

# Esso Nazis, Here Since War Began, Shepherded Secretly By Gestapo

NEW YORK—For the last month, ever since the outbreak of the European war, 240 German sailors have lived in two hotels in New York City, and 70 more in a Baltimore, Md., hotel. The New York hotels are the Rex and the Flanders, both in West 47th Street. Gestapo agents are in secret charge of the men.

## Gestapo

The sailors have been discharged by the Standard Oil Company which employed them on seven of its tankers. The men may stay here no longer than sixty days, and the Company is under obligation to pay their maintenance until they reach their port of origin, which is Hamburg. Every morning each

sailor gets his \$2.65, and because of the expense, the Company has tried to ship the crews back to Germany but so far with no success.

The Roma of the Italian Line would not take them, while the Rex of the same line cancelled the booking of 24 of these German seamen just before sailing. The Italians plainly fear trouble with the British on the high seas if they take Germans to Europe. Nevertheless, three seamen, who felt it was their duty to return, managed to sneak in aboard the Roma and sailed away.

## Cannon Fodder

Serious pressure upon the German seamen to go back to the Reich is put by the Nazis in America. The Nazis' motive is of course to provide Hitler's navy with additional cannon fodder. However, despite the efforts of the Standard Oil Company and of the Nazi Ortsgruppenleiter (district leader), few sailors have shown willing-

ness to leave. Of New York's 240 men only 25 have said that they would go.

Because of this "lack of cooperation," the guard over the seamen has been intensified, although it is made as inconspicuous to outsiders as possible. Whoever of the German sailors reads a non-Nazi newspaper, whoever goes to see places "where his mind might be poisoned," whoever stays away from his hotel too long at a time is disciplined by his ship's Nazi leader. His name is at once relayed to the Gestapo office in Hamburg which keeps a constant eye on the man's family remaining in the Reich and threatens revenge

for the seaman's conduct in America.

## Lots of Fun

Another way of influencing the sailors was thought up by the Nazis in this country when the Reichsdeutsche Vereinigung invited its members as well as German-Americans to attend a "Volksfest" for the benefit of the stranded Germans.

The festival took place recently, at the Schuetzenpark in North Bergen, N. J., in an atmosphere of semi-secrecy. The sailors held in New York received free tickets and were urged to come, for the meeting was to be addressed by Dr. Hans Thomsen, Nazi charge d'affaires in Washington. Only some 70 sailors came, and these mainly because they were bored by their secluded life in the hotels while all sorts of amusements were promised at North Bergen.

A representative, who attended the meeting, reports that at the park about 2,000 Germans gathered under large Nazi banners coupled with the U. S. flag. The stage was decorated with signs proclaiming, "Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Fuehrer!" A fervent poem was

staged, and the chief actor as if under an oath promised to fight for "sacred Germany," since it was to her, he said, that his soul and body belonged.

## A Speech, Yet!

This was followed by Dr. Thomsen's long speech, disclaiming responsibility for the war and whitewashing the Fuehrer. Dr. Thomsen also urged his listeners to be concerned mainly with Germany, putting all other things and countries (including the United States) into the background.

The Horst Wessel song and "Deutschland Ueber Alles" were sung, and the Nazi salute with an upraised arm and "Heil Hitler" were given. Long counters were heaped high with Nazi literature for sale. The proceeds of the "Volksfest," some \$1,000, were supposed to benefit the stranded Germans, but instead the Reichsdeutsche Vereinigung got the money.

## Sailors No Like

The Nazi work among the German sailors in this country is busily and successfully counteracted by the American Committee for Anti-Nazi German Seamen. Leaflets are being distributed in the hotels, on the streets near by, and at the nearest public places frequented by the sailors.

Contact men and women are being sent into the hotels. Leaflets are accepted by the sailors and read eagerly, and afterwards many are passed to those men who for some or other reason had not been reached.

Discussions are arranged with the help of American girls who have succeeded in striking up acquaintances with many of the sailors. The sailors, after their confidence is gained, praise the courage and determination with which the Nazi Bund is being fought here, and manifest their own anti-Nazi feelings.

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