

WHAT OTHERS SAY

IT APPEARS that the House of Representatives will authorize the continuation of the Dies Committee.

If funds are appropriated for continuing the investigations, it will be in recognition of the general belief on the part of the public that there is justification for bringing to light subversive activities.

But there are serious issues involved in investing the Dies Committee as at present constituted with this responsibility. While the objective may be sound, the past methods of the committee have not been.

Does the House of Representatives intend to place its stamp of approval upon:

1. The flagrant disregard of the rules of evidence?
2. The practice giving irresponsible and hysterical individuals an opportunity to slander persons who have no opportunity for defending themselves?
3. Practices which, in effect, result in trials without jury?
4. Tactics which are aimed at headlines for Representative Dies without regard for the damage done to innocent persons?

It should be kept in mind that in the present state of public opinion mere charges of communistic sympathies are sufficient to injure an individual's standing, and to impose penalties that are as harsh as a fine or prison sentence. The arousing of fear and suspicion without basis will not make any worthwhile contribution to the problem of subversive activities.

The Dies committee supposedly is interested in both fascistic and communistic activities. However, it appears to have labored under the false assumption that to be a fascist one must be a uniformed adherent of the Nazi Bund or the Italian Black Shirts.

SUCH IS not the case. If this country is endangered by fascism, it will not be the type of fascism that parades under the flag of a foreign nation and owes allegiance to a foreign dictator. It will be a type of fascism that cloaks itself in the Stars and Stripes, but which is as inimical to the fundamental principles of this nation as the bund or the comintern.

There are fascistic manifestations in this country which the Dies committee has not touched upon. They are to be found in the activities of persons and organizations which preach racial hatred; which would deny the right of free speech, free assembly and the right of trial by jury to persons having views other than their own; which cloak themselves under patriotic names, but have no conception of the true meaning of Americanism.

Isn't it possible that a committee really interested in un-American activities should give some attention to the Mrs. Dillings who slander their fellow Americans; to Mayor Frank Hague; to Father Coughlin, who has won the praise of Germany and Italy for his attacks on Jews and who uses the speeches of Dr. Goebbels as a source of information; to the Black Legion in the Midwest and the Ku Klux Klan in localities where it has been revived and to irresponsible vigilante groups?

There is reason to believe that the Dies committee as constituted has made questionable its fitness to investigate un-American activities by methods sometimes un-American themselves. If it is continued there should be safeguards to insure that in its efforts to preserve Americanism it does not undermine the things it should be strengthening. —From the Birmingham News.