

# I MEET A FEW MORE FUEHRERS

By A. B. MAGIL

At 105 S. La Salle Street, Chicago, there is a modest suite of offices occupied by an organization called the American Democratic National Committee. It is neither American, nor democratic (with a small or capital "d"), nor national; it may be a committee. This outfit was launched in Chicago last February and had as its first chairman former Secretary of War Harry Woodring, who was forced to resign in 1940 because of his isolationist views. Among those who also helped midwife the ADNC was Edward R. Burke, who was likewise retired in 1940 (in his case by the voters) as Democratic Senator from Nebraska and is now executive head of the Southern Coal Operators' Association. Burke is a member of the advisory committee of publisher Frank Gannett's Committee for Constitutional Government and of Gannett's Constitution and Free Enterprise Foundation. His passion for constitutional government was amply indicated in 1938 when on the eve of the Munich pact he returned from a trip to Germany and gave an interview which the New York Herald Tribune headlined: "Senator Burke Praises Hitler and Nazis' Rule as He Returns."

The American Democratic National Committee was formed for the avowed purpose of organizing hate-Roosevelt Democrats to block a fourth term. Though Woodring announced that the committee was planning to spend \$1,500,000, by April both the paucity of big business suckers and the singular apathy of the Democratic voters toward the group's aims had so discouraged him that he resigned. An obscure president of an obscure university, Dr. Gleason L. Archer of Suffolk University, Boston, was dredged up to take his place. Shortly after, the fates smiled: the southern electoral college conspiracy was started in Texas and provided the committee with something more substantial in the way of political and financial nourishment than could be attracted by its own windy pronouncements. Though the Republican convention rejected the ADNC's proposal of a coalition Byrd-Bricker ticket, the committee is today part of the coalition of arch-reactionary forces working for the election of Governor Dewey. For this purpose its connections with both the tory sections of the Democratic

Party and the fascist frontiers identified with the GOP are proving valuable.

On a recent trip to Chicago I dropped in at the office of the American Democratic National Committee to interview some of its leaders. For one reason or another I did not until now get around to writing about that visit. Perhaps it is just as well, for on going over my notes I am impressed with the way some of the remarks made to me in the ADNC office, as well as some of the committee's official statements, tally with the ideas in Dewey's campaign speeches. On entering the office I was greeted by a man in shirt sleeves who told me briskly his name was Goodwin. It was in fact the treasurer of the committee, William J. Goodwin of Queens, New York. I introduced myself, mentioning the name of the magazine I represented. He shook my hand warmly. I asked whether I could see Dr. Archer and he at once ushered me into his office. It was evident that Goodwin, a former Democratic district leader in Queens, was of the effusive type whose friendship it is difficult to shake. In fact, instead of leaving me with Dr. Archer, he proceeded to give me his own ideas without any prompting on my part.

"You know," he said, "I think there's a lot of good in Communism, I really do. I don't question your sincerity or motives. If only you people weren't so intolerant. Tolerance is a two-way street—that's my philosophy. I think every one of us ought to get down on our knees and thank God for this country of ours in which we have the right to express our opinions."

Just to be sociable I hinted that I was a believer in tolerance too and represented a very tolerant publication. I mentioned the fact that last year NEW MASSES had arranged a debate between Earl Browder and George Sokolsky. Goodwin's eyes caught fire. "Say, do you think you could arrange something like that for me? I'm willing to debate anybody."

I PROMISED to take it up when I got back to New York and then thought that was an appropriate moment to ask: "Weren't you mentioned in Under Cover, Mr. Goodwin?"

But William J. Goodwin is not the kind that embarrasses easily. "Yes, and

who wasn't?" he replied. "That fellow just took everybody and every group that in some respects was going in the same direction and lumped them all together."

"Under Cover said you were backed by the Christian Front when you ran for mayor of New York on the American Rock Party ticket in 1941."

"Nothing to it," and Goodwin proceeded to tell me about one of his warmest political backers who was of course a Jew.

Goodwin finally left us alone and I was able to talk to Dr. Archer. He is a tall, bald, elderly gentleman, obviously a front for the less respectable politicians and financial angels who run the ADNC.

"Why did Woodring get out?" I asked.

"Well, he was under a good deal of pressure."

"Pressure from whom?"

Dr. Archer gazed into space. "It's hard to tell where the pressure came from," he said enigmatically. "But Mr. Woodring is still subject to the call of the committee."

"What is the purpose of your committee?"

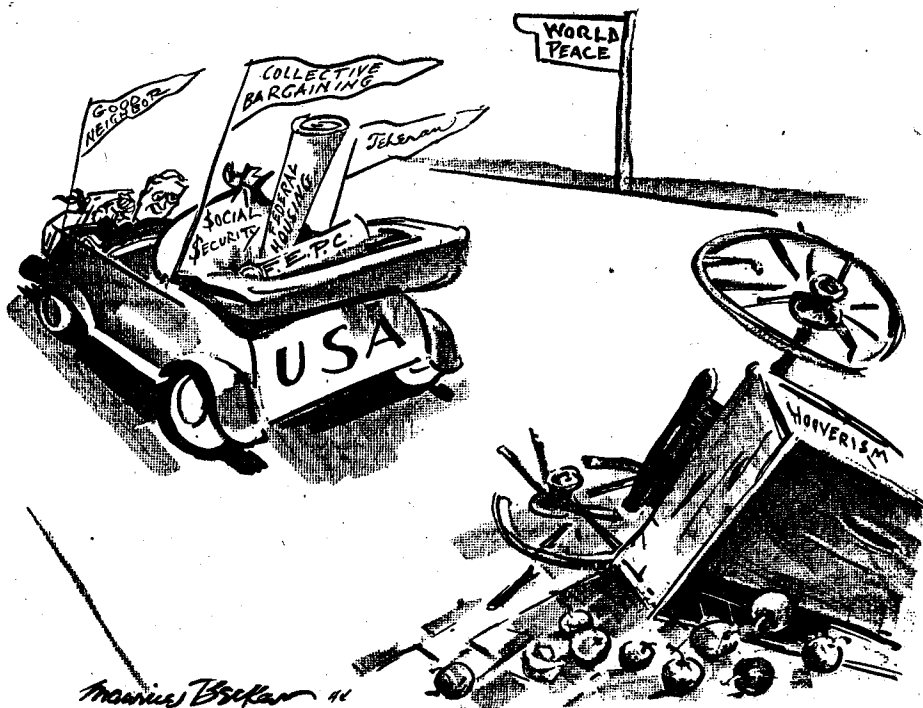
"Our purpose is to defeat the New Deal because we believe the American form of government is productive of more happiness than regimented government. The New Deal stands for regimentation."

"Will you support the Republican candidate?"

"Not necessarily. We may have a candidate of our own." Dr. Archer had evidently "forgotten" a letter that had been sent out over his signature by the American Democratic National Committee less than a month earlier. The letter stated: "The Republican Party is at last in position to challenge this Frankenstein monster. Without the aid of the hitherto unorganized anti-New Deal Democrats, the GOP cannot be certain of victory."

Dr. Archer was rather diffident about the precise relations between his group and the anti-Roosevelt movements in Texas, Louisiana, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Virginia. He admitted, however, that his committee had been working closely with this hate-Roosevelt crowd and that the Republicans were also backing these movements. "I've

October 3, 1944 NM



Maurice Becker, for the Independent Voters Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Roosevelt.

"The entire country testifies to the democratic actions of the Society of Friends of America in its propaganda for anti-fascist principles. All of our activities were developed in public assemblies under the control of the police. We never passed beyond the limit of popularizing the Atlantic Charter and President Roosevelt's four freedoms. Since we acted lawfully and in agreement with popular sentiment and with the official policy of the government, I vehemently protest against this act of violence."

The student group wrote Rabelo: "The battle waged by the society for Brazil's participation in the war and for the principles of Moscow, Teheran, and Cairo and the declaration of the United Nations is the battle of all good Brazilians, among whom the students occupy a vanguard position. The fight continues for the exercise of the most elementary civil liberties until the enemies of the people are reduced to impotence. When associations headed by such men as Rabelo and Aranha are closed by the police, then the fatherland is imperiled and those working for the honor and progress of Brazil endangered."

About the time that the anti-democratic actions were taken in July, Viriato Vargas launched *Brasil-Portugal*, a new daily newspaper. Its basic principles are: (1) The *Estado Novo* is the authentic "sociocratic" regime. What the term means is not explained. (2) Only military forces can save the country. The

newspaper repeatedly states this in language reminiscent of the Argentine regime. (3) Sympathy for the Argentine regime. (4) Opposition to Anglo-Saxon materialist and Protestant penetration. Anglo-Saxon, of course, means mainly the United States, but Viriato is not yet prepared to say so in so many words. (5) Russia is the main danger and an anti-Soviet alliance, composed of the US, Britain, Portugal, and Brazil, is necessary. (6) Brazil and Portugal are of the same "soul" and Portugal is the most civilized nation in Europe—because it too has an *Estado Novo*. (7) The only real danger to Brazil is Communism.

The main collaborators on *Brasil-Portugal* in addition to Viriato Vargas are: Gustavo Barbosa, leading *Integralista* who has been called Brazil's Julius Streicher because of his violent anti-Semitism; Hector Muniz, former editor of a German-subsidized magazine which later proved to be one of the Nazi espionage centers in Brazil (Muniz is now considered DIP's ideological orientator); Jesuit Father Olimpio de Mello, an old-time *Integralista*; Col. Lima Figueredo, former military attache in Tokyo; Cols. Maurel Lobo and Lima Correia, both violently pro-German and anti-Semitic; and Viscount Carnaxide, representative of the Portuguese DIP in Brazil. *Brasil-Portugal* is now busily engaged in a campaign against the Soviet diplomatic representatives in Montevideo with the aim of disrupting diplo-

matic relations between the USSR and Uruguay. A similar campaign led to a break in 1936.

In May 1938, the *Integralistas* tried unsuccessfully to seize the government. News of the impending *coup d'etat* was well known and when it was crushed, its extremist leaders were jailed. Other *Integralista* leaders, however, agreed to support President Vargas and the *Estado Novo* in exchange for key government positions, which they received and the number of which has now increased. "Such a step was also aimed at preventing democratization of the nation. Writing from his exile in Lisbon in September 1942, *Integralista* chieftain Plinio Salgado told his followers: "The *Estado Novo* must be supported because it contains essentially all the points in the *Integralista* program." Another *Integralista* recently said of the *Estado Novo*'s 1937 constitution that it is copied seventy percent from the 1935 Polish constitution of Pilsudski and thirty percent from Mussolini.

A MANIFESTO issued to Argentine army officers on May 3, 1943, a full month before the Colonels' *coup d'etat*, makes interesting reading in connection with the latest developments in Brazil. As reported by *Overseas News Agency*, the manifesto said: "In the northern part of America the role of the leading country will fall for a certain time to the United States. In South America, there are only two nations sufficiently big and strong to undertake leadership—Argentina and Brazil. Paraguay is already with us. We will get Bolivia and Chile. Then it will be easy to exert pressure on Uruguay. These five nations will attract Brazil, due to its type of government and its important group of Germans. Once Brazil has fallen, the South American continent will be ours."

Up to the present Brazil has been largely dependent economically on the United States. Now she is faced with choosing her future course: to form a Rio de Janeiro-Buenos Aires axis or completely to clean out the *Estado Novo*. Two years of an intense campaign for national unity around President Vargas has resulted in the creation in Brazil of a strong democratic and anti-*Integralista* movement. That movement is stronger today, and as a leader of Prestes' *Alianza Nacional Libertadora* puts it: "We will achieve national unity with Vargas, without Vargas or against Vargas." It appears that the last link in the chain is being forged.

written a book which has been used extensively in the South," he said. He thereupon opened a drawer of his desk and took out a copy which he presented to me. It is called *On the Cuff* and was published by Suffolk University Press. The jacket describes the book as "documented, authoritative." The chief documents and authorities cited are those of the Dies Committee. The scholarly doctor particularly asked me to read certain passages which prove in a manner that Doctor Goebbels would regard as more than adequate that Franklin D. Roosevelt is the direct political descendant of Karl Marx. I wondered, irrelevantly perhaps, whether the trustees of Suffolk University had authorized the use of funds for the dissemination of this Berlin-inspired propaganda designed to further the political fortunes of the Republican candidate for President.

I THOUGHT it would be of interest to learn what Dr. Archer thought about the war and the peace. "I want to win the war as quickly as we can and want to see peace maintained," he said. "I believe we should have the same attitude toward our own nation that Joe Stalin has toward Russia and that Churchill has toward Britain. There must be no surrender of American sovereignty." The phrases were a bit shopworn, it is true, but what's good enough for the McCormick-Patterson-Hearst press was evidently good enough for Dr. Archer. "I don't favor a WPA of the world," he went on. "That's what the administration wants." Three months later the Dewey echo resounded at Louisville.

I inquired how he felt about the Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran agreements. "What are the Moscow, Cairo, and Teheran agreements?" he countered. "When three individuals get together in secret conference, the people don't know what they agree on." As between Dewey and Archer, it was difficult to say who was plagiarizing whom.

But don't get the idea that Dr. Archer is a hardshell isolationist. In fact, "I favor the League of Nations type of arrangement. We should work out a compact based on law and not merely on the whims of leaders."

"Would you say that Senator Taft's ideas are what you have in mind?"

"So far as I've heard them, Senator Taft's ideas sound sensible." A little later he lashed out at "alien-minded internationalists who are trying to bring in European ideology in place of American concepts of government."

"Who finances your committee?"

"We are financed by the people. We have no large contributors."

"What would you say is the range of contributions?"

"From one dollar to \$5,000." Then realizing that the latter figure did not jibe with his statement about no large contributors, he added: "We can count the \$5,000 contributors on the fingers of one hand."

"Who is Henry Regnery?"

"He is a Chicago businessman." And though Regnery is listed as a member of the national committee of the American Democratic National Committee, Dr. Archer insisted that he had never met him. While Henry Regnery works with this outfit of nominal Democrats, his father, William H. Regnery, with whom he is associated in business, serves on the national committee of one of Colonel McCormick's pet projects, the Republican Nationalist Revival Committee, which operates among the fascist fringe. The elder Regnery was one of the powers behind the America First Committee. He is chairman of the board of the Central National Bank of Chicago and is president of several window shade manufacturing companies.

"What is the connection of your committee with Father Coughlin?"

"None whatsoever. I have no use for Coughlin's financial ideas."

"Did you know that Mr. Robert M. Harriss, a member of your national committee, was for years closely associated with Coughlin?"

"No, I did not."

Goodwin had come back at this point. "Did you know," I asked Dr. Archer, "that Coughlin has been accused of being a Nazi propagandist?"

"Oh, anybody who's against the New Deal is accused of being a Nazi."

Goodwin broke in with: "Now look, I respect your views and even though I may not agree with some of them, I think we're all working for the same ends; we're only using different methods. But tolerance must be a two-way street. I'm a Christian and a Catholic and it's against my religion to have prejudice against Jews. I don't know anything about Father Coughlin's activities, but I think these charges that he's pro-Nazi or anti-Semitic do a lot of harm."

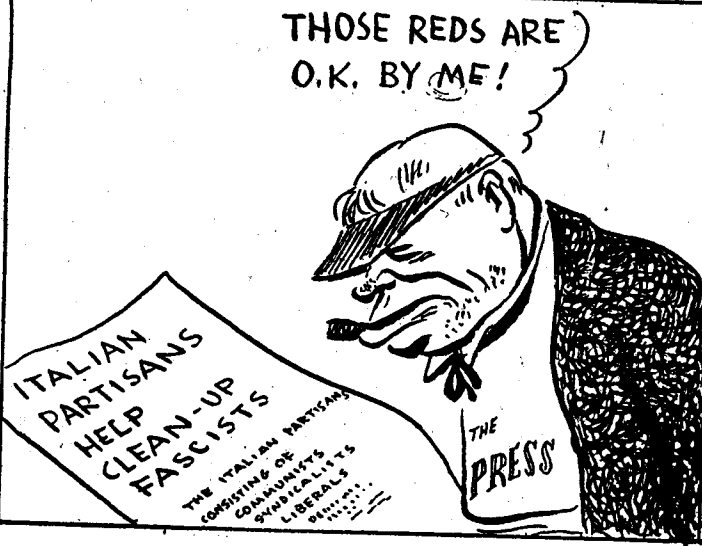
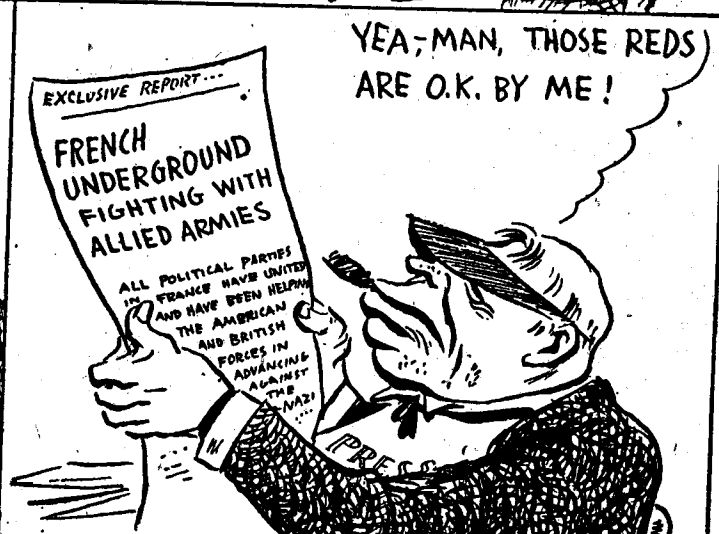
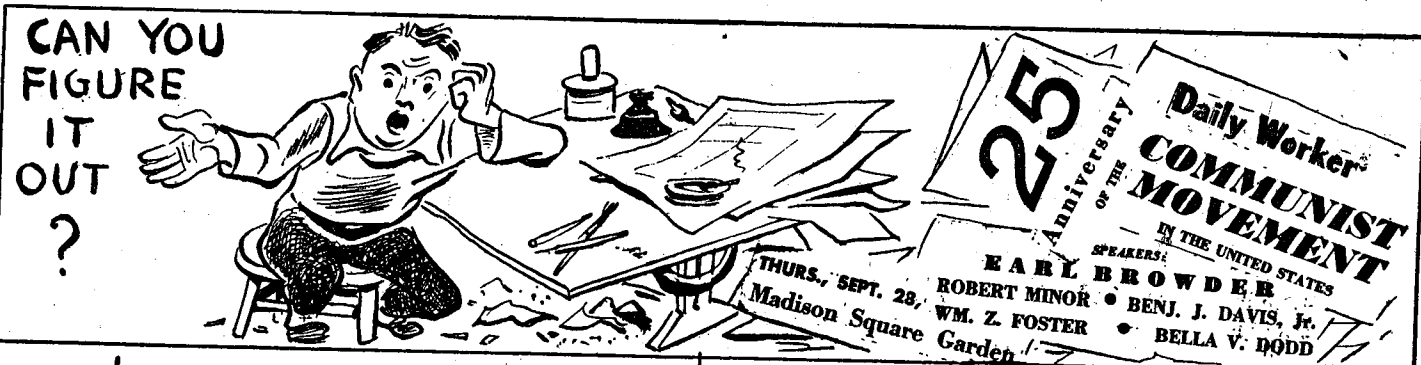
Dr. Archer had another appointment, but the lush Goodwin rhetoric flowed steadily on as we walked into the outer office. "The Jews should be the last people in the world to stir up intolerance. You ought to hear the way people are talking. I get around and I know. As a Christian, it's my duty

to defend the Jews, but you ought to hear the way people are talking. Now suppose I criticized Rabbi Wise, you'd call me anti-Semitic. Why isn't it anti-Catholic to attack Father Coughlin?"

It is curious that a couple of days later, when I interviewed Gerald L. K. Smith and Capt. William J. Grace, head of the Republican Nationalist Revival Committee [see *NEW MASSES* of July 25 for Mr. Magil's account of these interviews] they gave me precisely this argument about Rabbi Wise and Coughlin—at the same time disclaiming, like Goodwin, any knowledge of the Royal Oak fuhrer's present activities. Evidently this is part of the stock-in-trade of our native fascist and anti-Semitic propagandists. I made several valiant attempts to explain to Goodwin why the attacks on Coughlin were not anti-Catholic, but it was like trying to argue with a hurricane. Finally I turned to leave: when in walked a stocky middle-aged man in a brown suit. Goodwin hastened to introduce us. "This is Mr. Harriss—Robert M. Harriss. Meet Mr. Magil of the *NEW MASSES*—I guess his name used to be Weinstein." That was Goodwin's unique way of demonstrating that tolerance must be a two-way street.

Harriss is one of those behind-the-scenes people I've always wanted to meet. A member of the cotton brokerage firm of Harriss & Vose, 60 Beaver Street, New York, it was he who, in company with George LeBlanc, international gold trader, visited Charles E. Coughlin at Royal Oak, Mich., back in October 1932 and persuaded him to take up the crusade for monetary inflation. A few months later when the Committee for the Nation was launched, an organization of industrialists and speculators who sought to profit from inflation, Harriss became one of its leading figures along with Gen. Robert E. Wood, later chairman of the America First Committee. This group was believed to have been closely linked with Coughlin. Throughout the years Harriss has continued to be intimately associated with Coughlin as one of his principal political and financial advisers. And his political interests have led him into other pastures as well. A year ago he attended Frank Gannett's National Food Conference in Chicago and became a member of its continuations committee. (Gannett, according to a recent issue of *Publishers Weekly*, has been a frequent guest at the governor's mansion in Albany.) The pursuit of common objectives has also led Harriss to lend a

(Continued on page 27)



## Meet Some Fuehrers

(Continued from page 14)

helping hand—and checkbook—to the ADNC.

I must confess that Harriss' appearance disappointed me. He did not at all measure up to my conception of what a big-shot, broker and puller of mysterious wires must be like. In fact, he seemed a bit on the seedy side, and his eyes had that glassy look which I associate with a certain type of over-indulgence. He recalled that I had written unkindly of him in the past. I acknowledged I had written unkindly even if truthfully. For some reason which I couldn't fathom Harriss was eager to have a heart-to-heart talk with me. Since all the offices were occupied, we went into the corridor and stood near the elevator talking. For some fifteen minutes Harriss engaged me in earnest discourse. Since he pleaded with me not to quote him, I can only say that during most of those fifteen minutes he sought to persuade me that Charles E. Coughlin—about whose current activities he of course had no knowledge—was not, oh, most certainly not an anti-Semite or a Nazi sympathizer.

Perhaps I'm of a congenitally suspicious nature. Perhaps when genial Bill Goodwin makes cracks about people whose names used to be Weinstein (even when they didn't used to be), I ought to take it as good, clean, honest fun. And perhaps I shouldn't let a small matter like his having been sponsored by the Christian Front outweigh his own solid assurances that he is a friend of the Jews and a champion of tolerance. And maybe that gentle soul, Dr. Gleason L. Archer, is really one of nature's noblemen even though nature copied most of his intellectual physiognomy from something picked up on the Wilhelmstrasse. And perhaps generous Bob Harriss is a patriot after all even though he has fluttered around so much that smells of fascism. And the fact that these three gentlemen and others like them are working so hard to send to the White House an earnest young man now residing in Albany, N. Y. is perhaps just more evidence of the bedrock Americanism, liberalism, and integrity of the things that Governor Dewey stands for in this election.