

The Success Story of 'Handsome Bob' Is an American Tragedy of the War

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WASHINGTON — I am told that if you stick around here long enough you stop getting indignant more than once a month.

You learn to take the long view. You become reconciled to finding phonies, anti-democrats, right-wing stooges in high office.

You thank God for Roosevelt and let him worry.

The prevalence of that mood undoubtedly explains how Robert Rice Reynolds holds his job as chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee.

GRIDIRON TO SENATE

To many in our audience, Bob Reynolds needs no introduction, as they say in the burlesque circuits.

At college he was captain of the track team, a football letterman and a member of Beta Theta

Pi. Later he became an Elk and after that a Moose.

Then he became a Senator.

During the dreary years of Adolf Hitler's early conquests Handsome Bob took great delight in being photographed with leading members of the U. S. Fascist front.

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He said people who denounced Hitler were "warmongers."

HE VISITS GERMANY

Shortly before the Nazi attack on Poland, the Senator, who loves to travel, visited Germany.

He came back home still convinced that peace was wonderful, that nobody was mad at us, and that we shouldn't make faces at Fascism.

In Washington social circles he was considered a great asset. He was eligible until he married Evelyn Walsh MacLean's daughter.

Why do I bring all this up now?

For one thing, because we are at war and because the chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee ought to be a fighting democratic symbol—not an American caricature of why France fell.

But Handsome Bob says he is all for spanking Hitler now. Maybe he is. His mind hasn't been read lately.

The important fact is that the chief occupation of the chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee now is fighting labor.

His personal organ — "The American Vindicator" — runs a few rags and some patriotic hoopla, but its columns are overwhelmingly devoted to attacks on

He was the slick-haired darling of the "Women Against Communism" and the other pseudo-patriot knitting clubs that were doing Brother Hitler's work here.

Reynolds was a loud and lusty isolationist. He exposed all the dirt about the British Empire.

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unions, sprinkled with blasts against "aliens" and other forms of lower humanity.

It is all for beating Fascism (on the masthead) but its sharpest shots are fired at labor.

The Russians rate pretty low, too, in Reynold's book, and he has become a belated champion of India. I will be forgiven for suggesting that he hates the British more than he loves the Indians.

Now Reynolds has announced that labor must abandon the 40-hour week.

(He knows better. He knows that thousands of workers are on their jobs more than 40 hours. What he means is that they should not be paid time-and-a-half.)

Reynolds said labor must yield ground because this is a tough, grim war.

Who told him that?

Where was he when the lights went out in Europe? He was holding hands with our own two-bit fuhrers—with the Fascist frontiers who told us that the war was "very far away."

I say that Reynolds was no honest isolationist who abandoned his views when war came. I say that he speaks for the domestic Fascists who will propose a negotiated peace at the wink of an eye.

His war against unions, embodied in a magazine that bears

his name and flaunts his picture, is a reflection of the kind of war he is fighting.

HOW HE GOT THERE

He is chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee because of the seniority rights that govern such appointments. If Washington were not numb, there would be a movement to throw him out.

Handsome Bob's apologists say that he should not be taken too seriously because he's "a clown at heart." Maybe he is. Maybe he's just a big, overgrown school-boy.

But he's a standing monument to our weaknesses and indecisions.

He's a beautiful sight to our enemies. He's an affront to our allies.

His crusade against labor re-views the issue of his presence in a seat of strategic importance.

I should also tell you that he is the author of two travel books. They are called "Wanderlust" and "Gypsy Trails."

Why does he have stay in Washington?