

FEATURES AND NEWS FROM BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

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(Incorporated: Information Service of Free Czechoslovakia)

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Edited by J. Josten

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MOSCOW SHAPING ITS FOREMOST SATELLITE

by Josef Josten

(I) Soon after the Prague coup a cartoon appeared in the western press showing a thug clad in black dragging a helpless woman by her hair along a street. The thug was Communism and the woman was Czechoslovakia. The world's reaction was personified by a man whose face, the globe, had a bewildered expression. Turning to the onlooker, said the thug: "See? She insists on coming with me."

The overthrow of the democratic regime was branded in no uncertain terms in a diplomatic document issued 24 hours after the coup. Published simultaneously in Washington, London, and Paris, this stated: "The Governments of the United States, Great Britain and France have followed with attention the recent course of events in Czechoslovakia which jeopardized the very existence of the principles of liberty to which all democratic nations are attached."

"They declare that, thanks to a crisis artificially and deliberately provoked, certain methods already exploited elsewhere have been used to bring about suspension of free parliamentary institutions and the establishment of a disguised dictatorship of a single party under the cloak of a Government of National Union."

"They can only condemn the development the consequences of which must surely be disastrous to the Czechoslovak people, who again proved, during the sufferings of a Second World War, their devotion to the cause of liberty."

IN THE FACE OF FAILURE, THEY GAMBLLED AND WON THE PUTSCH Though much has been written of the technique of the coup de Prague, little seems to have been said about the struggle fought to avert the disaster, which was to no small extent precipitated by agreements arrived at during the war, when the western powers woefully underestimated their own, and overestimated Soviet, strength. The belated "liberation" of Prague by the Red Army after the armistice, when the spearhead of General Patton's army had retreated from the suburbs and some 3,000 people died in an uprising which made it free, was just one of the consequences of these agreements. Not until both Soviet and U.S. liberation forces had cleared out of Czechoslovakia in December, 1945, was the Red Army's political threat most blatantly shown. This was on the eve of the first postwar elections. On Saturday, May 29, 1946, it was announced that Soviet occupation forces in Austria would be relieved. The Red Army stated that the change necessitated the use of roads and railways on Czechoslovak territory! Dr. Benes protested in Moscow. The move was postponed, but the shadow of the Red Army hung over the country on polling day. Countless examples record how Prague Comrades, many of them trained in Moscow, made 38% of the population vote Communist. As soon as the voting was over a slogan went out: "New time 51% - at least!"

As the May 1948 elections approached there seemed little fear of a Bolshevik gain. Now began the events that were to become "the lesson of Czechoslovakia", which taught the free world the difference between a political party and an organised conspiracy. Summer 1947 saw thousands of western visitors in Prague. Jan Masaryk joked to the many western participants at the World Congress of the International Organisation of Journalists: "Now go and see for yourself. If you strike an Iron Curtain anywhere, give me a ring and I will come and have a look at it." He had no calls. A few weeks later, the Government, which had a democratic majority, decided unanimously, with the Communists in agreement, to accept the invitation to the Marshall Plan talks in Paris, a decision which was welcomed throughout the world.

A couple of days afterwards a Prague Government delegation summoned to the Kremlin was ordered by Stalin personally to revoke the decision. Jan Masaryk commented to his friends: "I went to Moscow as Foreign Minister of a free country, but returned a slave."

The shock over Moscow's instructions with regard to the Marshall Plan brought the only possible reaction in Prague. The Communists lost some of their popular support. They therefore resorted to intimidation, a line which was alien to Czechoslovak politics. They sent bomb parcels to Dr. Zenkl, leader of the Benes Socialist Party, to Jan Masaryk, the Foreign Minister, and to Dr. Drtina, the courageous Minister of Justice. The last two, with Gottwald, were members of the delegation to Moscow: evidently they knew too much. The parcels were detected and rendered harmless. When a Gallup poll was taken early in 1948 publication of the results was banned by the Communist controlled Ministries of Information and Interior, for they showed a sharp fall in the Communist vote! The democrats were preparing for the elections, and the Communists for the overthrow of the democratic regime.

JUGOSLAVIA ON THE SCENE The timing of the coup was precipitated by events elsewhere. Stalin knew of the forthcoming showdown with Tito. In Prague it meant: now or never! The D Day was fixed, and a man was nominated to see the Prague Comrades through their ordeal.

Thanks to Marshal Tito we know now that a Cominform meeting took place in Moscow on 10th February (See page 325, "Tito Speaks") at which the former Soviet Ambassador in Prague,

Valerian Alexandrovitch ZORIN, was suddenly promoted to be among the top six of the USSR - Stalin, Molotov, Malenkov, Zhdanov, Suslav and Zorin: a move of which the outer world knew practically nothing. A week later Zorin was on his way to Prague, which in another week saw the death of democracy. Soon afterwards, Tito's breach from USSR became a clear fact.

If this break with Yugoslavia had come first, there would not have been a coup in Prague; at least, not without Red Army intervention. But the Czechoslovak putsch saved two other countries from turning Communist: Italy, where events in Prague turned the scale in the spring, 1948, elections, and Finland.

THE STEAMROLLER During the actual coup the democrats were isolated and their opposition rendered ineffective. The President was not allowed to broadcast to the nation, though a talk by him had already been announced. Party Secretariats were raided by the Communist-controlled police and handed over to the "action committees" composed of traitors. The supply of newsprint to non-Communist papers was cut so as to destroy the last means of communication with the public. It was with the police force, which had been first neutralised and then impregnated with Communist elements, that the crisis in fact began. A protest by democrats in the Government against Communist infiltration into the police was ignored. 12 Ministers tendered their resignation to the President in the hope of bringing about the fall of the Government and the hastening of the elections. What happened was that the minority who had effective power in the state made outlaws of the majority and carried out a perfect police coup.

In the Army, before those in command had a chance to consider a possible course of action, 25 Generals known to be democratic were sacked.

There were only two instances of real opposition. One was a student demonstration that assembled about 10,000 people and marched to the castle of Prague to offer their support to the President. The second was an appeal by the courageous Primate, Archbishop Beran. He wrote an article which escaped the attention of the Censors and appeared in two daily papers, the non-party "Lidove Noviny" and the Catholic "Lidove Listy." The message was a moving one. The Archbishop began by stating that he had received an anonymous letter which said: "Do not remain silent, Archbishop. You must not be silent!" He continued: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin...." (St. John, XV, 22.) And so he spoke: "I have not betrayed, and I shall not betray, my people. I know how to suffer", obviously referring to his wartime experiences in a Nazi concentration camp.

The appeal continued: "I swear to you by the dear blood shed by our brothers and sisters in concentration camps and prisons. For the sake of the tears and pain of Czech women and mothers, awake! I know that you do not want to provoke fratricidal combat, but this is not the way to avoid it. Think of our responsibility!... Do not destroy the heritage of the President Liberator (Masaryk) and President Constructor (Benes)!... Ingratitude is painful, and ingratitude is punished by interdict!"

THE FATE OF DR. BENES The wisdom of certain supreme state acts by Dr. Benes is still disputed. He did not ask his nation to commit suicide or to bleed herself to death at the time of Munich. He went to Moscow in 1945 and it was an achievement that he was allowed to return home at all. He did not order the Army to arrest the Gottwald gang in February and finish them off. He did not do any of the things a man might have done, had he had the courage to act unconstitutionally. In September, 1947, Dr. Benes said to one of his Ministers, Dr. Jaroslav Stransky, now an exile in Britain: "If the Communists want a civil war, if we have to creep on all fours I shall call upon Sokols, Legionaries, and everyone else, and they can have it!" This could have been taken as a call to arms when later the emergency arose. But were the Sokols, the Legionaries, the democratic political parties, prepared for such a call?

In February 1948 the ailing, tired and partly paralysed Dr. Benes once again gave way to reason. He remembered the answer given in the USA by President Truman to Jan Masaryk in November 1947, when the possibility of a Communist attempt to gain control of the state was discussed. Czechoslovakia could not count on more than moral help in the event of an emergency, even if Soviet intervention was inevitable. So Benes, under strong pressure, hoping to avoid bloodshed and fearing intervention by the Soviet Army covering nine-tenths of Czechoslovakia's borders, signed the acceptance of the new Government as appointed by Gottwald. He then rebelled against his own decision. He left his official seat, Prague Castle, and never returned to it again before his death. He came back to Prague on two occasions only: for the funeral of Jan Masaryk and for the meeting commemorating the 600th anniversary of the foundation of Charles University in Prague. There he read and signed a proclamation renewing the foundation charter, to which he gave this introduction:

"Although the order and justice of the world secures and protects the truth, nevertheless truth is neglected, disturbed or oppressed, and evil appears which overturns the human race...."

Dr. Benes then began to prepare his resignation: his final revolt, which took place on June 7th, 1948. He met a premature death on September 3rd of the same year.

The "New York Times" gave voice to the feelings of all free people in saying: "The western world can only bow its head in sympathy not unmixed with shame. For Benes was a patriot who manoeuvred as skilfully as any man could to save the liberty of his people, and we all bear a share of the responsibility for his tragedy and theirs."

"The Times", London, stated: "His niche in the temple of fame is secure both for his triumphs and for his failures. His achievement was great, but history knows perhaps no greater tragedy than that a man should liberate his country twice and then lose it."

(to be continued next week)

(II) INTERLUDE IN THE UNITED NATIONS - AN UNFINISHED CHAPTER

Jan Masaryk's mysterious death was the signal for an action by Dr. Jan Papanek, Ambassador delegate to the U.N. Through him, with the help of the Chilean Government which was a member of the Security Council the coup de Prague was presented as an act of Soviet interference with Czechoslovakia's internal affairs. So strong was the evidence in the case, which occupied the Security Council for a great number of meetings, that a U.N. Commission was planned to investigate the matter. The plan was hampered by Mr. Gromyko, at that time Soviet delegate to the Security Council, who applied a "double veto." But things did not end there, for France, like the United States and the United Kingdom, promised to help the Council to get round the Soviet veto by providing it with statements from reliable witnesses now on their territories. It is in this respect that revelation by Marshal Tito of Soviet plans against Czechoslovakia could provide enough material to reopen the case.

Looking back on this incident and seeking a historical analogy one cannot help thinking of Manchuria in the days of the Japanese invasion, of Abyssinia or of Spain. And then indeed the only conclusion is: If Red aggression had been arrested in Czechoslovakia, would the Korean war ever have begun?

The words of Ambassador Tingfu F. Tsiang, at that time President of the Security Council, have been borne in upon the world by subsequent experience. He said on March 31, 1948: "If the accusations contained in the letter of the Chilean representative should be found to be true, the world might as well face the crisis to-day, rather than two, three or five years later. More delay in facing realities does not help."

THE IRON CURTAIN CLAMPS DOWN It was then that the Iron Curtain truly descended on the last border, where hitherto the door between east and west had been considered still not yet completely shut. It affected the life of over 12 million Czechoslovaks deeply and tragically. By now some 50,000 have penetrated through the Iron Curtain to liberty. 90% of those still in CSR would go too, if they could.

In 1948-50 the country was riddled with underground organisations. Hardly a day passed without one or more of them being discovered, crushed and tried by the ever tightening police regime. The papers at one time were full of those trials. Groups of people received total sentences of several hundred years' hard labour, and so many have died that Prague has been described as the most bloodthirsty capital behind the Iron Curtain.

Then monster trials followed: of clergy, of politicians connected with the previous regime, of the press and diplomacy - all branded as enemies of the people's democratic order and spies in the pay of the west. For the first time in the history of the Republic a woman, Dr. Milada Horakova, a former Deputy, was hanged for the crime of refusing to support the new regime. Archbishop Beran escaped trial only because of the fact that Gottwald himself had bestowed upon him the highest decorations for his patriotism and courage during the war. But he was forcibly removed from his diocese and he has been kept ever since at a secret place of captivity. At the trial of W. N. Oatis, chief of the Associated Press office in Prague, the whole staff of the western press were branded as spies, and some 25 Czechs received long prison sentences. Indeed, most of the Prague foreign diplomatic corps was mentioned at the trial as spies.

REVOLUTION DEVOURS ITS OWN CHILDREN

In autumn, 1949, the first big purge began in the Communists' own ranks. Among the victims were first the press chiefs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Evzen Klinger) and the Ministry of Information (Dr. Kosta.) Vilem Novy, the Editor of "Rude Pravo", the Party's central organ, followed. The purge spread in the Czech Foreign Office and while Foreign Minister Clementis was attending the U.N. session in New York, the western press suggested that he also was a marked man. He lasted only three months after his return, and was then made to resign. Within 12 months he was under arrest. This fate fell also to the Under Secretary for Foreign Trade, Evzen Loebl. The purge also affected the Party's Secretariat, where Deputy Mrs. Marie Svermova, wife of the late Communist national hero, Jan Sverma, was arrested, together with Deputy Otto Sling, known as the "Gauleiter" of the province of Moravia. Five prominent regional Secretaries of the Party joined them, followed by two deputy Ministers of National Defence, one of Foreign Affairs, another Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, of Security and the "Eminence grise" of the Party, Bedrich Geminder. Finally the man hitherto described as second to Gottwald himself, Rudolf Slansky, was declared a western spy! There was a similar purge, followed by arrests, in Slovakia. The Slansky trial is still too much in everyone's mind to need recollection. But one thing should be stressed: Slansky and his alleged accomplices in anti-state activities were tried for sins that President Gottwald had himself committed. He, not Slansky, co-operated with the "reactionaries" in the so-called Government of the National Front. It was he who coined the phrase, "Czechoslovakia will go its own specific way towards Socialism, not necessarily via Moscow." It was Gottwald, not Slansky, who agreed to CSR's participation in the Marshall Plan, and who was last of all the satellite leaders to make a statement condemning TITO, while Slansky acted by way of prosecutor at the Cominform meeting. For all that comprises Gottwald's deviation, Slansky had to die. With him died many of those who were Moscow's most obliging tools.

SOVIETISATION CSR has the same forced labour system (the names and locations of some 175 camps, with about 300,000 inmates, are known in the west) and the same Stakhanovite shock-work campaign goes on. People have to work in voluntary brigades in their spare time, and they learn Russian in hundreds of thousands. In administration, in the Army and in economic life and industry, everything is being run on the Soviet pattern. Many Russian expressions are introduced into the language. This is a natural result of the fact that Prague's Soviet

Institute has the monopoly for the publication of scientific literature. Soviet or Cominform organs have Czech and Slovak editions, and 75% of newly published books are either by Soviet authors or deal with Marx-Leninist subjects. The same goes for films and, of course, broadcasts. Intellectual oppression is absolute.

In 1953, it has been officially announced, the volume of CSR's foreign trade with the people's democratic countries will reach 79% of the total. This is directed by Soviet experts, who see that the remaining 21% concerns either the bringing in from the west of raw material necessary for the execution of Soviet orders, or deliveries to "under-developed countries" of the non-Soviet orbit, which can be used for furthering the aims of Soviet and local Communist propaganda.

Upon Soviet insistence, CSR has undergone what amounts to a major industrial revolution, although she has always been highly industrialised. Her light industries, firmly established and some branches of which were famous, have been abandoned, and the nuclear heavy industrial plants, by no means insignificant even before Soviet interference, are being developed into industrial giants out of all proportion to the country's needs and wishes. A new steel combine developed in the region of Kosice, in Eastern Slovakia, has neither coal nor iron ore nor any established system of communication. When completed, it is boasted, Slovakia's output of steel per head will surpass that of Great Britain!

Industrial changes of this nature have not been without profound effect on other branches of national economy. With the heavy claim on additional labour came the reorganisation of agriculture, which is being completely collectivised, in the expectation that work on large collectivised landstrips with increased mechanisation will free labour for the industrial plants.

CSR being a country ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the worker, according to Communist arguments, needs no other protection of his interests, for there is no one left to harm, exploit and misuse him. Leaders in the Trades Unions (Labour Unions) are identical with members of the Government. In fact, the supreme employer, the former Minister of Heavy Industry, is now head of the Trades Unions, whose only task is to see that the results expected by the Five Year Plan are achieved and even surpassed.

There is no one to strike against, so there are no strikes. There is no one against whom to make wage claims, so there are none. Payment in kind is described as a remnant of the old capitalist system, so it has been abandoned. This was done first "voluntarily" by about 15% of the benefactors. Then it was stated that these patriotic workers would be at a disadvantage as compared to the less patriotic ones who wished to maintain the old system, so the Government simply ordered its complete abolition.

ALL GOES WELL The best example showing how smoothly a "happy" country in the Soviet orbit can be run is the organisation of state security and its police forces. Besides the Ministry of National Defence with its military police, there is a Ministry of State Security with uniformed and plain clothes police. It has a special task force co-operating with the army in guarding the western borders against people escaping from the people's democratic order. Both are aided by workers militia in industrial centres and by armed police detachments of citizens in rural areas. To protect the interests of the people's government in industry and state economy there is a special Ministry of State Control, which provides an elaborate network of industrial police with agents attached to each industrial plant, administrative office, large store and kolkhose. Even with all this, it would still be difficult for the security or economic police to control the citizen's private life. So the combined Nazi-Soviet system of "housetrustees" was adopted.

THE FATE OF THOSE WHO WOULD NOT LISTEN TO THE ARCHBISHOP'S WARNING Five years have passed since the coup. Its main architects were men from the C.P. Secretariat: Rudolf Slansky, the Secretary General, his deputy Bedrich, Reicin, Chief of the Army Secret Service, and Josef Smrkovsky, the man who put the armed workers militia on its feet. The first three have been hanged; Smrkovsky is in prison awaiting trial as a "traitor."

From the new Government which came into power in February 1948 with 24 members, including the Prime Minister, Klement Gottwald, four are dead: Clementis was hanged, Jan Masaryk committed suicide within a fortnight, and two, Srobar and Petr, are said to have met a natural death. One member, Dr. J. Sevcik, is under arrest; three were dismissed: General Svoboda (Defence), Dr. A. Gregor (Foreign Trade) and E. Erban (Welfare). One is in exile: B. Lausman, the former chairman of the Social Democratic Party. Five lost office, but were upgraded to the position of deputy premiers (as was Slansky for a time): V. Siroky is out of the Foreign Ministry, Z. Nejedly lost the Ministry of Education, Z. Fierlinger the Ministry of Industry. V. Kopecky's Ministry of Information was dissolved, and J. Dolansky lost charge of the Finances and Planning Office.

One is tempted now to look upon the latest Government set up in February 1953, which has a Premier, nine deputy premiers and 35 Ministers - almost as many as in the USSR - as a body to provide enough scapegoats for all possible failures to come.

HOW EFFECTIVE CAN IT BE? The official report received from Prague in February has shown that all that is being done is no guarantee against failures. The 1952 overall output plan was fulfilled by 98.5%. But one reads in "Rude Pravo" that the housewife cannot obtain kitchen saucepans to hold less than, say, ten pints, for factories concentrate on producing larger sizes because in this way the planned output, measured by the weight of finished goods, is easier to achieve.

It is admitted that there is a shortage of almost all daily necessities. In December railway transport reached a chaotic state, not owing to the weather but purely to incompetence and sabotage.

(FCI)

MOSCOW SHAPING ITS FOREMOST SATELLITE continued

(20.2.53)

But the new order has apparently affected animal production as well. January milk production supplied only 68.6% of the planned milk output, and egg deliveries are even lower. An official comment stressed that this was due to "no fault of the hens."

THE HARDEST LOT IS THAT OF YOUTH In the creation of state labour reserves composed of young people of school-leaving age, the regime has introduced a system of directed labour which with the target set at 300,000 will absorb most young people whose future has not previously been settled. Their lot as the young generation is the hardest for some time. Turned against their "old fashioned" parents, conscripted in the Communist "pioneer" movement set up on the example of the Soviet Komsomol in the place of scouting and guiding, and educated on falsified history and in disregard to religious teaching, they cannot but be completely subservient to the Party and to the teaching of doctrinaire Marx-Leninism. A most shocking but by no means isolated example was provided during the trial of the Slansky group, when the son of the accused Ludvik Frejka was said to have demanded in a letter to the court capital punishment for his father. With the full impact of the teaching of class and even racial hatred, the pain of the whole nation is most acute in the progressing tragedy of its younger generation. A gloomy outlook indeed for the future.

J. Josten

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Not to be released before February 21st, 8.p.m.

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL BERNARD GRIFFIN, ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER, HAS SENT TO THE INFORMATION SERVICE OF FREE CZECHOSLOVAKIA, LONDON, THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO MARK THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRACY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA:

(FCI, London) "Archbishop's House, Westminster, London, S.W.1." - "It is increasingly realised that the main bulwark against Communism in Eastern Europe is the Catholic Church. Indeed, the suppression of the Church and its leaders by direct persecution is a regular and important part of the process by which Communism secures control of the State. Time and time again we have seen how Communists have trumped up charges against members of the Hierarchy in order to remove them from the position in which they can influence directly the people entrusted to their pastoral care. Occasionally, trials which are but a mockery of justice are staged, but these now fail to convince the outside world and it is noticeable that, in the case of Czechoslovakia, the Archbishop of Prague has never been tried. It would be difficult to try, as an enemy of the State, a hero who was awarded the highest honours by his native land only a few years ago.

"But because the Church suffers persecution it need not be imagined that it is forgotten by the lovers of democracy in other parts of the world. Indeed, so far as the Catholic Church is concerned this is far from the case. We are all members of the mystical Body of Christ and when one member suffers, the other members of the Church suffer with it. The Catholics of Czechoslovakia and all those in that unfortunate country now under the heel of Communism are not forgotten in our prayers and our endeavours for peace and freedom. At the great International Eucharistic Congress in Barcelona last May frequent remembrance was given to those behind the iron curtain unable to participate in this immense act of worship. Now, in His Holiness the Pope, by elevating the Archbishop of Zagreb to the Sacred College, has given fresh recognition to the persecuted Church identified in him.

"I have personal and happy memories of meeting Archbishop Beran in Prague shortly before the Communist coup. He was a man of faith and of courage and his enforced silence is eloquent in appeal for our prayers. We pray for him and for all the priests, nuns and laity now suffering persecution. We pray that the scourge of persecution may soon be lifted from Czechoslovakia, and that Almighty God may give strength to you all in your time of trial."

(signed) + B. Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster.

(79/FCI)

WASHINGTON, LONDON AND PARIS, February 26th 1948 (A DOCUMENT)

"The Governments of the United States, Great Britain and France have followed with attention the recent course of events in Czechoslovakia which jeopardized the very existence of the principles of liberty to which all democratic nations are attached.

"They declare that, thanks to a crisis artificially and deliberately provoked, certain methods already exploited elsewhere have been used to bring about suspension of free parliamentary institutions and the establishment of a disguised dictatorship of a single party under the cloak of a Government of National Union.

"They can only condemn the development the consequences of which must surely be disastrous to the Czechoslovak people, who again proved, during the sufferings of a Second World War, their devotion to the cause of liberty."

(80/FCI)

(FCI)

PRESCRIBED RANGE FOR RADIO LISTENERS

(20.2.53)

(Prague, -FCI) CSR's radio industry is attempting to construct a receiver which would allow listeners to tune in to only a selected number of stations. At the same time the development of rediffusion centres continues. Such listening centres are being exported in large numbers to China. (81/DrM)

ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR NEO-NAZI AGGRESSIVE AND IMPERIALIST AIMS

(Prague, -FCI) In an article published by "Rude Pravo" ("Red Right") called "Israel, the Base for American Imperialism", J. Sedivy writes: "According to an agreement on reparations, the World Zionist organisation will receive 450 million West German marks from the neo-Nazis in Bonn. In reality it is further support for the neo-Nazis and their aggressive imperialist aims. It further confirms Zionist co-operation with the Nazi hangmen, who killed millions of people of Jewish origin."

The article asserts that "Israel is a new base for the war against the USSR and a tool in the fight against the liberation aims of Arabs in the Near and Middle East." (82/RP)

HENS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR BAD PRODUCTION

(Prague, -FCI) The Party's central organ, "Rude Pravo", is much concerned about the collapse in the egg supply. It reports:

"In January the nationwide plan for egg production was fulfilled by 76.2%; in the Czech provinces by 83.7% and in Slovakia by only 53.4%. The yield in Plzen is 59.2%. Banská Bystrica, (the town which won fame as the centre of the Slovak uprising during the war) is lowest of all: only 38.4% of the quota! (Tradition?) "Someone might suggest," writes "Rude Pravo", that hens cannot be expected to lay so well in January, but that cannot affect the fulfilment of the plan...." (83/RD/OD)

CHANGE IN EXPORT OF PERIODICALS

(Prague, -FCI) The Ministry of Foreign Trade has established a new company, "ARTIA", with a monopoly in the export and import of cultural goods, including all publications, periodicals and products of printing, gramophone and film industries, as well as antiques. The licence for the export and import of periodicals held for decades by the "ORBIS" Company has been cancelled. (84/MZO)

"PEACE NEWS" IS NOT PUBLISHED BY THE BOLSHEVIK MOVEMENT OF G.B.

(London, -Editorial) Following the closing down of the Cominform publication, "The New Central European Observer", published and circulated by the Communist Collet's Holdings Ltd., the publishers offered to transfer unexpired subscriptions to one of 23 listed publications. This was reported by FCI on January 16th, 1953, No. 2/12. These publications were described as "imported from the USSR and other people's democratic countries or published by the Bolshevik movement in Great Britain."

Mr. J. Allen Skinner, the Editor of "Peace News", which was included in the list, has pointed out to FCI a fact that deserves attention: that "Peace News", a pacifist publication, is not "published by the Bolshevik movement in Great Britain", and "is in no way associated with the Communist Party."

From several sample copies of "Peace News", the following articles seem to be representative of the content:

"What I Saw in China", by E. Hughes, M.P. (Accusations of bacteriological warfare in China supported.) (November 7th.)

"Sinister Forces Behind Eisenhower", by Mr. Zilliacus. (November 14th)

"The Lesson of Monte Bello", by E. Hughes, M.P. (Insistence that huge rearmament programme be re-examined.) (October 31st)

The February 13th issue deals with the following subjects: "America's Ribbentrop" (Mr. Dulles), "A Meeting With Stalin" and "What Mr. Churchill Advocated is What He Now Evades", by Enrys Hughes, M.P. It has a cartoon illustrating the motto "Better to die on your feet than to live on your knees" through rearmament taxation, and it gives a quarter of a page to advertising "Peace in Pictures", represented by two publications produced in the USSR ("Soviet Union" and "News") distributed by Collet's, the Communist publishing house. Of these publications it is said: "Here are none of the usual pictures of the latest types of bombs and bombers, but pictures of peaceful construction.... in the Soviet Union.... Every page, every picture, is welcome evidence of the peaceful desires of the Soviet people. Every British peacelover will love it...." (85/FCI/JJ)

"KEINE ANGST VOR SOWJET-RUSSLAND!" (NO FEAR OF SOVIET RUSSIA!) BY "POLONIUS" *

In the opinion of "Polonius", the author of "Keine Angst vor Sowjet-Russland!" which plays down the might of Soviet Russia, the third world war will only last a very short while, and will begin and end with an atom bomb on Moscow which will do the trick. How often have we heard this solution. "Polonius", one of the East European refugees, sets out to prove that the danger of the Soviet Union is largely due to auto-suggestion on the part of its enemies, that is to say, the west. In his opinion we should concentrate our propaganda on the tiny minority that rules the USSR, and ignore the mass of the population. On one page the author says we should never regard the Russian people as our enemies, and on the next he advocates the dropping of an all exterminating bomb. His main mistake is in combining a factual account of the Soviet Union with a Wellsian view of the next war.

* Kurt Vowinckel Verlag K.G., Heidelberg,

(86/RC)