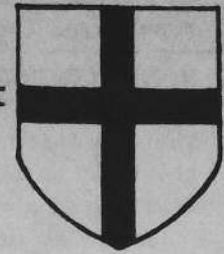


# BRETON NEWS



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THE SUGAR OR THE STICK? Commenting on last summer's manifestations of solidarity between all social and professional classes in Brittany, the editor of Barr-Heol (September 1961) wrote: "Attempts will be made to undo this knot. Three ways are open to the government: make a genuine attempt to solve the Breton problem; neutralise the most influential men by offering them money or honours, while giving enough concessions to keep down discontent; or repress." Had they the second method in mind when they appointed Mr. Gourvenneg one of the leaders of the farmers' revolt last July, as an adviser to the French minister for Agriculture? There is no reason however to doubt the integrity of Mr. Gourvenneg who will see in this appointment an opportunity to press more effectively for the reforms needed by the Breton agriculture.

On the other hand it is certain that the Breton solidarity and the threats of revolt have worried the French authorities. The demand for a special plan of development is equated in the official mind with a disguised demand for autonomy. We are informed that consideration is being given in high places to the means of preventing a certain number of persons from continuing their Breton action.

MINISTER BALLYRAGGED. However great solicitude is being shown to Brittany. On ++++++ October 22nd there were no less than 4 ministers in this area. Mr. PISANI, Agriculture, was the most noted. He came to inform himself and went around "flea-jumping" by helicopter. He displayed interest in the farmers cooperatives, credit organisations distribution centres, but seemed studiously to shun the places where the crisis is most sorely felt; the small farms. In Plouared, N. Brittany, he found 500 farmers barring his way with tractors. They compelled him to abandon his schedule and took him across country to a small typical farm where he had to answer a number of awkward questions.

During his tour, Mr. Pisani was often reminded by such slogans as: "Enough Promises", "Hear the rumbling of revolt", that he was not on holiday. But he could not announce any major decision. Instead he entreated the farmers to give him more delays. "You have brought us nothing" was the summing-up of the talks by the Chairman of the Breton Chamber of Agriculture. But the minister said NO to the Breton demand for an extension of the 80-canton "special zone for rural action" to all of Brittany. And in an interview given to Mr. Ihuel, Deputy, Gen. De Gaulle said NO to a special Plan for the Development of Brittany.

SHOULD THE LAND BELONG TO THE FARMERS?

Widespread alarm is felt by the Breton farmers because of the acquisition of more and more land by absentee landlords. 2000 men protested recently at Ploumoger near Brest against this practice (Croix du Dimanche, 5/11). Mr. Pisani was asked among other things to introduce a "professional card" for the farmers as a means to put an end to such transactions. All other professions are protected by trade union cards against encroachments on their rights. Mr. Pisani could not promise.

A letter containing the following warning was sent in June to Gen. De Gaulle by some of his war-time partisans in Brittany:

"Favoured by the events, the harassing propaganda of the separatists who were annihilated fifteen years ago is ceaselessly gaining ground and working on the mind of the youth. In the grievous moments we are going through here, you must not underestimate the excitement of the minds... Violence is communicative. Everything must be done before it is too late. We are coming to a point where we shall

no longer be able to resist the adverse pressure unless we oppose it with substantial results... (ref. Ar Vro, No. 11).

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**M.O.B. CONGRESS.** The 3rd Annual Congress of the Movement for the Organisation of Brittany took place at Redon, South of Rennes, on October 14-15. The 200 delegates gathered there represented thousands of Bretons who recognise the need to change Brittany's political status if the country is to subsist and develop as a national entity in the modern world.

A number of resolutions were adopted. They related to:

- 1) The strengthening of Breton unity in order to obtain a special law for Brittany;
- 2) A new meeting of the "Breton States-General" at Pontivy to press for an overall solution of the Breton problem;
- 3) Great-Britain's and Ireland's membership of the E.E.C.
- 4) The evolution of Belgium towards a federal state.

Regarding point 3, it is clear that Brittany stands to gain from a reduction of trade tariffs between the present Common Market and Britain. Breton food products and British coals are complementary. The resulting shift of the main economic streams towards the Channel would provide the sea-faring Bretons with opportunities which are denied to them in the present Common Market.

Without further waiting, the representatives of the Breton economy should establish direct contacts with their counterparts across the Channel and seek profitable bilateral exchanges.\*

The Bretons see also in this extension of the E.E.C. the possibility of strengthening the bonds of friendship and cultural affinity which have subsisted between the Continental and the Insular Celts in spite of many centuries of political domination by different powers. (L'Avenir, Nov. 1961)

Speaking at this congress about the demand for a special plan of development for Brittany, Mr. Y. Fouere asked: "Who would implement it? We have numerous examples of such stillborn plans. Powers must be transferred to Breton institutions receiving their mandate from the Breton people if we are to achieve concrete results." The Bretons must create the institutions in fact, they will later be legalised. (Ar Vro, No. 11)

\* In "Sturier-Yaouankiz, an excellently produced bilingual magazine for young Bretons, A.J.R. Peniarth examines the numerous possibilities of economic exchanges between the Celtic Countries.

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**BARZAZ BREIZ,** the famous and controversial collection of Breton epic songs and ballads which we owe to Kervarker (La Villemarque) was first published in 1841. It was out of print for many years, but two years ago it was republished by the Breton Cultural Association in Paris. This edition is identical with the 1867 one. It is again no longer available in bookshops, but copies can still be obtained for 10 NF (ca 15 shillings) post free, from Mr. H. Le Menn, 3 rue Fr. Garnier, Paris 17. From the same address: text and music of 80 popular Breton songs collected between 1860 and 1900 by Col. Bourgeois, published last year with comments in French on every song, 12 NF post free.

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The Association of the (300) Mayors of Finistere has asked the Prefect of Kemper to include the whole departement, and not 1/5 of it as at present in the "special zone for rural action". They are prepared to stage demonstrations in Kemper, or an indefinite administrative strike, or even to resign if their request is refused.

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**NOT TO BE TRUSTED?** The French government has not forgotten the acts of sabotage committed on the Pont'n Abad railway on June 1st. The Supreme Court has now been requested to take the case from the Kemper district court and hand it over, for reasons of public safety, to the Seine (Paris) district Court. The examining magistrate should here decide whether to drop the case or have it taken up by the Seine Court of petty sessions. (Ouest-France). This unusual procedure may reflect the fear that the Kemper magistrates could be too lenient or be influenced by mass demonstrations outside the court.

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. Four children of a Breton family had not been registered because the administration refused to accept their Breton Christian names. The mother was brought to trial recently. She was defended by Mr. G. Toubianc. She won (Ar Vro, No. 11)

. France is the only member of the Council of Europe which has not yet - after 10 years - ratified the protocol of the Convention for the protection of human rights.

. A meeting similar to the one which preceded the surprise - demonstration organised in Kemper, on July 23rd in protest against Debre's veto on the teaching of Breton was held on November 18th in the same town. Its aim was to strengthen the solidarity of the Breton organisations and decide the best means to develop propaganda in the coming months. (Breton News correspondent)