostenere le spese interne della guerra e gli altri \$15,000,000 restano in Inghilterra per pagare le fabbriche che hanno fornito le armi all'Abissinia.

JOHN—Firma la cambiale caro Negus e così potremo saldare i nostri conti.

NEGUS—Ma cosa diranno a Ginevra se scoprono questo documento?

JOHN—Non darti pensiero: la Società delle Nazioni legalizza tutti i miei contratti.

opia is Lake Tana and the Nile Basin. These represent also an interest of Egypt, which His Majesty's Government are bound to protect. In the event that Ethiopia should disappear as an independent State, His Majesty's Government should seek to secure territorial control over Lake Tana and an adequate corridor joining this lake to the Sudan....

"No vital British interests exists in Ethiopia or its neighborhood sufficient to oblige His Majesty's Government to resist a conquest of Ethiopia by Italy. Italian control over Ethiopia would from some viewpoints be advantageous for Britain.... From certain other viewpoints it would not. Speaking in a general sense, as far as local British interests are concerned, it is a matter of indifference whether Ethiopia remains independent or is absorbed by Italy....

"By (the Treaty of 1906) His Majesty's Government recognized almost the whole of Ethiopia as pertaining to the Italian sphere of influence."

REAL REASONS? Rome's sensational news break of the Maffey Report had the effect of sharpening in London the question of why Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin and his National Government ever embarked on a policy which is costing millions for "a matter of indifference."

A double hypothesis considered widely in London to fit the facts last week was: 1) To create a British scare which would enable the Conservative Party to win the general election, Party Boss Baldwin simply filled the Mediterranean with warboats; 2) The Mediterranean is being kept full of warboats to perpetuate the scare at least until the Chancellor of the Exchequer gets through the House of Commons the great program of \$1,500,000,000 for increasing British armaments which last week had London's stock market in the flood tide of a Munitions Boom.

Challenged again and again to give a frank accounting of the real reasons for "Eden Diplomacy," His Majesty's Government remained quietly snug this week in the position that, after all, they won the election. After all, too, the honest English workman, is eager for a job, even if his new work is on a \$1,500,000,000 order for ultimate War.

PAROLE CHIARE NELLA CAMERA ALTA INGLESE

Lord Phillimore, uno dei più autorevoli giuristi britannici, parlando alla Camera Alta Inglese sulla questione italo-abissina, ha detto fra l'altro:

"Se noi riteniamo di avere interessi in gioco nella contesa abissina, allora, se vogliamo la pace, dovremmo rassegnarci a fare delle concessioni. Se invece siamo davvero disinteressati, allora la parte di pacificatore dovrebbe riuscire più facile. Ma prima di tutto noi dovremmo cessare di agire in modo da farci giudicare non solo dall'Italia, ma da tutto il mondo come la Nazione che dirige e incoraggia tutte le forze ostili all'Italia. Le incertezze del Governo hanno reso perplessa la nazione. Noi vogliamo sapere dal Governo in modo chiaro e definitivo se ha intenzione o no di lasciare che la Gran Bretagna venga trascinata gradatamente verso una guerra, pur senza avere da difendere gli interessi dell'impero britannico".

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