

NAZI BUND MEMBERS 1941

By James Collins.

In New York City, prior to the start of World War II, there was a heavy German born population. A large number of these native-born individuals was sympathetic to the Nazi cause and used to march at meetings in Madison Square Garden. These people wore brown shirt uniforms with Nazi insignia and waved swastika flags. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, this country went on a war footing. The FBI had been keeping track of all potential alien threats to our country. The FBI identified Nazis who marched at Madison Square Garden and kept them under observation. Unfortunately, the attack was launched solely by the Japanese. Germany was not involved. Hitler solved this dilemma, three days later, on December 11, when he declared war on America. That day, the FBI declared war on the German aliens. Kollsman, a firm that employed a majority of German technicians and engineers had 32 of these known aliens working in their facility. The FBI entered the factory and walked all 32 out of the facility with their belongings stripped them of their identification and told them they would never be allowed to work in a defense plant.

Kollsman, a major manufacturer of aircraft instrumentation just received contracts to build tens of thousands of instruments, per month. These alien individuals worked for the company, on average, in excess of five years and were excellent contributors to the factory. Many of the existing workforce had immediately volunteered for the military at a time when the need for factory workers was exploding. Management discussed the problem and came up with a "Kollsman solution." The discussion went as follows; Otto, Hans, Dietrich and all the rest are outstanding workers. We cannot afford to lose them. The FBI will not allow them to work in our facility because we are a defense plant and a key assembly facility. We have that small factory down in Brooklyn, which is empty at present. Let us set up a small manufacturing operation down there with the necessary machines and these individuals can build the small critical gears needed for the aircraft instruments. Then we can bring the parts back here, inspect them and assemble them into the newest instruments. In this way, everybody wins. The 32 men get to keep their jobs. We get their quality work output. In addition, the government gets all their needed aircraft instruments. This truly was a "Kollsman solution." It worked well for a year.

Then we learned about the "FBI solution." It seems the FBI did not trust any of these 32 individuals. They had them all drafted into the infantry and made sure they all were sent to the South Pacific. The FBI did not trust that their Nazi leanings would not influence them in Europe. That organization felt that the enemy aliens could be trusted to fight the Japanese. A lot of them did not come back.

Years later I worked with a few of the survivors who appeared very normal. They were referred to in hushed tones by the old timers. They worked on all the commercial equipment but they were not allowed any clearance to work on military systems. The FBI has a long memory.

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