From the late 1930s through the mid-1950s, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) brought together America’s working men and women under a united class banner. Of the thirty-eight CIO unions, eighteen were “left-wing” or “Communist-dominated.” Yet the political struggle between the CIO’s “Communist-dominated” and right-wing unions was divisive and self-destructive. How did the Communists win, hold, and wield power in the CIO unions? Did they subordinate the needs of workers to those of the Soviet regime? The authors provide testable answers to these questions with historically specific, quantitative analyses of data on the CIO’s origins, internal struggles, and political relations. They find that the CIO’s Communist-led unions were among the most egalitarian and progressive on class, race, and gender issues, and fought to enlarge the freedom and enhance the human dignity of America’s workers.

Judith Stepan-Norris is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Irvine, and the author (with Maurice Zeitlin) of Talking Union (1996).

“Finally someone has engaged the old and new anti-Communist scholarship, treated it seriously, and having put its assertions to the test of thorough empirical research, finds this literature to be radically wrong. Finally someone gives the Communists their due without soft pedaling their apologetic stance toward the former Soviet Union. This book will replace Lipset’s classic on the ITU as the last word on trade union democracy and its relationship to anti-communism. The book will also put to rest the various functionalist accounts that assume the inevitability of trade union class collaboration.”

– David Wellman, author of The Union Makes Us Strong: Radical Unionism on the San Francisco Waterfront

“In their latest tour de force Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin return to the union radicalism of the 1930s and 40s. They peel away the veil of anti-communism and organizational pessimism to reveal an insurgent communism that was no Stalinist front for ‘infiltrating’ or ‘colonizing’ unions, but was instead the backbone of popular struggles for decent working conditions, racial equality, women’s rights, and participatory democracy. Culling and compiling data from many sources, they discover a broad, grassroots support for the Communist Party and its organizing initiatives. The postwar decline of labor is, then, tied to the aggressive purge of communism on the one side, and the failure of communist unions to forge their own Labor Federation on the other. Going against the shibboleths of our time, Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin question the inevitability of American labor’s self-destructive accommodation to corporate capitalism. Courageous, clear and compelling, this is counterfactual history at its best – history returned to the actors who make it.”

– Michael Burawoy, University of California, Berkeley, and President-Elect of the American Sociological Association
LEFT OUT
Reds and America’s Industrial Unions

JUDITH STEPAN-NORRIS
University of California, Irvine

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for Rick
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for Marilyn
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We wrote this book so that it can be understood by every literate reader – of whom we demand only intelligence and memory but no specialized knowledge of statistics. Any reader who wants to skip over the statistical tables and technical notes – which are included for the benefit of specialists – can do so without loss. All of the crucial findings of the quantitative analysis, as well as explanations of occasional technical terms used (e.g., “regression” or “logit”), are presented in plain English.
This is a joint work in the fullest sense; authors are listed alphabetically.

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Our research led us to several archives. These include the California Institute of Technology’s Industrial Relations Library; the Ford Industrial Archives; the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village Research Center, Dearborn, Michigan; the Southern California Library for Social Studies and Research; the U.S. Department of Labor Library; the Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs; and the microfilmed papers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). We are grateful to these organizations for allowing us the opportunity to utilize their collections.

No research effort is done in isolation, and this one is no exception. We received cogent and incisive comments and suggestions on various parts of this book from the following individuals: Perry Anderson, Stanley Aronowitz, Jeremy Brecher, Michael Burawoy, Sam Cohn, Daniel Cornfield, Lewis Coser, Theodore Draper, William Form, Walter Galenson, the late Supreme Court Justice and United Nations Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, Michael Goldfield, Larry Griffin, Larry Isaac, Howard Kimeldorf, John H. M. Laslett, Harvey Levenstein, Robert K. Merton, Ruth Milkman, George Strauss, Julia Wrigley, and Robert Zieger. Herbert Hill generously provided documents on discrimination in UE’s Philco and Allen-Bradley locals and gave provocative comments on drafts of Chapters 8 and 9. Richard Berk, Phillip Bonacich, Wang Feng, and Kazuo Yamaguchi generously advised us about logit and log-linear modeling,
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ABBREVIATIONS

ACA American Communications Association (CIO)
ACTU Association of Catholic Trade Unionists
ACW Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (CIO)
AECT Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians (CIO)
AFL American Federation of Labor
AFL-CIO American Federation of Labor–Congress of Industrial Organizations
ANG American Newspaper Guild (CIO)
AWU Auto Workers Union (TUUL)
BBC Barbers and Beauty Culturists (CIO)
CARD Committee to Abolish Racial Discrimination
CIO Congress of Industrial Organizations
CP Communist Party, USA
CRC Civil Rights Committee
DPOWER Distributive, Processing and Office Workers (Ind.)
FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation
FE United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers of America (CIO)
FEPC Fair Employment Practice Committee
FTA Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers (CIO)
GCC Gas, Coke and Chemical Workers (CIO)
GE General Electric
GM General Motors
HUAC House Un-American Activities Committee (U.S. Congress)
IAM International Association of Machinists (AFL)
IB Inland Boatmen’s International Union (CIO)
IBEW International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL)
IEB International Executive Board
Abbreviations

IFLWU  International Fur and Leather Workers Union (CIO)
ILA  International Longshoremen’s Association (AFL)
ILGWU  International Ladies Garment Workers Union (AFL)
ILWU  International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union (CIO)
IPP  Independent Progressive Party
IRC  Industrial Relations Center (at Cal Tech)
ITU  International Typographical Union (AFL)
IUE  International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (CIO)
IUMSBW  International Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers (CIO)
IWA  International Woodworkers of America (CIO)
IWO  International Workers Order
IWW  Industrial Workers of the World
MCS  Marine Cooks and Stewards (CIO)
MM  International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (CIO)
MOWM  March on Washington Movement
MWIU  Metal Workers International Union (TUUL)
NAACP  National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NAM  National Association of Manufacturers
NLRB  National Labor Relations Board
NMU  National Maritime Union (CIO)
NWLB  National War Labor Board
OLS  ordinary least squares
OWIU  Oil Workers International Union (CIO)
RIA  Research Institute of America
RLU  Red International of Labor Unions
RWDSU  Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (CIO)
SACB  Subversive Activities Control Board
SCM  State, County and Municipal Employees (CIO)
SOC  Southern Organizing Campaign
SUM  Save the Union Movement
SWOC  Steel Workers Organizing Committee (CIO)
SWP  Socialist Workers Party
TUEL  Trade Union Educational League
TUUL  Trade Union Unity League
TWOC  Textile Workers Organizing Committee (CIO)
TWU  Transport Workers Union (CIO)
### Abbreviations

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</tr>
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<td>UAW</td>
<td>United Automobile Workers (CIO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UE</td>
<td>United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union (CIO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMW</td>
<td>United Mine Workers (AFL, CIO, Independent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UOPW</td>
<td>United Office and Professional Workers (CIO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPW</td>
<td>United Public Workers (CIO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPWA</td>
<td>United Packinghouse Workers of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URW</td>
<td>United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America (CIO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>USS</td>
<td>United States Steel</td>
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<td>USWA</td>
<td>United Steel Workers of America (CIO)</td>
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<td>UTSE</td>
<td>United Transport Service Employees (CIO) (Red Caps)</td>
</tr>
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<td>UTW</td>
<td>United Textile Workers (AFL)</td>
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<td>WPR</td>
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