

# FISH'S AIDE INDICTED ON PERJURY CHARGES

## Franked Material Burned as Trash, Mrs. Clark Says

*Star 10/24/41*  
**America First Committee Acted After Use Was Questioned, She Asserts**

The America First Committee's Washington chapter has been burning franked envelopes and postal cards supplied by members of Congress almost daily since it moved to new headquarters at 1712 Connecticut avenue N.W. on October 11, Mrs. Bennett Champ Clark, acting chairman, told The Star today.

Mrs. Clark, wife of the isolationist Senate leader from Missouri, said the franked material was burned as trash in the alley behind the office, because America First decided not to mail any franked material after the question of its propriety was raised several weeks ago.

Justice Department officials leading a District grand jury inquiry into activities of alleged Nazi agents in the United States expressed interest in the fact that such material had been destroyed. One official reported that a subpoena had been issued today for Dillard Stokes, a reporter for a Washington newspaper, to appear before the grand jury this afternoon and produce some charred remnants of franked material he said he found behind the America First office.

**Volunteer to Talk.**

Meanwhile, Miss Isabel French, office secretary, and Hugh Fisher, volunteer worker for America First, of their own volition, arranged to talk with William Power Maloney and Edward J. Hickey, Jr., special assistants to the Attorney General, who are pushing the grand jury inquiry. They said they were ready to testify before the jury if the prosecutors desire.

Mrs. Clark touched on reports that the burned material might have been some of that which the Justice Department claims was brought to her organization on September 19 from the office of Prescott Dennett, secretary of Make Europe Pay for Debts Committee, allegedly supported by "known German agents."

**Nothing to Cover Up.**

"I certainly don't think there is a thing to that idea," she said, "though I don't know first hand. If we were trying to cover up something we would do it more efficiently. We have nothing to cover up."

Some material was brought to America First headquarters in a truck September 19, she said, but the driver declared it was from Representative Fish.

## Examines Indictment.

When the indictment was returned, Mr. O'Connor asked to see it and Justice Goldsborough responded: "Certainly."

Mr. O'Connor then wanted to ascertain at what time the grand jury voted the indictment, saying this would be material. The lawyer wanted to know whether the information that the defendant would be indicted was made public previously in whole or in part, contending that would affect the validity of the indictment.

At this point, Justice Goldsborough said: "No statement you have made so far would vitiate the indictment."

Mr. O'Connor then wanted to know on what day the indictment was voted, pointing out that if the indictment were defective on its face the defendant could not even be arraigned.

Justice Goldsborough said the record shows that Mr. Hill on October 23 was presented for a charge of perjury and that the indictment was not dated, as that is not customary here.

## Mail Bags Disappeared.

The mail bags about which Mr. Hill was questioned disappeared from the committee office on September 19, a few hours after secretary, Mr. Dennett, was subpoenaed to appear before the grand jury, according to the Justice Department.

According to the story told by Representative Fish on the floor of the House, Mr. Hill had ordered a House of Representatives truck to go to Mr. Dennett's office and pick up 500 Fish speeches which Mr. Dennett said were in his possession but unwanted.

The truck returned loaded with sacks, and Mr. Hill refused to accept delivery, according to Representative Fish's account. Mr. Hill, himself, gave no public account of the affair.

Days later, however, Walter L. Reynolds, first secretary to the New York Republican, announced that he had "discovered" about eight bags in a storeroom of the New House Office Building, outside a locker assigned to Mr. Fish.

The grand jury then issued a subpoena for Mr. Hill to produce these bags. Representative Fish said he advised him not to do so, on the ground they were not in his possession. After Justice Goldsborough set a deadline of noon, October 10, for the bags to be produced, they were sent to the grand jury by Finis Scott, House postmaster, who said he acted on written instructions from Mr. Hill.

## Isolationist Material.

Since that date the Representative's secretary has been repeatedly called as a grand jury witness.

One of the financial supporters of Dennett's committee, it was asserted, has been Mr. Viereck, who pleaded innocent after being indicted for alleged failure to give full information when registering with the State Department as a German agent.

Mr. Viereck today filed in District Court a demurrer to the indictment. He contended that the activities about which the Government complains are not amenable to the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Mr. Viereck did register, but the Government contends he did not do so completely.

The bags found outside Representative Fish's locker contained envelopes franked by Senators and Representatives, and other isolationist material. The sacks had been pulled open and reporters were able to view the top portion of their contents days before the grand jury saw them.

The Justice Department claims that some other Dennett bags were taken to America First Committee headquarters by the House truck. Justice agents seized a number of bags filled with franked envelopes at the America First office, and the grand jury examined these.

## Defended by Colleague.

Mr. Fish was said by his office to be in New York City, but his first secretary, Mr. Reynolds, said the indictment of Mr. Hill was "absurd, ridiculous and a frame-up."

"Mr. Hill has nothing to hide," said Mr. Reynolds. "Mr. Fish told him to tell all he knew and he did. He has co-operated to the fullest extent. There was a frame-up somewhere along the line."

## Not Guilty Plea Made by Hill

*Star 10/24/41*  
**At Arraignment Case Is Result of Probe in Loss of 20 Mail Bags**

George Hill, second secretary to Representative Hamilton Fish, Republican, of New York, was indicted on two charges of perjury today by a special District Court grand jury investigating alleged Nazi activities in the United States.

Special Assistant to the Attorney General William Power Maloney told Justice T. Alan Goldsborough Mr. Hill admitted receiving \$12,000 in the past five months from sources which he would not disclose and that he was the key man in a plot to disseminate propaganda under congressional franking privileges.

The first count of the indictment charged that Mr. Hill gave false and perjured testimony regarding directions, or instructions to certain persons named in the indictment on the removal of mail sacks from the residence of Prescott Dennett, 1430 Rhode Island avenue N.W., and their storage in space in the new House of Representatives Office Building under his direction.

**Pleads Not Guilty.**

The second count of the indictment accused Mr. Hill of giving false and perjured testimony under oath before the grand jury, by claiming he did not know George Sylvester Viereck, reputed Nazi agent, when in fact he did know him.

As soon as the indictment was returned to Justice Goldsborough, Mr. Maloney moved for immediate arraignment.

After an exchange between Justice Goldsborough and Mr. Hill's attorney, John J. O'Connor, former member of Congress from New York, Mr. Hill was arraigned and in a loud voice told the court:

"Not guilty."

He was released in Mr. O'Connor's custody for his appearance in court at 10 a.m. tomorrow after Justice Goldsborough had said he would set bond at \$5,000 and Mr. O'Connor had protested that it would be difficult to raise that amount this afternoon.

**Linked to Mail Bags.**

Mr. Hill, who was called to testify before the grand jury several times, has been linked by the Justice Department with the disappearance of 20 mail bags of isolationist material from the office of Make Europe Pay War Debts Committee, allegedly supported in part by "known German agents."

After Mr. Hill entered his plea, Mr. O'Connor asked about bail. Mr. Maloney suggested bond of \$10,000, and at the same time pointed out that the defendant was a secretary to Representative Fish.

"This is aiming at the lion and shooting the rabbit," observed Mr. O'Connor. "I am here to plead Congressman Fish not guilty."

At his New York office, Mr. Fish said that Mr. O'Connor by that remark "probably meant that Mr. Hill's indictment was part of the smear campaign against me."

Declaring he was not sufficiently informed to comment on the indictment, Mr. Fish asserted:

"I will say that George Hill is 100 per cent O. K., and I'll back George Hill to the limit on anything."

Mr. O'Connor then stated that Mr. Hill has lived in Washington for 21 years and that bond is fixed only to prevent the flight of a defendant. He then suggested that Justice Goldsborough set bond at around \$2,000.