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## Achilles Heel

By John Herling



A YEAR ago Victor Reuther, director of the International Affairs Department of the United Auto Workers, charged that the overseas activities of various affiliates of the AFL-CIO and individuals in it were financed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Then in February came the revelation that the CIA had financed the international activities — in whole or in part — of a whole spectrum of organizations, such as the National Student Association, the American Newspaper Guild, the State, County and Municipal Federation, the

Retail Clerks International Association, the oil workers and others.

When asked two months ago about the involvement of Jay Lovestone, director of the AFL-CIO International Affairs department, President George Meany denied it flatly, absolutely and without qualification. He did not then include Irving Brown, a close Lovestone associate, in his protective embrace. He did so this week.

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NOW, Thomas Braden, former CIA associate, asserts in an article in the Saturday Evening Post that both Lovestone and Brown were involved in CIA-financed activities to the tune of several millions of Dollars over a period of years. Mr. Lovestone denies the Braden charges flatly. He himself says it is also a lie as to Brown's involvement. "Braden's a damn liar", Meany says, another official.

Mr. Braden went further. He says that back around 1951 or thereabouts he went to the Detroit headquarters of the United Auto Workers and gave Walter Reuther \$50,000 in 50-dollar bills to be used as aid for European trade unions, mainly in West Germany.

Last Sunday, Walter Reuther issued a statement declaring the Braden account was "incomplete and misleading." Following the end of the war, he said, the American labor movement worked

hard to assist in the rebuilding of the European free trade union movement, the first victim of Hitler's brutality. Because the trade unions were lacking in resources, and especially vulnerable to communist subversion, the "UAW did reluctantly agree on one occasion to the request to transmit Government funds to supplement the inadequate funds being made available by the U. S. labor movement."

Later, however, Mr. Reuther said, Tom Braden tried to persuade Victor Reuther, then the European representative of the national CIO to permit his office to be used as a "Front" for the CIA. Victor Reuther rejected this, said his brother, the president of the UAW, and subsequently Philip Murray, CIO president at the time, and for whom Victor was working, concurred with his decision.

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WE have therefore reached the point in the whole CIA imbroglio where Victor Reuther, who charged Messrs Lovestone and Brown with CIA activities, himself is disclosed as having had a tie with the CIA. From Walter Reuther's account, this was a one-shot affair. In contrast, Victor Reuther has charged Lovestone and Brown with conducting a continuing affair under CIA cover. Mr. Braden, moreover, declared that Mr. Lovestone, spending about \$2 million a year, insisted on not accounting for his use of funds. His "AFL-CIO superior," said Mr. Braden, kept urging the Government to let the Lovestone operation alone.

What puzzles many people is the short-sighted behavior of Victor Reuther in this matter. When he lowered the boom on Messrs Lovestone, Brown et al., why did he not bring to light his own involvement 15 years ago? It might have reduced the shock of his first revelations about the others, but he would not now be facing the charge of moral hypocrisy. Reuther's brother should himself be above suspicion. Was Victor so wrapped up in the cocoon of certainty of his own moral position as to feel secure against all misunderstanding the possibility of disclosure? To the eye of the beholder, he was vulnerable.