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Congress Moves More Slowly on Ike's New Blank Check

The President may be doing fine in Mecca, but he's having trouble in Washington. Two years ago, when he asked a blank check for war in the Far East, the House gave it to him next day. The Senate acted three days later. There were only three dissenting votes in each chamber. This year's request for a blank check to make war in the Middle East is having a stickier reception. Mr. Eisenhower made his request in extreme urgency on January 5, but when the House finally acted 25 days had passed and there were 61 votes in opposition. The Senate, less easily hurried, resumes public hearings this week. Our Conscript Fathers, by their dignified pace, show that we too are recovering from the cult of personality.

Actually the size of the opposition in the House is better measured by the vote last Tuesday to impose a gag on debate than by the vote next day on passage. The vote for the closed rule was 262 to 146. Many liberals like Celler (*D. N.Y.*), Reuss (*D. Wis.*) and Roosevelt (*D. Calif.*) were sharply critical but in the end felt compelled to vote for the joint resolution. As James Roosevelt said, "I cannot take the risk of having any vote I cast in this great body give aid and comfort to the designs of the Kremlin." What he really meant was that he could not risk having his vote misrepresented. Only the bolder liberals and the more stalwart isolationists stuck to their guns; Clare Hoffman (*R. Mich.*) and Chet Hollifield (*D. Calif.*), O'Konski (*R. Wis.*) and Multer (*D. N.Y.*) thus found themselves together.

The Real Weakness of the New "Doctrine"

A careful reading of the favorable report made by the House Foreign Affairs Committee indicates that even the submissive majority is acutely aware of the resolution's shortcomings. The report urges attention to the problems not covered by the resolution—the Arab-Israeli controversy, the resettlement of Arab refugees and the reopening of the Suez canal with adequate safeguards. The report also underscores, with soft discernment, the weakness of the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine. It says the nations of the Middle East "evaluate their own problems and the world situation in terms of their own individual circumstances. . . . Several of the Middle Eastern countries do not give a high priority to the Soviet threat. . . . All of these nations give top priority to national independence and freedom from foreign domination."

But neither in the bitter speeches of the House nor in the storm gathering in the Senate have there appeared men intrepid enough to translate this into plain English. It is the Middle Eastern desire for neutralism, with the threat that holds for U.S. bomber bases, which lies behind the crisis. If the forthcoming investigation looks for understanding rather than sensation, it will see that the trouble began when Egypt in October 1951 turned down our proposals for a Middle Eastern

Command like NATO and SEATO.

A stable and neutral Middle East, in which legitimate oil and transit interests can be safe, is achievable. But \$400,000,000 in *baksheesh* will not be enough to create a permanent protectorate. Congressman Hardy (*D. Va.*), fresh from his study of foreign aid follies in Iran (see page 4), told the House it was nonsense to talk of spending that amount for economic development in so short a time with no advance planning. He asked whether we were inviting Middle Eastern rulers "to believe that we stand ever more ready to solve our diplomatic problems simply by writing out more checks for the U.S. taxpayer." We are trying to buy the desert potentates when experience has shown, as Wayne Hays (*D. Ohio*) expressed it, that they can only be rented.

Best Not Translated Into Hungarian

Until we recognize that we cannot treat the area as a private preserve, the Russians will make trouble. The Russian opposition in the UN to an international police force to prevent a new outbreak between Egypt and Israel speaks self-righteously of "a dangerous precedent in the domestic affairs of sovereign states"—a mouthful which will read strangely when translated into Hungarian. Ever since Litvinov, every Soviet definition of aggression has included the formation of armed bands like Nasser's *fedayeen* on the territory of one state for incursions into another, but Moscow forgets when it comes to the Gaza strip. There it finds Israel "has absolutely no reason" to demand guarantees.

Congressional debate is having the useful byproduct of pushing the Administration reluctantly toward a policy more realistic than merely bidding against Moscow for Egyptian favor. Nasser is no Galahad of anti-colonialism. A key point was touched in the Senate last Tuesday by Douglas (*D. Ill.*). He asked Mansfield (*D. Mont.*) whether Egyptian reoccupation of Tiran at the entrance to Akaba would not block shipping access to "the alternative or supplementary pipeline being built from the head of the Gulf over to the Mediterranean and thus we shall have lost any alternative to Mr. Nasser's control over the Suez canal." Mansfield agreed and said the pipeline "is about one-third completed." It will run from Elath to Haifa, permitting oil for Western Europe to bypass Suez. Douglas went on to criticize Lodge's position at the UN, saying that once the Israeli withdraw and the Egyptian troops are back "the United Nations can pass whatever resolutions it wishes, but it will be faced with an accomplished fact . . . and the possibility of an alternative pipeline will be out of the question." Mansfield agreed that "the best possible solution" would be the Canadian proposal that UN troops move in as the Israeli troops move out. The difference is between appeasement of a dictator and a settlement fair to all.

Legislative History Cited Against The Effort to Identify and Blacklist Individuals

A New Line of Attack on the House Un-American Committee's Powers

As yet unnoticed by the press, a new line of attack on the House Un-American Activities Committee has been launched by Telford Taylor in a brief amicus filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in the Watkins case. Taylor has dug back into the legislative history of the resolution establishing the Committee in 1938. This is the gist of his argument:

"The legislative history of the statute and resolutions establishing the Committee . . . clearly shows that the Congressional purpose, in harmony with the wording, was to look into the origin, contents and channels of distribution of propaganda. Nothing in the legislative history supports the extraordinarily broad construction . . . that Congress has authorized the Committee to identify and 'expose' every present and former member of the Communist Party. A resolution (H. Res. 88, 75th Cong. 1st sess.) the language of which might have been susceptible to such interpretation was debated and rejected by the House of Representatives in 1937 shortly before Representative Martin Dies introduced the much narrower resolution (H. Res. 282, 76th Cong. 1st sess.) adopted by the House in 1938, the language of which is identical with that of the statute under which the Committee presently operates."

Started With "Nazi" Not "Un-American"

The language of the resolution establishing the Committee has an interesting history. Taylor shows that it is identical with that establishing the McCormack-Dickstein Committee in 1934, except that the latter used the word "Nazi" instead of "un-American." This was an investigation of Nazi propaganda activities and culminated in the passage of the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

In 1937 Congressman Dickstein introduced a resolution calling for a broader investigation, no longer limited to propaganda but including "the character, objects, *extent of membership* and officers . . . of organizations spreading "slandorous or libellous un-American propaganda of religious, racial, or subversive political prejudices. . . ." (Italics added).

Taylor asks the Court to notice that the Dickstein resolution "did not purport to embrace the membership of such organizations in years long past, and in that respect was perhaps less sweeping than the authority now claimed by the Committee." But it did "specifically envisage the 'identification' of all members of 'un-American propaganda' organizations."

Ham Fish Opposed This One

This new resolution ran into heavy opposition from two diverse sources. One was from the liberals in the House, led by Maury Maverick of Texas and Lindsay Warren of North Carolina, who were prophetic in their warnings. The other was from rightists not wholly unsympathetic with the Fascist and Nazi "shirt" groups mushrooming up around the country.

The foremost baiter of Reds, pinks, and liberals in Congress turned champion of civil liberties when confronted by this resolution. Hamilton Fish of New York had been the chairman of the prototype of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the committee set up in 1930 to investigate "communist propaganda in the United States and particularly in our educational institutions; the activities and membership of the Communist Party of the United States. . . ."

Ike's Judges and FDR's

Another hopeful straw in testing the judicial wind was the 6-3 decision by the Supreme Court ordering a new trial for Ben Gold (as predicted in our last issue) on the ground that there had been jury tampering. Politically this was a hot case, the first Taft-Hartley non-Communist oath prosecution on which the Court has ruled. Gold as leader of the Fur Workers was the foremost Communist in the trade union movement. In ruling that he had a right to a new trial, the three New Dealers left on the Court (Black, Frankfurter and Douglas) found themselves lined up with the three Eisenhower appointees (Warren, Harlan and Brennan) in Gold's favor. The dissenters were the two Truman judges (Burton and Clark) and FDR's one conservative appointee, Reed.

The jury tampering came about when a member of the panel from which petit jurors are chosen complained to the U.S. Attorney that she had received a copy of the Afro-American containing an advertisement attacking the Taft-Hartley Act inserted by another non-Communist oath defendant, Hugh Bryson. In the course of investigating, the FBI also questioned three members of the jury already sitting on the Gold case. The majority ruled the intrusion unintentional but said that did "not remove the effect of the intrusion."

Now, while the manager of the new resolution (Greenwood of Indiana) pleaded that it was not a question of freedom of speech but of investigating the organization and drilling of uniformed men in this country by Nazi German agents and funds, Fish reversed position. "This bill," he protested, "sets up an un-American checkup, nothing more or less, and restores the alien sedition (sic) laws. The American Legion would never be for that." The resolution lost 184 to 38.

Enter Martin Dies

It was after the defeat of the Dickstein resolution that Martin Dies of Texas introduced the narrower resolution, omitting reference to membership, which the House passed in 1938, establishing the Un-American Activities Committee.

The history is not new, but the use made of it is. Taylor is counsel for Robert M. Metcalf, a professor of art at Antioch College, summoned before the House Committee in September, 1954. He admitted that a decade earlier he was a member of a Marxist discussion group but declined to name other members. Trial of Metcalf for contempt has been held up, pending the Supreme Court's decision on the Watkins appeal. This is similar in that the UAW organizer also declined to name others he had known as Communists a decade before.

Taylor argues that the legislative history shows that the Un-American Activities Committee, unlike the old Ham Fish committee, was never intended to set out on a general inquiry to identify all Communists or Marxists, past and present.

Correction: Mr. Sydnor H. Walker, assistant to the President of Vassar, informs us that we were incorrect in reporting (our issue of Jan. 14) that Lloyd Barenblatt was discharged by the college as a result of his subpoena by the House Un-American Activities Committee. On investigating we find we were wrong and regret the unintentional reflection on Vassar.