

2005
Cornell University
Civil Liberties
9/24/47

224 BOARDMAN HALL
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
ITHACA, NEW YORK

MAY 26 1948
APR 23 1948

SEP 26 41
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
ITHACA, NEW YORK
J 100 5000
DAA
ack'd
10/23
ack
discarded

Second, the best antidote for all this seems to me to be a better general understanding of the basic issues and values which are involved. The facts and appraisals necessary for such an understanding are not presently available. Virtually all the discussions of the loyalty tests and the activities of the "un-American" committees have come from those closely associated with either the crusading liberal, or radical groups and their spokesmen or from the super-patriots. There has been little or no objective, hard-headed fact-finding and analysis. I have long felt that the most effective way of exposing the dangers implicit in such an agency as the House Committee on Un-American Activities would be simply to put on record accurately and dispassionately the facts as they stand. It is almost impossible for a good liberal to mention the Committee without calling it names. But what is really needed is an honest, thorough, clear-headed report based on sound research and free from adjectives and invective. I believe that only such a report can be expected to influence fair-minded men who do not wish to associate themselves with either the crusaders or the ultra-conservatives. I do not doubt the feasibility of producing such a report.

Should the decision be reached to underwrite the proposed study, I hope that one point will be most carefully considered in organizing the group responsible for it. In my opinion, the committee or board should, if possible, have one man on it who has in the past had official responsibility for dealing with the problem of disloyal or subversive employees, persons or movements. In my opinion, there is a strong tendency on the part of those who excoriate the "witch-hunters" to assume either openly or tacitly that the whole program directed against subversive activity is entirely unnecessary, that there is no present danger to the public security and that loyalty tests and similar activities are the result of nothing but hysteria. I think this is far from true. Liberal-minded men in the Department of Justice and other parts of the government who have had to deal with these matters, and who have examined thousands of case records, do not share this view. They have had access to facts which are not made public and they do not question the reality of the dangers created by subversive movements which they know exist. A man like Edwin Dickinson (California) who served as executive secretary of the Attorney General's Committee on Investigations in 1942-43 is the sort of man I have in mind, and there must be others. Any study and report dealing with this whole problem which hopes to carry real weight should, in my judgment, come from a group in which this body of experience and point of view are adequately represented.

This is the substance of what occurs to me at the moment, and after pretty careful consideration, I shall naturally be keenly interested in whatever may be the result of the Hutchins proposal.

With best regards,

Very sincerely yours,

Robert E. Cushman

Robert E. Cushman

REC/pp