NATIONAL COUNCIL
OUTLOOK
SEPTEMBER 1956

LEADERS OF THE NCC AND WCC SHOWN IN COMMUNIST HUNGARY, AUGUST, 1956. OCTOBER 23, 1956, THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS MADE THEIR DASH FOR LIBERTY. THE TWO NON U.S. CHURCHMEN SHOWN ON THE COVER ARE ALBERT BERECZKY, A COMMUNIST, SPOKESMAN FOR THE HUNGARIAN REFORMED CHURCH, AND BISHOP K. H. TING, OF RED CHINA, WHO PRESENTED COMMUNIST LINE. NCC LEADERS ARE DEEPLY IMPLICATED IN THEIR CO-OPERATION WITH COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED CHURCHES

THE COVER

For the first time since the World Council of Churches was constituted at Amsterdam in 1948 its leadership was afforded an opportunity to meet behind the Iron Curtain.

Many American churchmen, led by the chairman Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, attended the meeting of the Central Committee at Galyateto in Hungary, July 28-August 5.

The cover picture commemorates this historic meeting. Left to right: Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Philadelphia, president of the National Council of Churches; Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, New York, president of the United Lutheran Church and chairman of the WCC Central Committee; Anglican Bishop K. H. Ting of Chekiang, China; Bishop D. Ward Nichols of New York, African Methodist Episcopal Church; Bishop Albert Bereczky, president of the Hungarian Reformed Church and of the Hungarian Ecumenical Council; and Dr. Robert S. Bilheimer of Geneva, Associate General Secretary of the World Council.

World Council Leaders Meet in Hungary

When Communist church leaders of this caliber can successfully lead and influence the ecumenical movement, one could hardly say that the influence of Communism in these church circles is near the zero point.

II. SECURITY COMMITTEES

It is in the chapter, "Patriots, Ex-Communists, and Congressmen," that Mr. Roy makes reference to various witnesses and their testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee and the Internal Security Subcommittee of the United States Senate.

These two committees, it must be remembered, are official committees of the Congress of the United States set up by the Congress and charged with the responsibility of obtaining factual material necessary for legislation which will protect the security of the United States. In investigating Communism in order to gain adequate information, the Committee has repeatedly run into Communist activity in the field of religion.

A. Manning Johnson

Manning Johnson, a former Communist Party leader, appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee in July, 1953. He graduated from the National Training School of the Communist Party. He was a member of the national committee, elected to this position by the Communist Party in its national convention in 1936. He left the Party in 1940. He was "determined that forever after I would conscientiously and vigorously oppose it, vocally and spiritually." Mr. Roy mentions Johnson on pages 237 and 238. He says, "Apparently he had been promptly dropped in 1954 as a paid consultant [the U. S. Department of Justice] after charging that Ralph J. Bunche was a Communist sympathizer." Concerning Johnson's testimony, all that Roy says is, "Johnson's testimony described Communist strategy in the field of religion as a broad conspiracy. Communist professors led by Harry F. Ward, he said, were planted in seminaries, where they organized cell groups." But what is most significant about all this is that Roy simply ignores it. In other instances, he says the testimony of this former Communist is uncorroborated.

Reproduced on the next page is the summary of Johnson's testimony. Roy does not face it!

B. Benjamin Gitlow

Another of these former Communists is Benjamin Gitlow. Roy calls him "the first man to be convicted as a Communist in the United States." Roy makes reference to his testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee but makes no effort to answer it. Roy makes reference to an allusion to Martin Hall, a Communist of long standing. Roy explains that he tried to get in touch with Hall, "sending a copy of Gitlow's testimony and asking for his analysis. Hall did not reply. When the author was in Los Angeles in August, 1956, he reached Hall personally by telephone and asked for the opportunity of talking with him. Hall refused. Gitlow's testimony is uncorroborated."

Does Mr. Roy think that he could corroborate Mr. Gitlow's testimony by a personal interview with the Communist, Mr. Hall? The reliability and the corroboration of Gitlow's testimony is given by a number of former Communists whom the House Committee on Un-American Activities also dealt with, including Joseph Kornfeder and Leonard Patterson.

It is in this area that Ralph Lord Roy brushes aside as of little value all of the volumes of testimony produced by the security committees of the United States Government which have touched upon the Communist infiltration of religion. Mr. Roy has to push it aside or he cannot maintain his contention that the Communists have not deliberately focused their attention upon religion in the United States. Among the direct statements in Gitlow's testimony which challenge the conclusion of Roy are these, "The Russian Communists were the first to exploit ministers of the United States and through them, the church organizations, for the purpose of spreading propaganda in favor of Communist Russia and for the building up of a pro-Soviet sentiment among church people in America and among Americans generally."

(See photographed reproduction of Gitlow's testimony on pages 9, 10 and 11.)

Gitlow tells of his own trip to Moscow and his contact with the top Communist leaders there, and in reply to a question as to whether they ever discussed "the question of Communist infiltration of religon with the leaders of the Comintern," Gitlow replied: "The matter came up in Moscow, not only in reference to the infiltration of religion in the United States, but also in the Far and Near East. . . ." "At the meetings of the Anglo-American Secretariat, also at meetings of the executive committee of the Communist International and of its organization department, the question of the American Communist Party's activities on the religious field was discussed. At these meetings the Communist Party was directed to intensify its efforts to draw the religious elements into the party's united-front activities." And Roy rejects all this. He has the audacity to conclude, "The Communist Party in America never did undertake a full scale campaign to infiltrate the churches" (p. 421).

C. Herbert Philbrick

Mr. Roy also has trouble with Herbert Philbrick. Philbrick was not a Communist. He was an agent of the FBI for nine years and he led three lives. It is obvious from Roy's entire book that his assignment, at least as he gives evidence of it, was to try to minimize and explain away anything and everything that might indicate that the Communists really did attempt to use religion, or were successful in any attempts which they might have made. It is interesting, too, that there is something always wrong, in Roy's opinion, that seems to mitigate the direct testimony and report of these men. Philbrick has contributed as much as any one man in the anti-Communist field to the widespread impression that the Communists are using religion.

In his article published in the *Christian Herald*, "The Communists Are After Your Church," Philbrick declared, "It is no accident that your church is the number-one target of the Communist conspiracy in America today." He explains, "This is the story of what I know, as much of it as may be revealed, told to you so that you can realize that subversion in the sanctuary is the most deadly and insidious menace facing America today, and so that you will not only be aware of the danger but prepared to counteract it."

According to Mr. Roy, we do not need to make any preparations to counteract it because it is really not operating and any Communist influence among the churches today is at a zero point.

(*Continued on page* 12)