

Portugal's Blue-Shirt Fascism



When It Comes to a Matter of Shirts

The British taxpayer has nothing to worry about.

—“The Bulletin” (Glasgow).

BLACK SHIRTS IN ITALY, Brown Shirts in Hitlerite Germany—and now comes a new imitator in Portugal's Blue-Shirt Fascist movement known as National Syndicalism.

Meanwhile, the British taxpayer, according to the sentiment indicated in the accompanying cartoon, has to be content with wooden haberdashery.

Portugal's Fascism is described by a Lisbon correspondent of the *London Morning Post* as a blend of Hitlerite Fascism and of Mussolini Fascism. Because it is called the National Syndicalist movement it must not be confused with the Red Syndicalism of Spain. Its leader is Dr. Rolao Preto, who is said to bear a personal resemblance to Hitler.

IN a country governed by a military dictatorship, whose armed patrols cover its entire area twice in twenty-four hours, and where a strictly enforced censorship prevails, Leader Preto had to have not only powers of adroit manipulation but also friends in high places. Both these requisites he possesses, according to the *London New Statesman and Nation*, which points out:

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"The manual workers have been won over by the choice of the Blue Shirt, the thunder of the Communists has been stolen by the adoption of the Red Flag, the blessing of the Church obtained by the superimposition of the White Cross, and the moneyed classes assured that National Syndicalism, as the new movement is called, will 'erect a strong dam against Communism, Socialism, and other influences subversive of the present social order.'

"Rolao Preto is a personal friend of Senhor Oliveira Salazar, the Prime Minister. He has promised the Government that should the call come to sweep away those who are plotting against the maintenance of order he can place at the disposal of the President 5,000 blue-shirted champions. As to what the real program of the party is, that remains for the moment largely hidden beneath a sparkling crust of rhetoric."

Explaining the aims of Portugal's National Syndicalism, Senhor José de Almeida Carvalho, editor of Leader Preto's newspaper, *Revolucão*, tells us that it is—

"A movement of opinions and ideas toward a more just and equitable social organization.

"We aim at substituting the principle of liberty of work by a system of 'harmony of direction' under which capital, technical knowledge, and labor will cooperate under the protective care of the State in the maximum productive return for the welfare of the nation."

THE Portuguese Blue-Shirt movement bears certain family resemblances to Italian Fascism, yet Senhor Carvalho emphasizes the point that "whereas both those movements inculcate the worship of the 'Kaiser State,' National Syndicalism, based on the traditional Christianity of the Portuguese people, has worked out a formula which permits us to harmonize the sovereignty of the State with the moral dignity of free and spiritual entities."

This claim leads *The New Statesman and Nation* to wonder what the outcome of Portugal's new development may be, altho for the moment everything seems to go pleasantly. Still it asks:

"But what if the Syndicalists want Syndicalism? Like the Burghers of Hamelin, the Carmona Cabinet has given permission to the Pied Piper to slay the rats of Communism.

"But if the children, too, are to be led off at his heels into the uncertain paths of National Syndicalism, the Piper may be sent to cool his heels across the sea, following the tracks of the old navigators to Africa in that delectable colony where so many promising advocates of change in Portugal are eating out their hearts in exile."