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THE REDS

in Our Labor Unions



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by

RICHARD GINDER



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Is Phil Murray a Communist?

Phil Murray, president of the CIO, is a devout Catholic. He detests communism. One of his most intimate friends, Charles Owen Rice, the Pittsburgh labor-priest, says of Murray and the Reds boring into his CIO: "Often I have talked this problem over with him. I know that he worries and prays about it. It is his greatest cross."

Joseph and Stewart Alsop, writing in *The Saturday Evening Post* of March 1, 1947, report that "There is no doubt at all about how Murray feels toward the communists. He hates them. At a recent meeting of the execu-

tive board of the United Automobile Workers, he spoke with extraordinary violence, his voice shaking with rage and contempt, of 'the filthy communists.' On several occasions he has urged pro-communist CIO leaders to look into their hearts and make sure that their first loyalty was to the United States. In recent months his feelings have been growing more intense."

Then there are communists in the CIO?

There are and they are harder to get out than vermin from an old mattress.

How did they get in?

The commies swarmed into the CIO when it was being led by John L. Lewis. They were first-class organizers and, in depression days, when the CIO was being formed, communist influence ran high in the country. Lewis thought he could use them and then ditch them. He used them all right, but then he

found it impossible to dislodge them. So he bequeathed them to his successor, Murray, and now cynically points to the CIO as Red-dominated—cynically, because it was through his own blunder that the commies got a foothold in the CIO.

But weren't there commies in the unions before the time of "Big John"?

Yes—notably Harry Bridges on the West Coast; the leaders of the United Electrical Workers, CIO; the Reds in the Maritime Union and among the United Automobile Workers. They were there ahead of John L., but he did nothing to discourage them.

Do the Reds Like Lewis?

No—the parting of the ways came when Hitler attacked Stalin. John L. had been an isolationist—with the commies, since up until then Hitler and Stalin had been holding hands via the non-aggression pact and, as far as the commies were concerned, the anti-Hitler war

was "imperialistic." Their tune changed, though, and it became a "people's" war when the Nazis marched into the U.S.S.R. John L., however, stood pat—still an isolationist, in spite of Red screams for all-out aid to the Allies.

Do the Reds Like Phil Murray?

Of course not. He took over only after a strong anti-communist resolution had been put through by the nominating convention and only after he had been given a personal assurance that Lewis would not interfere and would never ask him to do anything against his God, his country, or his union.

Why doesn't Murray sweep out the unions?

Because he has no direct control over them. The CIO is a congress of independent unions, somewhat as the U. S. is a federation of independent states. Murray could no more interfere within an individual union than the

President of the United States could interfere in the affairs of a particular State. He could expel a union, but what good would that do? It would only cut off completely what little influence over it he now enjoys. And the Red-dominated unions could form their own Congress and thus be an even greater nuisance than they are now.

Why do you call a Red-dominated union a "nuisance"?

Because the control of the union has passed from the good honest rank-and-file to the hands of a shrewd clique who manipulate the thing not for the best interest of the workers but for the furtherance of their own screw-ball ideas. These ideas look toward setting up a dictatorship on the Soviet pattern in this country; but this can hardly be done without a revolution; and the revolution will best be brought about by agitation, strikes and the promotion of bad feeling generally. Besides, they are pledged to the support of the Soviet

foreign policy, and that accounts for the peculiar resolutions passed on the conduct of our government, the strange causes sponsored and aided by individual unions.

Has any progress been made in clearing out the Reds?

Yes.—The Textile Workers have been swept clean; the Utility Workers; the Newspaper Guild; the Furniture Workers; the Rubber Workers. The Packing House Workers have shown an improvement; and even in the United Electrical Workers there is a grass-root revolt in development.

“Grass-root revolt”?

A purge from the bottom rather than from the top. The assertion of their fundamental American common-sense by the rank-and-file. A sort of mass-impatience with communist dictation from the officers. A refusal to be pushed around on the part of dues-paying members.

Is the Southern CIO drive clear of the commies?

Yes.

What about the AFL?

They have a pretty good record, although some spots are Red—such as the painters in the Bronx, some of the hotel and restaurant workers; the Hollywood studio unions, and many a Canadian union.

Could you name a few Red-dominated unions?

That's a hard thing to do, because there is a tremendous struggle for power within the various unions going on right now. However, Andrew Avery writing during the summer of 1946 in the *Chicago Journal of Commerce* lists the following CIO affiliates as "In the Communist zone":

**American Communications Association
Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied
Workers
Intl. Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's
Union**

Int. Union of Fishermen & Allied Workers

Int. Union of Fur & Leather Workers

**Intl. Union of Mine, Mill & Smelter
Workers**

(Just the Western Locals; the Eastern ones are safe.)

Inland Boatmen's Union of the Pacific

Marine Cooks and Stewards Association

Transport Workers Union

**United Electrical, Radio & Machine
Workers**

United Farm Equipment & Metal Workers

United Furniture Workers

(Lately merged with the Woodworkers, a safe outfit.)

United Office & Professional Workers

(which lately absorbed the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists & Technicians.)

United Public Workers,

("Formed by recent merger of United Federal Workers and the State, County & Municipal Workers, CIO.")

Joe Curren is trying desperately to pull his National Maritime Union away from Red influences.

"As leaning toward communists," Mr. Avery lists:

Barbers & Beauty Culturists

United Gas, Coke & Chemical Workers

(“organized during Stalin-Hitler pact by communists who seceded from United Mine Workers. But since then communist influence has weakened, and there may be a further shift away from communism.”)

Of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Mr. Avery says: “This was Sidney Hillman’s Union. He bossed it. Although allied with the communists in the CIO and in Moscow-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions, he didn’t let them get important in his own union. He was ready to turn against them whenever it might be to his advantage. It remains to be seen whether his death has left the union so weak at the top that the communists will overcome the barriers he built against them.”

Are any of the CIO affiliates against communism?

Yes:

United Brewery Workers

United Chemical Workers

Amalgamated Lithographers

Marine & Shipbuilding Workers

American Newspaper Guild

(excepting the Red-controlled New York chapter.)

Oil Workers International Union

Packinghouse Workers

Retail & Wholesale Workers

United Rubber Workers

United Steel Workers

(Phil Murray's union.)

Textile Workers

Transport Service Workers

Utility Workers

Woodworkers

Paper Workers

These are all pretty solidly anti-communist.

How can I find out the color of my union? I don't see it on any of your lists.

Write to the Reverend Charles Owen Rice, 61 Tannehill Street, Pittsburgh 19, Pennsylvania. Father Rice is a well informed "labor-priest" with access to unusually complete files of information. He will gladly answer your letter and tell you how your union stands.

How would you estimate communist strength in the CIO?

The Alsop Brothers' estimate "gives the communists control of unions having about 25 percent of the CIO's membership, and powerful influence in unions having another 25 percent." They stress the fact that this is a constantly shifting picture.

I am a Catholic belonging to a Red-dominated union. Must I quit?

While no Catholic may be a communist, you do not become one by belonging to a communist-controlled union. Don't quit. Stick in there and swing your weight.

You say no Catholic may be a communist. What about Mike Quill?

If he's a communist, he's no Catholic, no matter what he says.

How does communism square with Protestantism?

Communism is essentially atheistic, teach-

ing that Religion is the opium of the people—hence that Protestants are dopes and their ministers are frauds.

I'm just a lone card-holder. I detest communism, but what can I do?

You can do plenty. Go to all your council and union meetings. Don't miss one of them; and sit them through to the bitter end. Part of the Red strategy is to make these meetings so long and dull that only the communist fanatics will have the strength to last them out. They're only waiting for you to yawn and go home so that they can vote things the way Stalin wants them.

Find out the standing of your union on communism. If it is Red-controlled, use your vote to drive the rascals out and put in a set of Americans. Express yourself by applause or jeers. Get your friends around you and form a clique. Talk down communism at your job, explaining how the Reds are either dupes or traitors. Read up on the subject.

Isn't this what they call "Red-baiting"?

Yes, but what of it? Why shouldn't traitors be baited and hounded, and driven out of the country? Red-baiting right now is a patriotic duty, as long as we are sure that our victims are communists. The test will be their stand on Soviet aggression in Poland, Yugoslavia and Finland. If they condemn them, they're OK. But if they give Stalin (with his 10,000,000 labor slaves) a clean bill of health—watch them!

Where can I get more information on communism?

A list of valuable publications can be had by writing to the National Catholic Welfare Council, Washington 5, D. C.—or to the publishers of this leaflet.

Information on the color of any particular union may be had, as was said earlier, by writing to Rev. Charles Owen Rice, 61 Tannehill Street, Pittsburgh 19, Pennsylvania; or

by writing to A.C.T.U., 226 Lafayette Street,
New York 12, New York; or to A.C.T.U., 58
West Adams Street, Detroit 26, Michigan—
whichever is closest.

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