

# COMMITTEE FOR HAL CHASE

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## Committee Members

Lynn Bevell  
Baseball Historian  
Chris Goode  
Author/Baseball Historian  
Mary Darling  
Baseball Historian  
John Smirch  
Author/Baseball Historian  
David Green  
Baseball Historian  
Cousin of Hal Chase  
Hal Chase  
Grandson

## Commissioner Rob Manfred

Major League Baseball  
1271 Avenues of The Americas  
New York, NY 10020

Dear Commissioner Manfred,

On behalf of the Committee for Hal Chase—comprised of baseball historians and members of the Chase family—we respectfully request the posthumous formal reinstatement of Hal Chase.

Hal Chase was an exceptional first baseman known for outstanding defense, leading the National League in hits in 1916 with a .339 average, and ranking among league leaders multiple times in RBIs, stolen bases, and batting average; he was praised by Babe Ruth and Walter Johnson as the best first baseman ever, was named one of the 100 greatest baseball players of all time, and was the first true star of the New York Yankees franchise.

In addition to his on-field achievements, Hal Chase made baseball history by successfully challenging the reserve clause in court after White Sox owner Charles Comiskey tried to block his move to the Federal League, making him one of the first players to win such a case and angering team owners, which led to his blacklisting from the American League.

Despite his brilliance on the field, Hal's legacy has been overshadowed by unsubstantiated allegations of misconduct. Importantly, Hal Chase was never formally banned, indicted, or convicted; the accusations against him rested on rumor and hearsay, not documented evidence. Unlike the Black Sox or Pete Rose, there is no confession, financial record, court decision, or written agreement implicating him—only an atmosphere of suspicion that became legend.

Chase's effective "banishment" was the result of Commissioner Landis's informal blackballing, not a formal ruling or due process. While this may have reflected the concerns of its era, it now stands as a historical injustice.

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We commend your recent efforts to view baseball's past with greater historical nuance and humanity. Your precedent of considering bans as expired upon a player's death offers an opportunity to restore dignity to those whose reputations were shaped by insufficient evidence, questionable journalism, and the moral climate of a different era.

Formally reinstating Hal Chase would not be an endorsement of alleged actions, but an acknowledgment that no player should be condemned to historical exile based solely on unofficial blacklisting and unproven claims. His story deserves to be told with fairness and integrity. It certainly should not be erased.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Hal Chase  
Grandson

The Committee for Hal Chase  
(Baseball Historians and the Chase Family)

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