

Portugal Shields Nazi Cash; Bare Poll as Window Dressing

26 X 45 Daily Worker



Dictator Antonio d'Oliveira Salazar of Portugal, smugly seated at his desk behind a photograph of his late friend and partner, Benito Mussolini (see arrow).

By HELEN SIMON

Impressive sums of German money have found refuge in dictator Antonio d'Oliveira Salazar's Portugal, it was charged yesterday. A considerable number of Nazi German firms were established in Portugal just before V-E Day, the Portuguese American Committee for Democracy also revealed.

"Most scandalous incident in connection with the Nazi cache in Portugal," a Committee statement said, "is that reportedly involving Ricardo Espirito Santo, head of the notorious bank of the same name."

The Portuguese banker and his wife were recently arrested in France when they crossed the Swiss frontier "carrying veritable fortunes in French currency reportedly obtained during German occupation of France and owned by Nazi clients." Salazar's Minister to France, posting a \$1,000,000 bond, botained Senor Ricardo's release.

Collateral holdings of \$600,000,000, reported in the Bank of Portugal, are moreover "constituted by now worthless bills of exchange accepted through the clearing arrangement with the Axis countries before their

defeat. This transaction would substantiate the belief widespread in Portugal that the said sum constituted Salazar's contribution to the Axis war effort.

With these persisting links to the defeated Axis likely to arouse world sentiment for a United Nations break with Portugal, Salazar has undertaken to put out new democratic window dressing.

Early this month he dissolved the corporate "National Assembly" and offered "free" elections on Nov. 13.

This apparent about-face is more than balanced, the Committee pointed out, by a threat made by Salazar's Interior Minister, Major Moniz, that violence would be used to keep the opposition from winning.

As soon as Salazar granted free assembly to the opposition thousands of Portuguese democrats gathered in Lisbon and throughout the country. Resolutions demanded postponement of the elections for six months to allow for an election campaign; restoration of free speech and press untrammelled by Gestapo or censorship; immediate release of political prisoners from the Terrafal Concentration Camp off the west coast of Africa.

Diario Popular, outstanding Lisbon daily which had the temerity to support these democratic demands, was immediately suppressed. Salazar's airy promises proved worthless, stringent censorship was reestablished.

The Committee wonders why the

democratic opposition to Salazar also seems to have been banned from the U.S. press. Although news agencies carried a report of the Nov. 9 mass meeting, this was never printed.

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