

Letters To and From the Editor:

PM 11/10/40

From Mr. Capehart

Dear Editor:

It was brought to my attention this morning—for the first time—the article appearing in your newspaper, under date of Oct. 31, 1940, headed: "Like It Or Not, Willkie Gets Night Shirt Backing."

No man could be treated more unfairly, without any way of defending himself, than I have been in this article written by a supposed German refugee, Hans Wagner.

There are so many untruths concerning myself in this article that, I think you and your newspaper should take whatever steps necessary to correct the injustice done me which cannot help—but be harmful to my business.

I have never in my life met any of the following persons mentioned in your article: William Lemke, Dr. Griebel, George Deatherage, Father Charles Coughlin, Dudley Pierrepont Gilbert, William Dudley Pelley, Gen. George Van Horn Moseley or had any dealings with any organizers, either directly or indirectly, of any Nazism propaganda.

I do know Mr. Felix McWhirter, who was the Republican state treasurer and a banker here in Indianapolis, who has lived in Indianapolis all of his life.

Mr. McWhirter introduced me to Mr. Campbell in the fall of 1938, as a reserve Army officer and a friend of his.

However, at no time did anyone mentioned in your article—or anyone connected in any way whatsoever ever discuss with me the organizing of any Nazi support. Neither did any of them ever discuss with me supporting me for the Presidency because I never had any thought of such a thing.

If they put forth any effort for me—it was without my knowledge or consent. The records will show that when I was indorsed by the Indiana Republican Editorial Association for the Republican nomination for President—also by the Republican precinct committeemen of the State of Indiana—that I immediately declined the nomination. This is a matter of public record.

I have met Mr. Wendell L. Willkie only five times in my life. The first time I met him, casually, at the Sons of Indiana banquet in April 1939, in New York City. The second time I met him was when he gave a speech in Indianapolis in June of this year.

I then met him in the receiving line—along with dozens of others.

I, again, met him in Philadelphia, along with many, many others.

Again, when I was appointed chairman of the Notification Ceremony in Elwood by the Republican National Committee. I met with him for a brief period at Colorado Springs.

I talked with him for about 15 minutes in Rushville, Ind., upon his return.

Then, during the Notification Ceremony Day in Elwood. I have not seen Mr. Willkie since.

I was a delegate to the National Convention in Philadelphia. I voted for Mr. Will-

kie, but did no organizing work for him prior to the convention.

I have been a militant Republican during the past few years, which is within my constitutional rights, but never have I given any support knowingly, to any individual or group who was engaged in any form of subversive activity.

HOMER E. CAPEHART, *President*
PACKARD MANUFACTURING CORPORATION
Indianapolis.

The Hans Wagner articles published in PM did not say that Mr. Capehart knew Lemke, Griebel, Deatherage, Father Coughlin, Gilbert, Pelley or Moseley. Neither did the articles say that Mr. Capehart had dealings with any organizers or "Nazism propaganda" mentioned in his letter. The articles, in substance, indicated that Mr. Capehart, like Mr. Willkie, received backing of the "night shirt organizations" whether he liked it or not. One of the series said: "Whether Mr. Capehart fully understood the kind of backing he was getting was never satisfactorily established." So far as PM can find, the records of the Dies Committee, which bared the support of the "night shirt organizations" in behalf of Mr. Capehart, contain no testimony from him either avowing or disavowing the support of the fascist minded groups.—ED.