

Social Justice Snubs Hearing And Suspends

T-H 5/5/42
**Barred From Mails
After Failing to Face
Sedition Charges**

By GEORGE DIXON

A lady we know had heard that everybody would be on tenterhooks yesterday at the Postmaster General's hearing into the life or death of the magazine Social Justice. She was not able to ascertain whether tenterhooks would be provided, so she brought her own.

They were not needed because nothing happened. Nobody representing Social Justice—not even the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin, nor a reasonable facsimile thereof—showed up at the hearing. The Post Office Department interpreted this as waiving the right to be heard—and revoked the publication's second-class mailing privileges forever.

Coughlin Expected

There was quite a bit of subdued excitement when the tribunal opened because the story had gotten around that Father Coughlin was in town and intended to come striding in to take up the cudgels in person. Upwards of a dozen different strangers who wandered into the Post Office Building were positively identified as the radio priest by those lined up in the corridor seeking admission.

The hearing, on a show cause order issued April 14, was packed. Over it hung a tension as if everyone expected there would soon come the blast of trumpets and the grand entrance of the Social Justice editorial staff.

First Assistant Postmaster General Ambrose O'Connell was on the bench, flanked by Second Assistant Postmaster General Smith W. Purdum and Fourth Assistant Postmaster General Walter Myers. We inquired what had happened to the Third Assistant Postmaster General but could get no satisfaction.

O'Connell then reviewed the status of the case, saying that the tribunal was prepared to hear argument from representatives of the magazine why it should not—in effect—be barred from the mails. He announced he would call three times.

He did. When the third and last call was ended he declared a recess of half an hour. Then he announced that inasmuch as no appearances had been made there would be no more Social Justice.

Calvin W. Hassell, assistant solicitor of the Post Office Department, then proceeded to read a letter from E. Perrin Schwartz, editor of the defunct magazine. In it Schwartz said the magazine had suspended publication. Added to this was a communication from Father Coughlin that he had "approved" the suspension.

Charges Sedition

Hassell next read a list of the magazine's transgressions, which have been listed as seditious. He added, in the words of Attorney General Francis Biddle, that it had "reproduced the lines of enemy propaganda being waged against this country from abroad."

The three assistant postmasters general started to rise, signifying all was over, when former Magistrate Joseph Goldstein, of Brooklyn, got up and said he wanted to be heard on the ground that Social Justice had viciously attacked the Jews.

"You can't be heard," said O'Connell. "That is not an issue here."

But Goldstein kept on talking. He was still talking 10 minutes after the three assistant postmasters general had departed and only reporters and photographers were left in the room.