

Nazis of Copley Square: The Forgotten Story of the Christian Front

Charles R. Gallagher

Harvard University Press (Sep 28, 2021)

Hardcover \$29.95 (336pp)

978-0-674-98371-7

In *Nazis of Copley Square*, Charles R. Gallagher takes a searing look at the Christian Front, an American extremist group that weaponized Catholicism. The organization reached its height of popularity just before World War II. Much like Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime, the group used fanatical beliefs to try to end the perceived global influence of Jews.

Gallagher details the key players of the Christian Front saga, and the sociopolitical factors that helped the movement to gain power. The Depression-era radio broadcasts of popular priest Father Charles Coughlin criticized the so-called "Judeo-Bolshevist" infiltration of American commerce, banking, media, and even the Roosevelt administration. Coughlin's "coast-to-coast" audience also shared his outrage regarding anti-Christian atrocities committed during the Spanish Civil War, and during Russia's Bolshevik Revolution.

Gallagher shows how Coughlin's words galvanized the Christian Front. Militias were formed and seditious plans prepared by these "soldiers" for Jesus. Two of the most prominent Christian Front chapters were located in New York and Boston. Many members were Irish Catholics, who expressed further pro-Hitler support due to Britain's prolonged occupation of Ireland. England had brutalized Ireland for centuries, they felt; therefore, Irish Americans should not have to fight as their wartime ally.

The book profiles Christian Front charismatics Francis Moran and John Cassidy, as well as Herbert Scholz, a Schutzstaffel (SS) officer who served as Boston's German consul until 1941. Though he was welcomed to the city as a presumed "diplomat from a neutral power," the book shows that Scholz was an insidious spy. And there was liberal Boston Catholic Frances Sweeney, who, disgusted by the Christian Front's fervent, often violent antisemitism, worked to counteract the movement through the patriotic Irish American Defense Association.

With historical complexity and suspenseful intrigue, *Nazis of Copley Square* reveals one of America's secret and most disturbing domestic enemies.

MEG NOLA (September / October 2021)

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