

17 IN REVOLT

PLOT HELD IN

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\$850,000 BAIL

Christian Front Group Pleads Not Guilty

NEW YORK, Jan. 15 (U.P.). Seventeen members of the pro-fascist "Christian Front," charged with a fantastic plot to terrorize Jews and overthrow the United States Government, pleaded innocent in Federal Court today and were held in \$50,000 bail each.

Several thousand persons milled around the Federal building in Brooklyn, seeking a glimpse of the sheepish-appearing prisoners—four clerks, a truck driver, two unemployed, a student, a telephone lineman, a tailor, a mechanic, a salesman, and a hotel worker—who were handcuffed to FBI agents.

Smile for Photographers

The men tried to shield their faces with their hands and arms, but later dropped their arms and smiled for photographers.

Their arraignment followed their arrest Saturday in a series of raids led by J. Edgar Hoover, FBI chief. He charged that the prisoners had plotted to bomb two newspapers, a theater and the Custom House and to terrorize Jews. Hoover also said that the group had discussed assassinating 12 Congressmen who voted for the repeal of the arms embargo, "to teach them a lesson."

A quantity of arms were seized in the raids. Additional arrests are expected, officials said.

Plot Called "Fantastic"

The men were members of an innercircle group of the Christian Front known as the "Sports Club." Hoover said the prisoners were in sympathy with the Nazis and addressed their leader as "Fuehrer" and that at least one had been a member of the German-American Bund.

U. S. District Attorney Harold M. Kennedy said the arrests were made earlier than planned because the leaders had threatened "immediate action."

He described their plot as "fantastic," but said it had to be taken seriously because the group had been making bombs and stealing arms, ammunition, and explosives from the National Guard, of which seven of the group were members.

Prisoner for Constitution

Macklin Boettger, one of the prisoners and a member of the National Guard for 12 years, told reporters the Christian Front was chiefly concerned with the eradication of communism.

"We're for the Constitution, not against it," he said. "We're for representative government and we don't want communism. We were preparing to defend the Constitution against any encroachments that might be attempted by Communists or the Communist party, which not even the FBI is doing."

Asked if he didn't think the Army and Navy could take care of the Communists, Boettger said: "Sure, but we were out to help them. The Communists are running around loose and here we are—in the pen."

John M. Ryan, 38, who was arrested in the raids, was released today by Federal officials who gave no explanation.

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