

MUSSO

At first flush the news from Rome today was a trifle confusing. (Of course it has long been expected that Mussolini would abolish the Chamber of Deputies. For seventeen years those deputies haven't done anything of importance except to reply, "Yes" to everything the Duce said.) But when he also announced today that the state had taken over all the big industries of Italy, it sounded like a war measure. Actually, it is another logical development in the progress of the Fascist corporative state.

He told us he was going to do it as soon as the country at large had become adjusted to the ~~xxx~~ evolution into this new kind of economy. And now it has taken place. (And we see a Fascist politic practically in full being for the first time) in the history of the world.

Let's take a look at this corporative state business through the eyes of a man who has studied it. Dr. Lowell Fields, of the Faculty of Columbia University, has been in Italy,

exploring the mechanism of the thing. And this is what ^{he says} happens
under Fascism. A council of men is established who represent the
industries of the nation. The workers, the employees, are also
represented. All the officials of the big corporations, chairmen
of the boards, presidents, directors and what-not, will continue
to run those industries. But they ^{have been} ~~were~~ selected by the government
and the government becomes the senior partner, or if you prefer the
term, the principal stockholder. Small businesses are not affected,
except ^{in so far} ~~in so far~~ as they tie up to the general body of the country's
economic structure. ^π The condition is somewhat analogous to one
that prevailed ^{over} here during the World War. I mean of course when
Uncle Sam took over the railroads for the duration of the War and
Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo was Director-General of all
transportation lines. If you can imagine the same step applying
to steel, oil, motor cars, the building trades, all the key
industries, you'll have a picture of what ^{now is to} ~~henceforth~~ exist in
Italy. In other words, private ownership ~~is~~ retained to a degree,
but the state ^{to be} ~~is~~ the principal beneficiary. The control ~~inciden-~~
~~tally~~ is absolute.

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Thus we get a quick view of the differences between Socialism, and Communism, and Fascism. The Socialists aim to make the state own and operate all business. But they also make a pretense at retaining democratic control. That is, the people would vote, there would be legislatures, and so forth. At the same time, any candidate who runs on a Socialist ticket signs before the election a letter of resignation which is in the hands of the party committee. This resignation is held over his head and could be used to remove him at the will of the party leaders. Under Communism, the government also owns and operates all business. But there's no pretense at democracy, no legislative assembly. Workers elect a central government body which runs the whole show. ^{But} Socialism never has been tried out on a national scale. The nearest approach was in Vienna after the War. ~~But~~ That ended in a more or less Fascist regime under the late Chancellor Dollfuss. Of course Austrian Fascism is a rather easy-going Austrian affair. ^{Italian} Fascism now enters more positively and absolutely even than before, into full sway throughout Italy.

JAPAN

~~What happened to General Hagood in the good old U.S.A. is~~
~~happening to no fewer than ten generals in the land of the cherry~~
In Japan,
~~blossom.~~ When His Imperial Majesty, the Son of Heaven, shuffles the
cards, he makes a thorough job of it. The Emperor Hirohito has
reshuffled the entire high command of His Imperial army.

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In so doing, he didn't even spare his own right hand man.
The Emperor's chief military aide, General Shigeru Shongo, was
among the ten who received the same orders that War Secretary Dern
sent to General Hagood: "You are relieved of your command and you
will proceed to your home to await further order." Among those was
General Hori, the Commander of the First Division, the division
which started that sanguinary rebellion in Tokyo last month.

But that wasn't all. Twenty-two other generals were
shifted to new commands. Twenty-two find themselves in different
posts, different garrisons.

The interpretation of this is that the Emperor Hirohito
has swept things clean in his military establishment with an
exceedingly new broom. It means, so say the observers, that the
sabre-rattling, bellicose war lords, are in the discard, for the

time being at least. The liberal element in Japan is in the saddle. One consequence of that of course will be a shut-down on any ~~further~~ fresh projects of invasion on the Asiatic mainland. And a further consequence will be less fear of war on the Pacific, a firmer feeling of peace and security.

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So, after all these weeks comes what looks like a definite answer to those Japanese officers who assassinated four Cabinet ministers. For the time being, Japanese expansion is halted.

A characteristic story comes from the Land of the Cherry Blossom. A geography teacher said to one of his pupils: "Togo, what are the boundaries of our sacred fatherland?" And Togo replied: "Excuse me most honorable professor, I have not read today's newspapers."

HAGOOD

Nothing has so stirred United States Army circles in many a year as the Hagood episode. So not only military men but the public in general would be keenly interested to know what happened when Major-General Johnson Hagood boarded President Roosevelt's train on its way to Florida today. Probably only the President himself, and General Hagood know what was said at that much-conjectured interview. Although, naturally, War Secretary Dern must have been informed how his chief proposed to settle that storm in a teacup which ended by becoming a real public tempest.

The rumor is that General Hagood received a kindly panning, an official raking over the coals from his Commander-in-Chief today. But with that comes the welcome information that Hagood is to be restored to duty - three months leave and then back on the job. The rumor further added that he was to be sent to Governor's Island for command of the New York area. That's the post for which he was next in line before that stormy Congressional outburst. And, it's the most coveted command in the country, being next in line to the Chief-of-Staff.

General Hagood will not return to San Antonio, Texas.

The War Department published today an order assigning Major-General Frank Parker to that area.

The new commander of the Texas Army area is a West Pointer. He also served there as an instructor in modern languages. Among other things he's an officer of the French Legion of Honor. In fact, he wears in his dress uniform the ribbon of practically every distinguished order in the gift of the Allied Governments, which is not surprising when you remember that he was in command of the First Division, in France. Later when Marshal Foch came to the United States General Parker was his interpreter and aide-de-camp. He's an old artillery officer and believes that the horse still has a place in a modern army. He last assignment was commander of the Army in the Philippines.

I was at a luncheon given to General Parker and his wife on Sunday by General and Mrs. Bullard. Not a word was said about his new command. Naturally not after the Hagood episode.

ROOSEVELT

That speech which President Roosevelt made in Florida today draws attention to an interesting ~~an~~ experiment in college life. Rollins College, which made the President an honorary Doctor of Literature, and also presented an award to Mrs. Roosevelt, is one of the most unusual seats of learning in the world. Up to Nineteen Twenty-Five, it was just another fresh-water college. But in that year Hamilton Holt, a personal friend of the President's, and former editor of the INDEPENDENT, became ^{the college} ~~the~~ president. The first thing Dr. Holt did was to kick all tradition and all precedent out of the front gate. He ~~believed that the principal fault with most colleges, particularly most American colleges, is size. So~~ The first rule he laid down was, "five hundred students shall be the limit. Two hundred and seventy-five men, two hundred and twenty-five women." ^{Why the 50 extra me I don't know.} The next thing he threw out the window was the old lecture-question system. No marks, no exams. Instead of lectures, they have two-hour conferences. ~~Instructor and students~~ ~~* sit around discussing their subject for a couple of hours. The~~ ~~small number of under-graduates makes it possible to allot one~~

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It doesn't take much imagination to help us realize that the abolition of exams alone endears that place to the undergraduates. But the professors like it too. What the profs like still more is that one of the first things Dr. Holt did was to raise the salaries of the faculty.

All of which is why President Roosevelt described it ~~as~~ with the words, "This experiment might be called a third dimension in education." His Excellency was not in one of his fiery moods today. Some words he said that might be construed into a reply to his critics were: "Growth and progress invariably and inevitably are opposed, bitterly, falsely and blindly opposed." Again he said: "Continued growth is the only evidence of life, stagnation follows standing still."

ADD PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

The White House fishing season is about to open in two ways. The President has gone fishing. And a lot of places are fishing for him. That is, the season when all parts of the country start clamouring for the President to move his Summer White House from his home at Hyde Park in Dutchess County to some other spot, say Greenbriar, West Virginia, or the Black Hills of South Dakota.

But, this time the first two localities to get busy are both in the same state, the two famous New Jersey seashore resorts, Atlantic City, and Asbury Park. Both would like to entertain the President this summer. At any rate, either place would enable the President to come in contact with millions of his fellow countrymen, and at the same time enjoy ocean breezes, salt water taffey and bathing beauty contests to keep his mind off his work.

FLOOD CONTROL

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The newsreel pictures of the floods have shown many amazing and appalling sights. There are few spectacles more dramatic and shocking than those of bridges torn from their piers, whole houses swept away, people clinging to trees and telephone poles, ^{journeying} ~~driving~~ down main streets in boats and launches. As the waters subside, the pictures will show something less spectacular but holding just as grave a menace. For naturally those flood waters have carried everywhere incredible quantities of mud. Millions upon millions of tons of mud! One expert estimates it at two hundred and fifty million tons.

That expert is a government scientist who has been studying the subject for twenty-five years. Fifteen years ago he uttered the ~~re~~ prediction: "Floods before long are going to spread devastation in several states." His name is H.H.Bennett. He is a burly, six foot Tennessean, who has given his entire life to ~~bringing~~ experting soil for Uncle Sam. He used to be with the Department of Agriculture, but is now in the Department of the Interior, as Director of the new Soil Conservation Service.

In his thirty-five years of experience, H.H.Bennett has

made surveys all over the country. From state to state he has gone, looking over the farmlands, particularly where soil erosion was at its worst.

I mention all this as a background for what he has to say of these floods. The biggest part of the damage inflicted in the last five days could have been prevented, says he.

Bennett has had a flood control program that he has been urging upon the heads of the government for fifteen years.

"What about all that mud? What does it mean? Expert Bennett's answer is such as to fill everybody with concern. "That mud," he said, "Is top soil that the rivers have washed off valuable farmlands. And that top soil is irreplaceable, priceless. It took Nature centuries to deposit it at the rate of one inch every four hundred years. And along come the floods and wash it all away in four days."

In that whole stupendous tragedy of the flood has been one ironic thing which is expressed perfectly in that familiar paradoxical line: "Water, water, everywhere, Nor any drop to drink." The poet Coleridge wrote that in the ^{"Rhyme"}~~"line"~~ of the

Ancient Mariner," meaning sea water. But it applies with an even more bitter meaning to flood water. That has been one great danger, the shortage of drinking water -- and the danger

of epidemic that ^{goes with a}~~is~~ flood, ^{if}~~water~~. All of this takes an

especially interesting turn in Pittsburgh. You can imagine what a water shortage means in a great metropolis like that.

The authorities have been facing an acute problem. How to transport enough pure and healthful H₂O for the thirsty. The National Guard has stepped in and has asked the oil companies to lend them some of their big tank trucks - you know, those trucks that transport gasoline along the highways. Of course the oil companies agreed to co-operate -- ~~in~~ already great numbers of their trucks are operating in the service of suffering humanity in the Pittsburgh area.

FLOWER SHOW

I never knew until ^{now}~~today~~ that the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is one of the oldest in the world. It was founded a hundred and seven years ago. It's one hundred and eighth show opened today at the Commerical Museum in Philadelphia. It offers a sight worth traveling a good many miles to see -- thirty thousand pink tulips massed together, thirty thousand pink tulips with white magnolias and white azaleas. Another feature of the show is the exhibit of Acacias from the estate of Joseph E. Widener. Those Acacias are famed the world over, wherever gardeners and flower-lovers congregate.

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COTTON

Some years from now, if you take a drive down south in your car, you may be riding over roads made partly of cotton. It sounds novel. It isn't yet an accomplished fact. But the Cotton Textile Institute informs us that some experiments to that end are going to be made not only in the Carolinas but also in New Jersey.

81/2 The governors of those three states ~~isxpa~~ are planning to apply to Uncle Sam's Bureau of Roads for allotments of cotton fabric membrane. These will be used in building some hundred and forty miles of bituminous surfaced roads, reenforced with the cotton membrane. The Department of Agriculture has set aside one million, three hundred thousand dollars for the purpose. ~~This is not called an experiment but a demonstration. However, if the idea works in the Carolinas and New Jersey, several other states will follow suit. For those hundred and forty miles of surface in New Jersey and the Carolinas alone, the road-makers will use some million, six hundred and fifty square miles of fabric.~~

The thing is not entirely experimental. South Carolina was the pioneer state, tried out a cotton road in Nineteen Twenty-Six.

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It's been tested in Georgia, Mississippi, New Jersey and Texas too. The fabric is put in between the road base and the top surface. Engineers say that it minimizes the upthrust of the base. It is that upthrust, following severe frosts as of last winter, which makes roads buckle as they have in so many parts of the country.

So better roads bring me to the end of tonight's trail - and,

SO LONG UNTIL TOMORROW.