

May, 1962

JESSE B. STONER

Now in his middle 30's, Jesse Benjamin Stoner has been engaged in anti-Jewish agitation for more than fifteen years, starting in the 1940's when he claimed to be an organizer for the Ku Klux Klan in Tennessee. Later, around 1946, he was identified as leader of the so-called "Stoner Anti-Jewish Party," subsequently called the "Christian Anti-Jewish Party." This was a small group of extremists, operating mostly in Atlanta, whose main activity consisted of mailing anti-Semitic literature in wholesale lots, along with applications for party membership. Colleagues of Stoner in this activity were Edward H. Fields, now of Birmingham Ala., a chiropractor and a leading figure in the National States Rights Party, and Robert and Richard Bowling of Atlanta, who were indicted in connection with the synagogue bombing there in October, 1958. (Neither of the Bowlings was tried nor convicted, and the charges against Robert Bowling have apparently been dropped.)

Typical slogans of Stoner and his colleagues in the Christian Anti-Jewish Party were such exhortations as "Down With The Jews" and "Free America From The Jews."

In an interview published in the Atlanta Constitution on July 5, 1946, Stoner stated that he thought Hitler had become too moderate. Stoner said his idea was to just simply kill all the Jews except those who might espouse Christianity. The essence of the new party he was planning to form, Stoner told the Atlanta paper, was "to make being a Jew a crime, punishable by death."

In 1948, Stoner ran for Congress from the Third District in Tennessee with no party designation. He received approximately 500 votes out of some 30,000 votes cast.

During 1954, Stoner and his colleagues in the CAJP staged a number of public demonstrations, which included picketing of the White House in Washington, carrying blatantly anti-Semitic signs and placards.

Meanwhile, Stoner had embarked on a law course in Atlanta, and became an attorney. He reportedly became associated with Attorney James Venable of Atlanta, who has represented various extremists and racists and who has spoken at KKK rallies on several occasions. For a time, Stoner's name did not figure very prominently in extremist agitation. He was, however, scheduled to appear as a speaker at the National States Rights Party Convention, in Louisville, August 30-31, 1958, but did not actually show up. Agitator John Kasper was the main speaker. Nevertheless, the fact that Stoner was listed as a possible speaker indicated that Stoner was again becoming active in the hate movement.

Since 1959, there have been frequent indications of activity by Stoner in the hate movement -- apparently in close cooperation with Fielda and the NSRP. Recently, Stoner has been listed as Legal Adviser of the NSRP.

In May, 1959, Stoner addressed a Chicago meeting held under the auspices of a so-called "American Flag Committee" -- apparently an ad hoc organizational name adopted by the sponsors just for that meeting. Among the sponsors were Mrs. Agri Clark Van Hyning, of "Us The Mothers Mobilize" -- an old and notorious Chicago hate group which publishes a shrill anti-Jewish periodical called "Women's Voice." (Articles under Stoner's by-line have appeared from time to time over the years in this hate sheet, and "Women's Voice" has occasionally written up or plugged Stoner's activities.)

In June, 1959, Stoner tried to organize a Klan group in the Louisville area, called the "Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan." Headquarters was for a time located at Suite B, 792 Barrett Avenue, Louisville, 4, Kentucky. For several years he has published a Klan Bulletin.

In September, 1959, when the first white school in the Miami area was opened to Negro students, Stoner "invaded" Florida and agitated against the integration movement.

Until his move to Louisville, Stoner had for some time resided in the Atlanta area. Prior to that, he resided in Dublin and Savannah, Georgia. Earlier, he had resided in the Chattanooga, Tenn., area.

In March, 1960, Stoner addressed the NRP convention at Dayton, Ohio where Gov. Faubus of Arkansas and John G. Cromwell of Wetumpka, Ala., were nominated for President and Vice-President of the United States on the NRP ticket. (Faubus later withdrew his name.)

During the latter part of 1960, Stoner -- along with Fields and others -- was active in various Southern states in circulating petitions aimed at getting the NRP ticket of Faubus and Cromwell on the ballot. Stoner was especially active in Florida, and in November, 1960, was named attorney for the NRP to handle problems of getting the party ticket on the ballot in various states. During this same period in 1960, Stoner found time to issue his Klan Bulletin and to attend a few Klan meetings, one of them at Danville, Va. in September of that year.

His base appeared to be Atlanta, where he reportedly used the living quarters of Emmett Morris, a printer employed by the Atlanta Journal, and long active in extremist causes with Stoner. Stoner also shared quarters at times with one of the Bonding brothers.

Although Atlanta continued to be Stoner's base, he made frequent trips into Florida and Alabama throughout the year of 1961.

In May, 1961, Stoner reportedly was named defense counsel along with Wallace Lopez of Memphis for Emmett E. Miller who had been charged with an attempted bombing at

In September, 1961, it was reported that attorney Stoner had gone to Anniston, Ala. to represent several defendants who had been indicted in connection with the burning of a Freedom Riders bus during a series of Freedom Rider incidents in Alabama. He was not allowed to represent the defendants, however, because he was not licensed to practice law in Alabama.

Stoner also was present at the trial of Thomas Jackson Graham in Circuit Court, Talladega, Ala. on Sept. 13, 1961. Graham was accused, along with Francis Roland Kelly (or Kelley), of the May 13, 1961 flogging of Mr. and Mrs. Marilyn White near Sylacauga, Ala. (Kelly -- or Kelley -- was convicted and was sentenced to eight years in prison.)

Besides these episodes, Stoner also continued his activity in behalf of the NSRP and his own Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. On August 16, 1961, he and Fields of the NSRP were observed in Atlanta, distributing copies of the NSRP publication, "The Thunderbolt" for which Stoner is believed to write frequent articles. The distribution came on the eve of the desegregation of Atlanta schools. In September, 1961, Stoner was a featured speaker at an NSRP rally held on the outskirts of Anniston. He was also scheduled to be a main speaker at an NSRP rally slated for Fairfield, Ala. on Oct. 11, 1961, but a local ordinance was enforced to prevent the meeting.