

# Martin Dies Labeled A 'Native Fascist'

Liberal editors and writers joined last night in denouncing Martin Dies as a dangerous native Fascist engaged in an unscrupulous campaign to destroy American liberalism.

New Yorkers assembled at a mass meeting in the Astor were told that there was nothing funny about Dies and the seemingly careless charges put out by his House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Freda Kirchwey, editor of the *Nation*, described the Dies Committee as "a camouflaged pillbox in the Fascist fight for control of our democracy."

Bruce Bliven, editor of the *New Republic*, charged that the Dies Committee had "publicly slandered dozens of people." He said:

"It has interfered with the legitimate actions of liberal Americans who, far from trying to overthrow capitalism, were doing their best to patch it up and make it work a little better."

Kenneth G. Crawford, chief of PM's Washington Bureau, described the Committee as "a Committee for the Promotion of un-American Activities" and charged that "its real and only partially concealed purpose has been to discredit President Roosevelt and his New Deal."

Victor Riesel, labor editor of the *New York Post*, charged that Dies had created "an American political police" which is being used by his investigator, J. B. Matthews, as "a grudge weapon against those who fought him in his days of crackpot pseudo-radicalism."

*The Case Against Martin Dies* was the theme of all speakers at the meeting, sponsored by the Union for Democratic Action, recently labeled "subversive" by the Dies investigators after it had proposed a house-cleaning to rid Congress of members opposed to the all-out war effort.

## Holdes Dies Seeks To Wreck New Deal

Miss Kirchwey said, in part:

"The Dies Committee is an agency of civil political war. It is not going to use legitimate methods of inquiry because inquiry is not its purpose . . .

"Its purpose is to discredit and if possible destroy the New Deal and all those elements in the national Administration which support the New Deal, including the President of the United States.



Freda Kirchwey

"Its much larger purpose is the destruction of the progressive tendencies in American life as a whole. For this large purpose there is a simple accepted name—Fascism. . . .

"It is no accident that Dies, or his man Friday, Matthews, should have selected the Board of Economic Warfare for one of its most unscrupulous attacks. Headed by one of the true democrats of our time, Vice President Wallace; directed by a dynamic progressive, Milo Perkins; this Board has

powers which may go far to shape the economy of the peace as well as of the war. When Dies tried to discredit this board. . . . he was acting on a sound Fascist instinct . . .

"Whether all its members know it or not, the Dies Committee is an authentic, absolutely consistent, exemplification of American Fascism—as authentic and ugly as Huey Long—or Winrod whose appearance before the Committee was mysteriously canceled at the last minute—or Father Coughlin whom Dies never could be induced to investigate at all.

"Dies investigated—if so honorable a word can continue to be used for the sloppy, gossip-column technique of his Committee—he investigated the irreducible minimum of his fellow-Fascists. But the people he set out to save his country from, were the liberals, the progressives, the pro-labor, pro-New Deal democrats.

"He called them Communists, and he got his appropriations from Congress and his nice approving-with-qualifications editorials in the *New York Times* and he persuaded an astonishingly wide public, just as Hitler did before him, that he was saving it from the ravages of Red Revolution.

## Frightened Congressmen

"He not only succeeded in doing this; he succeeded in making people afraid of him. He created the remarkable myth that to oppose Dies was to support Stalin. And many a legislator who privately attacked Dies, or at least deplored his 'methods,' lost his nerve when the moment came to vote 'no' . . .

"Dies is not important as a man or a politician. Dies is important as a symbol of forces that have been mobilized to defeat our hope of a democratic America, a victorious war, and a people's peace.

"Dies is not performing a democratic function badly; he is performing an anti-democratic maneuver well. His every move is an act of war. His Committee is a camouflaged pill box in the Fascist fight for control of our democracy. It needs to be stormed and overthrown—not reformed."

## Bliven Labels Dies An American Accident

Bliven charged that the Dies Committee had failed in the purpose for which it was created—the investigation of un-American activities, and at the same time prevented any other Congressional committee from doing the job.



Bruce Bliven

"Martin Dies," Bliven said, "is a brash young man from a sparsely populated section of Texas who got elected to Congress because he had the gift of gab and because he played along with the local political machine."

"He fell into the chairmanship of the Committee more or less by accident. He

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Martin Dies was denounced at a New York rally last night as a menace to American liberalism and exponent of native Fascism.

knew a good thing when he saw it. To paraphrase an advertising slogan, he ran up a committee chairmanship into a national reputation, one which earns him very fat fees on the lecture platform.

"It wasn't very hard to create a situation where anybody who opposed him could be labeled a Communist, a Nazi or both. Members of Congress soon learned not to vote against added appropriations for Dies because they would be brutally attacked by the professional witch-hunters of the country who helped Dies while he helped them. Several of these witch-hunters have turned out to be close friends of the German Government and some of these are under indictment at this moment. . . .

## Uses of Publicity

"Matthews and Dies have had an enormous amount of fun the last few years playing with their techniques. Dies is bitterly anti-New Deal and anti-Roosevelt, and he found he could do the President and the New Deal a great deal of harm by skilfully timed publicity shots.

"The publicity might be completely false, but that didn't matter, since it could be timed to explode on the eve of an election. By the time denials had been made, the election was over. . . . The Dies Committee played a large part in defeating Gov. Murphy of Michigan and Gov. Benson of Minnesota, as well as many other pro-Roosevelt political leaders."

Bliven cited as "a good example of the Dies Committee at its worst" its attack on the Union for Democratic Action and the *New Republic* in connection with the supplement, *A Congress to Win the War*, published jointly by the UDA and the *New Republic*.

"Don't underestimate the power of the Dies Committee to do harm to honest Americans honestly trying to help their country in a great emergency," he warned. "The appeasoliationists in Congress now have an easy alibi when they are challenged on those records. They need only say: 'The people who put out that supplement are just a bunch of Communists. The Dies Committee proved it.' All over the country in little local newspapers, Congressmen who are not fit to serve and know it are getting summaries of the Dies record printed. . . .

"In my judgment, Diesism is a grave cloud on the horizon of democratic processes and of free and orderly democratic government."

## Crawford Says Dies Libeled Innocents

Kenneth Crawford reviewed his own experiences as a reporter covering the Dies Committee's activities and declared that the Committee had "libeled scores of innocent

bystanders in its crazy cops-and-robbers chase after a few genuinely subversive individuals and organizations."

"Twenty-eight alleged Axis propagandists were recently indicted in Washington for undertaking to undermine the morale of the armed forces," Crawford related. "These 28 were the people, according to the indictment, who carried the Axis propaganda ball as publishers and organizers."

"Why was it, one is justified in asking, that the Dies Committee never turned up this gang? The answer is easy. These propagandists either imitated or followed Congressman Hamilton Fish, Congressman Clare Hoffman or Charles E. Coughlin. Dies, Fish and Hoffman are pals and collaborators. In most questions they are in complete accord. Dies wouldn't investigate Fish any more than he would investigate a member of his own family. As for Coughlin, not a chance. Dies has a great respect for the power of Coughlin. He has always turned down requests to look into the activities of the Detroit dervish. . . ."

### **Declares Committee Backs Rabble Rousers**

Victor Riesel said:

"In the hands of Martin Dies and his Rasputin, sometimes known as J. B. Matthews, the Committee becomes a dangerous weapon serving the purpose of declassified ex-Communists, vintage 1925, the Southern Congressional bloc of Howard, Bilbo and Talmadge, and the Fascist leaders whom the 'un-American committee' failed to investigate."

Riesel asked why Dies and his Committee had failed to investigate Coughlin, the Ku Klux Klan, Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith and various agents of the Axis powers.