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Fight for Freedom News Release, April 20, 1941

Fight for Freedom Committee

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From: F.H. Peter Cusick, Executive Secretary
THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM COMMITTEE
Room 309, 1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y.
(Circle 6-9570)

FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, APRIL 20

NEW YORK, April 19 -- Formation of "The Fight For Freedom Committee," a national organization which "accepts the fact that we are at war" and is pledged "to do whatever is necessary to insure a Hitler defeat," was announced here last night.

Headed by the Rt. Rev. Henry W. Hobson, Cincinnati, Ohio, World War hero awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and now Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio, the Committee was launched with a key membership of almost 150 distinguished men and women in 24 States.

U.S. Senator Carter Glass of Virginia, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, is honorary chairman, with Wayne Johnson, Montana, former general counsel of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, treasurer.

In inviting Senator Glass to become honorary chairman, the "Fight For Freedom Committee," aware that the statesman always has declined to lend his name to non-governmental committees, said: "You stand for the qualities in our national life which have made it true in the past that Americans would not make terms with tyranny. You are a lone voice among the men of great position and reputation, telling the people the exact and ugly truth."

Enlisting himself with the committee Senator Glass replied: "Because of the great principles involved and the desperate situation in which we find ourselves, I am putting aside the considered practice of a lifetime to lend my name and whatever strength I may have to the work of the 'Fight For Freedom Committee.'"

Key members of the committee include Joseph F. Lash, general secy. of International Students' Service, New York City; Dorothy Overlock, exec. secy. of Student Defenders of Democracy, New York City; Rupert Hughes, author; Rt. Rev. W. Bertrand Stevens, Bishop of Los Angeles, Calif.; John L. Balderston, playwright; Pedro de Cordoba, Hollywood producer; Kenneth Thomson, executive secretary of the Screen Actors' Guild; Dr. Edwin F. Gay, economist, Calif;

William Montgomery Bennett, Connecticut economist; Dr. A.J.W. Myers, Hartford, Conn., School of Religious Education; Dr. William Allen Neilson, president-emeritus of Smith College; Jay Franklin Carter, journalist, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Frederick B. Harris, Foundry Methodist Church, Washington, D.C.; Capt. Harry H. Semmes, D.S.C., Washington attorney; Ulric Bell, Washington Correspondent;

M.R. Ashworth, publisher of the Columbus Enquirer, Columbus, Ga.; President Rufus E. Clement, president of Atlanta University; Dean Walter D. Cocking, University of Georgia; Dr. Ernest Graham Guthrie, Chicago Congregational Union;

Herbert Agar, editor, Louisville Courier-Journal; H.L. Gueydam, New Orleans, La.; William F. Cochran, Baltimore, Md.; Henry B. Cabot, of Massachusetts; George K. Gardner, Professor of Law, Cambridge, Mass.; Dr. Albert C. Knudson, dean emeritus, Boston University School of Theology; John M. Warbeke, Mt. Holyoke College; Mrs. N.M. Stanley, past president of Ohio League of Women Voters;

Rt. Rev. Herman Page, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Dr. L.M. Birkhead, Kansas City, Mo., head of Friends of Democracy; Judge William Clark, U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals of New Jersey; Dean Lynn Harold Hough, Drew University, New Jersey;

Mrs. Frederick Lewis Allen, Mrs. Marshall Best, Rev. C.J. Callan, Dominican Fathers; Ward Cheney, Grenville Clark, Frederick R. Coudert, lawyer; Col. Wm. J. Donovan, famously known as "Wild Bill Donovan" of the Fighting 69th; Allan W. Dulles, John Farrar, publisher; Marshall Field, Prof. Carlton J.H. Hayes, Columbia University; Prof. Ross J.S. Hoffman, Fordham University; John G. Jackson, president N.Y. State Bar Association; Mrs. Beatrice Kaufman, wife of George Kaufman, playwright; Gen. John F. O'Ryan, Judge Dorothy Kenyon, Rev. J.A. McHugh, Dominican Fathers; Peter B. Olney, lawyer; Rex Stout, author; James P. Warburg, James F. Curtis, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, all of New York;

George Watts Hill, Durham, N.C., Rev. Phil Porter, Christ Church, Dayton, Ohio., Dr. Howard White, Miami University, Ohio. Very Rev. Allan Evans, Dean of Protestant Episcopal Divinity School, Philadelphia; Brooks Whitehouse, lawyer, Portland, Me.;

Canon Stanley C. Hughes, Trinity Church, Newport, R.I., J. Skottowe Wanamaker, president of American Cotton Association, So. Car.; William Waller, Nashville, Tenn., Waldo H. Heinrichs, Middlebury, Vt., Dr. Silas Evans, Ripon, Wisc., Roger D. Lapham, Member of Mediation Board, pres. American Hawaiian Steamship Co., San Francisco, Calif.; and Freda Kirchwey, editor, The Nation, New York City.

After emphasizing that the American people have recognized that an Axis victory would be a threat to our nation and to our democratic way of life, the manifesto of the "Fight For Freedom Committee" continues:

"But we still are largely blind to the fact that there is no lasting choice between war and peace. We still think in terms of keeping out of a war in which we are already engaged in every sense except armed combat.

"We shall have no hesitation or delay in leadership, no holding back from unremitting and unselfish effort anywhere throughout the length and breadth of the land."

Once this acceptance is made, the manifesto continues, Americans will be in a position to work effectively for "the only real peace we hope to hand down to our children -- peace based on justice and human freedom."

Such a peace means far more than the defense of the world order we have known, the statement says, continuing:

"It means the development of a new world order -- not Hitler's 'New Order' of tyranny and fear which is in fact the oldest order man has known -- but a new order in which political, social and economic democracy may develop its full meaning, in which man may at last attain the full stature of human dignity, and in which all peoples, free from fear, may live in freedom to build those foundations of righteousness and justice upon which a lasting peace must rest."

But whatever the ultimate peace objectives, the manifesto concludes, the first immediate step must be the winning of a victory. It then states the belief of the key membership of the "Fight For Freedom Committee" as:

"That the time has come for the vigorous use of our full resources. We must win the battle of production. We must use our shipping, our Navy, and our Air Force to help safeguard the transportation of vital supplies across the ocean.

"We must throw our full weight now into the fight for freedom, knowing that if this means war, it also means the surest and swiftest road to peace."

The objectives of the "Fight For Freedom Committee" were further

elucidated by Bishop Hobson in a talk broadcast last night (Sat., April 19) from Boston, Mass.

Bishop Hobson is 50 years old, a native of Denver, Colo. He attended Phillips Academy, Andover, Mass., and graduated from Yale. He was a student at Episcopal Theological Seminary, Cambridge, Mass., when the United States entered the World War. Enlisting in the R.O.T.C., he was later commissioned as Captain, promoted to Major and sent to France in command of the Third Battalion of the 356th Infantry.

Twice wounded at St. Mihiel and gassed at Thiacourt, he returned for duty the last few days of the Meuse-Argonne offensive and was in action with his troops when the armistice came.

He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, next to the Congressional Medal of Honor the highest award an American soldier can receive for bravery, with the citation: "For extraordinary heroism in action near St. Mihiel, France, Sept. 12, 1918. Though twice wounded within ten minutes from the start of the advance, being in charge of the assault battalion and realizing the importance of its operations, he directed his command throughout the day until the fighting ceased."

Shortly before his departure for France, Bishop Hobson was married to Miss Edmonia Taylor Bryan, of St. Louis, Mo. On his return from the war, he and his wife went to Cambridge, Mass., where he resumed his work at the Seminary.

His first charge was being assistant to the Rev. John N. Lewis, rector of St. John's Church, Waterbury, Conn. In September, 1921, he was called to be rector of All Saints' Church, Worcester, Mass., where he served until he was elected Bishop Coadjutor of Southern Ohio in 1930. Upon the death of the Bishop in 1931, he became Bishop of Southern Ohio.

Bishop Hobson has been greatly interested in Christian Unity, has been active in working for the proposed union of the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches, and in 1938 went as a delegate to the meeting of the International Missionary Conference in Madras, India.

When the national Forward Movement of the Episcopal Church was started in 1934, Bishop Hobson was chosen chairman, and served for several years. He has been a member of the National Council of that church since 1937.

Feeling the need for a more active and far reaching program for covering the isolated areas, and unchurched people of his Diocese, Bishop Hobson gave up the attempt to maintain a program in the Cathedral in Cincinnati, which had lost its opportunity due to a population shift, and built a Church on Wheels for reaching areas where there was no established church.

This "Wayside Cathedral" is equipped to render service wherever there is the greatest need among people cut off from the influence of the Christian religion.

Hundreds of families are associated with this program, and over a thousand children receive regular religious instructions by means of the church school program which has been built up. The "Wayside Cathedral" has now traveled well over 100,000 miles.

Bishop Hobson's home is in Cincinnati. There are four children, Katherine Bryan, Henry Wise, Jr., Anne Jennings, and Margery Thayer.

Bishop Hobson is no recent convert to the principle of "all-out" aid to the democracies, as a means of preserving our own. When Hitler started the Second World War with his invasion of Poland in September, 1939, Bishop Hobson began preaching before his own and other congregations that America was definitely involved in the war and could not possibly avoid getting into it.

Again and again since the fall of 1939 he has preached that the sooner

America actively participates in defeating Hitler the better --- "because our participation would lead to a Hitler defeat and the only chance to make a peace based upon justice, and because the defeat of Britain would involve us in a far more destructive war in the future."

The "Fight For Freedom Committee," it was announced, will make a vigorous campaign for increasing its membership among influential men and women throughout the nation, as a means of effecting its avowed purposes.