

For Release Wednesday, Nov. 29

Russian Influence in U. S. Communist Party Seen Dominant by Public

Few in Poll Call Party American

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PRINCETON, N. J., Nov. 28.—Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's charge that Earl Browder, American Communist leader, "seems to feel that his first allegiance is to another country," is in line with the attitude toward Communists held by many American voters at the present time.

In a national survey just completed by the American Institute of Public Opinion a majority of those polled expressed the belief that the Communist Party in this country is merely an arm of the Soviet Union, being either controlled directly

by Russia or working in close consultation with Russia. Only a small minority in the survey said they thought the Communist Party was entirely independent of Russia.

These views, of course, represent opinions only. The actual facts regarding Russia's relation to the party have not definitely been established in detail. Whether those polled in the survey are right or wrong in their estimate of Russian control over the party, their sentiments may account in part for the slow growth of the party in this country.

To find the general attitude of the public toward the American Communists, the Institute put to a cross-section of voters a question containing four statements. The



An American Communist rally and (inset) Earl Browder, head of the party. In Browder's clash with the Dies Committee one of the chief questions was just how much influence the Russian Communist Party has over the Communist Party in the United States. A national survey by the Institute shows that most voters think the party in this country is largely a puppet of the Soviet government.

voters were asked: "Which of these statements best describes your opinion about the Communist Party in the United States?"

The four statements, with the percentage vote on each, follow:

The Communist Party in this country takes orders directly from Russia 25%

The policies of the Communist Party in the United States are decided on by Communists in this country in consultation with Russia. 27

The policies of the American Communist Party are decided entirely by Communists in the U. S. 9

Know nothing about the Communist Party 39

Some variation of opinion was found by income groups in the survey. More voters in the upper

income level had opinions than in the lower levels. But in each level the largest single group with opinions felt that the party was controlled either directly or indirectly by Russia.

The study also found a sharp difference in the no opinion vote between farmers and urban voters. Whereas only about one-third (35 per cent) of city dwellers in the survey said they knew nothing about the Communist Party, one-half of the farmers (50 per cent) said they had no opinion answer.

In all of these groups—rich and poor, urban and farm—only small minorities, less than 10 per cent, felt that the Communist Party was a purely American party, independent of Russian control. And, as previous Institute surveys have shown, Russia is one of the least liked foreign countries in the United States, polling only one per cent in a recent survey on favorite foreign nations.

Voters Estimate

Communist Strength

SOME anti-Communist forces in the United States have painted dramatic pictures of a so-called "red menace," professing to find a vast net-work of Communist party workers throughout the country. In order to get some idea as to what the public's views on the matter are, the Institute asked a second question in its survey. The question was:

"About how many members do you think there are in the Communist Party in the United States?"

A large majority—60 per cent—said they did not know. Among the remainder who were willing to hazard a guess, the median average of all estimates was approximately 300,000.

In 1932 the Communist presidential candidates polled approximately 100,000 votes, and the Communist Party vote in 1936 was approximately 80,000.

