Raid Warden Pleading Guilty As Nazi Spy

NEW YORK, June 28 (U.P.)—Ernest Frederick Lehmitz, 57, naturalized citizen and an air-raid warden, pleaded guilty today when arraigned before U.S. Commissioner Martin C. Epstein.

Lehmitz, a one-time employee of the German Consulate in New York, began his alleged spy activities in January, 1942, shortly after Germany declared war on the United States, the FBI said.

"In writing these letters," Hoover declared, "Lehmitz had used numerous fictitious names and addresses in the hope that his identity could not be established. However, in spite of these names and addresses, it was known that these letters were all written by the same individual."

Lehmitz apparently was well financed, according to Hoover. "Investigation has shown that Lehmitz has received a large sum of money through international banking channels," the FBI director stated. Hoover did not disclose when the exchange of money took place or who sent it to Lehmitz.

The FBI said that Lehmitz was "an honest and upright American citizen and in order to carry out this impression he even became an air-raid warden on Staten Island."

Investigation has shown that he attempted to sell to the United States Government an invention for a huge sum of money, Hoover continued, in an attempt to indicate "that he desired to do all he could to assist the war effort of the United States." Hoover would not reveal what kind of an invention that Lehmitz attempted to sell to the United States.

Came to U.S. in 1908

The FBI said that Lehmitz was born in Hamburg, Germany, and now lives at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, New York. He came to the United States in 1908 and for a time was employed at the German consulate in New York city until that office was closed at the outbreak of the first World War. He was naturalized a citizen in Richmond county, New York, on October 4, 1924. He is known to have made at least three trips to Germany, the latest beginning October 30, 1938, and ending March 17, 1941, and it apparently was during those journeys that he made his contacts with the German intelligence.

thousands of American troops were leaving in transports, some for Australia and others for England and Africa. He included the actual number of ships in some convoys and their destinations, with complete descriptions of their cargoes.

Tells of 11-Ship Convoy

On one occasion, Conroy said, Lehmitz told his superiors that a certain aircraft factory was at full capacity, three ships a day. In another letter he wrote about "11 ships leaving for Russia, including a steamer with airplane motors and 28 long-range guns. One steamer has a deck load of airplanes and below deck airplane motors, Boeing and Douglas airplane parts, with Curtiss-Wright airplane motors and small munitions, searchlights and telegraphic material."

Lehmitz made an unsuccessful attempt to learn Allied invasion plans, according to one letter, which reported "place and time of the intended landing attempt not possible to confirm, whether