

CANADA'S FASCISTS

Duplessis Lets Them In the Back Door

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chance that anything would show. The stomach ordinarily empties itself within three hours.

"Very well," I said, "you'll find whatever you're looking for when I get through with the pump."

It was hard getting the boy to sit down. He clamped his teeth shut and wouldn't let me insert the tube. He wouldn't look up at me so I jerked his chin up. For an instant I held a clenched fist against my breast pocket where I was needlessly getting out my flashlight. He saw it. Our eyes met. His expression didn't change, but he opened his mouth.

I introduced the pump, and the stomach showed a few cucumber seeds and a bit of other indigestible residue in the gastric juice. The policemen looked at the stuff. "Are you sure the paper would be there if he swallowed it? Maybe it's passed on."

"Gentlemen," I said, "the stomach empties itself only after four or five hours. If there had been any paper there you would see it now."

"Are you the only one in charge here? We would like to consult another doctor."

As he said it, my colleague walked in from his coffee-drinking. Now let him show how doctors stick together. I began pompously, "Herr Kollege, I have told these gentlemen on my word as a doctor that the stomach empties itself only after four or five hours. Is it not true that had this boy swallowed some paper at twelve o'clock it would now appear after a pumping?"

"We just wanted another doctor to confirm it," said the policeman.

"Yes, it is true, gentlemen," said my colleague. "It is not a point of dispute among us doctors."

The policemen shrugged their shoulders. "Well, young fellow, back to the station house with you in the meantime." The boy gave me a broad grin.

When they had gone my colleague said severely, "I covered you up of course, but do you not know that the stomach empties itself in two and a half to six hours and that the boy could have swallowed papers at twelve o'clock which by now could have been digested?"

"Don't worry about it, Herr Kollege," I said. "You have just saved a comrade of yours."

"Also," he said slowly and pleasedly, "I didn't know he was a Nazi."

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YOU THINK SO?

IT WAS not true, as used occasionally to be charged, that the *Sun* was always on the wrong side of public questions. On the contrary, it supported on occasion conservative platforms or candidates.—ALEXANDER DANA NOYES, reviewing "Dana and the Sun," in the *New York "Times" Book Review Section*.

"WHEN Canada becomes fascist the United States will follow. . . . Fascism will conquer in Canada in three years. . . . Premier Hepburn and Premier Duplessis are the forerunners of fascism. We are fortunate to have men in two key positions in Canada today under whom we can adequately lay the foundations for our final victory."

These are the words of Adrien Arcand, Supreme Chief of the National Social Christian Party of Canada, who boasts that his armed legions are better drilled than the Canadian army. His statements may seem far-fetched; but the facts show that Führer Arcand has reasons for his optimism.

Arcand's claim that his party has twenty thousand members is, of course, a tremendous exaggeration. However, the fascist leader derives his strength not from the number of his followers, but from the conscious attempts of Premier Duplessis in the province of Quebec to smash every remnant of democracy in that province in order to facilitate Arcand's "final victory."

Arcand is strong also because Premier Mitchell Hepburn of Ontario, in joining with Premier Duplessis to fight Prime Minister King's program for national social legislation, has created an alliance to which the Dominion's reactionaries have rallied with the aim of breaking the trade unions, smashing the growing resistance of the Canadian people, and so creating what Arcand correctly terms the "foundations" of fascism.

Finally, and most important, Arcand is strong because behind this drive toward reaction and this attempt to uproot Canada's democratic institutions stand the gold barons, the bankers, and the great industrialists. The tactic of the financiers in the Dominion is to create a base for fascism in the province of Quebec. The fascists' dream is greater: they hope to use Quebec as a base for fascism on the North American continent.

The financiers and industrialists have found in Duplessis the perfect grave-digger of democracy. He is a former corporation-lawyer and, up to the time he became leader of the Union Nationale Party, was head of the Quebec Conservative Party. His background is perfect, as is his record since becoming Premier. One of his first acts was to see that Adrien Arcand became editor-in-chief of the government's unofficial organ, *L'Illustration Nouvelle*, which today is the largest French

morning newspaper in Montreal. It is interesting to note that the owner of this paper, Mr. Berthiaume, also owns *La Presse*, which has the largest French circulation in the world, not excepting newspapers in France.

Duplessis made it clear, a few days after taking office, that his administration's main task would be "a campaign to wipe out Communism in the province of Quebec." What Duplessis meant by "Communism" was made clear a short while later when he pushed through his now famous padlock-law, which legally is described as "An Act Respecting Communist Propaganda." The term "Communist" remains undefined, and when asked to define it, Duplessis answered impatiently that a definition of the term "would defeat the purpose of the law."

The purpose of the law to date has been the raiding of about one hundred private homes and the confiscation of literature and private papers; the banning of two newspapers in the province, the *Daily Clarion* and *Clarté*; the padlocking of the Ukrainian Labor Temple halls; padlocking of *Clarté*; confiscation of periodicals like the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, *New MASSES*, *Soviet Russia Today*, *Fight*, *USSR in Construction*, all CIO pamphlets, and any book which deals with Marxism, pro or con.

When the Canadian people awoke to the implications of the padlock law there was a tremendous demand throughout the Dominion for the federal government to declare it unconstitutional. Prominent liberals and members of the Canadian bar, chief of whom was R. L. Calder, K.C., came forward with demands that the law be wiped out as "un-British, un-Canadian, and unconstitutional."

Premier Duplessis, who is also attorney-general, may, if he wishes, order any home padlocked, and the victim of the order has no recourse to the law. Declared guilty, he cannot plead his innocence or appeal to the courts, because another statute in Quebec makes it illegal for any citizen to bring any government official into a court on any charge whatsoever.

When the American newspapers began to catch on to what was happening to the north of them and carried a few reports of the raids, Duplessis denounced the reports in the press as a "Communist plot." In the legislature he attacked the staid *New York Times* for its reporting of the Quebec situation. When asked by reporters what he was going

to do about the fascists in Quebec, Duplessis smiled, raised his eyebrows, and said:

"Fascism? There are no fascists in Quebec. The danger is Communism. My government has pledged itself to wipe out Communism." Asked to define what he meant by "Communism," Duplessis answered, "Only five men in the whole of Canada could define it."

The liberal *Toronto Star* and the labor *Daily Clarion* insistently pointed to the growing threat to Canadian civil liberties. It was when the campaign against the padlock law, against Duplessis and Arcand, was beginning to assume the proportions of a mass movement that Duplessis pushed the Catholic Church to the fore. There had been ugly rumors that the fascists were armed. The denials of Arcand and the belittling of the reports by both the French and English press in Quebec did not appease the Canadian people.

So, on March 20, 1938, Archbishop Coadjutor Georges Gauthier of Montreal issued a pastoral letter, which has since been described as the most open pro-fascist statement ever to be uttered by a ranking dignitary of the Catholic Church in North America. Archbishop Gauthier virtually called upon the Catholics of Quebec to take up arms against the "Communist menace" which he,

in the same speech, described as a "handful of men."

The letter read in part:

Let us deal with the campaign against fascism which is being carried on throughout our province. Are they not trying to create the impression that the real danger which we must guard against is not Communism, but fascism? . . . And if certain of our young people engage in physical and quasi-military training, is it not because we are not taking the necessary steps to combat the peril which menaces us? If duly constituted authority gives in to these suggestions, it will be the time to arouse against it all those who would defend themselves.

Using the reactionary members of the clergy as a religious cloak both in his campaign to lower the living standards of the people of Quebec and in crushing any opposition to this campaign—and strengthened further by the open support of the tory financiers expressed through their organ, the *Montreal Gazette*—Duplessis moved further in his attacks against the people and his preparation for Arcand's "final victory."

In quick time he passed a law making the closed-shop union contract illegal in the province. He tried to use the Catholic unions against the international unions, describing the AF of L unions as "hotbeds of Communism." But when he again struck out against the trade unions with his bill to make collective labor contracts a farce, the leadership of the Catholic unions formed a temporary alliance with the leadership of the international unions, to oppose Duplessis' attacks against trade unionism. A joint delegation representing both trade-union bodies went to Quebec to present their protests. Duplessis listened politely and told them he would "consider" their arguments.

Meanwhile Arcand is having a good laugh

at the expense of the Canadian people. The man has been in contact with the Nazi Party of Germany since he first emerged as a fascist leader. Documentary evidence proving this has already been published in the *Daily Clarion*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Nation*, and the *New York Post*. Kurt W. Ludecke, Nazi agent in America up to the time of the famous June 30 purge in Berlin, refers to Arcand in his book, *I Knew Hitler*. Most of the literature and pamphlets distributed by Arcand's party are either rehashes of material sent out by the *Fichte Bund*, Hamburg, or the actual leaflets printed in English and French in Germany. Recently Arcand published a scurrilous thirty-two-page anti-Semitic sheet, which he called *The Key to the Mystery*. This sheet was printed on the presses of *L'Illustration Nouvelle*, and one million copies in French and English were distributed throughout Canada.

Arcand becomes more brazen and provocative every day. He is now demanding that the Quebec government ban *L'Autorité*, a liberal weekly, because *L'Autorité* has attacked the fascist movement in the province. On the political sphere he can already chalk up certain victories for his own party. Three small municipalities in Quebec, including the important shipbuilding town of Sorel on the St. Lawrence River, boast mayors who belong to Arcand's party. He is expected to place fifteen candidates for aldermen in the coming municipal elections in Montreal, and will give his support to Mayor Adhemar Raynault, a Duplessis henchman and an open lover of fascist Italy.

The feverish drive toward the consolidation of a form of clerical fascism in Quebec can only be explained by the finance-capitalists' fear of the growing desire of Quebec's workers and farmers to better their economic and social conditions. Spontaneous strikes in factories, grumblings on the part of the bankrupt farmer have frightened the finance-capitalists who have always looked upon the Quebec workers as docile sheep.

If the workers and small farmers have been exploited in the other eight Canadian provinces, then the Quebec worker has been super-exploited. His wages are the lowest in the entire Dominion and vie with those paid to the Negro cotton-picker in the American South. His children are forced to work in factories because Quebec is the only Canadian province where there is no compulsory school education. Twenty-three percent of the population are illiterate or semi-illiterate. There are fewer schools, hospitals, and libraries per community than in any other Canadian province.

The Quebec mother knows that if she lives in Montreal the medical facilities are such that one out of every six babies dies before it is a month old. If the mother lives in the smaller municipality of Lachine, she knows that one out of every three babies dies before it is one month old. Only Madrid, Bombay, and certain sections of China can boast higher infant-mortality rates.



Hirschfeld

The Isolationist