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COMMUNISM

Montana Friends:

Communism as an international threat to our way of life is a thing that we can recognize and handle if we are courageous, firm and true to the principles that have made America great.

Communism here at home, a subversive, underground fifth column threat to our peace and security, is a more difficult thing to recognize and to deal with.

The last session of Congress, belatedly it is true, made an effort to deal with the Communist menace at home. We enacted a bill which I hope will be properly administered and adequate to meet the red menace in the United States. I felt that it was a necessary step, for reasons which I think you would like to know.

Few incidents of our national life are more important to the happiness, peace and security of every one of you, and your children and their children, than the story I wish to give you now.

You have to go back a little to get a true understanding of the Communist problem in this country. It was a very minor problem indeed during the administrations of President Coolidge and President Hoover. The nation was prosperous. The Communist revolution in Russia had been kept pretty well within its own borders, and the United States of America had refused to recognize the Russian Communist government or to have any dealings with it.

Nevertheless, there was a small group of zealous Communist party members in America, waiting any opportunity to enlarge their influence and preaching always the doctrines of Karl Marx and his successors.

When the depression came, they saw their opportunity. Communists infiltrated into every group dissatisfied with the conditions then prevailing, and made every effort to stir up additional trouble and dissatisfaction.

American Communists who had spent most of the twenties in Russia, studying and learning Communist techniques of political action, infiltration and sabotage, flocked home to lead what they hoped would be the revolution in America.

The revolution did not come in a violent, bloody overthrow, as they might have liked, but the influence of these fanatics has been far greater than their numbers would seem to warrant, and they have had a great deal to do with the peaceful revolution which has moved slowly ahead in various fields of government relations with business, individuals and local governments, and in our foreign affairs.

The biggest break the Communists ever received came when Franklin Roosevelt, a few months after his inauguration as President, extended formal recognition to the Soviet Union.

From that time on they could operate with the light of respectability.

Maxim Litvinof, the Russian diplomat who negotiated recognition with the President, was overjoyed at the progress made. He confided to friends that the agreements reached concerning freedom of religion in Russia, negotiation of Russian debts, and the cessation of Communist propaganda in America were worthless, having been made with a capitalist power as a device of the revolution. Surely enough, the promises were worthless. Only a year later President Roosevelt made formal protest to the Soviet Union that Communist propaganda paid for in Moscow still flooded the United States. Stalin did not even reply.

I wish that you would all read the full story of the Communist infiltration that followed.

Wise and able reporters were on the job and wrote part of the story at the time. Few people believed them. They were dismissed as "red baiters."

The story of Harold Ware as the organizer of Communists in American agriculture is a particularly interesting example. Harold Ware was the son of Mother Hloor, the grand old lady of American Communists, I suppose you might call her. Some of you may even have seen her. She toured Montana once or twice back in the 20's, operating through a farm front organization which is no longer in existence, trying to make Communists out of American farmers. Harold Ware got his training in Russia, where he took some American farmers with him at the request of Lenin, to try to show modern American agricultural methods to the collectivized farmers of Russia. He came back in the early thirties, and one of his first jobs was to organize Communist party cells in the Agriculture Department of the United States Government.

One of the men who joined the party at his request was Lee Pressman, a brilliant Harvard law student and, like so many of the young Harvard lawyers who came to serve in the New Deal, a protege of Justice Frankfurter. Pressman makes an interesting story in himself.

He was working for the triple-A when he joined the party. He was accused of being a Communist and denied it. Then he quit the government and became general counsel of the CIO. Again he was accused of being a Communist, and again he denied it. The CIO finally released him from service, back in 1947, and then again he denied he was a Communist.

In 1948 Whitaker Chambers, of whom I will say more later, told the House Committee on Un-American Activities that Lee Pressman was a Communist who formed a party cell in the Agriculture Department in 1934.

Pressman then was running for Congress in New York City. He denounced Chambers, and denied he had ever been a Communist. But when he was called before the Committee, he refused to answer the question.

Pressman was defeated for Congress, two years went by, and then, when we entered the war in Korea, he asked for a hearing at the Un-American Activities Committee. He said he had a change of heart. He had indeed been a Communist party member through the years. He had been a member of a Communist cell in the triple-A in 1934, and he said that John Abt, Charles Kramer and Nathan Witt --- the same men identified by Chambers ---

were members with him. Abt, Kremer and Witt still refuse to make any statement. But there, for the record, is the history of one Communist party cell in the government, perhaps only one of many organized by the late Harold Ware.

Through the years, which I have condensed so briefly in the story of Harold Ware and Lee Pressman, the Communist party had considerable prestige in Washington. Although it was careful to keep most members secret, there were active and open Communists in circulation and for a time it was even stylish to consort with them.

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Earl Browder, the American Communist party boss, was under orders to be nice to the New Deal, while at the same time doing all he could to load his followers into strategic places. How well he did is shown by the records of those who have been exposed so far. Each, as I will show, rose swiftly to important and strategic positions.

The record shows Earl Browder in 1938 visiting the White House, invited in 1942 to discuss China policy at the State Department, pardoned by President Roosevelt after serving only a few months of a four-year sentence for passport fraud.

Still the Administration did not want it known that its Communist support was as great as it really proved to be. When loyal citizens protested against a disloyal individual, as often as not the man who made the protest would be fired rather than the guilty person. Strategic places in personnel sections came under the influence of those who manipulated the Communists into the jobs they wanted to have.

The record of Alger Hiss demonstrates how this was done.

Hiss, another brilliant Harvard law graduate who was a protege of Justice Frankfurter, started out in the agriculture department in 1934. Whitaker Chambers states it was about this time that he recruited Hiss for the Communist party. Hiss worked diligently. Apparently he did his routine work well. Soon we find him transferring into the State Department, where his services to the Communist party could be more useful. His prestige and influence grew rapidly. After only eight years in government, still a young man, he was called upon to take a leading part in the conferences of Bretton Woods and Dumbarton Oaks.

Next he is the President's principal adviser at Yalta, the only one who remains in the room with Roosevelt and Stalin when the other American advisers retired. Then he is secretary-general of the United Nations conference, and proposing a plan for the reorganization of the State Department which the department security officer viewed with horror because he said it would put the Hiss group in all strategic places.

Finally Alger Hiss, in 1947, resigned from government to become head of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Did no one suspect him of being a Communist in all these years? It seems unbelievable if that were the case, and it was not the case.

There were repeated questions about Hiss's loyalty.

In 1939 Whitaker Chambers, the confessed Communist courier, told Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle all about the five years of close relationships between Hiss and himself, how Hiss had delivered countless secret documents to Chambers who in turn sent them to the Russian government.

Again in 1942 Chambers told this story to the FBI.

There were others who questioned Hiss's loyalty.

Why was he permitted to remain in high position?

No one can answer that question. No one knows why.

President Roosevelt refused to consider the Chambers charge.

No one knows why Dean Acheson vouched so strongly for him, or why this was sufficient to quiet all questions and doubts.

I do not even know why the President, in 1948, dismissed the whole affair, despite all the information at his disposal, as "a red herring." Perhaps it was because an election approached. Perhaps it was because he thought winning the election was more important than Communists in high places in his administration. If that is what he thought, it shows either an astonishing and unbelievable cynical attitude, or a complete failure to comprehend the true menace of Communism.

Now the whole story is a matter of record. Mr. Truman refused to comment. Dean Acheson said he would not turn his back on Alger Hiss.

Here are two cases. There are many others. Just last week in Washington (September 19) the Secretary of Commerce asked a man named Michael Lee to resign.

Throughout the war and since Lee has been able to get jobs which had to do with shipments to Russia. As long ago as 1943, Congressman Dondero of Michigan told the government that Lee was known as a Communist. The charges were considered. They were dismissed. He stayed on in influence. The 80th Congress again questioned Lee's loyalty. Again the Civil Service Commission cleared him completely. Now at long last, the Secretary of Commerce has realized that these questions were well-founded.

Then there is the Marzani case. Marzani was cleared a half dozen times by Civil Service Loyalty boards that called only his character witnesses when they had their hearings. It took five years to get rid of Marzani. Finally a grand jury returned an indictment charging him with lying when he said he was not a Communist, he was convicted, sentenced to jail, and his Federal employment terminated.

Judith Coplon is another who was cleared, but turned out to be a Communist thief of secret documents.

Julian Wadleigh confessed that he had stolen hundreds of documents over many years.

The Ameriasia case comes to mind, when you will recall more than 1700 secret documents --- so secret some are still not revealed --- were stolen by three men in government and turned over to a pro-Communist magazine, edited by a known Communist. Two of the government men went off scot free. One was fined. One civilian was fined. Congressional Committees have been trying for years to get to the bottom of this case --- to find who gave protection to these people --- who hushed it up --- who asked the judge to dismiss the cases --- but President Truman has locked up the files and refuses to let any Congressional Committee look at them.

These are just a few of the many cases that have actually been proved. How many more are there that we will never know about?

How many people were given concealment from investigation when the State Department, from August to December 1946, hired eight men to remove every derogatory and damaging statement from the personal file of every employee of that department?

We may never know the extent of the infiltration. We can judge some of the results. We can only guess how much influence the fifth columnists had upon the foreign policy which has brought us into battle in Korea, unprepared, heavily in debt, at neither a time or place of our own choosing. We can speculate on how much these fifth columnists had to do with some of the disastrous strikes which beset us in the thirties and during the war, and how much they may have influenced the government programs designed to deal with the depression -- so many now-forgotten alphabetical agencies that tried to control the American economy, did their damage of confusion and disturbance, and then were replaced by another agency with the same personnel.

The Congress has long been aware of the dangers, but only recently the public has come to demand legislation which would control subversives in government and elsewhere in the United States. The war in Korea helped to convert a few who had previously been willing to follow the administration in its persistent and unyielding opposition to any kind of adequate law for combating domestic Communism. That opposition never ended. Finally, as a sop to public opinion, it took the form of a weak substitute measure

proposed by the President. But the Congress, at long last realizing in full what a minority of us had tried to tell for a time, has in the final days of its recent session placed upon the statute books a law which can deal with Communism.

That law provides for the registration of Communists and their front organizations, for the labelling of Communist propaganda. It provides that they may not be employed in government, and that they may not have passports.

It provides that the statute of limitations on crimes of espionage and sabotage shall be ten years instead of three. This provision would have made it possible for us to try Alger Hiss for the crime of espionage, rather than having to resort to convicting him of perjury for denying his activities.

J. Edgar Hoover states there are 54,000 Communists in this country, and 540,000 fellow travelers. He has stated time and again that they are a continual threat to our nation. The truth of his words was shown once again in September when, after failing on their first attempt,

Communists saboteurs succeeded in blowing up with dynamite the powerful Ohio radio station which beamed Voice of America programs to Russia.

We now have a law which will enable us to deal with these people.

I trust J. Edgar Hoover and his force to do the necessary work of tracking down, investigation and arresting these fifth columnists who violate this law.

I hope that we can depend upon the Justice Department to prosecute those Mr. Hoover's men uncover.

The time is here when we must meet this threat of Communism at home as well as overseas. We are years behind the times with this law. Let us fight Communism at home just as hard as our soldiers are fighting it overseas.