

Senate Takes Close Look at Game

Ol' Professor Reaches Oratorical Peak

On Capitol Hill



"Our Club Has Been Successful Because We Have the Spirit of '76."



"If I've Been in Baseball 48 Years, There Must Be Some Good in It."

Photos by DON WINGFIELD

Anti-Trust Group Questions Stengel and Standout Players

'Parts of Bill Worry Me,' Says Chairman Kefauver; Major League Luminaries Strongly Back Measure

By JACK WALSH

WASHINGTON, D. C.

In his own inimitable if often unfathomable way, Casey Stengel stole the show as the Senate opened hearings on bills granting anti-trust exemptions to Organized Ball and other professional team sports.

Luring a standing-room-only crowd to the Senate caucus room, as well as a battery of TV and still cameramen, were bright stars of the game like Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, Stan Musial, Robin Roberts and Eddie Yost, who testified in that order.

But behind the carnival atmosphere were clear indications that the Senate Anti-Trust and Monopoly subcommittee, headed by Sen. Estes Kefauver (D., Tenn.) would take a hard look at the House-passed bill.

Chairman Kefauver said: "Parts of the bill worry me considerably. To give a blanket waiver to anti-trust laws is a big request. We must consider what it does to the players, the owners and the public itself. The public has an important place in this."

The Keating-Walter bill, which the House passed by an overwhelming voice vote, and an identical Senate bill introduced by Sen. Thomas C. Hennings, Jr. (D., Mo.), would grant complete anti-trust exemptions to playing phases and player control in professional sports. Included, too, would be an anti-trust exemption for telecasting and broadcasting rights and policies.

O'Mahoney Raises Question

Sen. Joseph C. O'Mahoney (D., Wyo.) used strong language in raising some searching questions to Stengel and the players.

Commenting on the bill, O'Mahoney said:

"If it becomes law, nobody in government, nobody in Congress could question the actions of those managing baseball."

Then he asked Robin Roberts, the Phillies' fine righthander who is player representative of the National League, "Do you think that's fair to the fans and fair to the players?"

Roberts replied: "I feel the things that have been happening in baseball have been fair to all."

At another point, O'Mahoney said: "The big brass of baseball is asking

Griffith, Jackie, Chandler, Frick and Feller to Be Heard

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Hearings by the Senate anti-trust subcommittee on the sports bill were scheduled to resume on July 15, with testimony from Calvin Griffith, president of the Washington Senators, and officials of the Justice Department, FTC and FCC.

Chairman Estes Kefauver announced the following schedule:

July 16—Commissioner Ford Frick and President George Trautman of the National Association.

July 17—Gov. Albert B. Chandler and Kentucky, former commissioner and former senator, and ex-Senator Edwin C. Johnson, former president of the Western League.

July 18—Jackie Robinson and Bob Feller.

Stengel Positive in Views --But What Did He Say?

Yankees' Manager Touches All the Bases at Hearing; Senators, However, Have Difficulty Following His Path

By JACK WALSH

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The United States Senate, one of the world's most renowned debating societies, has heard its share of spellbinding and double talk. Until July 9, though, it never had experienced a full hour of pure, unadulterated Stengelese.

It still may be recovering.

Casey Stengel, the irrepressible manager of the Yankees, may not have added much to the understanding of the problems in the

involved sports bills before the Senate anti-trust and monopoly subcommittee, but he proved one of the most entertaining witnesses ever to appear on Capitol Hill. Never cracking a smile himself, Stengel continually created guffaws among the Senators and the standing-room-only crowd in the Senate caucus room.

It could be said, too, that Ol' Casey proved you don't have to take the Fifth Amendment to evade a Senatorial question. Touching all bases, with the exception of first, second and third, Stengel left the subcommittee members bewildered and baffled. And when he was excused, they still were looking for their first direct answer.

Sen. Estes Kefauver, like Stengel no stickler for correct names, later characterized Casey's testimony as "rather general." Kefauver, chairman of the subcommittee, added with a smile: "It was amusing, though. He's a great actor and personality."

Kefauver Puzzled

Once when Stengel had rambled seemingly aimlessly for several minutes, Kefauver interrupted to say politely: "Mr. Stengel I am not sure that I made my question clear."

After the ensuing laughter died, Stengel replied: "Yes, sir. Well, that is all right. I am not sure I am going to answer yours perfectly, either." (More laughter.)

Kefauver: "I was asking you, sir, why it is that baseball wants this bill passed?"

Stengel: "I would say I would not know but I would say the reason why they would want it passed is to keep baseball going as the highest paid ball that has gone into baseball

Mickey's No Switcher as Witness



"MY VIEWS are about the same as Casey's," Mickey Mantle testified. It was an answer that brought down the house, with the Senators having difficulty in figuring out Stengel's views.

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Robin Roberts, N. L. Player Representative.



Stan Musial, St. Louis Cardinal Star.



Eddie Yost, A. L. Player Representative.

Magic Names of Stars Draw Large Crowd

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Congress to turn the whole thing over to the owners."

The fact remains that a majority of the Senate, at latest count 50 members, already have signed the Hennings Bill as co-sponsors, indicating their support of it.

Baseball men wouldn't be quoted on it, but seemed of the unanimous opinion that the sports bill would have sailed through the Senate until the story broke here that Calvin Griffith was considering moving the Washington franchise to Minneapolis.

That created a furor. Even after a hastily-called meeting of the Washington club's board of directors and subsequent passage of a resolution irrevocably committing the team to remain in the nation's capital, some felt the damage may have been done.

Mundt Seeks Amendment

Sen. Karl Mundt (R., S. D.), one of the co-sponsors of the Hennings measure and an interested spectator at the opening of the hearings, already has announced he will seek to tack an amendment on the bill to safeguard the public interests in franchise transfers.

Sen. William Langer (R., N. D.), subcommittee member, insisted that Griffith be summoned to testify. Griffith will be one of the first witnesses called when the hearings resume, July 15.

The effect the bill would have on franchise shifts, as well as the proposed exemption for TV and radio rights, are now drawing closer scrutiny.

Observers feel that any amendment at this late date could act to bury the bill with the expiration of this Eighty-fifth Congress. Adjournment is expected next month and there may not be time, they say, for the House and Senate to agree on a bill satisfactory to both.

Sports officials, however, still are hopeful of its passage at this session. Their main contention is that it is needed to protect them from the harassment of anti-trust litigation.

It wasn't the bill or its merits that brought the overflow to the caucus room but the magic names of Mantle, Williams, Musial and Roberts.

Players Back Reserve Clause

The players pleaded ignorance to many of the technical aspects they were questioned about, but unanimously supported the reserve clause and told of the fair treatment they had received and observed in baseball.

Their appearance provided a novel twist to a congressional hearing—numerous small boys kept appearing out of the audience to get their autographs.

It was a touch not supplied by the equally crowded Goldfine hearing in the House or the McClellan Racket hearings.

Mickey Mantle, introduced proudly by Sen. Robert Kerr (D., Okla.) as a man of few words because of the way his manager operates, summed up the attitude of the players fairly well when Kefauver asked him if he

Stars Shine as Senate Witnesses

By JACK WALSH

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Casey Stengel supplied the comic touch at the Senate hearings here and some of baseball's most famed goodwill ambassadors performed nearly as well as witnesses as they do on the field.

With the list including Ted Williams, Stan Musial, Mickey Mantle, Robin Roberts and Eddie Yost, that contribution was considerable.

Williams, disdaining a tie as usual but wearing his white sports shirt buttoned at the neck, was particularly articulate.

Members of the Senate Anti-Trust and Monopoly Subcommittee seemed particularly interested in the question of a minor signing a contract, then being bound to a club for his playing lifetime.

When Williams was asked if he thought a player should be a free agent when he reaches 21, he replied negatively. "Those things have a way of working

themselves out," he told the subcommittee. "Personally, I don't see how baseball could operate without the reserve clause and preserve its integrity."

The soft-spoken Mantle made a few telling points.

When Sen. Kefauver questioned him about the unlimited reserve clause and reiterated the situation of a minor tying himself for life, Mantle said:

"I don't have any gripe. I've been very fortunate. If they don't do anything different than they've been doing, I'll be more than satisfied."

When Kefauver pressed the point and wondered how Mantle would feel if he had been sent back to the minors, Mickey said:

"I have a twin brother who signed with the Yankees when I did and he didn't do so good, so he quit. I think that's what I'd do."

Interestingly, all five players never played with any major league club other than the one they first joined.

thought there should be a limit on the reserve clause.

Mantle said: "I don't know, I don't think about those things very much."

Williams, who was typically without a tie, wore a white sport shirt under his coat. Perhaps in deference to the subcommittee, the shirt was buttoned at the neck.

Ted was an articulate witness. He and Musial made almost identical statements that "if they had a chance to start their baseball careers over, they wouldn't do a thing differently."

Musial, as player representative of

the Cardinals, and Roberts and Yost, as representatives of their respective leagues, all were questioned closely as to why the players first supported the Celler bill in the House and then withdrew their endorsement.

Roberts said: "We want what the club owners want. We thought that was the bill they wanted. It sounds strange, but we were confused."

In his case, Roberts said he talked it over with the Phillies' owner, Bob Carpenter, and Commissioner Ford Frick. Sen. O'Mahoney said: "And they convinced you that you were

wrong?" Roberts answered, "Yes, very much so."

The whole proceeding was reminiscent of the way the baseball hearings began back in the House in 1951. At that time, the legislators were puzzled about many of baseball's practices. And, in many cases, the players were unable to explain the rhyme and reason for many regulations and practices.

One reporter summed it up: "This is a standoff. The Senators don't know a thing about baseball and the players don't know a thing about law."

Ted in Swing With Game's Supporters



"IF I HAD A CHANCE to start my career over, I wouldn't do a thing differently," said Ted Williams of the Red Sox. And his words were about the same as Stan Musial's.

'Yank Players Must Produce or Else'—Case

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and from the baseball angle, I am not going to speak of any other sport.

"I am not here to argue about other sports. I am in the baseball business. It has been run cleaner than any business that was ever put out in the 100 years, at the present time."

The above verbatim reply is from the official transcript of the hearings.

Defines Yank Success

In further defense of the baseball writers, who for years have struggled manfully to reproduce Stengel quotes, was this apparent definition of Yankee success by Stengel:

"I must have splendid ownership. I must have very capable men who are in radio and TV, which no doubt you know that we have mentioned the three names—you will say they are very great.

"We have a wonderful press that follows us. Anybody should in New York City, where you have so many million people.

"Our ball club has been successful because we have it, and we have the spirit of '76. We put it onto the ball field and if you are not capable of becoming a great ball player since I have been the manager, in ten years, you are notified that if you don't produce on the ball field the salary that you receive, we will allow you to be traded or play and give your services to other clubs."

Casey discoursed on many things, including his ups and downs in a 48-year baseball career that started in Class D at Shelbyville, Ky.

He confided to the Senators: "I had many years not so successful as a baseball player, which is a game of skill."

Tells of "Discharges"

It included many "discharges," he explained, adding: "You can call them discharges—no question, I had to leave."

Stengel even took time to marvel at the way the Japanese have taken up baseball. "And they have those short fingers," he explained, "but overcoming that handicap they use the same size ball we do and I was surprised they'd play."

One thing Casey made clear was his belief that baseball is a fine, honorable game. "My opinion of baseball is that if I've been in it 48 years, there must be some good in it," he told the Senators.

He also told them he didn't know much about the legislative end. "I'll have to leave that to you men," he said. "That's what you're here for."

When Sen. John A. Carroll (D., Colo.) later asked him why baseball needed this anti-trust legislation, Stengel acted badgered and shrugged: "I didn't ask for this legislation."

It remained for Mickey Mantle, who followed his manager to the stand, to bring down the house.

One of Mantle's first remarks, as he smiled blandly, was: "My views are just about the same as Casey's."

This rocked the hearing room and prompted Chairman Kefauver to say smilingly:

"If you could define what Casey's views were, it would be a service to this committee."