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The Catholic lobby: the periphery dominated center, public opinion and American foreign policy 1932-1962.

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THE CATHOLIC LOBBY:

THE PERIPHERY DOMINATED CENTER,

PUBLIC OPINION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY 1932-1962

A Dissertation Presented

by

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History

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ABSTRACT

THE CATHOLIC LOBBY: THE PERIPHERY DOMINATED CENTER, PUBLIC OPINION AND AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY 1932-1962

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This work examines the origins of the Cold War from the perspective of domestic American politics. Specifically, the role of the so-called "Catholic vote" in the New Deal coalition built by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s. Catholics comprised roughly one-quarter of the population and were concentrated in the major urban and industrial areas of the country. These were the same areas that dominated the electoral college and thus were of primary importance to anyone seeking national office or proposing national policy.

FDR frequently modified his position on national issues if it appeared this "Catholic vote" might be jeopardized. Throughout the 1930s, as charges of Communist influence on FDR and the New Deal increased in intensity, the official position of the Catholic Church was hardening

into a strict anti-Communism. The potential, then, existed for widespread defections of Catholic voters from the New Deal coalition over the issue of Communism.

Using a variety of primary sources but especially the presidential papers located at the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, New York, and the archives of the Archdiocese of Boston in Brighton, Massachusetts, this work will demonstrate the impact of Catholic opinion on national policy, especially foreign policy, as it was reflected in the attempt to keep the Catholic vote in the Democratic Party. The response of first FDR and then Presidents Truman and Eisenhower to Soviet domination of largely Catholic Eastern Europe following the war suggests that religion, especially Catholicism, is the overlooked paradigm of the Cold War.

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CHAPTER 1

"SATAN AND LUCIFER"

When Franklin Roosevelt met with Winston Churchill at Quebec in August of 1943, the conference was publicly billed as dealing with military matters affecting both the Pacific and European theaters of war. By this time the military situation had turned decidedly in favor of the Allies. The Soviets were delivering smashing blows to the Germans on the eastern front, the North African campaign against Rommel had been successful and Anglo-American forces were completing operations in Sicily. However, the presence of American Secretary of State Cordell Hull and British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden led to press speculation that postwar political issues were also on the agenda. As the military situation became more favorable the wartime political alliance seemed to deteriorate.

Postwar political issues began taking on greater significance in early 1943, and would occupy more and more of FDR's thinking as the year progressed. In January, William C. Bullitt, former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union wrote a lengthy memorandum to Roosevelt in which he outlined his fears that Stalin would attempt to dominate Europe at the end of the war. Bullitt, in a speech at New York in July 1941, shortly after the Nazi invasion of Russia, likened the struggle between the two totalitarian

powers as "a war between Satan and Lucifer." He concluded the best course of action for the U.S. would be to let the Germans and Russians fight it out among themselves in the belief that the winner would be so weakened as to no longer threaten Europe. [1]

The very military successes which prompted the decision to meet at Quebec were at the heart of Bullitt's memorandum to FDR. It was now apparent that the Soviets not only stopped Hitler's Wehrmacht in 1942, but, with the encirclement and destruction of Paulus' Sixth Army at Stalingrad, were poised to begin throwing the Germans back in 1943. Bullitt's current concern seems to have been that Satan [or Lucifer, he did not designate which country represented whom] was about to emerge from the struggle, but not in the weakened condition originally forecast.

FDR seems to have been impressed with Bullitt's argument, which was that the closer the Allies came to defeating Germany the less influence they would have on getting Stalin to agree on any postwar settlements. Now was the time to apply pressure while "Your club would have lead in it, not cotton." He suggested that FDR threaten a Pacific first strategy, reduction in aid to the Soviets, possible difficulty in providing postwar aid to rebuild the Soviet Union, and expressing full opposition to "predatory Soviet policy in Europe and Asia." He also advocated striking

against Germany through the Balkans rather than France, but only if that decision were based on sound military considerations. FDR met with Bullitt to discuss the memo and asked him to continue to keep him informed on his thinking regarding the political situation as he saw it. [2]

The President also raised the issues contained in Bullitt's memo with British Foreign Minister Eden in March. He asked if Eden believed that Stalin's ultimate aim was to dominate and communize Europe. Eden responded there was no way to know for sure, but that even if that were his intention the Allies should continue to work with him and assume he intended to honor his treaty obligations. Eden added he was surprised by Roosevelt's belief that Poland would not prove to be a difficult question to resolve at the end of the war. FDR felt territorial concessions of East Prussia and parts of Silesia would make Poland a net gainer if the Curzon Line were accepted as its eastern border. According to Eden, FDR was also prepared to accept Russian demands on Finland and the Baltic States, but hoped the Russians would conduct plebiscites to ratify their actions.[3]

Further complicating the political situation was the German announcement in April of the discovery of a mass grave in the Katyn Forest of eastern Poland. The grave contained the remains of some 10,000 Polish army officers.

The Germans claimed the Russians massacred the Polish officers after occupying eastern Poland in 1939. Stalin immediately denied the charge, claiming instead that the Germans themselves had killed the Poles. FDR and Churchill supported Stalin's position, arguing the Germans were attempting to sow dissension among the Allies and to distract worldwide attention from their own massacre then underway of Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. However, in London, the Polish government-in-exile requested an investigation of the charge by the International Red Cross. Stalin immediately severed relations with the London Poles, further complicating the situation.

While the Allies were struggling to maintain a semblance of unity in the face of the Katyn accusations, FDR began making plans to meet with Stalin one-on-one. While Churchill had already held face-to-face meetings with the Soviet Premier, the President had yet to meet his Russian counterpart. In early May, as FDR and Churchill were preparing for the Trident Conference, to be held in Washington, the President sent former Ambassador to the Soviet Union Joseph Davies to Moscow. Davies was to relay to Stalin the President's desire to meet sometime in July, without the presence of the British. Stalin initially agreed to the meeting but expressed doubts to Davies that such a

meeting could take place in the absence of the opening of a second front in Europe.

Davies reported to FDR that failure to open the promised second front would have far-reaching consequences on Soviet attitudes on the prosecution of the war and their participation in the peace. Stalin's trust in his allies was obviously diminishing. Whether he believed the Allies were deliberately holding back and letting the Germans and Russians slug it out, as Bullitt had publicly suggested, is uncertain. He did believe that the Soviets were carrying the brunt of the fighting and expected another major German offensive in the summer. He also believed the successful North African campaign and the Allied air offensive against Germany were insufficient substitutes for the promised cross-Channel attack.[4]

The results of the Trident Conference were exactly what Stalin feared. Churchill persuaded FDR to postpone the cross-Channel attack in favor of securing the Mediterranean and possibly driving Italy out of the war. Stalin sent an angry reply to Roosevelt's cable informing him of the Trident decisions. The Soviets could not consent to these agreements, again reached without Soviet participation, "and without any attempt at a joint discussion of this highly important matter and which may gravely affect the subsequent course of the war." Churchill, now aware that FDR was

planning to meet with Stalin without him, began pressing for a Big Three meeting. Stalin refused, citing pressing needs on the eastern front which required his presence, although the Germans had not mounted a major summer offensive as expected.[5]

So as FDR and Churchill came together at Quebec for their sixth meeting of the war the political alliance seemed to be coming apart. Stalin's reaction to this meeting was as acrimonious as his earlier cable to FDR: "To date it has been like this: the U.S.A. and Britain reach agreement between themselves while the U.S.S.R. is informed of the agreement between the two powers as a third party looking passively on."[6]

The Soviet Premier continued to express growing distrust of his allies. Quebec demonstrated his allies' growing distrust of him. The conference produced a secret agreement regarding the Tube Alloys Project - the atomic bomb. The agreement stipulated that the weapon would never be used by either partner against the other or against a third party without the consent of the other. It also stipulated that information about the project could not be passed to a third party except by mutual consent. This in effect gave both FDR and Churchill a veto over informing Stalin about the development of the bomb or sharing information about it.[7]

FDR did press the British about committing to the cross-Channel attack in the Spring of 1944 at Quebec. They also agreed to pursue a meeting of the Big Three later that fall. When the meeting broke up, both men took short vacations before returning to Washington for further discussions. Historians have repeatedly attempted to determine just what Roosevelt's thinking was at this critical juncture, as preparations began for the first meeting of the Big Three later that year at Teheran. The controversy seems to revolve around just how much FDR's conversations with Bullitt and Eden earlier in the year reflected his real thinking and how much may have been pure speculation. Herbert Feis contends these early discussions were an "exercise in imagination" and that "the record of these discussions leaves the impression that they were conducted in a vacuum." Gaddis Smith, on the other hand, argues that policy was being based on a combination of naivete and stereotypes held by FDR and his advisors. This resulted in a formulation of policy "on the basis of hopes and illusion rather than ascertainable fact." Robert Dallek presents yet another position, contending that Roosevelt was indeed influenced by Bullitt's arguments and that "he was uncertain about postwar relations with Russia, he wished to assure against the possibility that Stalin aimed at extensive European control." [8]

By the time Churchill arrived in Washington on September 1, Italy had accepted the surrender terms of the Allies. The President invited Archbishop Francis J. Spellman of New York to dine at the White House along with the Prime Minister. The following morning FDR met privately with Spellman for more than an hour. The Archbishop recorded his impressions of what the President said in a two-page memo that he sent to the Vatican to his longtime friend and mentor Pope Pius XII. This document presents a very different picture regarding the firmness of FDR's views on the postwar world. According to Spellman, FDR forecast a postwar world dominated by "spheres of influence" among the "big four." China would have the dominant interest in the Far East; the U.S. in the Pacific; Britain and Russia in Europe and Africa. However, Spellman said FDR believed Russia would dominate Europe because of Britain's "predominately colonial interests." While Chiang Kai-shek would be consulted on "the great decisions concerning Europe," he would have no influence on them. Moreover, the U.S. would be in much the same position as Chiang on European matters, "although to a lesser degree." FDR hoped the Russian domination of Europe "would not be too harsh," according to Spellman, "[a]lthough that might be wishful thinking."[9]

It is interesting to note from this portion of Spellman's memo that FDR did not foresee a major role for the U.S. in Europe after the war. Much of what the President did in the remaining months of the war takes on new meaning when seen from this perspective.

Spellman restated the President's desire to establish a personal relationship with Stalin. He would seek a meeting with Stalin as soon as possible in the belief that he was better able to reach an accommodation with the Soviet leader than Churchill. Stalin's postwar territorial aims were outlined: "He would certainly receive; Finland, the Baltic States, the Eastern half of Poland, Bessarabia." The President had decided, according to Spellman, that there was no sense in opposing these territorial desires of Stalin's because he had the power to get them anyway. In essence FDR acknowledged that he would accept the Soviet frontiers in existence on June 21, 1941, the date of the German invasion of Russia. Stalin had been pressing for the recognition of these borders since December of 1941. He had proposed a secret protocol to Foreign Minister Eden to the treaty of alliance between Russia and Britain. Both the British and the U.S. had opposed the recognition of these borders. FDR outlined for Spellman the same position he took in his discussions with Eden in March; the Baltics would be absorbed by Russia, eastern Poland would be taken as well.

FDR then went on to outline for Spellman more far-reaching consequences of the changing military and political situation, far more than he revealed to Eden. According to Spellman, FDR confirmed to him the probability that Stalin would attempt to set up communist governments in the areas not incorporated directly into the Soviet Union. The President conceded that Austria, Hungary and Croatia would "fall under some sort of Russian protectorate." When the archbishop asked if the Allies intended to support noncommunist elements in those countries to help prevent communist takeovers, FDR replied, "no such move was contemplated." The President seemed to be agreeing with the most pessimistic evaluation of Soviet aims outlined by Bullitt in January.[10]

The picture presented here contrasts sharply with those of an undecided, naive President about to embark on an attempt to prevent Soviet power from expanding in Europe. Rather, he has a firm grasp of the postwar realities created by the increasing military strength of the Soviet Union. He believes the Soviets will be the dominant power in Europe. He believes the Soviets will attempt to install communist governments in several eastern European countries and is making no plans to counter such a development. FDR told the archbishop, and through him the Vatican, that all of Eastern Europe from the Baltic States to the Balkans would be either

incorporated into the Soviet Union or fall under Soviet domination. Furthermore, he will do nothing to assist or support elements within those countries which might resist such a development, and the United States and Britain cannot fight the Russians to prevent their takeover of Eastern Europe. The arguments put forth by Bullitt to prevent the expansion of Soviet power have been rejected.

The fact that Spellman swiftly notified the Vatican of the President's postwar outlook is clear evidence of his concern over what FDR had confided to him. The prospect of Poland, the Baltic States, Hungary, Austria and Czechoslovakia -- all predominantly Catholic countries -- coming under communist influence was not something the Vatican would take lightly. The question remains why FDR would be telling the archbishop of New York all this in the first place? Surely he knew Spellman would inform the Vatican of this discussion. He also risked the possibility the information would leak to the press and create a storm of protest. The answer seems to lie in the fact that this was not a new initiative on FDR's part but rather a confirmation to the Vatican of an already established trend of thinking on postwar problems. The evidence seems to suggest that FDR had reached decisions on the need to accommodate the extension of Soviet power in Europe as early

as mid-1942 and conveyed this to the Vatican through his personal representative Myron C. Taylor.

In August of 1942, while Italy was still an active member of the Axis alliance, Taylor was spirited into Rome for meetings with the Pope and his top advisors. Sumner Welles, Assistant Secretary of State and FDR's man in the State Department, initiated the idea to send Taylor back to Rome in the midst of hostilities. FDR agreed "that it would be useful for Myron Taylor to go back to the Vatican....But how can we get him there." Arrangements were apparently made through the Italian government in the belief that Taylor would transmit to the Pope conditions under which the Italians could withdraw from the war. The records of Taylor's meetings with the Pope, however, reveal that much more was being discussed, and the Italian situation was rarely mentioned.[11]

Taylor seemed intent on conveying to Pius XII, and his Secretary of State Cardinal Luigi Maglione, the nature of postwar Europe, and in particular the role of Russia. Taylor stressed the Russian signature to the Atlantic Charter, "which, among other things, asserts adherence to the principle of religious freedom, and by its expressed attitude toward Poland, the Baltic and Balkan States, in the discussion of postwar settlements," had led the administration to believe "the field is open for

collaboration - and generous compromise." Taylor impressed upon the Pope and his advisors the need for Russian cooperation at the end of the war without which "the future stability of Europe" would be endangered. Russia would gain security through an effective international organization dedicated to the prevention of German rearmament and in return would be asked only to "cease her ideological propaganda in other countries, and to make religion really free within her borders." According to Taylor, the Pope and his advisors were very impressed with the fact that consideration of postwar matters was already well under way. [12]

Taylor met privately the following day with Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione and again brought up the question of Russia and her postwar attitude "which is very much in the minds of everyone here." He raised the possibility of establishing a "buffer organization of states ...between Germany and Russia" to ensure Russian security and reducing her need "to gain territory in the less rich areas surrounding her on the west." Taylor did not spell out just how this "buffer organization of states" was to be created, only that the matter was under consideration.[13]

The evidence seems to suggest that FDR developed a postwar strategy very early in the war, much earlier than historians have commonly thought. He communicated important

elements of that plan to the Vatican as early as September 1942, while the Allies were still on the defensive (the battle of Stalingrad was just beginning). Historians have largely overlooked FDR's wartime communications with the Vatican as a source for providing a clear indication of what he planned to accomplish. For example, British Foreign Minister Eden was taken by surprise in March of 1943 when FDR suggested that Poland would not present a difficult problem to resolve at the end of the war. FDR suggested to him that East Prussia and parts of Silesia would more than compensate Poland for possible loss of territory to Russia in the east. Prior to Taylor's departure for discussions with the Pope the State Department prepared "a special map of Germany" for Taylor based on "[t]he instruction...to show the Germanized Slav sandy plain of Brandenburg." The commentary accompanying the map states: "Practically all of Pomerania, Brandenburg, Silesia and the Kingdom of Saxony are still inhabited by a stock whose anthropological characteristics are basically Slav." The document goes on to state that "Polish sovereignty at no time extended over so wide an area, but stopped at the western frontier of Silesia, some miles west of the Oder River" and concluded with the comment that "[f]or purposes of the present map, the Oder has been selected as the western limit of the Germanized Slav area" and that it approximated the

westernmost extension of Polish rule. As Taylor left for Rome in September of 1942 he carried with him the outline of possible future borders of Poland which Roosevelt would allude to six months later to Foreign Minister Eden.[14]

Yet another element of Roosevelt's postwar thinking is revealed in the Taylor documents. Upon leaving Rome, Taylor went to London where he held conversations with Averell Harriman and Soviet Ambassador Ivan Maisky on the subject of developing "a brief formula that would be the basis for a declaration by Stalin that would encourage the thought that religion in Russia would actually be free." While in London he sought the opinion of one of the leading authorities on the Soviet Union concerning the question of religion in Russia and what effect that might have within territories occupied by the Soviets after the war. George Kennan, then temporarily assigned to the embassy in Lisbon, outlined in a three-page memorandum dated October 2, 1942, the Soviets' hostility to the Russian Orthodox Church and religion in general. Kennan related a number of instances of a "great resurgence" of religious life in German occupied areas of Russia. While acknowledging the accounts may have been exaggerated by the Germans for their own propaganda purposes, he concluded they "are naturally not without their effects on the religious populations of the other eastern European countries," and "[t]hey doubtless tend to increase

the horror with which these people view the prospect of Russian occupation after the war." [15]

As a result of these wartime experiences, Kennan said it should "be evident to anyone that a greater real tolerance of religious life in Soviet controlled territories would be in the interests of the Soviet Government itself both now and in the future." Kennan acknowledged the difficulty of "achieving such cooperation and understanding." The problem, as he saw it, lay not so much with the concept of religious freedom itself, but with the potential of foreign influence. He compared the Communist rulers of Russia with the Czars of the 15th and 16th centuries who "fought Roman religious influence, not so much out of convictions of dogma as out of fear of foreign influence on a backward and credulous people, so the present rulers tend to feel that any foreign influence, religious or otherwise, challenges the security of their rule." Kennan's memorandum concluded, "If these preoccupations could be overcome and if the Kremlin could be induced to tolerate religion at home and to receive the proffered cooperation of western religious movements in the spirit of friendliness and confidence, I believe one of the greatest barriers to a sound future peace would have been removed." [16]

Upon returning to the U.S. Taylor resumed correspondence with Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit,

taking up with him the question of what type of statement would be necessary from Stalin. Mooney told Taylor, "I am profoundly convinced that a reliable, authoritative statement on religious freedom in Russia is a 'sine qua non' of sincere cooperation between America and Russia in post war problems." Mooney, like Roosevelt, felt that Stalin was an "utter realist" and that such a statement could be obtained "if we insist." However, the bishop also believed that "an ambiguous or evidently insincere declaration would be fatal to the prestige of the President and to the confidence which people must have in him if his high ideals for the post war settlement are to be realized substantially." The President's reputation, and acceptance of his postwar settlements, ultimately hinged on their acceptance by the American public.

Writing in 1969, Norman Graebner asked the fundamental question historians had been trying to answer: "After more than twenty years of Cold War, the quest for understanding raises one fundamental and still unanswered question: Why did the Untied States after 1939 permit the conquest of eastern Europe by Nazi forces, presumably forever, with scarcely a stir, but refused after 1944 to acknowledge any primary Russian interest or right of hegemony in the same region on the heels of a closely-won Russian victory against the German invader?" Graebner concluded that "when scholars

have answered that question fully the historical debate over the Cold War origins will be largely resolved." Graebner was writing at the conclusion of the second round of work on the origins of the Cold War conducted by the so-called "revisionist" historians such as William Appleman Williams, Gabriel Kolko, David Horowitz and Gar Alperovitz. They put forth their theories based on economic interpretations of global American interests. But after another quarter century and the end of the Cold War that question Graebner asked remained elusive. [17]

This work will attempt to resolve the question posited by Graebner in terms of a new Cold War paradigm - religion. More specifically, it will focus on the reaction of American Catholicism, and the domestic political repercussions inherent in the postwar settlement FDR envisioned and outlined to Pius XII as early as 1942 and Archbishop Spellman a year later. FDR was about to embark on an ambitious plan to make the postwar political realities he outlined to Archbishop Spellman more palatable to the Vatican and thereby to American Catholics. In doing so he was acknowledging the importance of the religious periphery, American Catholics, in terms of their ability to dominate the discussion of anti-Communism in America. Ronald Formisano formulated a political "core" and "periphery" in relationship to the development of political parties in

antebellum Massachusetts. According to Formisano, "core" groups should be "considered as culturally or religiously dominant groups seeking to maintain or extend their values over out-groups or minorities which the paternalist core usually regard as subordinate or inferior." In like manner the "out-groups resisting the political, economic, cultural hegemony of the Center/Core" groups were considered the periphery. [18]

Formisano was detailing the struggle of separatist religious groups such as Baptists and Methodists competing with the Center/Core orthodox Congregationalists in antebellum Massachusetts. By the 1930s the periphery was made up of Catholics and Jews, especially the huge influx of so-called "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe, the very area FDR was confirming would come under Russian hegemony following the war. That is why FDR seemed so concerned about keeping the Vatican well informed about potential postwar territorial settlements. In fact, FDR was so concerned that he appears to have informed the Pope and his advisors of his thinking some six months before making similar thoughts known to his principal wartime ally. What could the Vatican do? If, as Roosevelt told Spellman, the combined strength of Britain and the United States could not prevent Stalin from doing what he wanted; the Vatican would surely be helpless.

The answer was that the Vatican was not entirely helpless. It could sway worldwide Catholic public opinion, and Roosevelt, the consummate politician, knew this. Public opinion, particularly Catholic opinion, might not have counted for much in the Soviet Union under Stalin, but it counted for a great deal in the United States under FDR. Obviously, Roosevelt was well aware of the importance of the Catholic vote to his national coalition. He had risen to political prominence in New York State, where the large, well-organized Catholic minority was important. On the national level the same was true in several key industrial states of the Northeast and Midwest, such as Massachusetts, Michigan and Illinois with their large bloc of electoral votes. FDR always had at least one Catholic in his cabinet; James Farley through the first two administrations in the traditionally political position of postmaster general. When Farley broke with Roosevelt over the third term issue, he was replaced with another Catholic, Frank Walker.

American Catholic opinion on the wartime alliance with the Soviet Union was ambivalent at best. The German attack on Russia in June of 1941 suddenly turned one of the European aggressor nations into an ally. Even the staunch anti-Communist Winston Churchill was willing to put the past "with its crimes, its follies, and its tragedies" behind in the hope that Russia could hold out long enough to let

England catch its breath. When the U.S. entered the war in December, American Catholics found themselves allied with an ideological enemy of longer standing than Nazism.

Although Catholics were willing to fight Nazis alongside Russians, they, along with other Americans, remained skeptical of any long-range alliance with the Soviets. Catholic newspapers and periodicals continued to remind readers of the nature of the Soviet dictatorship. Commonweal, a liberal Catholic journal, reminded readers in September of 1942, while Myron Taylor was discussing postwar issues with the Pope, that the record on Soviet occupation of Poland was much the same as that of Nazi Germany. "What's the difference between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia?" asked Polish refugee Marta Wankowicz: "In Russia it's colder," she answered. [19]

Now, a year later, FDR had confirmed to the most powerful American Catholic prelate, and through him the Vatican, a vision of postwar Europe that confirmed Catholics worst fears. What was he willing to do? The answer to this question would unfold over the course of the remainder of the war. The story has never been fully told, but beginning with Taylor's mission to Rome in 1942 and continuing through the Yalta conference, FDR attempted to mediate a rapprochement between the Vatican and the Soviet Union. He knew the domestic political risk of failure was great and

might result in the loss of the large Catholic vote to the Democratic Party.

Events moved rapidly in late 1943, and the long-awaited meeting of the Big Three took place in November. Teheran, more so than any of the other conferences of the war, illustrated the basic interrelationship of domestic political realities with the President's formulation of foreign policy. Shortly after the first official meeting adjourned, Stalin visited Roosevelt privately. The President outlined for Stalin his concerns about the 1944 presidential election. In March FDR had told Eden that reaching a settlement on Poland would not present a problem. But in November FDR told Stalin there were six to seven million voters in the United States of Polish extraction (virtually all of them Catholic), and as a practical man he did not want to lose their votes. He told Stalin he agreed with him on the need to restore the Polish state, but he could not participate in any decision on the subject. When Stalin replied that he understood the President's position now that matters had been explained to him, Roosevelt brought up the similar problem he faced with American voters of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian heritage (also mostly Catholic). FDR told Stalin the United States would not go to war over the issue when the Soviets reoccupied the Baltic Republics, but the issue for Americans

would be the right of self-determination. FDR raised the possibility of holding a plebiscite, as he had with Eden and Spellman, and told Stalin he believed the people of the Baltics would vote to join the Soviet Union. Stalin replied that the Baltic States had no autonomy under the czars, and he saw no reason why the issue was being raised now. When the President said the public "neither knows nor understands," Stalin told him, "They should be informed and some propaganda work done." [20]

The "realism" the President spoke of to Spellman in September was manifesting itself in terms of American presidential politics in November. The reality was that FDR did not want to risk losing the Polish Catholic vote, and possibly the entire Catholic vote, over the Polish border issue. FDR was well aware of the impact a president's foreign policy decisions could have on domestic political alignments. As a vice presidential candidate in 1920 he had seen the mass desertion of Irish Catholics from the Democratic party in the Northeast that resulted from Wilson's pro-British foreign policy and the crushing of the Easter Rebellion. Roosevelt wrote to a British Friend Colonel Arthur Murray, M.P.: "I wish to goodness you could find some way of taking it (the Irish Question) out of our campaign over here." The impact of the Irish question on American domestic politics, the involvement of the Catholic

hierarchy, the rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and the ability of domestic politics to impinge on international agreements and create a potential breakdown of wartime alliances was not lost on FDR as he was facing a similar situation 25 years later over Poland. The evidence presented from the Taylor mission of 1942 clearly suggests that FDR was thinking in much larger terms than simple ethnic considerations. [21]

This work will attempt to analyze FDR's postwar policy within the context of his relationship with American Catholics. Throughout his Presidency, he confronted many issues, both domestic and international, which hinged on finding a political solution acceptable to Catholic voters and the Catholic hierarchy. Virtually all of these involved accusations of Communist sympathies on his part or within his administration. To fully appreciate the perspective from which FDR was operating during these critical war years it is necessary to review these incidents and the impact they had on his decision to attempt the seemingly impossible: a rapprochement between the Vatican and the Kremlin.

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CHAPTER 2

"HE HASN'T TALKED ABOUT ANYTHING BUT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM"

John Adams once remarked that "papists" were as rare in his hometown of Braintree as comets and earthquakes. The scarcity of Catholics in the new American Republic did not prevent the founders from worrying about the provisions contained in Article Six of the proposed new constitution. This article prohibited a religious test to hold office in the new federal government. Major Rusk of Massachusetts "shuddered at the idea that Roman Catholics, Papists, and Pagans might be introduced to office." A delegate to the North Carolina ratifying convention took a more long-range view, arguing that he "did not suppose that the Pope could occupy the President's chair," but that in "four or five hundred years," it was possible "that Papists may occupy" the presidency. [1]

In fact, it would take only 140 years for a Catholic to seek the highest office in the land. By 1928, when Alfred E. Smith left Houston with the Democratic Party nomination, the face of America had changed. The great waves of immigration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century transformed the nation. As if the sheer size of the new immigration were not enough to provide native Americans with a sense of being overwhelmed, the origin of the new immigrants was even more frightening. Prior to the 1880's,

95 percent of new immigrants came from northwestern Europe. The new wave was coming from southern and eastern Europe: Poles, Italians, Russians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Rumanians, Spanish and Portuguese. As one historian has noted, "most spoke no English," and, perhaps more importantly, "Protestantism was foreign to most." The bulk of the new immigrants were Catholics, Jews and Eastern Orthodox.[2]

Such huge numbers of Catholics seemed to many to present a clear and present danger to the American way of life. A midwestern scholar expressed his fear of the new immigrants' religion: "The church to which he [the southern immigrant] gives allegiance is the Roman Catholic, and, however much the Catholic Church may do for the ignorant peasant in his European home, such instruction as the priest gives is likely to tend toward acceptance of their subservient position on the part of the working man." The American ideal of the rugged individual as the basis for American democracy was clearly challenged by the traditional paternalism of the Catholic church. [3]

The great waves of immigration also transformed the nation from predominantly rural to predominantly urban. The census of 1920 marked the first time a majority of Americans were found to be living in cities. By 1900 the population of seven of America's largest cities: New York, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and Milwaukee, was over

seventy percent comprised of foreign-born stock. Along with the demographic shift came a shift in political power. Smith's nomination was a harbinger of that change. Political power was shifting from rural to urban America, and urban America was where Catholics were primarily concentrated. This is dramatically demonstrated by figures released in 1936 which showed that of the fifty largest cities in the U.S. forty-one listed Roman Catholics as the largest single segment of the population, including Providence with 52 percent, Newark with 45, Boston 40, Pittsburgh 35, Cleveland 32, and Milwaukee and St. Paul with 29. [4]

Smith's nomination revived all the old fears of papal conspiracies and anti-Catholic sentiment previously manifested in the nativist movement of the 1840's and the Know Nothing Party of the 1850's. The political resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920's was associated with the anti-urban, anti-foreign, anti-Catholic and anti-Semitic response to the great immigration in addition to the anti-black orientation of the original Klan. The crushing defeat suffered by Smith cannot be attributed solely to his Catholicism. Rather, as historian Richard Hofstadter has pointed out, no Democrat could have defeated Hoover in 1928. The combination of prosperity, prohibition and anti-Catholicism combined to make Hoover's victory overwhelming. Smith's candidacy represented to most

Americans all the evils associated with the immigrants: Catholicism, corrupt big city political machines, saloons, crime and vice.

The importance of Smith's candidacy, however, lies not so much in his defeat, but in his ability to obtain the nomination in the first place. Smith's nomination secured the urban ascendancy within the Democratic party, and that ascendancy assured Catholics a major role in the selection of any nominee of the party. A Catholic might not be able to be elected president, but no Democrat could hope to be elected without the support of the major urban political machines, which were predominantly Catholic.

Franklin D. Roosevelt understood this political shift in power perhaps better than anyone. His campaigns and leadership reflected it. He rose to political prominence in New York state where the large, well-organized Catholic minority was important. He stayed on good terms with Tammany while at the same time not becoming identified with its practices. He nominated Smith for the presidency in 1928 with his famous "Happy Warrior" speech. Campaigning vigorously for Smith, he criticized both the Klan and the religious bigotry of the campaign. This resulted in a large residue of support for FDR among Catholics as the 1932 campaign opened.

As the depression deepened and the response of the Hoover administration continued to rely on the traditional American value of individual responsibility and the ability of business to eventually correct the situation, Americans began questioning the very basis of American culture. The cultural clash between the "rugged individualism" of native Protestant America and the "paternalism" of the huge numbers of Catholic immigrants seemed to collapse in the face of millions of unemployed, hungry and hopeless workers. In May of 1931, Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical Quadragesimo Anno marking the fortieth anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum ("On the Condition of Labor"). Pius reaffirmed the teaching of his predecessor affirming the right of private property and condemning the socialistic concept of communal ownership. However, Leo also condemned the concentration of wealth and the evils resulting from the modern industrial process. He asserted the obligation of owners and employers to provide their workers with "reasonable and frugal comfort." [5]

More importantly, both pontiffs asserted that if employers failed to recognize their obligations to provide for their employees, "the public authority must step in to meet them." In October of 1932, with unemployment approaching 13 million, FDR made a speech at Detroit quoting approvingly from Pius XI's Quadragesimo Anno, calling it

"one of the greatest documents of all time" and "just as radical as I am." Was the candidate hinting at the need for government intervention in the economy on a broader scale than his previous campaign statements suggested? [6]

While FDR generally received support from American Catholics on New Deal issues, which affected them directly, he soon found himself embroiled in a host of foreign-policy questions which would place him in conflict with one of his most important constituencies. The new President had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the Wilson administration when the U.S. broke off relations with Russia following the Bolshevik Revolution. Three succeeding Republican administrations continued the nonrecognition policy, in spite of the fact that most major world powers had come around to the reality of dealing with the Soviet government. During the campaign FDR sidestepped the question of recognition, but early in the new administration it became obvious he was seriously considering the possibility. The Catholic press and members of the church hierarchy openly questioned the wisdom of such a move.

Many Catholics were shocked when Al Smith testified in favor of Russian recognition before the Senate Finance Committee. He favored more trade with the Soviets and dismissed their repudiation of World War I debts to the U.S. He noted that the U.S. sent troops to Russia to help put

down the revolution, although both countries were technically at peace. Reverend Edmund A. Walsh, vice president of Georgetown University and a leading Catholic authority on Communism, opposed recognition. Father Walsh headed the Vatican Relief Mission to the Soviet Union from 1919 through 1924, during which there had been much speculation that the mission signaled a willingness of the Vatican to enter into a concordat with the Soviets. This Vatican mission was affiliated with the American Relief Administration headed by Herbert Hoover. The Russian experience left Walsh a rabid anti-Communist. In 1950, at a dinner in Washington, he would counsel the junior Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, to make anti-Communism the focus of his reelection campaign, advice McCarthy would follow wholeheartedly. [7]

FDR sent a letter to Russian President Kalinin in October 1933 requesting a representative of the Soviet government be sent to discuss outstanding issues between the two countries in the hope of reaching a settlement. Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov was given the assignment. On the same day Roosevelt met with Father Walsh to review the issues. The President asked Walsh to prepare a report on the state of religion in Russia which he said would be used when serious negotiations began. Walsh quoted the President as saying "leave it to me Father; I am a good horse dealer." At

the same time the Vatican was expressing its concern about the possibility America would recognize the Soviet government. Cardinal Hayes of New York was asked to express to FDR the Vatican's hope that he would raise the issue of religious persecution in Russia during his talks with Litvinov. Hayes submitted a list of proposals for Roosevelt to discuss. These included: freedom of conscience for Russians and foreigners; freedom of worship, public and private; liberation of persons imprisoned for their faith; and cessation of propaganda against God. [8]

Catholics were not the only Americans opposed to the recognition of Russia. This division was reflected within the administration where Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, both Protestants, joined with Postmaster General James Farley, a Catholic, in opposition, although Hull's opposition was based largely on the potential political consequences of alienating large segments of Catholic Democrats. Hull proposed negotiating with the Soviets to permit freedom of religion for American nationals living in the Soviet Union. At this stage Auxiliary Bishop of Boston Francis Spellman was brought into the negotiations. While a student at the American College in Rome, Spellman became the protege of Cardinal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli. Spellman received a letter from Count Enrico Galeazzi, a financial advisor to the Vatican, asking

him to convey to Roosevelt the Pope's desire to insist upon religious freedom in Russia as a prerequisite to U.S. recognition. Spellman appears to have communicated the Pope's wishes through FDR's son James.[9]

When Litvinov finally arrived in Washington for the talks which would lead to U.S. recognition, he was surprised by the President's insistence on including the issue of religious freedom in the discussions. Years later, in 1938, Spellman recounted in a letter to his brother the astonishment Litvinov expressed to William Bullitt. According to Bullitt, after three days of talks Litvinov exclaimed, "I can't understand the President; he hasn't talked about anything but religious freedom to me, and I want to talk about important things like trade relations." [10]

After nine days of discussions FDR and Litvinov exchanged formal notes which extended recognition to the Soviet Union. In the notes the Soviets agreed to cease subversive activity in the United States, to permit American citizens in the Soviet Union free exercise of religion and to negotiate a final settlement on financial claims. The agreement seems to bear the imprint of Secretary Hull's position in that it recognized the right of Americans to worship freely in Russia. At the same time the agreement seems to have satisfied American Catholics. Monsignor Keegan

of New York congratulated Roosevelt on the manner in which he upheld "the vitally sacred principles which we Americans hold so dear." Bishop Spellman recorded in his diary, "Jack Kelly and Mr. Galeazzi, whose names will never appear in history did much to get President Roosevelt to insist that American citizens at least should worship God as they wished in Russia." [11]

The resolution of the recognition of Russia question established a precedent which would play an important part in the future relationship between FDR and American Catholics. First, Catholics did not get exactly what they wanted. They had sought virtually total recognition of freedom of religion in Russia. The recognition agreement provided only for the right of Americans in Russia to worship freely, which amounted to the right of the embassy staff to worship, as there were virtually no other Americans in Russia. At the same time the president did raise the issue of religious freedom repeatedly and vigorously, as testified to by the comments of William Bullitt. The fact that FDR even took into account Catholic sensitivities was a major departure from previous American administrations. His ability to reach a compromise they found acceptable would become a feature of his administration. Finally, the issue of religious freedom in the Soviet Union would continue to be a central feature of Roosevelt's future dealings with the

Soviet Union and an important element of his thinking on the future postwar settlement.

Notes

1) Chester J. Antieau, S.J.D., Arthur T. Downey, LL.M., and Edward C. Roberts, LL.M., Freedom from Federal Establishment (Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1964), p.105

2) Loren Baritz, The Good Life: The Meaning of Success for the American Middle Class, (New York, Harper and Row, 1990), p.21.

3) Quoted in Baritz, The Good Life, p.25.

4) On foreign stock for America's cities see Baritz, The Good Life, p.27. and on Catholic populations see George Q. Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, p.232.

5) Francis L. Broderick, John A. Ryan: Right Reverend New Dealer, (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1963), pp.19-20.

6) George Q. Flynn, American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency: 1932-1936, (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p.17.

7) Robert A. Graham, S.J., Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane, (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1959), p.363. and Robert Griffith, The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate, (New York, Hayden Book Co. 1970), p.29.

8) Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, p.135ff.

9) Robert I. Gannon, S.J., The Cardinal Spellman Story, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Co., 1962), p.98.

10) Ibid., p.157.

11) Ibid., p.98.

CHAPTER 3

"MARX AMONG THE AZTECS"

As the issue of Russian recognition was being favorably resolved another, more perplexing, problem arose which would haunt the administration throughout FDR's first term. American Catholics had been concerned about the fate of their co-religionists in Mexico since 1913. The church in Mexico was closely aligned with the regime which was overthrown in the revolution that year. The new revolutionary government wrote a constitution in 1917 containing several anti-Catholic provisions. The hostility of the Mexican government expressed itself in repeated instances of anticlericalism. Several priests were murdered and churches burned.

The election of General Plutarco Elias Calles as President intensified the problem and injected the issue of anti-Communism into the fray. Calles was arguably the most radical in a series of revolutionary Mexican Presidents. A true believer in the social and economic aspects of the Mexican Revolution, in 1925 he called for enactment of new laws to enforce the land reform provisions of the 1917 constitution. One such law allowed foreigners to purchase land but only if they renounced all rights of protection by their own government. The second law, called the petroleum law, declared subsoil deposits, such as oil, the

"inalienable and imprescribable" property of the nation. Several American oil companies, used to having their own way in Mexico, refused to comply with the new laws. Calls for American military intervention in Mexico increased, and the press picked up on the charges of the need to prevent the spread of Bolshevism. The oil companies argued that Mexico was going the way of the Soviet Union and would soon provide a base for the spread of Communism throughout Latin America.

American Catholics were just as upset as the American oil companies. Calles began enforcing the anti-Catholic provisions of the 1917 constitution which had been largely ignored by his predecessors Carranza and Obregon: nationalizing church property, expelling foreign priests and nuns, prohibiting religious instruction in private primary schools and limiting the number of priests allowed to perform religious functions in the various Mexican states. When Calles refused to compromise on these issues, the Pope took the extraordinary measure of authorizing an interdict against Mexico, prohibiting the performance of public religious rites.

When FDR took office in March 1933, he appointed his old friend and boss from his days in the Navy Department, Josephus Daniels, ambassador to Mexico. The appointment was initially well received by both the Catholic press and spokesmen who viewed the appointment of such a close friend

as an indication that FDR would use the ambassador to exert his influence in Mexican affairs. In late July 1934, Daniels gave a speech in Mexico City, before a seminar on education, in which he quoted President Calles on the importance of education in Mexico's future: "We must enter and take possession of the mind of childhood, the mind of youth." To this Daniels added his own thoughts: "To the carrying out of that aim, which alone can give Mexico the high place envisioned by its statesmen, the government is making the rural school a social institution." [1]

What Daniels thought an innocent phrase comparing Mexican efforts in education to the widely-respected American public school system provoked a furor among American Catholics. Many immediately called for his resignation. Father Coughlin told his huge radio audience that the U.S. government "from Wilson down to our President Roosevelt, has aided and abetted the rape of Mexico." The issue was quickly transformed from a question of the rights of private schools to the question of whether Mexico was following in the footsteps of Russian Communism. The issue would not go away, and in November, Commonweal, in an editorial entitled "Mexico follows Russia" stated that, "the ruling powers of Mexico are seemingly determined to follow Russia's example to the last and most bitter degree." The editors argued that Americans were witnessing just across

the border "a full demonstration of the most anti-democratic, anti-libertarian, anti-religious tyranny known in the modern world outside Russia itself." [2]

Unlike the recognition of Russia question, which centered almost exclusively around the official position of the church hierarchy, Catholic lay organizations became actively involved in the Mexican issue. In New York, Catholic students picketed the Mexican consulate. The Catholic Evidence Guild, Ancient Order of Hibernians, Catholic Daughters of America, Holy Name Societies, the National Council of Catholic Women and even the Massachusetts League of Catholic Foresters sent letters to the White House. The group which took the lead in criticizing the President, however, and which refused to let go of the issue, was the Knights of Columbus.[3]

Throughout 1934, 1935, and into the election year of 1936, the 500,000 member organization kept up a steady stream of criticism of the Roosevelt administration. Michael H. Carmody of New Haven, Connecticut, head of the organization, requested a meeting with FDR in January of 1935 to discuss the Mexican situation. The President instead arranged for Carmody, and the executive committee of the Knights, to meet with Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Following the meeting with Hull, the group termed the discussion "very satisfactory" but continued to lobby

influential Catholic members of congress. Through the efforts of Senator David Walsh from Carmody's neighboring state of Massachusetts, Senator William E. Borah of Idaho introduced a resolution in the Senate calling for an investigation "into the persecution of Christians... now being practiced in Mexico" and for Senate resolutions protesting the "anti-religious campaign" being conducted in Mexico.[4]

Catholic newspapers editorialized in favor of passage of the Borah resolution, and several prominent members of the Catholic hierarchy spoke out in favor of it. In an editorial of February 15, 1935, Commonweal acknowledged that the Borah Resolution was not expected to pass. But the editors took issue with the Protestant periodical The Christian Century, which had criticized the role of the Catholic Church in Mexico, claiming the church had "underwritten a blanket denunciation of socialism and socialistic education." Commonweal's editors argued that a "common-sense" distinction had to be made "between the 'socialism' of social reformers and the 'socialism of say, Marx, Lenin, Bakunin and their modern exemplars in Russia and Mexico." [5]

Only a week earlier, on February 8, 1935, Commonweal carried an article by William T. Walsh entitled "Is Communism Dangerous" in which he compared General Calles to

Stalin and criticized Daniels for his public praise "...in favor of a Communistic plan to transfer all control of children's education form the parent to the state." But, perhaps even more ominously for FDR, Walsh quoted an article in the Saturday Review to the effect that "collectivism in some form is inevitable...sovietism, fascism and President Roosevelt's 'New Deal' will be found in the long run, despite apparent divergencies, to have been fundamentally the same thing." Not only were readers being asked to equate Mexico's revolution with Soviet Russia, but also to equate Roosevelt's New Deal with Soviet style collectivism.[6]

The administration took the position that the Borah Resolution represented "a premature indictment of a friendly neighboring government" and would hinder the development of the president's Good Neighbor policy. Nonetheless a petition in the House garnered 242 signatures which was presented to Roosevelt. The President needed to say something and put the issue behind him. A second request for a meeting with the President was sent by Carmody in April and again was referred to the State Department. This time, however, FDR requested a reply be prepared that could be sent over his signature. Commonweal returned to the issue that same month with an article entitled "Marx Among the Aztecs." The author, Dixon Wecter, equated Mexican and Russian socialism and collectivism and reminded readers that "In 1927

Secretary Kellogg sought to convince the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate that Communism was receiving official encouragement in Mexico." Official encouragement? Was Wecter implying that FDR was encouraging Communism in one of our closest neighboring states? The evidence seems to suggest that this is precisely what was happening. The association with New Deal social programs promoting collectivism, reluctance to challenge the Mexican government and the Russian recognition issue were leading many Americans, both Catholic and non-Catholics alike, to the conclusion FDR's sympathies lay with some foreign ideology. In May Bishop John F. Noll of Fort Wayne, Indiana, expressed this concern in a letter to Roosevelt asking him to take a strong public stand on the religious freedom issue and "end rumors of Roosevelt sympathy for communism."[7]

Finally, in early July, the President met with Carmody and a delegation from the Knights of Columbus. The group again asked the President to speak out publicly against the persecution of the church in Mexico. FDR, however, would give the group no specific promise. After the meeting, the Knights told the press he had been gracious but noncommittal. Eight days later the President met with a Congressional delegation on the same subject and used the opportunity to issue a statement on religious freedom which said he wished to "make it clear that the American people

and the Government believed in freedom of religious worship not only in the United States, but also in other nations." [8]

The Catholic press seemed relieved by the statement. Most took the position that Roosevelt had spoken directly to the Mexican situation, although he had not mentioned Mexico. Commonweal praised the statement as the forerunner of an international pact on religious freedom. The Catholic journal America editorialized that "a major objective of our campaign on Mexico was achieved." It seemed as though a collective sigh of relief was taken by Catholic opinion leaders. The President had said something, anything, and they could now return to cementing relations with a President they believed was taking a genuine interest in Catholic issues.

It seemed the President had put the issue to rest. However, the Knights of Columbus were not so easily mollified. At their annual convention at New York in August the Knights passed a unanimous resolution authorizing Carmody to send yet another letter to the President expressing their regret at the President's apparent lack of concern over matters in Mexico. In October, the National Board of Directors sent a vigorous letter of protest to FDR arguing that the President's statement on religious freedom fell far short of what was needed. The letter concluded,

"You cannot escape responsibility for throttling the Borah Resolution...for the endorsement given the Mexican Government...by your ambassador...for nonaction on behalf of bleeding...Mexico." [9]

This time the Knights had gone too far. The political activism generated by the Mexican situation was calling into question who had the authority to speak for the church. Archbishop John J. McNicholas of Cincinnati issued a statement to be read in all churches of his archdiocese stating that the Knights "in no sense speak for the priesthood or for the Catholic laity of Cincinnati." McNicholas was correct in stating that the Knights did not speak for the entire Catholic community. The anti-Communist rhetoric which dominated much of the issue surrounding education in Mexico would now be overwhelmed by a symbolic gesture from American Catholic education. Chicago's liberal Cardinal, George Mundelein, would play a key role in bringing the clamor created by the Knight's latest letter to an end.[10]

In November of 1935, the University of Notre Dame, the most prestigious Catholic university in the country, invited Roosevelt to receive an honorary degree. Frank Walker, mayor of Detroit and a close political advisor to FDR and a Notre Dame graduate, appears to have been closely involved with the decision to present the degree to the President in the midst of the swirling controversy over the Knight's letter.

Notre Dame President John O'Hara was delighted with the prospect and traveled to Washington to complete the arrangements. Cardinal Mundelein presided at the presentation at South Bend on December 9 and said his presence was to insure the President he was "among friends." The Cardinal, in a direct reference to the Knight's controversy, said no one group had the right to claim to speak for all Catholics. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes confided to his diary that the Cardinal's speech amounted to "a pretty complete endorsement of the President." For his part FDR gave a ringing endorsement of the concepts of "freedom of education and freedom of religious worship" as a necessity for "true national life." The sight of the President receiving an honorary degree from Notre Dame from a Cardinal of the church would surely put to rest the idea that the President was secretly encouraging the spread of Communism. FDR was thus able to move into the election year of 1936 with what Arthur Krock of The New York Times described as a Catholic endorsement of the President. But 1936 would bring the President into yet more controversy with American Catholics, and again the issue would be Communism, at home and abroad. [11]

Notes

1) George Q. Flynn, American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency: 1932-1936, (Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p.153.

2) Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, p.156 and Commonweal, "Mexico Follows Russia", November 9, 1934, pp.47-48.

3) Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, pp.154-155.

4) Ibid. p.157.

5) Commonweal, "Let's Have Truth About Mexico", February 15, 1935, pp.439-440.

6) Willian T. Walsh, Commonweal, "Is Communism Dangerous", February 8, 1935, pp. 420-421.

7) Dixon Wecter, Commonweal, "Marx Among the Aztecs", April 12, 1935, p.673, and Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, p.174.

8) Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Vol. 4, (New York, Random House, 1938), p.305.

9) Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, p.167.

10) Ibid. p.167.

11) Ibid. p.184., and Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol. 1, The First Thousand Days, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1953), pp.479-480., and Rosenman, Public Papers, p.495.

CHAPTER 4

A COMMUNIST IN WASHINGTON'S CHAIR

The 1936 presidential campaign began in earnest in January when Al Smith addressed a glittering gathering of the nation's wealthy at Washington's Mayflower Hotel. The sponsor of the evening was the American Liberty League, a self-proclaimed nonpartisan political group organized in 1934. The organization's principal sponsors, however, included business and industrial leaders such as Irenee Du Pont, John J. Raskob, William S. Knudsen and J. Howard Pew. The Liberty League was opposed to virtually every aspect of Roosevelt's New Deal, viewing it as "creeping socialism" at best and outright Communism at worst. The League managed to recruit both Smith and 1924 Democratic presidential candidate John W. Davis as their spokesmen, hoping that having two former Democratic presidential candidates telling the nation that the New Deal was a betrayal of American principles would cause a split in the party and possibly deny FDR the 1936 nomination.

A national radio audience heard the onetime "Happy Warrior" of the Democratic Party denounce the inflationary spending policies of the administration, call for a return to the principles of state's rights and assert the need to honor the constitution. Smith said the choice was clear; America had to choose between "Washington and Moscow, the

pure air of America or the foul breath of communistic Russia...the stars and stripes or the red flag of the godless...Soviets." Smith said the President himself was not a Communist or a socialist, but was being misled by those around him. [1]

Jim Farley, again heading the president's campaign, claimed Smith made a major mistake aligning himself with the very elements which fought against his run for the presidency eight years earlier. Farley believed Smith had alienated himself from the urban Catholic working-class constituency which once formed the basis of his strength within the party. FDR's crushing defeat of Herbert Hoover in 1932 had achieved the very coalition of urban working-class Catholics with rural Protestant farmers of the South and Midwest which had been the goal of the Populist Party. The Democratic Party had again been unable to pull off such a coalition in 1928 with Smith as its standard bearer. The Protestant "core" was unwilling to accept the leadership of the Catholic "periphery." Now the Liberty League was hoping to drive a wedge into the New Deal coalition by separating the core from the periphery over the issue of Communism.

While Smith, the only Catholic ever nominated by a major party to run for president, broke with FDR over the New Deal early on, another important former Catholic supporter of FDR would soon do the same. Father Charles E.

Coughlin was becoming more critical of FDR with each passing week. Shortly after praising the President's State of the Union address the radio priest made his final break with FDR, charging that the President's Brain Trust was Communist infiltrated, virtually the same thing Smith was saying. He apologized to his radio audience for his earlier support of FDR and told them, "The slogan 'Roosevelt or Ruin' must now be altered to read 'Roosevelt and Ruin.'" Two of the most popular Catholics in the country were both accusing Roosevelt of leading the nation down the road of Communism. How would the President respond to this new challenge? [2]

American Catholic voters were being asked to make a decision on the New Deal: was it Communist? These same Catholic voters were faced with something of a paradox: some prominent, politically popular Catholics like Smith and Coughlin were declaring the New Deal Communist or Communist inspired. Other prominent, politically active Catholics like Farley, Joseph P. Kennedy and many more were active participants in the New Deal and seeking FDR's reelection. And both groups were decidedly anti-Communist. This is hardly surprising in view of the general anti-Communist rhetoric of the Catholic Church and the specific anti-Communist campaign being waged by the Jesuit order in America. In early April of 1934 the father general of the society wrote to the fathers provincial in America "to

organize a plan of concerted action against Communism as it exists and labors in your country." Father Edmund Walsh of Georgetown University took up the challenge and implemented a fourteen point program of "practical and concerted" action against American Communism. At the same time Coughlin and Smith were charging the New Deal was Communist inspired American Catholics were being deluged with some 4.5 million pamphlets on a variety of subjects, but "Communism was the topic most in demand, being represented with 18 titles...." The Catholic Periodical Index for the period 1934-1938 lists eight hundred thirty-eight entries under the heading of communism, quadruple the number for 1930-1933. [3]

The Catholic doctrine being so widely disseminated contained three elements. 1) That the origins of Communism were moral and spiritual. 2) That Communism is inherently atheistic and anti-God. 3) That Communism acquires its power through deceptive propaganda. The first of these elements is crucial to an understanding of Catholic thought. Leo XIII in his encyclical Rerum Novarum issued in 1898 saw the origins of both socialism and Communism in "the religious and moral destitution in which wage-earners had been left by liberal economics." Liberalism was thus "designated an amoral, materialistic philosophy originating with the Enlightenment which promoted a laissez-faire attitude toward economic arrangements." This produced the rankest sort of materialism

which left Catholics condemning both Communism and Capitalism. As Robert Frank describes the effect "a religious and amoral liberalism begat individualism which begat socialism which begat communism." This "liberalism" in turn was perhaps more dangerous than outright Communism because it allowed liberals to fall under the sway of element number three: the power of deceptive Communist propaganda. [4]

According to Catholic doctrine the Communist ability to deceive liberals created something of a multiplier effect enabling the relatively small number of actual Communists to become a genuine threat to the nation. By virtue of their ability to deceive "the millions of unwitting 'dupes' of the communists -- mostly 'liberals' and most of these consisting of teachers, writers and assorted union activists" -- the Communist threat was far greater than their actual numbers indicated. While the Popular Front tactics of the Communists during the Thirties may have enabled them to penetrate and manipulate a host of liberal causes, they were not fooling the Catholics. J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the FBI and a devout Catholic, entitled his book on Communism Masters of Deceit for just this reason. In his encyclical Divini Redemptoris Pius XI noted that "in the beginning communism showed itself for what it was thus alienating the people," but with the adoption of Popular Front tactics by the

Comintern "it has therefore changed its tactics, and strives to entice the multitudes by trickery of various forms, hiding its real designs behind ideas that in themselves are good and attractive." Thus the liberal FDR was being cast by both Smith and Coughlin as something of a "dupe" of communists that had infiltrated his New Deal Braintrust. The New Deal was just another liberal program that might be "good and attractive" in and of itself but which was being corrupted by Communist "trickery." [5]

In April Senator David I. Walsh of Massachusetts gave a speech to the Tidewater Holy Name Society of Tidewater, Virginia. Walsh's theme was not greatly different from many others of the period, but it is an indication of where he and many other American Catholics were heading in this crucial period. The Richmond Times Dispatch proclaimed on April 27 that "Senator (Walsh) Heralds War of Churches Vs. Reds." The Norfolk Virginia Pilot reported on the same day that "Walsh Sees Fight Facing Christianity" and that the senator told the members of the Holy Name Society they "must battle Communism." [6]

The speech suggests that Walsh perceived the great threat to western civilization as being the threat of Communism, not against democracy per se, but against Christianity. An anti-Communist speech coming from a Catholic senator in 1936 would hardly be surprising, but

neither would it be surprising coming from a Protestant senator. The core and periphery, which had clashed so alarmingly in the 1920's, seemed to have a common issue around which to rally in the 1930's, the threat of Communism to Christianity. However, much of non-Catholic America was not yet ready to jump on the anti-Communist bandwagon, especially if Catholics were holding the reins. The Christian Century, arguably the most influential Protestant periodical of the era, took up the argument with a series of articles with such titles as "The Catholic Anti-Red Campaign,"; "Shall Protestants Accept the Pope's Invitation?"; and "Stay Out!". Clearly the center-core groups were not entirely ready to accept the Catholic perception that Communism presented the greatest threat to the Republic. [7]

The spring primaries which demolished the hopes of the Liberty League created a more disturbing problem. Father Coughlin had turned his National Union for Social Justice, which he claimed had more than five million members nation-wide, into a political movement. Coughlin announced the Union would endorse congressional candidates that espoused its principles. In Pennsylvania, Coughlin endorsed twenty Democrats and twelve Republicans. Twelve of them won, including Representative Michael J. Stack in Philadelphia, who was opposed by the local Kelley machine. However, ten of

the twelve were incumbents, and with the economy beginning to show signs of recovery, incumbency was a strong position to hold for congressional races. In Ohio, the radio priest endorsed seventeen Democrats and fifteen Republicans. Fifteen of the candidates won, and the Cleveland Democratic machine was defeated along with two incumbents. Coughlin claimed similar victories in Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Michigan and Maine. While a Coughlin endorsement did not seem to guarantee victory, both parties were surprised at his apparent ability to translate his public popularity into votes. Perhaps more importantly, he had overcome the opposition of the big city machines so traditionally Irish and Catholic and staunchly Democratic.

This was exactly what the President and Farley had feared, and Farley was undoubtedly ready to call in all the political IOU's. Catholics had been one of the groups to benefit most from FDR's patronage. The percentage of Catholics appointed to the federal judiciary increased from four percent during the combined administrations of Wilson, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover to 29 percent under Roosevelt. Many prominent Catholic politicians were calling on the American church to take a public position against Coughlin. Edward J. Flynn of the Bronx, a close Roosevelt ally, was reported threatening to leave the church if the clergy did not repudiate the priest. Joseph P. Kennedy, Chairman of the

Securities and Exchange Commission, and Frank Murphy, Governor of Michigan and former close friend of Coughlin, were assigned to work against the priest among Catholic laymen. [8]

Both Murphy and Kennedy had close ties to the radio priest. Kennedy visited Royal Oak on several occasions, and once brought his young son Jack to meet Coughlin. The two disagreed on many aspects of politics, with Kennedy referring to Coughlin often as a "jackass," but this only solidified the priest's respect for Kennedy's openness and down-to-earth style. The Kennedy-Murphy duo kept FDR informed of Coughlin's shifting opinions. In late 1935 Coughlin told Murphy: "the general criticism against Mr. Roosevelt is due to the fact that he has broken nearly every promise that he has made while he prefers to seek means and methods closely allied with socialism and communism to rectify our economic ills. Joseph Kennedy agrees with me in this analysis." Indeed Kennedy often openly disagreed with many of FDR's policies; the same candor and frankness which produced his friendship with Coughlin had the same effect on FDR until Kennedy's own break with President. [9]

Kennedy, at FDR's request, arranged a meeting between the President and Coughlin in September of 1935 at the President's home in Hyde Park. Kennedy met the priest's train in the early morning hours of September 10 at Albany,

and both were taken by surprise by the early morning headlines announcing the death of Huey Long. They arrived to find the President still asleep, and in the informal tradition surrounding Hyde Park prepared their own breakfast in the President's kitchen. When the pair finally heard the President moving about upstairs, Coughlin ran up and announced, "your boyfriend is dead." The news must certainly have changed the president's approach to the forthcoming discussion as Farley's greatest fear was the potential alliance of Coughlin's rhetoric and popularity with Long's political acumen. [10]

After the president had breakfast the two got down to business: "Cards on the table Padre, cards on the table. Why are you cooling off to me?" the president asked. Coughlin produced a check given to him by Bishop Gallagher. The check had been sent to Gallagher by the bishop of Guadalajara and was allegedly issued by a communist sympathizer in the Treasury Department to Mexican revolutionaries. "Michael Gallagher's afraid we're going soft on the Communists down there," Coughlin said. FDR was surprised and promised to look into the matter. Coughlin then raised the issue of the president's recognition of the Soviet Union, but was not overly concerned because the US had to look out for its own interests, and no nation could go bankrupt, as the Soviet Union surely would, without it effecting the rest of the

world. Coughlin then turned to domestic affairs, telling the President he should pursue more inflationary fiscal policies and get rid of the Federal Reserve. FDR replied that he was "only the President" and that Coughlin should not "be so innocent as to think that the President of the United States can also be the Congress of the United States." He then reminded Coughlin the country still faced serious problems which would be compounded if a Republican were elected in 1936. If Coughlin were to lead a third party movement in 1936 the prospect of a Republican victory would be enhanced, and was that what he wanted, the President asked. Coughlin was noncommittal, but surely the knowledge of Long's death strengthened the President's hand and weakened Coughlin's. [11]

By the summer of 1936 Coughlin allied his National Union for Social Justice with three other groups disenchanted with the New Deal: the remains of Huey Long's Share Our Wealth Society, now under the leadership of the Reverend Gerald L.K. Smith; Dr. Francis E. Townsend of California, the spokesman for a movement advocating monthly old age pensions; and Congressman William Lempke, spokesman of neopopulist plains state farmers. Lempke would be the candidate of the Union Party, as the new organization was called. But the real threat to Roosevelt now that Long was no longer part of the political equation lay in the

possibility that Coughlin could translate his huge radio audience into a national voting block. On June 19, Coughlin announced the formation of the new party and his support of Lempke for President on a special nationwide broadcast. Claiming a "new day for America," Coughlin called on "agriculture, labor, the disappointed Republicans and the outraged Democrats" to join the new party and help "avoid the treacherous pitfalls of red communism." [12]

In early August the followers of Dr. Townsend convened for their convention. Reverend Smith spoke to the delegates in a speech that was to set the tone for the upcoming campaign. The country was faced with a choice: "in the presence of atheistic Communist influence...It is the Russian primer or the Holy bible...the Red flag or the Stars and Stripes...Lenin or Lincoln...Stalin or Jefferson." H.L. Mencken said he never heard a more effective speech. Coughlin was not about to be upstaged. Taking the platform the next morning, he told the crowd that FDR stood for "Franklin Double-crossing Roosevelt," a charge which drew both cheers and boos from the audience. The Sargeant at Arms called for order, and Dr. Townsend asked that the "booers" be put out. Coughlin resumed by asking the crowd why the American Communist Party was supporting Roosevelt for president. Ripping off his Roman collar, he called FDR a "liar" and a "betrayer." In a state of near exhaustion,

Coughlin was assisted from the stage. Once again the criticism of the Popular Front tactics of the American Communist Party in endorsing Roosevelt and his New Deal comes to the fore. Swept away by his own rhetoric, Coughlin is now associating FDR himself with the Communist plot, calling him a liar and betrayer. [13]

Church leaders were taken aback by the ferocity of Coughlin's attack on the President. His immediate superior, Bishop Michael Gallagher of Detroit, was about to leave for Rome and discussions with Pius XI. Questioned about Coughlin's speech, Gallagher said he did "not approve of the language Father Coughlin had used in expressing himself on the President." The bishop said he did not believe Roosevelt was a Communist and that disagreement over policy was not a reason to call a man a "liar." However, Gallagher said he could not censure Coughlin and would not be discussing the priest with Vatican officials "unless they speak of it." [14]

The Vatican would indeed "speak of it" when Gallagher arrived in Rome. While Gallagher and his traveling companion, Bishop Joseph Schrembs of Cleveland, were en route to Rome, the Vatican released a statement saying that Coughlin's characterization of Roosevelt as a liar was a "painful expression." Coughlin took the opportunity to publish an apology to the President in the form of an open

letter to FDR in his newspaper Social Justice. Coughlin wrote "in the heat of civic interest...,in righteous anger...I used the word 'liar.' I now offer the President my sincerest apology." [15]

On arriving in Rome Gallager and Schrembs denied rumors that Gallagher had been called to Rome specifically to discuss Coughlin and went so far as to defend Coughlin's "fight for the preservation of American democracy." The bishops would quickly change their tune. After meeting with Vatican officials, including Monsignor Giuseppe Pizzard, the Pope's closest political advisor, Gallagher announced that he "personally, would favor Mr. Roosevelt more than any other candidate at present" and that he and Schrembs "have been advised to cease talking about Father Coughlin." [16]

Coughlin did not appear ready to compromise. Taking to the campaign trail in early August, he continued to hammer at FDR, now referring to him as a "scab" President leading a "scab army' of reliefers. Coughlin claimed the New Deal was "surrounded by red and pink Communists and by 'frankfurters' of destruction," a pointed reference to Harvard Law School Professor Felix Frankfurter, an important advisor to FDR. The President would appoint Frankfurter to the Supreme Court in 1939. Coughlin became threatening in Providence, R.I., claiming there "would be more bullets in the White House than you could count with an adding machine" if FDR were

reelected. In New Bedford, Massachusetts he told an audience of 12,000 that he had been instrumental in removing Herbert Hoover from the White House and "I will be instrumental in taking a Communist from the chair once occupied by Washington." [17]

Returning to Cleveland for the national convention of his National Union for Social Justice in mid-August, both he and Smith returned to the now familiar theme of Roosevelt and Communism. Smith gave one of the most dramatic speeches of his career. The New Deal was led by "a slimy group of men culled from the pink campuses of America with friendly gaze fixed on Russia...and they had the face to recognize Russia, where two million Christians had been butchered." Smith concluded to a roar when he announced that the election was really meaningless to him: "My real mission is to see that the red flag of bloody Russia is not hoisted in place of the Stars and Stripes." [18]

Coughlin appeared angered at the enthusiastic response given Smith's speech by his National Union members. But his flair for the dramatic would once again come to his rescue in his battle of one-upsmanship with Smith. Speaking under a hot sun the following day, Coughlin told his followers that both Roosevelt and Rexford Tugwell, a key Roosevelt advisor, were "communistic." Once again the theme comes across that the President and his advisors, if not outright Communists,

were at best "Communistic" in the sense of being either "dupes" or "fellow travelers." Referring to the campaign as a "war," he advised the National Union members "to go to your homes as to a trench." He then collapsed and was assisted from the stage. He was treated for a mild case of exhaustion and advised to rest. [19]

The political threat that Coughlin and the Union Party presented to FDR was beginning to take a back seat to the threat to the church presented by his activities. The specter of a revived anti-Catholicism which had dominated presidential politics as recently as the 1928 campaign began to surface. A faculty member of the Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary stated publicly that "the voice behind that radio priest is the voice of his church." At the same time the New Republic, a liberal periodical, reported that "the Union Party marks the deliberate entrance of the Roman Catholic Church into national politics" and suggested that the Vatican was backing Coughlin because it was depending on the financial support of "wealthy American Catholic families." In addition, "influential and wealthy Americans such as Al Smith and John J. Raskob, think he can help defeat Roosevelt." [20]

Both the Vatican and the American Catholic hierarchy were concerned with distancing themselves from Coughlin and assuring all Americans that his views were not those of the

church. But in a very real way they were. His anti-Communist rhetoric claiming deception and infiltration of the New Deal by Communists or liberals deceived by Communist propaganda was clearly the message the Jesuits were proclaiming. That was the Catholic message on Communism being directed at labor unions and other organizations. Coughlin and others were now directing the same message at the New Deal. On September 2, Osservatore Romana criticized priests that challenged the constituted authorities in the countries in which they lived and pointed out Coughlin's attacks on the President as an example. The article also took issue with Bishop Gallagher for stating that the Vatican approved of Coughlin's activities. Both Coughlin and the press were on hand when Gallagher's ship returned from Rome. Seemingly overwhelmed by Coughlin's presence, the bishop was quoted as saying: "It's the voice of God that comes to you from the great orator from Royal Oak. Rally round it." The bishop denied the report in Osservatore Romana was accurate. Coughlin was overjoyed with this seeming endorsement, but then was shocked to hear Gallagher claim that Roosevelt was the best-qualified candidate for the presidency. When asked about the Osservatore editorial, Coughlin claimed it was only "one newspaper's opinion." The Vatican then took the unusual step of sending a note to all press organizations

confirming that the Osservatore editorial represented the official Vatican position on this issue.[21]

Just how much of a political threat the Union Party represented to FDR is an open question. The President was at the height of his popularity, despite the sniping and accusations of Communist sympathies. Publicly, Farley dismissed the third party movement; privately, he was taking no chances. He was continually monitoring the Union Party strength through his vast network of personal contacts, party workers and even postal authorities. FDR had instructed Farley to monitor postal receipts for Royal Oak to keep tabs on the priest's popularity. Several states were reporting great strength among Coughlin supporters. Both the nation's conservative and liberal press were taking the new party seriously. The conservative Los Angeles Times, perhaps wistfully, suggested that "Lempke's third party may defeat Roosevelt." The liberal New Republic editorialized "this party is far more formidable than Al Smith's Liberty League....It might prove that the New Deal has not been radical enough to satisfy popular discontent." The Minneapolis Tribune suggested that Lempke's popularity in the farm states would challenge FDR's earlier vote. A New York Times survey revealed Townsend's popularity in Washington, Oregon and California would disrupt traditional Democratic and Republican voting patterns. [22]

Unquestionably, Coughlin's strength rested with Catholic voters. Massachusetts political leaders were virtually unanimous in their fear of Coughlin's campaign. Governor James Curley, Congressman John McCormack and Senator David Walsh all reported to Farley that Coughlin's popularity would translate into a large Lempke vote. McCormack, who survived the September primary in Massachusetts despite the Union's opposition, wrote to FDR proclaiming Coughlin's supporters were "sullen discontented and bitter, using any argument they think will appeal to the hearer." The President's son, James Roosevelt, claimed Coughlin was "stronger in Massachusetts than in any other state." Farley disagreed, stating that Ohio was the strongest Coughlin state. Reports were coming in almost daily of the threat Coughlin forces represented in Cleveland, where Coughlin's endorsement in the spring primaries had been credited with defeating the local machine candidate. The priest was demonstrating great influence among both German and Irish Catholics. One party worker claimed: "I am not anti-Catholic,...but go into any Catholic settlement in Northwestern Ohio and you will find a lot of strong Lempke sentiment and following." [23]

Just who was supporting Coughlin at this point? One writer has described the priest's final audience as "the congregation of despair." One early supporter of both

Coughlin and FDR wrote to Roosevelt exclaiming, "You are a Christian Gentleman, and ...you abhor and despise Corruption, and the wealth of the Nation in the Hands of the Few, who strangle the Poor even unto Starvation." The same writer now told the President "I loved you, and you betrayed me." Clearly the Coughlinites were comprised of those who felt the New Deal had not gone far enough. This was the same analysis being put forward by The New Republic and Congressman McCormack. [24]

While Senator Walsh was demonstrating a lukewarm attitude toward the administration, his longtime rival in Massachusetts politics, James Michael Curley, was going all out for FDR. When Curley's brother John arrived at the Democratic convention, it set off "speculation of an attempt to put Curley on (the) ballot as vice-president." Realistically, Curley had no chance of being named FDR's running mate, and John probably started the speculation himself. Real "Hotel gossip" was swirling around the third ticket possibilities of Father Coughlin's Union Party. Boston District Attorney Thomas C. O'Brien had been given the Union Party nomination for vice-president and would be Congressman William Lempke's running mate. Most of the Massachusetts delegation, according to news reports, "believe that the selection of O'Brien was a ploy engineered by Governor Curley to keep O'Brien out of the Senatorial

contest in Massachusetts in September." This speculation centered around the fact that the Lempke-O'Brien ticket was announced "after the visit of Father Coughlin to Boston and his conference with Governor Curley." [25]

In addition to removing a potential rival to Curley's bid for the senate the fact that an Irish Catholic would be on the ticket in Massachusetts, where Coughlin was considered very popular, added to the possibility that the Union Party could cost FDR the state. On the other hand, a Catholic on the ticket was potentially dangerous in terms of alienating the core, which had soundly rejected Catholic Al Smith only eight years earlier. FDR was not about to be saddled with the volatile James Michael Curley, even in Massachusetts, and shortly after the convention he named Walsh as his campaign chairman in Massachusetts. FDR thus had his own Irish Catholic politician running his campaign in Massachusetts and one with a far better vote-getting record than Curley in the state.

In August The Boston Herald carried a story under the headline "Walsh Afraid of Lempke Vote." The article quoted Walsh as saying, "if the Union party polls 100,000 or more votes in Massachusetts, President Roosevelt will lose the state." Polls at the time were indicating Lempke would receive seven percent of the Massachusetts vote. Something of the old progressive still remained in Walsh, however, as

the same article carried his attack on "those calling FDR an enemy of the constitution and of liberty," wording that could have referred to either or both the Union Party and the Republicans. Walsh declared, "what they mean by liberty is the freedom of the exploiter to gain untold wealth at the expense of the general welfare." Indeed, FDR had used similar rhetoric at the Democratic convention when he attacked the "economic royalists" who sought to create a "new despotism." "They complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America," the President exclaimed, "What they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power." Both Walsh and FDR were using the very type of Bryanesque and Wilsonian rhetoric used by Coughlin and were now using it to undercut his appeal. Ironically, Walsh would break with FDR over his court-packing scheme and end up a critic of the New Deal. [26]

In mid-October the Associated Press carried a story in which Walsh declared that president Roosevelt's reelection had been "virtually certain" from the outset of the campaign. The outcome in Massachusetts, however, was still in doubt and "hinges on the size of the vote polled by the third party ticket backed by Father Coughlin." Walsh said FDR would carry the state easily in a "straight two party vote," and indeed he could still win "even with Democratic deflections to the third party there." Walsh's predictions

proved accurate when the Union Party polled its strongest showing in Massachusetts, but FDR carried the state. [27]

While Catholic politicians and laymen were busy solidifying FDR's position among Catholic voters, the clergy was no less active in making its position known. In July, shortly after Coughlin's opening attack on the president, Reverend Maurice S. Sheehy of Catholic University wrote to Roosevelt informing him that his "friends are not ignoring the calumnies of Father Coughlin." Sheehy told FDR of a meeting he had attended in New York with four bishops and three monsignori at which Coughlin's attacks on the President had been the topic of discussion. The result was a plan on "how this matter might be handled most effectively and we have taken action." [28]

Although Sheehy's letter to FDR did not outline the plan of action discussed at New York, it soon became clear that the church hierarchy intended to refute Coughlin at every turn and disassociate his campaign rhetoric from any official sanction by the church. Coughlin continued to attack the president as a "communist" and the New Deal as a Communist-inspired program developed by the President's advisors. He told the public that in voting for Roosevelt "We are voting for the Communists, the socialists, the Russian lovers, the Mexican lovers and the Kick-me-downers." Before a crowd estimated at 100,000 in Chicago he decried

the "Commies" in the administration: "Rexie Tugwell...hand shaker of Russia, plow-me-down Wallace,...Josephus Daniels-the man who applauds the slaughter of priests and nuns in Mexico." He was raising again all the issues associated by Catholics with communist influence in the years of the Roosevelt administration.[29]

But now his remarks were not going unchallenged. When Coughlin gave a speech in Cincinnati in which he declared Roosevelt a "dictator" and said it might become necessary to use "bullets" instead of "ballots," Archbishop McNicolas responded that he "cannot let pass the advocacy of the use of bullets and I condemn such remarks." South Dakota's Bishop Bernard Mahoney publicly called Coughlin a "Cultural vulgarian," and Boston's Cardinal William O'Connell spoke out against him. [30]

In early October the anti-Coughlin campaigns of the Catholic politicians and the Catholic clergy converged. Senator Joseph O'Mahoney of Wyoming reached Monsignor John Ryan of Catholic University with a request that Ryan make a radio speech rebutting Coughlin's charges of Communists in Washington. Ryan agreed to make the speech and submitted several drafts to O'Mahoney. FDR himself seems to have had some input into the speech. An early draft, with a specific reference to Coughlin was edited to delete his name; then it

was put back in, "reportedly at the direction of the president." [31]

Ryan went on the air on October 8, addressing himself to "the wage earners" and "toilers" who had suffered the most from the depression and benefited the most from the New Deal. This category of course contained the great bulk of working-class Catholics that had made up the great waves of immigration concentrated in America's urban areas. Ryan dismissed Coughlin's charges that FDR and his advisors such as Felix Frankfurter and Rexford Tugwell were Communists. Ryan charged that Coughlin's explanation of what was wrong with the American economy was "at least 50 percent wrong" and his solutions were "at least 90 percent wrong." He concluded by begging "the toilers of America" not to abandon Roosevelt in the coming election. Ryan quickly began to hear from Coughlin's supporters. The letters again demonstrated that Coughlin's support rested with Irish and German Catholics. Of 78 letters attacking Ryan's position, 36 were written by persons with Irish names and 39 by persons with German names. [32]

The Vatican, meanwhile,had again stepped into the picture. On September 30 it was announced that Cardinal Secretary of State Eugenio Pacelli would visit the United States for a three-week "vacation." The American hierarchy was taken completely off guard by the announcement, with the

exception of Boston's Auxiliary Bishop Frances Spellman, who was secretly notified of the visit in August. The bishop confided to his diary his reservations of the second most powerful prelate in the Vatican visiting the United States in the midst of a heated election in which Catholics were playing such a prominent role. Spellman realized, or knew, that this visit would not be confined to a simple "vacation." A nationwide tour for the Cardinal was organized. Pacelli spent four relatively quiet days at a secluded Long Island estate before embarking on a trip that took him to Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Washington, Chicago, St. Paul, Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Louis, Cincinnati and back to New York. Pointedly omitted from the Cardinal's itinerary was the Diocese of Detroit, Father Coughlin's home base. [33]

Bishop Gallagher was angered at the snub and traveled to Cincinnati along with his friend Bishop Schrembs of Cleveland seeking to meet with Pacelli. Although the two arrived early in the morning, they were informed that the Cardinal was already in a meeting with McNicholas. The two bishops were left waiting most of the day and then informed the Cardinal would not grant them an audience. The next day, however, Gallagher was informed by Pacelli "to exercise more control over Father Coughlin and to inform him that he was not to participate in political campaigning once the 1936

election was over." Gallagher seems to have finally gotten the message. On October 30, with Pacelli still in the country, Gallagher forced Coughlin to make a public apology for calling Roosevelt a "scab President." He also implied that Coughlin would no longer be allowed to participate in politics after the election, something which Coughlin later confirmed. Pacelli's national tour in the closing days of the election drew Catholic attention away from Coughlin at the most critical point of the campaign. [34]

When the votes were counted, Roosevelt won an overwhelming victory. The President carried 46 states with a popular vote plurality of over 11 million votes. Coughlin's Union Party had not been a factor in the outcome. Nonetheless Lempke received 882,000 votes nationally. The evidence seems clear that Farley had pulled out all the stops to keep Catholic voters from deserting FDR in favor of the popular Coughlin and had succeeded dramatically. Election analysts agreed that Catholics voted for Roosevelt in huge numbers. They disagreed only on the exact magnitude of the percentage that voted for FDR. George Gallop estimated the Catholic vote for Roosevelt at over 70 percent. R.M. Darrow said of Catholics voting over 80 percent voted for FDR. Catholic voters had apparently resolved the anti-Communist rhetoric and charges against the

New Deal in favor of the anti-Communist Catholics within the New Deal. [35]

In the midst of Pacelli's whirlwind tour of the country Spellman noted in his diary on October 24: "Joe Kennedy arranged for President to invite Cardinal to lunch with him on November 5th and so told me, but I said to have Cardinal invited directly and through neither of us." The day after the election Roosevelt met with Cardinal Pacelli at his home at Hyde Park. The guest list for the post-election day luncheon hosted by the President's mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt, was surprisingly limited; the President, Cardinal Pacelli, Bishop Spellman, Bishop Stephen J. Donahue representing Cardinal Hayes of New York, Count Galeazzi, Joseph P. Kennedy and Mrs. Kennedy and Frank C. Walker and Mrs. Walker. In a letter to his brother Bishop Spellman said such a meeting "before the Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, would have been considered fantastic." The President-elect and the Cardinal sat before the fireplace and discussed a wide range of topics. "This was a great day for America and for Catholic America," Spellman concluded. [36]

Little else is known of the events of that day or of what the President and the future Pope talked about in front of the fireplace. A crowd of reporters gathered outside the President's home waiting for the Cardinal to emerge. They

speculated that the two men discussed Communism, Father Coughlin, and the possibility the President would recognize the Vatican: sending an envoy to the Pope. Their hopes for a quote on any of these matters were dashed when the Cardinal emerged. The following day The New York Times reported that Pacelli left the meeting with FDR and greeted the waiting correspondents. However, attempts to question the cardinal "were stopped before a single question could be completed." The Cardinal's escort, Bishop Spellman, "declared that the Cardinal had given no interview and should give none now." Despite efforts to convince the Cardinal that questions he did not want to answer would be considered "as not having been put," Bishop Spellman "firmly declined." [37]

The lesson of the day was not lost on either the press or President Roosevelt: Bishop Spellman carried great weight with Cardinal Secretary of State Pacelli. This would become increasingly clear in future years as FDR relied on Spellman as a private channel of communication to the Vatican, circumventing normal diplomatic channels such as the Apostolic Delegate in Washington and other, higher ranking members of the American Catholic hierarchy. It was just such a message which Spellman sent to Pius XII outlining FDR's postwar plans in late 1943.

Although Roosevelt was overwhelmingly reelected and the Union Party crushed in the 1936 election, it would be a

mistake to view the election results as a complete repudiation of Coughlin. Analysts have correctly pointed out that the Union Party faced more than the usual obstacles placed in the path of American third-party movements. There was never a real political organization associated with the Union Party. No cadres to get out the vote, no workers to canvass and identify potential vote's. Both Coughlin and Smith used the party to advance their own personal agenda rather than to foster a new political movement. The party managed to get on the ballot in only 36 states, and in six of those states the party label did not appear on the ballot. As the campaign progressed the desention within the party became evident until even Dr. Townsend recognized the problem and switched his support to Landon. Voters were faced with the usual third-party dilemma: would their vote be wasted? In spite of all these problems, the party polled almost as many votes as the Socialist Party at the height of its popularity in 1912. One can only speculate on how that might have been different with Huey Long at the head of the ticket rather than Lempke.

There is no measure to determine how much of the public believed the charges of Communist influence within the New Deal or the accusation that FDR himself was a Communist. Certainly it did not affect the presidential voting. But the charge hung in the air. The New Deal

coalition between the core and the periphery held together, in large measure due to the efforts of anti-Communist Catholics working to beat back the charges of Communist influence on the New Deal. To a large degree the periphery had dominated the campaign. The issue of Communism and Communists in government would not go away. And for Catholics the issue would become more critical very soon.

Notes

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7) Frank, Loc. Sit.

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10) Ibid. pp.118-119

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12) Marcus, Father Coughlin, p.113.

13) Bennett, Demagogues, p.19.

14) Ibid., p.13.

15) Ibid., p.254., and Marcus, Father Coughlin, p.120.

16) Marcus, Father Coughlin, p.120, and Bennett, Demagogues, p.254.

17) Bennett, Demagogues, p.255.

18) Ibid. pp.227-228.

19) Ibid. p.21.

20) Ibid. p.254.

21) Ibid.

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23) Ibid. pp.201-202.

24) James P. Shenton, "The Coughlin Movement and the New Deal," Political Science Quarterly, LXXIII, NUMBER 3, (September, 1958), pp.352-373.

25) Walsh Papers, Scrapbook for 1936.

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28) George Q. Flynn, American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency, 1932-1936, (Lexington, Ky.: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p.211-212.

29) Bennett, Demagogues, p.224.

30) Bennett, Demagogues, p.228.

31) Francis L. Broderick, Right Reverend New Dealer John A. Ryan, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), p.225.

32) Ibid. p.226., and Shenton, "The Coughlin Movement," p.366.

33) Robert I. Gannon, S.J., The Cardinal Spellman Story, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1962), pp.106-107.

34) Marcus, Father Coughlin, pp.131-132.

35) Flynn, American Catholics and Roosevelt, pp.222-223.

36) Gannon, Spellman, p.111 and 115.

37) Ibid., pp.115-116.

CHAPTER 5

"...THE LOSS OF EVERY CATHOLIC VOTE..."

The President barely had time to celebrate his reelection before Catholic anti-Communism was once again thrust into his decision-making process. Events at home and abroad were again beginning to focus around the fear of the spread of international Communism, and around charges that FDR was fostering Communism within the U.S.

In July of 1936 General Francisco Franco led a revolt of the Spanish army against the democratically elected Popular Front government, which included elements of the Spanish Communist Party. The Popular Front received only 46 percent of the votes cast in the Spanish elections. However, the proportional representation used to allocate seats in the Diet resulted in the Front receiving almost two-thirds of the seats. The anti-Catholic sentiments of the extreme left within the Front quickly manifested itself in widespread incidents of anti-clericalism: churches were burned, religious education attacked, and priests, bishops and nuns murdered. Catholics argued that Franco's revolt was based on the fact that the democratic elements within the coalition had "succumbed to the extreme Leftist groups" and was founded "on the legitimate ground that the government had betrayed the electorate."[1]

Franco's revolt was widely viewed as the latest manifestation of European Fascism challenging the rule of democracy. Therein lay the problem for American Catholics. Commonweal opened the new year with an editorial on January 1 taking issue with its Protestant counterpart, The Christian Century, which had editorialized in late 1936 that the Catholic Church was conducting a world-wide campaign against Communism because "the Holy See is really concerned with supporting Fascism,'with its inevitable accompaniments of autocracy and brutality, and for the special privileges which the Roman Catholic Church is able to enjoy under Fascist governments.'" The editors of Commonweal found this charge incredible and pointed to the opinion of the editor of Der Angriff, Joseph Goebbels, who charged that Cardinal Pacelli's visit to the United States was part of a plan to set up a "Catholic Center Party" in order to prevent the spread of National Socialist doctrine and that FDR's reelection was "one anointed by the Vatican." The Commonweal editors doubted both views could be correct.[2]

The Church's condemnation of Communism was not political, according to Commonweal, but religious. Communist propaganda, as in Spain, embodied in the slogan "join with Communism against Fascism to save democracy" was a false issue. The real issue was not between Communism and Fascism but between "democracy and all forms of totalitarianism,

including Communism." Fascism was nothing more than a reaction against Communism, without which it could not exist. The editorial framed the issue for American Catholics and would form the basis of the Catholic approach to Spain as long as the civil war went unresolved. More importantly, the Catholic attitude would carry great weight with FDR. [3]

Isolationist sympathies in the United States were greatly strengthened following the revelations of the Nye Committee in 1934. These hearings produced the 1935 Neutrality Act prohibiting U.S. arms manufacturers from supplying belligerents in any foreign war. FDR attempted to apply the act to the Spanish Civil War, but the act did not mention civil wars, and U.S. arms manufacturers began to make shipments to both sides. When the administration's efforts at moral persuasion failed FDR asked for an amendment to the 1937 renewal of the act that would include civil wars and expand executive discretion in applying the act. Congress willingly approved the inclusion of civil wars in the act. The extension of executive powers was another matter.[4]

FDR opened his second term with perhaps the most serious political blunder of his years in office: his attempt to pack the Supreme Court. Much of the congressional debate surrounding the extension of executive powers sought by the President in the Neutrality Act revolved around his

attempt to assume "dictatorial powers." Senator Hiram Johnson, an ardent isolationist, said Roosevelt's attempt to alter the nature of the court would lead to him making himself "an absolute dictator in fact." The court fight spilled over into the Neutrality Act fight over the question of extension of executive powers. The nature of the Spanish fight was also changing. In March Italian troops were captured at Guadalajara, proving the charges that Italy and Germany were actively supporting the Franco "Nationalists." [5]

As the civil war in Spain intensified, American opinion on the Neutrality Act began to shift. The Guadalajara incident shifted the argument from direct help to the Loyalist government to imposition of the Neutrality Act against Italy and Germany. At the same time the Vatican was clarifying its position on the conflicting ideologies involved in the struggle. In early March Pius XI issued back-to-back encyclicals. The first, Mit Brenneder Sorge, (With Burning Sorrow) was an open attack on German National Socialism. The encyclical charged the Nazi government with violating the 1933 concordat concluded between the Reich and the Vatican and with sowing "suspicion, discord, hatred, calumny" and "secret and open hostility to Christ and His Church." The Pope attacked the racial and religious policies of the Third Reich and predicted "destructive religious

wars...which have no other aim than...extermination." The concordat of 1933 had been negotiated by Eugenio Pacelli, then serving as Papal Nuncio in Germany. It guaranteed freedom of the Catholic religion and the right of the church "to regulate her own affairs." The Reich broke the concordat within five days of its signing. Thousands of priests and lay leaders were arrested and confined to concentration camps, church property was confiscated, Catholic publications suppressed and the sanctity of the confessional was violated by the Gestapo. [6]

The second encyclical, Divini Redemptoris, attacked "the principles of dialectical and historical materialism" and condemned communism as "intrinsically wrong." It further stated that "no one who would save Christian civilization may collaborate with it in any undertaking whatsoever." This "plague on both your houses" attitude of the Vatican may explain why American Catholic opinion was split on the question of Spain. With Communists on one side and Fascists on the other, Catholics were being forced to choose between the lesser of two evils, as Commonweal suggested. The American Catholic hierarchy, however, had no difficulty in choosing sides. Increasingly, the struggle in Spain was portrayed in terms of the Communist faction within the Loyalist coalition. While the Catholic press was highlighting the anti-clerical atrocities of the Loyalist

government, bishops throughout the country were associating the government's activities with the spread of international Communism.[7]

In late April the bombing of Guernica thrust the entire question of the embargo back into the spotlight. It also exemplified the confusion surrounding the entire matter for American Catholics. German-made planes bombed the Basque city for several hours, leaving 1,654 people dead and another 889 wounded. Calls immediately went out for an embargo against Germany and Italy. The Basque region was largely Catholic, and the bombing should have outraged Catholic opinion in America as it did the rest of the country. But the Basques were fighting for the Loyalists, which meant the Communists. German planes being used to bomb Spanish Catholics who were fighting for the Communists? It was enough to confuse any Catholic.[8]

In the meantime FDR finally worked out a compromise with Senator Pittman regarding the extension of the Neutrality Act. The President was forced to accept less of the discretionary power he first sought under the act in the face of Pittman's objections to the expansion of "dictatorial powers." On May 1, the permanent Neutrality Law went into effect. Norman Thomas met with the President in June after returning from Spain and observing the war first hand. When Thomas raised the issue of the war in Spain and

the embargo, the President told him his position "had been and would be guided by what he thought was the attitude of the Catholic Church in America." [9]

Was the President's position on Spain a payback for the role the Catholic hierarchy played in the 1936 election? Catholic public opinion was, and would continue to be, split on the question of what to do about Spain. The hierarchy of the church, however, was virtually unanimous. The debate over the civil war in Spain would continue through the rest of 1937 and 1938. FDR continued to refuse to apply the embargo to Berlin and Rome and to lift it against Spain. He did this in spite of polls indicating the overwhelming support such a move would have with the American people. A Gallop Poll conducted in December of 1938 asked: "Which side do you sympathize with in the Spanish Civil War?" Nationally, 76 percent sympathized with the Loyalists, while only 24 percent sympathized with Franco. When broken down by religion, however, only 42 percent of Catholics sided with the Loyalists, compared to 83 percent of Protestants. Franco was favored by 58 percent of Catholics compared to only 17 percent of Protestants. Clearly, Catholic opinion on Spain varied widely from its Protestant counterpart in America. However, the position of the Catholic periphery would come to dominate the political center.[10]

For FDR the issue was framed in terms of the opposition of the Catholic hierarchy. Clearly, Catholic lay opinion on Spain was divided, as the poll indicated. As the congressional elections in the fall of 1938 approached, FDR put the matter in purely political terms. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes was furious when Roosevelt failed to act on lifting the embargo against Spain. He recounts in his diary how he overcame FDR's logistical objections to lifting the arms ban only to have the President relate that he had discussed the matter that morning with congressional leaders and they feared that to raise the ban "would mean the loss of every Catholic vote in the coming fall elections." The Interior Secretary exclaimed in his diary: "This proves up to the hilt what so many people have been saying, namely, that the Catholic minorities in Great Britain and America have been dictating the international policy with respect to Spain." Surely the periphery was dominating the core and the issue was anti-Communism.[11]

Clearly, FDR's position was political, as any President's would be. It was also consistent, as the two conversations with Thomas and Ickes demonstrate. The thrust of both conversations, coming over a year apart, indicate that the President was unwilling to risk losing the Catholic vote over the issue of Spain. They also demonstrate that his fear was that the Catholic hierarchy's strong anti-Communist

position on Spain was the deciding factor. The ability of the hierarchy to offset Coughlin's influence in the 1936 election was a lesson not lost in the White House. Some historians argue that recollections of private conversations with FDR cannot be taken at face value because he had a tendency to tell people what they wanted to hear, and then did what he wanted. Clearly, what FDR was telling both Thomas and Ickes was not what they wanted to hear, and what he did was not what they wanted him to do but rather what he felt he needed to do.

While the controversy over lifting the arms embargo against Spain was raging, the question of Communist influence within the administration would not go away. Father Coughlin briefly left the air following the 1936 election, as he said he would if the Union Party was not victorious, but quickly resumed his broadcasts and supervision of his Social Justice newspaper. By July of 1937 Coughlin was again on the attack against Communists, this time within the Congress of Industrial Organizations. He labeled the entire CIO as a "Moscow tool teeming with communists" and charged they were taking instructions from the "Communist Central Committee of the United States." Earlier, Coughlin labeled CIO head John L. Lewis a "labor dictator" and "a communist tool being used to prepare the

way for the eventual victory of Marxism in the United States." [12]

With Coughlin back in stride questions began to surface in places generally considered more congenial to the President. Writing in Commonweal in September Oliver McKee, Jr. denounced the "class prejudice" being fostered by the New Deal. McKee argued that FDR's "political strategy and many of his policies have...tended to incite class prejudice, and create in the public mind the impression that property is necessarily the foe of human rights." McKee does not charge that FDR is a Communist, or even being influenced by Communists, but the suggestion that the New Deal is promoting class warfare and "appeals to class consciousness to win popular support" demonstrate that even the liberal Commonweal was beginning to question the aims of the New Deal. [13]

In early 1938 Coughlin was again attracting considerable attention, so much so that the Gallop Poll conducted a survey in an attempt to gauge his strength. The poll revealed that some 8.5 million American families with radios listened to Coughlin either regularly or "from time to time." This represented one-third of the 24 million households with radios. More importantly, 83 percent of those listening to Coughlin "approved" of what he said. The survey was crude by today's standards and did not break down

the audience by religion, income, region or other indicators of where Coughlin's message was having an effect. [14]

Clearly, however, large numbers of Americans were still listening to Coughlin and agreeing with what he was saying. At the time of the poll Coughlin's attacks on FDR and the New Deal were becoming increasingly vitriolic. In October of 1937 Coughlin commented on the "personal stupidity of President Roosevelt" in an interview, while on the same day an article in his Social Justice declared that Catholics could not belong to the CIO because "Catholicism was as incompatible with the CIO as Catholicism was incompatible with Mohammedanism." He now added a new aspect to his attack on international Communism, associating it with "international Jewry." The pages of Social Justice became filled with anti-Semitic articles and pro-German sentiments, placing him in direct opposition to the anti-Nazi position asserted by Pius XI in his encyclical "Mit Brennender Sorge". [15]

The Communist threat was everywhere according to Coughlin: in labor unions, colleges, and the administration. The radio priest was providing the widest possible audience to the elements of the Jesuit campaign discussed earlier. In the process the periphery position is coming to dominate the developing popular culture of anti-Communism. The political atmosphere, poisoned by Coughlin and others, continued to

focus on the inability of the New Deal to bring the depression to an end, and manifested itself in the summer of 1938 when the House voted 181 to 41 for the creation of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee. Ostensibly, the committee was chartered to investigate extremist political activity on both the left and right. However, under the chairmanship of Martin Dies of Texas, the committee focused almost exclusively on the question of Communist infiltration of organized labor, education, and government.

The committee issued its first report in January 1939, defining UnAmericanism and Communism. Citing the "Trojan Horse" tactics of Communism, the report suggested Communists infiltrated existing organizations or set up "front organizations" dedicated to popular causes, but in reality under the direction of Moscow. Witnesses identified 640 organizations, 483 newspapers and 280 labor unions which they said were Communistic, including the Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and several Catholic organizations. At least one member of the committee branded the New Deal itself as Communist. Representative J. Parnell Thomas, a Republican member of the committee claimed the New Deal was "working hand in glove with the Communist Party" and that it was "either for the Communist Party, or is playing into the hands of the Communist Party." [16]

One of the "experts" on Communism called to testify before the Dies Committee was Father Charles Coughlin. In his ongoing battle with the CIO he released to the committee a copy of remarks made to him in a private conversation with Homer Martin, former head of the United Auto Workers, in which Martin claimed most of the leadership of the union were Communists. When Martin was forced to acknowledge the comments in public, it made the split within the UAW irreversible, providing Coughlin with a sense of victory over the CIO. [17]

The fact that a standing committee of the congress was leveling the same charges as Coughlin, and providing him with yet another forum for his attacks, could do nothing but lend credence to his charges. The criticism leveled at the tactics of the committee, and the ridicule of some of the testimony by the press, was not keeping the public from being impacted. A poll conducted in November of 1938 showed that 60 percent of the respondents had heard of the committee, and 74 percent of those familiar with the committee felt its findings were "important enough to justify continuing the investigation." A year later, a similar poll found support for continued funding of the committee at 75 percent. [18]

As FDR approached the midpoint of his second term he found himself embroiled once again in charges that he was a

Communist or under the influence of Communists within the New Deal. He openly admitted to both Harold Ickes and Norman Thomas that his policy on Spain revolved around the position of the Catholic hierarchy, which was based on the now official anti-Communism of the church, and the need to keep Catholic voters in the Democratic Party. A resurgent Father Coughlin was continuing his attack on the New Deal and the President. Conditions in Europe were rolling toward war and speculation was beginning to mount that the President would seek an unprecedented third term. Having seen the effort FDR made to keep the "Catholic Vote" in the 1936 election, and his position on Spain designed to keep it in the 1938 midterm elections, it seems clear that a pattern was developing in the President's political relations with American Catholics centering around the issue of anti-Communism and leading to Teheran and Yalta.

Notes

1) Wilfrid Parsons, "Fascist-Communist Dilemma," Commonweal, (February 12, 1937), "p." 430.

2) Editorial, "Catholicism and Communism," Commonweal, (January 1, 1937), "p." 257.

3) Ibid., "p." 258.

4) Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), p.140.

5) Ibid.

6) William L. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960), p.235.

7) Claudia Carlen Ihm, ed., The Papal Encyclicals 1903-1939 V. 3, (Raleigh, N.C.: McGrath Publishing Co., 1981), p.539 and 549.

8) Dallek, Roosevelt and Foreign Policy, p.141.

9) Norman Thomas, "Some Impressions of the Thirties," in The Strenous Decade: A Social and Intellectual Record of the Nineteen-Thirties, ed. by Daniel Aaron and Robert Bendiner, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1970), p.504.

10) George H. Gallop, The Gallop Poll, Vol 1, 1935-1948, (New York: Random House, 1972), p.132.

11) Harold L. Ickes, The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes, Vol. 2, The Inside Struggle 1936-1939, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), p.390.: see also James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt the Lion and the Fox, (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1956), pp.356-357.

12) Sheldon Marcus, Father Coughlin, The Tumultuous Life of the Priest of the Little Flower, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1973), p.194.

13) Oliver McKee, Jr., "Class Prejudice," Commonweal, (September 17, 1937), p.468.

14) Gallop, The Gallop Poll, pp.100-101.

15) Marcus, Father Coughlin, p.140.

16) William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940, (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p.280.; and William Gellermann, Martin Dies, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972), p.68.

17) John McCarten, "Father Coughlin: Holy Medicine Man," The American Mercury, (June, 1939), "p."129.

18) Gallop, The Gallop Poll, p.128.

CHAPTER 6

PAPA ANGELICUS

Events in Europe were rapidly deteriorating in early 1939 when Pope Pius XI died on February 10. While the College of Cardinals began to assemble in Rome to choose a successor, Hitler was pressing the government of what remained of Czechoslovakia. The Munich agreement, which had "guaranteed peace in our time," was falling apart under the onslaught of Nazi demands.

On March 2, the traditional puffs of white smoke arose from the Vatican announcing to the world the selection of a new Pope. Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli had been elected and chosen the name Pius XII. The former Papal Secretary of State who sat by the fire with FDR at Hyde Park after his reelection in 1936 was now the leader of worldwide Catholicism. The election of a new Pope whose career within the church centered on Germany and diplomacy was widely regarded as a signal the church planned on playing a role in seeking a peaceful solution to the problems in Europe. The election also initiated a series of events which would alter the relationship between FDR and American Catholics.

The new Pope was immediately faced with a crucial decision concerning the American church left by the sudden death of his predecessor. The most powerful position in the American hierarchy had been vacant since the death the

previous September of Cardinal Hayes of the archdiocese of New York. Speculation on a successor to Hayes centered on Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit and Archbishop John McNicholas of Cincinnati, both longtime friends of FDR. However, barely a month after being named Pope, Pacelli turned to his old friend the auxiliary bishop of Boston, naming Francis J. Spellman the new archbishop of New York. Under Spellman's tutelage the chancery office of the archdiocese would come to be known as the "Powerhouse" by political leaders of both parties and all religious denominations.

With the deteriorating European political situation the new Pope needed as many friends in high places as he could find. By the end of March Czechoslovakia disappeared from the map of Europe, absorbed by Germany, Poland, and Hungary. Hitler was now turning his attention to Poland. The attitude of the new Pope toward the Third Reich was of great interest to the Fuehrer. Pacelli served as Papal Nuncio in Germany from 1917 to 1929 and negotiated the concordat between the Reich and Vatican in 1933. There were some 35 million Catholics in Germany (including Hitler who was a nominal Catholic), and they, along with the Socialists, had provided the main support of the Weimer Republic. Hitler despised the political nature of the German church and immediately outlawed the Catholic Party upon taking office.

In spite of the concordat, confessional schools came under attack, along with Catholic Action Leagues, Catholic labor unions, and the Vatican itself as a non-German foreign influence. [1]

While Hitler was completing the destruction of Czechoslovakia, the German Foreign Office was completing an analysis of the new Pope. The memorandum on Pacelli stated: "His advocacy of an orthodox church policy repeatedly brought him into conflict with National Socialism on matters of principle." The Foreign Office regarded Pacelli as a "Germanophile" as a result of his long tenure in Germany. He admired German culture, philosophy, music, and literature. The report also drew attention to the fact the new Pope seemed particularly affected by the appellation "Papa Angelicus" associated with his reign. The term referred to the prophecy of St. Malachy which attributed to the 106th Pope a revival of Apostolic simplicity and zeal which would inaugurate a new age. [2]

While Hitler continued his pressure on Poland, his Axis partner Mussolini took the opportunity to invade Albania in early April. This move solidified the resolve of Great Britain and France as both countries guaranteed the borders of neighboring Greece and Yugoslavia. FDR meanwhile sent a letter to Hitler on April 15 listing 31 countries and asking the Fuehrer "to give assurances that your armed

forces will not attack or invade the territory" of any of them. The President sought the support of the Vatican for his peace initiative. Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles approached the Apostolic Delegate Ameleto Cicognani through Monsignor Ready of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The Vatican already had been approached by both Britain and France to support the proposal. The Vatican, however, took the position that the President's letter reflected an unneutral attitude, would be rejected out of hand by the Axis leaders and would reduce the pope's influence in Germany if endorsed by the Vatican. [3]

Hitler's response to FDR's peace proposal indeed took the form of the total rejection the Vatican predicted. The Fuehrer publicly rebuked the President before the Reichstag on April 28. William Shirer called Hitler's speech that day "the most brilliant oration he ever gave." As Shirer put it, "for sheer eloquence, craftiness, irony, sarcasm and hypocrisy, it reached a new level that he was never to approach again." [4]

The Fuehrer's rejection of FDR's proposal did not deter the Pope from putting forth his own peace plan in early May. The Pope's plan was given to the Fuehrer by the apostolic nuncio in Berlin, Cesare Orsenigo. According to the German report of the meeting, the nuncio told Hitler of the Pope's concern about the tension in Europe and his

desire to do all in his power to prevent the outbreak of war. He suggested a conference of the five great powers of Europe to discuss the German-Polish and Franco-Italian problems before they got out of hand. Hitler responded that the danger of war was exaggerated by propaganda, and in any event he would have to discuss such a proposal with Mussolini first. He concluded by saying he would "in a very short time...let the Pope have his answer." [5]

The five great powers of Europe included in Pius' plan were Britain, France, Poland, Germany and Italy. The British Foreign Minister, Lord Halifax, in a conversation with the apostolic delegate in Britain, expressed regret that the Russians were not invited to attend the conference and was told "that in no circumstances would it be possible for the Pope to consider such an approach." His predecessor's encyclical effectively banned any cooperation with the Soviet Union. This official Catholic anti-Communism would become an increasingly difficult problem for FDR and American Catholics to deal with in coming months. [6]

However, despite Halifax's admonitions,the British were in something of a quandary themselves at that moment as to what role the Soviets were to play in the European situation. Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov approached both the British and French in April with the possibility of forming an alliance of the three governments to protect all

the nations of central and eastern Europe which felt threatened by Germany. When the British government had not accepted the proposal by early May, Winston Churchill was openly critical stating "there is no means of maintaining an eastern front against Nazi aggression without the active aid of Russia." [7]

On May 17 Berlin Nuncio Orsenigo was finally given Hitler's response to the Pope's peace initiative. Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop told the nuncio that while Hitler and Mussolini were "very grateful to the Holy Father for his benevolent intervention on behalf of universal peace...they think the moment is not yet ripe for a conference" to discuss the outstanding issues between the various nations. The nuncio reported that when questioned on the current international situation, Ribbentrop replied that "Poland, if she judges badly enough to provoke a war, will be crushed in less time than it takes to say it." He also offered that Germany was not afraid of war with France and England, neither of which would be able to penetrate Germany's defense in the west except at a cost of a million men. More importantly, Ribbentrop raised the prospect of Germany reaching an agreement with Russia. Noting Stalin's displeasure over the British and French position and the dismissal of Litvinov, he said, "We have no quarrel with Russia except about Bolshevism, in other words we do not

want its perfidious propaganda for a world revolution...but should Russia drop this propaganda nothing prevents us from drawing closer together." [8]

While the Pope "in no circumstances" would approach the Soviet Union, and the British were putting off responding to Soviet overtures for an alliance against Germany, the German Foreign Minister was acknowledging to a Vatican official the prospect of a German-Russian accommodation. The prospect of an alliance between Hitler and Stalin must have seemed so remote as to border on the preposterous. There is no indication in the Vatican documents that this information was passed on to any other European embassy.

FDR meanwhile reopened the prospect of establishing some type of permanent diplomatic relationship with the Vatican. Sumner Welles had been meeting regularly with the Apostolic Delegate to Washington, Ameleto Cicognani, and Msg. Ready of the National Catholic Welfare Council. Welles was expressing the continued desire of the President to convene a conference aimed at resolving the European situation: He added that the "United States government was prepared to take part in a conference of nations to adjust the present causes of world unrest." FDR seems to have been disturbed by the exclusion of the U.S. from the Pope's

original proposal for a peace conference and was indicating a firm wish to be included in any future plans. [9]

In August, FDR asked Welles' opinion on the advisability of establishing diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Welles responded that the Vatican had access to valuable sources of information "particularly with regard to what is actually going on in Germany, Italy and Spain" which the U.S. did not possess, and the ability to get that information "was of considerable importance." The U.S. had maintained official diplomatic relations with the Vatican prior to 1867, when congress reacted against an unpopular President and a more unpopular Pope by cutting off funds for the mission. The subsequent loss of the Papal States removed the justification for maintaining relations with the Vatican as a foreign state, but the Lateran Treaty had returned that status to the Vatican. Speculation that FDR intended to reestablish diplomatic relations with the Vatican had been high at the time of Pacelli's visit to the U.S. in 1936, and indeed FDR discussed the possibility with Archbishop Spellman several times over the next two years. [10]

In October, after the outbreak of war, the President again raised the issue with Spellman, saying that "he was looking for a moment and occasion suitable for a persuasive appeal to the American people." Spellman said that the present situation in which both the Vatican and the U.S.

were working for the similar aim of restoring peace seemed "favorable and propitious." When Spellman raised the possibility that such an action would undoubtedly raise criticism, the President agreed, but added, "I think that every moment brings us nearer to the conclusion of this matter." The President obviously had a plan, which he then outlined to Spellman. He projected that the Congress would adjourn sometime in November after taking up the revision of the Neutrality Act and would not return until January 3. He felt an announcement during that time would be appropriate and that it could be justified by his belief that "such an association would be of great help to the peace of the world, as in effect it is." He also suggested the mission could be viewed in terms of assistance to the refugee problem. [11]

That the President had already made up his mind seems clear. He then discussed the question of funding such a mission and proposed that it be considered a "special mission of the United States Government to Rome accredited to the Holy See" because special missions did not require an act of Congress for funding, "but once the mission has been launched, if everything goes well, Congress could be induced more easily to vote the funds for a permanent mission." FDR had already narrowed the field of candidates to head the mission to Myron Taylor and former ambassador to Italy

Breckenridge Long. Spellman said either man would "be suitable" because the Pope already knew Taylor and Long had substantial diplomatic experience. [12]

If the President had not already decided on Myron Taylor to head the mission to the Vatican at the time of his meeting with Spellman, he soon did. Taylor was almost the perfect candidate for the job. A Protestant, Episcopalian with Quaker ancestors, he would not be accused of being pro-Catholic. He could also not be accused of being a wild-eyed New Deal social reformer. Formerly Chairman of the Board of United States Steel, he still sat on the Board of Directors. He was also a Director of American Telephone and Telegraph and The First National Bank of New York. In addition he had his own villa in Florence and could take care of his own expenses if need be until government funds were provided.

While FDR was working out the details of this mission to the Vatican, the war in Europe seemed to come to an end as abruptly as it started. The Nazi Blitzkrieg overwhelmed Poland just as Ribbentrop told Orsenigo back in May. The lull in the war was now being dubbed Sitzkrieg, or the sit-down war, by the western press. Hitler was making overtures to the British that the war need not continue. The Foreign Office was taken completely by surprise by the Pope's latest effort to secure a peaceful settlement to the

conflict. Sir D'Arcy Osborne, British ambassador to the Vatican, informed the Foreign Office in late November that Pius had been approached to act as an intermediary for a discontented group within the German Abwehr led by Colonel Hans Oster. This group contacted Monsignor Ludwig Kaas, former leader of the German Centre Party living in exile in Rome, with a proposal for a military coup against Hitler involving members of the General Staff. The conspirators sought the Pope's guarantee that if the coup were successful the British would negotiate a peace based on the restoration of Poland and non-German Czechoslovakia, but leaving Austria as part of Germany. In other words post-Munich Germany would remain intact, but without a Nazi government. [13]

Notes went back and forth between Halifax, Chamberlain and Osborne. The Foreign Office wanted to bring in the French, but the Pope wanted to limit knowledge of the plan to as small a number of people as possible and was convinced the French would go along if the British agreed. The negotiations dragged on until March with the Foreign Office apparently vacillating between taking the matter seriously, and then raising doubts about the nature of the conspiracy. Osborne's diary relates his frustration with the long process of communicating questions from Halifax and Chamberlain to the Germans through the Pope and then their response. The Germans in turn were attempting to find out

who would be acceptable to the British in a non-Nazi government. The whole thing collapsed as the Generals involved, including Beck and Halder, put off acting as final preparations for the Spring offensive in the west drew nearer. [14]

Meanwhile, on December 24, FDR announced he was sending Myron Taylor to Rome as his "personal representative to the Pope." The President was still clearly worried about reaction to his announcement. He sent a letter to Pius informing him of Taylor's appointment and a similar letter to Dr. Charles A. Buttrick, President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, and Rabbi Cyrus Adler, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The President couched his appointment of Taylor in spiritual terms, seeking the Pope's opinion on matters of peace and guidance in these troubled times. He also asked Buttrick and Adler to do the same. The difference, however, was substantial, as pointed out by Cicognani: "the President is sending a Representative to the Holy See, while to the two above mentioned gentlemen he is extending a simple invitation to call on him." [15]

The American Protestant community also noted the difference. Buttrick's organization called for Taylor's immediate recall. Protestant groups throughout the country condemned the appointment, some in open anti-Catholic

hostility, others calling on the tradition of the separation of church and state. Dr. George Truett, president of the Baptist World Alliance, said the Pope "has in fact no better title to receive governmental recognition from the United States than...the head of the least of the Baptist associations in the hills of North Carolina." FDR weathered the criticism, cracking jokes at a press conference about just what an ambassador to the Vatican would do each day. The strategy he outlined to Spellman worked, however, and Congress raised little objection to the Taylor mission when it returned. [16]

Notes

1) William L. Shirer, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960), pp.236-237.

2) Saul Friedlander, Pius XII and the Third Reich: A Documentation, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), p.154.

3) Ibid., pp.18-19

4) Shirer, Rise and Fall, p.471.

5) Friedlander, Pius XII and the Third Reich, p.20

6) Ibid.,p.21.

7) Shirer, Rise and Fall, p.479.

8) Pierre Blet, The Holy See and the War in Europe March 1939-August 1940, trans. Gerard Noel, (Washington: Corpus Books, 1965), pp.140-142.

9) Ibid., p.196.

10) Memo, Welles to FDR, August 1, 1939, PSF Diplomatic, Vatican: Myron C. Taylor, 1942, FDR Library.

11) Archbishop Spellman of New York to Cardinal Maglione, October 25, 1939, Blet, Holy See and War, p.302-305.

12) Ibid.

13) Owen Chadwick, Britain and the Vatican during the Second World War, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp.86ff.

14) Ibid.

15) Memo, Washington Apostolic Delegate Cicognani to Cardinal Maglione, Blet, Holy See and War, p.329.

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CHAPTER 7

"THE DEVIL IS A COMMUNIST"

The evening before the final session of the Teheran Conference FDR dined with Churchill and Stalin. When dinner was over, the President excused himself from after dinner coffee and cigars claiming he was not feeling well. Churchill, Eden, Stalin and Molotov engaged in general conversation which eventually turned to the question of Poland. According to Eden, the discussion went favorably with both sides believing the sooner the issue could be resolved the better. The problem lay in the fact that the "Americans are terrified of the subject which Harry [Hopkins] called 'political dynamite' for their elections." Eden told Hopkins the situation would only get worse the longer it was left unresolved and that in six months, with Russian armies in Poland, the elections would be that much closer.[1]

The conversation turned to generalities about the progress of the war during which Churchill remarked that he believed God was on the side of the allies. Stalin grinned when he heard the translation of the Prime Minister's remark and interjected that the devil was on his side "because, of course, everyone knows that the devil is a Communist, and God, no doubt, is a good conservative." Over coffee and cigars on the final evening of the Teheran Conference the

stumbling blocks of the postwar peace were outlined: Poland, religion and the American election. [2]

The President returned from Teheran in time to present his annual Christmas message to the American people from his home in Hyde Park. He told the nation that he had gotten along fine with Marshal Stalin and that he believed in the future "we are going to get along very well with him and the Russian people-very well indeed." As events unfolded in early 1944 the public optimism the President expressed in his Christmas message began to give way to the hard political reality of dealing with Stalin's demands. [3]

The stalemate which existed in Soviet-Polish relations since the previous April took on new significance on January 4 when Soviet forces entered Poland. Now that Soviet troops were returning to eastern Poland the London Poles were anxious to resume relations and establish a basis for cooperation between the advancing Red Army and the Underground Home Army. In Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, the Polish Ambassador of the government-in-exile, was told by Secretary of State Cordell Hull that in his opinion "the British Government, as an ally of both Poland and of Russia, was in a better position to initiate appropriate steps than the American Government" in terms of mediating a reconciliation between the Soviets and the government-in-exile. Hull was conveying to the London Poles

the same message FDR had given to Stalin at Teheran: he could not take a public stand on the Polish issue. Averell Harriman later summed up the President's thinking at this point: "The 1944 election was fast approaching and he preferred to postpone the Polish outcry until after the votes were counted, leaving Churchill to take the lead meanwhile." The formal treaty obligations the British had with both Poland and Russia provided FDR with an escape mechanism to avoid taking a public position on Poland. [4]

It soon became evident that Hull had not delivered the U.S. position to the Poles too soon. The offer of the London Poles to resume relations with the Soviets and coordinate activities between the Red Army and the Home Army was tersely rejected. The Soviets also rejected the "erroneous affirmation" by the London Poles that the area the Red Army was operating in was part of Poland. It was well known, they said, that the "Soviet constitution established a Soviet-Polish frontier corresponding with the desires of the population of western Ukraine and western White Russia... [and]the territories...were incorporated into the Soviet Union." In other words the Soviets were operating within their June 1941 borders. [5]

On January 22, Churchill met with the premier of the Polish government-in-exile, Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, and proposed a five-point program as the basis for renewed

recognition by the Soviets. The Premier was told that if his government would agree to the acceptance of the so-called Curzon Line as the basis of the western Polish frontier (linking the eastern frontier to the grant to Poland of East Prussia, Danzig and Upper Silesia to the Oder River), Poles on the Soviet side of the eastern frontier would be granted the right to return to Poland, all Germans within the new Polish frontiers would be removed, and the guarantee these agreements would be honored by the three principal United Nations, relations with the Soviets could be resumed. In reality this was the agreement the "Big Three" had reached at Teheran. It was also the outline of the new Poland Myron Taylor had carried to Rome in September of 1942. [6]

Churchill kept Stalin apprised of his negotiations with the London Poles. He also cabled Roosevelt on the position he was taking with Mikolajaczk. He informed the Polish Premier that even though England had gone to war over Poland it had done so not for the sake of "any particular frontier," but rather for the existence of a strong, free, independent Poland." Churchill said Stalin also supported this view and that even though England would have continued to fight Germany alone "the liberation of Poland from the German grip is being achieved mainly by the enormous sacrifices and achievements of the Russian armies." Poland would have to accept the fact that the allies would have a

large say about "the frontier of territory she should have." The Poles were willing to consider the matter, according to Churchill, but they refused to settle border issues prior to a general peace conference after the war. [7]

The border issue became secondary in early February. Stalin informed British Ambassador Sir Archibald Clark Kerr that at least three of the members of the Polish government-in-exile were unacceptable to him and he would not deal with them. FDR was anxious where this latest difficulty would lead. On February 7, he cabled Stalin that he appreciated his desire "to deal only with a Polish government in which you can repose confidence," but while public opinion was still solidifying around the "broad principles subscribed to at the Moscow and Teheran conferences," it would be better to allow the Polish Prime Minister to make changes in the makeup of that government "without any evidence of pressure or dictation from a foreign country." [8]

While the question of Poland was beginning to heat up, the President found himself embroiled in yet another issue highlighting the ability of the Vatican to bring both domestic and international political pressure to bear on American public opinion: the bombing of Rome. Although Italy formally surrendered to the Allies in September of 1943, stiff German resistance continued in that country. As Allied

forces began to move up the peninsula in early 1944 bombing raids in Rome and other military targets resulted in damage and casualties within Vatican City, the Papal Villa at Castelgandolfo and the Abby of Monte Casino.

By mid-February public attention was being divided between the deteriorating Polish situation and the flurry of diplomatic correspondence between the Vatican and Washington. Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate at Washington, was conveying the objections to the bombing by Pius XII and Luigi Cardinal Maglione, Vatican Secretary of State, to the President and the State Department. The Vatican flatly denied Allied military reports that Monte Cassino and Castelgandolfo were housing German military personnel. General Mark Clark of the U.S. Fifth Army later confirmed that no German military personnel were using either site. Archbishop Spellman notified Roosevelt that he intended to speak out publicly on the matter, a departure from the archbishop's usually cordial relations with the President. At St. Patrick's Cathedral on Washington's birthday Spellman deplored the fact that American armed forces had attacked "the territory of a neutral state" in spite of the fact that the Pope himself had denied that German troops were ever stationed in the areas under attack. [9]

On March 12 and April 1 the archbishop spoke on the subject again, as bombing raids in and around Rome continued to damage churches and shrines. The fact that Spellman would speak out publicly against the actions of American armed forces in the midst of a popular war effort and an election year suggests the possibility something deeper was involved. In fact, the Vatican was marshaling an international effort on the bombing issue. On March 15, the Irish Ambassador to the United States delivered a message from Prime Minister deValera seeking an agreement by which "Rome may be saved." The Irish vote could not be overlooked. Similar appeals came from the Spanish government and from several South American Republics. [10]

The situation was becoming serious in the eyes of the administration. On March 18, Secretary Hull cabled all diplomatic representatives in the South American Republics to "give your serious and urgent attention to the possibility of discreetly stimulating some comment on the part of high public officials, cultural leaders, and prominent newspapers" that responsibility for placing Christian shrines in jeopardy in Rome lay with the Nazis, who continued to use the city for military purposes, and not with the Allied airforce. The administration was promoting a counterattack of world opinion. Domestically, the situation was not much better. A poll conducted in late April asked

"Do you think the Allied Airforce should bomb Rome?" Nationally, only 37 percent of the respondents replied yes, while 57 percent said no, and 12 percent had no opinion. Among Catholics only 24 percent said yes, with 67 percent saying no, and 9 percent with no opinion. Protestant response was 36 percent yes, 52 percent no, and 12 percent no opinion. Clearly, a majority of American public opinion, led by American Catholics, was lined up against the administration. Just as in the case of the Spanish Civil War, American Catholic opinion was dominating the political center on a question of international importance.[11]

At virtually the same time that Spellman opposed the bombing of Rome, Reverend Gerald G. Walsh, professor of history at New York's Fordham University and editor of Fordham's quarterly journal Thought, spoke to the Women's Press Club of New York. The theme of Rev. Walsh's speech was the postwar peace. He quoted from a 1939 speech of Pius XII: "The real lesson of history - that what is common to all men and women is that they love the place where they were born, and any future world must be planned on the premise that they want their homeland to be free." In an obvious reference to the recently concluded Teheran Conference Rev. Walsh went on to say that peace plans currently under discussion were merely "selfish nationalism based on the military force of the Big Four." [12]

A respected Catholic historian and journalist, in an election year, was publicly questioning the conduct of the President's postwar planning in front of an influential media group. His superior, Archbishop Spellman, had just publicly questioned the President's conduct of the war. And this was not the first time Spellman had used Fordham in an election year to send the President a message. In 1940, when FDR was seeking an unprecedented third term, Spellman invited FDR to a Fordham ROTC inspection, the timing of which was widely regarded in the press as a subtle endorsement of the President. The prospect could not be ignored that a breach was developing between Roosevelt and the Catholic hierarchy he had so assiduously cultivated over the years. Since Spellman was fully aware that FDR's position on postwar Eastern Europe went far beyond what had been made public following the Teheran Conference makes this public criticism even more telling.

In the meantime, the Polish border question would not go away. By early March, the cables between Churchill and Stalin were becoming acrimonious. Stalin accused Churchill of leaking confidential correspondence on the Polish issue to the London press "with many distortions which I have no possibility of refuting." Churchill responded that the leak of information had come from the Soviet Embassy in London and in the case of The London Times had come directly from

the Soviet Ambassador Feodor Gusev. At the same time he informed Stalin that he would announce to the House of Commons that efforts to resolve the situation between the Polish and Soviet governments had broken down, that Britain continued to recognize the government-in-exile, that territorial questions must await the postwar peace conference and that Britain would recognize no forcible transfers of territory. Stalin responded by saying he considered Churchill's message "full of threats," and he accused the Prime Minister of reneging on the Teheran agreements concerning the restoration of the Curzon Line. He also said that if Churchill delivered the speech outlined in his message it would be considered an "unjust and unfriendly act towards the Soviet Union." The Soviets continued to refuse to deal with the Polish government-in-exile, which both Britain and the United States recognized as the legitimate government of Poland. They also continued to claim the area in which the Red Army was currently operating was not part of Poland but part of the Soviet Union. [13]

The President apparently thought he clarified the nature of the political problems the Polish issue would create for him with Stalin at Teheran, but the Soviet Premier was doing nothing publicly which would help solve the President's problems. Poland continued to remain an issue in U.S. domestic politics. Suddenly, in late April, a

Polish Roman Catholic priest from Springfield, Massachusetts, Rev. Stanislauv Orlemanski, arrived in Moscow at the personal invitation of Stalin and was granted two private interviews with the Soviet Premier. The State Department denied any connection with the Orlemanski visit, saying his visa had been granted purely as a private citizen visiting the Soviet Union. Bishop O'Leary of the Diocese of Springfield denied that Orlemanski was on any mission having the sanction of church authorities.

While the State Department continued to be rebuffed in its efforts to obtain a visa for a Catholic priest to travel to the Soviet Union to assist Father LeBraun in Moscow, a Polish priest from a small parish in Massachusetts not only obtained a visa but was granted private interviews with Stalin. While not well known outside Polish-American circles, Orlemanski was not a stranger to either Stalin or FDR. He first came to the attention of the OSS Foreign Nationals Branch in the late summer of 1943. At that time he established a "Kosciuszko League" in his local parish to give moral support to the Kosciuszko Division which Stalin had established in Russia to fight with the Red Army. This organization quickly came to the attention of a pro-Soviet Polish-American group in Detroit which had been involved in the bitter sit-down strike union struggle of the 1930's. The leader of this group, Waclaw Soyda, invited Orlemanski to

Detroit to establish a Kosciuszko League there as a prelude to making it a national organization. [14]

In early November Orlemanski delivered a speech at Detroit in which he attacked the Polish government-in-exile, claiming they had "forsworn" their right to represent the Polish people when they fled Poland. He also attacked their position on the territorial question of borders, arguing that only the "Polish landed aristocracy was interested in keeping the territory because they held great estates there." TASS issued a lengthy report on the formation of the Kosciuszko League and the fact that Orlemanski was named "honorary president." Branches of the League sprang up in Chicago, Winnipeg, Roxbury and West Springfield. According to an FBI report on the League, all the branches were largely made up of "communists or communist sympathizers." [15]

In January, shortly after returning from Teheran, Stalin had Foreign Minister Molotov propose to Ambassador Harriman the inclusion of three Polish-Americans as part of the government-in-exile: Oscar Lange, a professor at the University of Chicago, Leo Krzycki, a leftist vice president of the CIO, and Orlemanski. Harriman was taken aback by the proposal and told FDR not to dignify it with a response. In February, however, Soviet Ambassador Andrei Gromyko requested that Lange and Orlemanski be permitted to visit

the Soviet Union. At the same time DeWitt Poole of the OSS was reporting that Orlemanski was having second thoughts about his association with the pro-Soviet groups. Poole's report confirmed that Orlemanski was not a Communist but "a strange blend of naive patriot, shrewd peasant and loyal Catholic." He viewed his pro-Soviet activity as a means of supporting FDR's position that the Soviets were our wartime ally and declared that "if Roosevelt would declare war on Russia today I would break all my sympathies for the Russian cause and as an American go against Russia." [16]

While Father Orlemanski was meeting with Stalin the political power of the Polish vote FDR was so concerned about began to make itself felt. Just how important the Poles were politically became clear when one hundred and forty-seven speeches were made in congress celebrating Polish Independence Day on May 3, while Orlemanski was still in Moscow. Jan Ciechanowski, Polish ambassador to the United States, notes in his memoirs that he was told the Polish vote was critical to the President in five states; Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York. The connection between this analysis and the total Catholic vote is dramatically supported by a survey of religious affiliations conducted among the members of the 78th congress and reported in the Spring 1944 issue of Public Opinion Quarterly. The survey found that of 435 members of

the House 80, or 18 percent, were Catholic. In addition, 63 of the 80 were concentrated in nine states, the five listed by Ciechanowski along with Massachusetts, California, Wisconsin and Louisiana. The importance of these nine states, which represented 218 of the 266 electoral votes needed to win the presidency (over 80 percent), is quickly evident for any presidential candidate. Also, the Democrats had suffered substantial losses in the mid-term elections of 1942 when their majority in the House had fallen from 91 to only 14, and they had lost 8 Senate seats. Clearly, an erosion in the Catholic vote represented by the loss of the Poles would jeopardize the President's chances for a fourth term. Is it any wonder then that Harry Hopkins termed the Polish issue "political dynamite?"[17]

The President needed some indication from Stalin that his concerns expressed at Teheran over the Polish vote, and by implication the Catholic vote, would be addressed. The answer was forthcoming from Father Orlemanski. On May 6 Father Orlemanski left Moscow to return to the United States carrying with him a letter signed by Stalin which dealt with the question of religious freedom in the Soviet Union and the possibility of cooperation between Stalin and Pius XII "in the matter of the struggle against persecution and coercion of the Catholic Church." The American embassy in Moscow learned of the contents of the letter from Harrison

Salisbury of the United Press. Orlemanski had allowed Salisbury to make a copy of the letter under the condition it would not be made public until he could discuss it with Catholic authorities in the United States.[18]

The embassy cabled the President and the Secretary of State on May 9 that while Orlemanski came to the Soviet Union "primarily interested in the Polish question," he now believed the letter he was bringing back from Stalin "moved into the much broader field of general relations between the Kremlin and the Catholic Church." The Embassy reported that Orlemanski did not feel capable of dealing with a subject of that magnitude and would submit the letter to Catholic authorities in the United States. Salisbury believed the letter represented "a definite manifestation of a desire to bring about improved relations between the Soviet government and the Catholic Church and to remove a present source of friction not only in Soviet-Polish relations but also in relations with the United States." The cable concluded by saying, "The Embassy agrees with this estimate." [19]

Stalin seems to have been using the visit of Father Orlemanski, arranged by FDR, to send a message that he was willing to compromise on the issue of religious freedom in the areas of Eastern Europe that the Red Army would soon have under its control and that FDR had already acknowledged to Spellman would remain under Soviet control. Perhaps

Stalin felt this was the type of statement which Myron Taylor had requested through Ambassador Maisky in London back in October of 1942, or at least a starting point for negotiating such a statement. Stalin was well aware of the President's preoccupation with the question of freedom of worship in the Soviet Union, dating back to the original negotiations over recognition in 1933.

Clearly, Stalin was as aware as Roosevelt that Catholicism could be the key to the Polish problem. Polish nationalism and Polish Catholicism went hand-in-hand. The staff at the American embassy in Moscow apparently believed that Stalin was sincere in this effort to relieve the mounting tension over the Polish issue. Spellman noted in his memo to the Vatican the President's hope "that the Russian intervention in Europe would not be too harsh." With this in mind, and the President's repeated efforts to assure some measure of freedom of worship in the Soviet Union, it seems fair to conclude that FDR would view the possibility of a rapprochement between the Vatican and the Kremlin as a step in the right direction in terms of relieving the "harsh" Russian intervention in Europe. Domestic Catholic reaction to such an arrangement could also be expected to be less harsh in terms of possible defections from the Democratic coalition.

However, the State Department soon had reason to doubt the supposed importance of Orlemanski's letter. On May 24 Charles (Chip) Bohlen, Chief of the Division of Eastern European Affairs, reported to the Deputy Director of the Division the gist of a conversation between Andre Visson of the New York Herald Tribune and Vladimir Pravdin, head of the Soviet Tass Agency. According to Visson, Pravdin told him it was the intent of the Soviet government to support a "well organized, dynamic and state-controlled Orthodox Church which would have great influence throughout the Balkans and the Near East" after the war. Pravdin doubted the Vatican would respond favorably to the Orlemanski letter because it was too "well informed" not to recognize Soviet backing of the Orthodox Church as a much greater "threat to Catholicism than Atheistic Communism had ever been." Pravdin concluded by saying it was necessary to have "some force to combat the Vatican" and as Protestantism was too divided to do so "the only force capable of doing so was the Greek Orthodox Church controlled by the Soviet Government."[20]

In the meantime, military events were rapidly changing the context within which the political discussions were taking place. On June 4 Allied forces liberated Rome. Two days later Allied Armies landed at Normandy and the long-awaited second front was finally established. Some of Stalin's resentment seems to have given way to his

enthusiasm over the landing on the continent. He cabled Churchill "the landing, conceived on a grandiose scale, has succeeded completely" and that "the history of warfare knows no other like undertaking from the point of view of its scale, its vast conception, and its masterly execution." He was obviously pleased to have some of the pressure taken off the eastern front.[21]

On June 5, the very eve of the Normandy invasion, Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, premier of the Polish government -in-exile, arrived in Washington for talks with FDR. The first meeting took place on June 7, and Jan Ciechanowski, Polish ambassador to the U.S. described FDR as being in good spirits following the successful landing the previous day. FDR repeatedly stressed to Mikolajczyk the need for the government-in-exile to reach an accommodation with the Soviets. "When a thing becomes unavoidable one should adapt oneself to it," FDR said, and asked Mikolajczyk if he agreed with that theory. When the Polish Premier replied that the Soviet demands were irreconcilable with the concept of Polish independence and sovereignty, FDR replied: "remember there are five times more Russians than Poles" and that Russia "could swallow up Poland if she could not reach an understanding on her terms." Clearly, Roosevelt was trying to impress on the Polish Premier the seriousness of the situation facing the Poles. In his memo to the Vatican,

Spellman recorded what FDR told him regarding the Soviet position on Poland and at one point remarked: "Poland, if reestablished, would get Eastern Prussia."(emphasis added) FDR obviously feared for the very existence of Poland, and Soviet military might was already dictating the realities of the situation on the ground in Poland. Just as the Soviets refused to acknowledge the Red Army was in Poland rather than Russia in January, they could in fact, as FDR said, just "swallow up" all of Poland. For FDR the very existence of Poland was at stake, and if Poland ceased to exist, what would be the reaction of American Poles and their fellow anti-Communist Catholics? To succeed in reestablishing the Polish state would be a major diplomatic achievement, even if some territorial concessions were needed to compensate for Soviet security fears. FDR was giving the Poles the same message in June that Churchill gave them in January.[22]

FDR then said he thought it would be constructive for Mikolajczyk to meet personally with Stalin. However, the Polish Premier replied that without the support of the President Stalin would insist on acceptance of his conditions prior to any meeting; he asked Roosevelt to tell Stalin he supported the government-in-exile's position. Roosevelt replied that as a politician himself, Mikolajczyk could understand that in his "political year" he could not intervene with Stalin on the Polish issue. Both men were

obviously concerned with the impact of American public opinion. Mikolajczyk was hoping to force the President's hand into public support of the government-in-exile's position on the frontier issue by playing to the large Polish electorate he knew FDR needed in November.

Roosevelt, having already agreed to much of Stalin's position on the frontier issue at Teheran, was trying to preserve some semblance of a Polish state and reach a compromise acceptable to Poles in the United States as well as Poland. One way to do that would be to insure the reestablishment of the prewar Polish state after the war. A possible alternative would be to insure that Poles would be able to practice their Catholic religion.

Subsequent conversations between Roosevelt and Mikolajczyk revolved around the efforts of the Polish Home Army and the need to supply them now that the Soviets were in Poland. The President agreed that the underground army was performing vital services to the Allies by disrupting German activities behind the front. FDR used this issue to stress again the need for Mikolajczyk to meet personally with Stalin and inform him of the strength and activities of the Home Army. He felt Stalin would be impressed and would agree to coordinate Red Army plans with the Poles in order to defeat the Germans.

The conversation then took an interesting turn. FDR brought up Father Orlemanski's visit to Moscow. He said he had been asked to meet with the priest but had not yet decided if he would. It is interesting to note FDR's comment that he had not yet decided on meeting with Orlemanski. On June 2 the President was sent a memo by Secretary Hull advising against such a meeting. Hull disagreed with the idea that the offer brought back from Stalin represented a "real departure from the position of the Soviet government." He referred to the "criticism from Polish-American and Catholic circles." Hull believed all the information that could be gathered on Orlemanski's visit with Stalin had been obtained in the OSS interview conducted with him on his return and that an "off the record" meeting could not be kept secret and would generate more "unfortunate publicity." Besides, Orlemanski had been summarily suspended from his parish duties and ordered to the Passionist Monastery in West Springfield by Bishop Thomas O'Leary of the Springfield Diocese. Bishop O'Leary had been contacted by the Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Amleto Cicognani wanting to know "what provision had been made for the parish of Father Orlemanski." The reasons given for Orlemanski's suspension were that he had left his parish without permission and that he had consorted with Communists in violation of Pius XI's

1937 encyclical. It was obvious the reaction of the American Catholic Church was not what Orlemanski had expected.[23]

In any case, FDR told Mikolajczyk he was interested in the part of the priest's meeting with Stalin in which they had discussed freedom of religion in Russia, particularly freedom for the Roman Catholic Church. Stalin was reported to have said he had no objection to freedom of religion, only to the fact that there were so many religions in the world. He added that to give religious freedom to one or two denominations would result in dozens more applying and felt "it might be better to unify religions." According to Jan Ciechanowski, the President felt this statement "might be an indication that Stalin would favor a union between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches," and he might even be willing "to admit the Pope's leadership and allow him to become head of the two united churches." The President was making quite a leap from the note concerning cooperation with Pius XII to allowing the Pope to head a united church in Russia. Perhaps the President had in mind Bohlen's memo outlining Stalin's postwar plan and the possibility of working around that problem. The President then asked Mikolajczyk what he thought of Stalin's comments and the Premier replied that Stalin could indicate his sincerity by releasing the Catholic priests imprisoned in the Soviet Union. The President then turned the conversation

to other matters. FDR did not divulge to the Polish Premier that the American embassy in Moscow believed Stalin's remarks were intended as a gesture "to remove a source of friction" in Soviet-Polish relations. Neither did he attempt to ascertain the potential threat to Polish Catholicism of a revitalized Orthodox Church under Soviet domination, expressed in Bohlen's memo. [24]

On June 14 Mikolajczyk, having failed to extract a public commitment from FDR to support the government-in-exile's position on the frontier issue, returned to London. The following day Roosevelt lunched with Archbishop Spellman and made arrangements for the Catholic prelate to fly to Rome on an Air Force plane. The President quickly informed Stalin that the visit of Mikolajczyk to Washington would have no bearing on their Teheran agreements. FDR cabled the Soviet Premier on June 17, and in what may have been a reference to the upcoming U.S. elections he stated "I deemed his visit at this time as desirable and necessary for reasons which Ambassador Harriman had already explained to you." The President expressed the opinion that Mikolajczyk was most concerned about the cooperation of the Red Army with the Polish Home Army and the need to coordinate their activities to defeat the Germans. He stated that Mikolajczyk would be willing to go to Moscow to discuss the problems between the Soviet Union and his government-in-exile but

took no position favoring the Polish viewpoint as requested by the Polish Premier. FDR concluded by saying, "You will understand, I know, that I am in no way trying to press my personal views upon you in a matter which is of special concern to you and your country." The President was acknowledging the special significance attached to the Polish situation in terms of security to the Soviet Union expressed by Stalin.[25]

Notes

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2) Ibid.

3) James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt the Soldier of Freedom, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), p.416.

4) W. Averall Harriman and Elie Abel, Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946, (New York: Random House, 1975), p.280.; and Jan Ciechanowski, Defeat in Victory, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1947), p.260.

5) Ciechanowski, Defeat in Victory, p.262.

6) Ibid., p.269.

7) Churchill to Roosevelt, January 28, 1944, quoted in Loewenheim et.al.eds., Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1975), .p420.

8) Roosevelt to Stalin, February 7, 1944, quoted in Loewenheim et. al. eds. Secret, p.431.

9) Robert I. Gannon, S.J., The Cardinal Spellman Story, (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1962), pp.229-230.

10) Foreign Relations of the United States 1944, Vol. IV, Europe, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1966), p.1286.

11) Ibid., p.1289.

12) New York Times,(February 17, 1944),35.

13) Churchill to Stalin, quoted in Loewenheim et.al.eds., Secret, p.571.

14) Bernard Donahoe, "The Dictator and the Priest: Stalin's Meeting with Father Stanislas Orlemanski," Prologue (Summer 1990) "p."170.

15) Ibid., "p." 171.

16) Ibid., "p." 172.

17) Ciechanowski, Defeat, p.313.; and Madge M. McKinney, "Religion and Elections," Public Opinion Quarterly, (Summer 1944), "pp." 111-112.

18) FRUS 1944, Vol.IV, p.869.

19) Ibid.

20) Ibid. p.1214.

21) Stalin to Churchill, quoted in Loewenheim et.al.eds., Secret, p.530.

22) Ciechanowski, Defeat, p.293-294

23) Donahoe, "Dictator and the Priest," p.179.

24) Ciechanowski, Defeat, p.294., and pp.308-309.

25) Roosevelt to Stalin, quoted in Loewenheim et. al. eds., Secret, p.544.

CHAPTER 8

CULTS AND VOTES

On July 1,1944, Averell Harriman notified the State Department of an announcement in Moscow concerning the creation of a Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults under the Council of the Commissars of the USSR. The council was to provide liaison between the government and religious cults in the USSR, including the Catholic and the Greek Catholic churches. Bohlen was quick to recognize one possible implications of the new council. He viewed it as a potentially positive step giving a "greater degree of recognition than heretofore accorded" these religions and said the council should be viewed in connection with the "assurances given by Stalin to Father Orlemanski concerning the Catholic Church." He concluded that the council was "undoubtedly related with the Polish question and is probably designed to provide machinery to handle questions involving the Catholic population of eastern Poland which the Soviet government intends to incorporate in the Soviet Union." [1]

The Orlemanski mission was continuing to influence State Department thinking in spite of Hull's rejection of the letter from Stalin as offering nothing new to Soviet-Polish relations. Bohlen had not forgotten the Pravdin conversation, however, and pointed out that "the

Greek Orthodox faith ...has virtually been recognized as the State religion and unquestionably will be utilized in that guise as a political instrument of the Soviet State." No other religion was going to be allowed to "develop to a point where they might threaten the position of the official Orthodox church." [2]

On July 12 the Pope's most recent concerns over the Soviet Union were revealed to Myron Taylor in a lengthy audience. The Pope raised three issues with Taylor: the spread of Communism in Europe and "its development in a strong way in Italy," the "Russian attitude toward Poland" and the "Russian attitude re: freedom of religion generally." Taylor had told Joseph Davies that he was disappointed the Vatican had not responded favorably to the Orlemanski mission. Now he presented to the Pope a draft of a statement which evolved following his discussions with Ambassador Maisky in London in 1942 dealing with the form of "assurance to be made by Marshal Stalin [that] would be acceptable." He also informed the Pope that he had "discussed the subject with the President of the United States, with Secretary Hull and others, including members of the Catholic hierarchy in America." [3]

The statement Taylor provided to the Pope contained two elements. The first called on the Soviets to publicly proclaim "complete freedom of religious teaching and freedom

of worship in all Soviet territory." This would be in accord with article 124 of the Soviet constitution and an acknowledgement of "the loyal participation in the defense of the Fatherland by all Russian people," supposedly including Catholics. The second stipulated that "any abuse of these privileges, whether to organize movements or incite the people to overthrow the Government, will be dealt with in each case according to law." Taylor said both Pius XII and his political advisor Monsignor Tardini accepted the first point but rejected the second. Following his audience with the Pope, Taylor met with Tardini who presented him with a lengthy memorandum outlining the Vatican's objections to Soviet behavior toward the Catholic Church in Russia, which Tardini said showed no significant improvement since the war began. The memorandum concluded "in view of what has been stated above and after the sad experience of the past, it is necessary to follow a policy of watchful expectation and reserve."[4]

The Vatican did not rule out the possibility of reaching an agreement with the Kremlin but preferred to watch developments unfold. Taylor suggested to FDR raising the issue at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, which had just convened in Washington. FDR returned a message to Taylor telling him he had reached "the reluctant conclusion that at this particular moment it would be unwise to raise the issue

[religious freedom] openly." He said the Russians were "most sensitive" and might consider such a request an "affront" to the various statements they had already made concerning "freedom of worship in the Soviet Union." Instead, FDR wanted to pursue a policy of exerting U.S. "influence quietly and constantly " to obtain "practical tests of Soviet respect for that principle." This, he believed, was more in keeping with the Vatican's position that they were "wary of statements and intent upon concrete application." [5]

By late July, events were coming together on all fronts. FDR was overwhelmingly renominated by the Democratic Convention to seek a fourth term; Archbishop Spellman was in Rome where the American press was speculating on his "real mission" as he had been granted several private audiences with the Pope, and Polish Premier Mikolajczyk flew to Moscow to talk personally with Stalin. On the same day the Pope gave a speech encouraging Poles to work with the advancing Soviet armies. In an address to 500 Polish soldiers, the Pope "asked that Poles not seek vengeance against the Germans or Russians that overran Poland in 1939, but in fact should collaborate with the Russians." Pius said he was still seeking an independent Poland. Members of the diplomatic corps, commenting on the speech, said they believed it was extremely cautious. This speech takes on new

meaning when seen in the context of the conversations held on July 12 with Myron Taylor. Pius was publicly acknowledging Catholics' ability to cooperate with the Soviet Union within days of being told the President of the United States was still working to produce a satisfactory agreement which would guarantee the church freedom of movement in eastern Europe, even if under Soviet control.[6]

On August 1, with encouragement from radio broadcasts from Moscow, the Polish underground in Warsaw began open resistance to the Germans occupying the city. The Red Army was only 10 miles from Warsaw and the Poles expected a quick Soviet advance to liberate the city. By early September, however, it was clear that the Red Army was not going to assist the uprising. It remained exactly where it was when the uprising began. Pleas for assistance from Stalin met with excuses that military necessity prevented resupplying the underground or allowing the Red Army to advance on Warsaw. He also refused permission for U.S. planes to land at Soviet bases if they attempted to drop supplies. Churchill was furious and tried to get FDR to agree to send American planes to drop supplies to the Poles regardless and land at Russian bases without permission. While the President complained to Stalin along with Churchill about the lack of help to the embattled Poles, he was not willing to follow the Prime Minister's latest plan. To do so would

have destroyed the basis of trust which FDR was trying to establish with Stalin. FDR finally notified Churchill that he was informed the underground Poles had left Warsaw and "there now appears to be nothing we can do to assist them." The fighting continued, however, for another month. Finally, in what Robert Dallek has termed "an apparently cynical effort to refute accusations that they wished to see Poland's non-Communist underground destroyed," and after yet another British appeal, the Red Army resumed its advance on Warsaw, dropped supplies to the Poles and agreed to let American planes land at Soviet bases after dropping supplies. It was too late, however, and the rebellion was crushed with some 250,000 Polish casualties. [7]

In the meantime, the President was involved in a bitter reelection campaign. Polls conducted in August and early September showed Republican Party candidate Thomas E. Dewey holding a narrow lead over FDR overall, but in key electoral vote states Dewey was ahead by large margins: Illinois, 54 to 46 percent; Ohio, 54 to 46 percent; Michigan, 57 to 43 percent; Wisconsin, 56 to 44 percent. These were the same states cited by Ciechanowski where the Polish vote could make the difference. By early October FDR was clinging to a narrow 51 to 49 percent lead nationally. [8]

It was beginning to appear that the President's fear, expressed to Stalin at Teheran, was becoming a reality. Events in Poland were driving American Poles to seek answers from the President. Just what was his position on Poland? Jan Ciechanowski claims he was repeatedly being asked by various Roosevelt campaign operatives his opinion on what would be the most effective way to ensure the "Polish vote." And it cannot be forgotten, as Secretary Hull pointed out during the Orlemanski affair, "Catholic circles" in general were also showing a great interest in Poland.

On August 15, Secretary Hull forwarded to FDR a memorandum from Taylor dealing with the source of the information which had led to the Pope's belief that American Catholics supported a negotiated settlement to the war. Taylor had heard from the British Minister to the Holy See, Sir D'Arcy Osborne, that Archbishop Spellman had made the same comment to him. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, currently in Rome, indicated that Spellman told him the same thing prior to leaving for Rome. Taylor felt these disclosures "may indicate a movement to bring about a negotiated peace, along lines undisclosed to us directly." It seems entirely possible that Spellman was advocating to the Pope a policy that would bring an end to the war before Russian armies could occupy the areas of Eastern Europe that FDR had told him a year earlier would certainly remain under

Soviet domination. He may also have been attempting to raise the prospect of a potential revolt of 30,000,000 Catholics against FDR's foreign policy in the midst of a heated campaign, not just the possible loss of six or seven million Polish voters. Whatever his motives, Taylor was spending much of his time trying to convince the Pope that "there is no possibility of a negotiated peace and that the only terms that will be offered to the German Army are unconditional surrender." [9]

On October 11, the White House issued a press release, accompanied by photos, of a meeting between FDR and members of the Polish American Congress (PAC), the same group that had led the attack against Orlemanski's visit. The Poles were at the White House to get the President's views on the continued application of the principles of the Atlantic Charter, specifically how those principles applied to Poland. According to Ciechanowski, the Polish language press in the United States was not satisfied with the President's answers. Roosevelt knew of the continued dissatisfaction and arranged another meeting with Charles Rozmarek of the PAC aboard his campaign train in Chicago on October 28, seven days before the election. Ciechanowski says the President promised Rozmarek that he would "take active steps to insure the independence of Poland." The next day Rozmarek endorsed the Democratic ticket. The President was being disingenuous

with Rozmarek. He was indeed pursuing a policy for an independent Poland, it was just not the same Poland the Poles were talking about. But, as the President had told Premier Mikolajczyk, "when a thing becomes unavoidable one should adapt oneself to it." [10]

Meanwhile, Republican candidate Dewey was doing his best to revive with voters the anti-Communist theme of Father Coughlin. In a speech at Boston, Dewey told his audience that FDR had put his party on the auction block, and the highest bidder was the Communist Party. "Now the Communists are seizing control of the New Deal," Dewey said, "through which they aim to control the Government of the United States." He suggested that FDR pardoned Earl Browder in time to help organize for the fourth term bid. Roosevelt was furious, but his advisors were telling him he had to answer the charges because "the voters were more afraid of communism than fascism." [11]

The Polish vote held, however, and the President won reelection on November 4, but although the electoral vote count was overwhelmingly in Roosevelt's favor, the margin of victory in the nine key states identified earlier as having strong Polish or Catholic votes, was narrow indeed. In most cases FDR won these states by the narrowest of any of his previous elections, and his ability to hold the Catholic vote could indeed be pointed to as the margin of victory.

The President won Pennsylvania with 51 percent of the vote, and his plurality of 105,000 was over 500,000 less than his 1936 victory. Illinois was virtually the same, 51.5 percent, New York 52.3 percent, Michigan 50.2 percent. In California the President won with 56 percent of the vote, down from 67 percent in 1936. Ohio and Wisconsin went Republican for the first time since 1928. James MacGregor Burns pointed out that it was "remarkable that a forty-two-year-old governor with experience in neither war nor diplomacy could come so close to toppling a world leader at the height of a global war." Soon after the election the Catholic hierarchy served notice that it might not be so easy to maintain the Catholic vote in the future. [12]

On November 13, a week after the election, the American Catholic Bishops released a resolution on eastern Europe passed by the administrative board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The resolution noted the "sufferings, misery and fears" of their fellow bishops, clergy and religious throughout all of Europe and "the circumstances of the moment excite in them a particular anxiety for the fate of religion among their fellow Christians in Poland, the Baltic States, and neighboring Catholic lands." The resolution concluded, "American Catholics would ever resent their country's being made a

party to the de-Christianization of historic Catholic peoples." [13]

Three days later, on November 16, the bishops released a second, more lengthy statement on "International Order." With victory in the war seeming more certain each day the statement opened: "We have met the Challenge of War. Shall we meet the challenge of Peace?" The bishops statement was in response to the recently concluded Dumbarton Oaks Conference. The State Department had asked for comments from the public on the establishment of an international organization aimed at securing future peace. The New York Times carried a page one story on the bishop's statement and reprinted the entire text on an inner page. The Times concluded the bishops were not opposed to the creation of such an organization but were putting forward moral principles on which it should be guided. The statement said, "we have no confidence in a peace which does not carry into effect, without reservations or equivocations the principles of the Atlantic Charter." This seems a direct reference to the previous statement on conditions in eastern Europe. [14]

Proper organization of the international community was essential to establishing a just peace, according to the bishops, and "to do this we must repudiate absolutely the tragic fallacies of 'power politics' with its balance of power, spheres of influence in a system of puppet

governments, and the resort to war as a means of settling international difficulties." Without specifically mentioning the Soviet Union the bishops said, "the ideology of a nation in its internal life is a concern of the international community" and stipulated that as a condition of membership "every nation guarantee in law and respect in fact the innate rights of men, families and minority groups in their civil and religious life." In essence the bishops were continuing to call for a statement guaranteeing religious freedom in the Soviet Union and the countries of eastern Europe. [15]

The bishops had just raised the stakes. Poland was no longer an isolated ethnic political issue, if it ever had been. It was now a Catholic issue, as was the fate of all eastern Europe. FDR could not have been mistaken about what the bishops were saying. The statement was signed by Edward Mooney, Archbishop of Detroit; Samuel Stritch, Archbishop of Chicago; Francis Spellman, Archbishop of New York; John McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati and John Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne. These were all the President's old friends, the men who defended him in his battle over Mexico and against the charges leveled by Father Coughlin; the men whose position on Spain had influenced his policy.

Just what effect was all this having on American public opinion? A poll conducted that same November revealed

that a majority of the American people still believed Russia could be trusted to cooperate with the Allies after the war by a margin of 47 to 35 percent, while 18 percent did not know. The poll was further broken down by income groups and religious affiliation. Trust in continued Russian cooperation was highest in the upper-income group, with 56 percent overall believing in continued cooperation. However, there was a 14 percent difference within this group between Catholics and Protestants; 44 percent of Catholics believed Russia could not be trusted compared to only 30 percent of Protestants. The margin of distrust narrowed in the middle-income group where 34 percent of Catholics distrusted the Russians and 31 percent of Protestants. Among lower-income groups 48 percent of Catholics distrusted Russia compared to 34 percent of Protestants. Clearly, although still not a majority, distrust of Russia's postwar cooperation was running high as the war drew to a close, and American Catholics were far more likely to distrust Russian intentions than their fellow Americans. Just as in the thirties the periphery was far more distrustful of Communist intentions than American core groups. The question was could the periphery's opinion come to dominate the political discussion on postwar issues as it did on the Spanish question. FDR believed it could, and was about to take action to try and prevent it. [16]

Notes

1) Foreign Relations of the United States 1944, Vol. IV, Europe, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1966), p.1214.

2) Ibid.

3) Memo, Taylor to FDR, July 17, 1944, PSF Diplomatic, Vatican, Taylor Myron C., 1944, FDR Library.

4) Ibid.: Enclosure "C"

5) Letter, FDR to Taylor, July, 1944 (undated), PSF Diplomatic, Vatican, Taylor Myron C., 1944 FDR Library.

6) "Pontiff Bids Poles Work with Russia," New York Times, (July 28, 1944), p.4.

7) Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp.464-465.

8) George Gallop, The Gallop Poll, Public Opinion 1935-1971, Vol. I, 1935-1948, (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 455ff.

9) Memo, Gray to Tully, August 15, 1944, PSF Diplomatic, Vatican, Taylor Myron C., 1944 FDR Library.; Memo, Taylor to Hull, August 9, 1944, PSF Diplomatic, Vatican, Taylor Myron C., 1944 FDR Library.

10) Jan Ciechanowski, Defeat in Victory, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1947), p.

11) James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt the Soldier of Freedom, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), pp.528-529.

12) Richard M. Scammon, ed., America at the Polls, (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1965), (see results by state).

13) Pastoral Letters of the American Catholic Bishops, 1941-1961, (Washington: DePaul Press, 1981), p.52; see also "Catholic Bishops Offer Peace Ideas," New York Times, November 19, 1944, "p." 1.

14) Ibid. pp.56-57.

15) Ibid. p.60.

16) Public Opinion Quarterly, Winter 1944-45, p.520.

CHAPTER 9

"SAUL ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS"

As 1945 opened it was becoming increasingly clear that Stalin intended to have his way on the Polish question. On January 3 he formally recognized the Polish Committee of National Liberation, known as the Lublin Committee, as the provisional government of Poland. This was a move that both FDR and Churchill had been attempting to forestall until the Big Three met at Yalta. Anglo-American forces in the west were just beginning to regain the offensive following the breach of their lines in the Battle of the Bulge. And the public was beginning to have serious doubts regarding the conduct of the president's foreign policy. Pollster Hadley Cantril reported to the President in early January that his polls showed "a significant decline since the previous June in public confidence that the President and other officials were successfully handling the nation's interests abroad." [1]

The President knew he was faced with a potentially disastrous domestic political situation as he prepared to leave for Yalta. The polls showed Catholic opinion in the country at much higher levels of distrust in continued postwar cooperation with Russia, and overall opinion on the President's policies was now down as well. The Catholic hierarchy had called into question the cornerstone of the

President's peace plan and challenged him to live up to the principles of the Atlantic Charter. According to Edward J. Flynn, the situation of Catholics in eastern Europe was on FDR's mind as he prepared to leave for Yalta. Flynn, a Tammany associate of Al Smith and political boss of the Bronx, tied his political future to FDR following the disastrous 1928 election. Smith never forgave him, and when FDR wanted New York Governor Herbert Lehman to appoint Flynn to the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Roosevelt's nomination of Senator Royal Copeland as ambassador to Germany, Smith effectively blocked the nomination. Lehman would not make the nomination without Smith's approval, as he felt he owed his election as governor to Smith's backing, and Smith would not give his approval. [2]

In the long term, however, the backing of a powerful, popular President proved more beneficial to Flynn than the lack of approval from the ex-governor and defeated presidential candidate. Flynn was named Democratic National Chairman by FDR in 1940, and now, in 1945, would be thrust into the international limelight. According to Flynn, FDR raised the issue of the "position of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia and the Balkans after the war" during a conversation in the White House. Flynn said FDR told him "there could never be a permanent peace unless the large Catholic populations in Poland, Lithuania and the Balkans

were permitted to practice their faith freely." He then asked Flynn to accompany him on the trip to Yalta and take up the problem with Stalin and Molotov. The thrust of the conversation described by Flynn seems to indicate that FDR had not changed his position on Russian domination of eastern Europe that he outlined to Spellman in September of 1943, but was continuing to try to find a means of making it "less harsh," especially for American Catholics. [3]

On January 22, as the President and his party were boarding for the journey to Yalta, a single page document was prepared in the White House for the President's signature. It was addressed: "To all diplomatic, consular, army and navy officers of the United States Government." The document said the bearer, "the Honorable Edward J. Flynn," was "engaged in a mission for me which involves a visit to Moscow, with the approval of Marshal Stalin, and also a visit to Italy before returning to the United States." It then instructed all personnel coming in contact with Flynn to "permit him to pass, without let or molestation" and to extend to him all courtesies normally associated with diplomatic personnel. The President, apparently with the approval of Stalin, was in effect granting Flynn a personal passport allowing him to travel anywhere in Europe under U.S. military control. [4]

While FDR seems to have been embarking on yet another attempt to resolve the divisions between the Vatican and the Kremlin, Stalin was apparently embarking on his own plan. While the Big Three were negotiating at Yalta, George Kennan, now back in the Moscow Embassy as Charge, was sending a flurry of cables to the State Department dealing with some rather remarkable events taking place in Moscow surrounding the Russian Orthodox Church. A Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Eastern Church had been convened for purposes of electing a new Patriarch of Moscow. Invitations had been extended "through official Soviet diplomatic channels" to the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem. The Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria accepted personally and the others sent "rather imposing delegations of Metropolitans, Archbishops and Bishops." The visitors were treated as official dignitaries and shown great hospitality by the Soviet government (including a performance of the Moscow Ballet). [5]

The Synod elected Alexei, Metropolitan of Leningrad and Novgorod, as Patriarch on February 2, and an elaborate coronation ceremony was planned for February 4, which Kennan described as "in effect the ceremonial climax to the reestablishment of the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union." Kennan followed his first cable with a second, interpreting the events and placing them in their political context. The

revival of the Moscow Patriarch had nothing to do with "any spontaneous movement on the part of the church but [of] a deliberate policy on the part of the Soviet Regime." The move was seen as an attempt to promote an "all-Slav" policy based on the religious sentiments of the Slav populations in areas coming under Soviet control. Also, the revival would provide the Soviets a channel of communication "to all believers of the Eastern Church....An iron in the fire of Near Eastern politics through Russian Church property...[and]a means of disarming criticism...in western religious circles." Kennan is describing the opening phase of what Vladimir Provdin had predicted earlier would result in a "well organized, dynamic and state-controlled Orthodox Church..." as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy. [6]

On February 8, Kennan sent another cable on the implications of the recent religious activity in Moscow, dealing with the Soviet attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church. He thought the fact the Soviet government was sponsoring the reemergence of the Russian church might be the result of "the unfruitful outcome of Father Orlemanski's mission." Kennan felt the failure of Moscow and Rome to reach an agreement following Stalin's statement to Orlemanski resulted in the ability of the Russian Church to emerge from "its former obscurity." He added, "Today, all things indicate that the Kremlin is prepared to do open

battle against the influence of the Vatican." The Soviet press was currently attacking the Vatican openly, but "how this anti-Catholic tendency will affect Soviet policy in Poland, Hungary and Croatia is however still not apparent." He felt the Soviets' policy toward Catholics in Central Europe would present a "highly delicate problem for Russian Church diplomacy." [7]

When William Bullitt wrote to FDR in early 1943, he warned the President against the widespread assumptions taking hold that Stalin had "changed his political philosophy" that he "has abandoned all idea of world communism" and wanted to "have the Soviet Union evolve in the direction of liberty and democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of religion." To accept such a view, he said, "implies a conversion of Stalin as striking as the conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus." As Ed Flynn flew to Moscow with Averell Harriman following the Yalta Conference he was embarking on a mission that was directly contrary to the most recent evidence of Soviet intentions expressed by Kennan, a policy that had been revealed to the State Department eight months earlier. [8]

On February 14, The New York Times reported that Flynn had flown to Moscow with Ambassador Harriman. The story said Flynn had taken no part in the Crimea Conference but had simply accompanied the President "as an old friend and

associate." In conclusion, the story said, "It was emphasized that there was no significance in Mr. Flynn's mission to the Soviet Union." The following day The Times reported on Flynn's activity in Moscow, saying he sat next to Soviet Foreign Commissar Molotov at a performance of the Bolshoi Ballet. The story said, "While Mr. Flynn said he had no official mission here he was much interested in Poland." Only after several weeks did The Times begin to suspect that Flynn was up to more in Moscow than a simple vacation.

In a story datelined Rome on March 6, The Times confirmed that Flynn would visit the Pope after leaving Moscow. According to the report, "Despite President Roosevelt's bypassing of a press conference question concerning Mr. Flynn's mission to Moscow, the impression prevails that Mr. Flynn has been selected to provide the preliminary liaison between Moscow and the Vatican and that he may become the key figure in an eventual rapprochement." The story concluded by saying Archbishop Spellman of New York was expected in Rome at the same time as Flynn.

By the time Flynn reached Rome his mission was front-page news. On March 23, as the war in Europe was raging toward its conclusion, The Times reported Flynn had been granted an audience with Pius XII which lasted "far longer than the usual personal pilgrimage." It also reported that Flynn met with bishops Montini and Tardini of the Vatican

Secretariat of State. According to The Times, "Mr. Flynn smiled and said 'no comment' at a press conference when asked if he had discussed with Premier Stalin efforts toward a rapprochement between Moscow and the Holy See. 'I don't think I ought to discuss it until I get home and discuss it with him [Roosevelt],' but admitted reports 'were quite fair speculation'." [10]

By this time FDR had received a preliminary report from Harriman indicating there still might be a possibility of success. On March 14 Harriman sent a top-secret dispatch to the President telling him that Flynn had concluded the Moscow portion of his mission and had left for Rome by way of Teheran. Harriman said Flynn met twice with Molotov, and "although he declined to give Ed a message to the Vatican, Molotov showed undisguised interest in the subject." He said Molotov was pessimistic about the possibility of success, but "he indicated without saying so directly that he was open to suggestions." He believed, however, that while the door was still open, the ending of hostility would have to begin with Rome. [11]

While in Moscow, John Melby, a Foreign Service officer assigned to the U.S. Embassy, was given the task of accompanying Flynn on his travels in the Soviet Union. According to Melby, Flynn told him in the course of their weeks together that FDR "hoped to get some kind of Kremlin -

Vatican concordat, to end the feud between those two great power bases." Melby confirmed that Molotov felt the Vatican would be more troublesome on the issue, but told Flynn "... go ahead and talk with the Pope and see how he feels about it." He said he believed Flynn already knew the Pope would "if not enthusiastically, still go along with the idea." Melby said Flynn was so confident an agreement would be reached that Flynn asked him if he would be interested in being his assistant in Rome when Roosevelt appointed him to serve as liaison between the Vatican and the Kremlin. At the same time Flynn told Melby not to discuss what he had told him with anyone from the State Department "because neither Stettinius nor anybody else in the State Department knows anything about it." According to Melby, Flynn said, "This is a straight White House operation." The only one who would have any information was Harriman. [12]

In the meantime, the State Department was attempting to get some idea of what Flynn's mission was about. On March 8, Grace Tully, the President's secretary, placed a memo on the President's desk informing him that Mr. Bohlen of the State Department telephoned with a message from Harriman that Flynn was about to leave Moscow, and was seeking authorization to make travel arrangements and to pay for them. She said Bohlen told her "the State Department says they do not know the nature of his work but if he is on an

official mission all they ask is that you send a chit over authorizing them to pay for his expenses." Bohlen may have been seeking to get some hint from FDR on the nature of what Flynn was up to in Moscow, but FDR was not about to divulge any information before he was ready. On March 10 he sent a simple memo to Secretary Stettinius stating: "I hereby authorize the State Department to take care of all expenses in connection with Honorable Edward J. Flynn's confidential mission abroad." [13]

On the same day the press was reporting on Flynn's audience with the Pope, Flynn prepared a lengthy memorandum for FDR that was sent to Washington with Taylor's diplomatic correspondence. He outlined for the President his conversations with Molotov which centered, as FDR's conversation with Stalin at Teheran, on the domestic political reaction of American Catholics to Soviet activities. Flynn told Molotov "there are many millions of Roman Catholics in the United States" and that "the President was extremely anxious to create as good feelings as possible between the people of the United States and the Soviet Union." He pointed out "that a rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the Vatican would do much to improve the relations between the two countries." Molotov repeatedly stressed the Soviet position that the Vatican was openly hostile to the Soviet Union and at one point commented that

the "Vatican had often made favorable steps towards Germany, even Hitlerite Germany; but that it rarely had a good thing to say about the Soviet Union." Harriman raised the issue of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and the Soviets' intentions there. Molotov replied that "the Red Army had liberated Poland and that he had never heard that its presence there had any effect on the religious feeling of the Polish people." [14]

Molotov claimed that the Soviet Union respected all religions as long as they did not "interweave their policies with policies hostile to the Soviet Union." He was dealing with politics and not religious dogma and "the attitude of the Vatican is not only not friendly towards the Soviet Union, but unneutral." Flynn said Molotov thanked him for the frank exchange of views and promised to give the matter further consideration. He then said he would inform his colleagues of their conversations. This left Flynn and Harriman to believe "the door was deliberately left open for further conversations or for further action." He concluded it was his personal opinion "that some sort of rapprochement might be worked out." [15]

The Flynn mission had attracted the attention of more than just the western press. Writing in his diary on March 23, Joseph Goebbels also commented on the Flynn mission to the Pope, noting: "Clearly Roosevelt wants to win

the Catholic Church over to his side." Goebbels claimed the Pope had been displeased with the results of the Yalta Conference but that other considerations were at work as "The Americans are working actively in the background to cheat not only the Soviets but also the British out of the international game." Goebbels at this point was grasping at any straw which might indicate a breakdown in relations between the Allies. He still held out, even at this late date, for a miracle which would allow the Reich to conclude a separate peace, and his main hope still rested with the Soviets. [16]

On March 23 Taylor wired Secretary Stettinius that he presented Flynn that morning to Pius XII "following which there ensued for forty-five minutes a full review of Mr. Flynn's recent visit to Russia, the details of which are pledged to be strictly secret and as there is no apparent urgency in the situation I am convinced that it would be more appropriate for Mr. Flynn to report to you in person than through me by message." In spite of the widespread speculation in the press concerning the state of the President's health, there was "no apparent urgency" in sending a diplomatic wire on the results of Flynn's talk with the Pope. This view was reinforced on March 29 when Flynn cabled Harriman that nothing had happened requiring immediate attention but that if something did Taylor would

contact him. Flynn concluded by saying: "Will write after talk with President." [17]

Flynn arrived in London on April 3, for discussions with Churchill and other British leaders. While in London, he learned of the President's sudden death on April 12. He left immediately for Washington, faced with the task of informing a new president of "a straight White House operation" of which the new occupant knew nothing. In his memoirs, Truman says he met with Flynn almost immediately upon his return to Washington but that Flynn brought up domestic politics which he felt inappropriate to discuss under the circumstances. He told Flynn they would get together at a later date. For Flynn to have brought up domestic politics is entirely consistent with the nature of his mission. FDR had framed his discussions with Stalin on Poland at Teheran in terms of domestic political considerations. Flynn's discussions with Molotov revolved around FDR's concern about acceptance of Soviet policy in terms of American public opinion, particularly Catholic opinion. The entire mission revolved around domestic politics. Truman, however, had no idea what FDR was thinking when he sent Flynn to Moscow, and neither did anyone in the State Department. [18]

Melby said Flynn sent word to him that he felt "pretty sure that Mr. Truman, once he got used to the idea of being

President and got caught up on his homework, was going to tell him to go ahead and do it, carry through with it." Flynn was right. Truman's appointment calendar for July 3, as he was preparing for the upcoming Potsdam Conference, lists an appointment with Flynn arranged by Democratic National Committee Chairman Robert Hannegan. Hannegan apparently "thought [it was] important for the President to talk with Hon. Edward J. Flynn before going to Big Three meeting." By this time Melby was back in the United States, having returned to attend the San Francisco conference opening the United Nations. He met Flynn in New York who told him "he was still very confident that the thing [Kremlin-Vatican concordat] was going on." Melby also confirmed that in Flynn's meetings with Pius the pope, while not enthusiastic, had expressed interest and told him, "go ahead and see what you can do. See what we can work out." The available evidence suggests then that Flynn had commitments from both Molotov and Pius XII to continue to seek a resolution. [19]

Roosevelt's death probably ended what little chance of success that existed for achieving a rapprochement between the Vatican and the Kremlin. Stalin had already set in motion his plan to make the Russian Orthodox Church an instrument of Soviet policy, and without the influence of FDR to attempt a compromise in the Soviet attitude "to do

open battle against the influence of the Vatican," the result could only be a hardening of American Catholic anti-Communist opinion. Catholics were not the only Americans with an aversion to Communism. However, their growing political strength combined with the official anti-Communist position of the church led to the series of policy conflicts outlined here. In turn FDR's postwar planning took into account early in the war Catholic attitudes and the prospect, which he tried to head off, of renewed charges of Roosevelt sympathy for Communism. We must now turn to postwar events with this in mind.

Notes

1) James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt the Soldier of Freedom, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970), p.559.

2) Richard O'Connor, The First Hurrah, A Biography of Alfred E. Smith, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1970), p.279.

3) Edward J. Flynn, You're the Boss, (New York: Viking Press, 1947), p.185.

4) Memo, FDR to All Diplomatic, Consular, Army and Navy Officrs of the United States Government, January 22, 1945, PSF Edward J. Flynn Folder, FDR Library.

5) Foreign Relations of the United States 1945, Vol. V, Europe, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1967), pp.1112-1113.

6) Ibid., pp.1114-1115.

7) Ibid., pp.1119-1121.

8) Orville H. Bullitt, ed., For the President Personal and Secret, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), pp.576-577.

9) "Flynn Just a Visitor," New York Times (February 14, 1945),14., also "Flynn Talks in Moscow," New York Times (February 15, 1945),4.

10) Virginia Lee Warren, "Flynn Meets with Pope," New York Times (March 23, 1945),1.

11) Dispatch, Harriman to FDR, March 14, 1945, PSF Edward J. Flynn Folder, FDR Library.

12) Oral History Interview with John F. Melby conducted by Robert Accinelli, University of Toronto, (Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri, 1988), pp.90-91.

13) Memo, Tully to FDR, March 8, 1945, PSF Flynn Folder, FDR Library., and Memo, FDR to Secretary of State, March 10, 1945, PSF Flynn Folder, FDR Library.

14) Memorandum of Mr. Flynn, March 23, 1945, PSF Flynn Folder, FDR Library

15) Ibid.

16) Joseph Goebbles, Final Entries 1945, ed. Hugh Trevor-Roper, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978), p.212.

17) Memo, Taylor to Secretary of State, March 23, 1945, PSF Flynn Folder, FDR Library.; and Memo, Taylor to Secretary of State, March 31, 1945, PSF Flynn Folder, FDR Library.

18) Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, Year of Decision, Vol.1, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1955), p.32.

19) Melby Interview, pp.91-92.; and President's Appointment Calendar, PSF July 3, 1945, HST Library.

CHAPTER 10

"...WORK FOR RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY"

The rapid breakdown of the wartime alliance among the Big Three has been examined from virtually every perspective except the one which FDR outlined to Edward J. Flynn in January of 1945: "...there could never be a permanent peace unless the large Catholic populations in Poland, Lithuania, and the Balkans were permitted to practice their faith freely." [1]

Generally, cold war historians have not looked at developments from this perspective. Rather, they have been lumped into two schools, orthodox or revisionist, largely dependent on whether they viewed Soviet or American intentions as the source of the confrontation. Michael Leigh, in an attempt to sort out the "revisionist thesis," states that the "most contentious element of the revisionist thesis...is the claim that certain features of the American economic system limited the options of American decision-makers in their dealings with the Soviet Union." Ronald Steel describes a "general agreement" among revisionists "that American policy after the death of Roosevelt caused the Soviet Union to tighten its hold on Eastern Europe," in spite of the fact "there was no <u>objective threat</u> [italics added] to American security to account for the uncompromising anti-Soviet attitude of the Truman administration." [2]

These economic interpretations of the origins of the Cold War assert that "the United States could not recognize legitimate Soviet interests in Eastern Europe, Germany or elsewhere," because the "survival of the capitalist system at home required the unlimited expansion of American economic influence overseas." Thus, the outcome of "open Door" diplomacy described by William Appleman Williams is at the heart of the Cold War. [3]

While these arguments of Williams, D.F. Fleming, Gabriel Kolko, Gar Alperovitz, David Horowitz and others are certainly compelling, they do not take into account the more subtle subjective threat to the Truman administration, and indeed to subsequent administrations as well. This was the potential threat of a political revolt of Catholic voters that FDR worked so hard to prevent in 1944 and which he hoped to stave off in future elections by sending Flynn on his mission to Moscow and Rome.

One of the principal arguments put forth by revisionist historians is that a dramatic change in policy occurred with the ascension of Truman to the Presidency. Ambassador Harriman had been urging FDR to take a harder line with the Soviets since the previous September. Relations had steadily worsened over the Polish issue and the question of the makeup of the Polish government since the end of the Yalta Conference. Harriman now reported that Stalin seemed genuinely shaken by Roosevelt's death but

said he assumed there would be no changes in policy. He agreed to Harriman's suggestion that Molotov attend the opening ceremonies of the United Nations in San Francisco as a gesture of respect for the dead President. In mid-April Truman gathered his foreign policy advisors to assess the situation regarding U.S.-Soviet relations. [4]

The record of this meeting reveals there indeed would be a change in policy. Harriman restated his concern, expressed in a personal memo to Harry Hopkins the previous September, that the Soviets viewed the American attitude of "generosity and cooperation" as a sign of weakness and approval of their policies. Terming the current Soviet activity a "barbarian invasion of Europe," Harriman said Soviet control of a country meant the extension of the Soviet system complete with secret police, extinction of freedom of speech and other freedoms. Truman repeatedly expressed his intent to be "firm" with the Russians. The new President said the Russians needed us more than we needed them and that while he did not "expect to get 100 percent of what we wanted...on important matters he felt that we should be able to get 85 percent." [5]

President Truman did not share FDR's belief that giving the Soviets their way in eastern Europe was a method for establishing an atmosphere of trust. More importantly, he did not share FDR's belief, as expressed to Spellman in September of 1943, that the United States would not play an

important role in Europe after the war. Truman, and the new circle of advisors he was gathering around him, were believers in the concept of the "American Century" proclaimed by Henry Luce in 1941. While Truman brought a more nationalistic viewpoint to the Presidency in contrast to FDR, it was not simply a more provincial attitude nor a simplistic anti-Soviet outlook.

Revisionists point to the confrontational atmosphere that charged the first meeting between Truman and Molotov less than two weeks after FDR's sudden death. The issue of course was Poland - Catholic Poland. Virtually all accounts of the meeting center around the climax of the conversation after Truman pointedly told Molotov the U.S. would never recognize a government in Poland that had not been freely elected. According to Truman's later account, Molotov responded by saying "I have never been talked to like that in all my life," to which the President replied, "Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that." However, Charles "Chip" Bohlen, who served as Truman's interpreter during the meeting, claims the final exchange never occurred. Bohlen says Truman simply cut the conversation off by saying: "That will be all Mr. Molotov. I would appreciate it if you would transmit my views to Marshal Stalin." [6]

Perhaps a more important aspect of the conversation occurred earlier in the meeting when Truman informed Molotov

that "he hoped that Moscow would bear in mind how greatly American foreign policy depended on public support" and that "American economic assistance programs after the war would require the vote of Congress." This is virtually the same argument Molotov had heard less than a month earlier from Flynn during their discussions in Moscow. It seems logical to conclude that Truman, President for less than two weeks, was acutely aware of the atmosphere in the Senate where he had spent the last ten years. And that atmosphere was increasingly hostile toward the Soviet Union. Moreover, "public support" for American foreign policy was rapidly diminishing as Polish groups and the Catholic hierarchy continued to focus attention on the situation in Poland and Eastern Europe. [7]

Thus, while it may have been Truman's natural disposition to take a tougher line with the Soviets, he was also fully conscious that in doing so he would have the political support of the Senate, public opinion, and the great majority of FDR's former advisors. Truman was first and foremost a politician. In many respects that was why he was where he was. A product of the Pendergast machine in Kansas City, he in large part owed his nomination as Vice President to none other than the man FDR had sent to Moscow and Rome, Edward J. Flynn.

Flynn, Bob Hannegan of St. Louis, Edward J. Kelly, Mayor of Chicago, Frank Walker of Michigan and George Allen

were uncomfortable with the prospect of Henry Wallace being renominated for Vice President in 1944. The group had been formed at FDR's request to select his running mate. In Flynn's own words James F. Byrnes of South Carolina was the "strongest candidate," but he "wouldn't do because he had been raised a Catholic and had left the Church when he married, and the Catholics wouldn't stand for that." Flynn, Kelly, Hannegan and Walker, all Catholics, eliminated the incumbent Vice President, Wallace, and the "strongest candidate" to replace him, Byrnes, and settled on Truman, again demonstrating the power of the Catholic periphery in the political process. [8]

Meanwhile, the Catholic hierarchy was doing its best to keep the issue of what was happening in Poland before the public. Throughout 1945 Catholics flocked to churches and cathedrals to hear their leaders praise Poland as a "Christian Democracy" and call for her "spiritual liberation." A high Mass "for the cause of Poland" was held in San Francisco during the discussions of the United Nations Charter. When the United States finally recognized the Soviet-sponsored government of Poland in the summer of 1945, Charles Rozmarek of the Polish-American Congress declared it was "a tragic historical blunder" and the product of a "shortsighted policy of appeasement." Believing his last minute endorsement of FDR in 1944 had kept

Polish-American votes in the Democratic column, he may have felt betrayed. [9]

The meeting at Potsdam did nothing to assuage mounting Catholic fears concerning Eastern Europe. And while the major focus of attention remained on Poland, other Catholics were concerned about the effects of the Yalta agreements on eastern Germany and the Balkans. This may have been one of Truman's concerns as well. Gar Alperovitz has argued that Truman was conducting a deliberate policy of delay in confronting the Soviet Union at this time hoping that a wartime demonstration of atomic power would give the United States the upper hand in dealing with the Russians. According to Alperovitz, the first fruits of this policy were realized with Soviet concessions on elections in Hungary and Rumania. [10]

Nonetheless, in September, with the war in the Pacific over, and relations with the Soviets becoming increasingly acrimonious, Truman approved a resumption of the Flynn mission. The New York Times reported on September 12 that Flynn, after meeting with Truman at the White House, "would return to Rome and Moscow to complete a special diplomatic mission he undertook for President Roosevelt." However, Flynn suffered a heart attack in early November and was never able to reopen the discussions. The episode does demonstrate, however, that Truman was not relying exclusively on atomic weaponry in attempting to deal with

the Soviets as Alperovitz would have us believe. In addition, as Flynn stated to Melby, Truman was used to the idea of being President and had "got caught up on his homework," especially the idea that millions of Catholics were not pleased with what was going on in Eastern Europe.[11]

The end of the war in Europe also produced a flurry of activity and rumors surrounding the Vatican and its wish to tie itself to U.S. power. Harold Tittman, a State Department official in Rome, reported that the Pope was considering naming Spellman as Papal Secretary of State. The Pope wanted to demonstrate his gratitude to America and the American Church for its assistance and material aid during the war, as well as to strengthen the Church in the battle against Communism and to begin a process of internationalizing the Curia. Tittmann reported that the Pope "was emphatic that the Holy See must 'look to the United States.'" [12]

By November, however, the Pope had changed his mind, both because Spellman did not want to go and the Pope realized he could be more important to him in the United States. The Pope made the importance of the American church clear in February of 1946 when he raised four Americans to the College of Cardinals. Spellman, along with Archbishops John Glennon of St. Louis, Edward Mooney of Detroit, and Samuel Stritch of Chicago would join Cardinal Dougherty of

Philadelphia, giving the American church five Cardinals for the first time. [13]

Pius XII's recognition of the importance of the American church in the effort to fight Communism was again clearly demonstrated during the Senate hearings on the issue of a $3 billion dollar loan to Great Britain. Many scholars have viewed the conditions under which the loan was granted as evidence of United States determination to "exact the price of opening the British imperial markets to all on nearly equal terms." What is largely overlooked is the protracted fight in the Senate to approve the loan. The question hung in the balance for nearly six months. Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the British Labor government, was fearful that the loan would not be approved until late in March 1946 at which time Lord Keynes reported that he believed it "was in the bag." Keynes believed the "recent troublesome attitude of Russia" had been helpful, but more importantly "the Roman Catholic Church was now strongly supporting it." According to Keynes, "The Pope recently instructed all Cardinals that nothing was to be done which would weaken British power to resist Communism." The Pope's instructions apparently had the desired effect as both Joseph Kennedy, former Ambassador to Great Britain, and Leo Crowley of the State Department reversed their previous opposition to the loan. Kennedy, who had been publicly critical of the loan, was now calling for an outright grant

to the British. Overall, according to Dalton, "the Irish Americans had been told to keep quiet." The periphery was again demonstrating its ability to define the parameters of public debate in the United States, and the episode is a clear example confirming Truman's admonition to Molotov about the role of public opinion on foreign policy. [14]

This, I believe, gets to the crux of the matter. Much of what has been written about American Catholicism in the immediate postwar era attempts to place events within the context of a developing American Catholic nationalism. The pride American Catholics took in the large numbers that served in the armed forces during the war was seen as proof that Catholics would finally have to be accepted as part of the mainstream of American life. No longer could it be charged that Catholics had a split alligence between America and Rome. In addition, Catholic postwar anti-Communism is generally viewed in the same perspective. Catholic anti-Communism was a perfect fit with American anti-Communism and therefore made Catholics better Americans, or so the argument goes. But as we have seen above (Chapter 6) American anti-Communism, at least as represented by the Protestant core was not as virulent in the 1930s or early 1940s as it would soon become.

The very idea of Catholicism as an international religion with political ambitions provided the pretext for much of the American anti-Catholicism of the nineteenth and

early twentieth centuries. Just as the Protestants of Northern Ireland could proclaim "Home Rule means Rome Rule," many American Protestants could believe electing a Catholic like Al Smith to the presidency in 1928 would mean that the chief executive would be taking his orders directly from Rome. It was this aspect of American anti-Catholicism which led many Catholics to assume an ultra-isolationist position during the critical period of the 1930s. Many Americans feared a return to prewar isolationism would follow the breakdown of the peace process just as it had after WWI. Catholic internationalism rather than Catholic nationalism would play a leading, if not decisive role, in preventing this.

"The recent troublesome attitude of Russia" alluded to by Lord Keynes in March of 1946 would seem to be in reference to Stalin's February speech in which he declared that war with the capitalist powers was inevitable and that the Soviet Union would begin preparing for it immediately. He told the Soviet people that consumer goods "must wait on rearmament" and that the basis of a new five-year plan would be a tripling of defense spending. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas pronounced the speech the "Declaration of World War III." Stalin's comments took on additional meaning for official Washington in light of a military analysis conducted by U.S. intelligence in November of 1945. The report detailed the devastation wrought by the war on the

Soviet Union and its capacity to fight a major war in the near future. In several key areas: losses in manpower and industry; lack of technicians; lack of strategic air force; lack of modern navy; conditions of railway and military transport systems; lack of atomic bomb and other vital shortcomings led the authors of the report to conclude the soviets would not be prepared to fight a major war for some fifteen years. Yet now, within six months of the report, Stalin was announcing plans to undertake preparations for just such a war. [15]

In light of Stalin's speech Walter Lippmann concluded the United States had no alternative but to match the Soviet arms buildup. Truman meanwhile was faced with a Congress and a nation that was increasingly unwilling to move in that direction. It was in the aftermath of the furor created by Stalin's speech that Truman traveled to Fulton, Missouri in early March with former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. On the train the night before Churchill was to deliver his speech Truman read and approved the final draft, commenting that it would "do nothing but good" and "make a stir." It did. [16]

The President, Churchill said, had given him "full liberty to give my true and faithful counsel in these anxious and baffling times." He noted his admiration for both the Russian people and his wartime ally Marshal Stalin. Nevertheless it was clear that "From Stettin in the Baltic

to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain had descended across the Continent." All the major capitals of Eastern and Central Europe lie behind the curtain in what Churchill now called the "Soviet Sphere." He did not believe the Soviets wanted war, only "the fruits of war" and the "indefinite expansion of their power and doctrine." Churchill proposed an "English-speaking union of the United States and Britain" to stand against the common threat. Reaction to the speech was almost universally hostile. Stalin referred to it in Hitlerian terms as a "racial theory" in which the English-speaking peoples "should rule over the remaining nations of the world." The Wall Street Journal declared the United States did not need alliances with any other nation. The Nation believed Truman had been "remarkably inept" in associating himself with the speech. Walter Lippmann saw the speech as an "almost catastrophic blunder." Truman was shocked by the reaction, even though he had predicted it would "make a stir." The President now denied having prior knowledge of the contents of Churchill's speech. He offered to send the battleship Missouri to bring Stalin to the U.S. where he could speak at the University of Missouri as freely as Churchill had. [17]

The effort to move the British loan through Congress must be viewed against this nascent neo-isolationist tendency demonstrated by the hostile reaction to Churchill's speech and the suggestion that the United States ally itself

with a European power. If the Irish Americans had been told to keep quiet in order not to "weaken British power to resist Communism," as Dalton suggests, it would mark one of the rare times indeed that Irish Americans placed British interests before their own agenda. All the American Cardinals -- Spellman, Mooney, Stritch, Glennon and Dougherty were of Irish extraction. Irish nationalism was never easy for the Catholic hierarchy to put aside when British interests were at stake, as witnessed by the efforts of Cardinals Gibbons and O'Connell to include the Irish question at the Versailles Peace Conference and the Irish desertion of Wilsonian idealism in the 1920 presidential election. So this move to an internationalist position marked a turning point for the American church which would have far-reaching effects on U.S. foreign policy.

Another attempt to influence public opinion was underway in early 1946. As mentioned above many American Catholics were also concerned about the fate of Germany with its large Catholic population. Allen Dulles circulated a confidential memo to certain influential members of the foreign policy community, including Laird Bell, the Chicago banker and president of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. The memo dealt with the problems being encountered by the de-Nazification process and the need to convince Truman or Secretary of State Byrnes that to "continue to ruin Germany by indiscriminate de-Nazification

and unrelenting deindustrialization can only confirm Europe as a liability." Bell told Dulles he was in contact with a group from Notre Dame University "headed up by some of the Catholic hierarchy" that had formed a "Save Europe Now Committee." The group was in the process of convening a congress to discuss the problem. Bell's core instincts were at work as he told Dulles he dreaded the prospect of such a congress "but apparently something will have to be done to create public opinion" on the issue, and he hoped to "do something through the Chicago Daily News." The implications of Bell's response seem clear. Reluctantly, the Protestant core was being forced to accept the leadership of the Catholic periphery on questions dealing with developing public opinion on foreign policy matters.[18]

By late 1946 Truman seemed in disarray politically. He had not as yet, at least publicly, entered into the cold war rhetoric of confrontation as had Churchill and Stalin. His attempt to steer a middle course erupted in controversy in mid-September when Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace delivered a speech personally cleared by the President. The speech called for American understanding of Soviet security needs in Eastern Europe: "...we should recognize that we have no more business in the political affairs of Eastern Europe than Russia has in the political affairs of Latin America, Western Europe and the United States." In addition Wallace declared, "Whether we like it or not, the Russians

will try to socialize their sphere of influence just as we try to democratize our sphere of influence." [19]

Elsewhere in the speech Wallace declared, "We must not let our policy be influenced by those inside or outside the United States who want war with Russia but this does not mean appeasement." Just who were those elements "inside or outside" the United States that wanted war with Russia? Herbert Feis argues that Truman approved the text of Wallace's speech in an effort to reach out to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party to which Wallace appealed. He claims, "There still sounded in Truman's spirit echoes of Roosevelt's wariness of British diplomacy." In his Memoirs Truman also claimed that he approved the speech because Wallace told him "he intended to say that we ought to look at the world through American eyes rather than through the eyes of a pro-British or rabidly anti-Russian press." [20]

But Wallace also had other than "American eyes" in mind. In late December of 1945 he confided to his diary his speculations about just which groups were interested in promoting war with Russia: "In addition to a small group in the Catholic hierarchy there is also a small group among the English Tories and a small group in the American army...a small group among the American big-business hierarchy, a substantial group among the Chinese Nationalists, the London Poles...and a very strong element in the Republican Party." Wallace was optimistic in the short run because "these

various groups that want a third world war in order to lick Russia are not at the present time working together." In the long run, however, "as time goes on they will tend more and more to coalesce"; and concluded: "This is the great danger of the future." [21]

Although Wallace's speech dealt with foreign policy, it must be remembered that it was a political speech and part of the kickoff for the November congressional elections. Wallace was taking aim at the Republican Party and its spokesmen Thomas E. Dewey, Arthur Vandenberg and John Foster Dulles, who were calling for a tougher stand against Soviet expansion. Vandenberg was at that moment in Paris with Secretary of State James Byrnes attempting to negotiate peace treaties with Molotov. Both Vandenberg and Byrnes saw Wallace's statements as undercutting their negotiating position, particularly over the difficult issues of German occupation and partition. Byrnes demanded Wallace's resignation, and Truman reluctantly complied by asking Wallace to step down. [22]

Such disarray within the administration did not bode well for the coming elections. Liberals within the Democratic Party, who substantially agreed with Wallace, were now left without a spokesman within the administration. The Catholic hierarchy, however, could only express a quiet satisfaction at the results. Well aware that Wallace's "sphere of influence" for Russia in Eastern Europe

accurately reflected FDR's sentiments as expressed to Cardinal Spellman, they were actively opposing such a policy. In effect, two of the most important segments of the New Deal coalition were alienated and parting company with the President over the same issue but for different reasons: liberals because the President was being too tough on the Russians; Catholics because he wasn't being tough enough.

The day before Wallace's New York speech Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac of Yugoslavia was arrested by Josip Tito's government on charges of having collaborated with the Germans and Italians during the war. Stepinac was "widely regarded as one of the leading spokesmen for worldwide Catholicism," and American Catholics were outraged at his arrest. The National Council of Catholic Women called on Secretary of State Byrnes to personally intercede on Stepinac's behalf with the "atheistic Communist forces" in Yugoslavia. The Bishop's trial began on October 1, in the midst of the congressional elections and, perhaps by coincidence, on the same day the Nuremburg Court announced the convictions of Goring, Hess and Von Rippontrop. But the public trial of one of Europe's leading Catholic Archbishops on charges of collaborating with the Nazis on the very day the leading Nazis were convicted of war crimes may be more than coincidental. [23]

The New York Times carried a story on the opening of of the trial at which Stepinac denied being guilty of the

charges. The Times headline also pointed out that Bishop Joseph Hurley of St. Augustine, Florida was present at the trial representing Pius XII. Thus the American Church was associated with Stepinac's trial from the beginning. The Times also noted that the official Vatican publication L'Osservatore Romano carried a story on the opening of the trial saying the "verdict and sentence have already been decided." [24]

The Boston Evening Globe of the same day reported a story that dealt with a very different aspect of the trial than Nazi collaboration. Under a headline which announced "Abp. Stepinac Tells Court His Conscience is Clear," the Globe reported Stepinac "denied knowledge of the alleged forced reconversion of 230,000 Serbs from the Orthodox to the Roman Catholic Church during the Ustashi (Puppet) regime in Croatia, a part of Yugoslavia." As we have seen earlier George Kennan in dispatches from Moscow in early 1945 had warned of just such an attempt to promote an "all-Slav" policy based on the religious sentiments of the Slav population in areas coming under Soviet control. While Kennan noted that "all things indicate that the Kremlin is prepared to do open battle against the influence of the Vatican," he did not know "how this anti-Catholic tendency will effect policy in Poland, Hungary and Croatia." The break between Tito and Stalin would not be complete until 1948, and although the relationship between the two

Communist leaders was already strained in 1946, it is conceivable that Tito had knowledge of Stalin's "all-Slav" policy, just as Kennan did, and was using it to further his own objectives in Croatia. [25]

Only days after the opening of Stepinac's trial Cardinal Spellman addressed a World Peace Rally in New York on October 6 and called on the Catholic faithful to pray for Stepinac "whose only crime is fidelity to God and country." Spellman went on to say "the confidence and conscience of the American people...have again been outraged by this latest infamy and affront to human dignity and decency." Catholics, and the American public in general, in the midst of a national election were witnessing an administration seemingly in disarray over its policy toward Russia and helpless in the face of religious persecution taking place behind the "Iron Curtain." The 200,000 member Catholic War Veterans repeatedly attacked "the silence of President Truman," and the State Department's failure to act on the Stepinac question. [26]

The 1946 mid-term elections were nothing short of a catastrophe for the Democrats. Republicans gained control of both the House and Senate for the first time since 1928. In the House they had a majority of 246 to 188 Democrats. In the Senate their majority was 45 to 41. But that was not all. The Republicans gained a majority of state governorships as well, including Thomas E. Dewey's

reelection as Governor of New York by the largest margin ever recorded. The big city machines, longtime home of the Catholic bosses and their Catholic constituents, went down to defeat in Detroit, Jersey City, Chicago and New York. The very elements that had secured the Vice Presidency for Harry Truman in 1944 now seemed repudiated. The Republicans had made anti-communism a key issue in the campaign, including charges of widespread communist infiltration of domestic organizations. [27]

Despite the hardening of public opinion toward the Soviet Union the election results seemed to portend, the new year opened with a sense of optimism. The Council of Foreign Ministers convened in New York in November following the elections, and by mid-December five peace treaties had been worked out for Italy and the satellite East European governments. The increasingly thorny issue of peace treaties for Germany and Austria was put off for a later meeting. This "brief season of euphoria" quickly dissipated in January of 1947, and once again Poland was at the center of controversy. On January 5,1947 the State Department formally protested the manner in which the Polish Peasant Party had been forcibly excluded from recent elections as a violation of the Potsdam Agreement. Party leaders had been arrested, and some even killed, others were fired from their jobs, had their homes searched and papers sympathetic to the party were closed. [28]

Hungarian events also widened the breach between the two powers. In February the Hungarian National Assembly refused to withdraw parliamentary immunity of Bela Kovaks, Secretary of the Small Holders Party. When the communist Minister of the interior accused Kovaks of "counter-revolutionary conspiracy," the Russians arrested him. If the Soviets had made concessions to U.S. wishes in Rumanian and Hungary in deference to American atomic power, as Alperovitz suggests, they were now clearly beginning to reassert themselves. At virtually the same time, February 21, 1947, the British communicated to the State Department they could no longer afford their attempt to restore the monarchy in Greece or to provide aid to Turkey whose control of the Dardenelles was being challenged by Stalin. Secretary of State George C.Marshall concluded, "It was tantamount to British abdication from the Middle East with obvious implications as to their successor." [29]

The opportunity was at hand for Truman to make his public foray into the Cold War. On March 12 he went before Congress with his request for $400 million in military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. "It must be the policy of the United States," Truman declared, "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." The President of course knew beforehand that he would have the support of the leadership on both sides of the aisle. But it had not been

an easy sell. The GOP was already trying to fulfill its campaign promises to cut taxes and reduce spending. They were calling for some six billion dollars in cuts to the federal budget. In their meeting with Truman and administration foreign policy planners the initial reaction to assume British obligations in the Mediterranean was cool at best. Then Dean Acheson spoke up and framed the issue, not in terms of a Greek civil war, but rather as Soviet expansion. The Russian goal was nothing less than the control of the Middle East, South Asia and Africa with the ultimate objective of Germany and all Europe. "The Soviet Union was playing one of the greatest gambles in history at minimal cost," according to Acheson, and "we and we alone are in a position to break up the play." Senator Arthur Vandenberg, now Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told Truman he must frame the argument for the American public just as Acheson had done at the meeting. [30]

Roosevelt's policy of cooperation with the Soviet Union and granting them a "sphere of influence" in Eastern Europe was now publicly buried. It would be replaced by one of "containment" first outlined by George Kennan in an 8000 word telegram to the State Department almost a year earlier. Kennan argued in his long telegram that the Soviet Union was "committed fanatically to the belief that with the U.S. there can be no permanent modus vivendi, that it is

desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure." [31]

The contest then was not just economic or military but also cultural and spiritual, a test of our national values. The test was not long in coming. On March 21, less than two weeks after announcing what would become known as the Truman Doctrine, the president issued an executive order providing for the loyalty investigation of all government employees. Thus, within a matter of ten days, the President had pulled the political rug from under two of the most prominent Republican campaign themes of 1946. He and his administration were now at the forefront of confronting Communism at home and abroad.

While Assistant Secretary of State Acheson and Senator Vandenberg were telling the President that public opinion needed to be cultivated for the fight against Communism, at least one segment, the Catholic periphery, was already in it. On March 5, 1947 Archbishop Richard J. Cushing of Boston sent a letter to all the pastors of the Archdiocese which was "to be read at all the Masses in all the churches of the Archdiocese on Sunday, March 9 and Sunday, March 16." The letter was an exhortation to the Catholic faithful to contribute to a special collection for the Bishop's War Relief Fund. It was also a remarkably revealing document on

the developing trend of thought spreading through not only the American Catholic hierarchy, but also the Vatican itself. Cushing acknowledged past generosity of American Catholics to war relief in Europe through the Red Cross, UNRRA, "and to the several National Relief Campaigns for Greece, Italy, France, Poland and elsewhere." Fund-raising now, however, would go to the Emergency Relief Committee of the American hierarchy; "The agencies in Europe and elsewhere which will handle the money raised in this collection are both Catholic and American (emphasis in original)" but the money would be distributed "without reference to race, creed or class." [32]

Cushing went on to say that the new relief program was "one which is doing a work which can be done only by Catholics and by Catholics who are Americans," and that it was "a work for Religion and Democracy." The Archbishop was warming to his topic. "It might just as well be recognized that in many areas of Europe the work of Relief will be either Catholic or Anti-Catholic, either Democratic or Communist." Cushing was not making a giant or unprecedented leap in linking religion and democracy in American thought. After all America was the "City on a Hill." But he was linking America and Catholicism with democracy in the fight against communism in the city of John Winthrop. It would be the height of conspiracy theories to suggest that Truman announced his new doctrine smack in the middle of this new

national Catholic Bishop's effort to raise funds for European relief. But it was certainly fortuitous that the presidential speech asserting that only America could prevent the spread of Communism coincided with this message to some 35 million American Catholics that "...the future of Faith and Freedom in our generation is dark indeed." [33]

How did Catholics respond to this new call for American Catholic internationalism? Lavishly, its apparent. On March 26 Cushing again sent a letter to all pastors informing them that "the response to the diocesan appeal in behalf of the Bishops' War Relief Collection was so generous that I am asking you to express to all your people at Mass next Sunday my personal gratitude..." In addition, the Archbishop instructed the clergy to submit the names of those parishioners who had made "more conspicuous contributions" along with the amount of their gift so that he might "acknowledge by personal letter" their part in making "this important collection so outstanding a success."[34]

Cushing's letter was dramatic evidence that the policy shift of the Vatican "to look to the United States" for leadership in postwar Europe to battle communism was beginning to show results. The policy of the Vatican was also becoming clear to individuals other than State Department personnel. J. Alvarez Del Vayo, the last Foreign Minister of the Spanish Republic, lamented the resurgent

political power of the Vatican in Italian politics in an article entitled "Vatican Versus Left in Italy" that appeared in the April 5, 1947 issue of The Nation. According to Del Vayo "Italian leaders, asked to explain the rapid resurgence of Catholic political power, invariably answer, 'the United States.'" Del Vayo saw the shift in Vatican policy as a break with "centuries" of Vatican policy "oriented toward the Catholic countries of Europe." The hierarchy's main efforts were now "concentrated on America," and the Pope viewed "that predominantly Protestant country as the Vatican's chief future ally..." [35]

The Pope had even gone so far as to skip over Italian candidates when elevating American prelates to the college of cardinals. In addition, he named Americans as his special envoys to Yugoslavia (as in the case of Hurley at the Stepinac trial), Rumania and Germany; positions that in the past had "traditionally been entrusted to the Italian members of the Sacred College." According to Del Vayo, these appointments were meant not only to "flatter American Catholics" but also "to create the impression that the Vatican's policy is linked with that of the United States: the envoys speak as representatives of the church and as citizens of the strongest country in the world (emphasis in original)." Convinced that only the United States could confront "the political advance of the Soviet Union," and that 80 million Catholics already lived in countries "within

the Russian sphere of influence" the Vatican was drawing on "the experience of twenty centuries in its effort to follow a militantly anti-Communist policy" while still conciliating Russia's neighbors. The result presented a "curious zigzag strategy, but examination reveals a fixed central objective - a Western Christian coalition against godless Russia."[36]

Clearly, FDR's prescient observation to Flynn in 1945 that there could be no permanent peace if Catholics in Eastern Europe were denied freedom to practice their faith under Russian rule was beginning to take shape. Catholic immigrants with strong ties to their native lands were more concerned with family and friends left behind than with "open door" diplomacy, and they carried that concern with them into the voting booth. They were constantly being reminded of what was happening in their old homelands, both by the secular press detailing the difficult negotiations with the Russians over control of their homelands and by their clergy and the church hierarchy. On April 30, 1947, John J. Wright, Cushing's Secretary, directed a letter to the fifteen Polish-speaking parishes of the Archdiocese announcing that "... the most Reverend Archbishop has been asked to declare the first Sunday in May, May 4, as a day of prayer for Poland in the Polish-speaking parishes...." Wright went on to ask "for special prayers at all the Masses in your church next Sunday and if you will at the same time bring to the attention of the faithful the work of the

Relief for Poland Committee." Such appeals were constant reminders to Polish-Americans of the fate of their homeland. In like manner French and Italian-speaking parishes were reminded of the potential threat Communism posed to those countries. [37]

The same issue of The Nation revealed still another aspect of the role American Catholics were playing, and would continue to play, in international affairs. Del Vayo was dismayed by the breakdown of the Left in Italy particularly a split within the Socialist Party over the issue of relations with the Communists. The split resulted in the formation of the Italian Socialist Workers Party and weakened the left to such an extent that it "made it possible for De Gasperi [a Catholic] to set up a new Cabinet along more conservative lines." Del Vayo quotes from a letter sent by the Italian Socialist Party to other European Socialist parties explaining the split which occurred at the party congress: "Saragat and his scissionists were inspired by the Italian American Luigi Antonini, president of the Italian American Labor Council and a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union...He financed and is still financing anti-Communist movements of every description..." [38]

Antonini's anti-Communist efforts in Italy must be seen against the background of Catholic anti-Communist activity in the American labor movement in general. The

Church had been extremely active in the American labor movement during the 1930s and was supportive of labor's right to organize, which in that decade was still the primary struggle of American labor. Unlike Europe, where separate Catholic trade unions were developed, American Catholics were encouraged by so-called "labor priests" to work within the already established labor unions, but with the objective of promoting "parallel" associations of Catholic workers. This was the method prescribed by Pius XI in his 1931 encyclical Quadragesimo Anno. The Association of Catholic Trade Unionists evolved from this teaching and played an active role in union organizing, especially in the rising industrial unions of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). [39]

By 1947 Philip Murray, President of both the CIO and the United Steelworkers of America, was taking an increasingly anti-Communist position in regards to Communist activity in the labor movement. Murray was both a committed trade unionist and a devout Catholic "friendly to the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists." In May of 1947 he gained unanimous approval for a statement by the United Steelworkers that "This union will not tolerate efforts by outsiders - individuals, organizations, or groups - whether they be Communist, Socialist or any other group to infiltrate, dictate or meddle in our affairs." Later that same year, in November, Murray managed to have the eighth

constitutional convention of the CIO adopt a resolution stating: "We...resent and reject efforts of the Communist Party or other political parties [Republican?] and their adherents to interfere in the affairs of the CIO. This convention serves notice that we will not tolerate such interference." [40]

Murray's increasingly anti-Communist position was consistent with the developing theme of the ACTU. In fact, Antonini's method of isolating the Communist faction of the Italian Left as described by Del Vayo followed a similar pattern used by the ACTU in eliminating Communist influence in the Michigan Industrial Union Council in 1943. This alliance of Socialists and ACTU activists resulted in a victory for John Gibson, a "socialist" leader of the Dairy Workers and a protege of UAW President Walter Reuther, over Patrick Quinn an independent leftist who worked with the Communists as President of the IUC. The ACTU activists were also instrumental in Reuther's rise to the presidency of the UAW,and in convincing the clergy that he and his brother Victor were "sound leaders, whose socialism, we think will be mitigated by events." [41]

As mentioned above Truman was more than a little aware of the need to marshal public opinion on foreign policy decisions, as he had alluded to Molotov. Scholars have traditionally contended that Truman and his policy advisors were manipulating public opinion by creating a "crisis"

atmosphere in the relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. This work demonstrates that the Catholic periphery was more instrumental in marshaling public opinion and dominating the discussion over issues such as Poland, Hungary, Italy and France. While Truman may indeed have desired to manipulate and manufacture a crisis atmosphere, it was not necessary for him to do so. It was already being done for him by the Catholic periphery. The center/core groups, which had initially hoped for postwar cooperation with the Soviets were indeed being pushed into, as Del Vayo remarked, "a Western Christian coalition against godless Russia." Public distrust of the Soviets had been steadily growing since late 1945. "This distrust fed into the policy process -- via the Office of Public Affairs Public Studies Division," according to political scientist Michael Leigh. Truman's personal popularity with the public jumped dramatically with the announcement of the Truman Doctrine. Approval of his "handling of his job" increased from 48 percent in February to 60 percent in late March 1947. Distrust of the Soviets' willingness to cooperate with us reached a postwar high of 63 percent the same month. Leigh concludes that Truman, faced with a Republican Congress, and little chance for innovative domestic policies, "viewed foreign policy as the realm within which he might best establish his authority." The bipartisan consensus on containment Truman was able to forge with the Republican

leadership, especially Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan with his large Polish Catholic constituency, would not break down until after the 1948 election. [42]

In the meantime events in Europe were tending toward further mobilization of the American periphery. In Hungary the freely elected Smallholders Party Government was coming under increasing communist pressure and slowly disintegrating. In June, Secretary of State George C. Marshall advocated a plan for massive economic assistance to the war shattered economies of Europe. It was quickly dubbed the Marshall Plan. A conference was called at the end of June in Paris at which the European nations were to discuss Marshall's offer. The Soviet delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Molotov, but he walked out of the conference after three days when it became clear the Western European nations were willing to make agreements that would "cut across national lines." The Soviets, however, argued for national sovereignty over interdependence. After the Soviets left the conference both Poland and Czechoslovakia indicated an interest in the plan, but "Russian pressure forced these two nations to retreat from the Paris talks." [43]

By August the Soviets had officially rejected participation in the Marshall Plan and brought Hungary fully under Communist control. The Communist parties in both France and Italy "launched intense campaigns of hindrance

and vilification. In France strikes in one branch of industry after another occurred." In late September the Soviets called together a secret conference of nine European Communist parties -- seven from Eastern Europe along with France and Italy. The French and Italians came under severe criticism for their "timidity" and were urged to act more "combatively" They were in effect accused of allowing capitalism to survive in Western Europe due to "Their faltering and erroneous respect for parliamentary institutions." [44]

By November a triumvirate was in place that could have represented "the Western Christian coalition against godless Russia" envisioned by Del Vayo. In France Robert Schuman was named Prime Minister and would oversee French policy during the crucial period to mid-1948. Herbert Feis describes him as "the stabilizing leader in French politics," and a "creative and effective sponsor who abandoned constricting foreign policies shaped by fear and hatred for one guided by a vision of a United Europe in which France and Germany would cooperate." According to Feis, the rise of Schuman to power in France "along with Alcide de Gasperi's leadership in Italy and Konrad Adenauer's in Germany, is one of the rare wholesome and healing coincidences of history." For this work it is significant that all three were devout Catholics and maintained close relations with American

Catholics. It should not be overlooked given the Vatican's effort to tie itself, and thereby Europe, to American power. [45]

Notes

1) Edward J.Flynn, You're the Boss, (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1947), p.200.

2) Michael Leigh, Mobilizing Consent: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy, 1937-1947, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976), p.103.

3) Ibid. pp.103-104.

4) FRUS 1945, Vol. V, Europe, pp.826-827.

5) Walter LaFeber, ed., The Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947, The Wiley Problems in American History Series, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), p.96-98.

6) David McCullough, Truman, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), pp.375-376.

7) Ibid.

8) Flynn, You're the Boss, p.195. For the role Flynn played in Truman's selection see McCollough, Truman, pp.294-312.

9) Donald F. Crosby, S.J., God, Church and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church, 1950-1957, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), pp.9-10.

10) Ibid.

11) "Flynn Will Return to Rome," New York Times (September 12, 1945) 9.

12) Fogarty (complete citation from library)

13) Ibid. p.311.

14) Hugh Dalton, High Tide and After, Memoirs 1945-1960, (London: Frederick Muller Limited, 1962), p.108., see also Herbert Feis, From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1970), p.231., and Walter LaFeber, ed., The Origins of the Cold War 1941-1947, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1971), p.77.

15) Walter LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-1990, (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1991), pp.27-28; McCollough, Truman, p.486.; Feis, Terror, pp.75-76.

16) McCollough, Truman, p.486. and p.488.

17) Ibid. p.490.

18) Burton Hersh, The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA, (New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1992) pp.174-175.

19) Feis, Terror, p.161.; LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War. p.48.

20) Ibid. pp.162-163.

21) Richard J. Walton, Henry Wallace, Harry Truman and the Cold War, (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), pp.73-74.

22) Feis, Terror, pp.160-166; LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, pp.44-45.

23) Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p.10; New York Times, Oct. 1, 1946, p.1.

24) New York Times, Oct. 1, 1946, p.15.

25) Boston Evening Globe, Oct. 1, 1946, p.4. See chapter 10, pp.156-158 for a detailed explanation of Kennan's dispatches.

26) Crosby, God, Church and Flag, pp.10-11.

27) McCollough, Truman p.523.; LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, p.45.

28) Feis, Terror, pp.168-173.

29) Ibid. p.173.; LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, pp.51-52

30) LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War, p.53.: Feis, Terror, pp.191-203.

31) George Brown Tindall and David E. Shi, America: A Narrative History, Vol.2, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992) p.1234.

32) Richard J. Cushing to all Pastors, March 5, 1947, Chancery Circulars, Box 6, 1946-1953, Folder 2, Archives Archdiocese of Boston.

33) Ibid.

34) Cushing to Reverand and Dear Father, March 26, 1947, Chancery Circulars, Box 6, 1946-1953, Folder 2, AABos.

35) J. Alvarez Del Vayo, "Vatican Versus Left in Italy," The Nation, (April 5, 1947), 388-392.

36) Ibid.

37) John J. Wright to Rev. Stephen Musielak, April 30, 1947, Chancery Circulars, Box 6, 1946-1953, Folder 2, AABos.

38) Del Vayo, op. cit.

39) Msgr. George G. Higgins and William Bole, Organized Labor and the Church: Reflections of a Labor Priest, (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), p.58.

40) Walton, op. cit. pp.120-121.

41) Steve Rosswurm, "The Catholic Church and the Left-Led Unions: Labor Priests, Labor Schools, and the ACTU," in The CIO's Left-Led Unions ed. by Steve Rosswurm (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992), pp.126-127.

42) Leigh, op. cit. pp.161-162.

43) LaFeber, Origins of the Cold War, p.160.

44) Feis, op. cit. pp.262-263.

45) Ibid. p.261.

CHAPTER 11

"...HUNGARIAN CATHOLICISM COULD COUNT ON SUPPORT FROM CATHOLIC AMERICANS"

The presidential election year of 1948 would provide a crucial test of whether or not the Catholic periphery would maintain its loyalty to the Democratic Party. That Catholic attention was focused on events in Europe is clear. This attention would increase as events unfolded in 1948.

The European situation took on a decidedly new tone in January when British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin notified Secretary of State Marshall that Britain, France, and the Benelux countries were about to begin discussions on a common defense plan. This was not entirely unexpected as Bevin first raised the matter with Marshall the previous summer. The Soviets were concerned enough about the prospect of joint Western defense initiatives for Molotov to issue a warning that such a move would have dire consequences, "particularly for France." Molotov was certainly alluding to France's difficulties, with its large Communist Party, already upset over participation in the Marshall Plan, and the prospect that the difficulties would increase. [1]

When the matter came before the House of Commons in late January, Bevin placed the issue squarely in the context of the continued threat of Soviet expansion. He declared the process of Communization "goes ruthlessly on in each

country" and "the game [is being] played out in Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, more recently in Rumania." But that was not all, according to Bevin,"...from information in our possession, other attempts may be made elsewhere." However, the treaties with France and the Benelux countries were not enough: "We have then to go beyond the circle of our immediate neighbors. ...to consider the question of associating other historic members of the European civilization, including the new Italy...We are thinking now of Western Europe as a unit." [2]

That "other attempts may be made elsewhere" to expand Soviet influence was not surprising. The Soviets were in the process of pressing both Finland and Norway to sign agreements that would bring them closer to the "Soviet sphere." The next move, however, came in February in Czechoslovakia where a coalition government headed by Communist Prime Minister Klement Gottwald fell before a successful coup while Red Army units were camped on the border. The coup was precipitated by a cabinet vote which defeated an attempt by the Communist Minister of the Interior to influence upcoming elections by replacing Prague's non-Communist police with Communists. The Communist Cabinet Ministers refused to go along with this vote causing non-Communist members of the cabinet from the Populist (Catholic), Czech Socialist and Slovak Democratic parties to

resign. Their resignations led to Communist charges that a conspiracy existed to undermine the republic headed by United States Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt. Opposition leaders were arrested and jailed. Two weeks later the mysterious death of popular Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk compounded the animosity toward the Communist coup. The Communists claimed Masaryk committed suicide by leaping from a third floor window into a stone courtyard. Truman and other Western leaders believed Masaryk was the victim of "foul play." [3]

The Czech coup resulted in further solidifying American public opinion against the Soviet Union. Rumors of a potential outbreak of hostilities were rampant in the press. More ominously, General Lucius Clay, the American representative on the Allied Control Commission for Germany, reported to Washington in early March that he had changed his mind regarding the prospect of war with the Soviets. Recent activities left him feeling "a subtle change in Soviet attitude which I cannot define but which now gives me a feeling that it (war) may come with dramatic suddenness." Clay's message alarmed Washington and resulted in a special CIA analysis which concluded that war "...was not probable within sixty days." [4]

The impact of the Czech coup on America's domestic politics was instantaneous and enormous. Taken together with

the pressure the Soviets were bringing to bear on Finland and Norway; the solidifying of Soviet-dominated governments in Poland, Hungary and Rumania; and the activity of the large Communist Parties of France and Italy, the appearance of an aggressive Soviet Union bent on dominating all of Europe seemed only too real.

The Marshall Plan, meanwhile, had been languishing in Congress. Senator Robert Taft of Ohio was arguing that tax dollars should not be spent on a "European TVA." But by March the Senate approved the Plan by a vote of 69 to 17. The Republicans seemed on the brink of repudiating the bipartisan foreign policy developed under the leadership of Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. In February Republican Presidential hopeful Thomas E. Dewey, while not abandoning containment, attacked Truman's policies "which resulted in surrendering 200,000,000 people in middle Europe into the clutches of Soviet Russia...." In the midst of the war rumors in March Representatives Charles Kersten of Wisconsin and Richard Nixon of California introduced a resolution calling for a "solemn warning to the conspiracy in the Politboro" that the U.S. would fight to stop Soviet aggression. Truman's popularity, after surging with the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, plummeted again to an all-time low of 32 percent. [6]

Henry Wallace, campaigning for President on a third party ticket, appeared to excuse the coup as "evidence that a 'get tough' policy only provokes a 'get tougher' policy...." In addition, Wallace seemed insensitive to the fate of well-respected Masaryk. He compared the rumors of Masaryk's suicide with the rumors of the suicide of John G. Winant whose house he owned declaring that "Maybe Winant had cancer. Maybe Masaryk had cancer...Who knows?" [5]

In the midst of the fallout over the Czech coup Truman again undercut the Republican political initiative. He made a special appearance before a joint session of Congress on March 17, St. Patrick's Day, telling the assembled lawmakers that he came to "report to you on the critical nature of the situation in Europe." Three years had passed since the end of the war in Europe but the desire to achieve a "just and honorable peace" had been frustrated, not by the "natural difficulties" that follow any great war, but rather "chiefly due to the fact that one nation has not only refused to cooperate in the establishment of a just and honorable peace, but - even worse - has actively sought to prevent it." That same nation had undermined the value of the United Nations by vetoing 21 proposals in a two-year span. "The Soviet Union and its agents have destroyed the independence and democratic character of a whole series of nations in Eastern and Central Europe." This "ruthless course of

action" and the desire to "extend it to the remaining free nations of Europe" were the source of Europe's problems. The tragedy in Czechoslovakia had "sent a shock throughout the civilized world," and "the hazard of the entire Scandinavian peninsula" was the latest threat by the pressure being brought against Finland. [7]

Recent events were heartening, he declared. The Senate had approved the European Recovery Act and the prospect of speedy action in the House was encouraging. That very day five nations in Europe were signing a plan for common defense, and it "deserves our full support." It was time, he continued, that "the position of the United States should be made unmistakably clear." In addition to quick passage of the European Recovery Act the President called for universal training legislation and the "temporary reenactment of selective service legislation in order to maintain our armed forces at their authorized strength." [8]

Truman then moved to cut off the growing partisan attacks on his administration. The world situation was "too critical" and the nation's responsibilities "too vast" to allow "party struggles to weaken our influence for maintaining peace." The people, he stated, had "the right to assume that political considerations will not affect our working together" and that "...we will join hands, wholeheartedly and without reservations, in our efforts to

preserve peace in the world." The President followed up this appeal for bipartisanship by moving immediately to shore up his own political base. He flew to New York City to address the annual dinner of the Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. There may have been a friendly son of St. Patrick in New York who was a Republican, but most of the attendees were likely to have roots in Tammany. The President followed Cardinal Spellman to the rostrum. The Cardinal had warmed up the audience with a "rousing anti-Communist speech" of his own. [9]

The President's address was in the same vein. Reiterating major features of his speech to Congress that afternoon, he spelled out in greater detail, however, the "tragic record" which had left "Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania, Hungary. And now Czechoslovakia....under the domination of that one nation" that was obstructing the search for peace. "Nor is this the whole story," Truman continued, "For that nation is now pressing its demands on Finland. Its foreign agents are fighting in Greece and working hard to undermine the freedom of Italy." The President was warming to his task, encouraged by the enthusiastic response of the audience prepared by Spellman. In a departure from his prepared text he left little doubt this was a campaign speech. "I do not want and I will not accept the political support of Henry Wallace and

his Communists. If joining them or permitting them to join me is the price of victory I recommend defeat....any price for Wallace and his Communists is too much for me to pay. I'm not buying." The President was obviously moving to repair the damage left by the 1946 off-year elections. By appearing on the same platform with Cardinal Spellman he was associating himself and his administration with a newer, tougher stand against the Soviet Union the Catholic hierarchy had long called for. The Catholic ethnic voters who had deserted the big city machines in 1946 were being called back. This was a pattern that would be followed right up to the end of the campaign. [10]

Truman needed and wanted the cooperation of the Catholic hierarchy for both domestic and international reasons. The situation in Italy which Truman referred to repeatedly was of particular moment. New elections were scheduled to take place in early April and the entire administration was concerned about the prospect of a Communist victory. The Italian Communist Party enjoyed especially strong support in the industrial north. The prospect of a Communist victory in the elections followed by a total seizure of power, which had been the pattern in the Eastern European countries, and the prospect of Italy collaborating with neighboring Yugoslavia, still in the Soviet orbit, alarmed the State Department. According to

Clark Clifford, the President, a veteran of tough Missouri politics, was "very practical and approved use of every means to influence the [Italian] election." The American embassy publicly advocated the reelection of the government and hinted that Marshall Plan funds would be withheld if the Communists won. The Pope reminded Italians that Catholic cooperation with Communists had been prohibited by his predecessor in the encyclical Divini Redemptoris. In February several Italian-American newspapers urged readers to write relatives in Italy urging a vote against the Communists. The idea was picked up by Cardinal Ameleto Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States who urged American Bishops to encourage pastors of Italian parishes to participate in the letter writing campaign. [11]

The letter sent to all pastors in the Archdiocese of New York framed the issue in much the same manner that Archbishop Cushing had used the year before. "[T]he fate of Italy depends upon the forthcoming election and the conflict is one between Communism and Christianity, between slavery and freedom." All persons "of Italian origin living here and all friends of Italy" were encouraged "to write to relatives and acquaintances first of all to urge all to exercise their right of the ballot and to warn them of the dangers of a communistic victory." Letter writers were instructed to send their letters airmail and "to emphasize the help which has

been extended to the Italian people through American generosity...." Spellman went so far as to use radio to broadcast a personal message to Italy. The campaign contributed to a victory for the Christian Democrats and their centrist party coalition members. [12]

With the Italian elections out of the way the focus began to shift back to the domestic election campaigns. The Republican Party frontrunner, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, was being challenged by former Minnesota Governor Harold Stasson. Stasson won surprising victories in the Wisconsin and Nebraska primaries, eliminating Douglas MacArthur in the process and putting great pressure on Dewey's campaign. The climax came in the Oregon primary in mid-May. Dewey used the opportunity of the primary to attack the Truman administration foreign policy, accusing the president of "wavering between appeasement and bluster." He promised to "wage peace with all of the energy and determination and force with which we waged war." Nor was the issue of domestic Communism forgotten. When Stasson advocated outlawing the Communist Party, Dewey countered by arguing it was better to keep the "worms" above ground "where we can see them and lick them as we have in New York." Dewey managed a narrow victory over Stasson, eliminating him from the race but leaving many observers to

conclude the Republican nomination was in no sense locked up for the New York Governor. [13]

The man many regarded as posing the most serious darkhorse threat to Dewey's nomination was the party's chief foreign policy spokesman Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. The President had enlisted Vandenberg's support for possible American involvement in a European defense pact following the successful negotiation of the Brussels Pact in March. The Michigan Senator introduced what became known as the Vandenberg Resolution to the Senate in early May. In it, the United States pledged continued support of the United Nations but allowed American participation in regional collective security arrangements such as the Brussels Pact which were permitted under the U.N. Charter. The resolution placed the isolationist elements within the Republican Party in a difficult position. They opposed U.S. involvement in European defense arrangements but were hesitant to attack their leading foreign policy spokesman. Vandenberg produced a unanimous vote of approval on the resolution from his Senate Foreign Relations Committee. With the isolationists abstaining from the vote the Senate passed the resolution 64 to 4 on June 11, only two weeks before the Republican national convention. [14]

National polls, meanwhile, continued to demonstrate the schizophrenic nature of American public opinion on the

international situation. A Gallup poll taken in mid-April asked what was "the most important problem facing this country today?" The response showed 65 percent most concerned with "preventing war and getting along with the Soviet Union." Only 8 percent cited inflation and the high cost of living. An earlier poll, however, found 73 percent believing the Truman administration was "too soft" on the Soviets. Perhaps more alarmingly, the April Gallup survey showed a majority believing the Republicans would be better at handling foreign policy issues than the Democrats. Private polls conducted by the Democratic National Committee produced similar results. The public message seemed clear. International tensions and the threat of war was the most serious problem facing the nation, more so than any domestic issue. The best way to deal with the international situation was to take a tougher stand against the Soviets. The American public, not coincidentally I believe, was sending the same message to the administration as the Catholic hierarchy. [15]

While the Senate was debating the Vandenberg Resolution, the President was leaving on a mini version of his fall campaign tour. The trip was billed as "nonpolitical," as the purpose was to receive an honorary degree and speak at the commencement exercises at the University of California at Berkeley. Toward the end of the

trip at Eugene, Oregon, the President remarked on his negotiations with Stalin at Potsdam. "I got very well acquainted with Joe Stalin," he told the crowd, "and I like old Joe." He went on to say Stalin was a "decent fellow. But Joe is a prisoner of the Politboro." This was a view the President had expressed repeatedly in private, but it stunned the majority of the nation's press and the State Department as well. Robert Lovett, Under Secretary of State and a Republican, put through an emergency call to Clark Clifford who was accompanying the President. Clifford "tactfully advised the President not to repeat the remark again." The President told Clifford he "goofed." Republicans, however, "filed it away for future use." [16]

At least one historian, Robert Divine, attributes Truman's "goof" to "an apparent effort to attract Wallace supporters." From the very beginning Wallace's campaign was dogged by charges that it was Communist controlled, that Wallace was a "dupe" of the American Communist party and merely spouting the Soviet line on foreign policy. Labor was the segment of the American public where Wallace expected to find considerable support. A friend of labor throughout his career, he had the very considerable assistance of CIO President Philip Murray in a losing effort to keep Wallace on the ticket in 1944. Later that same year Murray had

presented Wallace with a "distinguished service medal" from the CIO. [17]

Communists had long been involved with the American labor movement, and held key leadership positions in many of the CIO-affiliated unions. But by 1947, with Taft-Hartley hanging over its head, coupled with the activity of the ACTU and an increasingly active government program of harassment, the CIO was moving to purge Communists from positions of power. Walter Reuther had won the presidency of the United Auto Workers in 1946 with "a campaign in which he pledged to oust Communists from the union payroll." In February of 1948 Reuther told an audience of Americans for Democratic Action that Wallace was "Joe Stalin's American agent" and was "separating the forces liberalism and leading them to Stalin's rustlers." A month earlier the CIO Executive Board voted 33 to 11 not to support a third party in the fall elections. While a blow to the Wallace campaign, the vote did not seem to preclude individual union leaders or their unions from endorsing or supporting Wallace. Philip Murray, however, moved to quell any such effort by writing to union officials that they "should be governed" by national CIO policy in favor of the Marshall Plan and against Wallace. When Harry Bridges of the International Longshoreman's and Warehouseman's Union continued to support Wallace in

California, he was fired as CIO regional director for northern California. [18]

The attacks by and on labor leaders associated with the Wallace campaign continued throughout Spring 1948 as the Czech crisis unfolded and rumors of war with the Soviets were rampant. In March the UAW declared that Wallace's Progressive party was "a Communist Party maneuver designed to advance the foreign policy interests of the Soviet Union. In April Murray declared "this is no time to mince words. I charge...that the Communist party is directly responsible for the organization of a third party in the United States." Murray further charged that the party was "inaugurated at a Communist party meeting in the City of New York in October of 1947." In July the ACTU officially announced the Progressive party "a new front for American Communists." This was a particularly difficult blow for the Wallace campaign which was directing its appeal to labor over the heads of the hostile union leadership to the rank and file, and "a high proportion of the rank and file was Catholic." [19]

Clearly, public opinion on events in Europe and at home was strongly being shaped by Catholic attitudes. The success of the letter writing campaign in influencing the outcome of the Italian elections; Truman's decision to make a Catholic event the kickoff for gathering public support

for his proposals to reinvigorate the armed forces with universal military training and selective service, as well as to attack Wallace's Communist connections; and the activities of Philip Murray and the ACTU in both attacking Communist leadership in the CIO and the Wallace campaign. The Catholic hierarchy, Catholic politicians, Core politicians with large Catholic constituencies such as Arthur Vandenberg, influential Catholic labor leaders and Catholic intellectuals were calling for a tougher stand by the president virtually since the end of the war in Europe. With each successive step; the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan; the containment policy; the call to arms; the involvement of the church in the Italian elections with the consent and cooperation of the government the president was regaining the confidence of American Catholics. The tougher his stance the more popular he became. As mid-1948 approached he was again about to be offered an opportunity to demonstrate his toughness.

All three of the major contending parties -- Democrats, Republicans and Wallace's Progressive Party -- had scheduled their conventions for Philadelphia. The Republicans were the first to arrive in mid-June. Senator Vandenberg was again parrying isolationist thrusts within his party. On June 3rd the House Appropriations Committee had cut $1 billion from the first-year appropriation for the

Marshall plan. With the approval of Speaker Joe Martin, a Catholic from Massachusetts, the full house passed the bill. The Democrats counterattacked, charging the Republican isolationists with playing "directly into the hands of the Communists." When the bill came before the Senate Appropriations Committee, Vandenberg appeared to argue in favor of restoring the cuts. Similar appeals came from GOP candidates Stassen and Dewey. The Senate restored virtually all the original request, and the Senate version prevailed when the bill went to a conference committee. [20]

Vandenberg simultaneously feared that the Republican platform would depart from the spirit of bipartisanship he was promoting. He had been corresponding with Dewey's foreign policy advisor John Foster Dulles, who recommended inclusion of language in the platform "stressing the need to roll back the Iron Curtain" and accused the administration of following policies that made the U.S. "appear uncertain, inefficient, vacillating and unreliable." Vandenberg incorporated some of Dulles' language in a platform draft and submitted it to Resolutions Committee Chairman Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. of Massachusetts. The final platform approved by the convention reflected Vandenberg's attitude toward bipartisanship. There were no attacks on "Democratic appeasement at Yalta or Potsdam." Rather, in conclusion it "invite[d] the Minority Party to join us under the next

Republican administration in stopping partisan politics at the water's edge." The convention itself was testimony to bipartisanship. Only one speaker, Clare Booth Luce, a convert to Catholicism and a close friend of Cardinal Spellman, attacked Truman on foreign policy by bringing up his "goof" in telling the country "I like old Joe." "Good old Joe," Luce exclaimed, "Of course they liked him. Didn't they give him all Eastern Europe, Manchuria, the Kuriles, North China, coalitions in Poland, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia?" Nevertheless, the party had removed foreign policy from the campaign agenda. Polls continued to show, however, "that the American people still gave foreign policy issues a priority over domestic concerns" and that "a slight majority felt that the Republicans were better equipped than the Democrats to handle the delicate international situation." In effect the Republicans were staking the future on the belief that the disaffected urban ethnic, and largely Catholic, voters that seemingly deserted the Democrats in 1946 would continue to support the Republican Party on domestic bread-and-butter issues if given no real difference between the parties on foreign policy issues. [21]

On June 23 the Republicans nominated Governor Dewey for the presidency. On the same day the Russians cut all overland and water routes to Berlin, leaving only air

traffic as the means of supplying the 2 million residents of the western-occupied districts. The President was faced with open hostilities breaking at any moment. Truman remained silent, preferring to let others speak for the administration. General Lucius Clay, American military Governor of Germany, announced the Russians could not drive the U.S. out of Berlin with any action "short of war." The President apparently agreed with him. When Secretary of Defense Forrestal began reviewing the advisability of staying in Berlin at a briefing for the President on June 28, Truman interrupted him to say, "there was no discussion on that point, we are going to stay period." Truman's military advisor Admiral Leahy thought the situation "hopeless," but the President authorized an increase in the airlift that had already begun to bring supplies to the city. On June 30 Secretary of State Marshall announced publicly that the United States "would not be driven out of Berlin" and that the airlift was already proving more successful than had been expected. Marshall was obviously speaking to reassure the public, for General Hoyt Vandenberg, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, doubted the effectiveness of the airlift and the additional exposure of the Air Force to danger. Supplying the necessary number of planes to support an effective airlift, he believed, would cripple the Air Forces's strategic capabilities elsewhere.

Nevertheless, planes were directed to Berlin from as far away as Alaska and Hawaii. [22]

The President's political position was certainly strengthened by his stand on Berlin. A strange combination of conservative southerners and liberal Democrats were appealing to Dwight Eisenhower to accept a draft from the Democratic convention. The southerners appealed to Ike "to lead the people of this nation in their fight against communism, tyranny and slavery and to maintain peoples of the world at peace." The liberals took a different approach, claiming that Eisenhower was the only Democratic candidate that could "keep Republican isolationists in line." In the midst of the Berlin crisis, on July 5, Eisenhower issued a statement in which he declared, "I will not, at this time, identify myself with any political party, and could not accept nomination for any public office or participate in a partisan political contest." The liberals turned briefly to Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in the face of Eisenhower's rebuff, but Douglas issued a statement of his own in which he said, "I am not a candidate, have never been a candidate, and don't plan to be a candidate." With the opposition fragmented and no clearcut candidate willing to step forward Truman for all intents had the nomination locked up when the convention opened in mid-July. [23]

The Democratic Platform Committee, however, took a more belligerent attitude on foreign policy than its Republican counterpart. In a departure from the spirit of bipartisanship the committee approved language that took credit "for resisting Communist aggression" through the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan and criticized the Republicans for "reluctance to provide funds to support... the greatest move for peace and recovery made since the end of World War II." Candidate Dewey in turn criticized the Democrats for this "extremely partisan and provocative assertions concerning foreign affairs." Truman, however, restored the essence, if not the spirit, of bipartisanship in his acceptance speech to the convention. In a rather backhanded manner the President claimed, "We have converted the greatest and best of the Republicans to our viewpoint." Giving the Republicans full credit for supporting the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, he went on to say "foreign policy should be the policy of the whole nation and not the policy of one party or the other" and that "partisanship should stop at the water's edge; and I shall continue to preach that through this whole campaign." [24]

When Henry Wallace and his Progressive Party delegates arrived in Philadelphia in late July, they made it clear that they at least disagreed with the concept of bipartisanship. Employing populist rhetoric typical of an

earlier era, keynote speaker Charles P. Howard called the bipartisan containment policy "the brainchild of banking house diplomats and banking house brass." Writing in the New Republic just prior to the convention, Wallace claimed, "Vandenberg and Dulles are every bit as much responsible for the Democratic foreign policy of cold war and rearmament as the Democrats themselves." The Wallace campaign had peaked in June, registering anywhere from 10 to 13 percent in public opinion polls. But the polls also showed Americans believing the United States was "too soft" on the Soviet Union. The Berlin crisis virtually eliminated any chance Wallace had of affecting the election. The crisis was the inevitable result of Truman's "get tough" policy Wallace declared in his nomination speech, and rather than confronting the Soviets over the city he favored immediate withdrawal from Berlin. Wallace was clearly out of step with public opinion on the Berlin situation, both at home and abroad. Even the British Labour Government, whose MP's often agreed with the goals if not the means of many things the Soviets advocated, received Foreign Secretary Bevin's report in the House of Commons with rousing cheers. Bevin declared that a "grave situation" could arise and that the government would ask the house to "face it" if it did. The alternative

was "surrender," concluded Bevin, "and none of us can accept surrender." [25]

The Berlin crisis, following as it did on the heels of the Czech Coup, helped to solidify the the perception within the center/core groups that the Soviets were intent on an aggressive course in Europe. While these events were unfolding, the periphery was beginning to focus on developments in Hungary which would solidify a developing religious bipartisanship over the issue of religious persecution. In April the Hungarian Minister of Religion and Education proposed the nationalization of the country's Catholic Schools. The Primate of Hungary, Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty, responded with a pastoral letter critical of the minister for reversing his position of February in which he declared that "the Catholic Church had played an enormous role in the educational development of our country" and that "the Hungarian democracy does not want to deprive the denominations of their schools." Mindszenty had been openly critical of the increasing influence of what he termed "Marxist" elements within the government which carried far greater weight than their numbers due to the presence of Red Army occupation forces. [26]

In spite of the fact that a peace treaty had been negotiated and signed with Hungary in January of 1947, the Red Army maintained large forces in the country. Because no

treaty had yet been agreed on with either Germany or Austria the provisions of the treaty with Hungary permitted Soviet occupation forces to remain in place "for the maintenance of the lines of communication of the Soviet army with the zone of Soviet occupation in Austria." Efforts first by Secretary Byrnes and then Secretary Marshall to reduce Soviet occupation forces in both Hungary and Rumania in early 1947 had been rejected by Molotov. The Soviet position toward the Hungarian church was made clear by Georgi Pushkin, chairman of the Allied Control Commission for Hungary. Newly appointed Minister to the Italian Republic Stephen Kertesz approached Pushkin about the possibility of renewing official Hungarian relations with the Vatican. Kertesz argued that "Hungary had a large Catholic population and it would be advisable for the new regime to settle Church-State problems by the intervention of an experienced papal diplomat." Pushkin responded that "The Vatican is an agency of American interests in Europe, financed by American capitalists. The new Hungarian democracy does not need the representative of such reactionary forces." This alleged interplay between Vatican and American interests would play an important role in subsequent events in Hungary. [27]

The crisis brewing in Hungary over the nationalization of the parochial schools came to a head in early June just as the House and Senate were taking up the Marshall Plan

appropriation bill and the major parties were preparing for their conventions. The Hungarian cabinet voted in favor of the secularization bill and sent it to the parliament where it was approved by a vote of 230 to 60 with 70 abstentions. Under the new law a total of 4,885 schools were nationalized, 3,148 belonging to the Catholic Church. In his memoirs Mindszenty later accurately observed that the "Bolshevist persecution of the churches," together "with dismay over the coup in Czechoslovakia that had just taken place, gave the anticommunist movement in the free world a tremendous impetus." [28]

The post-convention atmosphere of international crisis building over Berlin and Hungary took a dramatic turn in early August. On August 4 the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC) heard Whittaker Chambers, a repentant Catholic, former Communist and editor at Time magazine, testify that Alger Hiss, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former State Department official, had passed government secrets to the Soviet Union during the 1930s. Hiss had served as FDR's interpreter at the Yalta Conference, and the implication, soon widely understood, was that he had deluded the president on the importance of the Soviet position regarding Eastern Europe. Once again the image of a deceitful Communist minority, unable to gain its ends through legitimate democratic

processes, but rather through cunning, manipulation, spying, and treason was reinforced in the public's mind. This was precisely the message the Catholic periphery had been warning against throughout the 1930s when the Protestant core "saw no threat at all." Catholic writers had then argued "the millions of unwitting 'dupes' of the communists -- mostly 'liberals' and most of these consisting of teachers, writers, and assorted union activists," posed the real threat to the republic by advancing the Communist cause thereby allowing the relatively small number of real Communists to maintain "low visibility" and to keep "their activities largely undercover." The Communists' ability to gain power through deception, manipulation of the electoral process, and outside assistance from the Soviet Union was now thoroughly documented by events in Eastern Europe. Yet another lapsed Catholic and former Communist had contributed to the growing belief that the Soviet Union was committed to the overthrow of the United States by all means fair and foul. Louis Budenz, former editor of the Daily Worker and a member of the CPUSA national committee, had returned to the church in 1945 under the guidance of Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen. In 1947 Budenz published the account of his years within the Communist Party which graphically detailed the twists and turns of the party at the direction of Moscow. Budenz' "confession" convinced many of the monolithic nature

of Communism directed from the Kremlin. The accusations against Hiss now demonstrated to many Americans that the threat to America itself was real. [29]

Truman attempted to belittle the spy charges against Hiss, declaring them "a red herring" at a news conference the day after Chambers made his allegations. "The American people," as historian Robert Divine notes, "already deeply concerned over the Soviet threat as a result of Truman's containment rhetoric, took the spy charges much more seriously, viewing them as revealing a new front in the already dangerous Cold War." While the charges against Hiss contained "political dynamite" according to House minority leader Sam Rayburn, the question for the public to answer was whether or not the charges of a domestic Communist conspiracy would negate the hard line being taken by Truman in foreign policy. His advisors warned against associating "the containment policy with the Communist problem at home." But the president refused to follow their advice in this instance. He denied there was a domestic Communist threat, declaring "the greatest danger has been that communism might blot out the light of freedom in so much of the rest of the world that the strength of its onslaught against our liberties would be greatly multiplied." [30]

In this instance the President's political antennae appeared more sensitive than his advisors'. His appeal to

the Catholic ethnic voters on the strength of his resistance to the spread of Communism abroad succeeded. The famous whistlestop campaign featured repeated attacks on the Republican 80th Congress on the bread-and-butter issues so important to working class Catholics. At the same time the President took full credit for the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, which to ethnic Catholic voters demonstrated the President's commitment to resisting the Communist takeover of their homelands. This combination succeeded handsomely for the President. On October 27 as the campaign neared its conclusion this fact was overtly demonstrated in Boston. As the President was winding up his campaign swing through the Northeast he paid an unscheduled visit to Archbishop Cushing. Following a fifteen-minute private talk, the two men appeared before reporters, and Cushing virtually endorsed the President's reelection effort by telling him, "I think you are making one of the greatest and most courageous fights in history on behalf of the people." Cooler heads within the archdiocese attempted to blunt the Archbishop's statement by amending it later to read: "Both [Truman and Dewey] are putting up a great fight." But the Archbishop made no public comments the following day after meeting with candidate Dewey. [31]

Clearly the President wanted to associate both himself and his policies with support from the Catholic hierarchy,

as he did with his St. Patrick's day speech with Spellman in attendance and this end-of-campaign appearance with Cushing. In his Boston speech before meeting with Cushing the President stressed "his administrations record in checking Communist aggression." He concluded, "the whole world knows of the success of this policy," and "now, the Communists will never forgive me for that." Truman departed from the spirit of bipartisanship in the closing days of the campaign declaring in New York City, "We must never withdraw to the Republican isolationism of the 1920s" and that if we did "communism will become so powerful that the security of this nation will be gravely endangered." Dewey responded in kind, charging that "Millions upon millions of people have been delivered into Soviet slavery while our own administration has tried appeasement one day and bluster the next." In Chicago Dewey resurrected the "I like old Joe" statement by Truman and again charged the administration with vacillation between appeasement and bluster. But it was too little and too late to make administration foreign policy a critical campaign issue for Dewey. [32]

The periphery, which was largely defining the issues of the Cold War both at home and abroad, maintained its loyalty to the Democratic Party one more time. Catholics had voted for Truman in large numbers; according to David McCullough, "in some predominantly Catholic wards of Boston

and Pittsburgh the vote for Truman exceeded past tallies for Al Smith and FDR." The President's hard line approach to the Soviet Union, according to Robert Divine, "won back many of the Catholic groups [which had seemingly deserted the party in 1946] notably the Irish and Italians, who had been antagonized by Roosevelt's interventionism." Truman's strong stand on Berlin brought Germans, a large percentage of whom were Catholic, back to the party in large numbers. Only the Poles, resentful of the treatment of Poland, defected in large enough numbers to reduce traditionally large Democratic majorities in cities like Buffalo, Chicago and Detroit. Vandenberg's effort to attach Republicans to the popularity of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan did not succeed. The only foreign policy alternative to containment offered to the votes was Henry Wallace's, and that seemed to offer only more "appeasement" of the Soviets. [33]

The election was barely concluded when events in Hungary again focused Catholic attention on that country. One day after the election Hungary's bishops issued a statement acknowledging that they were "deeply disturbed and grieved by the recent disgraceful attacks made against Cardinal Mindszenty." The bishops, "speaking in the name of religious freedom, protests against this campaign." On November 18 the Voice of America broadcast to Hungarians a

pastoral letter written by Mindszenty in Esztergom and smuggled out of the country to be published. The letter asserted that Mindszenty was being "blamed for counter revolutionary plots and activities hostile to the people." The Cardinal complained that Hungary "is condemned to silence and public opinion is made a mere frivolous jest. Democratic 'freedom of speech' in this country means that any opinion that differs from the official one is silenced." He claimed that Hungary stood alone "an orphan in the whole world" and that he stood "for God, for the Church and for Hungary." Mindszenty was saying things that the government did not want said, he admitted, but, he continued, it was only because "I am compelled to speak out from time to time and to state the facts as they are, it is only the misery of my people and the urge of truth which force me to do so." [34]

The next day Mindszenty's personal secretary was arrested returning from Mass. The Cardinal's own arrest seemed imminent. While the situation remained strained and further arrests of priests ensued, including the treasurer and archivist of the archdiocese, the government took no direct action against Mindszenty. Then, on December 26 some eighty police surrounded the Cardinal's residence in Esztergom, and he was placed under arrest. No public announcement of the Cardinal's arrest was made until the

following day. The New York Times of December 28 carried a page-one story of the arrest along with a picture of Mindszenty with a subhead declaring "Catholic Primate Charged with Plotting Against the Government and Spying." The announcement of the arrest carried no details, according to The Times, but, quoting "a high Hungarian authority who requested that his name not be used, it reported that "the government would issue a "detailed statement" within 48-hours which would "contain some surprises." The Times source said the government had "indisputable evidence" against the Cardinal. The Times described Mindszenty as "an outspoken champion of the Catholic Church" and "considered probably the only remaining powerful enemy of the present Hungarian Government." [35]

The leader of the Parliamentary Opposition to the Communists in Hungary, Istvan Barankovice, was said to be "not surprised" by the announcement of Mindszenty's arrest. He alluded to recent speeches of Premier Istvan Dobi and Deputy Premier Matyas Rakosi which, he stated, "showed the Government had been determined to get rid of the Cardinal." The Times reported there had been other "hints" of action against Mindszenty in recent months, including a speech by then Premier Lajos Dinnyes declaring Mindszenty a "reactionary" and proclaiming the Hungarian people "are determined to break reaction whether in the form of the

purple of Bishops or the sabotage of kulaks [rich peasants]." In addition, Rakosi's speech of the previous January was cited in which he declared that it was "the task of democracy this year to settle the relationship between the Church and the Republic. It cannot continue that a majority of the enemies of the people should hide behind the cloak of the churches, especially the Catholic Church." The year-long battle then was seemingly drawing to a close. [36]

Interestingly, The Times did not carry a reaction to Mindszenty's arrest by New York's Cardinal Spellman. Rather, it cited the reaction of Boston's Archbishop Cushing and Boston Congressman John F. Kennedy. Cushing declared that any conviction of Mindszenty would come on "manufactured evidence." "No one will be surprised," he continued, "by the latest outrage against religion perpetrated by the Red fascists in Hungary. The only shock will be because of the added cynicism with which the Soviet puppets chose the Christmas season to strike their blow at religious resistance to tyranny." Cushing asked for "the prayers of all our people and all who love God for this heroic priest." Kennedy, meanwhile, released the contents of a telegram sent to Secretary of State Marshall in which he said, "The report of the arrest of the distinguished Cardinal of Budapest has alarmed and shocked all lovers of both religion and freedom." The telegram went on to say "it is hoped that our

State Department will urge the United Nations and religion loving people of the United States that no crime we can prevent will be permitted against this great patriot and world figure." [37]

The periphery was once again at center stage in the fight against Communism. Both the nation's Catholic press and secular news media gave considerable coverage to the Mindszenty arrest. Kennedy, ever the politician, and in this instance a realist as well, left himself and the government protected with his phrase "no crime we can prevent." In any case Catholics were once again perceived as bearing the brunt of Communist hostility in Eastern Europe. Mindszenty, recounting the early days of his interrogation, recorded the charges that he planned to overthrow the Republic and reinstall the monarchy by crowning Otto von Hapsburg with the Crown of St. Stephen, all with the assistance of the United States to stir up a third world war. He told his interrogators that he had indeed met with von Hapsburg in 1947 during a tour of America but only to secure help in "obtaining and transporting charitable gifts from America." He said he was heartened by the assurance that "Hungarian Catholicism could count on support from Catholic Americans." Indeed they could. And Mindszenty would become the leading martyr of American Catholicism's fight against godless Communism. A fight that, as FDR had foreseen, would continue

to have repercussions on American foreign policy. There could be no permanent peace as long as the Catholics of Eastern Europe were denied the ability to practice their faith. [38]

Notes

1) Herbert Feis, From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1970), p.285.

2) Ibid., p.287.

3) Ibid., p.293. See also, LaFeber, op. cit., p.72, McCollough, op. cit. p. 622.

4) Ibid., p.296, LaFeber, op. cit., p.72.

5) Robert A. Divine, Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections 1948, pp.188-189.

6) LaFeber, op. cit. pp.71-72; Walton, op. cit. pp.202-203.

7) Dennent, ed. Documents of American Foreign Relations, Vol. X p.6

8) Ibid. pp.7-8.

9) Ibid. p.9; Walton, op. cit. p.205.

10) Ibid. p.11; Walton, op. cit., p.205.

11) Feis, op. cit. p.311; Fogarty, The Vatican and the American Hierarchy, p.334.

12) Fogarty, The Vatican, pp.334-335.

13) Devine, op. cit. pp.191-192.

14) Ibid. pp.192-194.

15) Ibid. pp.200-201.

16) Ibid. p.206; McCollough, op. cit, p.627.

17) Ibid. p.206; Walton, op. cit. p.275.

18) Walton, op. cit. pp.280-281.

19) Ibid. pp.285-286.

20) Devine, op. cit. pp.210-211.

21) Ibid. pp.212-213. and p.225.

22) Ibid. pp.214-215.; Feis, op. cit. p.342.

23) Ibid. pp.216-217.

24) Ibid. pp.218-219

25) Ibid. pp.219-221.; Walton, op. cit. p.224.; Feis, op. cit. p.343.

26) Mindszenty, Jozsef Cardinal, Memoirs, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974), p.310.

27) Kertesz, Between Russia and the West: Hungary and the Illusions of Peacemaking 1945-1947, (Notre Dame, Indiana; London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), pp.227-228.

28) Mindszenty, op. cit. p.80.

29) Robert L. Frank, "Prelude to Cold War: American Catholics and Communism," Journal of Church and State, (January, 1991), 39-56.; for information on Budenz see Budenz, Louis, This is My Story, (New York:, McGraw Hill, 1947).

30) Divine, op. cit. p.236. and p.239.

31) James M. O'Toole, "Prelates and Politicos: Catholics and Politics in Massachusetts, 1900-1970," in Robert E. Sullivan and James M. O'Toole eds. Catholic Boston: Studies in Religion and Community 1870-1970, (Boston: Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, 1985), pp.54-55.

32) Divine, op. cit. pp.268-269.

33) McCollough, Truman, p.713. and Divine, op. cit. pp.274-275.

34) Mindszenty, op. cit. pp318-319.; Commonweal, January 7, 1949, pp.315-316.

35) Ibid. pp.88-89.; New York Times, December 28, 1948, p.1.

36) New York Times, December 28, 1948, p.8.

37) Ibid.

38) Mindszenty, op. cit. p.101.

CHAPTER 12

"REBELLION TO TYRANTS IS OBEDIENCE TO GOD"

The hail of protest resulting from the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty serves to highlight the impact of the periphery in focusing American public opinion. The ability of members of the Catholic hierarchy, such as Archbishop Cushing, and Catholic Congressmen, such as Representative John F. Kennedy, calling for some type of American response to Mindszenty's arrest generated press coverage which no other American religious denomination seemed capable of achieving. And non-Catholics noticed it.

The Protestant journal The Christian Century took more note of the disparity of attention given Mindszenty's arrest by both the American press and, more importantly, by the government. "Protestants may be struck by the difference between the excitement created by the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty and the lack of it when Bishop Ordass, the Lutheran primate of Hungary, and other Lutheran leaders were arrested," the Century noted with some sarcasm. The Lutheran press and "a few other church papers" protested the "travesty of justice" which had taken place against Ordass. "But there was no eagerness by the U.S. department of state to come charging into the arena....And the world's press let Bishop Ordass go to his cell without making much fuss over a blow to religious freedom." The editors were apparently

upset by the double standard employed by Undersecretary of State Robert Lovett. He described the charges against Mindszenty as "patently false" at a news conference and found that the legal process observed by the Hungarian Government was a "sickening sham." The difference in the treatment accorded Mindszenty's arrest could be ascribed to the fact he was "a 'prince' of a church with a worldwide organization and a publicity 'apparatus' (if we may venture to use in this connection a term popularized by Whittaker Chambers) that commands instant attention from press and radio everywhere." [1]

The editorial went on to describe the Communists' position on Papal activities: "In Communist thinking, the Roman Catholic Church is now everywhere at war with Communist governments," and from their viewpoint it was understandable that such terms as "treason" and "spying" should be invoked in the charges against Mindszenty. If the church is at war with Communist governments' "any communication...between the Cardinal -- a Hungarian citizen -- and Church authorities outside Hungary is communication with the enemy. Hence, treason. Hence, spying. Hence, plotting." The Christian Century argued that the Pope's Christmas allocution of 1948 amounted to "war to the hilt between the papal church and the Communist states" and concluded that "with the Roman Church thus committed by its

head to relentless warfare against Communist aggression, and holding it the moral duty of nations to back that warfare if necessary by force of arms, the part played in influencing national policy by faithful members of that church -- as diplomats, as legislators, as government executives and administrators, as soldiers, as journalists, as educators -- is something to be held under constant and careful scrutiny." For the editors of The Christian Century, at least, the issue of who presented the greater threat to the nation -- Moscow or Rome -- was still in doubt.[2]

The liberal Catholic periodical Commonweal on January 7, 1949 presented a rather measured response to the Cardinal's arrest. "The position of Hungary is fluid and complex," it editorialized, so "that it would seem an almost desperate job to describe the frame and pattern of the quarrel between the Hungarian Communist Government and the Primate of the Church in Hungary." However, noting that Mindszenty was an "ancient concentration camp dweller," having been jailed by Hitler, there could be no doubt that "Communism is an enemy of religion, of the Church." In the final analysis there could be no doubt that "the great issue is the worship of God and the persuasion of souls....There is spiritual battle." [3]

Coincidentally, the editors of Commonweal seemed to take up the challenge of The Christian Century to keep

"under constant and careful scrutiny" Catholics who were in a position to influence national policy. In its January 14, 1949 edition Commonweal ran an article examining the voting record of Catholics in Congress. The Commonweal article, however, was aimed at disproving the charge that Catholics represented "a reactionary force in the United States." Noting the charge of critics that "Catholics are puppets who must follow the leadership of their Church" the editors examined the voting record in the 80th Congress of 11 Catholic Senators and 45 Congressmen. They concluded that while "the votes of Catholics in the House and Senate did take a definite trend," it was not the conservative trend of the 80th Congress but was decidedly liberal. In order to prevent being charged with "chos(ing) our own issues and own designations" of what constituted a "liberal" vote the author employed the criteria of the New Republic. For the purposes of this study the votes of Catholic members of congress reflecting Catholic anti-communism will be examined. In the Senate a vote against cutting funds for the Marshall Plan was regarded as progressive. The Senate as a whole voted 65 percent liberal while Catholics voted 81 percent. In a somewhat surprising combination the two Catholic Senators voting in favor of cutting Marshall PLan funds were Denis Chaves (D), New Mexico, and Joseph McCarthy (R), Wisconsin. The vote in the House was narrower where a

vote to restore Marshall Plan funds previously cut was counted as progressive. Overall the House voted 83 percent liberal, while Catholics voted 85 percent. [4]

A vote in the House against the Mundt-Nixon Bill was considered progressive. Overall, the House voted only 15 percent liberal, while Catholics voted 61 percent. Interestingly, Minority Leader John McCormack (D) Massachusetts voted in favor of Mundt-Nixon while his colleague John F. Kennedy (D) Massachusetts did not vote. On a vote to provide new funding for the House Un-American Activities Committee a vote against was considered progressive. The House voted only 9 percent liberal, while Catholics voted 40 percent. In this instance both McCormack and Kennedy voted to provide new funding for HUAC. Thus, Catholics seemed to present a much more united front in terms of dealing with international Communism. Catholic support for measures dealing with domestic anti-Communism drops off considerably but may reflect more the partisan nature of the attacks on Communists in government. After all, the administration was Democratic. But even here 16 Democrats voted in favor of new funding for HUAC, while five more abstained. This seems to suggest strong Catholic congressional support for the fight against domestic Communism even among Democrats. [5]

The Catholic hierarchy moved to keep the Mindszenty arrest at the forefront of public attention. Archbishop Cushing sent a circular to all parishes calling for a day of prayer for Mindszenty the week his trial was to open. The Archbishop asked for prayers "during the counterfeit trial of the Cardinal, whose crime has been the defense of freedom of religion and of human rights." In addition prayer was sought "...that the Cardinal may be delivered from the power of his enemies, and that his people, delivered from the bonds of Communistic slavery, may be free once more to worship God." [6]

In New York as well Cardinal Spellman designated February 6 as a day of prayer for Mindszenty, and 4,000 Catholic Boy Scouts marched down Fifth Avenue to St. Patrick's Cathedral as part of the overall protest. Inside the Cathedral the Cardinal took to the pulpit for the first time since V-E Day and urged the American government to act. Denouncing "the Satan inspired Communist crimes" against the church in Eastern Europe, he called on the government "to raise their voices as one." Jesuit historian Donald Crosby in attempting to place American Catholic anti-Communism within the spectrum of a broader American anti-Communist persuasion has focused on the strident rhetoric of Spellman's speech rather than the overall message which, coming as it did in the midst of the emerging debate over

U.S. participation in NATO, could only be construed as an endorsement of American participation in keeping with the Pope's Christmas message. As pointed out earlier (see Chapter 6) Catholics were virtually alone in the mid-1930s in calling for an anti-Communist awareness. The Christian Century opposed and continued to oppose mainline Protestant denominations falling in line behind Catholic leadership in such an undertaking.[7]

Spellman was hardly discouraged. Calling for vigorous American leadership to halt the spread of "atheistic Communism," he asked "when will the American Government, the American public, the leaders in all phases of American life, religious, educational, political, labor, industrial, communications, yes, and entertainment, when will all free men raise their voices as one and cry out against and work against Satan inspired Communist crimes." This call from the periphery to the core to take up the fight had immediate results. The New York Times reported Protestant reaction in the same page-one article on Spellman's speech. In Washington the Rev. Dr. Frederick B. Harris, chaplain of the Senate, told his Foundry Methodist Church congregation in words seemingly lifted from The Christian Century that Mindszenty's trial "was the signal for 'war to the hilt" between Catholicism and Communism." In contrast to The Century's position, however, Harris said that "though he was

a Protestant he felt he should 'speak out' against the "so-called trial." In Boston the Rev. Dr. Daniel L. Poling, President of the World Christian Endeavor Union, "characterized the Mindszenty trial as 'a rape of justice' and a 'super crime against freedom'." And, he continued "this anti-God totalitarianism does not discriminate between Catholic and Protestant." [8]

Mindszenty's gaunt figure at his public trial raised the question of whether torture had been employed and his "confession" coerced. The Hungarian Communist regime produced letters Mindszenty wrote to American Ambassador Arthur Schoenfeld in 1946. Mindszenty cited the "responsibilities toward the nations of Europe" assumed by the Allied Powers at the Yalta Conference. The Cardinal declared that while "Hungary may appear to be a democratic nation," in reality it "is not a true democracy." "There is no room in the country for anything but a Marxist police force, a Marxist press, and innumerable prisons and concentration camps." The country was ruled by "Soviet adherents" and would so remain "as long as the Soviet army of occupation remains in Hungary." He appealed to "the United States and England, the defenders of freedom and justice the world over, to come to our aid. I ask them to rescue us from the oppression and corruption overwhelming our land." While Mindszenty's letters were probably aimed at

securing a more active role by for Anglo-American representatives on the Allied Control Commission for Hungary, the language could be, and was, construed as advocating war. The state prosecution so construed it, declaring "Mindszenty and his cohorts led foreign nations to believe that there was a widespread desire in Hungary to abolish the Republic and restore the monarchy....The conspirators tried to incite the American imperialists to declare war on our country."[9]

Mindszenty's trial and subsequent life sentence confirmed once again for the Catholic periphery the menace of "atheistic Communism" and its attack on religion. It also confirmed FDR's fear that religious persecution of Catholics in Eastern Europe would prevent a permanent peace. Contrary to most revisionist thinking on the development of the Cold War, religious persecution rather than economics was the paradigm driving confrontational public attitudes toward the Soviet Union. And while the core -- mainstream American Protestantism -- maintained a lingering anti-Catolicism as demonstrated by The Christian Century's reaction to the arrest of Mindszenty, the Catholic periphery was limiting its course of action. As if to underscore the nature of the Catholic vs. Communist threat The Christian Century returned to this theme on February 23 in an editorial condemning the arrest of fifteen Protestant ministers in Bulgaria. Noting

that the Protestant ministers in Bulgaria were charged with the same crimes alleged against Bishop Ordass and Mindszenty -- treason, espionage and black market operations -- the editorial declared, "When the Lutheran primate of Hungary was sentenced to prison, the world's press showed little interest. But now that a Roman Catholic cardinal has been given a life sentence, anything that can be used to whip up public indignation against Communist treatment of religion becomes front page news." While admitting the charges against the Protestant ministers were "incredible," the editors went on to say: "We do not believe any such supporting documentary evidence as was introduced in the Mindszenty trial will be forthcoming." The Hungarian prosecutors had made their case against Mindszenty as far as The Century was concerned. "Some sort of official protest from the United States government is now expected. What form it will take, to whom it will be directed, or what it may be hoped to accomplish no one seems to know." More importantly, the editors noted, "No such protest against Bishop Ordass' imprisonment is in prospect." [10]

More important, for our purposes, the trial and conviction of Mindszenty, and the consequent publicity surrounding these events, were thrust before the public during the ongoing debate over United States participation in NATO. Discussions involving U.S. participation in a

collective security arrangement for Western Europe had begun the previous September. Indeed, the Pope's Christmas allocution can be seen as an endorsement of it's necessity. In the very issue in which it once again criticized both the press and government for their reaction to the Mindszenty trial The Christian Century raised "new questions" regarding the advisability of such a pact. The shifting emphasis in Washington on whether or not the pact was in fact a "military" agreement, criticism from the foreign minister of Denmark that the United States was attempting "to force the Scandinavian states into the alliance," and a call from Trygve Lie not to let regional alliances undermine the authority of the United Nations led The Century to conclude that "a senate which ratified a military alliance under such circumstances would convict itself of irresponsible levity in its treatment of foreign affairs." [11]

Three weeks later The Century began to take a different view of the religious show trials taking place in Eastern Europe. The conviction and life sentences on the leaders of the Bulgarian Methodist, Baptist, Congregational and Pentecostal churches seemed to call for a reevaluation of the trials in Hungary. The life sentences were "of secondary importance," according to the editors, "The real tragedy of the trials was laid bare to the world in the sight of the succession of broken men mounting the stand to

confess to misdeeds which few outside the iron curtain believe they committed and to beg for punishment commensurate to their self-proclaimed wrongdoing." Catholic claims that Mindszenty's confession had been extracted through torture and drugs now seemed more credible given the appearance of these "broken" Protestant pastors. [12]

While acknowledging the renewed attack on religion behind the iron curtain, The Century continued to question the need for a military alliance against Russia. Quoting from a speech by John Foster Dulles opening the Cleveland conference on churches and world order in which he said that no responsible official "in this or any other government" believed that Russia "now plans conquest by open military aggression" and that the Soviet Union "does not contemplate the use of war as an instrument of its national policy." The Century concluded that only the administration's desire to have the North Atlantic pact ratified prevented other "such assurances" being made to the public. The security to be achieved by the pact was being threatened by claims from Communist Party leaders in western countries "that in case of an 'imperialist' war, the Communists in those countries would work for a Russian victory." With 1.1 million Communist Party members in France, 2.3 million in Italy and 2.2 million in Germany the ability "to sabotage effectively any military efforts by those countries" was enormous.[13]

The editors of The Century, however, were bucking the trend, one which they seem to have perceived as being largely led by the Catholic periphery as evidenced by their earlier call to keep close watch on Catholics in positions to influence policy decisions. Two polls conducted in 1948 demonstrated a dramatic shift in public opinion regarding the idea of the U.S. defending Europe. When asked if the "U.S. should promise to go to war to defend W. Europe if it is attacked," 43 percent of Catholics and 40 percent of Protestants responded yes. Interestingly, large numbers of both, 46 percent of Catholics and 48 percent of Protestants, answered no. By late November, when asked if the "U.S. should join W. Europe in a permanent military alliance," 69 percent of Catholics and 70 percent of Protestants answered yes. While the questions are not identical, it can be argued that the second incorporates the first. It could also be argued, and was, that a military alliance was a deterrent to war. Nevertheless, the numbers of those willing to have the U.S. actively involved in the defense of Western Europe jumped dramatically. [14]

Secretary of State Acheson responded in early February to criticism by some members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the department "was leaving so much in the dark about negotiations." Defending the treaty on March 19, Acheson stressed the cultural connections and ties of the

North Atlantic community as the product of "at least 350 years of history, maybe more." The United States was "connected to western Europe by common institutions and moral and ethical beliefs. Similarities of this kind are not superficial, but fundamental. They are the strongest kind of ties, because they are based on moral convictions, on acceptance of the same values in life." The Secretary's emphasis on "common institutions," "moral and ethical beliefs," "moral convictions," and the "same values in life" did not overtly state that these values were Christian. But to a Senate inundated with resolutions, petitions, proclamations and speeches condemning the arrest, trial and conviction of Cardinal Mindszenty, and the continuing attack on Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular in Eastern Europe there could be little doubt that "atheistic Communism" represented by the Soviet Union presented a fundamental challenge to western civilization.[15]

In the midst of the debate over ratification of the NATO treaty The Christian Century took up the plight of Rumania's Greek Catholic or Uniat Church which had been "wiped out by a decree of the Communist government." Noting that the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church affected a population "appreciably greater than that of persons belonging to the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States," this was no small matter. The Century also

noted that "the action was in conformity with the Kremlin's policy toward the Uniat Church everywhere and was undoubtedly adopted by the Rumanian government on orders from Moscow." The forced inclusion of the Rumanian Uniat Church into the Rumanian Eastern Orthodox Church was accompanied by the arrest of some 430 Uniat priests, many of whom were beaten in front of their families and "taken away with blood-covered faces." The editors applauded their courage in resisting the forced conversion. Although noting and condemning the actions in Rumania, the editors of The Century were unaware of the "all-Slav" plan of Stalin to use the Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe as a bulwark against Vatican influence. The pattern, however, had become clear for all to see. The Kremlin had changed its early policy of stamping out "all religions in the area under its control" and had decided "to use the Orthodox Church as an instrument of state power." [16]

While the Mindszenty case mobilized the Catholic periphery in early 1949, another espionage trial closer to home dominated public attention throughout the spring and early summer. Once again Catholics would play an important, perhaps a defining role. The trial involved Alger Hiss, charged with perjury related to his activities as a State Department official in the mid-1930s. As outlined earlier, Hiss had come under investigation by the House UnAmerican

Activities Committee in 1948 when lapsed Catholic and former Communist Whittaker Chambers accused him of being a member of the Communist Party. In late 1948 Chambers expanded his accusations against Hiss to include participation in a Soviet spy ring. Chambers charged that Hiss passed classified State Department documents through him on to Russia. The charges against Hiss called into question once again the entire nature of the postwar agreements which has so dramatically broken down. Hiss served as Executive Secretary at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference in 1944, served as an advisor to FDR at the Yalta Conference and held an important position at the conference establishing the United Nations at San Francisco. Thus, the thread of Communist intrigue could be seen woven throughout the entire postwar policy which many saw as clearly a failure and clearly designed to benefit the Soviet Union.

The HUAC investigation of Hiss was spearheaded by Richard M. Nixon, a little known first-term congressman from southern California. Nixon had come under the wing of Congressman Charles Kersten of Wisconsin. According to Nixon, Kersten "taught me most of what I know about Communism." Kersten in turn introduced Nixon to Father John Cronin, a labor priest in Baltimore who had been instrumental in purging Communists from the dockside unions in the early 1940s. Because of his activity with the

Baltimore unions Cronin developed something of a reputation as an expert on Communism, both within the church and with the FBI. Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit asked Cronin to prepare a secret report on Communism for distribution to Catholic Bishops nationwide. The FBI also sought out Cronin's advice on Communist activity in the labor movement, and in turn FBI agents kept him informed of what they knew. [17]

Nixon and Cronin were to develop a lasting friendship, and Cronin provided the congressman a copy of his report to the American Bishops entitled "The Problem of American Communism." It included Alger Hiss among a list of "actual and alleged Communists" who were implicated in atomic espionage or working for the State Department. Thus, Nixon was aware of allegations against Hiss over a year and a half before the public naming of Hiss set off a national furor. Later, Cronin revealed that FBI agent Ed Hummer was keeping him informed of the bureau's investigation of Hiss. "Since the Justice Department was sitting on the results...the car, the typewriter, ect....I told Dick, who then knew just where to look for things and what he would find." [18]

Thus, as the NATO Treaty was making its way toward ratification the attitude of the Catholic periphery was once again dominating the public discussion of Communism. Catholic reaction to persecution of the church in Eastern

Europe could not help but be tied to the allegations of espionage against Hiss. The church was not only defending religious liberty in Europe but was intimately involved with ferreting out the traitors at home who had left the European church at the mercy of Communism. Whittaker Chambers, who had seen the error of his ways and returned to the church, believed he had a role to play in the divine plan. He was a witness to the "struggle" which was taking place across the world. And "the turn the struggle had taken made it clear that what most of the world supposed it to be -- a struggle between the force of two irreconcilable faiths -- Communism and Christianity..." was being played out in Europe for all to see. The first perjury trial against Hiss ended in a mistrial in early July when the jury deadlocked 8-4 for conviction. Two weeks later, on July 21, the Senate voted to ratify the NATO Treaty by a vote of 82 to 13. All nine Catholic Senators present voted in favor of ratification, including Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin. A tenth Catholic, Senator Ellender of Louisiana, was not present for the vote but was recorded as prepared to vote in favor. [19]

Against the background of the NATO debate still another issue was emerging in which Catholic influence would play a decisive role. As early as March of 1948 when the House took up the first Economic Cooperation Act to implement the Marshall Plan the question of what to do about

Spain had been raised. Representative Alvin O'Konski, Republican of Wisconsin and a Catholic, introduced an amendment on the House floor making Spain one of the participating nations. The House adopted the amendment by almost a 3 to 1 vote, 149-52. The amendment was defeated in a House-Senate conference on the bill, but the question of what to do with overwhelmingly Catholic, but fascist, Franco Spain would not go away. One historian has remarked: "Undoubtedly, the sudden burst of support for Spain was due in part to the pressures of an election year." Just as Spain had been a political thorn for FDR during the civil war, it would also be a political thorn for Truman. Virtually simultaneous with the House vote Myron C. Taylor, first FDR's and now Truman's personal representative to the Vatican, met with Franco on March 30 to inform the Generalissimo "by what means he could gain the acceptance of the western governments." More importantly, at least from a political perspective, "it was asserted by some that the intention of the visit was to demonstrate to American Catholics that the Truman Administration was in a conciliatory mood toward Spain." [20]

In September of 1948 Senator Chan Gurney, Republican of South Dakota and Chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee, met privately for over an hour with Franco in Madrid. After the meeting the Senator declared

that he was in favor of "complete reestablishment of all relations between Spain and the United States." The official administration policy toward Spain was articulated by Secretary of State Acheson who pointed out that the U.S. had never severed diplomatic relations with Spain but that we honored the United Nations ban on ambassadors because it had "become a symbol." Thus, U.S. policy toward Spain was more symbolic than substantial. In spite of this, many Catholics were doing their best to mitigate the image of Franco's Spain. In March of 1949 the Jesuit weekly America argued that any persecution occurring in Spain, particularly any religious persecution, was not the result of Catholicism but the internal dynamics of the Spanish State. "Spain is not the Catholic Church" argued the editors of America, and Spanish policy toward Protestants should be regarded as specifically Spanish, not characteristically Catholic. Not so said the editors of The Christian Century in rebuttal; "This is the old excuse for the Inquisition: it was the state that did it not the church." [21]

By May The Christian Century was asking the question "What's Behind the Pro-Franco Agitation?" Citing a "new outburst of agitation in Washington for some sort of rapprochement with Franco Spain," The Century believed the answer was to be found in the "consideration of the North Atlantic Treaty." Fearing the possibility of Russian

aggression in Europe, the Army did not want to repeat the "invasion of 1944." In order to prevent this "Spain would offer the one fairly secure base for the American forces, beyond the reach of the Russians' first thrust, behind the rampart of the Pyrenees." In spite of "all the disavowals that will be made before the Senate votes, we expect that if the North Atlantic alliance is ratified, it won't be long before Franco's Spain will be in it." [22]

The answer to The Century's question of what (or who?) was behind the pro-Franco agitation could perhaps be more accurately found in the questioning of Secretary Acheson, not before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the NATO treaty, but before the Senate Appropriations Committee. The Subcommittee on State Department appropriations was chaired by Senator Pat McCarran, Democrat of Nevada and a Catholic. McCarran opened the questioning of Acheson with a specific threat to tie appropriations to policy: "I should like to ask you why it is that this country refuses to recognize Spain." Senator McKeller jumped in to agree with McCarran "about our nonrecognition of Spain. Spain is a Christian nation and we have had friendly relations with her.... I see no reason why we should not have friendly relations with Spain." Acheson attempted to evade the direct line of questioning by noting the U.S. was "acting under this recommendation of the General Assembly"

in not appointing an ambassador. McCarran jumped on the response: "Are we to be enslaved to the U.N.? I never voted with that in mind." Concluding his remarks, he declared, "Let me say to you Mr. Secretary that so far as I am personally concerned as chairman of this subcommittee I am not in favor of your policy with reference to Spain and until that policy is changed I am going to examine your appropriations with a fine tooth comb." The Senator from Nevada was not pulling any punches. [23]

Republican Senator Leverett Saltonstall, representing heavily Catholic Massachusetts, attempted to come to Acheson's aide by shifting the burden for our "nonrecognition" policy to a question of security based on the "attitude of other nations in Europe toward Spain and our wanting to work along with them." Acheson denied that there was a policy of nonrecognition and then admitted that Spain was indeed important to U.S. security and "that is why it is so important and why we have been doing our best to bring about what I call a reintegration of Spain in the west." This open admission that the Department of State was working for the "reintegration" of Spain was apparently not enough for McCarran who quickly brought up the issue of whether or not NATO could be successful unless the Iberian peninsula and Spain were included. Acheson in turn responded

that "the pact can be successful without it; it can be stronger with it." [24]

Acheson was attempting a delicate balancing act. And his efforts to reintegrate Spain into the western community were beginning to achieve results. The Christian Century noted in early June that "some curious things happened when the U.N. voted on rescinding its 1946 anti-Franco resolution. Explaining that "the United States does not want to do anything that would be resented either by western Europeans or by the Spaniards," the U.S. would abstain on the vote. However, when the vote came, not only did the U.S. abstain but also "the western Europe governments who were said to be against Franco." In spite of the substantially reduced majority needed as a result of the 16 abstentions, the resolution failed. While criticizing the U.N. action, Franco "hailed the 'realism' of his growing closeness with the United States. The Christian Century did not quite know what to make of "such a devious record." The Protestant journal reported on rumors to the effect that only open protests from Eleanor Roosevelt and John Foster Dulles had prevented the U.S. from "casting an outright pro-Franco vote," and that despite Acheson's public reservations, "Franco believes he has good friends in Washington." The fact that the major western European allies of the U.S.

abstained on the vote clearly illustrates that Acheson's policy of "reintegration" of Spain was making progress.[25]

The Spanish in the meantime had retained the services of Charles Patrick Clark to represent their interests in Washington as a lobbyist and public relations specialist. Clark was a Catholic and an honors graduate of Georgetown University. He was well connected in Washington all the way up to the oval office. Clark had served as an investigator for the Truman Committee investigating the National Defense Program during the war. In spite of Clark's close relationship with his former boss, and increasing congressional support to do something about Spain, Truman remained adamant in his opposition to Franco. He personally intervened to prevent inclusion of Spain under the Marshall Plan in July, declaring that relations between the two countries were "not friendly." [26]

By the Fall of 1949, however, the President was willing to make informal gestures to Spain. Admiral Richard Conolly, Commander of United States Naval Forces in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, had repeatedly sought permission to make courtesy calls on Spanish ports. Truman finally authorized such an informal visit, and on September 3 U.S. warships entered the Spanish port of El Ferrol for a five-day stay. This marked the first time since the Spanish Civil War that American warships entered a Spanish port.

Admiral Conolly, accompanied by four other admirals, an Army Major General and an Air Force Brigadier General met with Franco and "exchanged civilities and discussed problems of mutual interest." When Conolly returned to Washington in October, he reported to both the White House and the House Armed Services Committee on his meeting with Franco. Before the House Committee he made a strong argument for Spanish naval bases, citing "the strategic importance of the Iberian Peninsula." While Truman seemed pleased with the results of the visit, his opposition to Franco did not wane. [27]

The American warships had hardly weighed anchor when a virtual horde of congressional delegations, all headed by Catholics, descended on Madrid. On September 14 Senator McCarran departed for Spain, announcing that he intended to discuss an American loan with Franco. Truman, whose opposition to Franco may have stemmed in part from his dislike for McCarran, immediately announced that McCarran was traveling as a private citizen and "did not represent anyone in the Administration." New York Democrat James J. Murphy led a delegation of seven house members that met with Franco shortly after McCarran. Murphy announced after the meeting that he found Franco to be "a very, very, lovely and lovable character." Another Catholic New York Democrat, Eugene J. Keogh, was part of a five-member congressional delegation arriving at the same time. On November 1 an

important subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee headed by New Mexico's Catholic Senator Dennis Chavez began a five-week tour of Europe which included Spain. Chavez announced that Spain should receive both economic and military assistance from the U.S. to "bulwark Western Europe's security." On its return the committee unanimously agreed that Spain should be given full diplomatic recognition as well as economic aid. [28]

At the same time that Spain was being deluged by congressional committees Charles Patrick Clark was also visiting the country and conducting his own investigation into the nature and status of religious persecution there. Upon returning to the U.S., Clark prepared a report for Truman "as requested" which relied heavily on the testimony of Max H. Klein, President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Spain. Klein, like Clark and so many others involved in the attempt to reverse Spanish policy, was a Catholic. Klein reported that "Protestantism is not a problem in Spain." He confined himself to Barcelona where he lived and stated, "I can be quite definite in saying that the Protestant community is not persecuted and they are free to worship according to their beliefs." He, and several of his friends, had regularly attended Protestant services "without the slightest difficulty." In conclusion, Klein noted that Spaniards were great "individualists" and "apt to

be very undisciplined." However, "there is just one issue on which they are practically all agreed and that is their religion. Why should we attempt to destroy that unity?" [29]

Clark concluded his report to Truman by suggesting a meeting at which he could convey "an expression of General Franco's feeling regarding the religious situation, as well as other matters," and "certain conclusions" of his own, both of which he preferred to "give orally." While no such meeting ever took place, Clark's report was circulated among other influential sources, especially in Congress. In an apparent attempt to stem the tide of public criticism regarding Spanish policy several administration supporters from the House Foreign Affairs Committee left for Spain in early December. This group also included some prominent Catholics, including Joseph L. Pfeifer, Democrat, N.Y., Thomas Gordon, Democrat, Ill., and Clement Zablocki, Democrat, Wisconsin. Pfeifer issued a statement to the effect that the Spanish should not place too much weight on statements of individual members of Congress as individuals could not speak for the entire body.[30]

The issue of the "reintegration" of Spain would not be completely resolved for several years. That story will be taken up in later discussions of its impact on the development of cold war ideology. Within the context of the developing cold war atmosphere of 1949, however, it clearly

demonstrates the ability of the Catholic periphery to dominate the discussion of public policy, particularly foreign affairs. The Mindszenty trial, the Hiss trial, the unanimous Catholic support for ratification of NATO in the Senate, and the increasing debate over the "reintegration" of Spain all contributed to the underlying paradigm that Christian civilization was at stake. Is it any wonder then, that by mid-1950 the United States would be caught in the grip of an hysterical anti-Communist crusade led by Catholic Senator Joseph McCarthy and a hot war in Asia that would refocus Catholic attention to the threat of "atheistic Communism" in that quarter? The mindset first articulated by Archbishop Cushing of Boston in 1947 that there was "a work for Religion and Democracy" that could "be done only by Catholics and by Catholics who are Americans" was becoming dominant either publicly or behind the scene.

Notes

1) The Christian Century, January 12, 1949, p.39.

2) Ibid., pp.40-41.

3) Commonweal, January 7, 1949, p.316.

4) Commonweal, January 14, 1949, pp.342-345.

5) Ibid.

6) Cushing to all Parishes, January 31, 1949, Circular File Box 6, Item 6, Archives Archdiocese of Boston.

7) Donald F. Crosby, S.J., God, Church and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church, 1950-1957, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), p.12.; New York Times, February 7, 1949, pp.1 and 3.

8) New York Times, February 7, 1949, p.1.

9) Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty, Memoirs, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974), pp.322-326.

10) The Christian Century, February 23, 1949, p.237.

11) Ibid.

12) The Christian Century, March 16, 1949, p.323.

13) Ibid., p.324.

14) Alfred O. Hero Jr., American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank and File Opinion, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1973), p.305.

15) Annals of America, Vol.16, 1940-1949, p.588.

16) The Christian Century, March 16, 1949, pp.326-327 and 331-333.

17) Morton Levitt and Michael Levitt, A Tissue of Lies: Nixon Vs. Hiss, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p.28.

18) Ibid., p.29. and Alan Weinstein, Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case, pp.7-8.

19) Levitt, Tissue of Lies, p.66., and Congressional Record, Vol.95, Pt.8, p.9916.

20) Theodore J. Lowi, "Bases in Spain," in American Civil-Military Decisions, ed. by Harold Stein, (Twentieth Century Fund Study: University of Alabama Press, 1963), pp.675-676.

21) Ibid., p.676. and The Christian Century, March 30, 1949, p.690.

22) The Christian Century, May 25, 1949, p.644.

23) Lowi, "Bases in Spain," p.683.

24) Ibid., p.684.

25) The Christian Century, June 1, 1949, pp.667-668.

26) Lowi, "Bases in Spain," p.675. and p.677.

27) Ibid., p.678.

28) Ibid., p.681.

29) Ibid., p.679.

30) Ibid., p.680.

CHAPTER 13

"THE ATTACK OF THE PRIMITIVES"

The final months of 1949 had seen the utter collapse of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government in China. Chiang fled to the island of Formosa leaving Mao Tse-tung and his Communist armies in control of the mainland. The nation's attention shifted instantly from the threat of Communist expansion in Europe to actual Communist expansion in Asia.

On January 5, 1950, the British Government withdrew its recognition of Chiang's government and on the 6th officially extended recognition to Mao. The United States refused to follow the British lead. On January 11, while Mao was in Moscow negotiating the Sino-Soviet Treaty with Stalin, Senator Taft charged on the Senate floor that the State Department had "been guided by a left-wing group who obviously have wanted to get rid of Chiang and were willing at least to turn China over to the Communists for that purpose." The administration was again under attack from a variety of sources determined to find out "who lost China?" It was in this atmosphere that Secretary of State Acheson on January 12 delivered a speech to the National Press Club in Washington entitled "Crisis in China -- an Examination of United States Policy." The speech accurately reflected the twin pillars of revolutionary nationalism sweeping Asia: the

abject poverty of millions and the resentment of foreign domination. [1]

However, the speech would soon become more important for what it did not say than for what it did. In outlining what Acheson described as the United States "defensive perimeter" in the Pacific, he said that it "runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus....[and] from the Ryukyus to the Philippine Islands." The absence of Korea from this defense perimeter passed unnoticed at the time in the generally favorable response to the speech in the nations's press. In terms of "the military security of other areas in the Pacific" Acheson declared "that no person can guarantee these areas against military attack," but, in event of such an attack, "the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations...." The day after Acheson's speech Jacob A. Malik, the Soviet representative on the UN Security Council, walked out in protest of the continued representation on the Council by Chiang's Nationalist government. [2]

At the time of his speech to the Press Club Acheson was probably more concerned that Indochina, not Korea, could be the site, if confrontation were to take place in an area of the Pacific outside the "defensive perimeter" of the U.S.

The Nationalist/Communist forces of Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh had been engaged in open guerrilla warfare with the French colonial forces since 1946. As Chiang's army collapsed in 1949 and Mao's forces moved to the south Acheson speculated it "raised the ominous possibility of Chinese Communist collaboration with the Vietminh." In addition "From late 1949 on, French officials issued increasingly urgent warnings that without direct American military aid they might be compelled to withdraw from Indochina." It must be kept in mind that France, predominately Catholic France, was the centerpiece of American postwar policy for Europe. The need to restore France to its prewar position of power and prestige was a central theme of State Department position papers prepared for both the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. The thrust of the argument was that the U.S. should "treat France in all respects on the basis of her potential power and influence rather than on the basis of her present strength." By late 1945 this policy had crystallized even further. John D. Hickerson, Deputy Director of the State Department's Office of European Affairs, stated in a memo to the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee "it is the policy of the United States Government to assist in the reestablishment of a strong France in order that the country may serve as a bulwark of democracy on the continent of Europe...." [3]

That American Catholics were concerned about events in postwar France, just as they were in postwar Poland, Italy, and Hungary, is demonstrated by a letter "sent to all French pastors" on July 30, 1948 by Archbishop Cushing of Boston. Cushing notified his French pastors that "the Bishop of Lucon, France, has asked me to grant permission to his representative, Canon Louis Ratier, to seek alms among our French speaking people in behalf of the church schools in his diocese." France, as well as Hungary, was a focal point for the preservation of Catholic schools. Stressing the international nature of the appeal, Cushing went on to state that "Archbishop Roy of Quebec has granted a like permission and I am anxious to cooperate to the fullest extent possible." Cushing's letter was to serve as an introduction of Father Ratier to the French pastors and "to express my hope that you will allow him to speak to your people or to solicit contributions from them or from organizations within your jurisdiction." [4]

But Catholic schools in France was not the only thing on Cushing's agenda. If reviving the French economy and gaining public support for such action was high on the administration's agenda, Cushing was willing to do his part. Hard on the heels of his appeal to the French pastors of the Archdiocese Cushing led 600 American Catholics on a pilgrimage to the shrines of Paris and Lourdes. The

publicity surrounding the pilgrimage left no doubt in the public's mind about the intimate connection between the French and American church. But coming as it did amidst the ongoing debate surrounding funding for the Marshall Plan, the Berlin blockade and the beginning of the presidential election campaign, it also reinforced the need for American assistance to Europe. The political and economic nature of the trip was highlighted in Paris on August 21 when both Cushing and Auxiliary Bishop John J. Wright were made officers in the French Legion of Honor by none other than Foreign Minister Robert Schuman. Cushing's smiling countenance receiving the award from Schuman dominated the front page of the Boston Globe on August 22. Upon receiving his honor, Bishop Wright proclaimed "Vive la France!" [5]

In his remarks Schuman, whom the Globe described as "...the greatest foe of Communism in France," and "credited with the major role in defeating the Communists in the last election here," described Cushing as "a man of great character, a great leader in the spiritual field, and a powerful foe of materialism." Cushing was no less laudatory with his remarks, proclaiming he was particularly honored that the award was presented to him by Schuman "whose character and accomplishments we in America well know and greatly admire." Cushing told the assembled guests: "You are preoccupied with the staggering economic problems of

France," and that while the principal purpose of the pilgrimage was spiritual "...it involves transportation and purchasing expenditures of every kind. And we were not unmindful in planning this pilgrimage that a venture of this kind brings economic aid to France and the other lands we visit." Noting that "the political and economic problems of the past war have not yet been solved on higher levels of diplomacy and international relations," he continued, "I submit the chief objective of all governmental action in our day should be the facilitation of international friendship and knowledge on the popular level." To that end of friendship and knowledge both Schuman and Cushing reminded the audience, and American readers, that the first Bishop of Boston was Jean Louis Lefebre de Cheverus who was ordained in Paris in 1790 and escaped the guillotine during the French Revolution by fleeing to America as a missionary to Indians and French Catholic pioneers in Maine (which was then part of Massachusetts). Cheverus High School in Jamaica Plain was named in his honor. So the French connection to Boston and to the American church was underscored at precisely the moment it was most needed for political purposes.[6]

As historian George C. Herring has noted, "In the dramatically altered strategic context of 1950, support for France in Indochina was considered essential for the

security of Western Europe." State Department policy makers were already concluding that to maintain France as "the bulwark of democracy" in Europe it would be necessary to relieve the drain on French resources represented by the ongoing conflict in Indochina. In the midst of this ongoing policy debate concerning the extension of the containment policy to Southeast Asia two more events occurred in late January that would tip the scales in favor of U.S. action. On January 25 a New York jury convicted Alger Hiss of perjury in connection with his testimony that he was not involved with passing State Department documents to the Soviet Union during the 1930s. We have already examined the involvement of the Catholic periphery in the Hiss case. His conviction now added further credence to the charges that the "loss of China" was the result of Communist manipulation within the State Department. On January 30 the Soviet Union recognized the Vietminh Government of Ho Chi Minh as the legitimate government of Vietnam. Acheson immediately proclaimed the Soviet recognition cast Ho in his "true colors as the mortal enemy of native independence in Indochina." The Secretary of State, who only weeks before had spoken so intelligently about the need to recognize Asian nationalism and the hatred of foreign domination, now interpreted events as a "significant and ominous" sign of Stalin's intentions to "accelerate the revolutionary

process." Why the Vietnamese would be willing to exchange a French master for a Russian master he did not say. [7]

But perhaps the most significant event to occur in January of 1950 amidst all the public furor was a quiet private dinner at a Washington D.C. restaurant. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy was a relatively inconspicuous but brash first-term Senator from Wisconsin. He had been elected in the 1946 Republican sweep after defeating long-time Senate stalwart Robert LaFollette Jr. in the Republican primary. McCarthy was looking toward the 1952 elections and seeking an issue around which he could build a reelection campaign. Joining McCarthy for dinner that evening were Charles Kraus, William A. Roberts (attorney for syndicated columnist Drew Pearson) and Father Edmund A. Walsh, founder and dean of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. As we have seen earlier Walsh was in Russia at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution and headed the Vatican relief effort there in conjunction with Herbert Hoover's relief efforts. He also played an important role in the Catholic effort to prevent U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933. His anti-Communist credentials within the Church were impeccable.

After dinner the conversation turned to the search for an issue. Roberts proposed the St. Lawrence Seaway, but

McCarthy rejected that proposal as not having "enough sex." He then proposed his own project, a Townsendesque pension plan under which everyone over 65 would receive $100 a month. All three of his companions rejected this plan as fiscally unsound. Walsh then asked, "How about Communism as an issue?" McCarthy jumped at the suggestion, declaring "the government is full of Communists," and "the thing to do is hammer at them." At least one of his dinner companions, Roberts, warned McCarthy any such effort would have to be soundly grounded in facts and not unfounded charges. Writing about the incident later, Jack Anderson and Ronald May concluded: "His three fellow Catholics went away with the feeling that the sincere McCarthy would do his country a service by speaking out against the Communist fifth column." [8]

There has been considerable controversy surrounding the dinner at the Colony. Scholars generally agree that the meeting did in fact take place, although Father Walsh later denied having suggested anything to McCarthy and charged that Drew Pearson, who originally broke the story in his column in March, had "manufactured" the incident. Walsh went so far as to offer a $1,000 contribution to Pearson's favorite charity if the columnist could satisfactorily prove his contentions. Still, one of the participants was Pearson's attorney and could have served as a source for the

information. The real issue seems to have been whether or not the story was embellished in subsequent telling. It would certainly not be surprising for four Catholics discussing politics in early 1950 to zero in on Communism. But McCarthy's simplistic reaction, as if the idea of Communists in government had never before crossed his mind, is certainly not in keeping with the facts. The Senator had in fact charged his Democratic opponent in the 1946 Senatorial race with being "Communisticly inclined." He sponsored an amendment to the Taft-Hartley Act allowing employers to dismiss employees who had previously been members of the Communist Party or who had Communist "sympathies." And he had taken an active interest in the hearings of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee. In fact McCarthy had been engaged in an ongoing battle with the Madison Capital Times since November of 1949 on his charges that the newspaper was "the Red mouthpiece for the Communist party in Wisconsin." So the Communist issue was nothing new to McCarthy, and his earlier activities may have been the source of Roberts' concern that future charges McCarthy might make be well grounded. [9]

The conviction of Alger Hiss in late January was followed by the equally startling disclosure that the British government on February 3 arrested physicist Klaus Fuchs on charges of atomic espionage. Fuchs had worked on

the Manhattan project at Los Alamos. His arrest and subsequent confession resulted in the later arrest in the United States of Harry Gold, David Greenglass, Martin Sobel and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, all later convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage. It was within this virtual firestorm of interest surrounding Communist activity at home and abroad -- the "loss of China"; Acheson's attempt to define the Pacific defense perimeter; the conviction of Alger Hiss; Stalin's recognition of Ho Chi Minh's Communist dominated Vietminh as the government of Vietnam; the arrest and confession of Klaus Fuchs for atomic espionage -- that McCarthy delivered his speech to the Republican Women's Club of Wheeling, West Virginia on February 9, 1950.

According to press reports, McCarthy declared he held in his hand a "list of 205 -- a list of 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 in the State Department." Amidst all the daily news reports of spies, espionage, and Communist advances abroad American Catholics certainly needed no further reminders of the consequences of Communist success. Nevertheless they got one. The same week McCarthy delivered his speech at Wheeling the film "Guilty of Treason" opened in theaters around the country. The film, based on the trial of Cardinal Mindszenty, was scheduled to open on the first

anniversary of the trial. On February 2 a circular was sent to all parishes in the diocese of Boston with instructions that "the following announcement be read from all pulpits in the Archdiocese at the Masses on Sunday, February 5." The announcement stated that February 8 was the anniversary "of the imprisonment by the puppet regime in Hungary of the heroic Cardinal Mindszenty" and that "the film produced in Hollywood to dramatize the story of the Cardinal will open in several Boston theaters this coming week." It continued: "Catholics and all interested in religious freedom are called upon to ask their local theaters when and where the picture will be shown," and it was "earnestly hoped that large crowds of people will attend performances of this important film." The Mindszenty trial was again being thrust before public attention at the very moment McCarthy was leveling his charges against the State Department. [10]

The Senator from Wisconsin was at the right place at the right time. The initial press reports of his speech in Wheeling were sparse; the New York Times did not even carry the Associated Press wire service dispatch. However, when McCarthy arrived in Salt Lake City, he was surrounded by reporters wanting more information about his list. He now changed his story to claim there were 205 "bad risks" in the State Department, but of these there were fifty-seven "card carrying communists." The Senator was now national news, but

he had already begun to fudge on the accuracy and fact demanded by his dinner companions a month earlier. McCarthy in fact had no list at all in Wheeling. What he held in his hand was a letter from former Secretary of State James Byrnes written in July of 1946 detailing the results of an investigation of some 3,000 federal employees transferred to the State Department from other wartime agencies. The investigation resulted in the recommendation against the permanent employment of 285 of these employees as potential "loyalty risks." Of these, 79 had already been terminated, leaving 205 still employed. The entire matter became increasingly muddled as the criteria for dismissal was changed from loyalty risk to security risk and ultimately choked off when President Truman in March of 1948 issued an executive order withholding all loyalty and security information in all federal agencies from members of Congress. [11]

As William F. Buckley and Brent Bozell correctly point out in their defense of McCarthy this charge of fifty-seven card-carrying Communists in the State Department was a classic case of the Senator's penchant for overstatement. It permitted his critics to constantly raise the question of "Where are their cards?" when in fact by 1950 there were no card-carrying communists in the United States at all. The Party had recalled all membership cards years earlier. This

was the type of overstatement and lack of factual underpinning that would quickly lead to Father Walsh breaking with McCarthy over his methods. Nevertheless a Catholic Senator had suddenly been thrust to the forefront of America's anti-communist crusade. Notwithstanding the tremendous notoriety and popularity he would achieve over the next several years, McCarthy was never a player in the Senate. He had no real program other than the advancement of Joseph Raymond McCarthy. William V. Shannon uses the dictionary definition of a rogue elephant to describe McCarthy: "A vicious elephant which separates from the herd and roams alone; hence any large animal with habits like those of a rogue elephant -- sometimes used attributively of persons." [12]

Indeed Shannon's description of McCarthy seems appropriate. He was a lightweight in the Senate, not well regarded and given to breaking the rules and traditions of decorum. Nevertheless, he became the lightning rod around which the pent-up sense of frustration many Americans felt toward dealing with the Soviet Union and the seemingly endless series of Communist advances and affronts. McCarthy himself seemed taken aback by the almost instantaneous celebrity status attached to him by nature of his charges. Confronted by reporters in his Washington office, McCarthy

was asked for the names on his list by correspondent John Dear.

"Look you guys," Joe said, "that was just a political speech to a bunch of Republicans. Don't take it seriously."

"Don't you have any names?" Dear asked.

"Oh, one was a college professor," Joe replied.

"Where?" Dear asked.

"A professor of astronomy," Joe said. "Another was a professor of anthropology, a woman. But it was just a political talk."

The subsequent article failed to note McCarthy's attitude or the reporters' questioning; "Newsmen at the time were trained to report only what happened in public." [13]

McCarthy's attitude is critical to an understanding of what followed. It was indeed political. The nature of what was happening at home and abroad dictated a Republican attack on the Democratic administration. That McCarthy was an Irish Catholic with close ties to powerful Irish Catholic Democrats such as Joseph Kennedy only made matters worse. The political dynamics that FDR had foreseen and that Truman had forestalled in 1948 seemed about to break. Truman had barely been sworn in for his second term when Republican critics began attacking administration policy toward China. Much of this criticism centered around possible subversive activity within the State Department. Once again the genesis

of this criticism was Catholic. Patrick J. Hurley, Ambassador to China appointed by FDR had given up his efforts to reconcile the Nationalists of Chiang and the Communists of Mao claiming subversive State Department personnel were undermining his work. The Republican effort at bipartisanship in foreign policy had proven disastrous and was now abandoned. In fact bipartisanship now seemed to be working against the administration. Pat McCarran of Nevada introduced a bill in February of 1949 to increase assistance to the Nationalists and twenty-four Democrats joined him. The China Lobby was in full throat by the time McCarthy gave his speech in Wheeling, and the lecture circuit was crowded with Catholics: McCarran,, Henry Luce [whose wife Claire Booth Luce converted to Catholicism and played a key role in influencing him], Hurley and the Catholic Archbishop of Nanking, the Reverend Paul Yu-Pin. [14]

McCarthy, and the "ism" attached to his name, have been examined from a wide variety of perspectives by historians and political scientists. Much of this analysis disregards the political nature of McCarthyism or, when it does attribute political themes to the movement, misinterprets the underlying politics. Richard M. Freeland argues that McCarthyism was spawned as the result of the failed efforts of the Truman administration to implement

what he terms "multilateral" economic policies for postwar Europe. He argues that Truman deliberately introduced anti-Communism, both domestic ad international, as the only available wedge to secure passage of the European Recovery Plan. The need for that in turn was dominated by the need to keep American exports at a sufficiently high level to prevent domestic recession. Domestic politics, for Freeland, involved traditional Republican opposition to lowering tariff barriers. Once again we see William Appleman Williams' Open Door diplomacy at the heart of the cold war. In this instance, however, Freeland argues that while the administration was successful in pursuing "multilateral" economic policies among the Western European nations, it failed to achieve the same objectives at home due to a coalition of Republican and Southern conservative opposition. Freeland almost puts his finger on the real political underpinning in analyzing the 1948 election when he states that "an essential element in the President's victory was the unusually solid support he received from urban Catholic voters who admired his anti-communism." He dismisses this impact, however, by stating that "Truman's escape from political damage on this issue during 1948 did not represent the main current of American politics, for it resulted from circumstances that ceased to exist almost immediately after the election." As we have seen, this is

simply not so. Catholic anxieties increased dramatically after 1948 with the Mindszenty trial and the whole spectrum of events unfolding in 1949 and early 1950. If the Catholic periphery did not constitute "the main current of American politics," they were certainly dominating the public discussion and beginning to limit the policy options as demonstrated by the discussions on Spain. [15]

Seymour Martin Lipset takes a different approach to the conservative trend in postwar American politics. He argues that the period of "liberal supremacy" which marked the decade of the thirties also marked a period of "great growth in the influence of the Communist Party." This period of influence was characterized by "penetrating and manipulating liberal and moderate left groups, rather than building an electoral party. The Communists, by concealing their real objectives, by acting positively for liberal causes, by being the best organizers of the left, were able to penetrate deeply into various liberal organizations and into the labor movement." Postwar prosperity once more restored the "legitimacy" of the free enterprise system and at the same time created status anxiety among many groups that had been borne upward by the New Deal and a resurgent economy, especially Catholics. According to Lipset: "As a Catholic, McCarthy was able to embody the traditional Anti-Communism and the growing conservatism of that

population, without the disability of Father Coughlin's collar." The implication seems clear: McCarthy could represent the periphery to the traditional populist, isolationist, and agrarian sentiment of the Midwest and South without arousing the anti-Catholicism that an active member of the Catholic clergy could not overcome.[16]

Lipset and other historians in the status anxiety school of thought see an anti-elitist, anti-intellectual and anti-eastern trend in support for McCarthy. Lipset does look closely at the religious nature of support for McCarthy citing polls which indicated that "Irish and Italian Catholics were among the most pro-McCarthy groups." A Roper poll indicated that Germans, both Catholic and Protestant, "were disproportionately in favor of McCarthy." He goes on to cite Michael Rogin's study of McCarthy and his political impact. "It is a mistake to see McCarthyite support as rooted in the status-stricken or among the midwestern agrarian populists,"Rogin contends. He finds "that it is to be seen more simply as a conservative Republican movement feeding on these prevalent anxieties about Communism and the Cold War." These anxieties, we have already seen, were in large measure religiously motivated and represented exactly the political threat to the Democratic Party that FDR had foreseen as early as 1942 when

he sent Myron Taylor to the Vatican to discuss the prospect of Soviet domination of largely Catholic Eastern Europe.[17]

Lipset, however, finally errs in concluding that McCarthy had no lasting political impact. "McCarthyism," he states, "cannot be measured on an electoral basis. It was never a political movement; it was a political tendency, unorganized, activating certain impulses in a sympathetic audience...." Of course McCarthyism was a political movement, and movement is the operative word. The very thing FDR feared most was the movement of traditionally Catholic Democratic voters into the Republican ranks over the issue of Communism. As we have seen, this is precisely what Truman headed off with his strong anti-Commmunist stand in 1948. Now, in early 1950, with Catholics more upset than ever over events in Hungary and in China and over seemingly clearcut signs of espionage and subversion within the highest ranks of government, the potential political impact was enormous. [18]

McCarthyism was indeed rooted in the decade of the 1930s, not in a direct link from Father Coughlin and his populist rhetoric but rather in the campaign conducted by the Jesuits discussed earlier (see chapter four). Could McCarthy have attended (Jesuit) Marquette University from 1930 through 1934 without having become at least familiar with Catholic teaching on Communism? Possibly. His academic

record was not distinguished, although he was considered bright and hard working. But his Senate career as an anti-Communist seems clearly rooted in Catholic doctrine that emerged during the 1930s. Thus when Joseph R. McCarthy stood on the Senate floor and spoke of "a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man," he was speaking in terms that virtually every Catholic in the country was familiar with. [19]

As Robert Frank points out it was this emphasis on the spiritual origins of Communism and its deceptive propaganda techniques during the Thirties which "helps to explain why Catholics perceived a threat of enormous magnitude while their neighbors saw no threat at all.(emphasis added)" By 1950, however, the Catholic periphery's position had come to dominate the discussion. There is no better example of this than the 1947 publication of the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations. There is little doubt that the Truman administration "always referred to the ability of the communists to appeal to broad segments of the population through apparently patriotic appeals or organizations that concealed their relationship to the communist movement." The President himself had expressed concern about "reds, phonies and parlor pinks." The leading spokesman within the administration for exposing Communist front organizations, however, was FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. Hoover was a

close friend of Cardinal Spellman of New York, and as early as 1946 Spellman had agreed to cooperate with FBI agents to help "ferret out and eliminate the Communists and fellow travelers who are in positions of control in labor unions." The FBI informed Spellman they planned to publish a monthly magazine "to alert the business community to the dangers of Communism." [20]

By late 1946 and early 1947 Hoover was speaking and writing about these dangers with such impact that Attorney General Clark reversed a long-standing policy of the Justice Department against the FBI Director testifying publicly before HUAC. According to Richard Freeland, "both Clark and Hoover endorsed the principle of publicizing communist activities as a potent means of combating them." Hoover, of course, brought to the debate the Catholic belief that exposing these groups as "dupes" and "fellow travelers" of the Communists was the best way of eliminating their effectiveness to disseminate "deceitful propaganda." [21]

Both McCarthy's rhetoric and tactics fall well within the guidelines established by the Jesuit campaign of the Thirties and expanded on by the Catholic hierarchy in the postwar era. Speaking on the Senate floor shortly after his Wheeling speech, McCarthy framed the struggle in rhetoric reminiscent of Del Vayo's argument of 1947: "Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between Communistic

atheism and Christianity. The modern champions of Communism have selected this as the time....The war is on..." The Senate wasted no time in establishing a subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee to investigate McCarthy's charges. The committee was intent on having McCarthy name names, and he did. It is instructive to examine the cases of the individuals named by McCarthy before the Tyding's Committee, not from the perspective of guilt or innocence, but rather from the perspective of how McCarthy's allegations conformed to Catholic perceptions of threats to America and whether or not that perception was coming to dominate the Protestant core within the context of domestic politics. [22]

McCarthy named three individuals who basically fell within the category of "dupes" or "fellow travelers." These persons had joined or been affiliated with a variety of liberal organizations during the thirties which now appeared on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations. Many of these organizations, as noted earlier, had been infiltrated and taken over by Communists during the Popular Front period. McCarthy named Dorothy Kenyon, Frederick Schuman and Harlow Shapley before the Tydings Committee. He cited Kenyon as belonging to 28 Communist front-organizations, Schuman with 12 and Shapley with 21. None of the three were formally employed by the State Department,

but Kenyon, a lawyer and activist for women's issues, was an American delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. Similiarly, Schuman and Shapley, both academics, had both served as either lecturers or consultants on State Department projects.[23]

The Tydings Committee found that Kenyon's numerous affiliations were only "sufficient to suggest a high degree of naivete and perhaps gullibility." According to Catholic doctrine, "naivete" and "gullibility" were exactly the point. Liberals were susceptible to the deceptive propaganda of the Communists and ultimately were duped into supporting Communist objectives at the expense of legitimate social reform. Schuman and Shapley fell into the category of "fellow travelers" rather than "dupes." In fact, William F. Buckley and Brent Bozell, writing in defense of McCarthy, claimed that if the two professors were not "fellow travelers," then "no one can legitimately be called a fellow traveler." Both men had written approvingly of the Soviet Union, with Schuman at one point declaring: "The Russian adventure marks a long forward stride toward human mastery of man's fate...." Human mastery of man's fate, of course, was exactly the type of Anti-God sentiment which made Communism anathema to Catholics. "In Catholic teaching," according to Frank, <u>all</u> human freedom, <u>all</u> individual rights are grounded in a transcendent order that Communism would

abolish." Human mastery of man's fate made man responsible for those rights and freedoms which came only from God. [24]

The second group of individuals named by McCarthy before the Tydings Committee remain well within the framework established by Catholic doctrine but take on a more sinister character than those already mentioned. Haldore Hanson, Philip Jessup, John Stewart Service, Gustavo Duran and Owen Lattimore were all accused of being active participants in a Communist plot to undermine American foreign policy rather than simply being "dupes" or "fellow travelers." Hanson, Service, Jessup and Lattimore were associated with the perceived failure of American policy in China. Interestingly, it is through the use of deceptive propaganda rather than espionage that the group was supposed to have worked most effectively: Hanson through his book Human Endeavor which according to McCarthy outlined his "pro-Communist answer to the problems of Asia;" Jessup for his role with the Institute of Pacific Relations and its magazine Far Eastern Survey; Service for passing classified information to Amerasia magazine, another publication of the Institute of Pacific Relations and Owen Lattimore whom McCarthy called "one of the principal architects of our Far Eastern policy." [25]

The charge that this group was actively working to undermine American policy in China went far beyond the

accusations made against Kenyon, Schuman and Shapley which basically consisted of their membership in various Communist front groups. Adding to the drama was the testimony of McCarthy's fellow Catholic, the former Communist and editor of the Daily Worker, Louis Budenz. Budenz connected Hanson, Jessup and Lattimore to Communist Party activities either as party members or instruments through whom other party members carried out their directives. Jessup, for instance was described by Budenz as a pawn of party member Frederick Vanderbilt Field and that a series of articles appearing in Survey while Jessup was in charge were "planned and planted by the American Communist hierarchy to keynote the switch in the international party line on China." Budenz' testimony on Lattimore was equally damaging. He claimed to have told Communist Party chief Earl Browder in 1937 that Lattimore should take over "the general direction of the move to depict the Chinese Communists as 'agrarian reformers.'" In addition, as late as 1943, he had heard Frederick Vanderbilt Field report that "Lattimore had been instructed of a change in the party-line on Chiang Kai-shek." [26]

Budenz further testified that he had been instructed by Jack Stachel, who would replace Browder as head of the American Communist Party, to "consider Lattimore a Communist." His testimony did little to sway the Tydings Committee but was given a far warmer reception by the

McCarran Committee. Lattimore seems to have served as something of a lightening rod for Catholic criticism. As early as January of 1949, long before McCarthy decided to make Lattimore "the top Russian espionage agent in this country," Congressman John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts attacked the policies of the "Lattimores and the [Harvard University scholar and China expert John King] Fairbanks." Later, in September 1949, Reverend James K. Kearney attacked Lattimore in an article published in Columbia Magazine, the official organ of the Knights of Columbus. [27]

In virtually every case outlined above McCarthy's allegations followed Catholic doctrine established in the 1930s dealing with "liberals" being duped and manipulated to advance the cause of Communism. Buckley and Bozell in defending him argued from much the same position. In essence, they argued that only the China group had stepped beyond the role of dupes to being active and knowing participants in a scheme to advance the interests of Communism. They in turn used the techniques of deceptive propaganda in magazine articles and other intellectual pursuits to "dupe" liberals into following the latest party line. As Robert Frank points out: "It is more than an accident that the Senator from Wisconsin was a Catholic who attended the Jesuit Marquette University during the 'Red Decade'....It is more than an accident that the priest in

the Colony restaurant in early 1950 who suggested McCarthy use communism as a reelection issue was Father Edmund Walsh, the Jesuit who directed the opening Catholic campaign against the 'red scourge' in America." [28]

Interestingly, the one major attempt to examine the connection between McCarthy and Catholicism was also conducted by a Jesuit scholar. Donald F. Crosby in God, Church, and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church 1950-1957 argues that the phenomenon known as McCarthyism was little more than the Catholic version of the broader American "anti-Communist impulse." This is essentially the same argument as Robert Griffith who used the term "anti-Communist persuasion" in describing the impact of McCarthy during the second red scare. While Crosby examines Catholic anti-Communist activity surrounding events in Eastern Europe in the immediate postwar years, he does not see it as a driving force in either domestic or international policy development. More recent scholarship such as Frank's, however, points to a direct connection between the Jesuit led anti-Communist campaign of the thirties, which Crosby does not mention, and the more sweeping anti-Communism of the late forties and early fifties. Crosby concludes, "One has to question whether Catholics were vastly more concerned over the threat of Communism to their religion than the rest of the

populace.... In sum, though the Catholic population felt a deep concern over the problem of communism, so did the rest of America, and if the Catholic anxiety was the greater, it was not overwhelmingly so." That's exactly the point Frank makes in his article. If there was no longer a gap between Catholic anti-Communism and American anti-Communism overall, then something dramatic had occurred since the decade of the Thirties when "Catholics perceived a threat of enormous magnitude while their neighbors saw no threat at all." [29]

The evidence seems clear that what had happened was the ability of the Catholic periphery to dominate the public discussion of events in Eastern Europe through a combination of the Church hierarchy, influential Catholic laymen, and Catholic politicians in forming what was essentially a Catholic Lobby. These groups interacted on a regular basis and shared the Catholic perception that Communism posed the greatest threat to the church, Christian Civilization, and to America. They in turn interacted and supported Catholic leaders such as Schumann in France, di Gaspari in Italy, Adenhauer in West Germany, and Franco in Spain to form an effective international coalition against international Communism. In terms of the American elements of this group McCarthy was relatively insignificant, although he garnered support from the more important figures such as Spellman, Cushing, Joseph Kennedy and others at various times. His

major contribution was extending and expanding the atmosphere of anti-Communism within the context of Catholic doctrine that "liberalism" either unwittingly or in some instances knowingly advanced the cause of Communism. However, it is by no means clear that this would not have happened even if McCarthy had never been elected to the Senate -- and this Crosby does not address. As Pittman has pointed out, the term "McCarranism" briefly vied with "McCarthyism" for public attention. In the absence of Joe McCarthy, Pat McCarran would have had center stage. And Pat McCarran was a power to be reckoned with in the U.S. Senate.

McCarran had not given up on his efforts to change U.S. policy toward Spain. The Administration's Spanish policy was again under attack in both the House and Senate. In late April, in the midst of the Tydings Committee hearings, McCarran introduced an amendment to the Economic Cooperation Act which would authorize a $50 million loan to Spain. He was able to get 35 fellow Senators to cosponsor the amendment. For the first time real money was being discussed. Perhaps not by coincidence the previous month Rep. Owen Brewster led off the attack in the House against the administration's Spanish policy by again citing Max Klein on the religious issue. According to Lowe, "by this time, Mr. Klein's name, as an authority on Protestantism in Spain, had become almost a household word." Four days after

Brewster's speech, on March 14, McCarthy named Gustavo Duran as one of his public cases before the Tydings Committee. Duran was employed by the State Department from 1943-1946. His name had first come up before the Senate Appropriations Committee in 1946 when Secretary Byrnes denied the Duran being looked at by the committee was the same Duran employed by the Department. When it finally became clear that it was the same person, the Department did nothing. Duran eventually resigned and moved on to a position with the United Nations. The charges against Duran stemmed from U.S. military intelligence reports that he was a member of the Spanish Communist Party and possibly the Russian Secret Police. He had fought on the Republican side during the Spanish Civil War and headed their military intelligence service for three weeks. [30]

The confluence between McCarran's ongoing attempt to achieve a reversal of U.S. policy toward Spain and McCarthy's effort to resurrect Duran as an example of the State Department's failure to police itself against security risks may have been purely coincidental. However, it is unlikely. As David Oshinsky points out, U.S. military intelligence reports on Duran were based largely on the Franco-controlled Spanish press, and "since Franco had powerful friends in Washington," he kept coming under congressional attack. One of Duran's earlier critics was

none other than Republican Representative Alvin O'Konski of Wisconsin, friend of McCarthy's and a fellow Catholic. O'Konski in fact, in language reminiscent of McCarthy, had called Duran "one of the most notorious international Communists the world ever knew." While Duran was serving on the staff of the Cuban Embassy, his work was defended by Ambassador Spruille Braden in a memorandum to the Military Attache in Havana in which he declared "From my personal knowledge based on close association, Mr. Duran is not a Communist, but a liberal of the highest type." As we have seen, such a description of Duran as a "liberal of the highest type" within the context of Catholic doctrine would in no sense be seen as an exoneration but as more of an indictment. [31]

The naming of Duran would only remind both Catholics and the Core of the religious persecution suffered by the Church in Loyalist Spain so similar to that currently occurring in Eastern Europe. Once again, the threat of godless, atheistic Communism was being emphasized. This tied in with McCarran's efforts to rejuvenate Franco Spain and bring it into the Atlantic community.

In the midst of this opening round of what Secretary Acheson referred to as "The attack of the Primitives" the administration was moving toward decisions in which the Catholic Lobby, acknowledged or not, would play a leading

role. In April the National Security Council presented to Truman its policy document #68. NSC-68 has been described by historian Walter LaFeber as "the American blueprint for waging the Cold War during the next twenty years." The character of international relations had been "fundamentally altered" since the nineteenth century, leaving the United States and Russia as the world's superpowers. It described this realignment in terms of a confrontation between the "slave society with the free." In addition, "the Soviet Union, unlike previous aspirants to hegemony, is animated by a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own, and seeks to impose its absolute authority." Casting the issue in terms of "a new fanatic faith, antithetical to our own" was not simply an exercise in rhetoric dealing with the contrast of democratic versus totalitarian societies. No, the battle that was raging was religious in nature, one in which no compromise was possible. The call to protect Christian civilization predicted by Del Vayo, and again by both the Pope and Cardinal Spellman in the wake of the Mindszenty trial, was becoming a reality. Acheson himself framed the issue as he saw it in his memoirs: "The threat to Western Europe seemed to me singularly like that which Islam had posed centuries before, with its combination of ideological zeal and fighting power. Then it had taken the same combination to meet it: Germanic power in the east and

Frankish in Spain, both energized by a great outburst of military power and social organization in Europe. This time it would need the added power and energy of America, for the drama was now played on a world stage." The call for a twentieth-century Crusade, this time to be led by America -- "The city on a hill" -- comes through clearly as the underlying theme of both NSC-68 and Acheson's thinking.[32]

But what of bringing together the "Germanic power in the east and Frankish in Spain?," both were excluded from the NATO alliance. The first genuine opportunity to factor Germany into the equation occurred in May. On a trip to Paris prior to attending a meeting of the North Atlantic Treaty Council in London Acheson was presented with a secret initiative developed by Foreign Minister Schuman and Jean Monnet which called for the entire German-French production of coal and steel to be placed under a "joint high authority" and an organization that would be open to other European nations to join. The plan involved such great political risk to Schumann that he had not yet proposed it to the French cabinet. U.S Ambassador to France David Bruce called the plan "the most imaginative and far-reaching approach that has been made in generations to the settlement of fundamental differences between France and Germany." Coming as it did from French initiative, the proposal also fit into the State Department's long held view to make

France the "bulwark of democracy" in Europe. The fact that Catholic Schuman in France and Catholic Adenhauer in Germany could find common ground to combine the industrial might of both countries in the face of the Communist threat should not be surprising given the situation. [33]

Thus the Schuman Plan began to wind its way toward becoming reality. The British were immediately hostile to the proposal, regarding it as a Franco-American conspiracy. Acheson later regretted what he termed his stupidity in not recognizing the problems such a proposal created for the socialist government of Britain. It could not manage Britain's economy toward the development of a welfare state if coal and steel were excluded, and if they did not join the effort, they could expect to lose their continental markets. When Schuman publicly invited six countries to join the plan on May 25, the Benelux nations, Germany, and Italy accepted. Britain declined. In between the secret announcement of the plan and the public invitation the North Atlantic Council meeting began to probe the more sensitive issue of actually providing a common defense. The reliance on an American atomic monopoly had been shattered the previous September when the Soviets detonated their first atomic device. While Acheson may have desired the inclusion of "Germanic" power and "Frankish" Spain in the crusade against Russia, he clearly thought the political realities

precluded such an eventuality for the foreseeable future. Only a year earlier, in April of 1949, he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that "the disarmament and demilitarization of Germany must be complete and absolute," and "a discussion of including West Germany in the pact is not possible." In reality elements in both the Pentagon and State Department viewed the inclusion of both Germany and Spain as an eventual necessity. As early as December 1948 Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall stressed the view at a National Security Council meeting that the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarded any "commitment to the defense of Europe...should leave open the possibility of a later accession of Germany and Spain."[34]

The Schuman Plan, however, seemed to breech the age-old hostility between France and Germany. What had seemed politically impossible only a year earlier now seemed to take on new life. At the Big Three session of the Council meeting Bevin raised the prospect of giving the Chinese Communists recognition in the U.N., but Acheson argued to do so would "increase greatly the capacity for Communist trouble-making in Indochina, Malaya, the Philippine Islands, and Indonesia." Bevin must have felt more Franco-American pressure as Schuman agreed with Acheson's analysis as well as with the proposition that France was not likely to change its vote in the Security Council given Mao's recent

recognition of Ho Chi Minh in Indochina. Acheson then raised the question of just how long the continued occupation of Germany could be expected to have "a useful and beneficial effect in reshaping Germany." He answered his own question by claiming a couple of years at best. He claimed Germany's interests lay in Western Europe and the effort should begin at once to "entangle and integrate" her there. "Here," Acheson claimed, "the implications of the French Coal and Steel Plan were particularly relevant and important....In the ensuing discussion it soon became evident that even Schuman had not fully appreciated that as the plan went into effect it would have far-reaching effects on the status of the occupation and the Rhur Authority." [35]

It is against this background that the real significance of NSC-68 must be viewed. The analysis called for in the document was the result of the ending of American atomic monopoly only several months earlier. The prospect of the newly-created NATO presenting an effective deterrent against conventional Soviet military strength without both German and Spanish participation had been questioned from the beginning. Yet NSC-68 "did not give prominence to possible German assistance," because undoubtedly French and British resistance to rearming Germany could only be considered as a possibility in the distant future. But the Schuman Plan opened the door to the prospect that it could

be accomplished sooner than expected. That events were outrunning the planners was evidenced by two speeches presented by General Omar Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in April and May, virtually as the Schuman Plan was being presented to Acheson. In April Bradley "warned that NATO plans were in danger of outrunning the readiness of governments to provide the necessary forces" and in May of "the need to establish adequate ground forces before Russia succeeded in her efforts to achieve an atomic deadlock." [39]

The decision by Acheson and the administration to support the Schuman Plan and France against British resistance is consistent with Acheson's expressed desire to bring Germanic power to bear in the struggle against the "new fanatic faith" of an aggressive Soviet Union. That the Soviets were intent on an aggressive expansion of global dimensions was confirmed in the eyes of the administration in June when North Korean forces attacked South Korea. As historian Richard Freeland observed: "Had a mischievous deity determined to produce an event that would bring to fever pitch the already heated political situation in the United States, he could have succeeded no better than did the North Koreans in their bold attack upon an Asian area that only six months before the American Secretary of State had indicated would not be defended by American arms." While

some revisionist historians have argued the administration's charges that the Korean War was a probing action initiated by the Soviets and that South Korean activities provoked the North or even that the South initiated hostilities, we now know that both Stalin and Mao approved of the attack and that the North Koreans even used a Soviet prepared-battle plan. [37]

The fact remains that domestic political considerations played a role in the administration's decision to intervene in the Korean situation. Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson admitted as much. Domestic opinion also influenced the decision not to ask Congress for authority to dispatch troops. Johnson recalled, " We were scared of the Hill on this thing. If we tried to put ground troops in at the beginning there would have been a great deal of trouble." The related decision to send a military mission and increased aid to the French in Indochina would have far-reaching consequences for American foreign policy. The decision to support France via the Schuman Plan as a bulwark against Communism in Europe coincided now with the need to support France as a bulwark against Communist aggression in Asia. This is not to say the decision to assist a Catholic country was based on religious grounds, but rather that the influence of the Catholic periphery in establishing the political atmosphere and the culture of

anti-Communism then prevailing in the country left virtually no other option open but active intervention. Thus public opinion was prepared to support actions based on the analysis contained in NSC-68. [38]

The outbreak of war in Korea provided Pat McCarran with the opportunity to reengage his pet project -- Spain. In July, less than a month after the outbreak of war, McCarran convened a "somewhat secret" meeting of Senators and Pentagon officials in his Washington office. He announced his intention to introduce another bill calling for a $100 million loan to Spain. Pentagon officials restated the strategic importance of Spain to the senators. The official administration position, in spite of Acheson's personal desire to engage "Frankish" power along with German, was not to encourage any such move, at least not yet. McCarran was at the forefront of those convinced the Soviet Union was behind the attack in Korea. "Korea is not the real enemy in the conflict," he declared,"Korea is only the buffer. We must be prepared to fight the real enemy behind Korea -- soviet[sic] Russia." If the confrontation should ultimately involve the Soviets, he claimed "it will take the form of a crusade against the last bastion of evil ideology, which has plagued the world since fascism and nazism were conquered." The Senate was moving in McCarran's direction on the Spanish question. Even the Democratic

leadership deserted the administration in the crushing 65-15 vote. "I'm a realist," proclaimed Majority Leader Scott Lucas of Illinois before the vote on the loan, "and when I'm licked, I don't hesitate to admit it." [39]

Unlike Lucas, however, Truman was never one to admit defeat. Administration backers in the Senate called for reconsideration of the loan after Truman denounced its inclusion in the omnibus appropriations bill. McCarran again demonstrated his strength when the motion to reconsider was tabled by the same 65-15 vote. A House-Senate conference committee reduced the amount of the loan to $62.5 million and the Senate went along with a House request to cut the President's Point Four program request. When the President sent a strong message to the House requesting the full amount of the Point Four program be restored, Floor Leader John McCormack did not even read Truman's message to the House; he simply inserted it in the record. When he finally signed the appropriations bill Truman, in language reminiscent of a later President, declared he did not consider the Spanish loan provision "mandatory" only an "authorization." [40]

The initial bipartisan support of Truman's reaction to the Korean invasion seemed a throwback to the Vandenberg era. That, however, was not to last. The Republicans had learned all too well in the 1948 election that all things

being equal in terms of foreign policy they could not hope to draw the big city Catholic voters away from the Democrats on domestic issues alone. That the overall issue of Communism, both domestic and international, was political, and by political I mean electoral politics, was clearly established by McCarthy backer Tom Coleman. "The issue is fairly simple....," he declared, "it is now a political issue, and somebody is going to gain or lose politically before it's over. It all comes down to this: are we going to try to win an election or aren't we?" [41]

The Republicans were indeed going to try and win an election. While the major Republican spokesmen were praising the President's actions in Korea, they were qualifying the praise with criticism of the administration's past policies, which they claimed led to the war. Senator George Malone of Nevada declared "...it is fairly clear that what happened in China and what is now happening in Korea were brought about deliberately by the advisors of the President at Yalta and by the advisors of the State Department since then." Senator Albert Jenner of Indiana proclaimed: "The Korean debacle also reminds us that the same sell-out-to-Stalin statesmen who turned Russia loose are still in the saddle...." According to Senator Taft, "the bungling and inconsistent foreign policy of the administration" had led to the atmosphere in which "it was not unreasonable for the North

Koreans to suppose they could get away with it [the invasion] and that we would do nothing about it." Senator McCarthy, as usual, was perhaps the most extreme in his denunciation of past policies that were developed by "...that group of Communists, fellow travelers and dupes in our State Department -- a group who make Benedict Arnold look like a piker." [42]

By late summer the only spirit of bipartisanship seemed to center around domestic anti-Communism. Senator McCarran, fresh from his victory on the question of the Spanish loan, was pushing for passage of the McCarran Internal Security Act. As chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, McCarran had kept alive the salient features of the Mundt-Nixon bill which required the registration of "Communist-action" and "Communist-front" organizations with the Attorney General. Senate liberals, led by Paul Douglas of Illinois and Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, "as a hypothetically less drastic alternative" co-sponsored a bill authorizing the Attorney General to round up and hold in detention camps anyone he considered to be engaged in subversive activities in the event the President declared an "internal security emergency." The pressures of war, an upcoming election and the fear of being proclaimed "soft on Communism" generated overwhelming support for the McCarran Act. Despite the fact that both McCarran and Mundt

questioned the so-called "concentration camp" features of the bill as being unconstitutional, the measure sailed through both the House and Senate. Truman promptly vetoed the bill, declaring it "a bill which would greatly weaken our liberties, and give aid and comfort to those who would destroy us." The President's veto was overridden in the House 286 to 48 and in the Senate 57 to ten. Thus, while McCarthy's shotgun approach and flamboyant rhetoric was driving liberals to distraction, McCarran, the political insider, was going about the business of getting legislation passed in both the foreign and domestic fields. [43]

While the war in Korea was still going badly in late August, General Douglas MacArthur entered the fray. Advance copies of a speech prepared by MacArthur for delivery to the Veterans of Foreign Wars appeared in U.S. News and World Report. The speech attacked as "appeasement" and "defeatism" those who criticized defense of Formosa in the belief it would "alienate continental Asia." Such an attitude would expose our "friends" in the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Indochina, Japan and other areas to "the lustful thrusts of those who stand for slavery as against liberty, for atheism as against God." Truman asked Secretary of Defense Johnson to order MacArthur to withdraw the speech, which he did. This action only increased Republican criticism of Truman's conduct of the war. Senate Minority

Leader Kenneth Wherry attacked "the vagueness and complete lack of direction to the administration's policies in the Far East...at a time when our boys are fighting and dying in Korea." It was at this time, according to historian Ronald J. Caridi, that many Republicans "started to express their dissatisfaction with the entire concept of containment."[44]

The dramatic mid-September landing at Inchon by MacArthur, resulting in the encirclement and destruction of much of the North Korean army and a rapid series of military successes for the United Nations forces, probably kept the mid-term election losses for the Democrats at a minimum. With the war going well and MacArthur making predictions that the boys would be home by Christmas, the Republicans still managed to pick up 28 seats in the House and five new Senators. In addition, the Republicans managed to capture a majority of the governorships being contested that year. It was not the overall gains, however, but rather the individual Republicans who won, and, perhaps more important, the individual Democrats who lost, that made the results significant. Both the Senate Majority Leader, Scott Lucas of Illinois, and Majority Whip, Francis J. Myers of Pennsylvania, were defeated. Millard Tydings, Chairman of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee and of the investigation that had castigated McCarthy's charges against the State Department, and Elbert Thomas of Utah, Chairman of

the Senate Labor Committee, were also defeated. As William A. Glaser has pointed out "The simultaneous defeat of four such important leaders weakened the power and prestige of the Democrats," while at the same time "no comparable defeats of incumbents were experienced by the Republican Party in 1950." Among Republican incumbents Senator Taft's reelection in Ohio with some 57 percent of the vote "convinced him and his supporters that he possessed heretofore-unsuspected popularity at the grass roots and led to his bid for the 1952 presidential nomination." [45]

Equally important was the emergence of new Republican leadership and the issues they used to get elected. Richard M. Nixon, capitalizing on the national publicity generated by his involvement in the Alger Hiss case, won election to the Senate by over 680,000 votes in California. Everett M. Dirkson defeated Scott Lucas in Illinois by over 290,000 votes. In Maryland John Marshall Butler described his 43,000 vote victory over Tydings as "the largest majority that has ever been given a Republican senatorial candidate in the history of my state." Glaser has pointed out that along with the emergence of new leaders came new issues which "were tested for their vote getting effectiveness." The three big issues that would provide the cornerstone of the 1952 Republican campaign -- Korea, Communism and corruption -- "were first used widely by Republican campaigners in 1950."

Indeed, Nixon's campaign in California would become the bellwether for future Republican efforts linking both Korea and Communism. In late October, when the first evidence of Chinese Communist "Volunteers" became public, Nixon demanded to know Helen Gahagan Douglas' position on admitting Red China to the United Nations. When she declined to answer Nixon declared: "This is the last straw. I know that my opponent was committed to the State Department policy of appeasement in the Far East, but I never dreamed she would stick to it even after we were attacked." Thus Nixon neatly tied his opponent both to support for the enemy in the midst of a shooting war and to the policy of appeasement generated by the Hiss gang at the State Department. [46]

Post-election commentators tended to focus on the effect Senator McCarthy played in shifting Catholic voters to the Republican Party. This was particularly true in the case of Tydings' defeat in Maryland, where McCarthy took an active role in helping to defeat his Senate nemesis. But McCarthy had campaigned across the country, and according to columnist Marquis Childs, "In every contest where it was a major factor McCarthyism won." Later historians have attempted to minimize McCarthy's effectiveness, citing local issues and the personal popularity of some candidates rather than McCarthy's influence. Donald Crosby has made a particularly valiant effort to downplay the role Catholics

played in Tydings' defeat and to minimize the shift of Catholic votes to Eisenhower in 1952. Both these interpretations, it seems to me, miss the larger impact of Catholic influence not just on other Catholics but on the center-core groups as well. Most of the time these center-core groups may not even have been aware that Catholic influence was playing a role in shaping their attitudes. Californians may have been well aware that McCarthy was campaigning for his fellow Communist hunter Nixon and may not have been influenced by McCarthy's support for him. But they were certainly not aware at the time that Nixon's overall national prestige as a result of the Hiss case had been largely the result of efforts by Father John Cronin acting on information from Catholic FBI director J. Edgar Hoover and in turn passed on to Nixon. Thus the influence of Catholics such as McCarthy on Catholic voters is only one dimension of the politics involved. Equally important was the influence of the periphery on the center-core. [47]

Truman and the Democratic Party were now faced squarely with the prospect that FDR had foreseen in early 1945. The domestic political consequences of the failure to achieve a lasting peace in the face of Soviet domination of Catholic Eastern Europe had seemingly driven large numbers of traditionally Catholic voters into the Republican column in the 1950 mid-term elections. Historian Stephen Ambrose in

writing on the 1950 election states, "This was an America in which paranoia ran so deep that it was politically profitable to charge that Truman and Acheson, those coldest of cold warriors, were soft on Communism." The irony of the situation was clear. Truman had managed to retain the Democratic loyalty of Catholic voters in 1948 by keeping foreign policy out of the political debate. His tough stand against Communism through such measures as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan and, as we have seen, his ability to link Catholic support for those measures through the Catholic hierarchy was no longer enough. Appeals during the campaign by liberal Catholic Democrats such as Secretary of Labor Maurice Tobin, former Governor of Massachusetts, and Democratic National Chairman Stephen Mitchell were not as effective against the rhetoric of McCarthy, McCarran, and others on charges that the administration was influenced by Communism, as FDR's campaign against similar charges hurled by Father Coughlin in 1936 had been. Many Catholics who rejected Coughlin's charges now seemed receptive to the same arguments and were willing to vote accordingly. McCarran himself had become convinced of the validity of the charges. An early supporter of the New Deal, he considered not seeking a third term in 1944 on the Democratic ticket because "he cannot support those who call themselves Democrats, but who in reality are nothing but communists to

the very core." Similarly, Joseph Kennedy, who supported FDR in 1936, supported Richard Nixon's Senate bid in 1950 and even channeled a $1000 contribution to Nixon through his son Jack. [48]

The 1950 election results seemed to foreshadow the fact that the periphery was moving to the right politically, and in the process dominating the political culture of anti-Communism. In fact, Catholic anti-Communism governed not only the domestic political culture, but it drove U.S. foreign policy in directions the administration did not necessarily want to go, such as in Spain. Crosby framed the issue succinctly: "In the fearful ten months that followed the 1950 elections, the Democratic strategists in the White House found themselves haunted by a nagging question -- would the Republicans be able to use the Communist issue to capture the Catholic vote in 1952?" Stephen Springarn, administrative assistant to Truman, wrote a series of memoranda encouraging the President to appoint liberal Catholics to various security commissions the administration was trying to create as a counterpoint to McCarthy. The electoral politics of the Catholic vote, which FDR sidestepped in 1944 over the Polish question, and which Truman managed to maintain in 1948 through his hardline approach to Communist expansion in Europe, seemed about to break against the Democrats. The issues were in place, the

rhetoric was capturing votes and the prospect of a political realignment was in the air.[49]

Notes

1) Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1969), p.355.

2) Ibid., p.357.

3) George C. Herring, America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1970, Second Edition, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), p.11., and John Gimbel, The Origins of the Marshall Plan, (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp.35-37.

4) Richard J. Cushing to all French pastors July 30, 1948, Archives of Archdiocese of Boston (AAB), Chancery Circular File, Box #6, Folder #3, Item 5.

5) Boston Globe, August 22, 1948, p.1.

6) Ibid.

7) Herring, Longest War, pp.12-14.

8) Thomas Reeves, The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy, (New York: Stein and Day, 1982), p.202.; Robert Griffith, The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate, (New York: Hayden Book Co., 1978), pp.28-30.; and Donald F. Crosby, S.J., God, Church and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church 1950-1957, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), pp.47-52.

9) Griffith, Politics of Fear, pp.29-30.; Reeves, Life and Times, p.191.

10) Griffith, Politics of Fear, pp.47-49.; Cushing to all pastors, February 2, 1950, AAB Chancery Circular File, Box #6, Folder #8.

11) Griffith, Politics of Fear, p.42.; William F. Buckley and L. Brent Bozell, McCarthy and His Enemies: The Record and It's Meaning, (New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1954), p.20.

12) Buckley and Bozell, McCarthy and His Enemies, p.52.; William V. Shannon, The American Irish: A Political and Social Portrait, Second Edition (Amherst, MA.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989) p.371.

13) Reeves, Life and Times, p.235.

14) Richard M. Freeland, The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), pp. 340-341.; Von Vron Pittman, Jr., Senator Patrick A. McCarran and the Politics of Containment, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Georgia, 1979, p.181.

15) Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.339.

16) Seymour Martin Lipset, "The 1950's: McCarthyism" in Lipset, Seymour Martin and Earl Raab, The Politics of Unreason: Right Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1977, Second Edition, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p.215. and p.220.

17) Ibid., p.232.

18) Ibid., p.233.

19) Ibid., pp.44-49.; David A. Bennett, The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), p.302.

20) Frank, American Catholics, p.45.; Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.207.; John Cooney, The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman, (New York: Times Books, 1984), pp.146-147.

21) Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.211.

22) Bennett, The Party of Fear, p.293.

23) Buckley and Bozell, McCarthy and His Enemies, pp.76-85.

24) Ibid. pp.136-139.

25) Ibid. pp.86-96.

26) Ibid. pp.102-111.; Pittman, Senator Pat McCarran, p.9.; Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.347.

27) Buckley and Bozell, McCarthy and His Times, pp.154-160.; Reeves, Life and Times, p.443.

28) Frank, "American Catholics and Communism," p.56.

29) Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p.24.

30) Theodore J. Lowi, "Bases in Spain," in Harold Stein, Ed., American Civil-Military Decisions: A Book of Case Studies, (Birmingham, AL.: University of Alabama Press, 1963), p.680.; David M.Oshinsky, A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy, (New York: Free Press, 1983), p126. Reeves, Life and Times, p.256.

31) Oshinsky, A Conspiracy So Immense, p.126.; Buckley and Bozell, McCarthy and His Enemies, p.141.

32) Walter LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-1990, Sixth Edition, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1991) p.96.; Acheson, Present at the Creation, p.376.

33) Acheson, Present at the Creation, p.382.

34) Laurence W. Martin, "The Decision to Rearm Germany," in American Civil-Military Decisions, Ed. Harold Stein, p.646.

35) Acheson, Present at the Creation, pp.394-395.

36) Martin, "The Decision to Rearm Germany," p.649.

37) Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.348. and Newsweek, July 1994.

38) Freeland, The Truman Doctrine, p.349-350.

39) Pittman, Senator Pat McCarran, pp.185-186.; Lowi, "Bases in Spain," p.681.

40) Lowi, "Bases in Spain," pp.681-682.

41) Reeves, Life and Times, p.283.

42) Ronald J. Caridi, The Korean War and American Politics: The Republican Party as a Case Study, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), pp.39-40.

43) Reeves, Life and Times, pp.329-331.; Pittman, Senator Pat McCarran, p.143.

44) Caridi, The Korean War and American Politics, pp.62-64, and p.73.

45) William N. McPhee and William A. Glaser, Public Opinion and Congressional Elections, (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), pp.276-277.

46) Reeves, Life and Times, p.343.; McPhee and Glaser, Public Opinion, pp.277-278.; Stephen E. Ambrose, Nixon: The Education of a Politician1913-1962, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.220.

47) Reeves, Life and Times, p.343.

48) Ambrose, Nixon, p.202.; Pittman, Senator Pat McCarran, p.79.; Ambrose, Nixon, p.211.

49) Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p.79.

CHAPTER 14

"WE HAVE HEARD GOD SPEAK TODAY"

The Korean war was going badly in January 1951. In fact Seoul fell to the Communists on January 4. The conduct of the war, we have seen, had been identified by the Republican Party as a potential domestic political issue in the off-year election. According to Ronald Caridi the four-month period beginning with Chinese intervention in the war in late November 1950 and the dismissal of MacArthur in April 1951 resulted in Republican "resolve to oppose the Administration's handling of all phases of foreign policy," and "to use the Korean War for its own political advantage." [1]

Walter LaFeber, respected diplomatic historian, identifies Korea as "the war for both Asia and Europe." He emphasizes yet again the importance of France in State Department calculations for both areas. State Department planners had to support the French effort in Indochina in order to maintain access to vital raw materials and to provide markets in Southeast Asia for a recovering Japan, which was the "...key to the entire American position in the Pacific." Such support, both economically and militarily, would extract a quid pro quo, namely, French compliance with the rearming of Germany. Such strategic and economic arguments have validity, but the cultural aspects, in this

instance religion, have not been thoroughly explored. Religious views take on added significance in the context of approval of these policies by American public opinion.[2]

In Europe the dominant personalities, Schuman in France, Adenauer in Germany, DiGaspari in Italy and Franco in Spain were all Catholic. In the Pacific a similar pattern emerges. The Catholic Philippines and Indochina, controlled for the moment by Catholic France with the support of an indigenous Catholic bureaucratic infrastructure [which we will look at in more depth later], form the bookends of American strategic policy in Southeast Asia. In addition, both Syngman Rhee in Korea and Chiang Kai-shek on Formosa, while not Catholic, were converts to Christianity and thus represented Asian nationalist alternatives to "atheistic" Communism. To neglect this aspect of the emerging Republican policy of "liberation" versus the Truman policy of "containment" in terms of domestic politics has resulted, I believe, in a skewed interpretation of the origins and subsequent maturation of the Cold War.

The National Security Council was presented with a policy paper on Spain in mid-January at the time the military situation in Korea was deteriorating. Acheson, whom we have seen recognized the need to include "Frankish power" in the fight against an aggressive Russia, accepted the long-range goals enunciated in this paper. One of these was

"to search out the situation for a possible military arrangement." In naming Stanton Griffis Ambassador to Spain Truman again raised the religious situation. "I don't know what your religion is," the President told Griffis, "I do not even know if you have any, but I am a Baptist and I believe that in any country man should be permitted to worship God in his own way. The situation in Spain is intolerable. Do you know that a Baptist who dies in Spain must even be buried in the middle of the night?" The strategic significance of Spain, however, and the impact of the Catholic Lobby in building public support for enlisting Catholic Spain in the fight against "atheistic" Communism were overriding the President's libertarian objections. [3]

While Truman expressed his displeasure at religious persecution in Spain, American Catholics again confronted continued efforts to undermine church authority in Eastern Europe. Michael Busalka, Roman Catholic Suffragan Bishop of Bratislava, Czechoslovakia was brought to trial. Busalka and Bishops Jan Vojtassak and Pavel Gojdic were charged with treason and espionage for wartime activities. "Sent Spies to Russia, Bishop on Trial Says," read the headline in the New York Times of January 12. It reported that Busalka "told the court he sent spies into Soviet Ukraine shortly before the German attack on Russia." How this constituted "treason and

espionage" against the Czech government at the time was left unstated. [4]

Another story of the same day came closer to the mark for policy makers and those interested in changing public attitudes toward Spain. Archbishop Cushing of Boston, who led a pilgrimage to the Catholic shrines of France in the midst of the Marshall Plan funding debate, now announced plans to lead a pilgrimage to the shrines of Spain in the midst of growing public debate on Spain's role in European defense. Cushing, the Times reported, "was planning to accept the invitation of church and government leaders to lead an international pilgrimage to Christian shrines in that country(Spain) next summer."[emphasis added] The article went on to state that Cushing received a letter from Jose F. Leguerica, Spanish Ambassador designate to the United States "who noted that Archbishop Cushing recently had praised Spain for its fidelity to Christendom and its resistance to anti-religious violence." If Truman believed Baptists in Spain had to be buried in the middle of the night, the American public was being presented with a far different picture. The pilgrimage was scheduled to sail from Boston on July 14. [5]

As the question of what to do about Spain slowly took shape, the controversy surrounding military policy in Korea exploded. MacArthur advocated taking the war directly to the

Chinese, including the bombing of Chinese cities and the use of Chiang's forces either in Korea or in an invasion of the Mainland. Truman, who had earlier supported MacArthur's drive to the Yalu with the expressed intent of reuniting the Korean peninsula as a political unit, now reverted to the limited concept of maintaining the independence and integrity of the Republic of Korea. Republican policy during this period was reminiscent of the Civil War era's Committee on the Conduct of the War. No criticism of the administration's conduct of the war was too extreme. Much of it centered around the "no win" concept of limited war, the failure of the United Nations to support branding the Chinese Communists as aggressors, and the failure of our allies to provide adequate forces to the conflict and to discontinue trading with the Chinese.

By the time Truman dismissed MacArthur on April 11 the military situation had stabilized about the original 38th parallel border. The reaction to MacArthur's dismissal was instantaneous, furious and political. The White House received 125,000 telegrams within forty-eight hours and admitted they "were running 20 to 1 against the President." The Michigan legislature passed a resolution declaring that "at 1:00 A.M. of this day, World Communism achieved its greatest victory of a decade in the dismissal of General MacArthur." By April 17 MacArthur was back in the country

and a crowd estimated at over a half-million people lined the route from San Francisco's airport to the general's hotel. On April 19 "a record 30 million people tuned in their radios to hear General MacArthur address Congress." The general provided his political supporters with all the ammunition they needed. "In war, indeed, there is no substitute for victory," he declared, and went on to say that the policy of not attempting to drive China from Korea was nothing less than "appeasement." He claimed his plan to carry the war to the Chinese had the support "of our own joint Chiefs of Staff," implying that the military judgment of professional soldiers was being overridden by "a mere, meddlesome civilian, the President of the United States."[6]

Republican reaction to the speech took on a messianic flavor. Representative Dewey Short of Missouri proclaimed: "We have heard God speak today. God in the flesh, the voice of God." Former President Herbert Hoover declared MacArthur was the "reincarnation of St. Paul." The General's arrival in New York, "hard-bitten, cynical New York, stronghold of the Democratic party," seemed to foreshadow political doom for the administration. Six million people lined the parade route in a welcome that exceeded the return of General Eisenhower and the reception given Charles Lindbergh. Observers noted people crossing their breasts as the General passed. The motorcade took almost seven hours to cover the

19.2 mile route through Manhattan. The general got out of his convertible only twice, "once to pump the hand of Francis Cardinal Spellman, who was standing in his red robes outside St. Patrick's Cathedral." [7]

The politics of the situation was not lost on Senator Pat McCarran. On April 28 the Nevada Democrat burst into print on his favorite subject -- Spain. McCarran published a lengthy analysis of America's military situation vis.-a-vis. the real enemy -- Russia -- in the Saturday Evening Post entitled "Why Shouldn't the Spanish Fight for Us?" A short preface by the Post declared "A million fiery fighting men are ready to help us battle communists if we give them the nod and some guns. They are the subjects of a police state, but, says this distinguished senator, they can still kill reds." The senator briefly outlined his earlier efforts to secure a loan for Spain. In language that could only be construed as drawing on public discontent over the President's seeming "meddling" in military affairs, he launched into his primary objective -- to "bring Spain into the Atlantic Alliance." McCarran told his readers: "The shirt sleeve boys in the Pentagon wanted it. Army men of Cabinet level kept out of the argument, but one notch below were the professionals, the men who have already fought Russia on a hundred blueprints." These "professionals" knew the value of Spain to the defense of Europe. "But the

military does not make decisions if political questions intrude." In late April 1951 McCarran's readers did not have to be reminded what that meant. "Political decisions belong to the State Department and the White House," he continued, "and the President had made it clear he wanted no relations with Spain." [8]

This left the "professionals" in a bind. They could "not openly advocate a policy which frightened their superiors, let alone contradict the President," without jeopardizing their careers, as MacArthur's dismissal made all too clear. This blundering President could not, or would not, see what was clear to all, but "by the time we have waved good-by to a few more boatloads of nineteen-year-olds, the logic of Spain will be obvious." The still-ravaged European economies, and the reluctance of the Europeans to raise the necessary divisions for their own defense left Americans with only one choice; "as retaliation to Russian invasion, our trump card is air power directed at Russia itself -- atomic war carried right to the source." [9]

McCarran went on to describe the opposition to Spain's inclusion in the Western community as "a festering anger with critics in many countries of the West who have been too careless with the word 'Fascist.'" These critics failed to understand that the Spanish Civil War "was simply Stalin's first European inning in a game whose subsequent innings

were played and won in Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and China, and whose latest inning is Korea." For most Spanish, then, "their civil war was simply one Russian failure in a campaign that subsequently was a success in eleven other countries now bossed by the Kremlin." For McCarran it was almost impossible to discuss the Spanish Civil War rationally with our European allies; "in France's Chamber of Deputies there are some twenty men who fought in the Loyalist brigades. In the Italian Government -- at the cabinet level, in Parliament and in the civil service -- are some 200 veterans of the Loyalist army," and while England did not send as many men as other countries, "there was a unit in the Loyalist forces commonly known as the Attlee Company." Even Marshall Tito of Yugoslavia had commanded a Loyalist brigade. While McCarran's comments would certainly appear to be those of a rigid ideologue French political scientist Alfred Grosser describes a postwar European political situation much like that McCarran saw. "Everywhere," Grosser writes, "in France, Denmark, Italy, Germany and Belgium, a push to the Left was taking place." The war had been fought in the name of anti-Fascism according to Grosser and "the disappearance of the parties of the Right caused many conservatives to vote for the least Leftist party." The resultant triumph of socialist governments in Western Europe

committed to the "denunciation of monopolies, the refusal to equate political freedom and economic laissez-faire, the demand for a planned economy and participation of workers in the management of enterprises...were found almost everywhere...." The fact that virtually all these Governments were headed by Catholics, and that the United States was supporting them both financially and militarily, lends further support to the thesis that religion rather than economics was the underlying paradigm of cold war confrontation with "atheistic" Communism.[10]

This is further born out by the fact that McCarran had to address his religion. He asked readers for "leave to intrude with an explanation which is personal and, I hope, unnecessary." He acknowledged his leading role in the plan to "mobilize Spain," and added, "I am also of the Roman Catholic faith." However, "I am certain my religious views do not enter, consciously or subconsciously, into my advocacy of Spain's military role." But the mere fact he raised the issue, even as a disclaimer, indicates that it was significant and that by extension it involved the Catholic periphery and Spain in the public's perception. Furthermore, the disclaimer has something of a hollow ring to it, given his connections with Cardinal Spellman and his discussions of the Communist menace with Pius XII. In any case, the article, coming as it did at the very height of

the MacArthur controversy, further tied the Truman administration to what the public perceived as failed military policies in Korea, and perhaps disastrous military policies in Europe. Coming from a powerful Catholic Democrat, in a party largely dependent on urban Catholic voters, McCarran's arguments had to be taken into account. [11]

The MacArthur hearings before the joint Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees began in early May and ran through June 25th. Again controversy swirled about the conduct of the hearings, which the Democrats demanded be held in executive session while the Republicans sought public hearings. Senator Dirksen, newly elected Republican from Illinois, reminded his Senate colleagues of the result of secrecy at Yalta. In a Senate vote to place the bill of Senator Homer Ferguson, dealing with open hearings at the top of the agenda the Democrats won on a vote of 41 to 37, with Senator McCarran the only Democrat to cross party lines. MacArthur, as expected, attacked the administration's policies as "appeasement" and used the Truman Doctrine against Truman, declaring the enemy was not Russia but "Communism all over the world." MacArthur was confident the professional soldiers among the Joint Chiefs of Staff would endorse his proposals for victory rather than the concept of "limited war" espoused by the administration. Instead, the

Joint Chiefs attacked virtually every aspect of MacArthur's plan and even the general himself. The culmination of the attack came when General Omar Bradley declared that MacArthur's plan would involve the United States "in the wrong war at the wrong time with the wrong enemy." [12]

The MacArthur hearings had barely concluded when Truman announced his willingness to negotiate a settlement in Korea based on the 38th parallel. According to Walter Karp, "This was the appeasement peace' against which MacArthur had hurled his thunderbolts...and, so it seemed back in April, [to] the entire body of the American people." The general's political star was declining, but that of another general was rising. The Republican party throughout this period seemed to embody the contradictions inherent in the Korean controversy. The concept of a "limited war" for limited objectives ran against the grain of American public opinion. To a nation that had so recently emerged victorious from the greatest war the world had ever known with its clearcut objective of "unconditional surrender," the idea of limited war seemed preposterous. This was the appealing card Republicans were playing: either bring the full force of American military might to bear against the enemy or get out. This seeming contradiction emerged early in the MacArthur controversy when on April 24 Republican Senator Harry P. Cain introduced two resolutions on the same day.

The first called for a declaration of war against both North Korea and China. The second called for the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Korea. [13]

The controversy surrounding MacArthur seemed to have been spent by July 10 when American and Chinese negotiators met in the Korean town of Kaesong to begin discussions for a truce. At the same time events were moving toward a new U.S. policy toward Spain. On July 12 the Boston Globe, in a front-page story, described the purposes of the forthcoming pilgrimage to Spain being led by Archbishop Cushing. The pilgrims would receive a historic welcome in Spain, according to the Globe, and "be given an opportunity to learn first hand the religious character of the country" and "the sincere affection of the Spanish people toward the United States." Cushing's remarks barely concealed the political nature of the trip. "Despite the political misgivings on every side," he remarked, "I believe the times are propitious for such a strictly spiritual gesture of friendship for Spain. It is also a declaration of confidence in God. Little by little the Western world is beginning to acknowledge its debt to Spain and to understand in the light of its own experience with Red treachery, the militant resistance of the Spanish people to any compromise with atheistic Communism." The Archbishop of Boston clearly was thinking on the same lines as the Senator from Nevada.[14]

On July 16 readers of the Globe were greeted by a front-page picture of a smiling Archbishop doffing a straw hat to the 4,000 well wishers crowding the pier to wave 'bon voyage' to the Spanish pilgrims. "Summing up the motives for this historic making trip of American Catholics to Catholic Spain," the Globe reported, "Archbishop Cushing told this reporter tonite (sic) that American Catholics are conscious of the need of Divine Aid in the present world crisis." Cushing was restating his earlier theme that only American Catholics could perform the tasks necessary to save the world from atheistic Communism. This time it was being stated through the public media along with the belief that God was on our side. The Archbishop concluded by saying "one could consider this journey in the nature of a good will visit to Spain, not on a high or so called diplomatic level, but one of people to people." While Cushing's trip was obviously for public consumption and not "on a high or so called diplomatic level," it did not have to be. That was taking place separately, on the very same day. Admiral Forrest P. Sherman arrived in Madrid on July 16 to begin serious discussions with Franco on securing military bases in Spain. Secretary of State Acheson confirmed on July 18 the nature of Sherman's discussions with Franco. Noting that "military authorities are in general agreement that Spain is of strategic importance to the general defense of Western

Europe," Acheson went on to say "tentative and exploratory conversations have been undertaken with the Spanish Government with the sole purpose of ascertaining what Spain might be willing and able to do which would contribute to the strengthening of the common defense against possible aggression." McCarran's question of "Why shouldn't the Spanish fight for us?" was now being answered affirmatively. They should. The President confirmed the shift in administration policy toward Spain at a press conference the following day.[15]

Certainly geopolitical, economic, and strategic reasons entered into the decision to reverse American policy toward Spain. But perhaps in no other case do we have so dramatic a picture of the influence of the Catholic periphery in influencing the culture of Cold War anti-Communism in terms of public opinion on a foreign policy issue. Interestingly, we do have available statistical evidence of the change taking place in American attitudes toward Spain over the course of the postwar years. In May 1946 only 14 percent of American Catholics had "a favorable impression of the present government in Spain, headed by General Franco." Still, this represented more than double the 6 percent of American Protestants and seven times the 2 percent of American Jews holding a favorable impression. Much of the overall unfavorable impression was

traced to Franco's sympathies with America's enemies during the war years. The numbers begin to edge upward for all groups following the Czech Coup in 1948, and the beginning of what I have termed the Catholic Lobby's efforts to rehabilitate the image of Spain, not as a fascist state, but as a staunchly Catholic opponent of "atheistic Communism." In November of 1948, while still in the minority, 32 percent of Catholics, 24 percent of Protestants and 22 percent of Jews approved inclusion of Spain in the Marshall Plan. The gap between Catholics and other religious denominations had not only narrowed considerably, but had also jumped dramatically. By the spring of 1949 Catholic opinion was nearing a majority when 47 percent of Catholics favored Spain being invited to join the UN. Catholic opinion was more out front on this issue as only 30 percent of Protestants and 23 percent of Jews approved of Spain's inclusion. The Korean War pushed the numbers up even faster, and by the time of Stalin's death, but before the Korean armistice, 57 percent of Catholics, 53 percent of Protestants and 50 percent of Jews approved sending military and economic assistance to Spain. The efforts by McCarran, Kennedy, Cushing and the numerous other Catholics actively working for inclusion of Spain within the Atlantic alliance had paid off in the form of a supportive public opinion. These efforts culminated in late 1953 when 81 percent of

Catholics, 77 percent of Protestants and 75 percent of Jews approved the sending of military and economic aid to Spain in return for air and naval bases. [16]

With truce negotiations underway in Korea and the administration publicly admitting its reversal of policy on Spain, McCarran turned his attention once again to internal security. The Internal Security subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by McCarran, opened hearings in July 1951 on "the activities of the Institute of Pacific Relations and the actions of Owen Lattimore in particular." It should be kept in mind that it was these hearings which formed the basis of Buckley and Bozell's defense of Senator McCarthy's charges before the Tydings' Committee. Historian Von Pittman describes McCarran's attitude during the hearings by noting he "discussed the war [in Korea] mainly in terms of traitors within the United States." The fall of China was brought about by these traitors and now American boys were dying at Chinese hands as a result. In language reminiscent of MacArthur, McCarran charged the traitors were still at work within the administration, spreading defeatist propaganda [read "limited war"], and attempting "to inject fear into the hearts of Americans so they will accept peace at any price." With American negotiators sitting down with Chinese negotiators in Korea "peace at any price" could only

refer to the "peace without victory" theme being sounded by Republican critics of the administration. [17]

The resumption of charges of traitors in government, this time being led by a powerful Catholic Democrat rather than a Catholic Republican, could only embarrass the administration, its foreign policy and its conduct of the war in Korea. Once again the charges were lent credibility when on March 30 Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted of wartime espionage in passing information to the Soviet Union dealing with the construction of the atomic bomb. Judge Irving R. Kaufman, declaring the couple's crime "worse than murder," imposed the death penalty on the pair on April 5, less than a week before MacArthur's dismissal. Just as occurred earlier in the Hiss case, a Catholic played a prominent role in the Rosenberg case. Elizabeth Bentley, a former member of the Communist Party converted to Catholicism through the efforts of New York's Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, testified about her knowledge of Julius Rosenberg's participation in a Communist cell passing information to the Soviet Union through Harry Gold. Both Bentley and Budenz were now key witnesses before McCarran's subcommittee. The hearings before the McCarran Committee drew massive press coverage. Pittman notes that "this inquiry would develop into the largest, most thorough, and

most controversial of the efforts to uncover communist infiltration into the government." The following year, in July of 1952, The Washington Post, no friend of McCarran's, concluded: "It sums up the character of this congress to state an unquestionable fact: that its most important member was Patrick A. McCarran." [18]

But the political implications of the stalemate in Korea was beginning to take its toll within the Republican party itself. The prospect of victory in 1952 was already beginning to drive presidential politics within the party. Efforts within both parties had long been underway to secure the services of General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Truman himself, in 1948, briefly entertained the prospect of stepping aside as a presidential candidate in favor of the general if that could have been arranged. For many the problem was that noone seemed to know if Eisenhower was a Democrat or a Republican. Much light has been shed on this subject which points to Eisenhower's earlier decision that he was in fact a Republican and that he wanted the Party's presidential nomination. Raymond J. Saulnier, former Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisors, claims Eisenhower told him he "must be a Republican" as early as January, 1948. Saulnier, at that time on the faculty of Columbia University where Eisenhower had recently been named President, was discussing monetary policy with

the general and in the process concluded "it was evident as we talked that his views on public policy fitted him indisputably into the Republican scheme of things." Eisenhower talked "with great force and earnestness about the qualities of self-reliance, industriousness and frugality that individuals had to have if an enterprise system was to work," according to Saulnier, and "I began early to surmise that what I was hearing (and here and there contributing to) was oral drafting of a speech." Indeed, Saulnier claims the essence of the discussion that day was later given in a major address by Eisenhower to the American Bar Association and published under the title "The Middle of the Road: A Statement of Faith in America." [19]

We have clear evidence that by October 14, 1951 Eisenhower indicated in a letter to Senator James Duff of Pennsylvania that he would agree "to accept the Republican Party's nomination as its 1952 presidential candidate, should the Party designate him as its choice." Duff was part of a group of moderate eastern Republicans headed by former presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey that looked to an Eisenhower nomination to head off that of neo-isolationist Robert Taft of Ohio. The group also included Harry Darby, a Republican national committeeman from Eisenhower's home state of Kansas, General Lucious D. Clay, New Hampshire Governor Sherman Adams and Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot

Lodge, Jr., appointed to head the Eisenhower campaign. Along with Dewey came his principal advisor on foreign affairs John Foster Dulles. Dulles, a leading spokesman for Republican foreign policy positions from the internationalist perspective, had recently been the chief negotiator for the Japanese peace treaty which was signed in San Francisco on September 8, 1951. He would now take on the assignment from President Truman of securing ratification of the treaty in the Senate. [20]

Dulles was quite familiar with the political infighting of the Senate where the President was now asking him to secure confirmation of a peace treaty in the middle of a shooting war. He was also aware of the importance in many states of securing the Catholic vote in order to get to the Senate. He had served briefly in the Senate when Dewey, still Governor of New York [after his defeat for the Presidency in 1948], appointed him to fill the unexpired term of Robert F. Wagner, who resigned in the summer of 1949 because of ill health. In the critical 1950 off-year election Dulles faced a particularly tough Democratic Party candidate out to recapture Wagner's old seat. Former Governor Herbert H. Lehman with his connections to "the tight state and city machine" he formerly headed would be difficult to beat. The Republicans put together a team headed by Herbert Brownell [later Attorney General under

Eisenhower] and James H. Hagerty [later Eisenhower's press secretary] and "a young lawyer...named Roderick L. O'Connor, who was drafted to get out the Roman Catholic vote." [21]

The campaign in New York was as hard hitting as elsewhere in the country that year. In an effort to attract the big city ethnic Catholic voter the Republicans charged Lehman "was 'soft on Communism' and approved what the Soviets were doing to the Czechs and other satellite peoples in eastern Europe." Democrats in turn suggested that Dulles "was against popery and had disinherited his son...for becoming a Roman Catholic priest." The son of a Presbyterian minister and theology professor, Dulles had been taken aback by the decision of his youngest son, Avery, to convert to Catholicism in 1941. Avery then took matters further by entering a Jesuit seminary and taking the initial vows of the Catholic priesthood. The charges seemed to be sticking, and O'Connor, with Dulles' approval' sought to bring father and son together to discredit the claims. Avery, however, under the strict rules of the Jesuit Order, was confined to his seminary in Woodstock, New Jersey. O'Connor sought the help of Father Robert Gannon, former head of Fordham University, to see if "there [was] any way Avery could be brought to New York?" to which Gannon responded "Tell the senator I'm sure we can work something out." Indeed, something was worked out and Avery appeared at the family's

New York home for a photo session with his father. Hagerty later claimed the photos were intended only for use in the metropolitan areas with "the idea being to appeal to the Italian and other Catholic voters in the city." But the pictures were distributed upstate as well and, according to Hagerty, "probably didn't gain us anything. Because I think there was a certain feeling upstate about the Catholic connection." [22]

Dulles, then, was clearly aware of the importance of both the Catholic periphery's electoral importance and its central role in the development of the culture of anti-Communism. The Dulles/Eisenhower team would lay out a strategy of "liberation" rather than "containment" which was "motivated in fact more by determination to lure East European voting blocs away from the Democrats than from any realistic expectations of 'rolling back' Moscow's sphere of influence." Dulles elaborated on this theme of liberation in an article entitled "A Policy of Boldness" which appeared in the May 19, 1952 issue of Life magazine. "Our policies have largely involved emergency action to try to 'contain' Soviet communism by checking it here or blocking it there," he wrote, but "we are not working, sacrificing and spending in order to be able to live without this peril -- but to live with it, presumably forever." Such a policy was clearly unacceptable to the people of the United States, according

to Dulles, and just as unacceptable to the people in the enslaved nations. The task of liberation would not be quick and easy, but the people in the captive nations must be made aware that America was on their side. "Liberation from the yoke of Moscow will not occur for a very long time, and courage in neighboring lands will not be sustained, unless the United States makes it publicly known that it wants and expects liberation to occur." The transition to liberation from Moscow's domination should be on the model of Tito's Yugoslavia and a "peaceful separation" because, Dulles wrote, "We do not want a series of bloody uprisings and reprisals." [23]

Dulles's thinking dominated the Republican platform hammered out in Chicago in July of 1952. The platform attacked the Democrats because "they profess to be following a defensive policy of 'containment' of Russian communism which has not contained it," but rather "abandons countless human beings to a despotism and godless terrorism which in turn enables the rulers to forge the captives into a weapon for our destruction."[emphasis added] The phrase "godless terrorism" would of course remind all Americans of the activity in the satellite states against organized religion, particularly Catholicism. The platform went on to state: "The Government of the United States, under Republican leadership, will repudiate all commitments contained in

secret understandings such as those at Yalta which aid Communist enslavements." Further, "it will be made clear, on the highest authority of the President and the Congress, that United States policy, as one of its peaceful purposes, looks happily forward to the genuine independence of those captive peoples." [24]

Eisenhower in particular was not thinking of liberation in the sense that the United States was going to confront the Soviet Union over the control of its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and liberate the satellite countries. Rather, both he and Dulles would lend America's moral support to indigenous democratic forces that by peaceful means were attempting to throw off Soviet domination. In reality they were speaking of liberation by containment. The public, however, heard much more strident rhetoric. The Eisenhower/Dulles doctrine mirrored that put forward by Senator Brien McMahon, Democrat of Connecticut and a Catholic, as early as 1951 during the debates over the MacArthur proposals for widening the war in Korea. McMahon argued that Korea was in reality only a holding action while the United States built up the economic and military power of the free world. He regarded internal revolution in the communist countries as inevitable and that America could facilitate this with a well planned propaganda effort "a kind of intellectual invasion which will do more to weaken

the Kremlin than any other thing we could possibly do in the military field." Containment was to be a pro-active policy according to McMahon. This argument came under attack in the Senate from both Robert Taft and Richard Nixon but is strongly reflected in Dulles' Life article. [25]

The era of a bipartisan foreign policy was over. Not only did the Republican platform reflect this change, the convention itself was a virtual nonstop attack on Roosevelt/Truman policies from start to finish. The keynote speaker was none other than General Douglas MacArthur. He was followed by House Minority Leader Joseph Martin, Senator Joseph McCarthy with his charge that the Democrats had presided over "twenty years of treason" and former Ambassador to China Patrick Hurley. Not only was bipartisanship a thing of the past, now there was open talk of "treason." The lineup of speakers -- Martin, McCarthy, Hurley -- and their message, was an obvious tipoff of an all-out Republican effort to capture the ethnic, Catholic, big city voters that formed the core of the Roosevelt coalition. The realities of domestic politics, which prompted FDR to send Edward J. Flynn on his mission to Moscow and Rome following the Yalta conference hoping to forestall a confrontation between the Vatican and the Kremlin in Eastern Europe was being played out in the campaign speeches of the 1952 presidential election.

Perhaps the most dramatic incident of the 1952 presidential campaign occurred not between the presidential candidates, but between Eisenhower and Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin. It is generally conceded among historians that Eisenhower detested McCarthy and all that he stood for, especially following McCarthy's attack on General George Marshall, Ike's mentor and colleague. It was an article of political faith at the time that McCarthy carried great weight with Catholic voters in big cities, the very voters the Republicans wanted to peel away from the Democratic Party. There had been criticism from the right wing of the party following the convention when Eisenhower made a decision not to campaign in either Wisconsin for McCarthy or Indiana for Senator William Jenner. But following McCarthy's overwhelming showing in the Wisconsin primary in September, Eisenhower aides insisted the campaign train visit Wisconsin. Ike was prepared to use the opportunity of a speech in Milwaukee, where he would share the same stage with McCarthy, to defend Marshall and his career. Eisenhower was prepared to say he had known Marshall for 35-years "as a man and as a soldier." Marshall was "dedicated with a singular selflessness and the profoundest patriotism to the service of America." The recent "charges of disloyalty" were "a sobering lesson in the way freedom must not defend itself." [26]

But as the campaign train moved into Wisconsin both Eisenhower's aides and prominent Republicans began to doubt the wisdom of attacking McCarthy on his home turf. Republican Governor of Wisconsin Walter Kohler and national committeeman Henry Ringling urged the candidate to delete the reference to Marshall. McCarthy himself boarded the train and warned Eisenhower that if he disagreed with him publicly in Wisconsin he would be booed. Eisenhower replied that he had been booed before and didn't mind. Kohler then approached Eisenhower aide Sherman Adams, arguing that to attack McCarthy could jeopardize both local and national Republican candidates. Adams again approached Eisenhower over the critical passage, noting that he agreed with Kohler's position. Ike, described as "purple with rage," finally succumbed to the political realities and ordered the passage on Marshall taken out of the Milwaukee speech. In as much as the speech had already been released to the press the fact that Eisenhower did not mention Marshall when he delivered the speech caused an even greater embarrassment to the candidate who was now portrayed as being intimidated by McCarthy. The speech itself was a ringing endorsement of McCarthy's themes. "Two whole decades our national life" had been "poisoned" by a national tolerance for Communism, Eisenhower said. Just as McCarthy and Catholic doctrine had been saying, this evil doctrine had worked its way into

schools, labor unions, news organizations "and -- most terrifyingly-- into our government." This resulted in "contamination in some degree of virtually every department, every agency, every bureau, every section of our government," Eisenhower declared, and "it meant a government by men whose very brains were confused by the opiate of this deceit." The fall of China, he asserted, and the "surrender of whole nations" in Eastern Europe could be laid at the feet of Communists working in Washington. Eisenhower seemed to be quoting from McCarthy himself when he proclaimed both domestic and foreign policy of the previous administrations "meant -- in its most ugly triumph -- treason itself." [27]

Whatever the reaction of the press and the Democrats the political strategy appears to have paid off. The domestic political reaction that FDR attempted to forestall by sending Flynn to Moscow and Rome in 1945 and that Truman managed to overcome with his efforts to promote a bipartisan foreign policy and a hard line approach to the Soviet Union in 1948 materialized in 1952. Ethnic Catholic voters in large numbers deserted the Democratic Party and joined Protestants in putting a Republican in the White House for the first time since 1932. Pollster Louis Harris identified the issue succinctly when he wrote, "There is no doubt that a foreign policy issue -- the war in Korea -- dominated all other issues in the election." The stalemated war in Korea

"grated and gnawed" declared Harris and fused the public's frustration with the administrations apparent failure to deal with the Soviet Union since the end of the war. "Somehow, it summed up all the impatience and protest the people felt," he claimed, "It was easily the Achilles heel of the Democratic campaign. It was the issue on which any Democratic answer had little chance from the start." [28]

Korea managed to focus the attention of the electorate while at the same time highlighting the issue of Communists in government. The perception of a failed Far Eastern policy, perhaps undermined by Communist agents working within the State Department, resulted in a majority of Americans "believing the issue a major one, and by an overwhelming four to one count, that only the Republicans could clean the Reds out of Washington." More importantly, the Eisenhower/Dulles rhetoric of liberation rather than containment, while not appreciably different from what some Democrats such as Brien McMahon were saying, conveyed to large numbers of Catholic ethnic voters the belief the Republicans were prepared to liberate their homelands. The trend was across the board among Catholic voters and reversed "an identification of their economic self-interest with the New Deal." FDR's pro-British foreign policy had resulted in a drop off of German, Irish and Italian voting strength in both the 1940 and 1944 elections. Truman had

managed to bring these voters back in 1948. German voters present an interesting example because they were not overwhelmingly Catholic as were the Irish, Polish and Italians. Both Catholic and Protestant German-Americans had a long tradition of voting Democratic. In 1952 both groups came over to the Republicans in large numbers. However, 55 per cent of German Catholics "bolted from their past political affiliation and voted Republican" as opposed to roughly one-third of German Protestants. That 22 percent more German American Catholics switched voting patterns is a statistically significant margin and suggests something other than etnicity was at work. Catholic anti-Communism, it would seem, provides the answer to the difference. [29]

The movement among Irish voters was just as dramatic. Early indications seemed to indicate Irish voters would maintain their loyalty to the Democratic candidate, but there were reservations. A September poll taken at the traditional kickoff of the campaign season showed 43 per cent of Irish voters favoring Stevenson, 24 per cent favoring Eisenhower but a large 33 per cent in conflict or undecided. By October the shift had taken place with a majority, 51 per cent favoring Eisenhower. Most of this shift came from the previously undecided as Stevenson's total dipped to only 42 per cent, but the undecided dropped to seven per cent from 33 per cent. The Irish had made up

their minds and decided on Eisenhower. This movement of the Irish away from the Democratic Party held particular significance in terms of the impact of McCarthy on the election and the decision of Eisenhower not to confront McCarthy over the Marshall issue. This is not meant to convey the idea that the Irish, or any other ethnic group or Catholics as a whole, moved in lockstep with McCarthy or followed his political advice. But enough of them did to be considered decisive in any given election. The real issue for these groups was anti-Communism, not McCarthy or the tactics he employed. [30]

This Catholic anti-Communism was perhaps best illustrated in Massachusetts where young Congressman John F. Kennedy was seeking the Senate seat held by Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. Here was a virtual direct confrontation between the core and the periphery. An Irish Catholic politician whose grandfather had been a ward boss in Boston against a Boston brahmin whose grandfather had been the architect of defeat for the Treaty of Versailles. Kennedy's father represented new Irish wealth and power. Lodge's father represented old Yankee wealth and power. Lodge himself was one of the movers behind the Eisenhower candidacy. But with some 750,000 Irish voters in the state, and a majority of the state's voters being Catholic, Lodge felt the need to have fellow Senator Joe McCarthy endorse his candidacy for

reelection. But McCarthy had developed a close relationship with the Kennedy family, particularly with Joseph Kennedy, who frequently invited the Wisconsin Senator to the family compound at Cape Cod for Kennedy style weekends. The elder Kennedy also sought to keep the Wisconsin Senator out of Massachusetts by contributing $10,000 to his reelection campaign. Jesuit historian Donald Crosby asserts that Lodge avoided calling on McCarthy for help in Massachusetts "probably because he disliked McCarthy." Thomas C. Reeves, however, writing at a later date and with more information available, asserts that "Lodge strongly desired McCarthy's assistance, he telephoned the McCarthy office almost daily appealing for the senator's aid." McCarthy's asking price for his assistance, that Lodge "introduce him personally wherever he appeared and wholly endorse his fight against the Reds," was too high for Lodge, as McCarthy knew it would be. [31]

Measuring McCarthy's impact on the overall Irish move to the Republicans in 1952 is of course impossible. Crosby tends to downplay McCarthy's influence among the Irish and particularly among Catholics. Instead he focuses on the fact that a narrow majority of Catholics remained Democratic voters. Harris, more accurately, emphasizes the dramatic shift from the historically high Catholic vote of up to 80 per cent for FDR in 1936 and the traditional two-to-one

margin among Catholic voters for the Democratic Party as the basis for a potentially permanent new Republican majority.

The Irish and Germans were essentially part of the old stock immigrant groups. The new groups, the Poles, Italians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Czechs and Russians had come into their own politically as part of the New Deal. Al Smith had been the first Democratic candidate to benefit from these groups, and FDR had seemingly solidified their alligence to the Democratic party. A quick look at the above list indicates that with the exception of Italy, the homelands of all these groups were under the domination of the Soviet Union. These were the groups FDR feared might bolt the party and in the process bring along their co-religionists. He even raised the political implications of the Polish and Lithuanian vote with Stalin at Teheran. His great fear at the moment, of course, was for the "six or seven million Polish voters" in the United States.

During the war years the Poles had remained solidly Democratic, while the Italians had shown signs of moving away as had the Germans and Irish. The postwar years brought the Italians back as they began to make progress within the party, even challenging the Irish for leadership of Tammany Hall in New York. Italian-Americans were also less concerned with the outcome of the Roosevelt/Truman foreign policy since their homeland, while having a large Communist party,

was not under the direct influence of Moscow. "The Polish groups," according to Harris, "were torn between the avowed anti-Communist foreign policy program of Truman and Acheson, and the stories they were to hear with increasing anger that the Democrats had sold their homeland down the river at Yalta and in the years that followed." They expressed this anger in the polling booth. The Polish vote that FDR had struggled so mightily to keep in the Democratic column by avoiding the issue of Poland as much as possible in 1944 "broke heavily over to Eisenhower as the campaign moved into high gear early in October." The final vote in November 1952 showed voters of Polish descent splitting evenly between the candidates. This, of course, was a disaster for the Democrats. Eisenhower had neutralized a huge ethnic voting block that traditionally voted over 70 per cent Democratic. More importantly they were concentrated in big industrial cities: Chicago, Milwaukee, Buffalo, Detroit; and in states with large electoral vote counts: Illinois, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania. In the final analysis "three out of every ten voters of Polish descent who had <u>always</u> voted Democratic in the past broke ranks and <u>voted Republican for the first time in 1952</u>."[emphasis added] And the issue that separated the Poles from the Democratic Party was Communism. At the outset, in early September, polls indicated that while Korea and the issue of Communists in government were

important to Polish voters economic issues such as high prices were their primary concern. By mid-October this had changed dramatically with two out of three Polish voters citing "Reds in government" as the key issue. [32]

The results of the 1952 election seem to confirm the fears of FDR expressed as early as 1942 through Myron Taylor to Pius XII. The fate of Eastern Europe, largely Catholic Eastern Europe, would have political repercussions within the United States. This fear, expressed again to Archbishop Spellman in 1943 prior to the Teheran Conference, that this Russian domination would not be "too harsh" had indeed proven to be, as FDR phrased it, "wishful thinking." The religious conflict FDR had foreseen developing between the Vatican and the Kremlin had burst forth in a series of show trials in virtually every country of Eastern Europe. While this conflict was not exclusively directed at Catholics they were the most prominent targets, and attracted the most publicity. FDR's fear that the fate of Poland would develop beyond simply a Polish issue into a broader Catholic issue had taken place. Catholics had deserted the Democratic party in large enough numbers to swing the 1952 election decisively to Eisenhower. The key issue was foreign policy as conducted by the Roosevelt/Truman administrations in the face of an increasingly assertive Soviet Union. The Catholic periphery was dominating this discussion through the church

hierarchy's call for concerted American reaction against the threat of Soviet expansion, the efforts of Catholic politicians to alter the course of policy decisions such as in Spain, and Catholic involvement in the increasingly divisive campaign to identify a seemingly failed foreign policy with traitors in government.

The ability of the Republican Party to cast the stridently anti-Communist foreign policy of the Truman administration as being "soft on communism" becomes clearer when viewed from the perspective of the Catholic periphery and its domestic political implications rather than from the theories of postwar American economic imperialism. The ability of the Republican Party to maintain the new majority achieved in the 1952 election would now rest with the success or failure of the Eisenhower/Dulles conception of "liberation" versus the Truman/Acheson concept of "containment."

Notes

1) Caridi, Ronald J., The Korean War and American Politics: The Republican Party as a Case Study, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), pp. 108-109.

2) Walter LaFeber, America, Russia and the Cold War 1945-1990, 6th ed., (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1991), pp. 108-109.

3) Theodore J. Lowi, "Bases in Spain," in American Civil-Military Decisions ed. by Harold Stein, (A Twntieth Century Fund Study: University of Alabama Press, 1963), p.691.

4) New York Times, January 12, 1951, p.8.

5) Ibid., p.29.

6) Walter Karp, "Truman Vs. MacArthur," American Heritage, April/May 1984, pp.85-88

7) Ibid. p.89. and William Manchester, American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1978), p.663.

8) Patrick McCarran, "Why Shouldn't Spain Fight for Us?," Saturday Evening Post, April 28, 1951, p.25.

9) Ibid. p.136.

10) Ibid. p.138

11) Ibid.

12) Caridi, The Korean War, pp.152-153 and Karp, "Truman Vs. MacArthur" pp.91-92.

13) Karp, "Truman Vs. MacArthur" p.94. and Caridi, The Korean War, p.156.

14) Boston Globe, July 12, 1951, p.1.

15) Boston Globe, July 16, 1951, p.1. and Lowi, "Bases in Spain," p.692.

16) Alfred O. Hero, Jr., American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank-and-File Opinion, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1973), pp.71-72

17) Von Veron Pittman, Jr., Senator Patrick A. McCarran and the Politics of Containment, unpublished Ph.D dissertation University of Georgia, 1979, p.190.

18) Ibid., and Jerome E. Edwards, Pat McCarran: Political Boss of Nevada, (Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1982), p.147.

19) Raymond J. Saulnier, "Recollections of a 1948 Visit with General Eisenhower," Presidential Studies Quarterly, Vol. XXIV, Number 4, Fall 1994, pp.865-867.

20) Ibid. p.865. and Bernard C. Cohen, The Political Process and Foreign Policy: The Making of the Japanese Peace Settlement, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958), p.16.

21) Leonard Mosley, Dulles: A Biography of Eleanor, Allen and John Foster Dulles and the Family Network, (New York: The Dial Press/James Wade, 1978), pp.202-203 and p.218.

22) Ibid. pp.219-220.

23) John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.128. and Caridi, The Korean War, p.185 and pp.202-203.

24) Caridi, The Korean War, pp.218-219.

25) Stephen E. Ambrose, Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), p.242.

26) Thomas C. Reeves, The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography, (New York: Stein and Day, 1982), p.437.

27) Reeves, Life and Times, p.439., see also Ambrose, Nixon, p.268-269 and Pach and Richardson, pp.25-26. Ambrose argues that Eisenhower was more conserned with offending McCarthy than his aides.

28) Louis Harris, Is There a Republican Majority? Political Trends, 1952 - 1956, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954) p.26.

29) Ibid. pp.86-87.

30) Ibid. p.92.

31) Donald F. Crosby, S.J., God Church and Flag, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), p.110. and Reeves, Life and Times, p.443.

32) Harris, Is There a Republican Majority? pp.100-101.

EPILOGUE

"I'D LOVE TO RUN WITH A CATHOLIC"

The partisan divergence of opinion on foreign policy questions that emerged during the 1952 election campaign continued to dominate any discussion of foreign affairs. The era of bipartisanship had ended. Henceforth questions dealing with foreign policy had to be answered with the potential reaction of a shifting electorate in mind. And as indicated above, the most important shift had come among Catholic Democrats. Would they remain in the Republican column? The importance of the Catholic vote to the Democratic Party which we have seen so dramatically illustrated during the Roosevelt/Truman presidencies was now the concern of the Republican Party. That is a story which remains to be told in detail. A brief recounting of international events affecting Catholic political loyalties during the Eisenhower administration coupled with the emergence of a national Catholic candidate for the presidency suggests that the overall theme of religion as a paradigm of the Cold War continued unabated.

Eisenhower's relationship with the Catholic hierarchy was no less intimate than his Democratic predecessors. Cardinal Spellman, presidential aide Sherman Adams later recalled, was frequently a guest at the famous stag dinners Eisenhower gave at the White House and indeed might be seen

leading the guests into dinner on the President's arm. The President was well aware of the influence Spellman carried not only in New York, but within the Catholic hierarchy across the country. In his diary the President related an incident which occurred during the annual meeting of the Catholic Bishops in Washington in November 1954. A group of bishops approached Spellman with a resolution they intended to bring before the assembly dealing with a controversy on the Supreme Court. According to Eisenhower's account, "Spellman 'emphatically objected' to the matter and that 'he thought the matter was sufficiently serious that he should bring it to my attention." Spellman reportedly assured the bishops "their concerns were unjustified." Eisenhower went on to say the incident "does show the acute sensitiveness of particular groups in the U.S. in this matter of what they consider to be proper and equitable representation on all important governmental bodies, especially the Supreme Court." While the language of Eisenhower's entry clearly suggests the resolution dealt with an appointment to the Court, Robert Ferrell, who edited the diary for publication, noted the copy of the resolution referred to by Eisenhower was not found among the President's papers. Nevertheless, the incident clearly demonstrates the relationship between Eisenhower and Spellman and the fact that Spellman would go out of his way to prevent embarrassment to his friend. [1]

A dazzling array of problems faced the new administration. While efforts to bring the Korean situation to a resolution took priority, negotiations dealing with the European Defense Community [EDC] were again in trouble. Italy and Yugoslavia were still contending over Trieste and in the midst of all the turmoil the Italians were again holding elections. Once again the fear of an outright Communist Party victory in Italy, and what that might mean for NATO or the prospect of EDC, produced a desire to influence the election outcome just as in 1947. The new administration barely had time to settle into office when Italian-American Catholics were called upon to write to their relatives "back home" and urge "them to vote with the best interests of Italy in mind." Walter Faraday, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Boston, wrote to pastors in late May that "an Air Mail letter sent promptly would doubtless help to influence many to exercise their franchise with conscientious purpose." The elections, held on June 7, resulted in a narrow victory for the Christian Democrats and their smaller coalition party members. Catholic anti-Communism, so clearly influencing the culture of American anti-Communism, was again playing a decisive role in Italian politics with American help. In addition to the efforts of Italian-Americans to influence votes the American Ambassador Claire Booth Luce [a convert to Catholicism] and

the AFL-CIO under George Meany worked "massively" against the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro [CGIL] a union federation run by the Italian Communist Party to undermine their effect on the election. Ten days later Soviet tanks rolled through East Berlin in the first demonstration that Soviet military power would be used to control discontent among dissatisfied workers. [2]

In the Far East the situation in French Indochina was on the verge of total collapse. With French forces under siege at Dien Bien Phu an international conference opened at Geneva to settle the issue. In something of a reversal of positions congressional Democrats were now calling for assurances from the administration that its policy of "united action" in Indochina would generate adequate Allied support. The Democrats seemed to have quickly learned the lessons of being in the opposition. On April 7 the New York Times carried a two-column front-page story dealing with what it termed "a grave foreign policy debate" in the Senate. Senator John F. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, according to the Times, "precipitated the debate" and "called on the Administration to tell the people of the United States 'The blunt truth about Indo-China' " while at the same time declaring he backed the policy of united action "in principle." Yet, paradoxically, he also claimed that "so long as the French withheld the promise of

independence from the Indo-Chinese, no amount of military intervention by the United States could win the war against the Communist-led rebels." [3]

Kennedy asserted that a guarantee of independence would result in a "reliable and crusading native army" that would "deserve and get the military support of this and other free countries" and might "lead to United States involvement in the war." He drew immediate responses from Everett Dirksen of Illinois and William Knowland of California. Dirksen declared he could "give reassurance that the President had no intention of cutting across the power held by Congress alone to declare war." Already the Republicans saw the constitutional argument they raised against Truman's introduction of U.S. troops into Korea without prior congressional approval being used against Eisenhower in Indochina. Knowland was preparing a defense against unreliable allies, another major issue raised by the Republicans in Korea. Knowland demanded to know "how far they would go in a common effort in the Indo-China theatre" and that if United States forces ever had to go to Indochina "others must march with them." It was Kennedy, however, in a speech "saluted by several of his colleagues," who was defining the Democrats' position. Kennedy charged, ironically given later similar charges against his administration, that the Administration "had persistently

been over-optimistic and less than candid" on both the military situation and the political question of the French granting independence. Without this grant of independence "the hard truth" was that the people of Indochina would not "give adequate support to the fight against the Communist-led rebels." And without their support "no military victory could be won, United States intervention or no United States intervention." Kennedy concluded by declaring: "The battle against communism should be a battle not for economic or political gain but...for those values and institutions which are held dear in France and throughout the non-communist world." While not spelling out what those values and institutions were, it does not require a great leap to conclude Kennedy was referring to both democratic and Christian values that atheistic Communism was attacking in Eastern Europe and threatening to overrun in Asia. [4]

Kennedy was quick to capitalize on the attention his Senate speech produced. On August 8, 1954, only two weeks after the conclusion of the Geneva Conference, Kennedy authored an article entitled "Foreign Policy Is the People's Business" which appeared in the New York Times Magazine. The Senator was concerned with the impact of "myths" which distorted the hard realities of foreign policy decisions. The French, for example, were more concerned with "the

ancient fear of a rearmed Germany" than with the "menace of Soviet aggression." The Senator's mail convinced him that similar attitudes were influential in America and "are frequently more influenced by ethnic and cultural ties with the problem areas involved, or with ancient hostilities than by the necessities of world security." The Senator had his finger on the periphery's pulse and was seeking to use that in a partisan manner without seeming to do so. "The present crisis," according to Kennedy, "requires greater participation of American public opinion in the foreign policy-making process." This public opinion, however, "needs enlightenment on the United States new role as leader of the free world...the sheer fact of our physical and economic strength, and our position as the only real counter to the forces of communism in the world today." Kennedy needed no convincing that NSC-68 should be the policy of the United States. [5]

Hinting at where his true future aspirations lay, Kennedy told his readers this new enlightened and participatory public opinion "requires firm, candid and responsible leadership." That leadership had to come from the President because "in the last analysis" it was "to the President, with his constitutional role of foreign policy spokesman that we look for our initial information and guidance." Kennedy's views on presidential leadership were

evolving with his own aspirations. On election eve 1960 he would remark that the presidency had become "the center of action." Public opinion would "flounder and drift" if the President's statements on foreign policy lacked "firmness and consistency." Kennedy suggested such leadership was now lacking in dealing with the Far East. "If the public is unable to determine what our policy is in Indochina, that is, the policy of the United States, not the policy of the Vice-President or the Majority Leader or the Chiefs of Staff, then whatever our policy may be, it cannot succeed." The American "foreign policy mythology" was the "subject of gross oversimplification" in terms of "how we 'lost' China or why we are in Korea." The same tendency was evident in our dealings with Indochina. "It is apparent to all," Kennedy wrote, "that the very foundation of American assistance in Indochina rested upon a miscalculation of the military program of the French Union forces," and that the State Department "under both Democratic and Republican leadership failed to recognize the nature and significance of the independence movement in Indochina." [6]

The Junior Senator from Massachusetts was of course playing partisan politics to a large degree. With the Republicans in control of the White House it was easier to urge that public opinion influence foreign policy decisions and to decry the lack of presidential leadership. Such was

the case with "the use of beguiling slogans, including most recently 'the new look' and 'massive retaliation.'" While acknowledging that "the science of opinion research has made gigantic strides in recent years," Kennedy admitted "even some of the more reputable polling agencies fall far short of necessary standards of validity and reliability." In calling for public opinion to carry greater weight with policy makers Kennedy proposed "new and better techniques for gauging that opinion." He could not help but be aware that public opinion "influenced by ethnic and cultural ties to the problem area involved," in this case the cultural ties of American Catholics with Vietnamese Catholics, was about to take on added significance. In fact these cultural ties were already being noted in the press. On August 6, only two days before Kennedy's article appeared, the Times carried a story announcing the Archdiocese of New York was already sending aid to Vietnam's refugees. The article noted that "Cardinal Spellman had received information from his 'brother bishops' in Vietnam of the massed flight of civilians from North to South Vietnam to escape from the Communist-led Vietminh." The announcement of the aid came in the form of a pastoral letter to be read at all masses that Sunday, the same day Kennedy's article appeared in the Sunday Times. According to the Times, Spellman's letter went on to declare: "Happily, our Government which has so

generously come to the aid of other afflicted peoples has taken swift steps to assist in the evacuation and resettlement of the Vietnamese by providing them with transportation, clothing and food." The Cardinal then thanked all those who had made such a "generous response" to the recent Bishops Appeal which enabled the Archdiocese "to supplement American governmental subsidies by shipments of food and clothing which are already on the high seas." On the same page with the article on Spellman the Times carried a picture of refugees sleeping on mats in the streets of Hanoi awaiting transportation south. [7]

The next week, on August 16, the Archdiocese utilized the celebration of the Feast of the Assumption to again warn that "the death sentence" of the United States had "been pronounced in Moscow" and that Americans and "other free men...cannot live in peace with atheistic communism." This declaration was made by Bishop Joseph F. Flannelly, administrator of St. Patrick's Cathedral, at the mass of the assumption welcoming Mlle. Genevieve de Galard-Terraube, a young French Army nurse known as the "angel of Dienbienphu." In a politically-charged sermon Flannelly said it was "unfortunate" that "many of our blind leaders are leading the blind to the conclusion that atheistic communism and Christian civilization can exist together." The Bishop acknowledged Mlle. de Galard from the pulpit, telling her

that "Catholics were proud of her as a fellow communicant because her care of the wounded during the Indochina siege was a practical demonstration of the Christian religion." In addition, he hoped her visit "would awaken Americans to to power of the 'destructive force of communism.'" Flannelly then said, "We must turn from indifference and indecision and convince ourselves that we cannot live in peace with atheistic communism. It is simply and solely a force of destruction. It is the enemy of liberty, of peace and of God." Following mass, Cardinal Spellman presided at a lunch at his residence for Mlle. de Galard at which he presented her with a medal "imprinted with his motto and coat of arms." To complete the circle of Catholic attention, vespers in the cathedral that day saw "Hungarians and Americans of Hungarian descent honored St. Stephen, the first constitutional monarch of Hungary." A picture of Spellman presenting the medal to Mlle. de Galard accompanied the story. [8]

By mid-December 1955 Eisenhower was considering the possibility of seeking a second term and in the process was reflecting on the large numbers of Democrats that had deserted their traditional party to vote for him. As we have seen, a great proportion of these Democrats were Catholic. Eisenhower was concerned with keeping these voters in the Republican camp. He first raised the issue with Press

Secretary Jim Hagerty in discussing the prospect of turning the country back "into the hands of people like Stevenson, Harriman, and Kefauver." Ike noted that two of the potential Democratic candidates had been divorced and "up until recently there has been a political axiom that no divorced man could ever be elected President of the United States." If it were possible for a divorced man to be elected, was it not also possible for a Catholic to be nominated and elected? Ike queried Hagerty on the prospects of Ohio Governor Frank Lausche, and Hagerty responded that he "did not know whether a Catholic could be nominated or not, let alone elected." While Eisenhower was often characterized as politically inept, in this case he demonstrated a wide understanding of both the electorate and the internal politics of Washington. Declaring that "Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson are going to be politically important," he told Hagerty "they don't care much for Stevenson or Harriman and, of course, despise Kefauver." Eisenhower believed "it might be possible that they might get behind someone like Lausche." [9]

Hagerty, warming to the topic, told the President that he thought Lausche "as a Catholic" would be hurt in the South as Al Smith was. He told Ike that Jim Farley was the only Catholic he knew in politics who believed he could get the Democratic nomination and not be hurt in the South due

to his close relationship with the party district leaders. Ike still believed Lausche the natural candidate for Rayburn and Johnson to support. Moreover, he added that "in 1952 many Democrats voted for me because they didn't like Stevenson and the Truman Fair Deal-New Deal boys....[And] I'm the only Republican that the young folks will support." The politics of the situation was clear to Ike, "Lausche would appeal to the youth and hundreds of thousands of Democrats who left their party to vote for me...." [10]

By February 1956 Eisenhower had firmly decided to seek a second term, but the question of his running mate was still open. Now Ike put the question of Lausche running not as the nominee of the Democratic Party but as his own running mate. This time Ike and Len Hall, Republican National Chairman, "found themselves speculating on running Ike with Lausche, Democrat and Catholic, of Ohio." Hall seemed so enthusiastic about an Eisenhower/Lausche ticket that Ike had to remind him "that labor hated Lausche." That did not matter to Hall, who reminded the President: "Labor leaders don't like you, but the laboring people vote for him and vote for you." In addition, putting Lausche on the ticket would help relieve the Republican image of a stand still party. "The Republicans seldom do something different," Hall told Eisenhower: "here you would break the bugaboo of a Catholic." The potential existed for a new

alignment of parties, the very thing Eisenhower sought, just as FDR had in the mid-thirties. "It would just knock the props out of the opposition," Ike said, and Hall agreed it would be a "shocker." The fact that millions of Catholics had left the Democratic Party to vote for Eisenhower and now could be permanently locked into the Republican Party by such a move was critical to the underlying dynamics of presidential politics, as Harris suggested. "I'd love to run with a Catholic, if only to test it out," the President remarked. Hall thought it was, perhaps, more crucial, noting that "if the Republicans didn't run a Catholic this time the Democrats would next time." At this point Hall mentioned the future prospects of the young Catholic Senator from Massachusetts John F. Kennedy, whom he described as an "attractive guy." [11]

Eisenhower directed Hall to approach Vice-President Nixon about the possibility of stepping aside and being named to a cabinet post and at the same time to poll the Republican County Chairmen about the prospect of having Lausche on the ticket. He later mentioned several Catholics whom he considered to be good vice-presidential material besides Lausche. These included Connecticut Judge John A. Danaher, whom he appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals; Secretary of Labor Jim Mitchell; and NATO Commander Al Gruenther. He also asked Fred Seaton to prepare a list of

Republican Catholics but without mentioning what the purpose of such a list would be. The politics and the importance of the Catholic vote continued to occupy the attention of presidents and presidential advisors. [12]

Events in the summer and fall of 1956 brought the attention of America's Catholics, and most of the rest of the world, back on the fate of Eastern Europe. In late June workers in Poznan, Poland rioted following demonstrations against "bad rations, low pay and unsympathetic management." Polish Communist troops had "faded away" rather than confront and disperse their fellow countrymen. According to Adolf A. Berle, Jr., former Assistant Secretary of State, the Poznan riots showed three things about the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe; "First, that demonstrations were possible and widely known; second, that satellite troops were more likely to side with their own people than with Russian policy; third, that the captive countries had not lost their national identity during the ten years of Russian-Communist occupation..." The riots indeed resulted in dramatic change in Poland. Wladyslaw Gomulka, a Polish Titoist, emerged as Chief of State and named a Tito-type Central Committee. Gomulka even opened negotiations for the possible withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland. [13]

In October the demonstrations moved to Hungary, where students in the name of "anti-Stalinism" demanded "liberty

of criticism, instruction beyond the Marxist dogma,[and] communication with the West." According to Berle, "this was not a call for autonomy: it was a call for freedom." Soon appeals for a free economy and freedom of religion were sweeping the country. As in Poland the Communist Party of Hungary turned to a Titoist, Imre Nagy, in an attempt to restore order and confidence in the regime. Also as in Poland Hungarian Communist troops called on to restore order refused to shoot at their own countrymen. Dramatically, as Hungarians battled Russian troops, Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty "was rescued by a band of freedom fighters and brought to Budapest." Leo Cherne, Chairman of the International Rescue Committee, met with Mindszenty as he prepared to broadcast a message to France and Germany. According to Cherne, the Cardinal was surrounded not only by young priests and aides, but "with Hungarian leaders from many political parties," seeking the Cardinal's advice "as to whether to associate themselves with the Nagy Government, which on this day was forming along anti-Communist lines." Thus, after eight years imprisonment, Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty, however briefly, was back at the center of Hungarian affairs. "Obviously," Cherne said, "the Primate had assumed his role of leadership almost in the hour of his liberation." [14]

Mindszenty was also back as the focus of American Catholic perceptions of Communist persecution. His freedom, "however short lived, put a seal of accomplishment on the Hungarian revolt." The Russian crackdown, when it came, was all the more shocking in light of statements that generated hope of a peaceful settlement. Marshall Georgi Zhukov, who had developed a close wartime friendship with Eisenhower, told a Moscow press conference the Russians were willing to discuss "revision of the Warsaw Pact." An official Soviet statement followed Zhukov's: "The Soviet Union is ready to examine with the other Socialist states which are participants in the Warsaw treaty the question of Soviet troops stationed in the ... Hungarian and Rumanian Republics [and] in the Polish Republic." Eisenhower expressed the belief that if the Soviets meant what they said the world might be on the brink of "the greatest forward stride toward justice, trust and understanding among nations in our generation." Indeed, the concept of "liberation" generated from within as outlined by the Eisenhower/Dulles foreign policy seemed on the threshold of realization. [15]

When reinforced Red Army units reversed themselves and headed back into Budapest, Nagy called on the United Nations Secretary General to "put on the agenda of the General Assembly the question of Hungary's neutrality and defense of this neutrality by the four great powers." The Soviet

representative denied reports that tanks were moving back into Hungary. Nagy broadcast from Budapest that Soviet troops had indeed attacked "with the clear intention to overthrow the lawful, democratic Government of the Hungarian people." With Russian tanks crushing the revolt Nagy and his Cabinet were arrested. Cardinal Mindszenty sought asylum in the U.S. ligation. A final message delivered over a Hungarian radio station appealed to the "People of Europe, civilized people of the world, in the name of liberty and solidarity, we are asking you to help...Listen to our cry. Start Moving. Extend to us brotherly hands." Clearly, at least some within the Hungarian movement were hopeful that their efforts at "liberation" would bring assistance from outside Hungary. Even the editors of the Jesuit weekly, America, recognized the dangers inherent in such a move: "To have answered the Hungarian appeal with armed legions of free men would have precipitated World War III." They also recognized that the announcement of the formation of a new Hungarian government of "peasants and workers" came "fittingly" from "Radio Moscow." [16]

All of this, of course, was taking place in the midst of a presidential election in the United States and was compounded and confused by the simultaneous conflict between the United States and its principal allies Britain and France over the Suez Crisis. The crushing of the Hungarian

revolution left a hallow ring to the policy of "liberation" in the minds of the very Catholic ethnic voters to whom it was first designed to appeal. However, the denouement came after the votes were cast and the Catholic voters that had switched to Eisenhower in 1952 (whom he considered so important he discussed the possibility of placing a Catholic on the ticket with him in 1956), remained solidly Republican. However, doubts about "liberation" and just exactly what it meant surfaced almost immediately in both the secular and religious press. The editors of America questioned the "U.S. Policy of Liberation" in the December 1, 1956 issue. At a November press conference "a deadly serious President" was asked about "charges that the Government, after having encouraged the captive satellite nations to revolt, had failed the Hungarian people in their tragic hour of heroism and agony." Eisenhower, after expressing sympathy for the Hungarians and their cause declared: "I must make one thing clear: the United States doesn't now, and never has, advocated open rebellion by an undefended populace against force over which they could not possibly prevail." Rather, the policy of the administration "always urged that the spirit of freedom be kept alive; that people do not lose hope." [17]

The President was then asked to explain comments by Vice President Nixon in which he claimed events in Poland

and Hungary proved the liberation policy correct and "in view of the latest developments, could you explain, sir, what the liberation position of the Administration is?" Again Eisenhower stated we "never asked for a people to rise up against a ruthless military force," and "we simply insist upon the right of all people to be free to live under governments of their own choosing." Conceding that the "President's words might sound singularly uninspiring," the editorial in America went on to cite a column by Arthur Krock in the New York Times calling on the public to be realistic: "unless this Government and this people go to war with Russia," there was no possibility of "quick rescue... for the oppressed inhabitants of the satellites." The editors of America were forced to agree with Krock in spite of "the almost guilty knowledge that the only foreigners who struck a blow for the savagely oppressed Hungarians were deserters from the Soviet army." Still, the editors claimed "There must be something more -- something more that the most powerful nation on earth can do." They then quoted from a Life magazine editorial that stated "future fights for freedom on the part of enslaved peoples will find us somehow prepared to come to their aid," and called on the President "with his tremendous new mandate," to "develop a 'liberation' policy which is more than words." They then concluded: "We make that demand our own." [18]

As usual it was not just the Catholic press that was reminding Catholics of the terrors of Communism. On the same day America was editorializing on the inadequacies of the "liberation" policy, Archbishop Cushing of Boston sent a letter to all his pastors with instructions that it be read "at all the Masses in your Church on Sunday, December 9 and recall it again on December 16 when the collection for the people of Hungary will be taken up." The letter stated that the Bishops of the United States had organized a relief effort for the people of Hungary "who have been the victims of the most savage and inhuman massacre of modern times." The nature of events in Hungary meant that "at the moment our help must be extended to the refugees who have escaped to our country from the scene of Communist brutality and terror in their own homeland." According to Cushing, it was not necessary "for me to describe the tragic plight of the oppressed and persecuted Hungarian people." The annual appeals for funds to help relief efforts in Poland was temporarily replaced by this broad appeal on behalf of Hungary. Both Poland and Hungary, however, served to keep the fate of Eastern Europe before American Catholics. These efforts of the hierarchy in turn spilled over into the secular press to compliment the already heavy press coverage being given events in Eastern Europe. [19]

Within two weeks Cushing was again writing to his pastors, this time with an appeal from the Bishops designating December 30 as "A Day of Prayer for the Persecuted." Cushing left it to each pastor "to make suitable arrangements in his own parish," but the faithful "should be exhorted to receive Holy Communion...for this intention," and some special service "such as a Holy Hour, or Benediction with Rosary and Sermon" was encouraged. Enclosed with the letter was a statement issued by the Most Reverend Francis P. Keough, Chairman of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. If there was any doubt about just who the "persecuted" were, about who were being prayed for, Rev. Keough clarified matters in the first sentence of his statement. "With the sound of the Hungarian tragedy still ringing in our ears, there is little likelihood that we of the free world will forget the sufferings of our fellow Christians of that nation as they end the year in the darkness of renewed slavery." Again the formula - Christianity equals freedom and Communism equals slavery, was at the forefront. The Hungarian revolt was simply the most recent example. "Their truly noble uprising," Keough continued, "and the frightfulness of their repression serve as a vivid reminder of all those who for so long have borne the yoke of atheistic communism." [20]

According to Keough, Communism was the most unrelenting foe Christianity ever faced. "Never in history has any body of Christians borne such widespread and unrelenting persecution," he wrote: "Even in the pagan days of the Caesars there were intervals of quiet and places where the poor and obscure were left unmolested." Not so in 1956 when "throughout the whole vast territory under Red domination, in Eastern Europe and in Asia, a constant, grinding terror has everywhere and at all times made itself felt." The modern totalitarian state was thus far more efficient than its ancient predecessors, and "modern tyrants have learned the lesson that, as long as even a few of the faithful are left, they are certain to raise up from the seed of their martyred brothers a Christian Church which in the end will prevail." The story of Poland and Hungary, therefore, "bespeaks a still large body of Christians whose faith has been but deepened by their trials." The tyrants, for all their modern methods and constant attempts to crush any and all opposition, were faced by the "Church of Silence" which in the end "will prevail." [21]

As Eisenhower prepared to take office for a second term Communism continued to seem on the march against freedom, particularly religious freedom, in both Europe and Asia. The focus of this religious crackdown continued to be Roman Catholicism, both in terms of those whom the

Communists appeared to be cracking down on, and those most visible and vocal in the struggle against Communism. Yet as Eisenhower prepared to take the oath of office the editors of America were just as concerned about the prospects for religious freedom in the United States. "It is on the occasion of a Presidential Inauguration," the magazine editorialized, "that Catholics in America feel most vividly the heritage of bigotry that has so long hung over them." The editors pointed, almost despairingly, at "the old prejudices come to life again" that past summer when Senator Kennedy had made a brief run at the Vice-Presidential spot on the Democratic Party ticket. At that point, "fairly representative Protestants protested that a Catholic, as a Catholic, did not have the right to be chosen for the high office of President." That Catholics could still be denied the highest office in the land seemed incongruous in the face of the evidence. Thousands of Catholic officers had faithfully fulfilled their oath in the war and Catholic legislators on both the State and Federal level had proven their loyalty. Catholics had even sat on the highest court in the land and interpreted the very Constitution many Protestants claimed a Catholic President could only undermine. "That only the Presidency should be barred to a Catholic is a striking inconsistency, attributable only to ill-considered anti-Catholicism." So, as Dwight D.

Eisenhower took the oath of office on Inauguration Day, "despite the shadow over them, Catholic Americans have some reason for hoping that a better time may come. At some future date a Catholic President-elect may appear on that same spot before the Capital, take the same oath and win the same confidence of all America." The editors of America, of course, were unaware that Eisenhower had actively considered the possibility of running with a Catholic. The larger question, given Kennedy's failed attempt to get the Vice-Presidential nomination, was Len Hall's prediction that the Democrats would turn to a Catholic, perhaps even that "attractive" Senator Kennedy, to lure the Catholic Democrats back to the party they saw as selling out their native lands to Communism. [22]

The politics of religion and the culture of anti-Communism continued to converge during the second Eisenhower administration. The Eisenhower/Dulles rhetoric of liberation was badly damaged by Hungary. Senator Kennedy apparently benefited by losing the Vice-Presidential nomination. The Eisenhower landslide could not be blamed on the presence of a Catholic on the ticket. Kennedy was free to pursue the nomination without a national party defeat being attributed to his religion.

Meanwhile, would-be presidential candidate Kennedy was in the process of establishing his credentials in the

foreign policy field. On August 21, 1957, as negotiations on the test ban were breaking down, Kennedy made a major foreign policy speech in the Senate calling for a new approach to Poland and Eastern Europe. Kennedy said he was "strongly persuaded" of "the inadequacies of current American foreign policies and programs concerning Poland and Eastern Europe." It was "baffling beyond words," he declared to look at "that so-called 'liberation' policy" upon which the administration had "taken patent rights." In a style that was to become increasingly familiar he spoke of the need to "take the hard decisions" and the "real risks" necessary to a resolution of the problems of Eastern Europe. Kennedy was particularly critical of the administrations "liberation" policy as restated earlier in the year by Secretary Dulles. Labeling it a status quo policy, he noted that it provided for an American response "only" when the satellite states "gain more freedom" and not "before." [23]

Notwithstanding its own rhetoric, the administration had been singularly slow in responding to a Polish loan request. There was ample evidence that gains had been registered in Poland; the very type of "steps ...made toward independence" from Moscow which, according to Secretary Dulles, would result in American "readiness to respond with friendly acts." Not the least of this evidence, especially from Kennedy's perspective concerning the potential

political reaction of his fellow American Catholics, was the fact that "at least a precarious working accommodation has been reached with the Catholic Church in Poland under Cardinal Wyszynski." Kennedy here was relying on logic similar to FDR's at the end of the war. If the Polish Church could make an arrangement to work with the Communist government, then American Poles, Catholics in general, and the hierarchy in particular, might be willing to accept a less hard-line approach to the question of the United States dealing with the satellite governments. The loan agreement was "too little and too late," according to Kennedy, and had come only after "months of haggling, indecision and delay." All this in spite of the fact that "Mr. Khrushchev has indicated that he is not happy about it." If Khrushchev was troubled over this meager loan, what might his reaction be to "a bolder, more imaginative American foreign policy" that more closely related to the actual needs and realities of the Polish situation? Such vacillation on the part of the administration only strengthened "the Polish Stalinists" in their conflict with the more moderate Wladyslav Gomulka. If, on the other hand," Kennedy continued, "we take these risks, through a more adequate program of loans and other assistance...we can obtain an invaluable reservoir of good will among the Polish people, strengthen their will to

resist, and drive still a further wedge between the Polish Government and the Kremlin." [24]

Kennedy was particularly critical of Secretary Dulles' "extreme position" at the time of the Hungarian crisis when he "wrote off completely any possibility of the use of American military means in Eastern Europe, thus inviting Soviet intervention." Dulles and the Republican Party condemned Dean Acheson for his defense perimeter speech regarding Korea, Kennedy noted, and "might usefully ponder Mr. Dulles' much more sweeping remarks of last October in regard to East Europe." Thus, the threat of possible U.S. military intervention should not be withdrawn. Kennedy's speech certainly reinforced what the editors of America had pronounced the previous December, namely that the people of the United States and of the satellite countries had not heard the last word on the policy of liberation in the wake of Hungary. Kennedy, along with Senator George Aiken, Republican, Vermont, proposed an amendment to the Battle Act designed to provide "a more flexible set of economic tools to promote peaceful change behind the Iron Curtain." The amendment was defeated by one vote in the Senate, but would be revived and passed two years later.[25]

In his efforts to marshal bipartisan congressional support for the administrations pending Mutual Security bill, Eisenhower again demonstrated his political acumen.

He now sponsored a conference at the White House with former President Truman and Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen of Rochester, New York among the more prominent supporters. Sheen, of course, had been the most popular television personalities in the nation, having driven "Mr. Television," comedian Milton Berle, off the air.

If Eisenhower was taken aback by officials of State not fully comprehending his views, he must have been equally surprised by reactions to the announcement of Khrushchev's visit made at an August 5th press conference. It would be an exchange of visits; Khrushchev coming to the United States and the President visiting Russia later in the year. The announcement came at the conclusion of Vice-President Nixon's trip to the Soviet Union and his famed kitchen debate with Khrushchev. Even before Nixon's trip and during it Khrushchev repeatedly criticized a Joint Resolution of Congress declaring a "Captive Nations Week 1959" issued by Eisenhower just before Nixon's went abroad. The resolution called for a "week of prayer dedicated to the peoples held captive under Communist domination." Khrushchev, in Warsaw, criticized Eisenhower for signing such a resolution and questioned the advisability of the Nixon visit. [26]

The negative reaction to Khrushchev's visit came largely from the Catholic periphery. Both the hierarchy and many lay leaders opposed the visit by the "Butcher of

Budapest," as William Buckley's National Review dubbed him. More importantly, those opposing the visit saw the conflict in terms of a "spiritual struggle." Buckley, addressing an anti-Khrushchev audience in New York City's Carnegie Hall also placed the contest in religious terms: "Khrushchev cannot take permanent advantage of our temporary disadvantage, for it is the West he is fighting. And in the West there lie, however encysted, the ultimate resources, which are moral in nature. Khrushchev is not aware that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against us." Archbishop Joseph Hurley of St. Augustine, Florida, recalling events in Hungary, denounced the visit and declared he would not welcome "one whose hands are crimson with the blood of our fellow Christians." Brent Bozell, Buckley's colleague and fellow Catholic, placed the apparent willingness to appease Khrushchev in the context of the horrors of modern warfare, concluding the West had the advantage over "atheist materialism" by providing the comfort of an afterlife not available to the Communists. Garry Wills, a former Jesuit seminarian, "joined the chorus against Khrushchev in National Review." The invitation to Khrushchev by Eisenhower and his advisors was indicative of the "cowardice" that allowed "the cry of Hungary" to go "unanswered" and could not "see in Chiang Kai-shek's little garrison a desperate romance of courage." "The morbidity of the modern soul,"

according to Wills, "reflects a paralysis in the face of evil" among those advocating "coexistence" [27]

Eisenhower seemed taken aback by the ferocity of the attack on Khrushchev's visit. "Many Americans nursed serious misgivings about the forthcoming Khrushchev visit," he noted in his memoirs, and "some of the more vociferous (possibly thinking of the editors and writers of the National Review) were those who opposed any kind of contact with the Soviets..." There were others, however, "persons of standing" from among the nations business, labor and religious leaders that also opposed the visit. "One outstanding leader who expressed some misgivings," the President wrote, "was Francis Cardinal Spellman." Eisenhower was so concerned about Spellman's opposition that he "telephoned to assure him we would stand firm on Berlin" and that "the exchange of visits implied no hint of a surrender." The President was reassured when "the cardinal, always my great friend, promised he would continue to pray for the successful outcome of my endeavors." There is no way to measure the impact of Spellman's decision not to embarrass his friend. The crowds protesting Khrushchev's visit to New York were substantial, but the active and enthusiastic support of the Cardinal, who had repeatedly demonstrated the ability to produce thousands in the war against "atheistic Communism," most certainly would have led

to greater protest. He had, however, received private assurances directly from the President that governmental actions were not going to be detrimental to the interests of the Cardinal or his church.[28]

The off-year congressional elections in 1958 which produced a Democratic landslide also produced a Catholic landslide. In all 102 Catholics were elected to Congress, 90 in the House and 12 in the Senate. For the first time Catholic representation in Congress was roughly equivalent to their numbers in the country. Catholics were the largest single religious body in the Congress; and with a potential Catholic President emerging as well "interest and concern on the part of the public, the press, and the academic world" was focusing on "whether Catholic Congressmen would vote as a bloc." Democratic party leaders such as Bill Green and Jim Finnegan in Philadelphia, Richard Daley in Chicago, Robert Wagner in New York and Dan O'Connell in Albany represented crucial urban areas. More important were the Governors of key states; Pat Brown of California, David Lawrence of Pennsylvania, Mike DiSalle of Ohio and Steve McNichols of Colorado. In Massachusetts Senator Kennedy boosted his presidential hopes with a landslide reelection victory. The work of Kennedy's pastor, the Archbishop of Boston, was also recognized as Cushing was raised to the Cardinalate.[29]

The political situation seemed ripe for a return of the presidency to the Democrats in 1960. The emergence of Kennedy as a national candidate and the seemingly increased acceptance of Catholic candidates by the electorate suggested to many that a Catholic could indeed be elected President. Catholic politicians, however, mostly Democrats, feared a Catholic at the top of the Democratic ticket would only revive the underlying American anti-Catholicism so evident in the 1928 campaign. They worried that he might drag other Catholic candidates down to defeat eliminating the hard fought gains of a generation. Generally, the church hierarchy was also anxious about the potential for resurgent anti-Catholicism that a Catholic presidential nominee might generate. On a practical level, they had come to expect a sympathetic hearing on issues important to the church from Protestant politicians sensitive to the Catholic vote, as the Eisenhower example illustrates. Specifically, many members of the hierarchy viewed Kennedy as too liberal and would have preferred a more conservative Catholic candidate if there had to be one at all. Even the presence of the candidate's conservative father in the background and the longstanding relationship between Joseph Kennedy and Cardinal Spellman could not sway the Cardinal to support the his son. [30]

While prominent members of the Catholic hierarchy may have believed Kennedy was too liberal their flock, the "Catholic vote," would have been hard pressed to identify just what it was they objected to. The differences were a question of degree, and on foreign policy issues both Kennedy and prelates such as Cushing were calling for a more active anti-Communism. Candidate Kennedy, after all, was criticizing the Eisenhower/Nixon team for permitting the extension of the Communist menace into the Western hemisphere in Cuba, the continuing Soviet challenge to Berlin, the failure to take a sufficiently tough position on the defense of the Chinese Nationalist islands of Quemoy and Matzu and, perhaps most tellingly, allowing the Soviet Union to take the lead in missile technology thus producing the "missile gap." In terms of campaign rhetoric, this last was allegedly the most serious threat to American security.

It is interesting to note the similarities between candidate Kennedy's campaign rhetoric and that of his pastor Cardinal Cushing, in attempting to sort out religion and the Cold War. Cushing later recalled "Whenever he was home he never failed to contact me by a telephone call or a personal visit. Our conversations covered many subjects: for example, the trends of the times, legislation in which the Catholic Church and other churches were interested." The Kennedy/Cushing relationship has been "the subject of much

speculation," according to historian James M. O'Toole. Much of that speculation, however, has centered around the depth of Kennedy's commitment to Catholicism. Many writers have emphasized his secular Harvard education, others his divergent views on parochial education and the conflicts with the Catholic hierarchy that position engendered, still others his lack of moral commitment to the teachings of the church due to his sexual promiscuity and frequent adulteries. Even Cushing has been quoted as saying: "He wore his religion lightly." Perhaps a more accurate description is presented by Francis Russell who writes that while "Catholicism was of course a Boston Irish trademark," the Jansenist strain which dominated Irish and American Irish Catholicism was muted, and "Kennedy's Catholicism was Latin rather than Celtic - to accede to the church, accept it, but not to let it interfere too much with one's private habits or one's daily life." While this may explain much about Kennedy's personal life, more research needs to be done on the question of Kennedy's Catholicism as it relates to his anti-Communism, both as a candidate and as a President. [31]

The evidence seems to suggest that the anti-Communist position of the Catholic periphery which had been defined in the decade of the 1930s, led to FDR's initiative to reach an accommodation between the Vatican and the Kremlin, defined the postwar confrontation over Eastern Europe and the call

for internal security at home and, reinvigorated in the streets of Budapest, would reach its logical conclusion in October 1962 when John and Robert Kennedy realized their options in the Cuban Missile Crisis were limited by the domestic political realities. The inability to achieve a permanent peace, foreseen by FDR in his conversation with Ed Flynn prior to Yalta, is echoed in a conversation between the Kennedy brothers. "I just don't think there was any choice," Robert Kennedy told JFK, "and not only that, if you hadn't acted, you would have been impeached." The President reflected for a moment and replied, "That's what I think - I would have been impeached." [32]

The 1960 election marks the culmination of thirty years of effort on the part of the Catholic periphery to dominate the Protestant center/core by means of the culture of anti-Communism. This trend was particularly prominent in the postwar era when Catholic anti-Communism governed the discussion of both domestic and international affairs. Thomas Garvin of University College, Dublin, Ireland, building on the earlier work of Seymour Martin Lipsit, has demonstrated the case for a periphery-dominated center. According to him, the political party organization of the early Irish Republic saw Fianna Fail, the political arm of Eamon De Valera's revolutionary republican movement "inheriting a core of west coast ultra-nationalist rural

Republican support." Political developments in Ireland hinged on "the polarization within Ireland on the question of relations with Britain," and the political culture of radical republicanism espoused by De Valera came to dominate the discussion. This polarization continued into the 1930s and 1940s as "the stormy character of Anglo-Irish governmental relations" was kept alive by De Valera's efforts to establish a truly independent Irish Republic. This ultra-nationalist republicanism is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that Ireland, alone among the English speaking nations of the world, did not declare war on Germany during WWII. [33]

The parallels between the Irish situation, driven by the ideology of radical republicanism, and the American situation, driven by the ideology of anti-Communism which in turn was largely driven by Catholic anti-Communism are striking. Foreign policy as an issue in the 1960 election was dominated by the no compromise attitude toward the Soviet Union being expressed so candidly in the speeches of both candidates. As historian and Kennedy biographer Herbert S. Parmet has noted, "The issue was not whether the cold war could be mitigated, not which man was best equipped to search for peace, but who would face the 'Communist threat' with greater resolve." Nixon attacked Kennedy's seeming willingness to give up the Nationalist Chinese held islands

of Quemoy and Matsu off the China coast, which Kennedy denied. Kennedy in turn attacked Nixon's part in the loss of Cuba into the Soviet orbit, charges which Nixon denied. With both candidates struggling to outdo the other in demonstrating their anti-Communism, members of the Catholic hierarchy did not need to fear that their no compromise attitude toward Communism was in jeapordy. "Cold war issues raised the most passion" in the campaign, according to Parmet. There simply was no center politically when it came to anti-Communism. The Vital Center, as described by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., was just as dominated by anti-Communism as the extreme right. It is small wonder then that as President JFK could fear the prospect of impeachment should he be perceived as giving in to the Soviets on so vital an issue as missiles in Cuba. [34]

The focus of this work has been the driving force of religion, more specifically American Catholicism, as a motivator of the Cold War. The emergence of American Catholics as a potentially decisive factor in American politics during the 1930s coincided with the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union as the world's superpowers. Scholars have argued that American Catholic anti-Communism was an expression of Catholic nationalism - an effort to be accepted as true and faithful Americans. That view places American anti-Communism at the very center

of American nationalism. This work takes the opposite position. The importance of Catholicism to politics and in turn the importance of Catholic anti-Communism to American Catholicism influenced and shaped foreign policy filtered through domestic politics, beginning with FDR and continuing until the end of the Cold War. The significance of FDR's attempted reconciliation between Joseph Stalin and Pius XII in 1945 and is fully realized in the dramatic meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and John Paul II which symbolized for Catholics everywhere the end of the Cold War. If FDR had succeeded, would the Cold War have been fought? The evidence seems clear that he at least thought so, and attempted to forestall it.

Notes

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2) Walter J. Faraday to pastors, May 29, 1953 Chancery Circular File, Box #6: 46-53 Folder #14, Archives of Archdiocese of Boston, and Alfred Grosser, The Western Alliance: European-American Relations Since 1945, (New York: Vintage Books, 1982) p.114.

3) New York Times, April 7, 1954, p.1.

4) Ibid.

5) John F. Kennedy, "Foreign Policy Is the People's Business" New York Times, August 8, 1954, Section VI, p.28.

6) Ibid. p.30. and Theodore H. White, Breach of Faith: The Fall of Richard Nixon, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1975), p.70.

7) Ibid. p.32. and New York Times August 6, 1954, p.3.

8) New York Times, August 16, 1954, p.14.

9) Robert H. Ferrell., ed., The Diary of James C. Hagerty: Eisenhower in Mid-Course, 1954-1955, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1983), p.244.

10) Ibid., p.245.

11) William Bragg Ewald, Jr., Eisenhower the President: Crucial Days 1951-1960, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1981), pp.184-185.

12) Ibid., pp.186-187.

13) Adolf A. Berle, Jr. "Hungary and Human Dignity," America November 24, 1956, pp.222-223.

14) Leo Cherne, "I Spoke with Cardinal Mindzenty," America, November 17, 1956, p.187.

15) Ibid., and "Hungary: Story of Heroism and Perfidy," America, November 17, 1956, p.191.

16) Ibid.

17) America, "U.S. Policy of Liberation," December 1, 1956, p.256.

18) Ibid.

19) Cushing to all Pastors, Chancery Circular File, December 1, 1956, Box #7:54-58 Folder #8 Item #31, AABos.

20) Statement of Rev. Francis P. Keough, Chairman of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference attached to letter from Richard J. Cushing to all pastors, December 13, 1956, Chancery Circular File, Box #7: 54-58, Folder #8m, Item #44.

21) Ibid.

22) America, "Oath of a Catholic President," January 19, 1957, p.443.

23) John F. Kennedy, The Strategy of Peace, Ed. Allan Nevins (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), pp.82-85.

24) Ibid. pp.86-91.

25) Ibid. pp. 93-96.

26) Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p.408.

27) Patrick Allitt, Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Politics in America, 1950-1985, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp.68-70.

28) Eisenhower, Waging Peace, p.432. and Robert H. Ferrell, Ed. The Eisenhower Diaries, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1981), pp.285-286.

29) Herbert S. Parmet, JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy, (New York: The Dial Press, 1983), pp.37-38.

30) Ibid.

31) James M. O'Toole, "Prelates and Politicos: Catholics and Politics in Massachusetts, 1900-1970" In Robert E. Sullivan and James M. O'Toole, Eds., Catholic Boston: Studies in Religion and Community, 1870-1970, (Boston: Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston, p.58.; Francis Russell, The President Makers: From Mark Hanna to Joseph P. Kennedy, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1976), p.359.

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33) Thomas Garvin, "Political Cleavages, Party Politics and Urbanization in Ireland: The case of the Periphery-Dominated Centre," European Journal of Political Research, 2 (1974) 307-327.

34) Parmet, JFK, pp.45-46.

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