

Report on the cultural situation of Brittany

- 1.) Without interruption the Bretons have preserved the Celtic tradition, which goes back to the time when the Celtic and German peoples had nearly identical cultures.

In some respects, despite the superficial Latinization, they preserved the same coarse (barbaric) character as in the middle ages and it can be observed that the Breton folk were able to evade the influence of the western civilization and maintain their primordial mores and customs. In contrast, France has continually regarded itself as the bearer of a civilization mission, which it has engaged in with fanaticism. This explains the systematic hostility of the French - obsessed with classical universalism - toward the Breton spirit, which they accuse, as they do the German spirit, of nourishing itself on the muddy springs of blood. This explains the relationship between Bretons and Germans, which does not exist between French and Germans.

- 2) Brittany was until the 12th century a Celtic kingdom. Its penetration by France occurred in the following stages:

12th century: Romanisation of the noble class, Romanisation of the Breton clerical orders and destruction of the Celtic manuscripts through French monks, assimilation of eastern Brittany through the French language, ongoing penetration of Celtic law by feudal law. A Breton state arose on a Celtic foundation with half-French character.

16th century: Completed linguistic Frenchification of the totality of the prominent classes, political union with the kingdom on a foundation of autonomy.

18th century: Triumph of the French culture. The Celtic culture flees into the peasant masses. The bourgeoisie assimilates into the French.

Revolution: Abolition of Breton autonomy, the Bretons are incorporated into the French Regime.

1890 Universal compulsory education. The Frenchification of the people begins with the help of the universal compulsory military service, the press, the railroads, and tourism.

- 3). Current situation:

The struggle between the French system and the national power of the Breton people did not end with the victory of the former. Anemic France did not succeed

in assimilating the formidable Brittany. It's true that France destroyed it in part and ripped it out of its tradition, but it did not meet its demise. The Breton people is a people without national scope and without education. Of itself and its past it knows almost nothing. It has become shy (fearful) and resigned. Its manpower has been misused and its sons turned into mercenaries. Despite this it endures; its deep patriotism and racial consciousness live on and it has begun reflecting on itself and its destiny.

4.) The phases of the Breton awakening.

1821: Appearance of the first scientific Breton grammar

1839: Publication of the first collection of national songs

1887: Publication of the first collection of folklore

1897: Foundation of the first newspaper in the Breton language

1898: Foundation of the first Breton action committee

1900: Resurgence of peasant garb

1905: First attempt at the creation of Breton architecture

1911: First work to acquaint the people with celtic antiquity

1912: First demonstration in support of political separatism

1913: First revolutionary journal for national culture

1919: Roundup of the activist youth

1920: The first agricultural syndicates (farmers' association)

1925: Appearance of the first modern literary journal in the Breton language

1927: The first Breton national congress

1932: First dynamite assassination

1933: First election campaign

1935: Appearance of the magazine "Stur"; German-Breton cultural solidarity demonstration

1937: Breton pavilion at the Paris World's Fair

1938: Beginning of oppression by the French through the police force

5.) The Breton Movement. It is young and still not very organized, but noteworthy in the swiftness of its growth. Two examples of this: the number of readers of the nationalist press grew in two years – 1939-40 – from 10,000 to 100,000. The Breton language, in 1925 still a despised dialect, is 15 years later recognized as a language of the civilized world, in which scientific books are published and which is again spoken by a select group of people. Admittedly the supporters of Breton nationalism are still a minority, but the movement is always growing larger, more determined and better equipped. People from all social classes, in particular the intellectual petit bourgeois, the merchants and some of the peasantry, including many of the country clergymen, participate in the movement.

Hostilely opposed are: the capitalist bourgeoisie, the high nobility, the military, civil service and university circles (2/3 French oriented) as well as the high clergy.

Of the masses, the peasants, which make up 70% of the population, are passively sympathetic.

Generally speaking, France still holds its position, but has lost its authority and prestige in regard to the masses and the intellectual elite. As far as the Breton movement, it is "on the march". Nobody will be able to stop it. Perhaps it will need more time or less time to achieve its goal, but it will achieve it.

6.) The Breton people are identified through their allegiance to the bonds of blood. It is blood, the spirit of the clan, which constitutes the Bretons and not the language, culture, or national feeling. Related to this is the love of the earth, the physical and metaphysical feeling of unity with the forces of nature. The Breton has little skill with commerce, earning money and or even simply organization, but he possesses a great inclination for the military and religious life. He only exerts himself fully in the service of an ideal. His religious tradition shows itself mainly in the service of a hero cult and deference to the powers of nature, which today is still evident in the folk customs despite the whitewashing by the church. Rarely is the Breton churchly, but he is easily revolutionary: he is a man of belief. There are villages in which all men go to mass and yet vote red.

7.) In the course of the rebuilding of the Celtic culture, an interest in the Nordic world, the theory of race and German paganism has arisen in the nationalist youth. The Celtic religion already has its supporters and is searching for its own characteristic rites. In the Breton pagan circles, Celtic culture and German culture are seen as two different expressions of the cultural world of the north. It was statistically determined that in a sampling of leaders of the young generation, there are 7 pagans, 2 catholics and 1 atheist. The pagan circles, however, avoid all propaganda, as they must consider the influence of the church on the masses. Especially careful is "Stur". Despite this, it is noteworthy that outside Germany, Brittany is the only country in which a phenomenon similar to the German religious movement is emerging.

8.) In summary it can be observed that in Brittany 3 mystical orientations predominate: That Breton mysticism which has been nourished by the double spring of folk life and the Celtic past and which finds in paganism the advanced elements of its radical expression. The Catholic mysticism, which operates from above through the ecclesiastical organization. The French mysticism, which is based on the Paris-based state-tradition, language and culture. The latter is the least homogenous: yesterday it emphasized primarily the democratic ideal, today the social reaction, and it tries to unite with catholic mysticism against Germany.

9.) In regards to Germany, there exist mainly three orientations:

1.) The sympathetic orientation, due to their principles, is that of the Bretons, who have however been disappointed and discouraged.

2.) the hostile orientation of the high clergy, who see in nationalism a threat to their privileges

3.) The group of the military circle (Brest, Lorient), who think about revenge, and of civil servants, which encompasses the freemasonic and Marxist powers. These three groups form the “De-Gaulle clique”, which currently fills 90% of the leading posts in the country. The rest of the population is restraining itself expectantly.

19.) The previous France has not remained intact in Brittany. The anti-people system of government and education has been strengthened even more through the authoritarian centralization by Petain. The Breton language continues to be forbidden in schools and administrative offices. The people have no part in public administration, which lies in the hands of foreigners. The spiritual and intellectual leaders, followers of De Gaulle, were left in their posts. The good Bretons were boycotted, without German intervention on their behalf.

11.) No attempt at a Breton cultural renaissance can be undertaken without taking these facts into account. It is evident to all that if Brittany remains under the French yoke, the Breton language will continue to be suppressed and the political de-nationalisation of the race will be further carried out. As long as the Breton people remains in the hands of the “clique”, the attempts at liberation and re-establishment will always encounter insurmountable obstacles. There is nothing to hope for, if the clique and the system of the destroyer is not eliminated in one way or another.

12.) The re-establishment program would require:

1.) The elimination of the leading class of “Franskiljons” and the handing over of leadership posts to Bretons.

2.) The reinstatement of the language through fundamental reform of the school system.

3.) The implementation of a new educational system, based on the ideas of the race and the ethnic community, which introduces the concepts of the state, leadership principles, and discipline and which eliminates the Latin influence.

4.) The creation of a fanatical elite-corps modeled on and playing the same role as the SS

This would all be of course much easier to realize if the authority of Vichy over Brittany were revoked for the duration of the transformation, as is the case with Alsace.

13.) One of the foundations for the Breton resurrection is the study of the origin of the people and its life: prehistory, folklore, folk art, racial science, etc. Nothing serious in this respect has been allowed or achieved on the part of the French. Naturally, the Bretons are enthusiastic about these studies and one would find all the help he could wish for, if he encouraged it.

14.) Should Brittany be finally ceded to the French, there would be relentless oppression with which to reckon, as in the Basque after the return of Franco. The French would eradicate the Breton threat once and for all. For whom would this be an advantage? The eternal enemies of Germanism: the Roman Church, the imperial chauvinism from Richelieu to Bainville, the classical culture of one such as Maurras. The little Breton people, guardians of one of the most primordial Nordic traditions, would be sacrificed for the benefit of the rotten powers of the western world.

15.) The question frames itself for us as follows: How can this be prevented? What can one do to give the Breton people a chance? How to preserve the Breton foundation? Because Brittany can without a doubt become an outstanding element in the reconstruction of the west: perhaps she is the only living and sympathetic element to be found there.

16.) Whatever the development of these events, Germany will always be interested to know of France as divided and not unified. The German culture will find an advantage in the Celtic rebirth of Brittany linked with German culture, and not in a strengthening of the supremacy of the southern civilization powers over the northern Loire. The tradition of Louis XIV must be shattered rather than encouraged.

17.) When German observers travel to Brittany, they must never forget that Brittany has been subjugated by the power of the French kings for more than 400 years and was annexed more than 150 years ago. As a result there is naturally a French veneer, which however must not deceive. Brittany will not uncover itself just like that. There is time to penetrate her nature and her soul. As with all oppressed peoples, she has obscured her true face. In June 1940 a vast majority of Bretons were ready to dedicate themselves to separatism. The opportunity created the faith. After the faith dwindled, it was those in the circle of the "Franskiljons" who came to the forefront. But the true Breton people, as hard as steel, is rising up irresistibly and will wait for its hour as long as is necessary.

Le.

Berlin, 1. March 1941