

FEUDS AMONG THE FASCISTS

By DOROTHY ROBERTS

This is the fourth and concluding article in a series on the plottings of America's fifth column front. The first article by Harold Preece, Southern writer, dealt with the Ku Klux Klan. The second and third articles, written by Miss Roberts, a midwest newspaper woman, told the inside story of a fifth column convention in Detroit, camouflaged as the Congress of Monetary Organizations.

WHEN fuehrers fall out, somebody gets the bones and somebody gets the gravy. Three rival groups inside the American fifth-column movement see a big gravy-train a-coming in a postwar America where possibly mass unemployment may cause a scarcity of gravy on the dinner table. These groups are ex-Senator Robert Rice Reynolds' American Nationalist Party (which may soon blossom out under a shorter name), with headquarters in Washington; a second group led by Homer Maertz, Chicago stormtrooper aided and abetted by indicted seditionists Gerald Winrod, Ernest Elmhurst and by the formerly indicted Hudson de Priest; Gerald L. K. Smith's "nationalist" movement operating from Detroit. Leaders of each group are getting set to ride that train into Washington at the expense of other would-be top dogs left to gnaw the bones.

As I write this, I feel a little like one of Dante's spirits who has climbed his way out of Inferno back into the everyday world where everyday people go about their daily rounds of work and food and sleep. It's good to be back in a decent community of people who work hard, get along with their neighbors, and borrow each other's lawnmowers. When the taxi brought me to my door, after an extended visit into the fifth column underworld, something warmed my heart when I saw my three-year-old Scotch-Irish kid rolling and tumbling with the children of Mr. Goldstein, the grocer, and Mr. Bellini, the candy man. When I started poking around the headquarters of the rival fuehrers, bound by hate if divided by ambition, I thought that America was as safe as the kids who raid my cookie jar while I'm banging away at the typewriter.

I'm not so sure now.

I can say, after cozy sessions with one gutter magnifico after the other,

that America's margin of safety is dangerously slim. Even before V-J Day we might have been faced with the beginnings of a united fascist mass movement if that key organization of the fifth column, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, could have persuaded all of the warring little Hitlers that the train would carry plenty of gravy for everybody.

"Our biggest headache is getting everybody together without making it seem that we are especially favoring anybody," a Klan leader told me in Detroit. "Each one of the big boys has a pretty good opinion of himself and feels that he was just naturally meant to be the man. It's gotten so bad that each one is sending people into the other fellow's organization, hoping to take it over or, at least, to pull it into line with his particular outfit. The little local outfits, which we had no trouble in lining up before, are slow about coming into one big organization now. With the boys bidding against each other, most of the little outfits are waiting to see where they'll get the highest percentage when they jump.

"The same thing is happening in the churches, the fraternal lodges, and the trade unions where a united 'nationalist' movement could make some headway by combining on a platform and a leadership which would appeal to 100 percent American elements. Gerald L. K. Smith went out to California and lined up the leadership of the Ham and Eggs Pension Movement behind his Nationalist Party, which made all the other boys sore. Now, he's trying to do the same thing with certain people in the Townsend Movement where our organization has been working for a long time. Worst of all, we fear that he's going to start public attacks on all the other 'nationalist' leaders when we're breaking our necks to keep any differences between us out of the papers."

MEANWHILE, the three competing groups remind one of suspicious tomcats eyeing the same piece of meat with any two of them arched to spring on any third member of the pack moving an inch toward the prize. The Ku Klux Klan, hiding its tar buckets and three cornered bonnets shaped like a dunce's cap from the public eye, has been working feverishly since 1938 to set up a catch-all fascist movement with

jobs for all the boys knowing how to handle brass knuckles and a lie. In 1938, its move to combine all the major and minor fascist movements behind retired Army General George Van Horn Moseley fizzled when it was exposed by some honest newspaperman. Moseley is still hanging around Atlanta where the Klan has its national headquarters and, so it is said, still confers with Imperial Wizard James E. Colescott. I saw the aging general at a stock exchange watching cotton quotations being posted on a bulletin board, when I was in the Georgia capital city a few months ago. But he's not likely to be anybody's man on horseback because, as one of his intimate friends told me, "He's getting too damned old to ride a horse."

Age—plus too many marriages—is a main argument being advanced by fascists in and out of the Klan against ex-Senator Robert Rice Reynolds of North Carolina, current fuehrer of the American Nationalist Party, which represents a merger of an old Yorkville head-busting outfit of the same name with the Klan's united front of seventy-two fascist organizations, the American Nationalist Confederation. Recently a number of minor fascist rackets, which had operated under various names in Queens County, New York, have also joined up. The ANP is organized into close-mouthed, highly-disciplined units of ten potential head-busters each. But local fifth column leaders, who would have the job of building up the Big Man in their communities, are pretty lukewarm to the idea of having Reynolds run as the fascist candidate for President in the next national election.

"Hell's bells, he'll be almost seventy when 1948 rolls around," an ANP local leader in Queens told me. "And he's out on a limb with no way of crawling back. We're counting on the support of lots of people who'd turn against us in a minute if they thought that we were copying the fascists in Germany and Italy. Our cue is that we are loyal Americans, see, and that we don't want the Jews to take over our country after we've whipped the Germans, Japs, and Italians. But all that our enemies would have to do would be to reprint the speeches that Reynolds made in the Senate praising Hitler and Mussolini and saying that they had 'a date with destiny.' Neither would that trip he made

to Germany and Italy before Pearl Harbor help us or him.

"Besides, how could you sell a man who married the Hope Diamond heiress to another man who can't buy his wife a fifteen-dollar wristwatch on the installment plan?" (Reynolds' latest wife is the daughter of Evalyn Walsh McLean, hostess of Washington's "Cliveden set.")

The ANP man confided to me a major piece of strategy. "Oh, yeah, we tell the boys who've come into the party that Reynolds is a great guy—now. But some of us have long heads and we look upon Reynolds as being just a short-time proposition until we can build up a man with a military record who'll be able to carry the vets along with him and sweep the country. If your man out in front has had on a uniform, you can simply shut up critics by calling them

slackers. The voters will reason that nobody who has fought Hitler is likely to turn out to be a Hitler."

THE Maertz - de Priest - Elmhurst group dominated the Detroit fascist front convention which I described in my previous two articles. This group represents the wing of the fascist movement which wants to run "nationalist" candidates in the primaries of the old parties as a prerequisite for building opposition blocs which can eventually be swung in favor of a fascist third party. Maertz, the brains of the group, feels that it is premature to combine all the fascist forces behind one leader until that leader—probably a high-ranking general or at least an ex-soldier—can be definitely identified by his hold on the popular imagination.

The Klan, which is not tied up with

any group but seeks to unite them all, had unofficial representatives at the Detroit gathering. The KKK is not burning any bridges by insisting that Reynolds be the presidential candidate in 1948. It knows how to sweet-talk the ardent followers of Reynolds and how to doubletalk those who are skeptical of Tarheel Bob. The Klan was content at that convention to have Reynolds' man, John Scott, publisher of the New York fascist sheet, *Money*, elected as general secretary of the newly-organized Congress of Monetary Organizations and to have its close friends, indicted seditionist Elmhurst and formerly indicted de Priest, to map strategy. The partisans of Reynolds ganged up with the cohorts of Maertz to prevent Gerald L. K. Smith's lieutenants from grabbing the convention. Smith is now in the position of having to buck both groups in

They Can Be Defeated

WITH this issue *NEW MASSES* completes the publication of a series on the latest operations and postwar plans of the fifth column underworld. Eleven years ago we first turned the spotlight on the organized anti-Semites and Nazi frontiers with a series by John L. Spivak. If there are those who, after all the horror the world has gone through in these eleven years, still think of the Gerald L. K. Smiths and Robert R. Reynolds' as harmless crackpots who cannot pollute the democratic mainstream of American life, the recent spectacle of the newspaper with the largest circulation in the country, the *New York Daily News*, engaging in crude anti-Semitism should provide a sobering reminder of the actual state of affairs.

Throughout this period the attitude of government authorities toward our native fascist threat has been at best complacent. This is a charitable word to describe the failure to bring to book such leaders of Hitler's world conspiracy as Charles E. Coughlin, Gerald Smith, and former Senator Reynolds. And what can be said of last year's sedition trial which the defendants—all of them war criminals—were permitted to convert into a farce?

And while the fascists have been ignored or shielded, the FBI and such Congressional bodies as the Dies Committee and the new Wood-Rankin House Committee on un-American Activities have been busy harassing anti-fascists, Communists as well as non-Communists. All this is ominously familiar. Capitalist democracy in our country is following a pattern which led to the destruction of the people's liberties in Germany and Italy.

Will Attorney General Tom Clark act on this latest evidence presented by *NEW MASSES*? Will he strike at

the Ku Klux Klan which is fomenting pogroms against Jews and Negroes? Will he investigate the phony Congress of Monetary Organizations set up to coordinate the plottings of the fifth column front? Will he retry the indicted seditionists? Will he get after the big business sponsors and subsidizers of the peddlers of race hate and violence?

These are some of the questions Americans ought to ask the Attorney General. But they must do more than ask questions if our country is not to replace Germany as the bearer of the political bubonic plague. We live in a difficult time of postwar adjustment in a land dominated by the world's most powerful trusts and monopolies. These trusts, having fantastically enriched themselves in the war, are now trying to batten on whatever misery they can create by undermining the labor movement, pitting veterans against workers, reviving Goebels' Red bugaboo, and spreading hatred of Negroes, Jews and other minority groups. The fifth column plug-uglies are the tools with which the corporate overlords hope to shape their twisted world.

But not all the strength is on the side of reaction. Twenty organizations have banded together to demand the abolition of the Wood-Rankin committee which is just as much an instrument of American fascism as are Gerald Smith's storm troopers. The boycott movement against the *Daily News* has already produced results and needs to be intensified. The Bilbos and Rankins are being increasingly challenged. As Dorothy Roberts writes in concluding the NM series:

"It's up to the labor movement and to progressive organizations everywhere to take up the fight to put the whole fascist kit and caboodle out of business. It must not happen here."



FREDERICK KISTER

CHRISTIAN VETERANS OF AMERICA

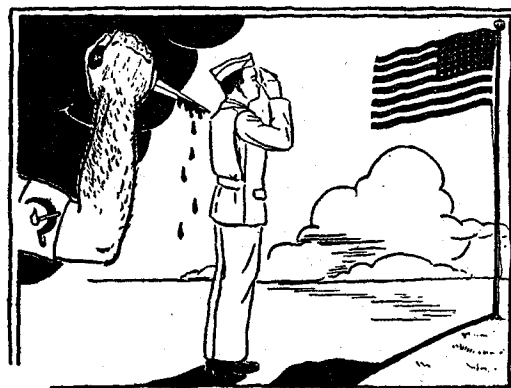
MY CRIMES

I belonged to the America First Committee before the war because I believed that Americans come first in war and peace.

I knew Charles A. Lindbergh, and respect him.

I was associate editor of a periodical which had an America First editorial policy.

On April 22, 1945, as the Chairman of a committee of Christian veterans I presided over a meeting of Christian Nationalists in the City of Chicago. The meeting was opened with prayer, hymns were sung, and Christian addresses were delivered. The meeting was closed with the pledge of allegiance to



Enemy Lifts the Dagger to the Back of the American Veteran

TODAY, I AM UNEMPLOYED.

I was fired by a boss who told me my work was excellent.

I was fired by a boss who admitted in his own words that the editor of a pro-Communist Jewish periodical demanded my dismissal.

Sample montage of copy from Christian Veterans of America literature.

a three-handed game where two rivals combine for the time being against the man with the low hand.

But the Klan fears that Smith, who calls himself a "liberal nationalist," may start a public smear campaign against Reynolds, damning him as "a rich reactionary out to grind down the poor." Smith's Nationalist Party—the third faction—is looked upon with the least favor by the Kluxer big shots. Smith, the top leadership feels, is too unmanageable, too unpredictable, and—too individualistic. Otherwise, he would have long since come into the united front of subversive rackets which the Klan has tried hard to build. Nevertheless, careful to have a finger in each of the fascist pies, the Klan still keeps on pleasant terms with Gerald. His monthly hate sheet, *The Cross and the Flag*, has become the quasi-official organ of the Klan, given to new recruits for indoctrination, since the knights of the bedsheet suspended their organ, the *Fiery Cross*, in the process of going underground.

WHILE in Detroit, I had the dubious pleasure of attending a social gathering where Smith and his top

ranking satellite, evangelist Harvey "Cowboy" Springer, made themselves the life of the party.

"We agree with the Reynolds group on foreign policy only," Smith insisted to a small circle which gathered around him. "Both groups will probably fight enabling legislation for the United Nations charter when such legislation is introduced in Congress. The Charter itself is so weak and" meaningless that 'nationalist' Senators didn't even bother to fight against its ratification. The real battle around which 'nationalists' of each group will center their forces will come when the internationalists bring up their enabling legislation. And that will be a battle.

"But foreign policy and domestic policy are two different matters. The Reynolds group is too reactionary and too tied up with high finance ever to attract the public."

"What fits your definition of liberalism?" I asked.

A benign smile played across Smith's heavy features. "My definition of liberalism," he said, "is the philosophy taught and practiced by the late Huey P. Long of Louisiana. I helped Senator Long organize the Share Our Wealth

Society and I'm trying to carry forward his principles today."

Then Smith gave out his economic panacea with which he hopes to seduce laid-off workers in the days ahead—a phony program of living without working which is simply Huey Long's "Every Man A King" doctrine brought up to date. "Cowboy" Springer uttered a pious amen. Smith continued expounding the Gerald L. K. nostrums, talking in a vein which reminded one of the early promises that Adolf Hitler made to institute "socialism" in Germany.

"We need to reorganize the entire economic system on the basis of production," Smith said unctuously. "Under my plan of profit-sharing, workers would stay on the payroll whether they had jobs or not because they would have produced enough for their country, while working, to be paid their usual salaries. The man who ate potatoes when he was on a payroll would still have the money to buy potatoes while he was staying at home. He would be paid in legal tender, and not in bonds collectible in the future. He would get from twenty-five to fifty dollars a week, but not in money raised through taxes."

That was a pretty tall order for one

guest. "I wouldn't mind drawing fifty, or even twenty-five dollars a week, for staying at home and taking it easy," she said. "But where would the money come from?"

"Well, I'd do the over-all thinking and leave the actual planning to experts," Smith replied hastily. Then, when a titter ran through the group, "American money should be constitutional money and should be based upon how much we can produce. Constitutional money would mean going off the gold standard, and this type of money would be balanced against productive capacity rather than against gold. In this case, funds would be issued directly from the government to the individual. Under such a system, workers would be inspired to work themselves out of jobs and into more leisure time."

Most of the fascist leaders are now putting forward programs of a "currency balanced against production" in order to "overthrow the Jew international bankers."

"I favor small vertical unions," he continued, "rather than large horizontal unions like the CIO. In the horizontal unions, the unskilled workers may outnumber the skilled ones and therefore loot the treasury. If the unskilled have less recognition and are forced to work up to skilled positions, they will have an incentive to earn more. In general, I favor independent unions, not to help management, but because it is better for independent unions to explain the needs of the workers to the boss." By "independent" unions Smith of course means company unions.

"Labor leaders in league with the reactionaries," he declared, "are the real enemies of the people. During the last three and a half years all labor has been abused by powerful unions. Look at the way that the CIO has treated the Mechanics Educational Society right here in Detroit." The latter organization, commonly known as MESA, is strongly influenced by figures who share Smith's "nationalist" views and is used by Detroit automotive interests to fight the United Automobile Workers-CIO.

MEANWHILE, agents of all three fascist alignments are looking for potential stormtrooper material among three elements—the veterans, the unemployed, and down-and-out derelicts willing to crack anybody's head for a dollar and a shot of rotgut.

Charles G. Smith, Queens County organizer of the Reynolds outfit, is himself one of the latter. He earns a couple of dollars now and then by giving "lec-

tures" on "communism." I am reliably informed that emissaries of the ANP in New York are lining up bums from the Third Avenue flophouses and the Bowery nickel-hootch joints to serve as stormtrooper units entrusted with minor jobs such as breaking windows in Jewish stores and smearing up a synagogue with filthy drawings.

This wing of the fascist movement also hopes to recruit ex-servicemen, enlisted by old-time hoodlums trained in the underground stormtrooper movements, for the big jobs of race riots, raids on union halls, and other spectacular "demonstrations." The trained terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan will also figure in these groups which, for obvious reasons, will not be officially affiliated with the ANP. The commander-in-chief of the group may be indicted seditious Joe McWilliams, the toughest stormtrooper who ever came from Yorkville. At present, McWilliams, using the alias of "Jack Williams of Perryton, Texas," is soliciting funds from businessmen for the ANP. An advance letter, signed by Reynolds, introduces McWilliams, who promises prospective contributors that their businesses will be "free from government regulation" once the ANP takes over.

Gerald L. K. Smith is also moving to set up a stormtrooper organization, recruited from the veterans. In July 1945, while carrying on his "organizing campaign" in Los Angeles, he sent out a form letter entitled "The Battle of Babylon" to prospective contributors. The letter informed the suckers that: "The nationalist veterans of this war are organizing. They will perhaps have their headquarters in Chicago. More about this later."

Meanwhile, an old associate of Smith's in the America First movement has started in Chicago a stormtrooper outfit known as the "Christian Veterans of America." Its ostensible leader is Frederick Kister, who served as associate editor of a pre-Pearl Harbor anti-Semitic magazine. A man with a tough mug and the hard eyes of a potential killer, Kister is said to have been a constant troublemaker during his stay in the Army. He is now sending out copies of a lurid "call to action" addressed "to the understanding Christian American Veteran, regardless of his particular creed, who is tired of being cracked around by bureaucrats, smear artists, refugees, alien-minded propagandists, Communists, plug-uglies, whip crackers and other varieties of un-American vermin who infest our beautiful America."

Various business tycoons provide the cash and call the tune for these fascist outfits. They are investing in the kind of future for America that they want—a future of despotic power for the few and imperialist adventures that will lead to World War III. And it can hardly be said that the government is interfering much with these plans. The Department of Justice, after bungling the first trial of the indicted seditious, seems in no hurry to place them on trial again. The House Committee on un-American Activities, far from putting Gerald L. K. Smith, Robert R. Reynolds, Homer Maertz, Imperial Wizard Colescott et al. on the mat, is in fact making common cause with them by harassing staunch anti-fascists. It's up to the labor movement and to progressive organizations everywhere to take up the fight to put the whole fascist kit and caboodle out of business. It must not happen here.

A BOOK REVIEW
OF

REPORT ON THE RUSSIANS

by
WILLIAM L. WHITE

*marked difference between inmates
' the Kansas state penitentiary at
visited an old friend. Food and
bought the same, maybe a little better
by Kansas friend decide that his
n, and express the hope that there
s, he would run no danger of being*

even if my nose was held by a stool pigeon." ... W. L. White

FREDERICK KISTER former writer for
Scribner's Commentator will give a dynamic
review of this highly controversial book.

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BIG BUSINESS STRATEGY

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

THE one thing which would have proved fatal to the President's Labor-Management Conference would have been a polite and seemingly acquiescence on the part of CIO President Philip Murray to the well-laid plans of management, the administration and the AFL. The idea was to ignore completely the wage issue, as a subject not fit for the drawing-room-funeral-parlor atmosphere of the conference which is now under way in the huge, largely empty Labor Department auditorium.

The fact that Mr. Murray did not so oblige, but opened up the fight for a discussion of the wage issue almost without waiting for the fatuous smile to fade from AFL President William Green's face with the last of his fatuous words, has increased his stature tremendously. The two dominating personalities of the conference emerging at the end of the first day were Phil Murray and Ira Mosher, the hard-boiled head of the National Association of Manufacturers. Certainly the public at large is going to be under no illusion as to who speaks for the workers of America by the end of this conference.

What is finally becoming clear to the public, seeping into the press at long last, is that Murray cannot be bought off, that the CIO unions cannot be bought off, that they have refused to fall for wage rises which entailed price rises, and will continue to do so. And when that so-gentle looking labor leader with the white hair and the picturesque eyebrows got up in front of the funeral-parlor background of potted ferns and palms and in his soft Scotch burr let loose a speech at the end of the day, it was a speech which cleared the air of all the Bill Green vaporizings, the glittering Eric Johnston generalities and the Truman truisms of the preceding hours. The President had in his opening address completely ignored wages—as the conference was of course all set to do—and adjured labor and management to work as “a team,” with a rather unpleasant threat of congressional action as an alternative. With the anti-labor bills pending, that threat appeared to be directed against labor. Murray reminded the conference of the President's recent nationwide radio speech, in which he clearly asserted that wage raises are needed, and that they can be

given by industry without lifting prices, save for exceptional cases, when they can get them.

Murray pointed out that industry has “not been disposed even to bargain with respect to workers' wage restoration demands.” He should know. Steel companies sent third-rate officials when they met with unions on the pretext they would bargain, only to say “No.” These companies did not even try to assert that steel workers were not entitled to a raise. All they did was to try to get the union to go along with them on a price increase—not the increase to correct inequities, to which OPA is committed in steel and which will amount to some \$160,000,000, but a further boost. When Murray demanded two dollars a day without any price increase, the steel companies had the gall to claim that Executive Order 9599 (August 18) represented no change in the national wage policy. Steel and most major industries have union contracts in which appears a clause, at the behest of the War Labor Board, that they may be reopened with a change in national wage policy. CIO Counsel Frank Donner had to go to the WLB to get the board to say that the order *did* represent a change. Still the companies would not negotiate. And now, even in the face of the President's latest speech on wages, they still say “No.”

“The word ‘No’ has, by and large,” Murray told the Labor-Management Conference, “been the answer of American industry to the workers' plea for a decent life.

“The word ‘No’ has *not* been the answer of the President of the United States. In his recent radio address, he stated that ‘wage increases are therefore imperative—to cushion the shock to our workers, to sustain adequate purchasing power and to raise the national income.’ The President emphasized that the answer could not be the word ‘No’ in enumerating the specific factors which, in his words, ‘add to the ability of industry to increase wages.’

“The word ‘No’ was not the answer of the staff of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion whose recent report condemned the word ‘No’ as lacking a dollar and cents basis. . . .

“Our true problem then cannot be defined as wholly a procedural one.

Our true problem is the little word ‘No.’ And we must not forget that the most effective and facile procedures which the wit of man can devise can't conjure away the word ‘No,’ nor heal the wound which it threatens to our common welfare.”

MR. MURRAY is not through fighting. He is just beginning. For it is apparent that if the conference does not touch on wages, it not only is unlikely to accomplish anything positive; it could achieve something devoutly to be avoided by becoming the means of government intervention on behalf of the employers. Industry for its own reasons does not want compulsory arbitration, and labor certainly does not. But the administration would like to have compulsory arbitration and industry is not averse to talking about it as a sort of threat over labor. What big business really wants is a bill penalizing a union for violating a contract without any penalty for the employer for doing the same or for provoking violations by the workers. Chairman Andrew J. May, of the House Military Affairs Committee, has rushed through just such a bill and is eager for it if he can't get a worse one—and industry to date is shying away from doing anything more than talking about cooling-off legislation. They can use it as a blackjack, but interfering with the right to strike might serve to unite labor. Right now they have been successful in splitting labor on the price and wage issue, the AFL and the NAM and of course John L. Lewis taking an identical position of saying, let us not discuss wages in this conference and wreck our harmony, let us just take the lid off prices and then we can negotiate.

The employers need help. This may seem surprising, since they have everything they want on the surface: they can diddle around for another six months, when they hope to have killed off OPA and to be able to raise prices to suit themselves, because they think their market will be just as good or better than now. They get the carryover in taxes until the end of the year; and then they get the repeal of excess profits taxes beginning January 1. Everyone thought that by this time their strike against reconversion would be over. But they are pretty smug about