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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
SANTA CRUZ

**COLD WAR COMRADES:  
LEFT-LIBERAL ANTICOMMUNISM AND AMERICAN EMPIRE, 1941-1968**

A dissertation presented in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
in  
HISTORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS  
with an emphasis in AMERICAN STUDIES  
by

**Ari. N. Cushner**

September 2017

The dissertation of Ari Nathan Cushner  
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Tyrus Miller  
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ABSTRACT  
Ari Nathan Cushner

Cold War Comrades:  
Left-Liberal Anticommunism and American Empire, 1941-1968

This dissertation examines the underappreciated history of what is commonly known as ‘cold war liberalism’ in relation to the rise of United States global power at the end of World War Two. More accurately described as ‘left-liberal anticommunism,’ this ideological orientation was produced through an alliance between three distinct species of political-intellectuals: democratic socialists personified by Norman Thomas, New Deal liberals typified by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and anti-Stalinist leftists (former Trotskyists) embodied by Sidney Hook. These factions came together in the early 1940s, united in resistance to what remained of the pro-Communist ‘popular front’; the initial phase of their partnership culminated in the successful derailment of Henry Wallace’s 1948 presidential campaign. In the early 1950s their union was reconsolidated around a renewed effort to thwart Stalinist subversion at home and Soviet expansion abroad; the left-liberal anticommunist coalition concurrently helped shape a CIA-sponsored counterpropaganda campaign that came to be known as the ‘cultural cold war.’ In the mid 1950s this alliance of *cold war comrades* became fractured over the issue of McCarthyism, as a group that included former Trotskyist ‘New York intellectuals’ refused to join a condemnation of the Wisconsin senator’s redbaiting. With the defection of many on this proto-‘neoconservative’ flank, which was becoming fixated on anti-Stalinism, those who remained in the left-liberal anticommunist camp cemented a commitment to the civil

rights and labor movements, while redoubling their support for Cold War foreign policy. The final iteration of their alliance, framed by the promotion of ‘rational’ as opposed to ‘obsessive anticommunism,’ lasted through the late 1960s, when it finally collapsed under the strain of an increasingly radical New Left and neoconservatives coalescing in opposition. Before disintegrating, the left-liberal anticommunist coalition pursued a domestic agenda of progressive reform attached to the legacy of the New Deal. Yet their utopian ideals were tempered by the realities of a global power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. By articulating their advocacy of social and economic justice from a standpoint of ‘anti-totalitarianism,’ left-liberal anticommunists unwittingly hastened the demise of a once-robust social-democratic tradition, while helping sustain the development of post-1945 American empire.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACCF	American Committee for Cultural Freedom
ADA	Americans for Democratic Action
AFL	American Federation of Labor
ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
AIF	Americans for Intellectual Freedom
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CCNY	City College of New York
CCF	Congress for Cultural Freedom
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CPUSA	Communist Party of America
ERP	European Recovery Program
MoMA	Museum of Modern Art
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NCASP	National Council of Arts Sciences and Professions
OPC	Office of Policy Coordination
PCA	Progressive Citizens of America
SDF	Social Democratic Federation
SPA	Socialist Party of America
UDA	Union for Democratic Action
VoA	Voice of America

## INTRODUCTION

### Cold War Liberalism and the American Century

Whereas their nation became in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the most powerful and the most vital nation in the world, nevertheless Americans were unable to accommodate themselves spiritually and practically to that fact. Hence they have failed to play their part as a world power.

—Henry Luce, “The American Century,” February 1941

When the Marshall Plan will have brought about a strengthening of Europe... then we can perhaps hope for a stable agreement with the USSR. But to argue...that somehow an international miracle can be achieved by two men sitting around a table...is to play into the hands of both the isolationists and the Communists.

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., 1948

Everything’s perfect about the past, except how it led to the present.

—“Homer J. Simpson,” 2011

Among the many uncertainties as Donald Trump took office in January 2017 was the question of his willingness to maintain what publishing magnate Henry Luce, in a widely-read 1941 *Life* editorial, dubbed “The American Century.” Speculation about a return to the policies of ‘isolationism’ notwithstanding, the likeliest scenario was that the United States under Trump would continue being what Luce described as “a dominant power in the world.”<sup>1</sup> Yet the mere thought of an American president not embracing a policy of keeping the United States at the center of international affairs was unprecedented in recent history, and posed a sharp contrast to eight years earlier when Barack Obama entered the White House championing what he described in a 2007 *Foreign Affairs* article as a “mission... to provide global leadership.”<sup>2</sup> Obama’s proud allegiance to the ‘American Century’ formed the cornerstone of his

administration's foreign policy, cemented in a January 2012 'Defense Strategic' Guidance titled "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership."<sup>3</sup>

Like each of his predecessors since Harry Truman, Obama accepted a premise that, having emerged from World War Two with the strongest military and largest economy, the United States had inherited from the British a responsibility to lead the 'free world.' It was in that sense unremarkable that he endorsed this bipartisan foreign policy accord, or what historian Andrew Bacevich calls a "national security consensus to which every president since 1945 has subscribed."<sup>4</sup> Still, it is highly instructive to note that Obama's reasoning in support of sustaining US global power echoed the sentiments of left-liberal anticommunists at the start of the Cold War. In an April 2007 piece for the *New York Times*, columnist David Brooks revealed that Obama considered theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (b. 1892) to be one of his "'favorite philosophers.'" Niebuhr became influential among policymakers through his now-famous *The Irony of American History* (1952), which argued that the US had unconsciously "acquired a greater degree of power" than any nation ever, "the responsible use of which... had become a condition of survival of the free world."<sup>5</sup> In formulating what became known as 'Christian realism,' Niebuhr warned that while it was necessary to wage a global struggle against Soviet Communism, American leaders must avoid falling prey to "degrees of interest and passion which corrupt... the exercise of power."<sup>6</sup> As relayed by Brooks, Obama took from Niebuhr "'the compelling idea that there's serious evil in the world, and hardship and pain. And we

should be humble and modest in our belief we can eliminate those things. But we shouldn't use that as an excuse for cynicism and inaction.”<sup>7</sup>

Once in office, Obama continued what Brooks described as his “attempt to thread the Niebuhrian needle.”<sup>8</sup> This was illustrated in December 2009, when Obama announced his decision to continue the US war in Afghanistan during a speech at West Point, and then a few days later accepted a Nobel Peace Prize awarded him mainly because of opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In his address in Norway, the President assumed the mantle of heir to Martin Luther King Jr.— also a noted acolyte of Niebuhr— quoting from the slain civil rights leader’s Nobel lecture forty-five years earlier: “Violence never brings permanent peace.” At the same time Obama pivoted away from the pacifism at the heart of King’s message, stating his belief that “non-violence could not have halted Hitler’s armies, just as negotiations would not “convince al Qaeda's leaders to lay down their arms”; there are occasions when “the use of force [is] not only necessary but morally justified.”<sup>9</sup> In his evocation of ‘just war’ theory, Obama used the Niebuhr’s phrasing: “to say that force may sometimes be necessary is... a recognition of... the imperfections of man and the limits of reason.” He admitted his “a deep ambivalence” about war, which especially for non-Americans might be “joined by a reflexive suspicion of... the world’s sole military superpower”; Obama at the same time defended his stance by citing the role of the United States in helping “underwrite global security,” out of an “enlightened self-interest” in promoting “freedom and prosperity.”<sup>10</sup> In an astute

assessment for the *Times*, Brooks concluded that the President had “revived the Christian realism that undergirded cold war liberal thinking.”<sup>11</sup>

Brooks offers an understanding of cold war liberalism that is largely informed by awareness of the development of neoconservatism. In the early 2000s, interest in the origins of the Bush-Cheney administration’s foreign policy, and the importance therein of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), gave cause for Brooks and others to revisit the postwar moment when Niebuhr’s ideas gained prominence. Those aligned with Niebuhr saw themselves as hardheaded realists, pitted against what Arthur Schlesinger Jr. referred to in *The Vital Center* (1949) as “doughface progressivism” that relied on a “sentimental optimism” to support Soviet policy under Joseph Stalin.<sup>12</sup> Throughout his career as a historian and Democratic political operative, Schlesinger was deeply influenced by his friend Niebuhr, who he described in 2005 as “the supreme American theologian of the twentieth century.”<sup>13</sup> In *The Vital Center* Schlesinger drew from Niebuhr’s “remarkable book on democratic theory,” *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944), which reasoned that humanity’s “capacity for justice makes democracy possible,” while its “inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.”<sup>14</sup> Cold war liberals in the mold of Niebuhr and Schlesinger espoused a fundamentally pessimistic view of human nature at the dawn of the ‘American century,’ rejecting utopianism as anachronistic in an era when, as claimed in *The Irony of American History*, it was “possible to exercise the virtue of responsibility toward a community of nations only by courting the prospective guilt of the atomic bomb.”<sup>15</sup> Given the continued

popularity of Niebuhr's ideas, among Democrats and Republicans alike, it should come as no surprise that during the first two decades of the twenty-first century, elements of what is known as cold war liberalism were visible in the philosophies that sustain the foreign policy of both major political parties.

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“Cold War Comrades” examines the history of a left-liberal anticommunist coalition that exercised significant influence on the course of domestic politics and the shaping of foreign policy in the United States during the middle of the twentieth century. It explores the role of so-called cold war liberalism within the development of American political culture and the rise of US global power in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s, while gesturing towards a critical assessment of its contemporary legacy. As commonly understood, cold war liberals pursued policies that combined the advocacy of anti-Soviet ‘containment’ abroad and New Deal-style reform at home. Used generically in that sense, as a descriptor for someone who supported both liberal reform and Cold War foreign policy, the term more specifically identifies those who, from a center-left standpoint, believed that Soviet subversion of the American political establishment presented a real danger: the need to contain Communism was a matter of both foreign and domestic concern.

The phrase ‘cold war liberal’ was not used with great frequency until the 1960s, arising among activists and historians connected to the New Left. It was first deployed in that context with derision by young radicals who criticized liberal Democrats for their role in developing policies that contributed to the disastrous war

in Vietnam. In contrast to a previous generation of ‘new deal liberals,’ cold war liberals had succumbed to an unhealthy fixation on anti-Soviet foreign policy, which steered people like Niebuhr and Schlesinger away from focusing on social-democratic values, which had dominated the American left in the 1930s and early 1940s. At the same time, to those in the Niebuhr-Schlesinger circle, ‘liberal anticommunism’ was the term that best described their position, and they commonly referred to themselves as ‘liberal anticommunists.’ Hence, this work adopts a similar stance with respect to terminology when discussing the political-intellectuals who today are regarded as avatars of cold war liberalism, yet more accurately should be known as liberal anticommunists. Moreover, as detailed in this study, the individuals encompassed by the cold war liberal/ liberal anticommunist designation in fact came from three distinct groupings attached to separate yet overlapping political orientations: liberal Democrats, Socialists, and ex-Communist (anti-Stalinist) ‘New York intellectuals.’ For that reason, in this study the phrase *left-liberal anticommunism* replaces what is otherwise known as cold war liberalism. This helps improve definitional clarity and enables a sharper analysis, while emphasizing the coalitional nature of a process whereby liberal *and* leftwing anticommunists joined forces against a common foe.

### Midcentury Left-Liberal Anticommunism

During the middle of the twentieth century, three species of political intellectuals converged to form the left-liberal anticommunist coalition; this study highlights a trio of individuals who embodied that alliance: Socialist Party of America

(SPA) leader Norman Thomas (1884-1968), erstwhile Trotskyist philosopher Sidney Hook (1902-1989), and liberal icon Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1917-2007). These *cold war comrades* inhabited a dynamic political universe in which primary sites of collaboration were *The New Leader (NL)*, an organ founded by SPA moderates in 1924 that became the mouthpiece for left-liberal anticommunism in the early 1940s, and the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), which was created in late 1950 as part of a propaganda campaign sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). *The New Leader* and the ACCF formed the heart of a political-intellectual constellation that included other groups, most notably the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), and periodicals including literary journal *Partisan Review*, which was formed in 1934 by the Communist Party of America (CPUSA) but quickly morphed into a platform for leftwing (Trotskyist) anti-Stalinism. Within this milieu, aspects of at least three separate political typologies were fused into a left-liberal anticommunist worldview that gained steady influence in postwar American society. Helping to safeguard the persistence of a set of political values and policies associated with the legacy of Depression-era progressivism, this coalition helped to buoy the so-called postwar ‘liberal consensus,’ which combined tacit acceptance of the New Deal with a basic approval of civil rights and related social reform.

Yet as a tenuous partnership that depended as much on a common enemy as a shared vision, the left-liberal anticommunist coalition was fractured from the outset. Existing ideological differences were quickly aggravated by a heated dispute over the nature of ‘McCarthyism,’ and whether or not the threat of excessive anticommunist



crusading was greater than the specter of Stalinist infiltration. As reflected in debates between American Committee for Cultural Freedom members, the outlines of this conflict were evident as early as the start of 1952; five years later it had become the precipitating factor behind a decision to suspend the organization indefinitely. Inasmuch as the ACCF can be viewed as a microcosm of a wider alliance, its demise in the late 1950s presaged the general collapse of left-liberal anticommunism a decade later. Recalling the experience of his involvement, Schlesinger maintained that clashes over McCarthyism, in the ACCF and elsewhere, were a symptom of the growing “division between American anticommunist intellectuals” wherein “rational anticommunists” like himself were pitted against “obsessive anticommunists” rooted in New York’s anti-Stalinist left.<sup>16</sup> As their coalition unraveled, left-liberal anticommunists moved generally into one of three camps distinguished by differing views on the war in Vietnam. Some, like Thomas, endorsed the New Left’s antiwar stance, which aligned closely with his anti-imperialist sentiment. Others, like Hook, embraced the outlines of US foreign policy in Southeast Asia and elsewhere as they began to formulate a neoconservative worldview. Schlesinger, meanwhile, gradually came to believe that the war was a folly, and worried about its implications for the fate of American prestige in the world.

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Norman Thomas (1884-1968), Sidney Hook (1902-1989), and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1917-2007) were born in different generations and came from distinct backgrounds. Their lives were shaped by socioeconomic/cultural circumstances that,

with some similarities, creating divergent experiences. Yet while in that sense Thomas, Hook, and Schlesinger personify three distinct species of political-intellectuals, they share a common heritage as part of the American left-liberal anticommunist tradition. These three individuals, and the perspective they represent, maintained overlapping values and interests for several decades, while having extensive contact with one another in the context of the midcentury anti-Soviet struggle. They shared, moreover, both personal and political affinities during this period, while they worked (fought) and in some cases socialized together in venues such as *The New Leader* and the ACCF. Thomas, the eldest of the trio, was also by many measures the most congenial. He came-of-age at the turn of the twentieth century, molded in a climate marked by ‘Gilded Age’ Populism linked to the Industrial Revolution transitioning to what became the Progressive era. As he embraced socialism Thomas attached himself to the specific movement surrounding Eugene Debs, which had centers of power both in the Midwest, where he was raised, and New York, where he lived as an adult. Illustrative of his position on the ‘old left’ is the fact that, even for several years after the Cold War had begun, Thomas continued to address friends and allies as “comrade.” His anticommunism had a profound ideological motivation that was at the same time devoid (for the most part) of personal grievances. Thomas exhibited in that manner a steady devotion to moral and ethical concerns centered on empathy and respect — values that are suggestive of his religious upbringing and training. When he was feted on his eightieth birthday in 1964, personages like Martin Luther King Jr., unable to attend, made sure to send

congratulatory messages to the much-admired man who, in a *Life* article published two years later, was dubbed “The Dean of Protest.” During the last decade of his life, the charismatic Socialist leader received tributes from myriad quarters across the political spectrum (and throughout the world). In 1963 poet Robert Frost, for instance, commented that meeting with Thomas was “one of the greatest moments” of his life. Two years before that, in an organized debate Republican Senator Barry Goldwater (who became the party’s presidential nominee 1964) told Thomas that he hoped to someday earn “just a small modicum of the esteem” people had for him.<sup>17</sup>

Unlike Comrade Thomas, Hook by the end of his life might have welcomed praise from the conservative icon Goldwater as not only personal testament, but also a partisan badge-of-honor. Hook’s intellectual and political career was, in that sense, volatile. One could, perhaps, draw some connection between his past as the child of first-generation immigrants who fled harsh economic conditions and religious persecution in the Jewish ‘shtetls’ (ghettos) of Eastern Europe, and his subsequent reputation as an abrasive person whose immense intellect was sharpened by a caustic wit. The 1917 Russian Revolution was *the* formative event of Hook’s young life, resonating across the distinctive political-cultural landscape of New York’s Jewish left as he came-of-age. His community being, in one sense, at the center of anti-radical hysteria during the postwar Red Scare, that experience helped catapult Hook into the vibrant world of Marxian dialectics, where he became a fighter at the left intellectual barricades. As with many of his comrades, Hook embraced communism with as much passion as he later embraced anticommunism, as if the idea of a middle

ground was at best fanciful. Yet one of the more curious aspects of his intellectual and political development is that even as he shifted consistently to the right, while hurling incessant attacks against his opponents, like any good (ex) Marxist he was constantly engaged in building and maintaining political coalitions. Hence, as he migrated from Socialism to Communism and, through Trotskyism, back to Socialism, then liberalism and a version of neoconservatism, Hook all along identified as a democratic socialist because that was what he always considered himself to be; his roots were on the left, and they could not be completely severed.

It is surely in part because of his lifelong identification as a leftist that Comrade Hook never turned his back on Thomas. Hook's reverence for Thomas grew in part from seeing his career as an example of the manner in which socialism and anticommunism were ideologically harmonious. It was in that context that Hook chose Thomas as one of two people to whom he dedicated *Heresy, Yes—Conspiracy, No* (1953), which drew a distinction between dissident leftists who practiced a healthy form of radicalism (heresy) and Communists, whose agenda was one of subversion (conspiracy). Thomas was in Hook's view, as inscribed on the original dedication page, an "American Heretic and Democrat." That they were closer in age might be one reason why Thomas had a stronger friendship with Hook than with Schlesinger. Beyond that, and perhaps more importantly, Thomas and Hook lived in New York at the same time (as adults) from the 1920s through the 1960s, during which time they traveled in the same social-democratic circles while building an alliance on the question of anti-Stalinism. It is also the case that since Thomas passed

away in 1968 he did not live long enough to see witness the full scope of the New York intellectuals' metamorphosis. Had he been alive in the 1980s, when Hook was very much out of sync (or step) with his previous leftwing orientation, it is perfectly conceivable that he and Thomas, who were clearly moving in opposite directions politically, would have lost their personal affection for one another (but probably not).

Schlesinger, whose father was a contemporary of Thomas (and he fifteen years younger than Hook), was in some ways born into a very different world than either of his elder comrades. In fact, his life began as the dramatic events of October 1917 were unfolding in what soon became the Soviet Union. Schlesinger was too young to have fully absorbed the rise of Communism in the United States during the 'red decade' (1930s), but otherwise just old enough to be influenced by the persona of Franklin Roosevelt and enthusiasm among for the New Deal among the East Coast liberal elite. Schlesinger had something in common with Thomas in that respect, as they both came from families that in general never had to worry about money, yet neither were they from the top fraction of the wealthy and privileged; they both, nonetheless, moved in rarified social circles. Thomas however moved to the left, embracing at least in theory the anti-capitalist ethos undergirding socialism, whereas Schlesinger made peace with capitalism and cultivated a liberal project in which reform (not revolution) was the end goal. Although Schlesinger embraced a progressive vision akin in some ways to a social-democratic outlook, he was never a leftist in the same manner as Thomas and Hook; as Thomas inched left, while Hook gyrated in one direction and then the other, Schlesinger stayed in the 'vital center.'

The same might be said of his personality relative to Thomas and Hook. Amiable and generous by most accounts, Schlesinger (who at least in his CUNY days was known to smoke a cigar during graduate seminars) also had an edge. As for example in the words of newspaper columnist Dorothy Thompson (in an article that made its way into a 1954 government security review that determined nothing about Schlesinger “could be construed as reflecting against his loyalty to the United States”), at least one person thought he was a “most arrogant, rude, opinionated, and intolerable egghead - but that doesn’t make him a Communist.”<sup>18</sup> But if that by one account was Schlesinger, it is more relevant to consider what the historian said of his onetime comrade in his memoir, when he referred to the man he had once described as an “intellectual street-fighter,” as an “illuminating analyst and clarifier of Marxism,” worthy of esteem for becoming “a trenchant anti-Stalinist at a time when the going was rough.” Schlesinger remembered Hook as “a short, stocky, angry man with a mustache and spectacles and a weakness for New Yorkish [*sic*] sarcastic humor,” whose tragedy was “letting anticommunism take over his life.”<sup>19</sup> The split between Hook and Schlesinger, starting in the 1960s, embodies the fracture and ensuing collapse of midcentury left-liberal anticommunism. But, what falls apart must first have come together.

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‘Cold war liberal’ is a convenient shorthand descriptor, but not an adequate conceptual framework for analyzing the dynamics of midcentury left-of-center anticommunism. Lumping together such individuals as Thomas, Hook, and

Schlesinger —among many others—does a disservice to the history of the coalition they sustained through decades of political and intellectual struggle. What is often called the postwar ‘liberal consensus’ was buoyed by the early Cold War alliance between liberals and leftists. Having come together to oppose Stalinism, a fissure over the question of McCarthyism widened into a deep chasm over the war in Vietnam. Bending under the weight of an intractable split between increasingly fractious blocs, the partnership buckled. The left-liberal anticommunist coalition came together (symbolically) in 1948 and collapsed in 1968: as their consensus unraveled, the compromise it upheld—for social reform at home and Cold War abroad—fell apart. As a result a proto-neoconservative flank emerged among a cohort of former Trotskyists; another effect was the invigoration of the New Left as polarization increased; and a third consequence was the reshaping of left-liberal collaboration in ensuing decades, to the detriment of what had once been a robust social-democratic tradition. Lastly, the growth of the ‘American century’ was inadvertently fueled by left-liberal anticommunism. While liberals and leftists had more power during the early Cold War than is often realized, that influence did not necessarily lead to outcomes they expected or desired.

#### Sources

This study incorporates broad range of primary and secondary sources. Since the people at the center of this study were intellectuals, their writings serve as primary sources, from articles published in *The New Leader* and similar journals to books like

Schlesinger's *The Vital Center* (1949), Hook's *Heresy—Yes, Conspiracy, No* (1953), and Thomas's *The Test of Freedom* (1954). Other books that act as primary sources were useful for various portions of this work, including James Rorty and Moshe Decter's *McCarthy and the Communists* (1954), published by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Additionally, autobiographical writings—published memoirs in the case of Hook and Schlesinger—were invaluable sources of information on this work's three 'main characters,' although certainly not always objective; biographical studies and/ intellectual profiles and of Thomas, Hook, and Schlesinger were also key. A few secondary sources were instrumental in terms of shedding light on the roles played by these three individuals, and their comrades, in the ACCF and related ventures: Frances Stonor Saunders's *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (1999), and Hugh Wilford's *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (2008).

Archival research for this study was conducted over the course of several months in the Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Norman Thomas Papers at the New York Public Library; the American Committee for Cultural Freedom Records at New York University's Tamiment Library; the *New Leader* Records as well as the Sol Stein and Diana Trilling Papers at Columbia University; plus the Tamiment Library's Sidney Hook Collection.<sup>20</sup> There are several archives at the Tamiment Library, NYPL, Columbia, and the Hoover Institution that will be necessary research-sites during the further development of this work. Both the *New Leader* Records and the Schlesinger Papers are recently opened archives. After Schlesinger's death in 2007, the bulk of



his papers were transferred from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library to a collection at NYPL arranged by his sons, which opened in 2010. The *New Leader* Records, which were organized in the years following the publication's final print edition in 2006, contain a wealth of information pertaining to the ACCF, highlighting the participation in that organization of the *NL*'s longtime editor Sol Levitas, whose tenure stretched from 1940 through his death in 1961. This recently opened collection (the surface of which has only been scratched) illuminates the intimate relationship between *The New Leader* and the ACCF, facilitated by Levitas's friendship with Hook and other other New York intellectual comrades. Similarly, the Sol Stein and Diana Trilling Papers have information relating to ACCF activities connected to their involvement in its leadership. Combined with material in the Thomas and Schlesinger Papers, as well as various Tamiment Library holdings, *The New Leader* Records and other Columbia collections offer a historical catalog of the ACCF and its milieu in the form of publications, correspondences, and minutes of executive meetings, (etc.).

### Original Contributions

There are two main areas in which this study breaks fresh ground, through both original research and interpretation. The first relates to the Free World Association (discussed in Chapter One), the Popular Front-linked group that sponsored the New York event at which Henry Wallace delivered his famous 'century of the common man speech.' In the eyes of the FBI and House Un-American

Activities Committee (HUAC), the Free World Association was a ‘communist front organization.’ US authorities suspected its leader Louis Dolivet, who edited the group’s publication *Free World* alongside prominent leftists like J. Alvarez del Vayo, of being a Polish-born Comintern agent named Ludovich Brecher; for that reason he was barred reentry after trying to return from a trip to Europe. Despite that, Dolivet is best known for his work with actor/ producer Orson Welles, who was an important part of the *Free World* circle along with *The Nation*’s Freda Kirchwey. Moreover Dolivet was married for a time to the heiress of the family that owned *The New Republic*, and was friends with (her brother) its publisher Michael Straight, who later confessed (to Schlesinger in fact) that he worked for Soviet intelligence in the 1930s.

Given the relative importance of the Free World Association (or at least its high-profile nature) combined with the fact that it has received very little attention—scholarly or otherwise—it warranted investigation (which prompted my creating a *Wikipedia.com* entry for *Free World*). There is contradictory evidence concerning the identity of Dolivet/ Brecher, and one should not automatically assume the conspiracy theory told about him by HUAC investigators and the libertarian journalists, etc., who from the standpoint of their critics were ‘McCarthyites.’ That said, through what amounted to detective work—scouring secondary sources—and looking through primary documents/ records (including through sources such as *Ancestry.com*), it was possible to determine that he was likely not who he purported to be; at the very least Dolivet/ Becher was a mysterious character. There certainly are worthwhile articles and/ or books waiting to be written about and the Free World Association.

Similarly, and much more importantly, this is the first study of any kind to reveal that Arthur Schlesinger Jr. was a paid “covert consultant” for the CIA in conjunction with his work on the Congress for Cultural Freedom project (discussed in Chapter Four). Four interwoven streams of information in Schlesinger’s papers at NYPL shed light on his heretofore unknown/ undisclosed CIA career. The most recently developed of these sources—correspondences with authors, publishers, researchers, etc. starting in the 1960s—include documents relating to him found in other archives. There are also files (letters, memos, minutes, etc.) pertaining to his work with the CCF and ACCF that appear to have been deposited separately from documents sent in response to Schlesinger’s 1976 FOIA request; review of that material makes it evident that he submitted simultaneous inquiries to both the CIA and FBI, and received separate replies. Confusing matters further is the fact that there are duplicates of many documents, as the Agency sent to Schlesinger some of the same material that, being unclassified, was already in his possession (and presumably available at the JFK Library). Still, from this mélange of sources it becomes possible to start building a composite sketch of Schlesinger’s secret identity as a CIA consultant code-named “Henry J. Laphorne.”

Schlesinger’s involvement with the CIA has not to this point been completely unknown. In writing *The Cultural Cold War*, which was a groundbreaking study, Saunders (a journalist by trade) interviewed Schlesinger who made several intriguing disclosures that prompted speculation; yet as best as Saunders could understand without more evidence, was that he was “one of the handful of non-Agency people

who knew from the outset the true origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.”<sup>21</sup> As he subsequently examined the history of early CIA front groups in *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, Wilford built on Saunders’s work, adding his own research, and concluded that Schlesinger was “in regular contact with senior officers of the CIA, briefing them about developments within the ACCF.”<sup>22</sup> When Saunders asked Schlesinger about this during their 1996 interview, he referred to talking with one CIA operative at parties hosted by another; ““Sometimes I’d meet Frank Wisner at Joe Alsop’s house, and he would ask me in a kind of way what was happening at the American Committee, and I would tell him.”” Saunders clearly had suspicions, noting that Schlesinger “was...reticent about any formal relationship with the CIA.”<sup>23</sup> Yet unlike Norman Thomas’s friendship with Allen Dulles, which in essence constituted an informal link to the CIA, Schlesinger’s relationship was in fact formal. If either Saunders or Wilford had researched the matter after the opening of Schlesinger’s NYPL archive, they would have discovered that there is much more to the story. In addition, this study offers new insight more generally into the mechanics of the CCF/ACCF operation, as well as the underappreciated involvement of Norman Thomas and others rooted in New York’s ‘non-Communist’ socialist community.

## Methods

This work combines political, intellectual, and cultural history grounded in an American Studies approach to the examination of US empire.<sup>24</sup> Although this is not a social history, it relies on an understanding of societal transformation during the

middle of the twentieth century, as shaped by the trauma of WWII, postwar political and economic dislocation, and the apocalyptic atmosphere created by a global struggle between nuclear-armed superpowers. By tracing how ideas become imbued with power and lead to the creation of policies that have influence, I am at one level concerned with broad questions relating to the organization and transformation of social structures as well as the creation and maintenance of ideology within the development of American hegemony on the global stage.

I follow Jamaican-born British cultural studies scholar Stuart Hall's advice that The purpose of theorizing is not to enhance one's intellectual or academic reputation but to enable us to grasp, understand, and explain—to produce a more adequate knowledge of—the historical world and its processes.<sup>25</sup> Theory should be used in the service of historical inquiry, not the other way around. Hence rather than attempt to artificially squeeze this study into a specific methodological framework, it incorporates various theoretical perspectives in order to gain a deeper understanding of how left-liberal anticommunist ideology influenced post-1945 US global power. Chiefly, I utilize the concept of 'hegemony' as conceived by Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), formulated during his struggle against Fascism. As secretary of the Italian Communist Party, Gramsci was imprisoned by Benito Mussolini's regime in 1926, under whose custody he eventually died of poor health. A collection of his writings from 1929 through 1935 was compiled posthumously in three volumes under the title *Prison Notebooks* (1929-1935). Smuggled out of Italy and disseminated throughout Europe, Gramsci's notebooks were initially published in the 1950s; their

first English printing was in 1971.<sup>26</sup> At various points in the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci developed the concept of hegemony to help explain why a worldwide wave of socialist revolutions had failed to materialize following the Bolshevik victory in Russia. According to Gramsci, hegemony was the result of a process in which “a crisis occurs, something lasting for decades,” during which “incurable structural contradictions have revealed themselves,” while “the political forces which are struggling to conserve and defend the existing structure itself are making every effort to cure them.”<sup>27</sup>

More than a simple case of what ‘orthodox’ Marxists called “false consciousness,” Gramsci reckoned that workers in Europe had not just been duped. Rather, they had absorbed certain values propagated by their rulers—national or religious pride, for instance—the appeal of which eclipsed class solidarity and fueled the rise of fascism instead of communism. As a way of understanding power in modern society, hegemony helps to explain how ideas formulated by the ruling elite are made to appear as the ‘commonsense’ values of society at large. In that manner, Gramsci departed from the classical Marxist view that society’s economic ‘base’ was determinative of its ‘superstructure,’ which included all other realms of life. He identified a space of fluid interaction between economic and super-structural processes, arguing for the importance of ‘culture’ in a range of historical processes.

Boiled down to its basic elements, Gramsci’s concept of hegemony refers to a process of achieving and maintaining power through persuasion, and by generating consent as opposed to merely applying coercive force. Among those trained in

critical theory, Gramsci's ideas are associated with the emergence of a 'cultural Marxist' school, which includes scholars like Stuart Hall who have produced an vast body of work on the importance of 'cultural hegemony.' Much like Gramsci theorized why Italian workers had embraced Mussolini, Hall wanted to know why the British working class supported Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Examining the rise of a 'New Right' in Britain during the 1970s, Hall argued that an ascendant ideology "won and transformed the Conservative party first, before setting about winning and transforming the country." Hall attributed the emergence of "Thatcherism before Thatcher" to what Gramsci called the "'organizational moment'—the 'moment of party.'"<sup>28</sup> Yet it "did not, of course, materialize out of thin air," as "One phase of hegemony had disintegrated," and "society entered a new era of contestations, crises, and alarms that frequently accompanies the struggles for the formation of a new hegemonic stage." Therefore, according to Hall, "Hegemony, once achieved, must be constantly and ceaselessly renewed."<sup>29</sup>

Hegemony is in that manner a useful way to conceptualize how and why people often act in ways that appear to contradict their best interests. A ruling group seeks to maintain power not through outright domination, but by using more subtle and insidious means that involve the promulgation of ideology within what today might be best understood as political culture. Central to the development of hegemony is the creation of coalitions within what Gramsci referred to as a 'historical bloc.' "For Gramsci," according to David Forgacs, "changing socio-economic circumstances... set the conditions in which...[other] changes become possible." In

that sense, Gramsci developed his “two central concepts,” “‘hegemony’ and ‘historical bloc,’” as part of a discussion of “the ‘relations of force’ obtaining at the political level,” and “the strength of the... alliances which they manage to bind together.”<sup>30</sup> As historian T.J. Jackson Lears argues, “A historical bloc may or may not become hegemonic, depending on how successfully it forms alliances with other groups and classes.” He adds: “to achieve cultural hegemony, the leaders of a historical bloc must develop a world view that appeals to a wide range of other groups within the society.” Accordingly, “The emerging hegemonic culture is not merely an ideological mystification but serves the interests of ruling groups at the expense of subordinate ones.”<sup>31</sup> In that sense, as described by political theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, “‘Hegemony’ will not be the majestic unfolding of an identity but the response to a crisis.”<sup>32</sup>

The notion of hegemony is relevant to the manner in which anticommunism became commonsense after World War Two, not just among conservatives but also a coalition of liberals and leftists. Seeing the Cold War as a battle for hegemony, cultural and otherwise, helps explain the emergence of left-liberal anticommunism as part of a historical bloc serving the interests of what sociologist C. Wright Mills called the “power elite.”<sup>33</sup> In fact, the term itself was built into the language used by policymakers in reference to their struggle against Communism: the influential Cold War blueprint, *National Security Memorandum 68 (NSC-68)*, issued in April 1950, depicted the USSR as different from “previous aspirants to hegemony” because it sought “to impose its absolute authority over the rest of the world.”<sup>34</sup> Gramsci offers



a constructive way to understand the Congress for Cultural Freedom, as demonstrated by scholarship such as Giles Scott-Smith's *The Politics of Apolitical Culture* (2002), which uses "Gramsci's conception of hegemony" to help "achieve a broader understanding of the Congress's historical context and cultural-intellectual purpose."<sup>35</sup> It is thusly fitting that Gramsci's *bête noire*, Benedetto Croce, served as one of the CCF's honorary chairman.

Largely because of projects like the Congress for Cultural Freedom, it has become fashionable to view post-1945 US global power as hegemonic, relying as much on ideological influence—the 'war for ideas'—as military or economic dominance; such analyses are connected to a recent trend among international relations scholars interested in using Gramsci to understand the contemporary global political-economic system.<sup>36</sup> For example in *American Ascendancy* (2007), Michael Hunt concludes that "if ever the term 'hegemony' was appropriately applied, it is to what the United States became in the latter half of the twentieth century and now remains." In fact for Hunt such a status connotes a unique form of power, and "to equate 'hegemony' with 'empire' or use the term interchangeably is to obscure the significance of this recent unprecedented, pervasive U.S. role around the world." According to Hunt, "the reward for the hegemon comes in securing international consent or at least acquiescence to what might otherwise require coercion."<sup>37</sup>

There are many reasons one might disagree with the logic of always substituting 'hegemony' for 'empire' when referring to post-1945 US global power, yet it does help to capture what is distinctive about the American Century. The

United States endeavored to lead the world not unilaterally, but rather through the UN, as the center of an international system in which American guidance could be construed positively, as a source of global stability following the horrors of World War Two. The concept of hegemony has tremendous value in terms of illustrating the importance of culture as a field of struggle, as well as elucidating the manner in which the United States exercised global power. Yet no theory offers a magic bullet. Gramsci's work was not designed to be part of an ontological framework that had universal application. In the pages that follow, therefore, his ideas serve merely as a tool for interpretation—*not the interpretation itself*. The concept of hegemony is relevant mainly in that the Cold War can be understood as a crisis to which anticommunist ideology provided a response, offering means to the a new consent that shaped foreign and domestic policymaking for nearly half a century.

## Literature Review

There is wide agreement among US historians that the Cold War—broadly defined—was both geopolitical and ideological in nature.<sup>38</sup> This consensus was solidified only after, as Robert Griffith described in 2001, “scholars from various disciplines” produced “an extraordinary outpouring of books and articles on virtually every aspect of American culture and how that culture shaped and was in turn shaped by the Cold War.”<sup>39</sup> Among the earlier manifestations of this trend were Paul Boyer's *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (1985), Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward Bound: American Families in*

*the Cold War Era* (1988), and Stephen Whitfield's *The Culture of the Cold War* (1991). The same year Griffith's "The Cultural Turn in Cold War Studies" was published, Peter Kuznick and James Gilbert's *Rethinking Cold War Culture* (2001) made its first appearance, demonstrating both the depth and breadth of what might be called the sub-sub-field of 'cold war cultural studies.' Griffith's historiographical discussion is part of his review of *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966* (2000), edited by Christian Appy, and John Fousek's *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (2000). In that sense, this genre includes work that examines how the global Cold War affected domestic culture and society, as well as how the struggle was influenced by cultural forces like nationalism, which are otherwise understood as being ideological (in much the way Gramsci saw culture and ideology as connected). This recent innovation in Cold War studies dovetails with a trend towards bringing culture into the realm of diplomatic history more broadly, typified by Michael Hunt's *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (1987), or more recently Walter Hixon's *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (2008).

Debate among scholars over the origins of the Cold War is rooted in the split that gave rise to the New Left, as radicals blamed a generation of leaders in the Democratic Party—who themselves identified as liberal anticommunists—for losing sight of their core values; the term 'cold war liberal' was coined in that context, out of derision. By their logic, anticommunist imperatives eclipsed the legacy of the New Deal, stifling a once-robust movement for progressive reform. That critique was

coupled with a condemnation of cold war liberals for having helped set the table for McCarthyism, and then condemning it belatedly. Moreover, under the Democrats' watch, the purported drive to halt Soviet expansion in Europe had ballooned into a disastrous land-war in Asia. The debacle in Vietnam illustrated the perilous rise of US global power, and signaled that domestic priorities like strengthening the welfare state had been overcome by an impulse to defend American interests abroad.

In that sense, there is an overlap between innovative work on the culture of the Cold War and a powerful tradition of New Left-oriented historical revisionism associated with William Appleman Williams's *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959). In his study of US-Cuba relations, Williams argued that "American power and policy had fomented a "crisis that characterized and symbolized the underlying tragedy of all American diplomacy in the twentieth century."<sup>40</sup> Williams challenged what to that point was the 'orthodox' view among diplomatic historians, asserting that despite official rhetoric about defending freedom and democracy, policymakers had actually constructed "America's version of the liberal... informal empire or free trade imperialism."<sup>41</sup> Per his thinking, postwar US dominance was not simply a reaction to Soviet expansion, but rather in support of 'open door imperialism.' He concluded: "It was the decision of the United States to employ its new and awesome power in keeping with the traditional Open Door Policy that crystallized the cold war."<sup>42</sup>

Williams's thesis helped shape a radical critique of US foreign policy, made ever more popular by New Left historians after the war in Vietnam. 'Wisconsin school' revisionism associated with *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* still has

significant influence in the American academy. However its primacy has been challenged successfully by a group of historians following John Lewis Gaddis, whose *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (1972) began making the case for a ‘post-revisionist’ synthesis, finding fault with both the US and Soviet Union, but rejecting a notion that American motives were imperialistic in nature.<sup>43</sup> One of Gaddis’s main sources of information and analysis over several decades was former diplomat George Kennan (d. 2005). Coming in that sense from the Kennan-Gaddis school of post-revisionist Cold War history, Schlesinger gave the following assessment in *A Life in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*:

Roosevelt and Churchill had hoped... to live at peace with the Soviet Union; but for Stalin, democratic capitalism was by Leninist definition the mortal foe, its continued existence an intolerable threat. With ideological conflict thus piled upon geopolitical rivalry, no one should be surprised by what ensued. The real historical surprise would have been if there had been no Cold War.<sup>44</sup>

#### *McCarthyism and Left-Liberal Anticommunism*

The revisionist tradition born from *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* and related historical narratives remain influential despite recent efforts to dislodge them. Specifically with respect to the history of left-liberal anti-communism, social critic Christopher Lasch’s September 1967 essay in *The Nation*,<sup>45</sup> which coined the term ‘Cultural Cold War’ set the foundation for a tradition whose inheritors include historians such as Marilyn Young and Fredrik Logevall, who examine the Vietnam War and analyze US foreign policy from the framework of empire, or Ellen Schrecker, who is widely considered a foremost expert on McCarthyism and anticommunism.<sup>46</sup>

Building from work like *The Specter: Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1974), edited by Robert Griffith Nathan Theoharis, Schrecker began etching her place in the New Left historical pantheon with *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (1986).<sup>47</sup> In *The Age of McCarthyism* (1994) she argued that during the early Cold War, “liberals and even socialists enlisted in an ongoing crusade... whose main effect was to bolster right-wing... programs.”<sup>48</sup> Furthering this interpretation in *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (1998), Schrecker acknowledged the existence of a “liberal version” that “supported sanctions against Communists, but not against non-Communists,” and “a left-wing version [was] composed of anti-Stalinist radicals who attacked Communists as traitors to the socialist ideal.” Despite a multiplicity of motives on their side, “The overall legacy of liberals’ failure to stand up against the anticommunist crusades was to let the nation’s political culture veer to the right.”<sup>49</sup>

Schrecker has not altered the crux of her argument over the years, despite a mild sea change in the way many scholars and pundits understand the CPUSA following releases of information from Soviet and American archives. Evidence in the VENONA files, released in 1995-1996, confirm a generalized suspicion—proven in some cases—that a number of Communists and their fellow travelers led secret lives as spies for the NKVD (forerunner of the KGB). Purportedly sent from Soviet agents in the US to superiors in Moscow, these decrypted cables provide ‘code names’ and other information that appears to corroborate the allegations of high-level espionage that fueled McCarthy’s meteoric rise and rocked American society during

the late 1940s and 1950s. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the so-called ‘atom spies’ who were executed in 1954 despite an international campaign on their behalf, are now widely seen as having been guilty. As described on the website of the National Security Agency (NSA), which provided the material in conjunction with the CIA, the VENONA files offer “indisputable evidence of their involvement with the Soviet spy ring” that was responsible for monitoring the Manhattan Project.<sup>50</sup> The Rosenberg case continues to be controversial, even as those on the left who once loudly professed their innocence have been forced to admit otherwise, as the debate has now turned the question of whether their punishments—both Julius and Ethel were sentenced to death by electrocution in March 1950—fit their crimes. With respect to the other figure most closely connected to the rise of McCarthy, Alger Hiss, the evidence is less clear. Some researchers think VENONA contains at least enough proof to corroborate accusations made to HUAC in 1948 by ex-Communist Whitaker Chambers that he and Alger Hiss were Soviet spies while the latter worked for the State Department.<sup>51</sup> Republican Congressman Richard Nixon staked his fledgling career on demonstrating Hiss’s guilt, with help from Chambers, who produced evidence concealed inside of a hollowed-out pumpkin still on the vine; with at least some proof of his involvement in espionage, which he always denied, Hiss was convicted of perjury in 1949, the statute of limitations for espionage having expired.

Views on the Rosenberg case and the ‘Hiss-Chambers’ Affair’ serve as bellwethers among scholars today, separating historians like Schrecker and Maurice Isserman, who emphasize the persecution of radicals during the ‘second red scare,’

from John Earl Haynes and Harvy Khler, who view their colleagues' position as an apologia for Communist Party treason. To Haynes and Khler, authors of *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (2000), and *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (2009), McCarthy was a flawed messenger, but his message about the threat of Communists-in-government, a proverbial 'den of spies in the State Department,' was prescient. They agree with the substance (if not the tone) of charges advanced by the likes of McCarthy, Nixon and HUAC generally, as well as FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, that the Communist Party was engaged in a conspiracy to subvert American democracy.<sup>52</sup>

Following VENONA and similar releases from the Russian government, Schrecker has recognized the need to reevaluate the CPUSA's dual-function as an arm of the Soviet Comintern as well as a domestic political party. In *Many are the Crimes* she concedes, "in the light of the new evidence... from formerly closed archives," that "the Kremlin's undercover operations may well have been more extensive than many historians had previously assumed." Yet to Schrecker the question still boils down to how much the 'red menace' was skillfully inflated, and manipulated, for personal and professional gain. It therefore remained her contention that "whatever the reality of the communist threat may have been," most "important for understanding the political repression of the McCarthy period is the way in which that threat was perceived."<sup>53</sup> Just as she had prior to VENONA, Schrecker still agreed with the essence of Freda Kirchwey's claim in June 1950, that McCarthyism was a cynical attack against proponents of the New Deal, benefitting the political



interests of conservatives.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, scholars continue to produce new studies in the mold of Schrecker's work, such as *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* (2013) in which Landon Storrs charges that Cold War anticommunism, as driven by conservatives, "stunted the development of the American welfare state." Beyond "its well-known violation of civil liberties and destruction of careers, the Second Red Scare curbed the social democratic potential of the New Deal through its impact on policymakers who sought to mitigate the antidemocratic tendencies of unregulated capitalism."<sup>55</sup> At the heart of the debate between Schrecker's camp and opponents like Haynes and Khler are two opposing perspectives on Cold War anticommunism that will likely never be reconciled.

In a July 2000 article for *The Nation*, "The Right's Cold War Revision," Schrecker and Isserman responded to the post-VENONA work of historians like Haynes and Khler by expressing concern that "Current Espionage Fears have Given New Life to Liberal Anticommunism." Haynes, as he describes it, does not view the entire history of the CPUSA in a negative light, attaching himself to a school of analysis concerning American Communism associated with the work of Theodore Draper.<sup>56</sup> He reiterated his position in a Winter 2000 journal article, "The Cold War Debate Continues: A Traditionalist View of Historical Writing on Domestic Communism and Anti-Communism," which coincided with a personal rejoinder to Schrecker and Isserman.<sup>57</sup> From Haynes's point-of-view his work represents a return to the commonplace mode of interpreting American Communism, acknowledging both positive and negative attributes, before the emergence of New Left-inspired

revisionism. Following the events of September 11, 2001, scholars and political commentators began to draw from the 'traditionalist' perspective in an attempt to reanimate cold war liberalism as a model for the Democratic Party's 'post-9/11' foreign policy. Historians Kevin Mattson, Jennifer Delton, and Jennifer Luff are among those who typify this type of 'post-sixties' thinking.

Mattson's *When America was Great: The Fighting Faith of Postwar Liberalism* (2004) seeks to recover a 'usable past' among those who he argues have been unfairly condemned for "selling out." He profiles a foursome of intellectuals, including Niebuhr and Schlesinger, along with journalist James Wechsler and economist James K. Galbraith, in order to "explain the promise of liberalism" and "improve current political discussion." His work has "two purposes: to reconstruct the worldview of 'Cold War liberalism' in its own context and evaluate it from the perspective of the present." Hence, postwar liberals "embraced their country's promise," yet "never allowed themselves to become pure celebrants of the American way of life or lose sight of their role as critics." In short, they "knew America was great but that it could become even greater." Mattson expresses awareness that "to say such a thing... runs against not just the conservative pundits" who dominated much of the media landscape, "but a New Left historical interpretation, an even weightier inheritance for anyone that writes from the left." As a result, "One narrative about 'Cold War liberal' intellectuals dominates: they *acquiesced*," and underwent "'embourgeoisement,' busy as they were 'making it' as middle-class eggheads in fat and prosperous America." Consequently, "They

were... ‘deradicalized,’ moving out of the leftism that dominated Depression-era America,” and “into the center and sometimes careening rightwards during the affluent 1950s.”<sup>58</sup>

A former student of Christopher Lasch, Mattson once imbibed a New Left-oriented view of liberalism, as described in 2005 in *Dissent*. In “Revisiting *The Vital Center*” he depicts his reencounter with Schlesinger as “like a blow” that woke him “from dogmatic slumber.”<sup>59</sup> Thus his awakening inspired not just a need to challenge the far left; Mattson noted that “Lasch’s sophisticated critique of liberalism” had been “surpassed by a nonstop screed from the right’s punditocracy.” He therefore mused about sending to the likes of rightwing pundits Ann Coulter and Michael Savage “copies of *The Vital Center* accompanied with a note saying, *Read this.*” It is curious, however, that Mattson treats his “cast of characters,” the erstwhile Socialist Niebuhr, New Dealers Schlesinger and Galbraith, and the ex-communist Wechsler, as though they formed a naturally cohesive category; although he briefly addresses Wechsler and Niebuhr’s prior orientations as leftists, Mattson’s analysis starts from the point where he can safely label his subjects ‘liberal,’ thereby more easily collapsing ideological differences between them. It also helps for his purpose that none of Mattson’s main characters migrated away from liberalism later in life. In that regard, he deals with the more complicated New York intellectuals by keeping their messy storyline separate. Curiously, Mattson acknowledges that his subjects “worked closely” with Sidney Hook, Daniel Bell, literary critic Lionel Trilling, and historian Richard Hofstadter, but “always remained independent.” Hence they enter his

narrative only when needed to help better “understand the worldview of liberalism.”<sup>60</sup> Yet it is not clear why Mattson categorizes Hofstadter as a New York intellectual rather than a cold war liberal. On one hand this exposes the inadequacy of such labels; on the other hand it illustrates why the concept of a left-liberal anticommunist coalition makes sense.

Jennifer Delton joined this effort with her 2010 article, “Rethinking Post-World War II Anticommunism,” which she expanded into a book, *Rethinking the 1950s: How Anticommunism and the Cold War Made America Liberal* (2013). Delton sought to undo “the entrenched—and misleading—characterization of post-World War II anticommunism as hysterical and conservative.” Refuting the narrative that anticommunism in the McCarthy era was dominated by the right, which used it as a smokescreen for its attack on the left, she concluded that “Liberal anticommunism grew out of different circumstances” and “served different ends than conservative anticommunism,” adding: “It brought about... achievements [that] deserve to be recognized and even perhaps celebrated, not hidden, regretted, or equated with McCarthyism.” While “Conservatives hated Communism,” Delton argued that “they also hated socialism, New Dealism, and other forms of progressive activity,” which made “their efforts were unfocused and ineffective.” Yet liberals had different motives, as they “could only benefit from the disappearance of Communists, who disrupted their organizations, challenged their ideas, alienated potential allies, and invited conservative repression.” She therefore concludes that “Whatever radical possibilities were buried by anticommunism in the late 1940s were less important

than the triumph of... the Liberal Consensus,” which “occurred with the Cold War” and was “born out of liberals’ anticommunist efforts.” Hence, “The [second] red scare did not subvert the New Deal,” according to Delton, “but rather preserved and expanded it.”<sup>61</sup>

*Rethinking the 1950s* compliments recent studies like Jennifer Luff’s *Commonsense Anticommunism: Labor and Civil Liberties between the World Wars* (2012). Examining the American Federation of Labor in the 1920s and 1930s, Luff concluded that “the history of labor anticommunism recasts” the prevailing consensus on “the origins of popular anticommunism and McCarthyism.” She further claimed:

Historians often treat anticommunism as a conspiracy of capitalists and conservatives who whipped the nation into a red-baiting hysteria after World War II in order to reverse the New Deal order. After enduring a merciless onslaught intended to roll back labor’s recent gains, labor unions yielded to pressure and drove Communists and leftists out of their ranks. In these accounts, unions appear as the victims rather than as critical organizers and sustainers of the movement.<sup>62</sup>

Like Delton, Luff contends that anticommunism in the twentieth century, as practiced by both liberals and conservatives, was far more diverse than is commonly understood. In that sense, a relatively brief moment of hysterical fear mongering in the late 1940s and early 1950s was in many ways more the exception than the rule. This point-of-view resonates with a position held on the center-right. In *Not Without Honor* (1995), for example, Richard Gid-Powers aimed to recover a more nuanced “anticommunist tradition,” in which Ronald Reagan’s achievements would not be “tarnished and obscured by bitter memories of Joe McCarthy.”<sup>63</sup> Arising from

liberals and conservatives, this revisionist impulse seeks to make anticommunism synonymous not with ignorance and malice, but with responsible political struggle.

In a 2011 *Diplomatic History* article K.A. Cuordileone notes that, “For over half a century, heated arguments about the CPUSA, anticommunism and the spy trials of the era have been aired in books, academic journals, periodicals, and Internet discussions. In the aftermath of Venona’s declassification in the 1990s,” moreover, “the conversation both inside and outside of academia was as prickly as ever.” In that sense she contends that “For now, the Cold War may be over, but those who lived through and often participated in the ideological battles and political upheavals in the 1950s and 1960s still dominate the debate. Their fundamental positions haven’t changed all that much from those staked out decades ago.” At the same time, she was prescient in the conclusion that, as debate over the legacy of cold war liberalism/left-liberal anticommunism continues, “subsequent generations of scholars, with less invest in proving previously pronounced certainties or defending beliefs passionately held for a lifetime, may take up the task with greater equanimity.”<sup>64</sup> For her part, Cuordileone seeks a more balanced historical assessment, arguing that “a central lesson of the Cold War” is that “secrets tend to protect, empower and corrupt their holders, breeding public mistrust, cynicism, conspiracy theories, and political malaise; they are inherently corrosive and undemocratic, and concentrations of power depend upon them.” Therefore, “while the CIA, FBI, and other U.S. institutions have considerable offenses for which to answer, the lesson applies to none so much as the

USSR.”<sup>65</sup> Such perspective is quite useful even for those historians sympathetic to the New Left—and perhaps *especially* for them.

*New York Intellectuals and Neoconservatism*

In *The Long War: The Intellectual People's Front and Anti-Stalinism, 1930-1940* (1995), Judy Kutulas captures the deep pessimism of Schlesinger's worldview, concluding that “vital center liberalism was not just anticommunism tempered by traditional liberal concerns,” but rather “a doctrine of disappointment, a concession that there were no utopias, just evil and corruption that must be held in check.” Her analysis demonstrates the relevance of literature on the New York intellectuals and the development of neoconservatism to an examination of left-liberal anticommunism. One must, at the same time, heed Kutulas's reminder that “the New York intellectuals... tend to loom larger in the historiography than they did in life.”<sup>66</sup> This is in part because they strove to shape their image among scholars, as with Irving Kristol's *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (1995), in which he describes his transformation from “a neo-Marxist, [to] a neo-Trotskyist, a neo-socialist, a neoliberal, and finally a neoconservative.”<sup>67</sup> Kristol is often seen as the ‘godfather of neoconservatism’ because in the 1970s he began to embrace a label that, like ‘cold war liberal,’ began as a smear among radicals used in reference to defectors (according to one popular mythology the term was coined by Michael Harrington). Kristol attended the City College of New York at the same time as his contemporaries Daniel Bell, Irving Howe (1920-1993), and Nathan Glazer (b. 1923); as the legend

goes, they assembled regularly with others at ‘Alcove 2’ of the cafeteria, where anti-Stalinists sat—‘Alcove 1’ being reserved for Stalinists.<sup>68</sup>

Scholarly discussion of this group began with such work as John Patrick Diggins’s *Up From Communism: Conservative Odysseys in American Intellectual Development* (1975), which profiled New York writers Max Eastman, John Dos Passos, James Burnham, and Will Herberg, analyzing the importance of such figures who had migrated from the far left to the far right. In *The Neoconservatives: The Men who are Changing America’s Politics* (1979) journalist Peter Steinfels offered a somewhat more skeptical examination of the phenomenon, focusing on Bell, Kristol, Glazer, and Democratic Senator from New York Daniel Patrick Moynihan—who spent a year at CCNY where he frequented ‘Alcove 2.’ Having both fierce critics and loyal defenders (often from within their own ranks), these particular ‘New York intellectuals’ began to gain wide attention in the mid-late 1980s, at the same time they became publically identified with neoconservatism, which in turn was associated with a renewal of hardline anti-Soviet foreign policy. This sparked a new round of scholarly interest. Some of the work produced during this period leading to such work as Terry A. Cooney’s *The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and Its Circle, 1934-1945* (1986), Alan Wald’s *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (1987), and Ruth Wisse’s “The New York (Jewish) Intellectuals” published in the November 1987 edition of *Commentary*. Howard Brick’s *Daniel Bell and the Decline of Intellectual*



*Radicalism: Social Theory and Political Reconciliation in the 1940s* (1986), helped set a precedent for future scholarship by identifying this process of ‘de-radicalization.’

Depending on one’s political orientation, the New York intellectuals’ de-radicalization is seen as either inherently negative or positive. In *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (1987), Alan Wald wrote from the standpoint of a Trotskyist rebuking those who had abandoned the faith, wondering how “a group of... revolutionary communists in the 1930s could become an institutionalized and even hegemonic component of American culture during the conservative 1950s,” morphing from “anti-Stalinist communists” to “anticommunist liberals.”<sup>69</sup> With far greater scholarly detachment, Alexander Bloom’s *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals and Their World* (1986) arrived at the same conclusion as Wald: that a coterie of former Marxists had “emerged as an essential group in the liberal anti-Communist coalition.”<sup>70</sup> Neil Jumonville gave a similarly dispassionate appraisal in *Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America* (1991), arguing that “the New York critics not only helped shape” anticommunism as “the official ideology of America in the postwar period,” but simultaneously “demonstrated how to integrate antitotalitarianism into culture as well as politics.”<sup>71</sup>

The mid-1990s saw another wave of interest in these colorful former Trotskyists who, along with their offspring, had become key Republican foreign policy strategists. Some of this work, like Harvey M. Teres’s *Renewing the Left: Politics, Imagination, and the New York Intellectuals* (1996), continued to highlight

distinctiveness; at the same time, Hugh Wilford's *The New York Intellectuals: From Vanguard to Institution* (1995) called for a historical recasting, based on "a tendency to underestimate the element of continuity between" their "contribution to the Cold War and... past radical activities."<sup>72</sup> Especially since 9/11, it has become increasingly commonplace to see the New York intellectuals' embrace of the Cold War as symptomatic of their 'institutionalization,' which coincided with their de-radicalization; in a 2003 essay seeking to normalize the history of the New York intellectuals, Nathan Abrams described them as embedded in a "network of alliances that formed the Cold War anticommunist hegemony."<sup>73</sup> Whether seen as having had a singular effect on the development of American political culture, or serving a more structural function connected to processes of hegemonic transformation, scholars have not ceased seeing import—overblown as it may be—in the history of these mostly Jewish anti-Stalinist leftists from New York.

Two historical studies focused on neoconservatism are especially germane to this work. In *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (1995), John Ehrman explores neoconservative foreign policy—a mixture of left-inspired anticommunism, pro-Americanism, and pro-Zionism—across two stages of development. Before tracing its evolution into the mid 1990s, he locates the emergence of a neoconservative worldview from within the "splintering of the vital center," as "the liberal consensus collapsed" in the "latter half of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s." Tracing the effects of "liberalism's split" in the face of civil rights and antiwar militancy, which animated the rise of neoconservatism, Ehrman

pays careful attention to the role of ADA liberals including Niebuhr and Schlesinger, while putting particular emphasis on the importance of *The Vital Center* in the ideological construction of early Cold War foreign policy.<sup>74</sup> Fifteen years later, in *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement* (2010), Justin Vaisse revisited many of the same themes covered by Ehrman, following a similar format, while adding discussion of a third phase of development, bridging the end of the Cold War and the start of the War on Terror.

In his first chapter, “Incubation: From the Cold War to the Collapse of Liberalism,” Vaisse examines the coming apart of an “unwieldy edifice,” that had grown “too large for its own good.” Like Ehrman, Vaisse concludes that the demise of liberal hegemony was more or less inevitable amid “the rise of the civil rights movement, the proliferation of student protests, and above all opposition to the war in Vietnam. The ‘vital center’ stood for only a few years after this assault began.”<sup>75</sup> Vaisse demonstrates, in that context, an awareness of the need for a nuanced understanding of differences among those who contributed to the liberal consensus:

Although intellectuals who came out of the factional struggles of the extreme left of the 1930s and the Democratic reformers of the New Deal can be lumped together under the label ‘Cold War liberals,’ there were significant differences between them. While former Communists and Trotskyists such as Sidney Hook... made anticommunism the central issue, at times to the point of a single-minded obsession, liberals of the ‘vital center’ like Arthur Schlesinger took it as one tenet of their faith among others, refusing to allow that one part of their political vision to devour the rest.<sup>76</sup>

As indispensable as Vaisse and Ehrman’s work is, such studies are on their own insufficient; the tendency to collapse examinations of left-liberal anticommunism within work on the New York intellectuals/ neoconservatives is akin

to letting a colorful butterfly obscure the nature of its cocoon. Work on McCarthyism and/or anticommunism more broadly have a related tendency, assigning cold war liberalism to the subplot of a discussion otherwise focused on subjects deemed more important. Yet given that many such discussions fail to differentiate between variations of leftwing and liberal anticommunism, using the term ‘left-liberal anticommunism’ helps to better capture fluidity among intellectuals and more accurately reflects the nature of coalitional power (hegemony) during the Cold War.

#### *Cold War Anticommunism and American Empire*

There is no escaping that the manner in which one analyzes the history of American communism and anticommunism depends ultimately on their ideological standpoint; for the most part, this is a matter of scholars examining the same evidence but interpreting it differently. If a historian is more inclined to deem the CPUSA as a dangerous conspiracy, then strong measures to destroy its influence are clearly justifiable. Yet if one understands the extent of Stalinist subversion as having been more limited than was claimed, McCarthyism is more easily viewed as a scheme to repress the left. Likewise, if one sees the United States as seen as having had fundamentally altruistic intentions on the global stage after WWII, the likelier they are to assess the anti-Soviet crusade as a necessary struggle against a totalitarian foe. If, however, one adopts a more critical stance with respect to what historian Paul Kramer has called “the long shadow cast by U.S. power in the past and present,” they

are more liable to perceive the so-called Cold War as a pretext for building and sustaining the American century, which was but a euphemism for empire.<sup>77</sup>

Like the authors whose work I engage, while remaining true to evidence as all scholars must, I do not pretend that it is possible to be completely unbiased and unopinionated with respect to this type of historical study. In that regard, I am not wedded to a specific intellectual camp or revisionist school, and I see the value in cultivating a middle ground between polarized extremes; it is indeed encouraging that there has been a recent trend towards producing a more complex, less ideologically grounded understanding of the Cold War and midcentury anticommunism(s). Still, my work embraces the fact that, as described by Kramer, “empire as a category of analysis” is “an indispensable tool in the kit of any historian of the United States.”<sup>78</sup>

Useful as a way to connect the nominally disparate struggles associated with anti-Soviet foreign policy, empire is indeed a helpful framework for conceiving the basic continuity in the structure US global power from Cold War to post-Cold War and beyond. As part of his analysis of post-1945 American empire, Andrew Bacevich has in that manner called the ongoing US military engagement in the Persian Gulf region since 1979 a “war for the Greater Middle East.”<sup>79</sup> In that sense, from the vantage point of American global empire, the history of left-liberal anticommunism provides an important cautionary tale regarding the contradictions of pursuing progressive reform at home combined with the projection of power abroad.

## Chapter Outline

This study is divided into six chapters detailing and interpreting the rise and fall of left-liberal anticommunism, from 1941-1968. Chapter One, “Tragedy of Possibility,” traces the creation of a new hegemonic formation born out of the defeat of the Popular Front alliance, through which left-liberal struggle was redefined. Chapter Two, “Following *The New Leader*,” situates the three species of left-liberal anticommunists that coalesced in the early 1940s, framed by the history of the Manhattan-based publication at the heart of social-democratic culture in New York—part of a nexus with the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF) and Tamiment Institute (formerly the Rand School of Social Science). Chapter Three, “Coming Together,” outlines the events and institutions involved in the convergence of midcentury left-liberal anticommunism, before and after World War Two. Chapter Four, “Speaking for Freedom,” examines the significance of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom—as a microcosm of the left-liberal anticommunist coalition—in the context of a Cold War Propaganda matrix that encompassed the Voice of America (VoA). Chapter Five, “Holding the Center,” examines the multilayered relationship between left-liberal anticommunism and McCarthyism, while exploring three variations of anti-McCarthyism represented by the attitudes of Thomas, Hook, and Schlesinger; it also traces the role of McCarthyism in fracturing the ACCF, and with it the left-liberal anticommunist coalition. Chapter Six, “Falling Apart,” follows the ultimate unraveling of left-liberal anticommunism during the late 1960s, highlighting the divergence between Thomas, Hook, Schlesinger, and other *cold war comrades*.

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On October 17, 1967, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and George Kennan spoke on the telephone. Since Schlesinger had celebrated his fiftieth birthday two days earlier, it is conceivable that Kennan called his old friend at home, and their conversation began on a personal note. Either way their discussion inevitably turned to an unavoidable topic, the American war in Vietnam, of which they had both recently become vocal critics. More than likely they also made mention of their mutual contributions to the *Foreign Affairs* symposium marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. In “Origins of the Cold War,” the second of five articles, which appeared directly after Kennan’s, Schlesinger expressed a point-of-view that echoed his friend’s recollection: in retrospect, “if it was “impossible to see the Cold War as a case of American aggression and Russian response,” it was nonetheless “hard to see it as a pure case of Russian aggression and American response.” Moscow bore greater responsibility for the conflict, which “could have been avoided only if the Soviet Union had not been possessed by convictions both of the infallibility of the Communist word and of the inevitability of a Communist world.” To accent his point, Schlesinger drew from another comrade (and fellow former ACCF member), poet W.H. Auden, whose 1945 essay on Melville’s *Moby Dick* compared “Greek tragedy” and “Christian” tragedy, which as relayed by Schlesinger, amounted to “‘the tragedy of necessity,’ where the feeling aroused in the spectator is ‘What a pity it had to be this way,’” versus “‘the tragedy of possibility,’ where the feeling aroused is ‘What a pity it was this way when it might have been otherwise.’”<sup>80</sup>

## CHAPTER ONE

### Tragedy of Possibility: From a People's Century to Cold War Empire

No nation will have the God-given right to exploit other nations... there must be neither military nor economic imperialism. The methods of the nineteenth century will not work in the people's century which is now about to begin.

—Henry Wallace, “The Price of Free World Victory,” May 1942

In the winter of 1946-47, New Deal liberals—led by Eleanor Roosevelt, Reinhold Niebuhr, Joe Rauh, Walter Reuther... John Kenneth Galbraith, Hubert Humphrey and many others—Formed Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal organization that excluded Communists and in 1948 led the attack on the Communist-dominated Progressive Party of Henry Wallace.

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., 1996

In the February 17, 1941 edition of *Life* magazine, publishing magnate Henry Luce penned a lengthy editorial proclaiming that “the world of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, if it is to come to life in any nobility of health and vigor, must be to a significant degree an American Century.” With war raging in Europe, the influential publishing magnate called for the United States to join the fight as a senior partner to the British, thus being able to dictate the aims of an Allied victory. As a Republican he hoped to sway fellow conservatives into branding “isolationism as dead as an issue as slavery,” while making “a truly *American* internationalism... as natural... as the airplane or the radio.”<sup>1</sup> Luce’s vision represented the interests of what some scholars refer to as a (trans-Atlantic) “state-private network” that helped create bipartisan consensus regarding the necessity of US global leadership at the end of World War Two.<sup>2</sup>

The most prominent group in the state-private network was (and still is) the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR); formed along with a British counterpart, the



Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), the CFR was born out of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and surrounding efforts to devise a League of Nations after World War One.<sup>3</sup> From the perspective of CFR-affiliated elites, the decline of British power presented a crisis in terms of world stability (especially with decolonization in developing countries), but also an opportunity to gain economic and military superiority based on what John Fousek has called “the hegemonic ideology of nationalist globalism,” and which as described by Michael Hunt, fueled the “dawn of U.S. dominance.”<sup>4</sup> From 1939 through 1945 the CFR and State Department conducted a series of classified planning sessions in preparation for an American-led postwar global order; in a report from either 1941 or 1942, CFR president Norman Davis advised that “the British Empire as it existed in the past” would not return, “and the United States may have to take its place.” Similarly, chief of army intelligence Gen. George V. Strong warned that US leaders must be ready to “cultivate a mental view toward world settlement” after the war, “amounting perhaps to a pax-Americana.”<sup>5</sup> Translating this idea for public consumption, Luce urged Americans, as citizens of “the most powerful... nation in the world,” to “accept whole-heartedly our duty and... opportunity to... exert upon the world the full impact of our influence, for such purposes... and by such means as we see fit.”<sup>6</sup>

Nearly a year after “The American Century” appeared on newsstands, on May 8, 1942, Vice-President Henry Wallace delivered the keynote address to the closing session of the Second Free World Congress at the Commodore Hotel in New York.

The event featured dinner for roughly two hundred people, mostly members of the international Free World Association, which was a network of leftwing antifascists from Europe, Asia, the US, and Latin America; the political dignitaries who joined Wallace on the Free World program included Walter Nash of New Zealand, Jan Masaryk from Czechoslovakia, and Chinese Nationalist Li Yu Ying.<sup>7</sup> Speaking for about thirty minutes, Wallace proposed that the war was “a fight between a slave world and a free world”; while an Allied victory was essential for obvious reasons, defeating the Axis powers would also enable a continuation of “the march of freedom for the common man,” or what he otherwise called the “great revolution of the people,” which encompassed “the American revolution of 1775, the French revolution of 1792, the Latin American revolutions of the Bolivarian era, the German revolution of 1848, and the Russian revolution of 1917.” Hence, winning the peace must entail “a better standard of living... not merely in the United States and England, but also in India, Russia, China and Latin America—not merely in the United Nations, but also in Germany and Italy and Japan.” To Luce and others who had “spoken of the ‘American Century,’” Wallace offered a rebuttal: “I say that the century on which we are entering... can be and must be the century of the common man.”<sup>8</sup>

Although not delivered in an official capacity, “The Price of Free World Victory” was probably Wallace’s most widely circulated speech, and arguably his most important as a member of Franklin Roosevelt’s administration. Linking the war against fascism to ongoing struggles for social and economic justice, Wallace framed his idealized worldview from the standpoint of support for the New Deal, which he

had done much to help shape while serving as secretary of agriculture from 1933-1940. As recounted by the Free World Association's founder Louis Dolivet, the address was broadcast to "millions of listeners" in the US on CBS Radio, while a "summary... delivered in Spanish" was aired on a short-wave frequency throughout Latin America, Europe, and Asia.<sup>9</sup> His remarks were published in the June 1942 issue of the group's journal *Free World*, which also contained Spanish journalist J. Alvarez del Vayo's prediction that Wallace's message would be "as effective in spreading democratic ideals... as any declaration made by the spokesmen of the United Nations"; his address was reprinted as a book titled *The Century of the Common Man* (1943).<sup>10</sup> Recognizing its propaganda value, in December 1942 the Office of War Information (OWI) released a short film that featured the Vice-President reading excerpts from his desk in the White House to the soundtrack of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."<sup>11</sup> *The Price of Victory* highlighted Wallace's amplification of the "Four Freedoms" outlined by Roosevelt in January 1941 (freedom of speech and worship; freedom from want and fear), which he called the "credo" of "the people, in their millennial and revolutionary march toward manifesting here on earth the dignity that is in every human soul." At the film's conclusion Wallace delivered a similarly messianic affirmation, which in its original context was directed specifically to a leftwing audience: "The people's revolution is on the march, and the devil and all his angels cannot prevail against it."<sup>12</sup>

## Henry Wallace and the Popular Front

In the 1940s the nucleus of left-liberal political culture in the United States shifted increasingly away from the Popular Front, which had gained substantial influence in the 1930s as a result of the Depression. As opponents of the Soviet Union squared-off against those who remained sympathetic to the revolutionary cause on which it was founded, on the other side were those left-liberals who were never enamored by the Marxist-Leninist project, and/or had become disillusioned by what they saw as its misdirection under Stalin. Believing that Soviet ‘totalitarianism’ posed an existential threat to Western civilization, this anti-Stalinist alliance joined together to defeat the Henry Wallace campaign, and more broadly to put an end to the lingering influence of the American Popular Front. No one embodied popular front progressivism in the United States in that era more than Wallace, who as vice-president during the first part of the decade had become enmeshed in a coalition that brought together supporters of both the New Deal and the antifascist Popular Front; his emergence as symbolic leader of that group culminated in his failed campaign for president in 1948 atop a Progressive ticket that challenged the Democratic Party from the left.

Henry Agard Wallace was born in 1888 to a Scottish-descended family that had resettled in Iowa from Pennsylvania. His grandfather, known as “Uncle Henry,” founded *Wallace’s Farmer*, which explored the application of scientific agricultural practices, and became an important resource while helping the family gain influence throughout the Midwest ‘farm belt.’ Henry Cantwell Wallace (b. 1866) turned the

editorship of *Wallace's Farmer* over to his son upon being appointed secretary of agriculture in the Republican administrations of Calvin Coolidge and Warren Harding, from 1921-1924. Henry A. Wallace followed in his father's footsteps by also leaving his post at the family newspaper to take up an appointment as agriculture secretary, having been recruited by the Democratic Roosevelt campaign in 1932. Wallace began lobbying Congress for a farm relief bill immediately after the election, quickly embracing the experimental spirit of New Deal policymaking developed by Roosevelt and his top advisors.<sup>13</sup> After taking office in 1933 he dove headlong into the task of addressing the crisis facing American farmers, which had started before the Depression; he developed a reputation as an impassioned New Dealer.

Although Henry A. Wallace was not particularly well known nationally (in May 1939 he ranked tenth in a poll of Democrats' presidential preferences should Roosevelt decline to run again), he became highly popular among those on the left flank of the New Deal coalition. Upon deciding to pursue an unprecedented third term amid the deepening war crisis, Roosevelt chose Wallace as his running mate in 1940—despite objections from party elders—replacing the conservative John Nance Garner who had made an ill-fated attempt to challenge FDR for the nomination.<sup>14</sup> During his tenure as vice-president, from 1941 through 1944, Wallace helped manage a shift in national priorities from domestic to foreign affairs; as head of the Board of Economic Warfare he was tasked with overseeing a restructuring of policies to meet the needs of large-scale military production. Another one of Wallace's wartime

responsibilities was to help sway public opinion in favor of supporting the Allied war effort (which became easier following the December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor).

Henry Wallace's appeal for what he referred to alternatively as the 'people's century' or the 'century of the common man' offered, as described by historian Norman Markowitz, "a progressive capitalist alternative to the benevolent imperialism of Henry Luce."<sup>15</sup> Still, given that the new vice-president was an established supporter of the Allied war effort from the standpoint of an avowed New Dealer, it can be argued just as easily that Luce, who was no fan of either Roosevelt or Wallace, had crafted his concept of the American century in large part as a response to positions long-identified with Wallace.<sup>16</sup> In that context, to the extent that FDR's global planning was an outgrowth of his domestic policies, as described by sociologist and historian Franz Schurmann, "the United Nations was to become the nucleus of a world government which the United States would dominate much as the Democrats dominated the American Congress." Still, Schurmann notes that, "over and above his national and international commitments," FDR also believed "the poor of the entire world, including Russia, could be incorporated into the evolving Pax Americana with profit... and... security for all."<sup>17</sup> By that account, Roosevelt held a view that in essence combined the visions of Luce and Wallace, with the UN seen as both an instrument of peace as well as the exercise of US 'benevolent hegemony.' Still, as far as his openness to the possibility of incorporating the Soviet Union within a community of nations, Roosevelt was clearly closer to Wallace's position.

Wallace's progressivism, which fueled his utopian political vision, was shaped by the dynamics of both the New Deal and the Popular Front. As official Comintern policy, starting in 1935 the Popular Front reversed the ideological purity mandate of the Third Period (1928-1934) in which Communist parties were instructed to make alliances only with other Marxist-Leninist groups. During the Popular Front, the Soviet Union officially sanctioned the building of coalitions between Communists and non-Communist left-liberals in order to combat the rising tide of Fascism in Europe. While it came to an abrupt end formally with the signing of the 'Hitler-Stalin Pact' in August 1939, the spirit of the Popular Front was rekindled during the war, and its influence lingered into the late 1940s.

The American Communist Party's electoral fortunes peaked in 1932, when then-leader William Z. Foster gained 103,000 votes for president. As Roosevelt took office in 1933, there were idealistic progressives in and around his administration who viewed (democratic) socialism as a source of inspiration, as well as a possible model for the future given the instability of capitalism. The appeal of communism in the United States during the Depression grew among radicals in New York and other northern urban centers. Moreover by squarely addressing the issue of racial inequality, the CPUSA gained stature in a swath of the rural south, where it organized among African-Americans in what the Party called the 'Black Belt.' Groups and individuals affiliated with communism joined the assault on 'Jim Crow,' and at the same time members of the CPUSA joined august liberal organizations like the NAACP and the ACLU that fought segregation. The same dynamic occurred in the

labor movement, which began to flourish under the New Deal. Communists had a particularly high level of involvement in groups affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), an assembly of radical unions formed in 1935 as an alternative to the AFL.<sup>18</sup> Under the leadership of Earl Browder, the CPUSA began pursuing a version of the popular front strategy prior to 1935, through generalized support for the New Deal amidst the crisis of the Depression, appealing for unity with the slogan: ‘Communism is twentieth century Americanism.’ As a result, the CPUSA’s membership swelled, as did the number of progressives who identified as fellow travelers. Many who were generally supportive of communism and the Soviet Union joined the emerging new deal coalition, seeing it as a worthwhile vehicle for radical reform. Although Browder ran for president in 1936, the CPUSA tacitly endorsed Roosevelt’s bid for re-election that year.

Upon formalization of the Popular Front, CPUSA members were encouraged to join unions and other groups not necessarily controlled or dominated by communists, and to create new organizations designed to attract support from non-communist progressives. Scores of groups were created to help facilitate popular front-style cooperation on a range of issues; many were formally attached to the Comintern and/or the CPUSA, while others were associated informally, in some cases simply by virtue of having a significant number of Communists among its members. Groups such as the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born (est. 1933), the League of American Writers (est. 1935), the National Negro Congress (est. 1935), the American Artists Congress (est. 1936), and the National Lawyers’ Guild (est.



1937) were accused by opponents of being Communist ‘fronts,’ in the sense that inner-circle (that had perhaps infiltrated the leadership) exercised control secretly in a manner that served Party interests dictated from Moscow. Sometimes with direct evidence and oftentimes not, progressive organizations were routinely labeled by anticommunists in HUAC and elsewhere as CPUSA ‘fronts.’<sup>19</sup>

### Free World Association

As a group that epitomized the character of the Popular Front, there is surprisingly little information about the history of the International Free World Association. It was launched during a conference held in Washington, D.C. on June 15, 1941, which as reported in the *New York Times* was attended by “citizens of sixteen nations, many of them former government officials of high rank.”<sup>20</sup> With headquarters in Manhattan, chapters were formed, according to the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, “throughout the United States, Latin America, and certain nations of Europe and Asia.”<sup>21</sup> In conjunction with promoting the development of a postwar United Nations (UN), the Free World Association’s main goal was to highlight the activities of the anti-Nazi underground in Europe. To that end it operated a “Free World Radio” network, which made regularly scheduled international broadcasts. And, in addition to *Free World*, it published pamphlets like one from 1942 that was “intended to show how the Underground movements are... undermining Axis domination” and “hastening the day for Allied invasion.”<sup>22</sup> It also held events like the March 1943 “Stop Hitler Now” protest at Madison Square Garden, co-sponsored with

the American Jewish Committee, the Church Peace Union, and the CIO, among other groups.<sup>23</sup>

Building from the success of the May 1942 event, a Third Free World Congress met from October 28-31, 1943 in New York, with a parallel Latin American meeting in Montevideo, Uruguay in early December. This combined body, “representing democratic organizations of more than twenty countries,” produced an agreement pledging that the “Congress solemnly reaffirms the fundamental principles of the Free World Movement—International Democracy—Economic Democracy—Political Democracy—Democratic World Organization Based on Collective Security.”<sup>24</sup> A Fourth Free World Congress was scheduled for April 18–19, 1945 in Washington DC in advance of the UN Charter meeting set to take place a week later in San Francisco, yet was postponed following Roosevelt’s death. Published in that month’s issue was a letter sent by FDR in March, which read in part:

April will be a critical month in the history of human freedom. It will see the meeting in San Francisco of a great conference of the United Nations—the nations united in this war against tyranny and militarism. At that conference, the peoples of the world will decide, through their representatives and in response to their will, whether or not the best hope for peace the world has ever had will be realized. Discussions by the people of this country, and by the peoples of the freedom-loving world, of the proposals which will be considered at San Francisco, are necessary, are indeed essential, if the purpose of the people to make peace and to keep peace is to be expressed in action.<sup>25</sup>

Roosevelt of course never attended that meeting, and it is unclear whether or not the Fourth Free World Congress was ever officially convened before the group disbanded. To the extent that its purpose was to aid the cause of Allied victory and the creation of the United Nations, its goals were accomplished.

Much of what has been documented about the Free World Association pertains to *Free World*, which ran from 1941-1946, originally under the banner: “A Monthly Magazine Devoted to Democracy and World Affairs.”<sup>26</sup> Similar to other small-circulation journals based at the time in New York, *Free World* mixed international political analysis with book reviews, occasional fiction or poetry, and artwork. To satisfy a readership of (former) diplomats and government officials from several nations, it was distributed in eight versions across five languages: American (English), Mexican (Spanish), French, Chilean, Chinese, Greek, Puerto Rican, and Uruguayan; Russian, Swedish, Czechoslovakian, Italian, Arabic, and British editions were purportedly “in preparation” during the final year of publication.<sup>27</sup> In the American edition, alongside academics and journalists from the United States, Britain, Canada, and Mexico, *Free World* prominently featured the voices of Chinese Nationalists, exiled leaders from Europe (Spain, Italy, France, etc.), as well as Brazil, Chile, and elsewhere in Latin America. An anonymous “Underground Reporter” gave regular updates on the activities of resistance fighters in Europe.

The inaugural issue of *Free World*, published in October 1941, opened with an anti-Nazi illustration followed by a note from US Secretary of State Cordell Hull proclaiming his “absolute faith in the ultimate triumph of the principles of humanity, translated into law and order, by which freedom and justice and security will again prevail.”<sup>28</sup> After Hull’s message, a verse by poet Archibald MacLeish titled “The Western Sky: Words for a Song” read in part: “Be Proud America to bear/ the endless labor of the free/ to strike for freedom everywhere/ and everywhere bear liberty.”<sup>29</sup>

Next came an “Editorial,” likely by Dolivet, revealing the general aims and methods of the Free World Association and *Free World*, which he argued “does not represent merely the launching of another magazine,” but rather “springs out of the conviction of the democratic forces gathered around FREE WORLD that the time is ripe for common action to win the war and to win the peace.” To that end:

Through its pages will speak the enlightened Latin Americans who understand that the fight on the other side of the Atlantic is also their fight; the people of Europe who know in their own flesh the merciless cruelty of Nazi domination; the forces that in China oppose to Japanese aggression not only their patriotic will for independence but also their faith in democracy; the leaders of democratic opinion in the United States, engaged in the double task of opposing the aggressors and contributing to the organization of a better world order.

Hence it was announced that their group endeavored to help create “a society that will establish a free peace based on *worldwide political and economic democracy*, working through an international system of collective security.”<sup>30</sup>

The Free World Association’s prestigious roster encompassed many of the most frequent contributors to *Free World*, with an Honorary Board that included such figures as New York City Mayor Fiorello La Guardia, Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal, Italian diplomat Carlo Sforza, Russian-born US journalist Max Lerner, and the German-American theologian Niebuhr.<sup>31</sup> Along with Dolivet, a writer and film producer (allegedly) from France, its International Board featured the likes of Albert Einstein; British statesman and Nobel Peace laureate Norman Angell; president-in-exile of Czechoslovakia Edouard Beneš; former Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas; French politician Pierre Cot; Soong Mei-ling—the wife of Chinese Nationalist leader

Chiang Kai-shek; and US Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes. *The Nation* magazine's publisher Freda Kirchwey served on both the International Board and Editorial Board of *Free World*, and was joined on the latter by *The New Republic*'s publisher Michael Straight.<sup>32</sup>

According to biographer Sara Alpern, Kirchwey enthusiastically endorsed the “Free world group and its publication,” to the point that she “lent her editor Robert Bendiner to serve as their managing editor, and her bookkeeper, Adeline Henkel, to help with the accounting.” Moreover, in 1942 Kirchwey “launched a special section of the Nation to help serve as a ‘weapon in the fight for a democratic victory’” by “pooling talent from Free World Association members.”<sup>33</sup> She authored at least one article in *Free World*, “The Isolationist Falls into Goebbels’ Lap,” which appeared in December 1941. Straight, whose family owned *The New Republic*, had an intimate relationship to Dolivet;<sup>34</sup> the two men apparently met at a 1937 rally in Paris organized by infamous German-born Soviet agitprop operator Willi Münzenberg; he subsequently introduced the French émigré to his sister, actress Beatrice Whitney Straight, and the couple was wed in March 1942 (and divorced in 1949).<sup>35</sup> They had a son named Willard Straight Dolivet who died in a drowning accident at age seven, in 1952.<sup>36</sup> *Free World* became something of a family affair, with Michael Straight a frequent contributor while Beatrice Straight Dolivet was listed on the masthead as ‘Associate Treasurer.’

Through his wife and brother-in-law, Dolivet developed contacts with prominent leftwing socialites in New York, Washington D.C., and Hollywood; he

was especially close with Orson Welles, becoming the actor/director's political mentor.<sup>37</sup> Welles introduced Dolivet to the film industry, and the two men collaborated on several projects, most notably the 1955 six-episode British television series *Around the World with Orson Welles*, and the *Mr. Arkadin*, released that same year in Spain. Dolivet seems to have been grooming Welles for a career in politics that never panned out, starting with a possible bid for Senate from Wisconsin or California, or even as the first secretary-general of the UN.<sup>38</sup> In the meantime, Dolivet enlisted the leftwing celebrity as an associate editor of *Free World*. According to journalist Roland Perry, Welles was soon "making speeches at Free World dinners and functions and to politicians in Washington."<sup>39</sup> As described by biographer Joseph McBride, "Welles served as Free World's voice in print and on radio."<sup>40</sup>

The editor of *Free World's* relationships with the likes of Orson Welles and Michael Straight add to the intrigue surrounding his identity. It is clear that a man known as Louis Dolivet, born somewhere in Europe around 1908, claimed to have fought in the French Air Force and then with the 'Free French' resistance before fleeing as his country fell to the Nazis. It was reported locally in Pittsburgh, where he seems to have spent a significant amount of time (perhaps because of the Communist affiliations of many steelworkers), that Dolivet spoke to a May 1941 gathering of the Foreign Policy Association, while on crutches, "because of a leg injury received shortly after France capitulated."<sup>41</sup> Not clear, however, is whether or not, as alleged by the House Un-American Activities Committee, "Louis Dolivet" was in fact the

alias used by a Romanian-born French citizen who, as a Soviet agent, was otherwise known as Ludwig Brecher and/or Udeanu.<sup>42</sup>

HUAC's annual report for 1950 painted a shadowy picture while summarizing an "extensive investigation" in which it was "disclosed that Dolivet held a semiofficial position with the United Nations, as a result of which he traveled under diplomatic passport" as early as 1947. It claimed further that "as a result of... hearings held by the committee, Dolivet's contract with the United Nations has not been renewed, and... [he] is presently in Paris and is excludable for admission to the United States under the provisions of the Wood-McCarran Communist Control Act."<sup>43</sup> Through the decoding of notebooks from professed Soviet operative Alexander Vassiliev, historians Harvey Klehr and John Earl Haynes have offered what appears to be corroborating evidence for HUAC's claim that Dolivet was connected to the Willi Münzenberg network.<sup>44</sup> While this conclusion is based on sources that are inherently problematic and difficult to verify, additional confirmation, at least circumstantially, comes from authors like Perry who have explored Michael Straight's role in the notorious 'Cambridge Five' Soviet spy ring in Britain (along with Guy Burgess, Kim Philby, Donald Maclean and Anthony Blunt). In his memoir *After Long Silence* (1993), Straight admitted his involvement while contending that he had been recruited reluctantly, and never passed classified information to his Soviet contact, "Michael Green." He also claimed to have broken with the Communist Party in 1941. Straight confessed privately in 1963 to Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a family friend. Having been invited to work in the Kennedy administration, and

concerned about undergoing a background check, Straight confided in Schlesinger who advised him to inform the Department of Justice, which helped trigger the investigation that resulted in Anthony Blunt's exposure.<sup>45</sup> In light of his connection to Straight, suspicions surrounding Dolivet's identity do not appear unfounded. Yet regardless of whether he was indeed a Comintern 'agent,' allegations to that effect enabled the State Department to bar him from reentering the country after he went abroad in 1950 (which included denying his request to attend his son's funeral). Following the final issue of *Free World* in December 1946, Dolivet launched a successor periodical, *United Nations World*, which he abandoned after being forced to remain in France (although it continued under a different editor until 1953). Dolivet died, apparently, in London in August 1989.

The mystery of Dolivet's identity is relevant mainly in that it helps shed light on the Free World Association and *Free World*. His group and its publication occupied a prominent position in the popular front network, which it in many ways typified. Its American members included not only avid supporters of Roosevelt, but in fact key members of his cabinet like Wallace and interior secretary Harold Ickes, who oversaw the Public Works Administration (PWA) and other New Deal programs. This segment of progressives ascribed to a foreign policy inspired by FDR's economic reform agenda; as for instance was expressed by Freda Kirchway, in a March 1944 editorial, only something akin to "a New Deal for the world" would be able to "prevent the coming of WWII."<sup>46</sup> Along those lines, in a November 1943 piece in *Free World* titled "We Must Live With Soviet Russia," journalist and author



Irving Brant (who informally advised both Roosevelt and Ickes) argued that since Stalin's forces "will occupy as dominant a position as a land power in Europe as the United States does in North America," it was incumbent upon both "those who believe the Soviet Union desires to live in peace with the rest of the world, and those who fear what the Russians will do with their new strength," to "oppose the setting up of a cordon of anti-Soviet states" and "avoid fostering the fascist... states in the rest of Europe."<sup>47</sup>

It was standard thinking among popular front progressives that, whether seen as friend or foe, the Soviet Union should be treated with respect; their understanding of postwar imperatives prioritized the creation of programs to ensure social and economic justice over preparing for the next military conflict. As Wallace argued in *Free World* in August 1943:

When we, as victors, lay down our arms in this struggle against the enslavement of the mind and soul of the human family, we take up arms immediately in the great war against starvation, unemployment, and the rigging of the markets of the world. We seek a peace that is more than just a breathing space between the death of an old tyranny and the birth of a new one.<sup>48</sup>

In that manner the Vice-President made his case for the 'people's century' by appealing to holdovers from the Popular Front, which included Communists as well as non-Communist progressives who were open to cooperation with the Soviet Union.

Henry Wallace's star continued to rise among liberal New Dealers and other progressives who were inspired by his rhetoric in support of the 'common man.' Yet conservative Democrats grew ever more wary of his outspokenness, and feared Wallace could derail Roosevelt's chances in the 1944 election. Ultimately the same

party elders that failed to prevent Wallace's nomination as vice-president managed to thwart his re-nomination, and had him replaced as FDR's running mate with Missouri senator Harry Truman, on a ticket that proved victorious. As what in some ways amounted to a consolation, Wallace was appointed secretary of commerce under Roosevelt and Truman. When FDR died suddenly on April 12, 1945, Truman became the thirty-third US President; had his passing occurred three months earlier, Wallace would have served in the Oval Office, at least for a brief period of time, which undoubtedly would have altered the trajectory of his career, changed the history of the country, and quite possibly transformed the course of world events.<sup>49</sup> Truman initially found himself in a delicate position as the successor to a man with whom Wallace had had a much stronger political and personal rapport. With Wallace remaining in his post after Truman's ascension, the two men maintained a cordial and functional working relationship for the first year or so after Roosevelt's death.

#### Union for Democratic Action

Despite the unpopularity of such a stance after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Socialist Party under Norman Thomas maintained its call for nonintervention in the war, consistent with the pacifism and anti-imperialism of Eugene Debs. Although Thomas fairly quickly reversed his position, many had already left the SPA in protest. In that context a group that had recently abandoned Thomas and the SPA, including Reinhold Niebuhr and labor activist James Loeb, launched the Union for Democratic Action (UDA) at New York's Town Hall Club on May 10, 1941. A. Philip Randolph

was among the speakers at that convention, which was chaired by Freda Kirchwey. Others who were present included secretary-treasurer of the CIO James Carey, Gus Tyler, head of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) and onetime editor of *Socialist Call*, *The New Republic's* George Soule; and (at least by some accounts) a Harvard history professor named Arthur Schlesinger and his twenty-three year-old son.<sup>50</sup>

The UDA explicitly barred Communists from membership. Yet among such a collection of New Dealers and left-liberal reformers, it was impossible to exclude all those who might still have a peripheral connection to the popular front, or harbor residual sympathy for the Soviet Union. Noteworthy, from that perspective, are the striking similarities between the goals of the UDA and the Free World Association, not to mention the overlap among members and proximity of their formations. It is indeed significant that, as described by historian Mark Kleinman, "the UDA dovetailed nicely with Wallace's efforts... to gain public support for both FDR's foreign policy and plans for a postwar global organization"; as Roosevelt and Truman came into office in early 1945, UDA leadership endorsed the former vice-president's confirmation as commerce secretary, embracing his campaign for 'full employment' and "other progressive ideas for which they believed Wallace to be 'America's most effective spokesman.'"<sup>51</sup> The UDA's early and consistent embrace of Wallace, both as vice-president and secretary of commerce, demonstrated the degree to which the popular front mentality remained entrenched during the war, even among a group whose leaders openly rejected cooperation with Communists. Yet as it evolved and

more fully embraced an anticommunist identity, the UDA helped to turn the tide against popular front liberalism, concurrent to the postwar escalation of tensions between the US and the Soviet Union. Illustrating that new atmosphere, in a July 1946 article for *Life* magazine a young Arthur Schlesinger Jr. praised Niebuhr and the UDA as “one left-wing group which has sought to combat the confusion and corruption coming inevitably in the wake of Communist penetration.”<sup>52</sup>

Born in 1892 to German immigrants in Missouri, Niebuhr attended Yale Divinity School before venturing in 1915 to lead an Evangelical church in Detroit, where he gained popularity among progressives for his criticisms of Henry Ford.<sup>53</sup> Although a pacifist at heart, during World War One Niebuhr helped rally the German-American community in support of the Allied cause. Upon leaving his Detroit congregation in 1928 for a position at the Union Theological Seminary, he became active in the New York Socialist Party. In *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) Niebuhr attributed the dramatic success of the Russian Revolution” to “the disillusioning consequences” of the war and “the misery and insecurity of millions of workers in every land.” While he did not see a worldwide Bolshevik-style upheaval as being either possible or desirable, he nevertheless believed that “the ultimate objectives of Marxian politics” were “identical with the most rational possible social goal, that of equal justice.”<sup>54</sup> As he began to articulate his philosophy of Christian realism, Niebuhr maintained faith in the left revolutionary tradition, as demonstrated in *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944), which contrasted the

evil of “Nazi barbarism” and the “social idealism” that gave rise to both “the individualism of bourgeois democracy and the collectivism of Marxism.”<sup>55</sup>

As his ideology evolved, Niebuhr continued to differentiate a nuanced view of Marxism and Socialism from an increasingly harsh critique of Soviet Communism in a manner that would become a hallmark of the development of ‘cold war liberalism.’

### Cold War (and Critics)

On February 9, 1946, Joseph Stalin delivered a speech in which he suggested that WWII had been caused by “the development of world economic and political forces on the basis of modern monopoly capitalism.” Upon receiving a request for an assessment of Soviet intentions following that statement, on February 22 George Kennan, the Charge d’Affaires at the US embassy in Moscow following the departure of outgoing Ambassador Averell Harriman, cabled his superiors in Washington D.C., stating his belief that “world communism” was akin to “a malignant parasite” that “feeds only on diseased tissue.” Kennan’s ‘Long Telegram’ warned that “the steady advance of uneasy Russian nationalism,” appearing in the “guise of international Marxism,” made this current regime “more dangerous and insidious than ever before.”<sup>56</sup> After his return to Washington D.C., in January 1947, Kennan was invited to share his views with CFR members New York; his talk on “The Soviet Way of Thought and Its Effects on Foreign Policy” served as the basis for his ‘Mr. X’ article in *Foreign Affairs* published in July, and appearing anonymously to protect his role as the State Department’s Director of Policy Planning, which predicted no “permanent

happy coexistence of the Socialist and capitalist worlds.”<sup>57</sup> On March 5 former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill travelled to Truman’s hometown, and with the President in-tow warned of Europe’s division into free and un-free spheres: “iron curtain” had “descended across the Continent.”<sup>58</sup> One week later, on March 12, Truman announced to Congress his decision to send \$400 million in aid to regimes in Greece and Turkey (former clients of the British Empire) to help combat “terrorist activities... led by Communists.” He pledged that the US would, likewise, assist all nations similarly threatened, as part of a commitment “to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.”<sup>59</sup>

While the ‘Truman Doctrine’ was being formulated, in a June 1947 address at Harvard Secretary of State George Marshall outlined a proposal to fund the rebuilding of Europe on the theory that it would reduce the appeal of Communism and enable democracy to flourish. As he proclaimed:

It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.<sup>60</sup>

Implemented from 1948-1952, the European Recovery Program—otherwise known as the Marshall Plan—distributed thirteen billion dollars across eighteen countries in Western Europe through the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA).<sup>61</sup>

Although Marshall Plan funds were made available to the Soviet Union, they rejected the offer as predicted, while instructing other Eastern Bloc countries to do the same.

One of the most prominent critics of containment, venerable liberal journalist Walter Lippmann, opposed what he saw as a distorted image of American power that would require a massive and unwise commitment of national resources. Lippmann (who had been a founding editor of *The New Republic* in 1914 and an original member of the CFR in 1919) attacked Kennan's thesis in a series of September 1947 newspaper columns that were promptly compiled into a book titled *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy*. Carefully noting that his critique did "not arise from any belief or hope that our conflict with the Soviet government is imaginary," Lippmann agreed with Kennan's assertion that Russian expansionism could not be "charmed or talked out of existence." Yet, Lippmann thought "that the conception and plan" recommended by Mr. X would "cause us to squander our substance and our prestige."<sup>62</sup> He advised against far-flung ideological crusades, urging the administration to instead focus on a more limited approach in Germany for instance, where Allied forces and the Red Army were engaged in a standoff. Lippmann made several warnings about the potential effects of containment that, in retrospect, seem prescient. Concerned about the costs of a long-term conflict, he noted that it would require the State Department to somehow have "the money and the military power always available in sufficient amounts to apply 'counter-force' at constantly shifting points all over the world." He wondered whether Mr. X might not have to "ask Congress for a blank check on the Treasury and for a blank authorization to use the armed forces."<sup>63</sup> Ironically, Kennan agreed in retrospect with the essence of Lippmann's critique, concluding that he had overstated his case regarding the nature

of the Soviet threat, and in his memoir described looking back in “horrified amusement” at the semi-hysterical tone of his 1946 telegram.<sup>64</sup>

Yet as he challenged the principles of containment strategy, Lippmann touted the Marshall Plan, coinciding with a reliance on the authority of the United Nations, viewing it as an alternative to the bellicosity of the Truman Doctrine. Even though Kennan, the so-called ‘father of containment,’ was also an architect of the ERP, Lippmann did not believe that the Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine belonged in the same category: the former represented a progressive blueprint for economic renewal, while the latter was an overtly militaristic strategy that risked triggering an escalation with the Soviet Union. This perspective on the ERP was shared by a wide spectrum of left-liberals, including Kirchwey.<sup>65</sup> Wallace was initially hopeful about the Marshall Plan, but eventually came to view it in a similar light as the Truman Doctrine, rejecting them both as manifestations of American imperialism. By advocating for multilateralism instead of a militarized foreign policy directed against Russia, he charted a course that precipitated his ouster as commerce secretary and set the stage for his 1948 presidential campaign.

On September 12, 1946, Wallace headlined a rally sponsored jointly by two influential popular front organizations, the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions (ICCASP) and the National Citizens Political Action Committee (NCPAC)—an outgrowth of the CIO’s Political Action Committee (CIO-PAC). In “The Way to Peace” Wallace told a packed Madison Square Garden crowd



that US policy should not be shaped by people “who want war with Russia.” American leaders could earn Soviet cooperation, he declared, by making clear that their “primary objective” was “neither saving the British Empire nor purchasing oil in the Near East with the lives of American soldiers.”<sup>66</sup> Even though Truman had read and approved the text of Wallace’s address beforehand, the President faced pressure from his Secretary of State and top foreign policy adviser James Byrnes, who was livid. Feeling that his authority had been undercut, Byrnes wanted Wallace to face a penalty for contradicting the administration’s position. The Commerce Secretary issued a statement clarifying that his speech had not been made in an official capacity, and was not intended to be pro-Russian or pro-American, but rather pro-peace; in a last resort to save his job, he reluctantly agreed to a moratorium on speaking about foreign affairs.<sup>67</sup> Yet his efforts were ultimately to no avail, and Wallace resigned from his post on September 20, just eight days after his speech in New York.

Most of the UDA leadership continued to back Wallace in the immediate aftermath of his firing, yet that support did not last long. While the Commerce Secretary was delivering his fateful Madison Square Garden speech, Niebuhr was touring Germany on a government-sponsored delegation to examine schools in the American occupation zone. Having been in Stuttgart on September 6 when Byrnes spoke in that city regarding US policy with respect to Allied settlement and reconstruction in Germany and bordering countries, Niebuhr witnessed the Secretary of State take what was seen a hardline anti-Soviet stance on the contentious question of Poland, among other issues, and sensed that his positions were popular among

Germans.<sup>68</sup> Following the former vice-president's speech a week later he publically sided with Byrnes against Wallace.

Excerpts of the *Reader's Digest* essay where Niebuhr took issue with the former commerce secretary were published first in *Life*, in October 1946, under the subheading "A distinguished theologian declares America must prevent the conquest of Germany and Western Europe by the unscrupulous Soviet tyranny." In "The Fight for Germany," which Kleinman calls "probably the most widely read article of Niebuhr's career," the theologian couched his criticism by positioning himself as someone "who belongs, broadly speaking, to Henry Wallace's school of thought in domestic politics."<sup>69</sup> From that standpoint Niebuhr sought to "challenge Wallace's foreign politics, as expressed in his recent attack on Secretary Byrnes's policy toward Russia." He argued that Wallace's belief in the good faith of Soviet leadership was not only naïve and dangerous, but eerily reminiscent of the attitude that led to the 'appeasement' of Hitler in 1938. Hence he claimed that since "Russian terror has made Communism odious... in Europe... American liberals may speak of any catalog of this terror as 'red baiting,'" but "the people of Germany know better out of bitter experience." As a result, Niebuhr explained that "it must be the business of a genuine liberalism... to make our political and economic life more worthy of our faith and therefore more impregnable" to Communism.<sup>70</sup> Niebuhr's critique of Wallace's opposition to Truman's Russia policy was both cause and effect of the growing rift among progressives vying to determine the legacy of the New Deal. With opposing camps on either side of what historian Walter LaFeber aptly termed the "Wallace-

Niebuhr division,” the period of intense conflict among left-liberals had an abiding influence on the shape of US foreign policy and domestic affairs over the next several decades.<sup>71</sup>

At the end of 1946, popular front liberals were consolidating their forces. On December 28-29, just as Wallace was settling into a position at *The New Republic* created for him by Michael Straight (whose family owned the magazine<sup>72</sup>), leaders from ICCASP and NCPAC including political organizer C.B. “Beanie” Baldwin and sculptor Jo Davidson, met to finish a merger of their respective organizations; as a result, the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA) born.<sup>73</sup> While A.F. Whitney, head of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen (BRT), and CIO president Philip Murray became the PCA’s first vice-chairman, from its inception the group was identified with Wallace (even though he did not officially join the group because of his role with *The New Republic*). The PCA took part in an ongoing effort, among a cohort that included some of the former vice-president’s most ardent supporters, to pursue a progressive agenda either by pushing Democrats to the left or—perhaps—building a third-party to contend for the presidency in 1948. Wallace was the featured speaker on the second day of the PCA’s inaugural meeting, attended by about three hundred people, delivering what Kleinman characterizes as “both an appeal for unity and a denial of division among progressives.”<sup>74</sup> The theme of Wallace’s “Unity for Progress” echoed the message of his first article as a contributing editor to *The New Republic*, published on December 16, which called for “peace, prosperity, and freedom in one world.”<sup>75</sup> True to its popular front roots, the PCA had a policy of not

restricting anyone, and Communists were no exception. Yet for that same reason, as much as Wallace sought unity, the PCA's creation served only to widen discord among progressives.

From the perspective of the bloc coalescing around support for the nascent Cold War, the PCA's stance on US-Soviet relations was wrongheaded, while its refusal to ban Communists was dangerous; its creation demanded a response. Hence one week after the PCA was established, on January 4, 1947, Niebuhr, Loeb, and other UDA leaders convened a meeting of about one hundred and fifty people in the nation's capital to launch the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). Like the PCA, the ADA brought together labor and civil rights leaders including the head of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Walter Reuther, NAACP chairman Walter White, and the ILGWU's David Dubinsky, as well as prominent liberals such as the mayor of Minneapolis (and future vice-president) Hubert Humphrey, Keynesian economist J.K. Galbraith, and Eleanor Roosevelt.<sup>76</sup> Schlesinger, who had recently begun teaching at Harvard, attended along with his father; elected as a national vice-chairman, the younger Schlesinger became one of the most active and identifiable members of the ADA, which he described in *The Vital Center* as "a new liberal organization, excluding Communists and dedicated to democratic objectives," its formation being "the watershed at which American liberalism began to base itself once again on a solid conception of man and of history."<sup>77</sup> Similarly, in January 1947 *The New Leader* applauded the ADA as "a distinguished group of New Dealers... members of the present Congress... clergymen and... important leaders of Negro

organizations,” who had come together to form “a fighting liberal movement” that was the “antithesis” of the PCA’s “amalgam of Communists and woozy, well-intentioned fellows who call themselves liberals.”<sup>78</sup>

*The New Leader*’s alignment with the ADA signaled an alliance between the Niebuhr-Schlesinger faction of anticommunist liberals and the (former) leftwing anti-Stalinists associated with such figures as Sol Levitas and Sidney Hook, both of who played a role in the ADA’s creation.<sup>79</sup> This partnership represented the type of anti-popular front coalition that Hook had been trying to cultivate since forming his Committee for Cultural Freedom in May 1939. The PCA claimed to have had 100,000 members at the beginning of 1948, yet only half were active dues payers, and their organizational strength was based mainly in New York (City), California, and Illinois (Chicago).<sup>80</sup> If only a relative handful of those active members had a leadership role that put them in position to influence policy, then, as understood by Hook and other New York intellectuals (following similar logic and using the same terminology as HUAC), the PCA could easily function as a Communist ‘front’—unbeknownst to most supporters—if its leadership were controlled effectively by Party members or ‘operatives.’

The PCA-ADA rivalry took center stage among progressives, starting in early 1947. As the two organizations clashed, their members were in broad agreement on major domestic issues—such as the need to address economic inequality and racial segregation—yet equally divided on foreign policy, particularly towards the Soviet Union, which was tied to the question of supporting or opposing Communism. A

related area of difference emerged with respect to mounting a third-party challenge, an idea that was embraced by many in the PCA yet rejected by their ADA counterparts. In that context, the rival groups' split over the Cold War began in the wake of the momentous Truman Doctrine speech; on March 13, 1947, the day after the President's address to Congress, Wallace delivered a speech sponsored by the PCA broadcast on NBC Radio. He admonished Truman for sending a message that there was "no regime too reactionary" to be a US ally if it opposed "Russia's expansionist path," and warned that by declaring a "world-wide conflict between East and West" the President was "telling the Soviet leaders that we are preparing for eventual war"; as the process snowballed, "the task of keeping the world at peace" would "pass beyond the power of the common people."<sup>81</sup> Two weeks later, when Truman issued an Executive Order initiating loyalty reviews for federal employees, the measure was officially supported by the ADA and opposed by the PCA; on March 31 Wallace headlined a PCA-organized mass rally at Madison Square Garden in which he accused Truman of "betraying the great tradition of America and the leadership of the great American who preceded him."<sup>82</sup>

Towards the end of 1947, Wallace's increasingly vigorous opposition to Truman informed his evolution with respect to the Marshall Plan, which was in theory similar to policies he had long supported. Yet once clear that it would not be administered through the UN, as he had hoped, and when the Soviet Union refused to participate, Wallace came out against the ERP, concluding it was an instrument for the pursuit not of global stability, but rather US interests.<sup>83</sup> His views on the Marshall

Plan thusly fell in line with the PCA's position, which once again was opposite that of the ADA. From the liberal anticommunist perspective, containment functioned by combining the threat of military intervention (Truman Doctrine) with the promise of economic recovery (Marshall Plan). As Schlesinger explained in *The Vital Center*, the role of the Truman Doctrine was "to make reconstruction possible by guaranteeing the security of those who seek to rebuild Europe in the face of Communist disapproval."<sup>84</sup>

#### The 1948 Election

Less predictable than the ADA's embrace of the Marshall Plan was the official approval it received from the CIO. More importantly, insofar as its implications for left-liberal unity, was that the CIO opposed the creation of a third party, agreeing with the ADA's position that it risked further splitting progressives and could easily hand Republicans control of the White House in 1948. Despite the sure prospect of a backlash, PCA leaders set in motion the creation of a Progressive Party (PP) tailored to Henry Wallace, who announced his intent to run as its presidential candidate in a radio address recorded in Chicago on December 29, 1947, declaring: "There is no real fight between a Truman and a Republican. Both stand for a policy which opens the door to war in our lifetime and makes war certain for our children. Let us stop saying, 'I don't like it but I am going to vote for the lesser of two evils.'" Wallace explained that he had "fought and shall continue to fight programs which give guns to people when they want plows," and on those grounds he

opposed “the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as applied because they divide Europe into two warring camps.” Recognizing that people who saw “The cost of organizing for peace, prosperity and progress” as “less than the organizing for war” would “be called ‘Russian tools’ and ‘Communists,’” he asserted: “We are not for Russia and we are not for Communism, but we... denounce the men who engage in such name-calling as enemies of the human race who would rather have World War III than put forth a genuine effort to bring about a peaceful settlement of differences.” And so, returning to his signature refrain, Wallace proclaimed: “The people are on the march.... We have assembled a Gideon's Army, small in number, powerful in conviction, ready for action.... By God's grace, the people's peace will usher in the century of the common man.”<sup>85</sup>

A reference to the Hebrew Bible's *Book of Judges* in which a wheat farmer is called by Yehuda to raise an undersized yet highly devoted band to fight against evil, ‘Gideon's Army’ turned out to be an apt descriptor of Wallace's campaign. The battle began in earnest only after he resigned from *The New Republic* on July 19, 1948; five days later Wallace officially accepted the Progressive Party nomination alongside his running mate, Idaho senator Glen Taylor, at a star-studded convention in Philadelphia. Chaired by Beanie Baldwin, who became campaign manager, the eight-person Wallace for President Committee included activist-philanthropist Anita McCormick Blaine—the chief financial backer—as well as Jo Davidson, economist and former FDR adviser Rexford Tugwell, and actor/singer-turned-civil rights crusader Paul Robeson.<sup>86</sup> While this core was attached to elements of the PCA, an allied group was



formed in the mold of ICCASP, which also played a major role in the campaign; chaired by Harvard astronomer Harlow Shapley, the National Council of Arts Sciences and Professions (NCASP) promoted the PP through a range of activities, including fundraising appeals like one titled “We are for Wallace” that appeared in the *New York Times* in October 1948, signed by scores of prominent individuals including physicist Albert Einstein and chemist Linus Pauling; architect Frank Lloyd Wright; composer Aaron Copland; playwrights Lillian Hellman and Arthur Miller; novelists Dashiell Hammett and Norman Mailer; journalist I.F. Stone; and NAACP founder W.E.B. Du Bois.<sup>87</sup>

Many who endorsed Wallace—like Robeson and Du Bois—were affiliated with the Communist Party. Yet nothing did more to create the perception that he was backed by Communists than the fact that newly reinstated CPUSA leader William Z. Foster chose not to run for president in 1948, and instead supported Wallace in a statement made prior to the Progressive campaign even becoming official. It did not matter that Wallace disavowed this support during a curt private meeting with CPUSA secretary general Eugene Dennis in late 1947, of which Wallace later recalled (as quoted by biographers John Culver and John Hyde): “All I said was that... the Communist party does not believe in God, I do believe in God; the Communist party does not believe in progressive capitalism, I do believe in progressive capitalism.”<sup>88</sup> Wallace from then on was torn between his instinct to reject organized assistance from Communists, and his desire to not exclude or alienate anyone. He was under no illusion that Communists supported his campaign

for no other reason than his stance on relations with Russia, even while they were (at least in theory) opposed to his domestic politics, yet Wallace considered it a fair trade-off; he was known to have informed aides regularly of his wish, as detailed by Culver and Hyde, to not “say anything that would interfere” with his “ability to make peace in the world.” Wallace told an audience in Arizona in early June 1948 that he would “not repudiate any support” that came to him “on the basis of interest in peace.” Speaking three weeks later to a small crowd in New Hampshire, however, Wallace assured that he was “never going to say anything in the nature of red-baiting,” yet candidly stated that “if the Communists really wanted to help” him “they would run their own ticket”; he “might lose 100,000 votes but... gain three million” others. That, however, was the furthest he went in terms of publically spurning Communist support.<sup>89</sup>

As a result of his refusal to formally disavow Communist support, combined with widespread skepticism about the viability of a third-party, in 1948 Wallace lost the confidence of many who had previously stood in his corner.<sup>90</sup> Philip Murray, for instance, resigned from the PCA and joined the anti-Wallace forces once Communists were on board. Moreover, Freda Kirchwey did not endorse the Progressive Party, nor did Michael Straight, who had broken with the Party a decade earlier and was fearful for Wallace’s campaign based on the Communist support for the PCA; it turns out Straight had in fact fired Wallace from *The New Republic* in order to prevent him from using the magazine as a campaign platform (even though it had been announced that he was stepping down in order to focus exclusively on the race).<sup>91</sup> Wallace was a

charismatic speaker, and had always had a penchant for drawing large and enthusiastic crowds, such as those that gathered at the outset of his campaign. Yet ultimately during the course of 1948 he arguably lost more followers than he gained.

That Wallace's campaign fizzled so mightily was the result of a confluence of events, including a bizarre episode that involved a damaging scandal over what became known as his 'guru letters,' referring to correspondences between Wallace and a Russian-born painter, Nicholas Roerich, who had been worked on a US Department of Agriculture-managed mission to Asia in 1933. A controversial figure who wound up fleeing the US when investigated for tax evasion, Roerich was known as a pseudo-mystic who had attained a cult-like following; letters that Wallace sent to Roerich appeared to show the then-Secretary of Agricultural viewing the Russian artist as a spiritual leader of sorts. Surfacing mysteriously the following decade, existence of the guru letters was rumored to have played a role in Wallace's failure to regain the vice-presidential nomination at the 1944 convention. Yet they were not published until 1947-1948, when copies fell into the hands of conservative syndicated Hearst Press columnist Westbrook Pegler, who was eager to use the letters to embarrass Wallace.<sup>92</sup> While the Roerich affair highlighted his personal eccentricities, particularly in terms of religion, Wallace's willingness to accept support from Communists, combined with his stance on US-Soviet relations, was what ultimately derailed his campaign.

Although his candidacy intensified the ongoing split among progressives, it energized and unified the left-liberal anticommunists who joined forces to derail it,

giving them a common and urgent purpose. In a manner typical of many New York intellectuals including those who were former Communists, Sidney Hook, came to view the Wallace campaign as a CPUSA front operation. Adopting logic and terminology similar to that of HUAC, Hook understood the PCA and NCASP as popular front organizations in the sense that they followed a model in which Communists either usurped the leadership of an existing progressive group, or created a new one for their specific purpose; to legitimize their effort, respected intellectuals and political dignitaries would be invited to join the group, sign a public statement, or endorse a campaign, without having direct knowledge (or in some cases even the faintest clue) as to the real interests behind the endeavor. As Hook and those like him saw it, there was no substantial difference in the distinction between groups allegedly controlled covertly by sinister Soviet agents, like the Free World Association, and ones that were dominated by naïve liberals who happened to support Communism.

In waging his crusade against procommunist intellectuals throughout the 1940s, Hook spent considerable time corresponding with figures linked to the popular front, including people of renown who he thought were (knowingly or unknowingly) allowing their names to be exploited. Such was his purpose in writing to Albert Einstein in April 1948 regarding his support for Wallace who, he reminded, had become “captive of the Communist Party whose devious work” he should be familiar with; the response Hook received was less than courteous.<sup>93</sup> Nor by any means were such challenges relegated to those who were famous; his exchange with Einstein echoed countless others, like for instance a correspondence with religious studies

scholar Philip Mayer, in July-October 1947, in which he made clear that “unqualified support of Wallace is tantamount to support of the present international Communist line.” Moreover, among Wallace’s crimes was a refusal “to join Norman Thomas in condemning the vast system of concentration camps which spans the Russian land.”<sup>94</sup>

That Hook would refer to the Socialist Party leader in such a manner was nothing new, as he often evoked his esteemed comrade as a moral authority on Soviet Communism and myriad other subjects. Yet in the context of Wallace’s Progressive Party, there was an added layer of importance given that Thomas was himself a candidate for president in 1948. Running in what turned out to be his final race, Thomas had initially declined to accept the SPA’s nomination for a sixth consecutive time, and sought to have A. Philip Randolph drafted instead. Wallace’s entry into the race helped trigger Thomas’s decision to reconsider, as Socialists had growing concerns that their strength as a political force risked being hijacked by Communists disguised as Progressives (veritable wolves in sheep’s clothing). Like the others before it, Thomas’s 1948 campaign was designed not to win the presidency, but rather produce a strong showing that would highlight issues and push the Democratic Party to the left while giving Socialist ideas greater influence. In that context, Thomas’s Socialists ran a campaign in 1948 that was arguably more concerned with Wallace (who also had essentially no chance of actually winning) than either Truman or Republican nominee Thomas Dewey.

In his acceptance speech at the Socialist Convention held in Reading, Pennsylvania in early May, Thomas contended that since Truman’s greatest

achievements—in the realm African American civil rights—were derided by conservatives in his own party, it was unsurprising “that so many thousands of good people” had “turned with false hope” to the Progressive candidate.<sup>95</sup> Wallace was walking the walk on race in the 1948 campaign, facing crowds that pelted him with eggs and threatened physical violence as he made appearances in the segregated south alongside Robeson and other black supporters. As Thomas viewed it, Wallace might have undergone a genuine conversion on the issue, yet that was suspicious given a bitter memory of having unsuccessfully lobbied the then-Agriculture Secretary to change the eligibility requirements for AAA farm subsidies to include sharecroppers. Thomas continued to hold Wallace responsible for being “ruthless” in his handling of complaints by the impoverished farmers who were predominantly black (although in fairness—yet certainly not as excuse—it needs mention that the policy was consistent with a pattern set by Roosevelt to appease the segregationist wing of the party in order to secure votes for New Deal legislation).<sup>96</sup>

Personal grudges aside, when the campaign began Thomas had an underlying respect for Wallace, who he recognized as presenting a formidable challenge (predicting at one point that he could earn as many as five million votes). Thomas knew, moreover, that he and Wallace were in general agreement on many domestic issues; and as a pacifist, he applauded his Progressive opponent’s desire to deescalate the US-Soviet crisis and work for a demilitarization of world politics. Still, the Socialist candidate joined other left-liberals who argued that Wallace was at best hopelessly naïve in his belief that Stalin and the current Soviet leadership could be

partners in good-faith with respect to the pursuit of global peace; he spoke often, and with a sense of urgency about Wallace's dangerous refusal to seek distance from his Communist supporters.<sup>97</sup> Thomas also attempted to make his case directly to Wallace, yet the Progressive candidate refused to debate his Socialist counterpart. Becoming increasingly irritated, Thomas warned in a December 1947 letter that, from his own experience, he knew Wallace would regret working with Communists.<sup>98</sup>

By the time the 1948 election was in sight, nothing else mattered as far as the Progressive campaign besides its stance on the Soviet Union; Thomas declared in a *Socialist Call* article published on September 24 that he had "presented a program far more likely to lead to peace than the militarism of Harry Truman or the appeasement of Henry Wallace."<sup>99</sup> The question, ultimately, was how many on the left would agree with that assessment and take the advice offered by the *Jewish Daily Forward*: "express their protest against both parties... by voting for Norman Thomas, rather than for the confused 'totalitarian liberal' Henry Wallace."<sup>100</sup> While both were disappointed on election night, Wallace had a far better showing, outperforming Thomas by a considerable margin. The Socialist candidate received nearly double the number of votes than his 1944 total, yet Thomas's roughly 140,000 in 1948 was a far cry from the party's electoral peak under Debs in 1912 (6 percent of the popular vote) and 1920 (roughly 914,000 total). Rather than being a springboard for the party's rejuvenation, the 1948 presidential election marked the symbolic endpoint of a long decline in the SPA's fortunes, and the starting-point of a new phase in which major

resources were no longer devoted to high-profile national campaigns (instead focusing on supporting/pressuring Democrats).

Based on polls, the headline drama on election night, the Truman-Dewey contest, was assumed to be a lost cause for Democrats. Americans for Democratic Action made its presence felt in that context, engaging a mission to not just derail the Progressive Party, but thwart the Republicans as well. While nominally independent of partisan affiliation, the ADA was enmeshed in the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, which the vast majority of members saw as the best available means to achieve the goal of preserving and extending the New Deal. Most in the ADA had no particular allegiance to Truman, and many including Schlesinger were involved in efforts to find a replacement who had a better chance of defeating the Republicans. Schlesinger's wing of the ADA in fact wanted Democrats to consider Dwight Eisenhower as a candidate, with polls showing him beating Dewey in a hypothetical matchup. The ADA's 'Draft Eisenhower' campaign was put to rest for good only when the retired General publically refused to disclose his party affiliation days before the Democratic Convention (ironically, Eisenhower was also invited by Wallace to join the Progressive Party, on the condition that he abandoned his reactionary racial views). Left with no choice but to consolidate liberal support for Truman, the ADA strategized for the electoral miracle it would take to have the incumbent upset his Republican challenger running with nearly all of the momentum.

As the Democrats gathered in Philadelphia in mid-July, a week before the Progressives were due in town for their convention, ADA leaders had a twofold plan



to combat Wallace, seeking to remind voters that Wallace's quixotic belief in Stalin's trustworthiness could put the nation in peril if it were to guide official foreign policy, and at the same time constructing a domestic program that could rival what the PCA's party was offering. The ADA became an unofficial Democratic campaign arm; Schlesinger became a Truman adviser and speechwriter, coordinating closely with presidential aide Clark Clifford and others in the administration. As a result of the ADA's work with Clifford and others in Truman's circle, a Democratic platform was crafted that, on domestic issues, offered a robust progressive vision; it included a pledge for action on jobs and housing as well as a repeal of the antiunion Taft-Hartley legislation, in addition to other measures that were presented informally—designed to invoke the memory of FDR—as 'Fair Deal' reforms. ADA liberals led by Hubert Humphrey were responsible, moreover, for winning the inclusion of a 'civil rights plank,' which passed narrowly, and prompted the desertion of southern delegates who went on to form the segregationist 'Dixiecrat' party. Although not as strongly worded as either the Progressive or Socialist platforms, both of which for instance contained anti-lynching language, the Democrats' 1948 civil rights plank was historic by that party's standards, punctuated accordingly by Humphrey's dramatic convention address urging colleagues to come "out of the shadow of states' rights" and "into the bright sunshine of human rights."<sup>101</sup>

As they put a civil rights agenda firmly in the Democratic orbit, and advocated for a Fair Deal, ADA liberals mounted a frontal assault against the Progressive Party over the Communist issue. As described in a "source-book" prepared for Clifford and

others in April, the ADA had “consistently and unreservedly condemned” Wallace’s candidacy, and “assumed the primary responsibility for challenging him and his spokesmen whenever... their utterances threatened the welfare or objectives of democratic principles here and abroad.” Yet given that many former supporters who had “disavowed or quietly deserted” Wallace had been replaced by “individuals well-known as CP apologists,” they worried it would be “increasingly difficult” to combat their “irresponsible and often dangerous statements.”<sup>102</sup> Hence as the ADA warned in an appeal to voters, the left was “facing its most serious test in 1948,” making it imperative to “reject the so-called Progressive Party,” which by choosing to “not repudiate Communism,” had mounted “the most serious attempt in the history of our nation by a totalitarian group to capture and destroy American liberalism.”<sup>103</sup> From the ADA’s perspective, two victories subsequently occurred when Truman upset Dewey by a razor-thin margin (producing the iconic image of the President displaying a newspaper headline from election night reading “Dewey Beats Truman”): Republicans were prevented from capturing the White House, and Progressives were prevented from capturing the liberal vote. In an editorial two days after the election that read like an ADA press release, the *New York Times* panned the “tragedy” of Wallace’s campaign, calling it an “abysmal failure,” which proved that “this country has no room for a third party allied with those whose roots are in foreign soil.”<sup>104</sup>

## End of the People's Century

The Progressive Party had set a modest aim for the 1948 campaign, hoping to earn around four million votes. Wallace's total count was a little over one million, which gave him just shy of 2.4 percent of the popular tally, and zero electoral college votes. Adding insult to injury for Wallace, the Dixiecrat candidate, South Carolina segregationist Senator Strom Thurmond, garnered slightly more overall support while winning his home state along with Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, gaining thirty-nine electoral votes. Although clearly not what had been hoped for, the election results were sufficient to provide PCA and PP leaders the impetus needed to continue their fight. With Wallace still de-facto leader, the popular front coalition continued to mobilize, culminating in what turned out to be its 'final hurrah' at the March 1949 Waldorf Conference, which was organized by NCASP and connected to a Soviet-sponsored international peace campaign. Their coalition held through the first part of 1950, in the face not only of ongoing scrutiny from HUAC and the FBI, but also the permanent challenge now posed by a potent left-liberal anticommunist alliance. Yet following the outbreak of the Korean War in late June, Wallace split from most of his Progressive colleagues on the question of who was to blame for the crisis. In a statement issued on July 15, Wallace announced: "I am on the side of my country and the United Nations." Most likely due to a combination of immense pressure and having had a genuine change of heart, he formally resigned from the PP on August 8.<sup>105</sup>

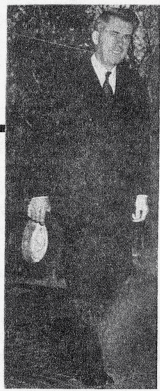
The August 26, 1950 issue of *The New Leader* featured a cover story on Wallace's break from the Progressive Party, billed as an "Exclusive" in his own words. Under the title "Where I Stand," Wallace asserted that the Soviet Union was "training a native people to use tools of force for purposes of aggression under a thick fog of double talk." He believed that many rank-and-file Progressives agreed with his view, yet the party's leadership was almost entirely opposed. Thus, Wallace felt that he "could no longer serve the cause of peace through the PP." Further still, he announced that although he had once believed "there was no disagreement between the U.S. and Russia which could not be peacefully solved," he lamented that the war in Korea made such a prospect "infinitely more difficult than it would have been two or three years ago." Still, he reaffirmed that "The common man is on the march all over the world.... seeking "to expand and enrich human values, not to destroy them." To that end, Wallace still had "hope that Russia, seeing how determined and how united we are, will decide to cooperate with us through the UN to help the march of the common man."<sup>106</sup> While applauding his decision, *NL*'s editors made clear that their goal was not to celebrate the former vice-president, as they attached a note expressing "hope that the appearance of Mr. Wallace in these pages will encourage others to follow him out of the pro-Communist movement." To that end Wallace's brief statement, published with photos of him (including one captioned "Pelted With Eggs in the Southland, 1948"), was accompanied by a follow-up editorial titled "...And Where He Stood," which declared that prior to his July statement, "Wallace rated as America's No. 1 fellow-traveler." Moreover, *The New Leader*'s readership

was reminded that in 1948 “the CPUSA sought to use the Wallacite ‘Progressive party’ as an instrument for splitting the liberal movement and torpedoing America’s policy of resistance to Soviet expansionism.”<sup>107</sup>

Not long after quitting the Progressive Party in 1950, Henry A. Wallace threw his support to Eisenhower, and retired from public life. He spent most days from that time forward back on his farm (figuratively and literally), pursuing interests in the genetic breeding of corn and similar endeavors; Wallace died in November 1965, at the age of seventy-seven. Many progressives who had once been Wallace’s fierce adversaries subsequently revived their respect for/ friendships with him; Norman Thomas, for instance, wrote to Wallace in April 1956 to say that he looked “forward with much interest to hearing” him speak at an event sponsored by the Biological Association, and hoped they would “get a chance to shake hands.”<sup>108</sup> Arthur Schlesinger Jr. offered retrospective thoughts in his memoir *A Life in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (2000), as well as a review of Culver and Hyde’s biography of Wallace published that same year, which he called “The Story of a Perplexing and Indomitably Naive Public Servant.” Addressing what he saw as the misfortune surrounding the former vice-president, Schlesinger recalled that Wallace “campaigns energetically and courageously” in 1948, yet “handled the Communist issue maladroitly.” In the final analysis, Schlesinger considered Wallace to have been “a great secretary of agriculture,” and found “sadness” in the fact “that few remember his serious achievements.”<sup>109</sup>

Of the myriad tragedies and missed opportunities connected to Wallace's political life, none looms larger than the demise of his people's century. It was ridiculed at the time as being an overly innocent vision, marred by an unrealistic faith in 'totalitarian' adversaries (versions of this view persist today). Yet by embracing a foreign policy in which anti-Soviet militarism became the dominant feature, left-liberal anticommunists evolved into champions of the American century. Even if one agreed with the ADA position that the defeat of the Progressive Party was a victory for the forces of liberal democracy under assault from Soviet tyranny, that should not have warranted an automatic dismissal of Wallace's ideas—particularly his anti-imperialist critique of US foreign policy. Seeing him as a well-intentioned 'dupe' of the CPUSA, left-liberal anticommunists too easily discounted Wallace's important contribution to the discourse surrounding the role of American power in the postwar world order. In the case of Norman Thomas, who remained dedicated to the ideals of socialism as well as pacifism/anti-imperialism even while becoming a (so-called) cold war liberal, there was much that united him with Wallace; one could even argue that there was virtually nothing of substance separating their respective worldviews circa 1950. By drastically narrowing the field of foreign policy debate in the name of anticommunism, progressive cold warriors not only contributed to an atmosphere of 'red scare' repression, but effectively drove the anti-imperialist left underground for the next decade and a half, where it festered until reemerging in the mid 1960s.

the new  
**Leader**



TAKES A WALK

—HENRY WALLACE:—

**WHERE**

**I**

**EXCLUSIVE**

**STAND**

—AUGUST 26, 1950—

**15**  
cents

Cover of *The New Leader*, August 26, 1950

[Credit *New Leader* Records, Columbia University]

## CHAPTER TWO

### Following *The New Leader*: Left-Liberal Anticommunist Routes

*The New Leader* has fought for the expansion of democracy, and against anti-semitism [*sic*], racial discrimination, anti-labor legislation, and all other manifestations of reaction.

—*The New Leader* [statement on reverse cover], August 26, 1950

Anyone surveying the situation with a cold eye can see that Soviet imperialism has all but swallowed up Asia. Stalin thus controls nearly all of the globe's greatest landmass, whereas we cling precariously from its eastern and western rims.

—*The New Leader* editorial, December 25, 1950

On April 14, 1955, the Tamiment Institute organized a public forum at the auditorium of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York: "Is Co-Existence Possible?" The panel, chaired by Oregon Democratic Senator Richard L. Neuberger, featured two American Committee for Cultural Freedom members: Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Bertram Wolfe, head of the Ideological Advisory Unit of the Voice of America (VoA). Joining them were *New York Times* Soviet affairs specialist Harry Schwartz and Gerhart Niemeyer, who was listed in the prepared transcripts as a Yale lecturer and CFR consultant. Norman Thomas, in his last month as chair of the ACCF's administrative committee, gave additional remarks in a ceremony to honor Wolfe as awardee of a Tamiment scholarship. A preface to the transcripts, written by ACCF director Sol Stein (who also made opening comments), highlighted that "The proceedings were recorded by the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe for adaptation, translation, and subsequent broadcast to listeners on both sides of the Iron Curtain."<sup>1</sup>



The location of this event was by no means random, given that MoMA was located just a few steps away from the American Committee for Cultural Freedom's W. 53<sup>rd</sup> Street offices. And, that there were many active committee members involved in that evening's program was also no coincidence, since the Tamiment Institute was organizationally aligned with the ACCF, and both were pillars of political-cultural life in New York's left-liberal anticommunist community; Stein was at that moment serving as both the executive director of the ACCF as well as educational director of the Tamiment Institute. Until a few years prior, VoA headquarters had been located just a short distance from the block of Midtown that housed both the ACCF and MoMA. That the symposium was being recorded for VoA and Radio Free Europe had in fact much to do with institutional links between the ACCF and the State Department's International Broadcast Division. Not only did the VoA's Wolfe belong to ACCF's inner-circle, but Stein had worked under him as a scriptwriter until being forced out along with many others after a reorganization following spring 1953 hearings conducted by Joseph McCarthy's subcommittee; he was hired by then administrative committee chair Dan Bell, at the recommendation of Wolfe and VoA colleague Harry Fleischman. Norman Jacobs, who became the ACCF's administrative chairman in 1956, was also among the VoA staffers forced-out by McCarthy.

On another night the forum might have been held at the auditorium of what many still called the 'Rand School,' even though its name had been changed twenty years earlier to reflect affiliation with the Socialist-run summer retreat in the Poconos

Mountains, Camp Tamiment (a Native American word for that area of Pennsylvania). It might have been deemed more appropriate to hold such an event in Midtown, as a more genteel and less distinctively ‘left-oriented’ environment than Lower-Manhattan, (not far from Greenwich Village) where the Tamiment Institute was located. Either way, the April 1955 “Is Co-Existence Possible?” forum represented demonstrated the set of interests and values common to the Tamiment Institute, the ACCF, and the VoA, (in some ways also MoMA). Meanwhile, as most in the room that evening would have known, the primary connective tissue between those nodes of left-liberal anticommunist struggle was a three-decade-old broadsheet founded by the ‘rightwing section’ of the Socialist Party.

“The Real Center of Anticommunist Thought and Activity”

We write for THE NEW LEADER because it most closely approximates our ideal of the kind of journalism most needed in America at this moment. It publishes free and honest discussion about the real social issues. Its readers have complete confidence that it is not ‘putting over’ any party ‘line.’ It is dedicated without reserve to the enlightenment not the manipulation of public opinion.<sup>2</sup>

The first ‘red scare,’ sparked by the Bolshevik Revolution, culminated in the 1919-1920 ‘Palmer Raids’ that resulted in the arrest of nearly 250 foreign-born radicals—primarily anarchists including the notorious “Red Emma [Goldman],” but also communists and socialists—rounded-up without distinction as to place of origin or citizenship status and sent *en masse* to Russia. Triggered by a series of Congressional hearings into alleged subversion by such foreigners, a politically motivated Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer was assisted by his young deputy J. Edgar Hoover, before

the Wilson administration shut down their deportation scheme. While it would set a powerful precedent for the Red Scare that followed World War II, post-World War I anti-radical hysteria had dramatic effects, particularly in New York's communities of European immigrants; entire neighborhoods—like the one where Sidney Hook was raised—were radicalized as a result. Following a period of calm, the federal government resumed its investigations in 1930, led by Republicans, and following Hitler's ascension in 1933, congress created a committee to examine Nazi and 'certain other propaganda activities,' which morphed into HUAC in 1938. Its key figures then were Democrats Martin Dies of Texas, its first chairman; Samuel Dickstein of New York, (who according to the VENONA files was on the NKVD payroll at the time); and Mississippi segregationist John E. Rankin. Turning from Nazism to focus on allegations of Communist sedition, HUAC made its first big headlines by investigating Communist influence in the ranks of two popular New Deal programs—the Federal Writers' Project (FWP) and the Federal Theatre Project (FTP)—created in 1935 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

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Founded in 1906, the Rand School of Social Science matured into a nucleus of left culture in New York during this period, its core functions being political education classes and lectures as well as community building. As a Socialist institution, the Rand School served as hub for New York radicals and would host visits from the likes of Eugene Debs (and other less luminous figures). A young Norman Thomas became a fixture after he joined the Socialist Party, which was not

shortly after 1917, when the Rand School moved into a six-story building it purchased at 7 East 15th Street, which was then named People's House, and became home to a number of different left organizations. Not only was there a large auditorium and extensive library collection at the facility, there was also an SPA-affiliated restaurant and bookstore on-site. In 1919, at the height of the first red scare, federal agents raided the Rand School/ People's House in connection with the congressional investigations that ultimately precipitated the Palmer Raids. As an institution it was an epicenter of radical life in New York; its historical trajectory reflects the many external and internal crises—e.g., repression and factionalism—experienced by the left during the first half of the twentieth century. When the Rand School closed in 1956, its vast collection of books and archives was transferred to what became the Tamiment Library, owned and managed by NYU since 1963.

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When the last editor of *The New Leader* Myron Kolatch announced the final print edition of his magazine in January 2006, *The New York Times* characterized it as a onetime “organ of the American Socialist Party,” turned into a “liberal beacon” that was burning out. *The New Leader* did flicker for a few more years, publishing sporadically online through 2010. Its translation into the digital age proving unsuccessful, its January/April 2006 issue was effectively *The New Leader's* last hurrah, at which time those who had been involved throughout different stages of its existence reflected on the periodical's significance. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. was among them, referring in Preface to the “straight and honorable course” steered by its

longtime editor, Russian émigré Samuel “Sol” Levitas (b.1894).<sup>3</sup> Daniel Bell, who was managing editor from 1941-1945, recalled that during the 1940s and 1950s, Sidney Hook was *The New Leader*’s “major intellectual figure,” as he “helped shape the ideological line, and pulled in new contributors,” many who had recently “moved out of the Trotskyist orbit.”<sup>4</sup>

As far as Hook’s influence on *The New Leader*’s ‘ideological line’ during the early Cold War, Bell might have been considering for instance the multipart feature showcasing the philosopher’s signature anticommunist tome, which as explained in the April 6, 1953 issue, was proudly presented “as a special dividend to...readers...specially adapted by him from a chapter of his forthcoming book *Heresy, Yes—Conspiracy, No!*”. Hook’s “Freedom in American Culture” was “selected...because of its special concern to the liberal movement in America and to that segment of public opinion which is convinced that the basic issue of the day is freedom vs. Communism.” The work was framed by the notion that Communism, being conspiratorial by nature, cannot be equated with left radicalism of a heretical form as practiced (in fact) by people like Norman Thomas, whose ideas might be unpopular to some, but they are not anti-American. In the portion excerpted by *The New Leader*, Hook linked his heresy-conspiracy formula to what he called “cultural vigilantism,” i.e. McCarthyism, and its twin “ritualistic liberalism,” i.e. Communist fellow travelling. As Hook explained in *The New Leader*:

We need not fall victim to pressure groups which, under the banner of anti-Communism, seek to further their narrow economic or sectarian interests.... Nor need we permit ourselves to be morally intimidated by other groups

which, under the traditional war cries of liberalism, unwittingly pressure us into allowing a free field for subversion, infiltration and espionage.”<sup>5</sup>

Hook was long dead in 2006, yet in his memoir twenty years earlier he referred to *The New Leader* under Levitas as the “real center of political anti-Communist thought and activity,” adding “Every major campaign against Stalinist influence...whether at the time of the Moscow Trials of the Communist Peace Crusade, was begun either at the offices *The New Leader* or the home of Sol Levitas.” That observation was made in the context of counteracting what he believed was an overblown sense of *Partisan Review*’s importance to Cold War struggle, a view that was inflected by having had a falling out with its editors, calling them “Radical Comedians.”<sup>6</sup> While it came from a heavily biased standpoint, Hook’s assessment of *The New Leader*’s importance under the direction of Levitas is valid, all the more so if he is included with the Russian émigré as a chief initiator of its left-liberal anticommunist character.

As noted by the *New York Times*, in explaining the reasons for its closing, in 2006 *The New Leader* had “a circulation of roughly 12,000, down from a peak of about 30,000 in the late 1960’s, and like most magazines of its kind” was running “at a loss.” As *The New Leader* shut down following an eighty two-year odyssey that began with its first issue on January 19, 1924, it underwent a series of dramatic transformations, illustrated to a large degree by its funding sources. As described in *The Times*, having been largely “sustained by contributions from...an institute

financed by Tamiment, the famous Poconos resort,” by “the 50’s” the onetime Socialist newspaper “was said to receive occasional support from the C.I.A.”<sup>7</sup> When precisely *The New Leader* began to accept such subsidies is unclear, but it was during the tenure of Levitas, who wrested control from then-editor James O’Neal during a power struggle that lasted from about 1936-1940. That period coincided with a factional dispute that arose between an ‘old guard’ and a ‘militant’ camps, which disagreed about, among other things, whether or not the party should admit a group of Trotskyists (militants for, old guard against). Bitterly divided by that and related matters, when Norman Thomas threw his weight as party head to the militants, a cohort from the old guard—including Levitas—split off and created the international Social Democratic Federation (SDF) in 1936. The previous year, militants launched *The Socialist Call*. The SDF faction at that time took possession of various SPA properties with which its members had been aligned, including the Rand School, renamed the Tamiment Institute at that time, as well as *The New Leader*. By 1940, Levitas was ensconced as editor-in-chief, staying in that position until his death in 1961. As described by Myron Kolatch in the January/April finale, for twenty years Levitas guided *The New Leader* per his vision of its “Social Democratic roots serving as a link to the liberal anti-Communist intelligentsia in virtually every corner of the world.”<sup>8</sup> To grasp how *The New Leader* became the primary organ of midcentury left-liberal anticommunism, it is necessary to examine the schisms from which it was born and subsequently shaped.

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In November 1917, as WWI drew to a close, Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin announced his country's withdrawal from the fight, calling for "the evacuation of all Russian territory," while proposing an immediate armistice and proclaiming that the triumph of the "the workers' movement" would "pave the way to peace and socialism."<sup>9</sup> After prevailing in the first stage of civil war, Lenin's declaration of a 'Third International' in March 1919 provoked a crisis on the left as socialists across the world were invited to join the 'Communist International,' or 'Comintern.' As was also the case throughout Europe, the question of whether or not to work with Communists—and if so, in what capacity—became a source of conflict among Americans who identified with the non-Communist left. Facing a crucial and contentious decision, the SPA held an emergency convention in Chicago, in September 1919, which resulted part of what was known as the 'leftwing section' splitting-off to join the Comintern. American communists remained underground for the duration of the Red Scare (during which time they were split into competing factions of English-speakers and non-English speakers). As the hysteria began to subside, a unified American Communist Party was established in 1921. The resulting Socialist-Communist rupture did not settle any disputes, serving instead to amplify divisiveness and factionalism, which was already endemic among left radicals.

When the 1919 schism caused the collapse of the Socialist Party's original daily newspaper, *The Call*, remaining members of the rightwing section formed *The Leader*, with, at least by some accounts, Norman Thomas as editor. After a brief run



*The Leader* failed, but was reborn shortly thereafter by Thomas and others in his group as *The New Leader*. During the first decade of its publication, *The New Leader* became an important part of the ‘opinion journal’ milieu on the left in New York, featuring writers who were widely-renown—the likes of Albert Camus, George Orwell, or Richard Wright. Like other periodicals of its kind, *The New Leader* paid careful attention to the dynamics of the national and international labor movement as well as the crises of segregation and racial injustice in the United States. In that manner, *The New Leader* followed a typical format that combined national and international political news with cultural affairs of particular interest to leftists—including holiday supplements devoted solely to literature reviews.

While its content evolved over time, and as the format shifted to a tabloid and then monthly magazine, *The New Leader*’s basic elements—including its concern for issues of race and labor—never changed. As a result, the relatively obscure social-democratic journal became at least somewhat familiar to many beyond the confines of the New York left by virtue of being one of three outlets to print an original version of Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” on June 24, 1963. The symmetry in that regard is striking, for while *The New Leader* was seriously devoted to the cause of racial justice, King identified then as a committed liberal anticommunist. The combination was essential. For background one could look to the September 30, 1950 issue, which on the cover features the image of an iconic jazz musician next to the headline, “Duke Ellington: No Red Songs For Me.” What typified *The New Leader* more than anything else, from the 1940s through at least the

early 1960s, was its anticommunism. Had he still been alive, would Sol Levitas have chosen to print King's letter? Quite likely, yes. Except if the civil rights leader had had some recent, concrete link to Communism (as opposed to what was later alleged by the FBI). In that case, the question would not be worth asking.

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*The New Leader* reflected the interests of non-Communist (democratic) socialists in the United States. Under Levitas, it also came to be a platform devoted to concerns rooted in his specific émigré experience. Born in Vladivostok, Levitas was a committed political actor who sided with the 'Menshevik' (minority) faction of social-democrats, which put him at odds with both the Russian monarchy and the Bolshevik (majority) leaders surrounding Vladimir Lenin. Like many of Tsar Nicholas's subjects at the turn-of-the-century, especially other Jews like Leon Trotsky who was in New York), Levitas had been seeking refuge in Chicago when revolution broke out in 1917; and he, also like Trotsky, returned to Russia to fight. Once the Bolsheviks were in power Levitas, who had risen to become the vice-mayor of Vladivostok, became an opponent of the new regime, and was jailed on several occasions. He subsequently fled the Soviet Union disguised as a Red Army officer and arrived back in the United States for good in 1923, joining New York's vibrant and often divided community of leftwing Jewish exiles.<sup>10</sup>

Among this diverse group of what historian Tony Michels has called "Yiddish Socialists," Levitas belonged to a political-cultural circuit flowing between Eastern Europe and New York, linked to a transnational organization known as the 'Bund.'<sup>11</sup>

This matrix was centered in large part on *The Jewish Daily Forward*, published on both sides of the Atlantic in multiple languages. Upon his arrival in New York Levitas wrote for *The Forward*, which he subsequently used as a model for much of what he later did with *The New Leader* (for instance publishing a Yiddish and other non-English editions). By the late 1920s New York left, broadly speaking, included numerous factions of Communists and non-Communists; among the latter there were variations of socialists and social democrats/ democratic socialists (etc.) as well as two main varieties of anti-Stalinists exiles: Mensheviks, and the recently crystallized followership of Trotsky that encompassed many former-Bolsheviks/ ex-Communists.

During the early 1930s, as the Communist Party developed a newfound strength fueled by economic conditions and anti-Fascist sentiment—soon formalized, into the Popular Front—it was embraced by segments of the New York Jewish left. A constellation of small-circulation ‘journals of opinion’ flourished in this environment. The literary magazine *Partisan Review* was founded in 1934, by Philip Rahv (b. 1908) and William Phillips (b. 1907), both of Ukrainian descent (first and second-generation respectively). Modeled after the defunct *Menorah Journal* (1915-1931), *Partisan Review* was initially Communist Party-affiliated yet—amid the atmosphere of intensifying factionalism—its editors adopted Trotskyism and remained in that orbit until following the trend in which many were drifting towards non-Marxian version of left-liberalism. By 1945, when the American Jewish Committee (AJC) launched *Commentary*, it was developed by its first editor Eliot E. Cohen as a liberal magazine reflecting the rightward political migration of certain

New York intellectuals, inspired by and connected to former socialists and ex-Trotskyists with *The New Leader* and *Partisan Review*. When founded in 1954 by Irving Howe and Lewis Coser, *Dissent*, as its name suggests, was designed as a sort of ‘friendly opposition to the established periodicals to which it was genetically linked. From the other side of the spectrum, taking over as *Commentary* editor after Cohen’s death in 1959, Norman Podhoretz subsequently guided the transformation into its neoconservative phase, as a schism between liberals and radicals climaxed in the late 1960s.

While it maintained links to its pre-Levitas roots, *The New Leader* took a new shape after he became its editor. No longer just anticommunist, which was not new for the paper, it adopted a particularly virulent anti-Stalinism that was accented by former Mensheviks and ex-Trotskyists. In that context *The New Leader* was, for a certain faction of New York intellectuals, as observed by Hugh Wilford, “not only an important publishing outlet,” but “campaign headquarters in their crusade against communism.”<sup>12</sup> In that context, perhaps *The New Leader*’s most iconic moment was the first American outlet to publish Nikita Khrushchev’s February 1956 ‘secret speech,’ delivered three years after the death of Stalin, in which he admitted and denounced many of the atrocities committed during his era. Yet *The New Leader*’s goal was not to applaud the Soviet Union’s ‘de-Stalinization’ campaign but rather confirm what it had long been informing its readers about all along, being in fact the first US publication to print the work of exiled novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, author of *The*

*Gulag Archipelago* (1973)—written between the late 1950s and late 1960s. The secret speech triggered, among many other things, Solzhenitsyn’s ability to return to the Soviet Union as part of de-Stalinization, and was attached to a renewal on the part of Soviet leaders under Khrushchev to discuss the prospects of ‘peaceful coexistence’ with the west.

After Stalin’s death, *The New Leader*’s editorial position on the Soviet Union remained essentially unchanged. The front-page article on January 26, 1953, for example, next to an ominous-looking photo of the gravely ill Soviet leader, asked: “Do Stalin’s New Purges Mean War?” The editors decided that while the answer to that question was inconclusive, clearly the current Soviet objective was the “weakening of the United States as preparation for war”:

The Soviet press... has become even more...anti-American than usual, literally bristling with epithets that would be unprintable anywhere else. In this respect as well, the inner and outer aspects of Communism are uncomfortably reminiscent of Nazism in the days immediately preceding the attack on Poland.<sup>13</sup>

Such articles were part of what prompted the *New York Times*, in its 2006 tribute, to claim, while referring to the 1956 case of former Yugoslav vice-president Milovan Djilas, that “In its heyday... *The New Leader* was probably read with more scrutiny in Moscow than in New York. If you were a dissident East European, a mere appearance in its pages could quickly land you in jail.”<sup>14</sup>

Levitas’s influence seems to have emboldened his anticommunism during the 1950s, despite risks of backlash from the Kremlin. It is unknown when exactly he began to collaborate with the CIA, as he left no paper trail; most of what researchers

know for sure relate to cryptic remarks, such as in 1950, when he told board members that “A group of Friends in Washington have contributed \$5,000 to *The New Leader*.”<sup>15</sup> There is little doubt about the identity of Levitas’s ‘friends,’ in part because of what is now known about CIA financing of other periodicals for their effect as Cold War propaganda, including *Partisan Review* and Max Ascoli’s *Reporter*. One of the operatives involved in the scheme, Frank Wisner, described the strategy by likening it to an organ (as in the musical instrument) able to play the Agency’s tune: a ‘mighty Wurlitzer.’<sup>16</sup> One piece of, albeit circumstantial, evidence relating to Sol Levitas’s work for the CIA would be the cover of the June 13, 1955 issue, features a picture of an intensely-focused Allen Dulles smoking a pipe, next to the headline: “U.S. Intelligence Chief Tells Why Russia’s Rulers are in trouble. There is, moreover, some reason to believe that Levitas could have been courting government largess as early as 1941, when he wrote to what appears to be a British intelligence officer with a proposal to help spread a pro-democracy, anti-totalitarian message to “hundreds of thousands of people engaged in the defense industries... as well as the middle class and intellectuals.”<sup>17</sup> With open assistance from the State Department—which helped arrange subscriptions and distribute copies abroad, as well as clandestine CIA funding starting by at least 1950—*The New Leader* circulated through a small yet influential network of ‘cold war intellectuals’ in the US and Europe. In that context, Levitas and his comrades played an instrumental role in the promotion of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) and the American Committee

for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), using their organ as a platform to promote the CIA-sponsored project in which they were intimately involved.

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The December 25, 1950 issue of *The Steelworker News* features on its front page a piece reprinted from the November 13 issue of *The New Leader*, where it appeared in the form of one article within another: “A Message to Americans,” signed by *The New Leader*’s editors, below which was a statement titled “Speaking for Freedom,” issued by the executive committee of the CCF following its inaugural meeting in Berlin that June. As it appeared in *The Steelworker News*, both portions of the text were placed under the heading “Speaking for Freedom,” which began: “On the very day the Soviets invaded South Korea, June 25, fate ordained that some of the finest minds of the Western world should have been scheduled to meet in the very heart of the Soviet Union's European empire, Berlin.”<sup>18</sup> In a letter dated February 6, 1951, Levitas wrote to a representative of *The Steelworker News* in Gary, Indiana, expressing “satisfaction that” they had “reprinted an article from the NEW LEADER,” in yet he was “surprised to find no credit” given to his publication, and indicated that it was required.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, a paid advertisement promoting the ACCF that Levitas helped arrange, and which after some delay ran in the April 2, 1951 issue of *The New York Times* featured text that was either identical, or extremely similar to “Speaking For Freedom,” under the heading “We Put Freedom First!” The ad copy began “On June 25, 1950—the very day the North Korean Communists invaded South Korea—

some of the most distinguished figures of the Western World were meeting in the free sector of Berlin.”

Was Levitas really objecting to what amounted to free advertising for the ACCF just because *The New Leader* was not given credit (even though it was not credited in the *Times* either)? That is unlikely. *The Steelworker News* reprint ran beneath an editorial statement that surely raised Levitas’s eyebrows, and probably irked him in some manner, although he did not mention it or express anger in his letter. After urging readers to absorb the “following thought-provoking article...even though it does not necessarily represent...this publication, especially on the political level,” *The Steelworker News* editors determined that it does develop the problem facing all mankind: the fate of freedom.” They concluded, dramatically:

The door on American freedom is about to close. The process of mobilization will slam the door shut. The greatest tragedy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is that the labor leaders and liberals in America helped place in power the very persons who, intentionally or not, are about to seal our doom.

Perhaps, as Levitas read those words, on Christmas in 1950, they affected him more deeply than he was aware. Or maybe he just knew that the *New Leader* and *Steelworker News* were on opposite sides of a widening divide between those who supported a military build-up in response to Korea, and those who did not. On that very same day, a *New Leader* editorial declared: “Having identified the enemy at last, Washington is obligated now to show the world how it proposes to destroy him.... Not partial, but *total* mobilization of men and resources is demanded... which...must far surpass that we were once capable of.”<sup>20</sup>



Fittingly, within a few months the opening salvo occurred in what tuned into a long and bitter feud between *The New Leader* and *The Nation*, which became symbolic of the fracture between left-liberal anticommunists and progressives whose worldview was less dominated by the Cold War. Upon deciding not to print a letter sent by her former art critic Clement Greenberg in early 1951, which accused *The Nation*'s J. Alvarez del Vayo of using his column as "a medium through which arguments remarkably like those which the Stalin regime advances are transmitted... to the American public," Freda Kirchwey pledged to pursue a libel suit against anyone who did.<sup>21</sup> After *The New Leader* printed Greenberg's letter on March 19, Kirchwey made good on her promise and sued the paper, while as, she put it, "having no intention of trying the case in the columns of *The Nation*."<sup>22</sup> Levitas's *New Leader* charged Kirchwey with censorship and wanted the matter tried in the court of public opinion. She did not print the flood of letters that poured in from those who sided with Greenberg and *The New Leader*, including one from Arthur Schlesinger Jr. charging *The Nation* with "betraying its finest traditions" by printing "week after week *these wretched apologies for Soviet despotism*."<sup>23</sup> The affair turned into a public relations disaster for Kirchwey and *The Nation*. For *The New Leader*, it was quite the opposite.

Norman Thomas worked for a long period of time to achieve a reunification of the SPA and SDF, which finally occurred in 1955. As the SDF was dissolved, the American Labor Conference on International Affairs (ALCIA) took official responsibility for publishing *The New Leader*. Thomas by then had long since been

back in the fold among his cold war comrades. In the October 15, 1951 issue, for instance, he told readers of *The New Leader* “Why No One Can Be Neutral,” in an article sub-headed “The Futility of the Third Force:

The most that our country can do is to make war more or less likely by its actions. It can avoid precipitating atomic war. It cannot of itself avoid fighting another world war by any unilateral decision short of surrender to an aggressive Communism which seeks everywhere universal power over the bodies, minds and souls of men.... there is, in the nature of Stalinist Communism’s drive for power, a nihilistic destruction of all values, and encouragement through jealousy of the possession of power, which would doom a Communist world to the bloodbath of vast purges and finally to recurring wars.

Norman Thomas (1884-1968)

If Communism should win the world, the twilight of the west would become the midnight of the human spirit.<sup>24</sup>

As an Ivy League-educated Presbyterian minister with no formal union affiliation or background in labor organizing, Norman Thomas was a rather unlikely candidate to succeed Eugene Debs as the avatar of American socialism. He graduated in 1905 as class valedictorian from Princeton University, where his chums included future CIA Director Allen Dulles; that same year Thomas co-founded the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (ISS) with other young intellectuals including Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Walter Lippmann.<sup>25</sup> Thomas subsequently honed both his ethical and political commitments while serving as a pastor in the working-class immigrant communities of the East Harlem, from 1911 through 1918 when he left the ministry, in part, to pursue his pacifist objections to American involvement in the First World War. Thomas subsequently joined the Socialist Party of America in late 1918, inspired by

Debs's principled resistance to US involvement in the First World War. While never becoming as widely known as the man he succeeded, Thomas achieved his own (mild) celebrity while heading six consecutive SPA presidential tickets, from 1928 through 1948.<sup>26</sup> By the late 1940s the moniker 'Norman Thomas Socialist' had come to signify a political stance that might not include formal SPA membership, but indicated one's commitment to both supporting social democratic values while supporting anticommunist struggle.

Norman Mattoon Thomas was born on November 20, 1884 in the town of Marion, located fifty miles north of Columbus, Ohio. He was the oldest of six siblings, four boys and two girls. His father, Reverend Welling Evan Thomas, was a Presbyterian pastor at a church attended by many of Marion's upper crust, whose mansions had indoor plumbing (unlike the Thomas family's two-story brick house). His mother, Emma Mattoon, was college educated, having been raised in Siam (Thailand) where her parents served as missionaries (earning praiseworthy mention in the 1944 novel *Anna and the King of Siam*—later adapted as *The King and I*). The Mattoons traced their heritage in the United States to the colonial era, descended from French Huguenots; Thomas's mother earned a modest income from her family inheritance. His maternal grandfather, Stephen Mattoon, graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1843, the same year as his paternal grandfather, Thomas Thomas, who came to Pennsylvania from Wales at age twelve, in 1824.

After his time at Princeton, young Norman temporarily suppressed his interest in politics and social activism in order to follow his expected path by attending Union Theological Seminary in New York, graduating in 1911. His subsequent career in the ministry was brief, lasting seven years, during which time he served as pastor of the East Harlem Presbyterian Church and director of the American Parish settlement house; Pastor Thomas ministered to mainly poor European immigrants, and East Harlem at the time was experiencing an influx of Italians. Thomas subsequently honed both his ethical and political commitments while serving as a pastor in the working-class immigrant communities of the East Harlem, from 1911 through 1918.

Although his family traditionally supported Republicans (as the party of Lincoln), in 1912 Thomas voted for the progressive Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson, from whom he had taken classes at Princeton. Thomas voted for his old professor again in 1916, yet with reservations, fearing that Wilson's declared support for 'military preparedness' was a prelude to ending the policy of neutrality in the war raging through Europe since the summer of 1914. In a March 1916 article for the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, "Defense of Dissenters," Thomas declared distaste for "the hideous violence of war," arguing that "No righteous end can justify unholy means."<sup>27</sup> When Wilson ultimately brought the US into the European conflict, Thomas reacted by abandoning the Democrats and embracing the Socialist Party, which had adopted a resolution against the war at an emergency convention in April 1917. That fall he supported the Socialist candidate for mayor of New York Morris Hillquit, and in October 1918, a month before the armistice that ended the war,

Thomas formally applied for membership in the Socialist Party; in a letter to SPA activist Alexander Trachtenberg, he proclaimed his belief in “establishing a cooperative commonwealth” that would promote “the abolition of... unjust economic institutions and class distinctions.”<sup>28</sup> At the same time, while skepticism about getting involved in the ‘Great War’—if not outright ‘isolationism’—was prevalent among the US public, it was not a popular view within Presbyterian officialdom or among most of Thomas’s parishioners, which included both Italians and Germans still tied to their native lands. Hence, the same year he joined the SPA, Thomas resigned his clergy positions (yet did not formally leave the ministry until 1931).

Throughout his subsequent career as a political activist, writer, and orator, Thomas continued to be animated by the Social Gospel. Upon departing from church and parish work, he took a job as editor of *The World Tomorrow*, published by the US Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), which Thomas joined in 1916, a year after it was formed by a group that included Dutch-born radical pacifist preacher A.J. Muste. Thomas ultimately developed a reputation as an impassioned and tireless champion for peace and social justice whose great oratory skill was accompanied by a humility and affability for which he gained the respect of his comrades as well as political opponents. Thomas built his standing on the left through involvement in groups like FOR, and in 1917 worked with some of its members including Roger Nash Baldwin to form the National Civil Liberties Bureau (NCLB)—forerunner of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)—to protect the legal rights of wartime ‘conscientious objectors.’ In 1921 he was involved with other ISS members in the creation of the

League for Industrial Democracy (LID), under the slogan “Production for use, not for profit”; Thomas began a stint as LID co-director the following year. As a staunch supporter of the cause of racial justice, moreover, Thomas became friends with and allies to many civil rights leaders; in the 1920s he helped A. Philip Randolph (b. 1889) organize the Brotherhood of Black Sleeping Car Porters (BBSCP), the nation’s first African American-led union. In honor of his eightieth birthday in 1964, Martin Luther King praised the Socialist leader as “the bravest man” he had “ever met.”<sup>29</sup>

As a skilled orator and savvy political operator, Thomas quickly ascended the ranks of the Socialist Party in New York. He left *The World Tomorrow* in 1921, becoming an associate editor of *The Nation*, which at the time was owned by journalist Oswald Garrison Villard, who had helped found the NAACP) along with Du Bois and others, in 1909. In his rise to prominence as a Socialist, the former minister was aided not only by his instinct for pacifism and anti-imperialism, but also his enlightened views on race, which were congruent with positions taken by the NAACP, but ahead of the curve among most white Socialists. In November 1919, for example, he supported justice for casino workers in Harlem on grounds that the American “body politic” had been “corrupted and poisoned by the atrocity and cruelty of our attitude toward our black fellow citizens.”<sup>30</sup> While he did not engage a complex theorization of race, Thomas abhorred the practice of discrimination based on skin color; he championed the struggle for black freedom and equality as a moral cause, as old as the nation itself, which continued to beat at the heart of American

society. He believed, moreover, that racial bigotry was fundamentally linked to European colonialism and imperialism, all of which could be challenged by Socialism as a force for solidarity among common people throughout the world.

Thomas began his career in electoral politics in 1924. As the Socialist candidate for governor of New York, he garnered less than 100,000 votes while losing handily to the popular incumbent, liberal Democrat Al Smith. The election that year marked a pivotal moment in the history of the SPA, which for the first time since its existence did not organize a presidential campaign, choosing instead to endorse Wisconsin Senator Robert La Follette, formerly a Republican. La Follette carried his home state and won almost five million votes, nearly seventeen percent, as a Progressive candidate. The SPA contributed significantly to La Follette's relatively strong showing, and his victory in Wisconsin helped elect a Socialist to the US House of Representatives, Victor Berger, from Milwaukee. Moreover, progressive New York Republican Fiorello La Guardia won his fourth term in Congress while running on the Independent and Socialist tickets. The decision to support La Follette in 1924 had been controversial among SPA leaders, with Thomas supporting those who thought it was worth the gamble, hoping that La Follette could unite progressives and the forces of labor in an alliance that might coalesce in a new national party.

Planning for such an entity, modeled after the British Labor Party, started under the auspices of the Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA), formed in 1922.

Yet the CPPA-La Follette coalition failed to produce a sustained nationwide movement, although it did lay groundwork for a labor party that later existed in New

York, as well as a ‘farm-labor’ alliance that took hold in the upper Midwest. As a result, the SPA returned to the practice of fielding its own presidential candidates. Having complimented his run for governor with a campaign for New York mayor in 1925, Thomas at that time was arguably the most notable American Socialist besides the iconic Debs, who had run for president five time, from 1900 through 1912, and in 1920 from the federal prison cell where he had been held as a conscientious objector since April 1919. Even though Thomas’s background as a clergyman rather than labor-organizer placed him outside the mold, in many ways he was a natural fit to become the new avatar of American Socialism after the death of Debs in 1926.

The party that Thomas inherited evolved from the Social Democracy of America (SDA), founded in 1897 by the Indiana native Debs (b. 1855); as l leader of the American Railway Union (ARU), he had been a supporter of populist Democrat William Jennings Bryan in 1896. Upon adopting socialism, Debs formed an alliance with a faction of the Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth, which had loose affiliations with the Socialist Labor Party (SLP)—originally the Workingman’s Party of America (WPA)—established in 1876. This merger created the SDA, which after a period of factional dispute, culminated in the establishment of the Socialist Party of America (SPA) in 1901. As Debs subsequently became the face of American Socialism during the first two decades of the twentieth century, his party drew loosely on principles that were developed in Europe and influenced by Karl



Marx (b. 1818) and Friedrich Engels (b. 1820), which found expression in the International Workingmen's Association launched in 1864.

The 'First International' unified various anarchist, communist, and socialist organizations; disbanded in 1876, it was replaced by a 'Second International,' otherwise known as the 'Socialist International,' in effect from 1889-1916. While operating partially under the umbrella of such European-originated Marxist internationalism, Debs's party had separate roots in a distinctly American tradition of reformism stretching from the anti-slavery and woman suffrage movements, to late nineteenth century Populism and early twentieth century Progressivism. The development of Socialism in the US, moreover, was shaped by a specific history of labor struggle, marked by rivalries between industrial versus trade and craft unions, first enacted between the Knights of Labor, formed in 1869, and the AFL, founded in 1886. In 1905, when miners and other industrial laborers formed the International Workers of the World (IWW), or 'Wobblies,' in opposition to the craft-dominated AFL, they were joined by members of both the SPA as well as the SLP (which remained a smaller organization linked more directly to Europe).

Thomas's path into the ranks of the SPA's national leadership circle was to a certain extent cleared by virtue of being among those who remained loyal amid the schism of 1919. As a member of the SPA's vaunted New York chapter during the drama, Thomas sided with those who were skeptical of Bolshevism particularly on grounds that it was hostile to democracy. In February 1919, for example, he wrote in

The World Tomorrow: “If the Bolshevik power can live on no other basis than the suppression of discussion its days are numbered.”<sup>31</sup>

Thomas had a modest showing in the 1928 presidential election, earning fewer than 270,000 votes. Yet the second-time candidate surged in 1932 and came close to winning 900,000 votes, which nearly matched Debs’s 1912 high-water mark. As a result of his rising popularity, the new SPA leader’s face adorned the cover of *Time* in August 1932. Thomas was a critic of the Roosevelt administration on a number of levels, and he viewed the New Deal in general as a ‘quick-fix’ attempt that was bound to fail, offering narrow technical solutions to specific problems without addressing the structural features or moral dimensions of the structural crisis. In that vein, Thomas supported the Southern Tenant Farmers’ Union (STFU), which was formed in 1934 to support the mainly black sharecroppers who were excluded from Henry Wallace’s Agricultural Adjustment Administration. However most of the American electorate did not share Thomas’s anti-Roosevelt position. In 1936, as FDR was re-elected in the biggest landslide in US history, support for the SPA plummeted to under 200,000 votes, declining further in Thomas’s next two campaigns (then falling to less than 80,000 in 1944).

Yet as Thomas articulated a critique that would eventually become typical of the Soviet Union’s opponents on the left, the nascent American communist movement facilitated the steady demise of the Socialist Party’s electoral fortunes; from its inception, the CPUSA posed a threat to the already limited power and prestige of the SPA. While the party he had become associated with was no longer a force in

electoral politics after 1948, Thomas remained highly active until his death in December 1968. During the latter portion of his career, no longer involved in electioneering, he continued to fight for socialist/ social-democratic principles while taking part in the creation of organizations such as the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) and the Institute of International Labor Research (IILR), both in 1957. Founded by Thomas with a group that included Walter Reuther and his brother (Victor), the IILR promoted the growth of democratic (non-Communist) unions and schools, etc. in Latin America. In 1959 Thomas was among those who tried in vein to prevent the youth wing of the LID from splitting off to form the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and he then became involved in maintaining close relations between the parent organization and its offspring, particularly in terms of coordinating opposition to the war in Vietnam.

Even while earning accolades as an anti-imperialist pacifist, Thomas never wavered from his anticommunist foundation. And while his reputation suffered among radicals due to his embrace of cold war liberalism in the 1950s, Thomas's stance in support of the antiwar New Left signaled the direction in which he was moving. On the whole, his principles remained consistent, even as he presided over the decline of the Socialist Party's political relevance and contributed in some measure to the 'de-radicalization' of the American left during the early Cold War. While embracing anticommunism, Thomas always hoped to maintain what, in a 1954 letter to Sol Stein, he called his "identification in the public mind with socialism."<sup>32</sup>

Sidney Hook (1902-1989)

Communist *ideas* are heresies, and liberals need have no fear of them where they are freely and openly expressed.... The Communist *movement*, however, is something much more than a heresy, for...it operates along the lines laid down by Lenin as guides to Communists of all countries, and perfected in all details since then.<sup>33</sup>

Like many who moved into the Communist orbit early in the Depression-years, Hook quickly became disillusioned by the state affairs in the Soviet Union under Stalin, who was increasingly viewed by some on the left as an authoritarian whose agenda was inimical to both democracy and socialism as well as the Marxist-Leninist aim of worldwide proletarian revolution. Moreover, to critical supporters of Marxian revolution like Hook, as they paid careful attention to the rise of Stalinism it became clear that the Soviet leader was capable of murderous brutality for the sake of consolidating and maintaining his own power; among the most egregious aspects of Stalin's authoritarianism was his treatment of dissidents like the exiled revolutionary-era Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, who attracted strong support from fellow Jewish leftists in both the United States and Europe; he in fact had fairly extensive ties to the community of Jewish radicals that was centered in working-class Eastern European immigrant neighborhoods of Manhattan's 'lower east side' and parts of Brooklyn. Hook came of age in that milieu, of the so-called 'Jewish left' in New York.

Saul "Sidney" Hook was born on December 20, 1902, to Jewish émigrés from Moravia and Galicia, respectively, who met and married in Brooklyn; Isaac Hook was a tailor by trade, and Jenny Hook (née Halpern) worked at home. When he

began school at age five, Saul's mother insisted that her youngest of four children (two sons and two daughters) be called "Sidney." Like many in their situation, the Hooks were concerned primarily with issues related to survival and assimilation rather than politics; their area of Williamsburg, moreover, afforded less opportunity to encounter the proponents of left ideologies who dominated some of Brooklyn's other working-class ethnic slums, such as Brownsville. In 1912, when support for Debs and the SPA peaked, Isaac Hook voted for Republican incumbent William Howard Taft (who lost to Woodrow Wilson). After the Bolshevik Revolution and ensuing Red Scare, young Sidney's first real exposure to New York's leftwing milieu came when he went to high school and mixed with students from other neighborhoods; becoming attracted to socialism as a teenager, he volunteered for Morris Hillquit's mayoral campaign in 1917.<sup>34</sup>

From 1919-1923 Sidney Hook attended City College of New York, which for most working class Jews during the early twentieth century, was the only option for higher education. As recounted in his memoir *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1987), Hook's time at City College coincided with the excitement generated by the Russian Revolution, and he contributed to a growing climate of political engagement by founding a 'Social Problems Club' on campus. Along with cultivating an abiding concern for politics, Hook developed an interest in philosophy and took several classes from Morris Cohen (1888-1947), who he later described as having "intellectual gifts... so outstanding that he became a dominant figure in the cultural life of New York City." Hook recalled, moreover, that Cohen's "critical

genius” was “sharpened and refocused by his increasing concern about the fate of the Jewish people.”<sup>35</sup> The early tutelage he received from Cohen had an indelible impact on the course of Hook’s career, helping propel his acceptance to a doctoral program at Columbia University—a rare opportunity at the time for Jews. Hook taught in a public elementary school in the spring of 1923, before starting graduate work that fall; he continued as a high school teacher until 1927, when he completed his PhD and took a position at NYU where he taught for the next four decades.

At Columbia Hook gravitated to John Dewey (b. 1859), despite the fact that it contradicted the influence of Cohen, who was a fierce critic of pragmatism. The world-renown philosopher and educational theorist wrote a preface to the published version of Hook’s dissertation, *The Metaphysics of Pragmatism* (1927), which he described in his memoir as “an attempt to give a realistic cast to Dewey’s views.”<sup>36</sup> Although he became a disciple of Dewey, Hook did not always see eye-to-eye with his mentor; in fact (having been molded by Cohen) he began his career as Dewey’s student by endeavoring to disprove the validity of pragmatist ideas, yet by his own account failed.<sup>37</sup> Over time they became friends and partners in political struggle; as Hook later recalled, they “fought in so many causes together that” Dewey “and the ideas he stood for became one of the central ‘causes’” of his life. Becoming known as a chief expositor of his teacher’s beliefs, “efforts to clarify his views and to defend them against the misunderstandings of critics” earned Hook the nickname “Dewey’s bulldog.”<sup>38</sup> What excited him “more than anything else was Dewey’s revolutionary approach to philosophy that undercut all the assumptions of the classical tradition,”

wherein “knowledge reflected the antecedent structure and truths of the world.” In Hook’s view, Dewey understood that thought was “an outgrowth of the world, not a mirror image of it, as most previous empiricists believed.”<sup>39</sup>

In *Out of Step* Hook explained that he viewed his teacher’s writing as widely compatible with that of Marx; “as an avowed young Marxist,” he thought that much of Dewey’s work, such as *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), offered a “brilliant application of the principles of historical materialism... to philosophical thought.” Hence “Dewey, without regarding himself as a Marxist or invoking its approach, tried to show in detail how social stratification and class struggles got expressed in the metaphysical dualism of the time and in the dominant conceptions of... truth, reason, and experience.”<sup>40</sup> As he sought to marry philosophical and political commitments, Hook embarked on an journey that led from Germany, where he was doing research in 1929, to spending that summer as a visiting scholar at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, at the invitation of its director. As a result of that experience, Hook wrote two books that received critical acclaim, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation* (1933), and *From Hegel to Marx: Studies in the Intellectual Development of Karl Marx* (1936). In the former, as described by philosopher David Sidorsky, Hook “examined the grounds for reconciliation between Marxism and pragmatism”; he argued that “to speak of Marxism as an ‘objective science,’ is... to emasculate its class character,” which results in “disastrous consequences... both in logic and historic fact.”<sup>41</sup> Therefore rejecting ‘orthodox Marxism,’ Hook referred instead to ‘Marxian’ thought, which he claimed offered “a

philosophy of social action” that unlike other systems “cannot be neatly cut from its highly charged historical context and examined exclusively in light of its verbal consistencies.” The Marxian tradition, Hook argued, “differs from all other social theories and methodologies in that it is the fighting philosophy of the greatest mass movement that has swept Europe since the rise of Christianity.”<sup>42</sup>

When discovering in the 1980s that Dewey had once referred to him in a private correspondence with a friend as his “successor,” Hook viewed it as an honor that he did not deserve. Nonetheless, in retrospect he expressed confidence that, were it not for having thrown himself “wholeheartedly into the political movement of the thirties,” he “would instead have done more work in academic philosophy to justify Dewey’s faith” in him.<sup>43</sup> Still, Hook solicited his mentor’s assistance in almost all of the campaigns in which he was involved during the 1930 and 1940s, such that “their positions were overwhelmingly congruent” both intellectually and ideologically, as characterized by political scientist Gary Bullert, who contends that “Hook should be properly recognized as the major advocate of Dewey’s pragmatic liberal legacy.”<sup>44</sup> On a practical level Hook did not join Dewey in fully espousing social democratic principles until after a brief sojourn in the Communist orbit, shaped by his summer in the Soviet Union, which culminated in supporting William Z. Foster in 1932. Less than a year later Hook had altogether renounced both the CPUSA and Stalin’s USSR, arguing that the Popular Front should have been launched earlier, yet the Soviet leader’s Stalin’s willful inaction had enabled Hitler’s rise to power. In a 1934 article, “Communism Without Dogmas,” Hook announced his rejection of “the present



principles and tactics of the Third International...[and] affiliated organizations,” while at the same time endorsing “a form of social organization in which the associated producers democratically control the means of production and distribution of goods.” Previewing his impending embrace of Trotsky’s ‘left opposition’ to Stalin, Hook set his version of “Marxian communism” against the “‘official’ and ‘orthodox’ communist parties in Europe and America.”<sup>45</sup>

Leon Trotsky (nee Lev Bronstein) was born in 1879 to relatively affluent Ukrainian Jewish farmers. While in prison following his involvement in a strike, Trotsky read Vladimir Lenin’s *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899), and pledged support for the fledgling Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP). The RSDLP received material support from the socialist ‘Jewish Labor Bund,’ which was active throughout the Russian Empire from 1897-1920. During his exile in Siberia, from which he escaped in 1902, Trotsky witnessed a split in the ranks of RSDLP members and initially supported the Mensheviks, arguing that the goal of overthrowing the Tsar outweighed ideological differences. Yet Trotsky defected when the Mensheviks pursued too close an alliance with liberals at the expense of Lenin’s Bolsheviks. Starting in 1904 Trotsky moved in and out of the Russian Empire, spending considerable time in London, which was a center of anti-Tsarist activity. He maintained nominal neutrality in the factional divide among Russian social democrats, while attempting to mediate differences and reunify the competing factions; yet after a failed uprising in 1905, which resulted in Lenin’s re-

imprisonment, Trotsky became increasingly aligned with Bolshevism (in 1915 he attended the ‘Zimmerwald Conference’ in Switzerland and helped avoid a split among European socialists who opposed their countries’ involvement in the war).

After the initial overthrow of the Tsar in February of 1917, Trotsky returned from New York to fight alongside the Bolshevik revolutionaries. Trotsky was subsequently involved in the ‘October Revolution’ when the Bolsheviks stormed the capital of the Russian monarchy in Petrograd (formerly Saint Petersburg). Marching under the Red Flag (a symbol from the French Revolution that had been adopted by Marxists), they ousted the provisional government of moderate socialist (‘Trudovik’) Alexander Kerensky. Taking up residence inside the ancient ‘Kremlin’ (fortified complex) in Moscow, triumphant Bolshevik leaders instituted an interim Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. In the bloody and chaotic war that ensued, the ‘Red Army’—founded and commanded by Trotsky—outmaneuvered the Tsar’s beleaguered ‘White Army’ loyalists who were supported in vain by Western powers. Upon completion of the revolution, in October 1922, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) came into existence.

The Bolshevik victory in the Russian Civil War coincided with the start of Lenin’s decline, following a series of strokes, beginning in May 1922. The maneuvering to succeed him began prior to Lenin’s death, in January 1924, at which point a power struggle emerged among top ‘Politburo’ members including Trotsky, Nikolai Bukharin (b. 1888), Lev Kamenev (b. 1883), Grigory Zinoviev (b. 1883), and the General Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, Joseph Stalin (b. 1878). In

large part through help from Bukharin as an ally against Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Trotsky, Stalin emerged victorious, declaring himself Premier of the Soviet Union. Since 1923, Trotsky was the leader of 'Left Opposition' within the party's Central Committee, mirrored by a 'Right Opposition' loyal to Bukharin. Trotsky articulated dissent on several fronts, especially his fear of increasing bureaucratization, which he thought would lead to greater authoritarianism. He disagreed, furthermore, with Stalin's plan to pursue 'revolution in one country,' while not actively fomenting it elsewhere—a clear betrayal of Lenin. Trotsky had been the key voice in Bolshevik debate over the Marxist concept of 'permanent revolution,' arguing that victories for the proletariat are inevitably fleeting unless actively defended and expanded; in the case of world revolution, struggle against capitalist exploitation becomes a virtually perpetual event. This was a central strategic concern for Trotsky, who did not think that the Soviet Union could survive indefinitely if it remained isolated and surrounded as an international pariah as opposed to the center of world revolution.

As Stalin consolidated power in an increasingly violent and paranoid manner, he embarked on the liquidation of (potential) rivals, either through arrest (disappearance) and execution, or banishment to 'gulags' (prison camps) in Siberia. As punishment for his insubordination, Trotsky was removed from the Politburo in 1926, expelled from the Comintern the following year. In 1928, Stalin instituted his first 'Five-Year Plan,' stressing a need to grow the Soviet industrial base, which led to policies that succeeded in remaking the Russian countryside—and with it, the economy. Yet this decision to collectivize farmland resulted also in the displacement

and death of up to 20,000 'kulaks' (prosperous farmers), followed by famines that killed masses of peasants (the precise amount is unknown). While Lenin had undertaken similar (yet less ambitious) measures to manage agricultural production, Stalin's scheme, aimed at rapid industrialization, had consequences that were far more devastating. With Bukharin refusing to endorse the plan, he was removed from the Politburo in 1929, the same year that Trotsky was deported.

Between 1930 and 1938, as many as ten million people died as a result of Stalin's collectivization policies, as well as his ruthless campaign to 'purge' the country of opposition to his authority. In 1936, at the height of Stalin's 'Great Terror,' the first in a series of 'show trials' was held in Moscow, as sixteen former top Bolsheviks were accused of hatching a plot to assassinate Stalin masterminded, allegedly, by Trotsky. While the supposed ringleader was tried in absentia, the other main defendants, including Zinoviev and Kamenev, were found guilty and summarily executed. Arrested in 1937, the following year Bukharin was charged with various offenses, along with a group of other defendants; he too was found guilty, sentenced, and put to death in March 1938. Trotsky, having escaped from London to Norway via Turkey, arrived in Mexico around the same time that the show trials were getting underway; he was subsequently tracked by agents of the Soviet secret police (NKVD), and assassinated in August 1940.

The Comintern became an instrument of both Stalin's authority and Soviet foreign policy. Although its ostensible purpose as a vessel for international socialist

solidarity remained intact, in practice, it came to function as a vehicle for policing affiliates, subordinating local Communist Parties to the interests of Moscow. Stalin and his acolytes effectively dictated the appropriate 'party line,' while disciplining those who deviated from it. During what became known as the 'Third Period,' starting in 1928, the Comintern stressed ideological purity and the internal strengthening of the Soviet system. This was justified on grounds that the USSR could not act prematurely as a world power; a global revolution would fail if the Russian foundation proved too weak. Opponents of Stalin's regime were denounced as 'enemies of the revolution,' with 'Trotskyite' used as an epithet for those accused of 'terrorism' and other forms of treason. The views of non-communist socialists, derided as 'social-fascists,' were considered no better (and perhaps worse) than those of rightwing reactionaries. The rise of (actual) fascism in Europe reinforced the notion that the Soviet Union was besieged; at the same time, it changed the international political calculus, prompting a reconsideration of official strategy. With dire threats emerging in Italy, Germany, and Spain the Comintern's Third Period was brought to a close in 1934, replaced by a set of policies known as the 'Popular Front.'

Initiated formally in 1935, the Popular Front reversed the thrust of the Third Period. Whereas Comintern policy had been arrayed against Western powers led by Britain and the US, with the new party line it was redirected towards forging a necessary alliance with capitalist nations, as well as with non-communist socialists and liberals who supported the fight against Fascism. The Popular Front helped to swell the ranks of the CPUSA, which had already embraced a coalition-building

mindset under the leadership of Earl Browder, whose slogan ‘Communism is twentieth century Americanism’ embodied the spirit of left-liberal collaboration. Browder helped cultivated space for the revolutionary socialist tradition within mainstream American political culture by having communists work with liberal and progressive ‘fellow-travelers’ who belonged to Roosevelt’s New Deal coalition.

The appeal of communism during the Popular Front was especially strong among radicals in New York and other urban centers. Yet by squarely addressing the issue of racial inequality, which many white activists still avoided, the CPUSA and its allies also gained stature in the rural south, among poor African-Americans in what the Party called the ‘Black Belt.’ While Communist-affiliated organizations joined the assault on ‘Jim Crow’ segregation, CPUSA members also fought within mainstream civil rights organizations, including the NAACP. The same dynamic occurred within the labor movement, which was burgeoning as a result of the New Deal; Communists assumed a leading role in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), an assembly of radical unions formed in 1935.<sup>46</sup> Although Browder ran for president in 1936, the CPUSA tacitly supported Roosevelt’s bid for re-election through the CIO’s National Citizens Political Action Committee (CIO-PAC), illustrating just how ‘American’ communism could be. In August 1939, when emissaries of Stalin and German Chancellor Adolph Hitler consummated a Non-Aggression Treaty, it brought an abrupt end to the Popular Front. The signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact sent shockwaves through progressive circles the world over,

prompting many American radicals to reconsider their faith in Communism as a solution to the crisis of capitalism laid bare by the Great Depression.

During his exile, Trotsky became a center of resistance for leftists who supported the international Marxist-Leninist revolution (communism), but opposed Stalin's control over it (Communism). American intellectuals who gravitated towards Trotskyism were inspired by their hero's critical analysis of the Soviet Union following Lenin's death, *The Revolution Betrayed* (1937). Being "the first time in history that a state resulting from a workers revolution has existed," Trotsky declared, "the stages through which it must go are nowhere written down." While "theoreticians and creators of the Soviet Union hoped that the...system would permit the state peacefully to transform itself," it could not have been anticipated that "the proletariat of a backwards country" would be "fated to accomplish the first socialist revolution." As a result, there was need for "a second revolution—against bureaucratic absolutism." Trotsky then drew a final conclusion that established parameters for a long-term struggle, applicable to Marxists-Leninists everywhere:

It is not a question of substituting one ruling clique for another, but of changing the very methods of administering the economy and guiding the culture of the country. Bureaucratic autocracy must give place to Soviet democracy. A restoration of the right of criticism, and a genuine freedom of elections, are necessary conditions for further development of the country. This assumes a revival of freedom of Soviet parties, beginning with the party of the Bolsheviks, and a resurrection of the trade unions.<sup>47</sup>

Following their 1928 expulsion from the CPUSA, Max Shachtman, Martin Abern, and James P. Cannon formed the Communist League of America (CLA), which became the center of the Trotskyist movement in the United States. A close

friend and ally of Trotsky, Shachtman (b. 1904) was a Polish émigré raised in the Jewish section of East Harlem (Norman Thomas's parish); he chaired a meeting of Trotsky's supporters that met in Paris in 1938 to establish a Fourth International devoted to rescuing communism from the clutches of Stalin. In 1934 the CLA merged with A.J. Muste's American Workers Party (AWP), launched a year earlier, to form the US Workers Party (WPUS). The WPUS dissolved in 1936, after a contingent of its members decided to join the SPA—only to be followed in 1937 by an exodus from that party and the creation of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).<sup>48</sup> After Trotsky's death, followers of Cannon and Shachtman splintered into opposing camps divided over several issues, including the question of whether to view the USSR as a “degenerated workers' state,” as had Trotsky formulated, or worse. Amid continued disagreement about the utility of allying with non-Trotskyists, the anti-Stalinist left became increasingly riven by doctrinal disputes, further complicated by a faction of dissident communists grouped around another exile from the CPUSA, Jay Lovestone, a devotee of Bukharin.

The question of whether or not to absorb Trotskyists into the party of Debs provoked the biggest crisis among Socialist since the schism of 1919. Following their rupture with the nascent CPUSA, remaining SPA members re-divided into rival left and right wings, forming an alignment that was solidified when the WPUS came calling and was supported by a faction of ‘militants,’ whose desire to admit the Trotskyists was opposed by an ‘old guard’ bloc loyal to elder statesman Morris Hillquit (b. 1869). A number of militants including SPA Executive Secretary



Clarence Senior (b. 1903) were protégées of Thomas, who gave them his crucial support during their showdown with Hillquit's supporters at the 1934 National Convention. This fissure over how the SPA should relate to Trotskyists ultimately prompted the schism of 1936, when defectors from the old guard formed the Social Democratic Federation (SDF).

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Sidney Hook's involvement in the American Trotskyist movement coincided with this tumultuous period of factional realignment; starting in 1933 he joined fellow-NYU philosophy professor James Burnham in helping Muste merge the AWP with the CLA, and became actively involved in early activities of the WPUS. As with his career as a scholar of Marxism, Hook's Trotskyist phase was lively yet brief; by the time of the split between the Cannon and Shachtman factions, he had already begun to migrate away from the anti-Stalinist left while embracing social democratic values as part of a growing liberal anticommunist bloc. In that context Hook helped arrange one of the most important endeavors involving US-based Trotskyists with his role in facilitating the so-called 'Dewey Commission.' The international campaign was officially known as the Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials, and was spearheaded by Dewey who led a five-person team that included journalists Benjamin Stolberg and journalist Suzanne La Follette, which traveled to Mexico and interviewed the exiled Bolshevik leader in April 1937. While not a Trotskyist himself, in some ways because of Hook's

influence Dewey had was highly sympathetic to Trotsky's plight and motivated to expose his persecution.

For his part Hook helped organize the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky as an adjunct to the Dewey Commission, with a roster of noted intellectuals that included anthropologist Franz Boas and Lionel Trilling (both of whom taught at Columbia) as well as John Dos Passos and many others who were subsequently at the center of left-liberal anticommunist activity, including Niebuhr and Norman Thomas. Through the American defense committee, Hook and his comrades helped to lay groundwork for the investigation that resulted in a four hundred-page report titled "Not Guilty," which acquitted Trotsky of all charges while accusing Stalin of heinous crimes.<sup>49</sup> Hook's efforts in this regard were informed on one hand by his experience in Moscow, having arrived not long after Trotsky's expulsion, as well as his associations with fellow former communists-turned anti-Stalinist leftists such as Max Eastman, who had studied with Dewey when Hook was still in diapers (yet refused to accept a degree despite completing all requirements). As a fixture in Greenwich Village's radical circles when Hook began teaching at NYU, Eastman had toured the Soviet Union for almost two years ending in 1924, inspiring a sharp critique of the Stalinist regime; over a decade later he translated the original English version of *The Revolution Betrayed*. With his involvement in the international campaign to defend Trotsky, Hook in essence initiated the anti-Stalinist-turned-anticommunist crusade that more or less consumed the rest of his political life.

From perches at NYU and elsewhere, including nearby at *The New Leader*'s Tamiment Institute offices, Hook became a pillar of the so-called 'New York intellectual' circle, which consisted of (primarily but not exclusively Jewish) radical thinkers and writers linked through attendance at CCNY as well as other foci of political and cultural contact among Jewish working-class immigrants during the interwar period. In his memoir published two years before his death in July 1989, Hook identified as a 'democratic socialist,' even though he endorsed conservative positions in the last two decades of his career, spent at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, during which time he supported Republicans Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan; in 1985 Hook was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom by the onetime liberal actor-turned rightwing icon. Although Hook never embraced the 'neoconservative' label, those New York intellectuals who did—such as Irving Kristol—saw him as a progenitor of their political migration from far left to far right.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (1917-2007)

The Communist party is no menace to the right in the U.S. It is a great help to the right because of its success in dividing and neutralizing the left. It is to the American left that Communism presents the most serious danger.<sup>50</sup>

When Arthur Schlesinger Sr. (b.1888) endorsed the Hook-Dewey Committee for Cultural Freedom's statement of principles, it would have been nothing out-of-the-ordinary for him. A Harvard social historian of the Progressive school associated with Charles Beard, Schlesinger was an ardent supporter of Roosevelt and the New Deal. Despite a 1963 FBI investigation that noted he was "involved in several communist front groups in the 1930s and 1940s," Schlesinger was not in fact a

Communist.<sup>51</sup> Still, it is not inconceivable that during the Popular Front era he joined—or more likely signed a letter in support of—a group that was ‘linked’ to the Communist Party. If one innocently attached their name to a petition circulated by the League of American Writers, for example, HUAC and the FBI (etc.) might translate that as being ‘involved’ in a front group. It is unknown whether Professor Schlesinger’s ‘involvement’ in Professor Hook’s committee was limited to endorsing the manifesto, or if there was more. Either way, one can imagine the historian’s amusement when, a decade later, upon receiving an invitation to join a new cultural freedom committee led by Hook, it came with a letter signed by his son—thereby bearing his own name.

Arthur (Meier) Bancroft Schlesinger (Jr.) was born on October 15, 1917, three weeks before the Bolsheviks seized St. Petersburg. Coming of age during the Great Depression, Schlesinger’s formative experiences were vastly different from those of Hook and Thomas (the latter being a contemporary of his father). The younger Schlesinger was born and raised just outside of Dayton about sixty miles south of Columbus, in the town of Xenia, where his father, a Prussian Jew, had settled after arriving in 1872 (his wife came from an Austrian Roman Catholic family—a conflict they resolved by converting to Protestantism). His wife, Elizabeth Bancroft, was a ‘Mayflower Descendent’ of German ancestry who traced her family’s history to colonial Massachusetts, and a presumed blood relation to the illustrious American historian George Bancroft. Two years older than her husband, she graduated college

and was a schoolteacher in Michigan for two years before the couple married and settled in Columbus, where Arthur was born and lived until he was two. The family left Ohio when Schlesinger Sr. took a position in Iowa, where they spent four years before he moved again in 1924 to Harvard and they to a new home in Cambridge.<sup>52</sup>

Schlesinger's youth was shaped in an upper middle class environment with parents devoted to Progressive causes, influenced to a degree by the Social Gospel. Sometime in the late 1920s, young Arthur changed his middle name from 'Bancroft' to 'Meier,' wanting to identify more closely with his father. The professor's son enjoyed a typical elite New England upbringing, attending Philips Exeter Academy and then Harvard. More than a 'faculty wife,' Schlesinger's mother was active in the local community and involved in national politics as a member of the League of Women Voters (LWV). She co-hosted the Sunday afternoon tea salons that the Schlesingers held for eager graduate students, and their home was often bustling with intellectual and political discourse—Harvard's Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America was opened in their honor 1943.

As described in his memoir *A Life in the Twentieth Century* (2000), Schlesinger's father briefly "flirted with democratic socialism" while supporting both of Wilson's campaigns. In contrast to Thomas's concerns that the President would turn his back on peace after 1916, Schlesinger Sr. was reluctant to cast his second vote for Wilson out of fear that he might continue to pursue neutrality. Ultimately, with the SPA's refusal to back the administration's war effort, the elder Schlesinger's faith in Wilsonian liberalism grew at the expense of his evaporating interest in

alternatives to the Democratic Party. The same factors that drew Norman Thomas to Socialism at the end of WWI pushed Schlesinger Sr. away from it. Guided by his father, the younger Schlesinger subsequently identified as a lifelong “New Dealer, unreconstructed and unrepentant.”<sup>53</sup> In that context, Schlesinger “never felt much sympathy for the Soviet Union,” having instead a “predisposition to distrust Communism” inherited from his parents, who were “on principal hostile to dogma and dictators.” Beyond a brief passing glance or two in college at Marxism as a mode of economic analysis, Schlesinger never took an interest in leftist politics. College for Schlesinger was, naturally, Harvard, graduating in 1938; it was at that ivy-covered institution where the young scholar first crossed paths with the future president (who was two years behind him despite being five months older). At Harvard, as Schlesinger describes, Communism was not a “consuming issue” the way it was elsewhere, such as CCNY or Columbia. There were no “furious sectarian battles” raging between Communists and Trotskyists on campus in Cambridge; Harvard simply was not a place where there were many “great arguments about the purges or the Moscow trials or the gulags in Siberia.”<sup>54</sup>

Ironically, Schlesinger might have encountered more Marxists while serving abroad during WWII with the Office of Strategic Services, which employed many left intellectuals. His service started in Washington DC, in September 1942, as a speechwriter at the domestic branch of the Office of War Information (OWI). Then, passing up an invitation to serve under Henry Wallace at the Board of Economic Warfare, Schlesinger transferred to the OSS. Stationed in London from May 1943

through March 1945, he worked for the Research and Analysis unit of the OSS, editing *PW Weekly*, which Schlesinger later described as a “classified journal” devoted to “psychological warfare.”<sup>55</sup> While overseas, Schlesinger finalized his manuscript for *The Age of Jackson* (1945), which subsequently won a Pulitzer Prize. That award, plus the publication of his undergraduate thesis *Orestes A. Brownson: A Pilgrim’s Progress* (1939)—and perhaps a recommendation from a certain elder Professor—all contributed to the young author landing a position at Harvard without completing a Ph.D.; Schlesinger joined his father on faculty in the fall of 1946.

Before returning to his familiar Boston-area haunts and settling into a teaching career, Schlesinger also launched another one of what became his many vocations, as he penned articles as a freelancer subsequently published in Henry Luce’s magazines—*Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*. The most memorable of these was, as Schlesinger referred to it fifty years later, an “extended expose of the clandestine activities of the American Communist Party.”<sup>56</sup> Published in July 1946 and innocuously titled “The U.S. Communist Party,” Schlesinger’s analysis was clearly indicated by the subheading: “Small but tightly disciplined, it strives with fanatic zeal to promote the aims of Russia.” While generating controversy in left-liberal circles, Schlesinger’s widely read *Life* article helped cultivate his reputation as a chief expositor of ‘cold war liberalism.’<sup>57</sup> While his piece in *Life* became a platform for the rest of Schlesinger’s endeavors as a journalist/ political commentator, which included columns for *The New York Post* in the early 1950s. More immediately,

Schlesinger's writings for the so-called 'Luce press' informed the development of his ensuing tome *The Vital Center* (1949), one chapter of which was adapted from the 1946 article. That work, which was also in-part derived from an spring 1948 article in the *New York Review of Books*, put Schlesinger on the map as both a respected public intellectual and avatar of liberal anticommunism, announcing a need to stop "the totalitarian left and the totalitarian right" from meeting "on the murky grounds of tyranny and terror."<sup>58</sup>

*The Vital Center* was, moreover, Schlesinger's springboard into the world of political campaigning—in his case exclusively on behalf of Democrats. After a minor role on Truman's campaign in 1948, Schlesinger served as a high-profile adviser and speechwriter to Democratic nominee Adlai Stevenson during his failed bids for the White House in 1952 and 1956, joined by fellow ADA leader James Wechsler. According to his memoir, Schlesinger became friends with John as well as others in the Kennedy circle after WWII, through the elite network that connected Washington DC 'insiders' — then and now — known as the 'Georgetown cocktail circuit.' Importantly for Schlesinger, this clique of 'Beltway' powerbrokers linked individuals from some of the East Coast's most influential families — members of the Kennedy *and* Roosevelt clans included — who had, like him, embraced the ethos of the New Deal. It was therefore through a sense of shared culture and personal attachment, as much as political alignment, that prompted Schlesinger's early and strident embrace of the Massachusetts Senator's 1960 campaign.<sup>59</sup> Joining his



friend's administration as a Special Assistant, he worked primarily as a speechwriter and advisor on Latin American affairs. Schlesinger's most memorable public role as a White House aide was as part of the inner-circle, steered largely by the President's brother and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, which deliberated over how to prevent a nuclear showdown with the USSR during the October 1962 'Cuban missile crisis.'

Schlesinger translated his experience in the Kennedy administration into a second Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (1965), which he followed with a prolific two-volume companion, *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (1978). Schlesinger's writing on the Kennedy legacy fit a pattern he had established with his biography of Andrew Jackson and continued with two studies of the Roosevelt Era, *The Crisis of the Old Order* (1957) and *The Coming of the New Deal* (1958); yet when a reviewer of his 1978 work dubbed Schlesinger the "court historian for [the American] Camelot," it stuck as an apt nickname given his proximity to both of the deceased Kennedy brothers, their families, and associated coterie.<sup>60</sup> In many ways shaped by his association with "Jack," "Bobby," and the Kennedy clan, Schlesinger's *The Imperial Presidency* (1973) tackled with questions regarding the history of expanding executive authority and its constitutionality (or lack thereof) throughout US history, in the context of a broadening crisis surrounding the Nixon administration's Watergate' scandal. Part of Schlesinger's critique extended to foreign policy, as he argued that the modern presidency had accrued too much power to make war.

Schlesinger was unable to bring himself to vote for Jimmy Carter in 1976, as he viewed the peach-farmer-turned Georgia Governor as a novice and in some respects too much of an ‘outsider,’ yet also a centrist who did not bear the imprimatur of the New Deal wing of the party. In 1980 Schlesinger naturally attached his name to the long-shot candidacy of yet another Senator Kennedy (this one also from Massachusetts), and when “Teddy” failed to unseat Carter, Schlesinger retreated even further into a stance as dug-in ‘loyal opposition’ to his party’s changing leadership. For similar reasons as those that made him skeptical of Carter, Schlesinger was not overly enthusiastic about the ascendance of former Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton and his ‘New Democrats’: he chastised the President in 1997 for appropriating what Schlesinger called “my vital center,” as term to defend of neoliberal economics.<sup>61</sup>

Yet Schlesinger was a partisan at-heart who never broke with Democrats fully, and certainly never embraced a Republican president; Richard Nixon, to whom he referred in a 1972 journal entry as a “third-rater,” was in that sense historically awful.<sup>62</sup> The way he saw Nixon underscores the manner in which Schlesinger’s views remained notably consistent, while those of former left-liberal anticommunist comrades like Sidney Hook shifted dramatically. As for instance noted in September 1968, he saw “a curious softness toward Nixon” evident “among the New York intellectuals,” which was “stimulated largely by a rather mean passion to ‘punish’ Humphrey.”<sup>63</sup> At that time Schlesinger might have easily known what many in the New York intellectual community were thinking; having left Harvard to join the Kennedy administration, following his exit from Washington DC he moved to

Manhattan, and taught at the school known formerly as CCNY—since renamed the City University of New York (CUNY)—from 1966 until his retirement in 1994. As Schlesinger began at CUNY, Sidney Hook was in the process of relocating for the final phase of his career, first to Santa Barbara and then Northern California.

Shortly after Hook's passing, in July 1989, Schlesinger offered reflections on the philosopher in a memorial that is highly illustrative of the manner in which the historian viewed his former comrade:

In the late 1940s Sidney and I were allies in the anti-Stalinist cause. We were never particularly good personal friends. But I admired his courage and trenchancy and felt that many liberals and leftists had been unfair to him because of his premature anti-Stalinism. We remained allies of a sort as late, I guess, as 1972 when I was asked to speak at his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday dinner. But we had long since parted politically. For him anti-communism remained the only issue, swallowing up everything else like an Aaron's rod. While continuing to proclaim himself a democratic socialist, Sidney thus supported Nixon and Reagan as reliable anticommunists and refused to see any possibilities of change in the Soviet Union.

Later he went west to the Hoover Institute at Stanford. I received a note or two from him commending me on various anti-communist utterances. One note, I recall, praised me for my courage, as if it took much courage to be anti-communist in the United States in the 1970s.

Then I reviewed his memoirs for the New Republic -- a quite favorable review on balance, but I did lament the extent to which his anti-communist obsession had narrowed his interests and distorted his judgments. This did it. He fired off an angry letter to the magazine denouncing me as, among other iniquitous things, a Kennedy stooge. In subsequent writings he would often go out of his way to incorporate anti-Schlesinger cracks. Still he played a brave and honorable role in the thirties and forties, and I could never feel very mad at him.<sup>64</sup>

Later reflections by Schlesinger about Hook are similar. The historical record demonstrates that he had misgivings about him and other 'obsessive anticommunists' as early as 1951. When Schlesinger passed away in February 2007, the man who once in jest called himself "an archetypal Cambridge liberal elitist," was

memorialized by many. One such person was liberal philanthropist and socialite Arianna Huffington, who enrolled Schlesinger as the first person to ‘blog’ for her news website *The Huffington Post*, since she could find “nobody better as a representative of the old establishment culture than Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.”<sup>65</sup> In the very first of his posts, which appeared in May of that year, Schlesinger reminded readers that he still held the same position always concerning the start of the Cold War: “No conceivable diplomacy could have saved Eastern Europe from Soviet occupation.”<sup>66</sup>

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On stage at the Tamiment Institute’s April 1955 “Is Co-existence Possible” forum, Schlesinger was in his element. He spoke after Niemeyer, who made an especially strong statement against aiming for cooperative relations: “even when we have nothing but universal peace and harmony in mind, we cannot show or feel respect for the interests of the Soviet Regime by giving up our objections to the Soviet police state, Soviet oppression of neighboring peoples, and the Soviet policy of ruthlessly destroying all opposition groups.”<sup>67</sup> Schlesinger, in pivoting against Niemeyer, made clear that he was speaking as “an advocate of co-existence, by which he was referring to “The word as used, for example, by Sir Winston Churchill, by Pius the XII, in his Christmas Message, by Reinhold Niebuhr in his recent article in the *New Leader*, and by the Eisenhower Administration when it speaks of ‘competitive co-existence.’” He continued: “Co-existence in this sense means...a condition of affairs in the world characterized by an absence of total war. It does not

mean a state of total bliss which would permit relaxation of vigilance or precaution. It simply means the ability of nations to live in the same world without resort to nuclear warfare.”<sup>68</sup> As for the way it was conceived in the October 1954 article referenced by Schlesinger, even in making “the choice of coexistence,” Niebuhr argued for “realizing that we are choosing not a good, but a lesser evil,” as a “preference to ‘preventive war.’” In that vein he argued: “There is no reason to suppose that the malignancy of Communism will become less. Hence as Niebuhr saw it the goal was to “avoid catastrophe by bearing heavy burdens...remaining cool and prudent... and by living together with a loathsome system in a narrow world.” The main problem facing the United States, in that regard, was not being “accustomed to such...unattractive alternatives.”<sup>69</sup> That argument by Niebuhr, and echoed by Schlesinger, represented one side of the narrow spectrum of opinion regarding American policy towards the Soviet Union propagated by the early Cold War *New Leader*. The other side of the spectrum, offered in the same issue as counterpoint to Niebuhr, was Brown’s rather more straightforward thesis: “Co-Existence is Poison.”



*Above left, Norman Thomas engaged in conversation (circa 1945); above, Sidney Hook at the Congress for Cultural Freedom's September 1955 Future of Freedom Conference in Milan, Italy; left, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. promotional photo (circa 1950).*

[Credits: Butler Library, Columbia University (Thomas and Hook); New York Public Library (Schlesinger)]

## CHAPTER THREE

### Coming Together: Making the Left-Liberal Anticommunist Coalition

The Communist party is no menace to the right in the U.S. It is a great help to the right because of its success in dividing and neutralizing the left. It is to the American left that Communism presents the most serious danger.

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The U.S. Communist Party,” 1946

One does not have to be an unqualified supporter of American foreign policy or even of American culture—and as a democrat, a Socialist and a Jew, I, for one, am not—to recognize that... the incomplete patterns of freedom in the Western world are infinitely preferable to the brutal totalitarianism of Soviet Communism.

—Sidney Hook, Letter to Albert Einstein, 1948

In our whole world there is no more important problem than the nature and character, the strength and the weakness, of that disciplined international movement, that fanatical yet Machiavellian secular religion, called Communism.

—Norman Thomas, “Reflections on a Secular Religion,” 1949

Nearly three thousand delegates from sixteen countries including the USSR attended the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, organized by NCASP and chaired by Harlow Shapley, held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York from March 25-27, 1949. Novelist Alexander Fadeyev, author of *The Young Guard* (1946), chaired the seven-person Russian delegation; famed composer Dmitri Shostakovich made his first of three visits to the US for the event, traveling at the personal behest of Stalin.<sup>1</sup> The professed purpose of the meeting was to advance the principle of amicability in international relations, which included pursuing ‘peaceful coexistence’ between the United States and the Soviet Union; it consisted of panel discussions and a banquet as well as a concert at Carnegie Hall featuring

Shostakovich, culminating with a mass rally at Madison Square Garden in which Shapely was introduced by an eighty-one year-old W.E.B. Du Bois who affirmed that “Peace is not an end” but rather “the gateway to a full and abundant life.”<sup>2</sup>

Also a speaker at the conference, Henry Wallace was among the hundreds of sponsors listed in the *New York Times*, as were many high-profile supporters of his campaign including Einstein, Pauling, Wright, Copland, Mailer, Hellman, Miller, Tugwell, and Robeson;<sup>3</sup> they were joined by the likes of actors Marlon Brando and Charlie Chaplin, as well as writers Langston Hughes and Howard Fast—who later claimed to have been the “major stimulating force” behind the meeting.<sup>4</sup> Although clearly overstated, Fast’s attempt to take credit was telling given the controversy regarding the event’s origins. Against that backdrop, the ‘Waldorf Conference’ became a major spectacle. While the closing event drew several thousand demonstrators, the sidewalks surrounding the hotel on Park Avenue were clogged all weekend with American Legion-organized protestors; as depicted in Henry Luce’s *Time* magazine, crippled war veterans were “paraded in wheelchairs” while picketers yelled: ““why don't you go back to Russia, you stinking Commies?””<sup>5</sup>

#### Committee for Cultural Freedom

The Committee for Cultural Freedom was founded on May 15, 1939. Sidney Hook enlisted John Dewey as ‘honorary chairman,’ and roughly one hundred people endorsed a statement of principles warning of a “tide of totalitarianism” that was “rising throughout the world” and “washing away cultural and creative freedom.”



While having been “enthroned in Germany, Italy, Russia, Japan, and Spain,” it was “winning too dangerous an influence in many other countries.” Hence the Committee announced it would “call upon others to join” a partnership “on the basis of a least common denominator of a civilized culture—the defense of creative and intellectual freedom.”<sup>6</sup> The primary goal of what was sometimes known as the ‘Hook-Dewey Committee’ was to galvanize support among anticommunist progressives for a campaign to confront their (former) comrades who held dangerous illusions about the Soviet Union under Stalin. In addition to he and Dewey, who served as honorary chairman, among its roughly ninety signatories were many who had already been—and would yet again be—enlisted by Hook, including Dos Pasos, Eastman, and Sol Levitas as well as African American writer George Schuyler, and American Federation of Teachers (AFT) president George Counts. Norman Thomas not only signed the statement, but also apparently viewed it as a significant-enough document to warrant saving for posterity. The Committee’s top officers besides Hook and Dewey—whose involvement was in many ways ceremonial—were journalist Ferdinand Lundberg and Frank Trager, also an NYU scholar. With about two hundred members at most, its founder recalled that the committee “published a *Bulletin* that achieved a much wider distribution,” and held events like the October 1939 “mass meeting” at New York’s Town Hall “on the subject of ‘Cultural Freedom and the World Crisis.’”<sup>7</sup>

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Hook's interest in democratic socialism was shaped in many ways by his professional and personal attachment to such figures as Dewey and Norman Thomas, who inhabited similar circles and worked together in various organizations including the LID. Hook's scholarship on Marxism was ultimately a reflection of his belief in its value as a revolutionary political program rather than a set of economic theories; it resonated in that sense with the non/ quasi-Marxist democratic socialism espoused by Dewey and Thomas. Hence it is noteworthy that at the start of World War II, Hook and Dewey initially opposed US involvement yet rather quickly reconsidered that stance and. However unlike Niebuhr who left the SPA despite Thomas's personal appeal, Dewey and Hook both remained politically loyal, endorsing the Socialist presidential ticket in 1940 despite disagreeing with the non-interventionist policy.

Hook belonged to a cohort of intellectuals who had embraced the promise of Soviet-inspired Marxian revolutionary theory in the 1930s only to become bitterly disappointed by its misappropriation in the 1940s. Indeed, like Trotsky, Hook was among those who lamented that Stalin had betrayed Lenin's legacy. Among his immediate circle of anti-Stalinist comrades in New York were other prominent intellectuals who underwent similar ideological metamorphoses, including James Burnham, Max Eastman, and John Dos Passos—whose case is particularly revelatory. A Harvard graduate who was raised in Chicago, Dos Passos (b. 1896) was emblematic of the many radicals who gravitated to the Popular Front, only to become thoroughly disenchanted by the end of the decade. Like Hook, Dos Passos made his break with communism well before the schism of 1939, passing through the

Trotskyist milieu on his way to liberal anticommunism and ultimately a version of neoconservatism. After attending the CPUSA-organized American Writers Congress in April 1935, Dos Passos joined its offshoot, the League of American Writers, which became influential among leftwing literary figures in the US and beyond (a parallel group was also established in Britain). With novelist Waldo Frank as its first president, the League of American Writers enlisted numerous prominent and lesser-known authors; the more famous included James T. Farrell, Lillian Hellman, Ernest Hemmingway, Langston Hughes, Archibald MacLeish, Thomas Mann, Upton Sinclair, John Steinbeck, and William Carlos Williams.

Amid the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in July 1936, the League of American writers took an active role in organizing assistance to the Republicans fighting General Francisco Franco, sending writers to witness and record events. The battle there became a type of rehearsal for World War II, pitting a Communist-supported government against a nationalist movement allied with Fascists. As the Comintern organized international cadres of antifascist volunteers, including members of the American 'Abraham Lincoln Brigade,' Spain became a proving ground for Popular Front strategy. The results, at least by one measure, were alarming and disastrous, as many who fought on the Spanish Front at the direction of Stalin appeared to be either unable or unwilling to accept non-communists as allies; to some it even seemed as though Moscow was more concerned with the targeting of social democrats ('social fascists') and 'Trotskyite' traitors than the Nazi-backed Spanish forces. For Dos Passos and others who went to Spain as fellow travelers

rather than Party members, their experience convinced them that although he paid lip service to fighting Hitler, Stalin's true enemy was not the totalitarian right, but rather the democratic left. Along with the infamous 'show trials' as well as reports coming out about the Gulag, some people's experiences on the Spanish Front contributed to the wave of disillusionment with Communism that crested with the Hitler-Stalin Pact.

While Hook sought to take advantage of growing disenchantment with Soviet policy and corresponding antipathy for Stalin, his efforts attracted fierce opposition and caused tremendous controversy on the left, particularly among defenders of the Popular Front. Ironically one of the primary antagonists of the 1939 Committee for Cultural Freedom was Corliss Lamont (b. 1902), a student of Dewey whose time at Columbia with overlapped Hook's although he received his degree five years later. As head of the American-Soviet Friendship Committee (later the National Council of Soviet-American Friendship), Lamont was also among the NCASP members who were front-and-center at the Waldorf Conference. Lamont spearheaded a 'Committee of 400' that published an open letter in the *Daily Worker* bearing 167 signatures of those opposed to the Hook-Dewey group; it was endorsed by notable Popular Front acolytes including Dashiell Hammett, Max Lerner, and I.F. Stone, as well as Harvard literary scholar F.O. Matthiessen, *The Nation's* Carey McWilliams, and American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) president Harry Ward. Claiming that it was a false equivalence to compare the Soviet Union to Nazi Germany, the 'Lamont letter' accused Hook's cohort, as he recounted it, of being "'Fascists and allies of Fascists

who are seeking to disrupt the unity of progressive forces in America”); in characteristically hyperbolic fashion, Hook charged that Lamont’s team had mounted “the strongest and most systematic attack ever organized by a Communist fellow-traveling ad hoc committee.”<sup>8</sup> He could not help but note with bemusement in *Out of Step* that the denunciatory letter “made the press just a few days before... Hitler and Stalin signed the pact that unleashed World War II.”<sup>9</sup> That fact seems to have caused embarrassment among at least some of the signers, which only served to exacerbate the growing hostility between Hook and his opponents. As he described further, “the real onslaught... came from the Communist Party,” through its organs the *Daily Worker* and the *New Masses*, as well as “the publications of its satellite groups.” Recalling events decades later, Hook seems to have placed more stock in the Communist-originated assault than “the reactions from the liberal journals and the sectarian left” that appeared in the *Nation* and *New Republic*, and which he described as mere “skirmishes.”<sup>10</sup>

Despite his contention to the contrary, Hook’s volatile disagreements with fellow left-liberals were arguably of more lasting significance than the CPUSA’s predictable attacks. A case in point would be Freda Kirchwey, who became one of Hook’s many favorite targets during this period. In response to a letter from the Committee for Cultural Freedom printed in *The Nation* on May 27, 1939, Kirchwey wrote an editorial, “Red Totalitarianism: A Reply to Sidney Hook,” in which she called for liberals and Communists to “move ahead toward their common objectives without wasting time... in an attempt to exterminate each other along the way,”

adding “The job of making this country unsafe for fascism calls for tremendous constructive effort as well as defensive strength.”<sup>11</sup> Yet Hook had no interest in stopping the volley of recriminations and counter-recriminations among left-liberals over the question of the Soviet Union and its supporters. He continued his exchange with Kirchwey, asking if she had been aware that Stone and another of her regular contributors had signed the Lamont letter, to which Kirchwey replied angrily.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in October Hook wrote to Franklin Roosevelt, notifying the President that he had been unwittingly listed as ‘honorary member’ of the League of American Writers, a Communist front organization. He received a reply from FDR’s secretary Stephen Early, and in his February 1940 response to Early, Hook reiterated that he was “interested in this matter not for any political or factional reasons but out of profound concern for the state of cultural freedom in America.”<sup>13</sup>

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After the 1948 election, remnants of the popular front network/ Henry Wallace campaign regrouped in support of a Communist-backed international peace movement. With the Soviet blockade of Berlin and ensuing eleven-month US airlift in full swing (having begun in June 1948), tension was high as delegates gathered in New York in early 1949. Waldorf Conference attendees were by and large drawn from the ranks of the pro-Soviet left, and/or those progressives who sought an alternative to the Cold War. Specifically, the NCASP-affiliated US delegation included, as described by Liebermann, “scientists disturbed by the consequences of their work on nuclear weapons and artists and writers concerned about the climate

created by anti-Communist congressional investigations.”<sup>14</sup> As an extension of the process that began with their coming together during the crusade against the Wallace campaign, the left-liberal anticommunist coalition was hardened by its role in opposition to the Waldorf Conference, on one side of the nascent ‘cultural cold war.’ As Sidney Hook’s cohort of left anti-Stalinists joined forces with Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and other ADA liberals, along with Norman Thomas’s moderate Socialists to create Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF), the state-private network supported them covertly. In that context, events surrounding the Waldorf Conference and its aftermath represented a *dénouement*, or in the words of Alexander Bloom, “the last gasp of the Popular Front.”<sup>15</sup> At the same time, the meeting served as both a symbolic and literal starting point for the development of left-liberal anticommunism as cultivated by the likes of Thomas, Hook, and Schlesinger.

#### The Waldorf Conference and Its Discontents

Like the public, American officials had reason to believe that the March 1949 meeting in Manhattan was connected on some level to a propaganda campaign organized through the Soviet Union’s Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), and launched during the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace on August 6, 1948 in Wroclaw (Breslau), Poland; the operation’s parameters were outlined during a speech in October by Stalin’s foreign minister, which as described by historian Robbie Liebermann, called for “political action based on a broad coalition of antiwar social forces.”<sup>16</sup> The ‘Wroclaw Congress’ elected an international committee that

met in February 1949 to plot a series of events, which included the First World Peace Congress held in Paris that April with a simultaneous event in Prague, and a Second World Peace Congress planned for November 1950 in Sheffield (which was moved to Warsaw because of pressure from British authorities). Also related was a March 1950 event held in Sweden that produced the now-famous ‘Stockholm Appeal,’ which called for a total ban on nuclear weapons, and was the occasion for which Pablo Picasso designed his indelible ‘dove of peace.’<sup>17</sup> Fedayev and a handful of other Waldorf Conference participants had also attended the Wroclaw Congress, including Shapley as well as former Assistant US Attorney General O. John Rogge. In that context, many critics thought the New York event was an extension of what they saw as a cynical attempt to exploit the genuine beliefs of people concerned about the costs of war; in an April 1951 report of the House Un-American Activities Committee the event was described, using characteristically hyperbolic language, as part of the “current world-wide ‘peace’ offensive,” which was “the most dangerous hoax ever devised by the international Communist conspiracy.”<sup>18</sup>

Given a broad perception that it was directed by Moscow, the Waldorf Conference and the activities of its participants faced intense scrutiny from J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI as well as the State Department, which issued visas to twenty-three “official representatives” from Eastern bloc countries including the USSR as well as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, and Romania. As reported in the *New York Times*, even though a number of French, British, and Italians had been granted entry, some “individual” applicants from those countries as well as Mexico, Brazil, and



Venezuela were denied on grounds that they were “known Communists.” At the same time, in terms of assessing who was in control of the affair, the State Department seems to have taken the position held by one of the officials responsible for escorting Soviet delegates, who recalled having “the impression that the conference was not actually communist-run,” but directed by “naïve, well-meaning, and vague Wallaceites.”<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, it is doubtful that anyone in the US foreign service went so far as to believe Shapley’s claim, in a February 1949 letter to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, that the Waldorf conclave was “not related in any way whatever” to the Soviet-inspired peace conferences “held elsewhere,” i.e., Wroclaw, or those “being planned” for the future.<sup>20</sup>

In some ways the mere fact of Communists and their fellow travelers gathering at one of Manhattan’s most opulent hotels—“Marxists at the Waldorf” as characterized by Frances Saunders—served to remind many of why the West needed to prevail in the (cultural) Cold War.<sup>21</sup> As it determined which foreigners could enter the US, the State Department made a point of publicizing its view that American citizens seen by the Kremlin as hostile would not have been permitted to attend the Wroclaw Conference; the *Times* applauded the comparative restraint of those in Washington who, unlike their Russian counterparts, had “nothing to conceal” save for “a few military secrets.”<sup>22</sup> Calling the Waldorf Conference “one of the most contentious meetings” in the city’s recent history, it was described as “a major issue in the propaganda war,” having earned mention in Moscow’s *Literary Gazette* as well as a “Polish government radio bulletin” that spoke of concern in “U.S.A. ruling

circles” about being exposed as an aggressor in world affairs. For its part the State Department, according to the *Times*, published a white paper that was adapted for broadcast on the Voice of America, stating that the Soviet Union had “blocked the free exchange of ideas to cover her own internal weaknesses.”<sup>23</sup> That charge cut to the core, for while US officials saw the conference as a self-serving exercise in the advancement of peace on the part of pro-Soviet propagandists, they also viewed it as an equally disingenuous effort to promote a type of ‘cultural freedom’ that did not in fact exist behind the Iron Curtain.

#### First They Took Manhattan: Americans for Intellectual Freedom

As frenzied as it was on the streets outside, the real drama of the Waldorf Conference took place inside, where left-liberal anticommunists sought to disrupt the program. Given that atmosphere, and the meeting’s ostensible aim to promote the cause of intellectual and cultural freedom, brief allotments of time were given to unscheduled speakers whose remarks were therefore not vetted by NCASP leaders or other organizers. Yet allowing for dissent was not the same as creating a mood in which it was welcomed, as demonstrated by the negative reaction to Norman Mailer’s attempt to couple his criticism of US foreign policy with a rebuke of the USSR for “moving rapidly towards state capitalism.”<sup>24</sup> While he broke an unspoken rule against criticizing Soviet policy, which was clearly part of the climate of the Waldorf Conference, as an official delegate offering a relatively mild reproach, Mailer’s remarks were more or less tolerated; a far different reception was given to writer and

peace activist Norman Cousins, who was roundly booed and hissed during an unscheduled speech in which he said it should be known that “Americans are anti-Communist but not anti-humanitarian and that being anti-Communist does not automatically mean they are pro-war.”<sup>25</sup> While there were rumors that he attended as an unofficial emissary of the State Department, which Cousins denied, tellingly, he maintained that he would have spoken in such a capacity if requested; either way, his sentiments resonated with the desired message that many in the Foreign Service would have wanted to promulgate in response to the notion that the Soviet Union and the international Communist apparatus were devoted to peace. Whether or not Cousins was acting as a ‘free agent,’ his criticism was far milder than the opposition mounted by Sidney Hook’s Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF).

As conceived by Hook in early 1949, during the lead-up to the Waldorf Conference, Americans for Intellectual Freedom represented the continuation of a decade-long endeavor to challenge the Communist Party’s strategy of gaining influence through culture-oriented ‘front groups’; Hook’s 1939 Committee for Cultural Freedom became the prototype for AIF, whose members included many of those who had been involved in his previous organization. Yet unlike the 1939 Committee for Cultural Freedom, AIF was quietly receiving assistance from friendly faces working for the US government who were eager to counteract what they saw as a Soviet advantage in the ‘war for hearts and minds.’ Michael Josselson, a Jewish émigré from Estonia who had served the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the

postwar occupation government in Berlin, was at that time working for the CIA's Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), which at the time managed covert operations as well as 'psychological warfare' activities. Josselson's boss, OPC chief Frank Wisner, wrote in a memo shortly after the Waldorf Conference (as early as May 1949), that he envisioned developing "a continuing organization" to function as "a little DEMINFORM" in promotion of Western values.<sup>26</sup>

In that context Josselson attended the Waldorf Conference counterdemonstrations and surreptitiously helped AIF through and members like president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) David Dubinsky. As the Waldorf Conference began, Hook and fellow AIF members transformed one of the hotel's bridal suites into its base of operations, using money procured by Dubinsky. Also engaged in the AIF campaign was anticommunist labor reporter Arnold Beichman who, working with Dubinsky, had union contacts threaten to stage a strike that would shut down the Waldorf if management did not provide a room in the hotel, which was booked solid through the weekend; Beichman also helped arrange a Sunday morning installation of ten extra phone lines for use by AIF.<sup>27</sup> Others who took part in what Frances Saunders has called Hook's "chaotic little intellectual parliament" were prominent intellectuals including writers Max Eastman, Dwight MacDonal, Mary McCarthy, Elizabeth Hardwick, and Robert Lowell, as well as *Partisan Review* editors William Philips and Philip Rahv. Russian-American composer Nicolas Nabokov, cousin of renowned novelist Vladimir Nabokov and a close friend of Josselson, was a key player at the AIF

counteroffensive on myriad levels, including as the recipient of OPC funds that were delivered by Dubinsky from Josselson or another operative.<sup>28</sup>

On the first two days of the Waldorf event, AIF members sought to join and/or interrupt panel discussions and otherwise disrupt the affair. One of the most dramatic moments occurred when Hook surprised Harlow Shapley by appearing in the NCASP chairman's room to confront him about his proposed paper that had been rejected by a conference committee. As his unannounced visit grew tense, Hook was ushered by Shapley into the hallway to continue their discussion outside, so he presumed, but instead was shut out of the room with his interlocutor having maneuvered himself back inside. According to Hook's account, a reporter from the *New York Herald Tribune* happened to witness the episode and printed a version of events that cast Shapley in an embarrassing light, which was widely circulated by the press.<sup>29</sup> Yet among various successes, none of AIF's endeavors came close to matching the impact of the counterdemonstration it staged on March 26 to coincide with the Waldorf Conference's closing rally at Madison Square Garden the following day. AIF members assembled on a balcony in front of a packed audience inside Freedom House and an overflow crowd below that spilled from the adjacent lawn at Bryant Square Park, behind the New York Public Library, onto a block of 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue that had been closed to traffic and where loudspeakers were erected to amplify the voices of Hook, Schlesinger, and others including Nabokov, who delivered the keynote address. Josselson, there at the direction of Wisner, emerged after the speech from the swarm of people inside to tell Nabokov the composer that

he and his AIF colleagues had organized “a splendid affair,” adding: “we should have something like this in Berlin.”<sup>30</sup> On the morning of the counterdemonstration, the *New York Times* published names of two hundred artists and intellectuals who were “denouncing the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace as a ‘Communist Front’”; it included those who were central figures in the AIF campaign, which obviously included Hook, as well as Schlesinger, and other comrades like Reinhold Niebuhr, Sol Levitas, and Norman Thomas.<sup>31</sup>

By the late 1930s Sidney Hook was arguably the leading figure in a social democratic-oriented intellectual community that included a range of perspectives, from erstwhile communists such as himself to liberal stalwarts like Schlesinger. Thomas, while having never been a supporter of the Soviet Union, at the same time remained on left, unlike many New York intellectuals whose rightward shift gave birth to neoconservatism. While Thomas’s positions on many issues were not that different from the likes of ADA liberals, especially after the start of the Cold War, consistently put a critique of capitalism at the heart of his politics. Thomas’s involvement in the left-liberal anticommunist coalition is therefore indicative not only of his dedication to the cause, but also the strength of his friendship with Hook, whose alliances extended to scores of comrades traveling with him through various iterations of his anti-Stalinist ‘enterprise, from the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky (1936) to the Committee for Cultural Freedom (1939); the

Americans for Intellectual Freedom (1949) to the American Committee for Cultural Freedom and the International Congress Cultural Freedom (1950-51).

#### Towards a Defense of Cold War 'Cultural Freedom'

In *Out of Step*, Sidney Hook describes hearing that NSCAP's 1949 conference at the Waldorf 1949 was going to be an "ambitious propaganda event to further the Soviet cause." As a way of testing that notion, he offered a paper proposing that "the cause of international scientific cooperation and peace" was "seriously undermined by the influence of doctrines that there are 'national' or 'class' or 'party' truths."<sup>32</sup> Upon hearing that his proposal had been rejected (although he was apparently offered a chance to speak on a panel), Hook "made extensive inquiries among friends in radical circles" and discovered that the Waldorf Conference was to be, "a family affair among Communists and... formally unaffiliated individuals who were willing to echo the party line."<sup>33</sup> Hook subsequently tapped into the network of left anti-Stalinists that he had begun cultivating a decade earlier, with his 1939 Committee for Cultural Freedom, bringing many of the same people who were his allies then—and a few who had been opponents—into an organization called Americans for Intellectual Freedom. In the lead-up to the Waldorf meeting, AIF initiated what Hook later portrayed as "a war of mimeograph machines and public relations releases... between the mammoth propaganda facilities of the conference" and a "handful of volunteers."<sup>34</sup>

Having established itself as leader of a left-liberal opposition to the apologists for Communist totalitarianism and their naïve allies who had converged on the Waldorf, the culmination of AIF's counteroffensive took place at the Freedom House rally on March 26. In a *New Leader* editorial, the author of which might very well have been Hook, it was proclaimed that "Undoubtedly the handful of non-Communist liberals who are helping to sponsor the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace won't be happy, a few years from now, to recall their connection with an obvious mechanism for pro-Stalinist and anti-American propaganda."<sup>35</sup> In the cover article for that issue, *Kulturefest at the Waldorf: Soapbox for Red Propaganda*," George Counts amplified AIF's sentiment that the meeting was part of "an effort to create the most gigantic 'Communist front' in the history of the Party"; he agreed with the basic conclusion of US authorities, moreover, noting that "Except for window-dressing provided by a number of wholly innocent and eminently respectable American citizens, the projected conference in New York appears to be a continuation of the Vroslav [Wroclaw] Congress under superficially changed auspices."<sup>36</sup> Hence in a manner that presaged the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, AIF waged a public affairs campaign against NCASP's involvement in a Communist front operation, which was loosely coordinated with US officials through members of Hook's group who had a line to the State Department.

In that context, Schlesinger's role in AIF was both highly visible and effective. The Waldorf Conference and its opponents were of significant interest at Harvard, which counted among its faculty Harlow Shapley and several other prominent



NCASP members including F.O. Matthiessen. Meanwhile, as chronicled in the campus newspaper, Schlesinger led a contingent of professors who traveled from Boston to New York for AIF's demonstration, yet was the only one who attended the Freedom House event. He was recorded in the *Harvard Crimson* as having declared that "the Cultural and Scientific Conference" was a "front operation" designed to lure left-liberals into supporting "the Communist party line." He and his colleagues therefore backed AIF's efforts to affirm "that not all American intellectuals agree that the United States today is 100 percent wrong and the Soviet Union, 100 percent right"; indeed, some "left wingers" such as himself could not tolerate a pro-Russia policy, while those who ignored "the Soviet threat to intellectual freedom" by supporting the [Waldorf] conference were nothing short of "false to human decency." In that sense, he suspected that when all was said and done the event might have "more effect than Mr. Shapley would like."<sup>37</sup> Along those lines, there is reason to believe that Schlesinger was the author of an unattributed editorial that appeared in *Life* on April 4, which recapped the "strange furor" surrounding the previous weekend's events and included headshots of fifty Waldorf Conference sponsors under the title "Dupes and Fellow Travelers Dress Up Communist Fronts."<sup>38</sup>

From the perspective of the left-liberal anticommunists who assembled in the spring of 1949 to form Americans for Intellectual Freedom—as well as those who applauded their efforts—NCASP had proven to be spectacularly unsuccessful in its attempt to turn the Waldorf into a venue for pro-Soviet propaganda. As was for

instance described by Irving Howe in the May 1949 issue of *Partisan Review*, “The conference, on the whole, was a failure. It aroused articulate and aggressive oppositions; it was disturbed by deviant speeches from among its own spokesmen; it could hardly have offered its supporters much assurance.”<sup>39</sup> Per Howe’s line of analysis, it was indeed the resistance that had proven successful and inspired further action. To that end, on the sidelines of their Freedom House rally—under the watchful eye of the OPC’s Michael Josselson—AIF members began to formulate a plan to turn their group into a permanent organization, with their next step being the staging of an event just time for just after the meeting of the First World Peace Congress. That idea materialized into what its organizers called an International Day of Resistance to Dictatorship and War, held in Paris on April 30, 1949. Recapping the action in *Partisan Review*, Hook elaborated on its explicit function as counterpropaganda, following “hard on the heels” of what he described as “a Cominform affair from start to finish.” Despite “How powerful the Communist position was in France,” he was satisfied by the results of his group’s attempt to undercut the message of their rivals: “That there were two peace meetings weakened the force of the first and revealed more clearly its Communist character.”<sup>40</sup>

Just over a year later, Hook’s coterie arrived in Berlin for a State Department-funded meeting during which the Congress for Cultural Freedom was established as a bulwark against the pro-Soviet peace movement and coinciding propaganda in the world of arts and letters. Just as importantly, this cohort instituted its ongoing base of operations in New York, as proprietors—for all intents and purposes—of the CIA-

funded American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Thus began the formalization of a marriage between intellectuals and intelligence officers—who were often one in the same—as part of what subsequently became known as the ‘cultural cold war.’ In the ensuing period, while on the domestic front negotiating the rise and decline of McCarthyism amid a second Red Scare, American members of the CCF/ACCF network spearheaded international efforts to roll back the Cominform’s gains while at the same time hardening the left-liberal anticommunist coalition for intellectual combat. Ironically, once its status as a CIA front became known the CCF/ACCF was accused by its critics of being party to the exact behavior—namely the manipulation of culture for political purposes—that it purported to be fighting against.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Putting Freedom First: Left-Liberals as Cold War Propagandists

Democracy... can create no conspiratorial instrument comparable to the Cominform, nor produce a counter-phantom to the Communist creed. The weapons in our fight can only be truth, sincerity, courage; an acute sense of reality, and our appreciation of the basic values of our complex civilization.  
—“We Put Freedom First,” ACCF Pamphlet, 1951

In the struggle against Communist efforts to woo the world’s intellectuals, one of the key roles has been played in recent years by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, whose membership includes many of the brightest stars in our own cultural and scientific life. The group’s authority to speak for freedom against Communist slavery has been enhanced by its courageous fight against those threatening our civil liberties from the Right.  
—“They Speak For Freedom,” *New York Times*, March 1955

The Congress for Cultural Freedom, as you probably know, has among its sponsors Bertrand Russell, Reinhold Niebuhr, Jacques Maritain and other leaders of western thought...and, in this country...Sidney Hook and myself.  
—Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to Eleanor Roosevelt, 1958

Still without its official name, Sidney Hook’s embryonic committee met for the first time at the NYU Faculty Club on December 14, 1950. The location was most likely chosen because both Hook and James Burnham were members, and it was deemed more suitable than the committee’s temporary address at the Tamiment Institute’s Lower Manhattan home on 7 East 15<sup>th</sup> Street, also offices of *The New Leader*. Finalized on December 20, *NL*’s Sol Levitas signed a lease for what became the group’s first Midtown office in a sixth-floor executive suite (#609) at 141 East 44<sup>th</sup> Street. The agreement was for two years (January 1, 1951-December 31, 1952) at \$115 per month, by the still unincorporated “educational organization for cultural freedom.”<sup>1</sup> Yet by October 1951 the committee had moved to 35 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street,

now just fifteen minutes away by foot from Voice of America (VoA) headquarters, and a few doors down from the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the move was related to the fact that MoMA president Nelson Rockefeller promoted ‘abstract expressionism’ as a weapon against ‘Soviet realism.’ In that sense, it was fitting that noted expressionist painter Jackson Pollock was subsequently invited to join the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.<sup>3</sup> Whatever the circumstances of its relocation, the ACCF was more easily able to use the MoMA auditorium as a venue for public forums, the first of which, perhaps, was “Re-examinations: Ideas, Stereotypes, and the American Liberal,” held on four successive Wednesdays in November-December 1951 (admission: \$4.00); featured speakers included Hannah Arendt on “The Nature of Totalitarianism,” James Burnham on “What Is Imperialism?” and Arthur Schlesinger Jr. on “Power, Class, and Democracy.”<sup>4</sup>

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A Voice of America script dated November 20, 1950 opened with a detailed summary, styled as news report, designed for maximum dramatic effect:

On the same day that the world Communist movement invaded South Korea, June 25, some of the best minds of the Western world met in Berlin. In the midst of all the jingoism and all the accessories of Communist totalitarianism (the spies, the police agents, the secret police, the commissars, and the persistent propaganda).....[sic]in this setting the true men of peace, writers, artists, scholars, and scientists from France, Italy, Great Britain, West Germany, North and South America deliberated on the fundamental problem facing all mankind: what is to happen to human freedom? Out of these deliberations came the Congress for Cultural Freedom.<sup>5</sup>

Printed without attribution, the text was almost certainly prepared under the purview of Bertram Wolfe (b. 1896), the Chief Ideological Adviser of the State Department’s

International Broadcasting Division from 1950-1954. Wolfe, a Brooklyn-born graduate of CCNY and former founder of the Communist Party was best known as author of *Three Who Made a Revolution: A Biographical History of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin* (1948); he was also a frequent contributor to *The New Leader*. Wolfe therefore could have played some role in the unsigned editorial that appeared in *The New Leader* one week earlier titled “A Message to Americans,” which began:

On the very day the Soviets invaded South Korea, June 25, fate ordained that some of the finest minds of the Western world should have been scheduled to meet in the very heart of the Soviet Union's European empire, Berlin. Here, surrounded by all the trappings of Communist totalitarianism—police agents, spies, soldiers, commissars—true men of peace, writers, artists, scholars and scientists from France, Italy, Great Britain, West Germany, North and South America deliberated on the central problem facing all mankind: the fate of freedom. And out of their many and intense discussions these intellectual fighters for liberty fashioned a physical force, the first worldwide movement of its kind since the cold war began—the Congress for Cultural Freedom.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of the VOA's text adhered to the same format as *The New Leader*'s “A Message to Americans,” with slight variations; the next portion of each provided a condensed version of the Congress' fourteen-point manifesto adopted on the final day, June 30, which opened: “We hold it to be self-evident that intellectual freedom is one of the inalienable rights of man”; and closed by addressing all who were “determined to regain those liberties which they have lost and to preserve and extend those which they enjoy.”<sup>7</sup> There also appeared a list of the US delegates to the Berlin meeting who were at that “very moment” forming an American chapter:

G. A. Borgese, Irving Brown, James Burnham, Elliot Cohen, Christopher Emmett, James T. Farrell, Carl J. Friedrich, Sidney Hook, Hermann Kesten, S. M. Levitas, Robert Montgomery, Norbert Muhlen, H. J. Muller, Nicholas Nabokov, Franz L. Neumann, Joseph Newman, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., George Schuyler, Grace Zaring Stone, Tennessee Williams and Max Yergan.<sup>8</sup>

*The New Leader*'s version continued with a Congress statement, issued "on the eve of the founding of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom," titled "'We Put Freedom First.'"<sup>9</sup> As it appeared in the VOA script, the Congress' message is preceded by a reference to it having been printed in *The New Leader* on November 13, signed by executive committee members Irving Brown (US), Arthur Koestler (UK), David Rousset (France), Carlo Schmid (Germany), and Ignazio Silone (Italy), noting: "These men explain that peace is a function of freedom. A nation enslaved can at any time be whipped by its leaders into war hysteria and aggression."<sup>10</sup>

Shortly after the American Committee for Cultural Freedom was formalized in early 1951, it published a pamphlet (again) titled "We Put Freedom First," portions of which were identical to *The New Leader* editorial and/or the VOA script produced a week later; its opening paragraph read:

On June 25, 1950, the very day the North Korean communists invaded South Korea, some of the most distinguished figures of the Western World were meeting in Berlin. Here, surrounded by all the trappings of totalitarianism—police agents, spies, soldiers, commissars—men of peace, writers, artists, scholars and scientists from France, Italy, Great Britain, West Germany, North and South America, deliberated on the central problem facing all mankind: the fate of freedom. And out of their many and intense discussions there arose a new organizational force, the first worldwide movement of its kind since the cold war began—the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

The preface concluded with a signed appeal from Sidney Hook, as founding chairman, expressing hope "that readers... desiring to pledge their support, moral and material, to the movement will communicate with the American committee."<sup>11</sup>

## Left-Liberals and Cold War Propaganda

The US government's official blueprint for anti-Soviet 'psychological warfare' was instantiated by the National Security Act, which created the CIA and the National Security Council (NSC) in early 1947 (as well as reordering what was formerly the 'war department' as the Department of Defense).<sup>12</sup> The NSC comprised a group of officials led by the National Security Adviser (whose appointments did not require Senate confirmation) designed to make permanent the covert 'intelligence' programs—such as espionage and propaganda—designed as temporary measures created during the war (and managed through the OSS). As a result, so-called 'alphabet soup agencies' including the CIA, NSC, and others accumulated vast power as a secretive and largely unaccountable foreign policy instrument. Some in the State Department and elsewhere endorsed the creation of this apparatus regardless, yet the idea of its necessity gained support among the increasing number of policymakers who worried—and in many cases also hoped—that the nascent US-Soviet rivalry signified an emerging global conflict on the scale of WWII. Hence as the birth of a 'national security state' coincided with the rise of US global power at the start of the Cold War, the dawn of the 'American century' was marked by lofty ideals (freedom and democracy) tempered by the cold realities of empire.

When first codified in 1947, the US strategy for secretly promulgating anti-Soviet propaganda was molded around the concept of 'containment'; in his capacity as head of the State Department's Policy Planning Group (PPG), George Kennan authored several of the first memoranda that set guidelines for clandestine techniques



applied to Cold War struggle. NSC 10/2, drafted by Kennan in 1948, established the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) to oversee covert programs.<sup>13</sup> Although Kennan did not typically attend gatherings of the Georgetown cocktail/ dinner-party circuit, he was aligned with those who did, a circle of mainly investment bankers and corporate lawyers that, as former top lieutenants of OSS head General William “Wild Bill” Donovan, were well positioned to take the reins of the fledgling CIA. Allen Dulles (b. 1893) entered in that context, in 1951, first overseeing covert operations, then promoted to second-in-command and becoming the first civilian director of the Agency in 1953, when his brother (John Foster Dulles) was named Secretary of State. Another OSS veteran and regular on the elite social circuit, Frank Wisner (b. 1909) became director of the OPC, which functioned parallel to the CIA’s chain-of-command until 1950-1951, when it was folded into the Agency and placed under the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB).<sup>14</sup> Dulles and Wisner joined Kennan and Averell Harriman, who also frequented the Washington dinner parties, as a core of influential strategists in charge of covert Cold War policy.<sup>15</sup>

Furtive Cold War propaganda organized through the national security/ central intelligence structure worked in tandem with unconcealed information warfare authorized by the 1948 Smith-Mundt Act. This ‘public diplomacy’ enterprise encompassed such highly celebrated endeavors as sending jazz icons including Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Dizzy Gillespie abroad as ‘cultural ambassadors.’<sup>16</sup> Yet even the State Department-funded jazz tours and similar public ventures often had clandestine dimensions, and usually undertakings attached to what was pitched

broadly as the ‘Campaign of Truth’ combined elements that were covertly designed and overtly implemented. Such was the case in one of the more colorful episodes of the ‘cultural cold war,’ when OPC officers oversaw creation of an animated film adaptation of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* (1946), highlighting anti-Stalinist content rather than its underlying promotion of socialism. It appeared in 1954, after the OPC secured production rights from the novelist’s widow by arranging a meeting with her heartthrob, actor Clark Gable. Serving as screenplay consultant was ACCF executive director Sol Stein, a former scriptwriter under Bertram Wolfe at VoA.<sup>17</sup>

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During the late 1940s the Voice of America underwent a transition after a period of postwar uncertainty; it was initially not clear that there still was—or should be—a mission for the agency minus the threat of Nazism. The VoA began wartime broadcasts in February 1942 under the aegis of the Foreign Information Service (FIS). In June of that year, after being moved into the newly established Office of War Information (OWI), VoA headquarters relocated from Madison Avenue to the Argonaut Building—a flatiron at the corner of West 57<sup>th</sup> and Broadway Streets—a few blocks from Columbus Circle (where it remained until moving to Washington DC in 1954). The State Department’s International Broadcasting Division became a key site for the development and dissemination of anticommunist public diplomacy/propaganda, flowing from the 1947-1948 NSC directives and the Smith-Mundt mandate. Part of the State Department’s broadcast plan involved using VoA programming as an instrument of Cold War ideological struggle. The Cold War VoA

was strategically designed to aggressively promote American/ western values throughout the world while promulgating its anti-Soviet agenda in a comparatively subtler manner. While the VoA engaged in what many took for ‘propaganda,’ it did so under no false pretext regarding its purpose as an arm of the US government, making it function in that sense as ‘public diplomacy.’ In contrast, the International Broadcast Agency also had involvement in managing Radio Free Europe (RFE), launched in 1949 and staffed by exiles who sent broadcasts into Soviet satellite countries, along with a companion formed two years later to beam directly into the USSR, Radio Liberty (RL). Unlike VoA, RFE and RL were (semi) covert operations linked discreetly to the State Department through a CIA-backed front, the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE), funded through an entity called ‘Crusade for Freedom’ (which arranged the famous 1950 ‘Liberty Bell Tour’).<sup>18</sup>

The model established for the relationship between RFE and the NCFE was to a large extent what the CIA followed with respect to mobilizing artists and intellectuals (including scientists) into a Congress for Cultural Freedom launched in the summer of 1950. Two of the CCF’s key organizers were already operating in Europe with US government support. Melvin Lasky (b. 1920), born to Polish Jewish immigrants, was a former Trotskyist who served as managing editor of *The New Leader* from 1941-1942; he served in the Army during the war and remained in Germany as an attaché to the US occupation government, where he edited the CIA-funded magazine *Der Monat* (*The Month*). Similarly, British-based Hungarian exile Arthur Koestler (b. 1905)—author of *Darkness at Noon* (1940)—was the leading

figure behind a volume in which he and five other ex-Communists—Louis Fischer (US), André Gide (France), Ignazio Silone (Italy), Stephen Spender (UK), and Richard Wright (US)—told their stores of having grown disillusioned with the Party. *The God That Failed* (1949) was distributed widely in Europe and elsewhere by the State Department; each of its authors except Gilde was involved in the Congress.<sup>19</sup>

The outbreak of war in Korea following the Soviet-backed invasion of the south by Communists in the north signaled to many that a widening geopolitical and ideological clash had spread from Europe to Asia, and the Cold War was turning hot.<sup>20</sup> The fighting in Korea, starting in June 1950, heightened the already-rising anxiety among Americans caused by the USSR's successful test of an atomic bomb in August 1949, followed later that year by the earthshattering (and ominous as seen in the west) triumph of a Communist revolution led by Mao Tse Tung in China. Against this backdrop a new regime under Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who replaced George Marshall in January 1949, began to push for an escalation that some historians call the 'militarization of containment.' The transition began after investment banker Paul Nitze, who replaced Kennan as head of the department's policy planning staff, drafted *National Security Memorandum-68 (NSC-68)* in April 1950. A nearly seventy page-long classified report, *NSC-68* provided the blueprint for a massive mobilization of resources, declaring it was imperative to strengthen defenses against Soviet "political, economic, and psychological warfare," which had "dangerous potentialities for weakening the relative world position of the United

States.” Since the adversary was “animated by a new fanatic faith,” the US was called upon to join “other non-communist countries” and engage a “rapid building up of strength” in order to “roll back the Kremlin’s drive for world domination.”<sup>21</sup> As Dean Acheson later recalled, *NSC-68* was used to “bludgeon the mass mind of ‘top government’” into approving a threefold increase in military spending, the idea being as disliked among many policymakers as it was generally by the public.<sup>22</sup>

Although the document was secret, contents of *NSC-68* were leaked to the public, and its findings promoted through various channels, primarily a Committee on the Present Danger (CPD) that was established in December 1950 by a group from the Council on Foreign Relations. Co-founded officially by former Army undersecretary Tracee Vorhees, atomic scientist Vannevar Bush, and Harvard President James Conant, the CPD’s stated aim was to raise public awareness about the threat posed both by Soviet power and the adjoined menace of Communism.<sup>23</sup> The CPD embodied the interests of what Dwight Eisenhower, who joined in 1951, later referred to as the “military-industrial complex,” a formulation to which over the years observers have added other branches: congress, academia, the press, etcetera.<sup>24</sup> Until it disbanded in 1953, the CPD exercised an appreciable effect on public opinion concerning the alleged need for a military buildup (so much so that it was twice reincarnated: 1976 and 2004). Meanwhile as the conflagration in Korea flared while policymakers debated *NSC-68*, many in Washington suddenly viewed the Soviet threat as far less abstract, and came to accept the frightening premise that nothing short of a mobilization for ‘total war’ was necessary. James Conant reluctantly

declined his invitation to be a member of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, although he did take part in some of its events. It was fitting therefore that on the top of page five of *The New York Times*' international edition, on April 2, 1951—adjacent to the ACCF's "We Put Freedom First!" advertisement—appeared the text of a statement issued the previous day by the Committee on the Present Danger regarding vote to put more US/NATO troops to Europe; the CPD urged "with deep conviction: a renewed spirit of national emergency, and of unity of action."<sup>25</sup>

#### Then They Took Berlin: The Congress for Cultural Freedom

On June 25 1950, and while policymakers in Washington debated the merits of NSC-68, participants arrived at the Titania Palace in western Berlin for the inaugural meeting of the international Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF).<sup>26</sup> Reporting on the event for readers of *Partisan Review*, Sidney Hook described an "exciting affair," made even more theatrical as "news of the invasion of Korea broke just before the first session when it seemed uncertain whether the Russians would march in Germany too," at which point they would have become prisoners of the Russians "in a few hours." Yet even with West Berlin being "defenseless in an iron ring of Soviet armor," there was no "overt sign of nervousness or anxiety among Congress members." In fact, as described by Hook, "the Korean events, if anything, had given a fillip to the spirit of the delegates," inspiring renewed dedication to the task at hand. Hook went on to portray "several dramatic incidents" that highlighted the five-day event, including when a speaker who had planned to criticize Western

foreign policy instead “withdrew his paper... as a result of the Korea incident” having invalidated his thesis that “Soviet political aggression” would not escalate into military conflict.<sup>27</sup> In a *New Leader* article that appeared concurrently, Hook used a similarly breathless tone to describe the adverse reception his group received from Germans, detailing a hostile exchange with professors from the eastern section with whom he and other organizers attempted unsuccessfully to initiate dialog.<sup>28</sup>

If Hook embellished his description of the situation in Berlin as the delegates arrived—the Red Army was not in fact on the verge of moving to conquer Germany—the start of fighting in Korea during the conference did add a major layer of excitement to proceedings. Moreover, participants had to pass through the Soviet-controlled occupation zone in order to access the western section of the city, which meant traveling via American military escort such that it was hard not to feel like a combatant in a world-historical struggle. The philosopher might have even viewed his experience as a way to offset not having fought in the war; Schlesinger, who flew to Berlin on the same flight as Hook and zoologist H.J. Muller, hinted as much in 1996 saying he “had this fantasy about Communist attacks from all sides.”<sup>29</sup>

Hook’s position in that sense was comparable on one level to other ex-Communists like Lasky, Burnham, and Koestler who comprised a hardline flank among CCF organizers—joined by Irving Brown—with a vision that the Congress would be a weapon against Stalinists and their apologists on the European left. Hook was highly sympathetic to such a desire, even as he understood that proselytizing too strongly against Communism had a potential to upset the delicate balance government

officials were hoping to strike. The State Department's objective was not to beat Europeans over the head with a proverbial anticommunist stick, but rather persuade those who might be on the fence in the Cold War that the cause of peace dictated 'choosing freedom' while rejecting the use of culture in the service of totalitarianism. US officials wanted to use the Congress to build a pro-American cultural hegemony among non-Communist leftists, not fulminate against Stalinism.

At the same time, their underlying goal of was to counteract anti-Americanism in Europe while combating charges that the Marshall Plan was imperialism by another name. The aim therefore was to widen the middle of the Cold War divide, and convince left-liberals to refuse Communism (totalitarianism) while choosing the West (freedom) instead. Although it is unclear when exactly (and in what context) he became witting of OPC support, As Hook embarked on his role in the enterprise, he embraced government assistance, having told US intelligence officers sometime in 1949:

Give me a hundred million dollars and a thousand dedicated people, and I will guarantee to generate such a wave of democratic unrest among the masses—yes, even among the soldiers—of Stalin's own empire, that all his problems for a long period of time to come will be internal. I can find the people.<sup>30</sup>

#### *Chairman Hook's Congress and the Committee*

Delegates to the Berlin conference, as well as subsequent members to both the CCF and ACCF were chosen based on two main criteria: perceived anticommunist commitment, and stature in the intellectual (academic and journalistic), artistic (literary and musical, etc.), and/or scientific communities. As per the overarching



mission of the Congress, the Europeans invited to Berlin were drawn specifically from the ranks of the non-Communist left, which included liberals, social democrats, and socialists; naturally, this group contained a high proportion of ex-Communists and/or Trotskyists. Delegations to the inaugural conference comprised a mixture of people who had organized the affair and those invited in order to raise the Congress' profile, weighted towards the former. Ideally, people who were active organizers (and oftentimes witting of the Congress' origins) would have recognizable names and reputations that could help raise the event's profile, as was the case with Arthur Koestler. Still, in order to attract as much positive attention as possible, six eminent philosophers were chosen as 'honorary chairmen': Benedetto Croce (Italy), John Dewey (US), Karl Jaspers (Germany), Salvador de Madriaga (Spain), Jacques Maritain (France), and Bertrand Russell (UK). Of the twenty-one people on the US delegation, all but two subsequently became founding members of the ACCF. Playwright Tennessee Williams, author of *The Glass Menagerie* (1944) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947)—perhaps the most famous American at the conference—was the most notable delegate whose name did not later appear among the roughly one-hundred charter ACCF members listed on the back of the 1951 "We Put Freedom First" pamphlet (film director Joseph Newman being the other).

As the Berlin conference got underway, OPC/CIA agents including Michael Josselson were on hand to help prepare and monitor the work of organizers including Arthur Koestler, Melvin Lasky, and James Burnham. Josselson and others became

concerned in particular with the conspicuous conduct of Burnham and Lasky, who were drawing too much attention, a serious problem given that they were identified closely with the occupation government. Not wanting to raise further suspicions about the conference's links to American officials, the OPC requested Burnham and Lasky lower their profiles. When word got back to Washington that the latter was refusing to fall in-line, Frank Wisner grew "very disturbed" and threatened to pull the Congress' funding, prompting Michel Josselson to tell his friend Lasky to take a "well-earned vacation," although it was too late to keep him from attending the conference.<sup>31</sup> Burnham lasted longer with the CCF's leadership, but he too lost favor eventually and was released from his OPC/CIA service; a similar fate befell Koestler, who had earned a reputation as a rabid anti-Stalinist, using tactics learned from Comintern 'agitprop' guru Willi Münzenberg against his former comrades.

Yet Koestler was still a major presence at the conference, delivering the keynote at the closing rally on June 30, when he uttered a phrase that made newspaper headlines across West Berlin the following day: "Freedom is on the offensive."<sup>32</sup> He was also the principle author of the manifesto adopted then, claiming "the theory and practice of the totalitarian state are the greatest challenge... in the course of civilized history."<sup>33</sup> The guiding principles set forth in the Berlin Manifesto were further institutionalized during the Congress' next meeting, which opened in Brussels on November 27, 1950. At that event, leaders ratified a formal proposal to establish headquarters in Paris with affiliates in England, France, West Germany, Italy, India, Japan, and the United States (there were eventually branches

also formed in Australia, Austria, Brazil, Ceylon, Chile, Cuba, Denmark, Israel, Lebanon, Mexico, Sweden, and Uruguay).

During its subsequent seventeen-year lifespan, the CCF sponsored over a dozen meetings and other events in numerous countries, including what Hook later called “two great international conferences”: ‘Science and Freedom’ in Hamburg, Germany in July 1953, and the ‘Future of Freedom’ in Milan, Italy, in September 1955—at which George Kennan made a rare appearance—highlighted by the presence of exiled German-Jewish intellectual Hannah Arendt, author of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951).<sup>34</sup> The Congress also sponsored a month-long international music, art, and literature exposition, ‘Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century,’ staged in Paris during May of 1952. In March of 1951 the CCF sponsored the ‘First Asian Conference on Cultural Freedom’ in Bombay (Mumbai), where the Indian committee was formed, which followed by a ‘Second Asian Conference on Cultural Freedom’ in Rangoon (Yangon), Burma (Myanmar) in February 1955. In September 1956 the CCF Sponsored the ‘Inter-American Conference of the Congress for Cultural Freedom’ in Mexico City; it also held an ‘East-West Music Encounter’ in Tokyo for three weeks in April-May 1961.

However, “The greatest achievement of the Congress” as recalled by Hook (and many have agreed), “was the establishment of periodicals in various countries” that “reached hundreds of thousands of readers with intellectually challenging positions on a variety of themes.”<sup>35</sup> Its flagship publication, the literary journal

*Encounter*, was launched in the fall of 1953 with Stephen Spender and Irving Kristol as editors. Additionally, the CCF was responsible for the publication of six other monthlies including *Preuves* plus two more in French; *Kontakte* in German; *Freedom First* in English (India); *Liberta Della Cultura* in Italian, plus a Japanese-language journal. A Spanish-language quarterly, *Cuadernos*, was published by the Congress' International Secretariat in Paris (alongside *Preuves* and *Encounter*). By the time it was forced to cease operating in 1967, the CCF's accomplishments had garnered such prestige that officials decided to continue its mission under a successor organization, the International Association for Cultural Freedom (IACF), which received a grant from the Ford Foundation (rather than Julius "Junkie" Fleischman's Farfield Foundation, just exposed as a CIA conduit). The IACF operated until 1979.

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The American Committee for Cultural Freedom existed legally from the time of its formal incorporation on January 5, 1951 through dissolution on April 30, 1967.<sup>36</sup> Practically, the ACCF was operational from its inception in the fall of 1950 through January 1957, when the board of directors voted to "suspend its active organizational life."<sup>37</sup> As Hook recalled later in *Out of Step*, his "was the only national committee that had been formed and was functioning *before* the congress was organized." As founding chairman of the American branch, and the only "member of the executive committees of both organizations," Hook had "the burden... to explain, mediate, and, wherever possible, conciliate the points of view of the two groups." While relations between ACCF leaders and CCF headquarters were

often tense, the group was also plagued by having two distinct factions, which as Hugh Wilford has described, consisted of a “New York intellectual majority” that often flanked Hook, and a “liberal opposition” guided by Schlesinger, who was “one of the organization’s leading anti-McCarthyites.”<sup>38</sup> The committee was plagued in that sense by what Hook later characterized as three interrelated “fundamental difficulties”: incessant infighting, ongoing lack of money, and perpetual conflict with the Paris office. In regards to the last of the three, “as a member of the executive committees of both organizations,” Hook had “the burden... to explain, mediate, and, wherever possible, conciliate the points of view of the two groups.”<sup>39</sup>

When as Hook recounted a split emerged in the spring of 1952 “over the attitude the committee should take toward... McCarthy,” others on the executive committee, including literary critic Diana Trilling (wife of Lionel Trilling), joined Schlesinger and the “many members” who “demanded that the committee issue a forthright condemnation” of McCarthy “at the *very outset*.” In contrast, “A much smaller number argued that those who were denouncing McCarthy were themselves, by their irresponsible exaggerations and misstatements about his effect, using the very methods they attributed to him.”<sup>40</sup>

In a formal vote at the ACCF’s second meeting, held on December 28, 1950, Sidney Hook was elected chairman. He held that post until being replaced by George Counts in June 1952; Hook at that time was given title of ‘president’ so that he could remain a public face of the committee. Others who were at Berlin were chosen as

officers, including Schlesinger and H.J Muller who became vice-chairman of the ACCF, along with sociologist Charles S. Johnson—the first black president of Fisk University. Niebuhr, who like Johnson had not been at the Berlin conference, was also elected as a vice-chairman; and at the expressed desire of Schlesinger (separately from the December 28 meeting), he was also added to the CCF’s international leadership structure as a seventh ‘honorary chairman.’ Another Berlin delegate who was at the December 28 meeting, author Grace Zaring Stone (Ethel Vance), became the ACCF’s first secretary-treasurer; she was joined by the only other woman in the leadership group at that time, Pearl Kluger, a confidant of Hook’s from his Trotskyist days who became the group’s first executive-secretary and, as described by Hugh Wilford, “was trusted by Hook and Burnham to be made ‘witting’ of the CIA connection.”<sup>41</sup>

Along with Hook, Stone, Niebuhr, and Kluger, present at the December 28 meeting of the Executive Committee were also the two African Americans who had been on the Berlin delegation, writer George Schuyler and Baptist missionary Max Yergan—both affiliated with the New York intellectuals. Also there was A. Philip Randolph, whose name had appeared on the very first list generated by ACCF organizers. A Florida native who moved to New York during the ‘great migration’ of blacks shortly before the Harlem Renaissance,’ Randolph was a socialist as well as respected civil rights icon and labor leader whose presence helped cement the committee’s public stature; he would eventually become a ‘good-will ambassador,’ or sorts. Others who had been at Berlin and were present on December 28 in New York

included James Burnham and Nicholas Nabokov, who had recently been named General-Secretary of the CCF—based in Paris. *Commentary* magazine’s Elliot Cohen (who was in Berlin) did not attend the December 28 meeting, but fellow ‘opinion journal’ editors Sol Levitas and *Partisan Review*’s William Phillips (who was not in Berlin) were at the New York meeting. Others who had been on the US delegation to the June 1950 Berlin conference subsequently played an important role in the ACCF. Irving Brown for instance, the AFL’s European Representative, joined Hook as the only other American on the CCF’s Executive Committee.

*Mr. “Henry J. Laphorne” Goes to Washington*

During his time with the Office of Strategic Services, Schlesinger developed an expertise in ‘psychological warfare,’ or ‘political warfare’ as he often preferred, or what is otherwise known as propaganda. While honing his touch for analyzing and generating political tracts in the service of American interests, as part of organized ideological struggle, Schlesinger cultivated lasting contacts and friendships with fellow OSS officers who were engaged in similar or related work. In fact one such associate, Dewitt C. Poole (1885), who as a top American diplomat in Russia during the 1917 Revolution had taken a lead in organizing anti-Bolshevik propaganda, inspired Schlesinger’s idea of a circular (rather than linear) political spectrum at the heart of his ‘vital center’ formulation. He first employed this concept in an April 1948 article for the *New York Times Magazine*, “Not Left, Not Right, But a Vital Center,” in which he declared “neither fascism nor communism can win so long as...

a democratic middle way” can unite “hopes of freedom and of economic abundance.”<sup>42</sup> Repackaging the concept in his book the following year, Schlesinger proposed an alliance of “the non-Communist left and the non-fascist right... to keep... society truly free.”<sup>43</sup> In that manner Schlesinger’s training with the OSS shaped the genesis of *The Vital Center*, which in turn helped launch his career as what historian Michael Wreszin has called a “Scholar-Activist In Cold War America.”<sup>44</sup>

If he had not crossed their paths in Europe during the war, Schlesinger otherwise bonded with fellow former OSS officers through participation in the social club that began to thrive again as he and others returned home. He became friendly in that setting with both Allen Dulles and Frank Wisner who, as described by Hugh Wilford, “Schlesinger saw frequently on the Georgetown dinner party circuit.” Others with whom Schlesinger came into contact as part of the ‘Georgetown set’ included Tom Braden (b. 1917), who in 1949 left his position as director of New York’s Museum of Modern Art to run the International Organizations Division (IOD) of the OPC—where he worked closely with Dulles and Wisner; and longtime CIA operative Cord Meyer (b.1920), the scion of a wealthy New York family who was also hired around that time by Dulles to work for Wisner’s OPC.

Another important Georgetown comrade of Schlesinger’s was Averell Harriman (b. 1891), the son of a railroad baron who as an investment banker-turned diplomat had by the 1950s reinvented himself as a politician (serving one term as New York Governor starting in 1955). When Harriman sought the Democratic nomination for president in 1952 as well as 1956, he had been Schlesinger’s preferred



candidate in both cases (even though he subsequently worked on Stevenson's general election campaigns). On the occasion of friend's seventy-first birthday in 1962, Schlesinger and his wife Marian gave as a birthday gift, signed "With love and admiration," a sketch of a man pointing to a crystal ball with the inscription: "To Averell Harriman, Soothsayer to Presidents, Wise Man of the New Frontier" (referencing his role as an at-large adviser to Kennedy).<sup>45</sup> While George Kennan did not attend the parties at the home of journalist Joseph Alsop (whose younger brother Stewart was an OSS-turned CIA operative) where Harriman (his boss at the Moscow embassy) was a fixture, he and Schlesinger met each other professionally as early as September 1950, and the two became good friends.<sup>46</sup> Through social links to such individuals (which also came to include the Kennedy brothers), Schlesinger was a key associate of those Wilford has described as the "liberal anticommunists who staffed the covert-action branches of the CIA responsible for front group operations."<sup>47</sup>

Shaped in large part by their experiences during the war, when the OSS employed left intellectuals as anti-Nazi propagandists (most famously the 'Frankfurt School'), many Foreign Service officers were aware of the tremendous variation among Marxists in Europe and the divide between Soviet Communists (Stalinists) and their rivals including Socialists and Social-Democrats. As Schlesinger describes in *The Vital Center*, there was cognizance of that dynamic among the network of elites—where policy was made informally over martinis and caviar: once "the State Department began to understand the significance of the non-Communist left," the "cryptic designation 'NCL' was constantly to be heard in Georgetown drawingrooms

[sic].”<sup>48</sup> As the historian later elaborated, “in American terms” the NCL was an “extension of the New Deal, a *via media* between laissez-faire, the source of depression, and collectivism, the source of despotism.”<sup>49</sup>

Upon returning from the war in early 1946, and before starting a professorship at Harvard in the fall, Schlesinger worked in New York as what he describes as a ‘freelancer’ for Henry Luce’s magazine empire. Technically that may be true, although in reality his career as a journalist was from the start connected to his intelligence training. One of Schlesinger’s bosses in the summer of 1946 was Princeton graduate and OSS veteran C.D. Jackson (b. 1902), the managing director of *Time-Life* International, who later became Eisenhower’s official advisor on psychological warfare. Under the ultimate purview of both Jackson and Luce, Schlesinger produced the July 1946 *Life* article that launched him onto the scene as a Cold War propagandist, “The U.S. Communist Party,” published in *Life* on July 29, 1946, subtitled: “Small but tightly disciplined, it strives with fanatic zeal to promote the aims of Russia.” Schlesinger worked with Jackson in a number of contexts during the early 1950s, including in the latter’s role as director of the National Committee for a Free Europe starting in 1949-50, when he left *Time-Life*. Schlesinger, at the same time, was asked by Allen Dulles to join the executive committee of Radio Free Europe, after serving in the spring of 1950 on its advisory board along with the likes of ex-Communist CIA operative Jay Lovestone and famed liberal broadcaster Edward R. Murrow—who later directed the US Information Agency (USIA).<sup>50</sup> In his memoir Schlesinger does not indicate what role, if any, Jackson played in his stint with the

‘Luce press.’ He does however note that his writing for the staunchly conservative publisher had much to do with Luce’s predilection for hiring or working with (anticommunist) left-liberals in order to promote a diversity of viewpoints, as evidenced by Daniel Bell being *Fortune*’s labor editor from 1948-1958. It is not clear, in that context, who exactly was responsible for formally inviting Jackson to join the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, but he was approved unanimously by those present—including Sidney Hook and Norman Thomas—at an Executive Committee meeting held at Bell’s home on Riverside Drive in May 1954; Jackson was on a list of proposed new members that also included Murrow, as well as Walter Lippmann and classical liberal economist Friedrich Hayek.<sup>51</sup>

According to a FBI “name check” investigation conducted from February through December 1963, Schlesinger’s postwar service to the Federal Government consisted of employment “as a consultant on a per diem basis for different agencies” including “the Economic Cooperation Administration in 1948, the Department of State in 1951... and the Central Intelligence Agency in 1952.”<sup>52</sup> While the Bureau did not necessarily obtain all of the facts, or understand them clearly (at least in that investigation), on the first count there is no dispute. Upon starting as director of the ECA office in Paris in 1948, Harriman enlisted Schlesinger as a temporary assistant. As he recalled in his memoir, Schlesinger embarked in mid July and returned in late September. He had to wait a month before joining Harriman, as the FBI stalled his security-clearance over an accusation that he supported communism, as later

informed (although he suspected the delay was motivated more by statements he had made criticizing HUAC). Schlesinger did not give much information about his exact duties in support of what he later referred to as “one of the most successful and beneficial projects in the history of the twentieth century” (other than travel though Europe with Harriman).<sup>53</sup> Yet from the details he does offer, the historian had interest in overcoming the fact that, while “the Marshall Plan had put the Communists on the defensive politically, they “still retained the propaganda initiative.”<sup>54</sup>

Beyond generating a few ideas for the waging of anti-Soviet political/psychological warfare in the context of the Marshall Plan, Schlesinger took part in less innocent endeavors, at least according to Frances Saunders’s claim that he “became involved in the secret distribution of [ERP] counterpart funds, dealing often with Irving Brown,” who was on the CIA payroll.<sup>55</sup> By that account, during the summer of 1948 Schlesinger grew familiar with the secret channel through which money was being diverted from Marshall aid payments into a ‘slush fund’ for covert projects; he also developed a relationship with at least one person connected to that network, who soon became a key organizer of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. The complete scope of Schlesinger’s work as a government consultant after 1948 (and before he entered the Kennedy administration) is unclear. If the FBI was correct in determining that the State Department contracted Schlesinger in 1951, as did the CIA in 1952 (plus that same year the Mutual Security Agency, again under Harriman in Europe), such information is omitted from his memoir. Still, that does not mean he was totally silent on the matter.

Like others who commented immediately after the CIA's involvement was exposed, Schlesinger generally denied and/ or deflected allegations that its influence had tainted the Congress' accomplishments. Schlesinger struck a slightly different tone however in 1996, when he told Frances Saunders "Of all the CIA's expenditures, the Congress for Cultural Freedom seemed its most worthwhile and successful." Schlesinger divulged in that interview that through "intelligence links" he was made aware "that the original meeting of the Congress... was paid for by the CIA." Saunders accordingly characterized him as "one of the handful of non-Agency people who knew from the outset the true origins" of the CCF.<sup>56</sup> Yet in 2002 Schlesinger told another researcher that while he was aware of the CIA's original link to the Congress, he otherwise "did not know that it was the continuing source of funds"; he "fell for the story that private foundations had taken over."<sup>57</sup> Without having sufficient information at their disposal, Saunders, Wilford, and other authors have thus far not been able to connect all of the dots regarding Schlesinger's contract work for the Central Intelligence Agency.

Yet researchers have managed to paint a generally accurate, if also incomplete portrait of a former veteran of the psychological warfare division of the OSS who socialized with and was an informal adviser to comrades in the clandestine services division of the Agency. Working from that premise, Wilford astutely assessed Schlesinger as having been "in regular contact with senior officers of the CIA, briefing them about developments within the ACCF."<sup>58</sup> Yet lacking evidence of a more formal arrangement, authors have otherwise assumed that Schlesinger's role in

the CCF was not officially government-connected; rather, he had friends in high places and would share information with them as a courtesy. Saunders and Wilford both identified this informal setup, which is made evident for instance in correspondences between Schlesinger and the CIA's Cord Meyer, by whom he was asked to send minutes of ACCF Executive Committee meetings.<sup>59</sup> In a follow-up to their 1996 interview, Saunders asked Schlesinger why he sent minutes to Meyer, to which he replied that it was likely "to inform him why the ACCF was so divided and ineffective."<sup>60</sup> Yet, Schlesinger omitted a key detail regarding these letters, which in all likelihood were connected to the formal agreement he had with the Agency, which he was required "to keep forever secret... unless released in writing."<sup>61</sup> It is unknown whether or not Schlesinger was ever released from that obligation, but it could simply be that he saw no reason for information to remain hidden after his death. In fact, one could imagine the historian—having worked for the CIA but never able to disclose it—would take satisfaction in knowing that one day the following line would appear in print: "Attached is a contract prepared by OPC for presentation to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (Pseudonym: Henry J. Laphorne), a cleared OPC consultant."<sup>62</sup>

In 1963 when the FBI investigated allegations of subversive behavior that could make Schlesinger a security risk, it mistakenly determined that his work for the CIA began two years later than it actually did. As detailed in a July 1954 memo generated apparently by the Agency (redactions make it impossible to know for sure), Schlesinger was "approved as a lead source" for the CIA's Personnel Procurement Division (PPD) on three separate occasions: "6 January 1950, 25 February 1952, and

9 December 1952.”<sup>63</sup> Further still, the FBI apparently also failed to note that that the history professor had obtained CIA clearance as a “covert associate” contracted “for the preparation of reports... and... other services of a confidential nature” on October 31, 1950. In exchange for his services, Schlesinger was “paid a fee of \$200.00 for each... satisfactory report delivered,” and would be “advanced or reimbursed funds for expenses incurred in connection with such travel as may be directed or authorized by CIA.” That contract was prepared after clearance was granted following an “urgent request of 2 October 1950” that emanated from the Agency’s Special Security Branch, at the behest of an “Assistant Director” who was “vitally interested in using the subject as soon as possible.” Schlesinger was reminded “not to represent himself as... an employee of CIA.”<sup>64</sup>

#### Left Wing of the CIA: Making the American Committee for Cultural Freedom

The timing of when Schlesinger was first contracted to assist the CIA with personnel procurement, six months before the June 1950 CCF conference in Berlin, corroborates surrounding evidence that suggests he was recruited to be a recruiter. Likewise, the date of when Schlesinger (Laphorne) obtained his first covert clearance, on Halloween that same year, suggests he was then enlisted by the OPC in connection with his pending work for the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. As later recalled by Hook, Schlesinger “took a lively role” in the informal “organizing committee” that had a decisive hand in selecting the CCF’s leadership, starting with Nabokov.<sup>65</sup> While Schlesinger did eventually support Nabokov’s appointment, he

only did so after first suggesting to Hook and Burnham two other candidates for the top post (both people he knew well): the ADA's general-secretary James Loeb, and Philip Horton, managing editor of *The Reporter* (published by Italian émigré max Ascoli). As Schlesinger told Hook on November 10, he thought the composer might in the end be "the person best equipped for the executive job," while adding the less flattering observation that Nabokov was "not so Russian and disorganized as he seems."<sup>66</sup> Unable to get away from Boston to attend the Brussels meeting (because of teaching responsibilities), five days before it opened Schlesinger wrote a warm note instructing Nabokov to be his proxy, while sending regrets to both he and his wife Pat (who was also involved in Congress affairs) for not being in attendance.<sup>67</sup>

Schlesinger moreover maintained close contact with other CCF organizers including Irving Brown, to whom he wrote in July, just a few weeks after they had returned from Berlin, noting with optimism that the Congress had potential to be "an immensely powerful instrument of political and intellectual warfare." In that same letter Schlesinger began to make his case to Brown that Niebuhr should be included (while lobbying Hook and Melvin Lasky in a similar manner), indicating that the theologian "would be ideal for several reasons," particularly since "his designation would strengthen the links between the Congress and the ADA."<sup>68</sup> Schlesinger simultaneously took a central role in selecting the inchoate American committee's founding membership on behalf of the CCF's Paris office, operating parallel to Hook as de-facto chair of the New York branch, with Pearl Kluger as intermediary. At whose directive is unclear, but it was decided to place Schlesinger's name on the



form-letter invitation sent to a select group of prospective members, with a copy of the Berlin manifesto attached. Hook asked Schlesinger on October 27 to review a draft of the letter and “add or subtract” whatever he thought appropriate.<sup>69</sup>

On November 1, the day after receiving his OPC clearance, Schlesinger responded that the letter was “fine,” but did not know to whom it was being sent, so he included a list he had already submitted to the Congress’ headquarters “at their request” (included on the back of the letter was a catalog of twenty-one people who had been included in the recommendation he sent to Pat Nabokov on October 21). Schlesinger then proposed to Hook: “If you would send me a list of the names to whom the letter is to go I could check those whom I call by their first name.”<sup>70</sup> After a conversation with the philosopher, Kluger wrote to Schlesinger, on November 6, to inform that the “list was primarily for the purpose of obtaining about 35 names... requested by the International Committee” to show in Brussels as an illustration of American membership, adding that Arthur Koestler had asked for it to be “drawn from all sections of the population.” Still, Kluger assured: “The names to which you objected will be omitted on Professor Hook’s responsibility, those you suggested will be added.” As for his other concerns, to which Kluger said Hook was “quite sympathetic,” she conveyed that since “musicians and painters” were viewed as “less likely to sign than the writers,” they were represented in “greater proportion.” Moreover she indicated that, to best meet the initial needs of the Congress, “with the exception of a few who were... requested abroad, political people were left off”; yet she told Schlesinger she would add “those requested” by him. At the same time

Kluger transmitted a request of Schlesinger from Hook, wondering if the historian could find “some people who are ‘socially’ conservative but... very strong... on civil rights” to “indicate that we are not building a left-wing organization.”<sup>71</sup>

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On November 9, 1950 invitations, with response-cards and return-envelopes, bearing Arthur Schlesinger Jr.’s signature were placed in the mail. They read, in part:

During the last week of June there took place in Western Berlin a series of meetings out of which emerged an International Congress for Cultural Freedom. The participants included eminent writers, artists, scholars, and scientists from many countries of the world. They journeyed to Berlin in order to affirm... the inalienable rights of human beings... and their resolution to defend... democratic freedoms in every culture.... We believe you are in agreement with the sentiments expressed in the [enclosed] Freedom Manifesto, and therefore take pleasure in inviting you to become a member of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Invitations are being sent to a relatively small but representative number of men and women in the arts, professions, and sciences. Permanent organizational plans will wait upon responses received... and you will be kept informed of all developments.<sup>72</sup>

As responses addressed to the Pulitzer-winning historian and *New York Post* columnist poured in, Kluger kept Schlesinger informed; ten days after the letters went out she told him “even the declinations to our invitations turn out to be testimonials, particularly to you.”<sup>73</sup>

Diplomat and civil rights leader Ralph Bunche, who in less than a month would accept the Nobel Peace Prize as the first African American winner (for mediation in Israel-Palestine in 1949), was one invitee who regretfully declined. Bunche informed Schlesinger that his position with the United Nations precluded his involvement in the ACCF, but otherwise expressed “full sympathy with the principles and objectives of the Congress.”<sup>74</sup> When Kluger phoned to see if the committee

could still use his name as an endorser of the Berlin manifesto, he politely refused on the same grounds, and conveyed that his message in response was intended as a personal courtesy to Schlesinger; she assured that it would not be used publically. A different but related type of reply came from the NAACP's Walter White, who inquired as to whether the letter was intended for him personally or his organization, and Kluger informed Schlesinger that she would confirm they "wished him to join as an individual."<sup>75</sup> There was also another type of mixed response, like the one given by a famous writer whose name Schlesinger had placed on his list a few spots below Niebuhr's, which was at the top. As Kluger reported to Schlesinger, "John Steinbeck wrote on his card: 'only if the intent remains within the manifesto.'" She therefore "cautioned" headquarters against using Steinbeck's name for too wide a purpose.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps the swiftest, and one of the most favorable replies came from someone whose name was the only one appearing on Schlesinger's list with a partial underline beneath his first name (whether just a stray pen mark or more is unknown). On his response-card, dated November 10, the Socialist leader wrote: "I have your letter and read the Manifesto of the Cultural Freedom with approval. I shall be delighted to become a member of the American Committee. What are your dues going to be?"<sup>77</sup>

*Enter, Comrade Thomas*

In the fall of 1950 Norman Thomas was celebrating his sixty-sixth birthday. Yet, he was just as active and involved in causes as ever. As he opened the letter from Schlesinger, Thomas no doubt was already aware of the June conference in

Berlin and the Congress for Cultural Freedom's ensuing formation. He also very likely had at least caught wind of plans to build the ACCF as they unfolded in late summer: hence the rapid response and unconditional acceptance when formally asked. Of course, upon seeing the name of the new group, Thomas might have flashed-back to involvement in a previous Committee for Cultural Freedom (perhaps he mused to himself that the old 'Hook-Dewey' group had been reborn as a 'Hook-Schlesinger' affair). It is possible to imagine he might have taken a moment to locate his copy of the committee's report on "Stalinist Outposts in the United States," which was issued in April 1940 after congressional investigations had "falsely accused" innocent groups while leaving "most... Communist front organizations... unmentioned"; of particular concern to Thomas then could have been a finding that "long-established independent pacifist organizations" had "been captured by Communists."<sup>78</sup>

Thomas's experience working on behalf of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom was most likely very similar to what he remembered from a decade ago—perhaps the biggest difference being more resources were available at present. His status with the ACCF was also that of an elder statesman, and his initial role was as a 'good-will ambassador' of sorts. For instance, in the spring of 1952 went on an ACCF-sponsored tour through parts of Asia, including a leg in Japan accompanied by A. Philip Randolph. Upon his return Thomas told a group gathered in New York that he felt "reassured" that "Japanese socialists" will "learn in time what history has taught about communism."<sup>79</sup> Although Thomas had not been at the December 28 meeting where executive committee members developed the basic framework for the

ACCF's operations, Randolph was one of the many who might have given his comrade at least an informal report of the proceedings.

In that event, Thomas would have recognized the group's agenda: as described in the minutes from the December 28, a subcommittee on the Congress' US affairs had determined that "The two primary objectives of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom should be to continue exposing totalitarianism factually and to constructively interpret the American scene... and democratic processes." Within those parameters, a "general program" would stress four categories in the following order: "Peace and Freedom; Freedom of science and culture; Reevaluation of the nature of imperialism; Dynamics of democracy and destruction of totalitarianism." Five "initiating activities" were also proposed, which included: "Page ad in New York Times -- statement based on manifesto asking for financial and moral and support; Mass meeting in Town Hall in New York City; All day panel discussion on the issues of freedom of science and culture... in Washington, D.C.", and a campaign "To work through existing scientific and cultural organizations to bring the questions of freedom and peace to their members and through them to a wider public." It was further determined that the ACCF should "publish a regular bulletin of Congress activities" for readers in the United States, and should "provide European "subscriptions to a selected list of American magazines such as FOREIGN AFFAIRS, COMMENTARY, THE NEW LEADER, PARTISAN REVIEW... etc.". Beyond that, although it was determined that there would be no local sub-chapters of a student section of the ACCF, it was determined that "Members on campuses to get other

professors and intellectuals working in universities to give leadership to student body through discussion groups.”<sup>80</sup>

In the fall of 1952 Thomas replied to an invitation to join the ACCF’s executive committee, telling chairman George Counts he was “honored” by the request and would accept “with some hesitation,” since he should look to retire from such ventures; but he was convinced the ACCF had a “very definite field to cultivate in America.”<sup>81</sup> In his new role Thomas was active in offering suggestions to other committee leaders, for instance telling Counts in March 1953 he thought it was “very important” that the group should “expand outside New York and reach larger numbers,” adding: “you might even count some middlebrows as intellectuals for your purpose, it seems to me.” Thomas’s suggestion to widen the geographic range of committee activities was connected to the issue that was otherwise on everyone’s mind at the moment, which he addressed by telling Counts “the Committee for Cultural Freedom is the ideal committee for an attack on McCarthyism.”<sup>82</sup> In April 1954 a news bulletin announced: “Norman Thomas, six-time Socialist candidate for President... was elected chairman of the A.C.C.F.’s administrative committee.” Replacing Daniel Bell, at the same time that Robert Gorham Davis replaced Counts, Thomas joined a multi-headed leadership that also included executive director Sol Stein (who had replaced Irving Kristol in August 1953 when he left to edit *Encounter*) in addition to Hook. There were also several others on the executive committee very actively involved at that time including, from both the liberal *and* New York intellectual wings of the anti-McCarthy camp: Diana Trilling, Richard

Rovere, and James Farrell—whose August 1956 resignation after nearly two years as committee chairman would set in motion the group’s suspension in early 1957. In the April bulletin introducing Thomas as administrative committee chairman, he addressed members by highlighting the theme of his latest book *The Test of Freedom: The State of Liberty Under the Twin Attacks Called Communism and McCarthyism* (1954).<sup>83</sup>

Thomas began ACCF-related activities immediately, as evidenced by the letter he wrote to Farrell on January 8, 1951. While agreeing to carry on the conversation over lunch they had begun after a recent discussion meeting, Thomas expressed concern to Farrell that “creative writers ought seriously to consider the fact that democracy and freedom have moved artists to so little positive expression in song, poetry, and story.”<sup>84</sup> His commitments were at that time, as always, many and varied—revolving around a nucleus of concern for the state of world affairs. For example in a letter dated January 15 Thomas addressed A.J. Muste, with whom he was having an intense exchange of ideas, telling him that while “F.O.R. has often performed a useful role in its practical political analysis,” he also believed “pacifists are open to the criticism that they overstress certain practical agreements because of the fundamental politics which make them... oppose war.”<sup>85</sup> On January 18, Thomas hailed a group of “Dear Comrades” in Italy, sending them “greetings and good wishes” on behalf of himself “and the American Socialist Party” in these “difficult days.”<sup>86</sup> And, he received a note dated January 25 from Dewitt C. Poole, as a member of the National Committee for a Free Europe, responding to his letter from that same day.

Poole told Thomas he had “read the pronouncement of the Post World War Council with keen interest,” and was hoping he could “find time to read the enclosed private memoranda... recently prepared on the present conflict.”<sup>87</sup> In that flurry of correspondences, Thomas also received a letter on January 20 from the head of the State Department’s International Broadcasting Division, who thanked him for his “contribution to the discussion, which proved most valuable to our operation,” and added: “please... be prepared to join us again.”<sup>88</sup>

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Had Comrade Thomas not been so eager to join the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, he might have waited a month and handed his response card directly to Professor Schlesinger when the two of them joined eighteen other men and one woman who gathered at VoA headquarters in Manhattan an “informal conference” addressing how to “more effectively counter Communist charges of imperialism against the United States.”<sup>89</sup> Convened at 4:00 pm on December 20, 1950 in the office of director Foy Kohler (who later served as Ambassador to the Soviet Union), VoA staffers in attendance included the ideological unit’s Bertram Wolfe plus scriptwriters Norman Jacobs and Harry Fleischman, a former SPA National Secretary who had been Thomas’s campaign manager in 1944 and 1948.<sup>90</sup> Thomas had recently been included along with the likes of Walter Reuther and Upton Sinclair in, as Fleischman later recalled, a series of VoA interviews featuring “prominent Americans known abroad as critics of...[US] foreign policy and opponents of imperialism.” As Fleischman related, he and Thomas had suggested to Kohler that



the VoA organize an “off-the-record” discussion of how to mobilize against “Soviet imperialism.”<sup>91</sup> As they met in late December 1950, participants were tasked with thinking about ways to use the government’s overseas radio programming in order to blunt criticism of the Marshall Plan—and the ‘Point Four Program,’ a companion in developing countries.<sup>92</sup> The aim was to “pin the odious label [of imperialism] on...Soviet policies,” while linking independence movements in Asia to the American “revolutionary tradition” and thereby remove “the stigma of colonialism” surrounding US programs. VoA officials sought, in that manner, to “persuade the ordinary workers and peasants of Europe and Asia that...propaganda about ‘Wall Street imperialism’ is false.”<sup>93</sup>

It is not clear who exactly was responsible for arranging the participants, but most if not all of the people in Kohler’s office knew each other through endeavors together in a number of capacities. Since the VoA conference was held directly in between the ACCF’s first two meetings on December 14 and 28, Hook was busy; that might have been one reason he declined his invitation and was not present with Thomas and Schlesinger that day—the simpler and perhaps likelier reason is that he was celebrating his forty-eighth birthday. Committee work—or his CIA contract duties—might very well have had something to do with Schlesinger’s presence. Being also at the same time involved with Radio Free Europe as a veteran of the OSS and Office of War Information (which originally oversaw VoA), not to mention a respected scholar, Schlesinger was a logical choice to have as consultant on the issue. Thomas’s involvement in this network of left-liberal Cold War propagandists was

less formal than Schlesinger's, yet he was very well connected indeed. And, even in his public writing Thomas displayed a consistent interest in questions of ideological struggle. For three decades, give or take, Thomas had been making the argument he reprised in a January 1952 *New Leader* article that asserted "Beyond any possible doubt, Communism has been and is able to exploit most profitably for itself the crimes and blunders of the nations we call democracies. American racial discrimination is an outstanding example. So is the colonial record of the Western powers."<sup>94</sup>

Kohler deferred to Thomas, as the wise elder in the room, to open the discussion. He was in many ways the ideal person to do so, knowing most likely who would be on what side of which issue, and how conflict might be avoided or resolved. Thomas in that sense was strategic about choosing to make what he knew would be a non-objectionable opening statement, calling (as reported in the transcript) for "long range planning... and consultation with people familiar with propaganda techniques," so as to "achieve a cumulative effect on the subject of imperialism" in the Soviet Union and its satellites. Beyond that he pondered how US officials could help burnish such efforts, suggesting "Negroes [should] be used more in VoA output," which might also "assign time to the A.F. of L. and the CIO for an uncensored program on American labor... not identified with Government."<sup>95</sup>

Thomas might have been able to predict what Schlesinger would say when he took the floor, stating what he heard "would do no particular harm," while suggesting that the people under discussion "were absorbed by local issues and problems," and

would likely not pay “much attention... to propaganda from the foreign radio.” Thus Schlesinger thought that since “the most damaging” anti-Chinese narrative “would be news about China itself,” he favored “good intelligence facilities” to strengthen “VoA’s ability to broadcast news of local experience.”<sup>96</sup> At least in that situation, Schlesinger agreed with Thomas that exposing the Soviet system is the best way to propagandize against it; reforming the American system is the best way to propagandize for it. As they offered a distinctly liberal view of the situation, others expressed ideas that differed in ways that again would have been predictable.

Two people with whom Thomas was well acquainted from *The New Leader* milieu (and soon also the ACCF), Bertram Wolfe and ex-Communist German émigré Karl Wittfogel, gave characteristic responses. Wolfe, for instance, introduced “Lenin’s theory of imperialism, stating that the term, as it is now understood, did not exist in the Eighteenth century”; moreover he wanted to recognize that “the most important single event of our time was the voluntary [British] withdrawal from India.” Wittfogel, meanwhile, “took up the question of Soviet imperialism,” which he said sprang from “an ‘apparatchik society’” that had become a “‘colossal class machine’ which is something entirely new in the world.”<sup>97</sup> Remarks like Wittfogel’s in particular were likely what Thomas anticipated when he noted, just before handing the floor to Kohler, that he preferred “documentation and detail” to “‘anticommunist tirades.’”<sup>98</sup> Given what soon unfolded as the American Committee for Cultural Freedom dealt with the crisis of McCarthyism, Thomas’s admonition was indeed more prescient than he could have known.



Photo by Lou Goren

<p>HONORARY CHAIRMEN</p> <p>BENEDETTO CROCE †          JOHN DEWEY †          KARL JASPERS          SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA          JACQUES MARITAIN          REINHOLD NIEBUHR          BERTRAND RUSSELL</p> <p>AMERICAN COMMITTEE</p> <p><i>Chairman</i>          GEORGE S. COUNTS</p> <p><i>Vice-Chairmen</i>          GERMAN ARCINIEGAS          CHARLES S. JOHNSON          H. J. MULLER          ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.</p> <p><i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>          GRACE ZARING STONE</p> <p><i>Executive Committee</i>          ARNOLD BEICHMAN          DANIEL BELL          JAMES BURNHAM          ELLIOT COHEN          JAMES T. FARRELL          SIDNEY HOOK          HANS KOHN          S. M. LEVITAS          NORBERT MUHLEN          WILLIAM PHILLIPS          RICHARD ROVERE          GEORGE SCHUYLER          PETER VIREECK          MAX YERGAN</p>		
<p>AMERICAN COMMITTEE          FOR          CULTURAL FREEDOM          35 West 53rd Street          New York 19, N. Y.</p>	<p>affiliated with          CONGRESS FOR          CULTURAL FREEDOM          41 Avenue Montaigne          Paris (8), France</p>	

(Above) “A Tamiment Institute Public Forum: Is Co-Existence Possible?” at Museum of Modern Art Auditorium, April 14, 1955. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (*far right*) listens to comments from chair, Senator Richard L. Neuberger flanked by Gerhart Niemeyer, left, and Harry Schwartz, right. Bertram Wolfe (*far left*) takes notes [from pamphlet cover picture].

(Left) Back cover of American ACCF booklet (circa 1952). A caption on opposite cover (not shown) reads: “An organization whose purpose is the defense of intellectual liberties against all encroachments on the creative and critical spirit of man.”

[Credits: New York Public Library; Butler Library, Columbia University.]

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Holding the Center: Left-Liberal Anticommunism in the Age of McCarthy

The use of McCarthy clearly shows who will control the government if the Republicans win.

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., November 1952

It is legitimate to interpret Senator McCarthy's actions as motivated less by an interest in combating communism than by a desire to exploit the authority he possesses as a Senator.

—Sidney Hook, May 1953

You can't fight either Communism or McCarthyism effectively unless you fight both of them.

—Norman Thomas, April 1954

On March 29, 1952, three years after the close of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, the ACCF hosted a forum at the “Starlight Roof” ballroom on the top floor of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. “In Defense of Free Culture” featured a typically impressive list of speakers including Max Eastman, Sidney Hook, Arthur Koestler, Mary McCarthy, Richard Rovere, Lionel Trilling, and Bertram Wolfe.<sup>1</sup> Despite slightly different themes for each session, all of the day's panelists endeavored to answer the same question: “Who Threatens Cultural Freedom in America?” Knowing the dynamics of the committee, and the specific personalities involved, no one in the overflow audience would have likely expected complete unanimity, especially given the climate. It was, therefore, perhaps not wholly unexpected when Max Eastman asserted that the idea of Joseph McCarthy leading a witch-hunt was a “smear tactic” invented by Communists, aided by “fuzzy-minded

liberals who, in the name of cultural freedom, are destroying every freedom throughout the world.”<sup>2</sup>

Whether or not it was expected, Eastman’s tirade (as some saw it) was particularly galling since he denounced by-name liberal institutions including the ACLU and ADA. Rovere, who thought Eastman was dead wrong and also felt personally insulted, fired-off a letter the next day to Schlesinger—which he also sent to Hook and eventually others including Thomas—saying if the ACCF “can’t make it clear that its anti-Communism is of a different sort entirely from McCarthy’s, it would be much better for it not to exist.”<sup>3</sup> That triggered a chain events at the end of which Frank Wisner penned a memo to CIA colleagues, on April 7, warning of a “reported crisis in the ACCF.”<sup>4</sup> And with that, not much more than a year after it was formed, the American Committee for Cultural Freedom was irreparably fractured.

#### “Enemies from Within”: McCarthy and McCarthyism

Senator Joseph McCarthy seized the spotlight in Wheeling, West Virginia on February 9, 1950, waiving a sheet of paper while declaring: “I have here in my hand a list of 205...names that were made known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy.”<sup>5</sup> Yet, the Wisconsin Republican had no such list; when pressed, he changed his number to fifty-seven, then later eighty-one. Finally, he named solely the nation’s ‘top Soviet agent.’ There was no concrete evidence that Owen Lattimore, a scholar of East Asia and State Department consultant, was a Communist or a spy. However,

like other left-liberals, he had become involved in government service in the 1930s during the New Deal. When Truman tried to quell controversy by investigating McCarthy's sensational allegations, Lattimore was the main witness at the "Tydings Committee" hearings, held from March through July. On March 29 *Washington Post* cartoonist Herbert Block drew the word "McCarthyism" scrawled on a precariously-placed platform atop a tottering pile of cans, towards which Republicans push a bewildered elephant above the caption: "You mean I'm supposed to stand on that?"

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In 1946, Republicans regained Congress largely by 'redbaiting' opponents—spuriously linking them to Communism; McCarthy labeled incumbent Robert La Follett Jr. 'communistically inclined.' In March 1947 Truman begrudgingly issued Executive Order 9835, establishing 'loyalty reviews' for federal employees while empowering the FBI to investigate 'security risks.' HUAC-style committees emerged in over a dozen state legislatures, while loyalty programs spread throughout the country, including the University of California, where thirty-one professors were dismissed in 1950. Truman's 'loyalty order' was precipitated by a longstanding legislative battle against Communism that started with the 1940 Alien Registration (Smith) Act, which created penalties for advocating the violent overthrow of the government. From 1949-1957, when it was deemed unconstitutional, over 140 Communists were indicted under the Smith Act (in August 1954, the Communist Control Act explicitly criminalized CPUSA membership). The 1950 Internal Security Act, or 'McCarran Act,' mandated 'Communist organizations' to register

with the Justice Department, while establishing the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS), or ‘McCarran Committee,’ as a Senate counterpart to HUAC.

The rise of McCarthy and McCarthyism coincided with second ‘red scare.’ In October and November 1947, HUAC held hearings in Hollywood. Friendly witnesses, including Walt Disney and Ronald Reagan, aided investigators, while a group that refused to answer questions was held in contempt of Congress. The case of the ‘Hollywood Ten’ perpetuated a ‘blacklist’ in which several-hundred film artists were barred from the industry between 1947 and 1957. An infamous pamphlet, *Red Channels*, logged the names of over 150 people who were banned from radio. When HUAC returned to Hollywood, starting in 1951-1952, its interrogation of celebrities often began with the refrain: ‘Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?’ Many cooperated, while some, like Paul Robeson, resisted: “I am being tried for fighting for the rights of my people,” he told his HUAC inquisitors in 1956, chiding: “You are the un-Americans, and you ought to be ashamed of yourselves.”<sup>6</sup>

After Republicans regained control of Congress again in 1952, McCarthy became chairman of the SISS and worked alongside HUAC as well as the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (SPSI). Between 1949 and 1954, those bodies conducted over 100 investigations into subversion—real and imagined—by Communists and their ‘fellow-travelers.’ This consortium also encompassed segments of the media including ‘Hearst Press’ columnist Westbrook Pegler and other notable figures including industrialist Alfred Kohlberg, a textile importer who



lobbied in support of Chinese Nationalism. J. Edgar Hoover simultaneously had a hand in sponsoring cinematic and televised propaganda like *The Red Menace* (1949), *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1951), and *I Led Three Lives* (1953-1956).<sup>7</sup>

Portraying scenarios that were overblown, even by existing standards, plotlines involving espionage/ counter-espionage were nonetheless sometimes based on real events, blurring with actual spy cases, like that of former diplomat Alger Hiss who was accused during HUAC hearings in 1948 of conducting espionage for the Soviets a decade earlier. During the period in question Hiss had worked for the State Department's Office of Far Eastern Affairs, in which capacity he attended the Yalta Conference and helped organize the founding meeting of the United Nations in 1945. A HUAC member, Richard Nixon staked his fledgling career in Congress on demonstrating Hiss's guilt, which he did through dramatic testimony from ex-Communist Whittaker Chambers. A statute of limitations prevented Hiss from being indicted as a spy; he was convicted of perjury.

During the 1949 trial, Truman called the prosecution a "red herring," while on the day of his sentencing in January 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson made news by saying: "I do not intend to turn my back on Alger Hiss."<sup>8</sup> In August, meanwhile, a grand jury indicted Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for passing atomic secrets to the Russians; after a trial in March 1951, they were convicted and sentenced to death. The Rosenberg and Hiss cases loomed in the background of McCarthy's February 1950 speech, and spurred his assertion that the State Department was 'thoroughly infested with Communists.' While Lattimore had been

Roosevelt's advisor to the Chinese Nationalists during World War II, he was also on the board of the Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR) with Kohlberg, who resigned in 1944, charging that Lattimore was pro-Communist; after 1949, Kohlberg accused Lattimore of helping steer State Department policy in favor of Chinese Communists. Lattimore defended himself in March 1950, while reproaching "Kohlberg and his associates," noting it was "easy to imagine their pleasure when they observe a United States Senator creating an international sensation by regurgitating their own fantastic and discredited venom."<sup>9</sup> The Tydings Committee exonerated Lattimore and eight other witnesses while excoriating McCarthy for perpetrating a "fraud and a hoax." The Senate accepted the report on partisan lines, with Republicans rejecting it as a whitewash. Despite his vindication, Lattimore's reputation was ruined. Progressives sensed a "witch-hunt" against supporters of the New Deal, including many who were firmly anti-Communist. In June 1950, *The Nation's* Freda Kirchwey characterized "McCarthyism" as "the means by which a handful of men, disguised as hunters of subversion, cynically subvert the instruments of justice...in order to help their own political fortunes."<sup>10</sup>

McCarthy resurfaced a year later, charging that Secretary of Defense George Marshall had fallen prey to "a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man." He claimed that throughout his entire career General Marshall, who had also been Secretary of State and commander of American forces during World War II, had helped "diminish the United States in world affairs," enabling the country to "finally fall victim to Soviet intrigue...and

Russian military might.”<sup>11</sup> McCarthy’s June 1951 speech offended many, including General Eisenhower, who considered Marshall a hero. As he ran in 1952 Eisenhower refrained from publically denouncing McCarthy; in private he was unambiguously disdainful, telling a confidant: “I will not...get into the gutter with that guy.”<sup>12</sup> As he campaigned for reelection, McCarthy reluctantly endorsed Eisenhower while working to undermine the Democratic candidate—Adlai Stevenson—who had been a character witness for Alger Hiss. In a major televised address one week before the election, McCarthy accused Stevenson of directly aiding Communists, while slyly dropping a slip-of-the-tongue reference to “Alger—I mean Adlai.”<sup>13</sup>

After the 1952 election, with Eisenhower in office, McCarthy grew even more emboldened. He turned his newfound power against, the Voice of America, which was well known for employing liberals and leftists as editors and scriptwriters. McCarthy’s investigation in February-March 1953 resulted in several VoA officials being forced to resign or transfer, including Reed Harris, who challenged the Senator during a tense exchange: “It is my neck...you are trying very skillfully to wring.”<sup>14</sup> As McCarthy grew increasingly unrestrained, Eisenhower moved against him, intervening when the Senator declared his intent to investigate the CIA. So he and his chief counsel Roy Cohn turned instead to the Army lab where Julius Rosenberg had worked, and where they thought officials had tried to quash an espionage probe. After forcing the Army to debunk flimsy theories of a Soviet spy ring at Ft. Monmouth, McCarthy dug-up a general who had advanced a uniformed dentist with leftwing sympathies; during a hearing in February 1954, he fulminated: “Any man

who has been given the honor of being promoted to general and who says, 'I will protect another general who protects Communists,' is not fit to wear that uniform."<sup>15</sup>

The Army and Eisenhower were outraged. When an Army lawyer disclosed to members of Congress and the administration that McCarthy was seeking special favors for Roy Cohn's assistant—David Schine—who had recently been drafted, officials were instructed to keep records of all communications with McCarthy; they organized a plan to discredit him. On March 9, CBS anchor Edward Murrow told his television audience: "The actions of the junior Senator from Wisconsin have caused alarm and dismay amongst our allies abroad, and given considerable comfort to our enemies. And whose fault is that? Not really his. He didn't create this situation of fear; he merely exploited it—and rather successfully."<sup>16</sup> With Eisenhower's approval, on March 22 the Army leaked information about his behind-the-scenes pressure, implying that the Ft. Monmouth investigation was part of an attempt to blackmail the Army into giving Schine preferential treatment. Congress convened a televised investigation into charges against the Senator; roughly twenty million people saw the "Army-McCarthy Hearings" unfold over thirty-six days of testimony between April 22 and June 17. The hearings climaxed during a June 9 exchange with Army counsel Jack Welch, who made a remark that McCarthy interpreted as an oblique reference to rumors that Cohn and Schine were gay—a topic that the two sides had agreed was off-limits. "Tail-gunner Joe" (as fellow Marines once called him) broke his end of the bargain and raised the issue of an associate of Welch who had once belonged to a group he accused of being a Communist front, prompting Welch's rebuttal: "Until

this moment, Senator, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness.” Before the gallery erupted in applause, Welch scolded McCarthy: “Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last?”<sup>17</sup> In September, a subcommittee recommended that McCarthy be censured; on December 2, 1954, his colleagues voted 67-22 to ‘condemn’ the Wisconsinite. Humiliated and struggling with alcoholism, McCarthy became largely irrelevant for the rest of his career. He died in May 1957 at age 48.

#### “Combating Unintelligent Anticommunism”

That most, if not all of McCarthy’s attacks were politically motivated was no secret. His targets were nearly always progressives who could be easily identified (at the time) as resolute anticommunists. Left-liberal intellectuals thusly opposed McCarthy for three main reasons, none of which were mutually exclusive: a defense of the New Deal; a partisan shield for liberal Democrats; and to promote a belief that redbaiting and witch-hunting worked *for* rather than against the anticommunist cause. Some on the left like Freda Kirchwey viewed McCarthy’s primary agenda as an assault on the New Deal and its defenders, a view shared broadly by many. A similar yet slightly different perspective held by many ADA liberals, who also viewed McCarthyism through a political lens, was typified by Schlesinger’s comment on the eve of the 1952 election that if Eisenhower won he would be “indebted to McCarthy and have to repay him.”<sup>18</sup> A third variant of anti-McCarthyism as espoused by left-liberals was typified by Hook’s argument in a May 1953 letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, when he noted “it can easily be shown that Senator McCarthy’s

behavior has strengthened sympathy for communism, and decreased friendliness to American democracy, all over the globe.”<sup>19</sup> *In The Test of Freedom*, meanwhile, Thomas demonstrated the degree to which all of those anti-McCarthy instincts could be, and often were combined. Proposing that Communism and McCarthyism were twin evils—not unlike the way Schlesinger paired the totalitarian left and totalitarian right—Thomas created space for the continuation of his verbal assault against “Russian imperial control” guided by a “secular religion...now horribly corrupted by power,” which seeks the achievement of its own form of economic collectivism.” Yet at the same time, using particularly evocative imagery, he decried those like McCarthy who go “burning down barns to catch rats,” but kill horses instead.<sup>20</sup>

As tempting as it might be to leave the analysis there, as a refutation of the idea that left-liberal anticommunism abetted McCarthyism in any way, that would be foolhardy. There was a substantial difference between the non-Communist progressive form of anti-McCarthyism espoused by such figures as Kirchey, and the left-liberal anticommunist version articulated by the likes of Schlesinger, Hook, and Thomas. Their differences on the question of McCarthyism parallel basic ideological divisions. For example, it was one thing to support the Marshall Plan as a wise (if also problematic) policy that might help improve conditions in Europe. Yet, it was quite another to champion that policy as a bulwark against Communist fifth columns and Stalinist domination. While Kirchwey might have generally agreed with the notion that McCarthyism served to amplify rather than diminish the influence of Communism, that was not where she or likeminded progressives put their emphasis.

There is also the hard-to-miss reality that while Kirchwey was issuing forceful condemnations of McCarthy in June 1950, within months of when his meteoric rise began, Hook was doing no such thing. In fact, strikingly, while Kirchwey was out trying to slay McCarthy and defend the New Deal, Hook, Schlesinger, and their comrades were in Berlin spearheading a CIA-funded Cold War propaganda campaign. Hook's most inspired moment on the anti-McCarthy stage, his May 1953 letter to the *New York Times*, came at a moment when the Senator's fate had all but been decided for him by virtue of the fact that both public opinion and Eisenhower were turning against him. Murrow's famous dressing-down of McCarthy was timed and to a certain extent staged in manner that, as many have argued, served the broadcaster's personal interests more than those of his viewers.

It is a commonly held misconception among some critics that most left-liberal anticommunists held views that were indistinguishable from McCarthy's supporters. There is no question that most left-liberal anticommunists were anti-McCarthy, and had opinions that differed greatly from most conservatives on such issues as whether or not Communists should be barred from teaching in public schools. And while they may have been opposed to the notion that Communists should be able to work in the federal government, many—indeed most—did not support the use of congressional committees to deal with the issue. At the same time, by directing so much of their abundant energy against one Joe (Stalin) while staying relatively silent about the other (McCarthy) during his immediate rise, at least in public, left-liberal anticommunists contributed to establishing a climate in which McCarthyism

flourished. Seen in that light, Hook's May 1953 denunciation of McCarthy came late, and was not for completely unselfish reasons.

By accusing McCarthy of having "fantastic views about how best to resist communism," in the same breath that he used to attack the Wisconsin Senator Hook reiterated what he thought was the overarching issue. His main concern ultimately was not that someone like the McCarthy could so easily gain influence and run roughshod over civil liberties, but rather that his actions weakened the nation's capacity to fight and win the Cold War. Thus while Hook closed with a remarkable declaration that "The time has come to organize a national movement of men and women to retire Senator McCarthy from public life," had he ended there it would have sent a different message than what was conveyed by his final flourish: "This is one movement in which we shall not have to fear infiltration by Communists. For the day Senator McCarthy leaves the political scene the Communists throughout the world will go into mourning."<sup>21</sup> In waging a rhetorical assault against McCarthyism, he concluded by railing against Communist infiltration. Published the same year he wrote his letter to the *Times*, in *Heresy, Yes—Conspiracy, No!* Hook wrote:

There are some who scoff at the whole idea of Communists constituting any menace at all to American security. Whether out of naiveté or stubborn ignorance of the ways of the Communist party, they airily dismiss the evidence of planned infiltration. 'The Soviet Union has its spies and so have we,' they say... There might be a point to such remarks if the United States had organized a political party of Russian citizens in the Soviet Union, or a faction in the Communist Party to bore within the army, police, and all other government agencies, to commit sabotage, espionage, and to strike for power when a revolutionary situation or war developed.<sup>22</sup>

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The week before the 1952 presidential election, on October 27, the junior senator from Wisconsin stood on stage in Chicago, the home-turf of his party's rival and delivered what *The New York Times* called an "Address by McCarthy Accusing Governor Stevenson of Aid to Communist Cause."<sup>23</sup> In the widely publicized speech, broadcast on television and radio, McCarthy opened by telling his audience that he was going to speak as "a lawyer giving...facts...and evidence in the case of Stevenson versus Stevenson," while "only covering...his aid to the communist cause." It was his solemn duty to expose the history of the Democrat candidate for the presidency -- who endorses and would continue the suicidal, Kremlin-directed policies of this nation." He had the said responsibility of informing that Stevenson was "part and parcel the Acheson-Hiss-Lattimore group." In doing so, the Senator took aim squarely at both the Illinois Governor and, since the Democratic nominee had said "judge me by the advisors whom I've selected," McCarthy took-up Stevenson's offer. First he introduced the candidate's personal secretary "Wilson Wyatt...the former head of the left wing ADA," which has "five major points": "Repeal the Smith Act"; "Recognition of Red China"; "Opposition to loyalty oaths"; "Condemnation of the FBI for exposing traitors"; "and Continuous all out opposition" to HUAC. In that manner McCarthy swiftly dispatched an array of Stevenson's campaign aids with his arsenal of fabrications. There was "Bernard DeVoto," who "violently attacked our strongest defense against communism -- the FBI," and "James Wechsler," whose wife and he "both admit to having been members of the Young

Communist League.” Yet at the center of McCarthy’s crosshairs that night was the man he called “Perhaps the key figure in the Stevenson camp.”<sup>24</sup>

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Chapter six of *The Vital Center*, “The Communist Challenge to America,” was an adaption of Schlesinger’s article that appeared in the July 29, 1946 issue of *Life*. As “The U.S. Communist Party” appeared in the magazine, it was an odd mixture one-part historically informed investigative research into the mechanics of the CPUSA, and one-part polemic screed against the international Stalinist conspiracy. Although not necessarily the most reliable witnesses, Schlesinger drew on interviews he conducted with former CPUSA members, including former chairman Earl Browder and his brother William (plus an FBI agent or two).<sup>25</sup> Schlesinger recognized that “the most impressive part of the Communist record in this country...has been its courageous activity against local injustice and exploitation.” Yet, he moved quickly to the “least impressive part” of the CPUSA’s record, namely, “its subservience to Soviet foreign policy.” He claimed that “party leadership” had “never hesitated to stifle its grass-roots initiative...in order to whip up American backing for Soviet adventures abroad.” In that sense, it had “two main commitments: to support and advance the U.S.S.R., and to promote the establishment of socialism in the U.S.”. The second goal was “necessarily subordinate to the first because Communists regard the preservation of the worker’s state in Russia as indispensable to the spread of socialism through the world.”<sup>26</sup>

If building a socialist utopia were the only aim of the Communist Party,

Schlesinger still might not support it, but neither would he oppose it. However, since the CPUSA's socialist politics ultimately served Soviet interests first and foremost, its members were—to use Hook's later formulation, not heretics but conspirators. “The U.S. Communist Party” was not a simple anticommunist hit-piece even much of it had that effect. Replete with grainy pictures of Communist headquarters in Manhattan and sinister-looking Party leaders, Schlesinger's ‘exposé’ concluded in a deadly serious manner that “Communists spread their infection of intrigue and deceit wherever they go.”<sup>27</sup> And yet, Schlesinger also levied a sharp attack on repressive methods, claiming that while “ex-party members” had named many “well-known Communist sympathizers” in government, the “Dies-Rankin nonsense,” as he referred to HUAC, had “hopelessly obscured the problem...by smearing so many non-Communist liberals.” As a result, “government officials [were] glum and immobile.”<sup>28</sup> It was thus his opinion that, “while the espionage threat cannot be shrugged off, it cannot be solved by witch hunts or by un-American committees, and should instead be left to the competent hands of the FBI.”<sup>29</sup>

In that manner, Schlesinger formulated a distinctly left-liberal anticommunism, incorporating a defense of progressive values as well as an attack on the conservative witch-hunt mentality. Part of his aim was to address the fact that “estimating soberly the extent and nature of Communist influence” was...confused by...various un-American committees in their wild confidence that practically everybody who opposes Franco or Jim Crow or the un-American committee is a Red.”<sup>30</sup> Schlesinger pushed that notion in a different direction as well, claiming that “Communist

influence immobilizes” liberals...by engaging “a massive attack on the moral fabric of the American left.” Communists and fellow travelers work “systematically to enforce the notion that writing must conform, not to the facts...but to a political line.”<sup>31</sup> Accordingly, Schlesinger concluded that “until the left can make the Communists and fellow travelers stand and be counted, its energies will be expended in an exhausting warfare in the dark.”<sup>32</sup> From that perspective Schlesinger also noted “the drive to organize the Negro...was second only to the unions” as “the great present field of Communist penetration.” Since racism was “the most appalling case of social injustice in this country,” it was not a surprise that that “Communist prestige” among African Americans “rose tremendously” after 1931 when the CPUSA aided defendants in the ‘Scottsboro Case’ involving nine black men accused of raping two white women in Alabama. Yet although “Communists performed commendable individual acts against discrimination,” Schlesinger asserted that Party leaders “continued to view the race problem mainly as a valuable source of propaganda.” It was therefore his perception—a serious accusation—that the CPUSA was “sinking tentacles into” the NAACP, just as it had infiltrated the CIO and the ACLU, etc.<sup>33</sup>

Schlesinger might have been correct that the CPUSA’s interest in racial justice had at least something to do with gaining an advantage in the realm of propaganda. Yet by raising the issue in such a brazenly self-serving manner, he was arguably guilty of engaging in the same behavior. It was in that context, in fact, that NAACP chairman, Walter White sent a note to the editors of *Life* after hearing from a

member that the allegation gave him “cause for concern” since “Mr. Schlesinger is a well-known and respected liberal”; “the article can hardly be brushed aside.” White initially received a response from managing editor John Shaw Billings, explaining that neither Luce, nor Schlesinger, nor “the researcher who did that particular portion of the story” was available for comment. Schlesinger simultaneously sent a telegram explaining that his main source had been Truman’s administrative assistant David K. Niles, who had relayed concerns expressed to him by none other than White, a staunch anticommunist (and ACCF member). Schlesinger also made clear that the statement had referred to “only attempted infiltration” by Communists, and “was not intended to impugn [the] present national leadership or organization,” which obviously opposed those efforts.<sup>34</sup>

As that exchange highlights the question of civil rights played a unique and important role in the development of left-liberal anticommunism. While Schlesinger accused the Communists of being concerned about racial inequality as a matter of propaganda, he therefore thought that fighting *for* racial equality was the best way to blunt or remove its effect. Images like that of white police officers in Alabama using fire hoses as water-cannons against unarmed black protestors stained America’s international reputation, and irked State Department officials by giving the Soviets reason to claim that the purported ‘leader of the free world’ denied rights to millions of its own citizens based on their skin color. While it might also be the right thing to do, promoting civil rights was an effective form of counterpropaganda. From the other perspective, many movement leaders knew that, even if they agreed with the

policy—backing ‘containment’—was a strategy for achieving specific goals. To the extent that process was formalized, and leading black liberals embraced anti-Soviet foreign policy for the sake of securing federal support for legislation and other reforms, historians refer to the trade-off as the “cold war civil rights” compromise.<sup>35</sup>

“The U.S. Communist Party” highlighted the foundation of Schlesinger’s anticommunism, as a defense of not just freedom but specifically liberalism. And by the same token, borrowing a phrase from Oliver Wendell Holmes, he declared in *The Vital Center* that freedom must be a “fighting faith” marshaled against totalitarian foes.<sup>36</sup> The battle in that sense would surely be long and not always fought in predictable ways—especially given the highly virulent nature of Communist influence. As Schlesinger opined in 1946:

The party fills the lives of lonely and frustrated people, providing them with social, intellectual, even sexual fulfillment they cannot obtain in existing society. It gives a sense of comradeship in a cause guaranteed by history to succor the helpless and to triumph over the wealthy and satisfied... The appeal is essentially the appeal of a religious sect—small, persecuted, dedicated, stubbornly convinced that it alone knows the path to salvation.<sup>37</sup>

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“Perhaps the key figure in the Stevenson camp,” bellowed McCarthy in Chicago a week before the 1950 election, “is his speech writer, Arthur Schlesinger Jr.” Then he divulged: “in 1946, Stevenson’s speech writer wrote that... ‘The present system in the United States makes even freedom loving Americans look wistfully at Russia,’ the Wisconsin Senator mused “I wonder if there's anyone in this audience tonight who is looking wistfully at Russia. And I wonder also if some calamity

would happen and Stevenson would be elected, what job this man would have.”<sup>38</sup>

Either no one told him or, as seems to have been the case, McCarthy deliberately ignored the context of the passage from Schlesinger’s *Life* article, which read: “the Communists are looking to a next depression as their happy hunting ground...the way to defeat them is not to pass repressive legislation...but to prevent that depression and to correct the faults and injustices in our present system which make even freedom-loving Americans look wistfully at Russia.”<sup>39</sup>

It was of course not McCarthy’s intention to accurately portray Schlesinger or his fellow ADA liberals who worked on Stevenson’s campaign. In fact, it was in large part for that reasons that Hook had decided to write his letter to the *Times*, writing that “Mr. Wechsler’s unforgiveable sin...is not his youthful communism,” but “criticizing Senator McCarthy,” who was “abusing his political position to carry on a personal feud.”<sup>40</sup> Schlesinger, as columnist under Wechsler at *The New York Post*, contributed to McCarthy’s interest including them both in the course of his attack on Stevenson. Yet if he had actually been concerned about the noted Harvard historian possibly sympathizing with the Soviet Union, he could have checked to see what information his friends at the Bureau had collected. In that case, McCarthy, Cohn, and those around them would have known what the FBI confirmed in 1963:

No one interviewed during the 1948 and 1951 investigations alleged that Mr. Schlesinger was a communist.... Some described him as a New Deal liberal; extremely learned; a leader for freedom of expression; and an anticommunist and opposed to ‘Investigations and witch hunts.’<sup>41</sup>

Then again, had McCarthy or HUAC investigators seen such information in Schlesinger's FBI file—which they easily could have—such outspoken liberal anticommunism might have been what actually prompted their attack against him.

Beyond what the Bureau learned about Schlesinger in 1948 and 1951, a 1954 investigation helped reveal why there could be confusion about his views:

Subject has been extremely anti-Communist since 1947 and has been prominent in the anti-Communist, politically partisan Americans for Democratic Action, and in the anti-Communist American Committee for Cultural Freedom and Americans for Intellectual Freedom. His active affiliation with the American Civil Liberties Union, an organization whose championing of the rights of the individual often results in its defending many accused pro-Communist and Communists, has resulted in his being charged of having pro-Communist sympathies.<sup>42</sup>

Whether or not agents were unclear about Schlesinger's record, or just disliked his views is unclear, but as was disclosed during the 1963 investigation, in 1954 he was placed on the 'Do Not Contact' list because "He was prominent in the Americans for Democratic Action...has written voluminously in opposition to the Government's Loyalty Program and has been outspoken and demonstrative with reference to his contempt to the FBI."<sup>43</sup>

Remarkably, the 1963 FBI investigation into Schlesinger, in which his fathers' past associations were scrutinized, appears to have been triggered by a comical yet also highly revealing episode. As described in a Bureau memo from November 14, "Two pieces of paper which were found on a seat of a...plane believed to have been occupied by Schlesinger" were retrieved and delivered to the FBI, since one was "a white onion skin marked 'FBIS 59 OFFICIAL USE ONLY (FBIS – Foreign Information Broadcast Information Service)." That document, as determined by the



Bureau, was related to Schlesinger's work as a Kennedy aide (from a "Spanish-language newspaper 'Prensa Latina' dated November 8, 1962"). Yet upon learning of Schlesinger's restricted status in the eyes of the Bureau, the memo advised that "No contact will be made with Schlesinger," and approval was requested to have a "Liaison...hand these two items to Schlesinger's secretary at the White House."<sup>44</sup>

Further reports gave no indication as to whether or not the FBI liaison managed to transmit the 'onion skin'-wrapped article to Schlesinger via his secretary. Yet the incident triggered the 'name-check' investigation wherein investigators rehashed what had already been discovered—mainly as background for security clearances related to postwar government service starting as early as 1948. At the end of its 1963 security review of Schlesinger, in a final report issued less than a month after Kennedy's assassination, the FBI determined that "Persons interviewed believed him to be entirely loyal to the United States."<sup>45</sup> Hence Bureau investigators, after reviewing several years' worth of allegations—about his father's links to communist fronts; that as a youth he led a Party 'cell' comprised of Harvard students; had called for better relations with 'Red China'—and after also scouring his copious writings and public statements, which included criticism of J. Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit: The Story of Communism in America and How to Fight It* (1958), the Bureau learned what it had known all along: Schlesinger detested Communism; and, while respectful of the FBI, was no fan of its imperious Director. It was thus likely not a coincidence that less than a year after being placed on the FBI's 'no contact list,' in a May 1955 letter to Sol Stein regarding a deepening crisis in the

ACCF, Schlesinger worried about the fate of the committee's primary goal:

“combating unintelligent anti-Communism.”<sup>46</sup>

### Fractured Front: Breaking the American Committee for Cultural Freedom

It is fitting that the ACCF terminated operation within a few months of when Joseph McCarthy's life ended. After the board of directors voted to temporarily suspend in January 1957, a custodial committee was formed in order to explore options for the ACCF's continuation as an independent, i.e. non-CIA-funded group. At a March 28 executive committee meeting held at the library of what in the minutes was affectionately called “Rand School,” Hook, Thomas, and Sol Levitas led an effort to keep the organization alive by exploring a proposal for “office space” and “administrative assistance” from the Tamiment Institute (after voting to reject a similar offer made by Freedom House).<sup>47</sup> Yet nothing materialized. When the committee was ultimately revived its main function was publishing *Partisan Review*, which used the organization's tax-exempt status as a shelter; it served no other purpose after 1960. The penultimate meeting of the ACCF was on January 10, 1961, its last on April 30, 1967 at the home of William Phillips. Chairman Arnold Beichman as well as Sidney Hook and other board members including *Commentary's* Norman Podhoretz—having notified directors who were not present including Norman Thomas and Daniel Bell—voted “to dissolve the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.” Before the meeting adjourned at just after 11:00 pm, a resolution

was proposed and unanimously adopted to “dispose of its net remaining moneys by donating them, in equal sums, to *Partisan Review* and the *New Leader*.”<sup>48</sup>

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There are several causes of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom’s demise, all of which revolved in some manner around McCarthyism. In his memo to superiors warning of a ‘crisis’ after hearing of the ‘Eastman affair’ at the Waldorf in March 1952, Frank Wisner reminded that the ACCF had been created for the purpose of “providing cover and backstopping for the European effort.”<sup>49</sup> Tom Braden reiterated that point in a 1997 interview with Frances Saunders, describing the American committee as just “a front in order to create the impression of some American participation in the European operation.”<sup>50</sup> From that perspective, which was shared by CCF leaders in Paris, the cause for alarm was not Eastman’s comments per se, but that they had caused a controversy. While most officials involved in the CCF project did not support McCarthy’s tactics, the delicate balance they were trying to achieve demanded staying out of the fray: it was a problem for Congress officials when ACCF leaders—who were supposed to be functionaries of a sensitive CIA front operation—were quarreling to the point of drawing needless public attention to themselves and the organization they represented. Beyond that, and perhaps more importantly, the particular dynamics of McCarthy’s crusade—that his investigations were focused on the influence of left-liberals in the State Department—meant that he quite potentially could soon be investigating *them*. In that sense, by the time McCarthy bore-down on the Voice of America in the spring of 1953, and was

prepared to take aim at the CIA, he was coming way too close for comfort in the eyes of Congress leaders.

In that sense, one wonders if Hook was at least in part motivated to send his anti-McCarthy letter to the *Times* when he did out of resentment over what the senator's subcommittee had just done to his friends at the VoA. Hook wanted on one level to be faithful to the mandate for the ACCF to avoid controversy. Yet, he also knew that from the perspective of many New York intellectuals, having a stance on such issues as McCarthyism was the entire point of what they saw as *their* group. Despite government sponsorship, there was no denying that credit for the concept of a 'cultural freedom' committee—as an anticommunist organization—belonged to Hook and his comrades; as the ACCF's founding chairman and permanent president, he was being pulled in two different directions. That dynamic helps explain the way Hook viewed the situation when he responded to Rovere's letter of March 30, 1952, the day after sparks flew at the Waldorf.

Addressing his complaints about the event and its implications, which included a half-serious ultimatum that “unless the Committee took a vigorous stand on McCarthyism” Rovere would “resign and do” his “damnedest to persuade others” to join him, Hook wrote on April 2:

The office staff and administrative committee...informs me that [Max] Eastman in his speech maintained that there was no witch-hunt and that ‘the real threat to cultural freedom in [*sic*] the world wide conspiracy to destroy all freedom everywhere.’... In the discussion Eastman irresponsibly defended McCarthy by name to the overwhelming disapproval of the audience

including almost all of our members present. No one identified Eastman's position on McCarthy with that of the Committee.

Hook told Rovere moreover that it was “unjust” of him to send “the impression that the Committee...refused to take a stand on McCarthyism,” or that he and other leaders had “been evasive on the issue because we fear a split. Hook told Rovere that he could have found an ACCF-sponsored pamphlet with two articles he wrote in which “Everything that one can reasonably mean by McCarthyism is excoriated.” While therefore expressing dismay while attempting to remain cordial, Hook also reminded Rovere that they had both attended the “planning conference” in early March, at which “not a single person defended McCarthyism.”<sup>51</sup>

In that sense, Hook was more or less correct. Yet at the same time, from the very start of the planning conference it should have been clear that there was going to be conflict, and Hook as usual would be caught in the middle. The meeting in question was held at the New School for Social Research on the afternoon of Saturday March 1, 1952, with about two-dozen members on hand. As Hook had indicated in his invitation to Levitas, leaders hoped “to pool the talents and intellectual resources of members of the committee in order to develop leads and ideas for... activity on the cultural scene.”<sup>52</sup> Yet there was one issue that was on everyone's minds, and in that context James Farrell took the floor first and proposed:

The main job in this country is fighting McCarthyism.... The Stalinist menace is largely licked in America, although not on the world plane. But we are seeing the development of a group of McCarthyite intellectuals. Over the summer the Committee should work out a plan for opposing McCarthyism in culture and for sending speakers to other parts of the country. The most effective way of influencing European intellectuals is to show how we defend cultural freedom in our own country.

The next speaker, Christopher Emmet, proposed that “One of the committee’s most useful functions could be to bring out the ‘middle ground between anti-McCarthyites and McCarthy himself. The sort of thing which Sidney Hook does as an individual should be done by the Committee on a more organized level.” At that point Dwight MacDonald jumped in to side with Farrell by declaring that there is no ‘middle ground’ regarding McCarthyism. The major danger now is a ‘witch-hunt.’”<sup>53</sup> The planning conference at the start of the month set the stage for the drama that ensued at the Waldorf in late March 1952. From a historical standpoint, the moment was remarkable as an illustration of just how far Eastman, once an icon of the radical left, had traveled. It also signaled the beginning of the ACCF’s slow unraveling, at the center of which—in different ways—were comrades Hook, Thomas, and Schlesinger.

After receiving Hook’s reply, Rovere wrote to him on April 5 and indicated that he was reassured on many levels, and reiterated that he had “no personal quarrel” with his friend. Still, Rovere was not convinced by Hook’s sense of the overall mood of committee members, nor was he impressed with his characterization of leadership’s efforts to combat McCarthyism. He told Hook that he was “not much interested in whether McCarthyism” was “more or less dangerous than Communism,” since any self-respecting man ought to be against lying and bullying in general.”<sup>54</sup> Rovere was not going to back down. His first step was to demand an executive committee resolution condemning McCarthy. He was joined immediately by Schlesinger, who the day after receiving Rovere’s letter, on April 1 sent a note to

Hook with a blunt message: “if we do not oppose McCarthy, we might as well fold up shop.”<sup>55</sup> He knew the risk it posed to the operation, but Schlesinger was in total agreement with Rovere.

On April 3, after speaking with Hook, Thomas sent Rovere a letter, informing “I share your concern that the Committee...should make a clear statement on the dangers to any free culture implicit in McCarthyism.” He made sure that Rovere knew he had told Hook as much. Thomas also tried to strike a conciliatory tone, adding “Hook makes a good defense of the Committee’s position to date,” yet Rovere’s speech had been “very fine,” and “opinion in Washington” viewed the conference as “socialist and leftist, rather than at all pro McCarthy” despite the fact that “Eastman did get some loud...scattered applause.”<sup>56</sup> In his April 5 replay to Thomas, he admitted that his “letter to Arthur was an angry one,” but his goal was to “build a fire under the committee,” since “a good many of its members are eager to straddle.” Rovere continued:

May I say this, Norman, in confidence: I am, like so many others in this circle, and ex-Communist. But I am reluctantly coming to the conclusion that the intellectual leadership of the ex-Communists has on the whole been a bad thing in this country. If you examine the extreme and irrational positions on this and related questions, you will find that in nearly every case they originate with people who have at one time or another been deep in the Communist movement. I hate to join the pack on this question, particularly since I am likely to be one of the victims, but I am coming fervently to hope that the influence of these aggrieved and unhappy people will soon be shaken off.<sup>57</sup>

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The day prior to Rovere’s remarkable confession to Thomas, on April 4 Schlesinger had written to Frank Wisner. It is quite possible that his message

constituted an official report pursuant to CIA contract responsibilities. Yet if that were the case, it certainly was not designed to be diplomatic. Schlesinger conveyed to Wisner that the American committee had “partly fallen into the hands of a band of ex-communists so vengeful and embittered that they want only to ventilate their own neuroses, at whatever cost to the Congress’s larger objectives”; “Their sense of guilt over their past mistakes has led them to try to compensate by a passionate admiration for Senator McCarthy today.”<sup>58</sup> The issue emerged, he continued, when “Max Eastman described McCarthy as a ‘clear-headed patriot of freedom’...and Sidney Hook and others became very equivocal when asked what they thought about McCarthyism.” Schlesinger moreover told Wisner: “the crucial issue here is the effect on the whole work of the Congress in Europe of the failure of the American Committee to take a clearcut [*sic*] stand on McCarthyism. I can think of nothing better calculated to confirm the worst fears of European intellectuals about the Congress.” That was the letter that prompted Wisner to report up the CIA chain-of-command about a “crisis” in the ACCF. And while he did not apparently try to prevent the executive committee from issuing a resolution, Wisner must have nonetheless been relieved when Schlesinger told him two weeks later, on April 17:

I think we will come out with something not too inflammatory.... The resolution will be in general terms. It will mention neither McCarthy nor Eastman by name; this seemed the safest course in order to avoid controversy and reprisal...at the same time...sufficient to strengthen the hands of the Committee in Europe and to counter the propaganda about American ‘hysteria.’

On April 29 Wisner responded to Schlesinger by thanking him for delivering “good news” and for his “very fine efforts.... I appreciate the manner in which you



appear to have negotiated the rapids and the rocks.... My real concern...was to avoid a continuing interplay of recriminations and the possible end result of a total breakup of the Committee.”<sup>59</sup> At the same time that he kept Wisner in the loop, Schlesinger was corresponding with Hook, who reassured him: “Had I known that Eastman was going to defend McCarthy I would have been unalterably opposed to inviting him as a speaker.” Hook also conveyed to Schlesinger that, in his view, “the episode indicates that endorsement of the Berlin Manifesto is not enough to insure effective agreement on the conditions of cultural freedom.”<sup>60</sup> In his response, Schlesinger agreed with Hook about “the vital importance of holding the group together on the principles of the Berlin Manifesto.” Yet, addressing the specific issues raised at the March 1 planning conference, he added that he could not “perceive a tremendous distinction between the methods of McCarthy and those of McCarran,” hence it was hard to grasp how some on the committee thought it logical to “defend McCarran... while ‘disapproving’ of...McCarthy”; “What we stand for,” he told Hook, “is freedom of the mind—a freedom to be defended against all comers.” Schlesinger continued: “What we condemn is all those who fellow-travel with the foes of the free minds, whether the demonic foes, like Stalin and Hitler, or the gangster foes, like McCarthy.” As much as that statement illustrated Schlesinger’s differences of opinion, Hook, it is in that light striking that Schlesinger reiterated his agreement that “the question of the wisdom of American foreign policy must be kept separate from the activities of the Committee.”<sup>61</sup>

The ACCF's statement was in the end rather mild, but the group was officially on record as opposed to McCarthyism. Yet those who had advocated a more forceful resolution were not mollified. That wing of the committee subsequently organized a project, which developed into *McCarthy and the Communists* (1954), written by James Rorty and Moshe Decter and published under ACCF auspices. The book argued that "McCarthy had "been unable to substantiate his charges or advance any solid evidence for them," thus concluding: in fact, "he is essentially uninterested in pursuing any case of Communist infiltration." As a result his attacks were "so consistently wide of the mark" as to have a "damaging... impact on the government and on the country as a whole."<sup>62</sup> *McCarthy and the Communists* was a scholarly-oriented, substantive critique of the Wisconsin senator; it was also published after his political demise was well underway.

The *McCarthy and the Communists* project became the final straw for the pro-Eastman flank, which had been growing evermore disenchanted since the March 1952 Waldorf meeting. Several members who had been involved in the ACCF since the beginning resigned as a result of the divide over McCarthy. Eastman, James Burnham, George Schuyler, and Max Yergan led the defection, and in a sense that was the moment when an identifiable 'proto-neoconservative' bloc took take shape, born from within ACCF ranks. In 1955 when William F. Buckley started the right libertarian *National Review*, Burnham was one of its primary contributors.

From that point forward, the ACCF careened from one crisis to another, riven by dissention, with constant turnover among its leadership. Hook was losing patience

and having a hard time keeping all sides on the same page. By the spring of 1955 officials in Washington began transmitting the message that subsidies to the committee were being cut-off, and that a new source of financial support would have to be secured. Yet before that plan could go into effect, Thomas was prevailed upon to call in a favor from Allen Dulles to help the committee avoid “virtual suspension.”<sup>63</sup> If technically it was a ‘personal’ request from an old friend, as he later described it, the record of correspondences between Thomas and Dulles, and between he and Sol Stein—who was in charge of procuring funds—makes it clear what was going on: as Diana Trilling later recalled... none of us [executive committee members] could fail to know that ‘Allen’...was Allen Dulles, head of the CIA.”<sup>64</sup>

Thomas however was put-off by the episode, and used it as the occasion to resign as chair of the administrative committee effective May 10, while nominating Trilling as his replacement. Thomas told Stein “I am...delighted that the Farfield Foundation came through. It was mostly your own...powers of persuasion that turned the trick. I am happy to think I had a little to do with the proposition in certain quarters.” Then, with a tinge of exasperation, he announced:

I am too busy to do what ideally the chairman of the administrative committee should do. Moreover, I am too definitely connected with other organizations to serve as the man who should be chiefly known organizationally for his work for the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.... American public opinion being what it is, it is a little of a handicap, I think, to have me in the position, since my name means to many various things to too many people.... You need someone who can give you more time and more undivided loyalty to this particular job.<sup>65</sup>

It is not a coincidence that Schlesinger’s warning to Stein about staying true to the goal of “combating unintelligent anti-Communism” was sent one day before

Thomas's resignation from the administrative committee.<sup>66</sup> In fact, two months earlier, on March 16, 1955, Schlesinger told James Farrell that the committee had "lost track of its original objectives." He added the following vivid statement:

Obviously the central and overriding enemy of cultural freedom in the world is Communism. But I doubt very much whether Communism can be plausibly considered the central and overriding enemy of cultural freedom within the United States today. The ACCF still had important jobs to do in the way of exposing illusions about Communism and of identifying Communist activity in the United States when it was first organized. But that time, in my judgment, has largely passed.<sup>67</sup>

As indicated by this exchange, Schlesinger was in agreement with Farrell's view about the unproductive state of committee affairs; their displeasure was a long time in the making. For example, not long after the 1952 'Eastman affair' at the Waldorf, Schlesinger wrote to Hook, telling him: "I have rarely felt so out of things as I have as a member of the executive committee of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom." Schlesinger's main concern was related to the appointment of Mr. [Irving] Kristol as executive secretary"; he wished Hook would have seen fit to "discuss the appointment with those of us who differ with him so sharply on issues."<sup>68</sup> A few months prior, before the Waldorf dustup, Kristol had asked Schlesinger to be on a panel with James Burnham at a March 12 forum "'Liberation' Or 'Containment': The Future of American Foreign Policy." Recognizing at least some of Schlesinger's concerns, ironically, Kristol told him: "I know that you are not, at this time, in exactly a friendly mood toward Burnham...and...you certainly have good cause."<sup>69</sup>

By the spring of 1955, as Schlesinger commiserated with allies like Farrell, he continued expressing concerns over how the committee's membership was taking

shape, telling Farrell in his March 16 letter that he was “puzzled” by “the composition of the ACCF.” Having “assumed that we were writers, artists, professors, intellectuals... who have made, or hoped to make, some contribution to culture and had therefore an especial stake in its protection, it was baffling “that all sorts of people are being invited to membership with no visible cultural qualifications.” Schlesinger was referring to judges and senators who had no noticeable link to the field of culture; he vented to Farrell: “Surely, we stand for more than anti-Communism per se.”<sup>70</sup>

Once he caught wind of Schlesinger’s concerns, Stein wrote on May 5 to inform him that “The Executive Committee agrees that there has been a long-standing problem relating to criteria for the selection of new members,” but added: it “does not agree with your contention that the ACCF has lost track of its original objectives.” Schlesinger responded four days later: “I am glad to note that the administrative committee is planning to reconsider the question of criteria soberly.”<sup>71</sup>

For Schlesinger the question of committee membership cut to heart of the ongoing conflict, and related directly to the delicate exchange that he, Hook, and Pearl Kluger had had in November 1950. As they compiled names and negotiated additions/subtractions to the list, and Kluger indicated that Hook was “quite sympathetic” to Schlesinger’s point-of-view, she explained that as had been conveyed to her, “The list ‘simply grewed [*sic*]’, the result of ideas of various members who tried to give it as broad a base as possible.” Kluger added, revealingly:

“Unfortunately, most lists drawn up by New Yorkers have a preponderance of New York names. I look to the out-of-town delegates to correct this.”<sup>72</sup> Many of those ‘New York names’ subsequently became the faction within the ACCF that Schlesinger opposed. His problem had little to do ultimately with the fact the some in the New York group were moderate or leaned to the right. Schlesinger had indeed helped to recruit pro-civil rights ‘social conservatives,’ like scholar Peter Viereck, who could help give the ACCF a veneer of non-partisanship; on paper it was an organization that united anticommunists from of ‘left, right, and center.’ Yet ‘New York names’ like Max Eastman and Karl Wittfogel belonged to a distinct group of ex-communists—those whom he described to Frank Wisner in 1952 as guilt-ridden, “vengeful and embittered” people, who “ventilate...neuroses.”<sup>73</sup> Conservatives were therefore not the issue, or even really members who were ‘political’ and opposed to ‘cultural’ (he had put Hubert Humphrey on his original list). Schlesinger was concerned mainly about the proto-neoconservatives who populated ACCF circles, former Communists-turned obsessively anticommunist. In that context, a stunning letter that Schlesinger sent to Nabokov in June 1951 is that much more revelatory.

In explaining how much the “American (I should say the NEW LEADER) section of the Congress” afflicted him, Schlesinger related his experience at a recent CCF- sponsored Freedom House event, after which he needed to “overcome...depression”:

Hook asked me to talk about ex-Communists and suggests that I say those who attacked the vocal ex-Commies (i.e., the anti-anti-Communists) were really helping the Communists. Instead I gave what seemed to me a mild, Anglo-Saxon address, saying that some ex-Coms were good, some were bad, it was an

individual matter... American liberalism couldn't care less about the Russian Revolution, and that New York liberals should not project their own feelings into the country in general. A ghastly silence fell over the hall.... The New Leader variety of ex-Communist is really too much for me. The world, thank God, is filled with sensible ex-Communists, like Rovere and Wechsler; but the neurotic Hook-Wittvogel type is too much.... I am sure they are all by now convinced that I am fatally soft on the Communist issue. The whole thing left a very bad taste in my mouth and considerably diminished my enthusiasm for the Congress which, in this country, at least, has become an instrument for these bastards.<sup>74</sup>

In retrospect, one cannot help but wonder what might have happened had Schlesinger acted more forcefully in 1951 on his impulse to reject 'unintelligent anticommunism.'

The situation was no better by 1954. In fact it had grown much worse. After a long discussion with Nabokov, Schlesinger reported in a letter to the Agency's Cord Meyer that the CCF secretary-general believed "the American Committee in its present form is no help at all to the European operations." Schlesinger added in his assessment that "The prospect of" the ACCF "devoting itself to the study of Communist infiltration in the intellectual community and thus acting as bird-dogs for McCarthy would be particularly hard to explain in Europe."<sup>75</sup> A year later, in May 1955, as the CIA was deciding to wind-down funding for the ACCF, Meyer wrote to Schlesinger, referencing Thomas's appeal to Dulles: "We certainly don't plan on any continuing large scale assistance, and the single grant request recently made was provided as...an urgent request directly from Sidney H. and indirectly from Norman T." The idea, Meyer told Schlesinger, was to provide "breathing space" so that "those gentlemen, yourself, and the other sensible" committee members could "reconstitute the Executive Committee and draft an intelligent program that might

gain real support from the Foundations.” If that were to fail, as much as Meyer thought it “would result in unhappy repercussions abroad,” they would “have to face the necessity of allowing the Committee to die a natural death.”<sup>76</sup> As it turned out, the circumstances of the ACCF’s death two years later would be suspicious.

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Shortly after his August 1956 resignation as chairman, James Farrell wrote in a cable to the CIA’s Michael Josselson “Have broken up American Committee,” adding: “Your advantage.... Have kept my word.”<sup>77</sup> Perhaps Farrell was just being coy. Yet there is a large amount of circumstantial evidence to suggest that CCF headquarters in Paris and/or officials in Washington might very well have prompted him to kill the committee. From the perspective of most in the CIA, the ACCF had lost whatever value it once had (if any) to the CCF operation. While factionalism within the committee had grown more rampant, there was seemingly endless conflict between leaders in New York and their counterparts in Paris/ Washington.

In October 1955 Sol Stein spearheaded an effort to have the Congress take a position against the regime of Indonesian nationalist leader Sukarno, to the embarrassment of CCF headquarters and even Hook, who saw it as inappropriate for a ‘cultural freedom’ group to wade into politics in such a manner. Similarly, when Arthur Miller declared in February 1956 that he was ‘neutral’ between the pro and anticommunist groups that each wanted his endorsement, several on the ACCF’s executive committee publically condemned the playwright, again causing consternation in Paris. The final blow came the following month, when CCF



honorary chairman Bertrand Russell protested against the imprisonment of Morton Sobell (arrested as an accomplice of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg), likening it to tactics of “other police states such as Nazi Germany and Stalin’s Russia.” The ACCF’s official response, unsanctioned by Paris, was to accuse the British philosopher of making “false and misleading statements.” At the end of the dispute Russell had resigned and ACCF leaders were reprimanded, with Josselson telling Hook in an April 1956 letter that his group’s antics had cost the Congress one of its “biggest attractions.”<sup>78</sup> Farrell’s resignation occurred amid the fallout from that fiasco.

Whether or not it was deliberate sabotage, it easily could have been. While traveling on a Congress-funded junket in the Middle East during the summer of 1956, Farrell sent a letter to Radio Free Europe to extend a “hand of friendship” to radical writer Howard Fast, veteran of the popular front alliance.<sup>79</sup> Still abroad, Farrell then sent a rambling letter to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, written apparently on the back of a menu while drunk, making a semi-coherent argument about the futility of US foreign aid in line with the newspaper’s isolationist editorial stance. The result was predictable, although not immediate. Upon returning he engaged committee members; it did not go well. The official reasons he gave were vague, boiling down to having “never been able to get off the ground with a fighting program concerning cultural freedom in America”: on August 29, 1956 a headline in the *New York Times*, next to a picture of Farrell, announced “Novelist Resigns Anti-Red Position.” He had called the newspaper first to give it the scoop.<sup>80</sup>

If James Farrell had a hand in what was ultimately a scheme to break up the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, there is a strong probability that Schlesinger was involved. In a letter dated December 2, Schlesinger reported to a CIA contact: “the Committee considering its name and pretensions, cannot have any vital existence in this country without taking a strong anti-McCarthy position.” Still, he asserted “it need not take an obsessive anti-McCarthy position: it can mix in its anti-McCarthyism as part of a general pro-culture, anti-Soviet, anti-totalitarian blend.” In that manner Schlesinger demonstrated his commitment challenging McCarthy in a manner that could be meshed with the Congress’ objectives and the need for extreme sensitivity. Schlesinger in that vein divulged, with somewhat astonishing candor, his complete awareness of the core issues related to the viability of the ACCF’s anti-McCarthy stance—namely, it exposed the Committee and the Congress to an attack should he manage to launch an investigation into ‘subversives’ working for the CIA:

It seems unlikely that McCarthy would care enough about pin-pricks from the Committee to do anything about it on his own. The only danger would be that some sorehead might tip him off as to the possibilities of government embarrassment. Is this likely? It would seem to me difficult for any one in the know to do with this without exposing his own clandestine connections; but you never can tell about the neurotics and crackpots, particularly on the ex-Communist right. Could McCarthy get away with such an investigation? Obviously Dulles would have to take the line he did on the [Harvey Hollister] Bundy case; but I think it would be hard for him to sustain the position that CIA activities are inherently immune from congressional investigation.

Given that complicated calculus based in an unpredictable set of circumstances, Schlesinger’s recommendation was that “the renewal of [CIA] support for the Committee would be a plausible calculated risk.” To facilitate that arrangement, he further advised “some action toward making [Sol] Stein a witting participant—if not

in detail, at least enough so that he can see the problems and dangers.”<sup>81</sup> Taking all of that into account, Schlesinger determined that “a real risk remains, though it was “hard to conceive that McCarthy, even if tipped off, would consider this kind of inquiry politically profitable enough to justify a long and punishing fight.” The Wisconsin senator “prefers quicker returns,” Schlesinger contended, “and there will always be bigger fish to fry.”<sup>82</sup>

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On the same day that he wrote to Frank Wisner and set-off alarm bells in Washington, April 4, 1952, Schlesinger also penned a note to Niebuhr, who was convalescing from illness. Addressing his close friend, “Dear Reini,” he felt obligated to disturb him with unpleasant news, since he was “partly responsible for inducing” the philosopher “to become a vice-chairman” of the ACCF. And so, Schlesinger exclaimed: “What idiots --- and dangerous idiots -- the Eastmans, etc. are!” Perhaps even worse, Schlesinger confided that he did not know whom he could trust, telling Niebuhr: “I wish I were as certain as Rovere is that Hook is really on our side.”<sup>83</sup> Things fell apart quickly in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. By April 1955 it was obvious to Michael Harrington, writing in *Dissent*, that from an outside perspective the ACCF represented “quasi-official opinion of intellectual liberalism,” and thus it was ominous to see it undergo “a severe political crisis on the very issue of cultural freedom,” which was “its presumable reason for existence.”<sup>84</sup>

## CHAPTER SIX

### Falling Apart: Liberalism, the New Left, and Neoconservatism

The torch on the statue of liberty must seem to the Vietnamese civilians as symptomatic not of liberty lighting the world but of the burning by which we hope to win a brutal war.

—Norman Thomas, November 1965

I have defended the joint America—South Vietnam war of defense against the Communist North Vietnamese efforts and that of their Viet Cong agents to impose by force a Communist terror regime on the South.

—Sidney Hook, July 1966

How much more proof will our leaders require before they acknowledge that the escalation policy has been a disaster?

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., November 1967

In early March 1966, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote to Sidney Hook. It was a short note, thanking him for sending a “cutting from The New Leader,” to which he added: “The Lasch book is amazingly bad, and I am baffled by the favorable press it received.... I am sending you a copy of my review for The London Sunday Times.”<sup>1</sup> The book in question, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963: The Intellectual as a Social Type* (1965) was Christopher Lasch’s latest work; it received considerable attention both in the press as well as among academic reviewers. The referenced cutting from *The New Leader* was from an exchange between Lasch and John P. Roche regarding the latter’s review of the former’s book; titled “Radicalism in America,” the exchange was published in the September 13 issue, while Roche’s review appeared in *The New Leader* on August 16, 1965. Two years later, Lasch’s

essay in a special feature of *The Nation*, “The Cultural Cold War,” sent shockwaves through the progressive intellectual community.

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February 1967 was a dramatic month in an eventful year. Based on a story breaking in *Ramparts*, a small San Francisco-based magazine attached to the New Left, the *New York Times* ran a front-page article on Valentine’s Day in 1967 revealing: “A Student Group Concedes It Took Funds from CIA.”<sup>2</sup> Not wanting to lose their scoop, a potentially blockbuster report on clandestine support for the National Student Association (NSA), *Ramparts* purchased an advertisement in the *Times* on February 13 to preview the exposé forthcoming in its March issue: “NSA and the CIA.”<sup>3</sup> As more journalists flocked to the story, an avalanche of reporting uncovered the sordid details of a network of organizations that had been recipients of CIA largesse since the 1950s, including the Congress for Cultural Freedom.<sup>4</sup>

When the *Ramparts* story broke, the NSA was respected among activists, having ties to the antiwar movement through groups such as Students for a Democratic Society. The author Sol Stern worked with an informant from the organization, Michael Wood, who had made a gut-wrenching decision to tell his story and betray many of his friends’ confidences in the process. In a statement attached at the end as an “epilogue,” Wood assured readers that “For those individuals in NSA who... knowingly...[worked] with the CIA, the worst consequences are internal”; “Very few... involved were callous Cold Warriors.... Most... were deeply

committed liberals, whose consciences had no rest while they served two masters.” The piece ended with a “judgment” offered by foreign policy analyst Marcus Raskin who, having “tried to figure out why the CIA would... set up front organizations and all the other tools that used to be the monopoly of the communists,” argued it was “primarily a commercial institution which deals in buying, renting and selling people.” In that vein, referring to the history of CIA-sponsored coups, he concluded: “we are left with Cold War wreckage as serious and immoral as the Bay of Pigs operation... or the Guatemalan caper.”<sup>5</sup>

The explosive NSA story had been preceded by an article in the *New York Times*, on April 27, 1966, which stated an enduring rumor as fact: “*Encounter* magazine... was for a long time... one of the indirect beneficiaries of CIA funds.”<sup>6</sup> It was a somewhat innocuous report, giving that the article mentioned that *Encounter* was no longer on the CIA payroll; the information was otherwise buried amid the larger issue of Agency-connected ‘dummy foundations’ through which clandestine projects were funded. Still, the rumored link between *Encounter* and the CIA was in print. The story precipitated a wave of accusations and counteraccusations, largely out of public view, among those who at that point involved in the magazine’s operations. The editor of *Book Week*, Connor Cruise O’Brien, was particularly vocal in his recriminations; Schlesinger, as a member of the ‘*Encounter* trust,’ was among those who attacked O’Brien as a way of defending the publication. In June 1966 Schlesinger wrote to the *Book Week* editor and claimed “One must assert the possibility that some writers might dislike communism, not because they have been

seduced by the CIA, but because they regard a system of thought so dogmatic and stupid and a system of government so cruel and vain with natural contempt.”<sup>7</sup>

Although focused in a different direction, the 1967 *Ramparts* story unearthed details about the clandestine funding network through which, according to Stern, “foundations...serve as direct fronts or as secret ‘conduits’ that channel money from the CIA to preferred organizations.” Among one detail was information that, “in the course of an investigation into the use of foundations for tax dodges, [a Congressman] announced that the J. M. Kaplan Fund of New York was serving as a secret conduit for CIA funds.” And, in an observation that turned out to have wide-ranging implications, Stern also revealed “The Farfield Foundation...has been a frequent contributor to the Congress for Cultural Freedom, [and was] previously identified in *The New York Times* as having received CIA funds.”<sup>8</sup>

What happened next was either the result of a rogue agent who suffered a momentary lapse of discipline, or—more likely—a concerted effort to manage fallout and get ahead of the story while giving the public what it needs to know: a partial disclosure/ ‘limited hangout.’ If Tom Braden was acting on orders, then the cover for the operation was to feign outrage and moral indignation about wildly exaggerated claims concerning the Agency’s actions, and share certain details under the guise of correcting the record. Or, perhaps he was telling the truth. Whatever the circumstances, on May 20, 1967, the Agency operative wrote an article in *The Saturday Evening Post* titled “I’m Glad the CIA is ‘Immoral.’”

As Braden told readers, “I decided that if ever I knew a truth in my life, I

knew the truth of the cold war, and I knew what the Central Intelligence Agency did in the cold war, and never have I read such a concatenation of inane, misinformed twaddle.” In countering what he characterized as misinformation, he gave away code-names, “I was Warren G. Haskins. Norris A. Grambo was Irving Brown, of the American Federation of Labor,” and he described the nature of certain operations (while taking the credit): “It was...my idea to give cash, along with advice, to...labor leaders, to students, professors and others who could help the United States in its battle with Communist fronts.” Yet to Braden, none of his actions, nor those of his associates, constituted anything other than the normal course of business: “Were the undercover payments by the CIA ‘immoral’? Surely it cannot be ‘immoral’ to make certain that your country's supplies intended for delivery to friends are not burned, stolen or dumped into the sea.” As Braden continued in his defense of the Agency’s covert actions during the early Cold War, he then made one revelation that literally blew the cover off:

We had placed one agent in a Europe-based organization of intellectuals called the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Another agent became an editor of *Encounter*. The agents could not only propose anti-Communist programs to the official leaders of the organizations but they could also suggest ways and means to solve the inevitable budgetary problems. Why not see if the needed money could be obtained from ‘American foundations’? As the agents knew, the CIA-financed foundations were quite generous when it came to the national interest.<sup>9</sup>

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In 1967 Norman Thomas was nearing the end of his life. Having never been associated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom, as opposed to the American committee, he largely avoided having to contend with the issue of what he had known



about CIA involvement. He was not, however, as lucky when it came to his role in the Institute of International Labor Research (IILR), which he had founded along with the Reuther brothers (Walter and Victor) in 1957. In addition to the Fairfield Foundation, run by molasses magnate Julius “Junkie” Fleischman, one of the other main sources of CIA funding disclosed in 1967 was the philanthropic fund managed by former president of Welch Grape Juice, J.M. Kaplan. When the IILR was implicated as a recipient of money from the Kaplan Fund, Thomas, as chairman, had to face the music. Although Kaplan told the *New York Times* “neither Mr. Thomas nor anyone else connected with the institute knew the sources of the funds,” that did not prevent scandal. In the same in February 1967 article, the eighty-two year-old Thomas announced: “I’m not ashamed of what we did.” It “was good work,” he continued, “and no one ever tried to tell us what to do.” Still, trying to save face, he added: “I am ashamed we swallowed this CIA business, though.”<sup>10</sup>

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### Breaking the Silence

In the spring of 1967, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered what was perhaps the most pivotal sermon of his life. Speaking to a group of “clergy and laymen” at New York’s Riverside Church on April 4, King sent shockwaves across the country and indeed the world when, after a brief opening, he breeched a subject that had previously been off-limits for the civil rights leader and those around him. In a carefully considered manner that involved consultation with a few close advisers, but which most people never saw coming, King declared

As I have walked among the desperate, rejected, and angry young men, I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining my conviction that social change comes most meaningfully through nonviolent action. But they asked, and rightly so, “What about Vietnam?” They asked if our own nation wasn’t using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted.

Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.

At that moment, the heretofore-liberal anticommunist civil rights leader transformed himself into a radical champion of global peace and justice. King renounced not only any support for the current foreign policies that had brought the nation to a state of crisis, but went much further, asserting “The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit.” And thus he flatly rejected ‘containment’ as having any legitimate purpose as a means of ‘national security,’ arguing instead that a “positive revolution of values is our best defense against communism. War is not the answer. Communism will never be defeated by the use of atomic bombs or nuclear weapons.” King in no uncertain terms, had come to reject the Cold War as a smokescreen for American empire.

Now an anti-imperialist, King beckoned his followers to recognize that “These are revolutionary times. All over the globe men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression... new systems of justice and equality are being born.... The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. We in the West must support these revolutions “Our only hope today,” he said, “lies in our ability to

recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes-hostile world declaring eternal hostility to poverty, racism, and militarism.” If not exactly echoing the slain Malcolm X, or necessarily announcing his alignment with the Black Panther Party, in his own way, King had become radicalized; as much as he could not stomach the brutalities of US policy in Southeast Asia, he saw hope amid tragedy:

We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation. We must move past indecision to action. We must find new ways to speak for peace in Vietnam and justice throughout the developing world... If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.<sup>11</sup>

Exactly one year after he decided it was time to “break the silence” on Vietnam, King was shot dead while standing on the balcony of a motel in Memphis, Tennessee, there to help with a sanitation workers strike. The next day, April 5, 1968, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote in his journal: “what the hell is happening to this country? ... JFK’s death produced a wave of shame and guilt, but King’s death...seems only to have increased hostility.”<sup>12</sup> Five years earlier, just a few months before Kennedy’s assassination, on August 28, 1963, King delivered his “I Have A Dream” speech at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Norman Thomas was among the hundreds of thousands of men and women who gathered that day, alongside King and organizers including A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin (who traveled among the New York intellectuals). Thomas, who had stood with his comrade Randolph for several decades, was also—like everyone—inspired by King. He later described that day as “one of the happiest” of his “political life,” for “it

looked as if we were inaugurating a unique event in history—a nonviolent, revolutionary effort toward integration and brotherhood.”<sup>13</sup>

More than just a spectator that day, Thomas addressed the crowd, declaring they were engaged in “the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.” As related in his 1965 tribute to Thomas, on that day in 1963 “a little Negro boy listened at the Washington Monument to an eloquent orator,” wrote King. “Turning to his father, he asked, ‘Who is that man?’ Came the inevitable answer: ‘That’s Norman Thomas. He was for us before any other white folks were.’” In completing that picture, King added that Thomas’s “concern for racial equality flows naturally from his heritage,” his father and grandparents having been abolitionists. And yet to King, Thomas was heroic for myriad reasons:

his courageous championship of exhausted sharecroppers in the South, of persecuted Japanese Americans in World War II, of conscientious objectors in federal prisons, of exploited hospital workers in northern cities, of Mississippi Negroes fighting for the right to vote, his lifelong campaign for economic and social democracy, and his unceasing drive for the maximum international cooperation for peace with justice have endeared him to millions around the globe. He has proved that there is something truly glorious in being forever engaged in the pursuit of justice and equality. He is one of the bravest men I ever met.<sup>14</sup>

Fittingly, given the nature of his praise for Thomas, King taped his message for the Socialist leader’s eightieth birthday celebration in 1964 as he readied for his Noble acceptance ceremony. He told Thomas “Your pursuit of racial and economic democracy at home, and of sanity and peace in the world, has been awesome in scope. It is with deep admiration and indebtedness that I carry the inspiration of your life to Oslo.”<sup>15</sup>

One year after later, in November 1965, Thomas spoke at the SANE-organized March on Washington for Peace in Vietnam. Mass mobilizations against the war were just beginning to take shape at that time; within a year the movement billowed and brought the nation to a virtual standstill. In his stirring remarks, Thomas presaged the immense social and political upheaval that was just over the horizon:

We used to say we were fighting for democracy. We are fighting for a corrupt and inefficient government, the latest in a long series and one which is not secure in any affection of its people. In the name of democracy, we are killing the Vietnamese because it is better for them to be dead than red.<sup>16</sup>

#### Things Fall Apart

After the assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas, on November 22, 1963, Schlesinger, like the slain President's brother Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, were devastated. They both stayed in their posts for a period under Lyndon Johnson despite personal and political differences with the former Senate Majority Leader from Texas (who had been chosen as running-mate mainly to balance the ticket in the 1960 election against Richard Nixon). Leaving the administration in 1964, Schlesinger did not work for Johnson's election that year, returning to his role as speechwriter and advisor when he joined the campaign of another Senator Kennedy (this one from New York) in 1968. While it is probable that he would have endorsed Robert Kennedy no matter what, Schlesinger's active backing was sealed by the campaign's platform highlighting civil rights reform *and* opposition to US policy in Vietnam. RFK's 1968 platform had, however, stole momentum from Minnesota

Senator Eugene McCarthy's primary challenge to Johnson, which galvanized support from antiwar radicals and forced the President's surprising decision to withdraw; once that occurred, Schlesinger abandoned what had been an initial concern about splitting the antiwar bloc. He subsequently threw all of his energies into electing another Kennedy.

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Schlesinger had become a vocal critic of Johnson's handling of the war in Vietnam by March 1967, when he held a "special ADA press conference on American foreign policy," suggesting "negotiations [with the North] would never occur if the Administration" chose "to follow the logic of its present course." The war, he said, was but "the most vivid expression of a deeper crisis" in US foreign policy.<sup>17</sup> That document formed part Schlesinger's hastily composed antiwar tome, *The Bitter Heritage: Vietnam and American Democracy, 1941-1968*. In an ensuing piece for *The New Leader*, "Vietnam and the 1968 Elections," Schlesinger honed his concerns, wondering: "How much more proof will our leaders require before they acknowledge that the escalation policy has been a disaster?" The months since February 1965 had sadly witnessed "the death of more than 13,000 American soldiers and of countless Vietnamese...[plus] the expenditure of nearly \$90 billion" and "our increasing isolation in the world," not to mention "irresponsible and dangerous neglect of the urgent problems of our national community." So, he asked rhetorically, "after all the blood and killing and waste and degradation, are we any closer to a solution than we were when we began? Are we nearer to winning the war?" In his

assessment of the official objectives, from “establishing a healthy society in South Vietnam...to pacifying the countryside” or, just as important, “winning world confidence in American purpose and...leadership,” Schlesinger determined that the US was “ever more deeply and hopelessly mired in the quicksand.” Therefore concluding that the Johnson administration lacked “the moral or the intellectual courage to conceive the possibility that it may be wrong,” he was convinced that the American public would “turn next year to leadership determined to meet this tragic problem with the...rationality and...high idealism that have marked the finest moments of our history.”<sup>18</sup>

Schlesinger’s criticisms of the American war effort were proven well founded a few months later at the start of the ‘Tet Offensive’, on January 30 1968. Meanwhile, this dramatic turn for the worse in Vietnam perpetuated Johnson’s sudden and shocking decision to withdraw from the Democratic primary on March 31 of that year, just a few weeks after Kennedy threw his hat into the ring against McCarthy’s antiwar insurgency. Johnson’s departure from the race guaranteed that Schlesinger’s desired change in leadership would take place, no matter which Democratic candidate finally ran against whoever emerged from the GOP primary. What exactly that would mean for the war was dependent on who in particular earned the right to face the Republican candidate, which in all likelihood was going to be Richard Nixon.

Published on November 6, the Monday following a weekend visit to Kennedy’s Hickory Hill estate in northern Virginia, “Vietnam and the 1968 Elections”

appeared while Schlesinger was attempting to enlist his friend as a potential ADA-sponsored alternative to Johnson. As he described in his journal on November 7, he had “talked to RFK both that [Saturday] night and the next morning about 1968.” Kennedy expressed his belief “that it would be a great mistake to enter the race” at that point, yet he was optimistic that “McCarthy’s entry into the primaries” would “help open things up” for him to run against Johnson without it being “considered evidence of his ruthlessness, his ambition and of a personal vendetta.”<sup>19</sup>

Just over a month prior, the ADA National Board meeting in Washington DC on the weekend of September 23-24 had resulted in the organization being “on the verge of a split between” an “irrevocably pro-Johnson” labor camp, “and most of the liberals,” who were “deeply opposed to the widening of the war” and “increasingly anti-Johnson.” Schlesinger dined at Hickory Hill that Saturday and Sunday as well, bringing James Loeb with him on the first occasion, as well as fellow members of the ‘dump-Johnson’ bloc, Allard Lowenstein and Jack Newfield, hoping they would all jump on the Kennedy bandwagon. A few weeks after the ADA meeting, he received a phone call from South Dakota Senator George McGovern with the information that he thought McCarthy was about ready to enter the race against Johnson, which prompted Schlesinger to surmise that it would not “do anything but good,” especially since it “might...open the way for a serious draft-RFK movement.” That was indeed Kennedy’s plan as relayed to Schlesinger when they met in November: McCarthy would weaken Johnson’s re-electability to the point that “state political leaders” would “ask him to run in the interests of the party.”<sup>20</sup>



Schlesinger however became worried that by beating him to the punch, McCarthy had stolen Kennedy's thunder, and he was among those pursuing a "harmony approach," trying to help arrange a unity ticket between the two candidates. When that failed, he thought Kennedy should come out in support of McCarthy so as to avoid splitting the anti-Johnson vote; he advised Kennedy of this just a few hours before the New York Senator declared his candidacy on March 16. Once Johnson dropped out soon thereafter, Schlesinger regained optimism about Kennedy's chances and revived his enthusiasm for RFK's campaign. Meanwhile, the ADA no longer had to worry about disagreement over whether to support the President or one of his two rivals, but that was traded for the question of what to do about Vice-President Humphrey, who after all had been a founding member of the group, yet was decidedly in favor of the administration's escalation in Vietnam.

Hubert Humphrey's candidacy had barely begun when Robert F. Kennedy's campaign and life came to an abrupt end at the hands of an assassin in Los Angeles following his narrow victory over McCarthy in the June 6 California primary. Added to Schlesinger's sense of personal loss was the bitterness of knowing that his friend would have likely won the nomination, even though the ADA had rejected Humphrey only to endorse McCarthy instead of Kennedy. Schlesinger subsequently lost most of his passion for the 1968 election, yet refused to support McCarthy, and happily agreed to help George McGovern when he entered the fray in early August, thinking he would "obviously be a better President than Humphrey or McCarthy."

Still, he did not harbor much hope that McGovern would get the nomination. Later that month Schlesinger and others mulled-over the possibility of drafting Ted Kennedy to run in place of his slain brother; in an August 24 phone conversation, Schlesinger and Kennedy agreed on the uncertainties and complexities of the situation, and the Massachusetts Senator expressed his “gut feeling” that 1968 was “not the year” for him.<sup>21</sup> The youngest Kennedy did not run, and Schlesinger embraced McGovern when he entered the race in August. As he remarked in a September 1968 letter to Niebuhr, he had “rallied round” his “very close friend” McGovern, despite an admission that “his candidacy was never realistic.” Schlesinger supported Humphrey’s embrace of a progressive civil rights plank, but he and Nixon had “pretty much the same Vietnam policy.” McCarthy, on the other hand, was a single-issue antiwar candidate with a lack of governing ability who could not be trusted to manage the legacy of the Kennedy-inspired 1964 Civil Rights Act. As he therefore hoped that McGovern would have a strong showing, and then gave lukewarm support to Humphrey in the fall, Schlesinger was resigned that Nixon would likely become president; and as he told Niebuhr, RFK’s death had “terminated” not only his “interest in the campaign” but “perhaps in American politics for quite some time to come.”<sup>22</sup>

Schlesinger’s inability to support McCarthy reflected his apprehension over the antiwar counterculture, which was about equal in measure to his distaste for the war. He blamed Kennedy’s lack of support among the young McCarthy devotees on figures such as “guru of the New Left” Herbert Marcuse, whom he had known “since

the old days in the OSS” and had “liked...without ever really trusting.” As he described in his journal in May of 1968, he was “filled with despair about the New Left,” which he compared in many ways unfavorably to “Stalinists,” who were extremely well read. “The New Left,” however, seems to have read nothing...and relies entirely on...feeling and acting”; “The Stalinists believed that the means justify the ends. The New Left believes the means will create the end.”<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, Schlesinger would have no doubt supported McCarthy had he won the nomination, just as he eventually joined James Loeb’s official September 26 call for ADA members to coalesce behind Humphrey against Nixon, “despite the overriding importance of the war issue.” While this was in many ways parallel to the ADA’s reluctant embrace of Truman in 1948, as Loeb reminded, it was Humphrey who had fought to get a civil rights plank adopted at the DNC two decades ago.<sup>24</sup> Hence in a scene that would have been wholly unpredictable in the spring of 1967, on October 31, 1968 Schlesinger spoke alongside the likes of fellow former JFK adviser Theodore Sorenson and civil rights activist Shirley Chisholm—who was running for Congress from New York—at a “Gala Rally” sponsored by ADA student-members calling themselves “The New Coalition for Humphrey-Muskie.”<sup>25</sup> By November 19, Schlesinger was lamenting in his journal that Humphrey “could have been elected so easily; if, for example, he had embraced the minority plank on Vietnam in Chicago.” When noting the following month that Henry Kissinger—with whom he was friendly—had been Nixon’s “best appointment,” he most certainly was not anticipating the new Secretary of State’s impending role in further widening the

war.<sup>26</sup> It is likely, however, that Schlesinger understood clearly the bleak prospects for the future of the left-liberal anticommunism. Four years later he worked for McGovern against Nixon, in what he most likely knew was a futile effort to win in 1972, which turned out to be the last election in which he was formally involved.

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The last forum ever held under the auspices of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom took place on April 6, 1961, at Freedom House. Diana Trilling, who had resigned her position on the executive committee in October 1960, was invited to speak to the assembled group, which included Irving Kristol, William Phillips, Norman Podhoretz, Daniel Bell, and committee chairman Arnold Beichman. Trilling's lengthy and densely lawyered address functioned on one level as an elaborate explanation for her resignation, which had been precipitated on an immediate practical level by the fact that the ACCF was a tax shelter for *Partisan Review*, which she believed was no longer a welcomed venue for her writing. The conflict related to a set of issues that could be traced straight back to the 1950s, and in particular, the fracture over McCarthyism. Trilling had been among the ACCF's more vocal opponents of McCarthy, among the group that wanted a statement denouncing him by name as opposed to the watered-down resolution that was eventually agreed upon. Yet as was signaled by her resignation from the board of directors, and the connected dispute with *Partisan Review*, in 1961 she was moving in the other direction.

Trilling spoke as a member of the New York intellectual community who had switched sides, so to speak, joining the liberal wing of the ACCF on the question of McCarthy. In that context she asserted: “It was in the McCarthy period that so many of our old colleagues...first formulated their protest that anti-Communism was insufficiently critical of America and too critical of Communism.” As she further described, “This protest has now hardened into an increasingly overt opposition to anti-Communism on the part of our cultural critics,” referring to (left) intellectuals associated with New York-based opinion journals like *Commentary* and *Partisan Review*. “In the course of this evolution,” Trilling continued, “many factors which were not present at the time of McCarthy have deepened the division between the anti-Communist and his old associates, and helped determine its new character”:

the death of Stalin, the thaw, the principle of peaceful co-existence and Khrushchev’s policies of liberalization, the surge of movements for national liberation throughout the world, the shift in the balance of power between Soviet Communism and ourselves, and, of course, the most significant factor of all, Russia’s thermonuclear strength.

Those events, she believed, had contributed to the situation where many of her onetime allies in anti-Soviet struggle had developed a “consistent negative assessment of America’s ability, or even right, to win” the Cold War. Thus identifying a deepening fissure, Trilling made a stark conclusion: “Our disagreements are no longer a matter of believing in Cold War or believing in peaceful co-existence, of favoring cultural exchange or being skeptical about it, even of neutralism or non-neutralism.” Rather, the position “now being made public by some” cultural critics has the effect of “staking out the ground for democracy’s capitulation to Soviet Communism.”<sup>27</sup>

## Left-Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited

First published in the September 11, 1967 issue of *The Nation*, Christopher Lasch's essay was, according to one biographer, a "coda to *The New Radicalism*, another chapter in the tragic-comic saga of intellectuals who should have known better."<sup>28</sup> First appearing under the title "The Cultural Cold War" (also the name of the special feature edition), it castigated the left-liberals who had "consistently approved...American policy, until the war in Vietnam shattered the cold-war coalition and introduced a new phase of...politics."<sup>29</sup> When adapted for republication starting in 1968, the piece acquired the subtitle "A Short History of the Congress for Cultural Freedom."<sup>30</sup> In a version that appeared in Lasch's *The Agony of the American Left* (1969), he charged that Hook, Schlesinger, and comrades including Niebuhr and Kristol built "a coalition of [moderate] liberals and reactionaries who shared a...view...that the communist conspiracy had spread through practically every level of American society." Lasch in that manner offered details of the ACCF's rise and demise, noting for instance that "[James] Farrell's resignation, along with other events, signaled the breakdown of the coalition" that included "a large number of ex-communists" in both wings, "held together by their mutual obsession with the communist conspiracy."<sup>31</sup> Carey McWilliams, who as *The Nation's* editor oversaw printing of Lasch's essay, later explained his view that the Congress operation was "part of a CIA strategy to mute criticism of Cold War policies among intellectuals here and abroad."<sup>32</sup>

There had always been widespread suspicion that the Congress for Cultural Freedom was connected to the US State Department, at the very least, if not also the Central Intelligence Agency. 1966 was the year that those suspicions turned into rampant rumors; in February 1967 the floodgates opened. Lasch's was not the first or necessarily even the most withering critique, although it was devastating. Yet part of what was so powerful about "The Cultural Cold War" as it appeared in *The Nation* and elsewhere, was its comprehensive accounting of the controversies among the CCF/ACCF leaders, and key events that marked the uniting and disuniting of their alliance. Lasch relayed, in that context, that "Some liberals, in fact, specifically defended McCarthy." Among them he pointed out, was

Irving Kristol, [who] in his notorious article in the March 1952 issue of *Commentary*, admitted that McCarthy was a 'vulgar demagogue,' but added: 'There is one thing that the American people know about Senator McCarthy; he, like them, is unequivocally anti-Communist. About the spokesmen for American liberalism, they feel they know no such thing.'

Kristol was an especially easy target for Lasch, as were other 'reactionaries.' For instance, "Hook's whole line of argument...reflected one of the dominant values of the modern intellectual—his acute sense of himself as a professional with a vested interest in technical solutions to political problems." Lasch claimed in that vein, "Hook's attack on 'cultural vigilantism' paralleled the academic critique of McCarthyism as a form of populism and anti-intellectualism" (a reference to Richard Hofstadter's 1964 "The Paranoid Style in American Politics"), "except it did not even go so far as to condemn McCarthyism itself."<sup>33</sup>

“The Cultural Cold War” was to a certain extent even more critical of liberals including Schlesinger, from whom Lasch expected better. In reference to his attacking the editor of *Book Week* rather than admit the truthfulness of his charge (or just stay silent), Lasch wrote, “Schlesinger leaped into the breach.” And in joining the likes of Kristol and repeatedly denying reports about *Encounter* and the CIA, which they knew to be accurate, he asked: “Why did Schlesinger go out of his way to endorse their evasions?”<sup>34</sup> In light of what is known about Schlesinger’s feelings towards Kristol, one can understand why Lasch was rather mystified at the thought that ADA liberals could so readily join forces with intellectuals who were obviously moving in a backward direction. It is indeed instructive to consider that when Schlesinger wrote to Hook with an objection to Kristol’s appointment as ACCF executive secretary, that complaint flowed from underlying disgust with his March 1952 article, the same one Lasch cited as a (now-infamous) example of sympathy for McCarthy among reactionary former leftists. The question Lasch posed is valid, especially in light of Schlesinger’s thoughts about his obsessive anticommunist comrades. What type of a coalition was Schlesinger involved in if he had to complain to Hook about Kristol, and then complain to Niebuhr about Hook? Surely he must have known on some level it was not going to end well. Was making common cause to oppose Stalinist influence really *that* important? If as Schlesinger himself suggested, Communism was not the main threat to American cultural freedom by 1955, why did he not then move decisively to other causes? And why, if he never really trusted Hook, did Schlesinger put so much effort into fighting his crusade?



It is rather astonishing that Michael Harrington presaged Lasch's critique, writing in *Dissent* at the very moment that Schlesinger openly questioned whether the ACCF still served a useful purpose as an anticommunist organization. Harrington's April 1955 article represented the assessment of someone who was friendly with many involved in the CCF/ACCF, yet very much detached from it. Although he did not have the evidence Lasch used when connecting the endeavor directly to the CIA, Harrington perceived clearly that it served the interests of the American state. In that sense, the crises he witnessed unfold in the ACCF were emblematic of "larger problems that beset those American intellectuals who are sincerely devoted to cultural freedom yet are simultaneously involved in a politics that prods them to qualify, weaken, and sometimes even negate this devotion."

Still, writing about his comrades, Harrington assured that he was not engaging in "mere denunciation [of the ACCF], if only because its membership includes good and honest people." It was in that context, however, that Harrington was especially dismayed by the actions of someone he greatly admired. After relaying a controversy involving Sol Stein's support for the McCarran Committee's treatment of Owen Lattimore, which upset many including Schlesinger, Harrington noted: "It is sad—indeed, humiliating—to report...that the official ACCF position found its only supporter in...Norman Thomas, the leader of the Socialist Party." As he saw the situation, "That Norman Thomas, identified in American eyes with the cause of socialism, should have let himself be put in the position of defending Sol Stein's

outrage—this tells us a great deal not merely about the ACCF but about the debacle of American radical and liberal politics in general.”<sup>35</sup>

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By way of responding to the torrent of disapproval unleashed in the wake of the revelations that informed Lacsh’s “The Cultural Cold War” and similar appraisals, Norman Podhoretz convened a *Commentary* symposium on “Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited.”<sup>36</sup> Published the same month Lacsh’s article appeared in *The Nation*, September 1967, the symposium featured contributions from forty “prominent intellectuals of liberal or democratic socialist persuasion,” who were “associated at some point in the past with an opposition to Stalinism and/or Communism.” Podhoretz, seeking to provide a platform for respondents to exonerate themselves, solicited replies to the three following questions:

1. It has recently been charged that the anti-Communism of the Left was in some measure responsible for, or helped to create a climate of opinion favorable to, the war in Vietnam. What justification, if any, do you find in that charge? As someone whose name has been associated with the anti-communism of the Left, do you feel in any way responsible for American policies in Vietnam?
2. Would you call yourself an anti-Communist today? If so, are you still willing to support policy of containing the spread of Communism? If not, why have you changed? Assuming that you once supported containment because you were opposed on moral rather than narrowly technical grounds to the spread of a totalitarian system, why do you think it wrong to apply the same principle to Vietnam?
3. Do the recent revelations concerning covert CIA backing of projects, some of which you probably sympathized with, or may perhaps have been involved in yourself, prove that liberal anti-Communism has been a dupe of, or a slave to, the darker impulses of American foreign policy?

In his introduction, Podhoretz summarized the main themes that emerged among the answers, concluding, for instance, “Most of the contributors...repudiate the idea that liberal or left-wing anti-Communism is responsible for present American policies—and with very few exceptions, they are all vehemently opposed to those policies.” Moreover, “Most would still call themselves anti-Communist in one sense or another.” And, finally, “As to CIA backing of cultural projects, the consensus appears to be that it was on the whole a disaster, but that the intellectuals who received such subsidies were subject to no actual coercion and were in any case, for better or worse, doing and saying what they would have done and said anyway.”<sup>37</sup>

Despite Podhoretz’s attempt to flatten differences among respondents, there was a fair amount of diversity of opinion expressed among who participated in “Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited.” Michael Harrington, for instance, declared that he was “for democracy and socialism for all people.” He added that he “opposed America’s tragic intervention in Vietnam,” and favored “ending the cold war.” That line of thinking was generally consistent with other answers (beyond the immediate identification as a democratic socialist), yet Harrington also announced that he was an “anti-Communist and an anti-anti-Communist,” thus rejecting a dichotomy that most did not question. Harrington’s response to the third prompt was even more revealing in terms of its tone as compared to other answers:

Now it is, of course, true that sophisticated manipulators in the American government have used this anti-Communism of the Left for their own anti-Left purposes. The most outrageous case in point is the CIA infiltration of democratic organizations. This was a shrewd and despicable policy and those who wittingly cooperated in it were worse than dupes (hopefully, however, they will not be treated in that style perfected by the House Un-American

Activities Committee for the degradation of fellow travelers and former Communists).<sup>38</sup>

Fittingly, given their co-involvement in *Dissent*, Irving Howe joined Harrington as someone who attempted a sober assessment, seemingly without interest in justifying or defending his own actions. In that sense, Howe offered one of the more devastating responses to the question of collaboration with the state. In Howe's view "revelations about CIA ties" were a "sad and ugly business." He thought it was disturbing to learn that "intellectuals one regarded as honest men.... were appearing under false pretenses insofar as they...had become knowing accomplices of a secret intelligence service." Put simply, "that is not the business of intellectuals...[or] people concerned with...disinterested scrutiny...or a passionate defense of freedom." Nor did motives matter, as "Even from the viewpoint of people who sincerely believed in an uncritical or almost uncritical support of the West during the cold war, the CIA connection was indefensible." Yet Howe's critique of the left-liberal anticommunist record did not extend into the realm of the Cold War, and battle then raging over the question of Vietnam. In fact, as a counterpoint to Harrington, Howe separated himself from any association with antiwar radicalism or so-called 'anti-anti-communism':

I see no merit whatever-indeed, only evasiveness-in the view currently fashionable among New Leftists that (to quote Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden) they 'refuse to be anti-Communist.' If someone thinks that the societies existing in the Communist world are essentially progressive or desirable, then 'a refusal to be anti-Communist' is not exactly an heroic stance. If, however, one believes that these are oppressive and undesirable societies, then the Lynd-Hayden formula is merely cowardice. How...can anyone actively involved in politics avoid taking a stand, no matter how complex and modulated, in regard to so crucial a matter as Communism?<sup>39</sup>

Diana Trilling, on the other hand, offered a succinct version of what Podhoretz suggested most respondents felt. She began with the assertion: "I am still an anti-Communist, as I have long been." Trilling then added that she was also "opposed to the Vietnam war which should indicate that I do not think containment of Communism is advisable or possible under all circumstances." Yet she qualified that, stating her opposition was "practical more than moral" since she did "not think" it would "accomplish what it set out to; rather the contrary." And, while she argued that "all secret subsidies of intellectual projects" were deplorable, equally so was the "suggestion that liberal anti- Communism was 'a slave to the darker impulses of American foreign policy.'" In her experience with the ACCF, Trilling "never knew any intellectual who did anything that was not wholly consonant with his own thought and conscience," even when they "contradicted" or "subverted...our foreign policy of the time."<sup>40</sup>

Sidney Hook's responses were similar to Trilling's except he, predictably, gave no ground whatsoever; many of his opinions were in stark contrast to Howe and especially Harrington's. He claimed "The notion that anti-Communist liberalism has had a profound influence on the conduct of American foreign policy-more particularly that it is responsible for the American presence and subsequent strategies in Vietnam-is a myth." For perpetuating the myth, Hook blamed "ritualistic liberals whose anti-anti-Communism has periodically been proved bankrupt by the persistence of Communists in acting like Communists." In that regard, "Why anyone should hold anti-Communist liberals responsible for the American presence in

Vietnam” was “obscure”; “Things were too far gone under French rule to save the situation. But whatever the mistakes of the past, they cannot now be undone.”

Moreover, he noted: “Anti-Communist liberals are divided today on the policy to be followed in Vietnam.” In Hook’s view, “If few are hawks, still fewer are in favor of immediate withdrawal and the surrender to torture, imprisonment, and death of hundreds of thousands...who resisted Communism both in North and South Vietnam with our encouragement.” In that light, Hook had a far less conciliatory (and more hawkish) view of the debate over the war:

Those who call for the de-escalation of the conflict in Vietnam only by one side, and denounce only the Americans for the death of innocent victims of military action, while refusing at the same time to condemn the Vietcong terror that has resulted in the death of many more innocents, are attempting to lynch the United States in the court of public opinion. If anything they are making a negotiated peace settlement more difficult.

In terms of the third question, Hook diverged even more drastically from t Harrington and Howe’s outright condemnation of CIA collaboration. Motivated seemingly to protect his own reputation, Hook argued that: “Because part of the financial support” for groups including the CCF/ACCF “came from the CIA, they face...vicious and objectionable...‘guilt by association.’” Yet he explained that there was no real choice, since philanthropists were “more willing to subsidize reactionary extremist groups...than liberal anti-Communist groups.” Moreover, Hook contended:

The charge that the CIA subsidies put the Congress in the same position as Communist cultural organizations underwritten by the Soviet regime overlooks the crucial difference which the intellectual freedom to take any position on any subject, enjoyed by all participants in Congress functions, makes to the life of mind. The free market of ideas was not rigged but expanded into ever widening circles of dialogue in which no person represented anyone but himself.<sup>41</sup>

Arthur Schlesinger Jr., in a characteristic manner, declared that he was “an unrepentant anti-Communist,” as there was “no other conceivable position for a liberal to take.” True, he said, “There was a time when some liberals may have regarded Communism as a more rigorous and uncompromising extension of liberalism,” yet he did “not see how any liberal could possibly feel that way after the last thirty years of world history.” For Schlesinger, it was “surely not necessary in 1967 to insist that liberalism and Communism have nothing in common, either as to the means or the ends of government, either as to principle or practice.” He was, however, willing to admit that liberal anticommunists might have made a “negligible” contribution “to the American folly in Vietnam.”<sup>42</sup>

And what did Schlesinger have to say about CIA involvement in the Cold War cultural freedom campaign? As he wrote, Schlesinger was clearly aware of the delicate nature of the subject given his role as a covert consultant whose work required secrecy. While Hook could defend the Congress’s connections to the CIA by claiming that it was all aboveboard, in sense, he could so—it seems—without anyone accusing him of obfuscating his formal awareness and participation. While many assumed that Hook knew of the CIA’s role, there was never any suggestion that he was a ‘secret agent’; he welcomed assistance from the state, whether overt or covert. Yet Schlesinger was in a much different position, working as a clandestine operative, while, naturally, having to pretend that he was doing no such thing. One cannot help but wonder, in that regard, if Schlesinger might have been contemplating an incident that occurred just a few months after receiving his first covert clearance.

Five days after Schlesinger had lunch in Washington with a CIA contact, a memo was sent to the Agency's Special Security Division (SSD) advising that an unknown (name redacted) informant reported on January 23, 1951, that Schlesinger was "broadcasting his connection with your shop [CIA]." While it is impossible to know his accuser's identity (James Burnham?), there was apparently reason to suspect the individual was merely "trying to discredit" the CCF. Yet a review was initiated, which produced evidence to corroborate certain charges, particularly that Schlesinger supported William Remington, a government economist accused of being a Soviet spy (who was later convicted of perjury and killed himself in prison). Consequently, as of April 26, 1951 Schlesinger's contract was rewritten. On May 16 the SSD concluded that "based upon the seriousness of the allegations," Schlesinger should be "disapproved." On July 26 an agent asked to "reconsider the action taken in the recent memorandum." The next day Schlesinger was reapproved pending a debrief, and it was reiterated he should be "emphatically warned that under no circumstances may he disclose his connections with intelligence work." On August 30 an agent reported that he had met with Schlesinger, who had asked "for guidance in his dealings with semi-covert persons abroad. He was told never to admit to anyone, even semi-covet OPC persons not associated with him, that he was associated with OPC." Soon thereafter, in March 1952, a memo arrived advising that "another area" of the CIA had requested his services. Schlesinger's clearance was amended in early 1953 with instructions that he was "not be cut in on operational information" and again reminded "not to represent himself as...an employee of CIA."<sup>43</sup>



It is entirely possible that Schlesinger had such experiences during the early 1950s at least in the back of his mind as wrestled, in 1967, with the question of CIA funding for Cold War projects. And in that context it is interesting to consider his comment in the *Commentary* symposium, when Schlesinger contended that “The CIA expenditures were wholly justified at the time when they began...before the Marshall Plan had restored the economic energy and moral confidence of Western Europe.” However, he continued, “as one who served in the government well after the point when the support should have been transferred to open or private sources,” he admitted his “error in not trying to do something more specific about the problem.”<sup>44</sup> That statement was part of an oblique reference to the fact that Schlesinger, when he was in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, had made overtures towards initiating reforms that might curtail the potential for corruption inherent in covert operations. He was motivated in large part by the 1961 ‘Bay of Pigs’ fiasco in Cuba, and the sense that such actions as plotting to overthrow foreign leaders should be more carefully considered. As indicated by his remarks, it is doubtful that Schlesinger saw any real harm in the CIA initially offering secret support to projects like the Congress for Cultural Freedom. Yet once it was clear that the CIA’s international reputation was as the instigator of coups, rather than just the supporter of cultural congresses, he believed that it did more harm than good to continue Agency support for cultural cold war endeavors; he expressed remorse that funding continued anyway. In that sense, it is telling to examine an action Schlesinger took ten years later, perhaps out of guilt.

Upon receiving a reply to his Freedom of Information Act request, in May 1977 Schlesinger promptly wrote to the Agency's Privacy Coordinator to express gratitude for the "courteous response," but also "confess astonishment at some of the material that found its way into the CIA files."<sup>45</sup> That same day Schlesinger also wrote to his attorney and included a copy of a *New York Times* article about a successful lawsuit against the Agency for violating the privacy of three individuals whose letters to people in the Soviet Union it had intercepted. Schlesinger, as he described, was alarmed to discover that the CIA had "opened and copied" three letters he had sent to individuals in the Soviet Union, as well as a 1950 letter to him from someone in Paris. Moreover, the CIA had also tampered with two "intensely personal" letters delivered to him care of the US Embassy in Moscow in 1959, when he had been "sent to the Soviet Union by the State Department." Schlesinger wondered, apparently to no avail, whether it might be advisable for him to take similar legal action.<sup>46</sup> Nothing seems to have materialized. Yet that Schlesinger contemplated suing the Central Intelligence Agency in 1977 suggests that he had, like many, absorbed the impact of the 1975 'Church Committee' hearings in which the Senate investigated abuses of power and illegality (i.e. coups and assassinations) on the part of US intelligence agencies.

In that light, it is worth contemplating the tempered thoughts Schlesinger offered ten years earlier in the *Commentary* symposium regarding his perspective on the Cold War at the time. He contended that when "Stalinism-posed a grave threat to

the democratic world, “measures taken to confront that threat,” containment, “seemed...then...and...now, rational, wise, and brave.” Then Schlesinger added:

But the situation of contemporary Communism is obviously different; and the fallacy-and tragedy of current United States policy, it would seem to me, is that we are trying to deal with polycentrist Communism today in terms of stereotypes and strategies left over from the fight a generation ago against Stalinism. We have thus permitted rational anti-Communism to yield to obsessive anti-Communism.<sup>47</sup>

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In part of her essay for *Commentary*'s September 1967 “Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited,” Diana Trilling returned to the theme of her 1961 Freedom House address sponsored by the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Observing “the rift between the anti-Communist intellectuals...and...the intellectuals who defined their liberalism by their unwillingness to oppose Communism took shape and established itself over two decades.” It was at the point that “McCarthy appeared on appeared on the political scene, to polarize the two factions, anti-Communist and anti-anti-Communist, still more sharply.”<sup>48</sup> Trilling, as she grappled with her position in the New York intellectual community, perceived the degree to which the fracture over McCarthyism had become an irreparable chasm. As she argued in April 1961:

From the charge, first formulated in the McCarthy period, that the anti-Communist is a reactionary or conservative, the advanced intellectual has logically progressed—if we can call it progress—to the point where he believes that any force which commits itself to democracy blindly commits the world to thermonuclear destruction.<sup>49</sup>

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The left-liberal anticommunist alliance coalesced in the 1940s around a movement to expose and defeat Stalinist ‘totalitarianism.’ During the 1950s this coalition held the center, between Stalinism and McCarthyism, while waging a Cold War propaganda campaign in defense of ‘cultural freedom.’ Yet beneath the surface, despite helping to shine a liberal and even social-democratic beacon during the dark night of the McCarthy era, their partnership was fractured from the start; it was constantly on the verge of flying apart. As the struggles of the 1950s became the crises of the 1960s, ‘rational anticommunists’ like Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and ‘obsessive anticommunists’ such as Sidney Hook could not sustain their common cause. Nor could those like Norman Thomas, often torn between competing factions (and loyalties), withstand the pressures of the moment. Emerging to fill the void created by the collapse of ‘cold war liberalism’ was on one hand the New Left, and on the other neconservatism.

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As the chaotic year that was 1968 came to an end, neoconservatives were on the march, the New Left was closing ranks, and liberals were hunkering down for the long road ahead. Schlesinger at that moment might very well have been contemplating a timeless verse, written in the aftermath of World War One:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold.<sup>50</sup>

## CONCLUSION

### Beyond the American Century (?)

Whereas their nation became in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the most powerful and the most vital nation in the world, nevertheless Americans were unable to accommodate themselves spiritually and practically to that fact. Hence they have failed to play their part as a world power.

—Henry Luce, “The American Century,” February 1941

History has thrust a world destiny on the United States. No nation, perhaps, has become a more reluctant great power.

—Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center*, 1949

The United States has been, and will always be, the one indispensable nation in world affairs.... if we rise to this moment in history...then...the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be another great American Century.

—Barack Obama, Air Force Commencement, 2012

In his 1967 *Foreign Affairs* essay, “Origins of the Cold War,” Arthur Schlesinger Jr. determined that Communist dogma “transformed an impasse between national states into a religious war, a tragedy of possibility into one of necessity.”<sup>1</sup> In terms of the events examined in this study, Schlesinger’s formulation can be flipped on its head: the history of left-liberal anticommunism is an example of Auden’s *tragedy of possibility*. Given what could have materialized from such a dynamic partnership among immensely dedicated and talented intellectuals—but did not—and, given what arose instead, their coalition came to a sorrowful end. Yet if there is hope to be found in the midst of tragedy, in this case it lies in the possibility that a better accounting of the successes, failures, and missed opportunities of left-liberal anticommunism can help produce a brighter day on the horizon for progressive struggle—and unity—despite uncertainties of life in the twenty-first century.

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Debate rages among scholars, journalists, and activists concerning the historical effects of anticommunism in the United States and the world during the Cold War. As this study demonstrates, more attention must be paid to the history of midcentury left-liberal anticommunism. On the one hand, this is necessary so that we can begin to ask new questions about the manner in which the Cold War was driven by ideologies that in many cases came not just from the liberal center, but indeed *the left*. Yet, most left-liberal anticommunists were fundamentally opposed to McCarthyism, even while many supported policies that helped create the climate of oppression in which it thrived. It is necessary to grasp the nuance of their ideology, while appreciating the positive and often brave role left-liberal anticommunists played in the promotion of social and economic justice during the bleak 1950s. By doing that, one can more graciously and productively analyze and critique their missteps and shortcomings.

In the final analysis, it would be far too easy to simply condemn left-liberal anticommunists—either as a group or at the level of individuals—for their role in the development of post-1945 American empire. As this study has shown, theirs was a coalition in which a range of differing perspectives—rooted in both radical left and liberal traditions—were brought together in the service of what was at one level a noble cause: exposing Stalin and Stalinism as antithetical to the spirit of democratic socialism. In their view, which was not wholly unfounded, Stalin was a counterrevolutionary, at the very least because he was an authoritarian leader at a moment in history when the Marxist left should stand firmly on the side of political

democracy. And by that same token, anti-Stalinist left-liberals abhorred the idea that artists and intellectuals (etc.) on the left could be so blind to the horrific atrocities committed by the Soviet leader, in the name of Marxist-Leninist revolution. As much as left-liberals today can and likely should harbor serious misgiving about the career of Sidney Hook—given where he ended up—it is still vital to recognize that he genuinely and passionately imbibed Marxism, and felt betrayed. If one can argue that he became a reactionary, it becomes all the more important to understand what he was reacting against. Sidney Hook's failings do not make it any less important to understand where he was coming from, and perhaps even find a sympathetic way to critique the development of neoconservatism.

Through his relationship to Sidney Hook, it is possible to better understand the tragedy of Norman Thomas. He was rooted in the turn-of-the-century American Socialist tradition, in which the name 'Debs' meant everything and 'Lenin,' nothing. For those so steeped in the New Left, it might not be easy to comprehend fully what it was like to be a part of the Old Left. And while many who came from his generation and belonged to the same socialist milieu did not fall prey to anticommunist instincts in the manner that Thomas did, that is not a reason to dismiss his contributions. As with Hook, Thomas had intimate reasons for opposing Stalin. While not harboring a sense of betrayal as with ex-Communists/ Trotskyists, he experienced the great schism in which the Socialist Party was effectively decimated by the formation of the Communist Party. Then, as he witnessed the Bolsheviks develop an antidemocratic system in the Soviet Union, while many avowed Communists began to treat Socialists

as their enemies, one can understand where Thomas's anti-Stalinism came from—while still finding fault with it. Like Michael Harrington, many on the left have been strongly critical of Thomas's role in the demise of the American socialist/ social-democratic tradition. That perspective has too much merit to ignore. Thomas made many mistakes that he freely admitted; perhaps his greatest failing—and the deepest tragedy—of his life, was that the party of Eugene Debs died under his watch.

In *A Life in The Twentieth Century*, Schlesinger recalled vividly that he had been at "Hook's side in some of those battles after the war," rejoicing "with him as he doughtily struck down the infidel." Yet that praise was tempered by his recollection that "*Out of Step* bristles with barely controlled rancor and rage," adding, "it was Hook's obsessive anticommunism that explained his steady movement to the right." In that sense his former comrade was unlike "some ex-Communists" with whom Schlesinger was still friends, who knew "that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in the anti-Communist philosophy."<sup>2</sup> Schlesinger was obsessed with the idea of 'obsessive anti-communism.' He had a constant need to differentiate his brand of anticommunism as 'rational' and 'intelligent.' He wanted desperately to believe that he was a *non-obsessive anticommunist*. So much so, that he translated his formula into anti-McCarthyism: obsessive anti-McCarthyites were too far left, McCarthyites too far right. His 'vital center' combined intelligent anticommunism with rational anti-McCarthyism. Yet the center did not hold. Like Thomas and—in a different way—also Hook, Schlesinger found himself trapped in an anti-Stalinist universe from which there was virtually no escape.



## Reheating Cold War

In one of the four blogs he wrote for *The Huffington Post*, published on Halloween in 2005, Schlesinger demonstrated both his consistent liberal internationalism and always-astute awareness of the political landscape, declaring “The Iraq War is a pure example of a war of presidential choice, not a war forced upon us, and it will doom the Republicans in 2008.”<sup>3</sup> And, naturally, he drew historical comparisons between the “running sore” in Iraq, and past US foreign policy debacles: “the Korean War and the Vietnam War had better pretexts, but, despite this, the Korean War doomed President Truman in 1952 and the Vietnam War doomed President Johnson in 1968.” The Bush-Cheney administration’s reckless war in Iraq, as Schlesinger perceived it, was in many ways the inheritor of American policy in Korea and Vietnam. In 1952, 1968, and 2008, different presidents became mired in wars that cost them their jobs, or cost their parties the White House. That is a definite pattern. And what unites those three wars? Schlesinger believed that in the first two cases the ‘pretexts’ were more solid: containing Communism. Yet between 1952 and 1968, it became increasingly less clear what ‘containment’ actually meant. So by the time liberal foreign policymakers began to grapple with the crisis in Vietnam, the inertia of the Cold War was too much to stop: the ‘domino theory’ did not have to make sense outside the logic of anticommunism. When many began to understand that the United States was engaging a war to defend colonialism against a movement for national liberation, it was too late: the next ongoing conflict (in the Middle East) was already being planned.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the Korean War never ended.

What is the underlying connection between US foreign policy in Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq? Empire. Schlesinger would have called it ‘American power.’ But, especially in 2017, the distinction is nearly meaningless. After September 11, 2001, neoconservatives embarked a thinly veiled effort to reinvigorate American power/empire by transposing the dichotomous Cold War framework onto a ‘post-9/11’ terrain. Nothing symbolized that goal better than when George W. Bush on September 20, in his first major address following the attacks, declared ‘Either you’re with us, or you’re with the terrorists.’ Yet perhaps even more revealing was Dick Cheney’s remark to a 2002 meeting of the Council on Foreign Relations: “The war against terror will not end in a treaty. There will be no summit meeting, no negotiations with terrorists. This conflict can only end in their complete and utter destruction.”<sup>5</sup> Or there was the revival of the Committee on the Present Danger prior to the 2004 election, referencing its two previous Cold War incarnations (1950 and 1976), dedicated to “fighting terrorism and the ideologies that drive it.”<sup>6</sup> Historian Ron Robin has identified the operation of what he calls the “military–intellectual complex,” through which at the start of the Cold War “A variety of public opinion leaders participated in the transformation of assumptions, fears, and selective information into a plausible, widely accepted construction of the enemy.”<sup>7</sup> Following 9/11 neoconservatives, having lamented the rootlessness of US foreign policy after the fall of the Soviet Union, eagerly worked to construct a new enemy; their search for a new foundation upon which to cast American power/empire began before the Cold War ended, and took a new shape after the events of 1989-1991.

As described in *Present Dangers* (1997) by Robert Kagan and William Kristol (Irving's son), co-organizers of the "Project for the New American Century": "the collapse of the Soviet empire has not altered the fundamental purposes of American foreign policy," which they argued was "to preserve and extend an international order that is in accord with both our interests and our principals."<sup>8</sup> By subsequently cultivating rhetorical connections between 'Islamic extremism' and 'totalitarian' ideologies of the past, neoconservatives formulated a vision of the 'new American century' framed as a 'war against terrorism.' In a March 2006 speech in Cleveland, George W. Bush announced: "In the Middle East, freedom is once again contending with an ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair. And like fascism and communism before, the hateful ideologies that use terror will be defeated."<sup>9</sup> Likewise in his 2007 State of the Union Address, Bush proclaimed: "The war on terror we fight today is a generational struggle that will continue long after you and I have turned our duties over to others."<sup>10</sup> From an intellectual standpoint this perspective found its fullest expression in Norman Podhoretz's *World War IV: The Long Struggle Against Islamofascism* (2007), based on a 2004 *Commentary* essay that cited George Kennan's 'Mr. X' article, written sixty years earlier, and then asserted:

Substitute 'Islamic terrorism' for 'Russian-American relations,' and every other word of this magnificent statement applies to us as a nation today. In 1947, we accepted the responsibilities of moral and political leadership that history 'plainly intended' us to bear, and for the next 42 years we acted on them. We may not always have acted on them wisely or well, and we often did so only after much kicking and screaming. But act on them we did. We thereby ensured our own 'preservation as a great nation,' while also bringing a better life to millions of people in a major region of the world.<sup>11</sup>

## After Empire

Journalist Peter Beinart ignited controversy with the publication of “A Fighting Faith” in the December 2004 issue of *The New Republic*, which he edited at the time. In the wake of John Kerry’s loss to George W. Bush, Beinart contemplated the reasons for Democrats’ defeat by upholding the history of ‘cold war liberalism,’ which he saw as a template for political recovery. In so doing, he evoked the Americans for Democratic Action and celebrated its role “in bitter political combat across the institutions of American liberalism” through which “anti-communism gained strength.” As described by Beinart, “With the ADA’s help, Truman crushed Wallace’s third-party challenge en route to reelection.” Moreover, “The formerly leftist...CIO expelled its communist affiliates and *The New Republic* broke with Wallace, its former editor. The...ACLU...denounced communism, as did the NAACP.” He continued:

By 1949... Schlesinger could write in *The Vital Center*: ‘Mid-twentieth century liberalism, I believe, has thus been fundamentally reshaped...by the exposure of the Soviet Union, and by the deepening of our knowledge of man. The consequence of this historical re-education has been an unconditional rejection of totalitarianism.’

Beinart lamented that the mobilization that occurred among left-liberals inspired to fight the Cold War in the late 1940s was not replicated in the context of the post-2001 War on Terror. Therefore he argued that even though the events of “September 11 brought the United States face-to-face with a new totalitarian threat, liberalism has still not ‘been fundamentally reshaped’ by the experience.” In his perspective, there was far too “little liberal passion to win the struggle against Al

Qaeda—even though totalitarian Islam has killed thousands of Americans and...if it gained power...would reign terror upon women, religious minorities, and anyone in the Muslim world with a thirst for modernity or freedom.” In that regard, the remedy he proposed was to “wrest the Democratic Party from the heirs of Henry Wallace.”<sup>12</sup>

Beinart expanded his thesis into a book designed for easy consumption before the 2008 presidential election; curious observers needed only to glance at the subtitle to grasp its message: *The Good Fight: Why Liberals—and Only Liberals—Can Win The War on Terror and Make America Great Again* (2006).<sup>13</sup> In case Beinart’s goal was not clear enough, readers could also have looked at the title of the April 2006 article in the *New York Times Magazine*, which featured excerpts of his upcoming book: “The Rehabilitation of the Cold-War Liberal.”<sup>14</sup> He proposed to demonstrate that “winning the war on terror and reviving liberalism...are two sides of the same fight.” He recognized that times had changed since “cold war liberals developed their narrative of national greatness in the shadow of a totalitarian superpower.” Yet while the Soviet foe no longer exists, as Beinart described in *The Good Fight*, the United States faces in the twenty-first century “a web of dangers” ranging from “environmental degradation to weapons of mass destruction,” at the center of which is “jihadist terrorism, a new totalitarian movement that lacks state power but harnesses...globalization instead.”<sup>15</sup>

It might have embarrassed (perhaps even angered) Beinart when in 2016 Donald Trump successfully used the slogan he had proposed for liberals eight years

earlier. Then again, ‘making America great again’ is a generic phrase that as illustrated by its prospective use in 2008 by Democrats and 2016 by Republicans, can be made to serve the rhetorical interests of both liberal internationalism and conservative isolationism (or just deployed against whichever party currently holds the White House). Of course, Democrats won in 2008, and they did so in part by using the strategy Beinart proposed: namely, offering a smarter and less bellicose version of ‘war on terror.’ In ensuing policy statements the Obama administration shied away from using such nomenclature as ‘war on terror’ and ‘radical Islam,’ referring instead to a ‘global struggle against violent extremism’ (etc.), yet that was a rhetorical shift already implemented by Bush-Cheney Pentagon strategists.

Ironically, Beinart thought that Kerry lost not because of his infamous ‘flip-flop’ on Bush’s ‘war of choice’ (saying he was ‘against it’ after he had been ‘for it’), but rather because he did not stick with his original pro-war position and defend it to the hilt. Yet the issue was not the war itself per se, but rather the *vote* to authorize ‘use of force,’ which led to the March 2003 invasion and ongoing (as of 2017) occupation of Iraq. As Beinart indicated in a confession in the introduction to *The Good Fight*, he was fooled about Iraq in much the same way as Kerry, or for that matter, Hillary Clinton claimed to have been:

I was wrong on the facts. I could not imagine that Saddam Hussein, given his record, had abandoned his nuclear program.... I could not imagine that the Bush administration would so utterly fail to plan for the war’s aftermath.... I was wrong on the theory...I was too quick to give up on containment.... And I did not grasp the critical link between the invasion’s credibility in the world and its credibility in Iraq.... I overestimated America’s legitimacy. As someone who had seen U.S. might deployed effectively, and on the whole

benignly, in the Gulf War, the Balkans, and Afghanistan, I could not see that the morality of American power relies on the limits to American power.<sup>16</sup>

Of course Beinart did not cast a vote, either for or against the war, since he was not a member of the US Senate in 2002. Nor was Barack Obama, who was thus not forced to cast a vote, and subsequently was free to run as a vocal critic of the war, while Kerry and then Clinton had to hedge their opposition. It might indeed be the case that Obama was genuinely opposed to the invasion of Iraq for the same reasons that Schlesinger was, rooted in a Niebuhr-inflected ‘realism’ that seeks to promote a benevolent projection of power and judicious use of force. Yet, Obama also made a calculation that the invasion was going to be unpopular and that running against Bush’s ‘war of choice’ (Iraq, but not Afghanistan) would pay-off; and it did. If Kerry or Clinton, in retrospect, could have rescinded their votes in exchange for a ticket to the Oval Office, they would have. Yet that says nothing about how they would have conducted foreign policy. For that, we can turn to their records as Secretary of State. And while Kerry proved to be somewhat more interested in diplomacy than did Clinton (for instance trying to stop war with Iran, as opposed to starting wars in Syria and Libya), neither seemed particularly concerned with cleaning-up the messes in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As it relates to Beinart’s vision, the Obama administration’s foreign policy demonstrates that his proposals (or at least the ideas they were based on) carried weight. While Obama came to power as a result of rejecting rather than embracing the Iraq War, he, Kerry, Clinton, and others such as Joe Biden proceeded to smoothly integrate the realities of that war—planned decades ago by neoconservatives—into

their global outlook. Indeed, as Beinart proposed, Democrats chose not to dismantle the structure of the Bush-Cheney post-9/11 imperial project, but rather attempted to replace its shaky foundation with something sturdier. In Beinart's formulation, "For conservatives...American exceptionalism means that we do not need...constraints" because "Our hearts our pure." That is contrasted with "the liberal vision," wherein "it is precisely our recognition that we are not angels that makes us exceptional." Thus, as Niebuhr himself might have put it, "Because we recognize that we can be corrupted by unlimited power, we accept the restraints that empires refuse."<sup>17</sup> One way of understanding Beinart, and for that matter Niebuhr and Schlesinger's discourse on the 'limits of power,' is that it articulates the United States as an *exceptional empire* because it exercises restraint. To Beinart, American power is not 'imperial' because it is wielded with caution, rooted in wisdom and (ideally) goodwill; it is benevolent—when liberals are in charge. And therein lies the biggest problem with the Niebuhrian case for American power: its validity rests on the notion of trusting the judgment of the nation's leaders, and the assumption that they have a desire to not be corrupted.

Yet as Beinart, or Niebuhr, or Schlesinger would likely agree, sometimes people who liberals do not trust end up in power; just as important, sometimes liberals, even when not intended, become corrupt. There is in that sense perhaps no better symbolic demonstration of the folly of American empire than that its first three managers in the twenty-first century were George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump: amid a transition from neoconservative to (cold war) liberal



internationalist to authoritarian nationalist, very little has changed—except for escalating violence and global instability. All of that begs the question: had Al Gore become president at the end of the contested 2000 election, would the United States have invaded Iraq? The answer is not clear. And, would a President Gore have made the climate change crisis a national priority in the same manner that he did as a citizen and documentary filmmaker? If so, would Peter Beinart have accused Gore of ignoring the global threat of a new totalitarian foe? Perhaps the time has come to set aside Niebuhr’s formula (elegant as it is) and move beyond the Cold War paradigm. The issue is empire.

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Among the critiques of “A Fighting Faith” and *The Good Fight* were David Corn’s “Liberals on Terror” in 2004, and Fred Kaplan’s “Cold Comfort,” Michael Lind’s “Not-So-Great Liberalism,” plus Andrew Bacevich’s “Misuse of American History” in 2006.<sup>18</sup> In an extended version of his piece that appeared in the July 2006 issue of *The Nation*, Andrew Bacevich asserted that on matters of foreign policy, “the fundamental divide in American politics today is not between left and right but between those who subscribe to the myth of the ‘American Century’ and those who do not.”<sup>19</sup> More recently, similar lines of criticism can be found in such work as journalist Chris Hedges’s *Death of the Liberal Class* (2010), which decries a “brand of liberalism” that was “fearful of being seen as soft on communism,” and which “struggled to find its place in contemporary culture” after WWII. It was from that standpoint, he argued, that “Cold War liberalism shifted into a liberal embrace of

globalization, imperial expansion, and unfettered capitalism.” Hence, an “anemic liberal class” became “cornered and weak, engaged in the politically safe game of attacking the barbarism of communism—and, later, Islamic militancy—rather than attempting to fight the mounting injustices and structural abuses of the corporate state.”<sup>20</sup>

As journalists, Beinart’s liberalism and Hedges’s leftism parallel the dividing line that endures among scholars and activists. Beinart, who was most recently writing for *The Atlantic* and featured as a CNN commentator in 2016, produces work aligned with scholarship such as Kevin Mattson’s *When America was Great* (2004). Meanwhile Hedges, a former *New York Times* war correspondent, and arguably one of the most acerbic critics of the Democratic Party, builds explicitly from Ellen Schrecker’s work on McCarthyism. One set of scholars and journalists seeks to rehabilitate cold war liberalism, while another continues to rail against it. And, as was illustrated during the 2016 presidential elections, the political and cultural schism between left-liberals is as wide as it has been since the 1950s, which exploded into the ‘sixties,’ and things fell apart.

If true that a portrait of Eugene Debs used to, or still does adorn the wall above the desk in the congressional office of Vermont Independent Bernie Sanders, it would be a striking symbol of the tragedy, hope—and also hazard—extant in the early twenty-first century American political landscape. With Sanders’s historic challenge to what had been presumed to be Hillary Clinton’s veritable uncontested march to the nomination in the Democratic primaries, new possibilities were

awakened on the left. Yet—as seen from one perspective—the grassroots Sanders coalition, built largely by disaffected youth who founded the Occupy Wall Street Movement in 2013, was sabotaged by the ‘establishment.’ Or as viewed from the other standpoint, left purists surrounding the Sanders campaign derailed Clinton’s historic chance to ‘break the glass ceiling’ in the nation’s highest office and, worse still, divided opposition to Trump. Whether or not the Vermont Senator runs again in the next presidential election, it appears that the Sanders and Clinton wings of the Democratic Party are gearing up for a battle in 2020. That is, unless the long-shot effort to ‘Draft Bernie’ as a third-party candidate should succeed. This entire scenario is reminiscent of the issues that were front-and-center when Debs and to a lesser extent Norman Thomas challenged Democrats perennially from the left.

For most of American history, at least since the crystallization of the ‘two major parties,’ attempts to organize a left-labor challenge have occurred within the social-democratic milieu, which encompassed much of the nineteenth century agrarian populist and progressive movements. Then came the Depression, the New Deal, the Communist Party, and 1948. In *The Good Fight*, Peter Beinart wrote:

From Henry Wallace in the late 1940s to Michael Moore after September 11, some liberals have preferred inaction to the tragic reality that America must shed its moral innocence to act meaningfully in the world. If the cold war liberal tradition parts company with the right in insisting that American power cannot be good unless we recognize that it can also be evil, it parts company with the purist left in insisting that if we demand that American power be perfect, it cannot be good.<sup>21</sup>

One cannot help but wonder if Beinart expected Moore to so quickly and thoroughly endorse Clinton against Trump, after being a staunch supporter of Sanders’s ‘political

revolution' in the primaries. If Beinart were attempting his recovery of *The Vital Center* in the wake of the 2016 rather than 2004 election loss, he no doubt would have cast as the new Henry Wallace someone like actor Susan Sarandon (who intimated that she might not support Clinton because a Trump victory would hasten the revolution), or radical scholar Cornel West. Yet, the issue is not Sarandon, or West, or for that matter Beinart, Hedges, or any individual left-liberal intellectual.<sup>22</sup> The global crises of today affect everyone—however they define themselves, and with whatever party they affiliate. The idea of 'wresting control of the Democratic Party' from anyone, let alone Michael Moore, is counterproductive. Leftists and liberals will disagree, often vehemently, about many issues. But a sense of common ground based on shared humanity, and empathy, is a much better starting-point than sowing seeds of division for the sake of partisanship. The issues at stake are too great.

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It is highly revealing that when the US Senate took steps in the summer of 2017 to impose sanctions on Russia in response to allegations of interference in the 2016 elections, the only two members of that body who did not cast a vote in favor were Sanders and conservative libertarian Rand Paul (R-Kentucky). It is quite indicative of the state of foreign policy affairs that they (and they in particular) were the only two senators who did not support an action that might increase hostility with a nuclear-armed rival; and that Russia is once again squarely in the crosshairs of American power speaks volumes about the nature of what lay beneath the Cold War façade. Was it really about Communism?

There is one main reason why both Sanders and Paul opposed legislation to sanction Russia for alleged interference in the 2016 elections. It is not because they wish the Soviet Union still existed, nor because they believe in the purity of Vladimir Putin. Rather, it is because they know that, to paraphrase Schlesinger, there are more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in the American Century philosophy. Whether or not criticism of US foreign policy as articulated by a ‘strange bedfellows’ alliance between Sanders progressives and Paul conservatives could gain traction remains to be seen.

Be it Joseph Stalin, Saddam Hussein, Vladimir Putin, or Kim Jong-un, there will always be—as John Adams said in 1821— ‘monsters to destroy.’ As the United States continues to extend its global military presence in the name of fighting evil, how much longer will it be before leaders of a ‘dispensable’ nation somewhere decide that they would like to extinguish a monstrosity that resides on the shores of the Potomac? Or, when said river is washed to the sea amid a climate catastrophe of epic proportions, will the empire have been worth it? Perhaps the best way to ‘make America great,’ would be to retract the claim that it is *indispensible* and *exceptional*, and work instead towards once again being a *sensible* and *respectful* nation. With terms such as ‘new Cold War’ and ‘new McCarthyism’ having become a regular feature of political discourse in the post-2016 election landscape, there is no better time to grasp the relationship between left-liberal anticommunism and post-1945 American empire. As Norman Thomas said at the 1965 March on Washington for Peace in Vietnam: “We must have coexistence or ultimately no existence.”<sup>23</sup>

## NOTES

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### Introduction: Cold War Liberalism and the American Century

- 1 Henry Luce, "The American Century," *Life*, 17 February 1941, 63.
- 2 Barack Obama, "Renewing American Leadership," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 4, (July/August 2007): 2-3, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/62636/barack-obama/renewing-american-leadership?page=show> (accessed 21 January 2017).
- 3 See US Department of Defense, "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," 5 January 2012. A Version of the document is archived at the Council on Foreign Relations website: <http://www.cfr.org/defense-strategy/sustaining-us-global-leadership-priorities-21st-century-defense/p26976> (accessed 22 January 2017).
- 4 Andrew Bacevich, *Washington Rules: America's Path the Permanent War* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010), 20.
- 5 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952), 74.
- 6 Ibid., 5.
- 7 David Brooks, "Obama, Gospel and Verse," *The New York Times*, April 26, 2007, A25, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/26/opinion/26brooks.html> (accessed 26 February 2013).
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Barack Obama, "Remarks by the President at the Acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize," *The White House: Office of the Press Secretary*, 10 December 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-acceptance-nobel-peace-prize> (accessed 27 February 2013). See also: Barack Obama, "Nobel Lecture: A Just and Lasting Peace," 10 December 2009, [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture\\_en.html#](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2009/obama-lecture_en.html#) (26 February 2013).
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 David Brooks, "Obama's Christian Realism," *The New York Times*, December 15, 2009, A41, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/15/opinion/15brooks.html> (accessed 26 February 2013).
- 12 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1949), 40-41.
- 13 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Forgetting Reinhold Niebuhr," *New York Times Book Review*, 18 September 2005, <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/18/books/review/forgetting-reinhold-niebuhr.html> (accessed 12 February 2017). Also see Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *A Life in the 20th Century: Innocent Beginnings, 1917-1950* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 249-251.
- 14 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of Its Traditional Defence* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), xi. Schlesinger presents this quote on page 170 of *The Vital Center*.
- 15 Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*, 1.

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- 16 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *A Life in the 20th Century: Innocent Beginnings, 1917-1950* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 505.
- 17 Quoted in Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel*, 232.
- 18 See “[Redacted]” “MEMORANDUM TO THE FILES, DATE: 29 July 1954, SUBJECT: SCHLESINGER, Arthur M., Jr., #4143”; box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL.
- 19 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 507-508.
- 20 As distinct from his papers at Stanford’s Hoover Institute where there are important documents, but enough material existed elsewhere to make a formal visit unnecessary for this leg of the project.
- 21 Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 91.
- 22 Hugh Wilford, *Hugh Wilford, The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, Mass., 2008), 89.
- 23 Quoted in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 201.
- 24 See for instance Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Mary Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002). While the content of these studies is not for the most part directly related to my research, such work on what McAlister calls the “culture of US imperialism”—broadly understood—offers a useful methodological framework for this dissertation.
- 25 Stuart Hall, “The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism among the Theorists,” in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 36.
- 26 See Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971).
- 27 *Ibid.*, 178.
- 28 Hall, “The Toad in the Garden,” 38.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 37, 54.
- 30 David Forgacs ed., *An Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916-1935* (New York: Schocken Books, 1988), 190.
- 31 T.J. Jackson Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities,” *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (June 1985): 571.
- 32 Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso Press, 2001), 1.

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- 33 C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).
- 34 See: (Federation of American Scientists) “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security (April 14, 1950),” “Conclusions and Recommendations,” <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68-cr.htm>; Section I: “Background of the Present World Crisis,” <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68-1.htm> (accessed February 5, 2010).
- 35 Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA, and Post-War American Hegemony* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.
- 36 On the relevance of Gramsci to International Relations scholars, for starters, see for instance Stephen Gill ed., *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 1993); Willam I. Robinson, “Gramsci and Globalisation: From Nation-State to Transnational Hegemony,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, Vol. 8, No. 4, December 2005, 559–574; and Alison Ayers ed., *Gramsci, Political Economy, and International Relations Theory: Modern Princes and Naked Emperors* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
- 37 Michael Hunt, *American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Wielded Global Dominance* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 314.
- 38 See for instance Melvyn Leffler’s *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), which opens: “In the beginning, there was an ideological clash” (3).
- 39 Robert Griffith, “The Cultural Turn in Cold War Studies,” *Reviews in American History*, Vol. 29, 2001, 150.
- 40 William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009), 3. In addition to Williams, who studied and then taught at the University of Madison, other ‘Wisconsin School’ revisionists include his former students Walter LaFeber, Thomas J. McCormick, Lloyd Gardner, and Patrick Hearden, as well as Gar Alperovitz and Gabriel Kolko.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 157.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 206.
- 43 See John Lewis Gaddis, “The Tragedy of Cold War History: Reflections on Revisionism,” *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 1 (1994), 142-154.
- 44 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 405.
- 45 See Christopher Lasch, “The Cultural Cold War,” *The Nation*, 11 September 1967, 198-212.
- 46 Concerning the latter authors, see for example Marilyn Young, *The Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), and Fredrik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America’s Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012).
- 47 For other examples of other work in this mode, for starters see David Cauter, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1978); Victor S. Navasky, *Naming Names* (New York: Viking Press, 1980); David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So*



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*Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987); and Joel Kovel, *Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anticommunism in the Making of America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Albert Fried, *McCarthyism: The Great American Red Scare* (Oxford University Press, 1997)

- 48 Ellen Schrecker, "The Growth of the Anti-Communist Network" in *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1994; 2002), 12.
- 49 Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 412.
- 50 See "VENONA: The U.S. Army's Signal Intelligence Service, the precursor to the National Security Agency, began a secret program in February 1943 later codenamed VENONA," [https://www.nsa.gov/news-features/declassified\\_documents/venona/](https://www.nsa.gov/news-features/declassified_documents/venona/) (accessed 4 March 2017).
- 51 See for instance Douglas Linder, "The VENONA Files and the Alger Hiss Case," <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/hiss/hissvenona.html> (accessed 4 March 2017). Hiss began work as a government attorney in 1933, serving during the war with the State Department's Office of Far Eastern Affairs, in which capacity he attended the Yalta Conference. He helped organize, and then presided as secretary-general of the United Nations Charter Conference in San Francisco, from April to June 1945. He left the State Department in 1946
- 52 For more of Haynes and Khler's work, see Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Iгореvich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Kyrill M. Anderson, *The Soviet World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *Early Cold War Spies: The Espionage Trials that Shaped American Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).
- 53 Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 155.
- 54 See Sarah Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey: A Woman of The Nation* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1987), 203.
- 55 Landon R.Y. Storrs, *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 1.
- 56 See Theodore Draper, *The Roots of American Communism* (New York: Viking Press, 1957), and *American Communism and Soviet Russia: The Formative Period* (New York: Viking Press, 1960).
- 57 "The Right's Cold War Revision: Current Espionage Fears have Given New Life to Liberal Anticommunism," *The Nation*, 24 July 2000, 22-24; John Earl Haynes, "The Cold War Debate Continues: A Traditionalist View of Historical Writing on Domestic Communism and Anti-Communism," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 2; no. 1 (Winter 2000): 76-115; and John Earl Haynes, "Reflections on Ellen Schrecker and Maurice Isserman's Essay, 'The Right's Cold War Revision,'" undated, <http://www.johnearlhaynes.org/page47.html> (accessed 6 March 2017).
- 58 Kevin Mattson, *When America Was Great: The Fighting Faith of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 5-6. See also Kevin Mattson, "Revisiting *The Vital Center*," *Dissent*, Winter 2005, 105-109.
- 59 Kevin Mattson, "Revisiting *The Vital Center*," *Dissent*, Winter 2005, 105-109, <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/revisiting-the-vital-center> (accessed 3 March 2017).

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- 60 Mattson, *When America was Great*, 8, 10.
- 61 Jennifer Delton, *Rethinking the 1950s: How Anticommunism and the Cold War Made America Liberal* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 14; 15; 37.
- 62 Jennifer Luff, *Commonsense Anticommunism: Labor and Civil Liberties between the World Wars* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2012), 1. Also see Eric Arnesen, "Recasting Anticommunism"; Judy Kutulas, "Commonsense Revisionism: Labor and Anticommunism in Jennifer Luff's *Commonsense Anticommunism*"; and Tony Michels, "Two Faces of Labor Anticommunism," *Journal of The Historical Society*; 6 June 2013: 115–155.
- 63 Richard Gid Powers, *Not Without Honor: The History of American Anticommunism* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), x.
- 64 K.A. Cuordileone, "The Torment of Secrecy: Reckoning with American Communism and Anti-Communism After Venona," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 35, no. 4, September 2011: 621.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 42.
- 66 Judy Kutulas, *The Long War: The Intellectual People's Front and Anti-Stalinism, 1930-1940* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995), 227; 10.
- 67 Irving Kristol, *Neoconservatism: The Autobiography of an Idea* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 3.
- 68 See Joseph Dorman: *Arguing the World: The New York Intellectuals in Their Own Words* (The University of Chicago Press, 2000). Dorman focused on the specific foursome of Bell, Kristol, Howe, and Glazer; his book became the basis for a PBS documentary aired prior to its release in 2000. See "Arguing the World," <http://www.pbs.org/arguing/index.html> (accessed 5 March 2017).
- 69 Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 10-11.
- 70 Alexander Bloom, *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals and Their World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 211-212.
- 71 Neil Jumanville, *Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America* (Berkeley, the University of California Press, 1991); xii-xiv.
- 72 Hugh Wilford, *The New York Intellectuals: From Vanguard to Institution* (Manchester University Press, 1995), 236.
- 73 Nathan Abrams, "A Profoundly Hegemonic Moment: De-Mythologizing the Cold War New York Jewish Intellectuals," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 21, No.3 Spring 2003, 81.
- 74 John Ehrman, *The Rise of Neoconservatism: Intellectuals and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1994* (New Haven, CT.: Yale University Press, 1995), 32-33.
- 75 Justin Vaisse *Neoconservatism: The Biography of a Movement* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010), 38.

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- 76 Vaisse *Neoconservatism*, 30-31.
- 77 Paul A. Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review*, December 2011: 3091.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 1348, 1350.
- 79 See Andrew Bacevish, *America's War for the Greater Middle East* (New York: Random House, 2016).
- 80 See Letter from Kennan to Schlesinger, 17 October 1967; and Schlesinger to Kennan, 23 October 1967; Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Origins of the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs* 46, no. 1 (October 1967): 52. As formulated by the poet: "Greek tragedy is the tragedy of necessity; i.e. the feeling aroused in the spectator is 'What a pity it had to be this way'; Christian tragedy is the tragedy of possibility, 'What a pity it was this way when it might have been otherwise.'" See W.H. Auden, "The Christian Tragic Hero: Contrasting Captain Ahab's Doom and Its Classic Greek Prototype," *New York Times Book Review*, December 16, 1945, BR1.

### **Chapter One: Tragedy of Possibility**

- 1 Henry Luce, "The American Century," *Life*, 17 February 1941, 63, 64.
- 2 For example, see W. Scott Lucas, "Mobilizing Culture: The State-Private Network and the CIA in the early Cold War," in Dale Carter and Robin Clifton eds., *War and Cold War in American Foreign Policy, 1942-62* (London: Palgrave, 2002); and Hugh Wilford and Helen Laville eds., *The U.S. Government, Citizen Groups, and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
- 3 While the CFR was formally incorporated in New York in July 1921, it originated informally among advisors to President Woodrow Wilson who met discreetly with British counterparts on the sidelines of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. According to its official history, the first phase of its organization dates to the winter of 1917-1918 when a small "academic band gathered discreetly in a [Manhattan] hideaway... to assemble the data they thought necessary to make the world safe for democracy." "The Inquiry," in which Lippmann took part, was set in motion by Wilson's request for a taskforce to develop plans for America's national interest during and after the war; what started as a "working fellowship of distinguished scholars" quickly developed into a "club of New York financiers and international lawyers." Peter Grose, *Continuing the Inquiry: The Council on Foreign Relations from 1921 to 1996* (New York: The Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1996; 2006), 1.
- 4 John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (2000); 14; Michael Hunt, *American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Wielded Global Dominance* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 7.
- 5 Quoted in Laurence H. Shoup and William Minter's "Shaping a New World Order: The Council on Foreign Relations' Blueprint for World Hegemony," in Holly Sklar ed., *Trilateralism: The Trilateral Commission and Elite Planning for World Management* (South End Press: Boston, 1980), 146-147 [there is also a version of this essay in Shoup and Minter's *Imperial Brain Trust: The Council on Foreign Relations and US Foreign Policy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977; 2004), 117-177]. These discussions took place as part of the 'War and Peace Studies Project,' a partnership between roughly one hundred CFR members and State Department officials, meeting on over 250 occasions between September 1939 and August 1945. Shoup and Minter cite the original State Department

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memoranda: “Minutes S-3 of the Security Subcommittee.” The group had four topical committees: ‘Economic and Financial,’ ‘Security and Armaments,’ ‘Territorial,’ and ‘Political,’ participants prepared 682 classified memoranda for the State Department, which distributed them to appropriate government departments; among members of the eight-person steering committee was future CIA chief Allen Dulles. On the War and Peace Studies Project in specific, also see Noam Chomsky, *Towards a New Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy From Vietnam to Reagan* (New York: New Press, 1982), 103-105; Michael Wala, *The Council on Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 1994), 32-33; Patrick Hearden, “Postwar Planning before Pearl Harbor,” in *Architects of Globalism: Building a New World Order During World War II* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 11-38; Inderjeet Parmar, *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of the Role and Influence of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 110-119; and Grose, *Continuing the Inquiry*, 23-25, <http://www.cfr.org/about/history/cfr/inquiry.html> (accessed September 12, 2016). For other useful studies of the CFR in general, see Robert Schulzinger, *The Wise Men of Foreign Affairs: The History of the Council on Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); and William G. Domhoff, “The Council on Foreign Relations and the National Interest,” in *The Power Elite and The State: How Policy is Made in America* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1990), 113-143;

- 6 Henry Luce, “The American Century,” *Life*, February 17, 1941, 63-64. Luce worried that most Americans were “were unable to accommodate themselves spiritually and practically” to the realities that would allow them to “play their part as a world power,” which could have “disastrous consequences for...all mankind.”
- 7 See “Free World Group Meets Here Today: Counter-Drive on Nazism and Fascism to Be Pressed,” *New York Times*, 3 May 1942, <http://select.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html?res=F10C12F7385E13748DDDA0894DD405B8288F1D3> (accessed 13 January 2017).
- 8 Henry A. Wallace, “The Price of Free World Victory,” *Free World*, June 1942, 9; 11-13, <http://www.unz.org/Pub/FreeWorld-1942jun-00009?View=PDF> (accessed 21 November 2016).
- 9 Louis Dolivet, “In the Forefront of the Battle,” *Free World*, June 1942, 21. As explained by Dolivet: “The regular Free World broadcasts received a tremendous impetus when Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, Chairman of the Free World Dinner held in the Commodore Hotel on May 8, introduced Vice-President Wallace to the C.B.S. audience over a coast-to-coast network. The Vice-President’s speech was heard by millions of listeners in this country and the summary which he delivered in Spanish was broadcast by short wave to South America where it was rebroadcast on the regular Free World programs in Uruguay, Mexico, and Cuba. It has also been sent out over station WRUL which Free World uses in its short wave broadcasts to Europe and the Far East.”
- 10 J. Alvarez del Vayo, “Free World at Work,” *Free World*, June 1942, 22; See Henry Wallace, *The Century of the Common Man* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1943).
- 11 See “Paramount Victory Short No. T2-3: The Price of Victory,” prod. and dir. William H. Pine, 14 min., Office of War information, 3 December 1942. “The Price of Victory” was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Film in 1943.
- 12 Wallace, “The Price of Free World Victory,” 13, 11.

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- 13 Wallace's first major accomplishment was devising the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), along with Rexford Tugwell, which raised the price of farm commodities by giving incentives to reduce surpluses. Approved by Congress in May 1933, the AAA became an important hallmark of the early New Deal. After the Supreme Court declared the AAA unconstitutional in January 1936, Wallace devised a replacement program, the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, which was passed by Congress the following month.
  - 14 See John C. Culver and John Hyde, *American Dreamer: A Life of Henry A. Wallace* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000), 102-108; 197.
  - 15 Norman D. Markowitz, *The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948* (New York: The Free Press, 1973), 45.
  - 16 See John Judis, *Grand Illusion: Critics and Champions of the American Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1992), 64-65.
  - 17 Franz Schurmann, *The Logic of World Power: An Inquiry into the Origins, Currents, and Contradictions of World Politics* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 67; 77.
  - 18 On CPUSA organizing in the 1930s, see for instance "The Industrial Worker's Movement," in Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage books, 1979); Mark Naison, *Communists In Harlem During The Depression* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer And Hoe: Alabama Communists During The Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).
  - 19 George R. Donahue, *The World Federation of Trade Unions: Facts about a Communist Front* (Washington, D.C.: International Union of Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers, AFL-CIO, 1958); Gerald Horne, *Communist Front? The Civil Rights Congress, 1946-1956* (Rutherford, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1988); John W. Sherman, *A Communist Front at Mid-Century: The American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, 1933-1959* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001); Lynn Mally, "Inside a Communist Front: A Post-Cold War Analysis of the New Theatre League," *American Communist History*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2007: 65-95.
  - 20 "Men of 16 Nations See a Free World: Former Foreign Leaders Found Association in Washington for Collective Security" *New York Times*, 16 Jun 1941, 5; also see "Anti-Axis Unity Sought in Parley: American and Foreign Leaders Meet at Capital Today to Map World Government," *New York Times*, 15 June 1941, 5.
  - 21 See "Foes of Hitler Launch New Magazine," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 18, 1941, 6. Housed initially near Times Square at 55 West 42nd St. across from Bryant Park, in 1943 Free World, Inc. moved around the corner to 8 West 40th St., directly opposite the main branch of the New York Public Library. The following year it moved for good to 144 Bleeker St. in Greenwich Village, two blocks from Washington Square Park (see the respective first issues of *Free World* for the years 1941 (October), 1943 (January), and 1944 (July).
  - 22 "How the Underground Fights Back," Free World Association, 1942, 2, <https://archive.org/stream/HowTheUndergroundFightsBack/HUFB#page/n1/mode/2up> (accessed 1 May 2107).

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- 23 “British War Relief Group Starts Drive,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, November 14, 1941, 37; “Save Doomed Jews, Huge Rally Pleads,” *New York Times*, 2 March 1943, 1.
- 24 See “General Declaration of the Third Free World Congress,” *Free World*, December 1943, 510, 511.
- 25 See “A Message from President Roosevelt to the Fourth Free World Congress,” *Free World*, April 1945, 11.
- 26 Accessible in the UNZ.org digital archive are fifty-five issues of *Free World* covering a period from October 1941 through December 1946 (no editions appear for May 1942, January-June 1944, or August 1946; issues from July 1944 onward are shown with magazine covers featuring colorful artwork, while prior editions are displayed without a cover: <http://www.unz.org/Pub/FreeWorld> (accessed 1 May 2017). The month prior to the opening of the United Nations Conference on International Organization in April 1945, *Free World*'s tagline was changed to “A Non-Partisan Magazine Devoted to the United Nations and Democracy.” In October 1945, as the UN Charter went into effect, it became simply: “A Monthly Magazine for the United Nations.”
- 27 Accessible in the UNZ.org digital archive are fifty-five issues of *Free World* covering a period from October 1941 through December 1946 (no editions appear for May 1942, January-June 1944, or August 1946; issues from July 1944 onward are shown with magazine covers featuring colorful artwork, while prior editions are displayed without a cover: <http://www.unz.org/Pub/FreeWorld> (accessed 1 May 2017).
- 28 Cordell Hull, “There will be a better day...”, *Free World*, October 1941, 5.
- 29 Archibald MacLeish, “The Western Sky: Words for a Song,” *Free World*, October 1941, 6.
- 30 “Editorial,” *Free World*, October 1941, 8, 9.
- 31 The full list of honorary board members is as follows: F. Cyril James, Guillermo Labarca, Fiorello La Guardia, Rt.-Hon. Ernest LaPointe, Henri Laugier, Perez Leiros, Max Lerner, Li Yu-Ying, Archibald MacLeish, Thomas Mann, Edouard Montpetit, Gunnar Myrdal, Reinhold Niebuhr, Fernando Ortiz, A. Ossorio Y Gallardo, Isabel de Palencia, Ralph Barton Perry, Stoyan Pribichevich, Paul Rivet, Gaetano Salvemini, F.R. Scott, Count Carlo Sforza, James T. Shotwell, T.V. Soong, Clarence K. Streit, Raymond Gram Swing, Alberto Tarchiani, Dorothy Thompson, Rustem Vambery, Eduardo Villasenor, Lucien Vogel, Wesley W. Waymack, Mary E. Wooley, Quincy Wright.
- 32 The complete list of international board members is as follows: Miguel O. de Almeida, Marcelo T. de Alvear, Max Ascoli, Henry A. Atkinson, Philip J. Noel Baker, Dorothy J. Bellanca, Robert Bendiner, Edouard Benes, G. A. Borgese, Claude Bowers, Esther C. Brunauer, Baldomero Sanin Cano, Gen. Lazaro Cardenas, F. J. van Cauwelaert, Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Ben. M. Cherrington, Mmm. Chiang Kai-Shek, John B. Condliffe, Percy E. Corbett, David Cushman Coyle, J. W. Dafoe, Rt.-Hon. R. Dandurand, Jonathan Daniels, Julius Deutsch, Paulo Duarte. Stephen Duggan, Albert Einstein, P. T. Ellsworth, Mordecai Ezekiel, Henri Focillon, Hon. Adelard Godbout, Frank P. Graham, Harold K. Guinzburg, John Gunther, Carl J. Hambro, Mrs. J. B. Harriman, Bernardo Ibañez, Hon. Harold L. Ickes. Appearing in a separate list, along with Louis Dolivet, were British statesmen and Nobel Peace laureate Sir Norman Angell; Uruguayan intellectual H. Fernandez Artucio; French politicians Henri Bonnet and Pierre Cot; head of the American Association of the United Nations (AAUN), Clark M. Eichelberger; publisher of *The Nation* Freda Kirchwey; American Zionist leader Louis Lipsky; and director of the Manhattan-based China Institute, Chih Meng. The editorial board members were Edgard A. Mowrer, Walter Millis, Anatol Muhlstein, Carlo a Prato, Milos Safranek, Michael Straight,

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- J. Alvarez del Vayo, Robert J. Watt, Wou Saofong. As of October 1941 Free World, Inc. was directed by Freda Kirchwey, Clark Eichelberger, and Simon Marcovici Cleja; Li Yu Ying was listed as the chairman, Julio Álvarez del Vayo the vice-chairman, and Wou Saofong the secretary-treasurer.
- 33 See: Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 141-143.
- 34 Heiress Dorothy Payne Whitney and her first husband Willard Dickerman Straight co-founded *The New Republic* in 1914, providing journalists Herbert Croly, Walter Weyl, and Walter Lippmann with financial backing to launch a left-liberal magazine in support of Woodrow Wilson's foreign policy ('Wilsonian' internationalism).
- 35 See "Milestones," *Time*, 2 March 1942.
- 36 See "Actress' Son, 7, Drowns: Willard Dolivet Found in Pool on Westchester Farm," *New York Times*, 8 September 1952, 21; "Boy's Death Restudied; Dolivet Drowning Investigated at Father's Cabled Request," *New York Times*, 11 September 1952, 35; and "\$110,000 In Boys Estate: Mother Files Papers in Case of Dolivet Child Who Drowned," *New York Times*, 12 September 1952, 23.
- 37 On Dolivet's relationship to Orson Welles and his wife Rita Hayworth, see: Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso Press, 1997), 395; Joseph McBride, *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles? : A Portrait of an Independent Career* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2006), 117-118; Simon Callow, *Orson Welles, Volume 2: Hello Americans* (New York: Viking Press, 2006), 183-201.
- 38 See Callow, *Orson Welles, Volume 2*, 244.
- 39 Roland Perry, *Last of the Cold War Spies: The Life Of Michael Straight* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2005), 144.
- 40 Joseph McBride, *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?: A Portrait of an Independent Career* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2006), 117-118.
- 41 See Henry Ward, "Internal War Predicted for France by Aviator: Strengthening of England and American Aid are Awaited," *Pittsburgh Press*, May 8, 1941.
- 42 In a piece for libertarian journal *The Freeman*, journalist Alice Widner discussed suspected Communist influence in the founding of the UN, based on supposed knowledge of HUAC hearings, and referred to "a Rumanian with the alias Louis Dolivet, who has been identified in sworn testimony as 'an agent of the Comintern' and who is now barred from the United States." See "Hiss Led the Way," *The Freeman: A Fortnightly for Individualists*, November 17, 1952, 128. Similar information appears in the work of Karl Baarslag, a former Director of Research for HUAC who might have also served at the Russian Desk for the Office of Naval Intelligence during World War II. As a researcher for the Church League of America (CLA) based in Wheaton, Illinois, Baarslag issued a report on Communism in the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), which appeared in the group's magazine *News and Views* in 1959. Baarslag described having seen an AFSC bulletin advertising Dolivet's presence at a November 1950 speaking engagement, wherein he was described as the editor of *United Nations World* and 'an international roving correspondent for the New York Post.' Baarslag sourced his information to pages 7806-7808 of the Congressional Record for May 25, 1950, which gave detailed information about the man "who is not Dolivet at all but really Ludwig Brecher of probable Rumanian extraction." According to this account, Brecher "had lived for a time in the small French village of D'Olivet from which he derived the name he used in this country." According to Baarslag, "Congressman Jenison of Illinois charged that Brecher, alias Dolivet was, according to the State

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Department, ‘a very dangerous Stalinist agent and a member of the International Communist apparatus.’ Dolivet’s activities in behalf of the Soviets was set forth in some detail in a French magazine, *La Revue Parlementaire* for Dec. 15, 1949. The French secret police knew Dolivet as Ludwig Udeanu a close associate of the notorious Soviet agent Willy Muenzenberg.” Moreover, “Under the Comintern name of Udeanu, Dolivet had written for *Inprecorr*, the journal of the Communist International. He was the brains of a Communist operation which infiltrated and took over a French paper, *Le Monde*. In 1932 he was in Amsterdam helping organize one of the Soviets’ first world congresses for peace,” and “was behind the scenes pulling wires for the Comintern at the 1933 World Committee for Struggle Against War and Fascism and in 1935 in Paris for another Soviet-instigated Universal Rally for Peace.” Beyond that:

In 1934 Dolivet was in Russia and about this time he made contact with the Swedish banker Olaf Ashberg, who later in his memoirs admitted that he had been very active financial agent for the Soviets for many years. In 1937-38 Dolivet was accused of alleged embezzlement of funds raised in France in behalf of the Spanish Loyalists. He was a French citizen by this time and a protégé of Pierre Cot, Communist and later a government minister. Cot and Ashberg allegedly financed and helped him get control of the *Free World*, a magazine which later became the *United Nations World*. There is no information as to when he first came to this country except that he came on a visitor’s visa. He was turned down for U.S. citizenship in 1946 after serving 25 days in the U.S. Army in 1943.

Brecher—alias Udeanu—alias Dolivet went abroad in 1950 just before a Congressional Committee could serve him with a subpoena. The U.S. Immigration Service thereupon served notice that he would not be re-admitted to the United States presumably because of his role as an international Communist agent.

See Karl Baarslag, “American Friends Service Committee,” *News and Views*, 3 May 1959, 3.

- 43 United States Congress, *Annual Report Of the Committee on Un-American Activities for the Year 1950* (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1951), 4, <http://archive.org/stream/annualreportfory1950unit#page/n9/mode/2up> (accessed 30 April 2017)
- 44 See John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, “Alexander Vassiliev’s Notebooks: Provenance and Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Activities in the United States,” *The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*, 2009, <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/86/vassiliev-notebooks> (accessed 30 April 2017); and the “Vassiliev Notebooks Concordance File,” <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113863>, which contains the following entry on page 42: “Dolivet, Louis: Brother-in-law of Michael Straight and head of the Free World Association. Also know [sic] as Ludovici Udeanu and Ludwig Brecher. Romanian born, naturalized French citizen [sic] active in French Communist politics in the 1930s in association with Pierre Cot and Willi Munzenberg and a leader of La Rassemblement Universel Pour La Paix, an anti-Fascist front with strong Communist and Soviet ties. Escaped the fall of France and came to the United States in 1940. Brother-in-law of Michael Straight. Later a well-know [sic] figure in the Hollywood movie industry.”
- 45 Between 1937 and 1942, Straight worked in various capacities for the State Department and was perhaps also on the payroll of the Department of the Interior. He became *The New Republic’s* Washington correspondent in 1940, and assumed the magazine’s editorship the following year, turning its stance away from neutrality in the war against the Axis powers. He served in the US Air Force from 1942-1945. Straight’s Communist activities remaining undisclosed, he served from 1969 to 1977 as the deputy chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, and died in January 2004 at the age of 87. According to *The Telegraph*, Straight was recruited by Blunt, who was briefly his lover. As described in his *New York Times* obituary, at Cambridge University in 1934 Straight “became a member of the circle around John Maynard Keynes, socialized with young radical patricians like himself and joined the Communist Party... mostly in sympathy with its Popular Front objectives.”



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Straight moved to Washington D.C. in 1937 where, “after spurning Blunt’s order that he take a job on Wall Street—he worked as an economist for the Department of State. He continued to pursue both politics and his stratospheric social life, sharing a house with Joseph Alsop, drafting speeches for and dining with the Roosevelts, and writing his analytic memorandums, some of which he passed on to Soviet intelligence.” See Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, “Michael Straight, Who Wrote of Connection to Spy Ring, Is Dead at 87,” *New York Times*, 5 January 2004; “Michael Straight,” *The Telegraph*, 17 January 2004; also see Richard Norton-Taylor, “Michael Straight: Cambridge Spy Whose Testimony Was Crucial in Exposing Anthony Blunt,” *The Guardian*, 8 January 2004; and Perry, *Last of the Cold War Spies*, 143, 232.

- 46 Freda Kirchwey, “A Program of Action,” *The Nation*, 11 March 1944, 300. Also see Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 160.
- 47 Irving Brant, “We Must Live With Soviet Russia,” *Free World*, November 1943, 404. On Brant, see Ann T. Keene, “Brant, Irving Newton,” *American National Biography Online*, September 2005, <http://www.anb.org/articles/14/14-01144.html> (accessed 5 May 2017).
- 48 Henry Wallace, “America Tomorrow,” *Free World*, August 1943, 105.
- 49 On Wallace and the “what-if” question, see James Chace, “The Presidency of Henry Wallace: If FDR Had Not Dumped His Vice President in 1944” in Robert Crowley ed., *What If? Eminent Historians Imagine What Might Have Been* (New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group, 2001). Having assumed office as a relative neophyte with respect to foreign policy, Truman almost immediately found himself in occupied Germany at a ‘Big Three’ meeting with Winston Churchill (later his successor Clement Atlee) and Joseph Stalin. Tensions arising at the Potsdam summit, held in the summer 1945 as a continuation of the Yalta meeting earlier in the year, became a source of lasting mistrust and suspicion between Anglo-American and Soviet leaders as they negotiated issues including postwar tribunals and reparations, while considering how to rebuild Germany and the rest of Europe. In the Pacific, Allied troops were marching towards final victory without help from the Red Army, yet Stalin was on the verge of entering the fight in China, thereby insinuating Russia into the terms of settlement after Japan’s impending defeat. In the midst of these deliberations, Truman received word that US military scientists had successfully tested an atomic bomb; he threateningly told Stalin about this “powerful new weapon,” which the Soviet leader was secretly aware of, his spies having infiltrated the ‘Manhattan Project.’ From Stalin’s perspective it was not unreasonable to suspect that Truman had ulterior motives for authorizing the detonation of two atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, with devastating results; ending the war sooner than expected put a halt to the Soviets’ planned entry into the Pacific theater, while sending an unmistakable message to potential new adversaries in the form of ‘mushroom clouds.’
- 50 See Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 10; Mark L. Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World of Fear: Henry A. Wallace, Reinhold Niebuhr, and American Liberalism* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2000), 134.
- 51 Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World Of Fear*, 181.
- 52 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The U.S. Communist Party,” *Life*, 29 July 1946, 96.
- 53 For some of the more incisive discussions of Niebuhr, see: Richard Wightman Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (New York: Pantheon, 1985); Martin Halliwell, *The Constant Dialogue: Reinhold Niebuhr and American Intellectual Culture* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); John Patrick

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Diggins, *Why Niebuhr Now?* (University of Chicago Press, 2011); and Daniel F. Rice, *Reinhold Niebuhr and His Circle of Influence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

- 54 Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 169; 170-171.
- 55 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of Its Traditional Defense* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 7.
- 56 See "Text of Premier Stalin's Election Speech Broadcast by Moscow Radio," *New York Times*, February 10, 1946, 30; "George Kennan's Long Telegram," National Security Archive: George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/coldwar/documents/episode-1/kennan.htm>, (accessed 28 February 2016).
- 57 X [George Kennan], "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* 25, no. 4, (July 1947): 582; also see Michael Wala, *The Council on Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994), 79-82.
- 58 Winston Churchill, "The Sinews of Peace," 5 March 1946, <http://www.hpol.org/churchill/> (accessed November 26, 2010).
- 59 "President Harry S. Truman's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress," March 12, 1947, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/trudoc.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp) (accessed November 25, 2010).
- 60 George C. Marshall Jr., "Remarks by the Secretary of State at Harvard University," June 5, 1947, <http://marshallfoundation.org/library/digital-archive/marshall-plan-speech-original/> (accessed March 3, 2016).
- 61 Approved in 1949 and launched the following year, a similar project to assist developing countries, known as the Point Four Program—managed by the Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA)—arranged bilateral agreements with countries such as Iran and Pakistan. Also in 1949, ten Western European countries joined the US and Canada to form a political union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which became a military alliance after the start of the Korean War. Launched in April 1949, NATO's original European signatories were Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, Iceland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the UK; all of those countries were Marshall Plan recipients, along with Austria, Greece, Ireland, Sweden, Switzerland, Trieste (Italy), Turkey, and West Germany.
- 62 Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1947), 10.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 15.
- 64 See John Judis, "Walter Lippmann, George Kennan, Paul Nitze, and the Origins of the Cold War" in *Grand Illusion: Critics and Champions of the American Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1992), 74-75; 96-106; and George Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925-1950* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1967), 294.
- 65 Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 185-186.
- 66 Henry A. Wallace, "The Way To Peace: Division of World Between Russia and United States," September 12, 1946, <http://newdeal.feri.org/wallace/haw28.htm> (accessed 21 November 2016).

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- 67 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 419-433.
- 68 See “Speech by J.F. Byrnes, United States Secretary of State, Restatement of Policy on Germany, Stuttgart, September 6, 1946,” <https://usa.usembassy.de/etexts/ga4-460906.htm> (accessed 10 May 2017).
- 69 Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World Of Fear*, 216; Reinhold Niebuhr, “The Fight for Germany,” *Life*, 21 October 1946, 65.
- 70 Niebuhr, “The Fight for Germany,” 67; 72.
- 71 Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War: 1945-1966* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), 258; also see Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World of Fear*, xi; 214-218.
- 72 Heiress Dorothy Payne Whitney and her first husband Willard Dickerman Straight co-founded *The New Republic* in 1914, providing journalists Herbert Croly, Walter Weyl, and Walter Lippmann with financial backing to launch a left-liberal magazine in support of Woodrow Wilson’s foreign policy (‘Wilsonian’ internationalism).
- 73 On formation of the PCA, see Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 433-434; Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World Of Fear*; 134-140; and Markowitz, *The Rise and Fall of the People’s Century*, 220-221. There is disagreement/confusion as to whether or not the PCA’s founding took place in Washington D.C., as contended by Kleinman, or the Commodore Hotel in New York, as maintained by Culver and Hyde (and which seems more likely).
- 74 Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World Of Fear*, 228; Henry Wallace, “Unity for Progress,” Address before the Progressive Citizens of America, 29 December 1946.
- 75 Henry Wallace, “Jobs, Peace, Freedom,” *New Republic*, December 16, 1946, 786.
- 76 On the ADA, in addition to Gillon’s *Politics and Vision* and Kleinman’s see Mary Sperling McAuliffe, *Crisis on the Left: Cold War Politics and American Liberals, 1947-1954* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978); Richard H. Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age: American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985).
- 77 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 166.
- 78 William E. Bohn, “The Home Front: Americans for Democratic Action,” *The New Leader*, January 1947, 4; see also Kleinman, *A World of Hope, A World of Fear*, 227-228
- 79 Hook, as described by Norman Markowitz, “supported the meeting” at which the ADA was formed to replace the UDA. See Markowitz, *Rise and Fall of the People’s Century*, 232. On Levitas’ role in the ADA, as he told then-national secretary Reginald Zalles in 1951: “I have a sentimental feeling toward the ADA, since I was one of the small group that gave birth to ADA many years ago. It’s true that the child has grown since then: that very often I disagree with its policies organizationally as well as ideologically but I am still convinced that they can serve as a rallying point for all truly progressive and courageous liberal forces.... I don’t have to tell you that *The New Leader* is at your service at all times.” See Sol Levitas to Reginald Zalles, 15 October 1951, Box 82, folder 7, *New Leader Records*, Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New York [hereafter abbreviated as *New Leader Records*, Columbia].
- 80 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 459.

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- 81 See Henry Wallace, "Radio address concerning President Truman's proposed loan of \$400 million to Greece and Turkey," March 13, 1947, <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/speech-on-the-truman-doctrine/> (accessed November 21, 2016). Note: while this website incorrectly lists this speech as having been delivered March 27, the text it cites matches that which is listed in the index of the University of Iowa's Henry Wallace Papers as his March 13 address, and cited properly by various authors. See: [https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/msc/tomsc200/msc177/index\\_speechesby\\_1947.htm](https://www.lib.uiowa.edu/scua/msc/tomsc200/msc177/index_speechesby_1947.htm) (accessed November 21, 2016). Also see Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 436; and Markowitz, *The Rise and Fall of the People's Century*, 235-236.
- 82 See Henry Wallace, "Back to the United Nations," March 27, 1947, <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/speech-on-the-truman-doctrine/> (accessed November 21, 2016); Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 436; Markowitz, *The Rise and Fall of the People's Century*, 435-436.
- 83 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 455.
- 84 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 224-225.
- 85 Henry Wallace, "I Shall Run in 1948," *Mutual Broadcasting System*, Chicago, Illinois, December 29, 1947, <http://newdeal.feri.org/wallace/haw29.htm> (accessed 13 May 2017); also see Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 456-457.
- 86 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 460-461.
- 87 See "WE are for Wallace," *New York Times*, 20 October 1948, 32.
- 88 Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 452.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 478.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 434-435, 453, 463, 458-459.
- 91 See Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 187-188; Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 447, 480.
- 92 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 482-483.
- 93 Sidney Hook to Philip Mayer, 2 April 1948, in Edward Shapiro ed., *Letters of Sidney Hook: Democracy, Communism, and the Cold War* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 113; also see Hook to Mayer, 30 August 1947, 110-111.
- 94 Sidney Hook to Philip Mayer, 16 October 1947; Hook to Mayer, 30 July 1947, in Shapiro ed., *Letters of Sidney Hook*, 107, 113.
- 95 Norman Thomas, "Why I am a Candidate," 9 May 1948, quoted in Raymond Gregory, *Norman Thomas: The Great Dissenter* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), 222; also see Bernard K. Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress: Norman Thomas and the Decline of American Socialism* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 256-257.
- 96 Quoted in Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress*, 257. On Thomas's criticism of Wallace over the AAA, also see W.A. Swanberg, *Norman Thomas: The Last Idealist* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976),

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317; and Murray Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1961); 232.

97 See Culver and Hyde, *American Dreamer*, 461, 465.

98 See Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress*, 256.

99 Quoted in Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel*, 232.

100 Quoted in Fleischman, *Norman Thomas: A Biography*, 227.

101 Hubert H. Humphrey, "Democratic National Convention Address," 14 July 1948, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hubertthumphey1948dnc.html> (accessed 15 May 2017).

102 Americans for Democratic Action, "Henry A. Wallace: The First Three Months," 27 April 1948, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, [https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study\\_collections/1948campaign/large/docs/documents/index.php?documentid=5-1&pagenumber=5](https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/1948campaign/large/docs/documents/index.php?documentid=5-1&pagenumber=5) (accessed 15 May 2017).

103 "An Appeal to the Liberals of America"; box 389, folder 16; Schlesinger Papers, NYPL.

104 "Mr. Wallace's Tragedy," *New York Times*, 4 November 1948, 28.

105 Henry A. Wallace, "Personal Statement on the Korean Situation," quoted in John C. Culver and John Hyde, *American Dreamer: A Life of Henry A. Wallace* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000), 508; and Kleinman, 293.

106 Henry Wallace, "Where I Stand," *The New Leader*, 26 August 1950, 3.

107 "... And Where He Stood," *The New Leader*, 26 August 1950, 2, 4.

108 Norman Thomas to Henry A. Wallace, 2 April 1956; box 63, folder 1, Thomas Papers.

109 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 477; Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Who Was Henry A. Wallace? The Story of a Perplexing and Indomitably Naive Public Servant" (book review), *Los Angeles Times*, 12 March 2000, <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/mar/12/books/bk-7842> (accessed 15 May 2017).

## **Chapter Two: Following *The New Leader***

1 See "'Is Co-Existence Possible?' A Tamiment Institute Public Forum, Held at the Auditorium of the Museum of Modern Art, April 14, 1955" (pamphlet); box 381; folder 3, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL; and box 50; folder 14, Sol Stein Papers, Columbia.

2 Editorial Statement [reverse cover], *The New Leader*, 26 August 1950.

3 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Forward," *The New Leader*, January/April 2006, 1.

4 Daniel Bell, "The Early Years: Learning History Firsthand," *The New Leader*, January/April 2006, 10.

5 Sidney Hook, "Freedom in American Culture," *The New Leader*, 6 April 1953, 512.

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- 6 Sydney Hook, *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 509-510.
  - 7 Charles McGrath, "A Liberal Beacon Burns Out," *New York Times*, 23 January 2006.
  - 8 Myron Kolatch, "Introduction," *The New Leader*, January/April 2006, 5.
  - 9 Vladimir Lenin, "Decree on Peace," November 8, 1917, <http://www.pitt.edu/~syd/ldp.html> (accessed August 4, 2015).
  - 10 See Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 229.
  - 11 See Tony Michels, *A Fire in Their Hearts: Yiddish Socialists in New York* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2009).
  - 12 Hugh Wilford, "Playing the CIA's Tune? *The New Leader* and the Cultural Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 1 (2003): 18.
  - 13 "Do Stalin's New Purges Mean War?," *The New Leader* 26 January 26 1953, 3.
  - 14 "A Liberal Beacon Burns Out."
  - 15 Quoted in [no attribution] "Biographical Note, *New Leader* Records," Columbia University, [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd\\_6912690/index.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/archival/collections/ldpd_6912690/index.html) (accessed 8 August 2017).
  - 16 See Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 229-232.
  - 17 Sol Levitas, "Letter to Alexander J. Halpern," July 8, 1941, ACCF Records; TAM 271, box 1; folder 13; Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, New York University.
  - 18 "Speaking for Freedom," *Steelworker News*, 25 December 1950; box 95; folder 2, *The New Leader Records*.
  - 19 Sol Levitas to E.T. Colosino, 6 February 1951; box 95; folder 5, *The New Leader* Records.
  - 20 "Limited Mobilization [editorial]," *The New Leader*, 25 December 1950, 30.
  - 21 Quoted in Sarah Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 210.
  - 22 *Ibid.*, 212.
  - 23 *Ibid.*, 212-213.
  - 24 Norman Thomas, "Reflections on a Secular Religion," *The American Mercury*, February 1949, 243.
  - 25 In 1921 the ISS was reorganized into the League for Industrial Democracy (LID), adopting the slogan: "Production for use, not for profit"; the LID's youth wing became Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in 1960.

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- 26 For useful work on Norman Thomas, to start with see Murray Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1961); Harry Fleischman, *Norman Thomas: A Biography: 1884-1968* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969); Charles Gorham, *Leader at Large: The Long and Fighting Life of Norman Thomas* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1970); Bernard K. Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress: Norman Thomas and the Decline of American Socialism* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970); James C. Duram, *Norman Thomas* (New York: Twayne, 1974); W.A. Swanberg, *Norman Thomas: The Last Idealist* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976); and Raymond Gregory, *Norman Thomas: The Great Dissenter* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008).
- 27 Norman Thomas, "A Defense of Dissenters," *Princeton Alumni Weekly* XVI, March 15, 1916, 527, quoted in Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress*, 21 [see endnote 11 in chapter one, page 297].
- 28 Quoted in Murray Seidler, *Respectable Rebel*, 28.
- 29 See Raymond F. Gregory, *Norman Thomas: The Great Dissenter* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), 205; and Martin Luther King Jr., "The Bravest Man I Ever Met," *Pageant*, 6 June 1965, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/essay-mlk-entitled-bravest-man-i-ever-met> (accessed 9 March 2017).
- 30 Quoted in Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress*, 37.
- 31 Norman Thomas, "What Is Bolshevism?," *The World Tomorrow*, II, February 1919, 37-39, quoted in Johnpoll, *Pacifists Progress*, 36-37.
- 32 Norman Thomas to Sol Stein, 28 May 1954; ACCF Records, TAM 023, box 4, folder 22; Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, New York University.
- 33 Sidney Hook, *Hersey, Yes—Conspiracy, No* (New York: John Day Publishers, 1953).
- 34 See Hook, *Out of Step*, 29.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 61-62; 66.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 89.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 82-85.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 80. Also see David Sidorsky, "Charting the Intellectual Career of Sidney Hook," in Matthew J. Cotter ed., *Sidney Hook Reconsidered* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2004), 20.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 88-89.
- 40 *Ibid.*, 81.
- 41 Sidorsky, "Charting the Intellectual Career of Sidney Hook," in *Sidney Hook Reconsidered*, 33.
- 42 Sidney Hook, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation* (New York: John Day Company, 1933), 8-9.
- 43 Hook, *Out of Step*, 90-91.

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- 44 Gary Bullert, "From Dewey to Hook: World War II and the Crisis of Democracy," in *Sidney Hook Reconsidered*, 204.
- 45 Sidney Hook, "Communism Without Dogmas," *Modern Monthly*, April 1934, in Robert B. Talisse and Robert Tempio eds., *Sidney Hook on Pragmatism, Democracy, and Freedom* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2002), 111-112.
- 46 On CPUSA organizing in the 1930s, see "The Industrial Worker's Movement," in Frances Fox Piven And Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York: Vintage books, 1979); Mark Naison, *Communists In Harlem During The Depression* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer And Hoe: Alabama Communists During The Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).
- 47 Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going?* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1937), 217-218.
- 48 After Trotsky's death, followers of Cannon and Shachtman splintered into opposing camps divided over several issues, including the question of whether to view the USSR as a "degenerated workers' state," as had Trotsky formulated, or worse. Amid continued disagreement about the utility of allying with non-Trotskyists, the anti-Stalinist left became increasingly riven by doctrinal disputes, further complicated by the presence of dissident communists grouped around Jay Lovestone, a devotee of Bukharin.
- 49 Hook, *Out of Step*, 313.
- 50 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "The U.S. Communist Party," *Life*, 29 July 1946, 90.
- 51 See "Arthur Schlesinger Jr." [FBI Name Check File] , 7 February 1963; box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 6-7, 34, 57.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 124.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 128.
- 55 Schlesinger, *A Life in the Twentieth Century*, 297.
- 56 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "The Record of Liberal Anti-Communists," *The Washington Post* [opinions], 23 May 1996, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1996/05/23/the-record-of-liberal-anti-communists/8159e38d-1569-46bc-a4fad60b38d985a2/?utm\\_term=.8e6cc326403c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/1996/05/23/the-record-of-liberal-anti-communists/8159e38d-1569-46bc-a4fad60b38d985a2/?utm_term=.8e6cc326403c) (accessed 4 August 2017).
- 57 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "The U.S. Communist Party," *Life*, 29 July 1946, 96.
- 58 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, xxiii-xxiv; 245.
- 59 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 131; 375-385.
- 60 See Robert Sherrill, "Court Historian for Camelot: Robert Kennedy and His Times, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.," *Inquiry*, 18 September 1978, 22-24, <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Inquiry-1978sep18-00022> (accessed 1 March 2013).



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- 61 See Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “It’s My ‘Vital Center,’” *Slate*, 10 January 10 1997, [http://www.slate.com/articles/briefing/articles/1997/01/its\\_my\\_vital\\_center.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/briefing/articles/1997/01/its_my_vital_center.html) (accessed 11 February 2013).
- 62 See *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Journals*, 364.
- 63 *Ibid.*, 299.
- 64 See “20 July 1989,” [untitled manuscript]; folder 385; box 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 65 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The Record of Liberal Anti-Communists”; Arianna Huffington, “Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.: Historian, Kennedy Court Philosopher...Blogger,” *The Huffington Post*, 3 March 2007, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/arthur-schlesinger-jr-his\\_b\\_42388.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/arthur-schlesinger-jr-his_b_42388.html), (accessed 4 August 2017).
- 66 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “Yalta Delusions,” *The Huffington Post*, 9 May 2005, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arthur-schlesinger-jr/yalta-delusions\\_b\\_529.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arthur-schlesinger-jr/yalta-delusions_b_529.html) (accessed 4 August 2017).
- 67 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 7.
- 69 Reinhold Niebuhr, “The Case for Coexistence,” *The New Leader*, 4 October 1954, 5-6.

### Chapter Three: Coming Together

- 1 See Philip Deery, *Red Apple: Communism and McCarthyism in Cold War New York* (New York: Empire State Editions, 2014), 116. Also see Terry Klefsted, “Shostakovich and the Peace Conference,” *Music and Politics* 6, Issue 2 (Summer 2012): 161-180. The Russian delegation also included Sergey Gerasimov (film director), biologist Alexander Oparin, writer Pyotr Pavlenko, film director and producer Mikhail Chiaureli, and Ivan Pozharsky—who served as translator and secretary.
- 2 W.E.B. Du Bois, “The Fight for World Peace,” quoted in David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1919-1963: The Fight for Equality and the American Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 543. Also see Eric Porter, *The Problem of the Future World: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Race Concept at Midcentury* (Raleigh, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 152. For a version of transcribed speeches from the conference, see Daniel S. Gillmor, ed., *Speaking of Peace*, (New York: National Council of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, 1949).
- 3 See “Sponsors of the World Peace Conference,” *New York Times*, 24 March 1949, 4.
- 4 Quoted in Deery, *Red Apple*, 114.
- 5 “Tumult at the Waldorf,” *Time*, 4 April 1949, 21–23; also see “Red Visitors Cause Rumpus,” *Life*, 4 April 1949, 39-43; and “Peace: Everybody Wars Over It,” *Newsweek*, 4 April 1949, 19–22.
- 6 *Ibid.*, 259; 271-272. Also see “Statement: Committee for Cultural Freedom,” box 147, folder “ACCF”/Reel 67, Subseries J:I, Thomas Papers.
- 7 Hook, *Out of Step*, 263.

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- 8 Ibid., 263 -264; 269.
- 9 Ibid., 264.
- 10 Ibid., 262-263.
- 11 See Freda Kirchwey, “Red Totalitarianism,” *The Nation*, 27 May 1939, 605-606; and “And Rebuttal,” 17 June 1939, 710-711; also see: “Red Totalitarianism: A Reply to Sidney Hook,: *The Nation* (150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue), 6 April 2015, 94.
- 12 Sidney Hook to Freda Kirchwey, in Edward S. Shapiro, ed., *Letters of Sidney Hook: Democracy, Communism, and the Cold War* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 68.
- 13 Sidney Hook to Stephen Early, in *Letters of Sidney Hook*, 184; 193. Hook did not forget about this episode, as he suggested in a pair of 1952 letters to Schlesinger, who was writing a book on FDR, that he should look into which Communists had craftily secured Roosevelt’s endorsement of the League. Also see Hook, *Out of Step*, 257.
- 14 Lieberman, ““Does that make peace a bad word?”” 199.
- 15 Bloom, *Prodigal Sons*, 260.
- 16 Robbie Lieberman, ““Does that make peace a bad word?’ American Responses to the Communist Peace Offensive, 1949-1950,” *Peace and Change*, April 1992, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 200. In endnote 2 on page 225 Liebermann cites Marshall D. Shulman, *Stalin’s Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 85-103.
- 17 Ibid., 199-200; Liebermann’s discussion of the Waldorf Conference is included in his *The Strangest Dream Communism, Anticommunism, and the U.S. Peace Movement, 1945-1963* (Charlotte, N.C., Information Age publishing, 200). Also see Deery, *Red Apple*, 114-115.
- 18 House Un-American Activities Committee, *Report on the Communist ‘Peace’ Offensive: A Campaign To Disarm and Defeat the United States*, (US House of Representatives: Washington, DC, April 1951), 1; also see Lieberman, 205.
- 19 Quoted in Deery, *Red Apple*, 114.
- 20 Quoted in Klefsted, “Shostakovich and the Peace Conference,” 165.
- 21 Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 45-56.
- 22 “Those Communist Visitors,” *New York Times*, 18 March 1949, 24.
- 23 “Waldorf War,” *New York Times*, 27 March 1949, E1.
- 24 See Gillmor, ed., *Speaking of Peace*, 83; also see Andrew Hemingway, *Artists on the Left: American Artists and the Communist Movement, 1926-1956* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 319.
- 25 Norman Cousins, “A Dissenting Opinion,” quoted in Deery, *Red Apple*, 122. Also see Glimor, ed., *Speaking of Peace*, 20-23.

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- 26 Quoted in Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," 92. Also see Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 70; and Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 72-75.
  - 27 Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," 92; also see Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 55.
  - 28 See Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 46; 55; Warner, 90; Wilford, 71-81.
  - 29 Hook, *Out of Step*, 391-392.
  - 30 Quoted in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 54.
  - 31 See "200 Sponsors Join Culture Unit Foes," *New York Times*, 25 Mar 1949, 18.
  - 32 Hook, *Out of Step*, 383.
  - 33 Ibid., 384.
  - 34 Ibid., 387.
  - 35 "An Editorial: What Fools!," *The New Leader*, 19 March 1949, 1.
  - 36 George Counts, "Kulturefest at the Waldorf: Soapbox for Red Propaganda," *The New Leader*, 19 March 1949, 1.
  - 37 See "5 Professors Attack Peace Meeting; Shapley Confident as Sessions Open," *Harvard Crimson*, 26 March 1949 <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1949/3/26/5-professors-attack-peace-meeting-shapley/> (accessed 5 July 2107).
  - 38 See "Red Visitors Cause Rumpus," *Life*, 4 April 1949, 39; 42. On the possibility that Schlesinger wrote this editorial, see Deery, 116; and Michael Wreszin, "Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Scholar-Activist in Cold War America: 1946-1956," *Salmagundi* 63/64, (1984): 269.
  - 39 Irving Howe, "The Culture Conference," *Partisan Review* 16, No. 5 (May 1949): 511.
  - 40 Sidney Hook, "Report on the International Day of Resistance to Dictatorship and War," *Partisan Review* 16, No. 7 (July 1949): 723-724.

#### **Chapter Four: Speaking For Freedom**

- 1 In a December 26 letter to his legal advisor, Morris D. Forkoach, Levitas noted that once the group was incorporated they would have to "rewrite the lease under the name of Committee for Cultural Freedom." See correspondence between Levitas and S.A. Berman of Gresham Realty, December 20, 1950 (and etc.); box 95; folder 3; *New Leader* Records, Columbia. After incorporation on January 5, the lease with Gresham Realty was transferred out of Levitas's name, as confirmed by a note from ACCF Executive Secretary Pearl Kluger. See Kluger to Levitas, February 8, 1951; box 95; folder 2; *New Leader* Records.
- 2 The reasons for breaking the lease early are not clear, but that it occurred as early as October 13, 1951 as evidenced by a letter from CCF Secretary-General Nicolas Nabokov sent to the ACCF at 35 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street; on October 24 Hook sent a note to Executive Committee members on ACCF letterhead

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featuring a black line through the old address (141 East 44<sup>th</sup>) with 35 West 53<sup>rd</sup> written by hand below. See box 95; folder 3; *New Leader* Records.

- 3 On links between Pollock/ abstract expressionism, MoMA, and the CIA, see “Yanqui Doodles” (Chapter Six) in Saunders’s *The Cultural Cold War*, 252-278; also see Wliford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 107-108.
- 4 See “The American Committee for Cultural Freedom announces, Re-examinations: Ideas, Stereotypes, and the American Liberal, A series of four discussion meetings in the Auditorium of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York City” (undated advertisement), box 95; folder 4; *New Leader* Records.
- 5 Untitled typewritten VOA script bearing handwritten date: “11-20-50” (page 1), box 95; folder 3, *The New Leader* Records, Rare Book and Manuscripts Library, Columbia University [Hereafter abbreviated as *New Leader* Records].
- 6 “A Message to Americans,” (unsigned editorial), *The New Leader*, 13 November 1950, 15.
- 7 VOA script “11-20-50” (2), and Arthur Koestler, et al., “Manifesto, Congress for Cultural Freedom,” 1950, box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL; and box 95; folder 3; *The New Leader* Records.
- 8 “A Message to Americans, 15-16.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 10 VOA script “11-20-50” (3).
- 11 Sidney Hook, et al., “We Put Freedom First,” (New York: American Committee for Cultural Freedom, 1951), 3, 4; box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers; and box 95; folder 4; *The New Leader* Records.
- 12 For good overviews, to start with, see Walter Hixon, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997); Michael Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000); Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); and Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- 13 See Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom*, 11; Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 45-72; Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture*, 66-82; Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, 41-42; and Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 21-28; 30-31.
- 14 See “Harry S. Truman Papers, Staff Member and Office Files: Psychological Strategy Board Files (1951-1953),” Truman Presidential Museum and Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpaper/physc.htm> (accessed 30 July 2017).
- 15 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 378.

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- 16 See Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up The World: Jazz Ambassadors Play The Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004); and Lisa Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009).
- 17 See Daniel J. Leab, *Orwell Subverted: The CIA and the Filming of Animal Farm* (State College, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 293-296; and Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 188-120.
- 18 See Puddington, 17-32; Wilford, 31.
- 19 See Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 64-66.
- 20 It should be noted that Korea had been excluded from what Acheson during a speech in January 1950 described as a “defensive perimeter” surrounding American interests in the Asia-Pacific, stretching from the Aleutian Islands through Japan to the Philippines. This was likely, or at least possibly, interpreted by the Soviets as a signal that the US would not intervene in a conflict on the peninsula.
- 21 See (Federation of American Scientists) “NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security (April 14, 1950): A Report to the President Pursuant to the President’s Directive of January 31, 1950,” <http://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68.htm> (accessed 21 February 2016).
- 22 Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987), 374.
- 23 See Jerry W. Sanders, *Peddlers of Crisis: The Committee on the Present Danger and the Politics of Containment* (Boston: South End Press, 1983); also see Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 51-53. While the original Committee on the Present Danger was disbanded in 1953, Paul Nitze and several budding neoconservatives launched a group with the same name in January 1976, two days after Jimmy Carter’s inauguration (Foy Kohler was a founding board member), for the purpose of pressuring leaders to abandon Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) talks as well as other policies associated with the ‘détente.’ See Charles Tyroler II, ed., *Alerting America: The Papers of the Committee on the Present Danger* (Maclean, VA: Pergamon-Brassey’s International Defense Publishers, 1984).
- 24 In his now-famous farewell speech to Congress as President in January 1961, the former Army General warned: “In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.” See “President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s Farewell Address (1961),” <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=90> (accessed February 21, 2016).
- 25 “Text of Views of Committee on Danger,” *New York Times* [international edition], 2 April 1951, 5; also see box 95; folder 2, *New Leader Records*.
- 26 For useful studies of the CCF, in addition to Saunders’s *The Cultural Cold War*, Scott-Smith’s, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture* and Wilford’s *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, see Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (New York: The Free Press, 1989); and Michael Warner, “Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1949-50,” *Studies in Intelligence* 38, no. 5 (1995) [a version of this article, posted online in 2007 and updated in 2008, is stored at the CIA website] <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the->

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[study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html](http://study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/95unclass/Warner.html) (accessed August 9, 2015); and Sarah Miller Harris *The CIA and the Congress for Cultural Freedom in the Early Cold War: The Limits of Making Common Cause* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

- 27 Sidney Hook, "The Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom," *Partisan Review* 17, No. 7 (September-October 1950): 715-716. Also see Hook, *Out of Step*, 433.
- 28 See Sidney Hook, "Encounter in Berlin," *The New Leader*, 14 October 1950, 16-19.
- 29 Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 74.
- 30 Quoted in Michael Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1949-50," 89.
- 31 Quoted in Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 80.
- 32 See "The Impact of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in Berlin and Western Germany," undated (no author listed – report prepared specifically for Schlesinger and James T. Farrell); box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 33 Arthur Koestler, et. al., "Manifesto, Congress for Cultural Freedom," 1950, box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 34 See: Scott Smith, 44; 83-112; Saunders, 45-72; "Harry S. Truman Papers Staff Member and Office Files: Psychological Strategy Board Files (1951-1953)," Truman Presidential Museum and Library, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/hstpape/physc.htm> (accessed November 5, 2010).
- 35 Hook, *Out of Step*, 445.
- 36 "Certificate of Incorporation," 5 January 1951, ACCF Records; TAM 023; box 6; folder 1; Tamiment Library; also see box 95; folders 2-4; *New Leader* Records; "Minutes of meeting of Board of Directors of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, April 30, 1967, at the home of William Philips, 263 West 11th Street, New York City"; box 147; folder 2; Thomas Papers.
- 37 Letter from Arnold Beichman to ACCF members, 26 February 1957; also see: letter from Diana Trilling to Arnold Beichman, 6 January 1957; Beichman to "Officers and Directors of the ACCF," 8 January 1957; "Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting, January 16, 1957"; and Beichman to "Members of the Board of Directors," 24 January 1957; Sol Stein Papers; box 50; folder 13; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library [hereafter abbreviated as Stein Papers, Columbia].
- 38 Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 89; 93.
- 39 Hook, *Out of Step*, 422-423.
- 40 Hook, *Out of Step*, 422.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 42 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Not Left, Not Right, But a Vital Center," *New York Times Magazine*, 4 April 1948, sec. 6, <http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/11/26/specials/schlesinger-centermag.html> (accessed 1 March 2013). Schlesinger ended this piece by quoting from poet W.B. Yeats's 1919 "The Second Coming," which refers to WWI: "Yeats long ago had an apocalyptic vision: 'Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and

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everywhere The ceremony of innocence is drowned; The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity.’ The problem of United States policy is to make sure that the Center does hold...the best must recover a sense of principle; and, on the basis of principle, they may develop a passionate intensity. We cannot afford to loose the blood-dimmed tide ever again.” In his memoir, Schlesinger described how he consciously adopted Yeats’s formulation, while he may or may not have been unconsciously influenced by the last passage of Herman Melville’s classic novel, *Moby Dick*: “Round and round he floats...‘till, gaining that *vital centre* [emphasis added], the black bubble upward burst; and now, liberated by reason of its cunning spring, and, owing to its great buoyancy, rising with great force, the coffin life-buoy shot lengthwise from the sea, fell over, and floated by my side.” See: *A Life in the Twentieth Century*, 510.

- 43 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 244.
- 44 See Michael Wreszin, “Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Scholar-Activist in Cold War America: 1946-1956,” *Salmagundi* 63/64, 1984.
- 45 Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Marian Cannon Schlesinger to Averell Harriman, 15 November 1962; box 58; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL.
- 46 See Schlesinger, *A Life in the Twentieth Century*, 377-378; and George Kennan, *Memoirs: 1950-1963, Volume II* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1972), 8-9.
- 47 Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 83; 89.
- 48 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, 167-168.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 324.
- 50 See Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 67, 91; Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 31-40; Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom*, 11-19; and Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, 37-43.
- 51 See “Minutes of the Executive Committee of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom,” 3 May 1954; box 95; folder 9, *New Leader* Records.
- 52 See “United States Government Memorandum: Arthur Meir Schlesinger, Jr., Information Concerning” [and included documents], 17 December 1963, 3; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 53 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 46.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 475.
- 55 Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 91.
- 56 *Ibid.*
- 57 Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to Elke Van Cassel, 26 June 2002; box 375, folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 58 Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 89.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 90. Also see Cord Meyer to Schlesinger, box 4; folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.

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- 60 Frances Saunders to Schlesinger, 27 October 1997, and Schlesinger to Saunders, 25 November 1997; box 4; folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 61 “Mr. Henry J. Laphorne,” undated contract, marked “SECRET”; also see E.M. Ashcraft memo to Chief, Boston Office, 26 December 1951; box 375, folder 2 (also box 384, folder 1), Schlesinger Papers.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 See [unattributed] “Memorandum to the Files,” 29 July 1954; box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 64 “Mr. Henry J. Laphorne,” undated contract, marked “SECRET”; and E.M. Ashcraft memo to Chief, Boston Office, 26 December 1951; box 375, folder 2 (also box 384, folder 1), Schlesinger Papers.
- 65 Hook, *Out of Step*, 444.
- 66 Schlesinger to Hook, 10 November 1950; box 4; folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 67 Schlesinger to Nicholas Nabokov, 22 November 1950; box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL.
- 68 Schlesinger to Irving Brown, 18 July 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers,.
- 69 Hook to Schlesinger, 27 October 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 70 Schlesinger to Hook, 1 November 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 71 Kluger to Schlesinger, 6 November 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 72 [Untitled invitation signed by] Schlesinger, 9 November 1950; box 384, folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 73 Kluger to Schlesinger, 20 November 1950; box 383, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 74 Bunche to Schlesinger, 14 November 1950; box 384, folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 75 Kluger to Schlesinger, 11 January 1951; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 76 Kluger to Schlesinger, 17 November 1950; box 383, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 77 Thomas to Schlesinger, 10 November 1950; box 383, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 78 “Committee for Cultural Freedom, “Stalinist Outposts in the United States,” April 1940, 1, 8; box 147, folder “ACCF”/ Reel 67, Subseries J:I, Thomas Papers.
- 79 See “The Cold War in Asia, Abstract of speech by Norman Thomas at the Hotel Commodore, New York City, Tuesday, June 17 [1952]”; ACCF Records, TAM 023, box 4, folder 22.
- 80 See “American Committee for Cultural Freedom, Minutes, Executive Committee, December 28, 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 81 Thomas to George Counts [undated]; box 50, folder 5, Thomas Papers.



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- 82 Thomas to Counts, 11 March 1953; box 51, folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 83 See “News from American Committee for Cultural Freedom, Inc.,” 19 April 1954; box 51, folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 84 Thomas to James T. Farrell, 8 January 1951; box 43; folder 64, Thomas Papers.
- 85 Thomas to A.J. Muste, 15 January 1951; box 43; folder 64, Thomas Papers.
- 86 Norman Thomas to Italian Partito Socialista Unitario, 18 January 1951; box 43, folder 61, Thomas Papers.
- 87 Dewitt C. Poole to Norman Thomas, 25 January 1951; box 43; folder 61, Thomas Papers.
- 88 Foy Kohler to Norman Thomas, 20 January 1951; box 43, folder 61, Thomas Papers.
- 89 See Letter from Foy Kohler to Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and attached “Report of VOA Conference on Imperialism,” January 20, 1951; box 375; folder 2, Schlesinger Papers; and [report] box 43, folder 61, Thomas Papers.
- 90 As listed in the report [see above], attendees were: Orville Anderson, Lowell Clucas, James Cork, Dorothy Crook, Harry Fleischman, Albert Herling, Sidney Hertzberg, Harold Isaacs, Norman Jacobs, Foy D. Kohler, Edwin J. Kretzmann, Leo Lowenthal, Howard Maier, Peter Meyer, Liston M. Oak, Raja Rao, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Norman Thomas, Karl A. Wittfogel, and Bertram D. Wolfe. As described in Oak’s letter to Schlesinger, others invited (and who not appear to have attended) included David Dallin, Sidney Hook, and Clarence Senior.
- 91 See interview with Harry Fleischman conducted by Morris Weisz, “Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, (Labor Series),” Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Arlington, VA, January 27, 1992, 5, <http://www.adst.org/OH%20TOCs/Fleischman,%20Harry.toc.pdf> (accessed August 29, 2015); also see Harry Fleischman, *Norman Thomas: A Biography, 1884-1968* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969), 254.
- 92 Approved in 1949 and launched the following year, the Point Four Program was managed by the Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA), which arranged bilateral agreements with countries including Iran and Pakistan.
- 93 “Agenda for Conference on Imperialism,” page 2, attached to a letter from VOA Labor Editor Liston Oak to Arthur Schlesinger Jr., December 8, 1950; box 375; folder 2; Schlesinger Papers; [agenda] box 43, folder 61; Thomas Papers.
- 94 Norman Thomas, “Dangerous Half-Truths,” *The New Leader*, January 7 1952, 9.
- 95 See “Report of VOA Conference on Imperialism,” 1.
- 96 Ibid., 3.
- 97 Ibid., 4.
- 98 Ibid., 1.

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## Chapter Five: Holding The Center

- 1 “The American Committee for Cultural Freedom announces a conference ‘In Defense of Free Culture’” (undated program); box 50; folder 15; Sol Stein Papers.
- 2 Max Eastman, “Who Threatens Cultural Freedom in America?”, 29 March 1952, quoted in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 200.
- 3 Rovere to Schlesinger, 30 March 1952; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers; and box 48; folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 4 See letter from Rovere to Schlesinger, 30 March 1952; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers, NYPL; and Frank Wisner, “Memo for Deputy Assistant Director for Policy Coordination, ‘Reported Crisis in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom,’” 7 April 1952; box 384, folder 4 (and box 4, folder 3), Schlesinger Papers. Also see Michael Warner, *The CIA under Harry Truman* (Washington D.C.: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1994), 455; Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 201-202; and Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 88-90.
- 5 Joseph McCarthy, “Enemies from Within,” speech on Lincoln Day to Republican Women’s Club of Wheeling, West Virginia, 9 February 1950, <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6456> (accessed 25 August 2017); also see Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 241-242.
- 6 Paul Robeson, testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, 12 June 1956.
- 7 For a good critical overview of McCarthyism in relation to Cold War culture, see Stephen Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); also see Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb’s Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Peter J. Kuznick and James Gilbert Eds., *Rethinking Cold War Culture* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2001); and Thomas Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium: Television, McCarthyism, and American Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
- 8 Dean Acheson, remarks during press conference, 25 January 1950, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13601> (accessed 25 August 2017).
- 9 Quoted in Robert P. Newman, *Owen Lattimore and the “Loss” of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 255.
- 10 Freda Kirchwey, “The McCarthy Blight,” *The Nation*, 24 June 1950, 609; also see Alpern, *Freda Kirchwey*, 203.
- 11 See “Speech delivered by Senator Joseph McCarthy before the Senate on June 14, 1951,” <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1951mccarthy-marshall.htm> (accessed 16 July 2017); also see Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*, 171.
- 12 Quoted in Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 258.
- 13 “Joseph R. McCarthy, *Address on Communism and the Candidacy of Adlai Stevenson*, delivered 27 October 1952, Palmer House, Chicago,” <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/joemccarthyagainststevenson.htm> (accessed 5 April 2013); Barton J. Bernstein and Allen J. Mathusow eds., *The Truman administration: A Documentary History*”

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(New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 422-423; and “Text of Address by McCarthy Accusing Governor Stevenson of Aid to Communist Cause,” *New York Times*, 28 October 1952, 26.

- 14 Quoted in Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*, 174.
- 15 Quoted in David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 377.
- 16 Quoted in Doherty, *Cold War, Cool Medium*, 175.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 204.
- 18 George S. Abrams, “McCarthy Again Blasts Schlesinger Over Radio, Schlesinger Denies He Ridiculed Religion; Says He Fought Communism at Harvard,” *Harvard Crimson*, 4 November 1952 <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1952/11/4/mccarthy-again-blasts-schlesinger-over-radio/> (accessed 7 August 2017).
- 19 Sidney Hook, “Letters to the Editor: Mr. McCarthy Criticized, Senator Believed to be Doing Great Harm to the Country’s Reputation,” *New York Times*, 8 May 1953; also see box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 20 Norman Thomas, *The Test of Freedom: The State of Liberty Under the Twin Attacks Called Communism and McCarthyism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1954), 48-49, 93.
- 21 Sidney Hook, “Mr. McCarthy Criticized,” *New York Times*, 8 May 1953.
- 22 Sidney Hook, *Heresy—Yes, Conspiracy, No* (New York: The John Day Company, 1953), 47-48.
- 23 “Text of Address by McCarthy Accusing Governor Stevenson of Aid to Communist Cause,” *New York Times*, 28 October 1952, 26.
- 24 “Joseph R. McCarthy, *Address on Communism and the Candidacy of Adlai Stevenson*, 27 October 1952.
- 25 See: “Interview – Earl Browder, William Browder,” 1 July 1949; Box 382; Folder 6; Schlesinger Papers.
- 26 Schlesinger, “The U.S. Communist Party,” 87.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 90.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 93.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 84.
- 31 *Ibid.*, 94.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 96.

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- 33 Schlesinger, "The U.S. Communist Party," 88-90. Incidentally, Schlesinger's article elicited an inquiry from the NAACP's chairman, Walter White, who sent a note to the editors of *Life* after receiving a letter from a member who stated that the allegation gave him "cause for concern," especially since "Mr. Schlesinger is a well-known and respected liberal," and "so the article can hardly be brushed aside." White initially received a response from the magazine's managing editor, John Shaw Billings, explaining that neither Luce, nor Schlesinger, nor "the researcher who did that particular portion of the story" were available for comment. Schlesinger simultaneously sent a telegram explaining that his main source had been Truman's administrative assistant David K. Niles, who relayed concerns expressed to him by Chairman White. Schlesinger reiterated that the statement had referred to "only attempted infiltration" by Communists, and "was not intended to impugn [the] present national leadership or organization which is resolutely opposed" to the Party and its supporters. See: Letter to Walter White from Robert A. Clarke; letter to White from John Shaw Billings; and telegram from Schlesinger to Lincoln Barnett, 6 August 1946; Box 382; Folder 4, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library [Hereafter referred to as "Schlesinger Papers, NYPL"].
- 34 See Robert A. Clarke to Walter White; John Shaw Billings to Walter White; and telegram from Schlesinger to Lincoln Barnett, 6 August 1946; box 382; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 35 See Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000); also see Penny Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997); Thomas Bortelsmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 200); Gayle Brenda Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), and *Window On Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, And Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
- 36 Schlesinger, *The Vital Center*, xxiii-xxiv; 245.
- 37 Schlesinger, "The U.S. Communist Party," 85.
- 38 "Text of Address by McCarthy Accusing Governor Stevenson of Aid to Communist Cause," *New York Times*, 28 October 1952, 26. See also: Barton J. Bernstein and Allen J. Mathusow eds., *The Truman administration: A Documentary History* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), 422-423; and "Joseph R. McCarthy, *Address on Communism and the Candidacy of Adlai Stevenson*, delivered 27 October 1952, Palmer House, Chicago," <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/joemccarthyagainststevenson.htm> (accessed 5 April 2013).
- 39 Schlesinger, "The U.S. Communist Party," 96.
- 40 Sidney Hook, "Mr. McCarthy Criticized," *New York Times*, 1 May 1953.
- 41 "United States Government Memorandum: Arthur Meir Schlesinger, Jr., Information Concerning," 17 December 1963, 3; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 42 See "[Redacted] Memorandum To The Files, Date: 29 July 1954, Subject: Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., #4143"; Box 384; Folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 43 See "United States Government Memorandum, Arthur Meir Schlesinger Information Concerning," 14 November 1962; ; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.

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- 44 Ibid.
- 45 See “United States Government Memorandum, Arthur Meier Schlesinger Information Concerning,” 14 November 1962; ; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 46 Schlesinger to Sol Stein, 9 May 1955, ACCF Records, TAM 023; box 4; folder 16; box 4; folder 3; Schlesinger Papers.
- 47 “Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors, American Committee for Cultural Freedom, 5:30 P.M., March 28, 1957, in the Library of the Rand School, 7 East 15th Street, New York City”; box 147; folder 2; Thomas Papers.
- On dissolution, see “Minutes of meeting of Board of Directors of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, April 30, 1967, at the home of William Phillips, 263 West 11th Street, New York City”; box 147; folder 2; Thomas Papers.
- 48 “Minutes of meeting of Board of Directors of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, April 30, 1967, at the home of William Phillips, 263 West 11th Street, New York City”; box 147; folder 2; Thomas Papers.
- 49 “Memo for Deputy Assistant Director for Policy Coordination, ‘Reported Crisis in the American Committee for Cultural Freedom,’” 7 April 1952; box 384; folder 4 (also box 4; folder 3), Schlesinger Papers.
- 50 Quoted in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 203.
- 51 Rovere to Schlesinger, 30 March 1952; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers; and box 48; folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 52 Letter from Hook to Levitas, 15 February 1952; box 95; folder 5, *New Leader* Records.
- 53 See “Minutes, Planning Conference, American Committee for Cultural Freedom, March 1, 1952”; folder 383; box 4, Schlesinger Papers; box 95; folder 5, *New Leader* Records; and box 36; folder 23, Diana Trilling Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University [Hereafter abbreviated as Diana Trilling Papers]. Also see Wilford, 93.
- The (incomplete) list of attendees reads: Daniel Bell, Arnold Beichman, George Counts, F.W. Dupree, Christopher Emmet, James T. Farrell, Clement Greenberg, Sidney Hook, H.M. Kallen, Hermann Kesten, William H. Kilpatrick, Pearl Kluger, Israel Knox, Dwight MacDonald, Peter Meyer, Walter Mehring, William Phillips, Koppel S. Pinson, Solomon Schwarz, Boris Shub, Karl Wittfogel, Bertram Wolf, Daniel Selig; by invitation: Franco Lombardi (Italian Committee for Cultural Freedom).
- 54 Rovere to Hook, 5 April 1952; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers; and box 48; folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 55 Schlesinger to Hook, 1 April 1952; Box 384; Folder 4; Schlesinger Papers.
- 56 Thomas to Rovere, 5 April 1952; box 48; folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 57 Rovere to Thomas, 5 April 1952; box 48; folder 1, Thomas Papers.
- 58 Schlesinger to Wisner, 4 April 1952; box 384; folder 4; Schlesinger Papers.

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- 59 Schlesinger to Wisner, 4 April; Schlesinger to Wisner 17 April; and Wisner to Schlesinger 29 April 1952; box 384; folder 4; Schlesinger Papers.
- 60 Hook to Schlesinger, 16 April 1952; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 61 Schlesinger to Hook, 17 April 1952; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 62 Moshe Decter and James Rorty, *McCarthy and the Communists* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1954), 42, 126.
- 63 Thomas to Allen Dulles, 5 May 1955; also see Thomas to Stein, 28 April 1955; Box 50; Folder 2; Sol Stein Papers.
- 64 Quoted in Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 92; 93.
- 65 Thomas to Sol Stein, 10 May 1955; ACCF Records, TAM 023, box 4, folder 22.
- 66 See Schlesinger to Sol Stein, 9 May 1955; ACCF Records; box 4; folder 16; Tamiment Library. Also see box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 67 Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to James T. Farrell, 16 March 1955; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 68 Schlesinger to Hook, 27 May 1952; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 69 Irving Kristol to Schlesinger, 8 January 1952; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 70 Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to James T. Farrell, 16 March 1955; box 383; folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 71 Stein to Schlesinger, 5 May; Schlesinger to Stein, 9 May 1955; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 72 Kluger to Schlesinger, 6 November 1950; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 73 Schlesinger to Wisner, 4 April 1952; box 384; folder 4; Schlesinger Papers.
- 74 Schlesinger to Nicholas Nabokov, 18 June 1951, box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 75 Schlesinger to Cord Meyer, 10 March 1954; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 76 Cord Meyer to Schlesinger, 16 May 1955; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 77 Quoted in Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 169; and Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 96.
- 78 Quoted in Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 94-95.
- 79 Ibid., 96.
- 80 Farrell to Norman Jacobs, 28 August 1956; and Trilling to Board of Directors, "A Report on the Circumstances Surrounding James Farrell's Resignation" [undated]; box 36; folder 23, Diana Trilling Papers.

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- 81 It is unknown whether or not the plan to make Stein “witting” was ever enacted. But it is worth noting that the former ACCF executive director, who went on to run a publishing house (Stein & Day), prepared a piece for the *New York Times* (apparently never completed, titled “Working for the CIA and Not Knowing It.” See box 50; folder 23, Stein Papers.
- 82 Unsigned letter to Anne Fredericks, 4 December 1953; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 83 Schlesinger to Niebuhr, 4 April 1952; box 384, folder 4, Schlesinger Papers.
- 84 Michael Harrington, “The American Committee for Cultural Freedom,” *Dissent* 2, No. 2 (2 April 1955), 113.

### Chapter Six: Falling Apart

- 1 Schlesinger to Hook, 2 March 1966; box 4, folder 3, Schlesinger Papers.
- 2 Neil Sheehan, “A Student Group Concedes It Took Funds from C.I.A.,” *New York Times*, 14 February 1967, 1-7.
- 3 See: Sol Stern, “NSA and the CIA: A Short Account of International Student Politics & the Cold War with Particular References to the NSA, CIA, Etc.,” *Ramparts*, March 1967, 29-39, <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Ramparts-1967ar-00029>(accessed February 25, 2013).
- 4 For example, Neil Sheehan, “Foundations Linked to CIA Are Found to Subsidize 4 Other Youth Organizations,” *New York Times*, 16 February 1967, 26; “5 New Groups Tied to CIA Conduits,” 17 February 1967, 1, 16; “Subversion by CIA,” 20 February 1967, 36; *Chicago Sun-Times*, 14 February 1967; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 19 February 1967; *Christian-Science Monitor*, 10 March 1967; Andrew Kopkind, “CIA: The Great Corrupter,” *New Statesman*, 24 February 1967; and Jason Epstein, “The CIA and the Intellectuals,” *New York Review of Books*, 20 April 1967.
- 5 Michael Wood, “An Epilogue...”; and Marcus Raskin, “...and a Judgment,” in Sol Stern, “NSA and the CIA,” *Ramparts*, March 1967, 38-39.
- 6 Quoted in Christopher Lasch, *Agony of the American Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 100.
- 7 Schlesinger to editor of *Book Week*, 21 June 1966, box 384, folder 1, Schlesinger Papers. On the exchange between Schlesinger and O’Brien, also see Lasch, *Agony of the American Left*, 104-105.
- 8 Sol Stern, “NSA and the CIA: A Short Account of International Student Politics & the Cold War with Particular References to the NSA, CIA, Etc.,” *Ramparts*, March 1967, 30; 32, <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Ramparts-1967ar-00029>(accessed 5 August 2013).
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- 10 Steven Roberts, “Thomas Upholds CIA Work, Ex-Socialist Leader Says he Didn’t Know Agency Role,” *New York Times*, 22 February 1967.
- 11 Martin Luther King Jr., “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence” (Speech to Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam), Riverside Church, New York City, 4 April 1967, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkatimetobreaksilence.htm> (accessed 18 July 2017).

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- 12 Andrew Schlesinger and Stephen Schlesinger eds., *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.: Journals, 1952-2000* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), 287.
  - 13 Quoted in Gregory, *Norman Thomas: The Great Dissenter*, 250.
  - 14 Martin Luther King Jr., "The Bravest Man I Ever Met," *Pageant*, 6 June 1965, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/essay-mlk-entitled-bravest-man-i-ever-met> (accessed 9 March 2017), 24-25.
  - 15 Quoted in Gregory, *Norman Thomas: The Great Dissenter*, 271.
  - 16 Quoted in Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel*, 322.
  - 17 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "Remarks on Foreign Policy," Americans for Democratic Action (press release), March 8, 1967; box 4, folder "ADA", Schlesinger Papers.
  - 18 Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., "Thinking Aloud: Vietnam and the 1968 Elections," *The New Leader*, November 6, 1967, 12.
  - 19 *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.: Journals*, 264.
  - 20 *Ibid.*, 263- 264.
  - 21 *Ibid.*, 297-298.
  - 22 Schlesinger to Niebuhr, 8 September 1968, in Andrew Schlesinger and Stephen Schlesinger eds., *The Letters of Arthur Schlesinger Jr.* (New York: Random House Books, 2013), 376; also see *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Journals*, 297-298.
  - 23 *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Journals*, 288-289.
  - 24 *Ibid.*, 288. Also see James Loeb Jr. to Schlesinger, 26 September 1968; box 4, folder "ADA," Schlesinger Papers.
  - 25 See "The New Coalition for Humphrey-Muskie" [undated, handwritten flier], box 4, folder "ADA," Schlesinger Papers.
  - 26 *Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Journals*, 302.
  - 27 Diana Trilling [untitled address], 6 April 1961, 3-5; box 36; folder 24, Trilling Papers.
  - 28 Eric Miller, *Hope in a Scattering Time: A Life of Christopher Lasch* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 128.
  - 29 Christopher Lasch, "The Cultural Cold War," *The Nation*, 11 September 1967, 201.
  - 30 See "The Cultural Cold War: A Short History of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," in Barton J. Bernstein ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York: Pantheon, 1968), 322-359; and [same title] in Christopher Lasch, *Agony of the American Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 61-114.



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- 31 Christopher Lasch, *Agony of the American Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 85; 81.
- 32 Carey McWilliams, *The Education of Carey McWilliams* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), 155.
- 33 Lasch, *Agony of the American Left*, 86.
- 34 *Ibid.*, 104.
- 35 Harrington, "The American Committee for Cultural Freedom," 113, 120.
- 36 See Norman Podhoretz ed., "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," *Commentary*, September 1967, 31-78.
- 37 Podhoretz, "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," 31.
- 38 Michael Harrington, *ibid.*, 43.
- 39 Irving Howe, *ibid.*, 52; 50.
- 40 Diana Trilling, *ibid.*, 73.
- 41 Sidney Hook, *ibid.*, 44; 48.
- 42 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *ibid.*, 68-69.
- 43 All the abovementioned documents can be found in box 384; folder 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 44 Schlesinger, "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," 70-71.
- 45 Schlesinger to Gene Wilson, 16 May 1977; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 46 Schlesinger to Robert Johnson, 16 May 1977; box 517; folder, 1, Schlesinger Papers.
- 47 Schlesinger, "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited," 69.
- 48 Diana Trilling, *ibid.*, 74.
- 49 Diana Trilling, [untitled address], 6 April 1961, 5; box 36; folder 24, Trilling Papers.
- 50 "Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity." See William Butler Yeats, *Michael Robartes and the Dancer* (Chruchtown, Ireland: The Chuala Press, 1920).

#### **Conclusion: Beyond the American Century (?)**

- 1 Schlesinger, "Origins of the Cold War," 52.
- 2 Schlesinger, *A Life in the 20th Century*, 507-508.

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- 3 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The Bush Disintegration,” *The Huffington Post*, 31 October 2005, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arthur-schlesinger-jr/the-bush-disintegration\\_b\\_9815.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arthur-schlesinger-jr/the-bush-disintegration_b_9815.html) (accessed 13 August 2017).
  - 4 See for instance the Jonathan Institute’s two “conferences on international terrorism” (in Jerusalem in July 1979 and Washington DC in June 1984) attended by leaders/policymakers, journalists, academics, etc. from Israel, the US, and Europe. At the 1984 event, Israel’s US Ambassador Benjamin Netanyahu declared “this collaboration between Marxist and Muslim radicals is not accidental...both are profoundly hostile to democracy, and both have found in terrorism an ideal weapon for waging war against it.” See Netanyahu ed., *Terrorism: How the West Can Win* (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1986), 11-12.  
The Jonathan Institute described itself in 1981 as “an independent research and educational foundation established in memory of Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Netanyahu, who fell while leading the rescue mission to Entebbe.” In this context, his brother Benjamin Netanyahu explained: “the Jerusalem Conference on International Terrorism was convened by the Jonathan Institute to focus public attention on the real nature of international terrorism, on the threat it poses to all democratic societies, and on the measures necessary for defeating the forces of terror.” See Benjamin Netanyahu, ed., *International Terrorism, Challenge and Response* (Jerusalem: Jonathan Institute, 1979; New Brunswick NJ: Transaction Books, 1981)  
The Jerusalem conference was attended by future vice-president/president George H.W. Bush, and served as incubator for the Reagan administration’s “war against terrorism” policies as declared by Secretary of State Alexander Haig Jr. in 1981, when stating “our national security and foreign policy agenda” will be combating “Soviet activity in terms of training, funding and equipping...international terrorism.” See “Excerpts From Haig’s Remarks at First News Conference as Secretary of State,” *The New York Times*, 29 January 1981. Also see Curtis Wilkie, “Denton Sees Soviet Menace, Tries To Spike It,” *Boston Globe*, Apr 17, 1981; Marc A. Celmer, *Terrorism, U.S. Strategy, and Reagan Policies* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987); Michael Gold Bliss, *The Discourse on Terrorism: Political Violence and the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism 1981-1986* (Peter Lang Publishing: New York, 1994); David C. Wills, *The First War on Terrorism: Counter-Terrorism Policy During the Reagan Administration* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003); Daniel Pipes, “Reagan’s Early Victory in the War on Terror,” (originally published in the *New York Sun*, 15 June 2004, <http://www.danielpipes.org/article/1888> (accessed 4 January 2010).
  - 5 See “Launch of the Maurice R. Greenberg Center for Goeconomic Studies with Vice President Dick Cheney,” 15 February 2002, [http://www.cfr.org/publication/4346/launch\\_of\\_the\\_maurice\\_r\\_greenberg\\_center\\_for\\_goeconomic\\_studies\\_with\\_vice\\_president\\_dick\\_cheney.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/4346/launch_of_the_maurice_r_greenberg_center_for_goeconomic_studies_with_vice_president_dick_cheney.html) (accessed 1 January 2010).
  - 6 See Joe Lieberman and Jon Kyl, “The Present Danger,” *Washington Post*, 20 July 2004; A17, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A63067-2004Jul19.html>; and [https://web.archive.org/web/20160220161351/http://committeeonthepresentdanger.org/index.php?option=com\\_cpdfont&Itemid=90](https://web.archive.org/web/20160220161351/http://committeeonthepresentdanger.org/index.php?option=com_cpdfont&Itemid=90) (accessed 13 August 2017).
  - 7 Ron Robin, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy: Culture and Politics in the Military-Intellectual Complex* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 4.
  - 8 William Kristol and Donald Kagan, “Introduction: National Interest and Global Responsibility,” in Kagan and Kristol ed., *Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000), 12.

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- 9 “President discusses War on Terror and Operation Iraqi Freedom,” *The White House: George W. Bush*, March 20, 2006, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/03/20060320-7.html> (accessed February 7, 2008).
  - 10 “President Bush Delivers State of the Union Address,” *White House: President George W. Bush*, January 23, 2007, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070123-2.html> (accessed 25 April 2007).
  - 11 Norman Podhoretz, “World War IV: How it Started, What It Means, and Why We Have to Win,” *Commentary*, September 2004, 48.
  - 12 Peter Beinart, “A Fighting Faith,” *The New Republic*, 13 December 2004, 17-29, <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/politics/fighting-faith?page=0,0> (accessed 3 March 2017).
  - 13 Peter Beinart, *The Good Fight: Why Liberals—and Only Liberals—Can Win The War On Terror and Make America Great Again* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006).
  - 14 Peter Beinart, “The Rehabilitation of the Cold-War Liberal,” *New York Times Magazine*, 30 April 30 2006, 40-45, [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/30/magazine/30liberal.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/30/magazine/30liberal.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) (accessed 3 March 2017).
  - 15 Beinart, *The Good Fight*, xi-xii.
  - 16 *Ibid.*, xii.
  - 17 *Ibid.*, x.
  - 18 See David Corn, “Liberals on Terror,” *TomPain.com*, 9 December 2004, [http://www.tompaine.com/articles/liberals\\_on\\_terror.php](http://www.tompaine.com/articles/liberals_on_terror.php) (accessed 1 March, 2013); Fred Kaplan, “Cold Comfort,” *Washington Monthly*, July/August 2006, <http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2006/0607.kaplan.html>; and Michael Lind, “Not-So-Great Liberalism,” *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas* 1, August 2006, <http://www.democracyjournal.org/archive/1/index.php> (accessed 1 March, 2013); Andrew Bacevich, “The American Political Tradition,” *The Nation*, 17 July 2006, <http://www.thenation.com/article/american-political-tradition-0> (accessed 1 March, 2013). Also see Tom Engelhardt, “Tomgram: Bacevich on the Misuse of American History,” *TomDispatch.com*, 28 June 2006, <http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/96805> (accessed 1 March 2013).
  - 19 Bacevich, “The American Political Tradition.”
  - 20 Chris Hedges, *Death of the Liberal Class* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 8. Hedges quotes Schrecker’s *Many Are the Crimes* on pages 105-106.
  - 21 Beinart, *The Good Fight*, xii.
  - 22 In fairness to Beinart, his work is not one-dimensional, or always uncritical, yet it is indicative of desire for influence. His two books after *The Good Fight*, *The Icarus Syndrome: A History of American Hubris* (2010) and *The Crisis of Zionism* (2012), affirm that Beinart seeks to produce work that is both timely and provocative; his latter book on the Israel-Palestine crisis began as a 2010 article titled “The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment.” In May 2012 Beinart was among a group of nine ‘national security’-focused journalists invited to an off-the-record meeting with Obama. As reported at the time, it was not clear whether or not the invitation had anything to do with *The Crisis of*

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*Zionism*, which the President had read, or *The Icarus Syndrome*, which as conveyed in a book review by former diplomat Leslie Gelb, was designed “to help President Obama overcome...a series of assumptions about American omnipotence that, if not challenged, threatens to drive our foreign policy deeper into the red.” See Peter Beinart, “The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment,” *The New York Review of Books*, 10 June 2010, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2010/06/10/failure-american-jewish-establishment/> (accessed 8 March 2017); Jason Zengerle, “The Israeli Desert,” *New York Magazine*, 11 June 2012, <http://nymag.com/nymag/features/peter-beinart-2012-6/index5.html> (accessed 3 March 2017); and Leslie H Gelb, “In Our Image,” *New York Times*, 11 June 2010 <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/13/books/review/Gelb-t.html> (accessed 3 March 2017).

23 Quoted in Seidler, *Norman Thomas: Respectable Rebel*, 322.

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