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**CAUTION CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS:
THE MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES
AND THE COLD WAR**

**CAUTION CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS:
THE MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES
AND THE COLD WAR**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

By

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"We reaffirm the principle of separation of church and state as provided in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. We are anxious that this independence be maintained."--170th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., 1958¹

World War II forced the United States to the forefront of the world stage. Only two nations, the United States and the Soviet Union; and two rival economic systems, capitalism and communism, emerged from World War II with the potential to dominate world politics and trade. Many liberals hoped that the two countries would remain allies following the war. Many conservatives believed, however, that the Soviet Union could not be trusted and urged a quarantine of communism.

Between 1945 and 1955 religion in America experienced a renaissance. The churches were the spiritual arm of the baby boom--American's were having children, moving to the suburbs, and going back to worship. Religious revivals drew huge crowds, and the country seemed obsessed with anything religious. The churches recognized their new importance and, hesitatingly, they began to assert their influence in the social, political, as well as spiritual life of the country. The ability of the churches to influence American politicians during the early post-war years was great, probably much greater than their ability to guide their own members.

¹ General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A., "Social Deliverances", Social Progress (July 1958): 16

Following World War II, it was good politics to take a hard line against international and domestic communism. The mainline Protestant churches, which had long opposed communism and communism's home base, the Soviet Union, should have been a certain and powerful ally of the fervent anti-communists, but they were not; in fact they were usually in strong opposition to the rigid communist-bashers.

Many conservatives urged the country to prepare, and even over prepare, for war by making more weapons and more destructive weapons; the mainline leaders urged cautious (but not unilateral) disarmament. Many Americans advocated seeking whatever allies could be found to aid in the fight against communism; the mainline churches fought all efforts to embrace the anti-communist head of the Catholic Church, the Pope, or any right-wing anti-communist dictators, just because of their anti-communist ideologies. Some conservatives lobbied for peacetime conscription and universal military training for all teenage boys in order to guarantee a viable military force in the case of war; the mainline leadership opposed both measures, arguing that they would threaten American values by militarizing the nation. For many Americans in the post-World War II era, controlling communism abroad was not as critical as controlling communism at home. The often hysterical fear of domestic communism was fed by people like Senator Joseph McCarthy and groups like the House Un-American Activities Committee who often used witchhunt tactics to "discover" communists; the mainline leadership cautioned that anti-

communist extremism could be a greater threat to America than communism. The mainline Protestant churches, traditionally seen as cautious and politically conservative, usually took a moderate, almost cordial, stance towards the Soviet Union. They did not like or trust the communists, but at the same time they worked for peace and good relations.

The Protestant churches have dominated the spiritual life of the United States since the early part of the sixteenth century, when King Henry VIII of England broke with the Roman Catholic Church and declared himself head of the new Church of England. Doctrinally, the original Church of England was similar to Roman Catholicism. But the Church of England's claim to royal supremacy in all matters established England as an enemy to Roman Catholicism. England and her new colonies on the east coast of North America became Protestant.²

Anglicanism (the Church of England) remained the dominant religion in England after Henry's break. America, however, became a polyglot of faiths as different Protestants, Catholics, Jews and others crossed the Atlantic and Pacific to avoid persecution or to find a better life. Although divided into many different denominations, the United States has always been predominantly Protestant. Of those faiths, the mainline Protestants have been the dominant denominations in the United States (both in membership and in political, economic and social power).

² J.M. Roberts, History of the World (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993), 460

The definition of mainline Protestant faiths differs. Usually, however, the grouping includes Episcopalians (the American follow-up to the Anglican faith), Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists. Occasionally the Baptists, Lutherans, and/or the Disciples of Christ are considered part of the mainline. For this work the category will include the traditionally dominant American Protestant faiths: the Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Methodists.

The French statesman and writer, Alexis de Tocqueville, after touring America, commented on the religious nature of the United States. "On my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention... There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."³ This penchant for religion has been part of the fabric of American life from the beginning. According to the Mayflower Compact of November 11, 1620, the voyage of the pilgrims was "undertaken for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian Faith." The Compact also described itself as a covenant made "in the presence of God."⁴

Most Americans have felt a need to "belong" to churches, synagogues, or other religious assemblies (this remains true today; in 1989 between 82 and 93 percent of all adult Americans claim

³ Mark Jurgensmeyer, The New Cold War (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1993), 11

⁴ Jurgensmeyer, New Cold War, 11

some religious affiliation).⁵ A much larger portion of Americans are (and have been) attracted to religious organizations than any other voluntary organization, and the U.S. levels of church attendance surpass those of most other industrialized nations.⁶ Surveys have shown that in a normal week between 29 and 39 percent of all Americans attend religious services, and 48 and 89 percent (depending on the survey) offer prayer to God.⁷

The mainline Protestants have always been in the forefront of America's religious, and political, life. Most presidents have been members of mainline churches (the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches have been the most represented), as have most members of Congress and justices on the Supreme Court. This political dominance stems largely from the high socioeconomic status of many in the mainline churches. Traditionally high income and social status have resulted in a more conservative political attitude (less desire to disrupt the status quo), and, true to form, the mainline Protestants, have historically been conservative.⁸

Of the mainline faiths, the Episcopal (or Anglican) church came to British America first. Sir Francis Drake landed in California in 1578, and his Church of England chaplain, Francis Fletcher, planted a cross and read a prayer while Drake claimed the land for Queen Elizabeth. Anglican chaplains accompanied the early English

⁵ David C. Leege, Religion and Politics, ed. W. Lawson Taitte (Dallas: Univ. of Texas at Dallas Press, 1989), 3

⁶ Christopher P. Gilbert, The Impact of Churches on Political Behavior, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), 15

⁷ Leege, Religion, 3

⁸ Kenneth D. Wald, Religion and Politics in the United States (New York: St. Martins Press, 1987), 240-41

settlers and explorers to America. Sir Walter Raleigh's chaplain baptized an Indian baby into the church, and John Smith's chaplain began conducting church services in Jamestown upon the company's arrival in the New World. In the South (especially Virginia), the Church of England was the established church. The Anglican clergy was supported by public taxes and private contributions. Because it was distant from the church headquarters in London, the church in America was nearly autonomous.⁹

The American Revolution all but destroyed the Anglican Church in America outside the South. Most Episcopalians remained loyal to King George and many had to flee to Canada or England to escape persecution by the revolutionaries. Only in the South (particularly Virginia) did the church remain strong, and it did so primarily because the Episcopal congregations sided with the Revolution. Parishes eliminated supplications to the King from the prayer books. During and after the war Episcopal church members were central figures in the leadership of the new country. Two-thirds of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and of the framers of the Constitution were born and raised Episcopalian (including Washington, Jefferson and Madison).¹⁰

The damage done to the Episcopal Church in America by the Revolution left the institution in a weakened state for more than twenty years after the Revolution, but by the beginning of the

⁹ Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), 184-85

¹⁰ Hartzell Spence, The Story of America's Religions (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 134-36

nineteenth century the church was once again expanding. Between 1830 and 1930, the Episcopal Church population grew at a rate almost five times faster than the population of the United States.¹¹ The Civil War had little impact on the church. It took no official stand on the question of slavery. During the war, the Southern parishes edited their prayer book to include a prayer for the president of the Confederacy. After the war, however, the Southern church returned to the General Convention.¹²

A number of Episcopalians were among the earliest advocates of the social gospel.¹³ The Church became so intertwined and influential in government that financier J.P. Morgan once defined the Episcopal Church as "the Republican Party at prayer."¹⁴ In many American cities the "society" church was the Episcopal church.

Episcopalians generally viewed their church as a bridge between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. There are many "Catholic" characteristics in the Episcopal Church (including a belief in Apostolic succession and a central hierarchy, vested clergymen who are referred to as priests, and a great deal of ceremony,

¹¹ Vergilius Ferm, The American Church of the Protestant Heritage (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 110

¹² Spence, The Story, 140

¹³ The social gospel, also known as Christian socialism, was a movement designed to secure social justice for the poor. It paved the way for the Progressive movement which followed. Among the goals worked toward by the social gospel and progressivism were temperance, slum clean-up, labor rights, the break-up of political machines, some government regulation of business, women's rights, and child labor policies. Eric Foner and John Garraty (editors), The Reader's Companion to American History (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1991), 868, 1000

¹⁴ James L. Adams, The Growing Church Lobby in Washington (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 16

including the rite of the Eucharist, in the church service).¹⁵ The Anglican-Episcopal Church was a leader in establishing the World Council of Churches, and the Episcopal Church in America helped to found the U.S. National Council of Churches. The church has publicly stated that it looks forward to the day when all Protestantism will unite to merge with the Orthodox and Roman Catholic faiths in a single communion of Christian brotherhood. Over the last fifty years the Episcopal Church has held talks with the Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist faiths about some sort of union or intercommunion.¹⁶

The roots of the Presbyterian Church go back to Protestant reformers John Calvin and John Knox. Many early Presbyterian settlers in America had been persecuted for their beliefs in England, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. The church had members in Virginia and Massachusetts in the early 1600's. But by the middle of that century, with Anglicanism claiming exclusive rights in Virginia and Congregationalism having become the state church of Massachusetts, most of the Presbyterians voluntarily migrated or were expelled to the middle colonies that stretched from New York to Maryland.¹⁷

¹⁵ J. Paul Williams, What Americans Believe and How They Worship (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1952), 167

¹⁶ F. E. Mayer, The Religious Bodies in America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 280; Williams, What Americans, 184-86; Mead, Handbook, 188; Spence, The Story, 145

¹⁷ Spence, The Story, 64; Mead, Handbook, 174

Befitting its Calvinist heritage, the early Presbyterian churches were spartan. No hymns were allowed, only psalm singing. At the service, sermons and prayers could last for hours. Presbyterians prominently supported the American Revolution, and as a result, Presbyterian property was the target of British wrath. Presbyterian churches in New York and New Jersey were used as cavalry stables, and a number of sanctuaries and manses were burned. The Presbyterians had difficulty recovering from the destruction of the Revolution and were subsequently victimized by the superior missionary efforts of the Methodists and Baptists.¹⁸

Around 1800 the Presbyterian Church began sending missionaries to the frontier. They experienced success with the Scotch-Irish frontier families and staged a comeback. The Presbyterian and Congregational churches began proselytizing the frontier together. The Presbyterians were in the forefront of the Second Great Awakening revivals, and by 1837 the church's membership had grown to over 220,000 (over a tenfold increase from 1790).¹⁹ Between 1837 and 1861, the church divided over issues like slavery and the association with the Congregationalists.

After the Civil War, the Presbyterian churches set up extensive domestic missions to the Indians and the former slaves. The church's work with the less fortunate placed it in the center of the social gospel movement.²⁰ Although typically considered one of the more conservative of the mainline religions, the Presbyterians

¹⁸ Spence, The Story, 66-67

¹⁹ Mead, Handbook, 176

²⁰ Spence, The Story, 70-71

have been in the forefront of social reforms such as the elimination of slavery, help for the poor, and racial integration. Like the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians became increasingly upper-middle class, suburban and highly educated. In 1910 the various branches of the church began reuniting. The Presbyterian church has also been active in bringing the Protestant faiths closer together by supporting inter-faith organizations in the U.S. and abroad.²¹

The term Methodist was originally a sarcastic barb directed at the followers of John Wesley for their adherence to a strict regime of living--every action methodically planned to make them more godly. They were also often referred to as Bible Bigots or Bible Moths because of their rigid adherence to a literal interpretation of the Bible.²² Most of the early Methodists, both in England (the birthplace of John Wesley and Methodism) and the United States, were pious, strictly disciplined members of the Church of England who formed into societies for the promotion of holiness. Like the Presbyterians, the early Methodists had a strict code of morals. Early Methodists were forbidden to dance, play cards, use tobacco, race horses or wear frills, lace or ornamentation on their clothing (though there was no prohibition on hymn-singing). Methodists, above all, believed that all men are equal before God and capable of being saved (directly contradicting the Puritan doctrine of predestination). This attitude led to a strong emphasis on

²¹ Mead, Handbook, 175-77; Williams, What Americans, 204-6; Spence, The Story, 69, 71-73; Ferm, The American, 221-22

²² Spence, The Story, 3

missionary work. President Theodore Roosevelt said of the Methodists:

"Its (Methodism's) fiery and restless energy of spirit and the wide play it gave to individual initiative all tended to make it peculiarly congenial to a hardy and virile folk, democratic to the core, prizing individual independence above all earthly possessions and engaged in the rough and stern work of conquering a continent."²³

He also stated, "I would rather address a Methodist audience than any other audience in America....The Methodists represent the great middle class and in consequence are the most representative church in America."²⁴

There were few Methodists in America at the time of the American Revolution, so the church played no real role in the founding of the country. The church was, however, a key player in the second great religious awakening. Wesleyan circuit preachers conducted frequent meetings all along the frontier. The efforts of the traveling preachers caused the church membership to soar from around 14,000 members in 1783 to over 1.3 million members by the middle of the nineteenth century.²⁵

Wesley's creation initially grew the most rapidly in the cities, particularly among the poor and dispossessed; but by the time of the Civil War the church had become largely middle-class in its membership. The slavery question divided the Methodists in

²³ Spence, The Story, 4

²⁴ Quoted by Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization, V.II (New York: Macmillan, 1930), 399

²⁵ Mead, Handbook, 149

several ways. The most important of these was the split between the northern and southern branches of the Church. But other groups also broke off from the main body. These included several black churches, the largest being the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The splits involved no doctrinal differences but were strictly political and social. The northern and southern wings of the church reunited in 1939. Most of the black Methodist churches still remain outside the central body.²⁶

The Northern Methodists were known for their active support of the abolition movement. Following the Civil War, the church continued to use political and religious means to affect social change. The church's large membership and its willingness actively to manipulate the political process put the Methodists at the forefront of the campaigns to clean up government, break up business monopolies, and limit or eliminate alcohol (the Methodists and the Baptists were usually the leaders of the Temperance movement).²⁷

There was not much theological divergence between the early Methodists and the Anglicans. Most of the differences involved the question of authority and power within the church. Methodism lacked a rigid hierarchical church structure. Otherwise, Wesley and other early influential Methodists differed little from the mother church (Wesley always remained a priest in the Church of England and maintained that his societies were merely an adjunct to the

²⁶ Mead, Handbook, 149

²⁷ Williams, What Americans, 286-88

Church.²⁸) The most distinctive feature of Methodism was that it had no creed. Wesley reinforced that attitude by saying, "Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think."²⁹ One Methodist bishop went further: "To put it epigrammatically, the distinguishing doctrine of Methodism is that it has no distinguishing doctrine."³⁰

By the post World War II period, the Church was firmly under the control of a General Conference that met every four years, and the local congregations featured less individual autonomy than most of the other mainline Protestant faiths (though they do not follow as rigid a hierarchical structure as the Catholic or the Episcopal faiths).³¹ Over the last century, the Methodist Church has consistently been among the most politically liberal of the Protestant sects.

The Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church united in 1957 to become the United Church of Christ. That union represented the last in a long series of unions that brought together many different Calvinist and Lutheran faiths.³² There had been dissenting groups of churchmen in England even before the Reformation who called themselves Congregationalists. Later many of these radical groups were

²⁸ Williams, What Americans, 277

²⁹ Spence, The Story, 3

³⁰ Mayer, The Religious Bodies, 289

³¹ Mead, Handbook, 150

³² Robert Famighetti, ed., The World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997 (Mahwah, NJ: World Almanac Books, 1996), 652

lumped together under the term Puritans. In America, the Puritans and the Separatists merged into the Congregational faith. This faith dominated Massachusetts and much of New England in colonial times.³³

Among other things, the Congregationalists were known for their austere, Calvinist lifestyle, their commitment to education, and their rejection of British religious traditions and government. Congregational ministers were in the forefront of the anti-English attitudes of the 1760s. After the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765, many Congregational clergymen argued that liberty had become a holy cause. Congregational support for the Revolution coupled with (for the most part) Anglican support for the crown caused the Congregational Church to be the most influential religious voice following the Revolution. But the Church soon lost its premier position. The joint Congregational-Presbyterian ministries to the frontier proved far more beneficial to the Presbyterians. Pockets of Congregationalism existed in the Old Northwest, but the bulk of the church remained in New England.³⁴

The abolitionist movement, the rapid expansion of urban poverty and blight, and the general liberalization of attitudes in New England in the nineteenth century altered the Congregational Church. During that century the church moved from its conservative, colonial roots to become a more liberal, activist denomination. Congregational ministers were among the leaders of

³³ Mead, Handbook, 214-15

³⁴ Spence, The Story, 85

women's rights and anti-slave groups (Oberlin College in Ohio, the first college to open its doors to women and to blacks, was largely funded by the Congregational Church) and later helped to start the social gospel movement.³⁵

Befitting its name the local congregations of the Congregational Church have almost complete control over their own financial, ministerial and doctrinal affairs. The denominational executive has nothing but an advisory influence in the local churches. Despite this seeming unlimited power, the reality is that most congregations stay within somewhat limited doctrinal and organizational constructs. Falling from fellowship with the larger church or other congregations proved to be a constraining force upon local action.³⁶

By the time of World War II and the beginning of the cold war, the Congregational Church was the least traditional and most rigid of the mainline churches. Within the church there were some conservative local congregations as well as some radical ones, but most followed a solid liberal position.³⁷ The church declared itself

³⁵ Spence, The Story, 86-87

³⁶ The editor of The Christian Century magazine said that the individual congregations within the Congregational Church "are not a whit more independent than Presbyterian or Episcopalian congregations. If they exercise their imagined independence beyond a certain point they are dealt with just as similar variations are dealt with by other denominations, the only difference being in the technique, not in its effectiveness...A Congregational, Baptist, or Disciples local church...conforms to an organic whole which is larger than itself, a whole of which it is a subordinate and cooperating part." He would later add though that the Congregational Church does in fact tolerate a wider range of and more frequent irregularities from its local congregations than would say the Baptists. Williams, What Americans, 218-20

³⁷ Williams, What Americans, 222

to be non-creedal, stating "that creeds dare not be invested with a binding character, but that liberty must be granted to each local church."³⁸ Because no central policy is imposed upon the local churches, the church leadership rarely addresses political issues publicly. Other Protestants were far likelier to address Cold War issues than were the Congregationalists.

Martin Luther, the man for whom the Lutheran Church was named, did not to begin a Lutheran Church. "I beg that my name be passed over in silence, and that men will call themselves not Lutherans but Christians," he said. "What is Luther? My teaching is not mine...Let us root out party names and call ourselves Christians, for it is Christ's gospel we have."³⁹ Despite Luther's efforts, most of his followers were called Lutherans. Luther is credited with beginning the Protestant Reformation by his act of nailing 95 theses (a series of complaints about practices in the Catholic Church) to the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517. His religious movement touched off progressive political and social forces throughout Europe, and the Reformation spread throughout the world. Lutheranism (as a church) primarily found converts in Germany and Scandinavia.

The first Lutheran immigrants to America were probably from Sweden, and they settled in Fort Christina (Wilmington), Delaware in 1637. William Penn promoted German immigration to

³⁸ Mayer, The Religious, 353

³⁹ Ferm, The American, 25

his colony of Pennsylvania, and a group of German Lutherans settled what is now Germantown (in Philadelphia) in the 1670's; other settlements in Pennsylvania, New York and the Carolinas followed soon thereafter. A new wave of German/Lutheran immigration to Pennsylvania began in the 1720's. In 1748 Lutheran minister Henry Muhlenberg organized the first Lutheran synod of America.⁴⁰

The Lutheran Church has always insisted that politics not be addressed from the pulpit, so the Lutheran congregations made no denominational statement in favor of or opposed to the Revolution against England. Nevertheless, many Lutherans (including two of Muhlenberg's sons) served with distinction in the Continental Army. A Lutheran, John Hanson of Maryland, was elected president of the Continental Congress in 1781, making him, in some respects, the actual first president of the United States.⁴¹

In order to train native born pastors for the ministry, a temporary theological seminary began operating in 1815; in 1826 the first permanent Lutheran seminary was opened in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The American Lutheran Church was independent from the European church. Indeed, the orthodoxy that characterized some European Lutherans was not common in America. The church would occasionally work closely with other American Protestant churches. Those who took Luther's name did not exhibit the same religious fervor that some of the other

⁴⁰ Ferm, The American, 33

⁴¹ Spence, The Story, 50

Protestants did during the second great awakening, but there was an effort to send more ministers to the frontier.

The Lutheran Church grew mainly because of the influx of Scandinavian and German immigrants. Whole counties on the American frontier became uniformly Lutheran as they were settled by German, Swedish, Danish or Norwegian practitioners of the faith. The most well-known of these was a group of 760 Saxons who moved to St. Louis and founded a community of Lutheran saints in Missouri. This would become the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod; a large, autonomous sect separate from the main branch of the Church.⁴²

The first major break in the American Lutheran Church came in 1863 when the southern Lutherans organized their own synod. The church broke even further, largely along the lines of national origin, following the Civil War. Until well into the twentieth century, most American Lutherans were actually members of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, or the Danish Church... In 1918 the Synod of the South, the General Synod and the General Council merged into the United Lutheran Church. Other local synods reunited in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1962 three Lutheran bodies (the United Lutheran Church, the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church) consolidated into the Lutheran Church of America--the largest Lutheran body in

⁴² Mead, Handbook, 133; Spence, The Story, 51

the country. But there are still approximately a dozen Lutheran synods and conferences outside the main body of the church.⁴³

The Lutherans have largely kept themselves apart from other Protestant bodies. As the membership lost its various ethnic identities, became second and third generation American, and moved to wholly English-language services, it became more involved with groups such as the National Council of Churches. The Lutheran Churches are largely conservative (particularly groups like the Missouri-Synod) and have not gotten as involved in 'liberal' causes as other mainline Protestants. The Lutherans were not as committed to the social gospel and were less active in the peace movements following both world wars. The main body of the Lutheran Church eventually became more moderate which led to some divisions between liberals and fundamentalists.⁴⁴

The Baptists claim more members than any Protestant faith in America. The largest individual Protestant sect in the country is the Southern Baptist Convention, with approximately sixteen million members.⁴⁵ Groups calling themselves Baptists or Anabaptists

⁴³ Mead, Handbook, 135-37

⁴⁴ Famighetti, World Almanac, 653

⁴⁵ (These are 1996 estimates) By comparison the next two largest individual sects are the United Methodist Church with about 8,500,000 members and the National Baptist Convention of the USA with 8,200,000 members. Other large Protestant sects include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America-5,200,000; the Church of God in Christ-5,500,000; the Presbyterian Church of the USA-3,700,000; the African Methodist Church-3,500,000; the National Baptist Convention-3,500,000; the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod-2,600,000; the Progressive National Baptist Convention-2,500,000; the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America-2,500,000; and the Episcopal Church-2,500,000. None of these sects comes close to the membership of the Roman Catholic Church which claims over sixty million members in the

emerged right after the Reformation. There was no single leader or creed that started or united the Baptists. The earliest English Baptists seemed to have been a group of British Separatists who moved to Holland in 1609 under the leadership of clergyman John Smythe. Part of his group returned to England under the direction of Thomas Helwys and became known as General Baptists. A second group known as Particular or Calvinist Baptists came into existence in 1638 under the leadership of John Spilsbury. The difference between these two groups was that one believed in predestination (those who will be saved was determined before birth by God) and the other believed that the atonement and salvation was for all.⁴⁶

In America, the Baptist Church dated to 1638 when Roger Williams established a Baptist congregation in Rhode Island. (There are those who claim that a Baptist Church in Newport, Rhode Island under the leadership of John Clarke preceded Williams). Heavy persecution against the Baptists in New England kept the numbers there small until the great awakening in the 1720s.

During the first great awakening, the Baptists split into two camps; those who opposed the use of revivals and emotion to win converts (known as the Regulars or the Old Lights) and those who used emotion-based spiritualism as a way to attract converts and to

United States. Other large, non-Protestant Church populations in the U.S. include the Latter Day Saints (Mormons)-4,600,000; the Orthodox Church in America and the Greek Orthodox Church-2,000,000 each; Islam-5,100,000; Judaism (the three largest Jewish organizations combined)-4,300,000. Famighetti, World Almanac, 644-45

⁴⁶ Ferm, The American, 188

experience spiritual rebirth (known as the Separatists or the New Lights). The two camps put aside their differences to fight the Revolution. Baptists were in the forefront of revolutionary thought and uniformly supported the effort for independence.

Befitting their origin as religious outcasts who were persecuted by the state church, the Baptists actively worked after the war for a complete separation of the church and state and for laws that would guarantee religious freedom. The Baptists strongly lobbied Virginia and Massachusetts to disestablish their state churches. They also worked for a national bill of rights to guarantee religious freedom. According to J. Paul Williams, Professor of Religion at Mount Holyoke College: "undoubtedly, more credit for the achievement of religious liberty in America is due the Baptists than to any other religion."⁴⁷

No one outdid the Baptists in working the frontier during the second great awakening. The Baptist reputation for informality, freedom, and warmth fit in well in frontier society. The Baptists (along with the Methodists) further aided their cause by allowing unlettered evangelicals to work the countryside in the name of the church. Most other Protestant churches used only trained ministers to ride the frontier circuit so they could not saturate the west like the Baptists and Methodists.⁴⁸

Following the rush of converts during the period from 1816-1826, the Baptist Church worked to clarify its doctrine and create

⁴⁷ Williams, What Americans, 247

⁴⁸ Williams, What Americans, 247-48

church uniformity through a series of church conventions and by setting up national Baptist organizations, missions, and publications. This effort fell apart due to differences within the church over the issue of slavery. In 1845, feeling that they were being ignored and over-ruled in convention meetings, the Southern Baptists walked out and formed their own convention. In addition to differing with the North on the question of slavery, the Southern Baptist Church was also more centralized, with more power given to the national convention. (This did not change the basic makeup in church power. Southern and Northern Baptists alike are congregational in nature and cannot be coerced by the national convention.)⁴⁹

The Baptists have always been missionaries at heart. In the urban North this meant working within the cities as well as on the frontier. Baptist pastors frequently led the efforts to clean-up the cities and aid the poor. The church was well-known for setting up hospitals, orphanages, old age homes, etc. Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist minister, is usually credited with starting the social gospel movement. His effort at saving the country's economic soul and improving its social order gave new direction to the Baptist Home Missions who got involved in everything from labor relations to housing codes and slum clearance.⁵⁰

Unlike the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, the Baptists have not traditionally been the church of the wealthy. The church has had special appeal to farmers and manual laborers and other

⁴⁹ Ferm, The American, 190; Spence, The Story of, 23

⁵⁰ Spence, The Story, 32

groups that traditionally have had limited access to higher education. As a result, the church has been active in the field of education. The Baptists founded Brown University (now non-sectarian) in Rhode Island in 1764 and as of 1960 boasted 63 affiliated schools of higher learning, including Baylor and Wake Forest.⁵¹

Southern Baptists have traditionally been more conservative than the northern churches, but surprisingly during the 1950s and 60s the central hierarchy (the national convention) of the Southern Baptist Church was almost as active in pursuit of causes like peace and disarmament and integration as the Northern Baptists. One difference between the churches, though, was that many more southern congregations fought the progressive stances taken by the national church than did those in the north. The various branches of the Baptist Church have worked closely on political, educational, and missionary issues, but at no time did the branches of the Baptist Church appear to be heading towards reunification.

Of the interfaith Protestant organizations that were active in the United States during the post-World War II era, none was more effective or recognizable than the National Council of Churches. The National Council came into being in 1950 when the former Federal Council of Churches merged with eleven other interdenominational agencies. The Federal Council was organized in 1908 by twenty-

⁵¹ Spence, The Story, 33

five Protestant denominations, and that body became increasingly outspoken in its support of liberal theology and a social creed.⁵²

Within the National Council the division most concerned with foreign affairs following World War II was the Department of International Affairs. The Department exercised nothing more than advisory power to the churches, but it carried a lot of weight in Washington. Its primary mission was to educate the member churches about international issues, develop consensus among the members on international issues, represent the member institutions at the United Nations, coordinate efforts with Christians in other countries, set up conferences between church and government leaders, and coordinate lobbying efforts. The Department worked to bring about better relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, to encourage peace and arms reductions, to support the United Nations, and to promote human rights in the United States and abroad. The Department and the National Council consistently pushed for a liberal foreign affairs agenda.⁵³

In direct opposition to the liberal Federal Council, the American Council of Christian Churches was formed in 1941. It had its greatest support among the more fundamentalist Protestant denominations and individuals. The ACCC accused the Federal (and National) Council of promoting "theories hardly to be distinguished from downright Communism."⁵⁴ The ACCC resented the media's

⁵² Mayer, *The Religious*, 500-501

⁵³ Kenneth L. Maxwell, "What are the Churches Doing?", *International Journal of Religious Education* 36, no. 3 (November, 1959), 14

⁵⁴ Mayer, *The Religious*, 502

tendency to rely on the National Council for religious broadcasting and the government's penchant for calling in the National Council as the voice of Protestant America in political deliberations.⁵⁵ The ACCC never commanded the attention or the membership of the Federal/National Council.⁵⁶

The World Council of Churches was organized from a group of small inter-denominational movements. At its initial meeting in Amsterdam in 1948, all major areas of Christianity except Catholicism were represented. The Council's purpose was to bring the Christian religions into a close working relationship in order to encourage communication and understanding and to promote some Church unity. The Council's aim was not to become a super-church, only a forum to bring together different ideas. Like the National Council, the World Council could not compel its members to support any policy. Also like the National Council, the World Council became well-known for its support of a liberal foreign policy agenda.⁵⁷

Officially no large American church, Protestant or otherwise, took sides in questions of partisan politics, but in reality they did. For example, by the post-war period, the Democratic Party could

⁵⁵ The ACCC had reason to complain of governmental preferential treatment for the National Council. In 1951 President Truman's correspondence secretary wrote, "We have always considered the National Council of Churches as the most nearly representative of all the Protestant Churches in this country." It certainly helped the National Council that they and Truman agreed on most issues. Merlin Gustafson, "Religion and Politics in the Truman Administration", Rocky Mountain Social Science Journal 3 (1966), 127

⁵⁶ Mayer, The Religious, 502-503

⁵⁷ Mayer, The Religious, 504-509

count on the votes of most Catholics and Jews. Protestants were expected to vote Republican, but there were some conspicuous exceptions, such as the Protestant dominated South which, for decades, was the safest Democratic region in the country.

In the country's first years, the Congregational Church was, essentially, the religious wing of the Federalist Party. Approximately nine out of ten Congregationalist ministers were staunchly Federalist and energetically pursued their cause.⁵⁸ The Congregational clergy warned of dire consequence if the deist Thomas Jefferson became president. In 1796, when Jefferson was elected vice-president, a Congregational minister prayed, "O Lord! wilt thou bestow upon the Vice President a double portion of thy grace, *for Thou Knowest he needs it.*" Jefferson's early support for the (arguably) atheistic French Revolution also won him few friends in New England.⁵⁹

In New England and the middle states most Episcopalians also supported the party of order and the status quo, the Federalists. This is not surprising since they and the Congregationalists had been the religion of power and status. Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans were seen as a threat to the existing power structure. By contrast, the Presbyterians, long persecuted by the state churches, strongly supported Jefferson. The mostly working-class Baptists also overwhelmingly supported Jefferson. The Methodists split along regional lines with the frontier Methodists supporting

⁵⁸ A. James Reichley, Religion in American Public Life (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1985), 178

⁵⁹ Reichley, Religion in, 178

Jefferson and those living in the more settled regions supporting Adams.⁶⁰

By the time of the second great awakening (beginning around 1820) the Federalist Party and the two-party competition for office was largely dead. The churches were too caught up in competition for converts to get actively involved in national politics. Only as the religious fervor died down and was replaced with partisan battles (Whig vs. Democrat), and later with arguments over slavery, did the churches again taken an active role in national politics.

Despite their disagreements over attracting converts, partisan politics, and later slavery, it was during the first seventy years of the country's existence that the Protestant faiths all pursued a common goal—uniformity. For all the talk in America about rugged individualism, the truth was that most Americans were very threatened by individualism. Tocqueville noted this after his visit to the United States in the nineteenth century.

"The public, therefore, among a democratic people, has a singular power, which aristocratic nations cannot conceive; for it does not persuade others to its beliefs, but it imposes them and makes them permeate the thinking of everyone by a sort of enormous pressure of the mind of all upon the individual intelligence."⁶¹

Tocqueville saw America's character as "the very embodiment of conformity, of conformity so extreme that not only individualism but even freedom was endangered." The opinion of the majority

⁶⁰ Reichley, Religion in, 179-80

⁶¹ David M. Potter, "The Quest for the National Character", Forging the American Character, v. II, ed. John R.M. Wilson (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991), 34

was so oppressive upon the individual that the American "not only mistrusts his strength, but even doubts of his right; and he is very near acknowledging that he is in the wrong when the greater number of his countrymen assert that he is so. The majority does not need to force him; they convince him...Freedom of opinion does not exist in America."⁶² The Protestant Churches became the religious arm of this lifestyle called Americanism.

Despite their differences in dogma, all the mainline churches worked to ensure that American beliefs stayed within certain bounds and the churches and church members would exact severe retribution upon those who violated these bounds. This intolerance for flouting the norms of the majority was most evident with the Catholics and the Mormons. Neither group would conform to the Protestant ideology, and thus it was often the Protestant clergy that led the mobs that persecuted those groups.⁶³

Originally only the Quakers made antislavery an active part of their religion.⁶⁴ Racially segregated church galleries existed in both North and South. A former slave, Richard Allen, in 1816 formed the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia as a protest against the segregation in God's houses. In 1818 the Presbyterian Assembly declared that slavery was unchristian and urged all Christians to work for complete abolition throughout the world.⁶⁵

⁶² Potter, Forging, 34

⁶³ Cushing Strout, The New Heavens and New Earth (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 138

⁶⁴ Strout, The New Heavens, 110

⁶⁵ Strout, The New Heavens, 146-47

In the 1840s more and more religious groups in the North called for an end to slavery. British Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, and Presbyterians pressured their American counterparts to become active witnesses against slavery. Unitarians preached passionately against the sin of slavery. The anti-slavery movement grew up almost entirely within the Protestant Churches.⁶⁶ Most of the founders of the abolitionist Free-Soil Party and then later the Republican Party were Protestants--many of them Protestant clergy (for example the Beecher family whose greatest contribution to abolitionism was Harriet Beecher Stowe's book Uncle Tom's Cabin).

To refute the religious arguments against slavery many southern churches enlisted clergymen to argue the religious position in favor of slavery. As has already been described, the slavery issue broke most of the Protestant churches along North-South lines. Politically the Republicans had their greatest success among the highly abolitionist Congregationalists and northern Methodists.

A. James Reichley argues, however, that it was not slavery and the Civil War that turned most northern Protestants into Republicans, but rather economics. During and after the war, Republicans were the party of social and economic reform, including the establishment of state land-grant colleges, the opening of public lands in the West to homesteaders, the charter and financial incentives provided to the transcontinental railroad, the national banking system, and a protective tariff. These reforms stimulated

⁶⁶ "Neither Catholics nor freethinkers were abolitionists--it was a thoroughly Protestant movement." Strout, The New Heavens, 155

the expansion of American capitalism, and as a result (along with war profiteering) many fortunes were made during and after the war.

Following the period of quick growth, the Republicans assisted the middle and upper classes in holding their wealth by passing many business-friendly pieces of legislation. By this time, most northern Protestants were financially successful and were quick to support the party that was trying to keep them there. In contrast, the Democrats were seen as the party of immigrants (often Catholic or Jewish); groups often accused of being a threat to the status quo.⁶⁷ To many, the Republican Party became the party of business and order--issues that aided the long-term residents (mostly middle to upper class and Protestant) more than the immigrant.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ In the closely contested presidential election of 1884 the Presbyterian clergyman Samuel Burchard linked the Democratic Party and the Catholics when he said to a meeting of Protestant clergymen that "We are Republicans, and we don't propose to leave our party and identify ourselves with the party whose antecedents have been Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion." Paul F. Boller Jr., Presidential Campaigns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 149; Reichley, Religion, 202

⁶⁸ In 1957 Practical Anthropology magazine looked at the social structure of the Roman Catholics, communists, and Protestants. It determined that Catholicism's greatest appeal was to the elite, and to the impoverished masses. The communists also directed their appeal to the impoverished masses, promising them a classless society but then delivering a class-conscious system that rivaled India's caste system. Protestants found most of their support among the middle class and the recently emerged upper class. About the Catholics the magazine said that although some of the local priests were taken from the lower classes the leadership was invariably aristocratic. The church's hierarchical power structure was a holdover from the medieval and Roman days of dictatorial rule. The lower class was kept close to the church through elaborate pageantry (where all could vicariously enjoy the opulence of wealth), by threats of hell or promises of heaven, and by the rigid (usually economic and/or legal) insistence of the ruling elite. The middle class, however, was usually anti-clerical because it had enough power to be semi-independent from the economic and legal control of the elite, and was educated enough to not be as intimidated by threats of the hereafter. The communists would not co-opt the upper class but would instead kill them and

In addition to guaranteeing the economic status quo, the Republican Party was also seen as the guarantor of the social status quo—the "religion" of Americanism. The social gospel, largely a Protestant movement, was in part a way to Americanize the unassimilated. Temperance was supposed to turn Catholics and others away from the evils of drink. Public education was to bring children out of parochial schools and indoctrinate them properly. Support for labor was an effort to undercut the radical labor organizers. Women's rights and temperance usually went hand in hand. Even cleaning up the slums was seen as a way of breaking up clusters of poverty and the anti-American ideas that were fostered

impose their own elite class. The lower classes were kept in line through threats and through the party's control of the economic system and the benefits it provided. The Protestants historically were based in the merchant (upwardly striving middle) class. Protestant values reflected the values of the ambitious middle class, i.e. thrift, moderation, education, hard work, and personal improvement. The biggest threat to the Protestants was their disdain for the class they had just left. The lower and lower middle classes felt the rising classes contempt and became hostile to the upwardly mobile churches who seemed to leave them behind. The article claimed that in the United States it was not the Catholics that were rushing to embrace the lower classes but the Pentecostals (another religious movement with a rigid church hierarchy and strict codes of behavior which provide security for the lower classes). The article stated that it is the Protestants who have the greatest problem with racial and ethnic prejudice and class consciousness. Protestant snobbery would forever result in the development of more denominations to provide churches for the lower class, meanwhile the mainline churches would steadily lose members as more of the lower and middle class felt unwelcome in the upper class churches, and as the second and third generation upper class lost interest in the Protestant values and work ethic. Assuming that the magazine's hypothesis is true the United States in the late Nineteenth Century perfectly matched the Protestant religion and the Republican Party. The wealth of the country was rapidly expanding, the population largely saw itself as the upwardly striving middle class (most Americans identified themselves as middle class even if their income level did not agree), Americans were most impressed by material success, and they disdained any group that did not live up to their upper middle class values. The Protestant Churches, the Republican Party, and most of the people were listening to the same drummer. Eugene A. Nida, "The Roman Catholic, Communist and Protestant Approach to Social Structure", Practical Anthropology 4 (1957), 209-19

there. The Republican Party strove to promote the concept of "right behavior". A New England Congregationalist minister stated that the Republican Party was "the party of God, The party of Jesus Christ" standing "against the party of iniquity". A Republican Baptist minister in Illinois urged his congregation to "vote as we pray."⁶⁹ In the years following the war, the Republican Party came close to becoming a political church, and Republican campaigns often looked as much like revivals as political meetings.⁷⁰

Before the Civil War the northern Methodists had leaned towards the Democratic Party, but in the years after the war, they changed to Republicans. In 1896 (a closely contested election) the northern Methodists went about 75 percent Republican; the various northern Baptists voted between 65 and 80 percent Republican. Scandinavian Lutherans--solidly Democratic before the war--voted about 80-85 percent Republican. These groups joined Protestants that were already aligned against the Democrats before the war (Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and Quakers) to form a consistent Republican majority in the north.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Reichley, Religion, 201-2

⁷⁰ William F. Crandell asserts that the Republican ideals of individual responsibility, self-restraint, and good stewardship closely matched the doctrines of the mainline Protestants. The Democrats in contrast emphasized the values associated with the more liturgical churches (such as the Catholics) which included community responsibility for the unfortunate, generosity of spirit, and intercession for transgressions. (The Episcopal Church technically is a liturgical church but many claim it has been Protestantized and Americanized into an evangelical faith). William F. Crandell, A Party Divided Against Itself (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1983), 51-56

⁷¹ The midwestern German Lutherans were the most significant northern Protestant group to stay consistently Democrat. This differed from the German Lutherans in the east who largely voted Republican. Some have theorized that this difference is because the midwestern Lutherans were

The Republicans did not receive the support of the Protestants in the South because the G.O.P. was seen as the party of the invading northern armies, the reconstruction era occupation military, and the carpetbaggers. Southerners also showed little enthusiasm for the social gospel, which was seen as an urban movement that had little relevance for the mainly rural South. Most important, the southern power structure saw the maintenance of a one-party system as the most effective way to preserve white political supremacy. A viable two-party system would result in competition for black votes and concessions to black interests. Southerners could not hope to win a share of national power as a perpetual minority third party, and they would compromise their goal of maintaining white supremacy if they voted with the party identified with (and supported by) the blacks—the Republicans. Thus the Democratic Party became their only viable alternative.⁷²

The Republicans and the northern Protestants remained tied together in the twentieth century because both still largely embraced the Puritan belief in American exceptionalism. This was the idea that Americans were a "chosen" people under the protection of God, and who were living a more God-like existence. This cultural superiority complex was not as evident among the Democrats whose members were often recent immigrants and

more orthodox and more adverse to the introduction of Calvinist (mainline Protestant) ideas and politics into their religion or government. Others say that the Protestant unity in the east was as much due to fear of Catholics and other immigrants as religious tradition. Lutherans in the midwest weren't as threatened by the Catholics and therefore didn't need the unifying Republican Party to keep the Catholics in check. Reichley, Religion, 198-200

⁷² Reichley, Religion, 203

therefore not as convinced of America's superiority. The issue of American exceptionalism, in addition to being more prevalent among Republicans, was also more common among individuals living in rural areas. Eastern cities, historically the bastions of the Democratic Party, were always more impressed with European culture and society than were the Midwest and upper New England (the heartland of the Republican Party), which saw European culture as decadent and frivolous. The more cosmopolitan, internationalist, eastern Republicans (who after World War II were most often associated with New York Governor Thomas Dewey) often seemed as uncomfortable in the presence of their more rural Republican brethren (whose post-war champion was Ohio Senator Robert Taft) as with the eastern Democrats, who also had an urban-rural split in their party between the North and South. One author summarizes the Republican division by saying, "the moderates (the eastern wing), after all, feared the conservatives (the midwesterners) more than they feared the Democrats, and the conservatives saw no real difference between the moderates and the Democrats."⁷³

The Republican Party has long been identified with conservative politics, and the Protestant Churches and church memberships in the North have been supportive of conservative foreign and domestic policies. The South, since the Civil War, has been the most conservative region in the country (or at least the most resistant to change--particularly social change). It would

⁷³Crandell, *A Party*, 51-56

therefore seem to follow that the Protestants, and the Protestant churches, in both the North and South, would be conservative in areas of foreign affairs and social policy. Since World War II, some Protestant groups have proven this generalization to be true. Southern Baptists and Missouri Synod Lutherans, as well as pentecostal and revivalist sect members, have usually been conservative. Smaller, traditionally liberal and largely northern, Protestant sects, such as Quakers, Unitarians, and Universalists, have maintained their liberal track record in areas like foreign policy and social welfare. The mainline Protestant sects (even occasionally the Southern Baptists) have proven to be more moderate to liberal than their political roots would indicate.⁷⁴

Episcopalians were usually better informed about and more favorably disposed than members of other Protestant denominations toward negotiations and trade with communist countries (including Asian communist leaders, even in times of war), economic aid, and membership for mainland China in the United Nations. Presbyterians and Congregationalists (United Church of Christ) have been the next most likely, Lutherans and Northern Baptists somewhat less so, and the fundamentalists and Southern Baptists, the least of all the Protestant groups.⁷⁵ The

⁷⁴ Alfred O. Hero Jr., American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank-and-File Opinion, 1937-1969 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1973), 173-76

⁷⁵ The term fundamentalism was coined shortly after World War I. At the time it defined those Protestants opposed to the modernism creeping into the Protestant churches. Fundamentalists tend to be more orthodox than the mainline in their belief in the infallibility of the Bible and in adhering strictly to traditional Christian doctrine such as the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His physical resurrection and imminent Second Coming, the necessity

Methodist Church has evidenced a wide gulf between its public positions, which have been quite liberal, and the more conservative rank-and-file.

By comparison, white Catholics were, in the first decade after World War II, more pessimistic than the mainline Protestants about America's relations with the Soviet Union. Catholics during this period were more inclined to take a tougher, less compromising stance towards the communists. Catholics were considerably more likely to agree that it was "very important for the United States to stop the spread of communism in the world" than were mainline Protestants and Jews. During the Eisenhower Administration, Catholics were usually the most supportive of Secretary of State Juhn Foster Dulles' policy of pushing the communists out of Eastern Europe. The Catholics also expressed more support for the development and use, or at least the threat thereof, of military means in dealing with the communists than did the mainline Protestants. In the aftermath of World War II, the Catholic hierarchy, both internationally and domestically was in the forefront of anti-communist agitation. But by the 1960s Catholic attitudes had moderated to the point where they roughly resembled those of the Presbyterians and the United Church of Christ. During the post-war period, America's Jews were

of a new or second birth (fundamentalists are often referred to as 'born-again'), and the literalness of Heaven and Hell. There are numerous fundamental churches and movements. There are also numerous shades of non-fundamentalism. Many members of mainline churches believe in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity but would not classify themselves as fundamentalists. Warren Lang Vinz, A Comparison Between Elements of Protestant Fundamentalism and McCarthyism (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1968), 1-3

consistently more liberal than any of the large Christian groups relative to foreign policy.⁷⁶

Denominational affiliation had little affect on people's foreign policy attitudes between the world wars, but following World War II, the two were much more highly correlated.⁷⁷ Demographic factors--particularly levels of education and income--had a higher correlation to foreign policy attitudes than did religion, however, demographic and religious variables are hard to separate, as they usually correlate closely to each other. Wealthier and more educated people usually supported a foreign policy based on negotiation and disarmament. The Episcopal Church, with those same foreign policy objectives, had a membership with a high education and income level; so did the Congregationalists.⁷⁸ The pentecostals and Southern Baptists reflected the more

⁷⁶ Hero, American Religious, 40-43, 176-77

⁷⁷ Christopher Gilbert's book The Impact of Churches on Political Behavior evaluates the correlation between religion and political behavior (including foreign policy issues) and he concludes "that churches are significant sources of political cues, and that churches do affect the political actions and beliefs of their members." Gilbert, The Impact, 171. In the final chapter of this work I cite several authors who would challenge this assertion.

⁷⁸ In The Naked Public Square Richard Neuhaus insists that for a long time America's churches have been slipping into, and may have arrived at, class warfare. The mainline religious leadership finds itself constantly allied with the mainstream media and academic worlds. These groups are usually liberal, educated and wealthy. Their opposition frequently is the religious right which has increasingly carried the banner for conservatism and the working class since the late 1970's. The Catholics, Southern Baptists, and Missouri Synod Lutherans go back and forth between the groups. Salient issues that often reflect these religious and the class separations include abortion, women in the ministry, capital punishment and homosexuality. Although the gaps between the mainline churches seems to be narrowing the gap between the upper and lower class churches is dramatically widening. Richard John Neuhaus, The Naked Public Square (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1984), 240-42

confrontational political attitudes of their usually more rural, working class and conservative membership.⁷⁹

The post-World War II divide between the more versus less educated churches was also apparent between the more versus less educated members within the same denomination. The gulf between the usually educated mainline clergy and church officials, and the less educated membership widened dramatically in the cold war era. In several areas, both foreign and domestic, the national church councils seemed to be leading churches that did not want to follow.

General church councils frequently faced the same dilemma in the post-war years that politicians did--were they supposed to act on their own moral principles and then proselytize the members to their way of thinking, or were they to reflect the wishes of the members? For strictly hierarchical churches like the Catholics, the decision was easier. In the Catholic church, religion was never meant to be a democracy; the Pope, not the people, set church policy. But for most Protestants, particularly American Protestants, the concepts of democracy and local autonomy were bedrock doctrines.

⁷⁹ Hero, American Religious, 183; In a 1978 study Wade Roof determined that "traditional religious teachings have the greatest appeal for persons with limited exposure to education, urbanization and impersonal bureaucracies. Such persons...tend to exhibit a narrow perspective on the world and to defend vigorously those traditional social values that have lost favor with the progressive clergy...Traditional religious values are the most plausible to persons whose limited exposure to the outside world had safeguarded them from the challenge of modern thought." Wald, Religion and, 246

Allen Hertzke, in reviewing studies on political organizations, observed that religions, like most interest groups, are run by oligarchies, and that there are "frequent disparities between national policy as enunciated by leaders and the views of the constituents in the field."⁸⁰ The frequently liberal policies of the church leaders (versus the more conservative attitude of most lay members) have caused church critics to accuse the mainline clergy of being left-wing ideologues first and Christians second.⁸¹ This ideological split is a reflection of elite-mass relations in most of society. The ruling group is often further to the left than the masses.⁸²

The United Presbyterian Church admitted to the importance of listening to the members but it made no apologies that ultimately the members were not the first concern when making church policy: "The committees are bound to pay some attention to the 'by-and-large' thinking of the Presbyterian church members on the issues before them, in so far as this can be known or estimated, declared the General Assembly. The consensus of Presbyterians, however, is not the determining factor in formulating the deliverances. In developing their recommendations, the

⁸⁰ Allen D. Hertzke, Representing God in Washington (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1988), 14

⁸¹ The split between official church versus lay member political attitudes was especially apparent regarding the question of war and peace. The Lutheran magazine noted the disparity between the two sides when it warned that: "Officially the churches may coo like a dove but the majority of their members are flying like hawks." Adams, The Growing, 238

⁸² Hertzke, Representing God, 15, 96

committees desire not to express 'the mind of the Presbyterians' but 'the mind of Christ.'"⁸³

One of the central factors influencing the ideological separation between the clergy and the lay members was education:

"Education has been clearly a much more important factor than any effects of church exposure on knowledge about world affairs among Protestants...This virtual irrelevance of church involvement to international thinking among white American Protestants has not been unique to foreign-policy attitudes. Paucity of differences between those active in churches and nonchurchgoers has been equally evident in the 1960's with respect to such controversial domestic issues as desegregation and civil rights, the death penalty, military conscription, and the antipoverty program...Successive liberal pronouncements of the National Council of Churches, the major non-fundamentalist denominations, and leading Protestant churchmen combined with similar views on foreign policy of much of the local clergy have exerted little influence on the thinking of most rank-and-file church members."⁸⁴

Similar educational backgrounds have caused the voting behavior of the mainline clergy (particularly those at the national level) more closely to resemble those of other elites than of their

⁸³ The General Assembly went on to warn Presbyterian members that there was only one ultimate authority to whom the assembly was responsible—the Holy Spirit. "The individual church member who is concerned about serving his Lord should give most careful and prayerful thought before he considers repudiating the judgment of the General Assembly as expressed in the social deliverances. He has the right, as with Luther, to repudiate the counsels of the highest judicatory of the United Presbyterian Church on social matters and say, "Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other." But he should consider the real possibility that the judgment expressed so consistently through the years by Presbyterian Church bodies may be right and true." "Social Deliverances," Social Progress, 3-4

⁸⁴ As ineffective as the churches seemed to be in convincing the rank-and-file to support their public policy decisions Alfred Hero showed that the mainline churches had more influence on the attitudes of their parishioners in the first decade after World War II than they did during the 1960's and beyond. Hero, American Religious, 185, 187-89

co-religionists. The same tendency has surfaced in the U.S. Catholic community where the clergy, like the mainline Protestant clergy, has become increasingly liberal. Roman Catholic priest and philosopher Ernest Fortin explained that since the early 1950s Catholic church leaders have succumbed to the power of public opinion; not general public opinion, but the public opinion in the university circles where they have spent so much time.⁸⁵ The fact that the religious leaders were trained in the same schools as the politicians could help explain why, in the post-war era, the church hierarchy has often had more influence with the government than with its rank-and-file.⁸⁶

Historians Alfred Hero and Joe Pender Dunn assert that, with some exceptions, the churches were ineffective in getting their political message out to the lay members. Dunn stated, "The man in the pew...more often than not was unaware of the national leadership or simply ignored it." Hero echoes this assertion, stating that most Protestant churchgoers "have remained unaware of their

⁸⁵ The same pattern has been developing since the beginning of the Civil Rights movement among black churches as well. Robert Woodson, head of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, wrote that: "Many of the mainline black churches that participate in the National Council of Churches have more in common with their ecumenical partners than they do with their own people—I mean, the grass roots, poor people. Ministers are now to the left of their congregations." Richard John Neuhaus, Unsecular America (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 83

⁸⁶ The churches had other advantages that they could use when dealing with Washington. One is that political officials are extremely hesitant to attack churches and are usually anxious to be seen as a church ally. Behind the churches also lurked a potential constituency that, if fired up, (as it was with issues like universal military training and American recognition of the Vatican) could be formidable. Joe Pender Dunn, The Church and the Cold War: Protestants and Conscriptation, 1940-1955 (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, 1973), 39

church's position on those (political and foreign policy) questions, and most of the minority who know of them have been little, if at all affected by them."⁸⁷

Due to congregational resistance many of the more liberal clergy, starting with the Joseph McCarthy-era and continuing through the 1960s, sought appointments outside the local congregation. Liberal ministers moved to campus ministries, denominational social action bureaus, the seminaries, and other, more accepting, areas of church political action. According to church historian Kenneth Wald, "To this day, nonparish environments continue to harbor a large number of politically liberal clergymen who would probably find it difficult to coexist with typical members of their denominations."⁸⁸

One of the reasons that the mainline church leaders were less effective at indoctrinating their memberships in foreign policy matters is that they had less time to proclaim church political statements from the pulpit. Catholic priests, for instance, were more likely to announce church councils on spiritual and secular matters than were the Protestant clergymen. This was due in part to the fact that Protestant sermons usually quoted more from the Bible than Catholic ones, allowing Catholic priests more time to preach and explain church encyclicals and directives. Even more critical is the hierarchical nature of Catholicism (directives sent down from above are church policy) versus the congregational

⁸⁷ Dunn, The Church, 39; Hero, American Religious, 189

⁸⁸Wald, Religion and, 245-46

nature of most Protestant Churches (directives from above are usually seen as merely suggestions or recommendations).⁸⁹

A third reason why the Protestants may be less effective in getting their message out to their memberships is a hesitation even to talk about political issues in church (something which has never been as taboo for the Catholics). From the moment the Bill of Rights was adopted and American government legally became secular, there has been a constant battle as to what role the churches should play in the government.

Several denominations, like the Baptists, survived in America despite concerted state-church efforts to exterminate them. As a result, the Baptists, among others, include as a foundation of their doctrine the necessity for maintaining a strict separation between church and state. By the 1840s, even the former state churches (Congregationalists and Episcopalians) embraced the doctrine of church/state separation. But at the same time, there was an uneasiness at strictly adhering to such a hands-off policy. A United Church of Christ official was typical in questioning the wisdom of erecting a strict wall of separation between the church and state. "The Church cannot avoid dealing with international affairs or other public areas," he said. "God is the creator of the whole world...he rules over the affairs of all nations. Thus the relations of nations, the problem of politics, and the struggles for peace and justice throughout the world are neither alien to him nor cut off from his

⁸⁹ Hero, American Religious, 206

concern."⁹⁰ Individuals from the political sphere have expressed similar sentiments. Senator (later vice president) Hubert Humphrey wrote in 1959, "Politics and ethics are closely related. Every political decision is a moral decision because political decisions affect for good or ill the destiny and welfare of human beings."⁹¹

The World Council of Churches did not provide much help to those churches trying to determine how political they should be. The council recommended, "The Church as such should not be identified with any political party, and it must not act as though it were itself a political party...Nevertheless, it may still be desirable in some situations for Christians to organize themselves in to a specific party for specific objectives, so long as they do not claim that it is the only possible expression of Christian loyalty in the situation." In other words the churches should get involved in politics so long as they do not become political.⁹²

⁹⁰ Huber F. Klemme, "Imperatives for Christians in International Affairs", International Journal of Religious Education 36, no.3 (November, 1959), 6

⁹¹ Senator Humphrey goes on to state what he believed the role of the church was relative to the state. He agrees with author William Lee Miller who said that Christianity provides "direction, understanding, commitment," rather than precise blueprints for dealing with day-to-day political problems. Christian values in politics should delineate "better and worse positions, relatively just and relatively unjust acts, and the Christian should seek what is good and just." Hubert H. Humphrey, "Christian Ethics and International Politics", International Journal of Religious Education 36, no. 3 (November, 1959), 10

⁹² The World Council's seeming dual policy of involvement and non-involvement was reflected throughout its first meeting in 1948. "The primary responsibility of the Church is to preach the gospel to the whole world, and to demonstrate in its own life a unity and fellowship, transcending the barriers that now separate men into antagonistic blocs. This obligation did not, however, relieve the Church of its responsibility to proclaim the sovereignty of God over all aspects of human life." Findings and Decisions, First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Amsterdam,

Jefferson is credited with being the leading voice for erecting a wall of separation between church and state. Unfortunately he left the concept somewhat undefined. In the early nineteenth century, Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story opined on what the term did and did not mean. Justice Story insisted upon "the right of a society or government to interfere in matters of religion." Indeed, he thought that "it is impossible for those who believe in the truth of Christianity, as a divine revelation, to doubt, that it is the especial duty of government to foster and encourage it among all the citizens and subjects."⁹³ In other words, the wall of separation between church and state did not mean excluding Christianity from the public sector. Later that century, Philip Schaff, a church and American historian, echoed Story's sentiment that the wall of separation did not exclude Christianity from involvement in the public sector:

"Destroy our churches, close our Sunday-schools, abolish the Lord's day, and our republic would become an empty shell, and our people would tend to heathenism and barbarism. Christianity is the most powerful factor in our society and the pillar of our institutions...Christianity is the only possible religion for the American people and with Christianity are bound up all our hopes for the future."⁹⁴

Usually it has not been the religionists that pushed religion into America's political sector. Political figures, military leaders,

Holland August 22nd-September 4th, 1948 (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 1948), 46-47, 50

⁹³ Joseph Story, Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States, 3 volumes, (Boston: Gray Hilliard, 1833), 2:722-23

⁹⁴ Philip Schaff, "Church and State in the United States", Papers of the American Historical Association 2, no.4 (New York, 1888), 15-16

journalists and others made extensive use of religious imagery in their oratory and writings. At the beginning of the nineteenth century that religious imagery was Protestant, but by the early twentieth century it had broadened to include Catholicism. In the mid-twentieth century, it broadened even further to become the Judeo-Christian interpretation (or ethic).⁹⁵

Recognizing that there has never been an unbreachable wall separating church and state, it would be more accurate to say that America's Constitution and traditions do not exclude government and the churches from interfering with each other, but instead protect each from an exclusive relationship with the other. In 1944 the Federal Council defined it as such: "The Church is not a partner of any State...The Church's task in relation to economic and political power is not to exercise rulership. It is rather to help induce the peoples and governments who may properly wield such power to use it less for immediate gain and more to extend the range of justice, peace, and freedom."⁹⁶ Thus the Republicans or Democrats or any particular office-holder can no more be certain of the constant support of any faith than any one faith can be sure of preferential treatment from any government or administration. This separation has helped both sides by freeing the political system from dangerous religious conflict and by protecting the

⁹⁵ John F. Wilson, Civil Religion and Political Theology, ed. Leroy S. Rouner (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 113-15

⁹⁶ Report of a Commission of Christian Scholars Appointed by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, The Relation of the Church to the War in Light of the Christian Faith (New York: The Federal Council of Churches, 1944), 70, 76

churches from guilt by association with an unpopular or unjust regime. Examples of this can be found in Latin America, where the Catholic Church has been hurt by close identification with unpopular factions or governments.⁹⁷

One of the most prominent Protestant theologians of the twentieth century, Reinhold Niebuhr, warned of the dangers of coupling too completely political and religious movements. "When the sanctification of the Church is extended to the sanctification of political programs, movements, or systems," Niebuhr stated. "The baneful effects are compounded. One need not be a secularist to believe that politics in the name of God is of the devil." For Niebuhr the church's goals relative to politics were to create a society

⁹⁷ Wald, Religion, 16; The wall of separation that was supposed to keep the churches and the politicians from receiving each others endorsements was never meant to apply to the members of the churches. All of the mainline Protestant churches and publications urged their members/readers to actively participate in politics and political campaigns. The Methodist Church, for example, has within its Social Creed the call for Methodists to "implement the teachings of Christ by voting our Christian convictions in all elections, by participating in political action as party members or independents, and by offering and supporting candidates who will translate our social ideas into social reality. The writing of letters concerning foreign policy to our Congressmen is good and should be continued, but even more important is conscientious political activity and voting on the part of our people so that qualified men who are in agreement with the general position of the church on foreign policy are elected to office. To this end we urge the study in local churches of our basic Methodist documents on foreign policy and the voting records of Congressmen." Board of World Peace of the Methodist Church, Resolutions From the Annual Meeting, July, 1958, Document located in the "Board of World Peace" file in the Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 3; The Episcopal Church also urged it's members to actively participate in the country's political life: "The task, then, before the committed Christian is to support the state when it performs its God-given tasks and seek to reform it when it fails in those tasks." The Report of the Joint Commission on Peace, To Make Peace (Cincinnati: Episcopal Church, 1985), 7

wherein Christian ideals and churches can exist and grow and not to be linked to a particular partisan outlook or agenda.⁹⁸

Tocqueville noted that although American religions did not in fact hold political power they were still the most important of America's political institutions because of their indirect cultural influence on American society. The churches, he said, provide the moral restraint and guidelines that all other actors in American society, including politics, must respect if they wish to remain viable. Religion keeps the citizenry from becoming overly self-interested and hedonistic which could otherwise occur quite naturally in a society that celebrates individual freedom.⁹⁹

This religious undercurrent to all of American society has become known as the civil religion.¹⁰⁰ Americans do approach political and life issues in moral terms, even if they do not

⁹⁸ Reinhold Neibuhr, Reinhold Neibuhr on Politics, eds. Harry Davis and Robert Good (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 203, 205

⁹⁹ Hertzke, Representing God, 207

¹⁰⁰ The term 'civil religion' is Rousseau's. In Chapter 8, Book 4, of The Social Contract, he outlines the dogmas of the civil religion: the existence of God, the life to come, the reward of virtue and the punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance. He wrote that all other religious opinions are outside the cognizance of the state and may be freely held by citizens. It was the words and ideas of the founding fathers, especially the first few presidents, that established civil religion in the United States. Although all the presidents have been Christian (as well as all of the founding fathers) the civil religion in America is not strictly Christian. Christ is not mentioned in the inaugural addresses of the president's (though God always is) nor in documents like the Declaration of Independence. But at the same time the civil religion is also not anti-Christian nor meant to supplant Christianity like the French civil religion was meant to replace Catholicism during the French Revolution. Rather it is to remind America of its moral heritage without offending the non-Christians. Frequently, American civil religion is referred to as the Judeo-Christian ethic, thus giving credit to both Testaments of the civil religion's handbook, the Bible. Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America", Forging the American Character, v.II, ed. John R.M.Wilson (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997), 159-66

personally consider themselves religious. This tendency largely comes from America's Puritan heritage. A close parallel is the Republic of South Africa which also has a strong religious undercurrent to its political and social life, and whose white settlers were also Puritan dissenters.

At the core of the concept of civil religion is the idea that a nation tries to understand its historical experience and national purpose in religious terms. Civil religion is an attempt by the citizenry to give its nation a transcendent value--the belief that the nation was somehow touched by God. According to sociologist Robert Bellah, civil religion was necessary because it bound a fractious people around a common goal and imparted a sacred character to civic obligation.¹⁰¹ The American embrace of the civil religion caused British author G.K. Chesterton to call the United States "a nation with the soul of a church."¹⁰²

The Jefferson-Madison heritage of the wall of separation has been almost as pervasive in American churches as has the embrace of a civil religion/Christian nation. In truth, most of the American clergy have been unwilling to preach to specific political issues from behind the pulpit; they usually prefer to provide broader moral guidance (one current exception to this rule is abortion in which the guidance from the pulpit is often very specific). But in the post-World War II era of rapid change and world domination, the American public has often sought more pointed political and social

¹⁰¹ Kenneth D. Wald, Politics and Religion in the Modern World, ed. George Moyser (London: Routledge, 1991), 252

¹⁰² Wald, Religion, 48-49

guidance from the churches, which, since the depression, has largely been provided by the religious media. The religious press, televangelists, Christian broadcasting, etc. has shown little reticence about discussing very specific political concerns. Every major religion has at least one church journal and they have acted as the forum for most church political discussions.¹⁰³

Since the establishment of Christianity in British North America, the Protestant churches have taken stands on domestic political issues (everything from witchcraft to rebellion to slavery), but it has only been in the twentieth century that the churches have also actively pursued an international agenda.¹⁰⁴ From the time of the social gospel onward, the mainline church's main international pre-occupation has been peace. In the pre-World War I period and in the 1930s that meant steering clear of Europe's penchant for war through a mixture of isolationism and missionary zeal. In the 1920s and the post-World War II period the churches sought peace through a policy of international cooperation, negotiation, and again a fair amount of missionary zeal.¹⁰⁵ Even during the two world wars, as well as the Korean conflict, the churches, though supporting the war efforts, were constantly

¹⁰³ MaryAnn Bryant Oakley, Protestant Response to McCarthyism: A Study of Selected Protestant Publications, 1950-1957, (Masters thesis, Emory University, 1970), 2

¹⁰⁴ The churches seeming lack of interest, prior to this century, in international issues, is probably due to a general national lack of knowledge or interest in affairs outside the western hemisphere.

¹⁰⁵ This missionary zeal to convert the world to American capitalism, democracy, and even to an American lifestyle is a modern manifestation of the Puritan belief in American exceptionalism.

working to reorder world diplomacy so that the peace after the war would last.

By the post-World War II period, the mainline churches had largely lost their squeamishness about actively trying to influence public policy. Through more collective action and through the use of the media, the Protestant Churches became much more adept at political pressure. President Harry S. Truman claimed to be strictly impartial in his dealings with various groups, but his papers show that the Protestant lobbies had a lot of influence with him. The Federal Council and other church groups had frequent contacts and consultations with President Truman. The Council was usually careful (with some exceptions) not to publicly disagree with the president, and he (again with some exceptions) was equally cautious about crossing them.¹⁰⁶ It helped that Truman and the mainline's political ideology were similar. Eisenhower and the mainline churches were even closer. Eisenhower even chose one of the mainline's leaders, John Foster Dulles, as his secretary of state.

The Methodist Church was the first of the Protestant denominations to set up an organized lobby in Washington D.C. In 1923 the United Methodist Building was erected across the street from the nations capitol. Housed in the building were two lobbying groups. The Commission on World Peace and the Methodist Board of Temperance were established by the Methodists despite the serious misgivings of others in the Protestant community. The Christian Century magazine, though supporting the Temperance

¹⁰⁶ Gustafson, "Religion", 126-27

Board's goal of maintaining the prohibition of alcohol, warned that the overt political action "has led the Methodist church suspiciously far into the field of political action." If the Methodist Church precedent continued, the editors warned, "democratic government would be vitiated by ecclesiasticism. Clericalism would be rampant and dominant--unless, indeed, it thereby reduced itself to ridiculous impotence." The magazine then suggested that the Churches "refrain from establishing any working relation between their churches and the government, or the appearance of desiring to do so."¹⁰⁷ However, a few years later, the Christian Century published an article by one of its associate editors, Reinhold Neibuhr, which repudiated the fiction of political neutrality by the churches and called for church and reform leaders to make their political convictions more obvious.¹⁰⁸

Most Protestant denominations did not have regular lobbyists in Washington on public issues before World War II. In 1943 the Quakers established a registered lobby in Washington primarily to

¹⁰⁷ It appears that the real objection of the Christian Century was not the Church's entry into the political arena but the fear that the effort would backfire and bring public, and political, condemnation on the Methodists and all Protestants. The Century admitted that it had no objections to the Protestant Churches supporting the non-denominational Anti-Saloon League's efforts to maintain Prohibition, because working through non-denominational entities protected the church from accusations of church-state interference and it kept the church clean from the grime of the politics. William McGuire King, Between the Times, ed. William R. Hutchison (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 132-33; James Allen Nash, Church Lobbying in the Federal Government, A Comparative Study of Four Church Agencies in Washington (Ph.D. diss., Boston Univ., 1967), 37; Hertzke, Representing, 28-29

¹⁰⁸ The Christian Century editorial opposing direct church lobbying appeared in March, 1931. Neibuhr's call to political arms appeared in August, 1934. King, Between, 133

protect their members' status as conscientious objectors. The Presbyterians followed in 1946, primarily out of a desire to keep abreast of activities in Washington rather than to influence legislation. Also in 1946 the Baptist Joint Conference Committee (representing the Northern and Southern wings of the Church as well as the black Nationalist Baptists and several small Baptist offshoots) appointed a full-time lobbyist who, according to one Baptist commentator, was initially there "to watch the Catholics."¹⁰⁹

The Congregational Church had, in 1936, set up a Legislative Committee for its Council on Social Action. The Committee was set up to analyze political decisions and legislative trends and to set up loose contacts between the Church and Congress, but it was not started as a lobbying enterprise. During the war it became more directly involved in lobbying.¹¹⁰ In 1948 the Lutheran Council, representing eight Lutheran bodies, created the post of "Washington Secretary," but the minister selected for this post did not register as a lobbyist due to the Lutheran tradition of opposing religious involvement in political affairs. The National Council of Churches (established in 1950) was far more willing to use direct pressure in Washington than was its predecessor, the Federal Council.¹¹¹ The National Council became well-known for its frequent testimony before Congressional Committees, extensive correspondence with individual legislators, and its ability to generate large amounts of

¹⁰⁹ Reichley, Religion, 244

¹¹⁰ Luke Eugene Ebersole, Church Lobbying in the Nation's Capital (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1951), 27-29

¹¹¹ Reichley, Religion, 245

constituent mail to legislators in a short period of time.¹¹² There existed a number of other interdenominational Protestant lobbies as well as multiple lobbies within some of the churches (for example in the Methodist Church there is the Women's Division of Christian Service, the Division of Foreign Missions and other auxiliaries that have their own part-time or full-time lobbying functions).¹¹³

The fact that the churches were willing, following the Second World War, to become more blatant in their efforts to influence legislation did not mean they were comfortable in the role. In the early 1950s the National Council's Washington office including this directive in its mission statement: "The Washington office as such is not to engage in efforts to influence legislation." That admonition would not be deleted until 1964.¹¹⁴

America in the 1950s was in the midst of a religious revival. The baby boom dominated America's culture, and people were looking for a set of morals or values for their homes and societies. Church attendance soared, contributions mounted, and new church buildings were erected alongside housing subdivisions and schools. Hollywood picked up on the country's wave of religion, and in the 1950s Richard Burton crucified Jesus in "The Robe", Charlton Heston parted the Red Sea in "The Ten Commandments" and watched Jesus carry his cross through Jerusalem in "Ben Hur", Hedy Lamarr was Delilah, Rita Hayworth was Salome, and sweeping Biblical epics

¹¹² Dunn, The Church, 19

¹¹³ Ebersole, Church Lobbying, 32-36, 43-45

¹¹⁴ Adams, The Growing, 258

were the movie studios answer to television. One in every ten books purchased in 1953 was "religious." Charismatic preachers such as Bishop Fulton Sheen, Reverend Norman Vincent Peale, and Reverend Billy Graham attracted huge crowds on their nationwide tours and for their TV appearances.¹¹⁵

President Truman, a Southern Baptist, frequently referred to God and religion in his speeches. "If the civilized world as we know it today is to survive, the gigantic power which man has acquired through atomic energy must be matched by spiritual strength of greater magnitude," he stated on one occasion.¹¹⁶ Truman also asserted, "Our religious faith gives us the answer to the false beliefs of communism. Our faith shows us the way to create a society where man can find his greatest happiness under God. Surely, we can follow that faith with the same devotion and determination the Communists give to their godless creed."¹¹⁷ Truman often urged

¹¹⁵ The 1957 Census Bureau indicated that more than 96 percent of the American people cited a specific religious affiliation in response to the question "What is your religion?" Winthrop S. Hudson, Religion in America (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987), 351; Actual 'on-the-books' Church membership increased from 57 percent of America's adults in 1950 to 62 percent in 1956. Martin E. Marty, The New Shape of American Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), 15; Will Herberg, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday and Company, 1956), 15; Religion became referred to as America's biggest spectator sport. Oakley, Protestant Response, 2-6; Although the fundamentalists experienced the fastest rate of growth in the fifties the mainline still led in actual number of new converts. After the war 82 percent of all Protestants were in one of thirteen faiths, most of which were part of the mainline. Clifford P. Morehouse, "Federal Council", The Living Church 112, no. 11 (March 17, 1946), 6

¹¹⁶ Harry S. Truman, "Address in Columbus at a Conference of the Federal Council of Churches, March 6, 1946", Public Papers of the Presidents-Harry S. Truman (Washington D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1965), 142

¹¹⁷ Harry S. Truman, "Address at the Cornerstone Laying of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, April 3, 1951", Public Papers of the Presidents-Harry S. Truman (Washington D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1965), 212

the American people to become involved in a church and in the spiritual life of their community and country.¹¹⁸

As committed to religion as Truman was, it was his successor that really blended religion into politics. Historian David Chidester declared that, "The ceremonial high priest of a revived American religious nationalism during the fifties was President Dwight Eisenhower." Eisenhower proudly wore his religious sentiments like a badge. "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith..."¹¹⁹

Ironically, Eisenhower, despite his call to the country to become more religious, did not belong to a specific denomination before his presidential campaign. Early in his campaign Eisenhower became concerned that the American people would not follow a president who was not a member of a church. He called upon Billy

¹¹⁸ Truman had no reservations about calling for a religious renewal in the country. In a national radio broadcast Truman did as he often did in local speeches and asked America to become more religious. "Each of us has a duty to participate--actively--in the religious life of his community and to support generously his own religious institutions." Harry S. Truman, "Draft of October 29, 1949 speech", File: OF 76, Revival, Box 425, Harry S. Truman Papers, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO, 1

¹¹⁹ David Chidester, Patterns of Power: Religion and Politics in American Culture (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 100; Eisenhower brought religion into his presidency from the time he became a candidate for the office. His campaign speeches used a lot of religious imagery. In St. Cloud, Minnesota he said: "We, therefore, must never forget the power of the spiritual and moral values in combatting Communism. The churches, as well as the schools and government, have an enormous part to play..." In Little Rock, Arkansas: "I believe first, that this country and its system of government rests primarily upon a foundation of spiritual values." And in Warsaw, Indiana: "You can't explain free government in any other terms than religious...Our forefathers proved that only a people strong in Godliness is a people strong enough to overcome tyranny and make themselves and others free." Dwight Eisenhower, "1952 Campaign", File: JFK Pre-Presidential Papers, 1952 Campaign Files, Eisenhower Campaign Statements, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, 212-13, 397

Graham to recommend a church that he could join. Graham suggested that he become a Presbyterian, which he did.¹²⁰

Eisenhower frequently brought up the issue of God and religion when discussing U.S.-Soviet relations. The struggle between the two superpowers was often characterized as a holy war between good and evil.¹²¹ The rest of the political establishment also warmly embraced religion during the fifties. In 1954 the words "under God" were added to the Pledge of Allegiance, and Congress legislated that all U.S. currency bear the slogan "In God We Trust." In 1956 Congress ordained that all first and second-class mail be canceled with a die bearing the slogan "Pray For Peace."¹²² And in 1955, after a six year struggle, Congress unanimously agreed to turn an old Congressional barroom in the Capitol into a nondenominational prayer room.¹²³

The United States was the most powerful country in the world, it had proclaimed itself religious, and it had a perfect foil as an enemy--the dangerous, Godless, and almost universally disliked (at least in the United States) communists. It would seem to have been a perfect opportunity for America's churches to call the troops to arms and embark on an all-out crusade against the common foe. But the country's dominant religious consortium, the mainline Protestant religions, instead preached caution.

¹²⁰ Mark Silk, Spiritual Politics (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 68

¹²¹ Chidester, Religion, 100-101

¹²² Silk, Spiritual, 96-100

¹²³ James T. Baker, Brooks Hays (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1989) 83-84

The Churches and Communism

The mainline Protestant churches have always opposed communism. "Marxist Communism in its orthodox philosophy stands clearly opposed to Christianity," announced a 1949 study. "It is atheistic in its conception of ultimate reality and materialistic in its view of man and his destiny. Its utopian philosophy of history lacks the essential Christian notes of divine judgment, divine governance, and eternal victory. Its revolutionary strategy involves the disregard of the sacredness of personality which is fundamental in Christianity."¹ But following World War II communism was arguably the most dynamic force on the world stage, and its appeal was growing. Most of the mainline churches conceded that the Marxist goal of greater social, political and economic justice in the world was admirable, but they opposed communism's methods and ideology. The pre-war hope that communism would soon collapse was no longer realistic, and so the churches had to come to an accommodation with a power that they did not like, but that would not go away.

In the years following the Russian Revolution, the churches made their contempt for communism well-known. Marx's statement that religion is the opiate of the masses was reason enough for opposing the movement. But with the seeming failure of capitalism during the Depression and the spread of the social gospel

¹ National Study Conference on the Churches and the World Order, Background Documents, Paper III (New York: Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1949, Paper located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN), 2

(greater economic and social equality and a guaranteed minimum standard of living for all people) among the Protestant ministry, there was renewed interest in communism. But even during the height of the Depression communism only won over a few ministers. A 1934 World Tomorrow poll of 20,870 Protestant ministers asked which system was "less antagonistic to and more consistent with the ideals and methods of Jesus." Less than five percent of the respondents identified capitalism as the system most in keeping with the teachings of Jesus. Fifty-one percent chose "drastically reformed capitalism," and 28 percent answered socialism; but only around one-half of one percent answered communism-- roughly the same percent as those who favored fascism.² Liberal religious theorists such as Reinhold Niebuhr (in his book Moral Man and Immoral Society) conceded that Marx may have been accurate in his assessment of capitalism, but his alternative was unrealistic and doomed to failure for its refusal to recognize both sin and God.³

The Depression softened the mainline leadership's hostility to the Soviet Union, and in 1933 Protestant leaders and publications led the move for U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union. The communist experiment both alienated and impressed many of the liberal ministers in the United States during the late 1930's. The show trials and purges in the Soviet Union shocked the American population. Yet, at the same time, Stalin won admirers for

² Ralph Lord Roy, Communism and the Churches (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1960), 66

³ Roy, Communism, 78

simultaneously leading the call for world peace and working for a united, hard-line approach to fascist Japan and Germany.

American admiration of the Soviet Union peaked during World War II. But after the war, as the cold war intensified, communism lost almost all its support among left-leaning Protestants. By 1956, the year of the Hungarian Revolution and Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin, communism had essentially no support with the mainline Protestant community.⁴

Two post-war, interfaith Christian conferences at Amsterdam and Lambeth declared that Christianity must always oppose communism because of communism's atheism, its treatment of human beings as servants of the state rather than of God, its belief that each individual is only a means to the accomplishment of some societal end rather than an end in and of himself, its support of class warfare, the ruthless methods it used to eliminate those who disagree with its philosophy, and its materialistic and deterministic teachings which ignored all that is spiritual and holy.⁵ The main Protestant concern was not that communism would, as stated by Marx and Lenin and Khrushchev, take over the world. ("No political order can prevail which deliberately leaves God out of account."⁶) The main concerns were that the communists would kill many

⁴ Roy, Communism, 425

⁵ Reverend Ward McCabe, "China Goes Communist, The Living Church 118, no. 25, (June 19, 1949), 6; First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Findings and Decisions (Geneva, Switz.: World Council of Churches Conference Report, 1948), 44-45; Reverend Harold E. Sawyer, "The Church and the Modern World" The Living Church 117, no. 11 (September 12, 1948), 17

⁶ "Presbyterian Statement on Communism and Related Issues", Information Service 32, no. 43 (published by the National Council of Churches), (December 26, 1953), 1

people (using devices such as atomic weapons) before their own destruction, or that the countries of the west would adopt the worst aspects of communist totalitarianism (hatred of others, suspicion, curtailment of individual liberties, and militarism) in order to combat communism.⁷

Some of the assaults against the Soviet Union and communism were moderate and cautiously worded, others were less diplomatic. The highly charged, anti-communist atmosphere that existed in the early 1950's encouraged overstatement and scare tactics. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) showed little restraint in attacking communism. In its pamphlet 100 Things you Should Know About Communism in the USA, HUAC warned that communists were using whatever illegal methods they could to bring down the United States government. They also warned that Moscow had used every means possible to destroy all vestiges of religion in Russia and would do the same in America; and that the people living in communist countries were denied all civil rights and freedoms.⁸

Protestant anti-communists were in line with other organizations that made similar statements. The United Automobile Workers of America insisted that those living under communist governments were being forced to work as slaves in a system that relied on the tactics of terror, aggression and subversion to

⁷ "Presbyterian", Information, 1

⁸ Committee on Un-American Activities, U.S. House of Representatives, 100 Things You Should Know About Communism in the U.S.A. (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 1-5.

accomplish total state control.⁹ Church publications made little effort to be even-handed or moderate in attacking communism, its leaders, and its origins. The Presbyterian Council of Christian Relations reported:

"[The communist] philosophy requires the complete allegiance of all members of the Communist state. The mind, heart and hands of the people must yield to the will of the totalitarian rule. This enslavement is won by the promise of peace and plenty...Obedience to the new order is maintained by the pressure of force. Evidence is abundant that any means to secure this subjection is considered by the leaders of World Communism to be justifiable."¹⁰

Other non-church publications also warned that the communists did not adhere to Christian values. Educator Herbert Miner Pierce wrote that communism was "ruthless...totalitarian, tyrannical, absolute and without consideration or sympathy...It turns citizens against citizens--children against parents--friends against friends. It destroys hope--creates fear--takes away all ambition and instills terror."¹¹ Another editorial expanded on how unChristian the communist ideology was:

"Ethically, Communism is devoid of all Christian standards of right and wrong...A large percentage of its leaders have been, and are, hardened criminals. Stalin himself was a bank bandit. Lenin himself is quite bold in proclaiming their ethical views. "There are no morals in

⁹ Walter P. Reuther, President, UAW-CIO, A Proposal for a Total Peace Offensive (Detroit: UAW-CIO publication, undated), 2-6

¹⁰ Report to the Council of Christian Relations, Two Major Issues (Atlanta: The Division of Christian Relations, Presbyterian Church of the USA, 1954), 19

¹¹ Herbert Miner Pierce, "Communism Defined and Analyzed", UEA (January 1, 1950), 5

politics," he says, "there is only expediency. A scoundrel may be of use to us just because he is a scoundrel."
"Communism is moral anarchy. Human depravity reaches its lowest level in the person of a thorough-going Communist." And finally in discussing Marx's Communist Manifesto, "This little booklet has produced more sorrow, tears and human anguish than any book in history."¹²

Billy Graham was in the forefront of anti-Communist rhetoric. He spoke of "'the battle to the death' between Christianity and communism. "These 'fanatical and ruthless...disciples of Lucifer'," he said, "have 'slaughtered millions of innocent persons' and are poised to kill millions more in order to spread their doctrine." The world, he continued, if it embraced "this godless philosophy (communism) of deceit, force and bloodshed, would plunge into the dark abyss of totalitarian despair and gloom, and ultimate annihilation."¹³

Communism's evil nature was said to be most evident in its treatment of religion. An editorial in a Baptist newspaper declared that, "Communism IS SATAN INSPIRED. It is all out against the finest things of our holy religion--against Christ and all the holy things of the Bible."¹⁴ It was asserted that the communists would use the churches in their own and other countries as long as they were useful but eventually would turn on religious institutions and persecute them into extinction. "Certainly there can be nothing like a free Church in a totalitarian State: and the Soviet brand of totalitarianism is no more tolerant of opposition than was the Nazi

¹² "Is Communism a Religion?" An undated editorial located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

¹³ Richard V. Pierard, "Billy Graham and the U.S. Presidency" Journal of Church and State 22, no. 1 (Winter, 1980), 110.

¹⁴ "Is Communism a Religion?", Unidentified Clipping, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, no page number

brand," editorialized the Episcopal Church magazine The Living Church.¹⁵ Even liberal, cautious theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr used emotion-charged language when warning the world about the communist religion. "Hell has no fury like that of a prophet of a secular religion, become the priest-king of a utopian state," he announced. "Our civilization may be faulty but the alternative is much worse."¹⁶

Lenin and Stalin were equally hostile towards Christianity. "We have struck the kings from the earth; now let us strike the King from the skies," Lenin stated in a 1923 speech before the Department of Education of the Soviet Union. "Religion must be abolished. The best country is a Godless country. If religion will pass out quietly, our attitude will be one of benevolent tolerance; but if it resists, we will hasten its exit by violence proportioned to

¹⁵ "Amsterdam in Retrospect" The Living Church 117, no. 16 (October 17, 1948), 18

¹⁶ "Persecution in Hungary", The Living Church 118, no. 2 (January 9, 1949), 8; The persecution of churches and church leaders behind the iron curtain didn't win the Eastern European leaders any friends among the church leaders in the West. The arrests and show trials of Lutheran Bishop Ordass and Catholic Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary were the most widely reported crackdowns against religion. But each Eastern European country was accused of persecuting Christian ministers. Evangelical and Orthodox pastors were arrested in Bulgaria; Romania imprisoned a large number of Orthodox priests, the most well-known being Justinian Marina, in Romania; Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany and the former Baltic countries imposed government control over the Catholic press, then Catholic ecclesiastical appointments and then demanded sweeping oaths of allegiance from all Catholic ministers; and in all Eastern European countries church schools and social service agencies were shut down and their was the constant fear of arrest for church authorities who challenged the government. Many Western church leaders were convinced that communism did intend to gradually strangle Christianity to death. Bishop of Chichester, "Unhesitating Condemnation of Totalitarian State", World Council of Churches (July, 1949), 1; "The Next Soviet Victim?", The Living Church 118, no. 20 (May 15, 1949), 11; "Christianity Behind the Iron Curtain", The Living Church 121, no. 15 (October 8, 1950), 14-15

its resistance."¹⁷ In 1950 the chairman of the Soviet Society for Political and Scientific Research, under the direction of the Communist Party, said that "The struggle against the gospel and Christian legend must be conducted ruthlessly and with all means at the disposal of Communism."¹⁸

Although the mainline church leaders saw nothing but evil in a world governed by communism, they also recognized its appeal. To millions of exploited people communism promised freedom from economic injustice; to the peasants it promised land; to peace lovers it offered ultimate international harmony; to people living in colonial areas communism it offered autonomy and political freedom; and to intellectuals it offered an economic social order free from the contradictions of Western Capitalism. Several General Church Councils warned that western exploitation and imperialism had been the seedbed of international communism and had to be eliminated if there was any hope of eliminating communism.¹⁹

Church leaders admitted that the churches were partly to blame for the world conditions that inspired communist revolutions. Reinhold Neibuhr declared that "communism expresses the discontent of vast masses of insecure people and the churches everywhere must recognize their involvement in the injustices and insecurities that communism seeks or promises to cure."²⁰ The

¹⁷ G.C. Brewer, "Is Communism Essentially Atheistic?", 20th Century Christian 17, no. 13 (September, 1955), 9

¹⁸ "Propaganda Drive Against Religion Mapped Out", The Living Church 121, no. 11 (September 10, 1950), 9

¹⁹ Christian Faith and the World Crisis, (Chicago: Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church, 1952), 28

²⁰ "Communism Held 'Christian Heresy'", New York Times (August 29, 1948), 1

World Council of Churches also placed some blame on the churches for the unjust conditions that spawned the communist movements. "Christians should recognize with contrition that many Churches are involved in the forms of economic injustice and racial discrimination which have created the conditions favorable to the growth of communism, and that the anti-religious teachings of Communism are in part a reaction to the chequered word of a professedly Christian society." The Council further stated that the hand of God was involved in the revolts against economic and political injustice, even though many of those were communist led.²¹

Several church publications also proclaimed that the United States needed to get its own house in order if it wanted to slow the spread of communism. Christian Frontiers magazine charged that

²¹ "The World Council of Churches, an Editorial Summary", The Living Church 117, no. 16 (October 17, 1948), 5; A 1949 National Study Conference sponsored by the American National Council of Churches affirmed the World Council's condemnation of the Christian religions for promoting and/or facilitating exploitation. In addition to upbraiding American churches for historically turning a blind eye to exploitation the Study Conference also gave special warning to America and America's religions. "We (America) have been vaulted with incredible speed into our present position of responsibility. Inexperience in power exposes our nation to the further danger of using that power awkwardly and thus, even without intent, aggressively." "Message", Draft presented to the National Study Conference, March 11, 1949, 2; "Freedom of Religion and Related Human Rights, Resistance to Persecution", Draft presented to the National Study Conference, March 11, 1949, 3-4; both drafts located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN.; World Council of Churches, First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Findings and Decisions, (Geneva, Switz.: World Council of Churches, 1948), 43-46; See also "The Atomic Bomb and the Future", Christianity and Crisis 9, no. 17 (October 17, 1949), 130; The Church, the Christian and the World, undated pamphlet published by the Church Peace Mission, excerpts of the pamphlet are located in the 'Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Church' file located in the Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN

the citizens of the Soviet Union were often treated better than those in the United States: "The USSR has created the conditions for political freedom, that, to say the least, is more democratic than most of the one party States of our South. In South Carolina, for example, 43 per cent of the population is disfranchised because of the color of the skin. In Russia all may vote."²²

The civil rights issue was continually used by the Soviet propagandists to expose the inherent prejudice in western attitudes. The churches, as the Soviet media often pointed out, could not keep preaching that the West needed to embrace the oppressed people of the world when it refused to allow the oppressed people of the United States into their meeting houses. Prior to 1946 the issue of racial equality had been eclipsed by more pressing issues such as depression and war; the churches had ignored racism.²³ The National Committee on Segregation in the Nation's Capital reported that in a fashionable Washington church near the Lincoln Memorial a black Christian knelt in prayer in a white church. A church official quietly handed the gentleman a piece of paper on which was written the address of a black church. The worshipper took the hint and left. The same incident, it was claimed, would have occurred in churches nationwide. An editorial pointed out that in

²² John B. Isom, "Freedoms in the Soviet Union", Christian Frontiers 2, no. 1, (January, 1947), 9

²³ Clifford P. Morehouse, "Federal Council, Special Meeting Formulates Postwar Strategy for the Churches," The Living Church 112, no. 11 (March 17, 1946), 7

some areas, where there were no black churches, African-Americans were not invited to worship at all.²⁴

The Federal Council of Churches in March, 1946, renounced the segregation of the races as "unnecessary and a violation of the Gospel of love and human brotherhood." The denominations represented by the Council were asked to issue similar declarations. To improve race relations, clinics were set up nationwide by the Federal Council.²⁵ The Council's efforts were as motivated by politics as theology. Communism was making some inroads into the American black community (including some high profile black communist spokes-persons such as actor-singer Paul Robeson) through its call for social equality. The Federal Council's Commission on a Just and Durable Peace warned that communism would triumph if democracy failed: "The American people must make their democracy work. Racial intolerance, discrimination, and oppression are a standing negation of democracy and Christian morality. Only as we establish a good society at home can we expect that our society will have a spiritual appeal to the masses of mankind."²⁶

The Federal Council was careful to point out that the issue of church segregation was not only a southern problem. The chairman of the Federal Council's Commission on Church and Minority Peoples

²⁴ "Segregation in the Church," The Living Church 119, no. 7 (August 14, 1949), 8

²⁵ Rev. Tollie L. Caution, "Racial Tensions," The Living Church 112, no. 11 (March 17, 1946), 6

²⁶ The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, Soviet-American Relations (New York: The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 1946), 13

asserted, "It is clear that we have adopted the pattern of segregation. This is not sectional but national. There is about as much in one section of the country as another...Less than one per cent of the colored Protestants in the United States have any fellowship in worship with their white brethren. The church is more segregated than the school system or than organized labor."²⁷ In fact, southern churchmen were usually more vocal in calling for an end to discrimination than were those in the North.²⁸

Politicians such as President Harry Truman urged the churches to take the lead in ending the racial divisions within the country, and several quickly responded.²⁹ The Committee on Resolutions of the Northern Baptist Convention passed a resolution in 1948 calling for an end to all segregation in the country and urged its local churches to set an example by immediately ending discrimination within the church.³⁰ In 1950 the Congregational Christian General Council "commended to our churches an

²⁷ "News--Federal Council Asked to Work for Non-Segregated Church," Christian Frontiers 1, no. 4 (April, 1946), 132

²⁸ "News--Churchmen Ask End of Discrimination," Christian Frontiers 1, no. 4 (April, 1946), 133

²⁹ President Truman, in an address to the Methodist Church in 1948, stated: "Does the declaration that every human being is of infinite worth as a son of God permit us to deny civil liberty to the American Negro? Is segregation a pattern expressive of the spirit present when, in the name of Jesus, we repeat the Lord's Prayer beginning "Our Father"?...Men who have received the bread and wine of holy communion are less likely to center attention upon the boundaries that divide than upon the brotherhood that unites." Harry S. Truman, "The Episcopal Address to the General Conference of the Methodist Church, Boston, Mass., April 28, 1948", address located in the File: The Papers of Harry S. Truman, Box 803, Folder 213, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Mo, 34, 42

³⁰ Report of the Committee on Resolutions, May, 1948 Committee Report located in the File: "Committee on Resolutions Reports," National Baptist Church Headquarters, Valley Forge, PA, 3

intensified effort to reach the goal of non-segregated church life" and punctuated its action by electing a black minister as chairman of its executive committee. The General Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church unanimously approved the goal of a "non-segregated Church in a non-segregated society." Even the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church declared in 1950 that church seminaries in the South would accept black students and that all groups meeting in the church's conference center in Montreat, North Carolina, other than children's groups, would be unsegregated.³¹ By 1953 two other predominantly southern churches, the Episcopalians and the Southern Baptists, also voiced their opposition to discrimination and segregation.³²

But despite the almost uniform calls for integration by the churches, there were some who claimed that the church was still the bedrock of entrenched racism. In 1949 Reverend Daisuke Kitagawa offered a more negative perspective on the church's racial policies:

"The Church has been guilty of negligence...The Church may not have had any racist policy or doctrine but that does not excuse it from the duty of doing something about the race problem which is such a serious menace to our society...That one is free from racial prejudice does not mean that his job is done. On the contrary he is charged by God to be engaged in the task to eliminate racial

³¹ "Progress--Quiet and Unspectacular," The Living Church 121, no. 4 (July 23, 1950), 10

³² In 1952, for example, the Episcopal Church's General Convention passed a resolution stating that "we consistently oppose and combat discrimination based on color or race in any form, both within the Church and without, in this country and internationally." Journal of the General Convention, 1952 (New York: General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1952), 277

prejudice and all forms of racism from the scene of United States civilization. And he who is not willing to raise his finger regarding this matter is he who silently sanctions the racist theory and practice and willfully takes part in its perpetuation. Any parson who is not concerned about the racist feeling of a member of his parish, because he is otherwise a good 'Christian gentleman' must necessarily be guilty of neglecting his spiritual duty."³³

The General Conventions and Boards were accused of doing little more about racism than talking, and some of the local churches were accused of actually promoting discrimination. The conviction that integration was morally right was by no means universally held within the churches. Ministers, particularly those in the South, warned of the dire consequences if integration was imposed too quickly on their congregations and communities.³⁴ General Church Councils remained almost exclusively white, thus blunting the effectiveness of their cry for integration.³⁵ Even at the national level, the churches ran into difficulty passing civil rights resolutions. In 1949, for example, the Episcopal Church General Convention rejected a canon requiring that all Episcopal Churches

³³Rev. Daisuke Kitagawa, "A Churchman's View of Race Relations," The Living Church 118, no. 20 (May 15, 1949), 17-18

³⁴ Reverend Middleton Barnwell, Episcopal Bishop of Georgia, wrote in an editorial that "Where prejudice and passion exist it is wiser to keep the races apart as much as possible until human attitudes change and so permit a more integrated life...Most colored people prefer segregation under present conditions and present race attitudes...Segregation is not the cause of racial tensions. It is the result of them, and we shall need it for the protection of the minority group until our racial attitudes change. We are trying to change these attitudes, but it is a slow business." Rev. Middleton S. Barnwell, "The Race Problem," The Living Church 114, no. 10 (March 9, 1947), 2-3

³⁵ Rev. Samuel J. Martin, "Segregation in the Church," The Living Church 119, no. 11 (September 11, 1949), 2

accept potential members regardless of color or ethnic background.³⁶

The possibility of communist infiltration into the desegregation movement worried many church officials. FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover, among others, intimated that the civil rights movement was communist inspired. A resolution on race relations adopted by the National Association of Evangelicals cautioned that the civil rights movement was communist inspired. In 1956 the editor of United Evangelical Action reported that there was "a widespread belief that Communists...had much to do with the zeal of certain NAACP representatives in forcing issues and stirring up trouble between the races." In 1957 he wrote that many of the racial disturbances were due to the activities of the communists.³⁷ Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., among others, was accused by some churchmen of being a socialist and having communist ties.³⁸

Local Southern Baptist ministers were the most consistent in opposing integration. The Southern Baptist Church was not affiliated with the National Council of Churches (though they frequently worked closely together) or the World Council of

³⁶ "Segregation in the Church," The Living Church 119, no. 18 (October 30, 1949), 24; An even bigger controversy occurred in the Episcopal Church in 1952 when eight teachers in the School of Theology at the Episcopal Church's University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee threatened to resign if black students were not admitted to the school. The teachers argued that the university, and the ten other Episcopal seminaries which also refused to accept black students, could hardly consider themselves training grounds for God's servants when they openly discriminated against a large portion of God's children. "Race Relations--Advocates for Negroes at Sewanee," The Living Church 124, no. 25 (June 22, 1952), 5-6

³⁷ Macel D. Ezell, The Evangelical Protestant Defense of Americanism, 1945-1960 (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 1969), 131-32

³⁸ Ezell, The Evangelical, 132-33

Churches, and thus neither organization's call for an end to segregation had much influence with the local Southern Baptist congregations.³⁹

Local Southern Baptist ministers were not alone in resisting the call for fully integrated churches, as evidenced in a 1959 study that showed that most mainline ministers, regardless of their denomination, "while not supporting school segregation, kept their distance from the controversy engulfing their community."⁴⁰ A 1960's study found that little had changed--the local, largely white, churches wanted to avoid any form of controversy. The study further showed that many of the local mainline ministers were nowhere near as liberal on social issues as their national leaders.⁴¹

The lack of local consensus on civil rights did not stop any of the mainline church national headquarters from actively supporting a civil rights agenda, especially after the mid-1950s. The Southern Baptist Convention remained the most cautious throughout the civil rights era, but in 1954 it did establish itself firmly in support of desegregation by passing a resolution commending the Supreme Court for its decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*.⁴² The Methodist Church, with one-third of its membership in the South, was also cautious in pursuing civil rights, but in 1958 the black and

³⁹ Many Southern Baptists (and other Evangelicals) were, in fact, openly hostile to both Councils accusing them of being infiltrated by and/or dupes of the communists. Ezell, *The Evangelical*, 166-67

⁴⁰ Kenneth D. Wald, *Religion and Politics in the United States*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 243

⁴¹ Wald, *Religion and*, 243

⁴² Winthrop S. Hudson, *Religion in America* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987), 356

white jurisdictions in the church were merged, thus allowing local congregations to integrate. That same year the church also set a deadline of 1968 for all Methodist communions to fully integrate.⁴³

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (a leading civil rights organization), largely led by black Protestant ministers, received support from their white counterparts. By 1960 the mainline white ministers and church officials were so involved in advancing the civil rights agenda that the National Council of Churches created a committee on religion and race to coordinate the church's civil rights activities. Prominent church-people joined in demonstrations and sit-ins and a special fund was created to help those who were legally or economically in need because of their efforts.⁴⁴

National Conventions like that of the American (Northern) Baptist Church proclaimed not only support for the integration of the churches and all church-related organizations (like schools and hospitals), but also disavowed any connection with groups or movements that remained segregated or had connections with white supremacist organizations.⁴⁵ The United Presbyterian Church in 1960 officially endorsed civil disobedience.⁴⁶

⁴³ James L. Adams, The Growing Church Lobby in Washington (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1970), 5

⁴⁴ Hudson, Religion in, 356

⁴⁵ American Baptist Convention, Resolutions Adopted by the American Baptist Convention (New York: Council on Christian Social Progress, 1958), 8

⁴⁶ "Some laws and customs requiring racial discrimination are, in our judgment, such serious violations of the laws of God as to justify peaceable and orderly disobedience or disregard of these laws." The Reverend Eugene Carson Clark, the highest official within the United Presbyterian Church, would follow the church's directive on civil disobedience and would get arrested and jailed in a protest in Baltimore. Adams, The Growing, 6

Church lobbying for civil rights peaked in 1964 with the introduction into Congress of a national civil rights act. The churches orchestrated letter-writing campaigns and mobilized their ministers to lobby elected officials and candidates to support the act. White ministers often marched with black religious leaders in places like Washington D.C., and Selma, Alabama. The goal of the mainline churches was to present civil rights as a mainstream issue.⁴⁷

The best way, according to the mainline religions, to end the influence and growth of world communism was to end the economic and social inequalities and the ethnic and racial discrimination that the West had long seemed to promote and support. If the West, and particularly the Christians in the West, became advocates of fairness and equality, then the oppressed people of the world would have no reason to turn to communism. In working toward these goals, the World Council admitted that God (and therefore, hopefully, the churches) were occasionally fighting on the same side as the communists.⁴⁸ The Council admitted that pure capitalism,

⁴⁷ Allen D. Hertzke, Representing God in Washington (Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press, 1988), 30; Adams, The Growing, 7-21; After bruising battles with the Catholics over issues like diplomatic recognition of the Vatican, and the election of Catholic John Kennedy to the presidency, the civil rights struggle healed some of the wounds between the two religious groups. Catholics and Protestants often worked together in the cause of racial equality and the bond created during this time period continued after the civil rights battles. Joe Pender Dunn, The Church and the Cold War: Protestants and Conscriptation, 1940-1955 (Ph. D. Diss., University of Missouri, 1973), 171

⁴⁸ Although communism and Christianity had some overlapping goals and philosophies, the Protestant leaders of the post-war era stated that the two 'religions' were incompatible. "A Christian cannot be a Communist. How can one deny God and still be a Christian? Here is a struggle to the death—not between peoples or nations, although they are necessarily involved—but

like communism, was flawed as an economic system and was also in need of reform: "The Christian Church should reject the ideologies of both Communism and laissez faire Capitalism, and should seek to draw men away from the false assumption that these extremes are the only alternatives."⁴⁹ Despite the statement's seeming even-handed condemnation of both economic systems, the report made it clear that the Council did not see the two systems as equally dangerous. The entire system of communism was perceived to be beyond redemption; capitalism, on the other hand, was salvageable if modified. The report further moderated its attack on capitalism by adding that many of the evils of capitalism had been lessened by trade unions, social legislation and responsible management. No such reservations were advanced about the evils of communism.⁵⁰

between two philosophies of life." It was argued that the communists not only differed from the Christians on their view of God but in their view of freedom. Christianity and communism both required a full commitment from their followers, but Christianity allowed man his free agency whereas communism refused freedom of choice to its subjects. It was also stated that Christianity relied on love as its primary source of action whereas communism used violence and destruction; this fundamental difference inspired in the Christian a spirit of faith and hope, while communism's primary inspiration was fear and hatred. Leonard Mullens, "What About the Communist Party?", 20th Century Christian 17, no. 12 (September, 1955), 18-19; D.F. Anguish, "Economic Determinism and Christian Ideals", 20th Century Christian, 17, no. 12 (September, 1955), 20-21; Rev. Paul Sweet, Communism: Satan's Religion (Pasadena, CA: The Voice of China and Asia, pamphlet is undated), 10-11, 14-15; Sherwood Eddy, The Challenge of Russia (Murray Hill, NY: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1931), 162; Clifford Morehouse, "The Churchman Looks at His World", The Living Church 122, no. 21 (May 27, 1951), 13

⁴⁹ Rev. John C. Bennett, "The Report on Social Disorder," The Living Church 117, no.16 (October 17, 1948), 15

⁵⁰ Bennett, "The Report", 15; The Episcopal General Convention, though using different reasoning, reached the same conclusion about the relative dangers of capitalism versus communism. "Americans must, for example, guard against deifying the individual as the supreme value because other nations deify the State...In any community where the individual is the unbridled

The churches then warned that the West needed to act quickly. Continued Western exploitation of domestic minorities as well as the third world would cause the oppressed peoples to embrace any doctrine that promised relief:

"The Communist movement has more effective weapons than the atomic bombs. It can win whole nations by promises and propaganda, by waiting for its opponents to lose the confidence of the people, by training a resolute minority to be in the right place at the right time to take over the centers of power with a minimum of violence. These methods have the advantage over the atomic bomb of leaving something more than a desert to rule over."⁵¹

Indeed, communist propaganda was said to be far more dangerous than communists bombs. In fact it was not the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons that caused the greatest concern to the Christian press. The church publications warned that if the communists could quickly convince enough countries to embrace their system (before those of the third world recognized the sham and unworkability of communism), then it would be the Christian West that would be the most likely to panic and start a nuclear war. Many Americans seriously considered launching a preemptive

master, social conflict, economic disorder and racial discrimination follow...This is by no means to say: 'A plague on both your houses.' Individualism and collectivism are not equally bad, nor indeed mutually exclusive." The Convention then said that although both systems needed to be replaced by Christian fellowship the more immediate danger was communism. Journal of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church (Sewanee, TN: Episcopal Church General Convention, 1949), 44.

⁵¹ "The Atomic Bomb, Christianity, 129; The Living Church also discussed the effectiveness of the Soviet Union at exploiting the disorder and dislocation of economic life. It then declared that one significant difference between the American and the Soviet system is that that Americans promote stability and order while the Soviet's encourage chaos. "Can We Live With Russia?", The Living Church 114, no. 22 (June 1, 1947), 16

nuclear strike against the Soviet Union before the masters of the Kremlin could achieve a level of weapons parity (and then superiority) over the United States. If America felt itself painted into a corner by a world gone communist, the churches feared that they might not be able to restrain the country from starting a nuclear war?

To woo the developing world away from communism, argued mainline church leaders, the imperial powers would have to grant their colonies independence and the United States would have to change the focus of its foreign policy from monetary gain and economic domination to the pursuit human rights and basic freedoms for all peoples (including the people within the United States).⁵² The Federal Council of Churches warned that the West needed to find economic and technical rather than military solutions for the problems of Asia if it did not want the rest of the continent to go the way of China.⁵³

Church members were also warned by the church leaders that their apathy about things religious was playing into the hands of the communists. The Reverend Paul Sweet voiced a concern held

⁵² Cross-Roads of American Foreign Policy, (New York: The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace and the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Churches in America, 1947), 8-9

⁵³ Dunn, The Church, 21-22; Clifford Morehouse, editor of the Episcopalian magazine The Living Church stated that: "When we condemn the Chinese for 'going Communist'...let's remember that if we had been half as enthusiastic about exporting true Christianity to them as we were about selling them the products of our capitalistic society, we might have them as allies today instead of as enemies." He later stated "Grain to India may be as important in winning that battle as bombs to Korea...The way we treat negroes in Harlem or in Mississippi is an important factor in the way the world judges the sincerity of America and Christianity." Morehouse, "The Churchman", 14

by many church leaders: "Communism has been aided immensely in this country, and others, immeasurably by a lack of fundamental faith in the truths of our God."⁵⁴ How could America model the joy of Christian living when most citizens were uninvolved in their churches or its teachings, and how could the United States call upon God to help stop the spread of communism when most Americans did not pray? In 1951 the Department of State conducted a study to see how moral and spiritual factors could be used more effectively in fighting communism. The study concluded,

"Material weapons are entirely inadequate; we must build a 'balance of spiritual power. If the thirsty souls of honest, seeking men throughout the world are going to be satisfied, a mighty living faith must be discovered or created to balance the militant faith of Communism.' The suggestion that the spiritual life of the West must be revitalized is pertinent...Without it, some would question the possibility of our developing the strength of character and moral stamina necessary for the U.S. to fulfill its responsibilities of world leadership."⁵⁵

Protestant church officials pointed out that, unlike the Christians in America, the atheists in the Soviet Union were neither apathetic nor complacent about their religion. Communism was said to be not only an economic system but also a religious system, that

⁵⁴ Sweet, Communism, 4

⁵⁵ Department of State, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Policy Advisory Staff, Information Program Guidance Special Series: Moral and Religious Factors in the USIE Program, June 22, 1951, report located in the 'Psychological Strategy Board' File in the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO, 7

was actively seeking converts (either through proselyting or force) to its new cult of atheistic materialism.⁵⁶

The church media argued that Stalin had been far more effective than Lenin in replacing Christianity with communism. Lenin directly assaulted the churches with persecution and propaganda. As this proved ineffective, with the peasants clinging even tighter to their embattled faiths, Stalin, a former divinity student, chose instead to reinterpret church doctrine. Christ's chasing of the money lenders from the temple was proof of his hostility to capital and capitalists. His advocacy of the poor and lowly proved his solidarity with the working class. Christ's preaching of common brotherhood demonstrated that he was a communist. These methods of reinterpretation, according to some Protestant leaders, had been introduced into Western Christianity to achieve the same ends.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Protestant pamphlets and sermons claimed that the founder and organizer of this new communist religion was not Marx, Lenin or Stalin but Satan himself. Reverend Paul Sweet declared "Who is the central person in Communism? That person is none other than the great opponent to Christ, Satan himself...He pervades all evil and all false beliefs, but never before has he poured forth upon the world such evil as he has embodied in his religion, that of Communism." Sweet, Communism, 7

⁵⁷ Joseph Zack Kornfeder, "Communist Deception in the Churches", (undated address given to the Circuit Riders of the Methodist Church Committee Conference), 'Religion-Tool of Communism' folder, James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 8-9; The general Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Dr. Visser t'Hooft, warned that communism's new tactic of domesticating and infiltrating the church rather than attacking it was a very real threat. The blood of martyrs has historically proven to be the seed of the church but the sweat of collaborators was the poison that could kill the seed. "The totalitarian doctrine is a false doctrine...", he declared. "We warn the Churches in all lands against the danger of being exploited for worldly ends...We urge the Churches to bear corporate witness to the truth in Christ, and their ministers to preach the whole gospel." "Domestication in Czechoslovakia", The Living Church 119, no. 22 (November 27, 1949), 22

In the decade following World War II, many books and articles compared the religions of Christianity and communism. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal commissioned a study of the moral and philosophical foundations of the Soviet state and determined that the United States was indeed competing with both a state and a religion. In 1948 Catholic Bishop Fulton Sheen wrote Communism and the Conscience of the West, which discussed Catholic doctrines (such as the trinity or the sacraments) and showed the communist analogues to each. Similar Protestant comparisons were made in such books as Alexander Miller's The Christian Significance of Karl Marx (1947), John C. Bennett's Christianity and Communism (1948), and William Hordern's Christianity, Communism and History (1954). Former Communist Party members also wrote articles discussing the religious nature of communism. The most well known of these was a compilation book entitled The God That Failed (1949) featuring essays from a number of ex-communists.⁵⁸

Conservatives both in and out of the religious structure warned that there could never be a truce or cease-fire between Christianity and communism. FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover said, "The godless tyranny of atheistic Communism has recognized that it cannot survive alongside a religion that changes men's hearts...A bitter Communist attack is being waged today--often in subtle forms--against all religions."⁵⁹ CBS correspondent Joseph Harsch

⁵⁸ Mark Silk, Spiritual Politics (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 92-93

⁵⁹ J. Edgar Hoover, "Communism Means Godlessness; *Godlessness Means Slavery*", 20th Century Christian 17, no. 12 (September, 1955), 23

wrote in The Christian Science Monitor that communist missionary zeal coupled with Russian resources and economic power posed a genuine threat to western political and religious values. Harsch said that the communist system would eventually (due to its inefficiency) collapse, but in the meantime America had to remain vigilant in keeping the communists in check. "Only the sword has ever held back the onrush of the religious state in its period of crusading ardor," he warned.⁶⁰

Most of the mainline leaders and the moderate Protestant publications were not so militant. Many sought to find common ground and/or positive aspects about communism in an effort to reduce tensions between east and west. For example it was pointed out that capitalism/Christianity (at least the Anglo-American version of it), and communism were both messianic. Manifest Destiny was the term coined in the nineteenth century to justify America's westward (and later cross-ocean) expansion. Manifest Destiny meant that America's system was superior to the rest of the world and that God expected America to be an example of "a better way" to other nations. Communism also declared itself to be a superior system that had the obligation to enlighten the rest of the world.⁶¹

Communism and Christianity also both wanted to end class exploitation and economic misery, and both used missionaries (in

⁶⁰ Joseph C. Harsch, "The Challenge of Communist Russia: Wherein Lies the Basic Roadblock to Peace?", The Christian Science Monitor (February 9, 1949), 3

⁶¹ Reinhold Neibuhr, Reinhold Neibuhr on Politics, eds. Harry Davis and Robert Good (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 275

America the communist "missionaries" were referred to as agents, fellow-travelers, or spies) to spread their messages. Communism expanded rapidly for the same reason that Christianity quickly grew in its first few centuries: its novelty, its challenge to the traditional assumptions and power bases within society, and its nearness to its saints (Lenin, Trotsky and Marx were still recent memories).

Christian moderates also pointed out that communism's roots were in Christianity and that much of communist dogma was taken from the Bible.⁶² Both systems were absolutist in their doctrine in claiming that they alone were the hope for humanity and for happiness, and both tended to be fairly intolerant of each other and of other systems and religions. Each required personal sacrifice, social service and absolute loyalty from its adherents. Each preached the value of a simple life, communal sharing, and both condemned selfish accumulation and unshared riches.⁶³ Each

⁶² Christian Faith, Commission, 27

⁶³ The Federal Council of Churches admitted in 1946 that communism as an economic program had "points of contact with the social message of Christianity." Dunn, The Church, 20; Dr. Garbett, the Archbishop of York, stated that "many Christians are convinced that there is much more in common between Christianity and Communism than between Christianity and Capitalism. "In Russia", he points out, "there are millions of Orthodox who are loyal citizens of the Communist state. In Poland there are convinced Communists who regularly attend mass...The Church therefore should avoid an indiscriminate condemnation of Communism, which would compel many...to feel that they must choose between Christianity and Communism." And still later he stated that "it is possible to be a Christian and a Communist." "Christian and/or Communist?", The Presbyterian Outlook 180, no. 49 (December 6, 1948), 8; and even anti-communist writings admitted that the communist tenet "From each as he is able, to each according to his need" sounded as though it could have been taught by Amos, Isaiah, Jesus or Paul rather than Marx. Kenneth W. Sollitt, "Pinks in Our Pulpits", Faith And Freedom (September, 1953), 4

looked to a predestined rule of righteousness where government and law would no longer be necessary. Each was born in persecution and violence and each foretold of greater future violence and conflict (or Armageddon) before a new world order could set up eternal peace.⁶⁴

The more tolerant believers in the West pointed out that in Das Kapital Marx frequently quoted Martin Luther in developing his critique of economic oppression. Marx cites Luther seven times when discussing his rejection of usury and condemning the usurer as the greatest "enemy of man" who strives to be "God over all men."⁶⁵

The best way to combat the teachings of Marx, mainline leaders suggested, was not to overreact about communism but to renew Christianity. John C. Bennett (a leading figure in the Federal Council of Churches) stated that, "The failure of Christians, and Christian churches, to be true to the revolutionary implications of their own faith" had been a major factor in the emergence of world communism.⁶⁶ Russian Orthodox philosopher-theologian Nicholas Berdyaev, who was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1922, wrote in 1947,

"The militant godlessness of the communist Revolution is to be explained not only by the state of mind of the communists,...but also by the historical sins of Orthodoxy which had failed to carry out its mission for the

⁶⁴ Eddy, The Challenge, 161; The Church, Church Peace Mission, 11

⁶⁵ Alan Geyer, Christianity and the Superpowers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 171

⁶⁶ John C. Bennett, Christianity and Communism Today (New York: Association Press, 1962), 77-80

transfiguration of life, which had been a support of an order which was based upon wrong and oppression. Christians must recognize their guilt and not be content to accuse the adversaries of Christianity and consign them to perdition."⁶⁷

Communism captured the interest of many because Christianity had grown stale.

"Communism is the first attempt, since the passing of Christendom, to provide life with a single, conscious purpose, related to every activity, giving to every mood and every moment one revealing reference...It is this which is so enormously attractive to those unrooted people who find in the vague 'democracies' of our time no wholeness, no power to integrate either person or society. It seems to illumine life with meaning. As against the Christianity which has accepted the broad division of life between Mammonism and Pietism, it comes with a positive, creative force."⁶⁸

The Episcopalian magazine The Living Church blamed the church's acceptance and promotion of the status quo (including colonization and economic exploitation) for communism's growth: "Christianity must offer brotherhood--and mean it. One sometimes wonders if the smug self-satisfaction of sectarianism, in whatever century, has not repelled more possible converts to Christianity than any of our other faults." The magazine also stated:

"With practically the whole of the Asian continent facing utterly new situations, politically and socially, and the manifest inadequacy of the old religions to stand up to this test, or even to offer hints for guidance into the dazzling new day opening, the only two answers appear:

⁶⁷ Nicholas Berdyaev, The Russian Idea, trans. R.M. French (Boston: Beacon Press, 1962), 247-48

⁶⁸ Rev. William G. Peck, "The Essential Battle", The Living Church 123, no. 7 (August 12, 1951), 11

Christianity or Communism...Christians, individually and in groups, must show the world how the Gospel principles are better and more basic than those partially Christian ideas which Marx borrowed for his new religion: even if less explicit, they are more fundamental: they appeal to the best in man rather than the less good; and most important of all, they are built upon God's working with man and not man alone."⁶⁹

Church publications occasionally repeated the Soviet propaganda line that churches in Eastern Europe were free. Some religious journals published a Radio Moscow broadcast that insisted that "religious freedom in the Soviet Union is wider than in capitalist countries. There the faithful are often forced to adopt ultra-reactionary political conceptions; there the highest religious authorities are often the agents of United States imperialism." It also claimed, "In the U.S.S.R. the church is separated from the state. It enjoys complete independence. The state does not interfere with the activities of religious groups...A Soviet citizen can profess whatever religion he chooses."⁷⁰ A Hungarian Protestant Minister wrote in an American religious magazine, "I have never had any difficulty in obtaining information on matters directly or indirectly relating to the churches and to religion in general. Nor have I ever had cause to fear meeting Protestant church leaders from abroad, rather large numbers of whom visited Hungary last year."⁷¹

⁶⁹ Donald A. Lowrie, "Communism's Apostolic Age", The Living Church 123, no. 19 (November 4, 1951), 8-9, 15

⁷⁰ Neal Stanford, "Religion in the U.S.S.R.", The Christian Science Monitor, undated article located in the Joseph Dawson Files, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN

⁷¹ That same Minister also said that the real reason that religions like Roman Catholicism are in conflict with the state is because "Rome will never admit that the Communists are bringing up to date a political order that was almost

Visitors to the Soviet Union often validated the Soviet claim that religion there was as free as in the West. Dr. Louie Newton, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, stated upon his return from a trip to the Soviet Union, "Baptists in Russia are as free to worship and to practice their religion as Baptists in the United States." In the same news conference Newton also observed that, "The Baptists stand for the same thing as the Russian government--renouncement of, and resistance to, coercion in matters of belief... Religiously we should regard Russia as our great ally...Russia never knew freedom of religion until the present regime."⁷²

Other Americans returning from Russia expressed similar amazement at the quality of life and the level of freedom of the Soviet people. The number of children enrolled in Russian schools was only 8 million in 1918, but had reached 34 million in 1939; between 1917 and 1957 the number of doctors in the Soviet Union rose from 20,000 to 300,000; and in that same time period illiteracy in Russia declined from over 50 percent to less than 5 percent. All these statistics seemed to bear out the Soviet claim that communism was improving the standard of living for the poorest

hopelessly retarded. The fact is, of course, that in Hungary especially the Roman Catholic Church has been the very embodiment of the old feudalistic and capitalistic regime. And it committed the unpardonable blunder...of casting in its lot with a bankrupt social order. Now it is panic-stricken... Many of our Protestant Church leaders...have followed the Roman Catholic lead in opposing the present regime, which has stripped the churches of their lands and political influence and deprived them of their precious privileges."Alexis Mathe, "Are Hungary's Churches Persecuted?", The Living Church 116, no. 12 (March 23, 1949), 364-65

⁷² O.K. Armstrong, "Where There is No Freedom", Christian Frontiers 1, no. 8 (October, 1946), 246

sectors in society.⁷³ But although many mainline leaders praised the Soviet Union for its successes and admitted that communism and Christianity had some similar aims, the churches never altered their stance that communism was evil and doomed to failure. Articles reporting on the glowing statements about Russia by visitors such as Dr. Newton usually added disclaimers that the scenes shown to the American visitors were probably staged and that the Soviet Union was still repressive, anti-religious and dictatorial.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, nations behind the iron curtain were never considered beyond redemption. The mainline refused to become anti-communist at any cost. Their publications were almost as quick to warn against over-reacting about the Soviets as they were to the dangers of communism. "If there is one lesson that we should have learned in recent years it is that those who take their bearings chiefly from 'anti-communism' do all the wrong things," stated National Council of Churches official John C. Bennett. "They help to perpetuate the very evils which give rise to communism.

⁷³ Harold J. Berman, "The Devil and Soviet Russia", The American Scholar 27, no. 2, (Spring 1958); "Czechoslovakia--European Enigma", The Living Church 117, no.11 (September 12, 1948), 21-23; Isom, "Freedoms", 9

⁷⁴ One such example was written by the editor of the Episcopalian publication The Living Church. He writes, following a visit to Yugoslavia, "There is freedom of worship in Yugoslavia, so far as freedom of church attendance and of the teaching of religion in the churches is concerned...But anti-religious pressures are applied in other ways, particularly in an effort to win young people away from the Church...Yugoslav Communists apparently hope that the Church will wither away." Some Observations on Yugoslavia", The Living Church 123, no. 12 (September 16, 1951), 10-11; See also Armstrong, "Where", 248-51; Stanford, "Religion", 1; Berman, "The Devil", 3-4; "Czechoslovakia--European", The Living, 23

They endanger the freedom which they claim to treasure in the process of repressing communism."⁷⁵

Throughout the early years of the cold war, the mainline churches consistently held that anti-communism should not be the basis of American foreign policy. Each of the mainline faiths as well as the mainline publications and interfaith councils uniformly rejected communism and opposed its spread. But they all also opposed a myopic foreign policy that saw no enemy but communism. Church policies often reflected John Foster Dulles'

⁷⁵ John C. Bennett, "Communism and Christians", The Churchman (November 1, 1951), 7; In 1950 the Federal Council of Churches adopted a policy of caution in dealing with the Soviet Union: "If we are to maintain and renew the political and moral health of our nation, Christians must stand firmly against public hysteria and against all attempts to exploit the fears of our people in these critical days. The sensational or self-righteous distortion of truth, the slanderous defamation of men in public life, the attacks upon hard-won freedoms and the safeguards of our Constitution--these divide and weaken our nation in the face of grave external dangers. They point us in the direction of the police state methods we oppose...They tend to make impossible a far-sighted and constructive strategy for peace. In the midst of the fears and frustrations of our new insecurity, the Churches of Christ must stand as guardians of freedom, as well as faith." Report of a Special Commission appointed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, The Christian Conscience and Weapons of Mass Destruction, (New York: The Department of International Justice and Goodwill, 1950), 18; Liberal (but still non-communist) church organizations such as the Church Peace Mission expressed their concern about overreacting even more fervently: "We urge that individual Christians seek out individual Communists and try to be "neighbors" to them, to understand them and their convictions and to communicate their own faith and convictions to such Communists or Communist sympathizers...We believe Christians should stand for the defense of the civil liberties of Communists, as of other dissenters. They should not be participants in or intimidated by the anti-Communist hysteria which is so rife in our country today." The Church, The Christian and the World, (New York: The Church Peace Mission: undated pamphlet), 11-12; The Unitarian Church, also well-known for its liberal attitudes, made a similar declaration "Any attempt to fan the emotions of the American people into mistrust, fear and hatred of Soviet Russia and to influence American foreign policy which is already far too much under the control of the military mind, is a perilous thing." Leslie T. Pennington, "Protestant Peace Program", The Christian Unitarian Register 128, no. 5 (May, 1949), 13

counsel when he (before he became secretary of state) said, "American policy in relation to the U.S.S.R. should not be directed against a system of social and economic organization as such, but rather against ANY imperialist drive to impose that system on other nations."⁷⁶

The mainline denominations did not oppose the building of a strong military as a tool for responding to injustices or intimidation in the world. "But moral and political strength is ultimately a larger factor than military strength," their leaders declared. "Military strength is simply the hand, and the hand belongs to an arm and body. If the moral and political struggle with Communism is lost, no military strength will avail."⁷⁷ For the mainline Protestants, tolerance and caution remained as important watchwords as preparedness:

"It must be made clear that our nation utterly renounces for itself the use internationally of the method of intolerance. Our people generally consider the faith and institutions of Soviet communism to contain grave evils. But they must recognize the right of others to believe what their reason and conscience may dictate, to reflect their beliefs in human institutions, and by fair means to propagate them. The American people must be resolved never to advance their own faith by forcibly crushing out such another faith...It must equally be made clear that persistence internationally by the Soviet Government or the Soviet Communist Party in methods of intolerance, such as purge, coercion, deceitful infiltration, and false propaganda shielded by secrecy, will not in fact make

⁷⁶ Precis of Study Report on Communism and Christianity, undated document located in The Methodist Archives, Folder no. 1341-7-3.12, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 9

⁷⁷ The Federal Council, The Christian Conscience, 18

their faith prevail and will jeopardize the peace...The occasion for tension will largely be removed if the democratic peoples will make their political institutions so vigorous and life-giving that men everywhere will want them. That is the surest way to relieve the competitive strain."⁷⁸

⁷⁸ The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, Soviet-American Relations, (New York: Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1946), 7, 13; Individually most of the mainline faiths made similar pronouncements. The Presbyterians for example stated "In hating a system let us not allow ourselves to hate individuals or whole nations. History and experience teach us that persons and people do change...Let us always be ready to meet around the conference table with the rulers of Communist countries...We should meet them officially, whatever their ignominious record, and regardless of the suffering they have caused us. We, too, have reasons for penitence and stand in need of forgiveness." John A. Mackay, A Letter to Presbyterians Concerning the Present Situation in Our Country and in the World, (Letter approved, published and distributed by the General Council of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States) Oct. 21, 1953, Presbyterian Church Archives, Philadelphia, 5; An Episcopal Church publication also urged greater tolerance and faith. "We believe that we can live with Russia. We can do so by being tolerant but strong, peaceful but prepared, and above all showing the peoples of the world that we have something, in our concept of freedom and democracy, that no totalitarian system can offer. The vital element in that concept is our faith in God, upon which it was built and by which alone it can be sustained." "Can We Live", The Living, 17

MCCARTHYISM

"We will find our most fertile field for infiltration of Marxism within the field of religion, because religious people are the most gullible and will accept almost anything if it is couched in religious terminology."¹

This assurance was given by Lenin to those who worried about the communist revolution's failure to destroy the churches. Following World War II many religious leaders and organizations would be accused of being in the service of or being the dupes of the communists. There were some political leaders (Congressman, Senator and Vice-President Richard Nixon of California, Senator William Jenner of Indiana, Congressman Martin Dies of Texas, etc.) who furthered their careers by exposing communists, but none was more visible or controversial than Senator Joseph McCarthy. Those who defied McCarthy were branded as communists or fellow travelers. For many such an accusation cost them jobs, influence and friends. Some religious leaders supported McCarthy's efforts to rid the United States of communists, but many more challenged the Senator. The Mainline Protestants all declared that it was critical that the United States resist domestic communism, but most also attacked McCarthy's witchhunt and his trial by innuendo tactics.

The Depression and the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s transformed the American Communist Party from a tiny, faction-ridden group composed mainly of radical immigrants, to a dynamic

¹ "They Have Taken Away My Lord", Dan Smoot Speaks 1, no. 13 (October 7, 1955), 1, magazine in the folder: "Religion-Fronts and Clergyman," James Bales Collection at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR.

leftist political party that generated a fair amount of attention (even if the attention never translated into a large membership). Many Americans, disillusioned by capitalism's seeming failure in avoiding or curing the Depression, flirted with communism. The communists enhanced their image by actively helping the poor, the unemployed, unskilled and semi-skilled laborers, immigrants, ethnic and racial minorities, and other oppressed groups; and by warning the country of the dangers of fascism both in America and in Europe. The Spanish Civil War brought many young Americans into contact (and sympathy) with the communists. Dozens of mainstream American organizations formed temporary alliances with the Communist Party of the United States, and mailing lists were shared.

Although the communist party achieved significant gains in the United States during the 1930s, it was still held in contempt by most Americans, and low-level communists usually kept their party affiliation secret in order to avoid persecution. In the late-30s the party's image deteriorated. The American Communist Party slavishly followed the Soviet line, and a series of well-publicized purges in the USSR, reports of Siberian slave labor camps, and the Nazi-Soviet pact soured America on communism.

In 1938 conservative groups such as the American Legion convinced Congress to create the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) which, along with the FBI, led the attacks on American communism (in 1950 the Senate stepped up its own communist investigations, matching and sometimes exceeding the

House effort). The first chair of HUAC was Texas Democrat Martin Dies. Dies was hostile to communism, but he was equally opposed to fascism. "The real issue," Dies wrote, was "between Americanism on the one hand and alienism on the other."² Communist Party leaders were investigated and jailed. In February 1940, the Department of Justice raided the homes of ten suspected Detroit communists, arrested the occupants, and removed a truckload of information to Washington for evaluation. Later, in 1940, Dies investigated the movie industry and other celebrities who had allegedly worked for either communist or fascist causes. Enough evidence of subversion was uncovered by the Dies Committee to cause liberal American leaders (like President Roosevelt) to stand aside, though they deplored Dies' methods.³

The invasion of the Soviet Union by Germany in June, 1941, ended communist hostility towards the Western democracies, and the attack on Pearl Harbor changed America's opinion of the Soviet Union. Throughout most of the war official government propaganda portrayed the Soviet Union as a good friend that was led by a group of agrarian reformers. But by late-1944 the war-time cooperation was fading, and communists were again held in suspicion.

By the time of the last 'Big-Three' meetings in Potsdam, Germany in July 1945, it had become obvious that the Soviet Union would dominate Eastern Europe. Over the next four years puppet regimes were set up by Stalin in all of Eastern Europe except

² Cedric Belfrage, The American Inquisition 1945-1960 (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1973), 33-34.

³ Belfrage, The American, 34-35.

Yugoslavia and Greece. In 1946 the Soviets threatened Iran and Turkey. Between 1944 and 1949 the Communists in Greece tried to overthrow that country's west-friendly government. During the Greek Civil War, Britain declared that it could no longer guarantee the protection of Turkey and Greece from communist overthrow; the United States took the lead in arming the governments of those two countries. In 1948 the Soviet military blockaded Berlin and completed the takeover of the last Eastern European democracy--Czechoslovakia. In 1949 China fell to the communists and the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb. In 1950 the United States led the United Nations into war against the communists in North Korea.

The changes abroad mirrored the rapid changes taking place in America. Following World War II (as was the case following World War I), most Americans wanted to return to normalcy (some sort of untroubled, peaceful, idealized version of the past). The goal of a quiet, worry-free existence was as much a pipe-dream as a hope for world unity and concord. The cost of living rose following the expiration of war-time price controls. Workers, now free from war-time labor constraints, made 1946 the most strike-plagued year in American history. Conservative groups such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, and business groups insisted that the communists were behind the turmoil. Increasingly, in addition to foreign threats and economic uncertainty, there was also widespread fear of domestic subversion. Religious, business, labor, media, law enforcement and political

leaders all talked about the threats posed by domestic communists; few, though, got more mileage from the fear of subversion than the Republican Party.⁴

The Republicans had been out of power since 1932 and were anxious to regain control of Congress and the White House and reverse some of the changes brought in by the New Deal. While President Truman was attacked from the left by individuals such as Walter Lippman, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt and Henry Wallace for souring relations with the Soviet Union and setting the stage for World War III, the Republicans hit from the right, blaming Truman for doing too little to stop the communist menace and for "losing" Eastern Europe. The constant assaults on Truman (and the list of complaints against Truman from parties of all political persuasions, was long) were effective and his approval rating dropped from 87 percent in July, 1945, to less than 33 percent in August, 1946. The Republicans plastered the country with the slogan "Had Enough?" In 1946, for the first time since 1930, the GOP won control of both houses of Congress.⁵ Anti-communism was not the only Republican issue (the Republicans also promised significant tax cuts and an end to the labor strife that was plaguing the country), but it did much to hurt Truman and the Democrats.

Following the election of 1946, Truman took a harder line against communists, both foreign and domestic. The Truman Doctrine guaranteed that the United States would aid any country

⁴ Peter H. Buckingham, America Sees Red (Claremont, CA: Regina Books, 1988),54-56.

⁵ Buckingham, America, 57.

threatened by the forces of international communism. Domestically, in March 1947, Truman signed Executive Order 9835 which created the Truman Loyalty Program this program allowed the president more latitude in removing government employees who were suspected of communist leanings.⁶ Truman wanted to ensure that he would not be outflanked by the Republicans on the communist issue, but by encouraging the communist hysteria he allowed the Republican's greater latitude in pursuing their anti-communist investigations. Indeed, historians Athan Theoharis and Richard Freeland argue that it was Truman's legitimization and embrace of the anti-communist crusade that allowed politicians such as Richard Nixon to take anti-communism to further extremes. Theoharis maintained that although McCarthyism was primarily a Republican political movement, it was made possible by the conservative climate created by Truman in pursuit of political gains and national security.⁷

Freeland goes further, charging that Truman and his advisers knowingly overstated the dangers of both domestic and foreign communism in order to achieve their foreign policy goals. Any bill that could be labeled as necessary to stem the tide of communism (such as military aid to Greece and Turkey and Marshall Plan aid to Western Europe) was more likely to pass the 80th Congress, and so Truman, according to Senator Arthur Vandenberg, chose to "scare

⁶ Richard Gid Powers, Not Without Honor (New York: The Free Press, 1995),197.

⁷ Lon Devere Marlowe IV, The Roots of McCarthyism: The House of Representatives and Internal Security Legislation, 1945-1950 (Ph. D. diss., University of Georgia, 1981), 45.

the hell out of the country."⁸ Later Truman tried to mute the anti-communist rhetoric when it got out of control, but he was too late. He merely made himself look indecisive, or even worse, sympathetic, to the communists.

With the country afraid of communists in high places the House Un-American Activities Committee (the old Dies Committee) had nearly a free-hand in investigating radicals. The first major post-war spy scandal focused on the left-wing journal Amerasia. John Service, a State Department China expert, was arrested in June, 1945, for passing hundreds of classified documents to the magazine. Philip Jaffe, Amerasia's editor was assumed to be a communist and thus an outright spy for the Soviet Union. The case started to fall apart when investigators discovered that the agents who raided Amerasia's office did not have search warrants. It was later revealed that none of the documents recovered from Amerasia was very important. Far more damaging was a spy case in Canada where twenty-two Canadian government employees were arrested for passing classified information to the Soviet embassy in Ottawa.

Several highly publicized cases and charges by FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover convinced HUAC and the American public that communist infiltration was far more widespread than previously assumed. Hoover testified that red fascism had infiltrated all areas of American society. He insisted that America had one communist for every 1,814 people—a figure which is more ominous when it is

⁸ Marlowe, The Roots of, 45.

compared to 1917 Russia, when there was only one Bolshevik for every 2,771 people.⁹

In 1947 the Republicans took control of HUAC, which was chaired by J. Parnell Thomas. The reconstituted committee included John Rankin of Mississippi, a notorious anti-Semite; John Wood of Georgia, a Ku Klux Klan supporter; and two individuals who had already shown a willingness to use the issue of communism to further their careers--Karl Mundt of South Dakota and Richard Nixon of California.¹⁰ In the 1946 campaign the Republicans promised to uncover the communists in American society, and they wasted little time. The committee began a series of high profile hearings on the film industry. Many friendly movie stars such as Adolphe Menjou, Gary Cooper, Robert Taylor and Screen Actors Guild president Ronald Reagan appeared before Congress and urged the removal of known Reds from their industry. A group of communist screenwriters--the Hollywood Ten--took the Fifth Amendment when asked about their party affiliation; the movie studio heads responded by creating a blacklist that denied work to all known or suspected communists.

The Hollywood investigation was the precursor of a bigger show--exposing communist subversion in the government. J. Edgar Hoover, the Republican Party, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and HUAC formed a tacit alliance to find the reds in government and to pull down the Truman Administration. Alger Hiss, a state

⁹ David M. Oshinsky, A Conspiracy So Immense (New York: The Free Press, 1983), 96.

¹⁰ Oshinsky, A Conspiracy, 97-98.

department advisor in the Far East Division, was first implicated as a Soviet Agent by Whittaker Chambers in 1939. Chambers had been a liaison between Soviet military intelligence and communist espionage rings inside the government between 1932 and 1938. In 1939 Chambers switched sides and became a leading communist hunter. In 1945 the FBI obtained evidence from the Royal Canadian Mounted police and from Elizabeth Bentley (a war-time courier between the spy network and her lover, Jacob Golos, the Soviet espionage's chief operative in the U.S.) that Hiss was passing secrets to the Soviet Union. Learning in 1946 that both the FBI and the Truman Administration were investigating him, Hiss resigned from the State Department. In 1948 Chambers appeared before HUAC and stated that he had worked with Hiss in the 1930s. Chambers claimed that initially Hiss and others were not really put in place to spy but were supposed to fill the American government with Soviet operatives. Chambers pointed out that Hiss was instrumental in organizing the Dumbarton Oaks conference where plans for the United Nations were drawn up, and that Hiss had been with Roosevelt at Yalta and thus was in a position to participate in the "sell-out" of Eastern Europe. Author and radio broadcaster John Flynn "exposed" the conspiracy:

"The Red Politburo cannot take over our State Department. But it can get one of its agents into the department in a position of great influence where he can shape policy. A well-known case is that of Alger Hiss...Roosevelt and Stalin held a secret meeting at Yalta at which Roosevelt--then in an almost dying condition--made a series of surrenders to Stalin, one of them being the abandonment of Korea. Roosevelt's adviser at that session

was Alger Hiss, now in jail. The dark fact is that thousands of these Reds had made their way into almost all of the most important spots in our government...So you see, in this grave emergency we are not talking about old-time American political sins such as graft and incompetence and political skulduggery. We are talking about treason-- treason which has cost this nation a terrible price, perhaps its very life."¹¹

With the Hiss investigation receiving widespread attention, HUAC became more bold and pushed a bill through the House requiring the registration of all communists (a measure subsequently disapproved by the Senate). During this process, HUAC members such as Richard Nixon became household names, and the Republicans gained a highly charged issue which they hoped they could use to capture the White House in 1948. Truman tried to portray himself as a vigilant anti-communist, but he could never wrest control of the domestic subversion issue from HUAC and the FBI. With some success, Nixon and others attempted to shut the Justice Department out of the anti-communist loop.¹²

Anti-communist hysteria did not carry the Republican Party to victory as the Republican's had hoped. Truman retained the White House in 1948, and the Democrats regained control of Congress. Truman wanted to abolish HUAC but did not have the votes in Congress to do so; instead, the House leadership packed the committee with "more responsible" members. In 1949 Chaing Kai-Shek was overthrown in China by Chinese Communist Party chief

¹¹ John T. Flynn, McCarthy: His War on American Reds, and the Story of Those Who Oppose Him, (New York: America's Future, 1954), 4.

¹² Powers, Not Without, 225.

Mao Tse-Tung. Politicians in Washington tried to duck responsibility for having lost China. In August, 1949, the state department released a white paper explaining why American policy in China had failed. According to the state department, there was no reasonable thing that the United States could have done to have saved China. Shortly after the triumph of the Chinese communists, the Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb, Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury, and the British government announced that one of its top scientists, Dr. Klaus Fuchs, had sold atomic secrets to the Soviets.¹³

Once again the Republicans sought political advantage from the chaos. On February 6, 1950 GOP leaders issued a statement of principles and objectives which would become part of their platform for the 1950 Congressional elections:

"We deplore the dangerous degree to which Communists and their fellow travelers have been employed in important government posts and the fact that information vital to our security has been made available to alien agents and persons of questionable loyalty. We denounce the soft attitude of this administration toward Government employees and officials who hold or support communist attitudes.¹⁴

The Republican Party had spent nearly twenty years losing elections, and over that time they had seconded most of the foreign policies and many of the domestic policies of the Democrats. By 1950 many Republicans did not care if their politics were fair or clean, only that they were effective. When a dinner guest of Ohio

¹³ Marlowe, The Roots, 16.

¹⁴ Marlowe, The Roots, 16.

Senator Robert Taft, generally perceived to be a man of cold intellect and reasoned caution, questioned the fairness of the Republicans in HUAC, Taft snapped back: "What difference does that make? I am always being unfairly attacked and confused." Taft wanted to be president, and the Republican Party wanted to control the White House after a twenty year absence. If achieving these goals required some communist hysteria then so be it.¹⁵ The atmosphere was perfect for an opportunist like Joseph McCarthy.

McCarthy was born into a working class Irish-Catholic culture in Grand Chute, Wisconsin, in 1908. In the 1920s and 30s the Catholic Church was a leader in the fight against communism. Arch-conservatives like Father Charles Coughlin (a Catholic Priest who was a popular radio minister during the 1930s) made names for themselves preaching to families like the McCarthys about the dangers of Marx and Lenin. By the late-1930s, many Catholics had turned on Roosevelt because of a liberal bias that supposedly allowed world communism to flourish.¹⁶

In 1946 McCarthy was elected Senator from Wisconsin. During the campaign, he frequently accused his Democratic opponent of being "communistically inclined." The communist issue helped McCarthy and other Republicans gain control of Congress in 1946. The 1946 freshman congressional class was staunchly conservative, and it worked diligently to reverse twenty years of liberal New Deal legislation.

¹⁵ William F. Crandell, A Party Divided Against Itself, (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1983), 204.

¹⁶ Powers, Not Without, 236-37.

Senator McCarthy initially was not popular in Washington. The media named McCarthy the worst senator in Washington. The Madison Capital-Times newspaper accused McCarthy of being completely ineffective, and many people wrote him off as a one-term senator. McCarthy shot back at the Capital-Times, accusing the editor of being a known communist and a Red mouthpiece. The newspaper backed off, and McCarthy suddenly had an issue. In 1949 the Wisconsin demagogue gained media coverage when he accused the state department of being "honeycombed and run by the Communists."¹⁷

On February 9, 1950, McCarthy gave a Lincoln Day speech at Wheeling, West Virginia. He claimed to have a list of 205 state department employees who belonged to the Communist Party. He reiterated his statement the next day at the Denver airport and then again in Salt Lake City, where he claimed to possess a list of 57 card-carrying communists who were actively employed in the state department. The numbers continued to change. On February 20 he said that he knew of 81 employees who were communists. The media jumped on the charges, and McCarthy became front-page news. When pressed to provide the names, McCarthy responded that he could prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that one state department employee was a top Soviet agent, and that the proving of the one would demonstrate the veracity of his other claims. The

¹⁷ Buckingham, America, 68-70.

one individual was Owen Lattimore--an expert on the Far East.¹⁸ For twenty months Lattimore was investigated by the McCarran Committee of the Senate, but in the end McCarthy could not prove that Lattimore was an agent for any foreign government.

In response to the attacks against his administration, President Truman urged Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Millard Tydings (D-Maryland) to investigate McCarthy. Truman hoped that the Tydings investigation would discredit McCarthy and silence other Republicans who might accuse the Truman Administration of subversion. While the Tydings Committee investigated McCarthy, the Korean War broke out, frightening the American population all the more relative to communism. Many Americans feared that the Korea was the beginning of World War III and supported McCarthy's efforts to rid the country of communists. Meanwhile, the Tydings committee had concluded that McCarthy's charges were "a hoax and a fraud," but the committee report had little effect. The greatest impact was probably on Senator Tydings, who lost his reelection bid in November, 1950. McCarthy's methods disgusted many politicians, but few were willing to tangle with him after Tydings' defeat.¹⁹

McCarthy's fame as America's premier red-hunter earned him a great deal of support and money from the right-wing. Richard Nixon fed the Wisconsin senator information from HUAC's files, J.

¹⁸ Warren Lang Vinz, A Comparison Between Elements of Protestant Fundamentalism and McCarthyism, (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1968), 146-47.

¹⁹ Ellen Schrecker, The Age of McCarthyism, (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), 63-64.

Edgar Hoover supplied information from the FBI files and arranged for a former FBI agent to help McCarthy's Senate committee in its investigations, and newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst provided a couple of reporters to help with publicity and investigations. With the money that poured in from wealthy right-wing citizens, McCarthy was able to hire individuals such as J.B. Matthews, former chief investigator under Martin Dies. Matthews brought with him a list of over twenty-thousand suspected communists and fellow travelers.²⁰

Moderate Republicans were ambivalent about McCarthy. They recognized the exaggerations and lies in his statements, but his charges were doing damage to the Democratic Party and President Truman. To muzzle McCarthy was to blunt their major weapon going into the 1952 elections. Most Republicans (with a few exceptions such as Senator Margaret Chase Smith who, along with seven other Republicans, presented a "Declaration of Conscience" to the Senate which attacked McCarthy and the Republican right²¹) chose to remain quiet and reap the rewards of McCarthyism. Conservative Democrats also encouraged McCarthy in the hope that he would destroy the Democratic left and save them from a party bloodletting.

No one in the Truman Administration was safe from McCarthy's attacks. One leader on whom he particularly focused was former Secretary of State George C. Marshall. McCarthy blamed

²⁰ Buckingham, America, 71.

²¹ Buckingham, America, 72.

Marshall for everything from causing World War II to facilitating every communist gain since the war's end. McCarthy put Marshall at the head of "a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man."²²

Truman tried to counter McCarthy's attacks. In response to a reporter who asked Truman if there was any chance that McCarthy's charges of state department disloyalty were provable Truman responded, "I think that the greatest asset the Kremlin has is Senator McCarthy."²³ Truman's efforts to discredit McCarthy (such as the Tydings investigation) failed. In 1951 and 1952 Truman's popularity fell to record lows, due in part to the stalemate in the Korean conflict, and to Truman's firing of the popular chief of command in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur. At the same time, the trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg (who were accused of selling nuclear secrets to the Soviets) convinced many Americans that Truman's administration had been, at best, careless, and at worst, treasonous. The president had little political weight left to throw and McCarthy's popularity seemed to grow with each presidential assault.

In January, 1953, the Republican Party regained the Senate, and McCarthy became chairman of the Committee on Governmental Operations and of its Subcommittee on Investigations. Utilizing the \$200,000 a year budget and the staff of investigators available to the committee, McCarthy went after new communist sympathizers.

²² Powers, Not Without, 244.

²³ Oshinsky, A Conspiracy, 174.

McCarthy started his investigation with Hollywood, moved on to the overseas libraries operated by the American Information Services (where operatives were sent with instructions to burn any books that encouraged subversion or unAmericanism), continued his assaults on the state department, and investigated the Government Printing Office, the Voice of America, businesses that traded with Russia or China and eventually the defense department.²⁴

One group that always came under suspicion when communism was under investigation was organized labor. Labor had been a target for conservative Republicans since the Civil War, and both HUAC and McCarthy looked for connections between the labor unions and the Communist Party. Labor had grown so used to being linked to communism that the unions had, since World War I, worked strenuously to sever all connections with communism. Herbert Philbrick, a communist counterspy who for nine years gave information about the communist party to the FBI, insisted that since the communists lost much of their influence in the labor unions in the 1940s they turned to religion as their number one target:

"Subversion in the sanctuary is the most deadly and insidious menace facing America today....Most of the persons involved--in the pulpit, in publishing, in the training of ministers--have been duped. It is not so difficult to believe that good men can be hoodwinked. But it will come as a jolt to many Christians to discover that

²⁴ Flynn, McCarthy, 7-10.

some members of the clergy are not dupes but hardened communists who are completely loyal to Russia."²⁵

Despite Philbrick's claims most members of the clergy and most religious organizations that were investigated were not accused of being outright communists but of being communist sympathizers or fronts. 'Fronts' was a term frequently used to describe those American organizations that were not actually communist but were either willing accomplices (often referred to as fellow travelers) of the communists or, more likely, unwitting dupes who did not know that they were being manipulated by Moscow.²⁶

The House Committee on Un-American Activities defined a communist front as "an organization or publication created or captured by the Communists to do the party's work in areas where an openly Communist project would be unwelcome." The Committee went on to say, "Because subterfuge often makes it difficult to recognize its true nature, the Communist front has become the greatest weapon of Communism in this country."²⁷ J. Edgar Hoover claimed that fronts gave the communist work a sense of legitimacy and decency because the fronts were usually headed

²⁵ Herbert Philbrick, "Reprint of Mr. Philbrick's Article in Christian Herald", undated document located in the "Religion-Fronts" folder of the James Bales Collection, The University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 1.

²⁶ Joseph Z. Kornfeder, Brainwashing and Senator McCarthy, (undated pamphlet published by The Alliance, Inc.: New York), 8.

²⁷ Committee on Un-American Activities, U.S. House of Representatives, Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications (Washington D.C.: Committee on Un-American Activities, 1951, reprinted, 1957), 1.

by a man of prominence such as an educator, minister or scientist who had no direct Communist Party credentials.²⁸

Legislators and others seeking to discover communist fronts almost invariably investigated the various peace and disarmament organizations in the country. The mere fact that a stated goal of an organization was the achievement of better relations with the Soviet Union and/or the reduction or destruction of nuclear arms in the United States was enough reason to suspect that organization of communist ties. The American Communist Party's declaration that one of its primary goals was the expansion of the peace movement fostered even more suspicion of the peace movements.²⁹

Frequently the leaders of those peace movements were members of the clergy, thus bringing the churches under suspicion as communist fronts. The National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches (both of which were dominated by the mainline Protestant churches) were frequently accused of being communist covers. Church efforts at social justice (particularly work for immigrants, blacks and the poor) were often said to be communist inspired. And in truth, there were a few ministers who

²⁸ "Hoover, Master of Deceit", undated document located in the 'Clergy-Fronts' Folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

²⁹ The June 11, 1950 issue of the communist Daily Worker provides evidence of this. "The Party's peace campaign is our major task for the next months. It is primary and transcends all other issues and struggles." John M. Swomley Jr., The Peace Offensive and the Cold War, undated pamphlet published by the National Council Against Conscription: Washington D.C., 28-29.

indeed did sympathize with the communists, but those were the exceptions.³⁰

Considering Marx and Lenin's disdain for religion ("the opiate of the masses"), it seems illogical that the churches would become the target of communist infiltration. But those who were investigating communist subversion in the United States claimed that the churches were, in fact, at the center of the communist plan to penetrate and take over America. The Presbyterian Outlook newspaper charged, "In all their plans and actions the Communists mark down religion as 'Enemy Number One'. Where they dominate they attack it head on. Where they do not dominate they try to deceive and corrupt from within just as they do in government, in education, in labor unions and throughout a nation's life in general."³¹

HUAC, McCarthy, various church organizations, and numerous church and non-church publications claimed that Moscow had long been planting communist operatives in seminaries and churches. Those operatives were expected to rise through the ranks and reach points of power where they could then sow seeds of demoralization, dissension, and reinterpretation into the churches.³² Those investigating this process insisted that the communists had been far

³⁰ Ralph Lord Roy, Communism and the Churches, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1960), 192-94.

³¹ "House Group Says Communists Seek to Destroy Religion", The Presbyterian Outlook 130, no. 49 (December 6, 1948), 1.

³² Joseph Zack Kornfeder, Communist Deception in the Churches, (Pamphlet published from an address given by Kornfeder to the Circuit Riders, Inc. in Cincinnati, Ohio on October 26, 1952. Pamphlet was published by the Circuit Riders), "Religion-Infiltration" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, 15.

more successful in permeating the mainline Protestant and the Jewish religions than they had the Catholic Church.³³

Non-communist clergymen were said to be lured into the work of the communists through liberal fronts. Liberal religious centers like the Union Theological Seminary in New York were accused of producing a generation of political Robin Hoods, who were destroying capitalism by urging the government to redistribute income and institute socialism.³⁴ Former communists, as well as some religious leaders, testified before Congress that these centers of religious liberalism were undercutting capitalism by preaching that economic competition was incompatible with the teachings of Jesus. They claimed that seminary students were being taught that capitalism was directly responsible for racism and poverty. "Christian Humanism" was said to be a code name for socialism. Socialism would then lead to communism and Moscow would conquer America without firing a shot.³⁵

³³ F. A. Fink quotes Rabbi Ben Schultz as saying that "Many key Protestant and Jewish leaders are their (the communists) dupes or willing pawns.... While it is true...that a number of lay Catholics, through labor movements, have promoted the Communist cause, there cannot be found any Catholic clergy who have gone to bat for it in any manner." F. A. Fink, Whose Friends are They--America's or Russia's?, undated pamphlet located in the "POAU" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 53; Reuben Markham, Let Us Protestants Awake, (undated pamphlet published by the American Council of Christian Laymen: Madison, WI) 48; Joe Pender Dunn, The Church and the Cold War: Protestants and Conscriptioin, 1940-1955 (Ph.D. diss. The University of Missouri, 1973), 23.

³⁴ The Union Theological Seminary was frequently accused of being a nest of communist teachers and ideas. "No religious seminary in America has approached the influence of the Red Union Theological Seminary of New York City in undermining and destroying the Christian religion." Carl H. Mote, Political Theologians and Theological Politicians (New York: America Preferred, 1945), "Religion-Fronts" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 12.

³⁵ Smoot, "They Have", 3-6.

The House Un-American Activities Committee published a pamphlet (entitled 100 Things You Should Know About Communism and Religion) that warned church members of the subversion in their churches. The pamphlet claimed that communists were corrupting religion in the United States, that they were doing it through front organizations that were disguised as welfare or civil rights organizations, and that the danger of "church communists" was very real. The pamphlet quoted J. Edgar Hoover as saying, "I confess to a real apprehension, so long as Communists are able to secure ministers of the gospel to promote their evil work and espouse a cause that is alien to the religion of Christ and Judaism."³⁶

HUAC warned America about communist-church connections that had allegedly existed since the 1930s. The Federal Council of Churches was often accused of being a communist front. In 1931 the Federal Council was accused of supporting "socialism, communism, internationalism and pacifism."³⁷ The Dies Committee

³⁶ Hoover would later backtrack on that statement. In a Feb. 3, 1951 letter from Hoover to E.L. Repass, Hoover explained that "the quotation which you set forth was taken out of context from remarks I made before the Committee on Un-American activities...I want you to know that neither on this occasion or at any other time have I ever made any statement criticizing the Federal Council of Churches or the National Council of Churches." (Hoover is technically accurate on this point. There was nothing in his testimony that directly attacked the Federal/National Council of Churches, but he did frequently warn about communist infiltration into the churches in general.) Despite Hoover's repudiation of the statement it was still frequently cited by anti-communists as proof of the corruption within the churches. (Excerpt from an untitled pamphlet), "Religion-Fronts" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 23; House Un-American Activities Committee, "100 Things You Should Know About Communism and Religion" as quoted in the pamphlet Is There a Pink Fringe in the Methodist Church?, (Houston: Committee for the Preservation of Methodism, 1951), Box 87, Folder 724 of the J. William Fulbright Papers Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 8-9.

³⁷ Roy, Communism, 227.

never directly investigated the Federal Council, but it did investigate influential Protestant clergymen with 'red sympathies'.

Few church organizations escaped suspicion. The YMCA, the YWCA, and a disbanded inter-denominational church youth group called the Epworth League, were mentioned as communist fronts whose purpose was to lead young Christians to communism. The Methodist Federation for Social Action (an organization within the Methodist Church that was not officially recognized by the church but whose membership included many prominent Methodist ministers) was also frequently cited as a front.³⁸ In 1950 the Federal Council of Churches became the National Council of Churches. The National Council was also accused of being a front. The American Council of Christian Laymen published a pamphlet titled How Red is the National/Federal Council of Churches? A list was included to show all the communist front organizations that were supposedly aided by those in the National Council. Reinhold Niebuhr was accused of aiding thirteen known communist fronts, former Federal Council President G. Bromley Oxnam, eleven known fronts, former Council President Francis McConnell, twenty-seven.

After listing many "well-known fronts" (the American Civil Liberties Union was among the organizations that were accused of being a communist front), the pamphlet asserted that "In many official pronouncements, the Council has attacked free enterprise, capitalism and the American way of life, and has baldly advocated socialism." The National Council was then chastised for endorsing

³⁸ "Probers Bare Red Drive to Infiltrate Churches", Fort Worth Star Telegram, (November 22, 1948), 1.

the 1948 World Council of Churches policy that "the Christian Churches should reject the ideologies of both Communism and laissez-faire Capitalism."³⁹ The pamphlet was widely circulated and would be cited in later Congressional investigations against church leaders..

In the late 1940s, a number of conservative, fundamentalist churches withdrew from the Federal Council and formed the American Council of Christian Churches (the ACCC), under the direction of Carl McIntire, a deposed Presbyterian minister. The ACCC accused the Federal Council of being dangerous and unchristian. One declaration by the ACCC warned: "Get out of any church that is affiliated with the Federal Council of Churches in America unless you want to serve the devil."⁴⁰ The ACCC was often the religious spokesgroup for the conservative right, and it welcomed the communist investigations, including those directed at the churches.⁴¹

Most of the congressional investigations of communism in the churches occurred in the House of Representatives. McCarthy's main attempt to expose communist-affiliated church leaders was a disaster. In 1953 McCarthy hired the former chief investigator for the Dies Committee, J.B. Matthews, to work for his senate investigating committee. Matthews had compiled an extensive list of known or suspected communists, and McCarthy wanted access to

³⁹ How Red is the Federal/National Council of Churches?, (New York: American Council of Christian Laymen, 1951)

⁴⁰ Mote, Political, 56.

⁴¹ Fink, Whose Friends, 16.

that list. Before working for McCarthy's Senate committee, Matthews had written an article for the American Mercury entitled, "Reds and Our Churches." Matthews claimed to be an ex-Methodist minister and an expert on communist infiltration of religion.

Matthews opened by declaring that "the largest single group supporting the Communist apparatus in the United States today is composed of Protestant clergymen....The Communist Party of this country has placed more and more reliance upon the ranks of the Protestant clergy to provide the party's subversive apparatus with its agents, stooges, dupes, front men, and fellow-travelers." The article then asserted that at least seven thousand Protestant clergymen were aiding and supporting the Communist Party. Matthews quoted Earl Browder (the former head of the American Communist Party), HUAC and J. Edgar Hoover as the sources of his information. In the article Matthews named hundreds of Protestant ministers from all the mainline denominations as communist front men or dupes. He also accused well-respected Protestant organizations and periodicals as being fronts.⁴²

Conservative church groups (such as McIntire's ACCC) applauded Matthews' article, but the mainline Protestants were furious at the attack. The Democratic Party sided with the mainline clergy and demanded that Matthews be fired. President Eisenhower had been looking for an opportunity to chastise McCarthy, and the Matthews article presented that chance. (Eisenhower was close friends with General Marshall and

⁴² J.B. Matthews, "Reds and Our Churches", The American Mercury 77 (July, 1953), 3-13.

apparently never forgave McCarthy for the attacks against Marshall. Eisenhower did not publicly defend Marshall for fear of alienating the Republican right-wing.) The president attacked Matthews for "destroying trust in the leaders of Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism by wholesale condemnation."⁴³ The President's brother Arthur called McCarthy "the most dangerous menace to America" and said "when I think of McCarthy, I automatically think of Hitler."⁴⁴

In response to Matthews' article, Dr. John O'Brien of Notre Dame University, President Maurice Eisendrath of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and Dr. John Bonnell of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church wired a joint protest on behalf of the National Conference of Christians and Jews to President Eisenhower condemning Matthews' article. Eisenhower responded immediately:

"I have received your telegram of today's date. I want you to know at once that I fully share the convictions you state. The issues here are clear. Generalized and irresponsible attacks that sweepingly condemn the whole of any group or citizens are alien to America. Such attacks betray contempt for the principles of freedom and decency. And when these attacks--whatever their professed purpose be--condemn such a vast portion of the churches or clergy as to create doubt in the loyalty of all, the damage to our nation is multiplied...The churches of America are citadels of our faith in individual faith and human dignity. This faith is the living source of all our spiritual strength. And this strength is our matchless armor in our worldwide struggle against the force of godless tyranny and oppression."⁴⁵

⁴³ Editorial, The Christian Century 70, no. 29 (July 22, 1953), 839.

⁴⁴ Powers, Not Without, 267.

⁴⁵ Editorial, The Christian, (July 22, 1953), 839.

McCarthy demanded Matthews' resignation, sacrificing him in order to quell the anger.⁴⁶ Eisenhower planned a news conference where he would call for Matthews to be fired. McCarthy planned to announce Matthews' resignation before the presidential conference, but Vice-President Nixon stalled him so that Eisenhower's announcement came first. The president's advisers wanted Eisenhower, not McCarthy, to get credit for Matthews' removal.⁴⁷ McCarthy's senate investigating committee then publicly condemned McCarthy for hiring Matthews. The American Mercury published no additional articles by Matthews, and McCarthy steered clear of any further attacks on the churches.⁴⁸

The Matthews debacle was the beginning of the end for McCarthy. Prior to the Matthews affair, McCarthy seemed to be untouchable. People like Truman and Tydings to bring McCarthy down failed to damage anyone but themselves. The outcry over Matthews' article proved that McCarthy was not invincible, and McCarthy's enemies (most significantly President Eisenhower) sensed this.

⁴⁶ McCarthy was especially embarrassed by the situation because he had tried to co-opt the religious community into his holy war against communism. Many saw his alliance with Matthews as the latest chapter in Protestant-bashing by the Catholics. The previous years battle over sending an ambassador to the Vatican had opened a lot of old wounds between the Protestants and Catholics, and some saw McCarthy's attack as the Catholics revenge for their defeat on the embassy issue. Mark Silk, Spiritual Politics, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 89-90.

⁴⁷ Crandell, A Party, 261-62.

⁴⁸ Murray Marder, "McCarthy Committee Splits Over Article By Senator's Aide About Reds Among Clergy", (Undated newspaper article from unknown newspaper), Box 87, Folder number 715 of the J. William Fulbright Papers, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR.

Southern Democrats were especially incensed by the Matthews attack (Southern Baptists and Methodists were not spared by Matthews; surprisingly it was in the conservative South that public opinion first started turning against McCarthy). Senators John McClellan (D-Arkansas), Stuart Symington (D-Missouri) and Henry Jackson (D-Washington), who were members of McCarthy's Senate investigating committee, described Matthews' charges as shocking and unwarranted. To protest the outlandish accusations being made by McCarthy, all three resigned from the committee shortly after the Matthews incident.⁴⁹

McCarthy made no further effort to again try to link communism and the churches, but the House Committee on Un-American Activities did. The House Committee (which was chaired by Harold Velde, R-Illinois) also experienced controversy relative to the churches. When the chair announced that the House was investigating communism in the churches, there was enough public outcry that Velde altered his statement to say that his committee was pursuing communists wherever they existed and was not singling out the churches.⁵⁰

The first person to testify before the Velde Committee was Joseph Kornfeder, a leader in the American Communist Party from 1919 to 1934. Kornfeder testified that over 600 American

⁴⁹ Wayne Addison Clark, An Analysis of the Southern Response to McCarthyism, (Masters thesis, University of North Carolina, 1969), 27-28.

⁵⁰ Silk, Spiritual, 88.

clergymen were "secret" members of the Communist Party and three to four thousand more were fellow-travelers.⁵¹

The Velde Committee found communists in most of the Protestant Churches, but the Methodist Church received the most scrutiny. One organization that claimed Methodist affiliation (a claim that the Methodist Church would dispute) was the Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA). The MFSA had been investigated since the 1930s as a communist front. A group of Progressive Methodist ministers had formed the MFSA in 1907. The goal of the organization was "to deepen in the church a sense of social obligation....and to promote social action in the spirit of Jesus."⁵² The organization was never officially sanctioned as an organ of the Methodist Church, but it did receive financial support from the church's General Conference, which had no alternative auxiliary that could act as a social educator for the church or provide a forum for the discussion of social issues. Many of the Methodist Church leaders were members of the Federation.

In the 1920s, the leader of the Federation, Harry Ward, had expressed support for the communist experiment in the Soviet Union. The Federation also aided the burgeoning labor and civil rights movements (both of which were accused of being communist tools). During the Depression, Ward and the MFSA moved to the left and urged the United States government to consider more public

⁵¹ Associated Press News Story as quoted in the article "Ex-Reds Tell of Try to Infiltrate Clergy", San Angelo (Texas) Standard-Times (September 12, 1953), 1.

⁵² The History of American Methodism, V. 3 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), 551.

ownership and regulation of private businesses. Ward visited the Soviet Union and returned to report in glowing terms about what he saw there. Winifred Chappell, a close associate of Ward's, embraced communism and worked closely with CPUSA Chair Earl Browder. In a Methodist youth journal, the Epworth Herald, she urged America's youths to "Accept the draft, take the drill, go into the camps and onto the battlefield, or into the munitions factories and transportation work--but sabotage war preparations and war. Be agitators for sabotage."⁵³

By the mid-30s, the MFSA was under attack both from within and without the Methodist Church. Many within the Church tried to get the 1936 General Conference to repudiate the MFSA and to force it to remove the word Methodist from its title. A compromise was reached wherein the MFSA had to include in its letterhead the statement that it was not directly sanctioned by the Church. In 1944 Jack McMichael replaced the retiring Harry Ward as the MFSA's executive secretary. In the 1930s, McMichael had sided with the communists when he was a representative to the American Youth Congress. After the war, he attacked the Truman Administration for souring relations between the Soviet Union and the United States and supported the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe.

One of the Methodist Church's most prominent Bishops, G. Bromley Oxnam, resigned from the MFSA in 1947. As the MFSA became more radical, many mainstream Methodists distanced

⁵³ Roy, Communism, 292-93.

themselves from the organization. In 1949 HUAC officially labeled the MFSA "a tool of the Communist Party," and accused it of "trying to use the prestige of the Methodist Church to promote the line of the Communist Party."⁵⁴ In 1950 The Readers Digest printed an article entitled "Methodism's Pink Fringe." Following publication of the article, the Methodist Council of Bishops reaffirmed that the MFSA "does not speak for the Church, and over it neither the General Conference nor the Council of Bishops has jurisdiction." The resolution further decried some of the stands taken by the MFSA.⁵⁵ The following month the Methodist Board of Publication expelled the MFSA from the Board-owned Methodist Building in New York.⁵⁶

Conservative Methodists organized to counter the influence of the MFSA. The most vocal opposition to the MFSA issued from a group called The Circuit Riders, Inc. which formed in 1951 to "oppose all efforts to propagate Socialism and Communism and all other anti-American teachings in the Methodist Church."⁵⁷ Most of the members of the Circuit Riders were local level ministers and church officials, although there were a few national church authorities that joined the group. The leader of the Circuit Riders, M.G. Lowman, urged the Church to form an Un-American Activities

⁵⁴ American Council, How Red is, 3; "Cited Communist Front Pulls Boner", Guardposts For Freedom, (Newsletter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, May 31, 1956), 2.

⁵⁵ The Church had cautiously distancing itself from the MFSA since the Mid-1940's and continually reaffirmed its opposition to communism. In 1948 the General Conference of the Church asserted: "We reject Communism, its materialism, its method of class war, its use of dictatorship, its fallacious economics, and its false theory of social development." The Committee for, Is There a Pink, 2

⁵⁶ Roy, Communism, 304.

⁵⁷ Roy, Communism, 305.

Committee of its own to expel Methodist clergy whose loyalty was in question. When the Church did not do so, he urged the government actively to pursue communists within the Methodist Church. "I thank God for the FBI and Joe McCarthy, and I feel we should leave the exposure of the full-fledged Communists to the professionals."⁵⁸ The Circuit Riders published a booklet that listed 2109 Methodist ministers who had associated with communist fronts.⁵⁹

In 1952 HUAC published a pamphlet entitled Review of the Methodist Federation for Social Action. The pamphlet quoted a number of sources in order to prove that the MFSA was an agent of Moscow. The 1952 Methodist General Conference passed resolutions that requested that the MFSA remove the word Methodist from its title, support the decision to expel the MFSA from the Methodist Building, and set up under the direct control of the church a Board of Social and Economic Relations that was supposed to take over the MFSA's informal role as social educator within the church.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ "Story of Commies in Church Told", Lake County (Calif.) Bee, (April 16, 1954), article located in the "Religion-Infiltration" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 1; "Churchman Asks Red Cleanup", Los Angeles Herald and Express, (April 7, 1954), 1.

⁵⁹ 2109 Methodist Ministers, A Compilation of Public Records, (Compiled and published by the Circuit Riders, Inc.: Cincinnati, 1956).

⁶⁰ The Church left no doubt of its repudiation of the MFSA and its goals in the 1952 General Conference resolutions. "The General Conference announces and emphasizes that the Methodist Federation for Social Action (unofficial) has no right to take any action which in any way might be construed as speaking for or reflecting the sentiment or position of the Methodist Church." Resolution Adopted, 1952 General Conference of the Methodist Church," included in document entitled Fifty Years of Un-Methodist Propaganda, "Methodist Panel" Folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 6.

The MFSA became the first religious organization attacked by the Velde Committee. McMichael appeared before that body and irritated its members by attacking the committee more vocally than the committee attacked him. McMichael's histrionic performance offended politicians as well as media (both the Christian and the secular journals attacked McMichael's performance) and religious figures. By 1953 the Federation had declined to the point where it closed its New York offices. Despite predictions that the MFSA would soon die, the Federation continued in its weakened state for years, becoming a regular target for anti-communist crusaders.

The Velde Committee followed its investigation of the MFSA with an investigation of another well known Methodist liberal. G. Bromley Oxnam, the Methodist Bishop of New York, was arguably the best known leader of his denomination in the country. Oxnam had been president of the Federal Council of Churches, was one of the founders of the organization, Protestants and Others United, and was one of Protestant America's foremost spokesmen. Oxnam had often been identified as a leftist. In the late-1940s, he questioned the methods of HUAC and others who "label progressives as Reds."⁶¹ He had been a member of the MFSA and other left-leaning groups.

Reverend Carl McIntire, head of the conservative ACCC, wrote a pamphlet titled Bishop Oxnam, Prophet of Marx. Conservatives within the Methodist Church, though not going so far as to call Oxnam a communist, were concerned about Oxnam's suspected

⁶¹ "Oxnam Censures All 'Red-Baiters'", The Christian Century 66, no. 12, (March 23, 1949), 374.

socialist ties. Conservative Christian author Rembert Smith declared in his book Moscow Over Methodism that the Methodist Church was full of communists or near communists like Oxnam. Robert Shuler, a conservative Methodist minister as well as the editor of the conservative newsletter, the Methodist Challenge, frequently assailed Methodist "pinks" like Oxnam whom Shuler claimed were inching America towards socialism. Oxnam never described himself as a socialist or a communist, only as an advocate of social responsibility.

When the Velde Committee announced its intention to investigate religious groups such as the National/Federal Council of Churches for communist infiltration Oxnam shot back, denouncing "self-appointed vigilantes masquerading in patriotic robes" and "hysterical men whose political ambition causes them to label distinguished public servants as subversive."⁶² One member of the Velde Committee, Donald Jackson of California, answered that Oxnam was "to the Communist front what Man O'War was to thoroughbred horse racing." Jackson then made public papers and documents that he said proved Oxnam's connections to communist fronts. Oxnam and Jackson appeared on the radio program "American Forum of the Air" to debate Jackson's charges. During that debate Oxnam demanded the right to appear before Congress to set the record straight.⁶³

⁶² Lately Thomas, When Even Angels Wept, (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1973), 153-54.

⁶³ Silk, Spiritual, 88-89.

On July 21, 1953, Oxnam appeared for ten hours before the Velde Committee. Television cameras were allowed to broadcast parts of the proceedings live. In his opening statement Oxnam said that he had always opposed communism, questioned the Committee's guilt by innuendo tactics, asked Congressman Jackson to apologize for his remarks (the most offensive he found to be Jackson's assertion that Oxnam had "served God on Sunday and the Communist front for the balance of the week"), and insisted that "the churches have done and are doing far more to destroy the Communist threat to faith and to freedom than all the investigating committees put together."⁶⁴

The Committee questioned Oxnam about his association with over 60 communist fronts. Oxnam denied connections with most of the fronts but admitted involvement in some. Oxnam pointed out that several of the organizations he had belonged to were war-time Soviet-American relations groups that included other distinguished Americans such as Cordell Hull, Breckinridge Long, Albert Einstein and assorted American Congressmen. He also read a statement from General Eisenhower in 1945 to one of those councils (the Committee for Soviet-American friendship) commending them for their actions in promoting peace and understanding.⁶⁵ Oxnam then admitted that he had been a friend of MFSA founder Harry Ward and had indeed been a member of the MFSA, but then asserted that

⁶⁴ Roy, Communism, 233, 254-55.

⁶⁵ Douglas B. Cornell, "Reports of Hearing by Washington News Writers", Associated Press news release as quoted in pamphlet In Freedom's Defense, undated pamphlet located in Folder: 1345-5-1:05 at the United Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 4.

he repudiated both Ward, McMichael and the MFSA when it became obvious that they were becoming too radical.⁶⁶

Groups like the ACCC insisted that Oxnam was discredited by the hearing. Robert Shuler stated that "Bishop Oxnam, while not a communist, has been associated, in his personal and official activities, with subversive agencies and known radicals, to where he has brought great grief to the hearts of tens of thousands of Methodist people." (A dubious claim to say the least. Oxnam received overwhelming support from Methodist laypersons and clergy throughout his service in the church.) Shuler also said: "I again affirm that I am convinced that Bishop Oxnam is not a Communist. He is a Socialist, a most radical Socialist."⁶⁷ For Shuler and other conservatives the fact that Oxnam had "socialist tendencies" did not make him evil like Ward, McMichael and other "known communists"; it just meant that he was stupid. An unwitting pawn in Moscow's plan to slowly take over America.

The Committee admitted that it could find "no record of any Communist Party affiliation or membership by Bishop Oxnam." Oxnam asserted that the committee's statement exonerated him of all charges of subversion.⁶⁸ But the Committee also refused to amend its accusation that he had been a dupe of the communists.

⁶⁶ W.O.H. Garman, Communist Infiltration in the Churches (undated pamphlet published by the Christians For Action: Pittsburgh), "Clergymen-Fronts" Folder, The James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 11.

⁶⁷ Robert Shuler, "Give Them Time!", The Methodist Challenge 22, no. 5 (October, 1953), 4; Robert Shuler, "Bishop Oxnam's 'Exoneration'" The Methodist Challenge 22, no. 5 (October, 1953), 7.

⁶⁸ U.S. Congress, House Committee on Un-American Activities, Testimony of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, 3656, as quoted in Vinz, A Comparison, 183.

Like Shuler, many of the Velde Committee members did not believe that Oxnam was treasonous, just naive. The Tablet, a Catholic journal out of Brooklyn, expressed the viewpoint of some members of the committee in reporting that an "objective reading of the testimony can result in the conclusion that Bishop Oxnam is either stupidly gullible or a master of deviousness." (The Omaha World-Herald was more succinct in its criticism, it merely accused Oxnam of carelessness). Oxnam was assailed by liberal media reports for not responding more defiantly to the committee. The liberal magazine The Protestant (which employed Oxnam as a member of its editorial board in the early 1940s; Oxnam would resign from the board because of its communist leanings) said that Oxnam had "scraped and bowed" before "an agent of fascism." Another liberal publication, The Progressive, wrote angrily that "To get the pack's fangs out of his neck, he (Oxnam) threw Harry F. Ward to them."⁶⁹

Most of the moderate religious publications, as well as many newspapers declared Oxnam the victor in the fight. Many ministers later pointed to the Oxnam hearings as the beginning of the end for communist witch hunts. The National Council of Churches supported Oxnam and remained convinced that his vindication was also vindication for them. The Methodist Church remained supportive of Oxnam throughout.

Although the Methodist Church received most of the scrutiny in the hunt for religious communists, it was not the only denomination that was questioned. Shortly after the Circuit Riders

⁶⁹ Roy, Communism, 259.

released the names of 2109 Methodist ministers who supposedly had ties to communist fronts, a group calling themselves Aroused Presbyterians released a similar pamphlet entitled A Compilation of Public Records, 614 Presbyterian Church U.S.A. Clergymen which exposed the communist connections of 614 Presbyterian ministers. The group of conservative Congregational ministers and lay persons calling themselves the Committee Opposing Congregational Political Action published a booklet entitled They're Using Our Church which attacked the Congregational Church's Council for Social Action. The council was accused of using church funds to advance Marxist ideals. The Unitarian Church was attacked from within and without for being the most communist-oriented of the Protestant churches. The Episcopal Church co-authored a pamphlet entitled A Compilation of Public Records, 20.5 Per Cent, which claimed that 1,411 Episcopal clergymen (20.5 percent of the total American Episcopal Church's clergy) had been members of communist front organizations. The Black Protestant Churches were frequently accused of being riddled with communists. This claim continued throughout the civil rights movement. The Baptists and the Lutherans were generally seen as the least communist of the mainline denominations but even they were not spared investigation and allegations.⁷⁰

The mainline churches fought back by charging that in addition to being undemocratic, fascist and dangerous, the Congressional investigators were lending far more assistance to the

⁷⁰ Garman, Communist, 17-22.

communists than were the few reds within the churches. The Department of Christian Social Relations of the Episcopal Church insisted that "The most interesting reaction (relative to the Congressional probes) has been from the Communists....They love to have wild charges of Communist domination hurled against America's churches. They know that such charges cause consternation, dissension, doubt and fear among church members. And they figure that anyone who succeeds in demoralizing America's churches is aiding their cause."⁷¹ The mainline churches published pamphlets, brochures and newsletters accusing Congress of violating the constitution and to no worthwhile purpose. "Where does the Constitution make that (the investigation of the churches by Congressional Committees) any business of Congress?" asked one religious pamphlet. "If religion is in danger and cannot save itself, how can the state save it? The idea that religion can be saved by paid ex-communist informers, and ex-communist spies trained in deception, is of course preposterous."⁷² Even before Congress investigated the churches, religious publications were questioning the findings of the probes. In 1950 The Christian Herald wrote that

⁷¹ The Department of Christian Social Relations, the Protestant Episcopal Church, Sowing Dissension in the Churches, Undated report located in the "Protestant Episcopal Church" Folder, James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 2.

⁷² A Conspiracy to Destroy Religion, (Undated booklet published by the Religious Freedom Committee: New York), "Religious Freedom Committee" Folder, The James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 18.

it was "far from impressed by the 'revelations' of Senator McCarthy."⁷³

The United Church Women, a National Council of Churches affiliate, called on President Eisenhower to repudiate "the attitude and behavior" of Senator McCarthy. The Council of Methodist Bishops stated their concern regarding fanatical investigations:

"We must oppose those who in the name of Americanism employ the methods of repression, who speak with the voice of democracy but whose hands are the hands of tyranny...We resent unproved assertions that the Protestant ministry is honeycombed with disloyalty. We are unalterably opposed to communism, but we know

⁷³ Gabriel Courier, "Investigations", Christian Herald 73 (May, 1950), 13; Milton Lovelady, in his 1975 thesis, examines the Protestant Press' response to Senator McCarthy. As Lovelady pointed out there were several conservative religious journals that strongly supported McCarthy; but the vast majority, particularly of the mainline publications, were at first leery of the junior senator from Wisconsin ("tempest in a teapot" was a frequent line used) and then firmly opposed to his methods and conclusions. As McCarthy's methods increasingly resembled the totalitarian fascist techniques of Franco and Hitler ('fascist' was an adjective that was frequently used to describe McCarthy's methods) the Protestant media called it's readers to action. The editor of the Episcopal magazine Witness stated: "Would that a voice might go up from every decent and righteous source, a voice of protest in the name of freedom and of truth." Milton Charles Lovelady, The American Protestant Press and McCarthyism, 1950-1954 (Masters thesis, The University of Louisville, 1975), 14; A November, 1952 editorial in the Episcopal Churchnews, urged voters to elect leaders who would follow lawful, quiet methods in ridding the country of communism and gloried in the fact that the two candidates for president were "too profoundly American to adopt the alien methods of McCarthyism." "McCarthyism, Communism--and Americanism," Episcopal Churchnews 117 (November 2, 1952), 15. Some Protestant writers publicly wondered if McCarthyism might actually be a Kremlin plot to sow seeds of dissension and mistrust in American society. Paul Payne, "Immunity Gone Berserk", Presbyterian Life 3 (April 29, 1950), 6; Prince A. Taylor, "Top Kremlin Asset", Central Christian Advocate 125 (April 20, 1950), 3; Oscar F. Blackwelder, "Current Senate Hearings", Lutheran 32 (April 12, 1950), 11.

that the alternative to communism is not an American brand of fascism"⁷⁴

In 1954 the American Baptist Convention noted, "There are individuals and groups in American life so intent upon combating the menace of communism that they adopt the very principles and methods which make communism frightening."⁷⁵ As early as 1950, the Federal Council of Churches warned of the dangers of witch hunts: "If we are to maintain and renew the political and moral health of our nation, Christians must stand firmly against public hysteria and against all attempts to exploit the fears of our people in these critical days."⁷⁶

Even the Southern Baptists, who came through the Congressional investigations largely unscathed, opposed the McCarthy/Velde trials. Dr. J.W. Storer, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, described the charges against the Protestant churches as "much ado about nothing."⁷⁷ Other prominent church leaders who publicly chastened McCarthy, Velde, and Matthews included Dr. Joseph Dawson, executive secretary of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; Dr. Louis Newton, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Henry Knox Sherrill, presiding

⁷⁴ "The Preachers Who Decry the Investigators", The Wanderer (January 7, 1954), 1-2; A Message from the Methodist Council of Bishops (Directive dated December 11, 1953 from Sea Island, Georgia), "Methodist Panel" folder, James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 2.

⁷⁵ C.C. Goen, "Baptists and Church-State Issues in the Twentieth Century", American Baptist Quarterly 6, no. 4 (1987), 242.

⁷⁶ "The Ugly Thing", The Living Church 71, no. 23 (Dec. 3, 1950), 13.

⁷⁷ This quote comes from the July 5, 1953 issue of the New York Times as cited by Clark, An Analysis, 26.

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church; Dr. Oscar Benson, president of the National Lutheran Council; Jacob Blaustein, president of the American Jewish Committee; Dr. Paul Rees, president of the National Association of Evangelicals and Dr. Frederick Reissig, executive secretary of the Washington Federation of Churches.⁷⁸

Although the Oxnam hearing was probably the most publicized 'church' attack of the McCarthy (and McCarthy-like) investigations, the Presbyterian Church was also conspicuous for its opposition to the man and the movement. When Dr. John A. Mackay, president of the Princeton Theological Seminary, was elected moderator of the Presbyterian church in 1953, he devoted most of his first speech to the new negativity in America by declaring that, "Detestation of Communism is producing in certain circles a religious fervor and this fervor is creating a substitute religion...It is proper to abhor Communism, Communism is an evil; let there be no mistake about that. But the spirit to which I refer, this new cult of negation is something quite different. It is a form of idolatry, which, as always happens in idolatrous attitudes, engenders fanaticism."⁷⁹

Matthews' article had prominently listed Mackay as a communist (as had other publications), which prompted Mackay to refute the accusation in a letter to the New York Times. At a General Council planning meeting Mackay was urged to prepare a

⁷⁸ Lovelady, An American, 35-36.

⁷⁹ John A. Mackay, "A New Idolatry" speech printed in, Christianity and Crisis 13, no. 12 (July 6, 1953), 93.

letter to be presented at the October meeting of the Presbyterian General Council. Mackay's letter (known as the Presbyterian Letter) was sent on October 21, 1953, by the General Council of the Presbyterian Church to all Presbyterian congregations, President Eisenhower (a Presbyterian), Secretary of State Dulles, and all Presbyterian members of Congress. The letter warned the nation of the dangers of communism, but also of the dangers of anti-communist hysteria. It further cautioned that the cure of Congressional investigation could become more deadly than the disease of communism:

"Some Congressional inquiries have revealed a distinct tendency to become inquisitions... Treason and dissent are being confused... There is growing up over against Communism a fanatical negativism. Totally devoid of a constructive program of action, this negativism is in danger of leading the American mind into a spiritual vacuum... Our national house, cleansed of one demon, would invite by its very emptiness the entrance of seven others."⁸⁰

The letter was adopted by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church by a vote of 880 to 1.⁸¹

Most of the mainline Christian publications hailed the letter as wise, necessary, and an excellent example of Christianity in action. Many in the secular press also praised the letter. The New York Times editorialized that "the statement...deserves to be read by

⁸⁰ Excerpts of The General Council of the Presbyterian Church's "A Letter to Presbyterians Concerning the Present Situation in Our Country and in the World", as quoted in Social Progress 44, no. 9 (May, 1954), 7.

⁸¹ Edmund A. Opitz, "Presbyterians and a Letter", The Freeman (September, 1954), 91.

every American interested in effectively combating Communism." Other publications, such as Time, Newsweek, the Washington Post, and the San Francisco Chronicle, also praised the Council's statement. Unfortunately for the General Council, the communist newspaper, the Daily Worker also praised the church's stand. No exact count of the letters and phone calls to the church headquarters regarding the statement was kept but estimates of the ratio ran anywhere from 3:1 to 8:1 in support of the Council's stand.⁸² One result of the letter was that it rallied opposition to McCarthy. Despite public sympathy for people like Bishop Oxnham, he was still seen as a leftist. The Presbyterian Church was decidedly a moderate organization, and its public condemnation of McCarthy's tactics helped make it acceptable for other moderates to express similar concerns.

Certainly there were many in the Presbyterian community (and the Protestant community as a whole) who criticized the letter. Many in the religious community saw the Protestant community's role in the forefront of the opposition to McCarthy as a sellout of God and country to Moscow and Satan. Robert Shuler decried the brainwashing of America by the Protestant liberals and declared that such patriots as McCarthy, Dies, and Jenner should be held in the same esteem as Jefferson, Lincoln and Washington.⁸³ The

⁸² Untitled clippings from The New York Times (November 4, 1953), 29; The Washington Post (November 5, 1953), 10; The Daily Worker (November 4, 1953), 3 are located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN.

⁸³ Robert Shuler, "Brain Washing", The Methodist Challenge 23, no. 7 (December, 1954), 8.

Fundamentalist and Evangelical Churches were usually more sympathetic to McCarthy's efforts than they were to the mainline churches. Carl McIntire's ACCC often accused the National Council of collaborating with the communists.⁸⁴ The United Evangelical Action warned America that many "ecumenicists seemed to have an illogical proclivity to support radical causes...liberal Protestants would not acknowledge the incompatibility of Christianity and collectivism. To the contrary it seemed that pronouncements of church councils not only tolerated but encouraged subversive movements."⁸⁵

The division within the Protestant community extended beyond the fundamentalist-mainline break. There was also a difference between the mainline leaders and their members. A January, 1954, Gallup poll showed that forty-nine per cent of America's Protestants approved of McCarthy's investigations. This was despite all of the churches efforts (Oxnam, the Matthews debacle, the Presbyterian Letter, etc.) in 1953.⁸⁶ One explanation for this disparity, and the disparity between the mainline and the fundamentalists, was provided by a 1952 Roper study and a 1954 INRA survey which determined that the major factor influencing opinions on McCarthy was education. Fundamentalist and Catholic members were on average less educated (and more supportive of

⁸⁴ Vinz, A Comparison, 12-13.

⁸⁵ The United Evangelical Action wrote in support of J.B. Matthews and would publish articles by Matthews long after he had been denounced by the most of the rest of the religious community. Editorial, "On Condoning Communism", United Evangelical Action 8 (May 15, 1949), 7.

⁸⁶ Dorsey Milam Deaton, The Protestant Crisis: Truman's Vatican Ambassador Controversy of 1951 (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1970), 174.

McCarthy) than the mainline Protestants and the Jews (neither of which were as supportive of McCarthy). And within the mainline community the leaders were usually much more educated than the average member.⁸⁷

The mainline churches removed ministers that had communist leanings and fought back in behalf of those who did not. The probes of the clergy quickly became unpopular, even among those who otherwise supported McCarthy's efforts. The public outcry against the perceived persecution of the ministers caused the Velde Committee and McCarthy to move on to new targets and J. Edgar Hoover announced that he knew of no communist clergymen.⁸⁸

The churches' efforts prior to and in 1953 helped erode some of the support for the Congressional investigations, and revealed that Senator McCarthy was potentially vulnerable, but it was the events of 1954 that ended McCarthy's career. Mainstream organizations like the U.S. Army publicly questioned McCarthy's tactics and conclusions. President Eisenhower hastened McCarthy's

⁸⁷ Vinz, A Comparison, 226-27.

⁸⁸ Belfrage, The American, 199. There is no evidence that, like with battle to prevent American diplomatic recognition of the Vatican, the mainline Protestants focused their anti-McCarthy efforts on one party or the other. Considering the mainline's long connection with the Republican Party it would have made sense to focus on the G.O.P. (which was also the party of McCarthy) but it does not appear that they did. This may be in part because the Republicans had the most to lose if McCarthy was disgraced and thus they would be less sympathetic to the mainline effort to bring McCarthy down. But more important, the churches did not approach the anti-communist hysteria as a political issue but as a moral one. If McCarthy's efforts were immoral they were immoral regardless of party affiliation; and the church's directed their appeals to America's conscience, not to America's politics.

demise by subtly attacking him in 1953 and directly challenging him in 1954.

Eisenhower's most devastating blow to McCarthy may have been his squelching of a Republican effort to pull the television cameras out of the McCarthy-Army hearings.⁸⁹ McCarthy welcomed the opportunity to prosecute the army in front of a national television audience, but conservative Republicans feared that such widespread exposure would hurt McCarthy more than help him. Eisenhower insisted that McCarthy be given what he wanted and the hearings were televised. Those hearings exposed McCarthy as a bully whose primary weapons were intimidation, innuendo, half-truths and bravado. In a few months he moved from being one of the most feared men in America to being joke fodder for comedians.

Catholics had always been more supportive of McCarthy than mainline Protestants (McCarthy was Catholic), but after the army hearings, even the Catholics doubted him. The Progressive magazine printed a speech given by the Reverend Bernard Sheil, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago. Pamphlets containing the speech (which was titled "The Immorality of McCarthyism) were distributed to Catholics nationwide. Bishop Sheil assailed McCarthy's methods as immoral:

"If anti-Communism is immoral it is not effective. You cannot effectively fight immorality with more immorality... One of the noisiest anti-Communists of recent history was a man named Adolf Hitler. He was not wrong because he

⁸⁹ Buckingham, America, 96.

was anti-communist. He was wrong because he was *immorally* anti-Communist...now is the time to cry out against phony anti-Communism that mocks our way of life, flouts our traditions and democratic procedures, and our sense of fair play." Bishop Sheil then added that if America abandoned its traditions and values to attack communism "then we will be left with our anti-Communism, but very little else."⁹⁰

Republican and Democratic leaders nationwide attacked McCarthy. On March 9, 1954, CBS broadcast a *See It Now* documentary by journalist Edward R. Murrow on McCarthy. Murrow exposed the recklessness and cruelty of McCarthy's investigative techniques. He ended with a call to arms: "This is no time for men who oppose Senator McCarthy's methods to keep silent...The actions of the junior Senator from Wisconsin have caused alarm and dismay among our allies abroad and given considerable comfort to our enemies...He didn't create this situation of fear. He merely exploited it, and rather successfully."⁹¹

On June 17, 1954, Republican senator from Vermont, Ralph Flanders, introduced a resolution demanding that McCarthy be stripped of his Senate chairmanships; this would later change into a resolution of censorship for conduct unbecoming a Senator. In November of 1954 the Democrats regained control of the Senate, thus depriving McCarthy of his chairmanships. On December 2, 1954, the Senate voted 67-22 to condemn McCarthy. McCarthy

⁹⁰ Bernard J. Sheil, "The Immorality of McCarthyism", included in the pamphlet McCarthy and the Communists (pamphlet is a reprint from The Progressive magazine: Madison WI, 1954), 2.

⁹¹ Powers, Not Without, 268.

dropped out of sight politically. On May 2, 1957, McCarthy died of the effects of chronic alcoholism at the age of 48.⁹²

⁹² Buckingham, America, 97-98.

The Dictator of Rome

For many Protestant leaders, American independence and freedom was as threatened by dictators on the right as it was by those on the left. In the eyes of the American Protestant hierarchy, World War II brought down fascism's political leaders but not its spiritual backers. The Pope was accused of being as much a power-hungry dictator as Stalin or Mao. Southern Baptist Home Missions compared communism with the Catholic Church, writing that Catholicism was "the most complete and perfect and powerful totalitarian organization in the world" and that communism was the "most complete, perfect and powerful totalitarian government in the world." The only force strong enough to counter either power and their efforts at world domination was "free Christianity of the free churches of the free people of the free United States of America."¹

The animosity between the Protestants and the Catholics has been a part of the American religious scene since colonial times. This animosity intensified after independence. In the 1820s, many Protestants warned that the Pope was conspiring to take over America. Nativist (anti-immigrant) agitators claimed that Catholic immigrants were sent to the United States by the Pope to overwhelm the Protestants through either democratic means or by force. Once the Catholics took control of the government, they

¹ "Catholic Church and Communism," Southern Baptist Home Missions XXII (October, 1951), 3.

would appoint the Pope as America's political head and would replace the Constitution with Catholic laws.²

Despite such anti-Catholic sentiment, the United States maintained consular representation in the Papal States between 1797 and 1848. From 1848 to 1868 relations became more formal and included the sending of a Minister Resident. In 1867 Congress stopped funding the American mission to the Vatican, declaring that the mission was unnecessary and expensive. Catholic immigration from Italy, Poland and Ireland frightened many native-born Protestants. From 1870 to 1929, the Vatican was a part of Italy and did not regain its political sovereignty until 1929, when the Lateran Treaty established the independent state of Vatican City, with the Pope as the country's political leader.³

To help coordinate assistance to war-time refugees, President Franklin Roosevelt, in 1939, renewed relations with the Vatican by appointing Myron Taylor, the former president of U.S. Steel, to be his personal representative to the Pope. All of the mainline Protestant churches except the Episcopal Church protested the appointment of a representative to the Pope, arguing that it violated the constitutional provision of separation of church and state. Taylor continued as the President Truman's representative to the Pope until 1950, when he had to resign due to poor health. Truman chose not to replace Taylor, but instead proposed that the

² Ray Billington, The Protestant Crusade 1800-1860 (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1938), 118-130.

³ National Council of Churches, Diplomatic Relations With the Vatican (New York: The National Council of Churches, 1951), 6-7

United States and the Vatican exchange embassies. Truman nominated General Mark Clark to be America's first ambassador to the Vatican. This proposal drew fire from all the mainline churches as well as most of the evangelical Christians and even some Jewish organizations. Truman was accused of violating the doctrine of separation of church and state in order to curry favor with Catholic voters in the United States.

President Roosevelt and the state department saw two important reasons for cultivating better relations with the Vatican in 1939. War was threatening to engulf all of Europe, and Roosevelt wanted as many allies there as possible to try and avoid or lessen the intensity of the war. Furthermore, war created refugees that the United States would feel an obligation to help. Secretary of State Cordell Hull recalled that President Roosevelt expressed concern about the large number of Christian and Jews that were likely to become refugees as a result of the war. "I am wondering, therefore if you and I should not begin the consideration," FDR wrote Hull, "*while the war is still on*, of discussing the whole subject with the Vatican and with the Federal Council of Churches."⁴ Coordinating with the Catholic Church on the refugees made sense because four of the countries that were at the heart of the war-- Poland, France, Czechoslovakia and what previously had been Austria--were overwhelmingly Catholic, and Catholic charities had always been among the dominant relief factions in those countries.

⁴ Cordell Hull, "The memoirs of Cordell Hull", The New York Times (February 11, 1948)

In 1938 an international conference on refugees was held in Evian, France. President Roosevelt picked Myron Taylor to be the American representative to that conference. Following the conference, Taylor worked as the head of a committee designed to help Jewish and other refugees. Most of President Roosevelt's communications with Jewish refugee groups went through Taylor (who was an Episcopalian).⁵

President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull, hoping to find a peaceful solution to the European war, and to set up contingencies for the war-time refugees, sought closer lines of communications with all world leaders. Roosevelt appointed Taylor to act as his personal representative to the Pope. Roosevelt declared that Taylor would hold an ambassadorial rank even though he was not an actual ambassador (an appointment of that sort would have required an act of Congress, and it was very unlikely that Congress would agree any such position). Taylor went to Italy at his own expense.⁶

On December 23, 1939, President Roosevelt sent a letter to the Pope asking permission to send a representative to the Vatican:

"...(I)t is well that we encourage a closer association between those in every part of the world--those in religion and those in government--who have a common purpose. I am, therefore, suggesting to Your Holiness that it would give me great satisfaction to send You my personal representa-tive in order that our parallel

⁵ James C. Conway, "Myron C. Taylor's Mission to the Vatican 1940-1950", Church History 44 (March, 1975), 87.

⁶ W.E. Garrison, "Vatican Embassy-A Personal History", The Christian Century (November 14, 1951), 1308

endeavors for peace and the alleviation of suffering may be assisted. When the time shall come for the re-establishment of world peace on a surer foundation, it is of the utmost importance to humanity and to religion that common ideals shall have united expression. Furthermore, when that happy day shall dawn, great problems of practical import will face us all. Millions of people of all races, all nationalities and all religions may seek new lives by migration to other lands or by re-establishment of old homes. Here, too, common ideals call for parallel action. I trust, therefore, that all of the churches of the world which believe in a common God will throw the great weight of their influence into this great cause."⁷

Similar letters appealing for help with the refugee problem were sent to the president of the Federal Council of Churches and the president of the Jewish Theological Seminary in America. After America's entry into the war, Roosevelt insisted that the Taylor mission was more critical than ever as the Vatican made an excellent listening post in the heart of the Axis.

The Pope and the American Catholic community welcomed the president's appointment. To allay any fears that the Protestants might have about the Taylor appointment, the state department issued a press release insisting that the appointment was only for the length of the war and the clean-up process following the war.⁸

The Protestants were divided in their response to the Taylor appointment. The fundamentalists largely took no stand on Taylor. David Settje argues that their silence was actually a reaction to the

⁷ Myron Taylor, Wartime Correspondence Between President Roosevelt and Pope Pius XII (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1947), 19.

⁸ Elizabeth Harrison Wilcox, American Relations With the Vatican: A Chronicle of Responses to Myron Taylor's Mission, 1939-1950 (Masters thesis, Winthrop College, 1979), 26

secular realm in general. "Fundamentalist churches had withdrawn from society and considered it more upstanding to refrain from the evil world of politics."⁹ In the 1930s the fundamentalist sects were probably the least influential of the major Protestant churches.

Of the mainline Protestants, the Episcopal Church was the most supportive of the Taylor appointment. The Episcopal Church traditionally tried to act as a bridge between the Protestant and the Catholic worlds and so was the least hostile to the Catholics. The fact that Taylor was an Episcopalian also brought church support. Nevertheless, the Episcopal Church endorsed the appointment only for the duration of the international crisis and warned that the president needed to make good on his promise to keep the appointment temporary and not use it as a wedge to formal recognition.¹⁰

Presbyterian and Disciples of Christ publications also gave mild endorsements of the Taylor appointment but with the same caveat--that it remain temporary and it be terminated when the emergency in Europe was over. The Congregational and Methodist churches opposed the appointment, but there were ministers within those churches that praised the appointment.¹¹ The Christian

⁹ David Settje, Protestant "Righteous Indignation:" The Roosevelt Vatican Appointment of 1940 (Masters thesis, Kent State University, 1995), 17

¹⁰ Settje, Protestant, 47-48

¹¹ For example the Methodist Bishop of Dallas, Reverend Ivan Holt, for example, called the Taylor appointment a "tremendous power for good." Sister Mary Theophane, The Development of Controversies in the United States Caused by the Taylor Mission to the Vatican (Masters thesis, St. John College of Cleveland, 1949), 28.

Science Monitor remained officially neutral on the issue though its editorial slant leaned in opposition to the appointment.

The strongest opposition to Roosevelt's appointment came from the three major branches of the Baptist Church (Southern, Northern, and National (African-American)), and the Lutherans. The Baptist faith has always been the mainline Protestants most avid defender of maintaining a strict separation between church and state, and they insisted that a representative between the president and a religious leader (the Pope) directly violated that doctrine. Many Lutherans opposed all American involvement in European affairs because they knew that if America again (as in World War I) sided with any European power, they would come to the aid of Great Britain. Most American Lutherans still had emotional ties to their German or Scandinavian heritage; and Germany, Finland, and Denmark were all at war with Britain. Neither the Baptists nor the Lutherans would ever show any support for Taylor or a Vatican appointment.

The mainline Protestants had a deeper motive for opposing all Vatican ties, however. Since World War I, the Protestant churches had been losing members. A religious depression affected the mainline, and they used the Taylor mission and the perceived Catholic threat as a crisis around which they could rally their congregations. People tend to close ranks in times of danger, and, if the Pope could be portrayed as a threat to America, the Protestant members might again seek shelter in the church.¹²

¹² Settje, Protestant, 17.

Of the Protestant publications, the Christian Century was the most consistent in opposing the Taylor mission. The executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches spent several months deliberating before also coming out in cautious opposition to Taylor's mission: "If we would safeguard our heritage we must be vigilant against every encroachment upon it. That is the valid ground for concern over the possible establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican."¹³

The fall of France and America's subsequent entry into the war muted, but never ended, the protests against the Taylor mission. The Christian Century still led the opposition to Roosevelt's Vatican representative . By the war's end, only the Episcopal Church (among the mainline Protestant Churches) expressed continued support for Taylor and his work in Italy. All of the other churches reminded the administration that the mission to the Pope was supposed to be for the duration of the emergency only. The Protestant leaders feared that if the Pope and the president became too used to the presidential envoy that it would become permanent. In 1945 even the Episcopal leadership publicly wondered if the Taylor mission was creating more bad feelings than it was worth.

Shortly after President Roosevelt's death, acting Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew recommended to President Truman that the

¹³ By 1944 the Council was much more adamant in its opposition to the Taylor mission. "...we are firmly opposed to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican...A continuing official connection between our government and the Vatican would also have the unfortunate effect of encouraging the Un-American policy of a union of Church and State." What the Record Shows: 1939-1951, (unpublished document circulated among Protestant leaders), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 1-2

Taylor mission be terminated. His reasoning was that Protestant opposition to the mission "may be expected to increase when United States representation to the Vatican can no longer be justified as a war time measure."¹⁴ Five days after taking office, however, Truman issued a statement reconfirming Taylor's position as the presidential representative to the Holy See. The president justified the extension because of the chaos and destruction in postwar Europe. Truman reminded the Protestants that the primary reason Taylor was sent to Europe was to deal with the refugee situation and at no time had there been more of a refugee problem than there was in 1945.

The Christian Century led the charge against the reappointment, calling on Protestant America to make a stand against an alleged violation of the constitution. One article called Taylor's reappointment an example of the camel's nose approach to diplomacy. Roosevelt appointed Taylor to be Franklin Roosevelt's representative to the Pope, but Truman was appointing Taylor to be the representative of the president. Taylor no longer represented the man but the office, and thus the people of the United States. Relations with the Vatican were slowly being formalized.¹⁵

Protestant opponents, neutrals and even some Catholics claimed that Taylor's mission was being continued because of pressure put on Truman by Cardinal Francis Joseph Spellman of New York. Truman and Spellman both insisted that such was not

¹⁴ Gerald P. Fogarty, Pro Fide et Iustitia, ed. Harold Schambeck, (Berlin: Duncker and Humblet, 1984), 386.

¹⁵ Wilcox, American, 96-97

the case, but the rumors persisted. Truman tried to quiet the protest by also asking Taylor to visit other religious leaders when he was in Europe visiting the Pope, but this action did nothing to satisfy the Protestants and instead the action irritated the Pope.¹⁶

Letters, editorials, and sermons discussing the necessity of maintaining church-state separation were the main Protestant modes of protest. Truman's public response to the criticism was continual reminders that Taylor's mission was indeed still temporary. On June 5, 1946, a delegation of Protestant leaders, led by Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, visited the White House. The president listened to the delegations concerns about the Taylor appointment before responding, "I inherited this thing. I would not have done it this way."¹⁷ Truman and the Protestant leaders tried to work out a compromise on the Taylor issue. Truman promised to end the Taylor assignment as soon as the peace with Germany was finalized (he estimated that the final peace would be achieved within 60 to 90 days). The Protestant leaders suggested that so long as Taylor remained as a special representative to the president that his duties be expanded, that he be designated as the president's representative to all religious leaders, dealing with each religion on equal terms. Truman offered to consider the proposal and then thanked the church leaders for their interest and input.¹⁸

On June 14, 1946, Truman announced that he was eliminating the post of special representative to the Vatican. Relations between

¹⁶ Fogarty, *Pro Fide*, 586

¹⁷ Garrison, "The Vatican", 1308-10.

¹⁸ Garrison, "The Vatican", 1309

the United States and the Soviet Union were rapidly deteriorating in 1946 as the Soviets tightened their grip on Eastern Europe. In September of 1946 the president directed Taylor to resume his position as special representative to the Vatican. Truman stated that in a period of such tension between the two superpowers the United States needed to cultivate as many allies as possible, particularly those in Europe; the United States could not afford to distance itself from the Vatican at that critical period. There is no indication that Truman knew he was going to reassign Taylor when he originally terminated the mission.¹⁹ The most likely reason for Truman's policy change was the strength of the Italian Communist Party. Washington was concerned that Italy would elect a communist government, and Truman wanted as much information and assistance as possible to prevent that from occurring.

The Taylor reassignment infuriated the Protestants who felt betrayed. Seven of the mainline denominations drafted resolutions opposing any appointment to the Vatican.²⁰ A set of resolutions

¹⁹ Ralph W. Hovis Jr., The Myron Taylor Mission to the Vatican, 1939 to 1948 (Masters thesis, Stanford University, 1949), 124-26

²⁰ The Episcopal Church was the only mainline church that remained supportive of the Taylor mission. In 1947 a church editorial decried the "frantic protests of Protestant Church leaders against the special representation of this country at the Vatican." The Episcopal Church's championing of the Taylor mission probably extends beyond just providing support for one of its own church members. The Episcopal Church's ties to the Anglican Church and the Archbishop of Canterbury as well as the church's largely Anglo-American membership has made the Episcopal church one of Great Britain's primary advocates in the United States (much like the Lutheran Church's support for Germany). In the Twentieth Century, when the United Kingdom's survival has been threatened, the Episcopal Church (even in the 1930's) has been the least isolationist of the mainline Protestants. The Episcopal Church did, however, include a caveat in their support for Taylor. "If President Truman finds it (the Taylor mission) similarly helpful we see no reason why it should not be continued, so long as

against the appointment was drafted to be introduced in the U.S. Senate, and an organization called the Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (POAU) was formed to coordinate efforts to fight Truman's Vatican policies.²¹

The POAU was formed by John Mackay, president of the Princeton Theological Seminary; Reverend Edwin McNeill Poteat, president of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School; Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, leader in the Methodist Church; Reverend Louie D. Newton, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and Charles Clayton Morrison, former editor of the Christian Century. The idea for POAU began in 1941, when religious leaders had met together to discuss the Taylor mission. No formal organization was set up in 1941, but a commission was appointed to "keep alive public concern with separation of church and state, and plan an organization that would function in that direction." When the POAU was officially formed in

it is kept on the basis of a secular diplomatic mission, without ecclesiastical implications." "Mission to the Vatican", The Living Church 114, no. 23 (June 8, 1947), 14-15

²¹ "Protest", Time 47, no. 24 (June 17, 1946); The Northern Baptist Convention in 1947 included a resolution in its annual report that stated: "We believe the continued relationship of the United States government to the head of a church, as in the case of Myron C. Taylor...is a violation of the principle of the separation of the separation of church and state as expressed in the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution; and Whereas, The Roman Catholic Church continues to seek political power within the nations of the world, and wherever it has secured political dominance there has been a curtailment of religious freedom and democratic rights and privileges; therefore, be it resolved, That we take immediate action through proper channels of Congress to effect the termination of Myron C. Taylor's mission to the Vatican." The resolution also urged the United states government to discontinue any and all diplomatic ties with the Pope. Northern Baptist Convention, Report of Committee on Resolutions (New York: Northern Baptist Convention, 1947), 7; "Recommended Resolution to be Offered," Baptist and Reflector (September 30, 1948), 4. Similar resolutions appeared in each years list of resolutions until Taylor's resignation in 1950.

1948 its stated goals were the ending of the Taylor mission, passing laws that would prevent the government from giving money to church schools, and resisting any law that would widen the breach in the wall that separated church and state. The POAU manifesto insisted that its position "cannot be justly characterized as anti-Catholic, or as motivated by anti-Catholic animus...Profound differences separate us in the area of religious faith, but these differences have no relevancy in the pursuit of our objectives...The issue of separation of church and state has arisen in the political arena, and we propose to meet it there."²²

In 1947 another Protestant delegation met with President Truman, and the president reaffirmed his intention to recall Taylor at the earliest possible time. He added, however, "I cannot bring myself at this time and in the midst of world confusion, to either terminate the mission or to change its essential character."²³

The Protestant leadership determined to make the Taylor issue a part of the 1948 presidential campaign. Of the four presidential candidates, only Progressive Party candidate Henry Wallace publicly opposed the Taylor mission; President Truman supported it, and States Rights candidate Strom Thurmond and Republican Thomas Dewey (at first) were non-committal. Neither major party took a stand on the issue, but the Protestant press editorialized that the Catholic Church was rapidly taking control of one of the major political parties, which they intended to use as a

²²Luke Eugene Ebersol, Church Lobbying in the Nation's Capital, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), 67

²³ "What the Record", Joseph Dawson Papers, 4.

springboard to take control of the government, change the constitution, and eliminate other political parties. This unsubtle endorsement of the Republican Party was accompanied by statements from prominent Protestants like Joseph Dawson, who warned that the Catholics and the big-city machines (usually one in the same) dominated of the Democratic Party's hierarchy and controlled its nominating process.²⁴

Following World War II, the American Catholic Church remained largely silent on the Taylor mission. There were a few editorials supporting the Taylor mission, but the only dramatic show of Catholic support came from Cardinal Spellman in 1946. Spellman responded to a speech given by Oxnham that condemned Taylor's presence in Rome. "Bigotry thrives on ignorance," the Cardinal responded, "and even intelligent people can be bigoted if they are not informed...What reason have these men of religion to make such demands of the President? Is it anti-Catholicism of unhooded Klansmen sowing the seeds of disunion within our treasured nation?...Only the absence of good will can misrepresent Mr. Taylor's presence (at the Vatican)."²⁵

²⁴ In this assertion the Protestant leadership may have been basing their assertions more on stereotypes and Nineteenth Century history than on 1940's America. While it was true that several Irish dominated machines still wielded a great deal of influence in some American cities (for example Boston and Chicago) and within the national Democratic Party (Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley would control a significant bloc of Democratic Party delegates until the 1972 convention), the day of the Irish-Catholic control of the big cities had passed with the death of organizations like New York City's Tammany Hall. Dorsey Milam Deaton, The Protestant Crisis: Truman's Vatican Ambassador Controversy of 1951 (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1970), 121-22

²⁵ "Big Guns", Time 47, no. 25 (June 24, 1946), 56

In January, 1950 Taylor submitted his resignation to President Truman. Taylor was in his late seventies, and given his poor health, the resignation was not unexpected. Protestants uttered kind words for his dedicated, albeit misdirected, service; but there was general jubilation that his mission to Vatican was at an end. Two final controversies surrounded his resignation. On January 2, 1950, a picture of Taylor kneeling at the feet of the Pope appeared in papers nationwide. Protestant publications printed copies of the picture and urged members to send copies of the picture along with strongly worded protests to the president.²⁶ At the same time, Taylor did not warn the Pope about his resignation. The Vatican was irritated at being left out of the decision-making loop and informed Truman that a replacement for Taylor would be unacceptable. Relations between the two nations had grown to the point where only a formal and permanent diplomatic exchange would be appropriate.²⁷ Against the advice of Secretary of State Dean Acheson (who, for reasons that are unclear, opposed recognizing the Vatican), Truman sent a letter to the Pope agreeing that it was time for the two nations to exchange embassies. Acheson did manage to convince Truman to postpone his proposal for awhile, and for a year and a half Truman's embassy plans remained on the back burner.²⁸

²⁶ "Myron Taylor Kneels to the Pope," Arkansas Baptist, (March 9, 1950), 7; Also a handbill entitled "Myron Taylor Kneels Before the Pope" is in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

²⁷ Deaton, The Protestant, 127-28

²⁸ Deaton, The Protestant, 127-28

On October 21, 1951, President Truman officially submitted a funding request for a Vatican embassy to the Senate. The White House nominated General Mark Clark to be America's first ambassador. The White House concluded its embassy proposal by stating, "It is well known that the Vatican is vigorously engaged in the struggle against Communism. Direct diplomatic relations will assist in coordinating the effort to combat the Communist menace."²⁹ The appointment was made a few hours before the Senate recessed for its Christmas break, ensuring that there could be no official action on the confirmation until January, 1952.

Some have surmised that Truman made the appointment while the Senate was in recess so that he could put Clark in as an interim ambassador to the Vatican while he was waiting official confirmation. It would have been more difficult for the Senate to recall Clark than to refuse to send him. If this was Truman's plan, it was killed by General Clark. In order to be appointed to a civilian position either Clark would have to resign from the military, or Congress would have to grant Clark a waiver as they had done when General Walter Bedell Smith and Vice-Admiral Alan Kirk had been named as ambassadors to the Soviet Union. There was not time to get such a waiver through Congress, and so the state department instructed Clark to submit his application for retirement from the military, Clark refused, thus ending any hope of an interim appointment.³⁰

²⁹ "Undiplomatic Appointment," Time 58 (October 29, 1951)

³⁰ Deaton, The Protestant, 216.

A second explanation for the timing of Truman's appointment was that the president was trying to put Congress on the spot. The president was already feeling heat from the Protestants because of the Taylor mission; by giving the appointment to the Senate he put Congress, and especially potential presidential rivals (like Senator Robert Taft, the likely Republican candidate for president) in the uncomfortable position of having to take a stand. Catholic voters carried a lot of weight in many key northern states, and the senators would have to decide which voter bloc they were willing to offend, Protestant or Catholic. A final reason proposed for the timing of the nomination was that Truman hoped the initial fury over the appointment would peak and subside over the holiday, so that by January the nomination would be a non-issue. Even more important, the furor over the nomination would develop well in advance of the presidential primary season so that angry Protestants would have time to cool off before going to the polls.³¹

The Protestant response was quick and loud. All of the major faiths registered strong opposition to the appointment.³² The

³¹ "The Vatican Appointment: A Second Look," The Nation 174, no. 1 (January 12, 1952), 25.

³² Even the Episcopalians attacked the president. Immediately after the appointment the church was cautiously supportive, at least in part because Clark was an Episcopalian. The appointment was described as "unwise, and certainly it was poorly timed. But we don't think that recognition of the Vatican of the Vatican means a surrender to the Roman Catholic Church, or that it jeopardizes the American doctrine of separation of Church and State. It may even serve to clarify that doctrine." Editorial, "Recognition of the Vatican," The Living Church 123, no. 19 (November 4, 1951), 11. But by December the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church released a statement that said the church "oppose(s) vigorously the confirmation of President Truman's nomination of an ambassador to the Vatican." The church justified the decision on the issues of separation of church and state, the stirring up of religious controversy and ill-will, and the fear that the

national church headquarters flooded their local congregations with resolutions, editorials, and directions to the faithful as to how to best fight the nomination. The POAU and most of the mainline churches sent letters to all 96 senators and to some members of the House. Sermons against the appointment were common over the holidays, and pamphlets attacking the appointment were widely distributed by the members.

Most American Catholics kept quiet about the appointment, but that did not mean that they were opposed to opening an American embassy in the Vatican. A Gallup poll indicated that Catholics supported the appointment by a ratio of 3.5 to 1. Protestants, on the other hand, opposed the nomination by a 3 to 1 margin.³³ The low-key Catholic response was no doubt due to fear of arousing bigotry and intolerance towards the Catholics.

Commonweal described the situation as "open season for Catholic baiting with scatter-shooting...the order of the day."³⁴

The Protestant letter writing campaign was successful. Over 100,000 letters, the largest number to that time on a single subject, deluged the White House; nearly all the letters opposed the nomination. (Approximately one letter of support for every fifteen of opposition.) President Truman downplayed the furor by stating that the negative reaction was not as strong as he expected, but that

Pope was exerting too much influence in American policy-making. "Vatican Ambassador," The Living Church 123, no. 26, (December 23, 1951), 8.

³³ Dayton McKean, "The State, the Church, and the Lobby," Religious Perspectives in American Culture, V.2, eds. James Ward Smith and A. Leland Jamison (Princeton, 1961), pp. 146-49

³⁴Deaton, The Protestant, 419

statement only spurred the Protestants further.³⁵ The Senate Foreign Relations Committee received over 50,000 letters with scarcely 50 in support of the nomination.³⁶

The opposition to Clark's appointment involved more than just religious objections. Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Tom Connally blamed Clark for the loss of a Texas Reserve unit that was sent into a brutal and useless assault against the Germans in Italy during World War II. Truman refused to back down and withdraw the nomination.³⁷ In January 1952, prior to the start of the Senate

³⁵ Robert E. Van Deusen, Division of Public Relations, National Lutheran Council, Washington Memorandum 5, no. 10 (November 1, 1951), 1, The Presbyterian Church Archives, Philadelphia, PA; Merlin Gustafson, "Religion and Politics in the Truman Administration," Rocky Mountain Science Journal 3 (1966), 129

³⁶ "Truman and the Vatican," New Republic 126, no. 3 (January 21, 1952), 7; "Appointments: Volume vs. Vatican," Newsweek 39, no. 4 (January 28, 1952), 24-26; The Southern Baptist Church was one of the churches that sent letters to all the members of the Senate and the House urging them to vote against the nomination. Most of the members of Congress responded to the Baptist letter by either agreeing with the letter or saying that the embassy question needed more time to be evaluated. Only one letter, from Congressman Zablocki of Wisconsin, expressed any support for the president's nomination. Copies of all of the letters are located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN

³⁷ Truman, a Southern Baptist, could not even attend church without being lobbied. Truman's minister, Edward Hughes Pruden of the Washington D.C. First Baptist Church, published a pamphlet entitled Why We Oppose Diplomatic Relations With the Vatican. Pruden frequently quoted from that pamphlet when Truman was in attendance. Truman stopped attending services at First Baptist claiming that "My preacher and I have had a fight." Pruden, however, claimed that the reason for Truman's inattendance was secret service concerns about assassination threats against the president made by Puerto Rican nationalists. Pruden and Oxnam visited Truman in the White House to lobby against the Clark appointment. The two churchmen threatened to "take steps which are repugnant to (us) in order to protect our American customs and insure our own liberty." Truman was not intimidated by all the threats and protests nor was he unwilling to return fire for fire. He directed his most bitter remarks at those "bigoted, knot-headed Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists" that were "stirred up against the Catholics." Edward H. Pruden, Why We Oppose the Vatican, (pamphlet taken from an address given on Oct. 28, 1951: Washington D.C.), the pamphlet is located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives,

hearings, Clark removed his name from consideration. Connally's opposition and the public outcry convinced Clark that the nomination was not worth the cost, especially since it was becoming quite likely that he would never be confirmed. Truman vowed to continue the fight for formal relations with the Vatican but the issue was not brought before the Senate until 1984 under President Reagan.

For many Protestant leaders the threat posed by the Vatican was genuine and frightening. Catholics were the single largest denomination in the United States, and due to higher birth rates and European immigration their numbers were growing faster than those of the mainline Protestants. Evidence of Catholic power was everywhere. Catholic secondary schools were receiving more and more financial assistance from the government (which was another significant issue for the POAU). Some Protestants still blamed the Catholics for the failure of Prohibition. Catholic politicians dominated many of the big city political machines. And during the post-war period one of the most influential and well-known American politicians was a Catholic, Joseph McCarthy.³⁸

Conspiracy theories about the Catholics circulated frequently within the Protestant community. United Evangelical Action

Nashville, TN; "Truman's Vatican Move", Independence Examiner (January 12, 1984), 14; Philip E. Jenks, "Mr. Truman and the Baptist," The American Baptist, (August, 1984); Davis, Harry Truman, 16.

³⁸ The Protestant media insisted that it was no coincidence that McCarthy, the most well-known source of American intolerance in the early cold war period, was also Catholic. The Catholic Church, in the eyes of many church leaders, was the leader in worldwide conformity and intolerance. A. Roger Davis, Harry Truman and Vatican Relations 1945-1952 (Masters thesis, Southwest Missouri State University, 1988), 14-15

claimed that the Catholic hierarchy had a grand scheme that they were implementing to conquer the world. The editor of Southern Baptist Home Missions also warned of a Papal conspiracy to govern the planet and insisted that the world was already in great danger of succumbing to the plot.³⁹ The editor of the Baptist Standard warned that America was the first target in the Catholic plot for world domination because Europe had become privy to the Catholic plans and was rejecting the church. Having failed to dominate Europe, the Vatican hoped to begin again in North America. With his base in the New World, the Pope would be able to take over the world.⁴⁰

Protestant publications vacillated as to which power, the Vatican or Moscow, was the greatest threat to American democracy. The editor of the Baptist Standard distrusted the Catholics far more than the communists. He insisted that Roman ecclesiasticism comprised the "only and ultimate threat to the liberties of America." No hand could "choke and strangle like the soft, suave hand that holds the crucifix."⁴¹ Other editorials insisted that the Catholic Church was an "absolute dictatorship" unsurpassed in world history. "If ever there were a dictator the Pope certainly is one; and there is no such thing as religious freedom wherever the Roman Catholic

³⁹ Marcus Cato (pseud.), "Global Strategy of the Pope in Rome," United Evangelical Action XI (March 15, 1952), 21, 50; "A Threatened Danger," Southern Baptist Home Missions XVII (June, 1946), 3

⁴⁰ For more citations of the Papal plot for world domination see Macel D. Ezell, The Evangelical Protestant Defense of Americanism 1945-1960 (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 1969), 66-69.

⁴¹ "Pastor Sounds Warning," Baptist Standard LXI (September 22, 1949), 4

church is in authority."⁴² As part of his coronation, Protestant magazines noted, the Pope was appointed the "Ruler of the World". Many Protestants insisted that the Pope took that title literally.⁴³

Denominational leaders and councils avoided the more histrionic attacks against the Catholics, but they did occasionally warn against "clerical totalitarianism." Moreover, they decried the suppression of human liberties by all dictators, be they Soviet or Papal.⁴⁴ But the Protestant leaders did not seem as worried about Papal plots for world domination as about the blurring of the line that separated church and state in America. "The colonies were founded largely by men and women seeking refuge from religious persecutions of one kind or another in Europe," said Dr. Harold Bosley of the First Methodist Church. "Even though commercial and political motives had their influence in the formation of large colonial companies, great bodies of immigrants in the early colonial period were willing to come because of religious oppression in their homeland."⁴⁵ Puritans, Anglicans, Quakers, Lutherans, Presbyterians and others settled in America to escape religious persecution in the old world. American churches were unique in the Christian world in that they had to support their congregations and their work through the voluntary contributions of their

⁴² Ezell, The Evangelical, 104-106; also an undated, untitled memo found in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Box 10, File 14. Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN

⁴³ Ezell, The Evangelical, 97-98

⁴⁴ Religious News Service, "Baptists Deplore Truman Exchange," Religious Herald (September 11, 1947), 3; "Baptists Voice Opposition to the U.S.-Vatican City Alliance," The Baptist Record 27, no. 37 (September 11, 1947), 1

⁴⁵ Dr. Harold A. Bosley, "Should the United States Have an Ambassador at the Vatican?", The First Church Pulpit-the First Methodist Church XI, no. 7, p. 16

members, not through government subsidies. From the time of the American Revolution no church had a government imposed monopoly but were always forced to compete with other denominations. The Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Episcopal Churches had enjoyed state-imposed dominance in Europe but sacrificed their favored-church status for what they said was a higher goal--peace and freedom. "The Roman Catholic Church alone has refused to move in this direction," proclaimed Dr. Harold Bosley.⁴⁶ The Catholic Church had enjoyed 1500 years of favored church status in Europe and they wanted the same in America.

The Catholic Church fed this fear with occasional church-state unification pronouncements. The April, 1948, issue of the Vatican publication La Civiltà Cattolica stated: "The Roman Catholic Church, convinced through its divine prerogatives of being the only true church, must demand the right of freedom for herself alone."⁴⁷ Protestant leaders quoted a Papal Encyclical given by Pope Leo XIII in 1885 and later adopted by the Catholic Church as canon law. This encyclical declared, "that the State must not only have a care for religion, but must recognize the *true religion*." American Catholic leaders interpreted the Encyclical to mean that "there exists only one true religion, Catholicism, the Catholic Church must establish itself as the state church of the United States of America." The interpretation by the American Catholic hierarchy further offended American Protestants by pointing out that the Pope

⁴⁶ Bosley, "Should the", 18

⁴⁷ "Religious Liberties Endangered," Western Recorder (March 30, 1950), 16

specifically condemned the American doctrine of church-state separation.⁴⁸

In the 1940s every mainline Protestant Church reiterated its support for church-state separation and called for vigilance in fighting any organization that opposed that policy. A 1940 pronouncement from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church pronounced, "this General Assembly requests that the President of the United States terminate at the earliest possible date the unconstitutional relations established between our government and the Vatican by the recent personal appointment of a representative with the rank of ambassador."⁴⁹

To achieve the termination of the Taylor mission, religious leaders representing the Northern Baptist Convention, the United Lutheran Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America had met on several occasions with Taylor to urge him to resign or to expand his mission to become the president's representative to all religions so that the Catholics did not get special treatment. Taylor refused to resign and

⁴⁸ Bosley, "Should the", 14-15

⁴⁹ The Myron Taylor mission and the church-state separation issue always got linked together. The Presbyterians continued to issue pronouncements of this kind throughout the 1940's. In 1947 they stated "This Committee reiterates the pronouncements of the Presbyterian Church regarding the personal representative of the President of the United States at the Vatican. The presence of such an official we regard as encouraging the unconstitutional adherence of Church to State. We consider the presence of such a diplomat unwarranted and unnecessary and call again for his immediate and permanent recall." Statements were taken from the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. official pronouncements which are found in the Board of Christian Education Files, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. archives, Philadelphia, PA.

deferred suggestions of changing the scope of his mission to the president, although he did express concern about taking on the added responsibility of being a liaison to all churches.⁵⁰

Presidents Roosevelt and Truman undoubtedly lost votes among the Protestants because of their work for closer U.S.-Vatican relations. The two men claimed they pursued that policy in order to further the United States' foreign policy goals. Like Roosevelt, Truman claimed that a connection with the Vatican was necessary to help with the refugee effort. He further justified the connection by claiming that the Vatican had access to secret information worldwide through its extensive political and religious connections, making it an important ally in the fight against communism.

The Protestant press and leadership claimed that the Vatican's value as a source of secret information was grossly overrated. The religious press reported that even at the height of the war the Vatican gained much more of its knowledge about world events from the media than from its own sources; following the war, the Vatican's access to enemy information was even more limited due to its few contacts inside the Soviet Union. The media also reported that what little original information the Vatican acquired was largely church-related and thus of little value to the United States. Finally, several Protestant journals argued that if the Pope was an ally against communism he could pass along critical information to America through the U.S. embassy in Rome which

⁵⁰ "Meeting of Protestant Clergymen With Myron C. Taylor at Union Club, Monday, October 20, 1947," Papers of Myron C. Taylor, Papers located at the Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO.

was less than six miles from St. Peter's. The media seriously doubted the value of an "ally" who would only provide information upon an exchange of embassies.⁵¹

The Protestant media further contended that a Vatican embassy could provide more information to America's enemies than it acquired about them. Their reasoning was that the Pope would expect information from American intelligence in return for whatever information the Vatican sources could gather. During World War II, the U.S. shared information with the Vatican through the Taylor mission, and some of that information was given by the Vatican to the Nazis. German diplomat Otto Abetz stated that the Vatican tipped off Germany about the invasion of North Africa.⁵²

One issue that was not in dispute was that the Vatican was committed to the fight against communism. Catholic declarations made it clear that the Catholic-communist animosity was genuine. What was questioned was whether the United States and the Vatican disliked the communists for the same reasons. The Southern Baptist Executive Committee chair explained the differences this way: "Baptists oppose the Communists because the

⁵¹ The actual value of the Vatican as a source of information is still in doubt. The Catholic American leadership frequently played up the availability of information through the Catholic Church's extensive connections but there's been little hard evidence to show that this information had much practical value for the United States. Loraine Boettner, An Open Letter to President Truman Regarding the Nomination of an American Ambassador to the Vatican, (Pamphlet published by the author and the Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, 1951), the pamphlet is located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 3-4.

⁵² Joseph M. Dawson, "The Battle for America" The Issue: An Ambassador to the Vatican (Pamphlet published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board: Nashville, TN, 1951), The pamphlet is located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 10

Communists deny religious liberty; Catholics oppose the Communists because the Russian government denies clerical control and church partnership. The Baptists do not believe in partnership of the church with the state. They are, therefore, strongly set against President Truman's maintaining an official representative at the Vatican...Baptists refuse to be pushed into the camp of totalitarian Roman Catholicism as the only alternative to Communism."⁵³

The Protestant press asserted that the Pope's search for allies and his hatred of communism had increased after the war because of his fear of losing his home base of Italy to the communists. It is accurate that the Catholic Church actively worked to keep Italy from electing a communist government. Since 1870 the Vatican had relied on the tolerance and support of the Italian government. Church support helped keep the Christian Democrats in power, but following the war the Italian Communist Party put up a strong fight for control of the government. If the government was to actually pass into the hands of the communists, the Vatican's power to act

⁵³ "Baptists, the Catholics and Communism," The Clayton Street Baptist (November 29, 1945, Montgomery AL), 2; The POAU sent letters to American officials warning them of the danger of an alliance with the Pope. A letter to Assistant Secretary for United Nations Affairs John Hickerson stated that "We seek in every way we can to resist the Communist materialistic philosophy and combat its atheism. This does not mean, however, that our case against Communism is identical with that of Roman Catholicism, because their fight against Communism is complicated with Vatican assertions of political control, land monopolies, and a system of church schools supported by government funds. Of course we have no part whatsoever in such interests. This makes it exceedingly difficult for Protestant people to rally to the relief of our Roman Catholic brethren in their struggles with Communism, even though we are as strongly opposed to Communism as they are, but not exactly for the same reasons..." Protestants and Other Americans United to Assistant Secretary John Hickerson, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 1

independently in Italy would be in question. Some even suggested that he would not even be able to stay in Italy at all.⁵⁴

The Communist Party in Italy so worried the Pope that the church urged all Catholics and the friends of Catholics to do whatever was necessary to keep the communists out of power. The Cardinal of Milan directed all Catholic clergy to refuse absolution to communists. The Catholic efforts were successful in that the communists never took power in Italy, but the American Protestants claimed that it was not the Catholics but U.S. aid under the Marshall Plan that really staved off the communists, aid, the Protestants complained, that the Vatican took credit for.⁵⁵

Furthermore, the Protestant leadership argued, the Pope was not really very good at fighting communism. The sending of a representative to Rome "is a blundering policy for combating communism as Protestant countries throughout the world are making the most effective stand against communism. The best way to lose the battle against a totalitarian state is for free countries to form a coalition with the Pope under a totalitarian church."⁵⁶

To some Protestants, the Catholics were in fact the greatest recruitment tool available to the communists. A confidential memo circulated among the POAU leadership asserted the following.

⁵⁴ Owen Chadwick, The Christian Church in the Cold War, (London: Penguin Press, 1992), 15

⁵⁵ Chadwick, The Christian Church..., 15; Religious News, "Baptists Deplore", 3

⁵⁶ "An Ambassador to the Vatican," Gulf Coast Baptist (no publication date was listed), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN), 4

"People in all Catholic countries of Europe had long ceased to look to Christianity, as they knew it, to satisfy either their spiritual or material needs. While Fascism's iron grip was broken, the people turned to Communism again for both spiritual and material comfort. The same would happen in Spain and Portugal should Franco and Salzar (sic) go the way of Hitler and Mussolini. It would seem that Christianity in those countries had become so corrupt that not even Satan could use it any longer as a means of deception."⁵⁷

The next piece of evidence mentioned by the Protestant press in support of their claim that the Catholics were ineffective at fighting communism was the postwar expansion of the European Communist parties. Communism made its greatest, freely earned, gains in those countries where Catholicism dominated--Italy and France, and even in some countries where they did not dominate, such as China. Some claimed that corrupt Catholics in and near the Chinese government alienated the Chinese, causing them to ally with the communists. Protestant countries were far more successful in fighting communism than were the Catholic ones the argument continued. Scandinavia, Holland, Canada, England, Australia, and the United States "have demonstrated the fact that the best way to resist Communism is with the weapons of freedom."⁵⁸ Christianity and Crisis editorialized, "How much more effective land reform in Italy would be than excommunications!

⁵⁷ POAU Memo, "Christianity and Communism," Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 1

⁵⁸ Dawson, An Ambassador, 9-10

Though fiercely anti-Communist, Catholicism has proved less effective than Protestantism as an antidote to Communism."⁵⁹

Protestants even insisted that fascism and Catholicism had been close allies with similar goals. They pointed out that Pius XI commended Mussolini as "The man sent by God." The Pope received and blessed both Italian and German troops during the war. Vatican support was a major factor in Franco's victory in Spain and continued to provide critical support to Franco following the war. And it was the Vatican concordat with Hitler that gave the dictator his first significant foreign policy triumph, one that dramatically increased his stature.⁶⁰ Some Protestants claimed that in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Austria, the Catholic Church provided key assistance to the Nazi's in their path to power.

⁵⁹ "The Vatican Appointment", Christianity and Crisis XI, no. 20 (November 26, 1951), 153; The most noteworthy success in holding back communist expansion was the highly Protestant country of Finland. Protestant Minister Claude Broach wrote: "There, right under the eyebrow of the Russian bear, the Communist party can't make an inch of headway in the Finnish Parliament" while in Catholic Italy the communists were being held back by only the barest of margins. Rev. Claude U. Broach, "Sweet Land of Liberty" (Charlotte, NC: The Friends of Religious Liberty, 1951), pamphlet is located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 6. Even the Catholic media began questioning their church's direction relative to the containment of communism. The Commonweal, A Catholic publication, editorialized that "for many people, sterile anti-Communism has become the hall-mark of Catholicism...In many minds anti-Communism is actually a synonym for Catholic action. It should give us pause that as men in their desperate need have stretched out their hands for life-giving bread, we Christians have been offering them the dead stone of anti-Communism." The Commonweal (October 12, 1951, as quoted in "The Vatican, Christianity, 154)

⁶⁰ Lloyd W. Taylor, "Some Implications of the U.S. Representation at the Vatican," The Oberlin Times (August 15, 1946), 2; The American Protestant Defense League, "Romanism Blast Communism", The American Protest (pamphlet published by the American Protestant Defense League, 1950), Joseph Dawson Files, Southern Baptist Conventions Archives, Nashville, TN, 5

Catholic Priests and Cardinals were accused of aiding the round up of thousands of Jews, Protestants and dissidents.⁶¹

Protestants insisted that Catholic aid to fascism stretched to America as well. They quoted public opinion polls of the late 1930s to show that American Catholics were more opposed to U.S. involvement in the League of Nations and were more opposed to providing military assistance to the allies than were either Protestants or the Jews. American Roman Catholics were also the most likely to compromise with the Axis in an effort to avoid war. It was argued that the Catholics were willing to use whatever delaying tactics they could to keep America out of the war in Europe until the Axis had completed its conquest. Two-thirds of the Catholics, when asked in 1939 if they preferred fascism or communism, chose fascism. In contrast only two-fifths of the Protestants chose fascism.⁶²

It is true that public opinion polls consistently showed the Catholics as the most isolationist group in America. Following the fall of France, Catholics remained the least inclined of all major American religious groups to support increased U.S. involvement in the war, such as lend-lease aid to Britain and Russia. After the war, the Catholics were the most militantly internationalist group of the major religions. Catholics were the most opposed to any compromise with the Soviet Union and most insistent that the

⁶¹ Alfred O. Hero Jr., American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank and File Opinion, 1937-1969 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1973), 21-24, 41-42, 70-71

⁶² Hero, American, 21-24, 41-42, 70-71

United States should take a firmer stance to counter the Soviets. The polls showed the Catholics were more willing to use war or the threat of war as a way to contain the communists. Not surprisingly, the Catholics were also much more supportive of a U.S. embassy in the Vatican than were either the Protestants or the Jews.⁶³

The Protestant media almost unanimously insisted that in truth communism had very little to do with Truman's (or Roosevelt's) decision to expand relations with the Vatican; the real motivation behind the decision was politics. There were between twenty and forty million Catholics living in the United States. Although the Protestants made up the majority of the electorate, the Catholics held the balance of power in several key northern and midwestern states. In December 1951, the Division of Public Relations of the National Lutheran Council explained Truman's proposal for an exchange of embassies with the Vatican in the following way. Catholics composed 44 percent of Boston's electorate was Catholic, 41% in Chicago, 30% in Milwaukee, 28% in Detroit, 27% in New York, 26% in Philadelphia, 25% in Cleveland, 21% in St. Louis, and 18% in Los Angeles. "The nine states in which these cities are located, plus the 'solid South'," explained the Lutheran Council, "would provide enough electoral votes to win an election, no matter how the other states voted."⁶⁴ The theory was that Truman expected the Northern Protestants to split between the two parties.

⁶³ Hero, American, 21-24, 41-42, 70-71

⁶⁴ Robert E. Van Deusen/Division of Public Relations, National Lutheran Council, Washington Memorandum 6, no. 13, (December 17, 1951), 1

Add the traditional Northern Democratic voters to a solid block of Catholics (who, it was claimed, were easy to manipulate since they were usually "controlled" by Catholic big-city machines) and the solid Democratic South, and Truman was assured a victory in 1952.

Actually Truman and Roosevelt were not the only politicians accused of pandering to the Catholics. Minnesota's Governor Harold Stassen was a leading Republican candidate for the presidency in 1948. In a speech to the Southern Baptist Convention, Governor Stassen attacked two Baptist resolutions that demanded the recall of Myron Taylor and protested a Supreme Court ruling that allowed New Jersey to use public funds for the transporting of students to parochial schools. Baptists and other Protestants were outraged at his speech and insisted that his reasons were obvious. Stassen would never carry the South (home of most Southern Baptists) in an election, and so he was using the high profile conference to reach out to Catholic voters.⁶⁵ A Baptist church leader charged that the Catholic Church's influence with the undemocratic machines of the North was causing many American politicians to abandon the doctrine of separation of church and state in order to gain temporary political advantages.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ "The Stassen Discourtesy", The Biblical Recorder 113, no. 23 (June 4, 1947), 4; "Stassen Disappoints Convention Audience", Arkansas Baptist 46 (May 22, 1947), 1

⁶⁶ Joseph Dawson singles out several of the Catholic-dominated political machines that controlled the big cities. One that was noteworthy was the Pendergast machine of Kansas City. The Pendergast machine was a major factor in the rise of Harry Truman. Dawson further pointed out that eight straight Democratic Party Chairmen had been Catholic including all seven that served during the Truman and Roosevelt administrations. This was especially irritating considering that Protestants made up the majority of the

According to the Protestant hierarchy, the chief beneficiary of the Vatican-American alliance was the Pope, not the American politicians. It is true that the Catholic Church lost a lot of its political influence following the annexation of the Papal States into Italy. Woodrow Wilson and David Lloyd George all but ignored the Pope's efforts to broker a peace treaty during World War I. During the World War II, Prime Minister Churchill proposed bringing the Vatican into the peace talks. Stalin, it is said, questioned the value of doing so by asking, "How many divisions has the Pope?"⁶⁷

For the Vatican, alliances with powerful countries like the United States allegedly provided protection, legitimacy, and prestige. "The Vatican gains prestige from these ambassadors and ministers at the Holy See, and it gains even more from the reciprocal treatment accorded to papal nuncios in the world's capitals," explained The Nation magazine. "The Vatican insists on, and receives, preferred treatment for its diplomats. According to the Congress of Vienna-1815, the papal nuncio is always to be given the rank of dean of the diplomatic corps in whatever capital he is assigned, regardless of seniority."⁶⁸

Once diplomatic relations were established, the Protestant press insisted that the Vatican would overstate its importance in influencing the military and foreign policy of the United States.

Democratic Party and approximately twice the population of the Catholics in the electorate at large. Dawson, An Open Letter, 12

⁶⁷ Percy Winner, "The Vatican's Feud With America", New Republic 124, no. 13 (March 26, 1951), 10

⁶⁸ Paul Blanshard, "Can We Do Business With the Vatican?", Nation 171, no. 5 (July 29, 1950), 103; Editorial, New York Times (August 27, 1947), 6

"The Soviets assume that the United States is linked for economic and political imperialism with the Roman Church [sic] ambition for ecclesiastical imperialism," observed Joseph Dawson. "The Roman Church encourages this Soviet claim by aligning the power and prestige of the United States in its vigorous fight against Communism and Russia, as if the United States had become a great advocate and promoter of Catholicism."⁶⁹

The Protestant leadership was more likely to support peaceful coexistence with the Soviets than were the Catholics. The Pope was accused of trying to stir up U.S.-Soviet animosity and hysteria to force the two powers into war (again McCarthy, the leader of anti-communist hysteria in the U.S., was proof of that argument). For the Protestants the only hope they had of achieving a Soviet-U.S. accord was if troublemakers like the Pope would be quiet or lose influence. The Southern Baptists took the lead in warning that the Pope was spreading exaggerated accounts of the conditions in Russia and of Russian imperialism in order to prompt a war. The goal of the Vatican was to crush Bolshevism, liberate the Catholic countries behind the Iron Curtain, and open up the rest of Eastern Europe and China to Catholic missionaries.⁷⁰ Some went so far as to claim that the Catholics were grateful for the current communist control of Russia, because the communists were slowly killing off the Russian Orthodox Church, which would leave Russia open for

⁶⁹ J.M. Dawson, "Baptists of the United States", Scottish Rite News Bulletin 125 (December 5, 1947), 1

⁷⁰ "Christianity and Communism" (undated memo), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN, 1

Catholic spiritual guidance once the communists were defeated by the Americans. It was assumed that the Catholic Church welcomed World War III because only through the fire of that war could the seeds of worldwide Catholic domination take root.⁷¹

Christianity and Crisis voiced the opinion of many Protestant leaders when it claimed that once the destruction of Russia was complete the Vatican would play its final card and overthrow the United States. Henry Van Dusen observed in the magazine:

"The Catholic Church looks forward to, and works assiduously toward, a condition in every nation where, Catholics being a dominant majority, the Church can insist upon recognition of the Roman Catholic Church as the official religion of the nation, the proscription of all other forms of religious faith with severe disabilities, and the subservience of Catholic political rulers to the advice and direction of the Roman hierarchy...The official recognition of the Roman Catholic Church (or any other Church) as a political power, a government entitled to diplomatic recognition, would be a long step in the direction of acceptance of the Catholic theory of Church-State relations and abandonment of the American principle of Church-State relations."⁷²

⁷¹ "The Pope Pleads for War", Baptist Standard LVIII (July 18, 1946), 4; Ezell, The Evangelical, 115-116. The American Protestant Defense League was the most direct in calling the Pope a warmonger. "...let the two ideologies--free enterprise and Communism--go on developing within their own respective national boundaries and spheres of influence, free from mutual fear...All nations could reduce their armaments and thus allow social progress through the world to move along natural channels. With this kind of victory for Liberty, Romanism would cease to have power among and within nations and in an enlightened world would pass out. This, the Vatican Papal State knows, hence its determination to precipitate a war with Russia." American Protestant Defense League, "'Card Carrying' Romanists Vs. 'Card Carrying' Communists", The American Protest (1950), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 5

⁷² Henry P. Van Dusen, "An American Embassy at the Vatican--What is at stake?" Christianity and Crisis 11, no. 24 (1952), 189-90

The question of whether the Catholics could in fact achieve a majority in America was addressed by the Christian Century in a series of articles published in 1946 entitled "Can Catholicism Win America?" The magazine insisted that if population trends continued, and if the American government continued to provide the Catholic Church special favors (such as public funds for Catholic schools), the answer was unquestionably yes. The Catholic media came up with the same result nearly two decades earlier. In 1929 The Catholic World magazine predicted a Catholic dominated United States by the 1960s or 1970s.⁷³

Once the Catholics controlled the government, Protestants alleged, they would end all of America's immigration laws and flood the country with foreigners (mostly from Catholic Latin America). Catholicism would become the state church, and priests would be paid from the public coffers. Some of the more extremist writers claimed that the state church would then imprison and persecute those who refused to convert to Catholicism as was supposedly being done to Protestants in Spain, Portugal, and South America.⁷⁴

In 1951 the Rosenbergs were convicted of being Soviet spies. Senator McCarthy spent the year trying to ferret out communists in the state department. The Republicans prepared for the 1952

⁷³ C. Stanley Lowell, If the U.S. Becomes 51% Catholic, {This pamphlet was published by the Protestants and Other Americans United (POAU)}, John F. Kennedy Pre-Presidential Papers, subheading: Religious Issues files of James Wine, John F. Kennedy Library, Boston, MA, 1

⁷⁴ Dawson, An Ambassador, 11; "Religious Liberties", Western, 16; Lowell, If the, 1; Ezell, The Evangelical, 65-68, 99-105; American Protestant Defense League, "What Must Be Done?" The American Protest, (1950), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 8

election by accusing the Democrats of being soft on communism and by playing upon popular frustrations over the stalemated war in Korea. The country's obsession with fighting communism made 1951 an ideal time to propose an anti-communist initiative like the Vatican embassy.

Protestant leaders worked to make sure that the anti-Vatican worries did not get lost in the anti-communist hysteria.⁷⁵ Leaders in the POAU and in the churches insisted that the Catholics were as dangerous as the communists.⁷⁶ The church leaders stated that inaction at that crucial moment would guarantee the permanent subordination of the Protestant faiths to the Pope.⁷⁷

President Eisenhower improved relations with the Vatican but did so quietly in hopes of avoiding the controversy faced by Truman. Never during the Eisenhower administration was the issue of a Vatican Ambassador or even a special representative to the Pope considered. Instead Eisenhower used existing lines of communication (like the American Catholic Church leaders, and the American Embassy in Rome) to keep in touch with the Pope.

⁷⁵ The POAU sent a memo out to church leaders insisting that, "It is no worse to be anti-Catholic than anti-Communist, both are Totalitarian in practice. If we must oust one we must oust the other." "Christianity and Communism", (undated confidential memo circulated by the POAU), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 1.

⁷⁶ "It is folly to attempt a victory over a totalitarian state under the thumb of a dictator, Joseph Stalin, by methods of a totalitarian Church under the triple-crowned monarchist of the world," Joseph Dawson declared, "...We will not be ruled by the red square of Moscow nor by the red hat of Rome!" Dawson, An Ambassador, 10

⁷⁷ Gene Bartlett-First Baptist Church, Harold Bosley-First Methodist Church, Martin Goslin-First Congregational Church and Harold Walker-First Presbyterian Church, Here We Stand, (Pamphlet published by the four congregations mentioned: Evanston, IL, 1951), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 9; Bosley, "Should the", 25

Protestant warnings of a Catholic dominated country resurfaced in 1960 during the election campaign of John F. Kennedy. Many Protestant ministers warned that if Kennedy (a Catholic) was president, the Pope would rule the country. Following Kennedy's election Protestant fears of a Catholic America subsided to the point that when President Reagan proposed formalizing relations with the Vatican in 1984 there was almost no Protestant protest. The appointment was confirmed with little opposition.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING

Following World War II, the Protestant Churches faced a dilemma. Since the time of the country's founding, the United States had prided itself in not being a militaristic, warmongering nation. To protect itself from military totalitarianism and/or coups, the country had always maintained a minimal, peacetime, military establishment. But in 1945 it was apparent that if the United States returned to its peacetime norm of an almost non-existent military, the world would be ripe for the taking by the Soviet Union. To guarantee preparedness against the Soviets, President Truman proposed two programs that would militarize peacetime America more than ever before--universal military training and peacetime conscription. All America, including the churches, were presented with what was said to be a mutually exclusive choice--a militarized peacetime America or a communist world.

By June of 1944, most Americans had little doubt about the outcome of World War II. Posturing and debate began about what the post-war world would look like. During the last few months of the war, many Americans were as afraid of post-war "creeping militarism" as they were of "creeping communism." Many mainline leaders warned that programs such as universal military training for all teenage American boys and peacetime conscription of soldiers into the military were examples of the military's dangerous desire to dominate American life. The fight over universal military training (UMT) and peacetime conscription were waged by the

preparedness faction (groups such as the military, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and individuals such as President Truman, Secretary of State George Marshall, and NATO Commander Dwight Eisenhower) and the peace faction (most of the mainline Protestants, peace churches such as the Quakers, many Catholic leaders, and education, farm and labor organizations). Both sides of the argument had solid, mainstream, backers but both sides tried to portray the opposition as a fringe and/or dangerous group. Those opposing UMT were accused of being communists or pacifists; those favoring the proposal were often labeled as warmongers.¹

Universal military training would have required nearly all young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty to spend from six months to two years in basic military training. Following basic training, the inductees would join one of the branches of the armed services or its reserves for further, specialized training. Each individual would be on active reserve for six to seven years when they would be placed on an inactive status. The universal training camps would be separate from the army camps and bases but would be run by the military.² Peacetime conscription meant literally the drafting of men into the military during peacetime.

¹ Universal Military Training, Hearing Before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, 80th Congress, 2d Session, March 17-April 3, 1948 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 97, 122; "Poling Asks Prompt Enactment of UMT," Religious News Service (April 1, 1948), 5.

² The amount of time spent in basic training camp and on reserves changed based on the proposal. Usually the key ages were induction at 18 1/2 years old and discharge from the reserves at 26. Neither Peace Nor Security, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription), 3. The pamphlet was authored by twenty-six historians and has no publication date, the Methodist Church Historical Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ.

Both sides of the debate liberally quoted the founding fathers and other American and church figures to back their arguments. Some claimed that military training and preparedness constituted a hallmark of American life (for example, the Minuteman), others insisted that peacetime military training was the antithesis of the American way of life (many early immigrants came to America to get away from the control of the military in Europe). Because of America's love-hate relationship with things military, both sides found examples and quotations to back their assertions.

Conscription and the raising of armies during the colonial period was left up to each colony. This policy continued during the Revolutionary War. Most of the colonies required every able-bodied (and at times non-able-bodied) man to perform a military duty in time of war. Periodic training was required, and penalties were usually harsh for those who shirked their duty. This training was required during both of war and peace; usually for those between sixteen and fifty. During the first year or so of the Revolution Washington's colonial army was largely made up of volunteers, but by 1777 the army was based on state-provided conscripts.³

³ This history of U.S. conscription prior to 1940 is pulled from four sources. Lt. Col. Bryce F. Denno, A Study of Public Opinion on Universal Military Training, (Masters thesis, University of Missouri, 1949), 10-31; S. Arthur Devan, Public Affairs Bulletin #90 "Universal Military Training and the Problem of Military Manpower" (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service, 1951), 33-34; Lt. General Lewis B. Hershey, Outline of Historical Background of Selective Service and Chronology (Washington D.C.: Selective Service System, 1960), 1-9; President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training, Pearl G. Spindler, Preparer, A Brief Historical Summary of Universal Military Training and Universal Military

Presidents Washington, Jefferson and Madison proposed that all men in the United States be classified on the basis of their fitness to serve in the military, and that those men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five be put into tactical military units, each with special military drill and training. Congress would not adopt these plans largely because Americas fear of a strong military and an oppressive central government.⁴ During the War of 1812 the United States military could not enlist enough volunteers and so again had to rely on raw, untrained state militias. The green troops fared poorly during the first year of the war.

Between the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, the military abandoned its reliance on the state militias. Instead, it maintained a small force (usually to deal with Native American uprisings) during peacetime and relied on reasonably well-paid volunteers during times of war. During the Mexican War, this system worked well as the regular military included enough seasoned veterans to train the incoming volunteers. The system was not without its problems though. During Winfield Scott's march to Mexico City, the enlistments of half of his volunteers ended, and they went home, leaving Scott undermanned. Scott's army languished outside of Mexico City for almost three months awaiting reinforcements.⁵

Neither the Northern nor southern armies could accommodate the rush of volunteers in the first months of the Civil War. But by

Training Proposals in the United States (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1947), 2-45.

⁴ Hershey, Outline of, 3-4.

⁵ Denno, A Study, 16-18.

1862 there were few volunteers to be found, and the twelve-month enlistments of many experienced regiments were due to expire. In April of 1862 the Confederate Congress instituted conscription throughout the South. The people of the South accepted the measure without much objection. Such was not the case in the North when conscription was imposed there in March, 1863. Corruption, the purchase of exemptions, and the hiring of substitutes convinced many in the lower classes that the rich were only being asked to sacrifice their money (which they were more than earning back through war-time profiteering) while the poor were required to sacrifice their lives. Resistance occurred throughout the north, most spectacularly during the New York City draft riots of 1863.

The Spanish-American War put no strain on the nation's manpower, and the military fought solely with volunteer forces. In May, 1917, Congress passed the Selective Service Draft Act which required all men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty to register for the draft. Once drafted citizen soldiers were required to serve until the war's end. Although there were exemptions and corruption during World War I, there was no paying of substitutes, and the draft was far more democratic than it had been in the Civil War. In addition, America accepted the draft during World War I largely because of what it learned from Europe during the first three years of war. The most successful military during the early years of the war was the conscript-based German army. The British

(and American) model of an all volunteer army failed so miserably that in 1916 Britain, for the first time ever, had to institute a draft.⁶

Indeed the idea of compulsory peacetime military training was first widely discussed during World War I. In 1913 Army Chief of Staff Leonard Wood set up voluntary civilian camps under the supervision of the War Department. In 1915 Wood established an officers' training camp at Plattsburgh, New York. At this camp, business and professional men joined college students in receiving military training. In 1916 the Military Training Camps Association recommended that compulsory training programs be instituted for all able-bodied males. The compulsory training idea had supporters in Congress and had the backing of important citizens like former President Theodore Roosevelt. Proposals for mandatory training programs were being prepared when the issue was rendered moot by America's entrance into the war. Following the war there again was talk of requiring peacetime training (now referred to as Universal Military Training). Although the Military Affairs Committees of both houses endorsed the idea of universal training, the issue died due to overwhelming public opposition.⁷

Anti-militarism was pervasive in America during the 1930s, and it was only the military successes of Germany and Japan that changed America's outlook from isolation to preparedness. The Military Training Camps Association (the General Wood-led group) took the lead in 1940 in passing a new conscription law. Senator

⁶ Denno, A Study, 22-23.

⁷ Denno, A Study, 25-29.

Edward Burke of Nebraska and Congressman James Wadsworth of New York introduced the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill in the Summer of 1940. President Roosevelt privately urged passage of the bill but publicly did little to push it through. The Military Training Camps Association (MTCA) shouldered most of the load of lining up support for the proposal.

The military establishment and the veterans' organizations mobilized to pass the bill. Those opposed to the proposed law included the traditional pacifist lobbies and religions (i.e. the Quakers, Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren). A few non-pacifist Protestant churches joined the pacifists as did some civil libertarian groups such as the ACLU and some education, labor, farm and African-American associations; but their efforts were poorly organized and underfunded. After debating the proposal for most of the summer and making some changes to the initial draft, the Senate passed the measure by a vote of 47-25. The House did likewise by a vote of 232-124. Peacetime conscription, for the first time in American history, was the law.⁸

Both Presidents Roosevelt and Truman recommended that following the war Congress pass a law implementing universal military training for all American young men. As postwar tension

⁸ Peacetime conscription in 1940-41 was proceeding somewhat slowly and cautiously when the Japanese bombed the American Naval Base at Pearl Harbor and the nation was at war. For a more extensive review of the Burke-Wadsworth Bill and the fight to get it passed see Joe Pender Dunn, The Church and the Cold War: Protestants and Conscription, 1940-1955 (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, 1973), 42-76; Samuel R. Spencer Jr., Cornerstone of Defense: A History of Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 From Inception to Enactment (Ph.D. diss., Mary Baldwin College,).

with the Soviet Union increased, Truman pursued universal training as a hedge against Soviet expansion. Truman felt that a large, trained military force was needed to discourage the Soviets. There was little domestic support for a large, expensive, permanent military force. There was, however, a consistently high level of support for universal military training for teenage boys. The reason for the difference is that most Americans considered UMT to be more of an advanced boy scout camp rather than a military force. Truman assured America that the training would not only supply a ready reserve of manpower in time of war but would also instill discipline, patriotism, physical fitness, democracy, education, spirituality and better hygiene in the nation's youth.⁹

In 1945 most Americans believed that Congress would enact some kind of universal military training program. Among the supporters of UMT were the military, most of the veterans' organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, the media, public opinion, the president, the House Armed Services Committee chair (Congressman Carl Vinson of Georgia) and over half of the members of the Armed Services committees in both houses of Congress.¹⁰

To head off this wave of support for universal training several pacifist and non-pacifist groups joined together in late 1944 to form the Committee Against Permanent Conscription and to start the bulletin, Conscription News. John Swomley Jr., a Methodist (and a

⁹ David Chidester, Patterns of Power: Religion and Politics in American Culture (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), 204-205.

¹⁰ "U.M.T.--The Hour of Decision", Universal Military Training (Undated pamphlet produced by The Christian Century magazine), 3.

pacifist) minister was the editor of the bulletin and the primary voice for the committee. Swomley's group was dwarfed in 1945 by the forming of the more broadly based National Council Against Conscription (NCAC). In 1947 the anti-conscription groups merged and Swomley, in addition to editing the newsletter, was appointed director of the National Council.¹¹

The NCAC successfully kept Congress from considering any universal training programs in 1945. In 1946 the military submitted a proposal that it hoped was acceptable to Congress and the American public. The war department lowered the instruction/basic training period from one year to six months. Service in the National Guard or in the Organized Reserve were provided as options for the trainees following their six month training.¹² The American Legion helped draft a bill that reduced the basic training period to sixteen weeks plus an additional thirty-six weeks of advanced training which could be accomplished at colleges, technical schools or other venues. But Congress again failed to act on the UMT proposals.¹³

In 1946 the voluntary enlistment's in the regular military fell and Congress responded by extending Selective Service for another year.¹⁴ In 1947 the Selective Service Act expired, but the Office of

¹¹ Dunn, The Church, 90-91.

¹² Denno, A Study, 34-35.

¹³ President's Advisory Commission, A Brief Historical, 65-68.

¹⁴ The difference between universal training and regular conscription, according to President Truman, was that conscription involved drafting an individual into the armed services. Trainees under UMT "would not be enrolled in any of the armed services. They would be civilians in training. They would be no closer to membership in the armed forces than if they had no training." For Truman's complete address see the Congressional Record,

Selective Service remained in operation. In 1948 Selective Service was again implemented, but the number of men drafted under it was fewer than 100,000. It lapsed after a year but was renewed in June, 1950, to provide men for the Korean conflict.¹⁵

Truman and the military (and the veterans organizations) worked for a decade following the war to pass some form of universal training. In December, 1946, Truman formed an advisory committee on universal military training. It was a citizens' committee composed of men from the worlds of religion, government, education, law and business. The commission conducted five months of hearings before recommending the adoption of UMT. Anti-UMT forces insisted that the commission was a contrivance from the beginning. The committee, though including many different interests, was comprised only of people that Truman knew supported UMT.¹⁶ In July 1947, a bill based on the commission's recommendations was introduced. Both the Senate and House conducted hearings on the bill, and the House Armed Services Committee favorably reported out the bill; but

79th Congress, Second Session, 10087-10088. Larry Quinn points out that for many of the UMT opponents the real difference between UMT and Selective Service is that UMT is more inclusive and therefore more pervasive and dangerous. Selective Service may have registered nearly all of the available manpower but it never called them all up for duty. Ideally for UMT all, or nearly all, of the young men would be required to both register and complete their service. The last major difference mentioned by Quinn between UMT and conscription was the time factor. Basic training and time spent under military supervision was less for the UMT's than for conscripts. Larry Dale Quinn, Universal Military Training:1945-1955 (Masters thesis, University of Oregon, 1964), 12-13.

¹⁵ National Council Against Conscription, The Cost of Conscription, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, 1959), 5-6.

¹⁶ "Educational News and Editorial Comment", The School Review 55, #2 (February, 1947), 63-64.

intense lobbying by the opposition kept the proposal from ever reaching a vote.¹⁷

The military pursued an active, pro-UMT policy. Military "stars" such as Generals Eisenhower and Marshall and Secretary of War Stimson appeared before Congressional committees, wrote articles for popular magazines, and gave speeches in behalf of the UMT. The military was so active in working for UMT that Congress, under pressure from the opposition, investigated to determine if military public relations money was being used inappropriately. And, in fact, a House subcommittee found the military guilty of using public funds to influence legislation before Congress--a violation of the law. The report also listed other unauthorized activities sponsored by the military's public relations department.¹⁸

One of the most publicized efforts of the military to sell UMT was the Fort Knox program. Boys seventeen and eighteen years old volunteered to spend six months at a model UMT program at the Kentucky base. In addition to military training, the boys were the beneficiaries of numerous educational, religious, vocational, citizenship and hygiene programs. Chaplains of several faiths were provided to ensure that religious counseling was available. The area around the camp was cleared of undesirable businesses such as bars and brothels to reduce the opportunities for inappropriate off-camp activities.¹⁹ The military declared the program a huge

¹⁷ Devan, Public Affairs, 38-39; Dunn, The Church, 108.

¹⁸ Dunn, The Church, 105.

¹⁹ "Universal Military Training", Bulletin Friends of the Public Schools 10, no. 4 (October, 1947), 8.

success and provided positive testimonials from camp graduates. UMT opponents argued though, that like the president's advisory committee, Fort Knox was a public relations ploy designed for public consumption and was not indicative of the camps that would exist under a universal program. Fort Knox, for example, had 560 adult supervisors and officers to oversee 664 boys. In a universal program this almost one-to-one ratio would be much too expensive. Further, the boys at the Fort Knox camp were hand-picked by the military--a luxury that could not happen in universal training camps. And even if the Fort Knox program was a reasonable facsimile of the UMT camps, it still was not perfect. The UMT opponents pointed out that Louisville bars were patronized by UMT boys on the weekends, that church attendance at camp dropped from 425 the first week to around 37 by the end of the program, and that Fort Knox M.P.'s said that the UMT-boys were no better behaved than average soldiers.²⁰

Despite the efforts of the supporters, Congress did not pass a universal military program. The Korean War cooled the talk of universal training. Most of the supervisors and trainers who would have been called on to conduct the universal military training were needed in Korea as soldiers, as were some of the eighteen year old boys who would have been participants in the training camps. Bills were introduced to set up some sort of a post-war universal training program (the word military was dropped in order to make UMT sound more like an advanced scout camp rather than boot

²⁰ Alexander Stewart, "Is Umtee the Answer?", The Christian Century 64 (May 28, 1947), 680-682.

camp), but again Congress did not pass any mandatory training programs other than outright conscription.

The failure of the universal military training programs came in spite of a consistently high level of public support for such programs. On June 23, 1940, a Gallup poll asked, "After the war is over do you think every able-bodied young man should be required to serve one year in the Army or Navy?" Sixty percent of those polled responded that such military training should be mandatory. Throughout the war, between sixty and seventy percent of the respondents affirmed that military training should be required. Polls in 1945 found that anywhere from 65 to 75 percent of Americans supported mandatory training. In 1946, 66 percent responded yes; in 1947 between 72 and 75 percent said yes; in 1949, 73 percent and in 1950, 78 percent agreed that mandatory training was necessary.²¹

According to Gallup, America supported the idea primarily because of fears about the nation's security (the oceans could no longer guarantee America's safety). A second reason for the public support was the hope that compulsory military training would be of physical and mental value for the trainee. A third reason was the belief that such programs would take up the slack in unemployment if the economy started to falter. Those polled who opposed the training programs feared that they would make

²¹ George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll, Public Opinion 1935-1971, Volumes 1 and 2, (New York: Random House, 1972); The President's Advisory Committee on Universal Training, A Program for National Security, (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1947), 227-228.

America too militaristic and would violate America's tradition of democracy and civilian control.²²

Universal training programs had the support of most of the secular media, and articles calling for more preparedness were frequent in the late-1940s.²³ But opponents of UMT claimed that support for the program was always soft. They pointed to a 1945 survey where Americans were asked if they supported a UMT-type program (72 percent said they did support such a program); but then they were asked: "If the government had two billion dollars a year to spend, would you rather have it spent on a program of better regular education in the schools, or on a program of compulsory military training in the Army or Navy?" Fifty-six percent responded that they would rather have the money go into education, only 25 percent favored military training.²⁴ National Education Association official Ralph McDonald insisted that the average American was actually apathetic about UMT and that the heavy support reported by the pollsters was because the average American confused UMT with national defense. What America was really supporting was a strong defense system, not UMT.²⁵

²² George Gallup, "The Public Say Yes", Parents Magazine 19 (November, 1944), 16.

²³ "Proposal for Universal Training: Press Reaction to Scope of Plan", The United States News 22 (Jan.10, 1947), 30.

²⁴ "A Poll on Compulsory Military Training Versus Better Education", School and Society 62, no. 1594 (July 14, 1945), 21.

²⁵ Quinn, Universal, 24-25; Only one poll seems to have been taken that tried to measure the strength of support for both favoring and opposing UMT. In January, 1948 the American Institute of Public Opinion asked respondents to classify the strength of their opinions. For those who favored UMT 51 percent said that they very strongly supported UMT, 43 percent said their support for UMT was fairly strong and 6 percent said it was not strong. Of those who opposed UMT 49 percent indicated very strong opposition, 40

For the military and its supporters, programs like peacetime conscription and universal military training were synonymous with strong national defense. UMT supporters pointed to World War II and Korea as examples of the heavy price to be paid for being unprepared. They quoted captured documents which indicated that Hitler's military timetable was greatly affected by the perceived preparedness of the Allies.

Hitler and the German general staff originally targeted 1943-45 as the likely date for an attack against the western allies, but that date was advanced because of the relative weakness of the western democracies. "We have nothing to lose; we can only gain," Hitler explained to his military planners when declaring that the invasion of Poland would occur in 1939. "Our enemies have men who are below average...No personalities, no men of action...Our enemies are little worms." Japan was also said to have attacked because it believed that the West was not ready to fight. In May, 1941 German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop assured Germany's allies that "America's rearmament was the biggest bluff in the world's history." He insisted that America, even if it did enter the war, could not provide support to England fast enough to stave off defeat.²⁶ America's shortage in military manpower was also blamed for the North Korea's invasion of South Korea and for America's poor early showing there.²⁷

percent had fairly strong opposition and 11 percent said their opposition was not strong. Denno, A Study, 58.

²⁶ President's Advisory Committee, A Program for, 4-5.

²⁷ Chairman, National Security Training Commission, Universal Military Training Foundation of Enduring Military Strength, (Washington D.C.: U.S.

Proponents claimed that America had three choices: leave the country vulnerable to coercion and/or attack due to weakness; man an expensive military with comparable manpower levels of the Soviet Union (and later the Chinese) military; or train a large reserve of fighting men capable of rushing to arms in times of crisis.

In addition to giving America a large pool of reserve forces, UMT would allegedly provide other advantages to America and to the boys being trained. In an actual war, the casualties would be fewer if all the soldiers had previously gone through universal training. General Eisenhower stated that one of the greatest tragedies of all America's wars was that the soldiers went into battle unprepared,;

"Without one blankety-blank item of training. It has been a crime. There are more Americans occupying graves overseas because they were not trained than I think for almost any other reason; not trained to take care of themselves, not trained to know what to do in combat...I firmly believe in the principle of universal military service at this critical stage in our affairs."²⁸

Government Printing Office, 1952), 3-4; National Security Training Commission, Universal Military Training Foundation of Enduring National Strength (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), 3-4.

²⁸ Report of the Committee on Armed Services, Universal Military Training and Service Act, Senate Hearings on January 29, 1951, Report #117, 82d Congress, First Session (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, Printing date-February 21, 1951), 14; in an earlier statement General Eisenhower stated "...in modern war it is not possible to win without training. But in the more personal matter of the individual's chances for survival, I should say that the trained combat soldier has at least three times the chances of the untrained to live to become a veteran." S. Arthur Devon and Bernard Brodie, Universal Military Training Public Affairs Bulletin #54 (Washington D.C.: The Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service, 1947), 19.

UMT would also allow America to mobilize both combat soldiers and a home guard more rapidly. The point was made that in World War III America would not have a cushion of time in which to prepare while Europe was fighting. In the two previous world wars, it took America months to mobilize; in World War III America would only have hours, maybe days.²⁹

But the most common argument for UMT was deterrence. The Soviet Union was like Germany and Japan in that it only bowed to demonstrations of power. America would be less likely to go to war if it could show that there was muscle behind its diplomacy.³⁰ Furthermore, America's allies would have greater peace of mind if the United States remained militarily strong, and the world's neutrals would be less likely to side with the Soviet Union in the face of a dominating American military presence.

Proponents of universal training insisted that the cost of UMT was minor compared to that of a fully outfitted military or to the cost of another war. They estimated that UMT's cost would be from one to six billion dollars per year (the standard figure used was around two billion dollars). To maintain a standing army that could stand up to the Soviet Union, America would have to spend an

²⁹ According to President Truman: "Never again can we count on the luxury of time with which to arm ourselves. In any future war, the heart of the United States would be the enemies first target. Our geographic security is now gone." Charles A. Quattlebaum, Universal Military Training and Related Proposals Public Affairs Bulletin #43, (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service, 1946), 36.

³⁰ President Truman also emphasized this point. "The surest guaranty that no nation will dare again to attack us is to remain strong in the only kind of strength an aggressor can understand--military power." Quattlebaum, Universal Military, 36

additional eight to nine billion dollars per year. The cost per year of World War III would be much higher than either of the other two figures.³¹

Universal training was also touted as more fair than the military programs already existing in the United States. Unlike Selective Service, which was riddled with exemptions, UMT would include nearly every young man. As boys from all economic strata and geographic regions were placed together, they would hopefully develop an understanding for others and a greater appreciation for democracy. According to President Truman:

"Universal training represents the most democratic, the most economical and the most effective method of maintaining the military strength we need...I am certain that the kind of training recommended in the report of the advisory commission will not only make our youth better equipped to serve their country, but better mentally, morally and physically. The experience of living together and fulfilling a common responsibility should strengthen the spirit of democracy."³²

It was also argued that UMT would improve the physical fitness, health, and hygiene of not only the young men but the entire country as the boys passed on their good habits to their families. The training would teach discipline and thus reduce juvenile delinquency and crime. UMT, according to its proponents,

³¹ Devon and Brodie, Universal Military, 30; Truman left no doubt as to his first choice for a strong military policy in the United States: "To preserve the strength of our nation, the alternative before us is clear. We can maintain a large standing Army, Navy and Air Force. Or we can rely upon a comparatively small Regular Army, Navy, and Air Force, supported by well-trained citizens, who in time of emergency could be quickly mobilized." Quattlebaum, Universal Military, 36.

³² Harry S. Truman, "Universal Military Training Essential", Vital Speeches of the Day 13, no. 18 (July 1, 1947), 565-567.

would reduce the number of unemployed in the country and would teach skills to the young men that would make them more employable later. Basic reading and writing would be expected and those who were not literate would become so in camp. The military could also teach proper citizenship to each generation of American men.³³

One last reason for supporting conscription and UMT was the fact that the Communist Party of the U.S.A. opposed the institution of those programs. Newspaper articles were read into the Senate hearings on universal military training. An article in the Washington Daily News stated, "As their latest move to strengthen Russia at the United States' expense, the Communists are preparing a grandstand play to capture sentiment in this country against universal military training." The article added that the umbrella anti-UMT organization, the National Council Against Conscription, disavowed all connections with communist fronts, but made the point that the communists and the anti-UMT's were working on the same side. The headline of another article was, "Commies Woo Big Names to Back Anti-UMT Demonstration Here." Letters from communist front organizations urging opposition to UMT and conscription and outlining strategies to ensure their defeat were also read into the record.³⁴ The point was further reinforced when Henry Winston, organization secretary of the American Communist

³³ Devon and Brodie, Universal Military, 33-35; Bower Aly-Editor, The NUEA Debate Handbook, Peacetime Military Training (Columbia, MO: Lucas Brothers Publishers, 1945), 46.

³⁴ Universal Military, 80th Congress Senate Hearing, 104-108.

Party, submitted a letter to the Senate hearing that strongly opposed both conscription and UMT.³⁵

Former Supreme Court Justice Owen D. Roberts leveled the charge "that the organized core of the opposition to universal military training centers is the Communist Party."³⁶ One of the religious representatives on President Truman's UMT advisory committee, Baptist pastor Daniel Poling, disagreed, claiming that it was the pacifist churches and organizations that made up the core of the UMT opposition. Either way, training advocates argued, UMT opponents were a fringe group that did not represent the public sentiment on the issue.³⁷ In truth, the real core of the peacetime conscription and UMT opposition came from the mainstream religious organizations as well as education, labor and farm groups.

Opponents claimed that not only did their side have broad-based support but historical precedent as well. UMT supporters had referred to founding fathers such as George Washington when citing individuals who advocated military training. The anti-UMT groups also invoked Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Clay, Andrew Jackson and others who warned the country of the dangers of a large standing army and a powerful professional officer class. Militarism was portrayed as un-American and many of America's early leaders warned that it was a threat to democracy.³⁸ Woodrow Wilson was also cited as warning that peacetime conscription would

³⁵ Universal Military, 80th Congress Senate Hearing, 1096-1098.

³⁶ Universal Military, 80th Congress Senate Hearing, 97.

³⁷ "Poling Asks", Religious News, 5.

³⁸ Neither Peace Nor Security, 3-4; National Council, The Cost of, 12.

mean the surrender of political freedoms to the military; peacetime military conscription would lead in turn to conscription of labor, and then capital, ultimately paving the way for a dictatorship.³⁹

Those opposing UMT, like those favoring it, bolstered their arguments by citing the "lessons" of World War II. They quoted Adolf Hitler who said, "We stand for compulsory military service for every man. If a state is not worth that, then away with it! Then you must not complain if you are enslaved....No one gives you freedom save only by your sword."⁴⁰

UMT opponents said that universal training would lure the United States into a false sense of security just as it had done to the French and the Poles at the start of World War II. To prove that point the anti-UMT faction quoted reports of the German invasion of Poland. The Knoxville Sentinel on September 1, 1939, assured its readers that Hitler may have been too ambitious in attacking Poland: "Every able-bodied man in Poland between the age of 18 and 40 was under arms. Poland has an army of 4,000,000, and although it has possibly less armaments than Germany it has more men in the field and there are plenty of rifles and bullets for all." Former U.S. Secret Service agent Dr. A.A. Bates told Congress, "The War Department tells us that universal military training will shorten war. It did, indeed, shorten the war for Poland. By putting all her faith in that ancient militarily irrelevant political

³⁹ Joseph M. Dawson, Testimony of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Regard to S. 2441, 6. Undated document located in Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN.

⁴⁰ "Another Fellow Who was for Conscription", The Christian Century 62 (June 27, 1945), 749-750.

racket...Poland precluded the possibility of any real defense."⁴¹ France was said to have made the same mistake. The opponents of UMT insisted that in the 1920s the French military command convinced the government that a line of fortifications along the French-German border (the Maginot Line), and universal military training for all French boys, would guarantee that France was safe from Germany.

The wars of the future, it was argued, would not primarily be waged by the foot soldier. This had already been somewhat the case in World War II, when industrial capacity, military technology, and air superiority were given primary credit for the Allied victory. Germany, the epitome of a universally trained country, withered in the face of the Allies better supported forces.⁴²

Opponents of UMT claimed that in the future, the major wars, particularly if they were to involve an invasion of the United States, would probably be quick and based on missiles, air power and atomic weapons. Widespread military training would be of no value in such a conflict. If for some reason the war did drag on,

⁴¹ Bates went on to say that other universally trained soldiers such as the French, Dutch and Belgians fared as poorly as Poland's. The country that finally stemmed the German onslaught was Britain. Britain had historically opposed conscription of any kind, especially peacetime conscription. The British weapon that brought Germany to a halt was not the essentially useless army-trained man who performed so poorly in Northern France but "a little gadget of glass, brass and tungsten, a little gadget called a magnetron, which was the heart of what we now call radar. It was the great secret of the war at that day. A little group of scientists--a mere handful of men--had produced this radar, which did what the tens of millions of European continental compulsory military-trained boys had been unable to do. They defeated the Nazi hordes, and England was saved." A.A. Bates, "Should the U.S.A. Adopt a Program of Universal Military Training?-Con", The Congressional Digest 26, no. 10 (October, 1947), 245-49.

⁴² Bates, "Should the", 249.

then men could be trained while supplies and infrastructure were prepared at the point of attack. Thus the country with superior air power, technology and industrial resources would have the advantage--not the country with the largest army.⁴³

Educators and scientists also spoke up, insisting that the next war would be won in the laboratory, and that if the United States continued a defense policy based on combat training, it would deny badly needed resources and manpower to the organizations that could most effectively use them in preparing for the future. The American Mathematical Society warned that "the peacetime military program should not interfere with plans to overcome the present dangerous shortage of scientists and technologists and (instead should) provide for a continuous generous supply in such essential categories of trained citizens in the future."⁴⁴ William Tolley, chancellor of Syracuse University, in speaking for other university administrators, issued a similar warning: "If our country

⁴³ Hanson W. Baldwin, "Should the U.S.A. Adopt a Program of Universal Military Training?-Con", The Congressional Digest 26, no. 10 (October, 1947), 243-245; The anti-UMT groups quoted military sources to show that combat training was the least of the military's problems in times of war. "Training of the soldier does not require any such long period, but takes only a short time--17 weeks according to the Army," said Joint Chiefs of Staff consultant John Henry Martin. He continued "Training in combat warfare is the most rapidly learned skill the services require." General H.H. Arnold argued that personnel always can be trained faster than the equipment can be built to supply them. During WWII America had far more men working in non-combat positions (over 12 million) than in combat (approximately 1 1/2 million). The combat training provided by UMT would be of little value for most of the American military personnel in the future. The Facts About Compulsory Military Service and Casualties (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, pamphlet undated), pamphlet located in the Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 2-3

⁴⁴ "Universal Military Service in Peacetime", Science 103, no. 2680 (May 10, 1946), 579-581.

really is in danger of attack...there will not be sufficient engineers to meet either the military or industrial needs. There will not be chemists, physicists or mathematicians for one-tenth of the demand." Chancellor Tolley quoted Dr. Arthur Compton, dean of physical sciences at the University of Chicago, as saying, "In modern warfare 100 expertly trained physicists may be more valuable than 1,000,000 soldiers."⁴⁵ Educator and Civil Engineer Arthur E. Morgan warned that UMT would not only disrupt the education of young men for but it may also permanently damage them:

"Extension of West Point influence would menace long-time military security. Its regimentation and arbitrary subordination to authority has been deadly to alert, creative inquiry...Rocket ships and atomic bombs make it necessary that we have as many resilient, imaginative minds as possible if we are to avoid chaos. West Point strait-jackets the minds of its own. Can we expect that the youth of the nation will escape the deadening impact of its regimentation under a program of compulsory military training which it dominates?"⁴⁶

The UMT opposition also insisted that the UMT-trained soldier would be of questionable combat value. Upon completion of a years training a man might be a competent peacetime soldier but would still be lacking the critical qualities which only war can provide--wartime incentive and battlefield experience. One year after training his value as a soldier would be considerably less; five years later his military efficiency would have been reduced by forty to

⁴⁵ William P. Tolley, "Should We Have Compulsory Postwar Military Training?-No." Parents Magazine 20 (October, 1945), 21.

⁴⁶ Arthur E. Morgan, "Conscription and the West Point Mind", The American Mercury 66, no. 266 (February, 1946), 163-165.

sixty percent, even with periodic refresher training.⁴⁷ Due to the rapid changes in weapons technology much of the UMT weaponry training would be obsolete in two of three years. In an actual emergency, it was argued, the UMT trained inductee would have little advantage over the non-UMT trained.

The secondary education groups opposing UMT also insisted that two to three billion dollars a year was too high a price for a program with only marginal military benefits. But, they added, the two to three billion would only be the start of the added costs caused by universal training. Programs like UMT would start a global rush for arms. Peacetime conscription and training historically had not deterred wars but encouraged them. France, Russia and Germany more willing to go to war in 1914 because they believed they were militarily superior. If those nations had been disarmed (like the United States was), they would not have declared war.⁴⁸ Educators testified that UMT "would diminish the possibility of creating a lasting peace and developing adequate international cooperation, since it would stimulate a universal armament race."⁴⁹ The new arms race would be especially destructive for war-torn Europe which would feel compelled to

⁴⁷ Hanson W. Baldwin, "Conscription for Peacetime?", Harper's Magazine 190, no. 1138 (March, 1945), Article was quoted as part of an undated pamphlet entitled Conscription for Peacetime? (Peace Section-American Friends Service Committee), 11.

⁴⁸ Baldwin, Conscription for, 7.

⁴⁹ William J. Miller, President of the University of Detroit. Statement before the House of Representatives. Universal Military Training, Hearings Before the Select Committee on Postwar Military Policy, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, First Session, (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1945), 107-108.

channel limited resources (including Marshall Plan aid) into arms in order to protect itself. This would lead to domestic unrest which the communists could exploit.⁵⁰

If UMT was adopted, America's foreign policy would be based on the question of how best to prepare for the next war rather than how to work for peace. This mentality would seriously undercut the work of the United Nations and could potentially result in mankind's extinction. An editorial in the journal School and Society warned:

"Congress has begun the work for peace. Declaring that the interdependence of the world demands cooperative efforts in solving international problems, it has authorized the United States to become a member of the United Nations organization...The obligations (of joining the United Nations) include a pledge to seek realization of democratic values throughout the world and a determination co-operatively to secure permanent peace by strengthening international law...and by gradually reducing armaments. Universal military training conflicts with all of these pledges. It can only lead other nations to doubt the validity of this country's word and fearfully arm so that they, too, may be prepared....Training of a nation's youth encourages acceptance of the idea that war is the only method of resolving international disputes."⁵¹

Southern Baptist official Joseph Dawson spoke for many UMT opponents when he contended that the military's plans would destroy the very country that it sought to save:

⁵⁰ Baldwin, Conscription for, 7; "Some Facts About Selective Service", Conscription News 139 (April 8, 1948), 1.

⁵¹ "The War Department Plan for Universal Military Training: A Criticism", School and Society 65, no. 1679 (March 1, 1947), 164-165.

"Universal military training in the totalitarian nations resulted in a hardness of heart and indifference toward, even a contempt for, all the humanities of life. It produced in these states a complete void of the virtues which make people and nations great. It produced a brutality unsurpassed in human history. There is implicit in universal training an old, old philosophy that the citizen exists for the benefit of the state. This philosophy underlies the demand that every young man should receive military training. The idea is not modern, it is not progressive, it is not enlightened....This conception of life has been proven false by history. We have twice seen, within one generation, the collapse of universal military training when opposed by the moral and spiritual forces of the world. Twice in our generation we have seen the defeat of the philosophy that the people belong to the state by the philosophy that the state belongs to the people."⁵²

Nearly all of those who wrote or testified against the UMT programs stated that universal training camps would do more harm than good to America's youth:

"We shall give opportunity to teach our sons not only the way to kill but also, in too many cases, the desire to kill, thereby increasing lawlessness and disorder to the consequent upsetting of the stability of our national society. God said at Sinai, "Thou shalt not kill." We shall take them from the refining, ennobling, character-building atmosphere of the home, and place them under a drastic discipline in an environment that is hostile to most of the finer and nobler things of home and of life."⁵³

⁵² Quote credited to The Arkansas Baptist newspaper. The quote was found in a document authored by Joseph Dawson entitled "Testimony Before Subcommittee House Committee on Armed Forces," Joseph Dawson Files, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN.

⁵³ This religious warning was given by the leadership of the Mormon Church--a traditionally conservative denomination with no reputation for pacifism. "Statement on Universal Compulsory Military Training by the First

Many religious leaders warned that vices such as gambling, drinking, swearing, selfishness, smoking and consorting with lewd women were common in military camps. At a time when young men were most susceptible to peer pressure, they would be removed from the protection of home and church and placed in an environment that encouraged cruder actions. In response to the Pro-UMT claim that universal training would promote democracy by mixing different groups in society together the anti-UMT forces stated, "The army is a leveler and its level is low."⁵⁴ An example of "army morality" cited by some religious leaders were the training films that encouraged the use of prophylactics, not abstention, to prevent venereal disease--this was not the spiritual and moral discipline advocated in most homes and churches.⁵⁵

In addition to teaching immorality and vice, the military, it was feared, would destroy individuality and creativity. The military was accused of "Prussianizing" (demanding strict uniformity of thought and action) its soldiers.⁵⁶ An interdenominational Protestant pamphlet warning of the dangers of UMT:

"It (UMT) will give the military a chance to indoctrinate every teen-age boy. Although boys can't be made ready for combat during UMT, or physically hardened for any emergency in the distant future, they can be psychologically conditioned to obey orders, to believe that one's highest duty is to the military, and that "the proper

Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints." Senate Hearing, 80th Congress, 122.

⁵⁴ Robert M. Hutchins, "Education in the Army", Universal Military Training (Undated pamphlet produced by The Christian Century magazine), 14.

⁵⁵ Aly, The NUEA Debate, 57.

⁵⁶ Morgan, "Conscription and", 165.

interpretation of the facts" of the world is the military one.⁵⁷

Those who opposed universal training warned that the military already had far too much control over government and society. "The pattern of militarism is already revealing itself in the United States," declared the National Council Against Conscription. "The situation dreaded by our founding fathers--military domination of the civilian population--is rapidly developing."⁵⁸ The military was accused of being more intent than ever on controlling American society because during World War II it had grown used to controlling most of the country's financial, business and labor force, and following the war it was unwilling to relinquish that power.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ The Facts Behind the Report, (undated pamphlet that included no publisher), Joseph Dawson Papers of the Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 24.

⁵⁸ Brigadier General H.C. Holdridge, Shall the United States Adopt Universal Military Training? (Chicago: Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church, 1948), 2.

⁵⁹ Holdridge, Shall the, 2-3; John Swomley, the leader of the Anti-UMT forces insisted that programs like UMT and peacetime conscription were indeed part of a military plot to control America: "The United States military establishment is now operating on the assumption that the nation is on a permanent war footing. Demands for permanent military conscription, talk of conscription for civil defense, plans for conscription of women are only a few illustrations of what the military has in store for America." And "all of the original devices intended by the founders of our country to safeguard the nation from military control have now been changed or largely nullified. Whether or not the framework of civilian control remains, the substance is increasingly military control. This is not to suggest that America is now a perfect illustration of the garrison state. It has not yet reached that point, even though it is moving in that direction." John M. Swomley Jr., Our Military Government, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, 1953), 3.

The biggest UMT/conscription threat, the anti-militarists claimed, was enlargement of the military's already pervasive influence in the government. The National Council Against Conscription quoted prominent Americans like Governor Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut (who had previously served on the House Foreign Affairs Committee) who warned of the military's desire to dictate government policy. "In my opinion," said Ribicoff, "in the last year or two more foreign policy has been made in the Pentagon than in the State Department."⁶⁰ The National Council Against Conscription insisted that programs like UMT were the next step on the road to a military dictatorship and American fascism.⁶¹

Although religious groups were a major part of the UMT and peacetime conscription opposition (and were the primary source of staff, funding and grassroots support for organizations like the National Council Against Conscription), they were not alone in the fight. The three leading farm organizations, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, and The National Farmers Union, all opposed the conscription programs.⁶² Organized labor

⁶⁰ John M. Swomley Jr., The Growing Power of the Military, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, 1959), 2.

⁶¹ The NCAC quoted the President's own advisory committee on UMT to prove that UMT would promote lock-step uniformity. The Advisory committee "favors it (UMT) because it would supply a force equipped to handle 'subversive elements within the domestic population', and so would 'develop national unity.' Such unity is the solidarity of the police state." "Showdown on U.M.T.", The Christian Century 64 (November 5, 1947), 1327; and "Whether the militarists will admit it or not, if we have universal service the road is wide open to a fascist state." Oswald Garrison Villard, "Peacetime Conscription: A Debate", Pageant (February, 1945), 84

⁶² The farm groups were largely driven by a concern by both the short and long term loss of labor if the young men were drawn into a UMT. Young men drawn off the farm to attend military training would have to be immediately replaced and, if they were seduced by the opportunities previously unknown

groups such as the C.I.O. were unequivocal: "We oppose the commencement of any Universal Military Training Program...We renew our opposition to all forms of national service legislation." The A.F.L. supported UMT only if it did not interfere with the civilian system of service, production and distribution; if it was not part of the educational system; if it did not restrict the rights of labor and if it was kept in place only for the duration of Korean War emergency.⁶³ Labor had long been concerned about government instituted labor conscription programs and saw UMT as a move in that direction.

Another group that also saw UMT as a potential threat to its livelihood as well as to the American way of life were colleges and universities. Education groups were almost as active as the churches in giving Congressional testimony, in writing articles, and in giving speeches. UMT's damage to the colleges would allegedly begin when prospective male students were taken away for a year. Many of those individuals would not return to college after their UMT-time was finished. Furthermore, the UMT programs would receive money that might otherwise go to the universities for education and research. Universal military programs would become a competitor with the colleges for public and private research grants. Three-fourths of the members of the American Council on Education (ACE) and its affiliates such as the National Education

in the cities or other parts of the country, they would have to be permanently replaced. Frederick J. Libby, "Unparalleled Uprising Blocks UMT Today", Peace Action of the National Council for Prevention of War 18, no. 2, (February, 1952), 1.

⁶³ Libby, "Unparalleled Uprising", 1

Association (NEA) opposed universal military training. The ACE and the NEA stated that UMT was not the answer for a strong, well-defended country, and that what was really needed was a strong and adequate regular army backed by "a strong, healthy, educated population."⁶⁴ Civil Rights organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the American Civil Liberties Union also warned that UMT would be bad for the country.

The opponents of universal training could not get either major political party to include an anti-UMT plank in their platforms, but neither party added a pro-UMT plank to their platform either. Of the leading presidential candidates in 1948, both President Truman and Governor Thomas Dewey supported UMT. Dewey's primary rival after 1948 for control of the Republican Party, Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, opposed UMT, as did the Democratic Party's presidential front-runner in 1950 and 1951--Senator Estes Kefauver. Dwight Eisenhower started out as one of the main proponents of UMT during the late 1940s and early 1950s, but in October, 1952, Eisenhower altered his position and opposed UMT.⁶⁵ The Progressive (under Henry Wallace), Socialist and Communist parties all opposed UMT and peacetime conscription. Strom Thurmond, States Rights Candidate in 1948, supported UMT.⁶⁶

Although the churches did not unanimously oppose UMT and peacetime conscription, they did make up the largest part of the

⁶⁴ Denno, *A Study*, 107-114.

⁶⁵ Quinn, *Universal*, 53-54.

⁶⁶ Denno, *A Study*, 136-141.

opposition. The Catholic Church had no official position on UMT or conscription. Cardinal Spellman, who was generally believed to speak for the Pope in America, favored UMT but many other Catholic leaders publicly opposed it.⁶⁷ Reverend Richard Cushing, the Archbishop of Boston, identified UMT with some of the "foreign" ideologies of Europe: "Lately some of those evil ideas have been gaining ground within this land. One of them is Communism--the other is militarism. Sometimes we are told that we must make a choice between the two. It simply isn't true. There is still a third possibility--and that possibility is Americanism." Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia said, "Compulsory military training in peacetime in the U.S.A., if such a change in our American system is brought about, will be a windfall for military officials and a catastrophe to taxpayers. It will be the ruin of our young men!"⁶⁸ Among several veterans groups that opposed UMT was the Catholic War Veterans.

The traditional peace churches like the Quakers were active in their opposition to UMT as were most of the mainline Protestants. The Federal Council of Churches stated that the United Nations must be given an opportunity to peacefully work on the world's problems; programs like the UMT would scuttle the U.N. before it started. Not only did the Federal Council urge the United States to forego any peacetime military training, but it also recommended

⁶⁷ "Catholics Oppose Conscription", The Christian Century 65 (April 21, 1948), 340.

⁶⁸ The Most Reverend Richard J. Cushing, D.D. The Third Choice--Americanism, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, 1948), 10-15.

that the U.S. representative to the U.N. propose arms reductions and regulations, the fixing of military quotas, and the abolition of all peacetime compulsory military training in the world.⁶⁹

Of the mainline Protestants, the Methodists were usually the most adverse to UMT. In addition to fighting peacetime conscription in the United States and urging a United Nations ban on peacetime conscription worldwide, the General Conference of the Methodist Church urged Methodist colleges to discourage R.O.T.C. programs and to find other ways to finance students who felt compelled to join R.O.T.C. in order to pay for school.⁷⁰ The Northern Baptists, though not directly opposing programs like R.O.T.C., did include this statement in their yearly Committee on Resolutions report from 1945 through 1958: "Resolved, That this convention go on record as opposed to universal compulsory peacetime training. Furthermore be it resolved that we urge upon the government that it discontinue compulsory training in the public schools of the nation."⁷¹

The Southern Baptist Committee on World Peace declared in 1944 that "universal compulsory military training for youth...would reverse our Nation's historic policy and culture, and would follow the preliminary steps to totalitarianism." The Southern Baptist

⁶⁹ Quattlebaum, Universal Military, 63-64.

⁷⁰ "The Church and Peace", (undated document reporting the official positions of the Methodist General Conference relative to military and international affairs), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ), 3-4.

⁷¹ Report of Committee on Resolutions, (New York: Northern Baptist Convention, 1947--similar resolutions appeared in each report from 1945 to 1958), 2.

Convention renewed this warning every year.⁷² The Presbyterian General Assembly resolved that the Church opposed any peacetime conscription, including that for universal military training, and supported any efforts that would bring about an international ban on peacetime conscription. The Disciples of Christ similarly resolved to oppose peacetime conscription in any form and urged its members to actively lobby the president and their Congressional representatives to oppose such measures. Similar resolutions by the general assemblies/councils of the National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches of America (which included eleven of the main predominantly black churches), the American Unitarians, the Mennonite Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), the Congregational Christian Church, the Church of the Brethren, the Augustana Lutheran Synod, the Church of God, and the Friends (Quakers) along with numerous affiliated, regional and smaller groups or sects were also issued.⁷³

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod claimed that the doctrine of separation of church and state precluded their taking a stand on UMT or conscription. The Southern Presbyterians stated that UMT was unimportant within their denomination, and thus they took no stand on the question.⁷⁴ The Episcopalians were the only major Protestant church to support UMT. A leading Episcopal

⁷² Universal Military Training, House of Representatives Committee on Military Affairs Hearing, 79th Congress, 2d Session; February 18-21, 1946 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), 998.

⁷³ Resolutions Against Universal Military Training 1945-1947, (Washington D.C.: Friends Committee on National Legislation, 1947), 1-110; Universal Military, Senate Hearing, 80th Congress, 620-621.

⁷⁴ Dunn, The Church, 115-116.

journal, The Living Church, stated, "We think the argument against compulsory military service on moral or religious grounds is not true. Christianity does not preclude the use of force in self-defense, in the defense of others, or in the restraint of evildoers...On the contrary, Christianity calls upon us to be strong...Military training, properly conducted, can be the means of a virile education in a democratic citizenship."⁷⁵ One possible explanation for this pro-UMT stand was the Episcopal faith's involvement with the military (including church sponsorship of several military schools) and the large number of military officers among the church leaders.⁷⁶ The Episcopal Church's more military-friendly bias has deep roots in the United States. In the eighteenth century the colonial military hierarchy was usually recruited from the elite in society. South of New England the elite was dominated by the Anglicans, and so the officer corps of many colonial militias was largely Anglican.

The American Council of Christian Churches was one of the few interfaith groups to support UMT. Daniel Poling, a Baptist Minister and the editor of The Christian Herald, was the most prominent Protestant clergyman to testify for UMT. Poling was Truman's ministerial appointee to his advisory committee.

⁷⁵ "Universal Military Training", The Living Church 64, no. 24 (June 15, 1947), 10-11; The church would remain consistent in its support for UMT. "The Living Church has previously expressed our conviction that universal military training is a sound and necessary national policy, and that it is not inconsistent with our Christian citizenship. We hereby reaffirm that conviction." "Universal Military Training", The Living Church 116, no. 2, (January 11, 1948), 10; and later "U.M.T. can prove to be a constructive moral force of great value, if religious leaders will cooperate instead of opposing it." "Universal Military Training", The Living Church 124, no. 5, (February 3, 1952), 16.

⁷⁶ Dunn, The Church, 115.

Church leaders were mobile, eloquent, and powerful and thus frequently testified before Congressional committees.⁷⁷ Indeed church and educational leaders made up the majority of those who testified against UMT. But church efforts went beyond testimonies. Despite the traditional Protestant concern about mixing church and state, the anti-UMT churches made regular use of the election process to pursue their goals. During the elections of 1946, 1948 and 1952 (and to a lesser extent 1950 and 1954), the NCAC and the national church headquarters urged local ministers to personally contact Congressional incumbents and candidates and secure pledges from them that they would not support UMT.⁷⁸

The churches and the NCAC claimed no connection to either major political party, but the opponents of UMT put far more effort into influencing the Republican Party than the Democratic. A memo from Swomley to the NCAC Public Relations Committee in June, 1948 urged members to make appearances at the Republican National Convention and to pressure the Republican Resolutions Committee to oppose UMT (the names and convention addresses of those on the Republican Resolutions Committee were included with the letter). Although the memo was geared towards influencing the Republicans, Swomley did briefly add, "This might also be done for

⁷⁷ The NCAC and its constituent members claimed that they were discriminated against in congressional hearings. They were usually given the worst times to testify before subcommittees (usually just before recesses) whereas the military was awarded the prime time periods (at the beginning of the day).

⁷⁸ E. Raymond Wilson, Executive Secretary, Memorandum No. 11-Universal Military Training and Selective Service Hearings, (Washington D.C.: Friends Committee on National Legislation, 1948), 1.

the Democratic Platform Committee."⁷⁹ The NCAC expressed no hope of influencing President Truman on UMT, but constant efforts were made to modify Dewey's pro-UMT position.⁸⁰ Church leaders were urged by the NCAC not only to support local congressional candidates who opposed UMT, but also to aid Congressman Dewey Short of Missouri. Short, a former Methodist Minister, had been fighting of UMT in Congress, and the American Legion had targeted him for defeat.⁸¹

⁷⁹ John M. Swomley Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to J.M. Dawson, June 16, 1948, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN; A similar memo was sent out after the 1946 elections which reminded the reader that it was the Republican Party that had "stood for an end to regimentation of the people in peacetime" and encouraged the Republican Party to keep that ideal in mind now that it was in control of the Congress. Undated, untitled memo located in the Joseph Dawson Papers.

⁸⁰ There are several reasons why the NCAC targeted the Republican Party rather than the Democrats. First is that the NCAC had its strongest support in the Midwest—the Republican bedrock region. Second, the core of the NCAC was Northern Protestants. Third, the question of UMT was somewhat of a throwback to the old isolationist-internationalist debate. Any country that builds a large military structure inevitably becomes more involved in world affairs. Prior to World War II the Republican Party usually leaned more towards isolation and thus a small (and unobtrusive) military. Many of those pre-war isolationists were still leading the Republican Party (i.e. Mr. Republican—Senator Robert Taft of Ohio) and some were still leery of things military (like UMT). Finally, the Republicans had been out of power since 1932 and they were looking for ways to win voters back from the Democrats. Under Truman and Roosevelt the Democrats had become the party of military build-up and preparedness, and thus the Republicans were the natural home for the opposing a huge military presence. John M. Swomley Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to J.M. Dawson, October 2, 1948, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

⁸¹ Ever mindful of the Protestant concern for becoming too involved in the election process, Swomley caveated his request by insisting that statements made on Short's behalf need not "be in any sense an endorsement of Mr. Short or his candidacy nor even his record...but might just in a sentence or two indicate your congratulations or pleasure on his effective leadership." Earlier in the letter the NCAC requested that "a sentence or two of commendation from some prominent educators and clergymen which he might be free to use" be sent. John M. Swomley Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to George Siebert of the Commercial and

The most effective weapons wielded by the NCAC were the letter-writing campaigns spearheaded by the churches. The churches influenced legislation by convincing tens of thousands of their members to write to their elected leaders. In February, 1946, the House Armed Services Committee was debating the president's UMT bill when the church-generated deluge of letters arrived. Several members of the committee expressed misgivings about rushing the bill through in the face of such opposition; ultimately the committee let the president's proposal die.⁸² In early 1947, the military tried to rush a new UMT proposal through the House Armed Services Committee before the opposition could again mobilize. Church and education delegations descended on Washington to stall passage of the bill.⁸³ At the same time, the churches sent out emergency telegrams and phone calls to their ministers to urge their members to start a second letter-writing campaign.⁸⁴ Again the proposal died in committee.

Financial Chronicle, July 21, 1948, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

⁸² Dunn, The Church, 99-100.

⁸³ John M. Swomley, Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to J.M. Dawson, March 18, 1947, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

⁸⁴ One example of this is: "Conscription", Arkansas Baptist, (March 6, 1947), 3; The NCAC was not able to convince a majority of the population to oppose UMT and so it relied on letter-writing to counter the public opinion polls. The NCAC sent letters to church leaders warning that the only thing preventing the passage of UMT was the volume of letters Congress was receiving that opposed plans like UMT. The NCAC on occasion added that the tide of that mail was turning in favor of UMT and if the majority of the letters received ever did support the conscription programs congress would vote them into law. The truth is that the feared pro-UMT flood of mail never happened. Congressional records show that the volume of mail received was always overwhelmingly opposed to any peacetime conscription programs. John M. Swomley Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to "Dear

The churches and the NCAC were not above using scare tactics in their literature and letters. The pamphlet, The Two Day War of 1968 was widely distributed by the NCAC. The pamphlet described the two day nuclear holocaust that would occur between the United States and the Soviet Union in twenty years. Programs like UMT were blamed for this anticipated conflict because they generated suspicion between the two superpowers.⁸⁵

In addition to sending letters to political officials, church members were also encouraged to write letters to the editor and to distribute anti-conscription/UMT pamphlets. Local ministers were urged to preach sermons against peacetime conscription--sermons which included calls for even more congressional letter writing.⁸⁶

The irony of all the lobbying and sermonizing and letter-writing was that it influenced Congress but it never convinced most of the church members. Opinion polls showed that most Americans solidly favored a program of universal military training for teenage boys and all the church's work did not change their attitude. While some church members wrote to congress opposing UMT, other church members wrote to their church headquarters opposing their anti-UMT stance. When Joseph Dawson testified against UMT, he said he spoke on behalf of sixteen million Baptists (including the

Friend", June 18, 1947, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN; Letter from the President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training entitled "Analysis of Correspondence", Feb., 1947, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO., 1

⁸⁵ The Two Day War of 1968, (Washington D.C.: National Council Against Conscription, 1948)

⁸⁶ John M. Swomley, Jr., letter from the National Council Against Conscription to J.M. Dawson, December 10, 1947, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN

northern and southern branches). Angry Baptists wrote that he did not speak on behalf of them. The April 10, 1952, issue of the Baptist Western Recorder out of Kentucky blasted "the 'Popery' attitude of those who claim they speak for our church instead of waiting a vote from the congregations."⁸⁷ Many members called for retractions and changes in church policy, but the mainline churches did not alter their stance. One church leader, when asked about the discrepancy between church policy and popular opinion within the church, responded, "We cannot be held back by the narrow perspectives of those who occupy the pews on Sunday morning. Their understanding of the Christian mission is so limited."⁸⁸

The result of the church's efforts was that no mandatory universal military training law was ever passed. In 1955 Congress approved a Reserve Forces Act that extended the draft law, included a longer reserve requirement for those inducted under the act, and provided for the reception of up to 250,000 men a year between seventeen and eighteen and a half directly into the military reserve units. This last program was strictly voluntary.⁸⁹ Limited peacetime conscription had, by 1955, become such a regular part of American life that there was little resistance to its extension under the Reserve Forces Act. But the continuing pressure to demilitarize America influenced President Eisenhower to keep drafting to a minimum and to put greater reliance on

⁸⁷ Dudley H. Taylor to Joseph Dawson, April 27, 1952, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN.

⁸⁸ Dunn, The Church, 172-173.

⁸⁹ Quinn, Universal Military, 58-61; Benson W. Landis, "The New Military Manpower Program", Social Action 22 (October, 1955), 22-25.

nuclear deterrence and the reserves than on the maintenance a large conscript army. According to The Christian Century there were many groups and individuals who deserved credit for this change in America's attitude, but no one deserved more credit than the churches:

"Public opinion defeated UMT and did so by a margin of votes which few could have foreseen a few weeks ago. While farm, labor and education organizations, together with a part of the press and a few public figures, played an honorable part in rousing this opposition, the major share of the credit goes to the churches. It was the churches which saw through UMT most quickly and did the most to help the American public see through it."⁹⁰

⁹⁰ "Congress Turns Down U.M.T.", The Christian Century 69, no. 12, (March 19, 1952), 331.

WAR AND PEACE

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."-Christianity Matthew 5:9

"Let one cultivate good will towards all the world,--a mind illimitable, unobstructed, without hatred."-Buddhism, Suptta-Nipata 150-151

"To God belong the East and West. Therefore whithersoever ye turn is the face of God."-Islam Koran 2.109

"Within the four seas all are brothers."-Confucianism Analects 12.5.4

"Weapons, even though successful, are unblessed implements, detestable to every creature. Therefore, he who has the Eternal, will not employ them."-Taoism Tao-Teh-King 31.1¹

"When we look out upon our world we see an ugly and unclean thing over all the brightness and good...This ugly thing, which we call war, hanging over our common humanity, is not something new...But the dimensions of the evil in any major conflict are now so heightened as to face us with something new...Serious Christians of every name now see in war a grievous disclosure of man's lostness and wrongness. War destroys what God creates. It hurts those whom Christ came to heal. It mocks the love of God and His commandment of love. It is the stark opposite of the way of reconciliation. It breeds hatred and deception and cruelty."- The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.²

¹ A Spiritual Approach to the Problems of Peace (New York: The Report of the June, 1948 Conference of the Church Peace Union, 1949), 8.

² The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, The Christian Conscience and Weapons of Mass Destruction (pamphlet is a report of special commission appointed by the Federal Council, New York: The Department of International Justice and Goodwill, 1950), 5-6.

There was only a very short period of peace following World War II. Within a year of the war's end the United States was again faced with a hostile and powerful enemy. Many Americans believed that it was only a matter of time before the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States became hot. Some people urged the United States government to take the offensive and destroy the Soviet Union before it gained even more power. The mainline denominations never accepted the inevitability of a major conflict between America and the Soviet Union. Although the mainline churches had been strong supporters of America's efforts in World War II, they adamantly opposed all measures that would lead to World War III. For the mainline Protestants the key to a permanent peace was diplomatic negotiation, not military conquest.

War has always constituted a dilemma for Christianity. Jesus Christ ended the Mosaic law of "an eye for an eye" and replaced it with "turn the other cheek" and the law of love. Some Christian faiths (such as the Quakers and the Mennonites) have interpreted Christ's teachings to mean that mankind is never justified in the taking of human life and in waging war. The Catholic Church has not shared that pacifist stance and has traditionally taught that Christians were authorized to wage "just" wars.

The mainline American Protestants have, at times, espoused almost pacifist policies, but only in times of peace. Once war has been declared by the United States, they have never actively opposed it.³ In times of war, the mainline churches have, like the

³From the days of Constantine down to Hiroshima, a vast majority of all Christians have consented to war and have supported it with patriotic

Catholics, conceded the necessity of fighting "just" wars. Even in peacetime, only the Methodist Church has ever issued a blanket condemnation of war as an instrument of government policy.⁴ Pacifism has been taught as a preferred method of diplomacy, but it has never been doctrine for the mainline. Most of the war-time statements by the mainline Protestants have focused on issues such as maintaining a sense of Christian morality in the midst of carnage and in clarifying the status of conscientious objectors; not on the basic morality of fighting the war in question.

A declaration made in 1950 by the Federal Council of Churches (in a policy that mirrored official and unofficial declarations by the mainline churches) underlined the differences between the mainline Protestants and the pacifists.

"The overwhelming majority of Christians...have held that there are times when Christians should take the sword and fight as very imperfect servants of God's justice. They have acknowledged their responsibilities not only for peace within the Church...but also for the maintenance of order and justice in civil society. There they have recognized the tragic necessity for coercive restraints on "the unruly wills and affections of sinful men", including their own. They have fought for what

devotion. There has not been a single exception within Christendom, not even in the case of civil war. The churches have sanctioned all wars and both sides of every civil war. Minorities have opposed all these wars, but in every case the majority has supported the war." Kirby Page, The Meek Shall Inherit the Earth, (La Habra, CA: Kirby Page, pamphlet undated), 16.

⁴ In 1940, in response to the growing crisis in Europe and Asia, the Methodist Church announced that the church could never again "endorse, support or participate in war." Joe Pender Dunn, The Church and the Cold War: Protestants and Conscription, 1940-1955, (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1973), 5

they believed was justice or good order or freedom, and against wanton aggression or enslavement."⁵

Reinhold Neibuhr explained that all good Christians hate war and the evils which result from war, and that good Christians should work to reduce international tension that could lead to conflicts. "But non-pacifist Christians reject the position of absolute pacifism because it distorts the Christian concept of love." He continued, "Justice is an instrument of love in a sinful society. To abandon it, whenever violence is involved, is irresponsible."⁶ Godly justice involves both punishing the wicked and creating the kind of society where righteousness is encouraged. According to Neibuhr and other mainline theologians, "The just war position gains strength from the consideration that the triumph of an unjust cause would defeat both the ends of justice and the future hope of peace."⁷ Mainline dogma asserted that governments were set up to maintain the order which is essential for a Christian society.⁸ To abandon those governments in their efforts to maintain order, even if by force, was seen as unchristian, short-sighted and dangerous.

⁵ The Federal Council, The Christian, 6-7.

⁶ Angus Dun and Reinhold Neibuhr, "God Wills Both Justice and Peace", Christianity and Crisis 15 (June 13, 1955), 75.

⁷ Dun and Neibuhr, "God Wills", 75.

⁸ Almost all Christians, including the pacifists, recognize the necessity for governments (be they secular or religious) to maintain the peace in society. To the Catholics and most of the Protestants these governments had to be given the power to enforce order "and this involved the use of force. So men came to see that force used for the maintaining of order and the safeguarding of freedom is not an evil thing. It is a good thing. If God were not strong as well as good the universe would fall into chaos. And if men of good will were without military strength, they would be overwhelmed completely by the evil forces of the world." Lynn Harold Hough, "Classical Christianity Confronts War", Christianity and Crisis 10, no. 19 (1950), 148.

The necessity of going to war did not, however, mean that war was God's doing or part of God's plan. Mainline doctrine stated that war always involves sin and that war is not necessary to fulfill God's purposes. God does, however, make use of war's disruption and despair for His own ends: "When man's disobedience brings war, God can transform it into a chastening of sinful, rebellious men and nations that defy his Lordship...God may turn war's waste of life, energy, and resources into a reminder of the folly of trusting in material things."⁹ War, or the threat of war, also did not justify an "anything goes" attitude toward the enemy. During World War II the mainline Protestants warned that being at war did not change a Christian's obligation to act Christ-like. "Churchmen should avoid building walls of hostility towards persons who reside in the land of the enemy," declared the Lutheran Church. "'Love your enemy' is a divine injunction."¹⁰

American Protestant leaders insisted that the United States had a special responsibility to conduct its foreign and military policy in a Christian manner. America was founded on Christian teachings, especially the necessity for tolerance and love. One of America's leading churchmen (and later the Secretary of State), John Foster Dulles, in 1949, reminded America that it was a Christian land:

"All students of United States history agree that our institutions became what they are, and our national

⁹ American Lutheran Church, War, Peace and Freedom, (Minneapolis, MN: Office of Church in Society, American Lutheran Church, 1966), 3.

¹⁰ American Lutheran Church, War, Peace, 6.

conduct has been what it was, primarily because of the religious views of our people respecting such matters as the nature of man, the moral law and the mission of men and nature...What has counted over the past, and what counts today is the powerhouse of faith and the transmission lines that connect faith and practices...nothing would be more dangerous and destructive than to have the present great material power of the United States rattling around in the world detached from the guiding direction of righteous faith...Some will probably be annoyed with what we do here and others will find it inconvenient to reckon with an opinion inspired by what we believe to be sources higher than government. But that is petty stuff, compared to the great fact that the American people do have a faith."¹¹

While most post-war literature reasserted the Christian right to use force when necessary, it also called for the judicious use of this power. All too often in the past, Protestant theologians warned, Christians had resorted to war before exhausting all other options, and lives were needlessly lost; wars of this type were not "just", and thus were sinful and should be resisted.¹² In the past that kind of

¹¹ "Dulles Calls for Peace Leadership By U.S.", Religious News Service, (March 4, 1949), Joseph Dawson Files, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 9. The debt of America to God for its creation, protection, and success has been a centerpiece of American Protestant doctrine since before the American Revolution. In the early post-WWII years most Protestant declarations relative to the war, to the peace process, to foreign policy, etc. reminded the readers of this debt. Among the numerous reminders to the American people of their debt to a Christian God is the one in the message from the Federal Council of Churches National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order: "As Christians we believe that this nation holds its power under the providence of God...We reject all interpretations of our destiny which would ascribe it merely historical accidents without moral or religious meaning." Message, unpublished proposal made to the plenary session of the National Study Conference, draft of proposal is dated March 11, 1949, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN, 1.

¹² For a good, concise history of the Christian use and abuse of war see Roland H. Bainton's "The Churches Shift on War", Religion in Life 12, no. 3, (Summer, 1943), 323-335.

impetuosity resulted in death, heartache and pain; but with the invention of nuclear weapons, an impatient rush to arms could result in the end of all human life. War, though defended as occasionally necessary, dared no longer be portrayed (as it often had been by Hollywood, writers, the media, politicians, and even history books) as romantic, patriotic or holy; at best it was a grim necessity.¹³

Following World War II, the mainline media's discouragement about war reflected the sentiment of the country as a whole, and these signs of American war-weariness worried many Europeans. At the end of World War I, the United States moved from jubilation to war-weariness, disillusionment, and then isolation. This change in the country's mood could be seen in the mainline churches. In 1919 the Federal Council of Churches urged America to take an inter-nationalist view of the world. The FCC and its members came out in favor of the Versailles Treaty and United States membership in the League of Nations.¹⁴ By the mid-1930s, however, the mainline Protestants had endorsed strict neutrality and some even supported pacifism.¹⁵ Most Protestant churches issued statements

¹³ Bainton, "The Churches", 335.

¹⁴ James L. Lancaster, "The Protestant Churches and the Fight for Ratification of the Versailles Treaty", Public Opinion Quarterly 31, no. 4 (Winter 1967-68), 597-619.

¹⁵ The pacifism of the mainline Protestants of the 1930's was a direct outgrowth of the idealism following the end of World War I. In 1924 the General Conference of the Methodist Church stated that "War is not inevitable. It is the supreme enemy of mankind. Its futility is beyond question. Its continuance is the suicide of civilization. We are determined to outlaw the whole war system." The 1924 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "World Peace," excerpt from the conference minutes found in the Methodist Church Archives, Drew University: Madison, NJ, 1924, 1. When Asia and Europe in the 1930's proved unwilling to follow America's lead

deploring Axis aggression and calling for American participation in international agencies that were working for the peaceful settlement of the controversies between nations, but they opposed policies that would push the United States into any conflict outside of the New World.¹⁶ The Episcopalians were not as isolationist and pacifist as the other Protestants, and the Southern Baptists supported U.S. rearmament and American involvement in the League of Nations; but no mainline Protestant faith publicly supported U.S. involvement in either the European or the Asian conflicts.¹⁷

The bombing of Pearl Harbor ended all mainline resistance to American involvement in the war. American soldiers and

in purging the world of war many religious and political leaders returned to America's Puritan roots. Many of the early Puritans and Separatists came to America to be isolated from and an example to Europe. Close interaction with Europe would corrupt the purity of the Puritan society and thus end its chance to be a city on a hill to Europe and the world. In the 1930's the language was similar. Europe and Asia could only be taught peaceful coexistence by the example of the United States. That hope would be lost if America too soiled its hands with blood and gunpowder. Isolation and pacifism were spoken of, not so much as a way to hide from the world's problems, but as a way to solve them by providing a very distinctive example of a better way. Harry Davis and Robert Good, editors, Reinhold Niebuhr on Politics, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 272-73.

¹⁶ One example of this is the American Baptist Convention's list of resolutions, drawn up in May, 1940. The declaration condemned "the ruthless invasion of helpless peoples by totalitarian powers, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, and we extend today to the democracies of the Old World, great and small, our sympathy in their ordeal" but "we register the stern opposition of this Convention to any intervention by the armed forces of the United States either in Europe or Asia." The resolutions also explicitly condemned war as a means of solving international disputes. "Excerpts From Resolutions of the American Baptist Convention Relating to War and Peace, 1940-1957," Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention File, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN, 1-2; Also see Footnote #4 for the Methodist Church's pre-World War II call for peace.

¹⁷ Alfred O. Hero Jr., American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank and File Opinion, 1937-1969 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1973), 159-60.

politicians were urged to act as Christians while prosecuting the war, however.¹⁸ The churches sought to protect members who declared themselves conscientious objectors, and they worked against all war-time government or military intrusions into the church; but support among the mainline faiths for America's involvement in the struggle against the Axis was unquestioned.¹⁹ "The issue is plain: It is Mein Kampf versus the Bible--Christianity

¹⁸ The Mainline Protestants only occasionally tried to alter the strategies of the military in combatting the war. One army policy that got a lot of attention from a number of well-known church leaders (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish alike) was the obliteration bombing campaign of Germany and Japan. The army was urged to use restraint when bombing near civilian areas. The churches themselves largely dealt with the question of obliteration bombing by urging that Christian principles guide those who were in charge. Roland H. Bainton, Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 232-33.

¹⁹ A war-era statement from the Northern Baptist Convention is indicative of the attitude of other Protestant Churches: "The church must be the church--not a recruiting agency for any government. She must build the morale and strengthen the foundations...She must companion her sons and daughters wherever as conscientious Christians they may go; to the battle front, to the ambulance corps, and to the camp for objectors. In no moment, however fraught with destiny for a cause, dare the church forget that she is an institution both human and divine, at once timeless and universal. The church must be the church and wherever the battle joins with evil...she must go with the message of Christ...In this war nearly a million of our Baptist youths are now engaged. The present is of all wars the most bestial. But while war itself is unholy, liberty and justice, brotherhood and human personality are most holy...when war is invoked against these holy things there is no alternative but to dedicate in their defense our lives, our treasure and that which is to us dearer than physical existence--the lives of our children...We do pray that our sons shall be adequate for their high hour, and that "with malice toward none and charity for all" we, with them, shall bring that "last full measure" to win the war and to achieve Christian ideals in the peacetime relations of the peoples of the earth. We will not bless war, but we will not withhold our blessing from our sons who fight and from our country's cause in which they, with the sons of the Allied Nations, now engage." American Baptist Resolution which was adopted on May 26, 1944 in Atlantic City, NJ. Resolution part of a document published by the American Baptist Convention entitled: "Excerpts From Resolutions of the American Baptist Convention Relating to War and Peace 1940-1957," Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention Files, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 8.

or heathen tribalism." declared the Disciples of Christ . The Methodists proclaimed that "God himself has a stake in the struggle." The cautious Federal Council of Churches issued a mild statement of support for the war effort but allowed the peace churches to offer a contradictory minority view.²⁰

The sudden reversal of church policy about war following the bombing of Pearl Harbor appears somewhat hypocritical for an organization that claims to be more concerned with eternal and lasting values than with current politics. But there was some consistency in these different church declarations. The mainline Protestants have never opposed the use of force in defending their lives, homes and property. In World War II, America was attacked, first by the Japanese in Hawaii, and then by the Germans along the East Coast in the U-boat war. The churches moderated their previous anti-war statements by urging America to stay out of other countries' wars. With Pearl Harbor, World War II became America's war as well. It should also be mentioned that the church leaders were not fools. It would have been suicide for a mainline church to oppose something as universally popular as America's involvement in World War II. Marginal churches, like the Quakers, could afford to be pacifists in the face of the country's overwhelming desire to fight, because they never claimed to represent a large segment of the population. But the mainline churches have always been far more cosmopolitan in their membership, and to take a position alien to such a large portion of

²⁰ Dunn, The Church, 5-6.

their members would have seriously reduce the effectiveness and the membership of the churches.

As the war drew to a close, the churches became active in planning the post-war world. Protestant leaders vigorously promoted organizations like the United Nations that were pledged to keep the world peaceful. The churches were also active in their efforts to provide post-war assistance to the defeated countries (as well as war-wracked allies and neutrals) so that the wounds of the war could heal as quickly as possible. As early as 1941, the Federal Council's Commission on a Just and Durable Peace began working to ensure that peace would have a chance once the war was over. To guarantee that the mistakes made in the wake of World War I were not repeated after World War II, church leaders embraced the United Nations and opposed any post-war return to isolation. The Southern Baptist Convention in 1944 declared, "'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' is a condemnation of the policy of isolation on the part of any nation. No nation is justified in seeking to separate itself from the rest of the world--its needs, its problems or its life. We are inevitably members one of another."²¹

The end of the war brought a new concern--nuclear weapons. On August 9, 1945 (the day of the Nagasaki explosion), the president of the Federal Council of Churches (G. Bromley Oxnam) and the chairman of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace

²¹ **The Southern Baptist Convention, Statements on World Peace by the Southern Baptist Convention (Nashville, TN: Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, pamphlet is undated), Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention Files, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN), 1.**

(John Foster Dulles) issued a statement deploring the use of the atomic bomb and pleading for the United States to drop no further atomic weapons. The two stated that if "we, a professedly Christian nation, feel morally free to use atomic energy in that way, men elsewhere will accept the verdict. Atomic weapons will be looked upon as a normal part of the arsenal of war, and the stage will be set for the sudden and final destruction of mankind."²²

In a handwritten response to the two leaders President Truman admitted that he, too, was disturbed by the use of the bomb but he was also disturbed by the attack on Pearl Harbor and by the treatment of U.S. prisoners of war by the Japanese. "When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast. It is most regrettable but nevertheless true," insisted the president.²³ Japan's quick surrender following Nagasaki ended the immediate concern over dropping more bombs. Oxnam and Dulles gave public thanks that no further atomic weapons were to be used. Some individuals in the government and the churches claimed that the restraint shown by the United States in dropping only two atom bombs on Japan regained for it some of the moral authority that it lost when it dropped the bomb.²⁴

Other church leaders were not quite so positive about America's morality. The Christian Century, one of the leading non-denominational Protestant journals, editorialized that America "should now be standing in penitence before the Creator of the

²² Mark Silk, Spiritual Politics, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 23.

²³ Silk, Spiritual, 24

²⁴ Silk, Spiritual, 24.

power which the atom has hitherto kept inviolate, using what may be our last opportunity to learn the lost secret of peace on earth." Shortly thereafter a group of thirty-four prominent clergymen denounced the bomb as "an atrocity of a new magnitude," stating that its "reckless and irresponsible employment against an already beaten foe will have to receive judgment before God and the conscience of humankind. It has our unmitigated condemnation."²⁵ A Federal Council of Churches commission on atomic warfare (including such prominent Protestant leaders as Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett) reported the following in March, 1946:

"[T]he surprise bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are morally indefensible....They were loosed without specific warning, under conditions which virtually assured the deaths of 100,000 civilians...Both bombings, moreover, must be judged to have been unnecessary for winning the war. Japan's strategic position was already hopeless....Even though the use of the new weapon may well have shortened the war, the moral cost was too high. As the power that first used the atomic bomb under these circumstances, we have sinned grievously against the laws of God and the people of Japan."²⁶

Because the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki could not be changed, most official mainline church pronouncements avoided direct condemnation of the bombings and focused instead on finding ways to make sure that the bomb would never be used again. The Presbyterian Outlook editorialized that it was good that

²⁵ Silk, Spiritual, 24.

²⁶ Policies on International Relations Adopted in the Annual Meeting of the Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church, (document dated Nov. 13-14, 1946), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 4.

the first country to develop the bomb was one that was still governed by principles of righteousness but then added, "Our nation has yet to prove to God and to mankind that the nation is morally and spiritually prepared to be trusted with the discovery of atomic power...It is only as America catches the spirit of Jesus that she can be trusted with the knowledge of atomic power."²⁷

Building a world that would never again resort to the evil of atomic weapons became the primary foreign policy goal of the Protestant American churches following the war. In an address before the Federal Council of Churches on March 6, 1946, President Truman said as much:

"When the sages and the scientists, the philosophers and the statesman, have all exhausted their studies of atomic energy, one solution and only one solution will remain--the substitution of decency and reason and brotherhood for the rule of force in the government of man....That is the great task for you teachers of religious faith....The Protestant Church, the Catholic Church, and the Jewish Synagogue--bound together in the American unity of brotherhood--must provide the shock forces to accomplish this moral and spiritual awakening. No other agency can do it. Unless it is done, we are headed for the disaster we

²⁷ Holmes Rolston, "The Atomic Bomb and Fire From Heaven", The Presbyterian Outlook (September 17, 1945), 9. The Protestant media frequently rejoiced that the only nation with nuclear weapons was the Christian United States who would hopefully use the power of the weapons more judiciously than would the non-Christian communist countries. However there was some concern was not the best choice among nations to be the sole owner of atomic power. "We have been vaulted with incredible speed into our present position of responsibility. Inexperience in power exposes our nation to the further danger of using that power awkwardly and thus, even without intent, aggressively. This danger would be aggravated should we succumb to arrogance." Message, unpublished proposal, 2.

would deserve. Oh for an Isaiah or a Saint Paul to reawaken this sick world to its moral responsibilities!"²⁸

Working for peace took on a missionary zeal. The only way to ensure that there would be no World War III was to convert mankind to the principles of Christianity. The Episcopalian magazine, The Living Church, editorialized, "The Churches have the duty of declaring moral principles which obedience to God requires in war as well as in peace....It is the duty of the Christian to pray for all men, especially those in authority, to combat hatred, support negotiation, and to sustain such national policies (that) in his judgment best reflect Christian principles."²⁹ The Episcopal Church's official stance mirrored that statement: "Christianity alone can lead this generation to that peace which is essential to its preservation....Modern science has no substitute for the last element in the equation, Christian workers of consecration, endurance and unwavering faith."³⁰

Other Protestants called for Christian missionary zeal in converting the world to Christian principles, including the Church

²⁸ Public Papers of the Presidents, Harry S. Truman, 1946, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), 142.

²⁹ "The World Council of Churches, An Editorial Summary", The Living Church 117, no. 16 (October 17, 1948), 5.

³⁰ Journal of the General Convention, 1946, (document dated September, 1946), Protestant Episcopal Church Archives, University of the South, Sewanee, TN, 458. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Reverend Henry Tucker, added that, "The Church's first contribution to the attainment of our post-war aims is to make an organized and united effort to bring the multitudes who wander as sheep having no shepherd into such contact with Christ that He may effect in them that radical change which is described as a new birth....If the branches of the Christian Church can measure up to this ideal, they will make a contribution of inestimable value to the solution of the problem of world unity." Henry St. George Tucker, "Four Fronts For Peace", The Living Church 112, no. 8, (February 24, 1946), 17.

Peace Mission which warned that if the world reverted to its pre-war methods of diplomacy (power politics and secret deals), there would soon be widespread nuclear war which would render the planet uninhabitable. To avoid Armageddon, the Peace Mission called on the West to follow the principles of the Savior when remaking the post-war world. "There is no agency in sight except the Church to serve as the channel of new vision and power from above," the Peace Mission wrote. "In an age such as ours, all hope is gone if there is no Church above the conflicts that are ravaging mankind, and which in the name of Christ asserts moral authority over men and nations."³¹ The Federal Council of Churches called on the statesmen of the world to project Christian principles into all treaties of peace and thus into the post-war world.³² The World Council of Churches urged the various Christian denominations to "not weary in the effort to state the Christian understanding of the will of God and to promote its application to national and international policy."³³ The Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church wrote: "We have trusted in international law to reduce the horrors and eliminate in a measure the cruelties of war, but war grows only more hideous and destructive. The time is at hand when the Church must rise in its might....Since the Church in a unique way holds in its keeping the moral and spiritual forces

³¹ The Christian Conscience and War, (New York: The Church Peace Mission, 1953), 32-33.

³² "The Churches and World Order, Report of the Section on World Order, Federal Council of Churches", The Living Church 112, no. 12 (March 24, 1946), 21.

³³ First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, (Geneva, Switz.: World Council of Churches, 1948), 60.

needed for a peaceful world, the Church has a unique and God-given responsibility."³⁴ The Presbyterian General Assembly made a similar declaration: "The material strength of a nation is not its ultimate strength but rather depends upon its obedience to God's revelation in Jesus Christ."³⁵ Similar statements were made by all the mainline Protestant faiths and in most of the Protestant publications in the years following World War II.³⁶

Despite the constant call for peace and negotiation, the churches did not return to their pre-war interest in pacifism. The Southern Baptist Report from the Committee on World Peace moderated the Baptist cry for peace with the statement: "These resolutions should not be interpreted as committing Southern Baptists to pacifism. Until the nations agree upon effective means for peaceable settlement of international disputes or until the nations agree upon an effective plan of disarmament, our government must maintain military preparedness."³⁷ The National

³⁴ The Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church, Statement Adopted as a Memorial to the General Conference on the Church, War, and Peace, (document presented and adopted by the Methodist General Conference at its March 8-9, 1948 meeting in Evanston, IL), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1-2.

³⁵ The Council on Christian Relations, "Speaking for God The Prophetic Role of the Church", (an excerpt of the Report that was approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1958), Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Church Files, Southern Baptist Archives, Nashville, TN, 15.

³⁶ A 1949 National Study Conference on the question of peace summarized the issue this way. "In proclaiming the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the world, the Christian Church will be faithful to its primary mission of bringing men to God in Jesus Christ and will contribute substantially to a moral climate in which a world of independent nations can grow into a unity of justice, order, and brotherhood." Message, Proposal to the, 5

³⁷ "Report of Committee on World Peace", (copy of 1960 report to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 2.

Study Conference on the Churches and World Order "urged the United States to maintain sufficient military strength to convince Soviet Russia that she cannot impose the Communist ideology by terror and tyranny".³⁸

Two international Christian peace conferences that were held after World War II in Amsterdam and in Oxford reaffirmed that wars could still be considered just if they were undertaken to establish or enforce international law. This qualification was put forward by church leaders speaking out for American involvement in the Korean conflict. It was the United Nations (the organization set up to enforce international law), not the United States, which accused North Korea of violating international law; thus America's efforts to end the North Korean aggression, they argued, was sanctioned by international law.³⁹

In an effort to promote international fellowship, the Protestant leadership encouraged exchanges between the Soviet Union and the United States. This became increasingly difficult, in part because the Soviet Union shut itself off from the west following the war, but also because any group in the United States that promoted Soviet-American friendship during the HUAC/McCarthy period risked the charge of being a Soviet front.

³⁸ "Churchmen Ask People Be Given to Study Atlantic Pact", Religious News Service, (March 11, 1949), 12.

³⁹ The Oxford Conference also asserted that a war can be declared a just war if it is "waged to vindicate what they believe to be an essential Christian principle: to defend the victims of wanton aggression, or to secure freedom for the oppressed." Dun and Neibuhr, "God Wills", 77.

During World War II, the Soviet government relaxed its control over the Russian churches but repression soon returned. After the war, as the government slowly tightened its grip, most of the initial religious restrictions fell upon the Catholic Church. Relations between the Vatican and the Kremlin had always been strained and it was not surprising that Catholicism was the first church to have its freedoms limited.

The Soviet government did not clamp down as quickly on the Russian Protestant churches. By 1947 the Catholic ministers in the Soviet Union were under siege, and communication between them and the Vatican was becoming difficult. But the ties between the American and the Russian Protestants were still strong enough that in 1947 the American Baptist Convention publicly praised the Soviet leadership for allowing the continued free exercise of religion. They also passed a resolution encouraging western churches to "make special efforts to create a better understanding of Russia through an exchange of correspondence, discussion groups, conferences, lectures, literature and study courses; and that they cooperate actively with the Inter-Church Committee of the American Russian Institute in a constructive program of building more friendly relationships with Russia."⁴⁰ Most mainline leaders and publications called for close integration and cooperation between Protestants east and west. Missionaries, church leaders and aid workers still crossed the borders separating the two sides.

⁴⁰ "Excerpts from Resolutions, American Baptist Convention, 11.

In 1948, in conjunction with the communist coup that took over the Czechoslovakian government, the Soviet government removed free-thinking Protestant clerics in the Soviet Union and satellite states and severed the ties between the eastern and western churches. In 1948 the Russian Orthodox Church declined to send any representatives to an interfaith Christian conference in Amsterdam, and the Eastern European Protestants dispatched only a few representatives. Later in the year, the communist countries declined to send any representatives to the World Council of Churches annual meeting in Toronto.

Visits from Eastern European clergy to the west became rare, and their primary purpose seemed to be the espousal of communist dogma. Western clergymen who visited Eastern Europe had their travel closely monitored, and their trips were also primarily used for propaganda purposes. By 1950 matters had reached such an impasse that the Episcopal Church gloried in the fact that it still maintained one line of communication with the Eastern churches. Unlike most western faiths, the Anglican leadership still had a direct (though undoubtedly censored) line of communication between the archbishop of Canterbury and the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church.⁴¹

Free and open communication became riskier in the United States (though certainly not to the same degree as in the Soviet Union) around the same time. In 1949 the Cleveland Conference on Churches and the World Order still felt safe in declaring, "No

⁴¹ "Canterbury and Moscow", The Living Church 120, no. 10 (September 3, 1950), 7.

attempt should be made by our government or any non-Communist government to destroy Communist institutions or to interfere with the right of any nation to choose freely its own form of political or economic organization." At that same conference, the following resolution was also adopted: "'Hysteria' in regard to Communism should end, and some methods of the former Un-American Activities Committees should be condemned and discontinued."⁴²

But by 1952 those promoting friendship and closer relations with the Soviet Union ran the risk of being investigated by the House or Senate un-American activities committees. The National and World Council of Churches were branded by some (including many in the American Protestant community) as communist dupes for trying to work with the Soviet Union. Critics pointed to the close relationship maintained by leaders in the World Council with Joseph Hromadka (a Czechoslovakian clergyman who was said to be Stalin's mouthpiece in the religious community) as proof that the World Council had communist leanings.⁴³

⁴² "Churchmen Ask", Religious, 13. Resolutions by the Protestant Churches urging U.S.-Soviet cooperation were common in the late-1940's. One example: "We, the delegates to the 56th General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, do herewith call upon our government to make ceaseless efforts through statesmanlike negotiation, to effect real and lasting reconciliation with the Soviet Union." Untitled document dated March, 1949 located in the Protestant Episcopal Church Archives, University of the South, Sewanee, TN, 333; Even as late as 1951 several of the churches were still bold enough to introduce a resolution in the Senate declaring America's friendship for all peoples, including those of the Soviet Union. "Our Greatest Need", The Living Church 122, no. 8 (February 5, 1951), 14.

⁴³ Macel D. Ezell, The Evangelical Protestant Defense of Americanism, 1945-1960, (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 1969), 167.

Throughout the 1950s the World Council was accused of being a tool of the communists.⁴⁴ In truth, that body was fairly moderate in most of its declarations. It was the largest Christian inter-faith council in the world (in 1954 the World Council represented nearly 200,000,000 Christians, most of whom were Protestants but also included some Eastern Orthodox and a few other small sects), and as a representative of so many diverse ideologies, it was compelled to stay close to the center. As often as the World Council was accused of aiding the communists, it was assaulted from the left for being under the control of imperialistic governments and using its money and influence to try and buy the support of the Eastern Orthodox Church. T.C. Chao of China had been a vice-president of the Council but resigned saying that when he heard the voice of the organization he heard "the voice of Wall Street."⁴⁵

In 1954 the Council held its annual meeting in Evanston, Illinois. Eleven Czechoslovakian and Hungarian delegates (including Hromadka) attended and were picketed almost everywhere they went. Upon their return to Eastern Europe, several of the delegates castigated the United States, describing the horrors of American life and the savagery of the press. Stories filled Eastern European newspapers of how the American secret police and the state department shadowed the delegates and continually stirred up

⁴⁴ The council had been a leader in promoting exchanges between the east and west. Conservatives accused the Council of giving the communists access to the west and thus promoting subversion and propaganda. Ralph Lord Roy, Communism and the Churches (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1960), 263-64.

⁴⁵ Roy, Communism and, 263-64.

trouble for them.⁴⁶ What few visits there were between east and west church delegations between 1949 and 1955 largely ended in the manner of the Evanston controversy--stirring up more hostility than good will.

In the Soviet Union, Stalin's death, secret police chief Beria's execution, and Khrushchev's rise to power; and in the United States the fall of Senator McCarthy started a thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations. Cultural exchanges between East and West began anew, came to a halt with the Hungarian Revolt in October 1956, and then became more commonplace. In 1955 several groups of Baptists and Quakers were allowed to visit the Soviet Union, and in March 1956 a number of American church leaders were invited to the Soviet Union. The visitors discovered that the churches in Russia were still alive but had little influence or freedom. The Soviet press used the visits to spread its propaganda.⁴⁷

In June 1956 eight Russian church officials accepted an invitation by the World Council of Churches to visit America. As during the Evanston visit in 1954, the churchmen were met by hecklers and pickets at most of their stops. Ironically the warmest greeting that they received was at a dinner held in their honor at the center of world capitalism--Wall Street.⁴⁸

By 1961 relations had improved enough between East and West that the Russian Orthodox Church was accepted into full membership in the World Council of Churches. Mainline Protestant

⁴⁶ Roy, Communism and, 265-67.

⁴⁷ Roy, Communism and, 267-69.

⁴⁸ Roy, Communism and, 269-70.

literature and resolutions again (as they had in the 1940s) called for more interaction and cooperation between America and the Soviet Union and especially between the churches of each country. One example of this was the General Council of the Presbyterian Church of the United States' call in the year 1962 for "all Presbyterians to seek out opportunities to widen their world friendships. Visitors to America should find in us recognition, acceptance, and understanding."⁴⁹

Even during the Korean War, arguably the darkest period of U.S.-Soviet relations, the mainline Protestants urged negotiation and friendship with the Soviets rather than hostility and mistrust. The Reverend Dr. Edward Dahlberg, president of the National Council of Churches, summed up the challenge to the churches this way: "The international watchword of the last few years has been massive retaliation. It has been the feverish philosophy of bomb for bomb, rocket for rocket...The gospel of Jesus Christ knows nothing of retaliation. When Jesus was reviled he reviled not again....The task of the Christian church, therefore, if we would be faithful to the express command of the Lord, must be one of massive reconciliation. It must be reconciliation on a world scale. It can not be just a patch-work business of making up petty little quarrels here and there."⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. General Assembly, 1962, Part I, (Philadelphia: Office of the General Assembly, 1962), 422-23.

⁵⁰ Edwin T. Dahlberg, "The Task Before Us", (Undated address given by Dahlberg before the President's Luncheon at the National Council of Churches), Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention File, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 1.

Both the Protestant and secular press (as well as some political leaders and many in the rank and file) accused the mainline leaders of being naive, unrealistic, utopian, or just plain stupid in their approach to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, church declarations continued to dismiss rigid anti-communism as apocalyptic and unfair, and continued urging negotiations. The national Protestant leadership maintained a consistently liberal, and occasionally even radical, voice on the question of foreign relations. Church leaders would remain one of the most consistent and vocal cold war critics.⁵¹ Alfred O. Hero's study of American public opinion in the post-war period asserts that from the 1930's onward the mainline churches devoted more resolutions, background papers, and other public utterances to peace and foreign policy than to any other area of public policy and "with few exceptions, the FCC, the NCC, their affiliated denominations, and most national Protestant or ecumenical periodicals have generally advocated multilateral, internationalist, or liberal post-war foreign policies."⁵²

⁵¹ Dunn, The Church, 38.

⁵² Hero, American Religious, 158, 161. Hero later states that the principle denominations that differed from the rule that the Protestants were more concerned with foreign policy than any other area of public policy were the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods of the Lutheran Church, the Southern Baptists, and some of the smaller fundamentalist sects. These groups were more conservative and concentrated more on domestic issues (everything from alcohol, gambling and education to interpretations of the Bible as it relates to public policy). When making statements about foreign policy these conservative sects tended to be more cautious than the mainline churches in dealings with the communists. The Southern Baptists, conservative Lutherans, and fundamentalists were usually less enthusiastic about negotiations with, trade or economic assistance to communist countries than were the Methodists, Presbyterians, Northern Baptists, American Lutherans or the United Church of Christ. Hero, p.163, 174, 176.

Much of what the churches did to promote peace was to talk about it. Many resolutions were passed by church councils urging the government to negotiate whenever possible. There were numerous calls for peace and negotiation, such as that given by the Methodist Church's Board of World Peace, which stated that the duty of the church was "to create the will to peace...to help create the conditions of peace...to help create the organization for peace...to organize effective action in the church for the advancement of peace."⁵³

The National Council of Churches urged member churches to encourage the government to "explore every honorable alternative to war. Believers in a God of love cannot concede that war is inevitable."⁵⁴ The Commission on Christian Social Relations of the Episcopal Church stated, "The very realistic men in the Kremlin presumably are no more anxious to have Moscow obliterated than we are to lose New York...It may well be that the situation created by the threat to the world, including Russia, implicit in the H-bomb...would lead Russia to join with us in serious negotiations to end the cold war."⁵⁵ The Cleveland World Order Study Conference (composed of the leading Protestant Church leaders) urged "a rejection of the 'posture of general hostility' toward the communist

⁵³ "Report of the Executive Secretary-Functions and Activities, to the Board of World Peace of the Methodist Church at its Annual Meeting November 17-19, 1953," Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1-2.

⁵⁴ "The National Council of Churches Views its Task in Christian Life and Work May, 1951," document located in "Psychological Strategy Board" File, Box 1, President Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO, 10.

⁵⁵ Reverend Leland B. Henry, "Program For Peace", The Living Church 120, no. 19 (May 7, 1950), 13-14.

countries and an end to the government's effort to drive every nation into one bloc or the other."⁵⁶ And the American Baptist Convention resolved "that nations renew their renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, that they emphasize negotiations at all levels, and that they engage in an ever-more intensive research for 'the things that make for peace'."⁵⁷

The mainline Protestant community was divided over the necessity of using the bomb against Japan, but was solid in its desire that nuclear weapons never again be used against human targets. A cartoon appeared in the Baptist magazine Crusader in 1948 that shows an American family praying. In the background is a mushroom cloud with the words 'August 6 Hiroshima' written on it. The cartoon's caption reads "God, forgive our common guilt and train our minds for peace."⁵⁸

When the Soviet Union detonated its first atom bomb in 1949, the debate in the United States over the control of nuclear power became far more urgent. The number of organizations devoted to peace and disarmament increased (including peace groups formed by scientists, students, teachers, businessmen, and other social and professional associations) in order to reduce the threat of nuclear war. The churches played a major role in many of these groups:

⁵⁶ Geraldine Sartain, "Christian Responsibility on a Changing Planet", (Reprint of an article by the same name in the National Council Outlook, December, 1958; Reprint produced by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America, New York), 1.

⁵⁷ Resolutions adopted by the American Baptist Convention, (New York: Council on Christian Social Progress, American Baptist Convention, 1959), 14.

⁵⁸ "Peace Drive Begins", Crusader 3, no. 3, (Summer, 1948), 3.

"Today it is not only official spokesmen of religion who call on men to save human society by living with one another in the spirit of religion. This warning summons... (is) echoed by leading thinkers in colleges, laboratories, legislatures and great offices. In impressive union they bid us control our anti-social instincts and amoral intellectual-ism by a religiously inspired social morality...They tell us that technology and the fantastically triumphant machine must be guided by the spiritual truths of religion if human life is not to become a delirious nightmare."⁵⁹

While the peace movements insisted that the road to greater security was to be found through negotiation and multilateral disarmament, others claimed that security could only be achieved by out-building the Soviet Union in weapons. A number of politicians made names (and careers) for themselves by calling for a dramatic increase in America's power to destroy, while other careers were lost by virtue of appeals for disarmament. The mainline churches consistently stated that America's true security depended on negotiation and not bigger and better arms: "The truth of the matter is that the United States can never be safe until Soviet Russia is also safe."⁶⁰ Other church declarations added, "The H-bomb cannot be considered in isolation...An agreement with Russia, to be worth the paper it is written on, must be directed not

⁵⁹ David De Sola Pool, "Religion--The Cornerstone of Lasting Peace", Article in A Spiritual Approach, (The Report of), 27; The Federal Council asserted that the churches had the right and needed to be leading the country and the government closer to peace. "While reaffirming our belief in the separation of church and state, we believe also that the Christian Church has the inescapable duty to focus attention upon the moral responsibilities of government in its conduct of affairs at home and abroad." Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, Third National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, (New York: Federal Council of Churches, 1949), 38

⁶⁰ Page, The Meek, 23.

merely toward the control of a single weapon, but toward ending the cold war."⁶¹ Disarmament was necessary to reduce the chance of an accidental (or intentional) nuclear war.

But fear of a nuclear war was not the only reason for advocating disarmament. Peacetime military expenditures were at an all-time high, and the mainline denominations noted that they were threatening to destabilize the economy. "Federal military expenditures under present circumstances are likely to have a destabilizing and strongly inflationary effect on an already unstable and inflation-prone economy...There are few kinds of governmental expenditures that are more inherently inflationary than military expenditures."⁶² The military buildup was also allegedly diverting funds needed for food, homes and infrastructure to bombs. This would not only affect the United States and the Soviet Union but other, more destitute, countries which would direct scarce resources into arms to avoid falling further behind the superpowers. As with the universal military training controversy the churches also feared that a rapid military build-up would give the military too much power in American society. Turning larger and larger percentages of the federal budget over to the military would only increase the military's control over American thought and behavior.

⁶¹ Henry, "Program", 13.

⁶² To Make Peace, The Report on the Joint Commission on Peace, Episcopal Church, (report covered the Episcopal Church's post-war stands on peace. Cincinnati: The Joint Commission on Peace, 1985), Episcopal Church Archives, University of the South, Sewanee, TN, 15. Also see The Methodist Church Officially Acts on War and Peace, (Statements of the General Conference and of the Council of Bishops of the Methodist Church, Minneapolis: General Conference of the Methodist Church, 1956), 7.

Following Hiroshima there were many ban the bomb articles in the religious press.⁶³ The Federal Council of Churches in 1946 recommended that atomic energy be brought under United Nations control. The explosion of the hydrogen bomb in 1950 intensified the campaign.⁶⁴ U.N. regulation of atomic power meant international inspection of nuclear reactors and weapons facilities. The churches did not ignore the fact that international inspection and control would result in a loss of American power, but they insisted that the country should sacrifice some sovereignty for the

⁶³ The Commission on World Peace of the Methodist Church stated it the most succinctly. "We ask for the cessation of the manufacture of atomic bombs by the United States." Policies on International, Methodist Church Archives, 1.

⁶⁴ Dunn, The Church, 11. Every mainline church passed resolutions calling for disarmament talks and nuclear weapons testing. The American Baptist Convention in 1956 stated, "We urge that the United States Government stop hydrogen bomb testing." The Church of the Brethren said, "We petition our government to announce as its own goal that it seriously seeks to reach agreements looking toward universal disarmament." The Congregational Church declared that "we urge our government to intensify its leadership in the effort to achieve a substantial reduction in armaments." The Disciples of Christ called on "our government to take an active position for leadership in all noble efforts toward universal disarmament." The Church of Christ urged "the Federal Government to continue its efforts to achieve effective international control of nuclear weapons." A more complete list of Protestant declarations on disarmament and nuclear weapons testing can be found in A Collation of Representative Actions By Member Denominations on Subjects Included in the Proposed Statement on 'The Churches' Concerns in Policies Related to the Control of Space and Armaments (Compiled by the Department of International Affairs, New York: National Council of Churches, 1958). Prominent church leaders also frequently signed on to non-sectarian calls for disarmament. One of the more widely broadcast efforts was by a coalition of 83 scientists, religious leaders, educators, labor leaders and others who called for an end to "to all nuclear weapons tests which can be detected by a United Nations monitoring agency." They further called on the United States to take the lead in a renewed effort towards world-wide disarmament. Included among the signers of this appeal were Reinhold Neibuhr, John C. Bennett, Edwin Dahlberg, and Walter Reuther. "Prominent Citizens Support Eisenhower Effort for First Step Disarmament Agreement. Stress Need to End Nuclear Weapons Tests." (Press release dated July 8, 1957), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 1.

sake of international trust.⁶⁵ The hope was that greater openness would lead to increased trust which would result in arms reductions. Reduced tension between the nuclear powers would then translate into reduced tension in other parts of the world. Hostilities in the Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent, the Orient, and Africa would be starved out if not fueled by the paranoia and arms of the superpowers.⁶⁶

Some of the peace movements called on the government to guarantee that the United States would never be the first to use nuclear weapons in war.⁶⁷ A declaration of that sort was usually characterized by politicians as financially unwise. It would be very expensive for America to match the Soviet Union's build-up of conventional forces; threatening nuclear retaliation against a conventional attack was far less expensive. The credibility of this threat relied on the willingness to respond first with nuclear weapons. Some American politicians paid lip service to a no first strike pledge, but no such policy was ever implemented. The Soviet Union, seeing the propaganda value of such a pledge, did declare a no first strike nuclear policy.

Among the Protestants, only the "peace" churches (Quakers, Mennonites, etc.) publicly advocated such liberal policies as the 'no

⁶⁵ For a discussion of this issue see Resolutions Adopted by the Northern Baptist Convention (New York: American Baptist Convention, 1950), 7

⁶⁶ Christian Responsibility on a Changing Planet (Report of the Fifth World Order Study Conference, New York: The National Council of Churches of Christ, 1958), 32-33.

⁶⁷ The pacifist churches often sought government assurances that the United States would never be the first to launch nuclear weapons but the mainline Protestants did not.

first strike' policy or unilateral disarmament (reducing armaments as a sign of good faith without having a guarantee that the Soviet Union would do likewise). The mainline churches and media never insisted that the United States disarm unilaterally. On the contrary, the churches usually coupled their calls for peace with appeals for preparedness. In 1950 the Federal Council declared

"We believe that American military strength, which must include atomic weapons as long as any other nation may possess them, is an essential factor in the possibility of preventing both world war and tyranny. If atomic weapons or other weapons of parallel destructiveness are used against us or our friends in Europe or Asia, we believe that could be justifiable for our government to use them in retaliation."⁶⁸

The Southern Baptists and the Episcopalians were especially adamant that it would be foolhardy and dangerous for the United States to fall behind in the race for superior weapons technology.⁶⁹

Pacifist elements within the Methodist, Congregationalist, Northern Baptist, and Northern Presbyterian denominations convinced their general church councils to debate resolutions calling for unilateral American disarmament (or for a no first strike nuclear policy), but they were not able to get them adopted. One

⁶⁸ "The Ugly Thing", The Living Church 121, no. 23 (December 3, 1950), 12-13

⁶⁹ For example The Living Church, an Episcopal publication, editorialized that America had to follow the counsel of people like Bernard Baruch who urged America to remain on the forefront of weapons technology. The editorial went on to say "We hope that such counsel as that of Bernard Baruch will prevail, so that if world war flares anew America may not be caught napping, as she was in 1941 and again, we fear, in June of 1950. Even now, with nearly half our combat forces locked in a life-and-death struggle in Korea, we are dangerously unprepared to meet what ever eventuality may come next; and we must be prepared if the free nations are to survive." "No Peace in Our Time", The Living Church 121, no. 7 (August 15, 1950), 10

example of this was the United Presbyterian General Assembly, where an amendment was proposed that would have the church call on the U.S. government "to stop now" the testing of nuclear weapons. Following a lengthy debate, the amendment was defeated by a vote of 516-480. The Council then compromised by passing a resolution that called on all nations to work together to end the armaments race.⁷⁰

Among the advocates of preparedness was Reinhold Niebuhr. The famed theologian held that because governments had the right to declare war to ensure justice and order, it also, by necessity, needed to build weapons. "Could we risk letting the Russians have the bombs while we are without them? The answer is that no

⁷⁰ "Presbyterians Ask Halt to Armaments Race", Religious News Service, (June 5, 1958), 4. Another example of this was an effort by pacifist ministers Dean Walter Muelder and Kirby Page to get leading American Protestants to sign onto a letter urging the U. S. government to promise to never again use nuclear or biological weapons, to stop production of all such weapons, and to destroy all existing stockpiles of atomic weapons. The response from the Protestant leadership was weak enough that Page and Muelder dropped the idea. Letter entitled "My dear Mr. Dawson:", dated April 10th (no year given), Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Church Archives, Nashville, TN; Many of the more pacifist-minded ministers went outside of the official church councils and wrote in other forums to get their ideas heard. A multi-denominational group called the Church Peace Mission was organized to bring together individuals who opposed America's continued production of nuclear weapons. In their pamphlet A Christian Approach to Nuclear War they urged the United States government to immediately, unilaterally destroy all of its nuclear weapons. In response to the concern that doing so would allow the Soviet Union to enslave the United States the pamphlet stated "An ordeal of this sort could not be as acute and meaningless a form of suffering as that bound to occur in an eruption of atomic warfare...The risk of enslavement at the hands of another nation is not so fearful a thing as the risk of effacing the image of God in man through wholesale adoption of satanic means to defend national existence or even truth." Church Peace Mission, A Christian Approach to Nuclear War (New York: Church Peace Mission, pamphlet is undated), pamphlet located in "Church Peace Mission" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville, AR, 10-12

responsible statesman will risk putting his nation in that position of defenselessness."⁷¹

Although the mainline churches recognized the necessity of arms production, they did not support the use of them in an offensive war. Some prominent Americans (one being General George Patton) insisted that the United States should destroy the Soviet Union while America was still more militarily powerful.⁷² The Protestant media and clergy called that idea sinful and catastrophic. The Federal Council declared "we must put behind us as a satanic temptation the dangerous idea of a 'preventative war,' which is closely bound up with the faithless and defeatist idea that war is inevitable...No nation which subordinates national policy to moral purpose can think of beginning a general war, however uncomfortable and frustrating the present situation is..."⁷³ Oxnam, Dulles, Neibuhr and most other Protestant leaders warned against any consideration of a preventive attack. Neibuhr (one of the most vocal proponents of the idea of a just war) and Angus Dun declared that "the concept of a just war does not provide moral justification for initiating a war of incalculable consequences..."⁷⁴

⁷¹ Reinhold Neibuhr, editor, Harry Davis, 146-47

⁷² If the Protestant media is to be believed there was a large and growing segment of the American population that wanted a war with the Soviet Union while the United States was still dominant, or that was defeatist and had already given into the idea that World War III was inevitable so let it come. Articles which examines this attitude include: "A-Bomb for Korea?", The Living Church 121, no. 4 (July 23, 1950), 10; "Must We Have War?", The Living Church 116, no. 15 (April 11, 1948), 13-14

⁷³ "The Ugly", The Living, 13

⁷⁴ Dun and Neibuhr, "God Wills", 78; The Episcopalian magazine The Living Church, declared itself in complete agreement with Prime Minister St. Laurent of Canada who explained his opposition to a possible preventative war against the Soviet Union by saying: "If we are to preserve civilization,

In the late-1950s the world's churches led the call for an international ban on nuclear weapons testing.⁷⁵ Mainline church lobbying played a part in the passage of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1963 which banned atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons.⁷⁶ Some church-related organizations (though none of the mainline denominations) followed up the Test Ban Treaty victory with a proposal that the government end all federal civil defense and fall-out shelter programs. They argued that civil defense encouraged a false sense of security which promoted recklessness in foreign policy. Civil defense was also seen as a drain on public and private funds that could otherwise be used to promote the general welfare.⁷⁷

The mainline leaders were convinced that the peace proposals (like the Test Ban Treaty) would end the hostility between the competing superpowers. A mainline Protestant study conference declared "We reaffirm our calm conviction that war with the Soviet Union is not inevitable, and we believe that it is improbable, given proper use by the United States of its power. Contradictory ideologies can co-exist without armed conflict if propagated by

we must first remain civilized." "Sufficient unto the Day," The Living Church 121, no. 12 (Sept. 17, 1950), 16

⁷⁵ Christian Peace Strategy and Nuclear Weapons Section IV (Report of a conference held on April 20-23, 1959 in Evanston, IL), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ), 4. Also see Collation of, (Department of), entire pamphlet, for a more lengthy review of nuclear weapons testing statements by America's Protestant Churches.

⁷⁶ James Allen Nash, "Church Lobbying in the Federal Government", A Comparative Study of Four Church Agencies in Washington, (Ph. D. diss. Boston University, 1967), 179, 198-99, 204, 224-25.

⁷⁷ Nash, "Church Lobbying", 205-206.

methods of tolerance...a preventative war would be folly as well as sin. The just society is impregnable to Communism..."⁷⁸

Peaceful co-existence with the communists meant more than negotiations with the Soviet Union. The mainline churches favored United States recognition of the communist government in China as well as the admission of Red China into the United Nations. The Federal Council of Churches insisted that there was "no reasonable alternative open to us other than to recognize that Communist China is a nation of tremendous and growing importance with whom we must live...Our policy should move in the direction of an acceptable solution of the problems of participation by the People's Republic of China in the counsels of the United Nations and the establishment of diplomatic relations with that government by the United States."⁷⁹ This call for improved relations with China put the mainline leadership at odds with most of the American public (and therefore, likely, the majority of their members). Not until the 1970s did the American public favor opening up relations with China; prior to that period, any communication with China was seen as a sell-out of America's ally, Taiwan.⁸⁰

The mainline media expressed as much dismay over the loss of China to the communists as the conservative (religious and non-

⁷⁸ Message, Proposal to the, 4

⁷⁹ Christian Responsibility, (Report of the Fifth), 36.

⁸⁰ The mainline support for better relations with communist China was not echoed by the conservative evangelical churches. Chiang Kai-Shek professed to be an evangelical Christian and Mao's communists were atheists. In 1959, when the National Council of Churches reconfirmed its support for the diplomatic recognition of China, a poll of evangelical Christians was taken and by an 8-to-1 margin the evangelicals opposed the National Council's action. Ezell, The Evangelical, 118.

religious) press, but they did not agree with the conservatives as to the cause of China's fall. For many conservatives, China became communist because America was unprepared or unwilling to give the military and financial assistance needed to defeat Mao Zedong and his followers. The mainline media (and leadership) placed most of the blame on the corrupt and exploitative government of Nationalist dictator Chaing Kai-Shek, and on the economic colonialism of China by the western powers that had impoverished the Chinese people:

"Communism did not succeed in China; we failed in China. Our failure in China was typical of the general failure of the West to understand or pay heed to the social dynamics and ferment that stir the exploited and oppressed Asiatic peoples. Western powers too often have attempted to sit on the lid and at best treat the people of these countries as children...We made the tragic mistake of believing that freedom's fight in China could be won on the battlefields alone, when all the time we should have known that basically freedom's fight had to be won in the rice fields."⁸¹

To avoid future communist takeovers like the one in China, the Protestant leadership endorsed a massive increase in U.S. non-military assistance (through programs like the Marshall Plan) to improve the living standards of the world's poorest and most war-ravaged countries . Protestant organizations like the Church Peace Mission worked to convince America that communism could not be defeated by only military means:

⁸¹ Reuther, A Total Peace, 4; although the publication here cited is published by a labor union and not a church it was directed to church leaders and it reflects sentiments similarly expressed in church publications.

"No great struggle, and certainly not the present struggle against Communist expansion, should be conceived simply and exclusively in military terms. The economic, political and spiritual dimensions of the struggle must be acknowledged and met by creative programs of a non-military nature...The scope and character of the military program may itself interfere with the more basic economic, political and spiritual strategy. Military preparation...may impose such intolerable economic burdens and social strains that the attempt to guard against Communist attack from without exposes free nations to civil strife or to the internal triumph of communism."⁸²

The Episcopal Church said of the European and Asian recovery program:

"It is an attempt to plug the leaking dike with millions of dollars of aid, so that the impoverished nations of Europe and Asia may have an opportunity to begin their own economic recovery...In one sense, this is a form of warfare against the Soviet government. In a broader sense, however, it is essentially a policy of peace, because it aims to provide the kind of orderly atmosphere in which alone peace can thrive. As such, it deserves the wholehearted support of the American public."⁸³

Non-military aid programs were widely supported by the mainline Protestant community. All of the mainline churches, the Federal Council, and most of the mainline publications urged funding of the Marshall Plan-like aid programs. From the American

⁸² The Christian Conscience, Church Peace Mission, 8

⁸³ The article goes on to say "we are beginning to realize that this nation has become its brother's keeper, and that all the world is its brother. If our brother is hungry, we must feed him; if he is without clothing and shelter, we must supply them. It is the only way we can possibly have the kind of world that we want for ourselves and for our children. And we believe that this is ultimately the only way that we can live with Russia. Ultimately our way of life must survive, not only because it is stronger but because it is better." "Can We Live With Russia?", The Living Church 114, no. 22 (June 1, 1947), 16-17.

Baptists came this call: "We urge our government to support more generously all responsible efforts to help the peoples of less developed areas towards the achievement of better conditions of life."⁸⁴ From the Methodist Church, "We continue our endorsement of the European Recovery Program, and urge that the United States provide the help needed for economic recovery and that the help thus provided not be diverted to military ends."⁸⁵ The United Presbyterian Church urged its members and friends to "call upon our Government to continue its support, without diminution, of international programs designed to minister to human needs and to assist less developed lands."⁸⁶ And the Federal Council of Churches declared, "The European Recovery Plan...shows the immense possibilities which reside in nonmilitary resourcefulness and action. The constructive objectives of this Plan have been strongly backed by our churches."⁸⁷

The arguments for greater aid said first, that it was the right, Christian, thing to do.⁸⁸ Second, mainline Protestants argued that

⁸⁴ Resolutions Adopted by the American Baptist Convention, (New York: American Baptist Convention, 1959), 14

⁸⁵ "Long and Short Range Proposals for Peace", Methodist Information Bulletin, (1949 Bulletin reporting on the annual meeting of the Methodist Commission on World Peace), Bulletin in the folder "1949 Commission Meeting," Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 2

⁸⁶ "Social Deliverances of the 170th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.", Social Progress (July, 1958), 26

⁸⁷ A Positive Program for Peace (New York: The Federal Council of Churches, 1948), 7

⁸⁸ The Christian-ness of the Recovery programs was a frequent theme of most church publications at the time. One of the more influential spokesmen for the rightness of the Marshall Plan was Congressman Brooks Hays of Arkansas. Hays had been an official in the Southern Baptist Church and frequently used Christian imagery in his politics. He supported the Marshall Plan for solid economic and political reasons but he never let it be forgotten that the real reason for helping Europe and Asia was because they were

economic chaos and devastation was the friend of the Soviet Union. If the world was becoming communist, it was because its peoples were impoverished.⁸⁹ And finally, it was argued that aid programs made good business sense. Money loaned to Europe and Asia would return to America to buy goods from American factories; thus American aid would result in more American jobs as well as foreign good will.⁹⁰ The churches support for increased government aid to poor and war-ravaged countries reflected the mood of the general public most of the time. The average American usually supported foreign aid to Europe and Asia but not always.⁹¹

The churches did not merely call for government aid, they raised private contributions as well. Following the war, every church organized fund-raisers for Europe and Asia. Through the

hungry and cold and it was America's Christian duty to help "The Christian duty part struck me because I had been reluctant to speak of what we owe others. I believe this is a mistake that is often made by representatives in government. We are inclined to rest policy exclusively upon our narrow national interests. My speeches during the rest of the summer included a reference to a...feeling of compassion for foreigners." Brooks Hays, Politics is My Parish, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 167; for even more on Brooks Hays and the Marshall Plan see John Herschel Barnhill's Politician, Social Reformer, and Religious Leader, The Public Career of Brooks Hays, (Ph. D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 1981), 126-28
⁸⁹ A. William Loos, "Co-Existence," Social Action 21 (March, 1955), 14-15; The Living Church editorialized that the European Recovery Plan was "the most important issue before the American people at the present time; an issue so important that its settlement will largely determine the shape of things for many years to come. For the alternative to European recovery is European collapse; and European collapse may well mean that within a few short years the United States will stand virtually alone." "The Marshall Plan", The Living Church 116, no. 4 (Jan. 25, 1948), 12

⁹⁰ Howard A. Mickel, Reinhold Niebuhr's Thoughts on War and Peace: An Analysis of the Development of His Views, 1916-1966, (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate School, 1969), 172-77

⁹¹ See Hero, American Religious, 56-61, 335-36, 339 for a summary of the American attitudes towards foreign aid in the first decade after WWII.

World Council of Churches Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, the National Council's Central Department of Church World Services, and numerous individual denominational agencies, more than 100 million dollars worth of goods and services were shared annually with all continents. At first this aid went largely to war-torn Europe, but later it was expanded to include impoverished nations and regions hit by natural or human disasters.⁹² Foreign missions expanded beyond their spiritual role to recruit missionaries with technical and educational training in order to improve the temporal as well as spiritual lives of those around the missions.⁹³

The churches also lobbied the government to go beyond foreign aid programs. Citing the lessons learned from the post-World War I return to protectionism, several of the churches and church publications urged the United States to take the lead in easing trade barriers and tariffs. Several writers pointed to the irony of Americans who were willing to fight Russia to defend the system of free enterprise but who at the same time wanted high tariffs to protect American industry. In 1948 Charles Taft, president of the Federal Council of Churches, warned Congress, "If goods do not cross national boundaries, soldiers will."⁹⁴ Later he

⁹² Kenneth L. Maxwell, "What are the churches doing?", International Journal of Religious Education 36, no. 3 (November, 1959), 8-9

⁹³ "Statement of Dr. Donald C. Stone, Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, on Mutual Security Program", Congressional Record, 86th Congress, First Session, March 17, 1959. (Copy of record reprinted by the United Methodist Church for distribution to members), Methodist Church Archives, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 2-3.

⁹⁴ "Race for Peace", Concern (April 1, 1962), 9-10; In addition to several official calls by the Federal Council for tariff reductions the Southern Baptist

observed: "If the powers are to live together as a family of nations, economic cooperation and mutual aid must transcend the traditional international struggle for one-way economic advantage. A coordinated world economy is needed to overcome the economic causes of conflict and to meet the Christian responsibility for mutual helpfulness." He then commended the government for promoting trade and reducing national and international barriers to the exchange of goods.

The mainline churches also called for the rapid decolonization of the third world by the imperial powers. The Federal Council and several church publications insisted that the most effective weapon the United States had in the fight against communism was its support of self-government and economic assistance for the former colonies. The Soviets had generated a lot of good-will in the third world by supporting post-war independence movements. At the same time, the United States lost friends by appearing to support the British, French, Belgian, Portuguese, and Dutch efforts to hold their colonies. The Federal Council of Churches declared that "that government which derives its just powers from the consent of the governed is the truest expression of the rights and dignity of man. This requires that we

seek autonomy for all subject and colonial peoples."⁹⁵ Church publications warned that if the west refused to free its colonies, the third world would have no alternative but to embrace communism.

In order to guarantee the orderly and democratic freeing of the colonial peoples, most church publications supported United Nations involvement in the de-colonization process. Support for the United Nations by the mainline churches and organizations was always solid. This was, at least in part, because the churches took some credit for the existence of the U.N..

In December, 1940, the Federal Council of Churches instituted a commission to study the basis of a just and durable peace. The commission lobbied Washington to propose a world organization that would arbitrate the conflicts in Europe and Asia. Sumner Welles, a close adviser to President Roosevelt, later recounted that the president privately said that there was little hope that such an organization would receive much support either in the United States or Europe.⁹⁶ The Commission On a Just and Durable Peace continued to meet during the war, and in 1943 it formulated a plan entitled "the Six Pillars of Peace" which was designed to promote world peace. The first of these pillars insisted that "the peace must

and the Methodist Churches also passed General Council resolutions urging the government to reduce trade barriers. The Southern Baptist resolution was short but definite. "Many nations are retarded in their development because of poverty and lack of economic opportunity. The erection of tariff barriers for the protection and enrichment of stronger nations may be as serious a hurt to weaker nations as military invasion." Statements on World Peace, The Christian Life, 2

⁹⁵ National Study Conference, The Federal Council, 6

⁹⁶ John Foster Dulles, "Four Fronts for Peace- Introduction", The Living Church 112, no. 7, (February 17, 1946) 13

provide the framework for a continuing collaboration of the united nations and, in due course, of neutral and enemy nations."⁹⁷

The commission lobbied Washington for an international organization, and at Dumbarton Oaks (near Washington DC.) in the fall of 1944, representatives of the major anti-Axis powers met to hammer out a charter for a permanent United Nations Organization. Between the Dumbarton Oaks Conference and a conference in San Francisco in June, 1945 (where the final charter of the United Nations was adopted), the churches worked closely with the government to ensure that the new organization would be fair and democratic. To accomplish their goals, the churches advocated giving greater power to the General Assembly (where there was no big power veto), and to set up assistance and aid organizations (such as UNICEF and WHO) that would not be under the control of the big power dominated security council. Diplomat and Time-Life editor Henry R. Luce, credited the churches for the significant changes that occurred between Dumbarton and San Francisco. The church's pressure rescued the UN "from complete subservience to Big Power absolutism. The...UN was made answerable, in at least some degree, to the principles of Justice. In my observation the greatest single influence at work in bringing about this salutary transformation was the Federal Council of Churches' Commission on a Just and Durable Peace."⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Federal Council, Third National, 20

⁹⁸ "Is UN a Failure?", The Living Church 112, no. 21 (May 26, 1946), 16-17

Church dignitaries were invited to Washington before the San Francisco conference to discuss the charter, and they also were in attendance at San Francisco. While at the San Francisco conference Rufus Weaver, an official with the Southern Baptist Convention, worked for the passage of a bill of rights which would guarantee, among other things, the universal right to the freedom of worship. Although the conference did not adopt the proposed bill of rights, it did appoint a commission on human rights which, in 1947, passed a declaration protecting the freedom of thought and worship.⁹⁹ President Truman declared that the churches had succeeded in bringing religion into the United Nations. "Nothing will do more to maintain the peace of the world than the rigorous application of the principles of our ancient religion. We have tried to write into the Charter of the United Nations the essence of religion."¹⁰⁰

The churches lobbied the American public to support the U.N. for both practical and theological reasons. Church encyclicals insisted that the United States could no longer live in the world as a recluse. World War II had demonstrated that America was economically and militarily intertwined with the rest of the world and could no longer function in isolation. An organization that included all the nations of the world would facilitate trade,

⁹⁹ C.C. Goen, "Baptists and Church-State Issues in the Twentieth Century", American Baptist Quarterly 6, no. 4 (1987), 237-38; Southern Baptist..., Statements on Peace..., 7; O. Frederick Nolde and Sartell Prentice Jr., "The Churches and International Affairs", Religion in Life 17, no. 2 (Spring, 1948), 223-24

¹⁰⁰ Harry S. Truman, "Address in Columbus at a Conference of the Federal Council of Churches. March 6, 1946", Public Papers of the Presidents, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), 143.

communication, and hopefully peace. Theologically the churches reminded the American people that all people were children of a common Father, and thus all had a common responsibility for the welfare of all God's children. "The Old and New Testaments directs (sic) the Christian to have faith and to serve one God...such faith and such service permit no parochial limits when related to one's fellowmen, inevitably bound together in a single community. The United Nations is the best political agency now at hand through which the Christian may meet his worldwide obligations."¹⁰¹

The churches worked through letter-writing campaigns and days of prayer to ensure that the U.S. Senate would approve the United Nations agreement. Over the next decade church publications continued their support by frequently listing the accomplishments of the U.N. throughout the world.¹⁰² The argument that the U.N. was little more than a debating society was countered by church publications that praised U.N. members for dealing with international problems through debate rather than resort to arms.

¹⁰¹ A. William Loos, "The United Nations and the Disciplines of Peace", Social Action 20, no. 1 (1953), 5-6

¹⁰² Among the accomplishments cited were the U.N.'s supervised removal of Soviet troops from Northern Iran, and British and French troops from Lebanon and Syria; the U.N.'s involvement in brokering cease-fires in Palestine and Kashmir; in negotiating an independent Indonesia; in coming to the assistance of South Korea; The U.N.'s providing a forum of discussion for topics ranging from nuclear power and weapons, to drug trafficking, the prevention of genocide, basic human rights, and swamp clearance; and in providing aid to the world's most needy through organizations like the World Health Organization, the International Bank and Monetary Fund and UNICEF. Loos, "The United Nations", 29-30; Federal Council, Third National, 21-22; Martin Hill, "The Positive Accomplishments of the United Nations", (this work is a chapter in A Spiritual Approach, Report of the, 38-40)

In the 1950s, when the United Nations was frequently attacked as un-American and ineffective, every mainline church issued statements of support for the United Nations. Most even urged that the United Nations be strengthened through measures such as increasing the U.N.'s enforcement capability, accepting more U.N. control over nuclear energy and international trade, limiting the great powers' use of their veto in the Security Council, and the admission of all countries (especially the People's Republic of China) who sought to join the United Nations.¹⁰³

Religious opposition to the United Nations usually came from the evangelical churches. The most frequent evangelical complaints about the U.N. were that the United States was giving up too much of its sovereignty to the U.N., was becoming too dependent on the secular protection of the debating society in New York, and was not dependent enough on the Lord. Conservative ministers like Robert Shuler, Carl McIntire, and Billy James Hargis accused the United Nations of being atheistic and anti-Christian because the Charter of the United Nations never mentions either God or Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Joseph Martin Dawson, "The United Nations From a Christian Point of View", Religious Herald (August 28, 1947) 4-5, 20; Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, National Study Conference on the Churches and World Order, Background Documents Paper I, Background booklet for the Cleveland Conference, March 8-11, 1949, Joseph Dawson Papers, Southern Baptist Convention Archives, Nashville, TN, 6, 11-12

¹⁰⁴ The United Nations was accused of trying to replace Christianity with a new religion called one-worldism. An extensive discussion of the Evangelical Churches concerns regarding the United Nations can be found in Ezell, The Evangelical Protestant, 169-78; Warren Lang Vinz, A Comparison Between Elements of Protestant Fundamentalism and McCarthyism, (Ph.D. diss., University of Utah, 1968), 74-5, 132-33; Dr. Billy James Hargis, The United Nations Destroying America By Degrees (Tulsa, OK: The Christian Crusade, pamphlet is undated), pamphlet in the "Communism-UN" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR; Carl McIntire, A

Despite the frequent attacks on the United Nations, the anti-U.N. forces never swayed a majority of the American public to accept their point of view. Opinion polls in the 1950s consistently demonstrated that the public supported the United Nations. Although there were large minorities in the American public who doubted the value of the United Nations, and most Americans had some complaints about the United Nations, the percentage of Americans who supported the continued participation of the United States in the United Nations always remained well above fifty percent.¹⁰⁵

Church support for the United Nations did not necessarily translate into church support for the United Nations-led war in Korea. Most of the mainline faiths did not take an official stand on the appropriateness of the war.¹⁰⁶ The religious press of the time was split on the conflict in Korea. Of twenty-three representative Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish periodicals that were surveyed in 1950, twelve supported America's policy, eight opposed, and three were uncertain. Three of the magazines that initially supported the war switched sides during the course of the conflict. Of the nine that remained supportive to the end, four were Catholic, three were Jewish and two, Christianity and Crisis and The Christian Herald,

Bankrupt United Nations (Collingswood, NJ: 20th Century Reformation Hour, pamphlet is undated), pamphlet in the "UN-Criticism" folder of the James Bales Collection, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR.

¹⁰⁵ Hero, American Religious, 35-37, 296-97, 512; Public Affairs Bulletin #34, Armaments Policy in the Postwar World (Washington D.C.: Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service, 1945), 33-35; Herman F. Reissig, "Our Response to the New World Situation," Social Action 19, no. 6 (1953), 24-26

¹⁰⁶ Dunn, The Church, 121

were non-denominational Protestant. No denominational Protestant magazines supported the war throughout its duration.¹⁰⁷

The Protestant magazines (be they for, against, or non-committal) did agree on two aspects of the war. First, conflict must remain limited in scope, not expanding into other nations or into a nuclear conflict.¹⁰⁸ Second, that the struggle over Korea, like China, was a result of years of Western exploitation and insensitivity in Asia, and that Korea-like wars would be repeated throughout the continent if Western attitudes towards Asia didn't quickly change.¹⁰⁹

The World Council of Churches publicly supported the United Nation's involvement in Korea. The vote on whether to endorse the U.N. action in Korea came during the body's 1950 meeting in Toronto. World Council delegates from Eastern Europe boycotted the Toronto conference to protest United Nations involvement in Korea as well as the West's refusal to give China a seat in the United

¹⁰⁷ Harold Henry Osmer, United States Religious Press Response to the Containment Policy During the Period of the Korean War, (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1970), 217-36, as quoted in Dunn, The Church, 121. Christianity and Crisis supported the war for three main reasons. First it served notice to the communists that the extension of communism by military force would not be tolerated. Second it brought the world closer to the goal of collective security and world rather than individual action. Third it remained limited in scope. John C. Bennett, "Our Korean Policy in Perspective", Christianity and Crisis XI, no. 13 (July 23, 1951), 97-98.

¹⁰⁸ A few, or even a series of small wars designed to show the Soviet Union that the United Nations would not tolerate bullying was seen as preferable to one all-out nuclear holocaust. Clarence Kilde, "The Gospel for a Day of Dilemma", Christianity and Crisis 11, no. 17 (1951), 131

¹⁰⁹ Christianity and Crisis said that the West was reaping what it had sown. "The seeds of exploitation sown in the 19th century became the harvest of hatred in the 20th century. Thus, once again the descriptions of life found in the Bible are being verified. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Ezekial 18:2)" Kilde, "The Gospel", 131

Nations. With the delegates from the communist countries not in attendance the World Council voted almost unanimously to support the U.N. war effort; only two members from the 'peace churches' abstained from the vote.¹¹⁰

As the war progressed and entered a stalemate, discontent increased among the general public and the mainline churches. Several conservative Protestant churches and publications urged the government to do more to end the fighting.¹¹¹ With the firing of General Douglas MacArthur, mainline attitudes divided even further. Most of the major Protestant publications agreed that Truman was justified in the firing, but they added that the decision was another example of Washington's mishandling of the war.¹¹² Several well-known Protestant leaders sided with MacArthur, including Rev. Billy Graham. Graham insisted that "the Soviet leaders were 'jubilant' about his [MacArthur's] removal" and called the Korean situation "a disgrace and a tragedy." Graham then recommended that the send more troops to Korea.¹¹³ Other

¹¹⁰ Reinhold Neibuhr, "The World Council and the Peace Issue", Christianity and Crisis 10, no.14 (1950), 107-08.

¹¹¹ The Episcopal Church seemed to be the most vocal mainline church urging a more concerted effort on America's part. The Episcopal magazine, The Living Church pushed the UN to "serve Communist China with an ultimatum : Cease fire by a specific (and early) date, or Chinese bases in the so-called 'privileged sanctuary' of Manchuria and elsewhere in China will be bombed." "The UN and Korea", The Living Church 122, no. 12 (March 25, 1951), 11

¹¹² "Where Shall We Turn?", The Living Church 122, no. 16 (Apr. 22, 1951), 14

¹¹³ Richard V. Pierard, "Billy Graham and the U.S. Presidency", Journal of Church and State 22, no. 1 (Winter, 1980), 110; Billy Graham was one of only a few nationally prominent mainline ministers who directly attacked Truman for firing MacArthur (most other leaders said things like that it was an unfortunate incident that showed the seeming aimlessness of America's Korea policy). The Evangelical Protestants were not equivocal in their attitude about the firing. The National Association of Evangelicals was

Protestant leaders argued that instead of more troops Truman needed to send more negotiators.¹¹⁴ By 1952 public and church dissatisfaction with the war was overwhelming; Dwight Eisenhower capitalized on this frustration and won votes by promising to go to Korea to work out a solution.¹¹⁵

The Korean War was not the only example of post-war collective security that received mixed reviews by the American public and the mainline churches. The United States' first post-war collective security proposal was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO was the result of two European military

meeting in Chicago when word of MacArthur's dismissal was announced. The United Evangelical Action said that the "moral indignation of the delegates was at a bursting point." The Association then approved two resolutions. The first expressed appreciation for MacArthur's Christian character, professional integrity, and democratic ideals. The second praised his knowledge of and unrelenting opposition to communism while "others in high places" had "displayed a lack of understanding by their record of appeasement and failure to oppose communist aggression." The delegates then called the country "to a national day of humiliation and prayer." There were, however, a number of evangelical ministers who called for calm and national unity rather than the widespread condemnation of national leadership. Ezell, The Evangelical, 119

¹¹⁴ The most prominently mentioned negotiator that was recommended was Indian Prime Minister Nehru who had offered his services to both sides. Neibuhr, "The World Council", 107-08; "The 'Witness' Statement", The Living Church 121, no. 8 (August 20, 1950), 11

¹¹⁵ Robert W. Coakley, Paul J. Scheips, Emma J. Portuondo, Antiwar and Antimilitary Activities in the United States, 1846-1954, (Washington D.C.: Prepared by the Office of the Chief of Military History, 1970), 121-22. Two polls around the time of the 1952 election show the frustration of the American public about the war. Between Aug. and Oct. of 1952 the Roper asked "what should the United States do now in Korea. Forty percent of the Catholics and 39 percent of the Protestants said America should Stop fooling around, knock the communists out even if it risks World War III; 18 percent of both Catholics and Protestants said the United States should pull out entirely; only 30 percent of the Catholics and 28 percent of the Protestants said that America should continue to try to negotiate and end to the fighting. In April, 1953 the National Opinion Research Center asked if Korea was worth continuing the fight; 38 percent of the Catholics and 36 percent of the Protestants said it was worth the fight, 55 percent of both said Korea was not worth the fight.

crises. In 1947 Great Britain announced that it could no longer afford to be the guarantor of the security of Greece (the government of which was in a civil war with the communists) and Turkey. On March 12, 1947 President Truman announced that under the Truman doctrine military assistance would be sent to both countries to defend them from communism. There was only lukewarm support in the United States for this policy (only about half the country supported Truman's decision).¹¹⁶

Later in 1947 the four-power negotiations over the future of Germany broke down followed by the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from the Allied Control Council in Berlin in March, 1948. The Western powers proceeded with a plan for a separate rehabilitation of West Germany. The Russians responded by stopping all rail and road traffic between the west and Berlin. The Berlin blockade lasted until May, 1949; many feared that Berlin would become the first battle of World War III.¹¹⁷

Before the blockade ended, the Western Allies signed the NATO Accords on April 4, 1949. Some of the mainline churches expressed reservations about the treaty. Their greatest concern was that NATO would undercut the United Nations. The United Nations was formed in the hope that an international forum for peace and debate would end the need for defensive alliances and balance of power politics. NATO was a violation of that hope. The Federal Council of Churches urged that no defensive alliance be

¹¹⁶ Hero, American Religious, 55

¹¹⁷ Alan Geyer, Christianity and the Superpowers, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 123

entered into which Russia or its allies might see as aggressive, or that went outside the framework of the United Nations. The Council insisted that the Soviet Union had as much right to be angry about the arming of Turkey as the United States would have if Russia set up an armed alliance with someone in Latin America. The Council's final concern about NATO was that military aid and NATO would take precedence over humanitarian assistance and the Marshall Plan .¹¹⁸

Many in the mainline churches took exception to the Council's caution on NATO. The Episcopal Church magazine, The Living Church, and the non-denominational Protestant magazine Christianity and Crisis, urged the ratification of NATO in order to assure America's allies in Europe, and throughout the world, that the United States would indeed help them resist communism.¹¹⁹ Public opinion was lukewarm about NATO. Just after the Senate ratification of the charter that created the Atlantic alliance, 58 percent of Americans supported sending "arms and war materials" at America's expense, to the European NATO members. By the

¹¹⁸ Third National Study, Federal Council, 34; Reinhold Neibuhr had similar concerns about NATO. One of his main concerns was that the United States was too dependent on military solutions to stop communism. "Communism must be contained; but the strategy of containment cannot be primarily military...the realists must learn that power, of which we require preponderance, consists of the unity and the moral and economic health of our world. We must not relax our military defenses. But they must remain subordinate to our main purpose." Davis, etc. (editors), Reinhold Neibuhr, 302

¹¹⁹ "The Atlantic Pact", The Living Church 118, no. 13 (March 27, 1949), 8-9; Christianity and Crisis further proclaimed that between NATO and the sending of troops to Korea the United States had put teeth into it's foreign policy and into the U.N. by showing the world that the United States would stand behind its friends. "The Shift in American Policy", Christianity and Crisis X, no. 13 (July 24, 1950), 97

summer of 1952, barely over a quarter of the population thought the government should "keep on building the armed strength of Western Europe like we've been doing"; close to half of the public answered that the United States "should continue some aid, but cut (the) amount", and sixteen percent said that America should "get out of Europe's affairs".¹²⁰

The divisions within the mainline churches, and between mainline attitudes and those of the government regarding NATO and the Korean War, were minor compared to the disagreements that would arise in the 1960s over Vietnam. From the beginning of America's involvement in Vietnam some of the smaller denominations such as the Unitarians, the Church of the Brethren, and the Quakers opposed the war, but the larger churches (including all of the mainline Protestants as well as the Catholics), at first endorsed America's aid to South Vietnam. In 1965 the furthest that any of the mainline Protestant churches and organizations would go in opposing the war was to call for greater humanity in the fighting of the war and for an end to the widescale bombing of both North and South Vietnam.

In October 1965, the General Board of Christian and Social Concerns of the Methodist Church called for an immediate halt to any bombing of North Vietnam, more humane treatment of the

¹²⁰ Hero has the answers broken down by religious groups. Of the Catholics surveyed 31 percent answered that the United States should continue to build up the armed strength of Western Europe as compared to 26 percent of the Protestants; 43 percent of the Catholics and 44 percent of the Protestants urged that aid be continued but that the amount be cut; and 16 percent of each group answered that the United States should get out of Europe's affairs. Hero, American Religious, 43, 57, 337-38

people of South Vietnam by American and South Vietnamese soldiers, and the beginning of peace negotiations between the Viet Cong and the South Vietnamese government. Shortly after the Methodist statement, other mainline churches began to express serious reservations about the war. In January, 1966, the United Church of Christ condemned all bombing in North Vietnam; in February of the same year the National Council of Churches protested America's expanded involvement and troop commitments in Southeast Asia; in May of 1966 the Presbyterian Church also urged the U.S. government to decrease rather than increase its involvement in Vietnam.¹²¹

Of the mainline churches, the Methodists would remain the most active in urging a negotiated rather than a military settlement in South Vietnam. The Presbyterians and the United Church of Christ also actively supported a negotiated settlement and a de-escalation of the war. In early 1966 the National Council called for an end to the bombings, and in the latter part of 1966 the Council publicly apologized to the people of Vietnam for atrocities committed by American soldiers (and their allies) in the war. It was not until 1969 that the National Council officially came out against the war. The council addressed a letter to President Nixon urging him to "end, and not simply de-Americanize" the war. Specific recommendations as to how to best accomplish the war's

¹²¹ James L. Adams, The Growing Church Lobby in Washington (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 231-33



end were included in the letter.¹²² Following the National Council's declaration most of the mainline churches also came out in opposition to America's involvement in Southeast Asia.

The mainline churches officially opposed America's presence in Vietnam several years before the majority of the American people turned against the war. The Vietnam War demonstrated that the mainline churches had become far more liberal than the general public. Since the time of the Social Gospel the mainline had moved away from its eighteenth and nineteenth centuries commitment to the status quo (in the 1980's fundamentalist televangelist Jerry Falwell boasted that "The Mainline is Becoming the Sideline"¹²³). The traditional idea that the mainline was a bastion of conservative thought in America was no longer accurate.

Between 1941 and 1963, the religions and the religious influence in the United States grew dramatically. The mainline Protestant churches were probably the primary beneficiaries of this renewed interest in spirituality. In the period during and shortly after World War II, the mainline Protestant churches grew in membership, grew in influence and power, and grew in their willingness to use that influence to achieve political and social ends. In the 1960s, the tide of religious interest in America turned and

¹²² These recommendations included continued U.S. troop reductions, negotiation of a ceasefire, and the setting up of a new, broad-based, interim government in South Vietnam that could negotiate a permanent settlement with the North. Adams, *The Growing*, 235-36, 239-40

¹²³ Anne Motley Hallum, *Religion in American Politics*, ed. Charles W. Dunn (Washington D.C.: Congressional Peace Quarterly, 1989), 63

the churches lost members. It was again the mainline that was the most affected, this time by a noticeable drop in membership. During the 1960s, many fundamentalist and other conservative, non-Protestant, churches (including the Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and the Seventh-Day Adventists) saw minor to significant membership increases, while most of the mainline saw their numbers decline. (Not surprisingly the Southern Baptists, the least mainline and most Evangelical of the traditionally dominant Protestant denominations, did not experience a population decline, but actually grew in total membership).¹²⁴ It appeared that the era of significant mainline Protestant influence on American society was over.

What did the mainline accomplish during their brief period of influence and power? Arguably the most important difference in church behavior in this period was the recognition that they actually had political muscle. Prior to the 1940s, the churches were hesitant to admit that they were blatantly trying to manipulate American foreign policy. Starting after World War II, the churches lost their squeamishness about trying to affect international change. In 1947 the Federal Council of Churches admitted that it had an agenda and was hesitant to pursue it:

"...We have emphasized some of the ingredients of a positive foreign policy which we believe stems from positive Christian principles. The positive foreign policy we emphasize will require strong spiritual foundations

¹²⁴ Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), 233-40; Robert Famighetti, ed., World Almanac and Book of Facts, 1997 (Mahwah, NJ: World Almanac Books, 1996), 644-45

both at home and abroad...Dynamic international policies must reflect a dynamic faith if they are to endure."¹²⁵

The church's willingness to continue trying to effect American foreign policy has continued into the church's period of declining membership and influence. In relation to programs that the mainline denominations specifically supported or opposed, two significant programs were not implemented, at least in part, because of mainline opposition: the official recognition of Vatican City by the United States, and universal military training for all teenage boys. In 1984 the United States officially recognized the Vatican as a country and the two countries exchanged ambassadors. A universal military training program for teenage boys has never been adopted in the United States; however a related program, peacetime military registration, was implemented in the 1980's (although there has not been, since 1941, a peacetime draft in the United States).

The anti-communist hysteria fomented by politicians like Senator Joseph McCarthy would probably have ended without the help of the mainline churches, but the churches possibly helped bring Senator McCarthy (and the anti-communist witchhunts) down faster, and ameliorated the conditions in the country somewhat during the crisis period. And the churches played a role in reducing the tensions of the Cold War, and in keeping the United States and the Soviet Union from the brink of war. How much

¹²⁵ **The Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, Cross-Roads of American Foreign Policy (New York: The Executive Committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 1947), 11**

credit the churches can take for successfully keeping the two countries from going to war is subject to question. The churches did play a role in some of the peace efforts (like the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963), but in describing the political effectiveness of the churches in the 1950s Alfred Hero states "Existing indications suggest the hypothesis that the churches, both separately and together, exert little influence on most aspects of foreign policy." Hero also asserted that one of the main reasons that the churches, during their seeming apex of power in modern America, had so little impact on American politics is that it was obvious to American political figures that the mainline leaders were not speaking in behalf of most of their members.¹²⁶

Hero's assertions are not borne out by the facts. Although other factors (such as income and education) probably had greater influence on American public opinion than did religious affiliation, religion did have a noticeable impact on public perceptions. Furthermore, the churches played a decisive role in the affecting of some American foreign policies. Church leaders were frequently called to testify before congressional investigatory committees; this alone is evidence of the power that they did (or at least were perceived to) have. Hero is probably correct in asserting that the impact of the church on the day to day political opinions of the average American was minimal, but that, at least for the 1950s, may not have mattered in the church's efforts to influence public policy. The fact is that the churches were perceived in Washington

¹²⁶ Hero, American Religious, 194

as a force to be reckoned with. Efforts like the UMT and Vatican representation letter campaigns impacted legislators (and legislation) for years to come. Few politicians dared ignore an organization that could claim a constituency of millions, an impressive network of political and fund-raising contacts, and the moral authority of speaking in behalf of God, or the nation's conscience, or both.

In the long run though, the legacy of the mainline Protestants push into foreign affairs in the post-war era may be the revelation that the church leaders were unable to arouse much support for their policies among the lay members. (Ironically the churches probably had more influence with politicians, be they mainline Protestant or not, than they had with their own parishioners.) Perhaps the most important information conveyed to the American religious and political community during the mainline's brief flirtation with political power, was that the mainline churches had moved so far to the left that they had lost touch with their members. By the 1980s it was the religious right, not the mainline center-left, that held Washington's center stage. Either the mainline had left the mainstream or vice versa, but the two had parted company.

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**CAUTION CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS:
THE MAINLINE PROTESTANT CHURCHES
AND THE COLD WAR**

**Abstract of dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

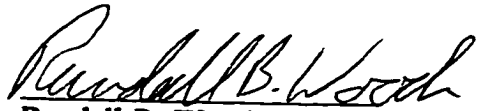
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World War II forced the United States to the forefront of the world stage. Only two nations, the United States and the Soviet Union; and two rival economic systems, capitalism and communism, emerged from WWII with the potential to dominate world politics and trade. Many liberals hoped that the two countries would remain allies following the war. Many conservatives believed, however, that the Soviet Union could not be trusted and urged a quarantine of communism.

Between 1945 and 1955 religion in America experienced a renaissance. The churches were the spiritual arm of the baby boom; American's were having children, moving to the suburbs, and going back to worship. Religious revivals drew huge crowds, and the country seemed obsessed with anything religious. The churches recognized their new importance and, hesitatingly, they began to assert their influence in the social, political, as well as spiritual life of the country.

Following World War II it was good politics to take a hard line against international and domestic communism. The mainline Protestant churches, which had long opposed communism and communism's home base, the Soviet Union, should have been a certain and powerful ally of the fervent anti-communists, but they were not; in fact they were usually in strong opposition to the rigid communist-bashers.

The churches opposed any emotional overreaction towards and/or persecution of perceived domestic communists; the

establishment of diplomatic relations with Vatican City, the city-state of the Pope—a staunch anti-communist; the militarization of America through programs like universal military training, peacetime military conscription, and a massive build-up of arms; and supported most measures that would reduce conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and would move those two countries away from war. The mainline churches did not like or trust the communists, but at the same time they never stopped working for peace and good relations.

