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POLICE QUESTIONED ON TIES TO 'FRONT'

NY Times
**Valentine Also Asks Them to
Disclose Any Bund, Nazi or
Communist Affiliations**

Feb 9/40

Seeking information as to the membership of members of the police department in the Christian Front, linked to the activities of the seventeen men who were arraigned in Brooklyn Wednesday on charges of conspiracy to overthrow the government, or in any Nazi, Communist, Fascist or other subversive organization, Commissioner Valentine distributed questionnaire cards yesterday to his commanding officers.

Four questions were asked on the cards:

"Are you a member of the Christian Front or any other organization connected with the Christian Front?"

"Have you ever been a member of the above organizations?"

"Are you a member of any subversive, communist, bund or fascist club or organization?"

"If so, state which."

Action Sequel to Inquiry

The questionnaire was distributed, Commissioner Valentine said, after an inquiry by Inspector Michael J. Murphy, his confidential investigator, had disclosed some members of the department, whose numbers he did not reveal, had joined the Christian Front. Many of them, after paying their \$1 dues, withdrew when they found the organization was anti-Semitic, he said. They had joined in the belief it was anti-communist.

Asked if the questionnaire was a sworn statement and what would happen if a man said he was a member, or denied membership if he was or had been, Commissioner Valentine said that all he wanted was "the truth."

"We know who the members of the department are who are members of the Christian Front," he said.

"There is nothing to prevent any man from joining any organization," he continued, "but the police officer must be neutral. By joining any one of these organizations he ceases to be neutral."

"If the men state they are members we will check to find if they have been assigned to the meetings of any of those organizations. If they answer 'no' and we find that they were, disciplinary action will be taken."

Some Grumbling Among Men

There was some grumbling among members of the department when the 21,000 cards, which must be filled out by civilian as well as uniformed members, were distributed. However, a report that the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, to which some 15,000 men belong, would sue for an injunction in the courts was denied by Joseph Burkard, the president. He said he "knew nothing about it."

Commissioner Valentine distributed the cards to his commanding officers personally after a meeting of all deputy chief inspectors and inspectors at headquarters.

He said later he had told them he wanted the answers kept secret and the cards returned to him as soon as possible after signing. He specifically ordered that no photostats of them be made.