

September 14, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR

MR. HALDEMAN

It pains me, but I would say "no" to a letter transmitting Sidney Hook's testimony.

Life, as President Kennedy used to say, is not fair. It has not been fair to Sidney Hook. For forty years he has been utterly faithful to the values of liberal socialism. He has fought the totalitarians of the right and the left with equal vehemence, equal detestation. He has been right. And he has ended up a man with almost no intellectual creditability in the very world he has striven to protect and maintain.

I am sorry to say this, but it is true. Hook has become a symbol of "strident anti-communism," et al. He has not been forgiven for being right in the past, and he will not be forgiven for being right in the present. Partly this is a matter of personal style: you can sense some of his ferocity from his testimony. But mostly it is that he is right.

In your western fastness, you probably never heard of those leftists who were vigorously anti-Nazi during the period of the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact and were subsequently accused in party journals of "premature anti-Fascism." So also with Hook. (Note also that Human Events reproduced his piece.)

May I offer an alternative suggestion. The President has for on to two years been warning against that "single poisoned premise" of which Hook writes. Why not, if the Scranton Commission goes wrong, issue a Presidential statement reviewing his past statements and bringing them up to date.

I am in close touch with the Commission. The report seems to be going well. Jim Wilson will be here tomorrow to read through it. The fear in the staff is that the Commissioners, notably Rhodes, simply won't accept it.

The Commission meets this Friday, I believe, and we will know a week hence.

Not all is in vain. Martha Derthick has been so shocked by the intellectual standards of her colleagues that she has determined to write a book.

Daniel P. Moynihan

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