MY DAY

Why Not Ask Businessmen to Sign Affidavits?

By ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

NEW YORK, Friday—I have received a letter from a gentleman in the Middle West who call himself "A Lifelong Democrat," and a good one at that, for he voted for William Jennings Bryan and he has a right to consider himself as having been "generally on the liberal side."

However, he has been an employer of labor and because of that, while he admired my husband, he could not agree with him on labor matters.

He is afraid now that I may go to extremes in support of labor unions. "At this stage," says he, "I do not think they need such support as your influence gives them. They have demonstrated that they can take care of themselves."

I entirely agree with this last sentiment, and it is not for the sake of the unions but for the sake of my own beliefs that I have criticized certain things in the Taft Hartley Act.

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I DO not believe that unions should be headed by Communists. And I have long stated that the AFL should clean house and remove any racketeers it may have in positions of influence, and that the CIO should remove any Comunist labor leaders from power. But that is quite a different thing from asking every man who heads a union, and the head officials of these great labor organizations, to sign a a declaration that they are not Communists.

That, to me, is taking one group in this country and offering them a kind of treatment which is insulting. And the only way I can imagine that we as Americans could consider it would be if all of us in any positions of influence were asked to make the same declaration. When you enter Government service you are asked to take an oath of allegiance, but this has not been asked of you when you started a business.

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IT interests me that in this country we have not recognized the very simple fact that Communism and Fascism are only dangerous to us if we allow democracy to fail. There may be, as some papers say, "an international conspiracy, headed by Soviet Russia, to break down democratic government wherever it exists—especially our American Government—and replace it with a Communist dictatorship." I doubt very much if this is actually so, but it cannot possibly succeed unless you and I do not make democracy work.

Any government which meets the needs of the majority of its people, gives them what they want and the satisfied feeling that they are better off than most of the world, has nothing to wear from Communism or Fascism.

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