

Boston Officials' Consent to Fascist Father Curran's Speaking Is Assailed as 'Vichy' Insult to People

By Ann Burlak

(Special to the Sunday Worker)

BOSTON, Mass., March 14.— Boston is slowly awakening to the fact that a Vichy municipal administration has nationally disgraced this city and its citizens by inviting (all expenses paid) Edward Lodge Curran, Brooklyn pro-Nazi and anti-Semite, as the official orator of the Evacuation Day Exercises to be held Sunday evening in South Boston. The commemoration of the Evacuation of Boston by the British March 17, 1776 is an important annual city observance.

In the minds of a growing number of citizens, the other participant in bringing about this unspeakable shame is Congressman John W. McCormack, House Majority Leader. McCormack's home is in South Boston. It is common knowledge that his authority in his home section is unchallenged. To date, the honorable John W. McCormack has not uttered a word of protest against this outrage perpetrated against the people of Boston. As a citizen of Boston and a resident of South Boston, Mr.

McCormack could scarcely be unaware of his obligations in this matter.

The first protest issued against Curran's appearance came from Miss Frances Sweeney, director of the American Irish Defense Association. Miss Sweeney stated, "For the first time in the memory of living man the day we celebrate is to be profaned by placing in the seats of honor and distinction men who have dedicated themselves to the persecution of their fellow men in keeping with the Hitler tradition. It is shameful. It is degrading. It is tragic. It is evil. At the risk of subjecting itself to abuse and vilification the American Irish Defense Association protests against the spectacle of introducing European hatreds into a celebration that is sacred to so many of us."

Miss Sweeney particularly castigated William Gallagher, chairman of the citizens arrangements committee, and produced copies of Gallagher's speeches before Social Justice and Christian Front groups in which he referred to Pres. Roosevelt as "Rosenfelt," denounced Jewish Amer-

icans, and stated lyingly that Secretary Hull was Jewish, as if that would be a crime if true.

Joseph Salerno, State President of CIO, stated, "We need national unity, and it cannot be promoted by a meeting of this type."

One of the strongest protests was issued by Neponset Post 2235, Veterans of Foreign Wars. This patriotic group condemned Curran as one "who will bring discord and disunity into our midst," as an associate of Father Coughlin, and roundly trounced the city administration for their responsibility in the matter. The Post refuses to participate in the parade of March 17th and favors "the immediate establishment of concentration camps for those who knowingly or stupidly or recklessly hinder our national defense."

Hundreds of citizens have phoned their protests to City Hall, it is reported. Many organizations have expressed their condemnation, including Community Church, New England Citizens for Victory, Union for Democratic Action, Harvard Defense Association; trade union

locals have spoken out, as well as groups of air-wardens.

The Boston press has played a cowardly role. To date not a single editorial comment against the Curran-outrage has been made. The Boston Traveler was the first to publish prominently Miss Sweeney's protest. The next day, the Traveler along with all other Boston papers, lavishly placed their columns at the disposal of the red-baiting, irresponsible citizens arrangements committee. And then the Herald Traveler took a quick run out powder on the whole question.

Veteran analysts of Boston politics are inclined to the belief that behind Curran stands the protecting might of William Cardinal O'Connell. The citizens arrangements committee, in their first statement, declared as their strongest point that Curran's appearance had the official approval of William O'Connell. The Cardinal's office, when queried, said that it had issued an OK as a matter of courtesy. But judging from the reactions of official Boston, it was a courtesy that the Cardinal was bent on bestow-

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ing, and that he brooks no opposition to his desires in this matter.

Curran stands as the orator of the day!

Boston has seen in this past week Vichy men in action. From Mayor Tobin, who conveniently remains away on vacation, to Acting Mayor Thomas Linnehan, who officially graced the platform at previous Curran meetings, and now states that it is enough for him that Cardinal O'Connell approves Curran's appearance; to the supine City

Council that sits mutely in session and helplessly mutters to itself "What do honest citizens want of us?"

This is the fallen state of the Boston of Crispus Attucks, of Adams and of Hancock, the Boston of Phillips, and Parker and Garrison. But it is official Boston, which has fallen. The honest citizenry is determined that the responsibility for this outrage shall rest with the Mayor and his administration, and that the memory of the treachery of these Vichy men shall not pass with fading echo of orator Curran's Evacuation Day voice.