1923-03-03 US NARA M336 Roll 18 pages 679-686 Report by R.D. Murphy about political situation in Bavaria

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National Socialist German Workmen’s Party (Hitler).

Campaign against Socialism, Profiteers (meaning thereby all Jews), Hunger, Poverty and the Parliamentary system of Government.

If the same amount of agitation, as is today the case in Bavaria, was indulged in and directed against the same objects among a people of more volatile temperament, serious explosions would have long since occurred. At the regular weekly meetings held by Hitler’s organization throughout the state enough sparks are struck to build a nation-wide conflagration but they fall among green timber.

The speakers at the meetings invariably adopt the well-worn tactics of opposing everything that readily arouses popular antagonism, viz., the errors committed by the socialists, the weakness of the government, the ‘Einheitsfront’ fake, the vicious party system, the illusion of Bolshevism, the evils of ‘unearned increment’ and above all the Jews. Upon the hands of the latter are heaped not only the sins of Germany but of the entire world, and to them are attributed the economic woes of the entire people.

The only published platform of the party, a copy of which is transmitted with this report, contains twenty-five planks, but fundamental throughout is opposition to the Jews. To them are accredited the evils of the present financial system and the race is portrayed as a menace to society. The arguments used by the party are far reaching. They endeavor to prove a united Jewish movement for world hegemony using Soviet Russia as an illustration of the first important step. Responsibility for the world war is laid at the Jewish door in the claim that the large Jewish money interests controlled the European situation and desired the disruption of Russia because of its attitude towards the Jews. The war was to be and was actually a source of profit to Jewish profiteers, but the principal aim was the destruction of the then existing order looking to the gradual progress of Jewish universal control.

The present money system and corporation system of business are savagely attacked as a yoke and fetter upon the German people. Hitler’s party demands a publicly owned banking system operated by and in the interest of the people. It does not demand public ownership of other private enterprises or the elimination of the master-servant relation. It imitates the Gandhi movement in advocating retrogression by elimination of the corporation in favor of individual ownership. A reasonable profit is to be granted the owner and the rest distributed to the employees in the form of fair wages. Multitudinous stock-holders – all Jewish – who offer increased dividends and decreased wages are to be entirely dropped.

Socialism is wrong and a cover for Jewish maneuvers. The evil genius of Rathenau has been a moth in the German fabric. The Reichsbank is a purely private and Jewish enterprise busily engaged in undermining the German nation. It is claimed that Jews actually control 80 percent of Germany’s wealth and have systematically manipulated the world situation with a view to plunging the German people into eternal poverty so that Germany which before the war produced 200 percent of its potatoes, 90 percent of its grain and 75 percent of its entire food requirements today is obliged to import 50 percent of its foodstuffs.

The details of the evidence offered in support of these platform arguments in pinning the responsibility for the difficult economic situation on the Jews, Socialism, etc., may be vague and nebulous but are impressed upon listeners, ready to be convinced, by positive expression. Even many members of the middle class, professors, doctors, etc., are ready to believe on an empty stomach that the Jews and socialists are to blame if convincingly told. Such arguments seriously impress the Socialist workman who today receives an average wage of 18,000 marks per day while coffee costs 20,000 marks the pound.

Many Bavarian Jews regard the movement with apprehension. The Jewish War Veterans League as well as the Society of Free Thinkers hold meetings and distribute counteracting literature. At a time recently when the situation looked threatening a leading Munich banker, Jewish but of old Munich family, inquired whether I could safeguard a number of securities for him should a pogrom occur.

For the Department’s information there is also attached a copy of a recently taken photograph of members of the Hitler storm troops (Sturmtruppen) which are estimated at four thousand, showing the Swastika (Hakenkreuz) – the organization’s symbol – as well as the slogan “  
Germany Awake” (Deutschland Erwache). These are all young men who maintain military discipline and drill regularly in the country. They are divided into groups of hundreds, the leader of each of which receives the insignia of a metal star worn on the cap. The colors are red, white and black with the eagle. Members may also wear distinctive arm bands in these colors with Swastika.

The party proposes a united German people including Austrians, Czech nationals who are of German blood, etc., under the dictatorship of a strong man – a Bismark. The official organ of the party is the ‘Völkische Beobachter’ which now appears daily. At the annual convention on January 27th Adolf Hitler was again elected party leader.

Many stories are afloat concerning the source of the party’s funds. As previously reported Henry Ford’s organization is credited with contributions to assist the anti-semitic feature of the movement. Contributions from the French are charged by the Socialists who principally authorize the statement because of the arrest on suspicion of treason and of being a French agent of a Hitler leader (Ludke) recently. He was found in possession of a number of French francs as well as other foreign money. As a matter of fact the organization is not believed oversupplied with funds, and probably most of the money is contributed by Bavarian royalists, some of the larger industrials who look to Hitler’s people for assistance against the Socialist workmen, and the modest subscriptions of middle class sympathizers.

The party is now meeting with the active opposition of both the United socialists and the Bavarian People’s Party.

Black Troops in the Rhineland.

As of possible interest to the Department there is transmitted with this report a sample of the propaganda published at Munich on the subject of the French colored troops in the Rhineland.

The Ruhr Occupation.

Notwithstanding that the Bavarians generally hope against hope that the United States will intervene in Germany’s favor in the Ruhr occupation the following view as expressed by the extremely nationalistic ‘Muenchner Augsburger Abendzeitung’ is probably illustrative of the majority view:

‘There was a time when even Scheidemann and Ebert declared that the Treaty of Versailles must be revised. Dr. Wirth along hit upon the curious idea of the policy of