

# Probe of Coughlin Listed After Complaint Of Jewish Group

## Justice Department Assigns Ace Prosecutor To Make Investigation

By the Associated Press.

NEW YORK, Jan. 29.—The Rev. Charles E. Coughlin has been marked for investigation "in due course" by the Department of Justice following the filing of formal complaints against the Michigan radio priest by the Jewish People's Committee.

This was confirmed by O. John Rogge, Assistant Attorney General, before he left last night for Minneapolis and Chicago to gather additional evidence in a widening inquiry stemming from the arrest of 17 Christian Front members here on charges of seditious conspiracy to overthrow the Government.

Father Coughlin, in his regular Sunday broadcast from Detroit, said he would welcome "with graciousness" an investigation of his activities.

Mr. Rogge is the 36-year-old

prosecutor who recently won convictions of several Louisiana politicians on mail fraud charges and who was hustled here—before his Louisiana work was finished—to bolster the Government's case against the 17 held in lieu of \$50,000 bail each.

The small size and crudity of the "arsenal" they are accused of caching, with revolutionary intent, moved some critics—including Mayor La Guardia and Father Coughlin himself—to scoff at the aims and ambitions the Government attributed to them in a city having 18,000 well-armed police. But F. B. I. Chief J. Edgar Hoover countered

with the remark that Russia was overthrown by 23 men, and the Department of Justice came up with an ace prosecutor for the climax of a case opened by Supreme Court Justice Frank Murphy last August, when Mr. Murphy was Attorney General.

Mr. Rogge, the "trouble-shooter" prosecutor, declined to discuss the nature of the accusations made by the Jewish organization against Father Coughlin. "They will be investigated in due course," he said.

The priest told his radio audience yesterday it had been "my life's ambition to contribute a share" to

protecting America's Constitution and its "Christian heritage."

Mr. Rogge, who was assigned here by Attorney General Jackson, said he would return to New York Wednesday from the Midwest after conferring with United States attorneys in Minneapolis and Chicago. The nature of those conferences was not disclosed.

Two weeks ago, following the arrest of the 17 alleged plotters, the Michigan priest issued a statement denying any affiliation with the Christian Front to which they belonged and said he "roundly disavowed it."

A week later he described himself

as "a friend of the accused," and continued: "I did not belong to any unit of the Christian Front; nevertheless I do not disassociate myself from that movement."

Father Coughlin, who has been accused by Jewish groups of stirring racial prejudice, concluded by urging his listeners to support "a Christian Front" for the purpose of safeguarding American liberties and "Christian democracy" as opposed to a "naturalistic democracy."

The 17 under arrest, accused by Mr. Hoover of plotting to set up a Jew-baiting dictatorship in the United States, are liable, if convicted, to 6-year prison sentences and \$5,000 fines each.

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