

F. D. R. CALLS DIES ACTION A 'SORDID PROCEDURE'; CAPITAL REVULSION GROWS

League Membership Up
Sharply Following Pub-
lication of List

DIES HITS F. D. R.

Reactionaries Increase
Demand for Curb on
Civil Liberty

By Adam Lapin

(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 27.—President Roosevelt today rapped the Dies Committee for making public the list of names which it seized from the local office of the American League for Peace and Democracy.

At his morning press conference the President characterized the committee's action as a "rather sordid procedure."

When he was asked to make a statement on the publication of the list, the President said that he had not read enough about the "rather sordid procedure" to comment. He then permitted direct quotation of his critical remark concerning the committee.

The President's statement climaxed the wide-spread revulsion in the Capital against the release of the American League list by the Dies Committee.

This reaction set in after Liberal Congressmen led by Rep. John Coffee and joined by Rep. John Dempsey, Dies Committee member, bitterly assailed the committee on the floor.

LOCAL GAINS MEMBERS

One effect has been a large influx of members into the local branch of the American League.

Most of the new members are employees of the Government.

Mr. Roosevelt's remark was the first in many long months from any authoritative spokesman of the administration assailing the Dies Committee.

As a matter of fact, it followed a statement by Attorney General Frank Murphy yesterday which praised the committee as "very helpful."

Most observers believe that the President's remark was directed only against the particular step taken by the committee which is now generally conceded to have been a clumsy blunder, and that the general cooperation which has been developing between the committee and the Justice Department will continue.

In other words, Dies is not expected to get anywhere right now with his demands for prosecution of the American League as a "foreign agent," nor will any immediate steps be taken against members of the League employed by the Government.

(Speaking before the New York Federation of Women's Clubs in New York City yester-

Dies Action 'Sordid' Says President

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day, Dies angrily defended his action and shouted an answer to the President:

"I say to you, Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, you may regard publishing the names of members of a Communist front organization as a sordid procedure but in my way of thinking if government employes belong to organizations dominated by foreign powers they ought to be exposed and the American public ought to know the names.

"Naturally it grieves me that leaders of my party and the President of the United States should take issue with what I conceive to be my duty," he said.]

But, on the other hand, the administration is not expected to take any effective steps to curb the Dies Committee's war mongering, and will continue to join actively in its witch-hunt against the Communist Party.

Meanwhile, the extreme reactionary, pro-fascist Congressmen in the House have begun to clamour for violent action by vigilante gangs against the Communists and for dismissal of all progressives from the Federal service.

Rep. Martin J. Kennedy, New York Tammany stalwart, inserted an exceptionally vicious statement in the Congressional record.

Kennedy demanded that Congress give authority to vigilante gangs, which he said would be composed of veterans, to engage in actual physical violence against the Communists.

'TURN THEM LOOSE'

"These veterans have demonstrated their patriotism," Kennedy said. "They have posts scattered throughout the country, and there is no finer group or more vigorous men and women who are anxious, even eager, to meet this insidious threat to the tradition of America.

"They despise these 'isms.' Turn them loose with the best wishes of this Congress. But let us put some teeth in laws to care for these filthy Communists, and then offer to these war veterans the full assistance of that splendid organization, the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"Do this, and over night these rascals will take to cover. I propose that Congress invite these organizations to enlist themselves for the duration of the 'war' against Communism."

From Rep. Clare Hoffman, Michigan union-baiter, came a proposed bill which would bar from the Government service any worker "who is a member of any organization which is affiliated with any organization which advocates the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force."

To make this involved language perfectly plain, Hoffman urged the discharge of all American League members in a speech on the House floor and attacked the League as connected with this organization which teaches the overthrow of this Government by force."

"It is not only foolish but unpatriotic to permit those who belong to such an organization to remain on the public pay roll," he added.

Rep. Dempsey interrupted Hoffman to call to the attention of the House of the case of a school teacher in Elliott Junior High School here in Washington who has been victimized as a result of the Dies Committee's action even though she is not a member of the League and had never even heard of it.

Dempsey declared that this teacher, Mrs. Bernice Lamberton, had told that parents had come to the school demanding her dismissal because her name was on the list put out by Dies.

"That's assassinating character," Dempsey said.

From Rep. Noah Mason, Dies Committee member who first demanded publication of the list, came the final blast of the day urging the dismissal of American League members by the Government.

"Those who don't get out should be forcibly separated from the rolls," Mason demanded.

Mason invoked the authority of Dorothy Thompson's column praising the action of the committee in reply, and added:

"Innocent people are often hurt to achieve desirable ends."

Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, will testify before the committee tomorrow morning.