

Jury to Probe Jap Activities Up to Attack

By Dillard Stokes

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The special grand jury on Axis agents yesterday turned its guns on the Japanese propaganda machine which operated in the United States up to the day the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor.

Using channels similar to those of the Nazi operatives, which were discovered in the last three months of the inquiry, the Japanese circulated antiinterventionist material which questioned the wisdom of aid to China and advocated that America keep "hands off the Far East."

Sought by the grand jurors and Special Prosecutors William Power Maloney and Edward J. Hickey, jr., are the Japanese agents—both American and alien—who carried on these operations without registering and revealing their connections at the State Department, as was required by the peacetime Foreign Agent Registration Act.

Action Sped on New Law

Meanwhile, on Capitol Hill action was speeded on a new law, sharpening the teeth of the regulations against foreign propagandists and broadening the definition of an "agent" to fit the realities uncovered by the grand jurors. Introduced in both House and Senate several weeks ago, the measure is expected to be useful under war conditions, providing a weapon against enemy operatives who might succeed in keeping clear of the stringent laws against sedition.

The House bill, which was offered by Chairman Hatton W. Sumners of the Judiciary Committee, is due to come before the committee today, having already been approved by a subcommittee.

First witness called by Grand Jury Foreman John S. Gorrell here yesterday was Ralph Townsend, former writer for Scribner's Commentator, antiinterventionist magazine of Lake Geneva, Wis., and its companion weekly, the mysteriously financed and violently anti-British Herald.

Townsend was at one time a consular officer in China. In recent years he has written sympathetically of Japan's ambitions in Asia, urging a conciliatory attitude on the part of the United States.

Reports from San Francisco, Townsend home until he joined the Lake Geneva group this year, were that he had numerous connections in Japanese commercial and government circles there.

From this it was conjectured that he would be able to give the grand jurors valuable information in the current inquiry.

Townsend pledged support to the national war effort and said he would do all he could to help. After being questioned most of yesterday, Townsend was ordered to return this morning.

Catherine Curtis Testifies

Briefly a witness yesterday was Catherine Curtis, national chairman of the Women's National Committee to keep the United States out of war, which Miss Curtis said was "now defunct, murdered by the Japanese on December 7."

Miss Curtis said the committee was formed in 1939, as a revival of the National Committee for Hands Off the Supreme Court, which flourished in 1937. In its antiwar role the committee published a pamphlet attacking the Lend-Lease Act. Large quantities of this work were sold to Frank B. Burch, Akron, Ohio, lawyer whom the grand jury indicted for acting as a German propagandist. He pleaded guilty, admitting he handled this pamphlet for the German consul in Cleveland, was fined \$1000 and escaped a prison term only because of his age.

Called as a witness this afternoon is Prof. Kenneth Scott, of Western Reserve University, Cleveland, who also wrote for Scribner's.