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# The Hour

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Number 147

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## AMERICA FIRSTERS PLOT NEW CAMPAIGN

The Hour charges that an insidious movement is afoot to launch a campaign of defamation against prominent Americans who have consistently and courageously exposed pro-Axis and appeasement elements in the United States.

The Hour charges that, as part of this movement, a concerted effort is being made to discredit the Government prosecution of twenty-eight pro-Axis propagandists now under Federal indictment on charges of conspiracy to sabotage the morale of the U.S. armed forces.

The Hour charges that the movement against American anti-fascists is led by former key spokesmen for the America First Committee, which played so prominent a role in obstructing the defense preparations of this country and which, in many U.S. communities, was headed by Nazi and Japanese agents.

The Hour further charges that a secret band of paid professional investigators is now being sent around the country to spy on the activities of well-known patriotic anti-fascist organizations, publications and individuals.

### Congressman Hoffman's Role

The first public hint of this insidious anti-democratic movement came in a speech delivered on the floor of the House on December 8 by representative Clare E. Hoffman of Michigan. In an hour-long diatribe, which subsequently filled eight pages in the Congressional Record, Representative Hoffman sponsored a resolution to form a new Congressional Committee to investigate an alleged "conspiracy against Congress" on the part of anti-fascist organizations, publications and individuals.

Congressman Hoffman, who is notorious for his pathological animosity toward the Administration, his rabid labor-baiting and his pro-America First Committee record, named as objects of his proposed investigation: Assistant Attorney General William P. Maloney, Walter Winchell, Rex Stout, Reverend L. M. Birkhead, Dillard Stokes,

the Washington Post, the Chicago Sun, PM, and other persons and publications noted for their militant work in exposing Axis activities in the United States.

In the course of his lengthy furious harangue, Representative Hoffman was particularly bitter in his attack on Assistant Attorney General Maloney, who has been in charge of the Federal Grand Jury investigation of Axis propaganda operations in the United States and who was chiefly responsible for the indictment in July of this year of twenty-eight persons charged with conspiracy to sabotage the morale of the U. S. armed forces. (See The Hour for July 25.)

Representative Hoffman has a personal interest in the case of the twenty-eight. One of the facts which inevitably will be made public at the trial of Charles B. Hudson, pro-Axis propagandist from Omaha, Nebraska, who is one of the twenty-eight indicted, is the full story of how Hudson obtained for his propaganda purposes mailbags crammed with franked envelopes of Representative Hoffman and reprints of the Congressman's inflammatory speech "Roosevelt is a Judas."

But Hoffman is a minor character in the drama. Behind him and supporting him are arrayed the former "brains" of the America First movement, the inside apparatus of which has actually never been allowed to die.

#### America First Quartet

The four political leaders of the America First Committee, Senators Gerald P. Nye, Burton K. Wheeler, Robert A. Taft and Robert R. Reynolds, have never lost contact with their America First friends, have never given up hope of a rebirth of the Committee and have never abandoned their obstructionist attitude towards the Administration's war program.

Today, these four Senators are providing the strategy for the campaign of defamation against American anti-fascist groups and individuals. Accordingly, like Congressman Hoffman, they are loud spokesmen in defense of the twenty-eight persons indicted by the Department of Justice as pro-Axis propagandists and of the publications and organizations named in the indictment as agencies used in the conspiracy to "promote revolt and disloyalty" among American soldiers, sailors and marines. The fact that the America First Committee is one of the several organizations listed as having been used in this conspiracy is obviously cause for serious concern on the part of Senators Wheeler, Nye, Reynolds, Taft and other former America First bigwigs. Another cause for their anxiety is doubtlessly the fact that almost all of the indicted propagandists made lavish use of quantities of franked envelopes of the America First Congressional clique.

Gerald Winrod, probably the most notorious of the pro-Axis, anti-Semitic propagandists named in the Federal indictment, is

currently distributing literature soliciting funds for his own defense in which he reproduces part of a letter written to him by Senator Taft. The letter, in which the Senator vigorously attacks the Federal indictment of the twenty-eight propagandists, reads in part: "I feel very strongly that the methods used by the Government in their Washington indictments present a real danger to the continuation of freedom in this country."

Senator Wheeler is no less vociferous in his angry criticism of the Government's action against the twenty-eight pro-Axis propagandists. In letters written to Attorney General Biddle on December 3 and 21, the former chief political mentor of the America First Committee bitterly assails the Federal indictment and supports Congressman Hoffman's proposal of an investigation of Assistant Attorney General Maloney. Senator Wheeler's second letter to Attorney General Biddle declares: "The whole proceeding is a disgrace and does not reflect to the credit of your department."

#### Role of Senators Nye and Reynolds

In the indictment of the twenty-eight persons, which was announced by Attorney General Biddle on July 23, thirty publications were listed as seditious agencies through which the defendants had tried to undermine American morale by picturing the United Nations as weak and ineffective, America as safe from attack, America's leaders as untrustworthy, and the war as a Jewish plot. Among the publications named as having been used in spreading this seditious propaganda was The Cross and the Flag, which is published in Detroit, Michigan by Gerald L. K. Smith, former Silver Shirter No. 3223.

Both Senator Reynolds and Senator Nye have publicly endorsed The Cross and the Flag. In a letter written to ex-Silver Shirter Smith by Senator Reynolds -- a letter used by Smith for promotional purposes -- this paragraph appears:

"Let me congratulate you with my full heart upon your first edition. It is well you did it in black and white. It is just the right size; it hits the bull's eye with every paragraph; it is straight from the shoulder; it is gotten up in a conservative manner; it should have its appeal; it speaks the truth."

In a similar letter, Senator Nye expressed in somewhat simpler terms his approval of the publication later branded as seditious by the Department of Justice. "I have received Issue No. 1 of the new magazine," Senator Nye wrote to Smith. "It is excellently done."

It is therefore not hard to understand why both Senator Reynolds and Senator Nye should be closely interested in the Government's prosecution of the indicted twenty-eight. Nor is it difficult

to understand why a newspaper dispatch from Washington reported on December 11: "A similar resolution (to that of Congressman Hoffman demanding an investigation of Assistant Attorney General Maloney and other militant American anti-fascists) may be pressed in the Senate by Gerald P. Nye if the House fails to approve the resolution." (Parenthesis ours.)

The Hour can disclose further evidence of the role being played by Senator Nye. We have learned from reliable sources that the Senator from North Dakota has been keeping in close touch with certain former America First organizers, that he has told them of his deep regret that the isolationist-appeasement Committee ever was liquidated and that he has urged working toward its reorganization, or the formation of a new similar organization, at the earliest feasible opportunity.

The Hour has also learned that Senator Nye is conducting certain private investigations which he apparently hopes will provide him and his collaborators with information to be used in the campaign against pro-democratic forces in this country.

#### Secret Investigators Visits The Hour

A number of secret professional investigators are at present engaged throughout the country in spying on pro-democratic, anti-fascist groups and individuals.

Some of these investigators are working directly out of the offices of notorious anti-democratic organizations, such as Joseph Kamp's so-called Constitutional Educational League. Other investigators are in touch with the America First clique in Congress. Still others are being financed by a small group of dangerously reactionary businessmen who even now are ready to do business with Hitler. The findings of all of these investigators are being compiled by a central investigatory apparatus which is hurriedly accumulating all data of possible usefulness in the plan to smear and discredit American anti-fascists.

Last week one of the secret investigators visited the offices of The Hour. Unknown to him, we had been forewarned of his visit.

Posing as an individual interested in anti-fascist activity, this investigator tried to involve us in statements which might later be used to discredit The Hour. For example, he was particularly eager to have us slander the Roman Catholic Church. In confidential tones he asked: "Don't you think that the Catholic Church is behind most of the current Fascist activities in the country?" When we emphatically replied in the negative his disappointment was ill-concealed.

During the course of our conversation with him, this investigator exhibited a somewhat clumsy curiosity in the contents of the file cabinets in this office. Needless to say, his curiosity went unrewarded.

The Hour advises all anti-Axis organizations engaged in the type of work being carried on by The Hour to be on their guard against similar investigators and provocateurs.

#### Need for Government Investigation

With the United States engaged in a life-and-death struggle against the Axis powers and their Fascist creed, it is clear that underground campaigns against anti-fascist forces in this country can result only in an impairment of our war effort.

The Hour therefore urges that the Department of Justice undertake an immediate investigation of those elements working to discredit American anti-fascists and to undermine their patriotic efforts. The Hour especially recommends that the Department of Justice investigate the past and present activities of that small Congressional clique who were used to such advantage by Axis psychological saboteurs and propagandists in the United States and who continue to be a source of comfort to the enemy on the homefront. The findings of the Department should be made public at the earliest opportunity.

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#### CATHOLIC GROUP RECOMMENDS READING SABOTAGE

Last week the Cardinal Hayes Literature Committee released its quarterly list of books recommended especially for members of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Committee listed 100 titles in all. Named as one of the most important books dealing with current events was Sabotage! The Secret War Against America, by Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, editors of The Hour.

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