

**The Problem with Charles Lindbergh - II**

**Lead: Charles Augustus Lindbergh, the Lone Eagle, inspired the world with his solo Atlantic flight in 1927. In the years leading up to World War II, he became a figure of great controversy.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: Lindbergh was the son of a U.S. Congressman. He dropped out of college to pursue his love of the airplane. After his stunning flight he was nearly everyone's hero. An intensely shy man, after his marriage**

**to Anne Morrow, he moved his family to rural New Jersey. Their son was kidnapped and murdered in the early 1930s. After the trial and execution of the killer, they tried again to escape the public eye, this time in Europe.**

**There Lindbergh witnessed the growing power of Nazi Germany. He was concerned about the growing power of Hitler's air power, but seemed fascinated with the Nazi accomplishments. So much so that he accepted a decoration from Herman Goering, Hitler's close associate and chief of the German Air Force. As the clouds of war gathered over Europe he returned to America a vehement isolationist, suspected of Nazi sympathies. Lindbergh was recruited**

**by the America First Committee a group of powerful conservative businessmen who completely opposed U.S. involvement in the European war. He became America First's poster boy, traveling from rally to rally speaking against President's Roosevelt's only lightly veiled attempts to get America into the war to support Britain. In protest Lindbergh resigned his Air Corps Reserve Commission. For the first time in his career he found himself under severe criticism.**

**With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, America First was humiliated. The Committee dissolved and urged its members to support the war. Lindbergh answered the nation's call. He was a consultant to major**

**corporations and flew 50 combat missions in the Pacific, but he could never quite shake off the public's suspicions arising from his association with the Nazis. The Lone Eagle died in obscurity in 1974.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

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### **Resources**

**Gill, Brendan. *Lindbergh Alone*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Publishers, 1980.**

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**Ross, Walter Stanford. *The Last Hero: Charles Augustus Lindbergh*. New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishing Company, 1967.**