

THE LIVING AGE

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The World Over

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S VIEWS on international lawlessness were well known before he delivered his sensational speech on foreign affairs at Chicago on October 5th. He had extolled democracy and had offered the peaceful relations of the American republics as an example to the Old World in his address to the Pan American Conference at Buenos Aires in December, 1936. Even then he had declared that 'peace is not to be had for the asking.' The stronger expressions which he uttered at Chicago appeared necessary in view of the activity of the aggressive Powers during the interval. Germany and Italy, after agreeing not to intervene in the Spanish conflict, had promptly violated their pledges; Japan had once more disregarded her treaty obligations by attacking China, in order to thwart China's promising effort to become a 'State' in the modern sense of the term.

The democratic peoples were heartened by President Roosevelt's declaration; the transgressors have either ignored it or treated it with contempt. Their policies have not been altered, nor will they be altered until the words of President Roosevelt and other democratic statesmen are backed by the probability of action.

Is the President's suggestion that a 'quarantine' be established against aggressors merely metaphorical, involving nothing more drastic than a moral quarantine, whatever that may be? Or is his declaration to be translated into a positive program of collective security?

We shall probably learn the answer when Congress assembles in Special Session in November. Unless we mistake the state of public opinion, many Senators and Representatives will demand that the Neutrality Act of 1937 shall be strengthened: that the President be deprived of his discretion in regard to the conditions under which the provisions of the Act shall be declared in force, and that a specific formula be inserted in the Act for recognizing the existence of a 'state of war.'

On several occasions since the end of the World War, the United States has refused to participate in arrangements for collective security, and the Symposium of distinguished Americans which THE LIVING AGE conducted late in 1936 revealed an overwhelming sentiment in favor of strong neutrality legislation. The Gallup and other polls have since emphasized the determination of American citizens to maintain neutrality, even at great material sacrifice. We do not believe that that determination is growing weaker.

FROM MOROCCO TO TUNIS, French North Africa is seething with discontent, and only in Tunis is Italian propaganda even partly to blame. In Morocco, where rioting has already occurred, natural causes are largely responsible, for two poor harvests were followed this year by a complete crop failure. No rain whatsoever fell in the interior and the desert population of more than a million is starving. From some of the oases it is reported that there is not even enough drinking water. The sorely-pressed Home Government has voted 11 million francs for relief, but several times that amount must be provided to sustain Morocco until after next year's harvest. In addition to these economic causes of distress, it has been observed that France has made town life too attractive to the natives, with the result that more than half of them have been urbanized and largely beggarized. And while providing towns, hospitals, roads and schools, the French have levied taxes, which most of the Moroccans managed to evade under the Sultanate.

Algeria, while suffering like Morocco from successive crop failures, is distressed by low wages, a rising cost of living and wrangling between native labor unions and employers. There are, besides, several political reasons for the unrest. Premier Blum went out of office before he was able to fulfill certain promises he had made to the Algerians, and they feel that since nothing is being done about them, the Home Government is indifferent to their situation. Native resentment is also growing against the limit of 25 per cent which has been legally placed on their representation in the Legislative Assembly. There are even complaints by the Moors that the French interfere in religious matters.

The Chautemps Government is already in an extremity because of

financial difficulties, internal and external political tension, a falling franc and a rising cost of living. Now it must add a colonial crisis to its burdens. And it is a crisis that has an important bearing upon national defense, for Italy is seriously threatening France's 'life-line' to the North African Empire by her occupation of Majorca, her intervention in Spain and her activity in Western Mediterranean waters. Premier Mussolini's sending of additional Italian troops to Spanish Morocco and of several new divisions to Libya indicate that he is preparing for an emergency, and leave little doubt that he would take advantage of the situation in the French possessions to seize Tunisia, at least, if an opportunity appeared.

THERE ARE PROBABLY more political and religious exiles in the world today than at any other time in history. However hard their lot has been in strange lands, it has been better than that of their fellows who have been unable to escape from régimes that brook no difference of opinion. So numerous have been the stories of man's inhumanity to man in Germany, Italy, Soviet Russia and the lesser dictatorships that our indignation has become dulled. What, after all, can we do? And the answer must be that we can do nothing, except to keep alive our democratic hatred of intolerant political systems.

In Great Britain, the Howard League for Penal Reform has issued a report entitled *The Accused: An International Study*, and based upon an investigation of the treatment of prisoners in some eighty countries. There follow several extracts from the Howard League's report:—

Austria:—Police have the right to send politically suspected persons to certain places of detention without trial for an unlimited period, and all intercourse with the outside world is controlled by the authorities.

Bulgaria:—In political cases prisoners are sometimes arrested and held by the police for several weeks without trial. Other suspects are interned without trial in remote villages.

Irish Free State:—Under the Public Safety Act it is an offence in political cases to refuse to answer questions put by the police.

Great Britain:—A confession is not admissible in evidence if induced by threats or promises. Cases are, however, known where the police have held out the hope of a lighter sentence as an inducement to plead guilty, and complaints are sometimes made of excessively long questioning before a suspected person is charged.

Germany:—Laws apply only to cases tried before the ordinary criminal courts. In cases where the State Police or Secret State Police take action against politically suspected persons without bringing them before the public prosecutor and the court, their action is completely free from judicial control and in every way legally unfettered. The Secret Police can keep a person in a concentration camp for an indefinite period.

Northern Ireland:—By orders under Special Powers Acts, refusal to answer police or examining magistrate or other officer is a criminal offence even if answer

may tend to incriminate the accused; answers to police or magistrates may be used as evidence of offence. Persons may be detained indefinitely.

Hungary:—Sometimes the third degree is used, especially in the case of political prisoners.

Italy:—Independently of any judicial procedure a special non-judicial committee presided over by the prince has the right to send a person to a place of detention for one to five years if he has acted (or has shown intention to act) against the authority of the State so as to damage national interests.

Poland:—Persons who, in the view of an administrative authority, may possibly endanger the State or the Government can be detained in concentration camps for a period of three months, which can be extended indefinitely, without any judicial control.

Soviet Russia:—The law is scrupulously carried out according to the code in all non-political charges. In all political or quasi-political cases the political police are at liberty to arrest any Russian citizen without a warrant or without indicating the charge; the arrested person may be held indefinitely without trial, and may be tried, condemned, and punished in secret.

Torture, according to the report, is 'usually spoken of as a stain upon the honor of past ages, from which our own is free. Yet no one who examines the evidence can doubt that the use of torture is more widespread today than it was half a century ago. The evil is not extinct but is growing.'

GAULEITER IS A TITLE which the Nazis bestow upon the director of the Party's activities in a certain region. The *Gau*, or region, over which Herr Bohle is director is the entire world outside Germany; so far, 548 foreign Party branches are known to have been established. All the Party's propaganda and espionage abroad, except broadcasting, are managed through *Gauleiter* Bohle's Foreign Organization, the Berlin headquarters of which employs more than 700 persons in 32 departments. The most important of these are the eight national directorates, the Marine Department and the Migration and Harbor (*Hafendienstamt*) Services.

The Harbor Service is perhaps the most active of the Foreign Organization's espionage centers, for its agents work in all foreign ports in close coöperation with the German Consulates. Their task consists of collecting military and naval information, identifying ships and ascertaining their destinations (for instance, of Spanish merchant ships which are later sunk by 'unidentified' submarines), smuggling Nazi propaganda material in the respective languages, etc. The Harbor Service also coöperates with the Gestapo in spying upon emigrants. Economic and industrial espionage is being directed by another special department.

The Foreign Organization, with the help of the Embassies and Consulates, urges every German abroad to do his duty as a 'fellow fighter in the front ranks' by serving as an agent, and in innumerable instances

pressure and threats have been used when persuasion failed. How many such voluntary and involuntary agents are under *Gauleiter* Bohle's orders? One estimate, which is regarded as being conservative, places the number of Germans throughout the world who are at present directly or indirectly at Herr Bohle's disposal at more than 350,000.

OUR WARNING in the last issue that front-page news may be momentarily expected from Poland must be repeated, for the political situation in that country grows steadily worse. The very fact that liberal elements have been encouraged to unite by former Premier Paderewski may bring the crisis to a head. A sudden stroke by Marshal Rydz-Smigly, setting up a military dictatorship, is still regarded as probable, though it is hard to see how such a course can result in any appreciable improvement in Poland's situation. Political schisms might in this way be eliminated, but Poland's relative poverty would remain. Agrarian distress, arising from the existence of a surplus population of some 4,000,000 on the farms, is sharpening criticism of the Government's failure to break up the large estates. From what we know of military dictatorships, a Polish one would scarcely resort to that solution, if, indeed, the redistribution of these lands would solve the problem. At present, the vested interests concerned are so powerful that a Parliamentary Committee recently formed to deal with over-population confined its study to the possibilities for temporary and permanent emigration.

Poland's resources do not permit her to employ the estimated 1,000,000 surplus men on useful labor service, as some countries have done. Nor is her industry sufficiently developed to absorb more than a small fraction of them. And, at the moment, Polish industry is competing with difficulty for high-priced raw materials in the world market.

Ever since the War Poland has felt obliged to spend a large part of her revenue, and to borrow heavily from France, for her Army and military works. These funds would have been spent more wisely in reclaiming millions of acres of good land from the marshy regions, in developing non-military communications and in fostering industry and agriculture. Now, placed as she is between the quarreling giants, Germany and Russia, and herself torn between their hostile ideologies, she must continue her uneconomic course. More than any other country in Europe, Poland needs foreign capital for internal development. Her resources are greater than Italy's, and she could, with foreign help, become reasonably self-sustaining. But peace—the assurance of real peace—is necessary before such help will be forthcoming. And in Eastern Europe the prospect for peace seems infinitely remote. Regardless of the outcome of the present crisis, Poland will remain in a political and strategic strait-jacket.

SINCE CHANCELLOR HITLER boasted at Nuremberg of Nazi Germany's exemplary treatment of her minorities, it will not be amiss to examine his claim. And we shall report, not on the German Jews, whose plight is well known, but on the situation of the Reich's greatest minority, the Poles, who number about 1,500,000. Until recently, as a result of the Polish-German treaty of amity and non-aggression of 1934, the Polish press was forbidden to write anything adverse about Germany. Now, however, the process of Germanizing the Poles has become so intensified that even the official *Gazeta Polska* publishes reports about the persecution of the minority.

Germanization is quite naturally focused on education and on the suppression of the Polish language. And here we find that Germany has not reciprocated the rather generous policy of the Polish Government toward its German minority of some 800,000. The Germans in Poland have 490 State elementary schools, 30 high schools, 4 normal schools, 4 trade schools and 50 private elementary schools. In all these schools the German language is freely taught. Although the Poles living in Germany are almost twice as numerous, they have only 68 State elementary schools, 1 high school and 25 private elementary schools. The reliable *Kurjer Warszawski* recently published an article in which it was stated that in German Upper Silesia, where the Polish population is almost equal to the whole German minority in Poland, only 193 Polish children are allowed to be taught in Polish schools.

The *Manchester Guardian* correspondent in Warsaw reports the following example of German methods:—

A Polish school was opened in Centawa, a village in German Silesia inhabited by about 600 Poles, forming 99 per cent of the population; 280 children were enrolled. But soon the police began to question the parents: Why did they send their children to a Polish school? Were they sure they were doing right? Where did they work? This was sufficient to reduce the number of pupils to 100. Today, owing to further police activity of this sort, only 9 children still attend the school; the others are in German schools. Poles who send their children to Polish schools and not to German ones are deprived of their jobs, fined under various pretexts and terrorized.

This determination to suppress the Polish language is carried out even in the Polish churches. More than a thousand localities which had borne Polish names for ages have had German names thrust upon them, and Poles are everywhere being 'advised' to adopt German family names.

However badly they may be treated, the Poles living in Germany dare not complain because of the close Gestapo surveillance that is kept over them. And whatever their fate, Poland dares not accuse the powerful and belligerent Reich.

THOSE ADMIRABLE and instructive Swedes! The success of their Labor Government in overcoming the last slump is universally known, and many of its schemes were adopted abroad. Just now the country is enjoying a phenomenal prosperity, for production is 40 per cent higher than the 1929 record, unemployment has vanished and prospects are good. Yet the Swedes are preparing for the emergencies of peace even while rearming to defend their neutrality in the event of war. After prolonged study the Government has drawn up a detailed works and relief program that can be put instantly into effect upon the threat of a new slump. Provision is made for a ten-year depression period, which would involve a maximum expenditure of \$715,000,000. Of this amount, \$180,000,000 would be spent directly by the State on building, and \$140,000,000 would be spent on public works by the Municipalities, a part of the sum to come from a State subsidy. Road improvements have been allocated \$240,000,000; agriculture, \$115,000,000; and forests, \$37,500,000. A total of 200,000,000 'man-days' would be provided. Preparations to finance the plan are already being made through repayment of the public debt out of budget surpluses.

It would be superfluous to point the moral of Sweden's latest example in practical economic planning.

NO LESS AN AUTHORITY than Sir Eric Teichman has called China's new unity 'only skin deep.' That unity, even if it is only superficial, has been largely achieved, and remains dependent upon, two factors: a hatred of Japan, and the ability and prestige of Chiang Kai-shek. The first of these factors has obviously become stronger since the Japanese invasion began; the second must remain uncertain. Chiang Kai-shek is, in fact, the most important element in China's ability to prolong the war and make it so expensive for the Japanese that they may agree to a reasonably equitable peace. He alone, among the Chinese generals, has had adequate preparation in the direction of large armies on many fronts. One of the surprising features of the war thus far has been the willingness of the Chinese war-lords to submerge their jealousies in the face of the common enemy and accept Chiang's leadership. As long as they continue to do so, a sudden collapse of China's resistance is unlikely. If the Generalissimo should disappear from the scene, either through the agency of some fateful Japanese bomb, or because of a cabal against him at Nanking, the present unity and China's slender chance of success would be gravely impaired.

Will French Labor, now 'the strongest force in France,' seize control?

Does France Face Revolution?

By ROBERT DELL

From the *Contemporary Review*
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EVER since the 'stay-in' strikes in France in the early summer of last year it has been asserted from time to time that France was on the verge of revolution. During the strikes the wildest stories were published in the press of various countries. There was talk of rioting, violence and even of murder. Many of these stories were spread by French people on the Right in politics to damage the People's Front Government which had come into office on June 1st, 1936. I was told last year by an American friend who visited Switzerland that a French Count and Countess staying in the same hotel had said that in the place where they lived in France a factory had been taken by storm and the owner of it had been murdered. The story turned out to be a pure invention. I was in Paris at the time of the 'stay-in' strikes and I have never seen strikes more orderly. The strikers, enthusiastic as they were, were perfectly good-tempered and there was no violence of any sort.

The strikes had no revolutionary aims—they were strikes to obtain better conditions of labor and nothing else; but it is quite true that the method of the 'stay-in' strike might be very useful in the event of a revolutionary movement. The movement of last year may turn out to have been a dress rehearsal.

Now, on the other hand, the conditions in France have, in my opinion, become revolutionary, and a revolutionary—or at least unconstitutional—movement is possible in the near future. It will not, if it comes, be made by the Socialist or Communist Party, but by the C.G.T. (*Confédération Générale du Travail*)—the French trade union federation. Last year's strikes gave an enormous impetus to the French trade union movement. Applications for membership poured in in such numbers that the trade union officials could not cope with them. In certain industries the trade union membership was increased tenfold in a few weeks.