1923-02-09 US NARA M336 Roll 18 pages 653-666 Report of U.S. Embassy in Berlin on situation in Germany

p.664:

The Bavarian situation is an extremely complicated one and just at this moment it is difficult to predict what will result from the Fascist nationalist movement taking place there. The scene takes on new color every day and at present a majority of Bavarians are enemies of the Berlin Government, and a certain number as well in open defiance of the Bavarian Government. The Bavarians are Nationalists in the first place, extremely anti-Semitic in the second, and to a certain extent separationists. At the bottom of a great deal of their hatred of the republican government in Berlin is the anti-Semitic movement. At the bottom of the separationist agitation lies the century old dislike of the Bavarians for the Prussians, which has been sharpened by the power which the Jews have acquired in Berlin as well as the passive and weak policy which the Berlin government has been forced to adopt since the war. Bavaria, however, is economically incapable of separation from the Empire and it has been impossible to find any one who believes that she will attempt to secede. At present the extreme nationalist feeling in Bavaria is taking the form of a Fascist movement called the ‘National-Socialist Labor Party.’ The leader of

[p.665] this extremist organization, Hitler, approached the Bavarian Government with propositions which amounted to reason against the Republic. Following this he attempted to turn Bavaria into an armed camp but energetic measures were taken by the government which declared martial law. He seems to be a man of only ordinary ability and for the present at least, to have failed to accomplish anything, for most branches of the Nationalist Party in Bavaria are deserting his standard and are gathering to the support of the government. However, the situation is extremely dangerous and trouble in Bavaria may surely be expected until such time as the Berlin Government has the strength to assert itself more vigorously.

It is true that there are possibilities and dangers in the present situation which it would be difficult to exaggerate. Local outbreaks are almost sure to occur probably in Bavaria, Hanover, Silesia or East Prussia and there is even a possibility of an attempt at organized warfare, if not against the French in the Ruhr then against the Poles in Silesia or against Czecho-Slovakia. . . .