

Hill's Sentence Is Cut in Half; 'Dupe,' Says Judge Letts Reduces Term Of Fish's Secretary To 10-Month Minimum

Justice F. Dickinson Letts in District Court today reduced the sentence of George Hill, second secretary to Representative Fish of New York, convicted of perjury, from two to six years to 10 months to 3 years in prison.

"I am convinced that you are a dupe," Justice Letts told Hill, "and have been misled. You were thinking about others, not yourself. I feel that you have repented as much as possible under the circumstances."

Hill was convicted of testifying falsely before the grand jury investigating Nazi propaganda activities in this country. Defense Attorney Richard Harmon, in arguing the motion for reconsideration of the sentence, pointed out that Hill had testified for the Government in the trial of George Sylvester Viereck, convicted Nazi agent, and also had made a "clean breast of things" before the grand jury.

As the proceedings opened, Justice Letts announced that John J. O'Connor, Hill's counsel during his trial, also had filed a motion joining in the petition for reconsideration of Hill's sentence. Justice Letts observed that in Mr. O'Connor's motion he defended himself against criticism in connection with the conduct of Hill's defense.

Not Opposed by Maloney.

William Power Maloney, special assistant to the Attorney General prosecuting the case, said he did not oppose leniency in view of Hill's "repentance." He said the people who advised Hill to "do what he did should be substituted in his place."

Commenting on Mr. O'Connor's motion, Mr. Maloney said it was the statement of a "disappointed, rejected, disillusioned seeker after office."

Mr. O'Connor formerly was a House member from New York, but was defeated in 1938.

In his motion, Mr. O'Connor took up certain points raised in Mr. Harmon's motion for reconsideration of Hill's sentence.

At one point in Mr. Harmon's motion, it was stated that Hill was "persuaded not to tell the truth by his former counsel prior to time of sentence."

"I brand that as a falsehood," Mr. O'Connor said.

Charges Other Falsehoods.

Mr. O'Connor said he also branded as a "falsehood" the allegation in Mr. Harmon's motion that at the time of sentence Hill would have informed the court of the truth except for the interference of counsel (Mr. O'Connor). Mr. O'Connor pointed out that at that time he told Hill if he had anything to say to the court to say it.

Regarding a charge that Mr. O'Connor had "plucked Hill clean," Mr. O'Connor pointed out that Hill still owned a home, had a job and "boasted to others of owning other property worth \$15,000."

Mr. O'Connor charged that Mr. Maloney had attempted to "besmirch" him throughout the case.

"In my opinion, Maloney is behind it all," Mr. O'Connor said.

Hill's former defense counsel asked the court to reconsider the sentence, but not on the grounds set forth by Mr. Harmon.

Hill was convicted of testifying falsely concerning the movement of certain mail sacks to a storeroom of Representative Fish in the House Office Building and on whether he knew Viereck.