

Voorhis Disclaims Consumer Report

Committee Members Uninformed, He Says

By the United Press.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11.—Representative Voorhis (D., Cal.) today attacked the Dies Committee, of which he is a member, for the "undemocratic" manner in which it released a report charging Communist activity among 13 consumer organizations.

Mr. Voorhis said he wanted to "disavow and disclaim" any responsibility for the report. He said it was "purely and simply the opinion of Mr. J. B. Matthews (the committee's research director), who, in spite of past connections with a consumers' organization other than those attacked in the report, sits as sole investigator, judge and juror on the whole consumers' protective and co-operative movement in America."

The report was released to the press by "a suddenly appointed one-man sub-committee" before other members even knew it was being prepared, he declared.

"Not Their Business."

"If anything is undemocratic in the world, certainly this procedure is," Mr. Voorhis said.

"I am utterly unable to see what business a committee on un-American activities has defending advertising as such regardless of its merits or attacking consumers' counsels or casting discredit upon a properly filed complaint of the Federal Trade Commission against a powerful magazine. (The commission now is holding hearings on a complaint charging Good Housekeeping with misleading advertising practices.)

"This is especially unfortunate right at this time in view of the campaign already launched by powerful interests to destroy the consumers' protective and co-operative movement as one of our democratic bulwarks, and I am extremely fearful that the really important findings of the committee, which have been made by proper methods and

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procedure, will be considerably less effective as a result of this unfortunate incident."

Mr. Voorhis said the "only decent thing" for the committee to do now was have full hearings and "let the facts speak for themselves, whatever they may be."

He said he "bitterly resented" the Matthews attacks on the consumer movement.

Mr. Matthews' report charged that the Communist party was using the 13 organizations as "transmission belts" to discredit the capitalist system and seek its overthrow.

He accused the Agriculture De-

partment of giving "frequent and favorable" publicity to one of the alleged Communist-dominated organizations through the Consumers' Guide, published by the Department's consumers' counsel.

Mr. Matthews' report on consumers' organizations was filed with the committee at "a special meeting" Sunday, Dec. 3. The only member of the committee present was Chairman Dies (D., Texas).

The consumers' organizations alleged by Matthews to be "transmission belts" were the League of Women Shoppers, Consumers Union, Consumers National Federation, Committee for Boycott Against Japanese Aggression, Milk Consumers Protective Committee, the Consumer-Farmer Milk Co-operative, New York Consumers Council, and six organizations in New York, Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles, "set up by Communists and their sympathizers and purporting to combat the high cost of living."