NAZISM'S *Last Stand*

BY EDWARD TOMLINSON

Chief pride of Chief pride of Argentina's strong-arm governors is their Nazilike army, here shown on parade shown on parade. Note similarity of helmets and uniforms to German equipment

Just back from South America, Collier's correspondent reports on totalitarian government in Argentina, its link to Hitlerism, and what to do to guard our future security

HITLERISM has already prepared the bulwarks behind which *it* hopes to make a last stand in defense of its ideas in the Americas. The totalitarian doctrine, spawned and spread by the Axis powers, has not only taken root, but is flourishing in Argentina. Worse still, the breezes of nationalism are blowing its seeds to other parts of the continent.

We have the word of the military rulers in Argentina to confirm this. Colonel Juan Domingo Peron, who, in the manner of Mussolini in his heyday, occupies several of the ministries of his own government, as well as the office of vice-president, and may, before this is published, become president, openly declares it. In a recent address at the University of La Plata, the pompous colonel announced that it makes no difference to him or to his country whether the Axis or the Allies win the war. He further said that there is no other way in which Argentina can achieve its destiny except by becoming a totalitarian state.

The military extremists now in power, of whom Peron is the present spokesman and strong man, not only plan to perpetuate themselves and their doctrines, but they already dominate the entire life—material, spiritual and political—of the far-southern nation. The military dominates the schools of the nation from kindergarten to graduation. With what frail humor is still left among the regular teachers and professors, the common remark at the close of a school day is, "Class dismissed until tomorrow," and then, under the breath, "or until a colonel takes over my chair."

The fanatically nationalist Minister of Justice and Education, Alberto Baldrich, is organizing the primary and secondary schools of the country after the old-time Hitler and Mussolini ideas. In speeches and propaganda, in the press and over the radio, Señor Baldrich commands the youngsters of the country to cultivate the ideal of living dangerously. He tells them they must keep always before them the fact that the greatest glory of a citizen is to be willing to die for his state.

In the field of organized labor, where, as in Germany and Italy, the roots of democracy and liberty had reposed in the past, the military is also dominant and complete. When Colonel Peron occupies his chair as Minister of Labor, he exhorts the workers to protect the national sovereignty, to keep watch on foreign enterprise, as well as on designing foreigners, and to co-operate exclusively with the state.

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"You have been exploited," he tells them, "by these alien employers and owners of foreign enterprises—the Yankee-owned packing companies, automobile-assembly plants and other firms.

"All the best minds of the nation," he counsels them, "each one in the field connected with his own activities, should strive to know war, to study and to understand it, as the only way of reaching a complete solution of the problem that may be presented to us at any time, and which we shall have to resolve, if some day God should decide that the clarion call of war must resound on the banks of the Rio de la Plata."

Meantime, he has seen to it that competition or opposition is at least kept at a minimum, by insisting upon a single union to each trade or craft—the single union organized by himself. To soothe any sense of lost political or public influence upon the part of the workers, wages have been hiked, rents lowered, and prices of the necessities of life slashed.

"Some say," the colonel observes, "that this is following the policy of Nazism. All I can say is: If the Nazis did this, they had the right idea."

The national congress, provincial legislatures and city councils have been abolished. Governors and mayors are appointed by the national cabinet. All political parties or groups, all civic welfare organizations, male or female, have been taken over or disbanded by order of the state. The press, the radio, all agencies of information and opinion have been completely throttled. Nothing may or can be published that does not accord with the expressed wish and will of the government. The great La Prensa, La Nación and other metropolitan dailies, for fifty years the freest and most independent newspapers in the world, may not print a sentence that criticizes the persons or parties in power, or that praises the ideas and successes of the United Nations. Yet such pro-Axis sheets as the Federalist (formerly the notorious Pampero), the Cabildo and numerous others may denounce the United States and England and praise the Germans and the Japs, not only

Gen. Edelmiro Farrell is president of Argentina, but takes orders from Peron

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Fritz Mandel, Austrian munitions magnate, now does big business in Argentina

Juan Peron is the real boss who molds the state to a Nazi design

without fear of opposition, but with the tacit blessing of the Casa Rosada.

Governmental officials subscribe openly to the Nazi philosophy that all business and industry should exist for the exclusive purposes of the state. They not only preach, but are proceeding to carry out this philosophy. All foreign (and especially United States and Allied) business concerns and industries are harassed daily. Several companies have been expropriated outright. They include the newly remodeled branch of the American and Foreign Power Company in the northern city of Tucumán, the large British-owned Primitiva Gas Company in the city of Buenos Aires, and others. In many instances, their managers and directors have been prosecuted and some imprisoned.

Bill Reese, for twenty years head of an American and Foreign Power Company branch, was recently arrested, along with Dave Matson, the chief engineer, and held in jail, without charges.

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When I mentioned the arrests of Reese and Matson, and the expropriation of United States companies, to one of the enthusiastic supporters of the present Argentine regime now visiting in the United States, he hastened to explain that the much more formidable and valuable European-controlled power companies in Buenos Aires had been treated in like manner. Several of their managers had been arrested, held in jail or sent to prison. But he overlooked the significant fact that most of the directors and investors in those companies were Frenchmen or Belgians and citizens of other nations still under the heel of the Nazis.

The Argentine government has harbored spies and saboteurs. Colonel Frederic Wolf, the Himmler of the German Embassy and the latest director of the real Nazi spy ring, remained in Buenos Aires until quite recently. Our military forces have plenty of evidence that Allied ships have been sunk, and American lives have been destroyed as a result of information broadcast from Argentina to U-boat commanders. Although Argentina subscribed to the resolution of the Rio Foreign Ministers Conference of 1942, calling for a break in diplomatic relations with the Axis, she clung to Berlin and Tokyo for over two years, after all her neighbors had severed relations.

A Transplanted Munitions King

Argentina has traded and trafficked with Germany through Spain. Her armament program has been placed in the hands of the notorious Fritz Mandel, former Austrian munitions king, who moved quietly to Argentina at the time of the Austrian annexation, with his fortune apparently intact. Today Mandel owns and controls three factories in Argentina devoted entirely to the manufacture of machines of war.

They are the Impa Aeronautica, which turns out monoplanes and gliders, and Impa Central and Impa San Martin, which produce bicycles and motorcycles for infantrymen, vehicles for transporting light war equipment, and various other war materials. Mandel's companies are all subsidiaries of the Impa Corporation, which he recently organized with joint Argentine government and private Argentine capital.

The Argentine rulers have furnished asylum to Nazi-inspired Yankee baiters from other countries. Doctor Arnulfo Arias, the Nazi stooge who, as president of Panama, tried to set up a Fascist state on the very banks of the Canal, now lives comfortably in the city of Buenos Aires.

Axis penetration of the pampa country is of long standing. I saw the first evidences, the first fruits of Nazism on the Rio de la Plata in 1936 and 1937. German agents and organizers were already far along in their plans. Their ultimate ambitions were clear, even if their methods changed from time to time. They were first interested in building trade and commerce to feed and foster the monster machine at home. In the thirties, German factories and trading companies set

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