

Clues Pile Up in Hopkins Letter Puzzle

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 26.—With the indictment of George N. Briggs as author of the forged "Hopkins" letter, the dime-novel aspects of the capital's whodunit were on the road to solution today.

But the real story may turn out to be an exposure of the financing and sponsorship of the "Get-Willkie" campaign, signaled by publication of S. Nelson Sparks' anti-Willkie book and climaxed with Sparks' issuance of the fake letter, purporting to show that Willkie was a New Deal stooge.

Series of Clues

A series of clues indicated today that the letter episode, which has

Boston Mayor, e Fascist Salute

Correspondence

Boston who was ousted from his post because of his Jewish ancestry, testified that the Dopolavoro in Boston was a part of a similar organization in Italy established by Mussolini's Fascist party.

Boston City Councilman Joseph Russo testified that he was a member of the Dopolavoro and that he had attended a few meetings.

Gallucci faces loss of his citizenship on the grounds that he never renounced his allegiance to a foreign state at the time he swore allegiance to the U. S. A.

ODT Enters Tire Situation

The Office of Defense Transportation has established a reporting system by which truck and bus operators, unable to obtain tire certificates from local ration boards, may report the fact to the ODT.

tees have received copies of the book free, without any indication as to who subsidized the distribution.

¶ Briggs, indicted on three counts yesterday, was an active associate of reactionary publisher Frank Gannett prior to his appointment as aid to Interior Secretary Harold L. Ickes.

¶ Movius says he has conferred in recent months with both Sparks and Ray Richman, former secretary to Herbert Hoover. Richman acknowledges that such meetings took place and denies that he had any hand in the preparation of the book.

¶ There is no War Production Board record of a paper appropriation for publication of the book, which indicates that some newspaper publisher sympathetic to the venture may have provided the materials.

¶ Although the book has not appeared on any best seller lists, letters received by Willkie from recipients of the volume (who had never requested it) indicate that the distribution has been widespread.

Sparks Seen Victim

All these items strengthen the belief that both big money and big names are linked to the Sparks crusade. Whether these ramifications will be explored appears to hinge on the willingness of the Senate Kilgore subcommittee investigating election campaign expenditures to undertake a full-fledged inquiry.

In indicting Briggs, the Grand Jury absolved Harry Hopkins and Ickes and pictured Sparks as a victim of Briggs.

Consequently, unless Briggs produces an expected inside story, the political aspects of the Sparks enterprise may be lost in the proceedings.

The newspapers which originally promoted Sparks' book and solemn-

ly reproduced the "Hopkins" letter are now acting as if Sparks were a stranger in town and the whole episode just a straight thriller. But the possibility that Sparks is front-man in a major Republican-isolationist drive designed to discredit Willkie, the White House and other "internationalist" forces may explain why a lot of citizens in this town wish the subject had never come up.

Meanwhile, Willkie is probably the chief beneficiary of the furor. Discrediting of the "Hopkins" letter impairs Sparks' prestige as a journalist, embarrasses his literary sponsors and is no advertisement for the veracity of his book. At the same time, the fact that Ickes employed Briggs for so long and in so confidential a capacity is no source of political comfort to the Administration.

Further revelations may hurt some respectable citizens, but are unlikely to injure the Presidential aspirations of Willkie.

Sparks' comment, when informed of Briggs' indictment: "I'm shocked."