

nam era. Nevertheless, the author of *The Origins of the Modern American Peace Movement, 1915-29* has succeeded in writing a very good survey of the *Peace Reform in American History*.

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The Communist Party and the Auto Workers Unions. By Roger Keeran. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980. Pp. x, 340. Notes, index. \$22.50.)

Roger Keeran's solidly researched book moves the quarter-century debate over the role that Communists played in the organization and early years of the United Automobile Workers to a more fruitful and politically meaningful level. Along with Bert Cochran, but in greater detail, Keeran demonstrates the extent to which the very formation of a strong and permanent industrial union in the automobile industry depended upon the dedication of a cadre of individuals whose own social vision far transcended the union movement itself. Relying on internal party documents, numerous oral interviews, and a wide range of labor archives, Keeran clearly demonstrates that Communist activity in the automotive industry provided an unbroken link between the revolutionary dual unionism of the late 1920s, the American Federation of Labor federal locals of the mid-1930s, and many of the strongest UAW locals thereafter. In this context Communists easily moved into influential posts as the UAW grew in size and strength. As Keeran emphasizes, their "legitimacy" as trade-union militants in the UAW arose out of their day-to-day work in building the union itself.

The author devotes the latter half of his book to answering the question: why did the Communists fail to hold the strength that they had built in the 1930s? Keeran's analytical framework in answering this query runs largely parallel to that of the Communist party itself, and he argues that party influence waxed and waned for a multitude of reasons, not all of which were directly related to developments on the world scene or the party line. In keeping with the postwar Communist critique of its wartime activities under the leadership of Earl Browder, Keeran believes that the party failed to take advantage of the favorable conditions that existed in the first half of the 1940s. Communists relied too heavily upon alliances with friendly, sometimes opportunistic, nonparty union officials, while its wartime defense of the no-strike pledge seriously eroded Communist support among many rank-and-filers. Keeran argues,

however, that the decline of Communist strength in the UAW came primarily as a result of their inability to resist the anti-Communist onslaught unleashed in the early Cold War years. In a blistering final chapter, "Reuther and Reaction," Keeran indicts the new UAW president as responsible for setting the pattern for the liberal anti-Communist purge that swept major unions in the early Cold War years.

Keeran's history sometimes reads like a legal brief, relentlessly defending the role played by the Communists in the internal union struggles of the 1930s and 1940s. Though often a good technical defense, his argument does little to put the UAW Communists in a broader intellectual or social context. From his perspective the Communists were the rightful heirs of the American socialist tradition, and their vociferous defense of the Soviet regime in the 1930s and 1940s proved merely the necessary education of the American working class in "socialist internationalism." At the same time Keeran's narrow political defense of the party suffers from the same disabilities that are common to all union histories focused on the relatively narrow world of leadership competition and ideological conflict. The social history of the automobile workers, and that of the thin but important stratum who cast their lot with the Communists, is largely absent from his book. What kind of automobile workers joined the party; what factors explain the variations in Communist support among the local members, regions, and ethnic groups; what meaning did their Communist experience have for those thousands of workers who passed through party ranks? Keeran offers tantalizing references to some of these issues, but his book contains no systematic search for the answers.

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Searching for Your Ancestors: The How and Why of Genealogy.

By Gilbert H. Doane and James B. Bell. Fifth ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980. Pp. xii, 270. Figures, bibliography, appendixes, index. \$10.95.)

Family History Record Book. By James B. Bell. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980. Pp. 263. Forms and charts. Paperbound, \$7.95.)

Today's flourishing genealogical market offers hundreds of manuals to assist persons researching family roots. A classic