

Ward Clashes With Dies on Civil Rights

Dr. Ward, American League Head, Declares That Soviet Pact Checked Hitler; Local League President Dares Dies to Drop Immunity

By Adam Lapin
(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)

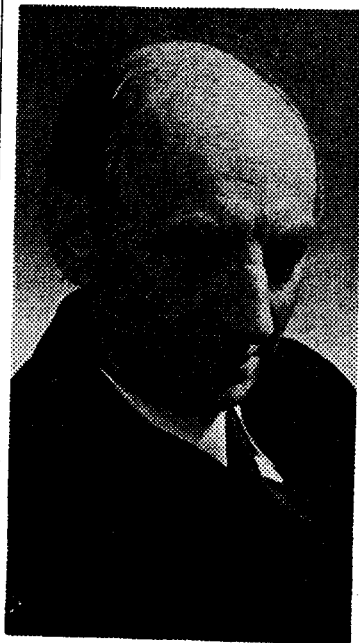
WASHINGTON, Oct. 23.—Dr. Harry F. Ward, chairman of the American League for Peace and Democracy, told the Dies Committee today that the members of his organization are increasingly beginning to understand the role of the Soviet Union as a peace force in recent months.

He declared that there is "an increasing recognition in the league as elsewhere that the actions of the Soviet Union have given Hitler more of a check than a help."

Emphasizing that this was his own view of the situation, Dr. Ward said that the official position of the League on the war in Europe would be formulated at a special membership conference this weekend in Philadelphia.

The lean and sharp-witted chairman of the league, who is also a professor at Union Theological Seminary, was more than a match for the committee which has been attempting to smear the league for more than a year.

On several occasions, Dr. Ward clashed with J. B. Mathews, once an official in the league who was active as a strikebreaker in the Consumers' Research strike in 1935, turned reactionary and landed up



DR. HARRY F. WARD

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WARD CLASHES WITH DIES ON CIVIL RIGHTS, REFUTES RED-BAITING LIES

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with a job with the Dies Committee.

In typical provocateur style, he tried to brand the league as "Communist-dominated" at its inception because of statements and programs which he said he had written.

"I am a Methodist," Dr. Ward said at one point. "I believe in repentance, and also in blacksliding, Mr. Mathews."

"Was that meant for Dr. Mathews' benefit?" Rep. Martin Dies, chairman of the committee, asked. "For his own special benefit," Dr. Ward retorted.

On other occasions Dr. Ward caught Mathews in the act of pulling quotations from speeches he had made out of context.

Dr. Ward said that the program of the league could be summarized briefly as being to "keep the United States out of war and help keep war out of the world, protect and extend Democratic rights to all sections of the American people."

STANDS ON ITS RECORD

He told the committee repeatedly that the "league would stand or fall on its record of activity," but the committee was apparently not interested in having him go into details of that kind.

Finally, Dr. Ward did manage to get in some of the details concerning the work of the league in working for continuation of the LaFollette Committee, against amendment of the Wagner Act, for aid to loyalist Spain and to China, and other activities along the lines of fighting for peace and democracy.

Instead, Mathews confined himself for the most part to reading isolated excerpts from speeches which had been made at various

congresses of the league or from articles which had appeared in the Daily Worker and the Communist.

Dr. Ward declared that the Communist Party was a "definite minority" in the league and that there had never been "the slightest manifestation" of a desire on its part to seize control of the league.

Asked by the committee to explain why the league had never condemned the Soviet Union while it had criticized the fascist powers, Dr. Ward said that league members "feel there is a vital difference between the Soviet Union and Germany."

CONTRASTS VOORHIS

He declared that the two countries "held opposite positions on the questions of war and fascism." These issues, Ward explained, were the two with which the league had been most concerned.

When Rep. H. Jerry Voorhis maintained that there is a "personal dictatorship" in the Soviet Union, Dr. Ward retorted: "I know there isn't."

He said that the two visits he had made to the Soviet Union in his professional capacity had convinced him that workers had a large share in the affairs of the state.

Questioned on his own personal beliefs, Dr. Ward said he doubted the authority of the committee to go into this line of inquiry but finally proceeded to give his views.

When he said he opposed capitalism, Rep. Dies seemed to consider this a flat statement of his belief in Communism, but Dr. Ward explained painstakingly that the two are not necessarily identical.

"My views on Communism are those of a critical student," he said.

"I chose to come to this country at an age when I was old enough to choose because I believed in American democracy."

"But you believe in democracy without profits and capitalism?" Rep. Joe Starnes of Alabama asked. "Yes, exactly," Dr. Ward replied. "Extend American democracy and that is what you get."

Rep. Starnes was by far the most excitable character in today's performance by the committee. He would take over the questioning for long periods, and wind up panting and red-faced.

One thing that seemed to annoy him was that Dr. Ward had spoken against continuation of the Dies Committee.

"You maintained that the Dies Committee should be discontinued?" Starnes asked.

"We did and we do," Ward replied.

He stood by an opinion expressed in his speech that Dies speaks for the prejudices of "a coalition of the uninformed and the misinformed."

TELLS OF RAID

Another thing that seemed to annoy Starnes was the fact that the league opposed the poll tax—the best friend the Southern reactionary politicians have.

Dr. Ward declined to discuss the affairs of the American Civil Liberties Union, which he also heads as chairman. He said that the A. C. L. U. had repeatedly asked to have its secretary and chief counsel testify and that they were far better acquainted with the detailed affairs of the organization.

Mathews attempted to drag in a detailed discussion of an organization called New America with which Dr. Ward was once associ-

ated. Dr. Ward explained that he had severed all ties with the group, and had been inactive for some time prior to that.

At the close of the day, the committee took testimony on the details of its raid on the headquarters of the American League for Peace and Democracy in this city on Sept. 29.

First, it called Robert Barker, the committee agent who conducted the raid. Barker, who looked and acted like a typical mail order detective, denied that any raid had been made.

OBJECTED TO METHODS

Then Henry C. Lamberton, chairman of the local chapter of the league and assistant counsel to the Rural Electrification Administration, took the stand.

He made it plain that the league did not object to having turned over its records but "to the methods used by your agents."

"We're objecting to an agent coming into our office and saying: 'I'm taking over this office, I'm in charge.'"

Lamberton charged that Rhea C. Whitley, counsel for the committee had "demanded our records instantly."

When Rep. Dies continued to insist that none of the rights of the league had been violated, Lamberton retorted: "The best way for you to test this is for you to waive your immunity and let us bring suit."

At this Rep. Dies lost his temper, jumped to his feet and shouted:

"Where did you think that up?" He declared that "employees of the government should have respect for Congress."

"I have great respect for Congress and for the position which you occupy," Lamberton said. He emphasized the word "position."