

PM 6/30/42

No Time for Nonsense

In the Spring and early Summer of 1942, we have lost the Kerch Peninsula, the potential island bases of Attu and Kiska—Tobruk and Matruh.

The great cities of Sevastopol and Cairo are menaced.

On the Kerch Peninsula, it was proved that the Germans still are strong enough to win battles even against a veteran Russian Army.

At Attu and Kiska, it was proved that the Japanese stepping-stone blitz technique still works, even against land-based American aircraft.

At Tobruk, it was proved that there still is something the matter with our weapons.

In the Spring and early Summer of 1942, we still are losing the Battle of the Atlantic—which everyone knows is just as vital to our success as the Battle of Russia.

The Summer of 1942 finds the richest country in the world—the U. S. A.—short rubber, short steel, short copper, and short God knows what other less-publicized raw material.

The Summer of 1942 finds our enemy landing saboteurs armed with high explosives on our shores.

We are about to open the Battle for Europe. The British barrage of 1000-plane raids already has begun. Our own AEF is poised on the northern shores of Ireland.

In the Summer of 1942, our men are fighting in Egypt, they are organized in Australia, they fly over the Dutch East Indies. They hold the battle line that runs from Darwin north through Midway to Alaska. Our armies now number millions.

There is obviously no time for nonsense.

The total energies of this country are necessary for victory.

We know the way to victory, with the mighty productive capacity of this country supplying an army that will dwarf Hitler's little panzer divisions and a navy and an air force that will drive the Axis navies from the sea. We know the way to victory and we also know that it is a grim and serious way and that before our goal can be achieved we must go all-out. We know that we have got no time for nonsense.

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Why, then, do the people go on putting up with such foolishness as Martin Dies's claim that his critics seek the abolition of Congress? No Congressman has been criticized since war began save for words or actions which threaten our national unity and effectiveness in the war effort. It is gibberish to say that such criticism is anti-democratic—whether it comes from *Time* or even the *Daily*

Worker. It is simple insanity to say that it is subversive for to be subversive means to give comfort to the enemy, and criticism of Congressmen for disloyalty to the war effort gives not comfort but pain to the enemy. The critics of Congress seek to make that democratic body not weaker, but stronger and more truly representative, and Martin Dies knows it.

We are all used in America to a certain amount of foolishness from a certain number of foolish Congressmen. More than that, we must defend their right to make fools of themselves. But defending their right to idiocy does not mean it should not be exposed as such or that the public should be urged to overlook it. For there is only one thing that will keep this nonsense from being really dangerous—and that is an aroused public opinion.

Public opinion *must* be impatient because there is no time for such nonsense now. If Dies and his like do not mend their ways, presently their talk will be translated into lives lost on the battlefield—as the result of a weakened war effort at home.

All the recent attacks on the war effort in Congress come under the same

head. We know that this war can be won only on the principle of equality of sacrifice. Congressmen who sabotage price-control mechanisms, Congressmen who are selfish or suspicious or timid in their handling of tax problems, Congressmen who shake the confidence of the people in their Government by attacking its social services—the nice name for the work of all of these gentlemen is nonsense. We have no time for it. But unless the good men who oppose them in Congress have the backing of public opinion, this nonsense will continue. And if it continues, lives will be lost as a result of it.

There is plenty of other nonsense afoot. Harry Bennett, of the Ford organization, defying the U. S. A. in the matter of housing war workers in a Detroit suburb is dangerous nonsense too. So is our Attorney General's indecision—that indecision which reveals itself in his sudden crackdown on Bridges coupled with his dropping the prosecution of Charles Coughlin for the latter's seditious activities in the publication of *Social Justice*. The witch-hunt for liberals in the Administration—the persecution of honest men for their faith in Roose-

velt and the New Deal—this is a suicidal kind of nonsense.

What are the American people thinking of that they watch all these things so complacently? No Hitler has appointed our representatives in Congress. We elected them. Who gives Harry Bennett the right to defy the Government? Whence comes Charles Coughlin's immunity from the law?

Wake up, Americans. Your enemies at home are getting away with murder. There is no time for such nonsense. Everywhere in the world, you are fighting for your lives. You are fighting against absolutely ruthless men who lie and steal and murder—murder even hostages and women and children. You are fighting against men who have sworn to destroy you—to crush the armies that are made up of your sons and brothers. They have sworn to steal from you and plunder your houses as they have stolen and plundered from other peoples all over the world. Your enemies still are winning battles against you abroad. Daily they kill Americans as well as the allies of Americans. There is no more time for nonsense. Not in the Summer of 1942.—RALPH INGERSOLL.