

# Hill Says Lawyer 'Prevailed' Upon Him Not to Tell Truth

By Dillard Stokes 3/17/42  
Post Staff Writer

Pleading that he was a dupe, tangled in a Nazi web, 45-year-old George Hill yesterday asked Justice F. Dickinson Letts to reconsider the 2-to-6-year penitentiary term Hill is serving for perjury.

Hill was a secretary of Representative Hamilton Fish when he lied before the special grand jury on German agents. Fish introduced Hill to the German agent, George Sylvester Viereck—who is now in jail with Hill.

But Hill told the grand jury he did not know Viereck and denied, too, that he helped one of the German agent's operatives get rid of evidence, which Hill placed in a Capitol storeroom used by Fish.

Hill said in a sworn statement yesterday that after he was indicted he went to church and made up his mind to take back his lies and tell all about using Fish's office for the Nazi propaganda machine.

When Hill told his previous lawyer, former Representative John J. O'Connor, of this, the affidavit said, Hill "was prevailed upon by said counsel not to do so and such counsel used expressions such as, in effect, 'you would not rat on them, would you?'"

Hill's statement, filed with his plea for mercy, added:

"Deponent (Hill) further says that he is now of the opinion that he was ill advised in permitting

prior counsel herein to represent him in that John J. O'Connor, one of said counsel, was at one time vice chairman of a committee whose mailing lists were involved in the matters on trial and on hearing and of which committee the Honorable Hamilton Fish was chairman, and says that he ill-advisedly elected to follow the advice of said counsel until he learned in effect that said counsel had, in effect, 'plucked him clean' of all funds and monies."

The "committee" was one called "Keep the United States Out of Foreign Wars Committee," which was set up in 1939 by Fish, shortly before the trip to Europe in which he talked to Von Ribbentrop and gave his approval to Adolf Hitler's demands on Poland.

Hill's present lawyer, Richard A. Harman, said in the motion for mercy that Hill "did not then appreciate nor understand the statement of said John J. O'Connor at the time Hill was arraigned, to wit, 'I am here to plead Congressman Fish not guilty.'"

Because Hill did eventually go before the grand jury and testify fully, later giving evidence for the Government when Viereck was tried, he asked Justice Letts to impose a shorter prison sentence for the perjuries.

Harman and Special Prosecutor William Power Maloney called on the justice yesterday and a hearing on Hill's plea was set for Friday.

Representative Fish told The Post last night: "I have no comment to make. That is a matter between Mr. Hill and Mr. O'Connor."

O'Connor could not be reached, his office saying he was in New York.

Prosecutor Maloney disclosed that Bessie Feagin, promotion manager of the magazine, Scribner's Commentator, has been called back by the special grand jury, and that she will probably testify this week.

Miss Feagin admitted several months ago that the isolationist master mailing list, closely guarded by Scribner's, was turned over to Ralph Townsend, one of its writers, who is now under indictment for criminal conspiracy and violating the Foreign Agents Act when acting as an agent of the Japanese government.

An investigation by The Post uncovered the mysterious financing of The Herald