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Fascisti Celebrate Sixth Anniversary of March on Rome

By ELOISE ELLERY

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THE past month in Italy was marked by several notable anniversary celebrations. On Oct. 28 there was celebrated throughout the country the sixth anniversary of the march on Rome and the advent to power of the Fascisti. The ceremonies, in accordance with Mussolini's orders, were not such as to involve large expense. They consisted chiefly in the inauguration of public works—nearly 3,000—and in the reading of a message from Mussolini outlining these undertakings and calling for general support:

The sixth year of the Fascist revolution has come to an active end with imposing works destined to remain in this age as a demonstration of our fidelity, our strength and our work. Two thousand eight hundred and two public works have been inaugurated in order to celebrate by deeds and in silence the great enterprise which in October, 1922, liberated the Italian people and created a new régime in Italy and in the world. These works are 566 roadways, 337 school buildings, 399 waterworks, 65 improvements, 63 naval constructions, 79 sanitary works, 371 public buildings, 860 other undertakings and a number of other works of less importance. This simple list of figures stands clear-cut apart from all outcry either at home or beyond the frontiers. Behind these figures are the hands, the money, the life and the well-being of the Fascist people.

Three events ought to be recalled in this hour of happiness: the monetary reform, the law on the Grand Council, and the law for land reclamation and utilization. These three facts are fundamental in the history of the régime and have made the sixth year particularly significant.

The public works inaugurated include a motor road between Rome and its most popular bathing resort, Ostia; the port works of Civita Vecchia, henceforth to be known as the Port of Rome; the new buildings of the Ministries of Marine and Education in Rome, and the court house or "Palace of Justice" at Messina. Two new air lines were also opened. The reclamation project involves a minimum expenditure of \$400,000,000, half of which is to be paid outright by the Government and the balance lent to the proprietors of the land for thirty years. The expense of the im-

mediate road improvements, involving over \$100,000,000, is to be met by increases in prices by the salt and tobacco monopolies and in the tax on bachelors, and in alcohol, excise and wheat duties.

Another feature of the anniversary exercises was the spectacular ceremony held the evening before on the steps of the Victor Emmanuel Monument, when Mussolini, in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, publicly burned public debt certificates amounting to about \$7,000,000. These were the offerings of public-spirited citizens to reduce the indebtedness of the State and thus to help to restore Italy's financial prosperity.

A few days after the anniversary of the march on Rome, on Nov. 4, all Italy celebrated the tenth anniversary of her armistice day and her victory over Austria in the battle of Vittorio Veneto. Huge crowds cheered the King at the Quirinal and did honor to the memory of Marshal Diaz, Italy's "Duke of Victory." Speaking from the balcony of the former Austrian Embassy in Rome, Mussolini paid tribute to Victor Emmanuel II, under whom the unification of Italy had been achieved, and to those who had fought for Italy in the World War. There were four things, he declared, of which the world needed to be reminded—namely, that Italy had not been forced into the war, but had entered it deliberately at the call of conscience; that the war on the Italian frontier was particularly difficult; that the victory was wholly Italian and that the war had been marked by episodes of incomparable valor. Then turning to the future he asked, "If it is necessary, will you do tomorrow what you have done, what we did together yesterday?" The answer was a thundering "Yes!" from the assembled multitude.

Among the reforms inaugurated since the conclusion of peace, Italians point to the changes in the school system now under way. In a recent order Mussolini directed

the Minister of Public Instruction to proceed to carry out further plans already started. These reforms include a greater administrative centralization; the adaptation of the schools to the needs of the locality; the preparation of a textbook for the elementary school which shall stress Italian achievements in past history and present endeavor; the diffusion of Italian culture in foreign countries; the restoration of the teaching of the Roman Catholic religion in the schools; the coordination and strengthening of professional instruction, and, above all, the complete Fascistization of the entire school system.

To protect the Fascist régime against direct violence a law re-establishing the death penalty was introduced in November, 1926, after the attempt to assassinate Mussolini. According to its terms attempts on the life of the King, the Crown Prince, or the Premier, as well as all cases of high treason, espionage and armed insurrection may be punished with death. Thus, after a lapse of some seventy years, capital punishment was restored in Italy. The first death decree under this law was pronounced by the special military tribunal for defense of the State on Oct. 17 against Michiele della Maggiore, who was convicted of murdering two Fascisti on May 16. His request for royal clemency was refused and the execution was carried out by a firing squad two days later.

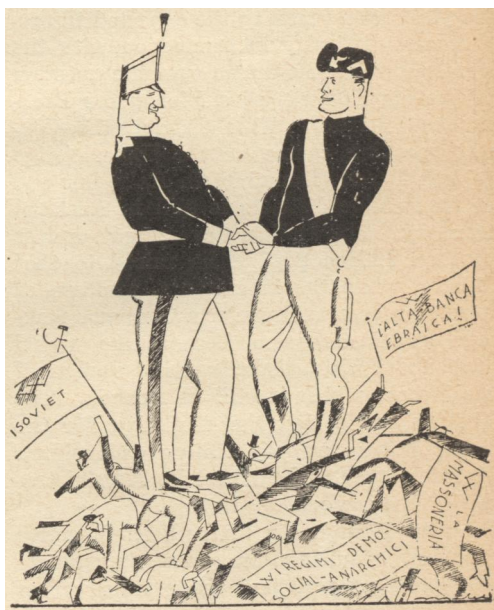
The Fascist Party now has the support, it is claimed, of 6,814,703 members, including 88,006 women, 325,127 Avanguardisti, or youths' organization, and 780,937 Balilla, or boys' organization. Such figures, according to certain Socialist sources, are misleading. Labor unrest is widespread in Italy, they declare, and Fascism is moving to a crisis. According to Mussolini, on the other hand, Fascism is stronger than ever and such increasing numbers offer convincing evidence that Fascism is not a one-man Government, but a Government of all the people—in short, a real democracy.

One of the main endeavors of the Fascist régime on the economic side has been to stimulate the production of wheat. In spite of the fact that about one-half of Italy's population is engaged in agriculture or in pursuits directly connected with it, the yield of wheat is not sufficient to feed all

the people. To increase the amount Mussolini inaugurated the so-called "Battle of Wheat." Its object was not so much to increase the area sown with wheat as to increase the yield per unit in order to make up the deficit between yearly consumption and production and so to lessen the need of importation. To this end national wheat raising competitions were inaugurated. In distributing the prizes at one of these competitions—at which incidentally Mussolini's own estate at Carpenta won third prize—he declared that the epoch of a predominantly urban policy was past:

All cities have had sums amounting to billions of lire for useful things and also for useless embellishments. It is now high time to dedicate billions to agriculture if we wish to avoid the phenomena of economic crisis and demographic decadence which have beset other peoples. To increase to the utmost the fecundity of the Italian soil, to elevate the standard of living of the millions upon millions of agriculturists who toil with patient and sacred tenacity—these are the fundamental tasks of the Fascist régime.

In thanking those who had contributed to the success of the battle, Mussolini especially mentioned the parish priests. He was obliged to admit, however, that the efforts of the past year had been in part neutral-



MUSSOLINI AND DE RIVERA
 "Two men, two systems, but one purpose,
 the prosperity of the nation."
 —Il "420," Florence



Times Wide World

Primo de Rivera, seated between the King and Queen of Spain, watching a bull fight at Seville

ized by the drought, which had prevented the yield from reaching the expected figure.

A new difficulty in connection with the Tyrol situation has arisen over the question of the appointment of a Bishop for Bressanone (Brixen). This district, the German-speaking centre of the Upper Adige (South Tyrol), is mainly in Italy, but one of its smaller districts is still in Austrian territory. The Italian Government desires that an Italian prelate be raised to that dignity, while the inhabitants, who are of German race, would prefer a German-speaking ecclesiastic, also because he would have under his jurisdiction that section of the diocese which is still in Austria. The Vatican has solved the difficulty for the time being by appointing Monsignor Mutschlechner to be Apostolic Administrator of Bressanone.

Mount Etna has recently been in active eruption, resulting in great damage to neighboring towns and the cutting off of light and water from a large area. It is reported that 50,000 are already homeless. Premier Mussolini has issued an order forbidding public subscription for the victims

of the eruption. This is a Government matter and a special law provides for aid in such cases.

SPAIN—A part of the recent celebration of the fifth anniversary of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship was an address to the Patriotic Union outlining his policy (see *CURRENT HISTORY*, November, 1928, p. 338). He subsequently found it desirable, in view of much criticism and opposition, to issue an additional statement somewhat modifying his program. It was headed "Epilogue of the Commemoration of Sept. 13." In it he outlined the work laid out for the next five years. For the present, he announced, the lists of adherents to the Patriotic Union, the only legal political party in Spain, like the Fascist Party in Italy, which were to have closed on Sept. 13, were to remain open until Jan. 1, so that "neophytes may be welcomed with affection and confidence, irrespective of their political origins."

The Premier then reiterated the doctrine of the control of the Government by the citizen through the Patriotic Union, as already proclaimed on Sept. 13, but this con-

trol is now broadened as follows: In municipalities and provincial corporations, although the Alcalde, or Mayor, his deputy and four-fifths of the corporation must belong to the union, the civil governors are ordered to choose the remaining one-fifth among independent persons, regardless of their politics, provided they are honest and capable.

A sweeping reorganization of the Spanish Ministry was announced on Nov. 3. The Foreign Ministry is to be suppressed and its functions added to the duties of the Prime Minister, who will appoint a director of foreign affairs to be under his immediate orders. Several other changes in the Ministries are announced. General Ardanaz, who has been President of the Supreme War and Marine Council, will be retired and a Ministry of War will be created with General Burquete as its chief. Vice Admiral Garcia Reyes replaces Admiral Cornejo as Minister of Marine. In addition, a new Ministry of National Economy is created, with Count de los Andes in charge of a

program to reduce Governmental expenses. He will also direct the Customs Service. The Labor Minister will henceforth be called the Minister of Labor, Corporations and Assurance.

Acting under the new railway statute, the Spanish Minister of Public Works has unified all the railways west of Madrid, on which the lines were considered to be inadequately operated or the rolling stock antiquated. The concession is for sixty years and the amalgamated corporation will be called the West of Spain Railway Company.

PORTUGAL—The Cabinet resigned on Nov. 7. President Carmona, while accepting the resignation, reiterated his confidence in Premier Vincente Freitas and charged him with forming a new Government. Dr. Salazar was asked to continue as Minister of Finance. The Freitas Cabinet was formed last April following the election to the Presidency of General Oscar Carmona.

EASTERN EUROPE AND THE BALKANS

Czechoslovakia's Tenth Anniversary

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THE late months of 1918 and the early months of 1919 witnessed a rapid succession of momentous events in Western and Central Europe, and the peoples of those parts of the world are now passing in equally swift succession from one decennial celebration to another. The most notable of these commemorative occasions to date was the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic. It was on Oct. 18, 1918, that Professor Thomas G. Masaryk, then sojourning in Washington as an exile, decided that the time had come to proclaim an independent State of Czechoslovakia; and it was just ten days later that Austria collapsed and the Czechoslovak Republic was formally proclaimed. Though the week beginning Oct. 28 last was crowded with celebrations throughout the coun-

try it was characteristic of the republic's high-minded and frugal inhabitants that the occasion was not one merely for fireworks, parades, and oratory. As carefully planned features of the commemoration, a new library was opened at Prague; the imposing Masaryk Infirmary for the sick and aged was dedicated; two great bridges over the Moldau River were opened; the Supreme Synod of Jewish Communities announced its decision to translate the Jewish Bible into the Czech language; banking and insurance companies contributed more than 1,000,000 crowns for educational, health and cultural purposes; one bank opened an account for each child born during the month.

The American connection, and especially that of President Wilson, with the republic's birth received signal recognition. The great marble monument to the author