

## RESPONSIBILITY OF CONGRESS

Much of the responsibility for acting against those Congressmen and Senators who have been linked with these pro-Axis propagandists must rest on Congress itself.

And the fact is that Congress has not assumed its responsibility in this matter. It has done nothing about Hoffman and Fish and the others.

It so happens that many of those in Congress who have the most clear-cut defeatist records are members of the Republican Party.

This is no reflection on the patriotism of the majority of the Republicans in Congress or of the millions of loyal members of the Republican Party throughout the country.

But the Republicans in Congress who do support the war effort certainly owe it to themselves and to their constituents to make crystal clear their opposition to the defeatists and appeasers in their ranks. And they have not yet even begun to do this.

The day that Clare Hoffman was called before the grand jury to explain his dealing with subversive agents he got up on the House floor to defend his activities and his defeatist speeches.

Two Democrats, Majority Leader John W. McCormack and Rep. Clifton Woodrum of Virginia, called Hoffman to task and asked him some embarrassing questions.

Not a single Republican, however, so much as asked Hoffman a question. And worst of all, practically all the Republicans in the House chamber at the time applauded Hoffman at the conclusion of his speech.

Of course, the Democrats in Congress have also not acted vigorously enough against the appeasers. But for the Republicans in Congress to speak up against the defeatists is particularly important in terms of removing the Congressional elections from the arena of politics as usual, of burying relatively unimportant partisan issues and making support of the war the real issue in the elections.

In a significant and interesting speech the other day before the American Society of Newspaper Editors in New York, Archibald MacLeish, director of the Office of Facts and Figures, pointed to a situation in the newspaper industry similar to that which prevails in Congress.

MacLeish sharply criticized, although not by name, those daily newspapers which spread defeatist propaganda, which try to divide the United States from its Allies and which preach a strategy of defensive warfare.

And he emphasized that with notably few exceptions the rest of the press has glossed over this defeatist propaganda by important members of the newspaper fraternity.

MacLeish challenged the press to hit out "not only against the open propagandists of the Axis but those of its own membership who follow, consciously or unconsciously the Axis lead."

For the OFF director to emphasize the responsibility of the press in combatting defeatist propaganda was an important contribution. Unfortunately he did not make clear the responsibilities of the government and of his own agency in dealing with this situation.

He said that the government could not "suppress all publications of this divisive and defeatist nature" unless a clear-cut violation of the law is established. He added that police action is not possible against those publishers "who strive from that ambiguous and doubtful shadow where freedom of expression darkens into treason . . . without the risk of injury to rights that must on no account be injured."

Whether a general crackdown on the defeatist press is advisable or not at this time, there are important functions which the administration can and must perform more effectively than in the past.

Quite apart from prosecutions under the law, the administration has not yet organized on a large enough scale a real propaganda drive against the appeasers and their doctrines.

The administration has not yet begun to rally the people behind the war effort with a real propaganda and educational drive on the issues of the war which would knock the ground from under the appeasers and the defeatists.

MacLeish has been hesitant about undertaking this job, although his OFF is the broad propaganda and information coordinating agency of the government.

There are reports now that OFF and several other agencies in this field may soon be combined and this may lead to a more effective drive to take the issues of the war to the people.

Certainly it is clear that the steps against Coughlin and Pelley can only be a first step in a broader and more inclusive movement against the "respectable" and powerful defeatists who threaten the war effort.

thus far only scratched the surface, that it has not yet launched the urgently necessary general attack against the defeatists.

The steps taken to date have been limited in scope to the so-called lunatic fringe of the appeaser movement, to Father Coughlin, William Dudley Pelley of the Silver Shirts, Charles B. Hudson of "America in Danger" and others of the same stripe.

But what is being done about defeatist members of Congress like Reps. Stephen Day, Claire Hoffman and Ham Fish and Senators Burton K. Wheeler and Gerald P. Nye, who have been closely linked with the Nazi propaganda and network and in some cases with these very seditious groups which have been hit by the government?

And what is being done about big daily newspapers like the Chicago Tribune, the New York Daily News, the Washington Times-Herald and the Hearst chain which on most essential points follow the same defeatist policies as Social Justice?

Unfortunately the answer must be: not very much.

The link between the appeaser Congressmen and the most dangerous Nazi elements has already been exposed by the Department of Justice.

At the trial of the Nazi agent, George Sylvester Viereck, the government showed that Viereck operated a real propaganda mill under the dome of the capital with the aid of about 20 appeaser Congressmen and Senators.

Viereck engineered the mailing postage-free, and in some cases the writing, of speeches by Senators Wheeler and Nye and Reps. Fish, Tinkham, Day, Sweeney and many others.

Perhaps most serious was the fact that Viereck used as a purchasing agent Fish's secretary, George Hill. And it is now clear that Hill was simply acting under Fish's orders.

At the grand jury proceedings here in Washington, Rep. Hoffman was linked with several leaders of anti-Semitic, pro-Axis groups including Hudson's "America in Danger" and Gerald Winrod's "The Defender."

Both Hudson and Winrod as well as others of their stripe mailed out thousands of copies of Hoffman's speeches. Hoffman, incidentally, is also closely linked with Gerald L. K. Smith, who is busily engaged in spreading defeatist propaganda in the key industrial area of Detroit.