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### Unveiling the Hyphenate

When the Ku-Klux Klan, about fifteen years ago, was offering a formidable threat to the liberties and security of law-abiding citizens, the Legislature of this state added a provision to the civil rights law which seems likely now to prove a handy weapon in dealing with organizations swearing allegiance to foreign dictators. The provision says simply that every membership corporation or unincorporated association (labor unions, college fraternities and benevolent orders excepted) which requires an oath as a prerequisite or condition of membership shall file with the Secretary of State a sworn copy of its constitution, bylaws, rules, regulations and oath of membership, together with a roster of its membership and a list of its officers; also that it shall keep this registered information up to date. It is a wholly reasonable statute which no organization need fear whose purposes are above board, but one can understand how deadly its application may prove to all those little groups bent on sowing here the seeds of an alien authority.

For example, it has just been invoked with success against the German-American Settlement League, Inc., and certain of the latter's officers. The case came up in Suffolk County where, at Yaphank, L. I., this Nazi organization has been operating Camp Stegfried. The county prosecutor charged that, though membership in the league was restricted to members of the American-Deutscher Volksbund and the bund insisted on an oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler, the public record required by the law had not been forthcoming. "We, in this country," he said, "have been negligent too long regarding the actions of persons who have foreign allegiance." And the jury agreed with him so thoroughly that within fifteen minutes after retiring it brought in a verdict of guilty.

Here is notice to Hitler, Stalin et al. that their recruiting programs hereabouts are likely to prove more difficult than they had supposed. It is one thing to be a hyphenate in secret, quite another to make a public record of the fact. Let's have more such unveilings and without discrimination respecting the foreign allegiance involved.