

BUND ACTIVITIES WIDESPREAD

Evidence Taken by Dies Committee Throws Light on Meaning of the Garden Rally

By LUTHER HUSTON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25.—Disorders attendant upon Nazi rallies in New York and Los Angeles this week again focused attention upon the Nazi movement in the United States and inspired conjectures as to its strength and influence.

There is no accurate gauge of the degree to which the philosophy which Adolf Hitler has imposed upon the German people has been accepted by the Germans in the United States. There is, however, evidence in plenty that proponents of that philosophy are active in a campaign to extend its influence and augment the numbers of its adherents.

The German-American Bund, which staged a rally Monday night in Madison Square Garden, New York, which some 20,000 persons attended, is the largest organization of Nazi sympathizers in this country. Only Germans who have become naturalized American citizens are technically eligible to belong to it. An organization known as the Deutscher Volksbund, to which only German citizens are eligible for membership, also exists, but little is known of the extent of its membership or activities.

Aims of Bund Indicated

John C. Metcalfe, an investigator for the Special Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives, known as the Dies Committee, testified at hearings conducted by that committee last year that the purposes of the German-American Bund were threefold:

"First, the establishment of a vast spy net; second, a powerful sabotage machine; and third, a German minority with the present group as a nucleus and to encompass as many German-Americans as possible."

Mr. Metcalfe further asserted that there had been established in Stuttgart, Germany, an "Auslandsbureau," which is manned by men who have been leaders of the Nazi movement in this country, some of whom have taken out American citizenship papers. This bureau, or foreign institute, he said, was "actively engaged in directing, planning and helping to finance" the program of the German-American Bund in the United States.

The German-American Bund is divided into three sections, the East, Middle West and Far West. Its leader is Fritz Kuhn.

Membership Estimate

There is no accurate record available of the exact membership in the German-American Bund. It is understood to have about eighty posts, or branches, in various cities of the United States. An investigation by the Department of Justice last year placed the membership at about 8,500. Mr. Metcalfe told the Dies Committee that he estimated the membership at about 25,000.

The intangible factor in estimating the strength and influence of the Bund, however, is chiefly how many people who are not enrolled members nevertheless sympathize

with it, buy its literature, attend its meetings, such as that in Madison Square Garden, and contribute financial assistance. No one knows how large this army of sympathizers is. Mr. Metcalfe estimated it at a half million.

The Bund, in its literature, claims to have about 100,000 people in the country upon whose friendship and aid it can depend, even though their names do not appear upon its rolls. Many of those who sympathize with but do not belong to the Bund are Germans who have come to this country since the Nazi regime attained power in Germany.

The Native-Born

All the evidence indicates that relatively few Germans who have been long in this country, and an even smaller number of native-born Americans of German ancestry, belong to or are greatly interested in the Bund.

To quote Mr. Metcalfe again: At least 90 per cent of the German-American element in the United States is bitterly opposed to the activities of the German-American Bund and all it stands for."

Many of the outward sympathizers with the Bund are led to attend its meetings and profess interest in its program, it is said, because of fear that if they do not relatives in Germany will suffer. The leaders and organizers of the Bund, it

is understood, keep in touch with Germans lately arrived here who have families or near relatives in Germany and report to Nazi leaders in the Fatherland as to the attitude of persons who have migrated to America.

If the attitude is unfavorable, according to some Germans here, reprisals may be inflicted upon their folks in the homeland. To avoid this, they maintain a semblance of interest in the Nazi movement in this country. Germans who have been longer in the United States are less susceptible to such pressure and consequently more indifferent to Nazi agitation.

A Question Mark

How much of the activity of Nazi leaders in this country has the approval of the official representatives of the German Government in the United States cannot be stated definitely.

Testimony before the Dies committee was to the effect that some of the Nazi leaders here complained of lack of cooperation from German consuls in American cities. On the other hand, Fritz Kuhn was quoted as asserting that he could bring about the removal of any consul who failed to cooperate with his Bund.

There has been no evidence of any active support of nazism in America on the part of the Nazi diplomatic force in this country. How much intangible aid may have been given the Nazi cause by the program of "education" regarding the blessings of nazism which is carried on under diplomatic auspices cannot be accurately estimated.