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VOTING AGAINST THE HAMMER AND SICKLE: COMMUNISM AS AN ISSUE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

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Since the Bolshevik Revolution, there has seldom been a time when some American politician has not accused another of loyalty to or softness on communism. Yet while the specter of communism has haunted U.S. politics since 1917 (and even before), it never prowled full-time. The issue of communist influence in American life became a core political issue only when a perceived threat of communism from abroad converged with a conservative reaction against liberal initiatives at home. These conditions existed most palpably through stretches of the period 1938–1954.

Red-baiting has produced casualties aplenty in state and national politics, as well as a number of beneficiaries, but its use did not always guarantee political success for the long—and sometimes not even the short—term. Of all who strove to harness it, only one, Richard M. Nixon, rode it to the White House. Even he was a rather different figure in 1968, when he achieved his ambition, than in 1948–1954, the peak of his anticommunist prowess. Still, his career also embodied the persistence of the communist issue in the American political culture.[1]

Other anticommunists enjoyed electoral advantage or earned livelihoods by lecturing, writing, and testifying before investigative bodies. Yet their triumphs were mostly brief. Over the *longue durée,* anticommunism has occasionally operated as a dominant, but more often as a secondary, theme, sometimes little more than a rasping hum backgrounding other political tones. That conclusion depends on whether we stress the brevity of the moments of glory enjoyed by each exploiter of the issue or the recurrent fre-

quency of these brief life cycles. Nor should a minimalist assessment overlook the fact that anticommunism expressed itself in many forms. It operated on at least three different levels: in claims that specific individuals followed communist discipline; in charges that political opponents pursued economic policies that would lead toward communism or socialism; and in cultural expressions of anticommunism. Lenin had hardly won power before American politicians sensed that anticommunism might yield a profit. Mitchell Palmer, Woodrow Wilson's attorney general and instigator of the Palmer Raids, hoped to parlay antiradical vigilance into a presidential nomination in 1920. He had the second-highest delegate total on the first ballot at the Democratic convention, but, stymied, had to release his delegates. Similarly, Ole Hanson had as mayor of Seattle helped break a 1919 general strike led by radicals, after which he launched a lucrative lecture tour, his topic the Red Menace. The anticommunists' excesses produced a counterreaction. Palmer had clearly overplayed his hand. No less than Warren G. Harding, the candidate of "normalcy" in 1920, declared that "too much has been said about Bolshevism in America."[2]

In 1924 Republicans, fearing damage from Robert M. La Follette's third-party presidential candidacy, labeled him a radical and all but ignored the Democrats. The senator's proposal to curb the Supreme Court's jurisdiction made him vulnerable, and his opposition to entering the world war raised doubts about his loyalty. Though he disavowed the communists, and they him, he was still red-baited.[3] One Republican activist proposed neutralizing La Follette with "a patriotic appeal against the Reds and Socialists." Charles Gates Dawes, President Calvin Coolidge's ebullient running mate, termed the third party "a heterogeneous combination, the largest portion of which are the Socialists, opposing the existing order of things and flying the red flag." Republicans warned that if the La Follette vote threw the decision to the House of Representatives, a deadlock there might enable Senate Democrats to pick Charles Bryan, William Jennings Bryan's younger brother, as vice president—and, in effect, president. The options were "Coolidge or Chaos." GOP orators claimed that communists were aiding La Follette; one even asserted that the Soviets had funded his campaign. However, Dawes expounded the more common theme, a choice between "Coolidge, who stands for the rock of the Constitution, or the shifting sand of socialism."[4] Republicans overrated La Follette's potential. His own party's organizational weaknesses and limited appeal, a divided Democratic Party, and prosperous times begat a Coolidge landslide. In the 1920s anticommunism had limited electoral use but some purchase when mobilized against particular policies. Conservatives discred-

ited reform through red-baiting. Progressive senators fighting to expose the Teapot Dome scandals were linked with Bolshevism. So were feminism and social-welfare causes such as the Sheppard-Towner Act, which funded a program to improve the health of infants and expectant mothers. The metaphors of anticommunism were developing. Thus, the "spiderweb network" by which a set of prominent reformers might be associated, through common memberships or other ties, could be used to imply a sinister link between them and some Soviet leader. Efforts to end the policy of diplomatic nonrecognition of the Soviet Union also attracted insinuations of procommunism, the labor movement was vulnerable to red-baiting, and so were such causes dear to an increasingly weak and fragmented Progressive movement as settlement houses and campaigns to improve the lot of workers.[5]

In 1932, despite the desperate throes in which capitalism found itself, the communist issue barely surfaced. In July, World War I veterans petitioning Congress for early payment of their service bonus had been routed out of Washington. General Douglas MacArthur, the Army Chief of Staff, and Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley justified setting troops upon the ex-doughboys on grounds that Reds had won influence among them and revolution impended. Although he knew better, President Herbert Hoover endorsed MacArthur's rationale—and further discredited his candidacy. At campaign's end a spent, beaten Hoover exclaimed, "Thank God, you have a government in Washington that knows how to deal with a mob." He charged that Franklin D. Roosevelt championed "the same philosophy of government which has poisoned all of Europe" and urged voters to avoid "the fumes of the witch's caldron which boiled in Russia." This blast was an exception; more typically Republicans said FDR had *no* views at all—offering, as one put it, only "glittering generality" and "slickness."[6] The New Deal's fast-breeding alphabet agencies, emphasis on planning, and growing control over the economy soon alienated conservatives, some of whom insinuated that FDR was in cahoots with or dominated by communists. Postwar investigations and trials would indicate that communists had found a first point of entry into the New Deal via the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, but in the 1930s suspicions of Red infiltration remained undocumented and were expressed in quarters so identified with diehard antagonism to the New Deal, then at its greatest popularity, that they were discounted. In 1934 the first investigation of charges that communists were at work in the administration owed its motivation to a critic of the New Deal's proposal to regulate the stock exchanges. Testifying against the measure, he claimed that one William A. Wirt had knowledge of a scheme by New Dealers to drive the country toward com-

munism. Summoned before a House committee, Wirt testified so outlandishly as to discredit such charges.[7]

Other charges of procommunism emanated from spokesmen for the ultraright American Liberty League, including some conservative Democrats displaced when FDR took over the party. The aggrieved Al Smith made a furious attack on the New Deal before a Liberty League audience. Democrat and Liberty Leaguer Joseph B. Ely charged that Roosevelt's viewpoints "constitute a great stride toward actual communism." Al Smith declared that Roosevelt was "neither a Communist nor a Socialist . . . but something has taken place in this country—there is some certain kind of foreign 'ism' crawling over this country," and FDR was oblivious to it. In 1936 Republican campaigners, conservative Democrats, and the president's sometime ally, the radio priest Father Charles E. Coughlin, warned of the New Deal's red coloration. Vice-presidential nominee Frank Knox and John D. M. Hamilton, chairman of the Republican National Committee, charged that the New Deal was careening toward communism. The RNC also declared that some of Roosevelt's closest advisors had "calmly discussed the amount of 'blood that ought to be shed' " in the coming revolution. Later, that body labeled FDR "the Kerensky of the American revolutionary movement"; although "the poor lamb" did not know where his disastrous policies led, Communist backers such as Earl Browder and Joseph Stalin did. Bainbridge Colby, a former secretary of state and now a disaffected Democrat, charged that Roosevelt had deserted "the time-honored doctrines of the Democratic Party" and was receiving Communist support that might prove decisive in New York and so determine "the character of government which we will have for the future." Al Smith accused his former protégé of leading an administration in which "even a Communist with wire whiskers and a torch in his hands is welcome."[8]

The White House felt the sting of such barbs. It preemptively denounced an attack in William Randolph Hearst's papers naming FDR "the real candidate—the unofficial candidate of the Comintern." In a major speech, Roosevelt rejected support from adherents of "communism or of any other alien 'ism,' " decried contrary imputations as a "red herring," and argued that while the Republicans had created conditions that nourished radicalism, his program had starved it. Thus, *he* was "the true conservative." In a radio talk sponsored by the Democratic National Committee, Monsignor John A. Ryan disavowed charges of communism against the New Deal and suggested that their purveyors had suspended the eighth commandment's strictures against bearing false witness. In the 1936 landslide, no accusations by FDR's foes won much traction.[9]

Charges of communism also greeted third-party and other radical movements such as Philip and Robert M. La Follette Jr.'s Wisconsin Progressives, the Minnesota Farmer Labor Party, and Upton Sinclair's End Poverty in California Movement. Sinclair's 1934 gubernatorial campaign stirred massive opposition from business interests and led a frightened Hollywood to create fanciful "documentary" short subjects suggesting that his program had lured a flood of hoboes into the state. All his critics in both major parties warned that he would usher the Golden State toward communism. Similarly, the La Follettes were red-baited within the Republican Party and again after they launched a third party. One Republican accused their newspaper of spreading "communist propaganda" just as did the *Daily Worker*.[10] That many attacks on the New Deal and movements to its left originated with Democrats initially muddled anticommunism's partisan implications. The first sustained charges that the New Deal gave refuge to communists issued from Congressman Martin Dies, the Texas Democrat who in 1938 launched a special investigation of un-American activities. (The Dies Committee was precursor to the House Un-American Activities Committee, or HUAC, formally constituted in 1945 through the efforts of Congressman John Rankin, also a Democrat.) Dies infused his anticommunism with a nativist viewpoint along with a growing distaste for the New Deal and the labor activism of CIO unions.[11]

Though he had once been a New Deal enthusiast, by the fall of 1938 Dies was allowing committee witnesses to suggest that several candidates, but especially Governor Frank Murphy of Michigan, furthered communist aims, in his case by coddling sit-down strikers the year before, as Murphy's Republican opponents were arguing. Dies also heard criticisms of Elmer Benson, Minnesota's Farmer-Labor governor, and Culbert L. Olson, the Democratic gubernatorial candidate in California. In New York, both Governor Herbert H. Lehman and his Republican challenger Thomas E. Dewey pledged to ban communists from state jobs. In Montana, the topic punctuated the effort (joined by the Democratic Party establishment as well as the Republicans) to unseat the left-wing Democratic Congressman Jerry O'Connell. A flyer supporting O'Connell's challenger enjoined Montanans to "Crush Communism."[12]

Charges of communism also echoed through New York's Sixteenth Congressional District. The incumbent, John J. O'Connor, a target of FDR's effort to "purge" the Democratic Party of conservatives, faced a primary challenge from his former campaign manager James H. Fay. He identified Fay's backers as the Communist Party, which did in fact oppose O'Connor; the left-wing Workers Alliance, which sought to corral the votes of WPA workers; and

meddling New Dealers. He warned that success for FDR's purge would mean "one-man dictatorship" followed by communism. Fay denounced the charges and shunned Red support; his campaign manager accused the O'Connor forces of spreading bogus circulars purporting to show communist support for Fay. O'Connor lost the Democratic primary. Running as the Republican and "Andrew Jackson" Democratic candidate, he was defeated again in November.[13] Republicans scored broad gains in the U.S. House and Senate. The results probably owed most to an increasingly conservative electorate's fatigue with the New Deal, the 1937–38 recession, voter discontent with local political corruption, and low farm prices. Although off-year election losses are normal for the party in power, these were a sharp rebuff to the New Deal. Columnist Arthur Krock noted presciently that a bipartisan conservative "Congressional coalition" might well "prevent any further advance of New Deal programs."[14]

Yet beyond simple conservatism lay more corrosive, nasty electioneering. Some campaigns aggravated religious and ethnic divisions. Ominous events abroad bred a sense of crisis that led many Americans to fear for their security and to question the loyalty of others. In his pre-election appeal, FDR called for recovery "without attempting to commit the nation to any ism or ideology except democracy, humanity and the civil liberties which form their foundations" or paying the price imposed for economic growth by "dictators." Not everyone absorbed the civics lesson. In New York, foes of incumbent governor Herbert Lehman called on voters to "Save Our State for Americans" and tacked up posters urging: "Keep the American Way." (His challenger Thomas E. Dewey repudiated such devices.) Anticommunism's cultural dimension sometimes dovetailed with nativism, anti-Semitism, and other symptoms of social dislocation.[15]

Amid fears of foreign threats, electoral red-baiting heated up in 1940. The term "fifth column," coined in Spain's civil war, entered the political vocabulary, as did the phrase "Trojan horse." Politicians applied them to Nazi and Communist threats, a convergence suggested by the tactics of Hitler's allies in countries he menaced and the Nazi-Soviet Pact, which made the Soviets and their American allies at least temporary bedmates of the Nazis. Republicans and Democrats gleefully slung this coinage at each other, the right using it against the left and the Roosevelt administration against its isolationist foes.[16] GOP standard-bearer Wendell Willkie less often decried communism than warned that a third term for FDR would bring "dictatorship" closer. The Republican platform condemned the New Deal's "encouragement" of those seeking extra-constitutional change and the access of "such un-American groups" to high federal posts. Governor Harold E. Stassen

charged that the weak and divisive New Dealers "just smiled and reached over and patted the flanks of the Trojan Horse." FDR riposted that "something evil is happening in this country" when "organizations that make no secret of their admiration" for dictatorship circulated Republican campaign materials and when a GOP ad appeared, "of all places," in the Communist *Daily Worker*. His running mate Henry A. Wallace charged that "appeasers" opposed Roosevelt, in whose defeat Hitler would "rejoice." He claimed "Nazi agents" and "friends of the totalitarian powers" aided the Republicans.[17] Such tit-for-tat tainting of the opposition's loyalties marked politics throughout the 1940s and may have helped sharpen the bitterness of electoral McCarthyism in its mature phase.

Anticommunist rhetoric mushroomed in 1944. The fourth-term issue prompted more cries of "dictatorship," and the wartime alliance with the USSR and tolerance of domestic communists irked conservatives. When FDR pardoned Communist Party leader Earl Browder, then in jail for passport fraud, and expressed hope that the action would "promote national unity," he stirred suspicion and anger. A "shocked" Catholic cleric passed on the comment that "Washington is growing to be a 'little Moscow.' " The worrisome future of the Eastern European lands in the Red Army's path troubled Catholics and ethnic groups and gave further poignancy to concerns about communist influences.[18]

Republicans belabored the CIO Political Action Committee's vigorous support for FDR. Heading the CIO's political arm was Sidney Hillman, a foreign-born Jew who could be yoked to the Communists felt to be potent in the CIO. When FDR told aides to "clear it with Sidney" whether Senator Harry S. Truman was an acceptable vice-presidential nominee, he gave enemies a brickbat and anticommunists (and anti-Semites and nativists) a mantra. A Cleveland paper editorialized that "the complacency of the Roosevelt administration toward the communism-statism sympathizers within the government, and the cooperativeness of Hillman and the CIO fourth-term campaign committee toward the U.S. Communist leaders" had created a "Communist issue."[19]

From governors Thomas E. Dewey and John W. Bricker on the national ticket down through the ranks, Republicans rushed to seize the Browder and Hillman corollaries. Bricker speculated that Browder had been freed to electioneer for Roosevelt, who was now the Reds' "political prisoner." Dewey contrasted normal Soviet Communists with their sinister U.S. brethren. "In Russia, a communist is a man who supports his Government. In America a communist supports the fourth term so our form of government may more

easily be changed." Dewey termed FDR "indispensable" to New Deal hangers-on, corrupt city machines, Hillman and the CIO-PAC, and "Earl Browder, the ex-convict and pardoned Communist leader." A GOP handbill in rural Illinois declared that voters looked to Dewey and Bricker to "drive Communism from Government."[20]

Such charges nettled the Democrats. Their adversaries were all "isolationists," doing the Fascists' work by Hitlerian methods, sowing dissent among ethnic groups, imperiling U.S.-Soviet relations. Tart-tongued Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes termed it "better to be a foreign born American" like Hillman than "an American born foreigner" like the pro-Dewey isolationists. Author John Gunther exclaimed that "the Nazi radio actually came out for Dewey . . . saying flatly that his election would be providential for the Germans." Dewey and company were trying to "drag in such completely extraneous issues as the Communist bogey" and to "stir up the ugliest possible passions on a racist level." Actor Orson Welles recalled that "the Nazis rose to power" with lies about communism. He wondered if "the Deweyites might even attempt their own equivalent of the Reichstag fire." (Some FDR backers did fret that Republicans might spring a last-minute "Zinoviev letter" ploy, referring to a forgery allegedly written by a Soviet leader that, published on the eve of the 1924 election, shattered the British Labor Party's chances.) On another radio show, comedian Jimmie Durante mockingly warbled, "That man in the White House is Moscow Joe, it's regimentation from the top to the middle, it's totalitariorriorism for each individdle." Roosevelt disavowed any communist aid. Citing Republican mailings warning of a "Red Specter of Communism," he stated that such "fear propaganda is now new among rabble-rousers and fomenters of class hatred" and had been used by Mussolini, Hitler "and others on the lunatic fringe."[21]

The communist issue had bite in 1944. Certainly spokesmen for both parties thought so. October soundings by pollster Elmo Roper identified three factors explaining defections from FDR. One was worry over his " 'close tie-up' to Communism." Political scientist and one-time Roosevelt advisor Charles E. Merriam warned that some Americans held intense feeling against Blacks, Jews, labor, foreigners "inflamed by what they call radicalism, socialism, communism. Hillman makes their ideal target." Responding to such sentiments, FDR declared that he "never sought the support of any person or group which would undermine the American system of government." (Why then, asked one hostile newspaper, did he free Browder?[22])

The 1946 campaign promised still more salience for anticommunism. Relations with the USSR had grown prickly. Truman's dismissal of Secretary of

Commerce Henry A. Wallace for criticizing his anti-Soviet policies created disarray on the left and a target for the right. The postwar strike wave and fears of the expanded power of labor unions suggested a reprise for pertinent motifs from 1944.Republicans rushed to rescue America from "statism," "socialism," and Red influences. Their national chairman, Congressman B. Carroll Reece, labeled Democrats an unlovely coupling of descendants of slaveocrats and sovietizers. "The basic political issue before this nation is that of liberalism versus State absolutism"—or "communism and republicanism." House Minority Leader Joe Martin pledged that his party would give priority to "cleaning out the Communists, their fellow travelers and parlor pinks from high positions in our Government." Republicans gleefully played up a Soviet radio commentator's advice that voters support "progressive," CIO-PAC-backed candidates and oppose the GOP. To John W. Bricker it proved that the CIO-PAC campaign "is being directed from communistic Russia." A Wisconsin candidate for Congress declared that Republicans wanted no "Russia Firsters, the pinkos, the fellow travelers, the Red [Sen. Claude D.] Peppers and the Two World Wallaces." In California, Richard M. Nixon charged that Congressman Jerry Voorhis had been endorsed by the Political Action Committee. The CIO-PAC had not embraced the liberal Democratic incumbent, but a local chapter of its cousin, the National Citizens Political Action Committee, had. Though anticommunist himself, Voorhis never got off the defensive against this charge. Just before the election, a phone bank of anonymous callers intimated to constituents that Voorhis was a Communist.[23]

In Wisconsin, Judge Joseph R. McCarthy ran for the U.S. Senate as an anti–New Deal yet "modern" internationalist Republican. In the primary he taxed incumbent Robert M. La Follette Jr.: "By your failure to do anything to promote peace you are playing into the hands of the Communists." Seeking to reenter the Republican Party, La Follette stressed his opposition by Communists in the state's CIO (he had condemned Soviet policy in East Europe) and by Tom "Boss" Coleman, leader of the conservative Republicans; he rejected both extremes of "colemanism" and "communism." In the general election, McCarthy called his Democratic opponent "communistically inclined."[24] As the election neared, more mundane issues crowded forward. The turmoil of postwar reconversion brought on a meat shortage. When beef reappeared in stores a week before the elections, harassed shoppers were too busy queuing up for now-scarce sugar. Blessed with such issues, Republicans found their best slogan to be "Had Enough?" Their smashing victory drew on so many discontents that it is impossible to disaggregate the weight of the communist issue. Nixon's victory, columnist Tom Wicker suggests, owed less to red-baiting than

to a changing electorate, the host of enemies rallied by Voorhis's liberal stands over ten years, the Congressman's inept campaign and the fact that his previous foes had been pushovers. A broader array of concerns than communism also elected McCarthy and many other Republicans. Nevertheless, the anticommunist speechifying prompted Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn to exclaim in a nationally broadcast radio talk: "if I were the kind of Moscow follower the Republicans are talking about, I would be cheering for the Republicans on Nov. 5." The 1946 elections suggested that there was mileage in the issue.[25]

Trends suggested a bull market for anticommunism in 1948. Great Power relations had further soured. The Iron Curtain was a fact of life. The doubts thus raised promised a harvest of Republican votes. The Democrats scrambled to defend their record on communism. Initially, that seemed to entail red-baiting the Progressive Party—"Henry Wallace and his Communists," as Truman labeled them on St. Patrick's Day. But as the Progressives foundered, Truman paid them less heed. He now stated that a vote for Wallace would only help the Republicans, and the latter, if returned to power, would foster communism through the hard times and isolationism that would ensue. This was an embellishment, not the main Democratic election theme.[26]

Whittaker Chambers's testimony implicating New Deal bureaucrats—most notably Alger Hiss—in pro-Soviet conniving prefaced the fall campaign. Both the FBI and the Central Intelligence Agency were keen to stir the pot, to provide grist for the Republicans, and the loyalty issue appeared to portend trouble. A White House staffer deemed the "spy" issue "the Administration's weakest link." Truman and his aides responded with an emphatic speech in Oklahoma City on September 28 in defense of his administration's vigilance. Some southern Democrats, alienated by the party's liberalism, notably its embrace of the civil-rights issue, also toyed with anticommunism. Thus, Texas Governor Beauford H. Jester listed among threats to the South "communistic agitators and a shallow-minded fringe of Henry Wallace liberals," and Truman's agitation of civil rights. While the Truman Doctrine helped people abroad to "preserve their institutions from being subverted by outside influences," apparently this credo was "too good for the Southern States."[27]

His 1944 apprenticeship had given candidate Dewey a solid grounding in the communist issue. A group of anticommunist activists backing him met in the summer of 1948 to canvass "the 'Communist Problem' " and its relation to the campaign. They labeled their project "Operation Polecat," reflecting Dewey's hope "to make communism as popular as a polecat." Members

were businessman (and "China Lobby" leader) Alfred Kohlberg, publisher William Loeb, journalists Frederick Woltman, George Schuyler, Isaac Don Levine, Robert Humphreys, and, notably, Whittaker Chambers, who had just testified before HUAC. The group believed that Dewey could assail Democratic failures on that score and oust communists, yet preserve civil liberties and raise the issue "from the mire of rumor-mongering, smear-ladling, abuse and counter abuse" by promising to appoint a long-term presidential commission to "make an exhaustive study."[28]

However, Dewey did not embrace Operation Polecat. Urged to stress the communist issue, he said he would "fleck it lightly." He had already taken a moderate stance in debate with rival Harold Stassen in the Oregon primary, when he opposed outlawing the Communist Party; though Stassen claimed that policy would "coddle" the Reds, Dewey had won the primary. He regretted his dalliance with the issue in 1944. Dewey and his running mate Governor Earl Warren did raise the topic, but not as a primary theme. His reticence may have spawned an unhappy irony. More stress on the issue might have averted defeat, one that, according to some observers, so embittered many Republicans as to lead them to tolerate, if not encourage, McCarthy's excesses for their potential for partisan gain. Perhaps an inoculation with a light case of red-baiting in 1948 might have prevented the epidemic that arrived in 1950.[29]

If indeed 1948's frustrations led to 1950's full-blown electoral McCarthyism, the 1949 special U.S. Senate race in New York between John Foster Dulles and Herbert H. Lehman provided a preview. Dulles asserted that all the Reds were backing Lehman. Dewey, who had appointed Dulles to the Senate, stumped for him—and echoed the anticommunist emphasis. Lehman in turn accused Dulles of anti-Semitism for his remark upstate that "if you could see the kind of people in New York City making up this bloc that is voting for [Lehman] . . . I know that you would be out, every last man and woman of you on election day." Dulles insisted that the "bloc" he meant was "Communist American Labor Party voters" and rejected the "ugly charge of bigotry." Lehman proposed that the Communists attacked him harder than his foe, aware that only Democratic policies could prevent "the economic crash which Marshall Stalin so anxiously awaits." Lehman won.[30]

The year 1950 opened red-baiting's golden age. Joe McCarthy had captured newspaper headlines since February, convincing many Americans that his charges of communism in the State Department had not been fairly reviewed. The Cold War had grown more menacing, with China's "loss" in 1949, Alger Hiss's trials and conviction, the Soviet A-bomb, arrests and con-

fessions of "atom spies," and then the Korean War. Even before Korea, these developments made South Dakota Republican Senator Karl Mundt optimistic about campaign prospects. "Certainly, the Communist issue is in the front as it has never been before."[31] The autumn began on an upnote for Democrats as UN forces drove the North Korean armies up the peninsula, but then China's intervention darkened the atmosphere as Americans went to the polls.

Since spring, the communist issue appeared to rack up victims. Southern liberal Senators Claude D. Pepper of Florida and Frank P. Graham of North Carolina lost to Democratic primary foes who termed them soft on communism (as wall as shaky on the race question). Senatorial primary rivals plied the communist issue against other Democrats on the party's left wing, notably Senator Glen Taylor of Idaho and Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas of California. Taylor lost to a conservative; Douglas survived, but the communist issue was now teed up for her Republican foe, Richard M. Nixon, who, in light of the conviction of Alger Hiss and other events, would in any case have exploited it.[32]

Communism saturated the 1950 campaign. Republicans had a field day, but Democrats too, strove to flex their muscles. Congressman A. S. "Mike" Monroney held that his rival in Oklahoma's Senate race, by "making a political football out of the Korean war to win an election, and blaming our elected leaders for war guilt" parroted the Communist Party line. Candidates melded the topic deftly with collateral issues. Colorado Republican Senator Eugene Millikin used it to flavor a disparagement of Truman administration bungling: "The background music against which these clowns play their parts is too often 'The Internationale' rather than 'The Star Spangled Banner.' " It also meshed with the emergent issue of organized crime. Thus, Bob Considine, who often devoted his newspaper column to these topics, found them linked. A "subtle black stain of hoodlum super-government, well protected politically," was spreading in American cities. Like communism, "it is superbly concealed, well organized."[33]

The communist issue tinted Senate contests in Utah, Colorado, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Idaho, Iowa, and Ohio, governor's races in Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and a spectrum of House campaigns. Informed that the topic was harvesting votes, Senator Mundt advised candidates like Nixon and Everett McKinley Dirksen to press it hard. The Mundt-Nixon bill, calling for the registration of communist groups, came up for debate in the tense weeks of late summer and passed by lopsided majorities in the harsher version offered by Senator Pat McCarran. If Truman

vetoed it (as he did), Mundt predicted it would be "the best political issue in more than a decade."[34]

McCarthy starred in the campaign, speaking in some fifteen states. He aimed especially at senators Scott Lucas of Illinois, the majority leader; Brien McMahon of Connecticut, a critic of his assault on the State Department; and Millard Tydings of Maryland, the hostile chairman of the panel that investigated his charges. Lucas lost to ex-congressman Dirksen, whose campaign featured anticommunist rhetoric. Tydings, who had survived FDR's 1938 purge attempt, suffered a stunning defeat. These and other results prompted observers to credit McCarthy and his anticommunist barnstorming with striking influence on voters and his colleagues, drawing similar conclusions, to give the Wisconsinite a wide and fearful berth.[35]

Yet journalists and politicos overrated McCarthy's grassroots appeal. As an Administration spokesman, Lucas may have been vulnerable to the charges leveled at it, including softness on communism, but he was more grievously wounded by a local crime scandal involving Chicago's Democratic machine. Tydings, McCarthy's most prominent victim, may have been weakened by insinuations of having "whitewashed" McCarthy's charges. However, he had plural vulnerabilities: Maryland Democrats were in disarray; his ticket mate the governor was deeply unpopular; black voters were responsive to Republican appeals; Tydings had grown distant from his constituents; and a long-term Republican trend was operating in Maryland. At the time, however, the 1950 election induced a sense among political elites that a powerful anticommunism had settled firmly upon the electorate. Previously, McCarthy seemed to survive by nimble-footed evasiveness; it now appeared that his politics carried a heavy punch.[36]

In 1952, with the Korean War stalemated, Truman weakened on other fronts, and McCarthy a fixture in public life, anticommunism again loomed as an electoral catalyst. Republicans endorsed that surmise by naming Richard Nixon as General Dwight D. Eisenhower's running mate, and soon after the convention, the Republican National Committee proposed to Ike a campaign that would italicize the communist issue.[37] The fact that the Democratic nominee, Adlai E. Stevenson, had once served as a character witness for Alger Hiss gave further promise that the subject would get a full airing. Nixon credentialed the Illinois governor with a "Ph.D. from [Secretary of State] Dean Acheson's cowardly college of Communist containment." Senator William Jenner, a McCarthy ally, predicted: "If Adlai gets into the White House, Alger gets out of the jail house." Aside from one nationally televised speech, McCarthy played a secondary role in the national campaign, but he

intervened on behalf of fellow-Republicans in thirteen states and seemed still to be an important political force.[38] The talk in 1952 suggested the importance of anticommunism, but politicians' rhetoric is not always an accurate guide to voting behavior. In most public opinion samplings, communism did not rank as a top concern. A May 1952 Roper poll found 27 percent of Americans preoccupied with the issue of government spending and taxes, 24 percent with inflation and the cost of living, 13 percent with "corruption and dishonesty," and 8 percent with allegations of communism and socialism. In September Gallup asked respondents to list reasons to vote Republican: the number citing communism was too small to be itemized. In 1952 as in 1950 there was a disconnect between the grounds on which politicians urged citizens to make their decision and the voters' actual reasons. Such a disjunction makes it hard for political elites to function. They find it easier to merge an election's rhetoric with its outcome. This temptation had much to do with a central fact of the age: the tendency of fellow politicians and the media to exaggerate McCarthy's political clout. In part the "McCarthy era" lasted as long as it did because of this conflation of appearances and reality.[39]

In 1954 many observers anticipated new excesses of political roughhousing. Democratic Party Chair Stephen A. Mitchell expected Republicans to "use the President to smile and McCarthy to smear." The nonpartisan Fair Campaign Practices Committee feared that campaigns would "descend to new and distressingly low levels." However, Republicans had now come to perceive McCarthy as a liability and isolated him from the campaign, a move whose wisdom the polls confirmed. In Illinois, for example, 16 percent of respondents would favor a McCarthy-backed candidate, but 35 percent would oppose him.[40] It is impossible to measure the extent to which his decline in status was linked to the distribution among political leaders of *Influences in the 1954 Mid-Term Elections,* a pamphlet by the statistician and political prognosticator Louis Bean. Subsidized by foes of McCarthy, the booklet claimed that Democrats against whom he had campaigned in 1950 and 1952 had not suffered damage and had even (in 1952) run ahead of Democrats he had ignored. Possibly this knowledge made some Democrats less timid and some Republicans less eager to rely on McCarthy or his campaign style. His censure was under consideration by a select committee, whose report, issued during the campaign, would be acted upon after the election. Democrats in Congress still fretted about the communist issue, as their support for the Communist Control Act, passed late in the session, made apparent. Two months later, according to veteran reporter William S. White, on the campaign trail "the 'Communist issue'—indeed, any kind of reference to com-

munism—is vastly less on the people's lips than it was two years and four years ago."[41]

That situation would soon alter, especially in the West, as the worried GOP revisited the communist issue, albeit without McCarthy. Periodically the Eisenhower administration had trumpeted the ever-growing numbers of security risks it had ousted from federal jobs. In October 1954 the Civil Service Commission reported dismissing 6,926 security risks in roughly a year. (Earlier, when a reporter asked Ev Dirksen if some such new total could be expected at this opportune date, the Illinois senator broke into a "broad grin.") Ohio GOP Senate candidate George Bender asserted that "the Communists know that they can count on a far more favorable atmosphere under Democrats than under Republicans."[42]

Nixon bore the main burden of the 1954 Republican campaign. Slightly less stridently than in 1952, he thrust at Democratic laxity. Under Ike, "the threat of communism within our walls is no longer pooh-poohed and brushed off as a 'red herring.'" "We have driven Communists, the fellow travelers and the security risks out of the Government by the thousands." Nixon redoubled emphasis on the Democrats' economic radicalism. If they won, "left wingers" would control their party and the nation would veer back to a "socialist tradition." Republicans, he claimed, had found in government files a "blueprint for socializing America." He tethered Democrats to the ADA again, picturing the latter group as blasé about communism and keen for socialism.[43]

Democrats, even southerners, responded in irritation and, presumably, some confidence. South Carolina Senator Olin D. Johnson charged the vice president with leading a "fascist-type attack" utilizing "the big lie," noting that while Nixon spoke of thousands of ousted Communists, the chairman of the Civil Service Commission had confessed "he knew of no single Government employee who had been fired because he was a Communist" or "fellow traveler." In Wisconsin, Adlai Stevenson accused the campaigning Nixon of purveying "McCarthyism in a white collar."[44]

Insinuations of procommunism still materialized, particularly in western-state senate races. In Colorado, handbills asked, "How Red is John Carroll?" Pamphlets warned of "Senator [James] Murray and the Red Network over Congress," depicting the Montanan as a red spider. In Illinois, Paul Douglas was termed "Mr. Capital 'S' of Socialism." Some charges retained a sting, but a number seemed on the fringe. In a futile Texas primary challenge to Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, Dudley T. Dougherty advocated an exit from the UN, ending diplomatic ties with all communist nations, aggressive congressional

investigation of Reds, and outlawing the Communist Party. With ample conservative support, Johnson lost little sleep over Dougherty.[45]

Narrowly the Democrats recaptured the House and Senate, but off-year electoral gains by the party out of power were normal, and these were slight. Economic issues cut for the Democrats. Polling evidence suggested that a more visible McCarthy would have harmed his party's prospects and that Republican devotion to expelling Reds from the federal bureaucracy was a theme that appealed to but 3 percent of one sample. Did Nixon's combative campaigning also cost votes? Not according to the savvy analyst Louis Bean, who reportedly concluded that Nixon's and Eisenhower's exertions may have saved their party twenty House seats.[46] The 1956 election revealed how passé McCarthy and his style had become. The senator was persona non grata in his party's activities, reportedly once even hustled from the stage when Nixon spoke in Milwaukee. (Nixon's office denied any repudiation, noting that McCarthy accompanied him around the state and once called him "one of the great men in America."[47]) There was some talk of Hiss and red jobholders, but ex-president Truman triggered much of it with an eruption against Nixon for having in 1952 labeled him a "traitor." (Nixon actually called Truman, Acheson, and Stevenson "traitors to the high principles in which many of the nation's Democrats believe.") Truman also commented that he did not think Hiss had been a Communist or spy. To Republicans the outburst became fair game. They challenged Stevenson to respond. When he reavowed his view of Hiss's guilt, Nixon applauded, implying that the issue was no longer germane. His hint that his party would stress positive themes may have been a response to Stevenson's gibe that he and other Republicans were "back on the same low road" they pursued in 1954. Stevenson also listed among Ike's leadership failures the phase when McCarthy "conducted, unhampered, his career as a national bully." These exchanges measured how far the nation had traveled in two years.[48]

In 1958 the theme was radicalism, not softness on communism. Again his party's featured orator, Nixon warned that Democratic gains in Congress would empower the party's "radical wing," or, as party chair Meade Alcorn put it, the "left-wing extremists." After a conference at the White House, a group of Republican leaders warned that "nationalization and socialization of industry" would follow a Democratic win. The Fair Campaign Practices Committee received reports of fourteen cases around the country of "imputations of softness on communism or shallow patriotism." The most bizarre instance may have been an anonymous Arizona handbill on which a leering Stalin (then dead five years) asked: "Why Not Vote for Goldwater?"[49]

By 1958, amid spreading discourse on the national purpose, the Democrats called for closing the missile gap and regaining lost momentum in the face of the Soviet challenge. Senator John F. Kennedy, seeking reelection and eyeing a presidential race, so embroidered these themes that RNC chair Alcorn urged him to "discard your all-is-lost, Russia-is-the-best speech," which might provoke the communists into "the most dangerous of miscalculations." The communist threat continued to punctuate political rhetoric, but it increasingly moved offshore. Thus, while J. Edgar Hoover told Nixon that the latter's riot-torn South American trip "made anti-Communism respectable again in the United States," there too the stimulus was an event abroad.[50]

By 1960, the communist threat as a personnel matter was dead. (There had been spy arrests under Eisenhower, and in 1960 two cryptanalysts defected to the USSR, but Democrats rarely addressed the topic.) Hard-nosed anticommunism was coming to be identified with a new political genus, the "extremists" or "ultra-right." One might still ask which party could more effectively resist the Soviet juggernaut. Indeed, the Democrats increasingly resorted to such attacks in Ike's second term, holding Republicans responsible for losing the race to orbit a satellite, for the missile gap and bomber gap, for the waning of U.S. prestige abroad and other evidence of "second-class" status, and, delicious irony, for the "loss" of Cuba to Castro.[51]

At a cultural level, hard-shell anticommunists still found reason to castigate Senator John F. Kennedy, the Democratic standard-bearer. Extremist anticommunism and anti-Catholicism could even fuse. One ill-wisher, warning that under JFK "the White House would turn into a nunnery," endorsed a Protestant evangelist's handbill titled "The Pink, Punk, Pro-Red Record of Senator Jack Kennedy." That preacher found Kennedy soft on communism and prematurely counter-cultural in how he "sneered" at the loyalty oath, "shaking his head so violently, after the fashion of Elvis Presley doing his version of St. Vitus dance, that his shaggy, uncut, uncombed hair spilled down into his eyes." On the other hand, some Democrats still feared Nixon would "lick Kennedy by use of the Communist issue. A leopard never changes its spots."[52]

Yet domestic communism was a nonstarter in 1960. After years of prosecutions, FBI infiltration, Khrushchev's disillusioning 1956 de-Stalinization speech and other blows, real Reds were scarce. Nixon did not wish to be cast solely as the man who got Hiss, and surely not as a red-baiting hatchet man. The communist threat had assumed an increasingly foreign aspect—in far-flung trouble spots and in a broad competition for prestige and supremacy. Nixon's "positives" stemmed from his foreign-policy expertise and experi-

ence, and from "standing up" to Khrushchev in the 1959 Kitchen Debate. An advisor cited a public mood of "no appeasement" to explain why Nixon got "a good crowd response with the line that no President should ever apologize to the Russians [as Kennedy had proposed after the Soviets downed a U-2 spy plane in May]."[53]

Republicans argued that Democratic laments of second-place status furthered Soviet ends, and this worried some Democratic strategists: "So long as the Republicans are unethical enough to play on the 'disloyalty' theme, foreign affairs will have a built-in disadvantage for the Democrats." A GOP congressman blamed partisan detractors for the riots in Japan protesting Ike's projected visit, labeling them "America second-class powerists" and "crawl on our bellies to Moscowites." However, charges that they were "running down" America enabled Democrats to respond, as did Senator Henry M. Jackson, chairman of their national committee, that Nixon sought to "deny the American people even a part of what Mr. Khrushchev knows already through his vast spy network." Voters "are not going to allow Mr. Nixon to hide the Republican record behind Nikita Khrushchev's baggy pants."[54]

Though "McCarthyism" had been exorcized from public life, both sides shot occasional cautionary glances at the past. "Now that the scourge of McCarthyism has become simply an embarrassing national memory, and the 'New Nixon' is professedly driving only on the center of the high road," red-baiting was apparently passé, but the Democratic National Committee warned of ongoing "tired distortions" of Roosevelt-Truman foreign policies.[55] Some Republicans expected Democrats to assail Nixon's campaigns against Voorhis and Douglas.[56] Nixon reproved his New Hampshire campaign chairman for calling JFK soft on communism. He differentiated his "constructive conservatism" from Democratic radicalism largely in economic terms. He warned of features of the Democratic platform "that would lead to socializing or nationalizing basic institutions" and highlighted Kennedy's as "the most radical program ever advocated by a Presidential candidate." He charged that JFK's farm program called for controls "which even Henry Wallace has said are as severe as those imposed in many Communist countries." He labored to ensure that news stories did not convey lines such as "Nixon hints Kennedy soft on Communism." There was little of the raw meat his fans had once enjoyed. Columnist Westbrook Pegler warned that he was repeating Dewey's error. "Communism is your dish."[57]

Kennedy had an analogous problem: convincing liberals that *he* had distanced himself from McCarthyism. He had claimed credit for having a Communist witness cited for contempt a year before Nixon confronted Alger Hiss.

He passed Nixon a contribution from his father for the campaign against Helen Douglas. Liberals had never heard him rebuke McCarthy; indeed, the two were friendly. Ill during the censure fight, JFK later peddled a speech that would have urged censure at an early stage of the battle, and he reiterated that stand to peevish liberals. His subsequent fight against the loyalty oath required of applicants for loans under the National Defense Education Act served to buff his liberal credentials. As he geared up to run for president, Eleanor Roosevelt stated her qualms about his silence in the McCarthy era. Boosters of his rival Senator Hubert H. Humphrey noted that much of Kennedy's Wisconsin presidential primary vote came from places that once "provided huge majorities for Joe McCarthy."[58] Thus, political circumstances prompted both candidates, but especially Nixon, to finesse the communist issue.[59]

When used, the old formula seemed quaint. A right-wing pamphlet exposed Lyndon Johnson's "left-wing voting record" and the praise he won from "extreme left-wingers" (namely the *Washington Post*). An Arizona congressman asserted that the Democrats' platform came "straight out of Marx's manifesto." Congressman Alvin Bentley, a Michigan Republican long enamored of the communist issue, charged Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright with blocking a bill "to stop the flow of Communist agents . . . by tightening passport laws." Frederic W. Airy assailed New Mexico's Democratic Senator Clinton P. Anderson for having "consistently voted with the 'soft-on-Communism' bloc." Airy did not survive even the Republican primary. As Anderson suggested to a home-state publisher, he had just spoken at the launching of the *Patrick Henry* and had been styled "Godfather" of this weapons system, so "surely the Navy would not have asked me to commission its newest submarine had this Administration felt I was soft on communism."[60]

A slight uptick in anticommunism accented the 1962 campaign. Running against Governor Edmund G. "Pat" Brown, Nixon declared "fighting Communism within California" a key problem. A bumper sticker asked: "Is Brown Pink?" Others were nastier. The campaign showed how anticommunism had moved rightward. Conservative senate candidate Howard Jarvis attacked the ex-Democrat Ronald Reagan, leagued with one of his Republican rivals, for using "so many procommunist people on his General Electric show." Canvassing for Nixon, Reagan himself described mainstream liberals as "more dangerous than outright Communists." Dewey—the 1944, not the 1948, model—consoled the defeated Nixon that "you had the undying enmity of the Communists and their allies." In his famous "last" press conference, Nixon pointed to press hostility "ever since the Hiss case."[61] In Florida, the far right resuscitated the Red issue by circulating a pamphlet entitled (as in

1950) "The Red Record of Senator Claude Pepper," but Pepper won a congressional seat even so.[62] Nixon's defeat suggested that his advisors and he were out of touch with the political culture.

Identification with "extremism" limited anticommunism's electoral utility. Barry Goldwater seemed to sense this early in his 1964 presidential campaign, when he let down a conservative audience by saying he was "not overly concerned" about communists in government, though he feared the "fuzzy-wuzzy" minds of their sympathizers and those who did not "understand Communists." But in the fall his running mate William Miller and he struck themes evocative of a decade back. Congressman Miller scored Democratic vice-presidential nominee Hubert Humphrey's voting record as "clearly one of the most radical in Congress." Goldwater termed the Johnson administration "soft on Communism"; he said Humphrey wanted "to drag our nation into the swampland of collectivism." "Well, shades of Nixon," Humphrey riposted, recalling the "witch-hunting days of McCarthyism." Though Nixon denied counseling Goldwater on the matter and declared LBJ's anticommunism above reproach, Goldwater reiterated the charge. The Democratic landslide suggested that intimations of softness on communism carried scant weight outside the circle of true believers.[63]

The last noisy gasp of election anticommunism arose as dissent over the war in Vietnam began to stir. New Jersey Republicans nominated Wayne Dumont Jr. for governor in 1965. He was given little chance to beat popular incumbent Richard J. Hughes. His chief issue was his zeal to fire Rutgers University historian Eugene D. Genovese for declaring at an antiwar teach-in that he welcomed "the impending Vietcong victory in Vietnam." Hughes dismissed the idea, upheld academic freedom, and said that Dumont's advocacy of a measure to make the Pledge of Allegiance mandatory "smacks of the McCarthy syndrome." He accused Dumont of seeking political profit from the deaths of American boys in Vietnam and of opening "a Pandora's box for the extremists." Bumper stickers appeared emblazoned "Rid Rutgers of Reds." A pro-Dumont handbill juxtaposed Genovese's remark, Hughes's position, and a depiction of tank-led Vietcong troops defiling a row of crosses over American graves. Several GOP leaders stumped for Dumont, but only Nixon endorsed his call to oust the professor. Hughes's easy victory convinced his party's state chairman "that elections can't be won by exploiting the unsubstantiated issue of soft on Communism."[64]

The jolts of the late 1960s triggered a conservative reaction, but anticommunist politics did not revive. That genre was now so discredited that occasional breaches of the new consensus were promptly punished. In 1968

Governor Spiro Agnew termed the deeply anticommunist Democratic presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey "squishy soft on communism." Hostile editorial reaction compelled the Republican vice-presidential nominee to regret and withdraw his crack. In 1972, Senator Henry M. Jackson charged that the "left-wing extremism" of Senator George S. McGovern, the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, would lead to an ignominious defeat. He criticized McGovern's support for Henry A. Wallace in 1948. Americans for Democratic Action, liberal foes of Wallace in 1948, nevertheless blasted this "smear." A Democratic congressman insinuated that Jackson thought to salvage his sinking candidacy "by becoming the Democratic Party's Spiro Agnew."[65] McGovern was nominated anyway—and whipped by Nixon.

By 1972, with scattered exceptions, the Red Menace had outlived its electoral usefulness by nearly twenty years. It never elected a president. Though it eroded FDR's support in 1944 and generated bombast in 1952, it proved decisive in neither year. Perhaps its greatest influence came, backhandedly, in 1948, when it was the dog that didn't bark. It may have been more pivotal in off-year contests—certainly in particular races, and in 1938, 1946, and 1950. Though anticommunism gave Republicans a way to nationalize the rhetoric of these clusters of local campaigns, in no instance was it a controlling national issue. Still, for what it lacked in weight it compensated in noise.

Several factors explained the issue's rise and decline. It blended snugly with conservative politics in either major party—it gave point to onslaughts against bureaucrats, excessive and remote central authority, and "socialistic" programs. It could be used to attack any reform cause, from labor and feminism to civil rights to fluoridation of water. It served to validate objections to change—offering a shorthand means to oppose such trends as the shift from a rural and small-town to an urban society, from a nation governed near at hand to one run from Washington, from an existence ruled by tradition to a life bent by stressful change.[66] The New Deal made conservatives fear that traditional American values of localism, individualism, and limited government were crumbling; it was natural for many to ascribe such changes to un-American influences around Roosevelt.

To be salient, however, the communist issue required a convergence of circumstances. First, a plausible Soviet threat was required. The brief first Red Scare collapsed in 1920 as the menace failed to meet Attorney General Palmer's dire predictions. In the late 1930s, notably during the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the totalitarian danger underpinned a new drive against subversives of the left and the right. The machinery of later anticommunist activism—the

Smith Act and the earliest federal loyalty program, for example—originated in this era. The Cold War naturally prompted further anticommunist disquiet, and the Hiss case, the Rosenberg trial, and other episodes suggested that there was a basis for concern. It was no happenstance that the peak of anticommunist activism occurred in the period of most sustained East-West tension, that McCarthy's run in the national spotlight coincided with the Korean War and that his political demise came soon after the Korean armistice. In its long turn on the national stage, anticommunism bulked up conservative attacks against the New Deal and liberalism generally. It combined well with other oppositional themes in an age of growing state power, urbanization, and societal complexity. Small-town legislators often saw Reds as a big-city, "eastern" phenomenon. Assuredly simple and genuine countryside ways clashed with urban sophistication. Thus, the conservative *Indianapolis Star* identified the "shrillest criticism of Nixon" in 1952 as originating among "the 'liberal' martini sipping set in New York, Washington and Hollywood."[67] These cultural connections with anticommunism were always relevant, but, save when reinforced by the presence of a sense of crisis engendered by the dangers of the late 1930s and the first decade of the Cold War, they lacked force to dominate American politics.

NOTES

1. Another leader, J. Edgar Hoover, though never elected to office, plied the communist issue so astutely as to secure preferred status for the Federal Bureau of Investigation and himself. See Athan G. Theoharis and John Stuart Cox, *The Boss: J. Edgar Hoover and the Great American Inquisition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988); and Richard Gid Powers, *Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: Free Press, 1987).

2. Stanley Coben, *A. Mitchell Palmer: Politician* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 261–262; Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964 [1955]), 66; M. J. Heale, *American Anticommunism: Combating the Enemy Within, 1839–1970* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 76.

3. The Conference for Progressive Political Action, the organizational vehicle for La Follette's candidacy, refused at a 1922 meeting to seat delegates from the Workers Party, which stood for an "un-American" political tendency. Kenneth Campbell MacKay, *The Progressive Movement of 1924* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 80, 87–88.

4. E. C. Stokes to Dwight Morrow, September 13, 1924, Morrow MSS, Robert Frost Library, Amherst College; *New York Times,* September 12, 1924, p. 1, September 19, 1924, p. 4, September 24, 1924, p. 4; MacKay, *Progressive Movement,* 164, 166.

5. On red-baiting in the Teapot Dome controversy, see Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 70–72; of feminists, see J. Stanley Lemons, *The Woman Citizen: Social Feminism in the 1920s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), chap. 8 and passim; of settlement houses, see Heale, *American Anticommunism,* 90.

6. *New York Times,* November 6, 1932, pp. 25, 30; Donald J. Lisio, *The President and Protest: Hoover, Conspiracy, and the Bonus Riot* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1974), 56–59, 197–199, 218–219, 229–230, 234.

7. Philip L. Cantelon, "In Defense of America: Congressional Investigations of Communism in the United States, 1919–1935" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1971), 264–280. On '30s anticommunism see Powers, *Not Without Honor*, 129–132.

8. George Wolfskill, *The Revolt of the Conservatives: A History of the American Liberty League, 1934–1940* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1962), 208, 209; *New York Times,* September 20, 1936, p. 26, September 22, 1936, p. 11, October 7, 1936, p. 7, October 2, 1936, p. 5, October 16, 1936, p. 18. Cf. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Politics of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960), 622–625.

9. *New York Times,* September 20, 1936, pp. 1, 29, September 30, 1936, p. 17, October 9, 1936, p. 1; Max Lerner, "Roosevelt and His Fellow-Travelers," *Nation* 143 (October 24, 1936): 471. For newspaper claims of Soviet support for FDR, see W. Cameron Meyers, "The Chicago Newspaper Hoax in the '36 Election Campaign," *Journalism Quarterly* 37 (Summer 1960): 356–364.

10. George H. Mayer, *The Political Career of Floyd B. Olson* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1951), 177, 240, 243, 250; Greg Mitchell, *Campaign of the Century: Upton Sinclair's Race for Governor and the Birth of Media Politics* (New York: Random House, 1992); John B. Chapple to Daniel W. Hoan, April 4, 1936, 1936 General Folder, Hoan MSS, Milwaukee County Historical Society.

11. The crusade against radicalism always had a strong nativist streak (though less so in the hands of Joe McCarthy). An early probe of communism led by Rep. Hamilton Fish (R., N.Y.) defined the threat largely as of foreign origin. The 1931 inquiry took place as the Depression deepened and energized those who wanted to tighten an already restrictive immigration policy. See Cantelon, "In Defense of America."

12. *New York Times*, November 5, 1938, pp. 4, 7; November 6, 1938, pp. 4, 10; Sidney Fine, *Frank Murphy: The New Deal Years* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 502–516; Robert E. Burke, *Olson's New Deal for California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953), 29–31; *Nation* 147 (November 26, 1938): 464–465.

13. *New York Times,* September 1, 1938, p. 4, September 10, 1938, p. 2, September 13, 1938, p. 9, September 21, 1938, p. 20, November 9, 1938, p. 13.

14. Krock later advised critics of this coalition that FDR's following had once itself been a union of "former Republicans, former Socialists, Farmer-Laborites, descendants of the Populists and Free Silverites . . . and roving labor and intelligentsia groups" and occasional "Communists and fellow travelers." *New Republic* 97 (November 23, 1938): 57; *New York Times,* November 10, 1938, p. 1; March 10, 1946, p. 4.

15. *New York Times,* November 5, 1938, p. 5, November 6, 1938, p. 8; *Nation,* 147 (November 19, 1938): 525. Similar charges sometimes roiled intraparty battles. In a race for the Wisconsin Progressive Party nomination for the U.S. Senate, the more centrist Herman Ekern charged that the economic planning system proposed in Congressman Thomas R. Amlie's industrial expansion bill resembled a Soviet Five-Year Plan. John E. Miller, *Governor Philip F. La Follette, the Wisconsin Progressives, and the New Deal* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), 152.

16. On the habit of terming foreign-policy foes a fifth column, see Wayne S. Cole, *Roosevelt and the Isolationists, 1932–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 397–411, 456; Richard W. Steele, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and His Foreign Policy Critics," *Political Science Quarterly* 94 (Spring 1979): 15–35.

17. *New York Times*, June 25, 1940, p. 17, August 30, 1940, p. 1, October 26, 1940, p. 1, November 1, 1940, p. 1, November 2, 1940, p. 8; Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York: Random House, 1938), 8:532.

18. Press release, May 16, 1942, Official File (OF) 3997, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (FDRL); Rev. Joseph F. Scannel to [Stephen Early], May 17, 1942, ibid; Father J. Hamel to FDR, October 23, 1944, OF 299, FDRL; William D. Hassett to Hamel, October 31, 1944, ibid. See generally George Sirgiovanni, *An Undercurrent of Suspicion: Anti-Communism in America during World War II* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990).

19. Clipping, *Cleveland News*, September 27, 1944, OF 3997, FDRL.

20. *New York Times,* September 26, 1944, October 8, 1944, p. 1, October 26, 1944, p. 15; handbill, "Dewey . . . Bricker for Victory Peace Unity," Box 7, OF 4070, FDRL.

21. Ickes speech, September 24, 1944, Box 1163, Democratic National Committee Papers; "Address of Hon. Oscar R. Ewing," October 27, 1944, Box 1159, ibid.; Publicity Bureau press release, Blue Network, NBC, Nov 1, 1944, Box 1163, ibid.; DNC radio script, CBS, November 6, 1944, Box 33, Stephen T. Early Papers, all FDRL; *New York Times,* October 6, 1944, p. 14. On the "Zinoviev Letter," see "Notes on Republican National Committee October strategy," n.d., with Robert E. Hannegan to Hopkins and Rosenman, September 30, 1944, Box 138, Harry H. Hopkins Papers, FDRL;

clipping, Robert G. Spivack, "Look for Last-Ditch Blast by G.O.P. to Scare Voters," New York *Post*, October 17, 1944, Box 6, Rosenman Papers, ibid.

22. Unsigned note, n.d. [October 1944] from Roper, attached to "Bill" [Hassett] to "Grace" [Tully], filed October 27, 1944, President's Secretary's File (PSF): Public Opinion Polls; Merriam to Hopkins, October 30, 1944, Box 211, Hopkins Papers, FDRL; clipping, "Repudiation?" *New York Daily Mirror,* October 7, 1944, Box 25, Samuel N. Rosenman Papers, FDRL; cf. Richard Polenberg, *War and Society: The United States, 1941–1945* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1972), 208–209.

23. *New York Times,* April 12, 1946, p. 17, May 29, 1946, p. 2, September 22, 1946, p. 53, October 21, 1946, p. 1, October 22, 1946, p. 2; *Milwaukee Journal,* October 2, 1946, p. 20; Roger Morris, *Richard Milhous Nixon: The Rise of an American Politician* (New York: Henry Holt, 1990), chaps. 10–11.

24. Milwaukee *Journal*, August 7, 1946, August 8, 1946, p. B2, October 17, 1946, p. B1; Patrick J. Maney, *"Young Bob" La Follette: A Biography of Robert M. La Follette, Jr., 1895–1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978), 298 and passim.

25. *New York Times,* October 13, 1946, p. D6, November 1, 1946, p. 1; Tom Wicker, *One of Us: Richard Nixon and the American Dream* (New York: Random House, 1991), 41, 48. Patrick Maney notes that during the fall ex-candidate La Follette spent more energy on the communist issue (in his writings) than did candidate McCarthy. "*Young Bob,*" 303. On the campaign generally, see James Boylan, *The New Deal Coalition and the Election of 1946* (New York: Garland, 1981).

26. Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 81–82; but cf. Ken Hechler, *Working with Truman: A Personal Memoir of the White House Years* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), 96.

27. Hechler, *Working with Truman,* 97; unsigned memorandum [George M. Elsey], "Random Thoughts 26 August [1948]," Internal Security—Congressional Loyalty Investigations, Subject File, Elsey Papers, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO; address by Beauford H. Jester, Texas Democratic Barbeque, April 20, 1948, Box 5, Famous Names File, Lyndon Baines Johnson Archive, LBJ Library, Austin, Texas. Two years later, South Carolina Governor Strom Thurmond, the States' Rights presidential candidate of 1948, attacked Truman's program as "un-American, Communistic and anti-Southern." *Milwaukee Sentinel,* February 14, 1950, p. 2.

28. Memorandum, Robert Humphreys et al., n.d. [1948], Box 7, Humphreys Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library; William Loeb to Dewey, August 26, 1948, Box 1, ibid.; Charles D. Breitel to Loeb, September 7, 1948, Box 3, ibid. Truman's Justice Department also pondered referring the issue of "Soviet espionage in the Federal Government" to a high-level bipartisan commission. George M. Elsey, memorandum for

Clark M. Clifford, August 16, 1948, Subject File, Internal Security— Congressional Loyalty Investigations, Elsey Papers, Harry S. Truman Library.

29. Richard Norton Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey and His Times* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982), 492–494, 507–508, 515; George S. Schuyler, *Black and Conservative* (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1966), 311–312; Richard M. Fried, *Men against McCarthy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 15–17; Irwin Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948* (New York: New American Library, 1968), 54–57, 187–188; Earl Latham, *The Communist Controversy in Washington from the New Deal to McCarthy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 396.

30. Dulles to Lehman, October 30, 1949, Special File, Lehman MSS, Columbia University; Independent Citizen's Committee for Election of Herbert H. Lehman as U.S. Senator, "Sample Three-Minute Speech for Sound Truck," October 22, 1949, ibid.; Lehman speech, September 22, 1949, "Elections—New York—1949" folder, ibid. Dulles thought Lehman's charge of anti-Semitism pivoted on his need, in the prevailing balance of New York ethnic politics, to "get, to all intents and purposes 100% of the Jewish vote." Dulles to Richard Stone, February 13, 1952, Folder 1, Box II (Correspondence, 1952-1054), Dulles MSS, Princeton University.

31. Mundt to Raymond Hieb, May 29, 1950, Political Campaigns DB 5, U.S. Senate 1950, Mundt MSS, Dakota State College.

32. Fried, *Men against McCarthy,* 95–101; Morris, *Nixon*, 555, 560, 580.

33. *Daily Oklahoman,* October 21, 1950, p. 1; *Denver Post,* October 7, 1950, p. 2; *Milwaukee Sentinel,* February 15, 1950, p. 1. Considine praised two senators "jabbing" at the octopus—Estes Kefauver and Joe McCarthy.

34. Mundt to Nixon, May 8, 1950; to Dirksen, August 4, September 13,1950; to John M. Butler, September 30, 1950, all in "Political Campaigns US Senate 1950," Mundt MSS.

35. Robert W. Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970), 124–127, 131; Fried, *Men against McCarthy,* chaps. 4–5. A Truman aide noted that the Democrats' loss of five Senate and twenty-eight House seats was "far less than the usual mid-term trend throughout history." Kenneth Heckler memorandum, "The 1950 Elections," November 15, 1950, George Elsey Papers, HSTL.

36. Griffith, *Politics of Fear,* 126, 129–131; Fried, *Men Against McCarthy,* 118–121, 136–140; Caroline H. Keith, *"For Hell and a Brown Mule": The Biography of Senator Millard E. Tydings* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991), chap. 2.

37. How firmly Eisenhower committed himself to this strategy is unclear. Jeff Broadwater, *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 38–39.

38. Fried, *Men against McCarthy,* 233–234; *Indianapolis Star,* September 7, 1952, p. 16.

39. "What the Opinion Surveys Said in May, 1952," Folder 3, Box 6, Hugh B. Mitchell MSS, University of Washington; *Indianapolis Star,* September 20, 1952, p. 4; Fried, *Men against McCarthy,* 232–234, 240; Griffith, *Politics of Fear,* 195. On the slight salience of the communist issue, also see Broadwater, *Eisenhower,* 44, 51–52.

40. Harry Louis Selden (Fair Campaign Practices Committee) to Bruce Barton, Box 20, Barton MSS, State Historical Society of Wisconsin; *New York Times,* June 28, 1954, p. 13, September 19, 1954, p. 7, October 3, 1954, p. 7; International Research Associates, Inc., State Poll, 11954, Illinois, Misc. Box 2, Paul Douglas MSS, Chicago Historical Society (CHS).

41. Louis H. Bean, *Influences in the 1954 Mid-Term Elections* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Institute, 1954), 18–32; Griffith, *Politics of Fear,* 241–242; *New York Times,* October 10, 1954, IV, 5.

42. *New York Times,* October 12, 1954, pp. 1, 21, October 25, 1954, p. 18, October 27, 1954, p. 19.

43. *New York Times,* June 27, 1954, p. 37, September 18, 1954, p. 11, September 29, 1954, p. 19, October 2, 1954, p. 9, October 14, 1954, p. 26, October 21, 1954, p. 22.

44. *New York Times,* October 1, 1954, p. 13, October 23, 1954, p. 1.

45. Fried, *Men against McCarthy,* 303; Joseph T. Meek, speech, Republican State Convention, June 12, 1954, Box 1, Meek MSS, CHS; Willis Ballinger, "The Texas Story," Committee for Constitutional Government, *Spotlight for the Nation,* No. D-269 [1954]; Herman Brown to Committee for Constitutional Government, June 2, 1954, both Box 13, Selected Names File, LBJ Archive, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library. Carroll lost; Murray was reelected.

46. CIO poll, ''1954 Opinion Survey," n.d., Paul H. Douglas MSS, CHS; Angus Campbell and Homer Cooper, *Group Differences in Attitudes and Votes* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), 66; Leonard W. Hall to Nixon, Dec. 13, 1954, Box 313, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers, National Archives and Records Administration—Laguna Niguel. Cf. Broadwater, *Eisenhower,* 163.

47. Robert L. King to Edward F. Mahon, October 22, 1956; King to Kermit W. Lueck, October 30, 1956; clipping, *Minneapolis Star,* "Nixon Snubs Sen. McCarthy," n.d., all Box 490, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers, NARA—Laguna Niguel.

48. *New York Times,* September 4, 1956, pp. 1, 18, September 5, 1956, p. 20, September 13, 1956, p. 1, September 15, 1956, p. 8, September 18, 1956, pp. 1, 20, September 19, 1956, p. 1, September 27, 1956, p. 28.

49. *New York Times,* October 9, 1958, p. 31, October 11, 1958, p. 14, October 12, 1958, p. 71, October 13, 1958, p. 17; Fair Campaign Practices Committee, Inc., "Report: The State-by-State Study of Smear: 1958" (September 1959), "Political Ques-

tions" folder, Box 24, Civic Interests, Papers of John D. Rockefeller Jr., Rockefeller Archives Center, Pocantico Hills, N.Y.; Rice R. Rice, "The 1958 Election in Arizona," *Western Political Quarterly* 12 (March 1959): 271.

50. Meade Alcorn, press release, September 25, 1958, Box 25, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers; Nixon to Murray Chotiner, June 23, 1958, Box 119, ibid.

51. Mary C. Brennan, *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 50–51; Powers, *Not Without Honor,* chap. 10; Kent M. Beck, "Necessary Lies, Hidden Truths: Cuba in the 1960 Campaign," *Diplomatic History* VIII (Winter 1984): 44–55.

52. ——— to Lyndon Baines Johnson, June 2, 1960, Box 76, Senate Political File, LBJL; Dan Gilbert, "Inside Election Report—No. 1," (Upland, Calif., 1960), ibid.; Clarence C. Dill to Sen. Henry M. Jackson, August 22, 1960, Folder 15, Box 249, Jackson MSS, Accession No. 3560-3, University of Washington.

53. Claude Robinson to Nixon, September 1, 1960, Box 646, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers. For Nixon's "self-education" during his vice presidency, see Anthony R. Maravillas, "Nixon in the Fifties" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois at Chicago, 2001).

54. Unsigned memorandum, "Foreign Affairs as a Campaign Issue," n.d. [1960], Folder 26, Box 247, Jackson MSS; Rep. William G. Bray, press release, June 18, 1960, Box 99, Gen. Corres., Nixon papers; Jackson speech, Clarksburg, W.Va., October 1, 1960, Folder 11, Box 23, Jackson MSS.

55. Democratic National Committee, "FACTS for Victory in 1960," (August 1960), Box I-42, Wayne Morse MSS, University of Oregon.

56. Poll data, revealing how few voters knew of these episodes, discouraged such a step. Unsigned memorandum, n.d. [1960], "The Nixon Imagery," Folder 26, Box 247, Jackson MSS; Warren E. Miller to "George" [Belknap?], January 22, 1960, Box 30, Charles S. Murphy Papers, HSTL. For one attempt to raise the subject, see party chair Paul Butler in transcript, CBS "Face the Nation," January 3, 1960, Box 2, Famous Names File, LBJ Archive, LBJL.

57. *New York Times,* March 8, 1960, pp. 1, 25; memorandum, Neil Cotter to Robert H. Finch, "Campaign Tactics," January 6, 1960, Box 183, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers; Nixon to Claude Robinson, April 9, 1960, Box 1, 1960 Campaign Series, Nixon Papers; Nixon speech copy, Tampa, Florida, October 18, 1960, Box 2, ibid.; memorandum, Nixon to Fred Seaton, September 21, 1960, Box 1, ibid.; Pegler to Nixon, October 4, 1960, Box 585, Gen. Corres., ibid.

58. Christopher Matthews, *Kennedy & Nixon: The Rivalry That Shaped Postwar America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 70, 88, 108–109; *New York Times,* March 31, 1958, p. 11; JFK to Frank Altschul, May 20, 1960, Folder 450b, Herbert H. Lehman MSS; Orville L. Freeman to Sen. Mike Mansfield, April 22, 1960, XIV/48, Folder 1, Mansfield MSS, University of Montana.

59. Economist John Kenneth Galbraith rightly predicted that Nixon would not revisit old haunts. "We must assume that he has learned better." Some more fearful Democrats found comfort that "Johnson on the ticket ha[d] taken away from the GOP the charge of 'radicalism.' " Galbraith memorandum, "Campaign Strategy, 1960," n.d. [July, 1960], Box 996, John F. Kennedy Pre-Presidential File, JFKL; unsigned "Memorandum for the Press," n.d. [1960], Reference File, 1960 Campaign, LBJ Archive, LBJL.

60. Handbill, "How Can the South Support Lyndon Johnson for President? Senator Johnson's Left-Wing Voting Record," *The Independent American* [n.p., 1960], Box 16, VIP File, Nixon Papers; clipping, *Phoenix Gazette,* August 8, 1960, Box 76, Senate Political File, LBJL; RNC Press Release, October 31, 1960, Box 77, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers; Airy press release, April 7, 1960, Box 421, Clinton P. Anderson MSS, Library of Congress; clipping, *Albuquerque Tribune,* April 4, 1960, ibid.; Anderson to Floyd B. Rigdon, April 12, 1960, ibid.

61. Nixon said Brown was anticommunist, but ineffectual. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913–1962* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 656, 658–661, 665, 670–671; "Murray Chotiner telephone call to rmw [Rosemary Wood], April 17, 1962, Box 147, Gen. Corres., Nixon Papers; Dewey to Nixon, Box 214, ibid. Dewey also noted public outrage over the fact that Alger Hiss was invited to offer televised comment on Nixon's political demise.

62. "Art" [H. Courshon] to Hubert H. Humphrey, April 23, 1962, Box 593, Humphrey MSS, Minnesota Historical Society; Harry LaFontaine to Claude D. Pepper, April 17, 1962, ibid.

63. *New York Times,* February 15, 1964, p. 11, September 6, 1964, pp. 1, 44, September 30, 1964, pp. 1, 22, October 1, 1964, p. 22, October 3, 1964, p. 14, October 9, 1964, p. 26, October 27, 1964, p. 21.

64. *New York Times,* July 30, 1965, p. 29, July 31, 1965, p. 18, October 13, 1965, p. 60, October 17, 1965, p. 84, October 25, 1965, pp. 1, 31, November 1, 1965, p. 46, November 3, 1965, p. 1.

65. Clipping, *Washington Daily News,* April 27, 1972, Folder 4, Box 4, Sterling Munro MSS, University of Washington; telegram, Joseph L. Rauh Jr. to Jackson, May 2, 1972, ibid.; Herman Badillo to Jackson, May 2, 1972, ibid.

66. For suggestive discussion of some of these connections, see David A. Horowitz, *Beyond Left & Right: Insurgency and the Establishment* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

67. *Indianapolis Star,* September 22, 1952, p. 14.