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Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin
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LEFT OUT

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).

Maurice Zeitlin is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Among his books are *Cuba: An American Tragedy* (with Robert Scheer, 1964), *Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class* (1967), *The Civil Wars in Chile* (1984), *Landlords and Capitalists* (with Richard E. Ratcliff, 1988), *The Large Corporation and Contemporary Classes* (1989), and *Talking Union* (with Judith Stepan-Norris). His edited volumes include *Latin America: Reform or Revolution?* (with James Petras, 1968), *American Society, Inc.* (1970), and *Classes, Class Conflict, and the State* (1980).

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[More information](#)

“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*

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for Rick
and
for Marilyn

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 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures and Tables</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Prefatory Note</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xiii
1 The Congress of Industrial Organizations: Left, Right, and Center	1
2 "Who Gets the Bird?"	24
3 Insurgency, Radicalism, and Democracy	54
4 Lived Democracy: UAW Ford Local 600	95
5 "Red Company Unions"?	121
6 Rank-and-File Democracy and the "Class Struggle in Production"	159
7 "Pin Money" and "Pink Slips"	189
8 The "Big 3" and Interracial Solidarity	212
9 The Red and the Black	232
10 Conclusion: An American Tragedy	266
11 Epilogue: The "Third Labor Federation" That Never Was	297
<i>References</i>	328
<i>Author Index</i>	368
<i>Subject Index</i>	370

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures

- | | | |
|------|---|----------------|
| 2.1. | Substantive theoretical model of the determination of Communist leadership in CIO international unions by insurgent political practices | <i>page 49</i> |
| 3.1. | Substantive theoretical model of the determination of constitutional democracy in CIO international unions by insurgent political practices, organized factions, and Communist leadership | 93 |

Tables

- | | | |
|------|--|----|
| 1.1. | The "Communist camp" in the CIO: The combined membership of the Communist-led international unions and their share of the total CIO membership in selected years | 19 |
| 2.1. | Logit estimates of the direct effects of the insurgent political practices in determining the comparative odds that CIO international unions were Communist-led | 48 |
| 3.1. | Constitutional democracy scale in CIO international unions, as of 1948 | 62 |
| 3.2. | Logit estimates of the direct effects of the insurgent political practices in determining the comparative odds that CIO international unions, as of 1948, were highly democratic | 78 |
| 3.3. | Level of constitutional democracy in CIO international unions, by political camp and the presence of factions | 89 |
| 3.4. | Constitutional democracy in CIO international unions by type of political practice in union organizing, and CIO political camp | 90 |
| 3.5. | Logit estimates of the direct effects of organized factions, amalgamation, and Communist leadership in determining | |

Figures and Tables

	the comparative odds that CIO international unions, as of 1948, were highly democratic	92
4.1.	Closeness of presidential elections in UAW Local 600, 1942–84, and the ITU, 1898–1942	105
4.2.	Standardized OLS regression coefficients of Local 600 unit election contention on measures of the political orientation of unit leaders, the number (and type) of clubs, and other control variables	117
5.1.	Prolabor provisions in CIO local union contracts in California, 1938–55, by CIO political camp	143
5.2.	Prolabor provisions in CIO local union contracts in California, 1938–55, by historical period and CIO political camp	150
5.3.	Logit estimates of the independent effects of the CIO's political camps, controlling for historical period, "aging," and "Big 3" in determining the comparative odds that specified provisions of the CIO local union contracts in California, 1938–55, were prolabor	157
6.1.	Prolabor provisions in CIO local union contracts in California, 1938–55, by the level of stable constitutional democracy in the international union	167
6.2.	Prolabor provisions in CIO local union contracts in California, 1938–55, by the presence of factions in the international union	168
6.3.	OLS estimates of the independent effects of stable constitutional democracy, the presence of factions, and the CIO's political camps in determining the likelihood that local union contracts in California, 1938–55, were prolabor	170
6.4.	Prolabor provisions in "Big 3" local union contracts in California, 1938–55	175
9.1.	Percentage of CIO international unions with specified aspects of interracial solidarity, by constitutional democracy and factionalism	244
9.2.	Average interracial solidarity score by the size of black membership, constitutional democracy, and factionalism in CIO industrial unions	246
9.3.	Average interracial solidarity score by political camp and by the size of black membership in CIO international unions	260
9.4.	Interracial solidarity score by political camp, constitutional democracy, and factionalism in CIO international unions	262
9.5.	Segregated locals "at one time or another" by political camp, constitutional democracy, and factionalism in CIO international unions	263

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Judith Stepan-Norris and Maurice Zeitlin
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PREFATORY NOTE

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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is a joint work in the fullest sense; authors are listed alphabetically.

Funding for this project was generously provided by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the Academic Senates of the University of California, Los Angeles and Irvine, the UCI School of Social Sciences, and by the UCLA Institute of Industrial Relations (IIR). We are grateful to Daniel J. B. Mitchell, then IIR Director, and Archie Kleingartner, then Associate Director, for helpful counsel. We also want to thank Mitchell for discovering and helping us obtain the batch of collective bargaining contracts at California Institute of Technology.

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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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

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and Berk, especially, carefully guided us through their pitfalls. Jody Borrelli coded the constitutional data; Jan Bitar supervised the transcriptions of the oral history interviews; and Cheryl Larsson kindly assisted with the manuscript preparation. We are especially grateful to Mary Child, our editor, for her astute advice on both the style and substance of the book.

Earlier versions of some parts of this book appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Social Forces*.

Finally, we are each indebted to our families for their patience and support. Stepan-Norris has found a constant source of inspiration in Rick, her husband, who helped with the data collection in the early years of this project. Her sons, Brandon, Devin, and Austin, have enriched her life in immeasurable ways and provided a welcome diversion from the long hours of research and writing that went into this book. Zeitlin thanks his friends and family for tolerating his long days and hard nights ignoring them (except for the newest member of the clan, Devin Alyssa, who always enticed him out to play a little) while he was writing the final draft of this book.

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
DPOW	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

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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
RILU	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)

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[More information](#)

Abbreviations

TWUA	United Textile Workers Union of America (CIO)
UAW	United Automobile Workers (CIO)
UE	United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union (CIO)
UMW	United Mine Workers (AFL, CIO, Independent)
UOPW	United Office and Professional Workers (CIO)
UPW	United Public Workers (CIO)
UPWA	United Packinghouse Workers of America
URW	United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America (CIO)
USS	United States Steel
USWA	United Steel Workers of America (CIO)
UTSE	United Transport Service Employees (CIO) (Red Caps)
UTW	United Textile Workers (AFL)
WPR	Walter P. Reuther
WSUA	Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs