

Von Papen Points the Way in Germany

By LUDWIG LORE

Papen's much discussed speech is more than a vent for his personal misgivings over the course steered by the Hitler government. After more than a year in the National Socialist Cabinet in which his individuality was completely eclipsed, he now speaks once more for the group he truly represents. Von Papen had become the floor-walker of the Nazi regime. It was his job to cover up with the placating suavity of the trained diplomat, the crudities of German fascism. The

Chancellor appreciated the services of this smooth and facile Westphalian aristocrat and industrialist.

A million and a half were spent for the monumental palace on No. 1 Voss Strasse which house the Vice Chancellor and his official mail box. For it is Franz Von Papen's outstanding function to be the recipient for all complaints against the Hitler regime. He is permitted to open the endless stream of letters from the Steel Helmet, German Nationalist and

Centrist sources and to send out mildly assuaging epistles to their indignant authors. Not one of these protests ever comes to Hitler's ears and nothing is done about them. Papen's bureau has developed the art of soothing malcontents to such a degree of efficiency that his elimination from the Cabinet would have been felt as a real loss by the Ministerial roughnecks. His ineffectual efforts to maintain amicable relations with Rome and his dummy-commissionership of Germany's in-

eed?

4. How much would I get under a worker's government?

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terests in the Saar are other aspects of his wide and varied usefulness.

Von Papen's Role

Why was Papen satisfied to play this secondary, largely decorative role? Because he still hoped to safeguard the interests of the group he represents by boring from within the Nazi government. He is the voice that speaks for the great industrialists and for the semi-industrialist-landed aristocracy which have abandoned their passive resistance for open

hammer and sickle. The ceremony is not pleasant, but I have heard that it is very powerful.

Fraternally,

LOUIS BREIER

opposition to National Socialist rule. The collapse of Germany's political economy, its shutting down on imports, its decision to forbid the importation of raw materials in quantities sufficient to guarantee uninterrupted production and last but not least the threatening mark inflation have persuaded them that the time has come to send their faithful servant into the list to break a lance with their Nazi opponents.

To those who know von Papen's
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Von Papen Talk Shows Fascist Rift

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political history it was clear from the start that this time-serving weakling was acting as the agent and spokesman of others. Left to himself the Vice Chancellor would never have had the courage to throw the gauntlet to the National Socialist government. That President Hindenburg sent him a congratulatory telegram on the day after his speech, gave the answer to the riddle. Hindenburg and the German Nationalist clique behind them together with the industrialist group had given the signal for attack and did as he was asked.

The Chasm Grows

Had this been otherwise Hitler would have accepted Papen's resignation on the following day. That he permitted him to remain in office and went to Neudeck on the following day to discuss the situation with the President proves that the National Socialist regime feels its strength seriously endangered. Germany's finances are in extremely bad shape. Its foreign credit is nil. The last word in the moratorium has not been spoken, and it is more than likely that Schacht will have to come to terms with Germany's creditors after all.

The economic position of the masses is becoming worse from week to week. The awakening which expressed itself so emphatically in the recent shop elections is making itself felt all along the line. Terrorist justice and death and prison sentences are a sign of weakness not of strength of the fascist government. The peasants are dissatisfied, the middle class feels that it has been cheated and even the SA, the Brown Army of the Nazis, is becoming more unreliable from day to day.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that the German Nationalists and monarchists should believe that the time for action has come. Hitler and his followers will try to cover up the rift as best they can, will make an effort to minimize the differences between them. But the chasm will grow. Fascism offers no cure for capitalist ills—that the German people will learn to understand—not this month or next, but after a few more years of needless suffering.