

Puts Calipers on Quislings

'Weighted Average' Plan Checks Nazi Propaganda

By DANIEL M. KIDNEY *News 5/10/44*

A "weighted average" system, intended to be used in measuring the volume of Nazi propaganda in American publications, was explained yesterday at a Post Office Department hearing by Harold D. Lasswell, Ph. D., director of war communications research for the Library of Congress.

The system, Dr. Lasswell said, produced a rating of 65 per cent subversive in the case of ~~The Weekly X-Ray~~, published by ~~Court Asher~~, at Muncie, Ind. The hearing was to determine whether the "X-Ray," having been once barred from the mails, should lose its second-class mailing privileges.

YALE PROFESSOR

Dr. Lasswell, formerly a Yale professor, was brought to Washington by Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish, who also is chief of the Office of Facts and Figures. His "weighted average" formula, Dr. Lasswell said, is based on answers to the following questions about a publication under analysis:

1. Does it follow the Nazi propaganda that the United States is economically corrupt?
2. Does it oppose the Administration's foreign policy or conduct of the war?
3. Does it assail the President on moral or ethical grounds?
4. Does it disparage Great Britain or other Allies?
5. Does it say that Washington is run by Communists, plutocrats, Jews or crooks?

STUDY CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Dr. Lasswell, who presented his charts and statistics at the close of Asher's hearing before three assistant postmasters general, said that his system is offered only for such use as courts or Government departments see fit to make of it in determining whether publications are guilty or innocent of subversion.

A Government aide said that The Chicago Tribune is one of the papers now getting the "weighted average"

treatment, and that so far its balance is on the pro-American side.

Asher, who was a Ku Klux Klan lieutenant under D. C. Stephenson, the former Indiana grand dragon now serving a life term for murder, said that he had left school at the sixth grade and couldn't understand Dr. Lasswell's system.

INSISTS HE'S AMERICAN

"But I'm an American—a 100 per cent American," he insisted. "I don't mind attacks on my reputation, altho I did think Time and Life magazines shouldn't have called me a 'petty bootlegger.' Why, I never sold less than a case of liquor.

"But I don't like to be branded subversive. I've printed information that I got from Father Coughlin's Social Justice, and I've seen worse stuff in The Congressional Record."