

Viereck Case to Go To Jury Today After Closing Arguments

7-16-43
The jury hearing testimony since June 25 in the District Court trial of George Sylvester Viereck, propagandist, author and journalist, for alleged violations—in six counts—of the Foreign Agents Registration Act was to be given the case this afternoon.

Both Government and defense counsel had yet to complete closing arguments following their initial statements to the jurors yesterday.

Terming Viereck as "Hitler's chief propagandist in the United States," Albert E. Arent, special assistant to the Attorney General, declared that "a man of Viereck's caliber—a man who has played crookedly smart with this Government and has practiced camouflage upon his Government and the American people for so many years and in so many years—ought not to be allowed to remain free."

Served "Hitler's Purpose."

Viereck, the prosecutor asserted, used "the democratic practices of this country to serve Hitler's diabolic purposes" when he contrived to get pro-Nazi propaganda before the American people through members of Congress and by his connections with the Flanders Hall publishing concern, which turned out a number of anti-British books.

"Viereck was the dynamo that kept Flanders Hall going," Mr. Arent told the jury.

The defendant went through the "motions" of registering with the State Department and he "attempted to cover his tracks," the prosecutor added. The Government contends Viereck was a paid agent of the German Reich before our entrance into the war. Mr. Arent further claimed that the Flanders Hall books were designed "to keep America from coming to the aid of the chosen victims of the Nazis."

Defense Attorney Leo A. Rover appealed to the jurors to render a "proper decision calmly and above any racial prejudice," adding that "it is difficult to think of things German in these days."

Case "Highly Technical."

He reminded the jurors that "before any war there are two parties—interventionists and isolationists."

Viereck has maintained he was in the latter camp and worked for neutrality solely on a "patriotic" and individual basis.

Claiming that "we have here a pretty highly technical case," Mr. Rover asserted that if Viereck wanted to be "dishonest" about his connections abroad, he would not have registered with the State Department "at all."

Viereck did not disclose he was an agent of the German Reich for the reason that he was not such an agent, the attorney insisted.

Mr. Rover, along with Attorney John J. Wilson, were named by Justice Bolitha J. Laws to defend Viereck after he had made a pauper's plea.