

Have you no sense of Decency Sir?

Har De ingen sans for anstændighed, min herre?

Joseph Nye Welch (1890-1960) var ledende advokat for den amerikanske hær, mens den var under efterforskning for kommunistiske aktiviteter ved senator Joseph McCarthys *Permanente Senatsudvalg vedr. Undersøgelser*, en undersøgelse kendt som Army-McCarthy høringsen .

Welch (tv) og senator Joe McCarthy (th) ved Army-McCarthy høringsen, 9.6.1954.



Den 9. juni 1954, den 30. dag af Army-McCarthy høringsen, anklagede McCarthy en ung advokat , Fred Fisher, i Welch's advokatfirma Hale and Dorr for at have været medlem af National Lawyers Guild (NLG), mens han studerede. NLG var en forening, som FBI-direktør J. Edgar Hoover forsøgte at få statsadvokaten til at udpege som en kommunistisk frontorganisation. Welch havde privat drøftet sagen med Fisher på forhånd, og de havde aftalt, at Fisher ikke skulle deltage i høringerne. Welch affærdigede Fishers tilknytning til NLG som en ungdommelig indiskretion og angreb McCarthy for at navngive den unge mand foran et landsdækkende tv-publikum uden forudgående advarsel eller tidligere aftale om at gøre det:



Indtil dette øjeblik, senator, har jeg aldrig rigtig målt Deres grusomhed eller Deres hensynsløshed. Fred Fisher er en ung mand, der gik på Harvard Law School og kom ind i mit firma, og er begyndt, hvad der ser ud til at være en strålende karriere hos os. Jeg kunne ikke drømme om, at De kunne være så hensynsløs og så grusom at skade denne unge mand. Det er rigtigt, han er stadig med Hale og Dor, og det er rigtigt, at han fortsat vil være ansat hos Hale og Dorr. Det er, jeg beklager at måtte sige, lige så rigtigt, at jeg er bange for, at han altid vil bære et sår, som er unødigt påført af Dem. Hvis det var i min

magt at tilgive Dem for Deres hensynsløs grusomhed ville jeg gøre det. Jeg vil gerne tro jeg er en gentleman, men Deres tilgivelse bliver nødt til at komme fra en anden end mig.

Da McCarthy forsøgte at forny sit angreb, afbrød Welch ham:

Senator, kan vi ikke droppe dette her? Vi ved, at han var med i National Lawyers Guild. Lad os ikke snigmyrde denne knægt yderligere, senator. De har gjort nok. Har De ingen sans for anstændighed, min herre? Når det kommer til stykket, har De så ingen sans for anstændighed tilbage?

McCarthy forsøgte at stille Welch et andet spørgsmål om Fisher, og Welch afbrød:

Mr. McCarthy, jeg vil ikke diskutere det yderligere med Dem. De har siddet inden for et par meter fra mig og kunne have spurgt mig om Fred Fisher. De har fundet det passende at bringe det ud i offentligheden. Og hvis der er en Gud i Himlen vil det gøre hverken Dem eller Deres sag noget godt. Jeg vil ikke diskutere det yderligere. Jeg vil ikke stille Mr. Cohn flere spørgsmål. De, hr. formand, kan, hvis De vil, indkalde næste vidne.

Kildetekst:

Joseph Nye Welch (October 22, 1890 – October 6, 1960) was the chief counsel for the [United States Army](#) while it was under investigation for Communist activities by Senator [Joseph McCarthy's Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations](#), an investigation known as the [Army–McCarthy hearings](#).

On June 9, 1954, the 30th day of the Army–McCarthy hearings, McCarthy accused [Fred Fisher](#), a junior attorney at Welch's law firm, of associating with the [National Lawyers Guild](#) (NLG) while in law school. The NLG was a group that FBI director [J. Edgar Hoover](#) sought to have the Attorney General designate as a [Communist front](#) organization. Welch had privately discussed the matter with Fisher beforehand and the two agreed Fisher should not participate in the hearings. Welch dismissed Fisher's association with the NLG as a youthful indiscretion and attacked McCarthy for naming the young man before a nationwide television audience without prior warning or previous agreement to do so:



Welch (left) being questioned by Senator [Joe McCarthy](#) (right) at the [Army-McCarthy hearings](#), June 9, 1954.

Until this moment, Senator, I think I have never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness. Fred Fisher is a young man who went to the [Harvard Law School](#) and came into my firm and is starting what looks to be a brilliant career with us. Little did I dream you could be so reckless and so cruel as to do an injury to that lad. It is true he is still with Hale and Dorr. It is true that he will continue to be with Hale and

Dorr. It is, I regret to say, equally true that I fear he shall always bear a scar needlessly inflicted by you. If it were in my power to forgive you for your reckless cruelty I would do so. I like to think I am a gentleman, but your forgiveness will have to come from someone other than me.

When McCarthy tried to renew his attack, Welch interrupted him:

Senator, may we not drop this? We know he belonged to the Lawyers Guild. Let us not assassinate this lad further, Senator. You've done enough. Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?

McCarthy tried to ask Welch another question about Fisher, and Welch interrupted:

Mr. McCarthy, I will not discuss this further with you. You have sat within six feet of me and could have asked me about Fred Fisher. You have seen fit to bring it out. And if there is a God in Heaven it will do neither you nor your cause any good. I will not discuss it further. I will not ask Mr. [Cohn](#) any more questions. You, Mr. Chairman, may, if you will, call the next witness.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_N._Welch

Videoklip af ordskiftet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1eA5bUzVjA>

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