

HITLER SUSPENDS REICH GUARANTEES; LEFT PRESS BANNED

**Emergency Decree to Combat
'Communist Terror' Voids
Constitutional Safeguards.**

CURB ON STATES PROVIDED

**Berlin to Seize the Executive
Power in Any Failing to
'Restore Law and Order.'**

ALL RED PAPERS BARRED

**Prussian Socialist Organs Also
Suppressed as Aftermath of
the Reichstag Blaze.**

By FREDERICK T. BIRCHALL.

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

BERLIN, Feb. 28.—Last night's fire, which rendered the Reichstag building untenable for at least a year, has provided the expected basis for measures of repression throughout the Reich unprecedented save in time of war or revolution.

An emergency decree signed by President von Hindenburg and published tonight suspended all constitutional articles guaranteeing private property, personal liberty, freedom of the press, secrecy of postal communications and the right to hold meetings and form associations.

The decree also authorized the government of the Reich to seize executive power in any German State whose government failed to take "the necessary measures for the restoration of law and order."

All the Communist newspapers throughout Germany and all Socialist papers throughout Prussia were suppressed today until after the Reichstag elections next Sunday and all suspected Communist meeting places were closed. Even the issue of the Socialist Vorwärts printed early this morning was confiscated before it reached the street.

Reds and Pacifists Jailed.

Some 130 known Communists and pacifists were gathered in by the police, subjected to severe questioning and detained for an indefinite period. They include five Reichstag members alleged to have been seen in or near the building shortly before the fire.

Throughout the day the police and Nazi "auxiliary police" have swarmed everywhere. Along Unter den Linden and the Wilhelmstrasse and in the neighborhood of the Reichstag the police are carrying rifles and armored cars are patrolling the whole of Berlin.

The Nazi and Nationalist newspapers in headlines, news and editorials inveigh against the "Red terror" and issue the direst warnings against it. Chancellor Hitler himself is quoted as remarking, "Now you can see what Germany and Europe have to look for from communism."

Nothing is being left unsaid and undone to arouse a wave of popular hysteria in advance of Sunday's elections.

That this is having its effect was indicated at the University of Berlin today, where Nazi and Nationalist students insisted on the removal of all newspapers having the faintest tinge of liberalism, including the Boersen-Courier and the Tageblatt and Vossische Zeitung groups, from the university reading room, leaving only the extreme Nazi and Nationalist organs. And they had their way.

Yet it is only in such publications

Continued on Page Eleven.

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Continued from Page One.

as the students ousted that the faintest suggestion of restraint and common sense is traceable at this juncture. Several of them in varying forms suggest that as the Socialist newspapers are being silenced it is only fair to say that the party should be absolved of the Reichstag outrage, since the German Socialists have always been respecters of public property.

Elsewhere the tendency is unchecked to make this act of violence, as one Socialist remarked bitterly, "just a bigger and better Zinovieff letter" [the publication of which played a large part in the overthrow of the first MacDonald government in Great Britain in 1924].

In the meantime the shabby, undersized Hollander who is the sole evidence of the source of the incendiarism to which the fire can be attributed, is undergoing hourly grilling at Police Headquarters. From papers in his pockets he has been identified as a stonemason from Leyden, as having been the ring-leader of local disturbances there and as being ostensibly on his way to Russia.

When he appeared at the frontier a few days ago the German police, not liking his looks, turned him back, but he succeeded in getting here, nevertheless. To all inquiries he is said to reply with a silly laugh, and he is telling nothing.

Which, therefore, leaves still open such pertinent questions as why a Communist intent on serious crime should carry his Communist card and other papers rendering him easily identifiable as such in his pocket; who his confederates were and how, if they resembled him, they all succeeded in entering so well-guarded a building as the Reichstag; how they were able to carry in with them the quantities of inflammable material—now said to have included petrol—with which the fire was started in a dozen places, and how it came about that they were so patently disregarding the well-known tenet of the Moscow leaders that individual acts of terrorism are useless, the best principle being first to attain power and then to apply a real terror of wholesale proportions.

Regardless of these unanswered questions, bearing so directly upon the stupidity of the German Communists in thus playing into Nazi hands the official versions of the outrage,—which under the present conditions of suppression and reticence are the only versions obtainable—charge openly that it is the direct result of recent orders from

Moscow to attempt a Bolshevik revolution at the earliest possible moment, or at least create widespread unrest throughout the Reich.

It is charged that the German Communist press has reflected this intention, hence the wholesale suspensions. And chemists are "examining the debris of the fire for traces of combustible chemicals" and are also taking fingerprints.

However, while Berlin is thus in the throes of anti-Communist hysteria, Bavaria and the rest of South Germany, quite regardless of what the Nazi organ here describes as "this flaming signal to the nation," are occupied solely with carnival merrymaking, and from the Rhineland comes the encouraging intelligence that the present carnival season has been the banner one of all time throughout that region.