

Rush-Holt Testifies Before Jury Probing Axis Propaganda

Star 2/1 1942

George Hill Also Appears And Signs Appeal From Perjury Sentence

Former Senator Rush Holt testified today before a special District grand jury investigating Axis propaganda in this country. The former "boy Senator" came to Washington voluntarily from his home at Weston, W. Va., at the request of William Power Maloney, special assistant to the Attorney General, who is in charge of the investigation.

Before entering the jury room at 11 o'clock, Mr. Holt told newspapermen he had no idea why he had been called, but was anxious to co-operate.

Mr. Holt, an active isolationist before entry of the United States into the war, was in the grand jury room for an hour. On leaving the courthouse, he told reporters that no "ghost writers" had helped him with articles published under his name. Mr. Holt, it was said, had collected his Senate speeches and other addresses for a book to be entitled, "Who's Who Among the War Mongers."

Another witness before the inquisitorial body was George Hill, 45, secretary to Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, who was sentenced Friday to from two to six years following his conviction by a jury in District Court on a charge of perjury.

Hill Appeals Sentence.

Just before entering the grand jury room, Hill signed a petition to the Court of Appeals for a reconsideration of his sentence. Through Attorney Richard A. Harmon, Hill charged, among other things, that he lacked effective legal representation at his trial.

Attorneys John J. O'Connor and William F. Cusick represented Hill at his trial. Mr. Cusick told newspapermen today he had not been informed of any formal effort to obtain a new trial for Hill. The time limit for an appeal from the verdict was to have expired when the court closed this afternoon.

Hill was convicted of perjury in connection with his testimony about the distribution of isolationist propaganda prior to the entry of the United States into the Second World War."

Cites Nine Legal Defects.

In addition to charging "incompetence" to his trial counsel, Hill cited nine alleged legal defects in the prosecution's presentation of its case against him.

Two witnesses expected to testify before the grand jury today were prevented by illness from attending. Prescott Dennett of the 1300 block of Vermont avenue N.W., said to have distributed isolationist propaganda with the aid of George Viereck, who is under indictment for alleged failure to register as a German agent, was reported suffering from an undisclosed ailment. The other witness unable to attend was William Griffin, publisher of a New York City Weekly for which Mr. Dennett served as Washington correspondent.