

Mr. David Ignatius, Editor, *Outlook*
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Dear Mr. Ignatius,

Your today's story on the Stephenson operation is fine and an important contribution to public understanding, which is significant in a representative society, yet to a large degree it lacks necessary context and in a small way it is quite unfair, as a matter of historical record to those of us who were not Stephenson's stooges.

The Nazis were doing exactly the same thing before Stephenson's operation began and this included inside and with the Congress. Some of it happened in the office next to my own in the Senate Office Building, then only one. The influence of the Nazis was considerable, within and outside the America Firsters, and it was almost official policy that those of us who were anti-Nazi were Soviet agents.

There were many native Nazi groups and I am among those who exposed some of them. This extended even to the Catholic Church and its "Christian Front" organizations.

I did a definitive series of Nazi cartel exposes for what was then the third largest picture magazine, *Click*, including of Schering, without any help from Stephenson, who I'd met. He helped me only with an article on the anti-Nazi underground in Europe and there was so little interest in it (I was freelancing then) that I gave it away to a small Jewish magazine for \$10. I'm sure I am not the only writer of anti-Nazi exposes who was completely independent.

Whether or not the British history exaggerates its success, as I think it does, the pre-existing other side was enormously powerful and effective, in addition to the influences of the America Firster types and the smaller and numerous other groups. In particular this was true of financial and industrial interests.

You make slight reference to Allen Dulles' alleged concern that exposure of Esso's complications could hurt the war effort. He had other concerns, as did his brother John Foster and their law firm. Was it Sullivan and Cromwell? I don't recall. You'll have little trouble confirming from the Library of Congress if it is not in your own morgue that only a day or two before Hitler attacked Poland John Foster returned from a business trip to Germany, was interviewed on shipboard, then the usual practice, and said to the country and the world that Hitler was a much misunderstood man, that he was a man of peace. As you may recall, this did not hurt John Foster's subsequent career, as it surely would if someone had said anything similar of Stalin.

When it comes to interference with the war effort, Allen's alleged concern, nothing like what Esso had already done to interfere with it was possible. One of the stories I dug up and could not place was the Esso-I.G. Farben deal on synthetic rubber and gas, a deal solidly recorded in patent office files, my source. A U.S. corporation, *M. Jasco*, was set up for it and under its terms we were prevented from using the Nazi patents to which we did or should have had a right.

I could never place that story, although, when I was working on the Schering story Hannah Baker, a reporter for *PM* I did not know, having heard I was working on it, phoned me about it. I offered it and *PM* even did not use it. I did give my research, really solid proofs, to both our Department of Justice and British economic intelligence. (In those days there was no xerox and I had to use photostats, which were costly and slow.) But there was no official action. (Some of the Nazi fronts were vested after my stories appeared.)

When I tried to recover from the Department of Justice under FOIA what I'd given it, it could not be found. Quin Shea, then appeals officer, told me that Joe Borkin was a friend of his, as in those World War II days he had been a friend of mine, and that Joe may have used this material in his book on I.G. Farben. Quin loaned me that book and it is there.

It was Moe, by the way, then in Anti-trust, which handled the cartel cases, who urged me to work with British intelligence, which I did. This was through men named Crowe and Westrupp. They and others had a house in the 30s just south of Mass. Ave and near it, on the west side. Westrupp had been a Beaverbrook reporter.

However, the British also could not do anything with that material because the other partner in the deal represented by Jasco was British Imperial Chemicals.

The German clients of the Dulles brothers' law firm included the J. Henry Schroeder banking house.

The British did take advantage of our openness but that is nothing to what the Nazis did through, among other things, these financial and economic deals and relationships. Another of my exposes was of Rohm & Haas, best known for its plexiglas. Its influence extended into our own government but it was vested after my article appeared. (I'm not suggesting cause and effect and don't know.) The Nazis at Darmstadt still controlled the U.S. corporation through a Swiss connection or two. The names Chefa for Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals comes to mind along with Forinvent, for Foreign Inventions, but my recollection is not clear and these may relate to other corporations I exposed. Through the Swiss Bank Corporation, which had a Wall Street office I was kicked out of when I found the elevator that went to their secret offices above street level and used it, handled the royalties, ostensibly to Switzerland but actually to the Nazis. By simple arithmetic based on the royalty payments the Nazis could calculate our aircraft production. Bomber noses, etc.

I never finished that series of Click exposes because of the pressure brought to bear on the man more recently the friend of Presidents Nixon, Reagan and Bush, among others, and then the son who handled his father's responsibilities because his father was in jail. Walter Annenberg bowed to what I then understood was the pressure of the America First banks, as I now recall largely Chicago banks, that the then editor and most of his staff, thus ending that series and similar articles, and before long the magazine itself. His father was Moe, the man who introduced gangsters to Chicago in newspaper circulation wars. Their magazines were grouped as Triangle Publications.

These are merely some of the indications of Nazi power and influence in this country when and before the British began the Stephenson operation. It extended through much of our major industry, including steel. In this I recall only Krupp and stainless steel.

In the late 1930s I was a Senate editor. My office was under the steps toward the Supreme Court, Room 103. Senator Rush Holt's office was next to mine and such Nazi luminaries as George Sylvester Viereck had free access to it and to him and what they gave him he put in the Congressional Record, which was only the beginning of its distribution. Senator Arthur Vandenberg was hot for the native Nazi Gerald L.K. Smith and he put into the Congressional Record much of Smith's stuff. This included even a Committee of a Million which Smith formed to gather 1,000,000 signatures to some pro-Nazi petition, and Vandenberg made a speech about it.

The Nazis were quite and effectively active in Latin America. They and Franco's Falange had enough influence to do such things as control the post office in Chile. Click had a correspondent there who developed the plans for a Nazi putsch in Chile. His problem was getting it out. It was on 35 mm film he didn't dare mail. Through an under-secretary of state and an assistant attorney general I knew it was brought up in the pouch, given to me and I first gave it to Jimmy Roosevelt and his father used it in a fireside chat. Jimmy was with the forerunner of OSS. CIA says it can't find the pictures but it has the records of my delivery of them and of the return of the copies I sent to Click.

Then such prestigious ambassadors as our George Messerschmidt openly associated with and were friendly with Nazis and pro-Nazis. He was then in Cuba and I handled the pictures Click got of him with Nazis and pro-Nazis, like Raoul Maestri, whose family published the then largest Havana Paper, Diario de la Marina.

Schering at Bloomfield, N.J., counterfeited the Nazi Schering label on what it shipped to Latin America. They not only made the profits for the Nazi parent, they made it appear that the Nazis were breaking the British blockade of Nazi exports. There ~~were~~ were other and to me more sordid aspects I still remember should it interest you in this Bloomfield operation.

I ramble as I write you in haste. Please excuse this and my typing for I must type sideways to the machine, with my legs elevated, and too close to the keyboard.

Whether or not the British history exaggerates, as would be normal and human, it is but one side. The British faced a Nazi operation in place and even more effective. The Stephenson operation did not get us into World War II, despite its effectiveness.

Rush Holt, by the way, was not the only pro-Nazi Senator or Congressman. And there were many publications that were pro-Nazi in varying degrees. Today's National Enquirer began when Gene Pope II bought out such a weekly then published in New York by a guy named Griffen or Griffin. Some of the larger papers had such prejudices, too.

There wasn't much competition in exposing Nazi cartels, alas. I remember only one, by a UP reporter who later became a friend. He is or was Lee Raschall and when he was a friend he managed ABC's KGO-TV and radio in San Francisco. He liked me, as he said, because as a kid I'd beaten his pants off, his words, on the Schering story. It may have been fed to UB by George of course.

But to suggest that this "George" operation was the only thing is to corrupt the historical record because at least some of us were entirely independent. I was and I didn't know about "George" until I read your fine piece.

As this country had many pro-Nazis, it also had anti-Nazis, of whom I was one.

You are, I'm sure, too young to remember the climate, including in publishing, in those days. Even people like Father Coughlin, of the Whutch of the Little Flower and those Sunday night radio broadcasts that were so effectively pro-Nazi, were relatively immune. I discovered the records of his financial dishonesties when I was not writing but knew many reporters. None was interested so I gave it to the left-wing writer Jack Pivack. He did a book based on it. "The Shine of the Silver Dollar."

Henry Ford also had a Sunday night, coast-to-coast radio program with a message in it by his pro-Nazi spokesman, W.J. Cameron. He and Coughlin, of course, were also anti-Semitic.

There were also powerful and influential pro-Nazi groups in England. Most changed after Hitler invaded Poland, but not by any means all. Two of the luminaries you mention, both later ambassadors here, were reputedly of such sympathy. As were the Astors of Cliveden, hence the name "Cliveden set." They and the like-minded there and here wanted Hitler strengthened in the hope he'd attack the USSR but he started with Poland.

It is, of course, too late for your article, but I write to give you a little of the ^{missing} context of which I presume you knew nothing, not having lived through it.

Journalists then had little interest in such things and even less about the Japanese than about the Nazis. They have almost exclusive boasting rights about Pearl Harbor, but that is another matter. Perhaps the lack of journalist interest came from an accurate reading of publisher interest and disinterest but it is, sadly, the fact.

Pope II published a pro-Nazi paper in New York.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg
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