

Meet Max Brauer—

Mayor of Hamburg

A ONE-TIME AMERICAN,
HE'S PUTTING 'ZIP' INTO HIS JOB.

THE diary of the Mayor of Hamburg—if he had time to keep one—would make fascinating reading. Going back a number of years it would begin with an entry something like this:

—1931: I am determined as Mayor of Altona, largest suburb of Hamburg, to use my influence in opposition to Hitler's Nazis.

—1932: Shots have been fired into our home. Have moved my family to the country for safety. A police guard has been engaged to ward off violence by Nazi Brown Shirts.

—1933: Germany falls to Hitler. Storm troopers rush into Altona, but I have escaped. A friend's passport sees me safely into Austria.

—1934: I am in China on an assignment for the League of Nations to advise Chiang Kai-shek on economic matters.

—1935: Nazi diplomatic pressure forces me out of China. I arrive in the United States.

—1936: I bring my family, whom Swiss friends have spirited out of Germany, to the United States. How wonderful this new freedom!

—1941: I receive my final citizenship papers. I am an American!

—1946: I renounce my American citizenship, and I am immediately elected Mayor of Hamburg. I have left my happy exile in America, because Germany has called. She needs me. I go to the new battle ground of democracy! . . .

This, in brief, has been the outline of the stormy career of Rotarian Max Friedrich Brauer, now Mayor of the second-largest, and perhaps most devastated, city in Germany. Were you to fill in that outline with a picture of the man himself, you would have an unusual portrait.

Born in 1887 into the home of a poor working family in Altona, young Max became a glass blower, a member of the co-operative movement, and a leader of trade unionism. He was—and is—a member of the German Socialist party. But labels do not adequately



describe the new Mayor of Hamburg.

Mayor Brauer has no tolerance for a socialism that "exhausts itself in theory." He boldly welcomes free initiative.

While his party advocates shorter hours, one of his first acts as Mayor was to extend the hours of business. "Why, in America," he says, "you can find superdrug stores that are open all night!"

The Socialists consider theirs to be a poor man's party, but Mayor Brauer says he is the representa-



Rotarian Brauer—who went home to fight for democracy.

tive of all the people, and, in spite of the near apoplexy of his political advisors, he associates freely with the city's rich as well as its poor.

While in the United States, Rotarian Brauer worked for church organizations, lecturing in nearly every State. His son, Dr. Werner Brauer, was a captain in the United States Army Medical Corps during the war, and his daughter—who now lives in Concord, New Hampshire—married an American.

One of his biggest problems upon returning to Germany was reawakening the people's spirit. For generations there had been little pleasure steamers plying the lake at Hamburg's center. During his first days as Mayor he diverted coal to the pleasure boats. It was a gesture the people needed. And when the city was lighted for Christmas—the first time in seven dark years—the people knew there were better days ahead.

It is perhaps traditional that German officials should deliberate, sometimes for weeks, over their decisions. With the efficiency of a Yankee business executive, Rotarian Brauer works fast, expecting his orders will be carried out with equal dispatch.

"Ach!" his subordinates say. "Such excitement! So much work he gives! Just like an American."

And it is true that Rotarian Brauer has taken back with him to Germany much that he learned and came to admire in the United States. But basically he has once again become a 100 percent German, doing his part to help his fatherland accept its responsibilities and achieve its rightful place in the world of friendly nations.