

## No Middle Ground in Upholding Civil Rights

• The fact that members of the Police Department are members of the terrorist "Christian Front" signals grave dangers for those civil liberties which the "Fronters" seek to stamp out.

That 27 policemen admit present membership, and another 380 admit they were once members (it isn't clear when even they resigned) shows the extent to which this subversive outfit has been boring within an official City Department.

Mayor LaGuardia's statement on the situation, to put it mildly, is unsatisfactory in view of such menace to the people's liberties. The "Front" is anti-labor, anti-Semitic, and anti-Negro—in short, it is a conspiratorial gang for violently wiping out the Bill of Rights.

And the Mayor admits that he received complaints from nearly "all groups" last summer, who were protesting the brazen incitements to bloodshed on the public streets by "Front" peddlers of Coughlin's inflammatory "Social Justice." At the same time, Coughlin was boasting about his inroads into police ranks, and covering up with wild red-baiting against the entire department. But the Mayor and Police Commissioner Valentine have waited until now—after 17 "Fronters" are under indictment—to take action.

This derelict attitude on the part of certain city officials together with their own red-baiting has helped create the atmosphere and basis for "Frontism" in the police department and city generally. All experience shows that those who rave most ferociously against the Communists—who are the most energetic fighters for civil liberties—are out to scrap civil rights for all.

Even the formulation of the questionnaire to the police aids the "Front." Despite its complete legality, the Communist Party was listed as one of the "subversive" organizations. The danger, as we previously warned, is that this move against the "Front" will be used as a witch-hunt against all progressives in civil service employment.

The Mayor unwittingly revealed the full danger when he said police cannot belong to "labor organizations," under the false theory that this makes them un-neutral. Does this mean that organizations of labor and the people are to be classified as "subversive" where policemen are concerned?

7/16/40-6

The civil rights of policemen are, of course, not to be questioned. What is to be questioned is the ability of a policeman to uphold the civil rights of the people, when he negates his oath by joining a band out to smash the Bill of Rights.

There is no middle ground when it comes to enforcing the civil liberties of labor and the public. The people expect full action (which the Mayor didn't mention) by removing "Front" policemen from the force, and by weeding out the influence of this terrorist gang from an official branch of the City Government.