

Research Expert, a Russian Native, Aids Silver Shirts

Cleveland Anti-Semitic
Group Receives Advice
From Lev A. Trofimov

By WILLIAM MILLER

A behind-the-scenes adviser to the anti-Semitic, pro-Fascist Silver Shirts in Cleveland is Lev A. Trofimov, president of the Product Development & Engineering Corp., at 4601 Euclid avenue.



For several months, local leaders of the Silver Shirts have been talking of a "Secret 10" which Mr. Trofimov allegedly had formed

to succeed the late-lamented "Secret Seven."

They also have been babbling enthusiastically about a publication called "The Red Network of Cleveland," which, it is said, "The Secret 10" will issue soon, "naming names" of Cleveland Communists and their sympathizers.

According to the leaders, Mr. Trofimov has told them he has at least two "millionaires" and one bank vice president on his committee, and he has been endeavoring to persuade them to have "The Red Network" printed by William Dudley Pelley on his Skyland Press at Asheville, N. C. Mr. Pelley is national commander of the Silver Shirts.

Former Aid of Czar

When interviewed Mr. Trofimov denied any knowledge of a "Secret 10," said he had heard of the project to publish a "Red Network of Cleveland" but declined to say where.

Tall, steely-eyed, rather handsome, Mr. Trofimov is Russian-born, says he commanded the Russian submarine Leopard in the czar's navy and fled the country after Lenin came to power.

Mr. Trofimov, who lives at 3859 Northampton road, Cleveland Heights, was an associate of Igor Sikorsky in the latter's first aviation enterprises in this country. Later he obtained a master's degree at Case School of Applied Science, where

he also acted as gymnastic leader of Gamma Phi fraternity.

Mr. Trofimov told the writer he was first attracted to William Dudley Pelley's movement through reading his propaganda organ, Liberation. This was the magazine which recently charged President Roosevelt with pocketing the proceeds of the birthday balls for paralytics.

Commends Pelley

"I found that Pelley had the most truthful information on the real situation, both here and abroad, that I had encountered," Mr. Trofimov said.

Asked if he was a member of the Silver Shirts, Mr. Trofimov said, "Not any more." Asked if he had been a member, he said, "Well, I didn't take any oaths."

Actually, early this year Mr. Trofimov told other members of the Lloyd Garrison post of the Silver Legion that he must withdraw from active participation; that he felt someone was out to "get" him, and that henceforth he would be a "silent partner."

Efforts to locate the alleged "Red Network of Cleveland" proved as futile as hunting the end of the rainbow. Mr. Trofimov refused to say who had told him about it.

Denies Preparing Book

Another source said William B. Ball, leader of the Young Americanist League, a youth organization to combat un-American groups in schools and colleges, was preparing the manuscript. This Mr. Ball denied.

"That's very strange," said Mr. Ball. "Several other people had the same idea, that I was preparing such a book. One of them was William Frew Long. Either he or his secretary called me this spring and asked if I were not preparing such a book. It's news to me."

Mr. Long said today he did not recall ever having talked to Mr. Ball and had heard no mention of the project to publish a "Red Network of Cleveland." "Personally," said Mr. Long, "I think such a venture would be very foolish."

Opposed to Roosevelt

Mr. Trofimov said he had never heard of a "Secret 10." Mr. Trofimov was active in Susan Sterling's "Association of Leagues" two years ago and Miss Sterling was a stockholder in the Trofimov School of Inventive Practices, which Mr. Trofimov was operating at that time.

"I am very much opposed to Roosevelt, because I think his ideas are alien to America," said Mr. Trofimov, whose daughter, a dancer, worked on a WPA art project. "But after he was elected I said to my wife, 'Tamara,' I said, 'no matter what we think of him, he is our President and we must respect him as such.'"