

May 8, 1940

Dear Cameron,

After I spoke with you today I arranged for Saul Mills to make available to you in New York the transcript of Quill's testimony in which the various references appear. The transcript should be in Mills' or Sacher's possession tomorrow and they will probably return to New York tomorrow or the next day. Mills said that if he got an opportunity he would copy for you the portions in which you are interested.

It all came up this way. Quill testified to his age and it differed by a year or two from the story. So Matthews offered the magazine after quoting from the article. As the questioning continued they were getting absolutely from Quill. Matthews was trying to substantiate the contentions of the previous witnesses. Quill denied that his union was under Communist domination or had communist affiliations. He demanded that Matthews produce documentary proof or shut up. Matthews with a great show waved a mysterious document in the air and put it in the record. He read a statement from it in which the membership of ^{an unnamed union} ~~the~~ TWU in, I believe, 1936, was placed at 5,000. The thing was so raw that Dempsey, no friend of the TWU, forced him to withdraw the document after it was identified as having come from the files of the NY Workers Alliance. So Matthews asked if the union didn't have a membership of 5000 in 1936 and Quill said it had about 1,100. Matthews, still attempting to show that the unnamed union of this membership must have been the TWU, read from the article to show that the union then had 3500, which Quill also denied. It was at this point that Matthews ran off the list of names of those he called Communists, as I told you today over the phone.

These are: Kent, Ellis, Gropper, McKenney (whom he connected with New Masses) and perhaps others, although I believe these were all. One of the things that got Quill in trouble was his crack when asked if he had seen the issue of Friday "Do you mean the issue with the picture of the murdered" etc."that you refused to investigate." He added that he thought the magazine was a good one. He was also asked if he had written the magazine a letter of congratulations, which was identified in the magazine.

This, in very brief form, is the story.

Quill was, I believe, quite within his rights, in spite of what will probably be a bad press on the incident which will distort it. Of course it can be used against him within the union and by employers. Note, however, that they did not cite him for contempt, although that was their announced intention. Merv. Rathborne followed, but he was accompanied by Marc., who sat with him, and he was treated with great respect and given an opportunity to answer questions as fully as he desired and then make any explanations he desired. This was very strange for that bunch.

If you decide to do anything or want me for anything tomorrow I expect to spend the first part of the day with the DA, by request, and then go to the hearing. If you want to get in touch with me early in the day, which I doubt, please do so c/o Marc.

I don't think you were hurt by it, but I did resent the nasty smear and violation of the sanctity of the press.

Harold