

Trial May 13

## First 'Soci' Agent Indicted For Sedition in Tennessee

By Dillard Stokes  
Post Staff Writer 4/30/40

George W. Christians, a Tennessee link in the Soci secret organization of armed revolutionists, was indicted on four charges of sedition in Chattanooga yesterday.

Christians was the first of the known Socis to be formally accused by a Federal grand jury. If convicted, he will be liable to \$40,000 fine and 80 years in prison. He was held in \$10,000 bail and ordered to trial May 13.

### Heads Crusader Group

The Socis—who find this label snappier than their full name of "Social Republic Society"—have been under the scrutiny of the special grand jury on Axis agents in Washington. Before the grand jurors for nearly three weeks has been David Baxter, summoned from his headquarters in California.

Baxter wrote much of the Soci propaganda, which he has been mailing out and which has been recirculated by agents who, Baxter says, are active in every State. One of these was Christians.

### Named on Four Counts

Christians coupled his Soci propaganda with that of an organization with which he made a stab at an uprising several years ago, the Crusader White Shirts, of which he is "commander in chief." What brought him to grief

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ster" and commented, "some neck, for a rope."

"When the mad mob gets in motion," Christians' dodgers advised his followers, "don't miss a single politician. Just HANG them to the nearest tree or lamp-post."

The indictment presented yesterday after a grand jury inquiry conducted by James B. Frazier, jr., United States attorney for eastern Tennessee, accused the Soci agent of four violations of the Espionage Act of 1917.

In violation of this act, the indictment charged, Christians willfully tried to foment disloyalty and mutiny in the armed forces and to discourage enlistments.

Meanwhile, Attorney General Biddle's crackdown on sedition was carried forward yesterday by Special Prosecutors William Power Maloney, John T. M. Reddan and Lieut. Edward J. Hickey, jr., U. S. N. (j. g.).

Reserving their further grilling



GEORGE W. CHRISTIANS.

dodgers of the latter group, which he is accused of having mailed to soldiers at Camp Forrest, Tenn., and Fort Oglethorpe, Ga.

One of these dodgers listed questions to be asked to "create a reign of terror." One question was, "Do Germany, Italy and Japan have the right to fight for freedom from OUR economic strangulation?"

Another dodger said President Roosevelt was a "merciless mon-

of Baxter and suspected confederates of the Socis, the prosecutors hammered at the operation of Charles E. Coughlin's weekly magazine, *Social Justice*, already barred from the mails pending hearing Monday on a final order.

### Editor Before Probers

Heard yesterday were E. Perrin Schwartz, the nominal editor, and three young women employed in the offices of the Church of the Little Flower, Royal Oak, Mich., where Coughlin is pastor. They were Eugenia Burke, private secretary; Marie Rhodes and Bernice Marks.

Prosecutor Reddan said new efforts were being made to locate the mysteriously missing Mrs. Ann Bethune, a key witness who disappeared when the grand jurors summoned her more than two weeks ago. She is believed able to give valuable evidence of the financing and control of the defeatist press—the widely scattered bloc of little publications whose policies and outcries against the American Gov-

ernment and the United Nations so closely parallel the propaganda line of the Nazi radio.

Mrs. Agnes Waters, isolationist speaker who calls President Roosevelt a "traitor," was ordered away from the grand jury chambers when the investigation began. She issued a statement yesterday that the investigation was persecution of Coughlin, Gerald B. Winrod, pro-Uazi Jew-baiter from Wichita, Kans., and other editors.

### Speaking in Baltimore

Mrs. Waters, who called the jailed German agent, George Sylvester Viereck, a patriot, said she would denounce the "suicide brigade" strategy of sending troops out of this country in a speech in Baltimore today, under the sponsorship of the "mothers of the Free State of Maryland."

Besides the grand jury inquiries in Washington and Chattanooga, Attorney General Biddle and the chief of the criminal division, Wendell Berge, are directing investigations in Indianapolis and Chicago.

A new one was announced yesterday, in Los Angeles, under the command of William Fleet Palmer, United States attorney for Southern California.

Already under indictment there are Robert Noble and Ellis O. Jones, for heiling Adolf Hitler and excusing the Nazi cause in harangues in the Los Angeles area.