

The Dies Committee: National Menace

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

National Chairman, Communist Party

The Dies Committee, misnamed a Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities, is a defender of the most sinister capitalist forces that are undermining American democracy and sapping the welfare of our people.

It is a mouthpiece of the Fords, Weirs and Girdlers who, in violation of the Wagner law, have prevented their workers from joining trade unions; of the Hearst and Scripps-Howard press, which is filling the minds of the public with reactionary poison; of the Associated Farmers, Father Coughlin and other fascists and Jew baiters; of the Southern Tories responsible for keeping the Negro people in suppression worse than that of the Jews under Hitler.

Also the reactionary Dies Committee rushes forward in the service of the profiteers, munitions makers and war-mongers who are preparing to drag the United States into the war under circumstances most favorable to the interests of American imperialism.

As its part in creating the hysteria necessary to overcome the opposition of the people to the war, the Dies Committee is making its present vicious attack against civil liberties, and espe-



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cially it is using its sessions to build up a war-hatred against the Soviet Union. Every day Dies grows bolder and more insolent in his pro-war propaganda.

Although it has made a few weak passes at the German-American Bund in consequence of

the war situation, the Dies Committee is centering its main fire overwhelmingly against the Communist Party. This is because it recognizes in our Party the most militant champion of all the things that Dies and his fellow reactionaries hate and consider subversive. They are trying to crucify our Party because of its militant efforts to build the labor unions, to defend the living standards of the masses, to protect the civil liberties of the people, to win equality for the Negroes, to educate the workers in the principles of Socialism, and especially to keep the United States out of the imperialist war.

These are the real reasons for Dies' attacks upon us, and his reckless charges of espionage, that we are agents of a foreign power, etc., are but the customary, red-baiting technique of fascists and other reactionaries to obscure their reactionary aims.

Dies and his sinister backers figure that if they can smash the Communist Party they will thereby clear the road for the eventual break-up of every democratic movement of the people. Dies has in his mind's eye the experience in Germany and Italy, where, once, the Communist Party was outlawed, it was not long until the trade unions, cooperatives, liberal parties, church organiza-

tions, etc., were soon destroyed. Dies, a budding fascist of the Texas K.K.K. brand, has taken as his political mentors Hitler and Mussolini.

The arrest of Earl Browder and Sam Darcy, the elimination of the New York Communists from the ballot, and the many open attempts now being made nationally and in various states to illegalize the Communist Party, are so many threats to the whole body of American civil liberties. That Dies menaces all democracy has been made quite clear for all who wish to see by his smear campaign against many progressive and CIO leaders and by his recent publication of the lists of the American League for Peace and Democracy—an act characterized by President Roosevelt as "sordid," meaning, according to Webster's Dictionary, "filthy, dirty, vile, base, gross, low, mean, ignominious, despicable."

It is very significant that the Dies Committee is not attacking the Trotskyites, Lovestonites and Socialists, despite their loud shouting about revolution during the past few years. In fact, Dies went out of his way recently to assure the Socialists (Debs should turn over in his grave) that he was not going to investigate them. And why should he interfere with

them? Are they not, with their anti-Soviet campaign, playing the same reactionary game that he is? It is only a question of a division of labor between them and Dies. The recent Socialist-inspired resolution rammed through by the American Labor Party leadership in New York might well have been written by Martin Dies himself.

The Dies Committee is conducting a political lynching bee, with the Communist Party (and eventually all the democratic organizations of the people) as the prospective victim. Its long-winded investigation has been an unending saturnalia of slanders, lies, red-baiting, Jew-baiting and fascist-like reaction. Dies has dug up from various social cesspools an unsavory collection of renegades, stoopigeons, under-cover men, criminals, labor fakers, crackpots, agents provocateurs and political castoffs, and he has paraded them daily for many months on the front pages of the country's press and through the radio as loyal defenders of American democracy.

This riff-raff has been encouraged by Dies to tell the most fantastic stories, charging our Party with espionage, receiving Russian gold and jewels, being controlled "by orders from Moscow," seeking to destroy the labor

movement, and similar cock and bull stuff. Not the slightest effort has Dies made to cross-examine these witnesses or to check up on their Baron Munchausen tales.

With the same lynch technique (trust a Texas bourbon to be an expert in such matters) Dies has gavelled down the Communist witnesses who, subpoenaed by his Committee, have tried to reply to the many lies told at its hearings against our Party. The Communists have been denied even the smallest opportunity to state the position of our Party and to give a picture of its real activities. Dies is not in the slightest interested in getting such information. All he wants is the mud-slinging of his red-baiting liars, to be spread through thousands of newspapers and over the radio as a daily dose of poison. It is doubtful if ever in the history of the United States has any Congressional investigating committee more flagrantly violated its mandate than the one now headed by Mr. Dies.

The most dangerous aspect of the whole situation is the timid and confused attitude taken by liberal elements generally, including progressive trade union leaders, towards the Dies Committee.

They have not understood that Dies is a spokesman for the most

sinister and reactionary forces in the country, nor have they realized that his attack upon the Communists is only the preliminary stage of an assault upon every phase of the people's democratic movement. Instead of developing a determined struggle against Dies and forcing his committee to investigate the real Un-American forces of this country—the Hearsts, Fords, Girdlers, etc.—the liberals have stood meekly aside, giving him a free hand, voting him funds, and contenting themselves with mild protests whenever he has trampled upon their personal corns or brazenly spat in their faces. Especially since the outbreak of the war have the liberals, who are full of illusions that this is a war for democracy, retreated before the vicious red-baiting and "war-mongering" of Dies. All together the liberals' position towards the Dies Committee has been one of measureless stupidity.

Because he has had no determined opposition from progressive Labor and the liberals, Dies has been able to build himself and his committee into a menacing national political force. His activities are a dangerous threat to all that is democratic and worthwhile in this country. It is high time, therefore, that the trade

unions and other progressive elements realize this and open up a real struggle against Dies and his supporters.

This requires a many-sided fight—to defend civil liberties, to build the labor unions, to protect the living standards of the masses, to prepare for the crucial 1940 elections, to combat war hysteria, and to struggle against every step leading this country towards participation in the imperialist war.

Especially in the fight against Dies it is necessary for all the democratic masses to defend the legality of the Communist Party. For whether the timid progressives in the trade union movement and outside like it or not, the Communist Party is the front line trench of American democracy, and if the reactionaries are allowed to overwhelm it, the whole defense-works of our democratic system will be grievously endangered.

Especially in the fight against Dies it is necessary for the democratic masses to protest and end the illegal attacks on the Communist Party. For whether the timid progressives like it or not, if the attack on the Communist Party is successful, then the door will be opened for the reactionaries and war-mongers, to strike further blows against civil rights, against the labor and progressive movement.