

NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES
1123 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

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Washington, D. C.

August 6, 1942

Mr. William Power Maloney
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
2718 Department of Justice Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Maloney:

On behalf of the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, I wish to congratulate you for the splendid job you have done in the past year. The recent indictment of 28 notorious pro-Axis propagandists for conspiracy to undermine the morale of our armed forces, and on other charges, merits the commendation of all Americans who believe in vigorous enforcement of the law for the defense of the country.

Smashing the fifth column in the United States is a prerequisite to victory. Defense of the home front from the agents of the Axis will ensure the military defeat of fascism by the United Nations.

Significant as are the recent indictments, they symbolize the tremendous and still incomplete task of indicting and prosecuting the countless pro-Axis agents still carrying on their seditious activities and propaganda, still jeopardizing civilian morale and national unity. We are glad to note, therefore, that the term of the Grand Jury in the District of Columbia has again been extended, and that it will be able to carry on its work.

In the extensive investigations which preceded the indictments, you must have been impressed, as have we in the National Federation in the preparation of material devoted to exposing the fifth column and building national morale, by the repeated recurrence of the name of Martin Dies in connection with the names of many of the defendants.

It is our considered judgment that the activities of Martin Dies, and his statements and actions in relation to many of the accused, require a thorough

On July 1, Congressman Dickstein announced on the floor of the House that he had attempted to persuade the Dies Committee to subpoena Count Anastase Adreivich Vonsiatsky, without success. In June, 1942 Vonsiatsky was indicted as a spy. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 5 years and 2,000.

the public mind by a malicious distortion of facts." He added

"If we were at peace these tactics might be overlooked as the product of a witchcraft mind. We are at war, and the doubts and angers which this and similar statements of Mr. Dies tend to arouse in the public mind might as well come from Goebbels himself . . . the effect on our morale would be less damaging if Mr. Dies were on the Hitler payroll."

It is precisely the effect of Mr. Dies on our morale, civilian and military, with which we are concerned.

Vice President Wallace's sharp censure of Martin Dies was evoked by the latter's scandalous attack on the Board of Economic Warfare, the most recent of a series of attacks by Dies on vital war agencies, including the Office of Price Administration.

The net effect of these smear campaigns instigated by Dies has been the same as that of the "systematic campaign" to undermine confidence in public officials, which is described in the Grand Jury's recent indictment.

"Divide and Conquer", published by the Office of Facts and Figures, describes this technique as the favorite of the Axis. It is little wonder, then, that a recent report of the monitoring service of the Federal Communications Commission found Martin Dies to be the American "most frequently and approvingly" quoted on Axis radio broadcasts.

The voices of anti-Semitism and Nazi "Aryanism" in the person of defendants like Pelley, convicted yesterday on eleven charges of sedition, in the writings of True, Edmondson and others, have long gone unchallenged by the Dies Committee.

Their advocates utilized the Committee to achieve a degree of respectability and a national audience which they could never alone have attained. The Committee record is replete with their statements, their phrases defending the Axis claim that it wanted only "to free the world from domination by Communism and International Jewry" - phrases identical with those in the indictment, phrases which were repeated and restated, but never questioned by Chairman Dies.

The unity of all patriotic Americans, and particularly the 13,000,000 Negro Americans, in support of the war, was flagrantly assaulted by the shameless refusal of Martin Dies to publicize evidence in his possession on the seditious activities of the Ku Klux Klan, one of the most notorious of the groups named in the indictment.

For four years, Dies has been urged to investigate the Klan. His "investigation" occurred on January 27, 1942, and consisted of a "secret" hearing at which Klanleader Colescott appeared, as Dies later informed the press, voluntarily and without subpoena. It resulted the following week in a communication from Colescott to Klan officials and members throughout the country instructing them to support continuation of the Dies Committee!

The Klan was not alone in its support of Dies. Pelley, Fritz Kuhn and countless other perpetrators of un-Americanism have been vocal in their support of Dies and his Committee, as the documentation proves. The affinity of seditious organizations for Martin Dies is in itself sufficient to demand investigation; the roster of names of Dies' supporters and of the 26 named in the indictment shows astounding duplication.

The tactics employed by Dies are likewise the tactics of the seditionists.

Thus Dies lambasts labor unions and progressive organizations, harangues against our nation's policies, and as recently as October 19, 1941 declared, "I am as anxious as anyone to see the defeat of Hitler, and I hope Russia is licked at the same time."

Nowhere are the divisive tactics of Martin Dies revealed as sharply as in his perennial barrages against all supporters of democracy and opponents of fascism. Even his protection of the fascists and their friends pales beside the virulence he reserves for attacks on democratic, patriotic organizations.

His recent sortie against the Union for Democratic Action and The New Republic, and incidentally against the newspaper PM and Time magazine, for their advocacy of a win-the-war Congress, was camouflaged in statements virtually identical with the "anti-communist" rationale of the Nazis.

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Dies, like Goebbels, uses the demagoguery of "anti-communism" to obscure his relentless efforts to weaken and destroy the anti-Axis, anti-fascist unity of the American people.

History, and Axis aggression, have written in blood and sacrifice the real meaning of this sinister camouflage. Dies cannot be allowed to obscure by demagoguery and distortion his treacherous attack on the loyal American people, who are willing to give their all for speedy defeat of the Axis, and who demand that the Nation's highest body be a win-the-war Congress.

Today, the very life of our nation is at stake. In the struggle against the Axis, American boys are giving their lives, and the men, women and children of the nation are making unprecedented sacrifices.

Today we face the fascist enemy, armed with the knowledge of the tragic experiences of other nations, aware of his weapons, both military and psychological. We have seen nations succumb before his "secret weapon" - their people demoralized by insidious, subtle propaganda, disunited by the slogan-mongers of "anti-communism".

We know that this slogan is the epitaph of thousands of brave patriots in the occupied nations who have given their lives for the cause of freedom and the defeat of the Axis.

Martin Dies stands accused before the American people of shielding those in the United States who foment disunity, undermine national morale, and jeopardize our war program. His own activities have injured the common cause of the United Nations.

The democratic procedures of our judicial system stem largely from the Grand Jury, which has throughout our history been the protector of the people's liberties.

The Grand Jury of the United States of America in the District of Columbia, charged with the investigation of pro-Axis propaganda, has, by its recent indictment, done much to protect the security and independence of our country.

We urge that the Grand Jury be instructed to examine any connections or relations, direct or indirect, between Martin Dies and the defendants named in the indictment, and to apply to Dies' statements and actions the same criteria applied therein.

Mr. William Power Maloney

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The people of America, soldiers on the battle and production lines in this people's war, demand that the truth be brought forward by presentment or otherwise.

The National Federation for Constitutional Liberties pledges you its complete cooperation in such an investigation.

We are eager to serve the cause of freedom, to help smash the fifth column, to expose the forces of the enemy, and to unite the nation for victory over the Axis.

Sincerely,



George Marshall
Chairman

National Federation for Constitutional Liberties

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Appendix A

Via Postal Telegraph
July 24, 1942

Mr. William Power Maloney
Special Assistant to the Attorney General
2718 Department of Justice Building
Washington, D. C.

Yesterday's sedition indictments by Federal Grand Jury deserve national commendation, but indicate immediate need two additional steps. Urge you use your full influence and authority to bring about termination Dies Committee and Federal investigation Martin Dies. Majority of individuals indicted, organizations and publications named were enabled continue pro-Axis, anti-American activities as result collaboration of Martin Dies.

Among indicted whom Dies refused investigate were Hudson, Garner, Kullgren, De Aryan, Asher, Sanctuary, Dilling, Viereck, now jailed for violation Foreign Agents Registration Act, indicted yesterday for sedition, repeatedly shielded by Dies, as was his aide Dennett. Dies ignored own investigators findings, gratuitously white-washed Winrod when latter's Nazi affiliations exposed. Dies spoke under auspices Coalition Patriotic Societies, sharing platform James True. Both named in indictment. Dies suppressed correspondence revealing pro-Hitler activities E. J. Smythe, refused force Smythe testify before Dies Committee. Smythe indicted yesterday. Further proof Dies' affiliation with seditious forces is his employment Hazel Huffman, former investigator Constitutional Educational League, named in indictment.

Most vociferous support for continuation Dies Committee always emanated from Pelley, Kuhn, Ku Klux Klan, German-American Bund, Silver Shirts, others named yesterday's indictment. These facts, many more, documented in our memorandum "Pro-Axis Leanings Dies Committee," published February, 1942, being sent you special delivery.

Indictments yesterday call for speedy extermination all groups still aiding enemy. Urge immediate action against Dies and Committee to prevent possibility Dies Committee's continuing to shield forces endangering unity and victory over Axis.

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Copies to:

President Roosevelt
Vice President Wallace

(signed) George Marshall
Chairman

Speaker Rayburn
Attorney General Biddle