

News Letter

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LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE EXPOSES AMERICA-NEXTERS WITHIN AMERICA FIRST

Three different techniques were used last week by Nazis, fellow-travelers and more-or-less sincere America Firsters, when the California State Legislature's Fact-Finding Committee on un-American Activities held hearings in Los Angeles:

Technique No. 1: Packing the court room for "spontaneous" audience reaction purposes.

Technique No. 2: Fake testimony by witnesses, despite being under oath.

Technique No. 3: Whitewashing themselves through damaging testimony against the German-American Bund.

First news of the serving of subpoenas leaked out a week ago Saturday, when Robert Noble announced at the meeting of his "Humanist Society of Friends'

that it is imperative that everyone "go to the hearings to give support to our friends under fire".

The same call for help was issued the next day by T. W. Hughes, when he addressed his "League to Save America First". Hughes himself successfully dodged a subpoena, but had a running report of developments from his wife, who attended every hearing.

On Monday, from the headquarters of the America First Committee and the National Legion of the Mothers of America, S.O.S. telephone calls went out to loyal supporters. The next day, hearings began before a packed house, with the hastily summoned audience ready to go into action at the opportune time.

Subpoenaed were F. K. Ferenz, Nazi film exhibitor; Hermann Max Schwinn, de-nat-



When the America Firsters and Nazis grew too noisy at the hearings of the California State Legislature's Committee investigating un-American activities, Chairman Jack Tenney had the hearing room cleared. Above picture shows the audience in the hall, where they sang patriotic songs, and voiced their disappointment in no longer being able to use the hearings for their own propaganda purposes.

uralized ex-West Coast Führer of the German-American Bund; Hans Diebel, owner and operator of the Aryan Book Store; Edward Stuetz and George Ernst Martens, publisher and editor, respectively, of the California Staats-Zeitung; Ellis O. Jones, founder of the "National Copperhead Association"; Harold Sparling, organizer of the "True Americans"; G. Allison Phelps, radio ranter and self-asserted instigator of the Senatorial Investigation into the motion picture industry; Russell Mack, alias Mahoney, the power behind the mouth of Phelps; Babette Mack, his wife; Henry D. Allen, organizer of the "American White Guards" and associate of propagandist Mrs. Leslie Fry; Faith McCullough, ex-secretary to Mrs. Fry; William P. Williams, chairman of the San Fernando chapter of the America First Committee; James McBride, a habitué at Bund headquarters; Joan McBride, his wife, swastika-braceletted waitress at the German House; Arthur Burnett, alias Roy Chase, author of threatening letters; Hans F. Bauer, formerly of North German Lloyd, now sending food parcels to Germany.

Also subpoenaed were "Colonel" B. Tarkington Dowden, America First speaker; the Van Meter family, mother, daughter and four sons, William, Baron, Daniel and James, all active supporters of Nazism and of America First; Captain James D'Orsay Murray, former America First speaker; John L. Riemer, owner of the National Book Mart; Benjamin Franklin Ballard, chairman of the Los Angeles Downtown Chapter of America First and formerly of "The American Guards"; David S. Hall, Jr., publisher of the defunct "Hypocrisy"; Edith M. Shol, Nazi Printer No. 1 of Southern California; Frances Sherrill, of the National League of the Mothers of America; Emil Lodahl, founder of the "National Patriots"; William S. Hunt, chairman of the Glendale chapter of America First.

Testimonies of Nazi Stooges

After he had made sure that the "loyal supporters" were in the majority, Hunt wheeled an electric recording machine into the assembly room, arguing that this device would give a truer report of the proceedings than the court reporter's typewritten transcript. Real purpose of the stunt became evident when Hunt explained that the electrical transcript would show the audience reaction to the various testimonies he would introduce. Hunt intended to exploit the recordings after the hearings were concluded. Many of those present were told that one of their men had obtained a sworn affidavit that Jack Tenney, chairman of the investigating committee, was a Communist. They had high hopes that this document would be made part of the recording.

On the second day of the hearings, the commandeered audience grew so vociferous and demonstrative that the committee chairman had to clear the meeting room (illustration on page 1). Being good "patrioteers", they broke into song, with "The Star Spangled Banner", "God Bless America" and "John Brown's Body".

Star witnesses were William P. Williams, North Hollywood High School teacher and chairman of the San Fernando chapter of the America First Committee, a former army officer who admitted having visited the German House; F. K. Ferenz, exhibitor of films made in Germany; James McBride, who denied Bund membership but admitted to being a frequent guest at Bund headquarters.

McBride startled the committee when he proclaimed that Hitler has done more for Christianity than any other living person, that he considers Hitler and Goebbels gentlemen, that Germany is fighting a defensive war, and that Great Britain is the aggressor.

McBride was followed by Attorney Ben S. Beery, chairman of the Americanism Committee, American Legion, 17th District, Department of California.

Beery asserted that the Legion's records indicate that McBride has attended 24 America First meetings -- a fact not denied by McBride, who also admitted quite proudly that he was one of those who picketed the Unity Rally at the Hollywood Bowl held on July 23rd, 1941, and addressed by Wendell Willkie (see NRS #157).

Robert Noble made a grandstand play from the witness chair when he proclaimed that he would like to become the American Hitler. The following Saturday, speaking to his lunatic fringe audience, he expressed his satisfaction over the publicity received, and announced that on Monday he would start a new campaign. Always intent upon grabbing publicity space by doing the spectacular, Noble asked his followers to meet him Monday at 11 o'clock at the office of the FBI, where he intended "to raise hell".

As soon as Noble's meeting adjourned, he and his right hand man, Frank Marquette, alias King, went to the German House, headquarters of the German-American Bund. There, a dinner was in progress in honor of G. Wilhelm Kunze, national Führer of the Bund. Kunze had arrived in town the middle of the week, but remained in hiding until the Tenney Committee had concluded its hearings. Only the most trusted Nazis saw Kunze before Saturday. They were summoned by the Bundführer and instructed as to what testimony to offer before the Tenney Committee. Saturday night, Herr Kunze delivered a pep talk to his followers, and praised those stout Nazis who had the "courage to tell the Investigating Committee where to get off".

Though the chairman of the investigating committee made a clear statement that it was not the America First Committee that was being investigated, but those Nazis who had infiltrated that organization, Kunze said:

I was glad to see that the America First Committee has been attacked. I hope that this is only the beginning. Now they will realize what we have known for the past eight years, and they will wake up to the truth. They are in the same boat with us and they will understand us better from now on.

Special Bundit praise was heaped upon F. K. Ferenz, who became highly excited every time the Committee asked him a question which, if answered honestly, would have revealed Ferenz as a Nazi propaganda agent.

William P. Williams, shown photostatic copies of a mimeographed pamphlet, "Question Please", denied being its author. The pamphlet contained typical Nazi propaganda lies, and concluded with the following:

FELLOW AMERICAN CITIZENS, FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION, FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, AND FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND, IT IS NOW UP TO YOU AND I IN EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD IN AMERICA TO PASS ON THESE TRUTHS, TO ORGANIZE IN SMALL GROUPS TO WORK QUIETLY BUT EFFECTIVELY TO SAVE CIVILIZATION.

SUGGESTIONS THAT YOU AND I CAN USE TO HELP BRING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS:

Demand of our representatives that we stop convoying "war" ships.

Write our U. S. Senators and Representatives in Washington to stop any possibility of sending our boys to Europe.

LET US STOP PATRONIZING THE MOTION PICTURES UNTIL ALL POISON PROPAGANDA HAS DISAPPEARED. LET US MAKE OUR OWN ENTERTAINMENT FOR OUR FAMILIES, EVEN AS OUR FOREFATHERS DID (NOW & FOREVER).

Pass these facts to your neighbors and friends, ORGANIZE IN SMALL GROUPS of 3 to 7; meet in your homes, not publicly, and stop the revolution the anti-Christians are plotting against all existing Gentile governments and all civilization (Underscoring by NRS).

Recalled to the witness stand on the following day, the school teacher and America First official reluctantly admitted authorship of the pamphlet. When asked whether he had issued any other publications, he replied with an emphatic "No"; whereupon he was confronted with another pamphlet entitled "Do You Know", also authored by him and on which his post office box was given. Williams reversed himself.

"Stop, Thief!"

Another witness called was Emil Lodahl, who organized the "National Patriots", referred to in the following NRS story of March 8, 1939:

"The Actioneers", another anti-Democracy organization sponsored by a California-Nazi combine in Southern California, last week held the second of a series of meetings for the purpose of stirring up trouble for the United States Government and its precepts. This new group (NRS revealed on Jan. 25, the formation of this group by the Bund and Silver Shirts to finance Father Coughlin broadcasts on the Pacific Coast) held a recent meeting at the McCormick Hall, 46th Street and Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles, attended almost entirely by habitues of the German House, Bund headquarters. J. O. Vesterby, 417 West 48th Street, Los Angeles, presided.

The second meeting, held at Trinity Auditorium, presented as principal speakers Kenneth Alexander, 333 So. Hope Street, Silver Shirt leader for Southern California, and Emil Lodahl, 8921 Holly Drive, National Commander of the "National Patriots", uniformed American Nazis. The "National Patriots" until recently met weekly in the basement of the German House but now headquarters are at the Embassy Hotel, 851 South Grand Avenue.

It is significant that, as an evidence that efforts are being made to co-ordinate fully all anti-Democracy groups, C. E. Snelson, new head of the Ku Klux Klan in Southern California, and other "Knights of the Midnight Mystery" were present at the meetings also.

Lodahl tried to cover up his own Bund connections by contradicting Hermann Schwinn's testimony that swastika flags were not displayed at Bund meetings. Lodahl, feeling it was better to pose as a friendly witness, said he had frequently seen such banners and uniformed Stormtroopers, and had heard the Horst Wessel song at Bund headquarters.

The same technique of speaking harshly of the Nazis in order to steer the committee off the track was employed by Edward Stuetz and George E. Martens of the California Staats-Zeitung. While their paper continues to print strong pro-Nazi editorials and biased news reports, they succeeded in having the committee interrogator concentrate his questioning on their experiences with the German-American Bund. They made much of the fact that they were attacked by a prominent Bund leader several years ago. Thus, the magnifying glass failed to reveal that Martens himself was the first publicity man for the "Friends of the New Germany" nor was it brought out that this publication has a strong pro-Nazi editorial policy. They actually succeeded in giving the impression that their newspaper is neutral.

While the majority of German-Americans are loyal supporters of the American form of government, the same cannot be said of the German-American press.

Report No. 1

SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

IN
America First
Committee

IN CALIFORNIA



AMERICANISM COMMITTEE
17TH DISTRICT - THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

Front cover of the American Legion "White Paper" exposing the invasion of the America First Committee by Fifth Columnists.

Staats-Herald Corporation

22-24 NORTH WILLIAM STREET

NEW YORK, N. Y.

New Yorker
Staats-Zeitung und Herald
(Daily)

Sonntagsblatt
Staats-Zeitung und Herald
(Sunday)

C O P Y

August 23, 1940

Transocean News Service,
341 Madison Ave.,
New York City.

Gentlemen:-

Please be advised that we wish to
discontinue the TRANSOCEAN NEWS SERVICE after
Saturday, August 31, 1940.

Very truly yours,

JOACHIM H. MEYER
EDITOR IN CHIEF.

*New Yorker Staats-Zeitung letter
cancelling Transocean News Service.*

Most of the so-called "American newspapers printed in the German language" are exploited by Nazi propagandists, though a few publications have incurred the ill will of the Nazis for taking an anti-Axis stand. Shining example of this is the "New Yorker Staats-Zeitung", published by Joseph E. and Victor F. Ridder.

On September 18, 1940, NRS presented an article dealing with the German-American press and the influence exerted upon it by Transocean News Service. In this connection, reference was made to the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung, which, taking no strong position in either direction, thereby incurred criticism from rabid Nazis as well as from those opposed to the ideologies of National Socialism.

NRS presented facsimiles from the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung, showing that this paper had printed Transocean news items. Shortly thereafter, NRS learned from the New York publishers that they had discontinued using Transocean (illustration on this page).

Further, the Ridder brothers went unequivocally on record that their paper is opposed to Nazism and its principles, and that its owners consider themselves "the foremost opponents of the Nazi element in this country". They further stated that they "recognized the viciousness of the Nazi theories of government long before most people realized what was occurring in Europe".

NRS gladly admits that it was misled by the use of Transocean Service into listing the Staats-Zeitung as a paper with pro-Nazi tendencies. NEWS LETTER is also happy to report that its Research Staff has carefully checked recent issues of the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung and found that its news and editorial columns substantiate the publishers' assertions.

In all parts of the country, German-American groups are springing up, to counteract the poisonous propaganda of Nazi agents and sympathizers. These Americans of German descent are fortunate in having the support of the most highly respected and widely read German language paper in the United States. Loyal German-Americans will look to the New Yorker Staats-Zeitung for leadership in cleaning out the Nazi germ-carrying elements within the German-American groups.

Another cleaning up campaign may be expected within the America First Committee of Southern California. Testifying before the Tenney Committee, Ben S.

Beery, American Legion official, offered in evidence a "White Paper" prepared by the American Legion's Americanism Committee (illustration on page 5). The 19-page document, termed "Report No. 1" and titled "Subversive Activities in America First Committee in California" was presented in five sections and contained many illustrations to back up the charges. It opened with the statement:

That the striking similarity between Nazi propaganda technique and America First methods of operation can be no mere coincidence has been repeatedly pointed out by observers in various sections of the United States.

The "White Paper" cites names of subversive organizations and individuals who, in one way or another, are affiliated with the America First Committee. Testimony of quite a few of those named in the document proved the charges set forth therein.

The Legion's Americanism Committee concluded with the statement:

<p><i>...rise movement in California.</i></p> <p>The American Legion Committee finds that in meetings of America First, processes are at work whereby a person attending merely to seek information, may unwittingly be transformed into a Nazi sympathizer, and even into a potential traitor to his country.</p> <p>This Committee further finds that subversive infiltration into America First in California has not only confused the minds of the people in the audiences it attracts, but also has poisoned the minds of persons of outstanding community reputation who have participated in its activities.</p> <p>It is obvious to this committee that subversive and un-American persons are tolerated by America First because such persons favor the isolationist America First doctrine. The American Legion, however, submits that acquiescence by leaders of America First in such subversive conduct permits the people to be deceived into believing that insidious doctrines and pernicious ideologies</p>	<p>of un-American elements express the ideals and have the approval of the leaders of America First.</p> <p>The responsibility for the loyalty and integrity of all those who are active in America First rests squarely upon the shoulders of its leaders.</p> <p>The entire leadership of the America First Committee is now at the crossroads. General Robert E. Wood and his National Committee associates must make one of three decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Publicly disown and publicly denounce America First chapters in California and in all other states where conditions exist similar to those revealed by this report. (2) Openly accept leadership of subversive and "lunacy fringe" elements in the United States. (3) Ignore conditions disclosed by 	<p>this report.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">★</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WHAT NOW?</p> <p>If General Robert E. Wood and his National Committee adopt the first course, America First will cease to be a sounding-board for un-American doctrines and the people will know precisely where it stands.</p> <p>If they accept leadership of the subversive elements (2), or if they ignore conditions disclosed by this report (3), [in effect the same] any resulting disunity of our people, any ensuing class hatred—attempting thus to strike at the very heart of our national defense—rests solely with America First. Such an eventuality loyal Americans must not and will not tolerate.</p>
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