

NAZI INTERFERENCE IN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

By NATHANIEL H. GOODRICH

WHEN fascism comes to America, it won't be called fascism. It will be called anti-fascism." Thus bluntly spoke the late Senator Huey P. Long. The truth of his words, which seem to have served as a guide for many of America's little men on horseback, lies in their implication that fascism in America will triumph—if it ever does—only under the cover of confusion. It is imperative, therefore, that Americans be fully aware of subversive and subtle tactics that are being used to set them against each other. The realization that democracy as an institution of government and a way of life is under attack on a world wide front has already awakened a demand for adequate defense measures.

Our defense, however, is a matter as much of ideological conviction as physical preparedness. It will depend equally upon our ability to resist physical attack, the stability of our institutions of government and in the faith and desire of our people to see them preserved. Democracy cannot maintain itself on prestige alone; every man, woman and child must see that, economically, socially and politically, democracy continues to be the best form of government for all. Without the will to defend democracy, the will to defend ourselves physically will be lacking.

This possible weakness has been recognized by the totalitarian forces seeking to destroy democracy. For many years, they have been waging the preliminary stages of their campaign with various types of propaganda as their weapons. By their success in destroying democracy in Europe, however, they have brought Americans face to face with the realization that the purveyors of their propaganda constitute the fifth column in the United States. Nevertheless, Nazi propagandists and their traitorous allies, in order to camouflage their activities and methods of operation, have deliberately attempted to confuse the identity of the fifth column in the public mind. All over the country, accusations have been flung back and forth with abandon until no one of prominence is left who has not been called a fifth columnist at least once.

The real traitors in America are the Nazi agents, propagandists, and sympathizers, be they alien or native born. The alien born, non-citizen propagandists and sympathizers are the easiest to recognize and probably the least effective workers. It is the lesser known operatives and the peo-

ple who unwittingly lend themselves to the machinations of the Nazi propaganda office who are the most dangerous. Many of them are super-patriots who make fervent protestation of their love for America on every occasion. All of them use anti-Semitism as a smokescreen to conceal their real aims. They include many native born Americans as well as foreign born citizens naturalized since Hitler came into power in Germany. Such organizations as the German-American Bund, indeed, accept only citizens as members and continually flaunt their super-devotion to the memory of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. This does not, of course, prevent them from having storm troop or guard units strikingly reminiscent of Hitler's Brown Shirts.

The manner in which the fifth column operated in Europe furnishes many clues to its identity here. All its leaders, typically enough, were natives of the countries in which they lived, lands they betrayed to Germany. Seyss-Inquart in Austria, Henlein in Czechoslovakia, Quisling in Norway, Mussert in Holland, Degrelle in Belgium, de la Rocque in France, and Mosley in England were all native born. They waved the flag of sincere patriotism before their countrymen and at the same time hawked the wares of super-nationalism and its sponsor—nazism. In every instance, they used anti-Semitism. Only too late did the European democracies learn that the surest way to identify the fifth columnist was by his anti-Semitism. Not until April 29, 1939, did the French Government enact laws making in effect the dissemination of anti-Semitic propaganda a crime, a step which had already been taken by the Swiss Government the previous December. Following typical Nazi tactics, traitors sought to foster disunity within each country by instilling in each section of the population a distrust of other groups. Propagandists lashed out against labor, capitalism, Jews, Catholics, Communists (until the Nazi-Soviet pact), monarchists, disciples of democracy, and anything else against which somebody might conceivably be aroused. The result was a psychological collapse and total lack of common purpose in the countries Germany attacked.

Here in the United States it is possible to uncover a group of men who but for the language they speak and the land in which they live might be part of the company of Nazi propagandists in European lands. Robert E. Edmondson, William D. Pelley, James True, Gerald B. Winrod, and their kind are all native born. They profess undying loyalty to the American constitution but at the same time make no secret of their opposition to the democratic form of government and way of life. Like their prototypes in Europe, they are all anti-Semites. Despite their professed loyalty, they find it natural to praise nazism and its leaders. Without exception, their efforts have been directed solely toward the promotion of prejudice and hate and disunity in the United States. And because America is a land

where people of many faiths, cultures and backgrounds live, their propaganda has found fertile soil.

These men and many others like them have been the spearhead of the Nazi campaign of interference in American affairs. No one who has read even a single issue of their publications can help but be struck by their bold use of Nazi propaganda, in many instances openly revealing their Nazi sources. James True, for example, often quotes *World Service* and *Action*, the publication of the British Union of Fascists, led by Sir Oswald Mosley, who was recently arrested in the English anti-fifth column drive.

II

NAZISM began to hammer at the portals of American democracy almost from the day Hitler launched his movement in Germany. Its campaign primarily undertook to stress the allegedly basic weaknesses of democracy while glorifying nazism. To win supporters, the Nazis ascribed to democracy those characteristics which they knew would arouse the antipathy of certain groups here. Thus, to bigoted and intolerant elements, American democracy was described as Jewish; to opponents of communism, democracy was portrayed as essentially communistic; and to opponents of capitalism, the capitalistic elements of democracy were stressed. In this way, advantage was taken of economic conditions to sharpen class lines between Americans. At the same time, nazism was portrayed as a virile, centralized form of government in which the interests of all people were treated equally, with no one class favored over the others. As a subordinate effort, Nazis tried to win the support of big business interests by showing how they destroyed labor unions in Germany. All these elements can be found in the propaganda of American Nazi disciples.

Saboteurs of American traditions borrowed these and other features from the German propaganda factories. One of the first acts of nazism in Germany was to restrict the civil rights of German citizens, particularly the right to vote. It is not surprising to find, therefore, that True, Pelley, Edmondson and others all advocate restriction of the franchise, one of their basic weapons in their attack on American democracy. Like the Nazis, they also attempt to spread lies about Jews, such as the notorious Franklin forgery and branding Jews as warmongers. Having once fostered these false conceptions, they proceeded to label the real objects of their attack as Jewish. Thus, they attacked the New Deal as the "Jew Deal"; referred to President Roosevelt as Rosenfeld; stated that the wife of Secretary of State Hull was Jewish; and in general endeavored to inject the religious issue into every situation and political campaign.

The technique of setting group against group in order to break down national unity is a favorite one among fifth-column propagandists. There are many groups in the country whose interests are diverse and who think along dissimilar lines. Religious groups, for example, are persuaded under the guise of a "Buy Christian" slogan to boycott Jewish businessmen. The fact that these agitators are borrowing the cloak of religion to gain their own fundamentally anti-religious ends is kept carefully hidden. Another example of these tactics is the effort to enlist the large and sincere isolationist element in this country who regard the present European war as none of our affair. It is to a group such as this that the Nazis and their American disciples address the charge that Jews are warmongers and that Jews are the only people who desire that aid be rendered to the Allies. Thus, in a recent issue of *Social Justice*, the sale of fifty used naval planes to England was characterized as a declaration of war. Governor Lehman and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., were declared to have applauded the transaction, but Colonel Henry L. Breckinridge, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, and others were not referred to, leaving the very clear inference that Jews were the only people to approve, and presumably to advocate, what *Social Justice* called a declaration of war. Both implications, of course, are wholly false. Our laws permit the sale of planes to belligerents, and the daily newspapers have been reporting statements by prominent Americans, most of whom are not Jews, urging aid to the Allies. Furthermore, a recent Gallup poll indicated that upwards of 60% of the American people favor such aid.

Propagandists have also sought to create hysteria and disunity by insinuating that the present administration is working with an international conspiracy to communize America. Some, like Winrod, have raised the bogey of a Catholic menace. Others have engaged in incessant anti-alien agitation. But no matter what their particular hate is at the moment all of them agree in their praise for Hitler and nazism. All of them follow the basic Nazi doctrine that constant reiteration of even the most impudent of lies cannot fail to convert a certain number of listeners. And since, as Herr Goebbels has said, "Propaganda knows neither right nor wrong, neither truth nor falsehood, only what it wants," strange beliefs have begun to grow where they never grew before.

III

THE campaign of direct Nazi interference in American affairs is waged from Germany through German consuls and Nazi propagandists, and their fellow travellers in the United States. Propaganda from abroad is channelled through *World Service*, located at German propaganda head-

quarters in Erfurt; through the Fichte Bund, with headquarters in Hamburg; the *Deutsches Ausland-Institut* in Stuttgart; the press and almost all German publications. These have been entering the United States without a halt since the Nazis came into power. The British blockade stopped the flow of this propaganda only temporarily; it is currently being routed through Siberia and Japan. Issues of some German newspapers, one of them being the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, are also being printed on thin paper and flown to America by trans-Atlantic Clipper planes. Powerful German short-wave stations have been broadcasting propaganda speeches in English every night, calculated to stir up opposition to American foreign policy. An American counterpart of "Lord Haw-Haw" also carries the theme *Unser Amerika* to "his friends in Iowa."

The German Government itself has attempted directly to give impetus to the effort to create American disunity by fabricating a case of alleged war plotting by American officials. Shortly after the conquest of Poland, the German Government issued a White Book purportedly based upon documents found in the archives of the Polish Foreign Office in Warsaw. The government charged that these documents, some of which mentioned by name the American Ambassadors Bullitt and Kennedy, proved that these officials had used their diplomatic status to assist England and France against Germany.

Furthermore, according to the letters attributed by the Nazi Government to Count Jerzy Potocki, Polish Ambassador to the United States, prominent American Jews, such as Bernard M. Baruch, Governor Lehman, Justice Frankfurter and Secretary Morgenthau, "who have the highest positions in the American Government," are "basically bound with unbreakable bonds to international Jewry" and wish to manoeuvre President Roosevelt into a position where he can serve "the interest of their race above all else." The objective of all this, according to the document in the White Book, was to have the United States rearm for the future war "toward which the Jews in full consciousness are striving." Count Potocki is also quoted as having said that propaganda here "is above all in Jewish hands, for they own almost 100% of the radio, films, press and periodicals," and that in their propaganda campaign, "which is principally directed against National Socialism, Russia is practically unnoted. If mentioned at all, it is in a friendly way so as to make it appear that Russia is going along with the bloc of democratic states."

Immediately upon its issuance, President Roosevelt branded the White Book as unabashed propaganda. Secretary of State Hull bluntly declared that its contents did not represent "in any way, at any time, the thought or policy of the American Government." Mr. Hull further stated that neither he nor his associates at the State Department placed "the slightest

credence" in charges contained in the White Book. Its statements were also flatly denied both by Ambassador Bullitt and by Count Potocki, to whom Mr. Bullitt was alleged by the German Foreign Office to have given assurances of American aid for the Allies. Senator Key Pittman, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, however, was even more emphatic. He declared that the alleged reports circulated by Germany were an "unmitigated falsehood designed to create dissension in the United States."

In addition, the Polish Government-in-exile in France charged that the alleged documents were obviously fakes, since all originals of diplomatic papers had been removed from Warsaw in the first week of the war and all copies burned. The reference to the alleged influence of Jews on the President is accepted by informed observers as practically conclusive proof that the documents were wholly the products of the Nazi propaganda machine.

An important part of the Nazi picture in the United States is the German consular officials. Despite the delicacy of their position, they often turn up at Bund camps and meetings. The Consul in Boston, Herbert Scholz, recently tried, in high-handed fashion, to exert censorship on a Boston paper, and warned it that it was being placed on a blacklist because it had printed an anti-Hitler editorial. The Consul in New Orleans, Baron Edgar Freiherr Spiegel von und zu Peckelsheim, recently threatened this country with Nazi vengeance for its attitude toward the European war. Baron von Spiegel's activities had previously been brought to the attention of the Dies Committee when President John H. Sherman of Tampa University testified that Spiegel and another German consular official had approached him with an offer to subsidize a professorship of German provided pro-Nazi publications were placed in the university library. The offer was refused. As a result of these and other flagrant violations of diplomatic courtesy, the State Department bluntly warned the German Embassy on July 5, 1940, that the right of foreign diplomats to remain in this country was contingent upon their avoiding public discussion of American policies.

The German diplomatic service has long been employing persons unaccredited to the government as diplomatic agents in its work. Several years ago Heinz Spanknoebel, then head of the Friends of New Germany, forerunner of the German American Bund, was forced to flee this country after he was indicted for having acted as a German agent without being duly accredited as such to this government. A similar state of affairs caused the arrest and indictment of a German named Herbert Hoehne in Los Angeles in July 1940. Hoehne's possession of consular dispatches was explained by Captain Fritz Wiedemann, German Consul General in San Francisco, who stated that he had asked Hoehne to carry the dispatches to Latin

American countries. At the same time, similar circumstances caused the arrest in the Canal Zone of Emil Wolff. The material found on Wolff, who also appears to have operated through the office of the German Consul in San Francisco, is believed to be new German codes.

The identity of Nazi propagandists here has been revealed over a period of years both by their German masters and by their own not too cautious statements. For example, on page 7 of the March 1, 1938, issue of *World Service* there is a dispatch headed "America. How You Can Help!" which urges Americans to support a selected list of propagandists in the United States. Among those approved by *World Service* are James True, Gerald B. Winrod, Elizabeth Dilling, Robert E. Edmondson, William D. Pelley, Charles B. Hudson and George Deatherage. Previously, in 1937, Robert E. Edmondson had received a letter of tribute from an international conference of anti-Semites held under the auspices of *World Service* in Erfurt, Germany, which was signed by leading Nazis and anti-Semitic propagandists. Edmondson proudly reprinted this letter as one of his bulletins with an answer addressed to his Nazi colleagues in "acknowledgement" of the fact that he was but "an humble instrument" in the campaign nazism was waging here.

Another propagandist, Pelley, has long bragged of his alleged interview with God in 1933, when he claims Hitler was revealed to him as the saviour of mankind. Winrod, publisher of *The Defender*, became active after a trip to Germany in 1933. His visit was arranged by a Dr. Anton Vollbehr who some time ago sold a Gutenberg Bible and other rare papers to the Library of Congress for a million and a half dollars and later testified before the Dies Committee that he had spent the money here for anti-Semitic propaganda. James True regularly quotes *World Service* and *Action*. Mrs. Dilling visited Germany in 1938. On July 11, 1939, while in England, she wrote to Charles B. Hudson of Omaha, telling of her attendance at a meeting of English Fascists and of her cavortings around London with Captain Archibald Ramsey, M.P., who was recently arrested as a fifth columnist. Despite the fact that the letter was confidential, Hudson published it in part in his paper, *America in Danger*, on May 27, 1940. This incident shows how close the mutual ties are between these fifth columnists. Charles B. Hudson is an adviser of the General George Van Horn Moseley, having appeared with the general when the latter testified before the Dies Committee. Moseley's other advisers when he testified were Congressman Jacob Thorkelson (Rep., Mont.) and his attorney, George E. Sullivan of Washington, D. C. Is it any wonder, when one realizes who Hudson and Thorkelson are that Senator Clark named General Moseley virtually as a member of the fifth column in the United States on the floor of the Senate on May 24, 1940?

How closely Thorkelson is linked with the activities of these various subversive groups is indicated by his frequent addresses at their meetings. In April 1940, he spoke in New York before the Christian Mobilizers, whose rise as the leading anti-Semitic agitators in the city coincides with the decline of the German American Bund. On August 23, 1939, the Mobilizers sponsored the largest anti-Semitic mass meeting ever held in New York. Those who spoke were Joseph E. McWilliams, their leader; Fritz Kuhn, then head of the Bund, who is now serving a prison term for embezzlement; and George Deatherage, head of the Knights of the White Camellia and president of the American Nationalist Confederation. When the 1938 international anti-Semitic conference of *World Service* was held in Erfurt, Deatherage contributed a two-page article in which he openly predicted that blood would soon flow in the streets of American cities.

Thorkelson was also scheduled to speak before the American Fellowship Forum in New York on June 7, 1940, but the address was cancelled by the hotel in which it was to be held. What is the American Fellowship Forum? It is the group headed by Friedrich E. Auhagen, the group that uses the mailing lists of the German Library of Information in New York, the director of which is registered with the State Department as a German propagandist, and the address of which is 17 Battery Place, the same as that of the German Consulate. George Sylvester Viereck, well-known Germanophile, was an editor of the Forum's publication until he was forced to register with the State Department as a German propagandist. Dr. Auhagen is the man to whom Herbert Scholz, German Consul in Boston, wrote on July 22, 1939: "I shall not neglect to telephone you the next time I am in New York so that we may discuss various problems." The link between America's pro-Nazi propagandists and their connections with Germany can be established in every case.

IV

REALIZATION of how America's Nazi propagandists have been serving German interests can best be obtained by surveying the course of their propaganda since the war began in Europe in September 1939. German interests required that the then existing American neutrality law continue in operation. Propagandists, therefore, set about to stir up public opinion against the repeal of this law and the extension of aid to the Allies by accusing those in favor of these measures of attempting to drag the United States into the war. The charge was pressed with particular vehemence against President Roosevelt and his administration and against Jews. The strategy of these propagandists was simple. By aligning themselves with sincere isolationist and anti-New Deal groups, they could serve Germany's immediate foreign policy aims and at the same time split pub-

lic opinion to the point where it would immobilize the government. This same charge had been made against the government—linked as usual, in good Nazi style, with the Jews—whenever the administration had called for increased national defense.

After the invasion of Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium, the moral issue became so clear, the fact of aggression so indisputable, and the public demand for American defense so strong that pro-Nazi propagandists found it impossible any longer to discredit the movement for national defense by labeling Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jews or the New Deal as warmongers. They had to play along with public opinion, which demanded a national defense. Despite the necessity for a sudden shift in their propaganda, however, they did not lack ammunition to continue to serve in the Nazi campaign against the American Government. Since they no longer could sustain the charge of warmongering, they promptly accused the administration of responsibility for America's lack of defensive armament. This was designed to instil distrust in the government and thus continue the basic effort to create disunity. Some anti-Semitic speakers and writers, hoping to delay rearmament, put forward vague suggestions calculated to complicate planning of the program. Others began to speak of America's destiny in the Western Hemisphere. Thus, the Christian Mobilizers and the publication that speaks for it, the *American Bulletin*, stated that it would be necessary for the United States to establish military bases in South and Central American countries, with or without the consent of the nations involved. Aside from the implicit advocacy of a policy of imperialism, the very thing for which Nazi propagandists berated England and France, the mere airing of such an idea would hardly be likely to engender the spirit of common endeavor and unity against Europeanisms that the State Department has been seeking to foster in our relations with South American nations. Apparently, the pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic press is playing Hitler's game on a larger scale than ever before. To their job of stirring up disunity within the United States, they have added the task of stirring up disunity between the nations of the western world.

With true German thoroughness, the fifth-column propagandists have carried their campaign to its logical conclusion. Besides accusing the administration of being guilty of America's allegedly inadequate defenses and thereby stirring up internal disunity by causing citizens to distrust the government, besides advocating a policy of Yankee imperialism and thereby arousing the fears of small South and Central American countries, they have begun to warn that if we are to defend ourselves at all against the totalitarian dictatorships of Europe, we cannot do so under our present form of government. Since democracies, they say, have proved ineffective

against totalitarian states, this nation must become a fascist totalitarian state.

Just as it became evident in September 1939, that pro-Nazi propagandists had used up the camouflage in their anti-Semitic campaign when they dropped all efforts to rationalize their anti-Semitism and began to attack Jews for being Jews, so now the wheel has come full circle in the other aspect of their propaganda campaign: their campaign against democracy as a form of government and a way of life. They have now reached the point where they say openly what they never dared to say before, that we must abandon democracy for dictatorship. This they advocate in the name of patriotism and loyalty to the memory of Washington and Lincoln.

An interesting result of these shifts has been the abandonment of the effort to confuse in the minds of Americans the form of government under which they live. Pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic propagandists deny that the United States is a democracy. They always insist that it is a republic. It is true, of course, that the government of the United States is republican in form, that is, representative, but it is also true that it is democratic, as the sovereign power resides in the whole body of the people. Fifth columnists denied the element of democracy in order to create the impression that as a nation we were not committed to the principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and, in particular, in the Bill of Rights. The ideal of the equality of all men was a constant target in their attack on democracy. They also sought to confuse Americans by making them doubt the supremacy of the people and by deceiving them into believing that the United States Government is actually no different from that of totalitarian states. But now, when they wish to prove that we cannot defend ourselves against totalitarian states under our present form of government, they suddenly discover that the United States is a genuine democracy.

All this is not without significance. For years, competent observers have maintained that anti-Semitism was only a smokescreen in the war of nazism and totalitarianism against the democracies. This the Nazi propagandists denied, although one of their favorite themes was that the democracies were Jewish controlled and designed by Jews to hoax unsuspecting non-Jews. Moreover, they maintained that Jews were Communists, thereby implying that democracies were communist states. But when the Nazis made their alliance with communist Russia, their Communist-Jewish line fell flat. There was no logic in pinning the tag of communism on their avowed enemies, the democracies, when their newest ally was the original communist state itself.

It was at this point that the very effectiveness of their propaganda began

to boomerang. They not only had to abandon their efforts to rationalize their anti-Semitism by labeling Jews as Communists, but they had to stop attacking democracies as communist states. They were able for a while, however, to continue to call democracies Jewish. The democracies of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, however, could obviously be no more Jewish than were those of Finland or Czechoslovakia. When the Nazis took over Norway and Denmark, therefore, the Jewish democracy theme was exposed in all its nakedness, and had to be abandoned. But here another hitch developed. The idea of Jewish communism was still being propagated by their well-trained American disciples, who somehow had missed the cue. It began to appear for a while that America's little Brown Boys were going to be left high and dry.

At this point, however, the Nazi war machine swung into high gear in its campaign of world conquest. America's pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic propagandists immediately seized the opportunity to extricate themselves from their uncomfortable position and, with every report of a German military success, their boldness mounted. They no longer found it necessary to argue for Germany by tagging her intended victims with the label of being Jewish. They began to come out openly for Germany, first by way of mere apologetics, then with more positive arguments in defense of Germany's conduct. Moreover, they abandoned their efforts to rationalize their attacks on democracy as a form of government and a way of life. The issue had become clear. It was nazism against democracy, and America's pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic propagandists were taking the side of nazism by openly proclaiming that democracy could not defend itself as a democracy against the totalitarianism of nazism. The very effectiveness of their earlier campaign to prove that Jews were Communists forced them to stand self-revealed for what they were and always had been, opponents of democracy, and tools of the Nazi Party propaganda machine.

It may seem inconsistent at first glance to say that, at the same time, these propagandists have aligned themselves openly with nazism, they are stressing the inability of democracy to defend itself. In their own minds, however, there is no inconsistency in such a program. As the self-proclaimed true patriots of America, they can strengthen their position by pretending to warn against the dangers that this country faces. By jumping on the preparedness bandwagon, they can identify themselves with the anti-Nazi and anti-fascist sentiment that has become crystallized in the minds of the American people. Then, having proved themselves genuine patriots—at least in their own opinion—they can advocate a totalitarian state as a defense measure even more freely than they do at present. These are the tactics of the real fifth columnist, following to the letter Huey Long's dictum that fascism will come to America as anti-fascism.