

Dies Inquiry Wins Backing Of Committee

Extension for One Year Approved, and Bill Is Sent to House Floor
Sponsor Criticizes Official 'Harassing'

Says Study Encountered No Trouble Until It Attacked Communists

From the Herald Tribune Bureau

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2.—The House Rules Committee, acting after days of acrimonious hearings, voted a favorable report today on a resolution to renew for another year the House committee investigating un-American activities.

The vote, said to have been virtually unanimous, came after Representative Martin Dies, Democrat, of Texas, chairman of the investigating group, had presented his case in a successful effort to show that 90 per cent of the people approved the committee's efforts to disclose the extent of Communist, Fascist and Nazi activities in the United States.

Asserting that the opposition to continuance of the committee, expressed by certain members of the House who marched in relays before the Rules Committee, was engendered by "Communist" or "fellow traveler" agitation and misrepresentation, Mr. Dies said:

"No committee of the House, no matter who is chairman, will ever satisfy this group, and further, no committee can properly do its job if it is to be denounced and harassed by the executive departments of the government."

Passage Is Expected

As a result of the Rules Committee action, the resolution will be called up in the House tomorrow, where its adoption by a large majority is forecast after a turbulent debate.

Meanwhile, Representative Dies filed application for admission to practice before the bar of the Supreme Court so that he might intervene to file a brief in the deportation case of Joseph C. Strecker, of Hot Springs, Ark., brought because of Strecker's membership in the Communist party.

This case will be argued Feb. 9, and upon its decision the Department of Labor is resting its deportation proceedings against Harry Bridges, West Coast leader of the maritime unions in the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The Dies committee report has demanded the deportation of Bridges and has accused the Labor Department of picking the "weaker" Strecker case to avoid being forced to act against Bridges.

Testimony and records from the Labor Department embodied in the Dies report also constitute a part of the impeachment charges preferred by Representative J. Parnell Thomas, Republican, of New Jersey, against Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor, now pending before the House Judiciary Committee.

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Claims Open Hostility

Without more than mentioning President Roosevelt's denunciation of the investigating committee, Representative Dies asserted that executive departments of the government, requested by Congress to co-operate, had been openly hostile. On the other hand, he charged, the so-called civil liberties committee of the Senate, headed by Senator Robert M. La Follette jr., Progressive, of Wisconsin, had received assistance in the loans of Department of Justice investigators and others which cost the government more than \$150,000.

When asked if Congress might not retaliate in the matter by withholding appropriations used in this manner, Representative Dies said that Representative Joe Starnes, Democrat, of Alabama, a member of the Dies committee and also of the House Appropriations Committee, had a list of the "items" for presentation to the appropriations groups.

Denying that the committee had been used to "play politics" in Michigan and California, as charged by members from those states before the Rules Committee, Mr. Dies said that as long as the committee stuck to alleged "Fascist" and "Nazi" groups there was no criticism.

"When we began to investigate the Communist activities within the C. I. O., the Michigan sit-down strikes and conditions on the Pacific Coast the barrage against the committee began," he said, adding that

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he did not make any speeches to defend himself until after these attacks, one of which was made by Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of the Interior.

Representative Vito Marcantonio, American Laborite, of New York, provoked the hottest exchange in the Rules Committee today when he appeared to urge that the investigation be dropped. By way of preface to his remarks, he said he realized that nothing he could say would change the minds of the committee, since apparently "the Democratic majority in the House" had agreed to continue the inquiry.

"I object to that statement," said Representative John J. Dempsey, of New Mexico, a member of both the Rules and the Dies committees. The statement also brought sharp reprimand from Representative Eugene E. Cox, Democrat, of Georgia, who shot several questions at Mr. Marcantonio with a final query:

"Are you a Communist?"

"I'm a member of the American Labor party," said Representative Marcantonio. "I'm not a Communist, and any one who calls me a Communist lies."

"I'm not accusing you," said Representative Cox. "Had I accused you, in view of your statement, I'd have kicked you out of the room."

At this point, Representative Adolph Sabath, Democrat, of Illinois, chairman of the committee, implored the members to proceed in an orderly manner.

Ickes Speech Criticized

Earlier, Representative Cox had asserted that Secretary Ickes's speech characterizing Representative Dies as a "zany" had "boomeranged" to make the Texan "a national figure." This comment was occasioned by the statements of Representative Knute Hill, Democrat, of Washington, who had called the Dies speeches attacking Cabinet members "publicity stunts."

"You're attacking Martin Dies," interposed Representative Dempsey, "when as a matter of fact the Cabinet members started it."

"I think," put in Representative

Cox, "it's perfectly outrageous that Cabinet officers took the stump to attack the committee, an agent of Congress."

"They had a right to defend themselves," Chairman Sabath said.

"The Cabinet members have done one thing," said Mr. Cox. "They've made a national figure of Martin Dies."

A moment later, when Mr. Hill attempted to read from a brief opposing the committee, prepared by lawyers, Mr. Cox said: "Now, Mr. Hill, stand on your own feet."

He added that the next time a witness attacked Mr. Dies personally he would move to strike the testimony from the record.