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Dr. Wilhelm Hoegner-Cabinet. - Communist activities.

Mann, Erika

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Dr. Wilhelm Hoegner, the new Minister President of Bavaria, ~~gave~~ held his initial press conference this morning. It was a refreshing and encouraging experience to meet with the man who, though fully aware of the intricacy of his position, feels confident of ultimate success.

Hoegner, the first refugee to hold a high public office in Bavaria, returned from Switzerland on June 6th, 1945. After the blood bath of June 30th 1933 he had fled Germany to continue his fight against Nazism from without. He has been a member of the Social Democratic Party since 1908 and a militant anti-Nazi from the very beginning. As a deputy in the Bavarian diet and, later, as a member of the Reichstag he missed no opportunity to denounce Hitlerism. Rightly dreaded by the "Fuehrer" and his gang, he figured high on the Nazi death list. In an order for his arrest which Heydrich, the hangman, then ~~X~~ Himmler's right hand man in the Munich *gestapo* police, issued early in 1933, he was flatteringly characterized as "the bitterest foe of National Socialism".

Hoegner saw more clearly than most Germans where Hitler would lead his country. On the eve of the fatal Reichstag elections of March 5th 1933, he delivered his last speech in Germany. "The fires of joy inflamed by National Socialism", he said, "will leave but ashes for the German people."

Hoegner, a self-made man (he was born as son of a Munich station master, 58 years ago), speaks with utter sincerity. Unlike his predecessor, the cagy Herr Schaeffer, he dodged none of the questions with which a score of reporters bombarded him for one hour and twenty minutes. Asked what he considered the most urgent tasks before him,

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he named these three:

- 1.) Punishment of all Nazi criminals who have thus far evaded prosecution.
- 2.) Aid to the surviving victims of Nazism.
- 3.) The promotion of democratic principles, for the sake of which, even prior to any elections, something like a small parliament ought to be established.

In forming his cabinet Dr. Hoegner will seek to include members of the three parties at present active in Bavaria. He feels confident that the liberal wing of the Bavarian People's Party will agree to cooperate. The Communists, too, will be approached. As for his own party, he believes, that - for the first time in its history - it might gain a majority in Bavaria. Elections, he hopes, will be held next spring.

Noting that the reOeducation of youth was, of course, essential, he advocated an entirely fresh start.

"You cannot", he declared, "compel a teacher today to teach the ~~o~~ precise opposite of what he taught yesterday. What we want are uncompromised men and women of character. Learnedness can be acquired and is at present of secondary importance."

This, he stated, was true in every field of life. De-nazification and de-militarisation ^{are} ~~hhh~~ imperative, even if they interfere, temporarily, with efficiency.

Questioned as to whether he favoured the re-opening of the confessional (catholic) schools, which in pre-Hitlerian Bavaria were run by the state, he replied in the negative. "The church", he ~~hhhd~~ observed, "should not be granted political power. Its mission is to practise active christianity - not

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politics."

Nazism, according to Dr. Hoegner, is dead and, if buried properly, will never revive. For some years to come, former party members should not be permitted to vote, although between 15 and 20 % of the total electorate would thus be eliminated. While it was true that an alarming amount of looting was going on all over Bavaria, he did not think that the armed bands who were ravaging the country consisted mainly of S.S. men. A short time ago no less than 1300 organized attacks on farm houses and country inns had been reported. The German police ^{were} ~~was~~ numerically weak; until recently they had not been permitted to carry arms and the culprits - simple criminals many of them - had mostly escaped. Though during the winter their number was likely to increase, they would be driven by the cold from their woody hideouts into the cities where they would be easier to catch.

When Dr. Hoegner, a lawyer by profession and since his return head of something resembling a provisional Department of Justice, ^{yesterday} came home from an inspection tour of Northern Bavaria, he found himself appointed Minister President.

To his mind - a reporter wanted to know - was a man sacrificing his political future by accepting a position from the hands of Military Government?

He looked utterly astonished. "On the contrary" he said, "those of us who know anything at all, realize that the closest cooperation with the occupying power is a vital necessity. Whether or not my government will survive the occupation, depends on many a factor."

For the moment, at any rate, Dr. Hoegner appears to be a fortunate selection. Most observers agree that with his appointment Bavaria has been given a chance. end article. beginning message hhh
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HYDE

Dr. Wilhelm Hoegner, the new Minister President of Bavaria, hopes to announce the composition of his cabinet tomorrow, exactly one week after his own appointment. Hoegner, a social democrat, has invited both, the Christian social Union (formerly Bavarian people's party), and the communist party to participate in the government. A fourth party - the democratic - is split in itself and is not at present ready to operate.

In an exclusive interview, granted this correspondent, Dr. Hoegner stated that he expects the eight Bavarian Ministries to be occupied as follows: Besides contributing the Minister President who will also be Minister of Justice, the Social democrates will furnish the ministers of Labour, Economics and Finance. The Ministries of education and of food and agriculture will go to the Christian Social Union, while the Ministry of the Interior will be headed by a Communist. Each Minister will be joined by one Counselor of State. The Communists, who will send counselors to the Ministries of economics and of food and agriculture, will be assisted in the Ministry of the Interior by a Social Democratic Counselor.

coalition
The formation of the cabinet was no easy task. Concessions had to be made by all parties. The Christian Unionists in particular found a communistic Minister of the Interior hard to swallow. The Social Democrates on the other hand must have hesitated to yield the Ministry of Education to the Christian Social Union. In its fight for political power the Church rightly considers the souls of youth a primary objective. By winning the Ministry of Education the catholic clergy have won an important battle.

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It seems though, as if the Social Democrats, too, had made ~~hhh~~ significant gains - not only in the government. Dr. Hoegner was happy to note that ~~the powerful peasants' union had gained him~~ ^{SOCIALIST} his administration enjoyed the backing of the powerful peasants' Union. This morning a peasants' delegation ~~had~~ ^{HAVE} come to town to assure the Minister President of their Loyalty. "This development," said Dr. Hoegner, ^{JS} ~~was~~ as novel as it ^{JS} ~~was~~ encouraging."

Meanwhile communistic activities are wide spread. In Munich a ~~campaign~~^{CAMPAIGN} is under way to turn the victims of de-nazification into members of the party. No sooner has a former Nazi lost his position, than he finds himself ~~approached~~ approached by the comrades. A green card, shoved into his mailbox, conveys the following invitation:

"Join the communist party, the only one that can save you now".

An employment agency, controlled by the city administration and run by Herr Amtmann Herberger, a communist official, would seem to serve similar purposes. Here former Nazis, purged by Military Government, are provided with jobs. Though they do not by any means need to be members of the party, they may be moved by gratitude and wisdom to join its ranks. end article

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