

WHY DIDN'T DIES INVESTIGATE PRO-NAZI EDWARD JAMES SMYTHE

On August 24, 1938, the Dies Committee received in evidence a letter from Edward J. Smythe, head of the Protestant War Veterans, correspondent of Gerald B. Winrod, George Deatherage, James True, William Dudley Pelley, and Nazi agent James W. Heeler-Hill, speaker at Bund meetings, model of the fascist pattern, which said:

"Now, the Jews are our greatest menace, at this time and they should and will be driven out of our political and economic life, otherwise we are doomed." (Hearings, August, 24, 1938, p. 2381)

On October 6, 1938, Arnold Gingrich, then editor of the magazine Ken, presented the Dies Committee with a letter written by Smythe to Nazi agent Ernst Goerner of Milwaukee, in which Smythe proclaimed:

"I don't associate with Jews whether those be Christianized, modernized, or just plain international revolutionary Jews, whether they have changed their names and religions that means nothing to me....I look upon a Jew as the born enemy of the Christian race, a parasite of the human family." (Hearings, p. 1234)

Dies did not seem to be alarmed by the statement.

Almost a year later, on August 29, 1939, Smythe was called to testify before the Dies Committee. Although a subpoena had been issued for him, he did not appear. But no action was taken against him.

Dies suppressed Smythe's correspondence and files which had been subpoenaed from the office of Donald Shea, head of the National Gentile League, after a colloquy with the Committee counsel.

In that discussion Dies showed a spirit of kindness toward the persons incriminated by the files, which he reserves for those of fascist leanings. He said:

"There are a great many letters here, including letters from prominent people. We ought to determine which ones we shall make public....because there have been so many people who have been duped in this country by the Nazi and Fascist organizations that if we should mention them all it would make a tremendous record....We can make this correspondence public at a later date." (Hearings, August, 29, 1939, p. 4274)

The correspondence has never been published.