

Labor Unions - Communist problem.
(1954?)

United electrical, radio and machine workers of America (Ind)

**...YOU'RE A
LIAR, SENATOR!**



MATLES TELLS MCCARTHY...



"McCarthy, you are a liar," UE Director of Organization James J. Matles told Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R.-Wis.), at a hearing in New York on November 25.

"When you accuse me of spying, and when you accuse decent working people in Lynn and Schenectady of spying and sabotage, you are lying, Senator McCarthy. You are a liar."

"You are doing a dirty thing for GE in Lynn and Schenectady, browbeating decent working people," Matles said. "I urge you to stop doing it."

Matles flung this challenge at the Senate's most irresponsible war-monger and slander-monger when he was called before McCarthy in an "executive session" as a part of the Senator's current smear

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campaign against UE on behalf of the General Electric Co. and the IUE-CIO.

Matles opened his appearance before McCarthy and Roy Cohn, chief counsel of McCarthy's one-man sub-committee, with a demand that he be furnished a copy of the record of the hearing and that it be made public.

"If you are holding this hearing in executive session on my account, I don't want you to do it," Matles said.

McCarthy refused to permit the record to be made public.

TAKES OFFENSIVE

The UE Director of Organization took the offensive early in the proceedings. McCarthy and Cohn are accustomed to bully and entrap witnesses and have matters all their own way, and obviously were at a loss when Matles carried the offensive to them. He came into the hearings with a written statement branding the hearings as an attempt by McCarthy to help GE obtain passage of the anti-labor Butler Bill and to help GE keep the IUE-CIO in the NLRB election in Lynn, set for December 10. In his statement Matles challenged both the legal and the Constitutional authority of McCarthy to meddle in the labor movement.

SETS RECORD STRAIGHT

"Nevertheless," the statement declared, "as you attempted to cover up your lawless and indecent aid to the General Electric Co. with lying imputations of spying and sabotage against the membership and leadership of this Union, I am setting the record straight in the following sworn affidavit, which I am submitting for insertion in the record."

At the same time Matles handed in an affidavit declaring:

"The policy of UE is unequivocally opposed to any act of espionage or sabotage. I have never engaged in espionage or sabotage. Any imputation that the steward system of UE is an instrument for espionage or sabotage is a lie. During UE's history of more than 18 years, I have not known of a single officer of UE who has ever been legally charged, much less convicted, of spying or sabotage. All employees in our industry, working on secret work, are screened by the Army, Navy or FBI."

Matles' affidavit went on to point out that he had signed Taft-Hartley non-communist affidavits for five years in a row and that former Assistant Attorney General J. M. McInerney had told McCarthy

himself, at a Senate hearing in 1951, that the FBI had repeatedly processed UE affidavits and found no evidence against them.

Matles' sworn statement also pointed out that twice Roy Cohn, then Assistant U. S. Attorney, tried to obtain indictments against him on the basis of his Taft-Hartley affidavits and that twice federal grand juries refused to indict. After that Cohn caused the second grand jury to issue a "presentment" against UE, which a federal court later threw out and ordered expunged from the court records as illegal and void.

GO INTO HUDDLE

McCarthy and Cohn huddled together to read Matles' statement and affidavit.

"Be careful, be careful," Cohn said, "when you say the grand juries refused to indict you."

"I don't have to be careful," Matles answered. "You tried it twice and the grand juries threw you out on your ear. I put down the facts in an affidavit and I stand on it."

"Were you there when they voted?" Cohn asked.

"Judge Weinfeld said they refused to indict when he threw out your presentment," Matles answered.

"Are you a communist?" McCarthy demanded at this point.

"My affidavit answers that," Matles answered. "It shows that I signed five non-communist affidavits over the past five years.

"The two of you, you and Cohn, have been trying to frame me and other officers of the UE for the past three years. I am not going to fall for your tricks now," Matles said.

"When did I try to frame you?" McCarthy asked.

"When you tried to get McInerney to say there was something wrong with the UE affidavits," Matles returned.

"You have no reason to ask any questions about my affidavits. You know what is in the FBI files on that. McInerney told you, and I have his testimony right here."

McCarthy kept insisting that Matles answer again if he was a communist, and Matles refused.

"I refuse on three grounds," he said. "First, there is the Bill of Rights, which you are trying to destroy, and under the First Amendment of the Constitution you have no right to inquire into the beliefs and associations of anyone. The Supreme Court has the question before it right now in the case of Julius Emspak, the Secretary-Treasurer of the UE. Second, you have no legislative authority from the Senate that I can discover, to conduct this investigation of me

Some GE Workers Suspended by GE's McCarthyism



ALEXANDER GREGORY
IUE-CIO, Lynn, Mass.

"I have been a resident of Lynn, Mass. for 35 years and I am 64 years of age. I am placed in a position today of either testifying as a political informer or losing my job with GE."



WITULUD PIEKARSKI
Draftsman, AFL, Lynn, Mass.

"I am not hiding behind the 5th amendment. It is the inalienable right of every American citizen to invoke . . . any amendment if he feels it is required."



JOHN NELSON
UE, Erie, Pa.

"Because I refused to help the Butler committee create the atmosphere for passage of the anti-labor Butler Bill, I am facing loss of my job. I have been with GE for 13 years."

"Stop Trying to Browbeat Decent Working People."

Matles told McCarthy

or my Union. Third, the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution prevents you from forcing me or anyone to be a witness against himself."

"YOU ARE A LIAR"

"You have been running around to Schenectady and Lynn," Matles went on. "You have had a lot to say about spying and sabotage. I want to tell you that I never engaged in spying, espionage or sabotage, the other officers of the UE have not engaged in it and the Union has not engaged in it. When you accuse us of that you are lying. Senator McCarthy, you are a liar."

"A DIRTY THING"

"You are doing a dirty thing," Matles continued, "going to Lynn and Schenectady for the General Electric Co. terrorizing and browbeating decent working people. I tell you to stop it. I urge you to stop doing it."

McCarthy was banging his gavel all this time. Both he and Cohn had left the head table where

they had been sitting when the hearing opened. They had lost all their pomposity. Cohn was sprawled out in a chair at Matles' table, with his chin on the table top, staring at Matles. McCarthy was walking around the room. For a considerable part of the exchange he stood over Matles, less than a foot away from him.

A CHEAP TRICK

"Have you discussed classified work with communists at communist meetings?" McCarthy asked.

"That is the kind of trick question you have been using to fool and scare GE workers in Lynn and Schenectady," Matles answered. "There is no use your trying your tricks on me. I told you I have never had any information about classified work. I have never discussed classified work with anybody. As to your political question about my associations, I have already refused to answer and given you my reasons."

"STOP TERRORIZING WORKERS"

Matles returned to McCarthy's appearances in Lynn and Schenectady.

1—TELL YOUR CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS that you expect them to speak, act and vote against McCarthyism in all its forms. Remember: 1954 is an election year!

2—SPEAK OUT against McCarthyism wherever it appears. McCarthyism wants to scare you into silence. Our unions, our democracy, our jobs, our peace can be safeguarded . . . if we speak out against McCarthyism!

"I urge you to stop terrorizing decent working people. That is the main thing I came down here for," Matles said.

McCarthy went and consulted with Cohn.

"Do you call members of the communist conspiracy decent working people? Answer yes or no," said McCarthy.

Matles said, "Any citizen is decent unless he is charged, tried and found guilty of a crime, and that applies to Communists as well as to Republicans."

Cohn then took up the question of Matles' citizenship, asking when and where he became a citizen.

"I became a citizen in 1934," Matles said.

"Did you swear to be loyal to the U. S. Constitution?" Cohn asked.

"I did," said Matles, "and I am a loyal citizen."

"Did you declare at that time you were not a member of a communist conspiracy?" asked Cohn.

"My declaration is a matter of record and speaks for itself," said Matles. "I am a loyal citizen of the United States."

"Where were you born?" asked McCarthy.

"Roumania," said Matles.

McCarthy said, "I want to set you straight on the purpose of this executive session. We've got a lot on you. We wanted to give you a chance to clear yourself."

Matles said, "You've got nothing on me, not a damned thing. You've been trying for three years to frame me and you haven't got a thing. You can't scare me with that kind of stuff."

"ARE YOU A SPY, McCARTHY"

McCarthy said, "We've got evidence you're a communist conspirator and a traitor to this country."

Matles said, "You have been trying to frame me

on my non-communist affidavits for three years, the pair of you, and you haven't done it yet. Let me ask you a question. Are you a spy? That question is as good coming from me to you as coming from you to me."

McCarthy didn't answer. He said, "Come on, Cohn, we are wasting our time. Let's give this man a public hearing. Let's get the immigration authorities in here and get this man deported."

"That's the kind of threats you use to scare working people in Lynn and Schenectady," Matles returned. "You can't scare me with it. I am a citizen and nobody's going to deport me. I'll be around for a long time."

"DON'T ANSWER, COHN"

Just before the hearing ended Matles gave Cohn a chance to answer a question.

"What are you doing around here, Cohn?" Matles asked. "I see you lost Schine; what about you?"

(Recently Private G. David Schine was called up for investigation at Fort Dix, N. Y., accused by fellow soldiers of receiving "preferential treatment" while in training. Schine is accused of disappearing from camp, stopping at swanky hotels, avoiding guard duty and KP without penalty, etc.)

Schine was the 25-year-old unpaid, "special assistant" to McCarthy before he was drafted a few weeks ago. Cohn is 26.

"I put in my time in the Armed Services," Matles continued, "What are you doing around here?"

Cohn said, "Do you want me to tell you?"

Matles: "Yes."

McCarthy: "You don't have to answer that, Cohn."

A moment of two later the "executive session" ended.



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