

Lid Clamped On Spy Case

Analyst Says Orders
From 'Higher Up'
Protected Reds

By Constantine Brown

The present investigation by the House Committee on Un-American Activities into Communist infiltration of key positions in the United States Government, and into Red espionage activities on behalf of Russia, may have surprised many people, but it is old news to top-ranking Government officials and to many members of Congress and newspapermen in Washington.

The spectacular hearings are the offshoot of a Federal grand jury investigation in New York, in which some 136 persons appeared as witnesses. More than half of them would have been indicted if American espionage laws were stronger than they are today.

Compilation of all the evidence and testimony presented under oath to the grand jury, in a report like that issued by the Royal Commission in Canada, would have bared the whole story of Soviet activities in the United States since 1933 and would have obliterated the hearings which are now being held by the House committee. Unfortunately, however, this was not possible, since the Justice Department is reported to have decided against it.

Agencies Had Files

The FBI and the intelligence services of the Army and Navy have not let the country down. All those agencies have voluminous files containing names of thousands of Americans and foreigners and substantiated evidence of their plotting, not only for the forcible overthrow of the Government, but also for the betrayal of top secrets of our armed forces to the Red Army.

The excuse put forth by Henry A. Wallace that these were not treasonable acts, since Russia was our Ally, holds no water. The chiefs of staff of our armed forces were fully aware of that and gave the Russian general staff officially all the information they believed necessary to assure perfect co-operation between the Allied forces.

There were, however, many plans—particularly in the technical developments of American weapons—which had to be kept secret from every other nation. The Russians were aware of this and used their minions, who had been placed in high position by the Kremlin, to obtain them.

Soviet War Planned

There is evidence that the U. S. S. R. was thinking in terms of a war against the western powers soon after the west rushed to her rescue when she was attacked by Adolf Hitler. For instance, when the Soviet government was allowed to open a consulate in Vancouver, Moscow ordered only two professional consuls to that city, according to documents produced by the former Soviet official, Igor Gouzenko. The rest of the staff was packed with NKVD agents and with professional spies instructed to do exclusively espionage work.

The administration in Washington was fully aware of the activities of our so-called Allies. The FBI and service intelligence units presented important information which should have thrown at least some suspicion on the work which was being done by agents of Russia.

In 1940, when the U. S. S. R. was still an ally of Germany, the Soviet government tried to buy important industrial products in this country to be used in the manufacture of war material. The chief of the Eastern European Division in the State Department—which included Russia—wrote a top-secret memorandum opposing such sale.

Secret Report Bared

A short time later he was asked by Constantine Oumansky, then Soviet Ambassador here, to visit him. After the usual exchange about the Washington weather, the Soviet Ambassador, to the amazement of his visitor, mentioned that he knew about the adverse top secret report. Mr. Oumansky showed his gold-filled teeth in what may be described as a smile and added, in essence:

"Why don't you work with us? If you realized how important it is to help the U. S. S. R., you could be an ambassador yourself in a short time. But if you continue with your present attitude, who knows what your career may be."

This conversation was reported immediately to the proper officials in the State Department. Some 18 months later, after we got into the war, the new Soviet Ambassador, Maxim Litvinoff, told "friends" in the White House that so long as this "anti-Soviet" official was at the head of the Eastern European Division, real diplomatic co-operation between the U. S. S. R. and the United States would be difficult. The official was promptly transferred.

Tools in the Pentagon

Soviet agents took advantage of the great influx of Reserve officers into the armed forces soon after we entered the world conflict. A considerable number of such agents were commissioned in the Army and the Air Force.

There was no trouble placing them in the Pentagon, where they became highly useful tools. But the intelligence sections in the Pentagon balked at taking them into sensitive posts such as cryptography, radar and other branches where highly confidential data existed.

This intelligence objection was overcome by a registered confidential order to the War Department and to Army commanders at home and

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(Continued From Page C-1.)

abroad that there should be no discrimination against such persons. This order reached the House Military Affairs Committee and a subcommittee was appointed to investigate the matter. One of the assistant secretaries testifying before this subcommittee declared that so long as a man is 51 per cent American and only 49 per cent Communist, he should be qualified for any job in the armed forces.

When questioned as to why notorious Communists were taken into the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime cloak-and-dagger outfit, a spokesman for OSS, which was an important intelligence organization headed by Maj. Gen. William Donovan, stated that "it takes a Communist to catch a Communist."

Couldn't Help Themselves

Neither the Secretary of War, the Secretary of State, nor the heads of other Government departments and agencies relished the presence of Communists in their organizations. But they could not help themselves. The pressure from the top of the executive branch not to "discriminate against liberals" was so great that no executive could stay in his job unless he complied with such instructions.

When a highly efficient admiral, head of Navy communications, protested too loudly that the files of radio operators in merchant ships, where well-known Communists had gotten a hold, were refused to him by the Federal Communications Commission, he was removed from active duty and retired, although he was one of the ablest communication experts in the United States.

The few attempts to purge Communists, who were proved to have transmitted highly secret information to Russia during the war, were frustrated. Such was the case with a former Soviet citizen, one Jaffe, who with a number of others was indicted by a grand jury in Washington. Although the proof of their guilt was overwhelming, Jaffe, who was the ringleader, drew a small fine, while the others were whitewashed.

Canada Broke Case

It was not until the Canadian spy case broke in 1946, with the revelations made by Mr. Gouzenko, code clerk at the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, that the public began to learn some facts about the activities of the Soviet government in the Western Hemisphere, facts which were fully known to the FBI and to the armed forces intelligence services and consequently should have been fully known to our own Government.

Neither the FBI nor the intelligence branches of the Army and Navy are allowed to give their information to anybody but their immediate chiefs, who, in turn, as members of the President's official family, must keep the available facts to themselves.

Naturally there was a good deal of off-the-record talk in Washington during those years about the doings of these agents of Moscow.

Congress was seriously alarmed over the information obtained through the Washington grapevine.

It was known that not a single top secret document was safe and that all information such a document contained would find its way to Moscow more speedily than to responsible American officials. In disregard of existing laws, because of the "war emergency" the Soviet government was permitted to install a powerful radio transmitter in the Pentagon itself. It sent tens of thousands of words to Moscow every day.

In 1944 War Department cryptographers had almost succeeded in breaking the Russian code. They wanted to learn what the Soviet representatives in this country were sending in such large volume to the Kremlin. They were elated over their success in breaking what was considered to be the most complicated code in existence when the head of the section working on it was called one morning by his superior officer and told to "lay off." When this officer tried to argue his case he was told curtly: "This is an order."

The testimony of the confessed Soviet spy, Elizabeth Bentley, two weeks ago, that she had caused a near panic among her Soviet contacts when she learned from her pipelines in the White House about the Russian code, explains at this late date the "order" not to tamper with Russian secret cyphers.

Other Codes Read

The unofficial explanation at that time was that it would be unethical for us to pry into the secret communications of our Allies, although it was an open secret to all that we were reading the codes of many other nations which were our associates in the war.

When this was pointed out to high officials the explanation was that this might be true, but that Russia was highly sensitive and suspicious and might take offense. It might have had serious repercussions on the war effort if we read her communications. That was correct. It would have been a serious blow to her conspiratorial plans if we had discovered what her agents or high and low levels in the government were transmitting to Moscow.

The desire not to offend Russia in any way unquestionably was behind the secrecy maintained by the highest men in the Government on the activities of Russian agents in this country. The war is over and we have been in a cold war with the Soviets for nearly 18 months.

It would seem reasonable for the Chief Executive to make available to congressional investigators the files containing the names and details of activities of those who have been working for Russia in this country. There is no reason to believe that this would not have been done at another time than an election year. Since most of the culprits gave actual or lip service to the New Deal, the revelations contained in these files might affect the result of the elections.

D-Day Tip-Off Given Reds by Spies in U.S. Jobs; Roosevelt Aide Called a Source of Information; Investigators Demand Grand Jury Be Summoned

D-Day Tip Given Reds by Spies Here, Congress Told

Aide to Roosevelt Called One Source of Information

REDS—From Page 1
ing the names of her contacts in the Government, Thomas announced, subpoena was issued immediately for every person mentioned. They would, he said, be given complete opportunity to answer any questions raised. Some have already been heard in executive session.

Upon testimony of Miss Bentley, supported by FBI investigation, 12 leaders of the Communist Party were grand jurors for advocating overthrow of the United States Government by force.

Information from Currie, Miss Bentley said, came to her through the spy ring headed by Nathan Gregory Silvermaster, whom she described in the position of an NKVD or secret police agent.

Currie told a member of Silvermaster's ring, she testified, that the United States was about to break one of Russia's codes.

She gave a dramatic account of how Currie "rushed all out of breath" to the home of George Silvermaster, one of the Silvermaster group, and told him the news about the code.

Silvermaster told her, she said, and she promptly told her Russian agent boss in New York. The Russians were much excited over the information, she said.

Silvermaster, she said, was in the Air Force at the time, and was himself a "prolific" source of information.

From Currie's office, she told the committee, came secret information on the United States' attitude toward China.

Old College Friends
Silvermaster and Currie, Miss Bentley said, were old college friends. She said that both Silvermaster and Silverman were members of the Communist Party, and she would not repeat the names of superior, even though Communists are deliberately taught to lie, to work in the basement of their own people.

It was Currie's influence that helped Silvermaster, she said, in his job when he was in the Government. She said that Silvermaster was a member of the Communist Party, and she would not repeat the names of superior, even though Communists are deliberately taught to lie, to work in the basement of their own people.

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LAUCHLIN CURRIE ... inside facts
HARRY DEXTER WHITE ... very helpful
JOHN ABT ... member of ring

Then she added that through these two contacts she got "quite a lot of information about General Hillding's activities," a matter of which the Russians were then ordinarily interested.

From April, 1943, to 1946, Maj. Gen. John H. Hillding was director of civil affairs for the War Department, a job which entailed acting policies for countries which the United States expected to occupy and in fact did occupy.

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described "Katherine" as a tall, blond girl, with blond curly hair, and she was very attractive. He asked her if she had any brothers or sisters. She said she had no brothers or sisters.

For days a dispute has been going on about whether or not Miss Bentley's own appearance, some persist in describing her as "blond" herself. She has brown hair, her eyes are a moderately brownish blue, she said, "in between."

Representative F. Edward Hebert, D., La., pressed Miss Bentley as to why she had joined in the Russian espionage net. She said she had not considered it betraying her own country in time of war.

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Plans for B-29 Also Were Rushed To Russian Agents, Congress Is Told; White, Former Official of Treasury, Is Called a Contact

By Mary Spargo
Post Reporter

Top United States war secrets, including advance notice of D-Day and plans for the B-29, were rushed to Russian agents from a Communist spy ring among trusted Government workers, Congress was told yesterday.

Named as a source of information for one of these rings were Lauchlin Currie, former administrative assistant to the late President Roosevelt, and Harry Dexter White, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

This ring, headed by a Government worker described as a probable member of the NKVD, Russian secret police, had a full photographic set-up in an apartment basement for the surreptitious photographing of secret Government documents, the House Committee on Un-American Activities was told.

A sordid story of eager betrayal of this Government at the hands of those sworn to uphold it was unfolded by Miss Elizabeth T. Bentley, self-confessed former spy for the Communist Party and its guiding Russian agents.

Her unemotional recital brought a prompt demand from Chairman J. Parnell Thomas (R., N. J.) for a special blue ribbon grand jury in the District of Columbia to hear evidence against the Government workers involved. He said he would ask United States District Attorney George Morris Fay to call such a jury.

Neither a Member of Ring
Miss Bentley made it clear that neither Currie nor White was a member of the Communist Party or of either of the two spy rings with which she worked in Washington. But she said, they gave information to members of the ring, and White aided the ring in placing and keeping its members in Government jobs, she testified.

Head of one ring she named as Nathan Gregory Silvermaster, formerly with the Board of Economic Warfare, later with the Agriculture Department.

Describing him as a probable Russian secret police agent, she said she visited his home at 3315 30th st. n.w., every two weeks to pick up information, documents and photographs made for her in the basement of the Silvermaster apartment.

The head of the other ring, Miss Bentley testified, was Victor Perlo, then a War Production Board official.

In the Silvermaster ring, she said, were: HELEN SILVERMASTER, his wife; WILLIAM TAYLOR, Treasury Department; GEORGE SILVERMAN, Army Air Corps; FRANK COE, Treasury Department; WILLIAM GOLD, Treasury Department; SONIA GOLD, his wife, Foreign Economic Administration; SOLOMON ADLER, Office of International Finance of the Treasury Department.

NORMAN BURSLE, anti-trust division of the Justice Department; WILLIAM LUDWIG ULLMAN, Treasury Department and Air Corps.

JOHN ABE, formerly of the Congress of Industrial Organizations Political Action Committee, and now of the Wallaceite Progressive Party; SOL LESHINSKY, UNRRA; HAROLD GLASSER, Treasury; JOSEPH GREGG, Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs; RUTH GREGG, his wife.

Alleged Members Under Perlo
Accused of having been members of a spy ring headed by Perlo were: ALLAN R. ROSENBERG, private attorney and formerly with the Foreign Economic Administration; DONALD NIVEN WHEELER, Office of Strategic Services; EDWARD J. FITZGERALD, War Production Board; HARRY S. MAGDOFF, Commerce Department; CHARLES KRAMER, born Kravitsky, of the staff of a Senate Education and Labor Subcommittee under Senator Claude Pepper (D., Pa.).

IRVING KAPLAN of the War Production Board worked for both spy rings, it was charged.

Government employees not in the spy rings who furnished information, according to testimony, were: DUNCAN LEE, legal adviser in the Office of Strategic Services; MORRIS HALPERIN, research and analysis division of the Office of Strategic Services; BERNARD REDMONT, CIAA press division; ROBERT T. MILLER, head of research, Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs; MICHAEL GREENBERG, assistant to Currie at the White House.

The only person charged who is still reportedly employed by the Federal Government is A. L. The Washington Post was informed last night that there were two men named Irving Kaplan in the War Production Board at the same time. Irving Kaplan of 5308 2nd st. n.w., said he was then employed in WEP's textile division and certainly was not the Irving Kaplan to whom Miss Bentley referred. A transcript of Miss Bentley's testimony fails to give any identification of the man to whom she did refer, except his wartime employment.

Currie, White Deny Aiding Red Spy Ring

'Duncan Lee Also Offers Denial of Miss Bentley's Charges

Quick denials were voiced last night by three of the persons accused by Elizabeth Bentley of divulging secret information to a Communist spy ring here.

They are Lauchlin Currie, aide to the late President Roosevelt, and Duncan Lee, former legal adviser to the Office of Strategic Services.

Currie, in New York, denied that he ever knew Miss Bentley or knowingly associated with any Communist agent. His statement follows:

"To the best of my knowledge, I have never known or associated with Miss Bentley or worked in any way directly or indirectly with either a Communist or a Communist agent. I never met Miss Bentley nor knew of her existence. If any Government employee conveyed information to Communist quarters and gave my name as a source it was most certainly not done with my knowledge."

"So far as a specific allegation is concerned, my work never brought me in contact with military codes. I was never told anything about them, so I obviously could not and did not pass on information about them to anybody, and I am at a loss to understand why my name was brought into this unless, as frequently happens, somebody wanted to enhance the reputation of the man named."

See REPLIES, Page 2, Column 7.

THE WASHINGTON POST Sunday, August 1, 1948

Currie, White Deny Charges

REPLIES—From Page 1
importance or authenticity of alleged information by attributing it to sources close to the President.

White denied that he ever gave confidential information to anyone with the belief that it would be passed along to the Russians. He said he would ask the House Un-American Activities Committee for permission to testify and refute Miss Bentley's charges.

"This is said to be the most fantastic thing I have ever heard of. I never heard of the woman before. I am shocked. This whole thing is news to me. I never dreamed that my name would be dragged into this."

He added that he testified before the New York Federal grand jury which recently indicted 12 top Communist leaders on charges of a conspiracy to overthrow the United States Government.

American-Born Blond Is Reported Key in Probe of Red Ring

The Evening Star
Thursday, 22 July 1948

(From Yesterday's Last Edition.)
By the Associated Press.

NEW YORK, July 21.—The World-Telegram said today in a copyright article that a beautiful blond's tip to the FBI on a large Russian spy ring led to the Federal grand jury investigation culminating in indictments of 12 Communist officials.

United States Attorney John F. X. Mc Gohey, commenting on the World-Telegram story, said that no woman gave testimony before the grand jury which resulted in the indictments of the 12.

The World-Telegram reported the following:

The unnamed woman, New England-born, suffered pangs of conscience and decided she could no longer sabotage her native country. Her fantastic story, incredible to FBI agents at first, turned out to be completely true.

She told the FBI that 50 Government employes of all ranks were members of the ring. The FBI still does not have enough evidence to indict, but is remaining relentlessly on the trail of ring members. Their biggest stumbling block is that Federal courts still do not admit wire-tapping evidence.

Got Control of Ring:

The woman, graduate of a noted women's college and an official of a purported relief organization during the war, had been a minor Communist Party member for years. Gradually she was taken into Communist confidence and, in the midst of the war, when her immediate superior died, found herself in control of the spy ring.

She was given information by about 50 men and women Government employes, all Communists, ranging from clerks to one man of near cabinet authority. Nearly all, due to FBI pressure, no longer are on the Government payrolls.

Among the secrets the woman and her agents turned over to the Russians were the first plans of the B-29, still under wraps, and complete data on R-D-X, a plastic explosive. She furnished the Soviet with almost daily figures on American production of planes and other war material.

Code Was Almost Broken.

From a White House official she learned one day that American intelligence officers were about to break the Russian secret code—a break, incidentally, which might have informed American authorities of the existence of the spy ring. The Russians presumably quickly changed their code.

Working for the woman was a man high in the councils of the Office of Strategic Services who would meet the woman on a Washington street corner and turn over secret information to her.

Others working for her included a personal adviser of President Roosevelt, a high Army Air Force officer, an official of the War Production Board, members of the Office of War Information and persons informed of policy from other strategic Government agencies.

None received money for their activities. They turned over the information because they were loyal members of the Communist Party. After informing the FBI, the woman retained many of her old associates for more than a year to give the FBI a chance to check her story.

Once, with FBI agents watching, she met a high official from the Soviet Embassy in Washington. She received an envelope containing several thousand dollars from him. The official came to New York to press the money on her because he believed she was weakening.

The Washington Post
Thursday, 22 July 1948

Blonde Leader of Spy Ring Credited With Reds' Arrests

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Just a Work of Love

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THE WEATHER
Cloudy, cooler, less humid, high about 81
TEMPERATURES LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

Times Herald

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EX-SPY SAYS REDS HAD WHITE HOUSE AGENT

Confessed Ex-Commie Spy Tells of Russian Agent in White House

Top Secrets of War Years Stolen, Senate Probers Are Told by Woman Witness

(Continued from First Page)
"Do you mean," asked Sen. Ferguson of Michigan, committee chairman, "that man who worked for the White House conveyed this vital information in time of war to your agent and you relayed it to the Russians? Did you try to get back to the White House and find out which code?"
Net a Party Member
Yes, Miss Bentley said, she tried but failed. Was this White House man a Communist party member? "No," she said, "we were very puzzled about it. We couldn't figure out what his motives were."
The chief job of the White House agent, she said, was to put the commie agents in strategic jobs in government departments. He helped put "quite a few" of them where they were wanted by the Soviets, she said, "but I understand he is no longer with the government."



One-Time Spy Takes Stand
Elizabeth Bentley, one-time director of a Russian spy ring, is pictured as she was sworn in yesterday by a Senate investigating subcommittee.

At least two others," she said, she added that she did not know whether there were still at work. Miss Bentley, upon repeated questioning, put the finger squarely on Remington and his wife "Bing," insisting that he paid dues for the two of them and that the money was definitely for party dues and no other purpose.
"Put on ice" by Russians
In the latter part of December, 1944, she said, the Russians in New York forced her to turn over her collection of information to other agents.
"Did you ever get actual papers, documents, marked secret?"
"Yes, I did."
Synthetic Rubber Secret
One of the secrets given her by Remington, she said, was a copy of a formula for making synthetic rubber out of garbage.
She called her agents "a bunch of misguided idealists" and said "they weren't held in line by threats from me."

She Identifies Commerce Dept. Official As Revealing Data and Party Member

Job. He didn't know that Remington had been put through the wringer by the FBI, she said, until yesterday when the committee told him the story in executive session.
He was as surprised as anyone else, Blaisdell declared, because she thought he knew Remington well. In fact, Blaisdell said he had Remington's first job in Washington. The young man was highly recommended to Blaisdell by a college professor "whom I respect," Blaisdell said.
Born in New York
A check of government personnel files revealed that Remington was born in New York in 1917. He went to work for the Tennessee Valley Authority in Knoxville, Tenn., in Sept. 1936. In April 1937, he switched to Workers' Education committee in Knoxville. He was graduated from Dartmouth in 1939.
Then in May, 1940, he came to Washington as a junior economist for the National Resources Planning board. He worked for a while in OPA, then from Feb. 1942 to April 1944, he served in the War Production board, with access to defense figures.

Top Secrets of War Stolen by Commies, Senate Probers Told

Woman Identifies Commerce Department Official as Dues-Paying Party Member

A dramatic story of a Soviet spy ring which had an agent in the White House, and through 50 agents stole top secret documents from almost every department in Washington throughout the war was unfolded yesterday before a Senate investigating committee.
Elizabeth K. Bentley, Vassar graduate, and one-time leader of the espionage organization, who renounced communism in 1948 and reported the whole outfit to the FBI, described in vivid detail the activities of herself and other operatives during the war years.
Identifies One Agent
She positively identified just one agent by name—William Remington, director of the Commerce department export program staff since last March. Remington, as an employee of the WPB in 1942-43, gave her secret aircraft production figures at least 10 times, she said. The witness said she collected Communist party dues from Remington, who was "very regular" in his payments.

Rendezvous Admitted by Remington

Although denying emphatically that he ever delivered secret information to the Soviets in the early days of the war, William W. Remington, Commerce department official, last night told of six to 10 rendezvous he kept in Washington with the ex-Commie spy who yesterday described him as one of her operatives.
Remington, a sandy-haired, lanky intellectual, called a special press conference in the Willard hotel at 9:30 p.m. to answer charges made before a Senate investigating committee by Elizabeth K. Bentley.
Scheduled to appear before the group at 10 a.m. today, he said he will ask for "more time" to substantiate his innocence.
Denies Party Membership
Remington denied ever being a member of the Communist party or delivering secret information to the Soviets. Everything he told Miss Bentley, he said, was substantially the same as he told newspapermen covering the war production board, to which he was then attached.
"Was it possible to talk to Miss Bentley, I guess," Remington said, "but I was convinced she was a researcher looking for information about American-British relations."
Remington said he was introduced to Miss Bentley through

The first witness was acting Assistant Secretary of Commerce Blaisdell.
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Blaisdell said the department had been looking for somebody to be head of the "ad hoc" special committee to handle exports to Russia. The committee had on representatives of the armed services, atomic energy commission, and other agencies. It had access to highly secret information on defense needs and equipment. Remington became chairman on March 16.
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Remington was married in 1939—after his graduation from Dartmouth—to Anne Snow, who according to a Commerce executive secretary was the "Washington Peace Mobilization."
Miss Bentley slipped quietly into the room from the back near the end of Blaisdell's testimony.
She had been billed in advance as a blonde, but she turned out to be a brunette, pleasantly plump, with pale blue eyes and a soft cultured voice. She wore a simple black crepe dress with pink silk roses in her hair.
"Did you become a card-carrying member of the Communist party?" Ferguson queried.
"Yes, in March of 1938," Miss Bentley answered, without changing her calm tones. Later, she said she became a member of the Columbia Club No. 1, of the Harlem section of the Communist party. That cell had 30 to 35 members.
Ferguson asked if she were sought to conceal her party ties.
"Was it possible to talk to Miss Bentley, I guess," Remington said, "but I was convinced she was a researcher looking for information about American-British relations."
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(Continued from First Page)
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