

Appendix

Special Committee To Investigate Un-American Activities

SPEECH

OF

HON. MARTIN DIES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 11, 1941

Mr. DIES. Mr. Speaker, this committee has been in existence nearly 3 years. When we began our work Congress gave us \$25,000. It was confidently expected by some people that the committee would be ridiculed out of existence and that with the small appropriation of \$25,000 it would be impossible for us to make a success of the investigation. Every attempt was made to deceive the American people with reference to the work of the committee. We were compelled to meet one false charge after another.

I do not want to be unkind to the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN]. I do not want to lose my head and say something that is unkind, but it seems to me that when Members serve in this House year in and year out, knowing full well what our mutual problems are and the difficulties we encounter in serving the constituencies we represent, that the least we have the right to expect of any Member is that he refrain from impugning the motives and the integrity of the Members of this House, no matter how disappointed or bitter he may feel.

My father served in this House for a period of 10 years. He went out of public life because he had the courage of his convictions. He told me before his death that this was the greatest legislative body on earth and that the Members of Congress were unexcelled in their loyalty and devotion to this Republic.

I have never said that our committee is infallible or that we have been perfect, but I do say to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. SABATH] and to the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] that we have exposed numerous Fascist and Nazi organizations. No one can fairly charge that we have shown any partiality in the investigation and exposure of any un-American group or organization. When we began our work the bund had 100,000 members in the United States and 100 local bund posts. As a result of our exposure, the bund has been discredited.

The American League for Peace and Democracy, which was in existence when the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] served on the McCormack committee, at one time boasted a membership of 7,000,000 people. It was under the control of Moscow and had as its

original program the recommendation that its members secure positions in munition factories, navy yards, and in national-defense industries for the purpose of sabotage. This organization, which was active in the gentleman's city and in the cities of the East, deceived many gullible and unthinking Americans. This organization was in existence when the gentleman was on the McCormack committee. Why, then, did he not expose it? I will tell you why.

Mr. DICKSTEIN rose.

Mr. RANKIN of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

The SPEAKER. The Chair sustains the point of order. The gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] must retain his seat.

Mr. DIES. No; I am not going to cast any insinuations on the motives of any Member of this House. I believe the Members of this House are honest and patriotic. I merely say to the gentleman that perhaps his views and his ideas of conducting an investigation of un-American and subversive propaganda and activities may not coincide with those of the majority of our committee. We believe that it is our duty to expose all un-American activities. We have not hesitated to expose organizations that are primarily concerned with the dissemination of hatred against the Jewish race. When William Dudley Pelley was disseminating a million pieces of literature throughout the country for the purpose of spreading racial hatred, and when he was receiving contributions from people in many States in this Union, did we hesitate to expose him and drive him out of business? As a result of our exposure, he was compelled to fold up his silver-shirted legion and go out of business. Did we hesitate to expose the Kyffhauserbund, with headquarters in Philadelphia and with posts scattered throughout this country? We did not. As a result of this exposure, many of the posts went out of existence.

I can cite many instances of Fascist and Nazi organizations that have been exposed by the committee and either destroyed by the publicity or largely discredited. Only recently we issued the White Papers, which constitutes the most thorough and far-reaching exposure of German propaganda activities that has ever been brought about by any agency of government at home or abroad.

More than a year ago I warned the people of the United States that South America was overrun with Nazi, Italian, and Communist agents. I had received information from sources in South America that I knew to be dependable. My warning was ridiculed by representatives of South American countries and by some people in the United States. The facts which I revealed were denied. Subsequent events, however, have proved that I was right and that I did not ex-

aggerate the situation. Our committee has made no distinction between the kind of foreign ideology which an organization advocates.

I have sought to ignore certain personal statements that have been made. Last year a group of Members of Congress and some Government officials met, and at this meeting they read documents purporting to link my name with William Dudley Pelley. I was then sick at home in Texas. I had been in bed for 6 weeks, under the care of a doctor, and I learned, to my amazement, that some Members of this House who had served with me in the House, and who professed to be my friends, had been present at this meeting when these letters were read, discussed, and passed around, and the question of how to use these letters for the purpose of destroying me was considered. Following this meeting a Member of this House stood on this floor at a time when I was unable to defend myself and read these letters into the RECORD. These letters were widely publicized throughout the United States and my congressional district. As a result of this I was bitterly attacked by some people as pro-Nazi. Then, finally, the whole thing was exposed as a forgery, and the man who forged the letters was convicted, it is true. But what happened to the man who gave \$104 to buy the letters—Mr. Gardiner Jackson—the man who sat in the Executive Mansion conferring with the President during 30 or 40 minutes that had been set aside by the President for the purpose of conferring with me after I had traveled with my family to Washington for that specific purpose? What happened to those who aided and abetted David Mayne in the publication of these forged documents? The slightest investigation would have revealed to these men that these documents were forged. In fact, there were certain facts that should have put them on notice that the documents were not genuine.

Mr. HOOK. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DIES. No; I am not going to engage in a personal dispute with the gentleman. I am simply setting forth the facts. I have never attacked the gentleman, although many of his constituents urged me to appear in his district. I refused to do this. I am not here to attack you. I merely point out to you and the gentlemen of this House that there is a constant effort to malign me and members of this committee, to cast insinuations upon the motives that actuate us, and to spread reports, such as one Member of Congress who recently made the ridiculous charge that I had made \$100,000 since this committee began out of writings and lectures. Please permit me to set forth the facts. It is true that I have written articles for mag-

azines, newspapers, and that I recently wrote a book styled "The Trojan Horse in America." It is also true that I have made 160 speeches since this investigation began. There were a number of reasons that impelled me to write and speak on the subject of our investigation. In the first place, it was imperative that I combat and expose the lying propaganda that was spread throughout the country by subversive groups and their dupes against the committee and answer the attacks that were made upon me. You recall that for several years after the committee began, a torrent of abuse and misrepresentation was turned loose upon the committee. You will recall that a number of prominent Government officials aided this campaign to discredit the investigation. Cabinet officers, such as Secretary Ickes and Madam Perkins, attacked the committee and misrepresented the facts. There was an organized and well-planned campaign to destroy the investigation. This campaign almost succeeded and, in the opinion of many people, would have succeeded if I had not exposed it over the radio, the lecture forum, and through the columns of magazines and newspapers.

Another reason for my decision to write and speak on this subject was the urgent necessity to acquaint the American people with the truth about the enemies within this country. There was a great deal of ignorance on the subject in America as well as in the democracies across the water. This ignorance spelled disaster in the countries overrun by Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler. It would have been serious in the United States if we had not succeeded in informing and arousing the people. In proof of this statement it is only necessary for me to call your attention that millions of unthinking and gullible people in this country were duped by the "fifth column." Many of these people have appeared before the committee and confessed that they had innocently aided the "fifth column" in this country in various ways. Unfortunately, some of the newspaper reporters and columnists were bitterly opposed to the committee because they had been duped into joining some of the Communist and Nazi front organizations in America. Consequently some of the reports of the committee's hearings were garbled in the press and there was a constant effort to distort the facts brought out by the committee for the purpose of discrediting the investigation. I could cite many concrete examples of this. It was, therefore, imperative that we devise some means of getting the truth to the people. The National Broadcasting Co. cooperated with me in every way possible. I was given many opportunities to speak over its facilities. While this helped, it was wholly insufficient because many of the broadcasting stations affiliated with the National Broadcasting Co. would not carry the speeches and none of the stations would advertise the speeches in advance. It was, therefore, necessary to write articles for magazines, newspapers, and to publish the book setting forth the facts. Some magazines and newspapers were not accustomed to paying fees for

this type of writing; consequently I wrote a number of articles for which I received no fee. Other magazines will not accept articles from anyone without paying the customary fees. Consequently for some of the articles I wrote I received remuneration.

Another reason why I decided to speak throughout the country was to enable me to visit as many sections of the country as possible and learn first-hand what the situation was. By visiting these numerous sections I have been able to obtain a vast amount of information and facts that I could not have gotten in any other way. The committee has never been able to afford more than seven or eight investigators on an average, and naturally these investigators have been compelled to confine their activities to the principal cities of the country. Consequently, there are many sections of the Nation that these investigators have never been able to visit. Had I made these trips to all of these numerous towns and cities and charged the expenses to the committee it would have depleted our much-needed funds and also subjected me to criticism and misrepresentation. It would have been charged that I had no right to spend the committee's funds for these purposes and that I had some political motive for making these trips. As a matter of fact, some of the most valuable information that our committee has obtained has come as a result of my appearance in the various sections of the country. People who will not send information through the mails or who never have an opportunity to contact the agents or members of the committee will come to my room at the hotel or contact me after the speaking and furnish me with information. Some of the information is, of course, of no value, but much of it is important. I have been able to make personal contacts in many towns and communities of this country and to establish a personal interest in the work of the committee. Consequently there are thousands of patriotic people in America who are constantly on the lookout for information or leads that may prove of value to the committee. If we were compelled to depend upon the small staff that we have had to work with, due to our limited funds, we would be greatly handicapped. But because we have encouraged patriotic people everywhere to give us information, we have been able to accomplish for a few hundred thousand dollars what would ordinarily require millions of dollars. As proof of this compare what the committee has done in the way of gathering information on this subject with what other agencies of the Federal Government have done with their large personnel.

As I have said, since the investigation began I have made 160 speeches throughout the country. For 105 speeches I received no honoraria, and in 35 percent of these speeches I was not even reimbursed for my expenses. However, there are a number of organizations that are accustomed to paying to all speakers an honorarium. This has become an established practice in many sections of the

country. These organizations have an annual budget to take care of honoraria paid to speakers.

I accepted fees for writing some magazine articles and honoraria for lectures because of several reasons. First, it was customary, as I have pointed out, for these magazines to pay every contributor a fee and for these organizations to pay every speaker an honorarium. Second, because it was necessary for me to secure funds to finance expenses incurred by me in connection with the delivery of these speeches. In many instances it was necessary that I take my family with me to cities where I spoke and also to cities where I conducted executive hearings for the committee. We could not be separated day in and day out. My wife was constantly frightened by threatening notes and the fear of having our children kidnaped. I could not charge the traveling expenses of my family to the committee, and, in many instances, I paid out of proceeds derived by me from speaking and writing a part of traveling expenses incurred in connection with the committee work. In cases where I spoke without receiving an honorarium I could not charge to the particular organization sponsoring my speech the traveling expenses of my family.

There was another reason I accepted fees for writings and honoraria for speeches. When this committee began, the Committee on Accounts gave our committee \$25,000 to defray the expenses of the investigation. It was confidently expected by some people that with this paltry sum it would be impossible for the investigation to be successful. I took money out of my own pocket and spent it on the investigation—not once but many times—and I have the evidence to prove it. As evidence that I was spending more money because of this investigation than I received from my congressional salary I wish to point to the fact that I was compelled to borrow upon my salary and today any Member of this House can go to the Sergeant at Arms office and he will find that one bank has an assignment that will take \$433 of my salary until June, and another bank has an assignment that will take \$200 for some months to come. My telephone and telegraph bills often amount to \$150 or \$200 a month which I paid out of my own pocket.

Not only were there compelling reasons for me to accept fees for writings and honoraria for speeches but I had many precedents to justify my decision. For instance, the President of the United States has written articles for magazines since he was elected. I have been reliably informed that he received \$35,000 for three articles which he wrote for one magazine.

The President has also written books since he was elected and has no doubt received considerable royalties for such books. Many of the Cabinet members and top-ranking Government officials, as well as some Members of the House and Senate, have also written numerous magazine articles and books for which they received fees. The wife of the President, Mrs. Roosevelt, has written many articles for magazines. She has

advertised for Pond's cream and receives a large consideration for her daily column, My Day. I recently saw an authentic list of Cabinet members, Government officials, and Members of the House and Senate who have appeared on lecture forums and received honoraria. It is a long list and includes many of our Cabinet members, Government officials, and Members of Congress. For instance, Mrs. Roosevelt has received large sums of money for lecturing throughout the country. I have been advised that she has been paid as much as \$1,500 for one lecture. She says she is contributing the proceeds from these lectures to charity, and I believe that she is. Cabinet members, such as former Secretary of Commerce, Harry Hopkins, and Secretary of the Interior Ickes have lectured for fees. I could cite many examples to show that Members of Congress over a long period of time have supplemented their salaries in this manner. I am not condemning them. I know the life that the average Member lives. I have traveled over this country and seen the derelicts of public service. I have seen men in this House who for many years devoted their energy and ability to the service of our country and I have seen them retired to private life without any business or income and in great poverty. All of us appreciate the difficulty of saving money upon a Congressman's salary when Members are compelled to meet many demands that are not made upon men in private life.

I have not, therefore, condemned any Member of the House or Senate because he accepted honoraria for lectures delivered. But because of the nature of the investigation and because I knew that there are those who are constantly seeking to find an opportunity to discredit me in the public mind, I wanted to make clear and specific in such terms and in such a manner that no one could ever question it that I did not propose to use the net proceeds from writing and speaking for my own personal benefit. Consequently, I published a statement which clearly sets forth the whole conditions under which I wrote and spoke. This statement was publicized in Liberty magazine, in the newspapers, and over the radio. I want to read my statement which was published in Liberty magazine January 13, 1941, for the benefit of a few who have been whispering things which were untrue and unjustified:

It is equally clear to me that it is my duty to take advantage of every legitimate opportunity offered by the radio, magazines, newspapers, and public forums to acquaint the people with all the facts with reference to subversive activities and propaganda in the United States. Where it is customary for magazines and forums to pay writers and speakers a fee, I shall accept it, but only for the purpose of using all such proceeds for some patriotic cause and to inform the people with reference to the enemies within our country. In other words, I do not propose that the proceeds from lectures and writings dealing with this investigation, and the facts brought to light by it, shall be used by me for my personal benefit. While some public officials accept honoraria and use them for their personal use and benefit, and while there is nothing illegal about this, I question its propriety under the present circumstances, and I do not want to do any-

thing that would tend to cheapen this great cause and cast a cloud upon the motives which prompt my utterances and activities. I shall consult with leaders of patriotic organizations with reference to the most effective use that these proceeds can be put to in order to promote Americanism in this country.

[Here the gavel fell.]

Mr. RANKIN of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman 10 additional minutes.

Mr. DIES. It is, of course, my intention to carry out this promise to the letter. Naturally, I shall deduct from the gross proceeds all legitimate expenses incurred by me in connection with speaking tours, writing articles, and in connection with the investigation. The balance of the proceeds will be disposed of in the exact manner as set forth in this Liberty magazine article.

Subsequent events have more than justified my decision to take advantage of every legitimate opportunity to inform and arouse the people. I have received 2,800 invitations to speak in every section of the country. I have had splendid audiences and, in many instances, the auditoriums have not been large enough to accommodate the crowds. This has shown the widespread and keen interest of the people in the investigation and their eager desire to learn the truth. It has shown that there is a real need to hammer home the truth to the people of the country. It is my firm conviction that had I not taken advantage of every opportunity to arouse and inform the people, the "fifth column" and their dupes would have been successful in destroying or discrediting the investigation. I am also convinced that this crusade has been successful in frustrating many of the plans of the "fifth column" in this country. No one can deny that the country has been thoroughly aroused and, to a large extent, informed with respect to this problem. Many Members of the House and Senate and many State officials have joined in urging me to make these speeches. Practically every patriotic and civic organization in this country has urged me to speak under its auspices. In many instances these organizations have taken the position that it is my duty as chairman of the committee to accept as many of these invitations as possible.

So far as the future of this committee is concerned, I say now what I have said every time that it has been continued, that it is a question for the House of Representatives to decide. It would bring to me a deep sense of personal relief if you terminated it, for I can say to you that never in all my life have I passed through a period of stress and tension equal to the 3 years that I have served as chairman of this committee. I have constantly had to watch people who have sought to trap us, who have used every device to discredit the investigation, and through it all we have succeeded in conducting an honest, fearless, and nonpartisan investigation. We have said to the country that we would not become partisan and that we would not "crook the pregnant hinges of the knee where thrift may follow fawning," and

that our committee would expose all political organizations under foreign control and every guilty individual, regardless of the party with which he was affiliated.

And may I say, Mr. Speaker—and I address these remarks to you and to the President of the United States—that in your national-defense industries, in your navy yards, and in the industries essential to your preparedness, you have thousands of people now working who have been active in political organizations that our committee has shown to be clearly under the control of the totalitarian powers? We have called attention to this fact many times. With sufficient personnel we can submit to the appropriate agencies, as we have done on several occasions, the names and occupations of such persons. Because our committee has been constantly exposing this fact, many of these people have been deterred from the commission of acts of sabotage. Had we not widely publicized their aims and purposes, many Communist-inspired and instigated strikes would have already crippled our national-defense industries. Through exposure we have frustrated their plans. Our committee has named the Communist-controlled organizations which have penetrated some of our vital industries. We have shown that Communists are entrenched in positions of leadership and we have publicized the names of these Communist leaders. And when critics talk about cooperation between our committee and other agencies of the Government, they fail to mention the fact that not a day passes when agents of different departments—the F. B. I., the Military and Naval Intelligence Service—are not in our offices securing information which we obtained at a time when this Government had no agency engaged in doing the same thing. It was possible for us to obtain information 2 and 3 years ago which no Government agency can now secure. We have, therefore, built the most valuable record of the enemies within this country which any country has ever possessed.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to express to members of my committee my very deep gratitude and to express to the Members of this House my sincere thanks for their loyalty to this committee. It is an encouraging fact that through it all, when we have been denounced, misrepresented, and maligned by "fifth columnists" and their dupes, and by those who have misunderstood this question and the seriousness of it, that the House of Representatives with courage and patriotism has seen fit to continue the investigation and support us in a policy that is designed for one purpose and one alone, and that is the protection of the United States. I plead with this Congress and with the President, let us not make the mistake that was made in France when the People's Front, initiated by and controlled from Moscow, undermined the national unity of France, drained her resources, and left the country relatively defenseless before the blitzkrieg of Hitler's invading horde. It was the People's Front, composed of radicals of every shade and description, and

led by militant and aggressive Communists, which promoted continual strikes, sit-downs, and slow-downs and prevented the French industries from competing with the Nazi industrial system. It was the People's Front, which included professional reformers and misguided idealists and aided by Nazis and Fascists, which was in a large measure contributory to the undoing of France. And may I say to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. SABATH] that when you seek to make a distinction between Communists and Nazis you are not acquainted with the real situation. Since Hitler and Stalin formed their unholy alliance, Communists and Nazis have been in active collaboration and cooperation in the United States. I can see no distinction between brands of totalitarianism. To my mind all of them are based upon the materialistic concept of life and upon an ideology that preaches exaltation of the state at the expense of the individual. Any ideology that would deprive you and me of the right to live free, to worship our God in accordance with the dictates of our consciences, any ideology that is predicated upon the atheistic philosophy that the state must be everything and the individual nothing, whether it masquerades under the name of communism, nazi-ism, or fascism, is un-American and is diametrically opposed to all our country stands for. [Applause.]

Mr. McCORMACK. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DIES. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. McCORMACK. Reference has been made to the legislation, which is very important. I have had experience as chairman of the committee which preceded the gentleman's committee. I have a very firm conviction that it is very difficult to draft legislation which affects personal liberty, because when you are going after those who abuse constitutional rights, the legislation is likely to enter into and affect real Americans in the exercise of their rights.

Mr. DIES. That is true.

Mr. McCORMACK. And I have always been of the opinion that while legislation is important, it has to be very carefully drafted. The most important function that can be performed by a committee of this kind is to expose fearlessly these un-American activities.

Mr. DIES. That is true. May I say that, of course, we are dealing with a very difficult subject. If we were to come before this House with repressive legislation that seeks to strike down an organization because it is un-American but at the same time may injuriously affect a bona fide organization or abridge the Bill of Rights, how many Members of the House would be in favor of supporting it? I may say to the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] that our committee has done more to resist, to oppose, and to abate racial and religious prejudice and hatred that some people are seeking to spread for the purpose of building up some form of totalitarianism in the United States than any committee that Congress has ever established.

While I am speaking frankly I might as well say that the President and I have

not always seen eye to eye. I do not say that I am always right. I have never placed myself upon a pedestal of perfection. When this committee began, the President did not approve of it. He and I had a conversation down at the White House, and I publicized that conversation, and it was never denied. I think today the President has changed his attitude. I believe that today the President realizes that the presence of numerous agents of totalitarian countries, not only in the national-defense industries but in some instances in government itself, constitutes a continuing menace to our whole national-defense program.

If I had my way, as chairman of this committee, I would drive every such agent of a foreign power out of every national-defense industry in which he works. [Applause.] I would not sit idly by in the hope that I could watch them and detect some of them in the commission of an offense. There is some legislation that can help and the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] can be of great assistance. It may be interesting to know that, according to the evidence before our committee, 90 percent of the 100,000 members of the bund were born in foreign countries and emigrated to the United States under our laws. It may be interesting to you to know that Earl Browder, secretary of the Communist Party in the United States, testified some years ago that only 10 percent of the members of the Communist Party were born in the United States and 90 percent were born in foreign lands.

I do not mean to cast insinuations upon the millions of patriotic people of foreign stock. I realize perfectly well that they cannot be condemned because of an unassimilated and un-American minority, but I am saying to the gentleman from New York [Mr. DICKSTEIN] that instead of constantly condemning this committee, instead of constantly casting aspersions upon the motives of his fellow Members, if he will begin to strengthen the immigration and deportation laws and meet the issue fearlessly, he will aid us greatly in saying to all these people, "You cannot come to the United States; we will not allow people infected with the virus of totalitarianism to enter the United States and become a part of our population." If the gentleman will further assist in the writing of legislation for the purpose of deporting such people, if he will apply himself to that and not to the uncharitable task of seeking to make life more difficult for the Members of this House who have their hands full as it is, who are subject to enough misrepresentation in the normal course of their public service, without having their colleagues to add to it, he would be doing a great service. [Applause.]

Mr. STARNES of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DIES. I yield.

Mr. STARNES of Alabama. In order to come down to the point at issue will the gentleman please state to the House that there is absolutely no foundation in fact for the statement the gentleman from New York made that 110 organiza-

tions had the key to the back door of the Dies committee.

Mr. DIES. Why the gentleman knows that every Nazi publication in this country has been bitterly denouncing this committee. He has read the publications of the bund, the Kyffhauserbund and the German-American Alliance which has 300,000 members in the city of Chicago alone. He knows these organizations have repeatedly denounced this committee and have been as vociferous in their opposition to our work as Communist groups. The gentleman knows perfectly well that no committee of this House would ever betray the Nation it serves, and that no President would ever enter into an alliance with the enemies of his country. [Applause.] I should think the gentleman would have more confidence in the integrity and patriotism of his fellow colleagues.

Mr. DICKSTEIN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield on this question?

Mr. DIES. No. I do not want to engage in controversy with the gentleman.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York must understand that the Chair cannot recognize him under the circumstances.

Mr. DIES. I want to conclude this speech and I want to conclude it by saying simply that if you see fit to continue this committee—and that is a matter entirely in your hands; I have never solicited it, I did not appear before the Rules Committee, made no request for it; I made a speech over the radio in which I set forth my own views very plainly—if you see fit to entrust us with the responsibility of carrying on this work, insofar as I am concerned, and I believe I speak for this committee when I say this, I can assure you we will place our country and our country's welfare above every other consideration; and we will do our duty untrammelled from any source. We propose to carry out the mission, the task, and the function you have given us. If anyone is laboring under any other impression than that, then it is his duty to vote against the continuation of the committee. I thank you. [Applause, the Members rising.]