

Noted American writers join united front protest against Nazi atrocities. Warn against fascist danger in U. S. A. Urge powerful united movement against capitalist terror.

Against the Fascist Terror in Germany

(Immediately after Hitler's assumption of the chancellorship, the New Masses in a letter sent out on March 3 asked a number of writers to send in protests against German fascism. The protests which came in are printed below. The New Masses, shares the general feeling expressed in these letters, that of unqualified and energetic struggle against fascism here and abroad through a united front of all working class and intellectual organizations willing to participate. It does not, however, share the personal political opinions expressed by some of the writers. Each author is alone responsible for his contribution).

NEWTON ARVIN

When the Fugitive Slave Law was adopted, Emerson wrote in his journal: "This filthy enactment was made in the nineteenth century, by people who could read and write." The half-incredulous indignation of this sentence must be the spirit in which an American intellectual—or indeed any self-respecting American—goes over the daily reports from Germany, and realizes how far, in the twentieth century, it is possible for men who can "read and write" to go. Emerson continued in his journal: "I will not obey it, by God"; and this sentiment, too, with the right changes, must obviously become more and more general if the brutish energies of Hitlerism are not to reduce the whole world, nation by nation, to the cultural status of a primal colony or a prison-camp. The desperate class tyranny that lies behind these fascist movements—it goes without saying—is pitilessly hostile to every impulse of the intellectual or creative life; left to itself, it will crush out everything that writers and artists value; and the protest against Hitlerism in Germany can be only a part of the struggle against similar forces throughout the world. I do not see how American writers who take pride in their heritage of radical dissent—to put the case, for the moment, on no other grounds—can fail to see what the menace is and to speak out against it without evasion.

ROGER N. BALDWIN

Nobody whose heart is enlisted in the cause of freedom in any aspect can fail to condemn and abhor the terrorism of the German Fascist reaction. Today's victors in the class war, the Hitlerites serve the frightened propertied class by attacking its enemies through a lawless armed youth, disciplined only to violence. The extremes of that violence are the measure of its fear of working class power, and especially its Communist vanguard.

German Fascism, like its counterparts elsewhere, cannot endure. It is the last fighting trench of a dying capitalism. Narrow nationalism and concentrated economic power will rot the whole structure of German industry and prepare fertile ground for the seeds of revolution.

Unceasing warfare on Hitlerism; unceasing support of the revolutionary working class—these are the guides for us all on the road to freedom.

HEYWOOD BROWN

The Hitler dictatorship in Germany seems to me to present all the worst of reactionary evils and the great pity of it is that some of the support for the Fascist party in that country comes from workers who are voting and functioning entirely against their own interests.

I understand some of the difficulties but it seems to me tragic

that the various radical groups have not been able to combine in a political way to keep Hitler out of power. The only consolation lies in the fact that some form of cooperation will now become necessary for the very life of all who oppose the Hitler regime.

LEWIS COREY

They have seized power, unleashing all the furies of reaction, prejudice and hatred, mobilizing scoundrels and assassins against the workers, using force ruthlessly while the socialist and liberal opposition clung to constitutional illusions.

Hitlerism, which is Fascism, is no ordinary dictatorship: it means annihilation of the workers as an independent class, a social system of economic and cultural death, an ideology cherishing the most reactionary ideals.

Behind the barbarity of Hitlerism skulk the reactionary and sinister interests of the capitalist intent on maintaining power. To maintain power in the midst of economic collapse the capitalists must increase the burdens of the workers and prevent resistance, so Hitlerism must crush the workers and their organizations and make of them a mass of helots bound to the Fascist capitalist state. Crush the revolution! But in this program is latent the threat of war against the Soviet Union and other imperialist wars. Hitlerism and Fascism are a world danger: the hyena in Rome and the jackal in Berlin greet one another and prepare their plans.

But observe: bourgeois democracy and culture promote Hitlerism in Germany as they promoted Fascism in Italy! The middle class rallies to Hitler, providing the Fascist battalions: the very class which is the carrier of democracy becomes the executioner of democracy. The intellectuals overwhelmingly rally to Hitler, providing the justification and ideology: the cultural workers of capitalism become the executioners of culture. The results: Fascist Italy tells the story!—Fascism degrades the professional worker and the intellectual even more than capitalism degrades them, unlike socialism which liberates the professional worker and the intellectual for the socially creative performance of their craft function, precisely as socialism liberates democracy and individualism from capitalist perversion and Fascist repression.

In this emergency, in which is bound up the immediate future of the proletarian revolution and of humanity, our sympathy and support must go to the communist workers and the non-communist workers of Germany in their struggle, and to the progressive intellectuals who recognize and resent Fascism as a cultural danger.

But we must also recognize and resent, and struggle against, potential Fascism in the United States. There is no danger? That is what they said in Germany in 1923 and in 1933. That is what Friedrich Stampfer, editor of the Social-Democratic *Vorwärts*, said after Hitler had become chancellor: Germany's culture is too great to permit the triumph of Fascism, said Stampfer and all the slaves of democratic and cultural illusions. But Fascism arises out of bourgeois democracy and culture, and Germany's Fascism developed on an even lower level than in Italy.

All the elements of potential Fascism are present in the United States—a large middle class tormented by economic decline, a democracy and culture already possessing some Fascist traits, and underworld overflowing with scoundrels and assassins capable of being mobilized against the workers, innumerable prejudices and hatreds and the technique of exploiting them (Ku Klux Klan, yellow press), a developing revolution-

ary workers' movement. These forces are being set in motion by the aggravated crisis and decline of American capitalism. In its decisive aspect Fascism is merely the exploitation of middle class resentments, prejudices and action to do the dirty work of monopolist capitalism—and that was done by Theodore Roosevelt, a perfect Fascist born too early.

Struggle against Fascism must proceed on all fronts, led by the revolutionary, the communist workers. Intellectuals must concentrate on the cultural struggle, expose the cultural reaction of Fascism: the intellectual who combines this with the communist struggle performs the greatest service of all. To work!

WALDO FRANK

Hitler's coming into power is the darkest news of our dark era. It is the most dangerous threat to human liberty since Wrangel, Denekin, Kolchak and Company tried to destroy the Russian Soviets. It strikes at the young heart of world-revolution. It calls for the grim rallying together of all progressive groups throughout Germany and throughout the world. If we do not learn to collaborate now for the immediate destruction of Fascism in one of the most highly industrialized, most highly cultured nations of the world, we do not deserve to survive, and we shall not survive. Hitler, and his equivalents in all the countries, will see to that.

What then is the immediate role of the radicals outside of Germany? It is to bring to bear upon the German workers of every party the pressure of solidarity, in order that the German workers and their allies may be inspired and literally forced to unite against the universal menace.

Let the German people, whether they follow Communist, Socialist or liberal leaders, know that the workers and intellectuals of the world look to them who stand, now, in the forefront of the battle against reaction. And let them know that we, of the other nations, recognize our responsibility in the present unspeakable plight of the German people.

Every nation which supported the Versailles treaty shares the responsibility for Hitlerism and for the defeat of the German workers. Every nation that insisted on payment of German reparations and war debts shares the responsibility for Hitlerism and for the breakdown of the German radical movement. Even the Third International is not cleared of responsibility, since it delayed too long the strategy of a feasible united front against Hitler and his henchmen.

But the present breakdown of the workers need not be final. Five million Communist votes on March 5 (and doubtless many more that were not counted) in the face of Nazi oppression and suppression, prove the heroism and the will of the German masses. Let us therefore hasten to their aid. And in order to prove our solidarity, let us first of all acknowledge our share in the responsibility for Germany's present sad state.

German people, in your hands lies the immediate destiny of the workers of the world. If you go down, terrorism will probably triumph throughout the West for another generation. And after that, who knows whether human culture will have survived at all?

German people, your genius has never been nationalistic; the great men who bespeak you in literature, in music, in philosophy, in science, have always been *world-conscious men*. Know, today, that your struggle against Hitlerism makes you the leaders in the struggle for the life of the human spirit.

MICHAEL GOLD

If Hitler consolidates his power we will see a world reaction infinitely worse than that which followed the events of 1848. Every sign of the faintest liberalism amongst the middle class intellectuals will be drowned in blood. The workers will be massacred, terrorized, forced into a medieval serfdom. It is war-time. We must close ranks or be annihilated. Hitlerism will spread over Europe and sweep America. Unless we unite. Unless there is a united front of all the workingclass parties and liberal groups. The Socialists and liberals may form such a front, leaving out the Communists. They may piously ignore the massacre of Communists, deeming themselves more respectable

and hence safer. But this is a form of suicide, for Mr. Villard will find himself consigned to the hangman by an American Hitler as swiftly as any Communist. Every anti-fascist is needed in this united front. There must be no base factional quarrels. Leaders who stand in the way of a united front should be swept aside by the rank and file. We are faced with the death of the whole workingclass movement. We cannot waste time. We cannot quibble. How can anyone underestimate this thing? But I feel an apathy in America, a failure to react to the events in Germany that is appalling. Forward to the united front! There need be no hypocrisy or ignoring of basic differences. Each party and each group can retain its individuality. But at once! Let us unite to fling back Hitlerism and crush it forever!

HORACE GREGORY

Yes, I know Hitler. I have seen his face too often in the rotogravure sections of the Sunday papers, the little man with the comic mustache under his nose. No caricature can be more damaging than his photograph. See his shouting to a sea of hands uplifted in a Fascist salute: "Hoch Hitler, schoene Adolf" and in the crowd women are fainting and children trampled underfoot. Hear the little man shout for a new pogrom, the little man from nowhere, ex-corporal from the ranks of a defeated army, who yearns for the power of the Junker class—and why not seize this power, and through the power of remembered death on battlefields, extend the hand of death over these people?

But it is futile to waste one's hatred against a single, ambitious little man. Behind him are the new industrialists, gasping for power with Hitler, the orator, the fighting cock their tool, their symbol. And in the crowd that cheers Hitler are the petty shopkeepers, the small business men. They want a leader who shouts Yes and No to their demands—they want no wavering of liberal statesmen, nor the promises of an important war general, an old man ready for the grave. It is through Hitler that they see a reestablishment of banks, backed by the new industrialists, national banks—away with the Jewish international bankers!

As for the worker and his party, the Communist Party, grind them underfoot, under the petty shopkeepers, under the industrialists under the bright red heel of Hitler—if this is not sufficient warning to the American intellectual, whatever I have to say will not change his mind. There is the picture for everyone to see.

GRANVILLE HICKS

The ruthless suppression of working class organizations in Germany calls for the most vigorous protest. The apathy of most Americans in this crisis is appalling. I particularly urge all liberals to protest in the name of the principles they profess. The complacent satisfaction taken by the reactionary press in Hitler's brutal persecution of German radicals indicates clearly enough the pertinence of the issue. Not merely Hitler but also his admirers and would-be imitators everywhere must be made to feel the scorn and condemnation of the civilized world.

SIDNEY HOOK

Hitler's accession to power and the reign of terror he has unleashed against all workingclass organizations challenge American intellectuals to protest and action. For Hitler is not merely an individual; he is the incarnation of a principle, a system, which seeks to bolster up the hegemony of finance-capital with properly administered doses of myth and blood and iron. Hitler presages the future of every capitalist economy racked by crisis. Unless he and what he represents are overthrown by the *united action* of all workers, farmers, and intellectuals who desire to retain whatever democratic rights they have in their struggle against capitalism, a new and bloody "dark ages" will be upon us. Although international in economic origin, Fascism is intensely national in form. Its political ideology is