

ACLU plays active role in getting anti-war groups audited by the IRS

Recently released FBI documents on ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst reveal his very active role in urging FDR to audit the tax returns of anti-war groups. On April 13th, 1942, Morris Ernst, the ardent defender of 1st Amendment Rights in defense of James Joyce's *Ulysses* appears to be far less inclined to the free speech rights of anti-war activists during WW II. Just one year earlier the ACLU was marching in unison, protesting the war sentiment, lauding the same groups it would now set out to destroy. Ernst worked behind the scenes, trying to lure J. Edgar Hoover into helping him. Hoover would deftly refer him to "Francis", who we can assume was Attorney General Francis Biddle. Biddle would later become Chairman of the Board of American Civil Liberties Union.

The motives of ACLU General Counsel Morris Ernst become clear in his request to Hoover to keep the correspondence secret by severely limiting the distribution, asking that it would be okay to show it to Marvin McIntyre, FDR's Press Secretary, and to 'Francis', "but to no one else, of course." It is clear that Morris Ernst knows that his behavior is certainly close to criminal.

The correspondence demonstrates the very active role the ACLU played in the rise of the National Security State. This public charity however, would work behind the shadow of non-profit status, being far less accountable than government agencies, and free lancing on issues far beyond the charter of any government agency. Who was the ACLU working for on this particular issue? It certainly seems to support what many have charged, that the ACLU was doing Stalin's bidding. Stalin was anxious to destroy the anti-war movement because he now wanted US support now that he was under the jackboot of Hitler. Just one year earlier Stalin was Hitler's partner in crime. At the same time, British Intelligence was ensconced in Rockefeller Center, and badly wanted the United States taxpayer to pay for WW II under Lend-Lease aid. It was not a good time to be an anti-war activist.

Morris Ernst makes it clear that the letter to Hoover is "for your eyes alone." Even more remarkable is that Ernst mentions what groups the federal government should go after, throwing in a number of nut groups, and then mentioning America First, the broadest anti-war group during WW II. The FBI Reading Room in Washington, D.C. contains 2,900 pages, all of which clear them of any involvement of any anti-American sentiment. It is clear that Ernst is targeting them. Ernst certainly knew the origin of the group, for its Chairman was General Robert Wood, Chairman of Sears & Roebuck. Wood was so highly thought of, that when war began, General George Marshall appointed him to run the entire supply effort and logistics for WW II. Wood was very careful to have a broad base of conservatives and liberals on the board from conservative heroes Eddie Rickenbacker to liberals like novelist Kathleen Turner, Alice Roosevelt Longworth (her husband was Speaker of the House), Mrs. Burton Wheeler, wife of flaming liberal Sen. Burton Wheeler, etc. America First was highly popular on Capitol Hill, and J. Edgar Hoover was not about to join in this conspiracy, thus referring Ernst to Ernst's good friend, "Francis."

While political charges during WW II would fly back and forth, and rhetoric would get heated, this smoking gun suggests that reality was worse than imagination. The anti-war types would have an array of groups and organizations working to destroy them, and the American Civil Liberties Union would be in the vanguard. The interests of the ACLU and America's munitions makers would become closely aligned, and one of the munitions' makers biggest customers would soon be buying in bulk; Stalin would soon be purchasing

enormous quantities of arms using American tax payers dollars under Lend-Lease. It has now become very difficult to refute charges that the ACLU was an agent of Stalin's desires. However, it appears that Stalin was not the only client of the ACLU. Their connection to the British Empire, another main recipient of Lend-Lease aid, gives the appearance that the ACLU would work for any foreign agent as a lobbyist, provided that the price was right. Ideology does not appear to be a factor at all. In the end, the ACLU would seem to insure that the American taxpayer would foot the bill for every endeavor. They would be identified with the internationalist agenda, which in the final analysis, would seem to be a smokescreen; a rationale for American financing of WWII.

Chilling behavior no matter what your political stripe!

The copy of the March 23rd, 1942 letter from ACLU Counsel Ernst to the FBI is attached.