

The Amerasia Affair, China, and Postwar Anti-Communist Fervor

Inside information on the first great spy case of the postwar era

Date Range: 1945-1973

Content: 14,164 pages

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In 1945, Kenneth Wells, an analyst with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), noticed that an article in Far East-focused magazine *Amerasia* was almost identical to a 1944 report he had written on Thailand. OSS agents broke into *Amerasia*'s New York offices, where they found hundreds of classified documents from the Department of State, the Navy and the OSS.

A subsequent FBI investigation suggested editor Philip Jaffe had probably obtained the documents from State Department employee Emanuel Larsen and Naval Intelligence Officer Andrew Roth. In carrying out its probe, the FBI illegally broke into offices and homes, installing bugs and wiretaps. But no evidence indicated documents had been forwarded to a foreign power.

Unlike Alger Hiss or the Rosenberg cases, the *Amerasia* Affair did not lead to epic courtroom confrontation, imprisonment or execution. Nevertheless, as the first public drama charging that respectable American citizens had spied for the Communists, it contributed to the creation of McCarthyism in American life.

Through thousands of government documents, *The Amerasia Affair, China and Postwar Anti-Communist Fervor* illustrates the perceptions of espionage and uncovers the inner workings of the postwar anti-Communism movement. This collection provides unique documentation for scholars of political, radical and social history, government and politics, Asian studies and more.

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The Amerasia Affair, China, and Postwar Anti-Communist Fervor

Major topics include:

- Philip Jacob Jaffe and John Service
- Kate Louise Mitchell
- U.S. policy toward Chiang Kai-shek
- Institute of Pacific Relations
- Office of Strategic Services activities in Asia
- Mark Gayn
- Postwar India
- Colonial empires in Asia
- Chinese-Japanese relations
- UK foreign policy in Asia

Documents include:

- Transcripts of the wiretaps
- FBI surveillance and informant reports
- Transcripts of discussions Jaffe and others had with their lawyers on the progress of the case
- FBI memos regarding newspaper articles accusing the government of whitewashing the case
- Lists of classified documents in Amerasia's possession
- Congressional testimony

Principal correspondents:

- J. Edgar Hoover
- Myron E. Gurnea
- E. E. Conroy
- Louis B. Nichols
- J.C. Strickland
- Clyde Tolson
- Millard E. Tydings
- E.H. Winterrowd
- J.P. Harratty
- Alan H. Belmont
- D.M. Ladd
- Guy Hottel
- Any many more


George E. Allen:vh

May 29, 1945

LIEUTENANT ANDREW E. ROTH

ACTIVITIES AND CONTACTS WITH OTHER SUBJECTS

It has been noted that Philip Jaffe has visited in Washington, D. C., and stayed at the Statler Hotel on the following dates: April 9th, May 2nd, June 5th, July 18th to 21st, August 2nd and 3rd, September 12th to 14th, October 3rd to 5th, October 31st, November 3rd, December 6th to 8th and December 29, 1944, January 23rd to 25th, February 9th to 11th and March 13 to 15, 1945. No investigation was conducted of Jaffe's contacts during that period of time. However, a review of his telephone calls made from the Statler Hotel discloses a call to Andrew Roth on February 9, 1945, and again on March 14, 1945.

 Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York, 7, New York

EBC:CC
65-14461

April 13th, 1945

MEMO:

RE: PHILIP JACOB JAFFE, was.; et al;
ESPIONAGE (X)

Reference is made to Bureau letter dated March 9, 1945 in the case entitled "INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS - INTERNAL SECURITY (C)". This letter instructed that [redacted] be interviewed.

In view of the fact that [redacted] is presently involved in litigation concerning the INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS, and in view of the fact that any interview with him should also probably involve an interview concerning individuals in the above-captioned investigation, Mr. Gurnea has instructed that the requested interview of [redacted] should be postponed until further instructions are received.

Special Agent [redacted]

65-14461-147

100-17808

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : THE DIRECTOR

FROM : M. E. GURNEA

SUBJECT: PHILIP JACOB JAFFE, with aliases, et al
ESPIONAGE - C

DATE: July 10, 1945

CONFIDENTIAL

The Commissioner's hearing for the Washington defendants of the Jaffe case was held on Monday, July 9. In discussing the prosecution of this case with Mr. Hitchcock, he has stated that the attorneys of the New York defendants have contacted him and have expressed a possible desire of having their clients appear before the grand jury. This is particularly true insofar as Kate Mitchell is concerned. Mr. Lowell Wadmond, Kate Mitchell's attorney, apparently is of the opinion that if Kate Mitchell will appear before the grand jury she may possibly avoid being indicted. They will, of course, sign waivers of immunity. Information received from confidential sources, as well as by interview with Mr. Hitchcock, indicates that Lowell Wadmond has been in direct contact with Tom Clark, as well as with Hitchcock.

In view of the above, Tom Clark instructed Mr. Hitchcock, after all the evidence had been presented to the former grand jury, to [redacted]