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CRIMINAL DIVISION

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Report made at Detroit, Mich.

6-16,42 Period made Charles M. Solomon
6-5,6-10,42

HUNGARIAN ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S.

Synopsis of facts. Principal pro-Nazi newspapers printed in Hungarian language are MAGYARSAG (Hungarians), Pittsburgh, Pa., EGYETERTES (Concord), Bridgeport, Conn., JÓ PASZTOR (Good Shepherd), Cleveland, O., OTTHON (At Home), Chicago, Ill. These newspapers have changed their pronouncements from pro-Nazi to pro-American since Dec. 7, 1941. Apparently no original campaign of Hungarian Nazis in Detroit Field Division and very few persons were pro-Nazi before United States entry into war, not considered dangerous now.

DETAILS AT Detroit, Michigan

By confidential memorandums dated July 30, 1940, Commander W. J. Gregory, U.S. Navy Intelligence officer, 9th Naval District Great Lakes, Ill. advised that MERTIN HIMLER, president of Associated Hungarian weeklies of America, Inc., Detroit, Mich. and ERNEST W. NEMENYI, industrial editor of the Vindicator, Youngstown, Ohio reported that the Nazis have had a very thorough ground-work among Hungarian-Americans and that as soon as Hungary is subjected to complete Nazi influence, extreme pressure will be exerted by the Nazis on these persons to the detriment of the United States. Also these ~~gentle~~ men reported that many editors of Hungarian language newspapers have received

releases written in the Hungarian language but obviously printed in Berlin which denounced our form of government as weak, vacillating, Jew-ridden with a demand that these releases be printed and that when the editors refused to publish them, they were threatened with reprisals against relatives living in Hungary. Commander Gregory stated that he was informed by St. Harkins U.S. Naval Reserve that FRANK PRATTINGER was a Hungarian Nazi in Detroit receiving support from abroad and working with EMIL CHARLES GROSS who calls himself a U.S. Army major. Prattinger is the subject of an Internal Security investigation in Detroit Field office, and Emil Charles Gross of an impersonation investigation same place.

On July 16, 1940 Martin Himler prepared for Lt. D. J. Hawkins, U.S. Naval Reserve, Alexandria, Va., a brief on Hungarian activities in the U.S. which may be summarized as follows:

Of the 600-700,000 Hungarian immigrants in the U.S. all are naturalized except about 30,000. The remainder have experienced technicalities of citizenship have been unable to learn English sufficiently. All however are loyal Americans.

Communist activities started among the Hungarians immediately after the World War. A Communist newspaper was published in NY City but little headway was made since Hungarian immigrants are extremely conservative and religious. At the beginning of the depression era the Communist propaganda campaign was fairly successful. The IWO (International Workers Order) was exceptionally active among the Hungarians and organized a Hungarian group. Presently a semi-weekly newspaper in the Hungarian language was financed almost solely by the IWO. As a result of the Munich pact when Hungary regained part of its lost territories, many Hungarians credited Hitler

for this partial revision of the Trianon treaty. Three Hungarian weekly newspapers openly expressed admiration for the dictators and wished for their complete victory. They disseminated antisemitic propaganda among Hungarians and defended the three dictators. In anticipation of the re-annexation of Transylvania by Hungary these newspapers heartily endorsed Hitler. A tremendous propaganda campaign was expected and it was believed that the Hungarian Reference Library of NY which was maintained by the Hungarian Government, might be used for this purpose. Mr. Himler did not think the situation was dangerous and recommended that government agents speak to the editors of these three newspapers and caution them that their editorial policy was displeasing to the US Government.

* The writer conferred with special agent E.M. Roth, who is known to be of Hungarian ancestry and familiar with the Hungarian language and activities. Agent Roth suggested as a potential informant the newspaper editor, Martin Himler of Detroit, Mich.

Mr. Roth stated that the only serious pro-Nazi activity among the Hungarians with which he was acquainted was the EGYETERTES, edited by Cornelius Csengrady in Bridgeport, Conn. Agent Roth suggested that any subscriber to the newspaper would be a logical suspect as a Hungarian Nazi.

On June 6, 1942 Martin Himler, 811 Sloan St., Detroit, Mich. visited the Detroit Field Office in response to the writer's request. Himler stated that he did not know of any Hungarian Nazi activities in Detroit. He said that as far as he knows there is no organized Nazi campaign in the US for purposes of espionage, sabotage or propaganda. However he said there are four newspapers which have expressed in their editorial policy Nazi sympathies: MAGYARSAG¹, EGYETERTES, JO PASZTOR and OTTHON. However he thought that these

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newspapers expressed the personal opinions of the editor and were not employed by the German or Hungarian Governments as propaganda agencies. The four newspapers are as follows:

MAGYARSAG (Hungarian People) is published in Pittsburgh, Pa. and was distinctly pro-nazi until sometime in 1941, when the wife of the minority owner MRS. EDMOND VASVARY entered the employment of the US Government as censor of the foreign language newspapers. The majority owner of this newspaper is ALBERT FIOK and the minority owner EDMOND VASVARY. Since some time before the US entry into the war this newspaper has abandoned its former pro-nazi tendencies.

EGYETERTES, Bridgeport, Conn., by Cornelius Csongrady, Mr. Himler said that Csongrady was a 100% Nazi sympathizer and his newspaper was strongly pro-nazi until Dec. 7, 1941. Since that time, the newspaper is continuing to exist, but Csongrady is trying to behave.

JO PASZTOR, published in Cleveland, O. by Bela Tarkanyi, editor and owner. This paper was also pro-nazi prior to Dec. 7, 1941, but since that time appears to be patriotic.

OTTHON, published in ~~Chicago~~ Chicago by J. Kalman. Mr. Himler stated that until December 7 this newspaper also expressed pro-nazi sentiments but since that time it has been toned down. Mr. Himler said that he has heard that this newspaper has already been subjected to an investigation by the FBI. He explained that this newspaper was a sideline with Kalman and that most of the writing is done by Leslie Szegedy. Mr. Himler explained that Szegedy also does a little routine writing for Himler himself, but this consists of innocuous poems, closely supervised by Himler himself.

Mr. Himler stated that he did not believe there was any Hungarian-American in the US

who was dangerous to its welfare. However he stated that there were a few isolated persons who had expressed pro-nazi sentiments before the US entered the war. He named Rev. Jacob BECKER, a Lutheran minister who argued with him that the Nazis were justified in waging the present war, and he was also opposed to Great Britain which he alleged was responsible for the dismemberment of Hungary. Himler said, BECKER was born in Hungary of German descent, and is now a naturalized American. He believed that since the entry of the US into the war Becker can be relied on to be a patriotic American. He said that Becker was a very intelligent man. Mr. Himler added that Rev. A. Petre was in favor of Germany over Great Britain but now that the US is involved in the war he thinks Petre can be relied on as an American citizen.