

Frey's Red Scare Tales About CIO Filled With Errors, Distortions

By HENRY C. FLEISHER

WASHINGTON.—The list of "Communists" in the CIO, presented this week to the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities by John P. Frey, aged AFL metal trades leader, is packed with errors of every description.

A study of the list of more than 280 names submitted to the committee by Frey revealed duplications, hearsay evidence, names of non-CIO members, names of non-Communists, and of people who are no longer alive.

Presented to the committee by Frey as a document based on three years of arduous research, the list of names gives evidence of having been gathered from the usual sources of red-baiting favored by spies and stool-pigeons.

Meanwhile, as the committee hearings sank to a new low level for Congressional investigating bodies, a new development helped discredit the proceedings:

Discovery that another leading witness—Walter Steele editor of the Natl. Republic magazine—has been charged in an affidavit with membership in the Silver Shirts, fascist organization.

Steele represented, among other groups, the American Vigilante Intelligence Federation. Former Speaker of the House Rainey once referred to this outfit as doing the "slimy, stool-pigeon work necessary for the purpose of destroying organized labor.

Frey constantly promised to supply the documentary proof for his allegations. If he had done so, the public and the newspapermen covering the hearing are not aware of it.

Audience Unimpressed

Except for a few elderly members of the Daughters of the Revolution who sat awe-inspired during Frey's testimony, the audience seemed unimpressed by his three-day speech fest before the committee.

A study of the documents inserted into the record revealed an amazing lack of proof for Frey's statements, frequently made with shaking hand uplifted and with a trembling voice.

Scores of Errors

A study of the list of "280 Communists" on the list submitted by Frey showed close to 20 duplications in names.

It included the names of a number of Communists, or labor journalists, teachers and attorneys who have no connection with the CIO.

It included a number of misspelled names, of alleged CIO organizations which do not exist in addition to the names of some CIO officials who are easily identified as being definitely hostile to the Communist party and its philosophy.

One of the alleged "Communists" was included on the list because "There are those in the Pacific Northwest who say he is a Communist."

A CIO union official was listed, because, claimed Frey, he was "suspected" of being a Communist.

An SWOC official was included on the list because it was noted that he had "associated" with Communists.

One AFL Leader Named

One of the men charged with being a "CIO Communist" turned out to be the head of an AFL state federation of labor. He denied sympathy or membership in the Communist party.

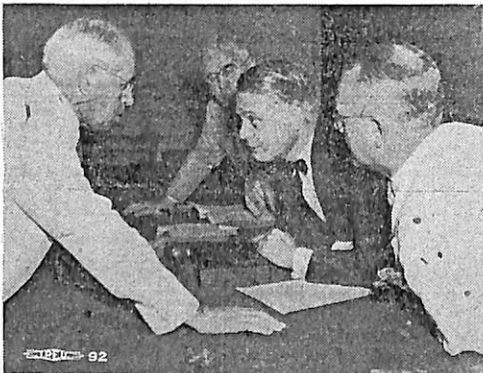
Another of the Communists in the CIO, Frey admitted, had no CIO affiliation, merely being a resident of a city in which CIO union members also live.

A large number of the names on the list were minor or part-time SWOC organizers during the steel drive in 1936 and 1937. One of these men has been dead for several months.

While the alleged "Communists" were aiding the steel campaign, Frey, it is recalled, was doing his best to discredit it—going so far as to offer an AF charter to

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Sh! It's A Secret!



Taking time out from his presentation of phoney evidence about Communists in the CIO to the Dies Committee, John P. Frey, left, AFL leader, engages in frenzied whispered conversation with Cong. Noah Mason, Committee Chairman Martin Dies and Rep. Harold Mosier.

Errors In "Red" Charges

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company unions at U. S. Steel.

One document which attempted to "prove" that Joseph Curran, general organizer of the Natl. Maritime Union, and two other of its leaders are Communists was branded as a crude forgery when it appeared in New York some months ago.

Filmsy Evidence

Still another piece of "proof" consisted merely of excerpts from the record of a Massachusetts legislature committee probe held early this year. This state committee was sharply criticized by Michael Widman, Jr., CIO director in Boston, and by numerous leading educators and progressives throughout the Bay State.

An interesting commentary on Frey's list of "Communists" in the CIO was the fact that many of the names bore the same misspellings that appeared in an anti-CIO story in the arch-reactionary Chicago Tribune early in 1937.

Frey's list, like the Tribune's story, carried the names of "leading SWOC officials" in the Chicago-Gary area who were completely unknown to Van Bittner, SWOC chieftain in that area.

Lenials Pour

As Frey continued his attack on the CIO, denials of his allegations poured into Washington from all parts of the country.

Two Pittsburgh priests, Revs. C. O. Rice and C. P. Hensler sent the following telegram to Chairman Dies, protesting the listing of John Brophy, CIO director, as a Communist:

"As Catholic priests conversant with labor problems, national and local, who take no sides in labor's international war, we ask you to include in the record the fact that we know John Brophy intimately and certify him no Communist but thoroughly and enlightenedly Catholic in philosophy and action."

Frey's pompous exterior was scarcely shaken by the telegram. He explained to the committee that Brophy had been called a Communist several years ago, and he therefore felt justified in including his name on the list!