

Students Prove Able Witnesses at Dies Quiz

Mrs. Roosevelt Present, Probers Go Easy on Heckling Tactics

By Adam Lapin

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The Dies Committee came off second best in its spectacular two-day encounter with leaders of progressive youth organizations which ended this morning.

Following the heads of the American Youth Congress to the witness stand, Joseph P. Lash, secretary of the American Student Union, denied charges by previous Dies Committee witnesses that his organization is "Communist-dominated."

Mrs. Roosevelt sat near the committee table intently watching the proceedings. Newsreel cameramen and spectators who were attracted by her presence crowded the hearing room.

The most significant fact which emerged from the two days of testimony was the almost universal opposition to the Dies Committee which exists among organized youth both on and off the campus.

Jack McMichael, chairman of the American Youth Congress, William Hinckley, former chairman, and Joseph Cadden, Secretary, put a sharply worded resolution criticising the committee into the record when they testified yesterday.

SONG FOR COMMITTEE

Lash was not as explicit as the Youth Congress heads in rapping the committee and at one point he won nods of approval from some of its members as he expressed disapproval of the policy of the Soviet Union toward Finland.

He did, however, clash several times with J. B. Mathews, who conducted the questioning. And, at one point, before startled committee members could object he sang the following verse from one of the songs in the A.S.U. show, Pens and Pencils:

**"If you see an un-American
Lurking far or near
Just alkalize
With Martin Dies
And he will disappear."**

Today's hearing ended on a note of bitter protest from Youth Congress secretary Cadden who rose from the audience to object to a statement by Mathews.

Cadden had denied yesterday Mathew's boast before the committee last year of having participated in the activities and organization of the Youth Congress.

IN THE RECORD

Mathews took occasion today while he was questioning Lash to state that this was "false testimony."

Cadden immediately jumped to his feet and declared:

"That's not true. It's in the record."

Acting committee chairman Joe Starnes began to pound his gavel and ordered Cadden to sit down, and the Youth Congress head was

not given a chance to reply.

Despite this class, committee members were on the whole more considerate to the youth leaders than they had been to previous representatives from progressive organizations.

There was somewhat less heckling and gavel banging and more opportunity for opposition witnesses to express their views than is customary at Dies Committee hearings.

Responsible for this, of course, was the presence of Mrs. Roosevelt in the audience for the last two days which embarrassed the committee members no end.

TO LUNCH AGAIN

Although Mrs. Roosevelt has engaged in some red-bating of her own recently in attacks on Earl Browder and Gil Green, she is known as a friend of the Youth Congress leaders and she invited them out to lunch both yesterday and today.

Naturally, the committee members felt they had to take it easy and their style was cramped.

Lash said in response to questions from Mathews that he did not consider it "disloyal" to advocate a change in the profits system.

He denied, however, Mathews' implication that the American Student Union was formed in December, 1935, through an amalgamation of the National Student League and the Student League for Industrial Democracy in order to overthrow the capitalist set-up.

"What brought us together was our fear of fascism," Lash said.

"There are Communists in the A. S. U.," Lash declared. "They have democratic rights. They argue. They try to convince people. We argue, we try to convince people. What's sensational about that, Mr. Mathews?"

VOORHIS DISSENTS

Mathews retorted heatedly.

Rep. Jerry Voorhis objected, and said that he didn't think Communists ought to be permitted in the A.S.U.

"It's easy to say: let's not have anything to do with these people," Lash retorted. "But we have found it's a good thing to discuss things with people you disagree with."

"That's all right if you can predict what they will think," Voorhis said.

"Well, they can't predict what I'll think either," Lash replied.

At times, however, Lash seemed to accept the position of the committee that Communists didn't have the right to occupy leading posts in progressive organizations.

For example, he said that Celeste Strack, former high school secretary of the A. S. U. was removed "as soon as we could find a non-Communist to take her place."

Lash said that he had belonged to the Socialist Party until he quit in 1937 returning from the war in Spain because the Socialist Party "was subordinating the interests of the people as a whole to factional interests."

Sitting beside Lash while he testified was Agnes Reynolds, college secretary of the A.S.U.