

Key Witness In D. C. Nazi Probe Escapes

Griffin Believed
To Be in Havana;
Jury Action Delayed

By Dillard Stokes
Post Staff Writer

William Griffin, key witness in the special grand jury investigation of Axis agents, who has been missing two weeks, was believed to be in Havana, Cuba, last night—beyond the reach of the United States courts.

Investigators believe Griffin can give important testimony about the far-flung operations of George Sylvester Viereck, the German agent who goes on trial here February 9 on charges of concealing his use of Congressmen and their franks for propaganda purposes.

Griffin vanished from New York two weeks ago, just ahead of a subpoena for his appearance before the grand jury in Washington. Associates and relatives said they did not know where Griffin was and Federal marshals could not serve the summons.

Attorney Wants an Out

Thomas Jefferson Ryan, New York attorney who had assured the investigators Griffin would be produced when wanted, last night said he wished "to wash my hands of the affair."

Griffin's relatives, Ryan told The Post, had assured him that Griffin would get in touch with the attorney as soon as he returned to New York Wednesday. But Griffin hadn't been heard from. Ryan, denying he knew Griffin's whereabouts, said he believed him to be in Havana.

With Griffin out of the country, the special grand jurors canceled their session yesterday morning. Special Prosecutors William Power Maloney and Edward J. Hickey, jr., will produce other witnesses next Tuesday.

Griffin is editor of the New York Enquirer, a paying client of the Nazi propaganda news agency Transocean, which was convicted in the District Court last summer of violating the Foreign Agents Act. Prescott Dennett, declared by the grand jury to have been Viereck's tool in propaganda activity, wrote Washington articles for the Enquirer.

He Sued Winston Churchill

Griffin was a contributor to Scribner's Commentator, the Lake Geneva, Wis., isolationist magazine whose sponsors also issued an anti-British paper called the Herald, which was financed, they claimed,

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out of big bundles of \$20 bills tossed in their living room window.

Griffin once sued Winston Churchill for a million dollars, for allegedly denying an interview, in which Griffin claimed Churchill made statements critical of this country.

Representative Hamilton Fish's secretary, George Hill, 45, who supplied a House truck in which Dennett got rid of evidence wanted by the grand jury, will be sentenced today for two perjuries. He was convicted of falsely telling the special grand jury that he did not have mailbags from Dennett's placed in a Fish storeroom and of falsely denying that he knew Viereck.

Justice F. Dickinson Letts will pronounce sentence.

Scheduled for arraignment in the District Court Monday is another Scribner's writer, Ralph Townsend, and three other men accused of conspiracy and of being unregistered Japanese agents.

Townsend was ordered here after being arrested in Lake Geneva. Fred V. Williams and David Warren Ryder were arrested in San Francisco.

The fourth defendant—two others, Japanese, having left the country before Pearl Harbor—is Tsutomu Obana, secretary of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in San Francisco. Brought before Federal Judge A. F. St. Sure yesterday, Obana agreed to be sent here.