

Anti-Semitic and Fascist Organizations

Today in the United States there are some 800 organizations that are pro-Nazi and pro-Fascist. The Department of Justice presented Dies with an 8000 page report on these organizations and their activities, but it was never put to any use. Dies was careful to avoid going too far into anti-Semitism and fascism in the United States. His method of "investigating" them consisted of sending a staff man with a court reporter to the organization's headquarters with instructions to tell the organization that the "committee wanted to find out the facts with reference to their activities". Naturally, the fascists and anti-Semites refused to answer or reveal their records, as Dies admits, and thereupon they were dropped. (p.2339)

He was very considerate of the "rights" of these organizations. He wanted to make sure "they were told the committee did not assume that they were un-American, did not have any preconceived views on the matter, but that we wanted to afford them an opportunity to set forth their side of the case." Compare this tender respect with Dies treatment of the CIO, Gov. Murphy, Gov. Benson, the New Deal in general, and the entire liberal movement, which on the word of a criminal, a crackpot or a labor spy he was ready to condemn without the chance of their setting forth "their side of the case".

Dies continually shut off testimony about anti-Semitic organizations. Page after page of the record carries his remarks that "that's enough of that" or "that will be enough", when investigator Metcalfe tried to introduce into the record evidence of the fascist and anti-Semitic propaganda of these organizations. (pp. 2344 ff.)

Dies refused to go into the Ku Klux Klan saying: "There is no necessity of going into that. That has been gone into in days gone by."

Dies, who found it so easy to believe that the New Deal, the CIO, the American League for Peace and Democracy, and the International Labor Defense and hundreds of other movements and organizations were inspired and controlled by Moscow, could not be convinced that organizations named by his investigator were pro-Nazi and anti-Semitic. Not only was this true in the case of Winrod, already mentioned, but also in the case of the National Liberty Party, of the state of Washington. Not even this outfit's proven connection with the Nazi Bund and the "American Fascists", another similar organization led by George W Christians, was enough to convince Dies, who remained skeptical even after he was shown photostatic copies of letters exchanged by the leader of the National Labor Party, Frank Clark, a well-known anti-Semite, and Mrs Lois de Lafayette Washburn, equally well known for the same thing. (p.2379) Reading from a pamphlet put out by this organization, Dies said he "could not see

anything here. . . antiracial or antireligious," the excerpts which he read contained such phrases, typical of Goebbels and Hitler, as these: "Revise the textbooks. Rehabilitate America's lost culture and prosperity. . . No life is safe until Christians are safe from slaughter in their own native land."

Dies showed that he did not want to link up anti-Semitism with Nazi-ism. For example, (p.2340), he tried to bring out that "what these organizations have in common with the Nazi and Fascist ideology is racial or religious hatred. I mean by that there is no evidence other than racial and religious hatred of any fascistic tendencies on their part is there?" This was one leading question which didn't get the right answer for Dies, because the witness, Metcalfe, replied: "In some cases we find it goes further than that." Dies never tried to find out which cases. He could have found out very easily by taking Pelley's Silver Shirts as an outstanding and typical example. Pelley's writings are full of such sentiments as these: "Adolph Hitler is the greatest personality in Europe."

"Germany, Jew-purged, becomes the ideal country."

"America must join the trend toward Fascism as a matter of world momentum."

"We are moving towards Fascism in 7 league boots."

"America may undergo a brief bath of violence. . . But it will be the same cleansing bath that awakened Italy, that awakened Hungary, that awakened Spain, that awakened Germany. It will awaken thousands of Americans to a realization of the menace."

Or, Dies could have referred to the McCormack committee report which declares, in reference to the Silver Shirts, that "overtures were made to Nazi groups and Nazi leaders in this country. . .The Silver Shirts are patterned after the Storm Troop of Germany."

Again, Dies showed he had no intentions of making a real investigation of Nazi activities in American when he subpoenaed George Sylvester Viereck, a well known for his intimacy with Nazi leaders and activities, an admitted Nazi propagandist, "admirer of Hitler" and "friend of Hitler Germany." Viereck was allowed to leave, in spite of the subpoena on a "gentleman's agreement" that he would return. He did return, but never appeared before the committee. (McCormack Committee hearings Pt. 7 p.89,99)

Three German-American workers at the Brooklyn Navy Yard were secretly questioned by two members of the Dies Committee in August, 1938, and after a short inquiry were excused, without any public announcement by the committee. These workers, all of them marine engineers with access to blueprints of Government ships, were known to have made trips to Germany after the completion and trial run of two U.S. cruisers at which they were present.

AMERICAN FASCIST ORGANIZATIONS MINIMIZED.

Steele's 187 pages of a "documentary evidence" on "subversive" activities (V. 1, pp. 519-706) contains just two short paragraphs on native American fascist organizations, and they are inserted with the effect of minimizing their activities.

"In 1934 there existed in the United States a number of org-
anizations/^{which} called themselves 'American' fascists, but it is understood that they are no longer in existence." (Vol. 1, p.658)

Steele has a reference to the Silver Shirts which says, "the movement is rather small in comparison with other movements." (V.1, p. 706)

Sullivan's report minimizes anti-semitic and fascist activities in this way: "Jewish organizations naturally are concerned about the activities of the German-American Bund and the so-called Silver Shirts, but this concern is not shared by any other agency with whom I contacted. For the most part, the law enforcement groups and patriotic representatives seemed to think that this great agitation over the activities of the Bund is but a smoke screen to take the people's mind off the real menace, Communism and those affiliated with it."

(LMP L - p. 12)
Report