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AUSTRALIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION

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FOR: ROYAL COMMISSION ON INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY

The following is provided further to: discussions on 27th and 28th November 1974 concerning the Special Projects Section, in which the Director-General referred to certain activities of the National Civic Council (N.C.C.).

Notes on N.C.C. Activities.

- 1. Attempts have been made by N.C.C. members to obtain employment in A.S.I.O. They have done so without revealing their N.C.C. membership. All known ones have been refused entry: e.g.,
- 2. Following the appointment of the present Director-General, A.S.I.O. came under attack from the N.C.C. (via "News Weekly") and Maxwell Newton ("The Melbourne Observer"). A.S.I.O. was accused of being soft on Communism and the Director-General of relaxing penetration of trade unions as allegedly done under Spry and Bland (Department of Labour and National Service).
- The N.C.C. used to submit to Government its own analysis of Communist influence and activity in trade unions, no doubt due to its distrust of the analysis submitted by A.S.I.O. and the Department of Labour and National Service. (See "News Weekly".) Some of these were referred by Prime Minister Gorton to A.S.I.O. for comment. A.S.I.O. was highly critical of the analyses and said they were based on surmise rather than fact.
- 4. A.S.I.O. (reference internal minutes attached) gave considerable attention to the N.C.C. attacks on A.S.I.O. and N.C.C. competitiveness in respect of interpreting Communist influence in the Australian Labour movement. The attached minutes indicate A.S.I.O. was highly critical of the N.C.C. in this case.
- * Description of the circumstances leading to provision of the information or material.

A.S.I.O.

MINUTE PAPER



Subject: NATIONAL CIVIC COUNCIL (NCC)

February, 19 73

To: ADG/B

C/B2

As directed, I have begun work on a background paper covering, as far as available information allows, the organisation, personnel, policies and tactics of the NCC.

- 2. As this will be delayed somewhat by preparation for, and a report of, my visit to New Zealand (24th February 4th March), the following are a few interim points for your information.
- There is a formidable amount of published material readily available about the NCC (or as it was formerly called "The Movement") However, most of this is either apologetic or polemical, of course, handicapped by the clandestine aspects of NCC organisation, membership and operations. (The CPA, for example, publishes its National Committee; the NCC has few self-confessed members and even fewer have press references to their membership.) Consequently, one is dependant currently on a critical reading of such material and on some information coming from contacts in the labor movement, employer organisations, universities and Government departments.
- 4. The most recent description of NCC organisation and estimate of its numerical strength was given in a series of articles in the Financial Review (beginning 25th July, 1972). These were written by Robert MURRAY, author of "The Split" which was regarded as fairly objective by a variety of critics. However, since publication of "The Split", MURRAY reportedly has become more sympathetic to the NCC. This may be supported by his description of NCC members in the first of his FR articles:

"The ideal, often achieved, is of a fairly bland but sympathetic and lideable personality, or notably upright but not rigid character, intense and committed, but still able to mix well with other people.

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There is often a cameraderic and a sense of being something of a moral and enlightened elite prepared to sacrifice pleasure and profit in dedication to a religious and patriotic mission."

A sceptic might be inclined to disbelieve that such people could be found in large numbers anywhere, let alone a political task force. The creduluous enthusiasm is reminiscent of such people as Myra ROPER reporting that the Chinese have eliminated both crime and flicence.

Nece Nevertheless, Murray in his FR articles quotes B.A. SANTAMAI NCC National Director, as stating that NCC membership in 1972 compr:

"2,800 hard core throughout Australia, about half in Victoria, a quarter in Queensland and a quarter in all other states. About another 3,000 are prepared to help the NCC one night a week or so."

This, of course, if correct, would place NCC "hard-core" membership, alone, roughly equivalent to the maximum combined membership of all three Communist parties in Australia.

6. The main tasks for hard core NCC members as described by MURRAY include:

"adding as individuals to anti-Left numbers in community organisations, particularly trade unions and being sufficiently well trained and disciplined to know what to do."

- 7. Membership of the NCC, in contrast to that of the DLP, is not open but is by invitation to strict, practising Catholics only who must pledge at least one night's work a week and to perform task allocated by full-time officers.
- 8. MURRAY describes the objectives of the NCC as seeking for Australia" self-reliance and discipline in national life". To do this it must first destroy the "Coalition of the Left" which is not only weakening the moral fibre of Australians through promoting permissiveness, but simultaneously is weakening the national will to resist Communist subversion and aggression.

"Mr. SANTAMARIA includes in the Coalition of the Left not only the various strains of Communists, Trotskyists,

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