

DIES AND THE SILVER SHIRTS.

Liberation, official organ of the Silvershirts, and edited by William Dudley Pelley, in its issue of Jan. 21, 1939, says: "There is no denying that Congressman Dies has done good work in congressionally authenticating what the Silvershirts have been screaming at the American public for five years."

The following ^{from the same issue,} are examples of what the Silvershirts have been "screaming at the American public":

"This cramming of the Austrian Jew Felix Frankfurter down the throats of 115 million indignant and protesting Americans . . . is by no means the major thing which International Jewry proposes to make us take -- and like!"

"The appointment (of Frankfurter) comes as merely one more bit of conclusive demonstration that the Overseas Gang is out to Judaize the United States. It is only one more convincing argument that the Russo-Campo Administration is RED -- clean down to its unwashed heels."

"Anti-semitism came in as the third most important event (in 1938). . . . We venture that this subject will occupy first place on the list of ten news events for 1939, especially in the United States. And we'll do our part!"

Another issue of Liberation throws some light on Dies' attitude towards the Silvershirts. Under date of Jan. 14, an ~~xxxxxx~~ article appears entitled: "Pelley's Persecution Means the Jew Question into Court," which says:

"It looked for a while last June as though everything were set to put the brush-off on Pelley. In fact a whole bevy of congressional Jewtopians gave eager assent to twenty-five thousand

dollars' being put behind the activities of a committee to 'investigate un-Americanism' -- on the understanding that its leading anti-Pelleyite, Sammy Dickstein, was to have direction of it. But when the committee emerged from the congressional hopper, Dickstein wasn't on it but Marty Dies was.

"And no matter how often the kept gentlemen of the press wrote it into their headlines, and tacked it onto the end of Martie's radio speeches, that Pelley and his Silvershirts were to be probed pronto, somehow they weren't.

"The whole summer and autumn -- and the whole Committee scrimmage -- became history, and Pelley wasn't grilled once!"

Pelley provides further witness to the real activities of the Dies Committee when he says, in another connection: "Marty committed the faux-pas of going on a witch-hunt after perfectly good Federal Reds and making only a hollow gesture towards Bunders and Silvershirts."

The record of the hearings offer testimony to this fact. On the opening day of the hearings, Dies declined to accept evidence of the "violently anti-Semitic" activities of the Silvershirts, saying, "We have a great deal of data here on the Silver Shirts, but we will pass it up for the time being and go into it at a later date." (Vol. 1, p.47)

The later date never arrived. The Silvershirts were ~~mentioned~~ mentioned ^{in passing} once in the committee's report, and were brought up into the testimony only briefly on several occasions. This, despite the fact that Arnold Gingrich, editor of 'Ken', offered evidence of Silvershirt connections with Tom Girdler and offered the name

Dies and Silvershirts. 3.

of a proposed witness who was willing to testify on the Silvershirts out of her own experiences with the organization. (V. 2, p.1321ff.) Dies did subpoena the proposed witness, Barbara Baker of Cleveland, who wired back her willingness to testify provided her fare and expenses could be forwarded. When the wire was put in the record, Dies announced that a sub-committee would go to Cleveland to hear "the various witnesses on the subject of the sit-down strike and other phases of communism." There was no more mention of Miss Baker nor of ^{calling any other witnesses on} the Silvershirts. (V. 3. 2085)

Pelley's magazine is full of libellous attacks on the President, and his outstanding cabinet members: Ickes, Hopkins and Murphy. The Dies Committee, and Dies himself in his public speeches, has also concentrated his fire on these same figures, with, of course, more moderation in his tone, particularly in regard to the President. But the objects of attack, the New Deal in particular and the liberal movement generally, are the same in both instances. Pelley, in fact, has drawn upon the Dies committee for material and argument against New Deal leaders. For example, in an attack on Frank Murphy in the issue of Jan. 14, Pelley writes: "It was generally known in Michigan in early 1937 that everything was true that these men testified to before the Dies Committee."

Dies was repeatedly asked to investigate the Silvershirts but he never explained his failure to do so. Since he himself admitted that the committee had "a great deal of data" on the organization, it cannot be pleaded that lack of funds prevented their being made public. In several parts of the country, notably Michigan and the Pacific Northwest, the openly fascist activities

Dies and Silvershirts. 4.

of the organization demanded an investigation. Yet, although the Department of Justice had turned over an 8000 page report on Nazi and anti-Semitic activities, ~~they~~ Dies made no use of it.

Dies had reports on the speeches and activities of Roy Zachary, "field marshal" of the Silvershirts, but he made no attempt to make the investigation that was warranted at the same time that Zachary was making a speaking tour through the Northwest in conjunction with Nazi Bund officials. (V. 3 2357

The Seattle News on July 23, 1938, calling upon the Dies committee to investigate the Silvershirts and the Bund in Oregon, reports a speech of Zachary's as containing these words: "When we eliminate Communism and the Jews from the United States it will not be with the ballot but with guns, wading in blood. ~~Communism~~ Communism has been stopped in Germany, Italy, and Spain, but not with ballots. I can't help but admire Hitler."

In the same speech Zachary called the Roosevelt administration "Jew Communist", in keeping with the usual vicious terms of Pelley. It is clear, then, that the Silvershirts aim at the elimination of the Roosevelt Administration "with guns, wading in blood."