

'Christian Front' Trial to Go to Jury; Defense Winds Up With Red Baiting

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A long-suffering jury today will finally be locked up to consider a verdict in the case of 14 members of the Christian Front who have been standing trial for ten solid weeks on charges of conspiring to overthrow the United States government and to steal government munitions.

The trial has been winding up for several days in an oratorical blaze of red-baiting as five defense lawyers held forth picturing their terrorist clients as a bulwark against imminent revolution.

During the long-drawn out trial, the government summoned a total of 59 witnesses, and evidence was presented to show that the defendants, over a period of time, had built up sizable stores of rifle ammunition and high explosives, which they obtained from a National Guard Armory through Capt. John R. Prout, who is also on trial.

Also introduced were numerous home made bombs, together with floor plans of the Daily Worker office, which was their target.

Material seized in the homes of John F. Cassidy, Christian Front leader, and William Gerald Bishop, head of the so-called Action Committee, as well as their testimony, showed close connections between them and Father Coughlin, Father John Lodge Curran, Martin Dies,

Rep. Jacob Thorkelson and similar professional red-baiters and proponents of fascism.

These angles, however, were studiously concealed by the prosecution, and any links to men in high places were effectively covered up.

ATTACKS C. P.

Martin Conboy, one of the defense attorneys, based his entire summation to the jury on a vicious castigation of the Communist Party, and declared that the Christian Front is the only organization warning the American people against "revolution." His appeal was unadulterated "fifth column" hysteria.

But even he was outdone by former Magistrate Leo J. Healy, another of the defense attorneys. The trial, Healy declared, was only a "plot to smear and destroy the Christian Front." The organization he described as "a solid front of American citizens opposing Communism."

He defended the Coughlin paper Social Justice, and the red-baiting, anti-Semitic Brooklyn Tablet, and declared that his clients were being persecuted because of their Catholic religion.

At one point he declared that even if John F. Cassidy had threatened to "kill" a dozen Congressmen, a statement attributed to him in the trial, that would not constitute

conspiracy to overthrow the government.

At another point Healy said: "Macklin Boettger (one of the defendants) says 'I'd like to have a rifle with a telescopic sight and go out and shoot a few Communists.' So would I . . . I'd like to see them all strung up by the neck."

He concluded his ranting with a direct effort to scare the jury into acquittal: "The Communists," he cried, "will hail you as heroes if you convict these boys."

Harold M. Kennedy, United States attorney, will make the summation for the prosecution today after which Judge Marcus B. Campbell will charge the jury and the case will be in its hands.