

# Dies Refuses NCPAC 'Day in Court'

## Lame-Ducks Set To Smear Committee as 'Communist Front'

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 6.—A Dies subcommittee, composed of three avowed enemies of the CIO Political Action Committee, is writing a report today branding the National Citizens Political Action Committee as a "Communist front" outfit, without giving the organization a chance to defend itself.

Following the customary tactics of the Dies Committee, Chairman John M. Costello (D., Cal.) closed the hearings on the NCPAC yesterday without hearing a single witness from the organization or friendly to it. Costello, a lame-duck who blames his own defeat on the CIO Political Action Committee, told newspapermen he could "see no purpose" in calling Sidney Hillman, the Committee chairman.

### Hearing Called Forum

"We have all the facts. We have all the records," Costello said. "If we called Hillman we would merely provide him with a forum."

That forum, which Costello doesn't want Hillman to use, has been used by the Committee itself now for two weeks to slander the NCPAC. On the final day, the Committee heard testimony that Communists had taken control of the Bethlehem-Fairfield local of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers in Baltimore. No one explained what this had to do with the NCPAC, except that it had contributed money to the CIO-PAC, along with other unions.

This testimony led to sharp clash between Costello and Rep. Herman P. Eberharter (D., Pa.), a member of the full Dies Committee, in which Eberharter charged the subcommittee with using its "high-powered staff" for "carrying

on a sniping political campaign against the Democratic party."

The clash came when Eberharter tried to impugn the testimony of the Committee's star witness—Joseph Blumenfeld, one of the organizers of the Baltimore Local—asking if he had not been convicted in 1934 for robbery and assault with a deadly weapon. Blumenfeld refused to answer, but said he would file a report with the Committee.

For once, the Dies Committee, which has never hesitated to probe into the background of witnesses for smearing purposes, jumped to the defense of the witness. Costello heatedly assailed Eberharter and objected to his line of questioning.

### Denies Sniping

He denied the Committee was engaged in "sniping," asserting it had proved that 80 per cent of the members of the NCPAC had "a record of Communism."

Eberharter replied, over Costello's objections, that the Committee was putting its appropriation to "improper purposes" and that all Washington observers agreed with him.

Blumenfeld has testified that he resigned from his union, along with 48 other members, because he found it had been taken over by the Communists. He said the 44 were now threatened with losing their jobs because of a union maintenance contract. The Shipbuilding Committee of the WLB has ordered the company to appear Monday and show cause why they should not be fired, Blumenfeld said, adding that a member of that Commission is Lucien Koch, who had been an organizer for the union in the plant. J. B. Matthews, Committee research director, testified Koch had a Communist record.

Pete De Guardia, another of the 44 members who quit the union, testified that he had been invited to join the Communist party and had attended some meetings to see

whether he wanted to join. He listed a number of officials of the local whom he said were at the meetings, one of whom he testified was chairman of the Communist Party in Maryland.

Several others of the 44 dissident union members followed to bear out the story of Communist control of the union. One of them—Ralph Uplinger—testified in response to questions by Eberharter that he had been convicted for robbery twice and had also been jailed for driving drunk.

### They're All 'Fronts'

The final testimony relating to the NCPAC came from Matthews, who presented a detailed tabulation which he said showed 119 of the 141 members of the Political Action Committee had been affiliated with "Communist front" organizations. His definition of Communist front organizations included such groups as the Consumers Union, the Farmers Union, and the League of Women Shoppers.

By this kind of testimony, Matthews linked such people as Morris L. Cooke, noted engineer and Government official, former Rep. Thomas Eliot (D. Mass.); James G. Patton, president of the Farmers Union; and Jennings Perry, editor of the Nashville *Tennessean* with communism, and therefore the NCPAC with communism.