

FBI files reveal ACLU General Counsel Ernst's lavish praise for the FBI

In a letter dated 8-26-43, ACLU General Morris Ernst is heaping praise on the FBI to such an extreme degree, and from the premier civil liberties organization in the United States, that it is an eye opener to say the least. The FBI record of protecting civil liberties was quite good, particularly so for an investigative agency, but the casual reader would assume a civil liberties organization could find something wrong. The FBI files on America First, the largest anti-war group in the country, received constantly praiseworthy reviews, and the FBI agents go out of their way to praise both liberal and conservative members. Virtually none were connected to any German agents. Many liberal members of America First were extremely critical of the British Empire, but other than that, had no particular political posture; they simply wanted to keep America out of war. The FBI files describe America First as a wholesome American group.

In a letter that ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst had written on 8/26/43, Ernst was attacked by writer I.F. Stone for defending the FBI. Ernst promptly forwarded the letter to the FBI. Writing in *The Nation*, Ernst writes, "For close to ten years (I) kept a close eye on the FBI and had yet to hear of a single proven case of a violation of the basic civil liberties. This is close to a miracle". Since this letter has previously been in the public domain, it has been commented upon many times before, but FBI files do provide the behind the scenes skirmishing between Stone and Ernst. Further, with the release of KGB files, it has been determined that Stone was a KGB agent. Stone, one of the most controversial columnists of his time, never tried to hide his pro-communist sympathies, but it was never publicly known he was more than a fellow traveler, but it was not known he was an actual agent for Stalin.

ACLU Counsel Ernst would have no misgivings about his deliberate violations of the civil liberties of any anti war activists, and would constantly feed information to the FBI regarding the anti-war movement. Most anti-war activists would be cleared quite quickly by the FBI. Perhaps Ernst's allegiance was to money. For the most part, the interests of Stalin and Churchill were the same. Get America into the war, and get America to pay for it through Lend-Lease. However, Churchill and Stalin were competing for their fair share of Lend-Lease Aid. Stalin believed he was doing virtually all of the fighting. Britain had only fought in the Middle East, and anti-war groups firmly believed they were only protecting their colonies. Stalin would remain embittered after the war, feeling he received crumbs from Lend-Lease while losing millions of people. Churchill would do extremely well through Lend-Lease even though it would participate in no major fighting until after the D-Day invasion.

FBI files previously identified Ernst as on the payroll of the OSS, and that organization had a distinctly Anglo orientation. It would be Great Britain that would get the greatest share of our tax dollars through Lend-Lease, for the Churchill lobby, with its WASP orientation controlled far more media outlets in New York; and all international news was filtered through New York. Yet Izzy Stone was putting his oar in for Stalin. The spat between Stone and Ernst was more probably about money than ideology. Ernst's daughter was working for the OWI (Office of War Information) in London. Its only purpose was war propaganda. His brother was working for a London insurance company.

While Ernst appears anti-communist in this spat with I.F. Stone, FBI files reveal his connection with Alger Hiss, which would appear to be pro-communist. The KGB files verify that Alger Hiss was a spy for the Soviets, yet he was recommending Morris Ernst for United Nations work in the area of human rights. Since Hiss is now a confirmed Soviet spy, it is easy to assume that Stalin had no objection to Ernst working for the

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United Nations. Since the Soviets were massively violating the civil rights of so many people, Stalin would have to be sensitive to the overseers of human rights at the UN. It could quickly turn into a bully pulpit for Stalin's critics. The sounds of silence on Stalin's part are deafening. There was no objection to Ernst at all. Hiss recommended him.