

FASCIST SIGNS EVERYWHERE

IT IS not necessary for one to be a skilled observer to note the Fascist elements organizing to-day under various disguises throughout the land. The un-American fascist activities of a certain sadist element in the "American" Legion is already too well known and odious to elaborate upon here. The Legion's outrages have stained and re-stained almost every community in the nation and no amount of drum beating and flag waving can ever efface these indelible blotches.

And we are all more or less familiar with this same element in the "Brotherhood" of Elks to stir up the passions of members of that organization into a witch-hunting brigade.

The latest outfit to hoist the Fascist banner to do battle against "subversive influences" in the land is the "Knights" of Columbus, and it is well known that the monumental minds behind all these movements consider all people subver-

sive who have grown tired of expecting the Republican and Democratic parties to do anything about solving the economic problems with which the people of America are sorely afflicted.

The Knights of Columbus are organizing a "Uniformed Patrol" in 21 counties in California, composed of young men between the ages of 18 and 25, for the purpose of "combatting communism and advancing Americanism". This "uniformed" feature of the Knights' new organization is particularly interesting to the American people. It would seem that this is not to be the ordinary brown shirt or black shirt fascism of Italy or Germany. The American fascists would naturally do things in a big way. The Knights, therefore, are going to provide pants for their youthful "Patrol", and maybe a nifty coat, yea, even perhaps a cocked hat! And for all the public knows, the Knights' Patrol may blossom out eventually in the classy splendor of say Kearny's Dragoons of 1846. But on the other hand, they may be rigged up like the Pope's Swiss Guard—you know—with monkey jackets, spears, coal-scuttle bonnets, and a' that. Who knows?

The citizens of Los Angeles are in a lather of excitement over the prospects.

The State Chairman of the new crusaders is Harold Greenbaum! Shades of Israel!—how did this name get among the Knightly Callahans, Shannons, Gilhooleys and O'Flahertys?

According to Mr. Greenbaum in a communication to the Los Angeles *Post-Record* answering the growing criticism leveled at the new "Patrol", his organization is to "promote patriotism and combat communism"—"assist police in directing traffic at times"—"march on public occasions with the Elks, the Shriners, and similar fraternal organizations".

Many will instantly wonder why these patriotic Knights, Elks, Shriners and Legionnaires do not devote their energies toward stamping out American poverty in the midst of plenty but it seems that there is more important business to attend to. One might suppose that the Communists were swarming in great numbers about the streets, tossing bombs promiscuously, and knocking over Catholic Cathedrals and traffic cops with diabolical gusto, and that the Knights' Patrol was organized to establish order even if their new uniforms do get soiled a little in this patriotic endeavor.

Perhaps a few elderly ladies may be frightened by this Knightly furor, keep behind locked doors, and hide their jams and jellies from the communist marauders, but sensible people are having a good laugh at the antics of the Knightly patriots.

Of course, no one expects the pudgy patriarchs behind this movement personally to lead their uniformed youths in "directing traffic" or in forays against the communists. Dear! Dear!! No!!! These elderly men are "executives" and it is the business of executives to work others but not themselves.

Nor is it Fascist etiquette for the real leaders to sally forth

with clubs and guns to save the nation. There is too much exercise in this, too, not to mention some personal hazard. And another thing about the promoters of these un-American activities is that none of them is unemployed or in any manner concerned with the problem of where his next meal is coming from, or worried about the necessities of life for his family.

Gentlemen who promote Fascism are not beset with such mundane trifles. Instead, they are accustomed to all the nice things of life and they mean to keep those advantages even if it is necessary to use European fascist methods to do so while shouting "Americanism" with great fervor.

These men have not been promoters, go-getters and shrewd manipulators all their lives for nothing, and we may depend upon it that their present manipulations of fraternal organizations and the youth of the land is not for the good of America and her people. The real purpose of the Knights' patrol can be accurately determined even before they put on their uniforms.

Should the pea-pickers in the Santa Maria Valley or the lettuce-harvesters in the Imperial Valley demand a semblance of a living wage or protest against any unbearable condition, the Knights' Patrol will probably be on hand with the Legionnaires to beat some "Americanism" into them. One thing is certain, however, and this is that the Knights will not be found helping the working people of America to better their condition. Nor will they be found leading any unemployed groups to relief stations to protest against cuts in their already miserable allowance.

This Knights' Patrol smacks of the ominous "The Klan rides again". The Ku Klux Klan has long been opposed to

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the Knights of Columbus and have called Catholicism a foreign menace to American institutions. But now it would seem that these hereditary enemies have joined their hands together upon the same foreign club of Fascism to cudgel a fancied devil, Communism, from American soil, and this primitive action is called Americanism!

Such a strange union upon this paradoxical platform, under the shield of Americanism, is a fit subject for psychiatrists to explain. But the greatest paradox of all is yet to come.

Should these shortsighted groups eventually produce a Hitler in America, as they surely will if allowed to continue, then we shall see as we now do in Germany, the Catholics and fraternal orders joining hands in brotherly fashion with the Communists to resist the common enemy, Fascism, the monster that would devour them all. Fascism was sprung on the people of Germany and Italy under the cloak of "combatting communism" and then extended to demolish other groups that helped Hitler and Mussolini to gain power.

It speaks well for the intelligence of the citizens of Los Angeles that their many protests have put the new gendarmerie of the Knights of Columbus on the defensive at once.

The real menace in America is not communism but poverty and insecurity in the midst of abundance, and the lawless groups that roam about the land attacking those who must actively protest against social injustice or lie down like submissive animals and starve.

—JOHN PONIARD