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17 'FRONTISTS' INDICTED; FACE 8 YEARS IN JAIL ON SEDITION, THEFT CHARGES

NEW YORK, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The 17 Christian Front members arrested Jan. 13 and 14 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in an alleged plot to overthrow the Government were indicted by the Brooklyn Federal Grand Jury today on charges of seditious conspiracy and stealing Federal munitions and property. The defendants face a maximum penalty of eight years' imprisonment and \$15,000 fine each, if convicted on both counts.

United States Attorney Harold Kennedy, who presented the evidence to the Grand Jury, said in a statement that the men were being accused as individuals and urged the public to "turn a deaf ear to those who continue to raise false issues, whether it be ostensibly against these men or in their interests."

"Under our system of government these men are entitled to a fair trial, free from any atmosphere of bias, sympathy or prejudice," Kennedy said.

The indictment charges: (1) that the defendants conspired "to overthrow, put down and destroy by force the Government of the United States and by force to take its property," (2) that they conspired "to commit an offense against the United States by stealing munitions and other personal property belonging to the United States."

The munitions allegedly stolen were from the armory of the 165th Infantry (the old 69th Division), of which one of the defendants, John T. Prout Jr., is a captain. It was the first time that the specific armory from which the defendants were alleged to have stolen arms was officially stated.

The indictment did not mention the Christian Front and referred by name to only one organization, the Action Committee, but said that the defendants intended to use their position in "other organizations" to further the conspiracy.

The defendants are: William Gerald Bishop, 32; John F. Cassidy, 30; John T. Prout Jr., 29; Michael J. Bierne, 32; Macklin Boettger, 32; Andrew Buckley, 32; William H.D. Bushnell, 18; Claus Gunther Ernecke, 36; John Franklin Cook, 19; John A. Graf, 23; Leroy Keegan, 37; George M. Kelly, 24; Frank M.J. Malone, 25; Alfred J. Quinlan, 22; John A. Viebrock, 36; Michael Vill, 32; Edward L. Walsh, 23.

Liability of Radio Stations in Seditious Speeches Held Limited

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The liability of radio stations for seditious speeches sent over their airwaves is limited, according to an unofficial opinion by the Department of Justice today.

There has been speculation in some quarters as to how radio stations might be affected if speeches broadcast over their facilities are found to have incited the 17 members of the Christian Front just indicted by the Grand Jury on charges of sedition.

For the station owners to be charged with aiding and abetting sedition, it was stated by the Department of Justice, it would have to be proved that the station conspired with the speaker to utter sedition. However, the Department gave as its opinion that the Federal Communications Commission would deal sternly with any station which allowed a person convicted of sedition to speak over its facilities.

"It would be an open and shut case of operation of a station contrary to the public interest and necessity," a spokesman for the Department said, "if speeches definitely against the public interest were broadcast."

LOAN BY CHRISTIAN GROUPS ENABLED LONDON REFUGEE BODY TO CARRY ON

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Christian organizations gave a loan to the Central Council for Jewish Refugees to enable it to continue its activities and use their influence with the Government to obtain the recently-announced grants for refugee maintenance, it was revealed today.

At a meeting of the Jewish council, which yesterday launched a £400,000 campaign to cover the year's budget for refugee maintenance in England and Palestine Anthony de Rothschild paid tribute to Christian refugee organizations whose loans, together with funds contributed by a small group of supporters, made it possible for the council to go on with its work.

In addition, Rothschild revealed, Christian groups were energetic in seeking Government support for refugee maintenance. The Rev. Carter told the Government he spoke in the name of the Christian churches of England and Scotland in asking Government aid.

Rothschild also paid tribute to the Government for offering to match private contributions up to £27,000 monthly, plus a £100,000 grant for previous expenditures. Out of the latter grant the loan from the Christian Council for Refugees will be repaid. A resolution of gratitude to the Government was adopted unanimously by the meeting of the Jewish council, held at Woburn House.

However, Rothschild stated that requirements for refugee aid would exceed the sum of which the Government would provide half. He said that in view of unemployment conditions, absorption of refugees into industry was proceeding relatively slowly, but expressed the opinion that in time many would be drawn into employment by service to the State and there would also be substantial enlistment of refugees in the Pioneer Corps.

He also referred to plans for reorganizing refugee work for efficiency and economy and said the coordinated committee to be formed under Sir Herbert Emerson's leadership to administer the Government grants would be helpful in this regard. It was learned that this committee will include Christian members of Parliament, as well as social service experts and representatives of the Jewish council.

Co-chairmen of the Jewish council's fund-raising drive are Lionel Cohen and Israel Sieff. The Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund), which is covering all costs of the campaign, will receive £75,000 for relief of refugees in Palestine.

STARNES HALTS PELLEY HEARING AS VOORHIS SEEKS TO BROADEN QUIZ; CAROLINA ACTION AWAY

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Acting Chairman Joe Starnes abruptly adjourned a public hearing of the Dies Committee today after Rep. Jerry Voorhis sought to broaden the field of the questioning directed at the witness, William Dudley Pelley, chief of the Silver Shirts. After objecting to several of Voorhis' questions as "outside the scope of un-American activities," Starnes adjourned the hearing until tomorrow morning. Pelley is expected to take the stand again at that time.

Meanwhile, Washington police said they had received a request from North Carolina authorities to hold Pelley under a capias issued against him. The Washington Department said it would take no action until a warrant had been received from the sheriff's office at Asheville. It was indicated they expected to receive it tonight or tomorrow morning. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, which had also been requested by State authorities to hold Pelley, does not plan to take any action in the matter, considering it the task of the local department.

In his first public appearance before the committee, Pelley asserted the objectives of his organization were precisely those of the committee itself. He denied that he had any foreign connections or had received foreign support in any form.

Every member of the committee, with the exception of Chairman Dies, was on hand, but the bulk of the questioning was by Starnes and Voorhis. Pelley said he launched his Silver Shirt organization in 1933, "with the advent of the so called New Deal." Previously he had made his living "working on magazines and in free lance writing," he said.

Asked the membership of his organization, he replied: "At the end of 1939 I had issued 25,000 membership certificates." Under further questioning he added he would place the number of "active sympathizers of his group at 75,000 and the number of contributors at between 100 and 1,000. He declared he was active in 22 states.

Pelley declared he had assumed he was violating no laws in his activities after no action had been taken as a result of investigation by "three sets of G-men in May, 1939." He stated he showed the F.B.I. investigators "everything but the membership lists," and added he got the impression that "they sort of approved of my organization."

"I have been engaged in the same activity as the Dies committee has been prosecuting--opposing subversive activities," Pelley declared at one point.

ISSERMAN QUILTS ST. LOUIS INTERFAITH BODY IN MOVE TO BRING CATHOLICS BACK

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman, whose recent speech in a Protestant Church criticizing President Roosevelt's appointment of Myron C. Taylor as envoy to the Vatican caused the resignation of the five Catholic members from the St. Louis Round-Table of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, has now himself resigned from the round-table and invited the Catholics to return. The Jewish Community Council has issued a statement disassociating itself from Rabbi Isserman's views.

RELIGIOUS LIBEL TRIAL OPENS IN LAUSANNE: ATTACK ON TALMUD BROUGHT COURT ACTION

LAUSANNE, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Several members of the National Front went on trial here today on charges of distributing pamphlets libeling the Jewish religion.

The pamphlets, which were circulated last December, said that certain passages in the Talmud, the body of Jewish civil and canonical law, were in contradiction to modern moral standards and even permitted commission of ordinary crimes. Two Swiss university experts, Professors Colay of Lausanne and Sailer of Berne, testified for the prosecution, declaring that the quotations from the Talmud which were used in the pamphlets did not have the meaning attributed to them by the defendants.

The action was brought against the accused by the Jewish communities of Lausanne, Vevey, Montreux and Yverdon. A third expert called to testify in the case is the Dutch scholar, Prof. Van Heckelingen.

NAZIS WRECK JEWISH CEMETERIES, USING STONES, METALS FOR ROADS, BULLETS

PARIS, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- Materials taken from destroyed Jewish cemeteries in the Poznan area of Nazi-occupied Poland are going into the construction of German roads and the manufacture of bullets for the German army, it was disclosed today in the Nazi newspaper Ostdeutscher Beobachter.

The newspaper reported that all Jewish cemeteries in the area, which has been cleared of Jews and Poles to make room for German repatriates from the Baltic countries, are being systematically destroyed. Gravestones are being broken up for use in road construction, while metal ornaments and gates are being melted down to be made into bullets.

According to the paper, the oldest Jewish cemetery in Poznan was the first to be destroyed. Jews lived in Poznan since the thirteenth century.

FORMER BERLIN GESTAPO LEADER DESCRIBES BUCHENWALD TORTURES

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The sufferings of Jews detained in the Buchenwald concentration camp are described by Hans Juergen Koehler, former vice-president of the Gestapo (German secret police) in Berlin, in a book "Inside Gestapo," just published by the Pallas Publishing Company here.

Jews working in a quarry, Koehler states, had to carry great blocks of stone to a road one mile distant which had also been built by Jewish prisoners. Some of the blocks were so heavy that several prisoners had to lift them to the shoulders of the man assigned to carry them.

The road along which the stones were being carried rose steeply for the last 500 yards. The Jews were driven mercilessly by S. S. men, members of Hitler's elite guards, who forced them to run with their loads. The Jews, Koehler asserts, were not permitted to drink or to rest for a moment. On the afternoon of the first day of the labor project, 30 of 100 prisoners collapsed and two died during the night.

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One of the worst aspects of the situation, according to the former Gestapo leader, was the system of placing six habitual criminals in each stable where 500 Jews were packed. These men were permitted to maltreat the Jews as much as they liked.

Reveille for the Jews was 3.30 a.m. From 4.30 to 5.30 was "morning parade." Work started before six o'clock. At noon there was a half-hour rest period, with lunch consisting of a cup of thin coffee without milk or sugar. Work was resumed and continued until 3.45 p.m. and at four there was another "parade" lasting until 5.30. Then there was another brief interval for dinner, work again until eight o'clock, then supper and taps were sounded at nine.

In the first four weeks, Koehler writes, 80 of 2,000 Jews in the Buchenwald camp died. Thirty others died in one week. These figures, he asserts, were carefully suppressed.

ENGLAND WARS TO ENABLE JEWS TO RETURN TO REICH, HAMBURG RADIO HOLDS

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The Nazi propaganda broadcast from Hamburg last night presented a dialogue between two announcers, one taking the role of an Englishman, in which it was declared that England was at war to permit the Jews to return to Germany.

Speaking of "the conspiracy of international Jewish finance to ruin Germany," the announcers charged that the Allies planned to break Germany up into several independent small states. The proposal for a European federation was characterized as a scheme of the City of London to gain control of Europe's finances.

REICH JEWS GET MEAGRE RATION OF SEWING MATERIALS

LONDON, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- A ration of 20 pfennigs worth of sewing materials every three months to repair clothes will be allowed to Jews in the Reich, it has been announced by the Reich Association of Jews in Germany.

ARAB WORKERS' UNION FOUNDED IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- A new Arab workers' organization has been established here through the efforts of the Arab lawyers Hussein and Kemal. It represents the third attempt to organize the Arab working masses, two previous efforts having failed.

PALESTINE TRADE BODIES OPPOSE INCOME TAXATION

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The Chamber of Commerce has called a special meeting to consider ways and means to prevent introduction of an income tax. The Arab Chamber of Commerce is also opposing income taxation.

NEW COLONY, FIRST IN 1940, FOUNDED IN HULEH REGION

JERUSALEM, Feb. 7. (JTA) -- The first Jewish colony of 1940 was established this morning by a group of General Zionist "A" workers, making the third of the Ussishkin cluster of settlements in the northern part of the Huleh region.