

11/29/72. Howard, Your Times clip on Martin Dies is the stereotype version, which always credits all native fascists with honorable intent while indicating they may not have always been right. There are many exceptions, if they are not universal. Dies is a conspicuous exception. He was a cheap crook, an opportunist, and didn't really give a damn about anything except political advantage - publicity and fat lecture fees - until the payola started. Then he became A Man of Principle. He never was. I forced him into his first "expose" of any native fascists. Well, he and all the staff were of this stripe, what else would you expect, particularly when he was parroting them, but protections of them? If we were not friends, I first-name knew him and several other members of the committee. I pride myself on their feeling they dared not print my testimony, if that is what their effort at persecution can be called. They even held a special, unscheduled, really impromptu hearing at which they tried again and also tried to get me to change my testimony. They held a third hearing on this, scheduled, where my establishmentarian lawyer was with me and I went over the galleys of the testimony with them, never yielding. As I believe I told you, they had a law passed to get me, on still on the books. (Few ever melt.) Then they convoked a grand jury to get me. The Pillsbergs, Hopkins and others don't know how good they have it. I was utterly alone. I had to fight my own colleague and my own lawyer, the only way any of us could be -and were- saved. No, I was not alone. Lil was really the turning point is her unaccustomed role as Mata Hari, self-casting, by the way. I was out of town. Her judgement and her performance could not have been better is she'd been trained in intelligence.... That was a very rough period, Howard. I was young and tough, but tough alone is not enough for experiences like those, nor for the potentials of that kind of raw and uninhibited, corrupt power. Even FDR was afraid to fight him. While the old curmudgeon Ickes fought back, he did not help others, not to my recollection and certainly not me, even if a former investigator for ~~him~~ set the trap, as he had to know. No liberal lawyer offered to help. My associate was close to everyone at ACLU (I to a couple), and I mean the national office, but they were silent, too. Even Roger Baldwin, who had made a play for that guy's wife. My associate had been on the Sacco-Vanzetti committee, but all of those who survived were silent. I met Frankfurter through him, with Acheson, who I'd met earlier. His guy was a friend of Acheson's, and he did ask Acheson to represent. Neither he nor the "liberal" members of the firm, like Charley Dowsky, who later and ostentatiously took a few such cases. It was a conservative firm, Drew Pearson's then lawyer, who took us on. I don't know that they did much. I was glad to see the one on our case, Edgar Turlington, and international lawyer, not criminal, as I now recall (used a hearing aid and very dignified), one time in particular, a second time maybe, I'm not clear now. The second was the time the Dies committee was going over my previous testimony with me. The first was when I was at FBI headquarters and a couple of agents would not let me leave until I signed a statement that would have been both false and incriminating. I just refused and sat until they finally saw they had no choice and they let me phone Turlington whose coming gave the FBI finks, not me, an out. Everybody tried to help Dies, even the "liberal" administration, which did control the US Attorney's office. They didn't have to try to get me, and they did. They could have played it straight, and they didn't. The reason was simple enough, side from the general political situation always present in such cases. FDR had nominated the US Attorney, who I knew, to be a federal judge. Dies, working though the bastard who was well thought of but was an ignorant hillbilly bastard who'd mastered the Congressional ropes, Sam Rayburn, got the nomination held up. The deal was get my partner and me and you get your nomination. I'll say this for Pine: he would not handle the case himself, as he could have to butter the bastards. As I think I told you, I took the grand jury away from the guys who handled it. One, the second-in-command, is the same federal judge, Curran, who gave me the summary judgement against Justice in the Ray thing. He never showed recognition and I never addressed him. Curran had no love for what he was into or what he was getting from a brash kid, so he turned it over to one Ed Mahelly, not as bright, later war-crimes prosecutor in Tokyo. F wound up with enough respect for me to give me a grand-jury transcript for my own protection after it was all over. Then as now these juries in DC were mostly federal employess, but they indicted the Dies agent and would not vote a true bill against us. Two counts. Dies was forced to intercede openly to get him a suspended sentence. Interesting sidelight on "loyalty" in the program and the concept: during world War II, when I lived in Virginia, which meant when I was in O.S.S., an FBI agent with Arizona tags came to see me on a "loyalty" investigation of the convicted man, who was a felon and had been the Washington rep of the fascist "Ilve"hirts. I refused to say anything other than to tell him if the existing official record was not enough for his purpose, his purposes could not be serious and genuine. He left and I wasn't bothered. ...Later, when his successors went after The Hollywood Ten; one of them, Dmytryk, who later finked, came to see me and left with much of the research for the anti-dies book on which I was working. I never got a sheet of paper back, nor thanks.