

**"I AM NOT A COMMUNIST, BUT I AM CERTAINLY NOT GOING TO RUN AWAY FROM THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE AND PEACE BECAUSE I FIND A COMMUNIST AT MY ELBOW WORKING FOR THE SAME THINGS. I WILL WORK IN THE SAME FIELD AS HE UNTIL HE TRIES TO FORCE HIS MATERIALISTIC COMMUNISM ON ME AND OTHERS. THEN I SHALL PART COMPANY WITH HIM AS FAR AS CO-OPERATION GOES.**

"I cannot go back or give up the work I am doing. If I did not act as I am doing, I would consider myself a traitor to my Master and to my conscience, and a coward to boot. I do not intend to do either."

# U.S. Priest Speaks Out in Defence of Communist Party

Father Clarence Duffy, of New York, said this to his Vicar-General when it was suggested to him that he should cease speaking in defence of liberty and peace—or his right to say Mass might be taken away.

SOON AFTER THE CONVICTION OF THE 11 AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTY LEADERS, AND THEIR SENTENCE TO LONG PRISON TERMS AND HEAVY FINES, FATHER DUFFY SPOKE OUT AGAINST THE VERDICT AND THE ENTIRE TRIAL.

And since he spoke out he has kept on speaking out. On several occasions he has been attacked in the street by fascist hoodligans, and after he had addressed one street corner meeting, police took him to the station and told him to "get the hell out of here."

This is what Father Duffy said after the 11 Communist leaders had been sentenced—

I am a priest of the Catholic Church. I am neither excommunicated nor under ecclesiastical censure of any kind.

## DENOUNCES TRIAL

I am a U.S. citizen by birth. I belong to an Irish diocese and have the written permission of my Bishop to be absent from that diocese. I am, therefore, in what is termed good standing in the Catholic Church and I intend to retain that good standing.

While I am opposed to laissezfaire capitalism, I am not a Communist. I do not believe in or subscribe to the underlying philosophy, the dialectic materialism and economic determinism, or materialistic Communism.

I recognise, however, that others have a perfect right to believe in or subscribe to materialistic Communism, or to any other economic or political system that they choose, to think and act as they like, and to propagate their views freely as long as they do not violate the rights of others in so doing, incite to the violation of them or advocate or use coercion, force or violence in the propagation of these views.

I am on this platform tonight because I am sure that right was violated last week in the persons of 11 men who were convicted and sentenced to prison, nominally because they advocated force or violence to secure their objective, but in reality because they were Communists. I am not satisfied that they were tried for advocating force and violence. I am not satisfied either that this charge was proven against them.

Like many other people, I believe that they were tried and convicted precisely because they were Communists. They were tried and convicted not for criminal acts, but for holding and expressing ideas that are at present unpopular. The long drawn-out trial occupied itself mostly with establishing the fact that they held and expressed Communistic ideas. Very little time or attention was given to proving or establishing the fact that these men advocated the use of force or violence to promote the acceptance of their views.

## MUST DEFEND PRINCIPLES

As a priest who believes in freedom for everyone to think and act as he pleases, and to hold and express, or propagate any views he chooses, as long as he does not violate the rights of others or does not advocate or use coercion or violence to promote his views, I want to take this opportunity to protest, not only against the conviction and sentence of these men, but against the trial and the manner in which it was conducted.

I do so not only in the name of justice and freedom, but in the name of Christian charity which obliges me and all

other professing Christians to love our fellowmen and particularly, to love our enemies or those with whom we may disagree economically, religiously or politically. While we may dislike materialistic Communism, we may not ever dislike or hate the Communist or any other person, no matter what his views may be. If we are Christians, we must love all men, look upon them and treat them as our brothers, and do unto them as we would wish they would do unto us.

## "MY BROTHERS"

As a Christian priest I look upon these 11 convicted and sentenced men as my brothers, and as such I must help them in any way I can when they are, in my opinion, unjustly deprived of their God-given freedom or denied their God-given rights. If I did not try to help them in such straits I would be false to the teachings of Christ and His Apostles which I profess to follow, and I would richly deserve similar treatment myself at a later date.

Not only in their interests and for the upholding and protection of their rights, but in my own interests and for the continued free exercise of my own God-given rights I solemnly protest the injustice done to my 11 Communist brothers and call for the immediate righting of that injustice.

In conclusion, I would like to quote and make my own the following excerpt from "The Time of the Toad," by Dalton Trumbo, which appeared in the current issue of the National Guardian.

"In the campaign ahead, we shall have to depend upon our ability to summon from its slumber the immense devotion to constitutional government which still abides with the American people. We shall have to reassert the dignity of the intellect"—and I might add the dignity of man.

## MUST DEFEND PRINCIPLES

"The legal principles which protect against the force of the State protect all. If a Communist comes first under attack and is overwhelmed, the breach opened by his fall becomes an avenue for the advance of the enemy with all his increased prestige upon you. You need not agree with the Communist while you engage in his and your common defence. You may indeed oppose him with every honorable weapon in your arsenal, dissociate yourself from his theories and repudiate his final objectives.

"But defend him you must, for his defeat in the constitutional battle involves the overturn of principles which thus far have stood as our principal barrier short of bloodshed, against fascism"—and may I add against State tyranny and the intimidation encouraged and promoted by powerful private vested interests, including the corrupt and corrupting commercial press.

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