

FASCIST ORGANIZATIONS-  
NATIVE

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.....Their menace lies in the fact that they have endowed an alien idea with a distinctly American flavor. The American fascist leaders can be subdivided- again risking oversimplification- into three groups according to the particular activity they stress- the propa-  
gandists, the organizers of "shirted" troops, and the politicians.

One of the chief American fascist propagandists is Robert Edward Edmondson, head of Edmondson's Economic Service, who from his headquarters in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania floods the nation with hundreds of thousands of "Vigilante Bulletins", which proselyte for a native version of fascism. Similar activities are being carried on by James True in Washington, D.C., W.J. Cameron (Henry Ford's radio voice) in Detroit and Chicago, Charles Phillips in Lincoln, Nebraska, Charles Hudson in Omaha, William Millgren in Attascadero, California, Henry Graede ( alias Henry C. Curtis ) in New York, and perhaps fifty others.

The best known of the stern-troop organizers is William Dudley Poffey, of Ashville, North Carolina, whose uniformed Silver Shirts are to be found in nearly every section of the country. Emulating the methods and objectives of Hitler's Brown Shirts and Mussolini's Black Shirts, these hoodlums prefer, and practice, violence as a means of establishing the totalitarian state. Poffey, of course, also operates a large and highly efficient printing plant grinding out tons of fascist propaganda, which is distributed by numerous other groups besides his own. Lesser Fuehrers are George Christians of the Crusader

Rangers in California, William Gregg Blanchard III of the White Front in Florida, and a host of smaller fry.

Only in the past year or two have certain of our legislators indicated unmistakable fascist tendencies. One of the most influential is Senator Robert Rice Reynolds of North Carolina, who early in 1939 formed the American Vindicators, an anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-alien organization marked with all the stigmata of fascism. Closely associated with Senator Reynolds are George Deatherage of St. Albans, West Virginia, leader of the American Nationalist Confederation, and James True, of Washington, D.C.. Even more openly fascist than Senator Reynolds is Representative Jacob Thorkelson of Montana, whose reputation as the most prolific extender-of-remarks in Congress was the result of his regular insertion in the Congressional Record of such pieces of Nazi propaganda as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion". The 1940 primaries have added some new names to the list of politically ambitious fascist leaders: Joseph E. McWilliams and James Stewart in New York, Kenneth Brown in Oregon, Father Coughlin's aide Louis B. Ward in Michigan, and a dozen others in various sections of the country.

American fascist groups can<sup>be</sup> further subdivided with respect to their membership appeal. A large group of ministers-notably Gerald B. Winrod of the Defender Movement in Kansas, Harry H. Hodge of the Christian Americans in Beaumont, Martin Luther Thomas of the Christian American Crusade in Los Angeles, Gerald L.K. Smith of the Committee of One Million in Detroit, W.B. Riley in Minneapolis, and George Griffith in Kansas City-appeal primarily to the religious fundamentalists, who believe that "Jewish communism" is the anti-Christ and that Hitler is its great enemy. At least 15,000 Americans are under the influence of this type of leader.

Then there are such organizations as Edward Hunter's Industrial Defense Association in Boston and Harry Jung's American Vigilant Intelligence Federation in Chicago, which have combined spying and strike-breaking with the peddling of "inside information" to naive industrialists.

Another large group exploited by fascist leaders is formed by Catholics, who have been influenced by such spokesmen as Father Coughlin, Father Brophy, Father Curran, and several hundred less well-known priests who would welcome a form of clerical fascism in the United States--as they did in Spain. Under this influence many Catholics join organizations like Joseph McWilliams's Christian Mobilizers or John Cassidy's Christian Front, which has units as far inland as St. Louis. In all fairness it should be said that many members of these organizations believe they are defending the faith and have no idea that they are supporting a movement to destroy democratic government.