

Probe Clears Sen. Walsh, Barkley Says

Never Slightest
Foundation' for N. Y.
Article, He Asserts

By the Associated Press

Democratic Leader Barkley of Kentucky, told a hushed Senate yesterday that a thorough investigation by the Justice Department had completely exonerated Senator David I. Walsh (Democrat) of Massachusetts of an "unjustified, malicious, degrading charge" that Mr. Walsh visited a house of ill-repute in Brooklyn and could be accused of "conspiring with alien enemies" there.

Walsh Noncommittal

Displaying documents furnished to him by Attorney General Biddle, Mr. Barkley said there was "never the slightest foundation" for statements published in the New York Post that Mr. Walsh had been a frequent visitor to a "house of degradation" in Brooklyn. The majority leader said there were reports soldiers and sailors were "plied with liquor" there in order to obtain from them information on ship movements.

(In New York, Ted O. Thackrey, editor of the Post, said in a statement that the paper's only aim was to "arrive at the truth, openly and publicly" and that it would "continue to demand a full public Senate investigation.")

The Senate was crowded, with Walsh one of the few absent. Reached by reporters later, Mr. Walsh had no comment and declined

Department of Justice Investigation Clears Senator Walsh, Barkley Says

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to discuss any future action he might take.

Beekman Admits FBI Questioning

Outlining the case slowly and deliberately, Mr. Barkley said the New York Post had charged in its May 1, 1942, issue that a member of the Senate frequently was seen in a 'house of degradation' in Brooklyn. Gustave Beekman, alleged operator of the house, was convicted in Brooklyn for an offense Barkley said was "too loathsome to mention in the Senate or in any group of ladies and gentlemen."

The New York Post story said, Mr. Barkley went on, that a member of the Senate had been observed in the place talking to an alien suspected of being a "spy in behalf of the Nazis." A few days later, he said, the New York Post named Mr. Walsh as the Senator involved.

Mr. Barkley said a purported affidavit signed by Beekman was used as the basis of the New York Post's story. The Democratic leader said Beekman subsequently made statements to Department of Justice agents that Walsh was not the man who came to his house and identified the picture of another as being the man who did visit the place.

(The New York Post published today a further affidavit from Beekman saying that on May 15 and 16 he was questioned by the FBI at length and that the FBI "wanted me to identify someone else as Mr. Walsh.")

(The affidavit continued in part: "They showed me a picture of a man called 'Doc.' They wanted me to agree that this 'Doc' was the man and let it go at that. They questioned me for about six or seven hours.

("They had a stenographer present when I was questioned. It

(Democrat), of Montana; Clark (Democrat) of Missouri and Nye (Republican) of North Dakota that the Senate bring before it those responsible for what Mr. Clark called a "filthy conspiracy to smear a member of this body."

Mr. Wheeler asserted that the Senate ought not to let the matter drop.

Mr. Clark said Morris Ernst, attorney for the New York Post, ought to "come before the bar of the Senate and respond to questions about how deeply he is involved in this conspiracy."

Story Reported Brought Here First

Disclaiming personal knowledge of the matter, Mr. Clark said he had been informed "by a very reputable newspaperman, whose information is usually correct, that Mr. Ernst brought the story to Washington and went to the White House with it in an attempt to interest the highest authority in Washington in an effort to smear the Senator from Massachusetts."

"To the credit of the President and his advisers," Mr. Clark went on, "Mr. Ernst's suggestions were entirely rejected."

Thackrey's statement also said: "The New York Post does not now nor has it ever believed in secret trials or the use of the Department of Justice as a private detective agency even in behalf of the Senators...."

"The Post will have more to say later about the unfounded and amazing charges of conspiracy made by Senator Clark of Missouri, who must have known he was making them under the protection of the official immunity granted to him by virtue of the fact that he made those statements on the floor of the Senate where he could not be held legally accountable for them...."

Ernst Reticent

Dorothy S. Backer, publisher of the New York Post, said that Thackrey's statement also expressed her

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Wheeler said that a New York Post story quoted Judge Samuel Leibowitz as telling Beekman, after his conviction, that if Beekman uncovered the whole alleged spy ring the court would give him extreme

leniency, otherwise the judge would give him the maximum of 20 years.

"If this man does not make a statement telling what Judge Leibowitz and the New York Post wants, he will be given 20 years," Mr. Wheeler declared.

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("They had a stenographer present when I was questioned. It was finally agreed to put down in writing that 'Doc' was the man I called Mr. Walsh. They (The FBI) insisted upon it. What else was I to do but agree to it and sign such a statement? But I know that the 'Doc' they wanted me to identify as Mr. Walsh and the Mr. Walsh who visited my home are two different people.

("The FBI asked me to sign the statement. Even though I knew it was untrue, I signed it. There was nothing else I could do.")

While Mr. Barkley said he was not prepared to commit himself on a future course in the matter, his statement brought immediate demands from Senators Wheeler

(Democrat), of Montana; Clark (Democrat), of Missouri and Nye (Republican) of North Dakota that the Senate bring before it those responsible for what Mr. Clark called a "filthy conspiracy to smear a member of this body."

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Dorothy S. Backer, publisher of the New York Post, said that Thackrey's statement also expressed her view as publisher.

Ernst said that his law firm had "no statement to make."

Mr. Clark said the Senate ought to summon Walter Winchell, "the radio commentator who disgraces the uniform of the United States Navy by appearing in his Navy uniform to try to smear members of Congress." He said Winchell, in a radio talk, "undertook to smear not only the Senator from Massachusetts but three other members of the Senate whose names happen to begin with 'W.'"

Mr. Barkley's report, Mr. Clark continued, had made it "perfectly obvious that there has been subornation of perjury" in the Beekman trial, "to which the trial judge himself, in view of the statement from the trial judge quoted in the

New York paper, must have been a party."

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