Weekly News Review

House Un-Americanism Body Probes Hollywood Communism

By Joseph W. La Bine

A. F. OF L.'S JOHN FREY, INVESTIGATOR DIES
They were obliged to discuss John Lewis.

Domestic

Last year Chicago Times Reporter John Metcalfe joined Fritz Kuhn's German-American Bund, traveled 20,000 miles attending Bund meetings, then resigned to write a startling expose for his paper. Direct result was a $25,000 house committee on un-American activities, which met last week under Texas' Martin Dies. After three days of probing, un-Americanism reared its colorful head everywhere from C. I. O. headquarters to glamorous Hollywood.

Ex-Bundsman Metcalfe told how Fritz Kuhn organized 500,000 German-Americans under instructions from Adolf Hitler, how in return Kuhn was given a whip hand over Germany's ambassador to the U. S. He told of Chicago's "Silver Shirts," organized to smash Communism.

Ex-Bundsman Peter Gissibl told how Nazi spies consorted with German-Americans, how the Red Star line "fixed it" so spies could slip back home when they got in trouble. But it was American Federation of Labor's John P. Frey who tossed in the biggest bombshell and caused C. I. O.'s John L. Lewis to snort with rage.

Naziism is one thing, but Metal Tradesman Frey promised to identify "several national C. I. O. officers" as Communists. Would he mention John Lewis? "How could I avoid it!" replied Mr. Frey.

The Frey disclosures had barely started before Committee Investigator Edward Sullivan hurried into Washington from California, anxious to reveal how C. I. O.'s Harry Bridges, America's most famous alien, "attended 'top fraction' meetings of the Communist party and received aid from officials of the U. S. labor department while patriotic citizens were trying to have him deported for his Communistic activities."

Continued Investigator Sullivan: "Witnesses can be produced who can name the day when an official of the immigration service contacted Harry Bridges and called him to his office, where he read . . . a confidential letter of instructions on his future behavior, written by an outstanding official of the labor department."

That Communist Bridges is financed by Hollywood cinema stars was Mr. Sullivan's next charge. Armed with this evidence, supported by Unionist Frey whose accusations John Lewis seemed unwilling to answer, the Dies committee prepared to remain in Washington two more weeks. In New York they will pick up more tasty rumors, then move west across the nation to smell out Communism a la Hollywood.

Foreign

Many years ago Germany's great Bismarck fooled his opponents by telling the truth, knowing they would not believe. Last week, when Adolf Hitler called 500,000 reserves to the colors for war games with a million regular soldiers, all Europe became jittery. But in Berlin there was scoffing; if Germany planned anything but peaceful moves, she would have assembled her giant war machine secretly. Remembering Bismarck, answering too that secret mobilization on such a giant scale would be impossible, Berlin's nervous diplomatic corps sped the news back home to Paris, London and Prague. There, these things happened:

(1) In Prague, England's Lord Runciman has spent a fortnight mediating differences between loyal Czechs and their disgruntled fellow-countrymen, Sudeten Germans. Sudetens want autonomy, eventual annexation by Germany. Was it possible that Germany's mobilization foreshadowed a quick annexation move? As Premier Milan Hodza rejected a Sudeten demand for autonomy, all Czechoslovakia became worried and Lord Runciman wished he were back home.

(2) In Paris, where the government has also been having trouble with Mussolini, French frontiers along Germany and Italy were virtually locked. Next, Interior Minister Albert Sarraut re-enforced his counter-spying service against Germany.

(3) In London, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain forgot his catarrh and returned from Scotland. Since Germany recently closed its fortified zones to all military men, Britain's war office warned its officers to get special certificates to avoid "trouble" during travels in Germany.

Chief dynamite in Germany's maneuvers lay in the possibility of an incident that would topple Europe's delicately balanced peace structure.

● When Japan and Russia signed a truce in their month-old undeclared war on the Manchukuan-Siberian border, only the most optimistic observer could predict lasting peace. As a redemarcation commission prepared last week to settle the boundary dispute, two incidents threatened once more to send Russia's bear charging up bullet-pocked Changkufeng hill. On isolated Saghalien island, half Russian, half Jap, Soviet guards fired on a touring member of the Japanese parliament. Next day Tokyo's troops took advantage of the truce, advanced 100 meters up Changkufeng hill while Russian guns bristled. Since wisdom was the better part of valor, the Japs immediately retreated.

Politics

Dearer than anything else to Franklin Roosevelt is his legislative program, blocked last session not by a Republican minority but by anti-New Deal Democrats. No silent sufferer, Mr. Roosevelt decided long ago that congress needed new blood to replace opponents of his reorganization bill, wage-hour bill and lesser measures. This year's primaries offered an opportunity.

By last week his "purge" program was not a success. But neither had New Dealism suffered many losses in elections thus far. Bound

GEORGIA'S GEORGE
He had reason to scowl.

to break the impasse, Mr. Roosevelt decided to stake his political future on his tremendous personal popularity in the South. Fortnight ago at Barnesville, Ga., he bluntly read out of the party Sen. Walter F. George, who sat scowling in the audience (see picture). Last week 60-year-old Senator George took up the "challenge" and set out to beat New Dealer Lawrence Camp in Georgia's primary, September 14.

Stalking next into South Carolina, the President intimated that Senator Ellison D. ("Cotton Ed") Smith would be unwelcome at Washington next winter, intimated also that South Carolinians should send in his place Gov. Olin D. Johnson.

Back in Washington, news of the South's "purge" gave political commentators enough hard tack to chew on until election day. What Franklin Roosevelt wanted was complete domination of congress, insuring passage of his legislative program. Thus would he be able to dictate his 1940 successor, dispelling the third term bugaboo.

People

Last month Anne Lindsay Clark married Son John Roosevelt, who a fortnight ago took an $18-a-week job in the Boston department store of late Democrat Edward Filene. Last week Anne Roosevelt's sister, Sally, who has sung her way to nominal fame in a night club, said she would marry George Xavier McLanahan of New York.

● Wed only two weeks to his telephone operator sweetheart from Gore Bay, Ont., 21-year-old Auto Heir Daniel C. Dodge was honeymooning on Manitoulin island off Lake Huron's Georgian bay. One afternoon as he rummaged around the garage with his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Bryant, a stick of dynamite exploded. Completely shattered was Dodge's left arm, his face torn, his eyes blinded. Rushed off by boat to a distant hospital by his badly injured friends, Dodge suffered excruciating agony. Finally he stood up, swayed, jumped into the water, drowned. Next day Bryant was not expected to live.

Crime

One morning last fall, 18-year-old Paul Dwyer of South Paris, Me., was arrested in North Arlington, N. J. Stuffed in the trunk of his automobile was the corpse of James G. Littlefield, elderly country doctor. Stuffed in the back seat was that of Dr. Littlefield's wife. Paul Dwyer went to prison under life sentence for double murder. Then he changed his story. Said Dwyer:

Francis Carroll, a former deputy sheriff, had improper relations with his daughter, Barbara, Dwyer's sweetheart. When Dr. Littlefield learned of this, Carroll killed him. Later he killed the doctor's wife. Fear of Carroll caused Dwyer to admit both murders.

Last week these horrible accusations were settled. Francis Carroll was convicted, sent to prison for life. It appeared likely that sallow-faced Paul Dwyer would be pardoned, though he might still be charged with guilty knowledge of the slayings. Meanwhile Barbara Carroll received offers to appear in a Boston night club.

Aviation

Transatlantic commercial air supremacy has long since been willed by public consent to U. S. and Great Britain, though until last year neither nation did anything to justify the public's approval. A few weeks ago Nazi Germany sent its Nordwind, Nordstern and Nordmeer catapulting from the Azores to New York and back, placing a new nation in the race for Atlantic air supremacy. Last week Adolf Hitler's birdmen did something still better.

Non-stop from Berlin to New York in 24 hours, 56 minutes, came the 26-passenger Brandenburg. Two days later Brandenburg was again in Berlin, making her return trip in the record time of 19 hours, 55 minutes. No longer a secret is Hitler's ambition to make not London, not Paris, but Berlin the European starting point for transatlantic flights.

● Down from the clouds east of Mexico City plummeted an airliner. First a crash, then flames, and 11 were dead. Down from fog-bound skies into Germany's Black forest came a Czechoslovak liner bound from Prague to Paris. Sixteen died. Down to their deaths off England's coast went six crew members of a royal air force flying boat, bringing to 126 the total fatalities in that service this year. Thus, in 12 hours, in Mexico, England and Germany, 33 lives were snuffed out.

Sports

When Broker J. Smith Ferebee played 144 holes of golf in Chicago last fortnight, it looked like a new marathon fad would start, rivaling marathon dancing, surpassing the toughest flagpole sitter. Last week at St. John, Ind., 23-year-old Charles Grant started playing golf at dawn. By 3 p. m. he had covered 162 holes, by sundown, 225. His worst 18-hole round: the tenth, scoring 81.

Miscellany

From San Francisco's Golden Gate exposition grounds last week came orders that publicity on the 1939 fair must show more fair buildings, fewer fair maidens. Result was a new bit of publicity, something fair officials had not expected. Up and down in front of the administration building paraded "the most beautiful picket line in America." Their placards: "We're out on a limb." "We want a leg-acy."

● Last fortnight Britain's proud Queen Mary made a westward Atlantic passage in 3 days, 21 hours, 48 minutes, clipping better than an hour from the record of her rival, France's Normandie. Last week Queen Mary steamed east from New York, made the crossing in 3 days, 20 hours, 42 minutes, to beat another Normandie record. Said a proud officer: "This is the lion's turn to roar."

● Last June 1 a big malamute dog went hunting with his master off Alaska's frozen Bering strait. Lingering off shore to gobble seal meat, the beast was carried to sea on an ice floe. Last week, more than two months later, the master again went hunting, this time with Father Bernard R. Hubbard, Alaskan missionary. On lonely Point Hope, 250 miles away, the dog bounded up. He had cruised the entire distance on a cake of ice, had thrived on seal meat.

Washington Digest

National Topics Interpreted
By WILLIAM BRUCKART
NATIONAL PRESS BLDG. WASHINGTON, D. C.

WASHINGTON.—Something like a year ago, quite a furor was raised here by the revelation that the Home Owners Loan corporation had loaned $40,000 out of its own treasury to its employees who wanted to organize a group which could hire its own doctors on an annual basis. This was public money, because the HOLC is wholly owned by the federal treasury and its function is to loan money on private homes to encourage home ownership. The Group Health association, as it was named, guaranteed medical treatment to its members for a fixed annual fee and hired doctors to do the job.

Roar Over HOLC

There was a roar from many quarters at the time because of the use of government money in this manner, but the loudest roar came from the doctors who are members of the District of Columbia Medical society. Few of us realized then, I think, where this controversy was going to lead. I doubt that there were very many persons expected to see the tiny spark fanned into a flame so large. Now, however, that spark has become a national flame, national issue of serious import. For what could be more serious, indeed, than a chance to live when the cold fingers of death creep closer?

The issue as it is now defined, succinctly, is whether the long and honorable history of the medical profession, and all of the scientific assets that this implies, shall be thrown to the winds; whether, in the place of that history and gain and the services of those individual doctors, there shall be created a new basic method, a procedure where the doctors are hired by a corporation subsisting on the annual fees paid by its members who will telephone the corporation offices and say: send me one of your best doctors. In short, as I see it, the issue is whether there is to be personalized, conscientious service or service as lacking in personal interest as a "fill my tank, please," at the gasoline service station.

That is the preface to the recent legal proceedings by our own government against the American Medical association and the District of Columbia Medical society, which are threatened with prosecution as a "trust." The government's action, of course, makes the controversy a national issue, one which interests all of us. The trust busting assistant attorney general, Thurman Arnold, former Yale professor, vows he will break up the "trust" which is the national organization of doctors, but there are those of us who cannot help linking the corporation method of medical practice with Professor Arnold's blast and threats against the doctors who believe in individual practice.

The whole department of justice position strikes me as rather fuzzy, rather asinine and, in some respects, reprehensible. However, if there is to be a complete analysis made and a complete understanding of the situation obtained, it is necessary to know that "President Roosevelt wants it done," and Mr. Arnold is proceeding. It does not seem to matter that there are only a few medical crooks, only a few unethical and unscrupulous medical practitioners; the whole profession must be attacked and defamed. Nor does it seem of great concern to the prosecuting officials that some of those doctors who are promoting corporation medicine throughout the United States have been denied admission to the American Medical association for reasons of character and ethics deemed sufficient to warrant non-recognition.

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And while I am about it, I want to pay tribute to that greatest of all American characters, the country doctor. I have personal reasons for offering my humble praise to one of their number, but throughout America there can be found no greater asset. He is a friend and confidant and adviser, minister to the body and the mind. There are some among his numbers that will not have, even do not warrant, respect. But that obtains in every walk of life and my belief is that there are fewer country doctors lacking in honesty and good conscience than in any regular profession or avocation of life.

Lauds Country Doctor

The country doctor is different from his brother practitioner of the city. The latter probably is better trained, more up to date on all developments of science, perhaps more expert in most fields, but I think I can say without equivocation or doubt because of personal experience that the country doctor is not excelled anywhere among humans for good, common horse sense. And the man or woman who is equipped with horse sense keeps the human race on an even keel.

But to get back to the government proceedings: here we see an action, or threat, against a whole profession that has done as much or more for mankind as the ministers of the gospel. I take it for granted that there are skeletons in the closets of many doctors. There is, and can be, no justification, for example, of some of the high fees charged in cases where people without worldly goods are concerned. Their lives are as valuable as the lives of the richest multimillionaires. There can be no defense, as a further proposition, for laxness and disinterest which are matters of record. But I maintain and shall always believe that there are comparatively few members of the medical profession who fail to give the best that is in them. And when I mention disinterest, I cannot help wondering whether doctors hired by group health associations are going to be much concerned about hurrying to the bedside of an association member after a few years of such practice. The monthly check is going to come in whether the corporation doctor is sympathetic and skillful or apathetic.

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But let us get on to another phase; two of them, in fact.

According to the best legal opinion that is available outside of the department of justice, it seems likely that no court will hold the medical society to be a "trust." The organization of doctors is effected for the purpose of maintaining high standards, to keep racketeers out of the profession. Its members must be of good character; they must adhere to rules that are designed for the protection of the layman who obviously is at the mercy of the man trained in the science of medicine and surgery. The whole purpose seems to be the very simple proposition of self-discipline. (I might say just here that New Dealers all along have called for self-discipline among business and professional men.) The medical men want to destroy the type that feeds upon the hopeless individual's desire to regain health, to live; they want to rid society of the abortionist, the quacks and the men and women who traffic in blood. And the question I propound, therefore, is: can such a profession be catalogued in law or in morals as dealers in commodities like steel or oil or calico? If it can be so held under our laws, then there surely is no point in young men and women slaving through six or seven or eight years of training for the profession. They had better go out and start practicing medicine as the unskilled laborer digs ditches.

Other Phases

In this connection, too, it seems proper to mention an implication of a decision holding the medical societies to be trusts. As set down above, membership is based on character and training. If the medical society is a trust, what are all of your fraternal organizations, your civic societies, your clubs, who elect or fail to elect members because of good character or lack of it? The Masonic order, the Odd Fellows, Woodmen of the World? And, what of Knights of Columbus? That great organization for good also could be broken down if a crook, for selfish reasons, would want membership.

And now to the politics of the situation. It appears to me to be a great tactical blunder on the part of the so-called board of strategy which has President Roosevelt's ear. Those men, most of them untrained in political campaigning, have failed to recognize the human element that is involved. They have listened to the generalities of those who have their own nests to feather and have so far forgotten common sense in politics as to propose a move that can be offset by direct, personal contact.

Let us think of the picture here presented in a hypothetical case. Suppose you are a great supporter of President Roosevelt, believe him to be sincere in his announced interest in the masses, praise his courage and his forward-looking program for government. Along comes old man sickness and lays you down flat on your back. Your doctor comes. You know him, have confidence in him, or you would not call him.

Then, after the manner that usually happens, the doctor talks about a number of things with you. Of course, you know something about the government attacks on the doctors and you want to hear the story from the other angle. I would, and so would you. What is all of this about, Doctor? Is there such a thing as a medical trust?

Well, unless I miss my guess, unless my understanding of human relations is as wet as swamp log—you are going to feel that the whole proceeding is quite unfair and possibly you will condemn the man who "wants it done." That thing will go on in thousands upon thousands of households and hospitals, because the smart alecks who started Mr. Roosevelt in that direction put him on the spot.

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WHO'S NEWS THIS WEEK

By LEMUEL F. PARTON

NEW YORK.—When Sir Walter Runciman was here in 1937, it was reported that he was trying to persuade Washington to lend money to Germany, to soothe Hitler and make him stop frightening England. That may or may not have been his mission, but, as a master of the old credit-and-raw-materials squeeze play, he works that way, and, now, as Viscount Runciman, he is deep in the Downing Street strategy which swings these two cudgels of empire. Prime Minister Chamberlain appointed him as mediator in the Czechoslovak-Sudeten German negotiations, but the Czechs toned that down to adviser.

Runciman Master of Squeeze Play

Viscount Runciman has been a silent ally of Viscount Halifax in the quiet, glacial-pressure advance of the four-power bloc scheme for a European coalition and the final and complete isolation of Russia.

It was reported from London, unverified so far as this writer knows, that it was he who put over a fast credit double-play with France and Italy, the moment the Daladier government came in, and he has been tagged as the man who deploys the empire's financial resources in the diplomatic chess game.

Makes Moves In World's Chess Game

His father was a ruddy old sea dog who sang chanteys, a cabin boy who became a shipping czar and a baronet. Viscount Runciman is a pallid, tight-lipped little man, a total abstainer, a former Sunday School teacher, and a faithful chapel-goer.

As president of the British board of trade, he made concessions in empire free trade, but he is a protectionist of the Chamberlain tradition. Like many men of small stature, he has the Napoleonic psychosis, writing books about Napoleon and hoarding memorabilia.

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THIS writer has heard from several assured but not necessarily authoritative sources that Tullio Serafin would succeed Edward Johnson as manager of the Metropolitan Opera. Signor Serafin has been highly esteemed here for his musicianship, but all was not well between him and the Metropolitan management when he returned to Rome in 1935, after a number of years as Italian conductor here.

Serafin To Boss The Met?

"The Metropolitan has not kept pace with the artistic progress of the modern stage," he said, on his arrival in Rome. "The way opera is put on at the Metropolitan is ridiculous . . . The great fault with the Metropolitan is the little encouragement it is giving to its latent talent."

The Metropolitan reply hinted that Signor Serafin was really thinking about money rather than art. In the season '32-'33, he had a fair subsistence wage of $58,200 for the season. This had been worked down to $34,000 the year he left.

He did indicate that he thought that was pretty shabby pay for an ace conductor, but insisted his criticism was directed solely at artistic shortcomings.

Several years ago, the Metropolitan was intent on national self-sufficiency in music. It was going to discover and nurture native talent. That hasn't quite come off, and there have been the usual number of importations. It will be interesting if it brings in not only a European manager, but one who is its sharpest critic.

Home Talent For Opera No Bargain

Among music lovers of this writer's acquaintance, there seems to be great indifference about where the singers come from as long as they are good. They insist that music, above all, must be free from the sharply nationalistic trends of the day.

As a lad, Tullio Serafin laid down a shepherd's crook for a baton. Tending the sheep near Cavarzere on the Venetian mainland, he used to walk several miles to town on Saturday night, at the age of ten, to conduct the village band. He attended the conservatory at Milan and was a full-fledged conductor in his early youth.

At La Scala, in Milan, he was assistant conductor under Gatti-Casazza. He became one of the most widely known and popular conductors in Europe.

A stanch supporter of the Fascist regime from its outset, he has been conductor of the Royal Opera at Rome since his departure from New York. He was replaced here by Ettore Panizza.

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