

Is Curran a Red?

It's a Big Question

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By LEO HUBERMAN

Is Joseph Curran, president of the National Maritime Union, a member of the Communist party?

Charles Yale Harrison, author and journalist, says yes.

Mr. Curran says no.

The issue meant something in labor circles today because Mr. Curran had just been named president of the CIO Industrial Council in this city.

Not many hours after the election Mr. Harrison issued advance copies of documents being published today in *The New Leader*, Socialist weekly.

The documents purported to show that Mr. Curran was a Communist. They included a dues-receipt from the Communist party, bearing Mr. Curran's name; a letter declared written by Mr. Curran asserting that the Communists "have about got control" of the union; and a statement said to have been made by Mr. Curran at a union meeting that the union would soon control all U. S. shipments.

A spokesman for Mr. Curran said that all attempts to link him with the Communist party were "outright forgeries." He said that most of the charges had previously been laid before the Dies committee and that, even if Mr. Curran had written the letter attributed to him, it didn't prove he was a party member.

Last night Mr. Harrison challenged Mr. Curran to sue him for libel.

"I would welcome a libel suit for the purpose of establishing the validity of these documents," Mr. Harrison declared.

The NMU recently filed suit against Walter Winchell for asserting that it was planning sabotage on U. S. ships.