



# EDITORS NOTES

## ***If You're a Consumer You're a Communist***

THE American press of December 11, 1939 carried (in some instances — *Herald-Tribune*) the full text of a report to the Dies Committee on the so-called "Communist" activities of consumer groups. It was submitted by Research Director J. B. Matthews at 6 p.m. of December 3, Representative Dies then being in session alone. The witness was duly sworn and then sank his depth bomb. It turned out instead to be a stink bomb.

The bomb starts off with astute reference to the People's Front, inaugurated by the Communist International in 1934, and ratified at the Seventh World Congress in Moscow in 1935. This is said to have directed the Communist Party of the United States to broaden the base of its attack on American institutions, to bore and use existing discontent, and to market in people ultimately who just wouldn't buy Japanese goods while China was catching hell from the Japs.

By a slight detour the report soon gets to Consumers Union and definitely proves that Arthur Kallet is a Communist because he once used certain phrases and expressions in a book. We are told that "the politically informed person will have no difficulty in recognizing the strictly Communist phraseology." So watch Willie—for any day the brat may talk Communist phraseology and have to be poisoned. Anyway brother Kallet is said to exploit the consumer movement for the Communists because Earl Browder once told Communists to use other organizations for their own ends. If that sounds illogical you ain't heard nothing yet.

In that case the organization be-

comes a "transmission belt," and keep your fingers out of the transmission or you'll be a Communist before mother can drag you back in time. Lenin said "Our task is to utilize every manifestation of discontent, and to collect and utilize every grain of even rudimentary protest," nasty man that he was. So you are simply ripping up capitalist society every time you try to get middle-class support for the idea that advertisements are often false and fraudulent. Of course the Federal Trade Commission and writers in *Printers' Ink*, the advertising magazine, often find it that way—but no matter. They are probably transmission belts, too.

Anyway the League of Women Shoppers is one of these pernicious things because one woman, Susan Jenkins, said to have once been a Communist because she is said once to have worked for the *Daily Worker*, bobs up in it. Consumers Union is rotten and bless me if Susan doesn't bob up again. Kallet's political connections are clear to the mystics and ouija board operatives. They are shown "by his typically Communist comment on consumer cooperatives"—he once is said to have said that they were just escapes from participation in the struggle against the capitalist system! Dern the man.

In fact Kallet was even on the editorial board of the "Communist" *Health and Hygiene*, the unexpired subscriptions of which went finally to Consumers Union. Incidentally Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, distinguished specialist of Mayo Clinic, and Prof. A. J. Carlson, eminent physiologist and outstanding scientist, were on the medical advisory board of Consumers Union, if that means anything. But to get back to sinner Kallet; in a book called *Counterfeit* he stamped himself because he said Soviet Russia

eliminated fraud in commodities by eliminating the capitalist system. In an interview for *Scribner's* he even said he disliked our economic system! He said he hoped the Russian system would work so well we'd have to take it over. (He can have it, for all of me, at that.) He also said once in a letter that anyone who attacked Communism was a Fascist. That proves it? What? Don't ask.

## ***There's Always Susan***

THEN there is the New York Consumers Council and be blowed if Susan is caught again manipulating that. Ubiquitous Susan. Various organizations in other cities set up to fight high living costs also prove to be Communist, for Eagle-Eye Matthews knows that high-living cost stuff is just a blind; high-living costs don't bother any real American *per se*. In fact, Mrs. Alice Belester, executive secretary of the United Conference Against the High Cost of Living, once made a contribution to the Communist Party and also stood in a picket line, the naughty woman. It was in the loop. She was protesting the high cost of milk. Bad, bad woman.

The report also says that the Consumers Emergency Federation is another horrid thing—a clearing house actually to federate consumer groups, once known as the Consumers Emergency Council—and drown my liver in a peck of onions—Susan Jenkins turns up again here, with Arthur Kallet—and even Donald Montgomery, Consumers Council of the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Adjustment Association, looked in the door now and then. Fancy the Department of Agriculture is Communist!

Montgomery trotted down to the monopoly investigation with a drove

of suspect witnesses—Mrs. Alice Bel-ester, Dexter Masters from C U, and Persia Campbell of Consumers National Federation, all fresh off their respective transmission belts and still dizzy. *The Consumers Guide*, published in the Department of Agriculture, actually now and then publishes material that offers intelligent guidance to consumers, so it too is Communist. Now that gives you a rough outline.

The clear aim, says Fraidy-cat Matthews, of these Communists is "to utilize the protests of consumers against the real or fancied abuses which they meet in their day-to-day existence as buyers of goods . . . for the building of a movement which the party hopes to integrate with its own revolutionary program dictated from Moscow." Page Shirley Temple. The idea is to overthrow the capitalist system, discredit free enterprise, and invent false weaknesses in our economic system. Advertising performs an indispensable function in a mass-production economy. It is an essential part of the distribution mechanism—"wholly apart from questions which have to do with good or bad advertising copy." So these Communists know that if they can sabotage advertising they can thus destroy the economic system of capitalism. That's why all the recent attack on advertising.

### The Story's Been Told Before

FACT is some people in government have been studying *Good Housekeeping* advertising recently with PWA funds, which is very wicked and shows that consumer organizations just want to completely abolish the capitalist system. For the record: If you will look up the *Bridgeport* (Conn.) *Sunday Herald* for February 18, 1932, you will find depicted therein advertisements of various products starred OK by Good Housekeeping Institute and, along therewith, you will find the opinions of the American Medical Association, the American Dental Association, Consumers Research (when Matthews was there), the Food and Drug Administration, and the Federal Trade Commission showing that these products advertised falsely and fraudulently. Nobody in Washington had to study this up with PWA funds; there it was in

a newspaper in 1932—seven years ago.

But Matthews says these dirty organizations are all aiding the government in its wicked and abominable work of taking action recently against false labels and advertisements. A large part of our population, as yet momentarily innocent of Communist inroads, has been influenced by these nefarious consumer pressure groups. But it would take huge funds for Mattie to fill the picture in completely, though he'd love to do it.

Now we wonder whether Mattie would regard the railroads as a private enterprise? He might read Crawford's *The Pressure Boys* and see what he thinks then. We wonder if he would consider Eastman and other distinguished certified non-Communists to be Communists because they have advocated the end of fictional free enterprise in this sector and Government control and operation of railroads?

### Consumers Aren't Nuts, Mattie

WE wonder, in fact, if Mattie read C. B. Larrabee's article in *Printer's Ink* for November 29, 1939. Larrabee is managing editor of this outstanding advertising journal. He said consumer groups gained while advertisers beat the bushes for witches and that advertisers who thought the consumer problem could be squelched by witch hunts were nuts. He said a thing isn't silly just because a consumer suggested it and that consumer demands should not be viewed emotionally. He said several concerns had adopted honest, informative labeling and had prospered. He also wrote this, for Mattie's information:

"The loudest opposition to certain consumer demands comes from those who are most likely to be damaged if the consumer gets what he wants. . . . In pretty nearly every trade association there are companies that have no business to be in business." Yet they often become leaders in trade association activity, though their interests are not the best interests of the industry. Is Larrabee a Communist? Is *Printer's Ink* Communistic?

Was Mattie there when Alfred T. Falk in late October, he of the Advertising Federation of America, told the One Hundred Club of New York that consumers mainly wanted infor-

mation that would help them spend their dollars more effectively, and greater consideration of their needs by manufacturers and dealers? Was Mattie there when Edgar Kobak, Vice-President of Lord & Thomas, told the Associated Grocery Manufacturers the day before that advertisers should thank consumer critics who chasten them, help them correct errors, and make them "hue to the line?"

Like as not Mattie wasn't there. Like as not Mattie don't know that Commissioner of Agriculture George B. Loring in 1883 said that American consumers should be protected against fraud. Like as not he don't know that Commissioner Le Duc in 1880 wrote: "Under the present standard of commercial morality, nothing is safe from adulteration. . . . Merely prohibitory laws are of little value against human ingenuity and cupidity." Naw; Mattie never heard of that. Does he even know who Harvey W. Wiley was? Now Mattie, go crawl back under the bed like a good boy.

### Political Notes

*We're for Dewey.* After reading and re-reading Thomas E. Dewey's recent Minneapolis speech—"when he threw his diaper in the ring" (Ickes)—we find we have not lost our enthusiasm for the bright young man. We're still for him—for District Attorney of New York County for the next four years.

*It's Your Choice—and You're Stuck With It.* The best the mired Republican party can offer the American people for 1940 is a choice of Vandenberg, Dewey, Taft or Bricker. The Four Musketeers of Reaction all stand on the same platform: "We'll balance the budget even if we have to bust the country."

*Martin Dies—You're It!* Father Coughlin has come out for the Texan for President. Only the other week he was for Garner. The Democrats would be wise to nominate Dies, for it would be foolish to ignore the support of a man who carries around nine million votes in his vest pocket. Remember Lemke!

*Stop the Boycott!* It's now o.k. for Americans to buy German goods. The Communists no longer want us to boycott Nazi exports—it helps the imperialist aggressor nations, England and France, and injures the cause of those two peace-loving countries, Germany and Russia.