FAIR ENOUGH

By Westbrook Pegler

MERVYN RATHBORNE, a member of the Communist party and of the Communist party's secret policy board in the national executive committee of the CIO, spent two weeks in the White House as the guest of Eleanor Roosevelt in the summer of 1940.

He had just resigned the presidency of the American Communications association, a Communist union within the CIO, because his health had failed. He was starting a drive from New York to California in his small sedan with his wife and baby, who was accommodated in a sling or hammock in the after-section of the car.

Arriving in Washington, Rathborne drove into the White House grounds with the casual assurance of a southern cousin calling on kin-folks and settled down for a fortnight's sojourn. Princess Martha, of Norway, was another guest at the rat-infested national palace at the time.

RATHBORNE has quit the party since then and appears to have suffered privation in common with three other former Communists who testified in the latest Harry Bridges trial. Their reward for their repudiation of the enemy long before Korea and for the ordeal of the trial has been unemployment and poverty.

When Rathborne announced that he would have to quit the presidency of the American Communications association, the Communists would not take his word or the word of any non-Communist physician but insisted on a concurring opinion from a doctor who was a member of the party. They suspected, of course, that he was about to turn on them. This he did not do until 1944.

Although the A.C.A. was generally co-operative in the American war effort after Hitler attacked Russia in 1941, nevertheless the Communists within the union remained loyal to Soviet Russia and their pleasant attitude toward the United States was only a by-product of the situation.

DURING that co-operation an American Navy plane on a long flight in the Pacific sighted an American merchantman and by radio asked the union radio operator aboard her for information so that the Navy men could verify their position.

The commander of the plane later reported to the naval district intelligence office in San Diego that, before complying, the ship's radio man inquired, "Are you a member of the American Communications association?"

This incidental information is intended to indicate the attitude of the Communists in this union whose Communist president and his family had been entertained for two weeks in the White House as the guest of the wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Tolson
Ladd
Clegg
Glavin
Nichols
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