

Fair Enough

By Westbrook Pegler

Dies Lacks Cooperation

THE DIES COMMITTEE should be able to get pretty good mileage out of its new appropriation of \$110,000, for this appears to be a little more than its yearly average expense up to now, but the important thing is that the committee is to continue its work and preserve its files from a hostile Administration which has always resented disclosures of Communist affiliation or flirtation among Government bureaucrats and would like to get its hands on the records. This great mass of information, containing, it is true, an element of gossip and hearsay, has been accumulated over a period of four years against stubborn resistance from the extreme left wing of the Government, including Mrs. Roosevelt, who undertook to discredit a committee of the National Legislature by publicly mothering a group of precocious pinks, and the President, himself, on one conspicuous occasion. It is a record which probably could not be replaced and should be protected from those whose political peace of mind would profit from the knowledge that so many damned spots were reduced to pulp or ashes.

Martin Dies is not to be counted among the wiser statesmen of his time, for he is a bit of a bumpkin and his ways are uncouth, wherein he calls to mind the Honorable Hugo Black, the backslid night-rider, whose disrespect for the Constitutional rights of his political adversaries—more than any other single achievement of his career—qualified him for a place on the Supreme Court.

DIES BEGAN work with two strikes on him, for it was inevitable that any honest man starting such an investigation would not confine himself to the treacheries of the notorious German-American bund, but would pay equal attention to the ramifications of the Communists operating under many false names and labels. It was inevitable, too, that, as individuals in and close to the Government were identified with such groups and activities, Dies would be smeared as a total ignoramus, which he is not, and as a Nazi, Fascist and disruptionist, all terms now applied to all anti-Communists.

He was an utter greehorn when he started and was the butt of many ribald pranks, including some outrageously prejudiced and distorted reporting by that element of the press corps in Washington who felt that they had a mission to promote New Dealism and hide its faults rather than to inform the people.

On one occasion, for several days, he was openly heckled and witnesses testifying about Communist activities were audibly ridiculed by reporters of the Ad-

ministration set and Dies, not yet sure of his authority as chairman of a committee of the United States Congress, suffered this indignity, instead of ordering a cop to throw the claque downstairs, for fear that he would "get a bad press."

DIES SEEMS to have irritated a colleague or two by releasing publicity on his own initiative and for this minor violation of an unimportant canon may be censured accordingly, but, on the whole, he has turned in a good performance on a thankless and unpleasant task which, in the final history of these times, will provide a chapter of disagreeable truth.

He started with no more knowledge of communism, or the methods of the Bolos, than any yokel might derive from a reading of the old Hearst Red scares, but went to the books for larnin' and had the good luck to connect with J. B. Matthews, a renegade Bolshevik, who knew all the personalities and most of the answers and, much more important and helpful to Dies, knew how to trace connections. On his own confessions, Matthews may be held permanently under suspicion, but it has not been necessary to take his word, for he has brought in proofs by the bushel which are now in the files of the Dies Committee.

It must be observed that Dies has been abused and ridiculed by members and adherents of the Administration only when he was exposing communistic activities and the infiltration of Communists and fellow-travelers into the Government. When he was digging up Nazis and Fascists and exposing anti-Semitic groups he was, at worst, ignored and at some such times even heard his name uttered in tones of praise. But at no time has he had any real co-operation from the Department of Justice and it may be well to keep in mind the fact that most of his material has never been refuted. The defense, or reply, has been personal ridicule of the investigator which is ever the favorite retort of the political culprit without an answer.