

# U. S. Hunting Key Nazi Agent Probe Witness

## Ralph Townsend Fails to Appear Before Grand Jury

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A Nation-wide hunt was on last night for Ralph Townsend, anti-interventionist writer and key witness in the special grand jury investigation of German agents.

Townsend was mysteriously missing yesterday, when he was scheduled to testify before the special grand jury.

A month ago Townsend was given the closely guarded, secretly compiled master mailing list of the anti-interventionists, according to Bessie Feagin, promotion manager of Scribner's Commentator.

Lawyers for Scribner's said yesterday, however, that his whereabouts was "unknown" and they could not produce him as agreed.

Other developments in the inquiry were:

Senate and House Judiciary Committees speeded consideration of a bill to put sharp teeth in the law requiring foreign agents to register with American authorities.

Special prosecutors of the Department of Justice propaganda squad said they would seek a trial December 8, if Representative Hamilton Fish's secretary, George Hill, loses his technical attack on the perjury indictment against him.

National officers of the Steuben Society, a large handler of franked mail, were questioned before the special grand jury.

Miss Feagin testified that a copy of a mammoth mailing list, com-

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iled a year ago, was prepared and given to Townsend by order of George T. Eggleston, editor of Scribner's. Alfons B. Landa, counsel for the magazine, promised to produce him to testify, declaring the publisher's wish to cooperate with the foreign agent investigation.

Yesterday Landa said that inquiry had brought out that Townsend had no connection with Scribner's but might work for Lake Geneva Publications, Inc., which issued a paper called The Herald. Landa said his firm had nothing to do with the Lake Geneva company, which, like Scribner's, operates in Lake Geneva, Wis.

Special Prosecutors William Power Maloney and Edward J. Hickey, jr., immediately launched a Nation-wide search for the missing witness. In particular, Townsend was sought in San Francisco, New York and the Lake Geneva area.

Hickey left by plane for Miami, Fla., but explained that his trip had no bearing on the search, as he is to appear for the Government in a case in Federal Court there at 10 o'clock this morning.

### Bills Introduced

Bills more strictly defining foreign agents, rigidly limiting their activities against this country or the Pan-American republics and providing severe penalties for violation, have been introduced by Representative Hatton W. Summers (Democrat), of Texas, and Senator Kenneth D. McKellar (Democrat), of Tennessee.

Summers, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, yesterday named a subcommittee of seven members, who will hold hearings on the bill Friday.

Senator Frederick Van Nuys (Democrat), of Indiana, Senate Judiciary chairman, also named a subcommittee, which probably will attend the House hearings to save time.

The Senate committee yesterday heard an indorsement of the measure from Attorney General Biddle and explanations of its clauses from spokesmen of the State, Postoffice and Justice departments.

"I believe the subcommittee was impressed by the necessity for quick action," Senator Van Nuys said, "and that they expect to be ready to report next Monday."

### Collins Fails to Appear

Administration sponsors of the measure emphasized that without its provisions enforcement officials are helpless against many foreign agents who keep technically within the present law.

Besides Townsend, Seward Collins, identified as an associate of George Sylvester Viereck, indicted German propagandist, was scheduled to testify before the special grand jury yesterday. He did not appear.

The prosecutors spent the session questioning Theodore H. Hoffman, president of the Steuben Society of America, and Marie F. Johansen, secretary.

Miss Johansen was one of the signers of two announcements issued this summer, calling on members of the society to come to meetings and get copies of friendly speeches of Congressmen for mailing "without" postage stamps. Many copies of the speeches listed were mailed in New York at the time under Congressional frank. One of those was a speech of Hoffman which had been inserted in the Congressional Record.

This writer, who testified twice previously, was recalled before the grand jury for half an hour.

### May Rule Today on Hill

Justice James M. Morris, of the District Court, indicated yesterday, that he will rule today on the technical objections raised by counsel for George Hill to the indictments charging him with perjury. Justice Morris also will rule on Hill's petition to be allowed to see the transcript of all his testimony before the grand jury.

Another prosecutor joined the propaganda squad at Judiciary Square yesterday. Albert E. Arent, who filed letters of authority from the Attorney General, took part in several early investigations of the propaganda squad.