

FOR RELEASE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1959

COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

File

Communist lawyers rank as part of an elite core within the Communist Fifth Column on American soil, the House Committee on Un-American Activities declared in a report, Communist Legal Subversion, made public today.

The report summarizes the records of 39 of the more than 100 lawyers who have been identified before the Committee as members of the Communist Party. Their activities include abuse of the courts, misbehavior before Congressional committees, circumvention of the law, espionage, subversion in government, and propaganda for Communist causes.

Such activities on the part of lawyers who have been identified as Communist Party members, the Committee said, create "a vital problem" which is summarized in these questions:

How can a lawyer maintain his oath to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States when he is an agent of a conspiratorial apparatus designed to destroy the Constitution?

How can a lawyer carry out his duty to serve the interests of a client if he is under Communist discipline which subordinates professional loyalties to the interests of the Communist Party?

How can a lawyer meet the high standard of ethics and conduct, historically required of members of the bar, if he exploits the know-how and prestige of his profession in behalf of Communist propaganda, subversion, and espionage?

The Committee emphasized that Communist lawyers "represent only a fraction of the total number of individuals engaged in the practice of law in the United States," and that the report "should not be construed as a reflection on the overwhelming majority of the legal profession, in whose loyalty and patriotism the Committee has the highest confidence." The Committee praised the American Bar Association for its concern over the activities of Communist lawyers. The Committee noted that the American Bar Association has established a Special Committee on Communist Tactics, Strategy and Objectives, and that the Association has adopted a number of recommendations directly relating to communism and Communist lawyers.

The report states:

"The mechanics of legal subversion extend far beyond any legitimate process of legal representation. They embrace the efforts of a conspiratorial minority, trained in the use of the legal instruments of our society, to turn those instruments into weapons for the destruction of our free society."

It continues:

"While relatively few in number, the principals in this operation enjoy a far disproportionate influence in the American community as a result of a combination of legal training, schooling in Communist subversive techniques and the fact that they have behind them the entire Communist apparatus and are made the subjects of favorable publicity build-ups on the part of the Communist Party, its fronts and fellow travelers in all walks of life."

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"The fact that identified Communist lawyers are very much in a minority does not alter the seriousness of the situation whereby agents of the Communist Party, by gaining entry into the legal profession, are in a unique position to serve as instruments for those who would pervert the very democratic processes a lawyer is sworn to defend."

"Under the mantle of the legal profession, the Communist can operate as an ostensibly respectable and influential member of the community despite his dedication and subservience to Communist doctrines and directives."

"The frequency of their appearances before our most important and highly respected democratic institutions is evidence of the prominence attained by Communists who have been admitted to the bar. They appear not only before Congressional committees but, because of their highly respected profession, are given free access to executive agencies, such as the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and to the State and Federal courts, including our highest tribunal--the United States Supreme Court."

"In the past decade alone, identified Communist lawyers appeared in person before the United States Supreme Court or were on the principal brief in at least 32 important cases adjudicated by the Court on some vital issue affecting the operations of the Communist Party itself."

"This report must not be construed as a reflection on the right and privilege of legal representation for Communists. The cherished American concept of the right to counsel must never be denied even to Communist conspirators who would render such concepts meaningless if their efforts to subvert our Government were to succeed."
