

en our common background, we both came to the same “bad end” and quite independently of one another. We were the closest of friends, neighbors in the same building, yet neither of us discussed the Party or the possibility of joining it with the other.

As per Hal’s request, I invited her to have lunch with me in one of the capital’s swankiest restaurants, without telling her why. It was a rare and beautiful occasion for both of us as we learned of each other’s Party membership. Marion was then unemployed, so devoted herself to writing for the Party. Her first piece, I believe, was a pamphlet on the severe drought inflicting the Great Plains, its consequences for the farm area, and a program to meet the problem.

During our childhood summers at Schneider’s Farm, Marion would always find a sick chicken or a cat with a broken leg and would spend her time nursing the animals back to life and strength. She had the same characteristic with respect to people. I suppose she felt that she had the strength to carry herself and her many men—and she had quite a number—all of whom had afflictions of some kind, as Artie did. Marion was an incurable optimist. Everything was going to turn out beautifully; she relished telling friends about her wonderful experiences, which were usually better in the telling than the reality. All of which contributed to her facility for prose. She wrote like a dream. This combination of inner strength, compassion, and optimism would make Marion a true Communist activist and leader.

My Party unit met weekly. We read and discussed articles from Marxist journals, or various works by Marx, Engels, and Lenin. We mainly talked about our work in the various agencies where we were employed, what this indicated about the drift and policies of the Roosevelt administration. If there were developments we thought were particularly interesting or important, someone would be asked to draft a report to be given to Hal, who presumably passed it on to the national leadership in New York for its consideration in estimating the direction of the New Deal and what might be done to influence it. This was the extent of my Party involvement in this period.

When, in 1948, the existence of the “Ware Group” was first exposed in the national media, we were pictured as having been engaged in espionage. That we met privately and that we did not openly reveal our membership was used to portray us as a conspiratorial group engaged in disreputable and treacherous practices. Actually, the Ware Group was a name invented by Whittaker Chambers and a freshman Congressman named Richard Nixon to make headlines and advance their own careers, which were replete with disreputable practices of their own. In fact, our Party unit had no name; because