

# Marcantonio Tells Dies He's Menace to Liberty

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## Dickstein Assails Krivitsky as a 'Phony' Before House, Denounces Dies

By Adam Lapin

(Daily Worker Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 17.—Rep. Vito Marcantonio told the Dies Committee today that suppression of the civil liberties of the Communist Party would result in "undermining" American democracy.

After repeated requests, the fighting New York Laborite was given a chance to appear before the committee in his capacity as President of the International Labor Defense to answer charges that the organization is "dominated" by Communists.

"I accept responsibility for every act of the I. L. D. since I took office in 1937," he declared emphatically. "I took office as president with the distinct un-

derstanding that this was going to be a non-Communist organization and that understanding has been maintained."

Marcantonio flatly challenged the committee's campaign designed to deprive the Communists of their constitutional rights of free speech.

"As long as they keep within the constitution," he said, "they are entitled to the right to unite, organize and advocate Communism. If you deny them that right you are undermining the constitution."

He said that he knew that Secretary Anna Damon and Vice-President William Patterson of the I. L. D. were Communists, and added that the organization did not bar anyone from holding office be-

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# Marcantonio Says Ban on CP Would Wreck Democracy

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## I.L.D. President Declares Civil Liberties of All Must Be Preserved; Dickstein Denounces Dies Before House

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cause of their political views.

He answered questions concerning his own political philosophy by stating that he is "opposed to all forms of dictatorship, including Communism, fascism and socialism because I believe in capitalism."

Marcantonio's defense of civil liberties was followed by a scathing denunciation of the activities of the Dies Committee on the House floor by Rep. Samuel Dickstein of New York.

Dickstein assailed the committee for calling "general" Krivitsky as a witness.

Repeating his charges that the committee was not making a real investigation of Nazi activities, he said that he could not see why the committee was "taking all this testimony about things happening in Russia 13 years ago while they're doing nothing about the German Nazi Youth movement right here in the United States.

Krivitsky is "nothing but a phony," Dickstein said. "He is an alien in this country. He is here to sell his wares. He prepared articles for certain publications and a libel suit may grow out of this."

Apparently referring to the Saturday Evening Post, which ran a series of articles by Krivitsky, Dickstein declared that "the committee is letting itself be used by a magazine so that it could avoid a libel suit."

### GITLOW TO RESCUE

The committee attempted to counter the effect of Marcantonio's testimony by putting on the witness stand its prize stool-pigeon, Ben Gitlow, who was expelled from the Communist Party some ten years ago and is now attempting to cash in on his former associations.

Gitlow, who originated the story about diamonds from Moscow, produced similar fantasies today and followed up with a direct demand for the suppression of the Communist Party.

"You cannot consider the Communist Party in the United States a political organization because it is not a political organization," he said. "They cannot claim for themselves the right of legitimate political parties."

Today's sensation by Gitlow was a bizarre theory designed to explain why the Communist Party in this country explained the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact along the same lines as the Communist Parties in England and France. That all three parties follow the same principles of Marxist analysis apparently did not occur to the committee's ace renegade.

He said that he was "told that an investigation was made in all cable offices" to see if the Communist Party had received any cables from the Communist International at Moscow concerning the pact.

Gitlow admitted that no such cables had been found, but this simply confirmed him in the belief that they had been sent.

### FANS WAR HYSTERIA

He then went to the president of the A. F. of L., Commercial Telegraphers' Union, who, he alleges, told him that "it was a simple matter to receive radio messages from Moscow if the Communist Party has radio operators aboard ships."

Gitlow says that he then "investigated" the American Communications Association, a CIO affiliate, and discovered that it is "dominated" by Communists.

The "explanation" that Gitlow offered was that the American Communications Association had transmitted the alleged messages from Moscow.

No proof was offered concerning any of these speculations, and none was demanded.

Gitlow then took up the cudgels

against the National Maritime Union, another CIO affiliated. He repeated the false assertion that President Joseph Curran of this union is a member of the Communist Party and added that "all members of the executive board are also Communists."

Working in a little war hysteria, Gitlow said that these unions "in time of war can cripple the ships of the United States."

He backed up his statement that the Communist Party controls the I. L. D., with "evidence" of the same sort. He produced alleged "minutes" of Communist Party discussions concerning the I. L. D., which the committee did not attempt to check or verify.

Another statement eagerly accepted by the committee without any attempt at checking was his assertion that Robert W. Dunn, treasurer of the I. L. D., is a member of the Communist Party.

#### SUPREME COURT, TOO

Marcantonio had told the committee that he knew that Dunn was not a Communist, but as soon as Gitlow made his statement Dies began to refer to the I. L. D. treasurer as an "admitted Communist."

Several times members of the committee came off second best in encounters with the New York Congressman.

Rep. Joe Starnes of Alabama said that "I subscribe to your statements about civil liberties but"—and launched into a tirade about why Communists should not have civil liberties.

"There's a difference between subscription and application," Marcantonio retorted.

When Rep. J. Parnell Thomas of New Jersey questioned the I. L. D.'s defense of a Communist in the Strecker case, Marcantonio said:

"And the Supreme Court held that we were right."

Thomas said that he didn't like the decision, and Marcantonio asked if the "gentleman from New Jersey would like to have Chief Justice Hughes bow to his legal opinions."

#### NO DEFENSE FOR SPIES

Marcantonio declared that the I. L. D. defended Communists because "Communists have always been the victims of persecution."

He said that no cases of persecution of anyone else by Communists had been called to the attention of the I. L. D., and that it would have to consider any such cases on their merits.

Marcantonio told the committee that one reason the I. L. D. did not defend Nazis was because of "Nazi espionage in industry and elsewhere."

"I am opposed to all kinds of espionage whether Communist espionage, fascist espionage or whether it is Wall Street espionage," he said in response to questions. "I'm for punishing spies as much as you are."

Another reason why the I. L. D. had not defended fascists, he said, was that fascists are "anti-labor."

"Do you consider the Communist Party anti-labor?" Rep. Dies asked.

"No, I consider it party of the labor movement," Marcantonio replied.

He said that he would not support resolutions condemning Communists at the next convention of the I.L.D.

After a whispered consultation with Rep. Jerry Voorhis, Dies asked Marcantonio his opinion concerning what he termed a "purge" of Communists in the American Labor Party.

"I'd rather not comment on American Labor Party politics," Marcantonio said, explaining that his primary duties were as Congressman in Washington.

Asked to name organizations of which he is a member, Marcantonio mentioned the Italian Holy Name Society and the F. H. Le Guardia Political Club.