

# Communist Honesty

— by Mike Gold —

**"I** THINK your article of June 24 on Mrs. Roosevelt is all correct," writes C. R., a Baltimore comrade, "and I hope she will take some note of it, and soberly re-examine her thinking. For these are dangerous times in America.

"Mrs. Roosevelt, thoughtlessly repeating Dubinsky, slanders against the Communist movement, can only have aided the American imperialists, who, as you state, were long her enemy and the enemy of President Roosevelt's New Deal.



"However, I really want to call your attention to some words in a sentence of your column, viz.: 'this type (the Dubinsky) hates Communism for no political or social reason, but mainly because Communists are honest and generally form the only effective opposition to grafters and dictators in the labor unions.'

"I think this is a wrong slant on the matter, Mike. It would deny our political effectiveness and ability, since other people, not Communists, are also honest.

Besides, how could every single Communist be honest?

"Communists are a cross-section of society, and hence are affected by the capitalist environment as much as any other American. Capitalism puts a premium on personal dishonesty, greed and grafting.

"So, do not claim so much. Do not advertise that the minute one joins the Communist movement one becomes an angel. You and I know Communists who are not angels, but who reflect some of the power-lust, money-greed and unhealthy competitiveness of the capitalist environment."

Well, Comrade C. R., I like your devotion to the strict truth about things.

It is strictly true that Communists are people with all the faults and virtues of other people. It would be as false to paint them as angels as it is for Mrs. Roosevelt and other liberals to repeat the stale lie that Communists are outstanding for their lack of ethics and their unscrupulousness about means.

I never asserted that anybody calling himself a Communist might not pick your pocket, steal your girl, or scandalize your name in evil gossip. No, it can happen here, as well as there, over in Capitalism.

What I meant was that the Communists are the chief political group in every land which, doggedly and through hell and high water, remains true to the cause of the people. This is what I mean by "honesty."

Individual Communists may have a lot of human faults, but, collectively, they have the greatest virtue of our time: they are always working tirelessly to save the human race from war, fascism and slavery.

They do not pay the rhetorical lip service to the great ideals of freedom. They generally act. This was true in France, in Greece, in Yugoslavia and all the other lands recently held in bondage by the Nazis. Who remained true to freedom, who led the underground, who bled and died in regiments? It was the Communists. In Europe, millions of the common people are flocking today into the Communist parties, not because they understand Marxism clearly or even want a Communist order.

They have seen in bitter life and peril that Communists are the bedrock of resistance to fascism. Nothing can intimidate or bribe them. The incorruptible honesty of the Communist movement in Europe has saved the soul of the peoples.

I find this political honesty prevailing in America, too. We have had a discouraging development recently that might prove the contrary. Some of our Communist leadership reverted to the bourgeois camp and developed crooked, sophisticated ideas that were meant to negate Marxism and tie the American working class to the imperialist chariot of the monopolists as they set forth to conquer the world.

Call it opportunism. Call it revisionism. Call it the pressure of the vast environment. Even call it dishonesty, if you wish. But to me the more important fact is that the evil was perceived, and is being corrected.

The "dishonesty" could not long flourish in the Communist heart and mind. It is being rooted out. What other political group of Americans has this fierce honesty, this loyalty to the ideal, this courageous self-criticism and constant self-purification?