

Unions Must Demand Dies Committee Probe Nazi Spy Activities On The Waterfront

Writer Asserts

Word of
Federation
5/11/39

The Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis functions very smoothly on the West Coast as far as espionage activities are concerned, according to those who have studied the situation.

It is not uncommon for German and Japanese agents to work together "on a job," or to pool information that might be of interest to their respective countries.

Cognizance of this has been taken by the Naval Intelligence Service in one of its reports which was introduced as evidence at a recent trial in Los Angeles:

"For data deduced from reliable informants, it is becoming more and more apparent that German and Japanese spies are tied up together in espionage activities in this country. It is believed that various German-American and Japanese-American chambers of commerce are centers of this work," the report stated.

Center of Japanese spy work is the fishing fleet, some of whose vessels are busily engaged in photographing important coastal defenses, in following the movements of the U. S. Navy in its maneuvers, with fishing as only a secondary objective.

Powerful short-wave sending and receiving sets and expensive cameras are standard equipment for these boats. If questioned, their owners blandly reply that they were interested in photographing fish or marine botany, but more likely their cameras have been trained on the carefully-guarded contours of Point Loma.

As an example of how closely Japanese and German agents work together, on or about March 7, 1939, a radiogram was directed to San Diego from somewhere off the coast of Costa Rica by the Japanese captain of the FLYING CLOUD.

The message requested the services of a radio operator and specified one named John Saldan, reputedly a German-American Bund

member. Saldan, incidentally, was against his will persuaded to join the American Communications Association, but has since worked for less than union scale. He has a decided preference for Japanese boats, it is reported.

As for the Flying Cloud, it was recently used as the carrier for a chemical so powerful that when dissolved in salt water it eats through a cable and the iron plates of ships.

This sensational information was contained in a report of the Naval Intelligence Service introduced as evidence at the Los Angeles trial above referred to.

To quote the report:

"In June, 1937, a Japanese fishing boat named the Flying Cloud, which was registered to owner Matasuka Tsuida of San Diego, and purchased from the Van Camp Seafood Corp., came into Ensenada from the south with a very heavy load of gasoline drums.

"These drums were procured from a German freighter, Edna, which landed in Ensenada and and stored them in a flour mill nearby.

"In September, 1937, the same procedure took place. The keeper of the mill is an Italian who kept it under guard day and night with two armed men.

"These drums are twice the size of our own gasoline drums, are painted yellow and have only the lettering A. H. stenciled on them.

"In October, 1937, the contents of the drums were secured by us and tested. It was not gasoline, but an acid substance which when mixed with salt water turned into minute bubbles just under the surface of the water and at-

tacked violently any metals placed in the solution.

"In the fall of 1937, a vessel in the molasses trade between Hawaii and the United States, which bore an Indian name, was loading molasses at a sugar mill in Hawaii when it was reported that some of this substance was dumped overboard by a Japanese fishing boat. The plates of this vessel were supposed to have been 25 per cent eaten away during the period of her loading.

"In February, 1938, two Japanese were arrested by the Fish and Game Commission for using the acid near the jetty of Terminal Island to catch fish. This was the same substance used to eat away a large cable, one end of which was imbedded in the jetty.

The intelligence service reported that this acid was shipped through the Panama Canal on German boats in drums, which when examined, were found to have inner containers.

The report sounds fantastic, but more fantastic things are happening every day under our nose with fatal results. There can be but little doubt that Japan has the West Coast honeycombed with spies, and that the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis finds its application here in a working arrangement between Japanese and Nazi agents.

The West Coast, as a base of naval operations and an important shipping center, is of vital interest to Japan in any war that might break out in the Pacific. And we have already mentioned its close proximity to Mexico, Central and South American, now the scene of intensive Nazi-Fascist activities. That is why it has become a spy center.

The series of articles, of which this is the last, has merely skimmed the surface of this subject, but the Dies committee will arrive here on the Coast in the latter part of June to open hearings on "subversive and un-American activities."

It is up to the trade union and progressive movements to demand that it abandon its project-

ed "red witch hunt," which is designed only to bring discredit upon these movements, and to launch a thorough and exhaustive investigation of the Nazi-Fascist propaganda and espionage network that is operating in our midst. This is the real "subversive and un-American" activity that is gnawing at the foundations of our government.