

For Immediate Release
FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 1942

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Attorney General Francis Biddle today announced that he has instructed the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Tennessee, at Chattanooga, to institute prosecution of George W. Christians of that city for violation of Title I of the Alien Registration Act of 1940 (Smith Act).

Christians is charged with violating provisions of the statute which make it unlawful for any person "with intent to interfere with, impair, or influence the loyalty, morale, or discipline of the military or naval forces of the United States, to distribute any written or printed matter which advises, counsels, or urges insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the military or naval forces."

Penalties provided by this statute are imprisonment for not more than ten years or a fine of not more than \$10,000, or both.

Christians, organizer of "The Economic Liberty Movement" and the "Crusader White Shirts", with headquarters at Chattanooga, is charged with sending a communication addressed to the "Officers and Enlisted Men of Fort Oglethorpe (Georgia) and Camp Forrest (Tennessee)" on December 5, 1941, designed to impair the morale of the military forces. This communication was received at headquarters, Camp Forrest, on December 6, 1941.

On December 29, 1941, literature was received at headquarters, Camp Forrest, addressed to the Commanding Officer. This document, on the letterhead of the "Crusader White Shirts" and signed by Christians as "Commander-in-Chief", read in part:

"Even in war time we are permitted to ask questions, so on the reverse side of this page is a list of them which are designed to finish the demoralization and disintegration of the existing order and create a REIGN OF TERROR...."

"When the MAD MOB gets in MOTION make sure that they dig all of the Blood-Sucking Gangsters out from under their pile of rock and steel. Line them up against a wall and SHOOT them. See that they run down all the Political Parasites. Don't miss a single Politician, big or little. Just HANG them to the nearest tree or lamp-post. Drive the Moral Lepers out of our Prostitute Press into a Pest House and BURN them...."

Among the "questions" listed on the reverse of this document were the following:

"WHAT are we fighting FOR?"

"Do we DIE for DOLLAR DOMINATION?"

"Are we fighting to quiet the struggles of the victims of Economic Strangulation?"

"Do Germany, Italy and Japan have the right to FIGHT for FREEDOM from OUR Economic Strangulation?"

"Are we fighting to restore Europe to British Economic Bondage?"

"Is Military Aggression more brutal or immoral than the Economic Strangulation of the Tyranny of Gold?"

"Do our allies enjoy the Economic Straight-Jacket we have imposed upon them?"

"If Russia gets too aggressive do we Lend-Lease to Germany and Japan?"

"Do we have enough Blood and Treasure to Determine the Destiny of all the People of the World?"

"What is the MARKET PRICE of Defense Bonds and Stamps?"

"Are we fighting to make Roosevelt the Dictator of the World?"

"Does our Commander-in-Chief have Ideas or is he just the World's Greatest Humbug?"

"Does Wendel Wilkie and certain Wall St. interests and certain high army officers have an IDEA that HE would make a better Commander-in-Chief?"

Accompanying this document and addressed to "Crusaders" was a two-page "Manifesto", outlining a "new economic order", as well as a handwritten note signed "G.W.C." The text of the latter follows:

"C.O.

"The enclosed ought to get me SHOT but if our boys in the Philippines can TAKE it-- I can too-- AND DISH IT OUT to the Stuffed Shirts whose Stupidity and Stubbornness got us into this mess.

"YOU are supposed to be an American. See if you can get these questions answered. Maybe you will get SHOT instead of me.

"G.W.C."

Other documents, signed by Christians are presently under investigation. Christians, according to an FBI investigation, organized and incorporated his "Crusaders for Economic Liberty" on June 23, 1931, at Nashville, Tenn. He is described as a prolific writer who has had more than 1,000,000 copies of his material printed for distribution.

On or before February 9, 1933, Christians had printed so-called "General Orders" to the "Crusader White Shirts". These, in part, said:

"No unit of the Crusader White Shirts should attempt any positive action until it has been thoroughly drilled and officered and perfect discipline has been obtained, nor should it attempt to move until it is sufficiently strong to accomplish its purpose without any chance of failure.

"The first objective should be to take control of the local government in the following manner: March in military formation to and surround the governmental buildings. Then, by sheer numbers and a patriotic appeal, force the officials to accept and as under the direction of an economic adviser appointed by the President of the C.F.E.L. This adviser's first duty will be to repudiate the public debt and utilize the payments assigned thereto for the public welfare.

"Dishonest officials should immediately be brought to justice. You should remember that these politicians are unfamiliar with modern business methods, and that their

accounts are apt to be badly muddled and may be short. Great care should be exercised so that the situation does not get out of control and some poor, muddle-headed but honest politicians get hung without a fair and legal trial.

"When this is accomplished, Crusader White Shirts should assist law enforcement officials in maintaining the kind of codes we consider essential...."