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WHITHER BRITAIN? EXTRAVAGANZA SHOWS SELECTED

Shortly after his departure for Germany at the end of 1937, the suggestion was made that Lord Halifax was going to see Goering, not merely to swap hunting yarns, but perhaps to swap colonial claims for a free hand in central Europe. This aroused a rather comic storm of protest in the press, but the fact remained that on the statesman's return, official pronouncements were made to the effect that the mission "had not proved fruitless." In view of the hearty acclamation with which the Nazi press greeted the appointment of Halifax to the control of the "peace" mission it is not difficult to guess the tendency of the talks; and judging by subsequent events, such as the recent Nazi coup in Austria, Hitler's threats to Czecho-Slovakia which he now no longer even pretends to conceal, and Britain's apparent unconcern in face of both, it seems far from fantastic to suppose that the Fascist drive to the East and the snaring of game in Central Europe formed the subject of at least one of the yarns.

Then with appalling suddenness Mr. Anthony Eden's resignation comes as a bolt from the red white and blue. The next step after Germany was Italy, but unfortunately for Mr. Chamberlain, the goodwill mission to Italy did not proceed as smoothly or as far as that of Lord Halifax.

There have long been those who claimed that the contradictions involved in the foreign policy of the Conservative Cabinet must ultimately show themselves; but there can have been very few who foresaw how sharply and suddenly that state of affairs would arise.

Lord Halifax and his mission and Mr. Anthony Eden and his resignation show clearly what those contradictions are.

Since 1933 the British Government has been faced with the unwelcome presence of nations who were at once both a threat to the undisturbed possession of the British Empire, and an attempt to prolong the already over-ripe old age of the Capitalist order of society; whose desperate recklessness was a constant embarrassment and whose debts were alpine. Three solutions were possible.

Either H.M. British Government might by judicious negotiation and political prestidigitation sacrifice parts of the British Empire to the land hunger of Fascism and thus ensure its continuance; or it might, from within the League of Nations, shoulder its full joint responsibility with the other democracies in resisting fascist aggression, thus hastening its inevitable collapse; or it might search for a lamb to lead to the slaughter.

THE NEW DIPLOMACY

The first possibility was unpleasant, but a possibility; the second was definitely unthinkable; for what social order would be more likely to follow the collapse of Fascism than some socialist order? This is, and always will be, anathema for the British Conservative Party.

The third was a more likely possibility and there can be little doubt that this is the task towards which the best efforts of British diplomacy have been directed over the recent months, from the time Lord Halifax left London for Berlin, up to the recent Cabinet split.

After all, British diplomacy has long been concerned to weaken the link between France and the U.S.S.R., and little though our diplomats like the prospect of German expansion to the East—the prevention of which was one of the main things which brought Britain into the last war—they may well regard it as the least of the evils with which they are faced today. Given that the League idea of settling disputes on the basis of justice is discarded—and it seems it is—diplomacy must necessarily be concerned with tactful arrangements for the sacrifice of the weak to the strong.

It was upon the question of the choice between the first and third alternatives that the Cabinet split.

According to Mr. Anthony Eden's view the time had come to call a halt in the process of bolstering up Fascism. The Spanish war had taught him a lot. The "life line to India" via the Mediterranean was directly threatened by Germany at Gibraltar, and at the Red Sea by Italy's African Empire. There must be no more sops to Cerberus, and the time had come for a showdown with the unruly debtors, regardless of the consequence. The maintenance of the integrity of the British Empire demanded it. The possible result of such a showdown—nothing less than the collapse of Fascism—was to Mr. Chamberlain, unthinkable. This divergence of opinion had grown more marked as the days went by and the progress of the Spanish War showed the Imperialist ambitions of the Fascist powers in Spain. The question which had to be faced was how far was Britain willing to let them go. Mr. Eden said "No further." Mr. Chamberlain hasn't made up his mind yet.

The issues stand clear. Mr. Eden refuses to sacrifice the British Empire to Fascism. Mr. Chamberlain regards the benefits of the continuance of Fascism, or rather the avoidance of Socialism, as greater than dangers to the British Empire it involves. You can still draw dividends from half a British Empire; but you couldn't draw dividends in a Socialist Britain. Better half a loaf than no bread.

Mr. Chamberlain had his way. The changeover is complete. Lord Halifax has supplanted Mr. Eden. The pro-Fascist elements are temporarily well seated in the saddle. The question which concerns you and me is, where will they turn the horse's head? Towards Geneva, or towards Berlin-Rome-Tokio?

The Cabinet re-shuffle contains several possibilities. At first it appeared that the issue of Fascism or the British Empire might be a wedge which would cleave the Conservative Party in two. It appears, however, that the self-styled champions of individualism and freedom of thought have no tears to shed at the loss of one whose opinions differ from theirs, and the possibility of a serious split within the party is disappointingly small.

The effect on the electorate, however, is more problematical and it remains to be seen how far the enormous propaganda resources of our rulers will be successful in overcoming the natural indignation of a hoodwinked electorate which elected the party to power on the assumption that the League of Nations and Collective Security would be the foundation of British foreign policy.

The general opinion, no doubt, will be that instead of telling Halifax to go to Hitler, Hitler should be told to go to Halifax.

—A.H.S.

Mr. Agar, Organiser of this year's Extravaganza, when approached by "Salient's" representative, announced that the Selection Committee, after carefully perusing the various shows submitted, had chosen the following for this year's "Cappicade":—

1. "A Banned Item," a curtain-raiser by Ronald L. Meek.
2. "Adam Baba and the Forty Leagues," a Satire by The Seven Pillars of Wisdom.
3. "Port Nick Iniquity," an Interlewd by John Carrad.
4. "Olympian Nights," or "The Wisdom of the Gods," an Extravaganza by Ronald L. Meek.

Mr. Agar said that the shows this year are all of a particularly high standard, overshadowing all previous Extravaganzas. As there are to be no examinations in the last three weeks of the term, it is an ideal opportunity for everybody. Freshers included, to take an active part in Capping festivities, not only in the Extravaganza but also in any work connected with Capping. If anyone questions the opportunities for enjoying oneself in these activities, let him consult anyone who has participated in them for the last few years.

"Cappicade" will run for four nights, commencing on Saturday, May 7th. Preliminary meetings will be proclaimed on the Notice Boards. So—get busy!

"Salient" hopes to divulge further details of this year's shows next week.

"Salient" Points

1. The staff desire to print all letters and articles in their manuscript form with a minimum of alteration. Would all students who do not wish to have their copy sub-edited please leave a phone number with which we can communicate? Unless this is done we cannot show that consideration for your opinions we would like to.
2. All contributions must be written on one side of the paper and on sizable sheets.
3. All articles, etc., must be signed or under a pseudonym. The paper accepts no responsibility for signed articles.
4. Some letters in this issue have had to be abridged. We want to adhere strictly to the policy of printing contributions unaltered. Would correspondents help us by restricting letters to 300 words?
5. The staff requests that contributors place the approximate number of words on any copy they send in.

N. Z. U. S. A. A STATEMENT

Association Headquarters are in Norwich Chambers, 153-155 Featherston Street, Wellington, C.I.

The Executive has under consideration the following:—

- (a) Negro Debating Tour of New Zealand in 1938.
 - (b) Australian Athletic Tour of New Zealand in 1938-39.
 - (c) Scheme for insurance of students' health and also of their books, personal effects and instruments.
 - (d) Scheme for cheaper sale of text books.
 - (e) A general investigation into employment of graduates and undergraduates.
 - (f) The question of reductions for students in fares, freights, etc., on New Zealand railways.
 - (g) Standardisation of the fees charged by the N.Z.U. for degrees.
- Two ways in which students can get more than their money's worth out of N.Z.U.S.A. are:—

(1) By demanding information (by personal interview, phone, letter or telegram) from our Information Bureau, which is qualified to give you advice on any phase of N.Z.U. life or even overseas information. If we haven't got it on tap then we will promptly get it for you. We have our secret sources.

(2) By obtaining from us before you go overseas a C.I.E. Identity Card, which entitles you to whatever concessions in fares, hotel tariffs, etc., are going for students in other countries. The N.Z.U.S.A. exists solely for the benefit of students, and will only go out of existence for two reasons. Firstly, it will close down if it finds that there is nothing it can do to further students' interests.

Secondly, the Association will go out of existence if students don't support it. If we fail for this reason it won't be our fault.

Authorities on N.Z.U.S.A. at V.U.C. are Helen Maysmor, Simpson, Christensen or Agar. Consult them for further information.

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