

## The Dies Committee and Pearl Harbor

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. VITO MARCANTONIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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RADIO ADDRESS OF HON. VITO MARCANTONIO, OF NEW YORK

Mr. MARCANTONIO. Mr. Speaker, under leave to extend my remarks, I include the following speech I made recently over the radio:

Next week the House of Representatives will vote up or vote down a resolution continuing the life of the Dies committee. This committee was constituted by Congress to investigate un-American and subversive activities. Has this committee carried out the purposes for which Congress authorized its existence? Or has it failed? This, and this alone, should be the test in determining whether or not Congress should continue the existence of the Dies committee.

Therefore, it is essential that we examine the record and the facts, disregarding the publicity and the fanfare with which this committee has covered itself.

The most subversive activity in the history of our country is that which caused the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. Everyone today agrees that the sneak Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor would have been impossible had it not been for the effective activity of the Japanese fifth column.

I charge that the Dies committee failed utterly to expose or to exterminate these Japanese agents who brought such tragic consequences to our Nation.

Here are the facts. On January 28, 1942, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, Mr. MARTIN DIES, chairman of the Dies committee, stated: "In a few weeks our committee will release a full report on Japanese espionage and sabotage. This report will contain many official letters and will disclose that if our committee had been per-

mitted to reveal the facts last September, the tragedy of Pearl Harbor might have been averted."

Here we have from the mouth of Mr. DIES himself the admission that last September he possessed the facts which, if revealed last September, might have averted the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. If you will notice, Mr. DIES included the statement "if our committee had been permitted."

I charge, and everyone must agree, that it was his duty to have made this information available to every agency of the Government and that he should have utilized it in every manner possible so as to have "averted" the tragedy at Pearl Harbor.

I charge that he did not fulfill this duty. Mr. DIES, in the same speech, sought to convey the impression that the administration had not permitted him to discharge this duty. According to newspaper accounts of this speech, he attempted to place the blame specifically on the State Department and on the Department of Justice. In fact, at a public hearing before the Rules Committee, held on Wednesday, February 11, 1942, he again attempted to convey the impression that he had not been permitted to reveal the facts last September by the Department of Justice.

I have personally investigated this effort on the part of Mr. DIES to explain away his dereliction by his charge that the administration had prevented him from revealing, or in any manner utilizing, information which he had last September in relation to Japanese fifth-column and espionage activities around Pearl Harbor.

I now give to the Nation the results of my investigation, and I challenge contradiction of the following facts:

On the day prior to the Rules Committee hearing I spoke to Mr. Sumner Welles, Under Secretary of State, by telephone. I called his attention to the charge made by Mr. DIES in his speech of January 28, and referred Mr. Welles to page 829 of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, in which Mr. DIES' statement appears. Mr. Welles informed me that he would look into the matter and that he would communicate with me on the following day. On Wednesday, February 11, I phoned Mr. Welles in response to a message from him. Mr. Welles informed me, speaking for the Secretary of State and the State Department, that the statement made by Mr. DIES was not true. He stated, further, that on October 24, 1941, Mr. DIES had had a telephone conversation with Mr. Cordell Hull, and that the Secretary of State had in no manner whatsoever stated anything that justified Mr. DIES to make the charge contained in his speech.

Mr. Welles also informed me that he had conferred with President Roosevelt on this matter and that the President had directed him to state that I was authorized to say that the White House never prevented Mr. DIES from revealing the facts relative to Pearl Harbor, as Mr. DIES had charged in his speech.

I immediately conveyed this information to the members of the Rules Committee in the presence of Mr. DIES. Mr. DIES stated that he had a letter from the Department of Justice which would uphold his contention, and which he subsequently made public.

I have seen this letter. The letter merely advises Mr. DIES not to hold public hearings; and now I call your attention to the tremendous distinction which exists between merely holding public hearings and the revealing and the using of information in a manner so as to have prevented the disaster of Pearl Harbor. In order to make sure, I investigated the record on this matter with the Department of Justice, and again here are the facts. I have been informed by the Department of Justice that at no time has Mr. DIES turned over to it any of the information which he stated he had last September, the revelation of which would have averted the tragedy of Pearl Harbor.

In fact, in the early part of August 1941, Mr. DIES made a statement to the press to the effect that he had information about Japanese espionage activities and that he had turned it over to the Department of Justice.

On August 13, 1941, the then Acting Attorney General, Francis Biddle, wrote a letter to Mr. DIES, in which he stated that he had read what Mr. DIES had said. Mr. Biddle then called Mr. DIES' attention to the fact that Mr. DIES had not turned over this information and requested Mr. DIES to do so. On August 27, 1941, Mr. DIES replied by letter that the information should be obtained by the agents of the Department of Justice and that he would instruct the Dies committee agents on the west coast to cooperate with the Department agents. Thus, instead of giving the information, Mr. DIES gave the Attorney General mere evasion—commonly known as the good old-fashioned run-around.

The correspondence between the Attorney General and Mr. DIES therefore does not substantiate the statement made by Mr. DIES to alibi his dereliction of duty.

Therefore, what is the picture before us? The chairman of the Dies committee informs the Nation on January 28, 1942, in a speech to Congress, that last September, if his committee had been permitted to reveal his information then, the tragedy of Pearl Harbor might have been averted. The facts are that neither the President, nor the Secretary of State, nor the State Department, nor the Attorney General, nor the Department of Justice, in any manner, prevented the revelation of information which DIES states he had last September, and the use of which might have prevented the tragedy at Pearl Harbor. Mr. DIES knows very well that the law-enforcement agency of our Government is the Department of Justice. Why was this information, which he says he had last September, not turned over to the Department of Justice for appropriate action? Why did Mr. DIES give the Attorney General evasion instead of information when the Attorney General specifically requested this information which DIES had informed the press he had? Inasmuch as Mr. DIES stated that he had this information, inasmuch as he failed to turn it over to the proper authority, inasmuch as he failed to reveal or use it, inasmuch as no one prevented him from revealing it or using it, the Dies committee stands before the Nation as guilty of the grossest dereliction of duty in the history of our country. This dereliction proves beyond any peradventure of doubt the failure of this committee to carry out the purposes for which Congress authorized its existence.

I charge also that the Dies committee, and to be more specific, the utterances of its chairman, have been used against us by the enemy, Axis short-wave radio broadcasts. I now read to you from a letter written to Mr. MARTIN DIES by Mr. James Lawrence Fly, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, dated February 11, 1942. In this letter Mr. Fly informs Mr. DIES of the results of monitoring, recording, translating and analyzing the radio propaganda aimed at the Western Hemisphere by the enemy countries. Mr. Fly quotes to Mr. DIES the following: "Representative DIES, ardent supporter of Americanism, and opponent of subversive propaganda received as many favorable references in Axis propaganda to this country as any living American public figure. His opinions were quoted by the Axis without criticism at any time." Is it not remarkable that Mr. DIES should be presented to Americans by Nazi and Fascist propagandists as an authority who should be heeded? What a situation! Here, in Washington, Congress establishes a committee, \$385,000 of the American people's money is spent by this committee, the purpose of which is to fight subversive and fifth-column activities, to expose un-American propaganda, and what do

we find? The utterances of the chairman of this committee, made in his capacity as chairman, are used by the enemy as propaganda ammunition fired at the people of our country by the enemy short-wave broadcasts.

I therefore submit to you, my fellow Americans, on the record and on the facts, the Dies committee has failed in its duty and has become an instrument which the enemy now utilizes for its propaganda attacks on our people.

We are at war. We face a formidable and ruthless enemy. We cannot take any chances.

Yes, by all means, we must investigate, expose, and destroy the real subversives and the fifth column. The Dies committee, however, on the facts and on the record, has forfeited its right to do this job.