

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION

COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION

COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: HENRY LOUIS MENCKEN

FILE 61-1286

61-1286
Form 1500

Treasury Department,
SECRET-SERVICE DIVISION,
OFFICE OF CHIEF. *12/6*

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

7C

Washington, D. C., 10/13/22.

Baltimore, Md.
10/11/22.

Respectfully, referred to Bureau of
Investigation, Department of Justice,
the writer having been advised of the
reference.

Encloses clipping from
the Baltimore Sun, 10/10/22,
giving H. L. Mencken's alleged
interview with former German
Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm,
and expresses her fears that
Germany is planning still to
regain the power she had prior
to 1914, with sinister motives
regarding America.

H. J. Moran
Chief.

Handwritten notes:
Hench
10/14/22

OCT 23 1922

[Redacted]
7C

61-1286-1
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
RECORDED
OCT 14 1922 A.M.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
EMP *CHK*

OFFICE OF THE
RECORDS
OCT 18 1944
S. P. 18

Does it seem quite right
to allow Menschen to be so
openly pro German? He
has only been in America
training down our boys
in a most successful
manner. Don't you
think you could suggest
to the gentleman that he
stay in Germany? If you
have not been following
his trail of "snakey" cred-
it in the last few years,
a dipping beverage will
furnish you enough to
make you red as a new
head of bail! Are we going
to allow Germany to catch
us in a tighter net than
we were in before and

61-1286-1

I shall be glad to give you
some aid by any
service I can in preventing
such a situation, & causing
a general stillness with
the more obvious relations
of a good a. met. Please do
something! I shall be
glad to help in any way
I can, through my club,
or whatever may be
I have to be the patient
most substantial help
in stopping this insidious
German Spider!

Yours sincerely,
Lain

[Redacted signature]

Oct. 11, 1922.

Kaltwasser

ans. 10/17/22

70

Thinks America Must
Help In Saving Europe



CROWN PRINCE FRIEDRICH
WILHELM

EXILE AT WIERINGEN SAYS HE LONGS FOR DAY WHEN HE CAN ASSIST GERMANY

Heir To Former German Throne Declares He
Finds It "Hard To Stand By Without
Taking A Hand"

WILLING TO SUBORDINATE OWN FORTUNE FOR COUNTRY

Tells H. L. Mencken He's Sure America In Time Will
Cease To Believe War Crimes Laid
To His Charge.

The following interview with the German Crown Prince, now in
cells in Holland is an authorized statement of his views.
In compiling his report of the interview, Mr. Mencken added to it this
statement:
"The text of this interview was passed by the Crown Prince under
an absolute promise that there would be no extension or paraphrase."

61-1286-1
By H. L. Mencken.
[Special Cable to The Sun.]
(Copyright, 1921.)

Oosterland, Island of Wieringen, North Holland, Oct. 10.—The
days are long here in wind-swept Wieringen, but for the German
Crown Prince they are certainly not empty.

Few men are interested so actively in so many different things.
He begins a typical day by tackling the newspapers and an immense
correspondence; puts in an hour or two in the forenoon tinkering
with his motorcycle or working with the village blacksmith; reads
or writes all afternoon, and devotes the evening to his violin.

VISITORS FREQUENTLY ENTERTAINED.

Two or three times a week, when the weather is good, visitors
come—old friends and retainers from Germany, Dutch acquaint-
ances from Amsterdam, strangers from near and far.

Letters pour in from all over the world, and the Prince's faith-
ful adjutant, Major von Muedner, spends eight hours a day answer-
ing them.

(A charming man and a heroic soul is Muedner.) He was by the
Prince's side all through the war and has remained continuously on
duty, save for eight weeks' sick leave, ever since. Without him exile
would be 10 times worse.

Wieringen is a small, flat island at
the entrance to the Zuider Zee, swept
constantly by high winds from the North
Sea. Oosterland is a small hamlet on
the north shore. Two hundred yards
from the Prince's house waves roar
against the dike.

spends winter in Studz.
the island by Fallow,
and motor boat—a complex

than my fair share of the glory and ap-
plause. In defeat I receive, perhaps,
rather more than a fair share of the
blame and execration, both at home and
abroad, but such are fortunes of war for
commanding officers.

"I doubt that any sane American seri-
ously believes today I was guilty of the
fantastic crimes laid to me during the
war. That perhaps must necessarily

Wieringen is a small, flat island at the entrance to the Zuider Zee, exposed constantly by high winds from the North Sea. Oosterland is a small hamlet on the north shore. Two hundred yards from the Prince's house was a boat against the dike.

Spends Winter in Stud.

One reaches the island by railway, motor car and motor boat—a complex, slow, fatiguing journey. The closest connection from Amsterdam to the landing place at De Hauke's took me 20 hours. For weeks in winter communication with the mainland is cut off and no visitors come.

"What do you do then?" I asked the Prince.

"I study my books and papers," he replied, "and wait for spring." But this deadly isolation has failed to make any noticeable impression on the spirit or frame of the Prince. There are touches of gray in his sandy hair, but he still is erect as a drill sergeant, and as quick in speech and movement. Very tall, slim and lithe, and now smooth-shaven, he looks much like a big boy.

Talks Shrewdly Of War.

But certainly there is nothing immature about his ideas. Among all the Germans I have talked to during the past six weeks, ranging from high officials to newspaper editors and from university professors to business men, I can recall none whose views of past and present events contain less of illusion. He discusses the war objectively and with great shrewdness and accepts his present position uncomplainingly. It is uncomfortable, but so is every other German's position.

"Germany," he said, "faces stupendous tasks and almost intolerable burdens and it is naturally hard for any German to have to stand by without taking a hand. I sincerely wish I could be more actively employed, but certainly have no desire to complicate the present situation by raising factional questions. It would be absurd, of course, to say dynastic considerations do not interest me, but they assuredly take second place in my thoughts. In such days as these I am, first of all, a German citizen and soldier. As such my duty is precisely that of every other good German—to subordinate personal fortunes and even personal opinions to the common good."

National Unity Needed.

"What we need today above all is national unity. A thoroughly united Germany would be unbreakable."

I asked the Prince if he would vote, supposing himself at home.

"Certainly," he answered; "my wife always votes. Why shouldn't I?"

Watchful Major Mueländer evidently feared I would ask him how he would vote, but the Prince himself saved the situation.

"I refuse to answer," he said with a smile. "The ballot is secret by law and I always try to obey the laws."

Takes 'Libels' Philosophically.

The Prince takes a philosophical view of the extravagant tales about him circulated in America during the war. For example, the stories of wholesale burglaries in France. He collects such fabrications with humorous interest and was apparently delighted with several I contributed from the archives of the Creel press bureau.

"Such nonsensical libels," he said, "do not annoy me half as much as their authors probably think. Abuse of that sort goes with the trade I was born to. If Germany had won a sweeping victory I'd have got as Crown Prince for more

than I could decently receive, perhaps. I'd have got a fair share of the blame and reputation, both at home and abroad, but such are fortunes of war for commanding officers."

"I doubt that any sane American seriously believes today I was guilty of the fantastic crimes laid to me during the war. That madness must necessarily pass. Meanwhile it gives me no concern."

Thinks U. S. Should Aid Europe.

Like most other Germans, the Prince believes the European situation will never be genuinely remedied until the United States takes a hand at it.

"It rather surprises me," he said, "what the United States as a nation shows little concern about the immediate future here."

"Things go steadily from bad to worse," he said, "in Germany alone and everywhere on the Continent. Here in rich, peaceful Holland, among people famous for industry and business capacity, the effects of the German situation are everywhere visible. Hollanders must sell their goods, but their best customer, Germany, can no longer buy, nor will she ever buy again until there is a radical dealing with the evils which beset her."

"I hear that trade is almost as badly paralyzed in the two Americas and for the same reason. Europe simply cannot buy the surplus of the natural products of the Western Hemisphere. Thus, one-half of the civilized world sees its crops rotting in field and warehouse and the other half faces starvation."

Blames Versailles Treaty.

"The underlying cause of all this disorganization and distress is the Versailles treaty. It was made in anger and in total disregard of the most elementary economic laws and common sense. Today the fact that it is utterly unworkable is obvious to everyone. It is doing almost as much damage in France, in fact, as to Germany, and scarcely less to the other Allies and the neutrals."

"The speech of Reginald McKenna in New York last week ought to be accepted by the whole world as a plain warning. McKenna knows the situation thoroughly, and he told the simple truth."

"The entrance of the United States into the war threw the balance toward the Allies and was largely responsible for their victory. But the United States opposed the treaty before it was signed and has never ratified it since. I am in hopes that the view of it thus indicated will gradually win over those who still believe it can be executed. Failing in that hope, I can see no way out save through a catastrophe. That catastrophe, remember, is not remote; it lies directly around the corner."

Eager To See America.

"The Prince told me he was very eager to see the United States, but that, he said, must wait for better times. This is no day for Germans to be traveling. There is too much work to do at home, and too little money."

Certainly the little household at Oosterland shows no signs of wealth. The house itself—once the paragon of a lonely church on the sand dunes, now abandoned—after four years shows some small comforts, but they are the comforts of a plain citizen, not of a Prince. The new house of the Burgomaster at Wieringen is ten times as luxurious. Until six months ago the Prince and his adjutant lived as in maneuver quarters. Now at last they have a bathroom and begin to feel like well-to-do

Baltimore, Md, May 26-1940

Mr. Stephen Early,
White House
Washington, D.C.

RECEIVED
FOR AGENT TAD SMITH
AND CONCERNATION
W.M. [unclear]
Secretary to the President

CRIMINAL DIVISION
MAY 31 1940
RECEIVED

My dear Mr. Early:

I am enclosing clipping written by the notorious German iconoclast, Henry L. Menckler, of the Baltimore "Sun". I humbly ask that you bring it to the attention of our beloved President, and also see if the Department of Justice can't do something about such lable, which sounds like the words of a "fifth columnist."

He is a German and was in Germany when the last war broke out, but he nearly broke his neck getting back to the United States.

RECORDED & INDEXED

61-1286-2
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
JUN 13 1940
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FIVE

Are such expressions as he has used permitted under the head of "free press" and free speech? Let's have a law to stop it.

Respectfully yours,

[Redacted signature]

Baltimore, Md.

61-1286-2
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MAY 28 1940 P.M.
DIVISION OF RECORDS
S.M. DIV. - RUFFIN

H. L. Menckler

8-1-40
7C

May 26, 1940

[REDACTED] 7C
Baltimore, Md.

[REDACTED] 7C

Re: Enclosed clipping written by Henry L. Mencken of
"Baltimore Sun". Are such expressions as he has
used permitted under the head of free press and
free speech?

Justice
hwa:ef

The Campaign Opens

H. E. MENCKEN

THE SIXTHS for a third term have stamped Congress into giving them \$3,000,000,000 for their campaign fund, but what good the money will yield for the rest of us remains to be seen. A number of stock jobbers disguised as shipbuilders will grow rich, another huge horde of bogus experts of all sorts will struggle up to the public trough, and the air will be blistered and festooned by fresh waves of crooning from the White House, but there is no evidence whatever that all the waxes and aggroes will stop the war, or even influence its course. If it is on the rocks that the werewolf Hitler shall wreck England, that wrecking will be duly achieved, Roosevelt or no Roosevelt. And if he is doomed to be wrecked himself, the job will be done by backward-looking Frenchmen in the trenches above Paris, not by mendacious politicians in Washington.

The current wild talk of building 5000 planes in a few months might have some sense in it if anyone knew what kind of planes to build, but that is precisely the question which no one can yet answer. Every so-called authority on the subject, whether military or political, has an opinion about it, but all are merely guessing. Until there are detailed technical reports from Heinkel, Heinkel or one will know how the different types of planes are behaving, and what their real value is. The English have reported daily that their Hurricane and Spitfire were downing Hitler's planes by the hundred, and yet the Germans have been inching forward almost every day, and bombing objectives nearer and nearer to Simpson's excellent eating-house in the Strand, which God save!

It would seem the better part of prudence, in such a situation, to wait a bit, seeking more reliable news, for it is hard to imagine Hitler, after downing the sweating Netherlands, setting off to tackle this great Republic, especially since it is notorious that nine-tenths of his planes are of very short range. But the exigencies of the third-term campaign demand instant action, with plenty of loud whooping and plane crooning, and that is what we seem fated to get. It is one of the penalties we must pay for the honor of democracy, which is always sparred by compressed air. When a Lindbergh rises up to speak a few words of common sense, he is treated as if he had proposed to burn the flag. The Chamberlain and the southpaw have the right of way.

There is no argument against arming. On the contrary, I am strongly in favor of arming, and have been in favor of it ever since my conversion to Christianity, now many years ago. It is plainly an imbecility for a fat and limping country like this one, with both banks exposed to trust to the power of charity alone, to pretend that it may be. If Roosevelt and his associated friends had spent half the money of the national defense that they laid out on schemes to collect the votes of young farmers and city laborers, we'd have a navy

today that could make some head or tail of defending both our coasts. And if all the CCC boys who have been trained as hedge-trimmers, tree-psychiatrists, Y. M. C. A. janitors and jobholders had been given military training instead, we'd have an army of the first class, with adequate reserves.

I have nothing to say against the benevolent hallucinations of the late pacifists. I believe that they were (and, if any survive, still are) mistaken, but it is surely no crime to be mistaken. Their unhappy error was based on the false assumption that the Government of the country was honestly in favor of peace, and would strive to procure it. We all know today that such was not the case, and is not now the case. Roosevelt and his gnomes began trying to lunge into the war even before there was a war, and since it broke out they have been doing their best to injure one side and help the other. Unfortunately, they are back doorknobs. What they believed the side they rooted for, would have a walk-over. Now that it begins to appear otherwise, they howl and grope in a frantic manner, and ask the taxpayer to lay out billions for an armored bare door after the horse has been stolen.

More and worse, they ask that the country expunge their gross dishonesty and incompetence from the minutes, and entrust them once more with safeguarding its honor. Anyone who objects is denounced as a traitor to the flag, and accused of taking bribes from Hitler. And then, proceeding from worse to worse, they actually argue that we owe a duty, not only to our own country, but also and more especially to the tattered and moth-eaten pirate flag of England. I wonder what George Washington would think and say of that, supposing him paroled from Columbia. I wonder what any decent and self-respecting American thinks of it.

In As Sure as Very Likely, the books swallow this humbug, the inevitable effects are not hard to discern. The first will be four years more of the New Deal obnoxiousity, with the waste and stupidity of the last seven years multiplied almost ad infinitum. Instead of getting rid of such jackasses as Corcoran and Cohen, Morgenstern and Ma Perkins, Wallace and Ickes, Hopkins and Hugo Black, Bullitt and Hull, we'll have them on us for another merry ride, with greatly augmented powers and getting back to work. We'll be robbed and rowled, deluged and dragooned for another spell as long as the Civil War, and at ten times the cost. And to what end? If England is spared to rob the muffs, bog the high seas and hose the world, we'll pay all the bills, and probably do most of the dirty work and pour out most of the blood. And if England throws up the sponge before that rescue can be effected, we'll have not only Hitler on our neck, but also Mussolini, Stalin and the Japs, on the account they will send in will be

even the bookies and bookmakers of the New Deal. As for the latter, I have sympathy from the "palp" side. I don't know, Roosevelt, Hull and Hopkins have not been greatest to do their unscrupulous bloodthirsty fellows foul and constant injuries, hitting them below the belt and behind the back. They have also been upon them a long series of gross and intolerable insults. Such insults are not quickly forgotten by men and nations of a generally felonious cast of mind.

For is this all? Two or three years of bitter and uphill war, with victory far less sure than it was the last time democracy was saved, will leave us torn and dilapidated at home, with maybe the last vestige of our trying freedom gone. The tyrannical forces that have just converted England into a sort of Asiatic Spain, with every citizen completely at the mercy of the politicians, will be initiated here, and we shall bettered. And what the hell of rough-houses to see it, but something even that it ends in glory, there will be a repetition of such inevitable pathological sequelae as Ku Klux and Prohibition, and it will take still longer to get rid of them than it did the last time.

I have no gift for constructive criticism and so do not venture to say in any detail what should be done to avoid all this unpleasantness, but certain obvious facts of the situation point their own lessons. If, as now begins to seem at least imaginable, Hitler manages to outfight the poor French and proceeds to give the quaking English a really formidable wallop, nothing we can do can stop him, and all we'll accomplish by making the attempt will be to convert him into an open and ready dangerous enemy, with all his allies against us too. What have we to gain by that? I see no nothing whatever. He will not only pass and lather for revenge; he will also have a perfectly sound case against us, and history will grant its swordsmen if England wins, we will pay the bills; if Hitler wins, we will pay the damages.

But we must save democracy! We must deliver a blow, however vainly, for religion, morality, the civility of treaties, the defense of the home and all the rest of us. So the crooner says—but not I fear, very convincingly. The United States has broken just as many treaties as Hitler, and got just as much territory by the arts of the burglar. It was the ally of that master of democracy, the Great Swindle, in 1897, and it would be the ally of Hitler today, if only Hitler had not lashed him first. Up to a few weeks ago the English hoped by a discreet use of machine guns, to make it the ally of Mussolini, as the actual code is the ally of the Turks, and it would embrace Japan tomorrow. If Japan were willing to sell out, all the Latin-American brigands and assassins are its dear friends.

I warn all innocent moralists against entering the field of international conduct, whether of the Bull-Roosevelt variety or any other variety. It is full of spring-traps, dead-falls and stick-bombs.

Baltimore Sun, May 26, 1940. Please do not let this man get in between you and me.

The Newer Freedom

EVERY time a policeman, in the execution of his just and awful process under American law, produces a compound fracture of the script of some citizen in his custody, with hemorrhage, shock, coma and death, there comes a feeble, falsetto protest from specialists in human liberty and dignity. Is it a fact with its significance that this protest is never supported by the great body of American freemen, setting aside the actual heirs and assigns of the victim? I think not. Here, as usual, public opinion is very realistic. It does not rise against the cop for the plate and ample reason that it does not question his right to do what he has done. Cops are not given nightsticks for ornament. They are given them for the purpose of cracking the skulls of the plain people, Democrats and Republicans alike. When they execute that high duty they are palpably within their rights.

The specialists aforesaid are the same fanatics who shake the air with sobe every time the Postmaster General of the United States bans a periodical from the mails because its ideas do not please him, and every time some poor Russian is reported for reading Karl Marx, and every time a prohibition enforcement officer murders a bootlegger who resists his levies, and every time agents of the Department of Justice throw an Italian out of the window, and every time the Ku Klux Klan or the American Legion tars and feathers a Socialist evangelist. In brief, they are radicals, and to scratch one with a pitchfork is to expose a Bolshevik. They are men standing in contempt of American institutions, and in enmity to American idealism. And their evil principles are no less offensive to right-thinking and red-blooded Americans when they are editors of such wealthy and puissant newspapers as the Evening Sunpaper than when they are degraded I. W. W.'s throwing dead cats and infernal machines into meetings of the Rotary Club.

II

What ails them primarily is the ignorant and uncritical monomania that afflicts every sort of fanatic, at all times and everywhere. Having mastered with their limited faculties the crude principles set forth in the Bill of Rights, they work themselves into a passionate conviction that those principles ought to be enforced literally, and without the slightest regard for circumstances and expediency. It is precisely as if a high church Episcopal rector, accidentally looking into the Book of Chronicles, and especially Chapter II, should suddenly issue a mandate from his pulpit ordering his parishioners, on penalty of excommunication and the fires of hell, to follow exactly the example therein set forth, to wit: "And Jesus begat his first born Elish, and Abinadab the second, and Shimma the third, Netheneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, Ozem the sixth, David the seventh," and so on. It might be very sound theology, but it would surely be out of harmony with modern ideas, and the reverend gentleman would be extremely lucky if the bishop did not give him 10 days in the diocesan calaboose.

So with the Bill of Rights. As adopted

by the Fathers of the Republic, groups, caudex, inchoate, a la Hume, transcendental. It specified the rights of a citizen, but it said nothing about his duties. Since then, by the steady process of legislative science and the even more subtle and beautiful device of juristic art, it has been knitted and mellowed into a far greater pliability and workableness. On the one hand, the edicts still retain the great privilege of membership in the most superb free nation ever witnessed on this earth. On the other hand, as a result of countless shrewd enactments and sagacious decisions, his natural instincts and appetites are held to reasonable check, and he is thus held to order and decorum. No artificial impediment stands in the way of his highest aspiration. He may become anything, including even a cop. And once a cop he is protected by the legislative and judicial arms in the exalted rights and prerogatives that go with his office, including especially the right to jug the laity at his will, to sweat and mug them, to subject them to the third degree, and to subdue their resistance by beating out their brains.

Those who are unaware of this are simply ignorant of the basic principles of American jurisprudence, as they have been exposed times without number by the courts of first instance and ratified in lofty terms by the Supreme Court of the United States. The one aim of the controlling decisions, magnificently attained, is to safeguard public order and the public security, and to substitute a judicial process for the inchoate and dangerous interaction of discordant egos.

Let us imagine an example. You are, say, a peaceable citizen on your way home from your place of employment. A police sergeant, detecting you in the crowd, approaches you, lays his hand on your collar, and informs you that you are under arrest for killing a trolley conductor in Altoona, Pa., in 1918. Amazed by the accusation, you decide hastily that the cop is crazy, and take to your heels. He pursues you. You continue to run. He pulls his revolver and fires at you. He misses you. He fires again and fetches you in the leg. You fall and he is upon you. You prepare to resist his apparently manual assault. He beats you into insensibility with his espartoon, and drags you to the patrol box.

Arrived at the watch house you are locked in a room with five detectives, and for six hours they question you with subtle art. You grow angry—perhaps robbed of your customary politeness by the throbbing in your head and leg—and answer tartly. They knock you down. Having failed to wring a confession from you, they lock you in a cell, and leave you there all night. The next day you are taken to police headquarters, your photograph is made for the Rogues' Gallery, and a print is duly deposited in the section labeled "Murderers." You are then carted to jail and locked up again. There you remain until the trolley conductor's wife comes down from Altoona to identify you. She astonishes the cops by saying that you are not the man. The actual

By H. L. MENCKEN

murderer, it appears, was colored. After holding you a day or two longer, to investigate your means of livelihood, they let you go.

IV.

You are naturally somewhat irritated by your experience, and perhaps your wife urges you to seek redress. Well, what are your remedies? If you are a finebrand, like the editor of the *Evening Sun* paper, you reach out absurdly for those of a preposterous nature; the instant jailing of the sergeant, the dismissal of the police commissioner, the release of Mooney, a fair trial for Sacco and Vanzetti, free trade with Russia, One Big Union. But if you are a 100 per cent American and respect the laws and institutions of your country, you send for a lawyer—and at once he shows you just how far your rights go, and where they end.

You cannot cause the arrest of the sergeant, for you resisted him when he attempted to arrest you and when you resisted him he acquired an instant right to take you by force. You cannot proceed against him for accusing you falsely, for the courts have many times decided that a public officer, so long as he cannot be charged with corruption or malice, is not liable for errors of judgment made in the execution of his sworn duty. You cannot get the detectives on the mat, for when they questioned you you were a prisoner accused of felony, and they had a right to examine you. You cannot sue the turnkey at the watch house or the warden at the jail for locking you up, for they received your body, as the law says, in a lawful and regular manner, and would have been liable to penalty if they had turned you loose.

But you have no redress whatever, no rights at all? Certainly you have a right, and the courts have very jealously guarded it. You have a clear right, guaranteed to you under the Constitution, to go into a court of equity and apply for a mandamus requiring the *Polizei* to cease forthwith to expose your portrait in the *Rogues' Gallery* among the murderers. This is your inalienable right, and no man or men on earth can take it away from you. You cannot sue the cops for damages, and you cannot prevent them cherishing your portrait in their secret files, but you can get an order commanding them to refrain forever from exposing it to the gaze of idle visitors, and if you can prove that they disregarded that order you can have them haled into court for contempt and punished by the learned judge.

V.

Thus the law, statute, common and case, protects the citizen against injustice. It is ignorance of that subtle and perfect process and not any special love of liberty per se that causes radicals of anti-American kidney to enort and rage every time an officer of the gendarmerie, in the simple execution of his duty, knocks a citizen in the head. The cop plainly has an inherent and inalienable right to knock him in the head; it is an essential part of his general prerogative as a representative of the sovereign power of the state. He may, true enough, exercise that prerogative

(Continued from page 2.)

rogative in a manner liable to challenge on the ground that it is imprudent and lacking in sound judgment. On such questions reasonable men may differ. But it must be obvious that the sane and decorous way to settle such differences of opinion is not by public outcry and florid appeals to sentimentality—not by the ill-disguised playing to class consciousness and anti-social prejudice indulged in by the eminent editor of the Evening Sunpaper—but by an orderly resort to the checks and remedies superimposed upon the Bill of Rights by the calm deliberation and austere logic of the courts of equity.

The law protects the citizen. But to get his protection he must show due respect for its wise and delicate processes.—From the *Baltimore Evening Sun*.

FJS:EEW:RM
61-1286-2

August 1, 1940

RECORDED

[Redacted]

7C

Baltimore, Maryland

Dear [Redacted]

7C

Your letter dated May 26, 1940, and the enclosure attached thereto, addressed to Honorable Stephen T. Early, Secretary to the President, has been referred to this Bureau for my information.

Your courtesy and interest in bringing these data to the attention of the Federal Government are indeed appreciated. You may be assured the information you have submitted is being made a matter of official record for such attention as may be deemed appropriate.

Sincerely yours,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

Handwritten signature

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
 MAILED
 AUG 1 1940
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

JEM

May 17, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENCKEN

At the request of Mr. M. C. Spear as to whether it would be possible to determine if an article entitled "Kenny Rev. Year" by H. Hencken had at any time been published, the Library of Congress was contacted in this matter.

The Library of Congress advised that they consulted their Index of Periodicals and the Readers' Guide, and that there was no record whatsoever of this item having at any time been published.

This, of course, does not mean that it may not at some time have appeared in print, but there is no way of locating the source if such was the case.

Respectfully,

[Handwritten Signature]

B. M. Guttler

[Handwritten Initials]

*see index 40
Henry L. Hencken*

RECORDED & INDEXED

61-1286-3
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
6 MAY 20 1941
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

*EX-1
EXCL 1*

*CH-27
77*

HAPPY NEW YEAR

By H. L. Mancken

In my childhood I was well and pleasantly acquainted with an ancient colored woman, almost coal-black in complexion, who cherished the notion that she would be transmogrified, at death, into a blonde angel of the approximate age, to judge by her talk, of ten years. Even in my infant innocence that expectation seemed to me to be extravagant; later on, having taken up the study of divinity, I learned that there was no warrant for it in Holy Writ. But the dear old soul hugged it fondly - and hugging it cost her no less than two-thirds of her cash income of \$15.00 a month, the usufruct of her deceased husband's tonsorial servicing of Gen. George G. Meade in the Civil War. Out of that comfortable sum, \$4.00 a month went for room rent, and \$1.00 for cough drops, snuff, charms against witchcraft, postage, burial insurance, and charity. All the rest, down to the last mill, was collared by the colored pastors who inflamed and exacerbated her post-mortem hopes.

The unhappy situation of this devout and worthy creature made a deep impression of me as a child, and I often pondered it afterward. Compared to other women of her race, age and previous condition of servitude in the Baltimore of the 60's, she was rich almost beyond the dreams of avarice, but her anticipations of grandeur beyond the grave kept her on very short commons, and she had to depend on the kindness of the neighborhood cooks for rations, on the rag-bags of friendly white folks for clothes (always deep mourning), and on the loose boards in their backyard fences for firewood.

From her I learned a lesson that has stuck to me through manhood into senility, to wit, the lesson that believing in anything that is palpably not true is always very expensive, not only in headaches but also in hard cash. Half the world, in fact, appears to live by collecting on the delusions and hallucinations of the other half. A veteran of both sides of the board myself, I could cite many instructive examples but confine myself this lovely Sabbath morning to pointing to a single big one. It is provided (not for the first time, alas, alas!) by the taxpayers of the United States. Flayed upon adroitly by demagogues with dreams to sell, and abandoned to the pillage by a gullible and pusillanimous intelligentia, these taxpayers now entertain themselves again with the theory that England is a philanthropist consecrated to

61-1286-3

supporting the United States. Once more, in brief, they embrace a piece of transparent hokum, and once more their embracing of it is about to cost them their shirts.

* * *

England, of course, is nothing of the sort, and has never been, and never will be. There is no country on earth which puts self-interest upon a higher pinnacle, and there has been none recorded in history. The English, in fact, have got on in the world mainly by refusing philanthropy to the lowest and most abject place of decimals. When they do anything for any other people, however virtuous, they always charge handsomely for it, and nine times out of ten - or even ten times out of ten - they do it merely as a by-product of doing something for themselves.

In the present case, their altruistic purpose is to be found only in the speeches of the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt and his disciples, and in the cheer pumped out of London for American consumption. The actual aims of the English in the War are something quite different. The first of them is simply to throw off an attack that is fast wrecking their charming country, and reducing it to bankruptcy. The second is to recover that hegemony on the Continent of Europe which was their chief dividend from the last War to save Democracy. And the third is to retain that hegemony in Asia which they earned aforetime by long years of heroic bricandage and massacres.

The rest is but sound and honey, signifying nothing. All three aims turn out to be difficult of attainment -- indeed, impossible of attainment without a great deal of help. The last time they went to the rescue of humanity they had the assistance of a large band of fans for "religion and morality," including Japan, Russia, France, Italy and Rumania, with the United States coming in at the end to pay the outstanding bills. But this time most of these lovers of virtue are on the other side, and the rest are in no state to lend a hand, so the whole burden falls upon Uncle Shylock. First he must be spared, and then he must be taken. The former desideratum is already reached, and the other will follow swiftly.

* * *

It may seem incredible to historians that Americans should

PENCIL NOTE: England continues to do it!

fall for the same hokum twice, and in exactly the same place, but it will hardly surprise psychologists. As Prof. David W. Maurer shows in a recent very entertaining work, "The Big Con", con men seldom abandon a mark after once swindling him; they usually go back to him confidently, knowing that he is now even easier to rook than he was before. So in the large affairs of nations. The poor French fell twice, and now the United States is falling twice. What is generally overlooked is the historical fact that this second ride might well have been the third.

You will find nothing about the forgotten first attempt in the school history books, but there is a very instructive account of it in the late Albert Jeremiah Beveridge's "Life of John Marshall." The time was the first decade of the nineteenth century, when England was engaged in a battle to the death with Napoleon I, the Hitler of those times, and searching the universe for help. In the end that help came from Germany, the present sinkhole of sin, but in 1802 Germany was not ready, so recourse was had to that new and sassy Republic which had been the chief sinkhole of sin only a few years before.

Beveridge tells the story at length, and with considerable humor. The first job in hand was to scare the Americans out of their pants, and this was attempted by the very device that has worked so well in our own time. That is to say, the news was broadcast that Napoleon's real aim was to conquer the Americas, and that he would proceed with it the moment he crossed the Channel. "Our gazettes and pamphlets tell us," wrote John Adams, "that Bonaparte will conquer England, and command all the British Navy, and send I know not how many hundred thousand soldiers here, and conquer from New Orleans to Passamaquoddy." Adams himself dismissed the threat as an "empty phantom," but he had to confess that "the people seem to believe every article of this bombastical creed," and that the prospect of rapine and ruin made them "tremble and shudder."

Moreover, it was not only "the people" that swallowed it, but also many of the Harvard pedagogues, - Wrong-Horse Harry Stinsons and William Allen Whites of the time, including especially the Hon. Fisher Ames, Congressman from Massachusetts, and a favorite rabble-rouser. "Great Britain," howled Ames in November, 1803, plagiarising Roosevelt, "is fighting our battles and the battles of humanity, and France is combating for the power to enslave and plunder us and all the world." A few months later he was offered the presidency of Harvard.

4

Unhappily for "religion and morality," the Americans of that day had not altogether forgotten the Revolution and there were still leaders among them who viewed the altruistic English with sardonic skepticism. One such was the cynical John Adams, just mentioned. Another was the even more agnostic Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson not only refused to believe that the English were fighting the battles of humanity; he denounced them as a low-down gang of frauds, and warned the people of the United States to pay no heed to their blarney. England, he wrote to Walter Jones, was "a pirate spreading misery and ruin over the face of the ocean." A little while before, writing to James Madison, he had denounced it as "a nation which nothing but views of interest can govern."

So the plan to rope the youthful Uncle Shylock failed to work, and he was not actually roped, in fact, until 1917, more than a century later. Meanwhile, the philanthropic British Navy, in the pursuit of its divine mission to fight "our battles and the battles of humanity," bombarded Fort Mchenry and burned the Capitol at Washington. But even these proofs that Ames was an inspired prophet did not shake the incorrigible Jefferson. In June, 1815, he wrote to Thomas Leiper:

I consider the Government of England as totally without morality, insolent beyond bearing, inflated with vanity and ambition.... of deep-seated hatred toward us, and the eternal disturber of the peace of the world.

I suggest that you cut this out and paste it in your income-tax return -- I mean, of course, your work-sheet, for by March 15th, it will probably be a felony to send it through the mails.

c
o
p
y
d
f
s

HMK:VGG

May 15, 1941

~~PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

As of possible interest to you, I am furnishing herewith a memorandum of information of a confidential character [REDACTED]

There is also transmitted herewith a copy of an article written by Mr. H. L. Mencken which [REDACTED] source turned over, stating he thought it might make good material for some of the "isolationist Senators" in their trips throughout the country.

Copies of this memorandum and article are being transmitted to Mr. Matthew F. McGuire, the Assistant to the Attorney General.

Respectfully,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

Enclosures

RECORDED

61-1286-4
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
JUN 13 1941
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

69
CH-17

ORIGINAL FILED IN 66-5424-3-259

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

 1 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

- Deleted under exemption(s) b7D, b7C with no segregable material available for release to you.
- Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.
- Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- Documents originated with another Government agency(ies). These documents were referred to that agency(ies) for review and direct response to you.

 Pages contain information furnished by another Government agency(ies). You will be advised by the FBI as to the releasability of this information following our consultation with the other agency(ies).

 Page(s) withheld for the following reason(s):

For your information: _____

The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
 61-1286 Serial 5

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
X DELETED PAGE(S) X
X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

61-1286-5

SECRET

RECORDED

November 24, 1941

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

8-25-86
Classified By 1276 RFP-JAR
Declassify on: OADR
Appeal 95-1764

[Redacted] u (S)

b7D

1259 pm 10-28-78
Date of Declassification

[Redacted] b7D

I desire to acknowledge receipt of your letter [Redacted] concerning Henry Louis Mencken. b7D

In response to your inquiry I wish to advise that Mencken has not been investigated in recent years by this Bureau. He was, however, brought to the attention of the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Justice during the last war. At that time he was deemed by some to be a suspicious person and information was received that he was of pro-German sympathies. However, this statement of Mencken's sympathies was refuted by an associate of his. During the last war there was no indication according to the records of this Bureau that Mencken was involved in espionage activities. In the absence of recent data I am unable to be of further assistance to you. (u)

With respect to Mencken's background the publication "Who's Who in America, 1940-1941" states that Henry Louis Mencken was born at Baltimore, Maryland, September 12, 1880, to August and Anna Mencken, nee Anna Abhau. This source states that the subject was educated at private schools and Baltimore Polytechnic; that he married Sara Powell Heardt of Montgomery, Alabama, on August 27, 1930, and that she died on May 31, 1935. Mencken's journalistic efforts are reported as beginning in 1899 when he was a reporter on the Baltimore Morning Herald, of which he subsequently, in 1903, became city editor. He retained this post until 1905 when he was made editor of the Evening Herald which he left in 1906 to join the staff of the Baltimore Sun. Mencken remained with the Baltimore Sun until 1910 when he joined the Evening Sun where he was employed from 1910 to 1916 and from 1918 to 1933. According to the aforementioned source Mencken has been with both the Sun papers since 1936. His other literary endeavors are listed as editor of the publication "Smart Set," 1908 to 1923; editor of "The American Mercury" from 1924 to 1933, and contributing editor of "The Nation" from 1921 to 1932. (u)

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Mr. Carson _____
- Mr. Coffey _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Holloman _____
- Mr. Quinn Tamm _____
- Mr. Nease _____
- Miss Gandy _____

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
★ NOV 26 1941 ★
P. M.
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

SECRET

11th. Hd. 506
RECORDED ON 1276 RFP-JAR
Appeal 95-1764

[REDACTED] (\$)^u
b7D

~~SECRET~~

The above-mentioned volume states that Mencken is a Director of the A. S. Abell Company, publisher of the Baltimore Sun, and of Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated. (u)

The above source gives Mencken's home address as 1524 Hollins Street, Baltimore, Maryland. (u)

Assuring you of my desire to cooperate in all matters of mutual interest. (u)

Sincerely yours,
J. Edgar Hoover
John Edgar Hoover
Director (u)

~~SECRET~~

- Tolson
- Nichols
- Boardman
- Belmont
- Mason _____
- Mohr _____
- Parsons _____
- Rosen _____
- Tamm _____
- Nease _____
- Winterrowd _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holloman _____
- Gandy _____

Mencken Says New Book Sure to Be Denounced

BALTIMORE, Jan. 27 (AP).— "It will be nice being denounced again," H. L. Mencken observed.

The 75-year-old author settled himself in an easy chair encircled by cigar smoke and told of the book he put together in 1948, then "forgot."

It will be published in May, Mr. Mencken said, and he looks forward with pleasure to the heated replies his barbed epigrams will bring. "You see, the book is controversial," he says.

He dismissed with a wave of his hand the vibrant controversy that lights up the thousands of essays and scores of other books he has produced in his 75 years.

This one, he believes, may be "more so."

Notebook of Essays

The book, to be called "Minority Report," was created before a cerebral hemorrhage laid him low and limited his powers of communication. It is, as he says, a "notebook" containing essays of varying lengths on a variety of subject matter.

"I scribbled ideas down as they occurred to me. Then after I'd gotten it all off my chest I put a title on the whole hodge podge and wrote a preface for it," Mr. Mencken said.

The material was stuffed into a folder and buried in the huge pile of correspondence, notes and other papers he has collected.

Several weeks ago, Mr. Mencken's secretary found the manuscript among a pile of papers headed for the Enoch Pratt Library for inclusion in the Mencken Room.

Here are some excerpts from the manuscript:

"The relativity of moral ideas is proved anew every time there is a war. Whatever the enemy does, however gallant or reasonable, is denounced as immoral, and what the home boys do, however brutal and dishonorable, is praised as heroic.

Views on the Soul

"No one blames a man for believing that his wife is beautiful, but it is impossible to avoid disgust in the presence of one who believes that he has an immortal soul of some vaguely gaseous nature and that it will continue to exist 400 million years after he had been shoveled away.

"The fact that I have no remedy for all the sorrows of the world is no reason for my accepting yours. It simply supports the strong probability that yours is a fake.

"The Russian proletarians who were to have been made rich, fat and happy by the triumph of the Marxian gospel are still eating herring and black bread and getting \$7 cash a month, but their saviours are riding about in imported cars, sleeping with perfumed women and living in steam-heated flats. If it be true, as the American Communists allege, that 10 per cent of the American people own 90 per cent of the national wealth, then it is equally true that 5 per cent of the Russians eat 95 per cent of the caviar and drink 100 per cent of the champagne."

file

BAUMGARDNER
5
Right
McGowan

- Wash. Post and Times Herald _____
- Wash. News _____
- Wash. Star 1 2 3
- N. Y. Herald Tribune _____
- N. Y. Mirror _____
- N. Y. Daily News _____
- Daily Worker _____
- The Worker _____
- New Leader _____

Date JAN 27 1958

138
62 FEB - 3 1956

61-1286-A
NOT RECORDED
138 FEB 3 1956



A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE AGAIN—Baltimore. —H. L. Mencken, shown here in an informal pose at his Baltimore home, is looking forward to the denunciations he is sure his latest book will bring. The book, due to be published in May, was written by the 75-year-old essayist in 1948 before a cerebral hemorrhage ended his writing career, but was uncovered only recently by his secretary.



Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Mr. Carson _____
- Mr. Coffey _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Kramer _____
- Mr. McGuire _____
- Mr. Harbo _____
- Mr. Quinn Tamm _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Mr. Nease _____
- Miss Beahm _____
- Miss Gandy _____

KRM:alo'd

Date: October 5, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. MUMFORD

RE: HENRY L. LENCKEN

Attached hereto is photostatic material concern-
ing the captioned matter obtained by the Washington Field
Office from the files of Walter Steele of the National
Republic Magazine. This material was made available gratu-
itously by Mr. Steele and was forwarded to the Bureau by
letter from the Washington Field Office dated August 27,
1942.

Respectfully,

K. R. McIntire
K. R. McIntire

2 0/1
1 ENCL 2 3

DE-INDEXED
DATE: 1-29-59

Enclosures

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED



59 OCT 15 1942
/65

RECORDED
D 11
INDEXED

61-1286-6
8 1
8 OCT 8 1942
FIVE KRM
VE