

Hart, Merwin K.

See D.W. 11/19/40 re Ries' Madison  
Square Rally of 11/29/40

# 10,000 RALLY HERE FOR FRANCO CAUSE

~~Fascist Org~~  
Urge U. S. to Recognize His  
Regime at Once — Please  
for Neutrality Made  
NY Times

REDS, NAZIS ARE ASSAILED

But, Part of Crowd Applauds  
Mention of Hitler, Mussolini—  
A Coughlin Demonstration

2/20/39

Recognition by the United States of the Franco government in Spain was urged at a mass meeting held yesterday afternoon in the 107th Infantry Regiment Armory, at Sixty-SIXTH Street and Park Avenue, under the auspices of the General Committee for Americanism and Neutrality. Resolutions were unanimously adopted demanding that Congress enforce on all executive officers absolute neutrality in foreign controversies, forbid special privileges in secrecy to any foreign government and condemn abusive and contemptuous comment upon rulers of foreign states.

The police estimated the crowd in the armory at more than 10,000. References by speakers to General Franco, Premier Mussolini and Chancellor Hitler were applauded. A picture of the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin carried down the aisle while Dr. Alexander Hamilton Rice, geographer and explorer, was speaking, was greeted with such boisterous enthusiasm by a section of the audience that Dr. Rice could not make himself heard.

Following the reading and adoption of the resolutions, a group that identified itself as part of an association called the Christian Front walked up to the speakers' stand. The leader, who refused to give his name, shouted: "There is a telegram here from General Franco. We want it read." He repeated his demand several times. The demand was taken up by six or seven of his followers.

### Hart Denies Message

Not until Merwin K. Hart, lawyer and president of the State Economic Council, who presided, publicly denied that there was any such message, did the police act. The group was escorted to the rear of the armory, insisting loudly that

the message be read. The demand was continued after the meeting was adjourned despite assurances that no such message had been received.

Mr. Hart, who opened the meeting, attacked communism. His mention that Hitler had driven it out of Germany and Mussolini out of Italy was applauded.

"However great our individual sympathies with any oppressed persons," Mr. Hart said, "we are Americans and cannot permit ourselves to be concerned with the internal affairs of other nations."

"The Nazis are making as serious a mistake as the Communists in the activities in the United States. I do not believe these activities involve many men. The American people will never long tolerate in its midst uniformed persons who openly take their cue from the head of any foreign government."

In referring to Spain, he declared the war in that country was now over and said: "If we expect to maintain close relations with our neighbors to the south, if we expect to maintain the Monroe Doctrine, we should recognize the new Spain."

### Pre-war Spain Described

Ogden H. Hammond, Ambassador from the United States to Spain from 1925 to 1929, described pre-war Spain and said General Franco was a great man who would unite Spain and give it a stable government.

Dr. Rice gave the background of what he said led to the war in Spain. He said the issue was one of Christianity and civilization against communism and atheism. He praised former King Alfonso and said he was the victim of certain things over which he did not have any control. He added that General Franco would install a government of law and order which would be administered for, by and with Spaniards.

It was at this point in the address that the picture of Father Coughlin was carried into the armory. Dr. Rice was drowned out several minutes by applause, which did not seem to be general, however.

The last speaker was the Rev. Dr. Joseph F. Thorning, Professor of Sociology and Social History at Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, Md. I. urged strict adherence to the Wilsonian doctrine of "open covenants openly arrived at," confidence in the integrity, knowledge and good judgment of the American military, naval and air experts, creation of a peace psychology in this country and genuine neutrality in the conduct of foreign affairs.

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