

Look - June 2 / 1940

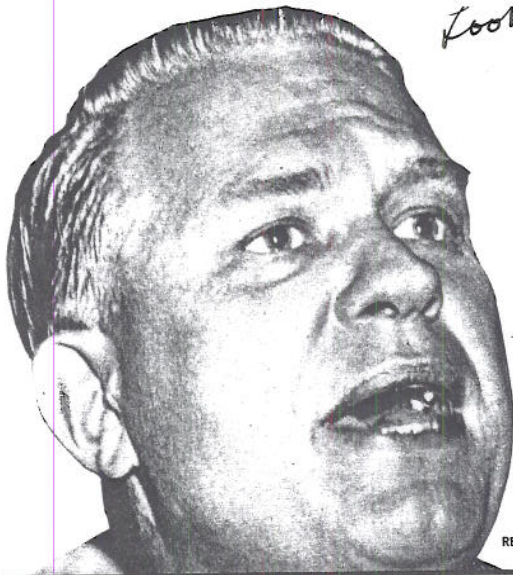
THE DIES COMMITTEE . . .

IS IT AMERICAN?

by Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen

REP. MARTIN DIES, Democrat, of Texas, 38-year-old chairman of the Committee for Investigation of Un-American Activities, worships publicity. At hearings he keeps one eye cocked on the press table. When the newsmen scribble, he knows he's making headlines. When they look bored, Dies gets up and whispers to an investigator, who immediately uncorks some hot evidence. The boys at the press table begin to take notes, and Dies is happy again.

It has made Dies the best known man on Capitol Hill. But this reaching for headlines is why newsmen and Congressmen call his investigation the unfair, most slipshod, ever held in Washington.



REP. MARTIN DIES



THE DIES COMMITTEE MEETS

DAILY NEWS FINAL
DIES NAMES 563 U. S. AIDS IN RED PROBE

**...rley With Naz...
...ache Admitted...
...Dies Witness...
...es Pro...
...Are...
...to**

**Dies Defies Roosevelt
Demands a Free**
Reply of Dies to President
**Text of Dies' A-
To Roosevelt
Dies Demands**
WASHINGTON, August 18, 1940
Opening Meeting

THE BREVITY OF HIS NAME is one of many factors which make the Dies committee a one-man show. A name is a natural for a headline, always preferable to the name of a committee. To head writers "Dies" is a heaven-sent word. It has only three and a half units. There is a constant parade of witnesses before Dies, mostly headliners, with no

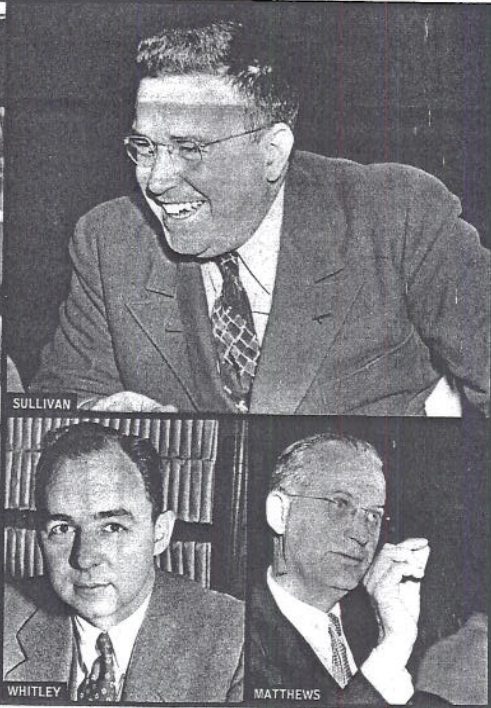
attempt at bringing on witnesses to cross-check, corroborate or defend. When Frank Murphy was campaigning for re-election as governor of Michigan, political foes—many of them crackpots—swarmed before the Dies committee to give distorted versions of the sit-down strike. No witnesses for the other side were called.



THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN TORN by internal strife since its inception. Most enthusiastic Dies follower on it is J. Parnell Thomas (Rep., N. J.), who changed his name from Feeney. On leave from the brokerage firm of Paine and Webber, he is recognized as Wall Street's spokesman in Congress. Most idealistic committeeman, but disappointing to his friends, is Jerry Voorhis (Dem., Cal.). In-

heritor of several millions, he deliberately learned the scary side of life. Cultured, charming, but vacillating, he shuns a showdown with the blustering Dies. Only committee member with nerve, brains and stamina to buck Dies is Jack Dempsey (Dem., N. M.). He is no great liberal, but believes in fair play. Of Noah Mason (Rep., Ill.) and Joseph Casey (Dem., Mass.) little is heard.

RAUCOUS JOE STARNES (Dem., Ala.) serves as the chairman of the committee when Dies is away. During questioning he joins Republican members in gleeful support of Dies' tactics. Joe gets himself full of hate, and his lip curls as he shouts at witnesses. He is even more bellicose than Dies.



WHEN THE DIES COMMITTEE talked of summoning Gypsy Rose Lee, strip tease artist (above), to question her about Hollywood's Communist front, Gypsy Rose cracked, "With my act and Dies' publicity, we could bring back vaudeville!" The committee's first investigator, Edward F. Sullivan has an anti-labor, anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish background, but when

Dempsey demanded his dismissal, the committee resisted him. Since Sullivan departed, investigation is under Rhea Whitley, former G-man who worked on the Lindbergh kidnaping and helped run down Dillinger. He is 36, married into the Cannon towel fortune, and a vast improvement over Sullivan, but even his conduct is far from being based on Ameri-

can civil rights. Most unusual investigator on the Dies staff is J. B. Matthews, once a teacher in Tibet. He became secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and was ousted for making a speech advocating a proletarian war; then went to the League for Peace and Democracy, which he later helped Dies expose. **CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

IT WILL LAST AS LONG AS DIES STAYS ON PAGE ONE



THE DIES COMMITTEE put into the record a list of members of the German-American Bund, whose leader, Fritz Kuhn, is shown testifying at the right, but gave it no such publicity as the membership list of the American League for Peace and Democracy. It also avoids investigating Father Coughlin, despite demands from some members of congress that it do so.



AT SIXES AND SEVENS on most witnesses, the committee is unanimously opposed to one. He is William Dudley Pelley (above), who as head of the Silver Shirts has made a lucrative living out of preaching race and religious hatred. For Pelley escaped Dies' subpoenas and thwarted the Texan's appetite for publicity. Dies sent an army combat plane to Asheville, N. C., after Pelley, but he had flown the coop.



MOST SPECTACULAR WITNESS was George E. Deatherage (above), a St. Albans, W. Va., house painter who played Goebbels to retired Maj. Gen. Van Horn Moseley. These Knights of the White Camelia were supposedly plotting to overthrow the government—though the coup seemed to boil down to a plot against the Jews. Deatherage said anti-communist, anti-Semitic groups co-operate all over the world.



MAJOR GENERAL MOSELEY (above) was famous in the army for mounting a French 75-mm. field gun on a motor truck to combat mythical mobs during Hoover's depression days. Only trouble with the gun was that it fires far beyond any mob that might confront it. Aside from worrying lest the drinking water be poisoned, Moseley seemed to enjoy his publicity as a witness just as much as Dies did.



DIES HAS A POSITIVE GENIUS for stumbling onto spectacular witnesses. One headliner was chubby Helen Vooros (above), who told about sex life at the Bund camps of Brooklyn. "They call it pure," she explained, "when two people go together and they don't curb their natural instinct. It disgusted me."



DIES WILL BECOME BORED with his own grandstanding only when and if it ceases to keep him on the front pages. President Roosevelt and Congressional leaders have attempted to steer the irrepressible Texan into more impartial channels, but now they have given up in despair. They figure that the only way to stop him is to let him run his course. That will take a long time.

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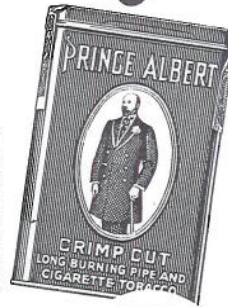
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