ABUNDANCE AND ANXIETY

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AMERICA, 1945–1960

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For Abby-do

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INTRODUCTION

There have been few eras in American history more dynamic than the first fifteen years after World War II. The theme of the time was great expectations, lofty hopes, and grand dreams for the future. These hopes and dreams were personal: to own a home, to be financially comfortable, to live a good life. But there were also expectations and dreams for the nation: to be a world leader in a new modern era. Immediately after the war, Americans saw the future as prosperous, safe, and secure.

It is no wonder. During the war the nation's economy had been geared up to meet the challenge of fascism and expansionism in Europe and Asia. War production was phenomenal. In fact, by the war's end, the average American had come to realize that it was American industrial might that had won the war. And if anyone doubted it, there were nearly amazing facts and figures to prove it. By 1942 full employment had been reached; by the end of the war U.S. industry was producing over 46,000 aircraft per year; in Portland, Oregon, Henry Kaiser was building 10,000-ton liberty ships in just seventeen days; and the total national income had risen from $70 billion in 1940 to over $161 billion by 1945. These were phenomenal statistics. Clearly, the United States had the ability to do about anything it wanted. The war showed that the U.S. government, through

effective central planning, could move the economy in any direction, at any speed, and with any number of results.

It is not surprising that when the war ended, the American people had tremendous confidence in what the future held. Their powerful wartime economy was about to be retooled and redirected toward consumer needs. There was every reason to believe that government planning (used in conjunction with the powers of the private sector of business and industry) would produce an economy for the future that could provide for everyone, maintain full employment, and send the United States into the future as the richest nation in the world, even in history. The Great Depression seemed little more than a bad dream. The war was over. The future was bright.

And in many ways it was. Personal income continued to rise after the war. Factory production increased. The gap between rich and poor narrowed. More products were available to the consumer than ever before. And the burgeoning economy kept postwar inflation in check. All this translated into a better standard of living for most Americans. It was a dynamic time.

But with the abundance came a great deal of unexpected anxiety. Americans had come to believe that the end of the war had somehow brought an end to evil in the world; and if it had not, then the U.S. atomic monopoly would keep the forces of evil in check in the future. But almost immediately after the war the Soviets became the new enemy, and within four years they had the atomic bomb, and Eastern Europe and China had fallen into the Soviet sphere. Then, in the summer of 1950, the U.S. military was at war against the forces of communism in Korea—and not winning. These events were so surprising, so frustrating, to Americans that they began to accept that Communist spies inside the government must have caused the turnabout. Americans did not expect a cold war, and certainly they did not expect to be losing it. The anxiety was tremendous.

The economic abundance caused a number of important changes in the period—but few Americans seemed to see the consequences of those changes for the future. For instance, few saw the significance of the new suburban lifestyle—how it would change the character of America's cities, alter race relations, even reshape the place of women in society. The shift to the suburbs was as significant in American history as the move from the farm to the city in the first half of the century. For the middle-class white Americans who made the move, things were generally good; it was the manifestation of the American dream. But the problems that were left in the lurch grew through the 1950s until they became the major social problems of the next decades.

African Americans began to make progress in their demand for civil rights in the postwar period. Much of this had to do with the growing economy that allowed for the development of a new black middle class that could aid in the support of such a movement. It also had to do with the

power of the black vote in northern urban centers that held sway in several elections. For the first time in history, politicians were forced to listen to black voters if they wanted to win. It was a major turning point. But the entire movement was headed toward a tremendous white backlash that would, some argued later, cause the nation's race relations to worsen through the last half of the century.

There was no time like this in American history. Americans honestly believed they could do anything, achieve any goal: stop communism, bring an end to poverty, send rockets into space, end racism, build a house and provide two cars for everyone, cure any disease. The irony of the era is that the successes themselves often brought along serious problems that had to be dealt with in the next difficult decades.

1

DOMESTIC POLITICS IN TRUMAN'S FIRST TERM—AND THE ANATOMY OF AN UPSET

On February 20, 1945, Vice President Harry S Truman heard that Franklin Roosevelt was dead. Truman had been in office barely four weeks, and the prospect of taking the weight of the nation's woes from Roosevelt's broad shoulders was something that clearly frightened him. The news "swept through the corridors and across the floor" of the Senate, Truman wrote in his memoirs. But it was only a rumor. "There had always been baseless rumors about Franklin D. Roosevelt. . . . I did not want to think about the possibility of his death as President." It was no wonder that the rumors flew through Washington in the late winter and early spring of 1945. As Truman remembered Roosevelt in those days, "I was shocked by his appearance. His eyes were sunken. His magnificent smile was missing from his careworn face. He seemed a spent man. I had a hollow feeling within me."[1] On April 12, FDR died of a massive brain hemorrhage in Warm Springs, Georgia—and Harry Truman was president of the United States. "Maybe it will come out alright," he wrote to his mother a few days later.

Franklin Roosevelt was a symbol for an age. And on April 12, 1945, that age came to an abrupt end with his death. He had carried the nation through the Great Depression and World War II. He had served three terms and had been elected to a fourth. To many Americans he was the only president they had ever known; to others it seemed incomprehensible that

anyone else could become president. Through twelve years in office he had forged a coalition that would still show its force in presidential elections thirty years later. Some attribute his success to his character and charm, others to his leadership abilities, and still others have said that it was the magnitude of the events during his tenure in the White House that produced the greatness in the man.

In April 1945 Roosevelt was a world leader. The war was about to reach its climax on both fronts, and all the goals and aims that the Allied armies had fought and died for were about to be realized in total victory; horrible evils in the world were about to be removed, swept away by all that was right. At home, the great American war machine, geared up and humming smoothly, was about to be redirected to peacetime production, and Americans could look forward to a prosperous and secure future, standing astride the world with their supreme military and strong consumer economy.

But there were serious problems, and to Harry Truman in April 1945 it was the problems that seemed to outweigh the promising prospects of the postwar world. Could the American economy absorb 10 million war workers and another 12 million soldiers returning from the battlefronts? There was great concern in the nation that the U.S. economy had only briefly flourished because of the demands for war production and that when the war ended, the miseries of the Great Depression would return to haunt the nation. Others saw the opposite problem. American consumers, with money from the wartime boom burning holes in their pockets, were ready to spend their savings on goods that had long been denied them. Would that bring on runaway inflation? Organized labor had abstained from making wage demands through the war. Overtime work for the war effort had brought with it the prosperity of overtime wages. How would labor react when the war ended, production slacked, and overtime wages came to an end? And what of the Soviets, the United Nations, and the Grand Alliance? What of a new world order that was bound to emerge in the postwar era? In April 1945 the problems of the nation and the world were transferred from the broad shoulders of Roosevelt to the not-so-broad shoulders of Truman, and it all seemed more than the new president could handle. "I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me," the new president told some friends.[2]

It is a phenomenon of the American political system that, in order to appeal to the largest possible range of voters, a presidential candidate is bound to select as his running mate someone of nearly opposite character. Such was the case in 1944. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was urbane, urban, wealthy, the career politician who had risen to political importance in New York as a reformer who had battled the bossism of Tammany Hall. With the Roosevelt money and name, he had glided through life from the social

prominence of Hyde Park to Groton, Harvard, and on to law school at Columbia. From there life took the young Roosevelt on to Wall Street, New York State politics, and then into the White House in 1933. For Truman, in stark contrast, life had been hard. Born in 1884 in western Missouri, Truman had lived his early life on the frontier, where opportunities were limited and prospects were bleak. He carried with him through life the values and ethics of his Baptist youth and the rural southern traditions of western Missouri. There was no prominent family name, no family wealth, no marvelous education to carry him through his early life. He was, in a word, ordinary.

Truman served in France during World War I, and afterward he failed at a small haberdashery business in Kansas City. He then tried his hand at investing in oil and mining interests; he failed at that as well. At the age of thirty he turned to politics, where he found success at the local level, where he seemed destined to stay. But by allying with the Pendergast organization, a corrupt Kansas City political machine, Truman moved up the political ladder and finally into the U.S. Senate, where he made a name for himself as one of only a few southern Democrats who stood by Roosevelt and the New Deal. As chairman of the "Truman Committee," a Senate investigative committee charged with examining all aspects of war production, he moved into national prominence as a Capitol Hill workhorse, a man who could get a job done. When powerful southern Democrats and big city bosses put pressure on FDR to dump his liberal vice president, Henry Wallace, for a more moderate man (preferably a southerner) Roosevelt relented and chose Truman as his 1944 running mate. A few of the Democratic Party leaders knew what the future held for the party, for the nation, and for FDR. Edwin Pauley, the Democratic National Committee treasurer, said during the party's dump-Wallace fight: "You are not nominating a Vice President of the United States, but a President."[3] In April 1945 they got their man: Harry Truman, the virtual antithesis of Franklin Roosevelt.

Truman was a proven New Dealer, and in his first term in office he moved to extend the tentacles of the New Deal. On September 6, he revealed his twenty-one-point plan to expand and extend New Deal programs already in place, and to take the New Deal into the next era. He called for a full employment bill, a higher minimum wage, national housing legislation, an extension of Social Security, a new public works program, and the establishment of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission. To this he added a request for an atomic energy control board, federal aid to education, and national health insurance. It was a broad, aggressive program—a significant extension of the New Deal. But Truman, a product of Capitol Hill politics, was unwilling to confront the increasingly conservative Congress, and only two of his twenty-one-point proposals were passed

by Congress during the next two years. All too often, Americans soon learned, the new president's words did not translate into actions.

Truman may have come to the White House as a proven supporter of Roosevelt's New Deal, but he was clearly uncomfortable with the New Dealers. Most of Roosevelt's appointees were northeastern liberals, intellectuals, and visionaries. At first, Truman wanted to keep the spirit of the New Deal alive by keeping the New Dealers by his side, but the differences were simply too great. Within a month he was complaining about the advisers and cabinet members he had inherited from FDR. "Most of the people Roosevelt had close around him," he told an aide, "were crackpots and the lunatic fringe."[4] He preferred the term "forward-looking" when describing his programs, as opposed to "progressive" or "liberal," words that he felt described the programs of the far left. Not surprisingly, the feeling was mutual. To the New Dealers, those men who had conceived the New Deal, who had fought for it in Congress and in the courts and then implemented it—men who had had their hands on the gears of the nation's economy and its government for twelve hard years, Truman was a usurper, a country hick, a "Throttlebottom," as David Lilienthal called him. Not surprisingly, within four months of Truman's ascension all of Roosevelt's cabinet officers except Henry Wallace had resigned, thereby alienating the large and significant liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

For many liberals it was the lone survivor, Henry Wallace, who had been the heir apparent to FDR's throne; and, of course, he would have become president in April 1945 had not the conservatives in the party had their way at the 1944 Democratic National Convention and insisted on dumping him for Truman. To the liberals, the prospect of a man of Truman's ilk carrying on in the shoes of "The Boss," as they had often called Roosevelt, was more than they could comprehend. "How I wish you were at the helm," a young Hubert Humphrey wrote to Wallace.[5] Eleanor Roosevelt expressed the same feelings. Just after her husband's death she wrote to Wallace: "I feel that you are peculiarly fitting to carry on the ideals which were close to my husband's heart."[6] FDR had placed Wallace in the cabinet as secretary of commerce, as a sort of consolation for being dumped from the 1944 ticket, and there he remained when Truman came to office. But Wallace continued to see himself as the titular head of the party's left wing, and the rightful successor to Roosevelt and the New Deal, a program that he helped build as secretary of agriculture and then as vice president. For eighteen months Wallace chafed at the bit in the Truman cabinet as the administration stumbled into a stalemate with Congress, and then (as Wallace came to believe) began moving toward war with the Soviets. A break between Wallace and Truman was inevitable. Their power bases were different, their backgrounds were different, their attitudes toward government and policy were different. They tolerated each other at first, but they were two opposite poles simply waiting for the right moment to repel each other.

The Truman–Wallace conflict reached its climax on September 12, 1946, when Wallace spoke to a crowd of supporters at Madison Square Garden in New York. The topic was foreign policy, and the tone was clearly antiadministration. He derided Truman for his "get tough with Russia" policy, and he said that the United States had "no more business in the political affairs of Eastern Europe than Russia has in the political affairs of [Latin America]."[7] Truman's secretary of state, James Byrnes, was at the Paris Peace Conference with a bipartisan congressional delegation, trying to convince the leaders of the world that the United States was of one mind on foreign policy in these early days of the cold war. Byrnes saw Wallace's speech for what it was: a statement in direct opposition to his own foreign policy. His reaction was exasperation. Over Teletype he told the president that if Wallace was not kept quiet on foreign policy, he would resign. Later he added: "The world is today in doubt not only as to American foreign policy, but as to your foreign policy."[8] Byrnes's him-or-me statements were clear. Truman had to make a choice, and it would be Wallace who would have to go. He resigned on September 20; but he emerged from the fray martyred, the darling of the left—the first faction of the Democratic Party to spin off after Roosevelt's death, and the first faction that Truman was unable to control.

Truman stepped into the White House with a convincing 87 percent approval rating. That figure clearly owed more to his anonymity than to his popularity, or even the people's expectations. But as Americans got to know their new president in these difficult times, their attitude changed quickly. By October 1946 Truman's approval rating had plummeted to a paltry 32 percent. The problems in the administration revolved mostly around the postwar economy. Truman may have wanted to expand the New Deal and continue with the Roosevelt mantle, but the economic situation after the war was much different from that during the Great Depression. In fact, one could argue, it was just the opposite. The postwar economy boomed. Fears of a postwar depression evaporated almost immediately as the nation's war machine was switched over to peacetime production to meet the growing demand for consumer goods that was fueled by wartime incomes. Demobilization of the armed forces was rapid; they dropped from a wartime high of about 12 million to about 3.5 million in less than a year. Consumer income was up; production was up. Truman's problem with the economy was inflation, not depression. The postwar world was no longer faced with the problems of poverty and the burdens of inequality that were so pervasive in the 1930s. The new problem was how to distribute the new abundance more equally.

In an attempt to maintain a grip on the economy, Truman carried the wartime wage and price controls over into the postwar period, a policy that was immediately unpopular. Americans had money to spend, and they

knew the products (the products they had been denied for four years) were available. Workers had socked away some 25 percent of their take-home pay in the last two years of the war, and by midsummer 1945 the nation's liquid assets totaled about $140 billion—three times the national income in 1932. The United States was an economic explosion waiting to happen. But Truman insisted on keeping the wartime controls in place to head off inflation. The inevitable result was a rapid increase in black-market activity, a flouting of the law, and a quick drop in Truman's popularity. Finally, in June 1946, under increasing pressure from the electorate, Congress forced the administration to lift the controls by emasculating the Office of Price Administration, the government agency responsible for implementing the controls. The result was an immediate jump in inflation. The economy, however, was basically sound. The large infusion of money moved business and industry to convert rapidly to peacetime production in order to meet the additional demand, and industrial production soared.

In the wake of this economic boom was left organized labor, now stronger than it had ever been, a force to be reckoned with both at the bargaining table and in the political arena. But labor emerged from the war hemmed in. Certainly, labor had done its part to win the war by agreeing not to strike in wartime, and then by building the matériel needed to win the war. But after the war the average worker was taking home less real income than before the war, while everywhere he looked he saw prosperity: higher salaries, higher profits, bigger budgets, more demand. When the war ended, cutbacks in overtime dragged wages down. In 1941 the average American laborer's real wage was $28.12 per week. That had risen to $36.72 in 1945. But by the fall of 1946, inflation and a reduction in overtime pulled real wages back to the 1941 level. The pie was expanding, but labor's share had remained the same. Industry, however, argued that it was stuck with the cost of retooling for peacetime production, plus it was forced to endure the burdens of Truman's postwar price controls. To become locked into long-term wage contracts in such uncertain times was inconceivable to industry leaders. Neither side would budge. Strike was in the air, and everyone knew it.

Between the two victory celebrations of V-E Day and V-J Day the nation experienced 4,600 work stoppages involving some 5 million workers. Then, after the war in the Pacific ended, the situation got even worse. In September, 43,000 oil refinery workers went out on strike, cutting off one-third of the nation's oil supply. In late November the United Auto Workers struck General Motors, idling nearly 325,000 workers. Then on January 21, 1946, 750,000 steelworkers walked off the job. Two hundred thousand electrical workers and another 200,000 packinghouse workers were out. The nation looked to the president for answers, but Truman's only response was to set up blue ribbon committees of labor and management to recommend answers. They had none. On April 1, 1946, John L. Lewis, the

bushy-browed head of the United Mine Workers, ordered 340,000 soft coal miners out on strike. Truman responded decisively by seizing the mines, but he provoked the wrath of the powerful John L. in doing so, and he placed himself on the road to alienating organized labor, a major sector in the New Deal liberal coalition. The showdown between the president and labor finally came when the railroad engineers and trainmen struck on May 24, threatening to shut down the nation's commerce and much of its industry. America's labor leaders, Truman said, were no different from "the 'foreign enemy' of Pearl Harbor." Before a joint session of Congress, Truman asked for emergency powers to bring contempt proceedings against the labor leaders and to draft striking workers into the military. These were Draconian measures, and the response from labor was quick. While Truman spoke, the telephone rang in the anteroom of the House chamber. A note was handed to Truman. "He smiled silently," an aide remembered, and read the note to Congress: "Word has just been received that the railroad strike has been settled on the terms proposed by the President."[9] The chamber erupted in applause and sustained cheering, and Truman basked in the glow of the moment. It would be some time before he would again experience such popularity. Philip Murray of the CIO said that Truman's proposal "constitute[s] a beachhead for those sinister forces in American life which seek to use the military power as a means of crushing labor."[10] And A. F. Whitney of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen vowed to use all of the union's $47 million to defeat Truman in 1948, pronouncing him little more than a "political accident." Truman had won the day, but he had lost the support of labor—the second sector of the Democratic Party he had alienated in just twelve months.

As the midterm elections approached in November 1946, polls showed Truman's approval rating percentage continuing to hover in the low thirties. Clearly, he was not what the nation wanted in a president. For many Americans he was only filling out FDR's fourth term, a caretaker president, someone holding down the fort until 1948, when the Democrats would again nominate a strong candidate to carry on at the head of the Roosevelt coalition. Truman, as he admitted later in his life, felt much the same way, and it showed. Even inside the Democratic Party he held little sway. The Democratic National Committee decided in the 1946 campaign that it was better to buy radio time and broadcast some of FDR's speeches than to send Truman out to campaign for the Democratic candidates running for Congress.

Truman's lack of leadership abilities in his first fifteen months in office caused a splintering in the Democratic Party. FDR had put together a fragile coalition of diverse groups that included southern conservatives, northeastern liberals, western farmers, organized labor, big city bosses, and minorities and immigrants in the northern cities. Truman simply did not have the qualities necessary to hold these disparate groups together. With-

out the glue of FDR, parts of this fragile coalition began to split off, each hoping to organize its own power base and lead the Democrats into the future. Other groups moved toward independent third parties in an attempt to forge a new Democratic coalition.

Truman would have to use his position and power as president to bring the coalition back together in time for the 1948 election. All of this became clear to the Democratic Party leaders in November 1946, when the Democrats lost control of Congress for the first time since 1930. Truman, the "accidental president" and the most unpopular man in the White House in the twentieth century, now also had to face a hostile, and conservative, Congress eager to assert its own policies and programs. Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas suggested that Truman, in such an untenable position, might appoint a Republican secretary of state (then the successor to the president in the absence of a vice president) and step aside. Thereafter, Truman referred to Fulbright as "Senator Halfbright." Truman would hang on for the coming political wars.

The members of the Republican-dominated 80th Congress came to Washington prepared to change the direction of the nation, to use their mandate to bring an end to the liberal New Deal. They had won their majority in both houses with a national Republican campaign that revolved around the phrase "Had enough?"—although it was not clear if the voters had had enough of Truman or the New Deal, or both. But it was clear that the answer was a resounding "yes." The Republicans had also campaigned hard on an issue for the future: that Washington was riddled with Communists. The Republican "class of '46" included thirty-three-year-old Richard Milhous Nixon from California and Joseph R. McCarthy from Wisconsin. McCarthy had defeated the venerable Robert La Follette, Jr., by just over 5,000 votes, using the campaign slogan "Washington needs a Tail-Gunner," a reference to his place in a B-29 during the war. Also elected in 1946 was the twenty-nine-year-old John F. Kennedy, whose family wealth, prominent name, and heroic war record quickly made him a promising young figure among the powerful northeastern liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

The Republicans who came to Capitol Hill in the early days of 1946 coalesced around Robert Taft, "Mr. Republican," the austere, prewar midwestern isolationist, the son of Theodore Roosevelt's successor. Taft was eyeing the 1948 Republican nomination and the White House. In his shadow was Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, another prewar midwestern isolationist. But Vandenberg had been jarred from his isolationism after Pearl Harbor and now led the Republican Party's internationalist bloc. Truman tried hard to place a bipartisan face on America's foreign policy (for consumption both at home and abroad) by keeping Vandenberg visibly on the inside of all major administration foreign policy decisions.

The love–hate relationship between Truman and the 80th Congress was

a phenomenon unique in the twentieth century. On domestic matters, it was a gloves-off affair; the president vetoed seventy-five bills in the two sessions, five of his vetoes were overridden, and very little was accomplished. On foreign affairs, however, the two parties worked together through both sessions to establish a cold war foreign policy that would prevail for another forty years. In the final analysis, the record of the 80th Congress benefited Truman and helped him ride a surge of support right into the Democratic National Convention and then on to victory in 1948. Image had become an important factor, and Congress became Truman's foil. By introducing and supporting liberal legislation that he certainly knew the conservative 80th Congress would not pass, Truman was able to portray Congress as the political arm of big business, insensitive to the needs of the average American, and unwilling to act on much-needed domestic reforms. Consequently, the president came away with a heightened image as the defender of the common man, a fighter against oppression, and the real successor to the New Deal—a program that the average American was not at all prepared to throw over at the hands of the Republicans. On foreign affairs, Truman took the popular anticommunist stance that was supported by a large majority of both parties—and by a large majority of the American people. With support from both sides of the aisle, Truman's decisive foreign policy initiatives gave him the image of a strong world leader.

The Republicans, confident that the 1948 presidential election was theirs, fell into Truman's trap by refusing to enact the president's liberal program and by passing a number of bills that seemed to be designed to dismantle the New Deal and aid the wealthy. A Republican bill to reduce taxes on the upper income brackets was passed over Truman's veto; and the Republicans excluded several groups from Social Security benefits, overriding two presidential vetoes to get the job done. They turned down Truman's request to expand public power in favor of private power interests, and they killed an administration-supported bill to provide aid to education. A bill to increase the minimum wage failed without so much as a hearing, and bills to provide comprehensive housing and a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission also met premature deaths in committee. Southern Democrats, seeing no need to support what appeared to be Truman's failing lame-duck presidency, backed the Republican initiatives in Congress in exchange for Republican support in killing all civil rights legislation. This antiadministration coalition in Congress seemed insurmountable, but it increased Truman's image with the American people as their representative fighting in the trenches against the forces of big business and privilege.

One of the biggest fights came over the Taft–Hartley Bill. Passed in the summer of 1947, Taft–Hartley was designed to give the administration a mechanism to regulate labor and control strikes. It would supersede the

1935 Wagner Act, a New Deal sacred cow that had recognized the right of labor to bargain collectively but had placed no restrictions on strikes. Taft–Hartley was clearly a reaction to the postwar strikes that had been sweeping the country; it was also a move by the Republicans to dismantle at least one portion of the New Deal. Taft–Hartley outlawed the closed shop, allowed for injunctions, and banned industrywide bargaining. It was not harsh, and in light of the recent wave of strikes it was clear that some sort of mechanism was needed to keep labor from grinding the nation to a halt in order to serve its own ends. But the labor unions called it the "slave labor bill," and Truman saw an opportunity to get back into labor's good graces. He vetoed the bill, and Congress promptly overrode the veto. Thanks to the 80th Congress, Truman was able to win back labor, along with a great deal of grassroots liberal support.

As the 1948 election approached, several members of the Truman administration began devising a strategy that would reinvigorate the old New Deal coalition that had elected FDR to four successive terms. Most of this strategy came from Truman's special counsel, Clark Clifford. Clifford was a young St. Louis attorney, a wunderkind who had slipped into the White House through his association with Truman crony Jake Vardeman. Clifford was no New Deal visionary; he was more pragmatic than idealistic, one of the founding disciples of the new postwar brand of politics that focused on winning elections and answering questions later. "Every decision made," Clifford later recalled, "had some political connotation."[11] Clifford saw in Roosevelt's New Deal coalition a winning formula that could keep Truman in the White House for four more years, and he worked hard to exploit it. Immediately following the 1946 midterm defeats, he and a group of self-styled liberals (most of them were in undersecretary positions in the administration) began meeting on Monday nights to plan a strategy for 1948. Clifford became a conduit for this group—the man with the president's ear. They would formulate a mostly liberal agenda for Truman to follow, and Clifford would present the plan to the president. This group advised Truman to veto Taft–Hartley; attack the 80th Congress; and support civil rights, national health insurance, fair employment legislation, federal housing, and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Much of this strategy was set down in a notorious memo to the president by presidential assistant James Rowe in September 1947. The memo, entitled "The Politics of 1948," came to Truman's desk under Clifford's signature, but later evidence has shown that Rowe, and not Clifford, was its sole author. Rowe's prophecies and advice could not have been more correct. Some fourteen months before the election he predicted that the Republicans would nominate Thomas Dewey, that Wallace would run on a third-party ticket, that relations with the Soviets would worsen, that the conflict between the president and Congress would deepen, and that African Americans living in northern cities would support the president and southern Democrats would

not desert him. He identified the various groups of the old New Deal coalition and offered suggestions on how the president might satisfy each one in order to win their support and votes. He recommended that Truman move to the left to bring back into the party those disaffected liberals who were panting after Wallace. He suggested a reorganization of the Democratic Party directed at winning elections, and that "the President work to present a sharper image to the people. . . . No one really cares any more about the round-the-world flyer, or the little girl with the first poppy of the Disabled Veterans, or the Eagle Scout from Idaho."[12]

One group targeted by Rowe was African Americans. Truman inherited a minor commitment to civil rights when he came to office in April 1945. FDR had walked a thin line between demands by black leaders and those made by southern whites, with the result that he was successful in receiving the vast majority of votes from both sides of the line. During Roosevelt's tenure there was enough room in the Democratic Party for both southern whites and blacks. But after the war the demands by African Americans increased, while southern whites continued to stand firm against federal encroachments on southern values, particularly their right to continue segregation of the races and disfranchisement of African-American voters in the South. By 1948 the flame under the issue had been turned up considerably. In addition, the great migration of blacks from the South to the North that had started during World War I was beginning to have an effect at the polls. During the 1940s alone, nearly 2 million African Americans had moved north, mostly to the large urban areas where jobs were the most plentiful. By 1948 a powerful coalition had emerged in America's largest northern cities (and the large California cities) between African Americans, liberals, and organized labor. James Rowe, in his memo to Truman in the summer of 1947, told the president that the Democrats would need this black support in 1948: "A theory of many professional politicians is that the northern Negro voter today holds the balance of power in Presidential elections for the simple arithmetical reason that the Negroes not only vote in a bloc but are geographically concentrated in the pivotal, large and closely contested electoral states such as New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan."[13]

But the problem for Truman was the white South. Would the South hold? Could he do what Roosevelt had done: Walk the thin line between the southern power brokers in Congress and black voters? Rowe addressed this question as well: "As always," he wrote, "the South can be considered safely Democratic. And in formulating national policy it can be safely ignored."[14] But even more important for the future, the Democrats had come to see that the northern African-American vote was much more important than the southern white vote. Through 1947 and 1948 Truman's advisers counseled the president to move more aggressively on civil rights issues and

ignore complaints and threats from the South. The Democrats had made a decision that marked the road for the future of American politics.

At the same time, the race situation in America was changing drastically in the postwar world. Northern urban blacks were beginning to share in the nation's economic growth. The median income of African-American wage and salary earners rose from 41 percent of the white median income in 1939 to 60 percent in 1950; and economic advancement meant political affluence. The war, fought at least in part against the racist ways of Nazi Germany, forced Americans to face the reality of their race problems. Blacks had fought and died, flown combat aircraft, and been raised to the rank of general. "Don't judge a man by the color of his skin or the width of his nose," a youthful Ronald Reagan told white pilots in a film about race, "only by how he flies his plane." In addition, the color barrier had been broken in professional sports. Kenny Washington and Woody Strode signed with the Los Angeles Rams in 1946, and Jackie Robinson joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Also, the growing cold war pitted the United States and the Soviet Union in a competition for the support of the mostly nonwhite Third World. The United States could not convince black Africa, for instance, of its good intentions if a portion of American society maintained legal segregation based on race. The winds of change were beginning to blow in the postwar period.

Following the 1946 Democratic congressional defeat, Truman's advisers pushed the president hard to make some concessions on civil rights issues, to begin the process of bringing those crucial African-American votes to bear. At the same time several unusually heinous lynchings in the South (some of ex-servicemen) were reported graphically in the national press and brought an outcry from northern whites. In response, Truman created the President's Committee on Civil Rights (PCCR), a blue ribbon committee of the type Truman used over and over to advise him on domestic problems. The committee deliberated for a year, producing a report that the president would not be able to ignore.

While the PCCR sat, Truman moved closer to civil rights issues. He spoke to 10,000 people at an NAACP rally at the Lincoln Memorial in the summer of 1947. In his speech he seemed prepared to forge ahead on civil rights—and to take on the power brokers in the South. "Every man should have the right to a decent home, the right to an education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in making the public decisions through the ballot, and the right to a fair trial in a fair court. . . . We cannot," he added, "any longer await the growth of a will to action in the slowest State or the most backward community."[15] After the speech he told NAACP Chairman Walter White that he meant every word he said.

In October 1947, the PCCR published its report, *To Secure These Rights*, one of the milestones in the history of the civil rights movement. This

detailed report blamed segregation for the problems of African Americans, and it placed the responsibility for solving those problems squarely on the shoulders of the federal government. It called for an end to the poll tax, an end to Jim Crow laws, and the desegregation of the armed forces. It pressed for federal legislation to end lynchings, and it insisted that federal grants-in-aid be withheld from both public and private agencies that practiced segregation and discrimination. By February 1948 over 1 million copies of the report had been distributed by the U.S. Government Printing Office, by private publishers, and by various interest groups.

In early February 1948, Truman incorporated many of the recommendations from *To Secure These Rights* into a civil rights message to the nation that set off a wave of hysteria in the white South. The president's message was the beginning of the Democratic Party's official commitment to civil rights, and the beginning of a postwar political shift that would finally break the Solid South. It would begin the long process of moving white southerners into the Republican Party, and ultimately it would make Democrats of the majority of the nation's black voters. In his speech Truman made it clear that he would accept most of the suggestions spelled out in *To Secure These Rights*. He called for a civil rights division in the Department of Justice, a strengthening of the civil rights statutes, the enactment of an antilynching law, and protection for the right to vote. He also asked for the creation of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC), and he proposed a bill that would end discrimination in interstate transportation services. "All our people," he said, should "have equal protection under the law."[16] The message was significant. But it was little more than pure politics in anticipation of the 1948 election. At the moment of his speech, there was before Congress a bill to establish a permanent FEPC, a bill to abolish the poll tax, several bills to outlaw lynchings, a bill to eliminate segregation in the nation's capital, and a bill to prohibit discrimination in interstate travel. Truman's civil rights message was a challenge to the Republican–southern Democratic coalition in Congress to pass those measures or stand aside when it came to the black–liberal–labor coalition votes. The 80th Congress, in its overconfidence about the political future of the Republican Party, accommodated Truman by killing all these bills. African Americans would vote Democratic in November.

The southern Democrats, however, refused to accept the account offered by some in the administration that Truman's civil rights message was merely a politically motivated plea for votes from the liberal–black–labor coalition, and that the president would not actually deliver significant civil rights concessions in exchange. Such an appeal for African-American votes (empty or not) was considered by white southerners to be the beginning of an infringement on the conservative wing of the party, an attack on their political power, and ultimately an attack on the southern way of life.

Clearly, it was a signal that the northern coalition was about to jump into the lead in the party, and that the conservative South would have to follow along in the future if it chose to remain in the party at all. Southerners like Strom Thurmond and James Eastland saw the president's civil rights message as a mark of what was to come in the future, the handwriting on the wall.

Southern leaders had always believed that Truman was one of them, a southerner with a southern background who wished to perpetuate the southern way of life that, among other things, excluded African Americans. That may well have characterized Truman the man, but Truman the president was a political animal, and he had come to realize that without the northern–liberal coalition (that now included African Americans) he could not win in 1948. He had to take James Rowe's advice and support civil rights, hoping that the South would not bolt. Moreover, Truman owed little to the South. Southern congressmen (in bed with the Republicans on most issues) had turned against him on nearly every piece of domestic legislation he had proposed since he took office. He vetoed Taft–Hartley with no apologies to the southern congressmen who voted for the bill, and he overlooked southern demands for a southern chairman of the Democratic National Committee, choosing instead Howard McGrath from Rhode Island.

The South reeled following Truman's civil rights message of February 1948. Clearly the northern coalition was about to eclipse the South's place in the party. For many southerners the Democratic Party was no longer the place for them, and a number of southern leaders called for an all-out revolt against the party. Two leaders emerged to carry the southern mantle in opposition to Truman and the Democrats: Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi and Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. Thurmond, the more moderate of the two, came to dominate what quickly turned into a third-party movement that the press dubbed the "Dixiecrats." He tried hard to expunge the stigma of white supremacy from the movement and hold tightly to the age-old southern issue of states' rights.

For many supporters, however, it boiled down to a question of race, a realization that the loss of political power meant an inability for the South to conduct its own affairs, to deal with the race issue the way southerners felt it should be dealt with. For them it was the beginning of the end for southern culture, for southern privilege, and for segregation in the South. But to those at the top of the movement it was a question of southern political power on the national stage—and how to return that power to the South. It was this group that came to control the movement, and the plan they initiated was simple: A few southern states could withhold their electors in a close election (which the 1948 election promised to be) and force the Democrats to repudiate civil rights for states' rights. By the late spring of 1948, Thurmond was certain that Truman could not win the

election in November without white southern support; he also believed that when the president himself finally reached that conclusion, he would reject his civil rights program, which would bring an end to the conflict, and the Democrats would go into the election united. The disgruntled southern leaders met in the spring of 1948 to plot their course. In May, at Jackson, Mississippi, they decreed that if Truman and civil rights emerged victorious at the Democratic National Convention in July, they would meet afterward in Birmingham to select alternative candidates for president and vice president.

The growing southern revolt gave Truman pause, and he began to backpedal a bit on his earlier civil rights stance, mostly by simply ignoring the issue as the convention approached. At the same time, the Republicans had not ignored the issue, nor had they overlooked the possibility that with the right moves they might use civil rights to win the African-American vote for themselves. Governor Dewey of New York, moving quickly toward the Republican candidacy, pushed through the New York State legislature an FEPC law that protected New York State workers against discrimination on the job. Dewey also appointed several African Americans to important positions in the New York State government. In fact, Dewey was often depicted in the press as a moderate on the race issue, and that had not gone unnoticed in the African-American community. By the summer of 1948 it appeared that the Democrats were having a much more difficult time accepting civil rights than were the Republicans.

While the right wing of the party prepared to bolt, the left wing, now massing around the twice-martyred Henry Wallace, was also headed rapidly toward a third party and a further splintering of the Democratic coalition. After Wallace was bounced out of the administration in the fall of 1946, he took up the post of editor of *The New Republic*, and there he became the chief oracle of American liberalism. Through 1946 and 1947 Wallace attained a great deal of popularity, and the possibility of his nomination as the Democratic candidate at the head of a powerful urban–labor–liberal–black coalition seemed real enough. In late December 1946 the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA) was formed, and it was clear that Wallace was the group's symbolic leader. Wallace and the PCA seemed made for each other: the new progressive political organization and the strong, experienced, progressive leader. But Wallace's insistence that the United States develop a working relationship with the Soviet Union was quickly undermined by the growing anticommunist feeling in the nation.

The Rowe election strategy had predicted that Wallace would run as a third-party candidate in 1948, and after waffling through the fall and winter of 1947, Wallace finally announced in late December that he would, in fact, run on the Progressive Party ticket (the New Party, he called it). But by then most of Wallace's momentum that had been gathering through 1947 had passed, and he was already on a downhill slide into the abyss of

American third-party movements. Rowe had also predicted that the core of Wallace's support would be from Communists, and if that fact were exposed to the American people in these times of growing anticommunism, Wallace would melt away. Wallace was content to accept Communist support—after all, Roosevelt had not discouraged the Communists from supporting him in 1940 and again in 1944. But in 1948 the international scene had changed. The Soviets were no longer the U.S. wartime ally, the Grand Alliance was dead, and Communists, both at home and abroad, had become suspect. Wallace's calls for rapprochement with the Soviets, and his continued defense of Soviet aggressions in Europe, sounded a lot like Communist sympathy to many Americans. Wallace was also a spoiler, and Democrats of all shades had come to realize by the summer of 1948 that a vote for Wallace was in fact a vote for the Republican candidate—to split the Democratic ticket was to hand the election to Dewey. So it was the Democrats, and not the Republicans, who took the lead in sticking the Communist label on Wallace in order to keep him from splitting the Democratic vote in 1948.

But that job was not left to Truman and the Democrats in the White House. It was carried on by the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), the one organization that could rightfully claim to be the old New Dealers in exile—the keeper of New Dealism and the legacy of FDR. The ADA was a small organization, incessantly without sufficient funds to carry on its day-to-day business affairs, but extraordinarily powerful. It had strength in its membership alone. Out front were names like Eleanor Roosevelt and her three sons, Hubert Humphrey, the Alsop brothers, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, historians Arthur Schlesinger (Senior and Junior), the young William Leuchtenburg, actor Melvyn Douglas, and even Ronald Reagan in his celebrated liberal days. The ADA had been formed from the bankrupt Union for Democratic Action in January 1947, just days after the PCA was organized, and two months after the Truman administration was handed its embarrassing loss in the midterm elections of November 1946. The ADA and the PCA had much in common, but there was one significant difference: The ADA was fervently anti-Communist, and its members used their newspaper columns and their celebrity to punish Henry Wallace, to convince the American people that Wallace was not just a Communist sympathizer but in fact a Communist. By election time in November 1948, Wallace had evaporated, consigned to speaking at empty high school gymnasiums and to a few Communist gatherings here and there.

The ADA was responsible for the political death of Henry Wallace, but that was not its only role in the politics of the postwar period. Despite all the important and recognizable names on its masthead, the ADA had no powerful political figure to whom it could throw its support in the election. Headless, it wandered through 1947 in search of itself until it stumbled on

Dwight Eisenhower, clearly a political party's dream candidate. As one ADA member wrote to a Truman aide:

> Between the Taft and the Truman
> When the darkness begins to lower
> Comes a pause in the ADA program
> Which is known as the Eisenhower.[17]

Ike was the perfect candidate: a war hero of immense popularity, not dirtied by politics, and possessing a presidential-style appearance that included a broad smile. He even had an appealing nickname. There was talk of Eisenhower for president as early as 1943, but when he returned from Europe in 1945, the prospect of an Eisenhower candidacy seemed to snowball. Eisenhower added to all this by saying "no" to the "Will you run?" questions as many ways as seemed possible without actually saying he definitely would not run. He also refused to say whether he was a Republican or a Democrat, which kept him out of the lines of critical fire from both parties. In late January he finally released a letter to the press that seemed to clear up all the doubt with a definitive, Shermanesque "I am not available and could not accept nomination to high public office." But the Democrats took this as a response to the Republicans only. Eisenhower must then be a Democrat, they reasoned, and the fire for a Democratic nomination was fanned instead of extinguished. The ADA took the lead in this Eisenhower diversion, carrying with it a number of northeastern big city bosses and southern political leaders, all of whom were willing to accept anyone who could take over the Democratic Party and defeat the seemingly undefeatable Republicans in November.

But Eisenhower spurned the overtures from the Democrats, too. He accepted an offer to become president of Columbia University and began writing his memoirs. Just days before the Democratic National Convention, Truman contacted Eisenhower. Some writers and historians have concluded from this that Truman offered to run as Eisenhower's vice presidential candidate. But more likely, Truman simply wanted to know if Ike would run, and if not, then to ask him to make a statement before the convention began—which he did. Truman had control of the party structure by then, and he had been on the campaign trail for months. It is difficult to believe that he would have stepped aside for Eisenhower just days before the convention. By the time the Democrats met at Philadelphia in mid-July, the Eisenhower interlude was dead, and those who had supported it found themselves with no choice but to tuck their tails and support Truman. Increasingly, Truman was becoming the only choice left.

The ADA came to the convention prepared to force the issue on civil rights. Truman had decided to evade that issue through much of 1948, when the South became increasingly hostile to his earlier civil rights stance,

and he intended to backpedal at the convention and have the vague 1944 civil rights plank placed in the platform. "Most of [Truman's] friends at the time were urging him to go easy on the South," Clark Clifford recalled.[18] That, of course, would keep the South in line, but probably at the expense of northern African-American and liberal votes. After the ADA lost the fight in the platform committee for a more liberal civil rights plank, it took the issue to the floor of the convention. The southerners countered with their own plank, insisting that the federal government "shall not encroach upon the reserved powers of the states by the centralization of the government."[19] Sectionalism, the burden of the Democratic Party, had once again become a divisive factor in the party's history. "Not since the South rebelled against Stephen Douglas in 1860," *Time* reported, "has the party seemed so hopelessly torn and divided."[20] In a rousing speech just before the floor vote, a tenacious Hubert Humphrey railed: "There will be no hedging and there will be no watering down. . . . We are one hundred and seventy-two years late." Then he added, "The time has arrived in America for the Democratic Party to get out of the shadow of states' rights and walk forthrightly into the bright sunshine of human rights."[21] The southern plank was soundly defeated in the roll call vote that followed. That evening, when the convention reconvened, Ellis Handy, representing the Alabama delegation, rose to announce that half of his group would walk out, along with the entire Mississippi delegation. Amid boos and jeers from the floor, Handy delivered an anticlimax: "We bid you good-bye." After trying to wrestle the Alabama standard from a stubborn delegate who refused to leave, the unvanquished one and a half delegations unfurled a Confederate flag and walked out of the convention into a driving rain—and on to the formation of the States' Rights Party (the Dixiecrats) in Birmingham. "Finally," an ADA official wrote, "after generations of effort, the stranglehold of the reactionary South on the Democratic Party has been broken."[22] That was not quite true. For better or worse, the South remained a force in the Democratic Party for some time to come, but the Democrats had reached a crossroad in the summer of 1948 and they had made a momentous decision. The northern–urban–black–liberal–labor coalition had now proved itself more powerful than the segregationist southern vote, and that would be the political posture of the party for the future.

Truman won the nomination on the first ballot with no real competition. He had brought the liberals in line; he had won black support; and, although still disgruntled, labor would soon fall in with the rest. Wallace was quickly losing his support as the situation with the Soviet Union became more tense and Americans of all types and political leanings began to fear communism at home as well as abroad. Truman was rapidly moving toward recapturing the New Deal coalition and putting together a stunning victory in November, but in July no one saw it that way. The polls and the press all chose Dewey and the Republicans. The nation seemed poised

for a change. In his speech accepting the nomination, Truman called Congress into special session, to meet on July 26—Turnip Day in Missouri, he said. He would challenge them to pass laws to aid the American people. It was clearly a political ploy and nothing more. By calling Congress into session, he would set a liberal agenda and force a confrontation with Congress that would leave little doubt in the minds of the American voters that Truman was on their side against the rich man's Congress. He would, in fact, take the campaign to the "do nothing" 80th Congress instead of to Dewey. In his memoirs, Truman called it his "trump card." Clifford called it a little "razzle-dazzle."

The Republicans turned for the second time to Thomas Dewey, but not without an uncharacteristic convention fight. It was only on the third ballot that Taft surrendered his delegates to Dewey, whom he called "a great Republican [who] . . . will be a Great Republican President."[23] The air at the Philadelphia convention was filled with the certainty that the Republicans were nominating the next president. Dewey chose Earl Warren, the popular liberal California governor, as his running mate. Considering the power that Taft wielded in the party, the Dewey–Warren ticket was moderate, so moderate that it generally disavowed the 80th Congress and its conservative domestic agenda—which was directed by Taft.

Dewey was young, only forty-six in 1948, and he appealed to progressive urban voters who traditionally favored the Democrats. But his personality was less than appealing: standoffish, priggish, and often openly self-important. As one Republican Party leader said, "You have to know Dewey really well to dislike him."[24] Dewey seemed on the road to victory against the fragmented Democrats, but his confidence pushed him to avoid central issues. He said little and did less, convinced that he had only to keep his name visible to the public and ignore Truman. In 1944, against Roosevelt, Dewey's campaign had revolved around promises to cut the excesses of the New Deal while maintaining the programs. He and other Republicans had openly attacked FDR, insinuating that he might not be healthy enough to continue as president; and in one case they accused the president of sending a U.S. Navy destroyer to pick up his dog that had been accidentally left behind in Alaska. When FDR countered with a physical robustness reminiscent of the old Roosevelt, and with a speech condemning those who picked on his "little dog Fala," the nation turned away from Dewey and the Republicans at the polls. In 1948, fearing a similar backlash, Dewey's handlers counseled the candidate to keep to himself, avoid controversy, and wait for the victory in November. Dewey campaigned quietly. Truman did not.

On July 17 the Dixiecrats met in Birmingham and chose Strom Thurmond as their presidential candidate, and Mississippi Governor Fielding Wright for vice president. In an attempt to capture votes in the border states, where racism was not quite so fashionable, Thurmond turned to

moderation in his campaign by attacking lynching and advocating state abolition of the poll tax. But despite all of Truman's fears that he would lose the South, and despite all the noise and bluster by southerners at the Democratic convention, James Rowe would prove to be correct. When the smoke cleared in November, Truman would lose only thirty-nine electoral votes to Thurmond. Florida, Georgia, Texas, and the entire upper South held for Truman. The South had lost its place in the Democratic Party to the northern coalition of urban African Americans, northeastern liberals, and the forces of organized labor.

Truman went at the 1948 campaign with a fervor that gained him the well-deserved reputation of being feisty. Like a small dog yipping at the heels of his ominous opponent, Truman traversed the nation on his celebrated whistle-stop tour, traveling some 22,000 miles and delivering 271 speeches that were heard by an estimated 12 million Americans across the country. He sometimes spoke as many as twelve times a day. His message was simple: The average American was being hurt by the "do-nothing" 80th Congress that had caused the high prices, the high rents, and the nation's housing shortage. They had hurt labor and cut programs in conservation and reclamation. He spoke of "Wall Street reactionaries," "gluttons of privilege," and "the economic tapeworm of big business." The people listened. His vice presidential candidate, Alben Barkley, told Truman to "Go out there and mow 'em down." "I'll mow 'em down, Alben," Truman replied, and "I'll give 'em hell."[25] Overheard by reporters, the exchange made the papers; by the time Truman reached the West Coast, people in the crowds were yelling, "Give 'em hell, Harry!"

In September, Elmo Roper gave Dewey a whopping 44 to 31 percent lead, and then announced that he would no longer annoy the nation with such useless polling data. Dewey would obviously win. As late as mid-October the polls still gave Dewey a strong lead. On October 11, *Newsweek* published a survey of fifty news columnists' opinions on the election. All fifty chose Dewey. The Democratic National Committee, so certain that Truman would lose, did not even reserve a room for a victory party. A Roper postelection poll found only 19 percent believing that Truman could win. Very few, it seems, believed in Truman—besides Truman. But in the days before the election the New Deal coalition came together again for the moment it took to elect Truman to a second term. Truman took the electoral vote by a convincing margin of 303 to 189. The popular vote, however, was closer: 24,200,000 to 22,000,000. Thurmond won 1,200,000 popular votes and thirty-nine electoral votes in the South. Wallace received a paltry 1,100,000 and no electoral votes, although Wallace voters in New York and possibly New Jersey gave those states to the Republicans.

The next day Truman told reporters that "labor did it." And certainly labor saw that a vote for Wallace (or not voting in protest, as many work-

ers had done in 1946) was to vote for a conservative, antilabor Congress. But it is hard to credit labor because Truman lost important industrial states such as New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Indiana, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. But labor did have its way with Congress: a total of seventy-nine incumbents in the House who voted for Taft–Hartley were voted out of office in 1948. It was the African-American votes that made the difference in close voting in California, Illinois, and Ohio, and black voters may have kept Florida, Georgia, and Texas from going to the Dixiecrats. The farm vote in Ohio, Iowa, and Wisconsin turned those states to Truman in close elections. In addition, Truman won all the nation's sixteen largest cities. The coalition that Rowe called for in his memo came together: urban, African Americans in the northern cities, northeastern liberals, and organized labor.

Truman held onto the political center by purging the conservative white South and the ideological left. The third-party moves by these two groups helped him win even more votes. Wallace's candidacy and support from the Communists allowed Truman to avoid Republican charges of being sympathetic to communism. From the other side, the Dixiecrats continually railed against Truman for favoring civil rights. Truman did not deny the charge, and African Americans voted for him in droves. In the final analysis Wallace's Progressives and Thurmond's Dixiecrats actually helped Truman win rather than forcing a split in the party, as others had assumed they would.

On Election Night, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* wrote its well-known headline: "Dewey Defeats Truman." A copy was placed on the president's breakfast table by Clark Clifford the next morning.

2

THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR

Americans hailed the end of World War II as a total victory over the forces of evil—over the horrors of Nazism and the brutality of Japanese imperialism. The summer of 1945 brought a feeling of accomplishment, with all goals realized in a complete military and moral victory. The sacrifices had been tremendous, but the war's end had left the United States astride the world, free of any serious enemies, free to carry on as it wished, and free to convert its huge military–industrial complex into peaceful industrial production that would bring jobs, products, and, it was hoped, prosperity to the people of the nation. American leaders sensed their new power, by far the greatest in the world, and they felt called upon by destiny to use it to remake the world in the American image.

But it quickly became apparent that World War II, like most wars, caused as many problems as it solved—turning victory into a stable peace would not be easy. One problem was the huge and dangerous power vacuums opened by the retreating German army in Europe and the Japanese army in Asia. In eastern Europe, the Soviets had pushed the Germans back to their homeland and placed puppet regimes in Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Austria; and Soviet troops occupied every eastern European capital except Athens. In Asia, the Red Army was in northern Iran, Manchuria, and northern Korea. Communists were trying to topple governments in

China, Vietnam, Greece, Turkey, and even Italy. For most Americans, communism was the new fear, and quickly it became a haunting enemy.

Ever since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the United States and the Soviet Union have had an ambiguous relationship at best. Anticommunist feeling in the immediate post–World War I period sparked America's first anti-Bolshevik Red Scare of the century, and Washington refused to recognize the new government in Moscow. U.S. troop deployments to the Soviet Union during the postwar Red–White civil war gave the Soviets cause to distrust the United States. In the 1920s both nations moved into isolation as the Soviet Union worked to stabilize its economy and the United States wallowed in the artificial prosperity of that decade. But in the 1930s, with the rise of fascism in Europe, a tenuous accord in the face of that common enemy replaced the U.S.–Soviet animosities. Under pressure from American businessmen, who had begun eyeing the Soviet Union as a potential market, President Roosevelt agreed to extend recognition to Moscow in November 1933 over strong objections from his own State Department. But it was a difficult alliance. In the mid-1930s Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin put to death millions of his countrymen and confined millions more to prisons—acts that for many Americans outweighed any need for a U.S.–Soviet antifascist coalition.

In August 1939 Stalin surprised the world by negotiating a nonaggression pact with German Chancellor Adolf Hitler that doomed Poland and bought Stalin time to prepare for the inevitable German invasion; on September 1 the second world war in the twentieth century began. Two years later Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, and in the United States the "ruthless Soviets" became the "brave Russians" almost overnight. During the war Stalin tried to calm Western fears of spreading communism by deliberately downplaying the Soviet commitment to communism, even to the point of abolishing the Comintern in 1943. Admiration for our wartime ally grew accordingly. Secretary of State Cordell Hull said that the Soviets had won "the admiration of the liberty-loving peoples of the world." When the United States entered the war in December 1941, Stalin and the Soviet Union became American allies for better or worse in a united front against a common enemy. General Douglas MacArthur spoke eloquently of his new ally: "Today the free peoples of the world unite in salute to that great army and great nation which so nobly strives with us for victory, liberty, and freedom."[1] But it was still not a comfortable relationship—it was one that both sides would take advantage of and barely tolerate through the war years.

As early as 1942 Stalin insisted that the United States and Britain open a second front in France to take the pressure off his forces, then fighting nearly alone in the east against the bulk of the German army. Soviet distrust of the Americans increased when Roosevelt first agreed to open a second front but then, at British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's behest, re-

neged on the promise and invaded North Africa and then Italy instead. This operation slowed preparations for the major invasion of the European continent that did not come until June 1944. As the Americans delayed in the west, the Soviets lost 10,000 men a day in the east. By the war's end, Stalin had come to believe that the Soviet Union had defeated the Germans while the Americans had done little more than mop up in France, and he would make his postwar demands accordingly. In the last months of the war, the two most powerful nations on earth came into conflict over such issues as the fate of postwar Germany and the political future of eastern Europe, conditions in the Middle East, the future of East Asia, and control of atomic energy. It should have been no surprise that the Soviet Union emerged from the war with an opposing sense of the postwar world order, and eventually fell into place as the new enemy of the United States.

It was at the Yalta Conference, held in the Crimea in February 1945, that the old animosities merged with the new, and the United States and the Soviet Union found themselves at loggerheads over the treatment of the postwar world. It was the seedtime for the cold war, a dramatic and fateful confrontation between the American concept of self-determination and the Soviet need for security against attacks from the west.

As the Big Three—Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt—met, Soviet armies were spreading across eastern Europe. Stalin wanted reparations and a guarantee that Germany would not again rise up and invade Soviet soil. Roosevelt came to Yalta talking in the Wilsonian language of self-determination for all peoples and a new international organization designed to keep the peace. Specifically, he wanted Soviet military assistance against the Japanese after the defeat of Germany, a free and independent Poland, and Soviet participation in his newly proposed United Nations. He knew it would be difficult to dislodge Stalin's armies from Poland and the rest of eastern Europe, but he believed strongly that he could convince Stalin that the Soviet Union had nothing to fear from the West in the postwar era. Roosevelt wanted to reassure Stalin that the U.S.–Soviet alliance would continue, and that the Soviet leader did not need an eastern Europe buffer against the West. Indeed, Roosevelt believed, as his advisers and American liberals like columnist Walter Lippmann believed, that failure at Yalta might plunge the world into an arms race and ultimately a third world war.

The Yalta agreements pertaining to postwar Europe revolved around the disposition of two nations, both crushed by the ravages of war: Poland and Germany. In postwar Poland, Stalin demanded a friendly government. When Churchill reminded Stalin that Britain had gone to war in 1939 to protect Poland's sovereignty, Stalin replied flatly:

> The Prime Minister has said that for Great Britain the question of Poland is a question of honor. For Russia it is not only a question of honor but of security. . . . During the last thirty

> years our German enemy has passed through this corridor twice.[2]

Short of declaring war against their own ally, an ally that was fully mechanized by then and entirely capable of fielding an army twice the size of the combined armies of the United States and Great Britain, Roosevelt agreed to a compromise. There would be a "reorganized" Polish government made up of Lublin Poles (placed in power by the Soviets) and the London Poles (pro-Western Poles in exile). This provisional government, Roosevelt believed, would be in power in Warsaw only until elections could be held—elections, Stalin said, that might be arranged within a month. "It's the best I can do for Poland at this time," Roosevelt told Admiral William Leahy.[3] For U.S. public consumption, Roosevelt persuaded Stalin to sign an ambiguous and vaguely worded "Declaration on Liberated Europe" that called for the formation of governments in eastern Europe that would be "broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population and pledged to the earliest possible establishment through free elections of governments responsive to the will of the people."

Germany's fate, as suggested by Roosevelt and readily accepted by Stalin, was dismemberment. The Americans, the British, and the French would occupy the western zone and the Soviets would control the east. This was to be a temporary situation; it was never intended that these two zones of occupation would become superpower-dominated independent countries. Berlin, inside the eastern zone, was also to be divided east and west. FDR had settled on dismemberment after rejecting several much harsher options. He finally concluded that a divided Germany, reindustrialized under tight Allied control, was necessary to maintain an economic balance for the future of Europe. Stalin, however, saw the fate of postwar Germany differently. He wanted Germany to pay a high price for the damage it had inflicted on the Russian people in the war; and he wanted a weak Germany for the future, a Germany that would not again rise and attack the Soviet Union. To that end, Stalin demanded that Germany pay stiff—even damaging—reparations. In addition, he wanted to strip Germany of its industrial might by confiscating its machinery and shipping it to the Soviet Union to rebuild the war-damaged economy there. The decisions at Yalta did not resolve the two differing opinions on how postwar Germany would be handled, and that would become a major point of contention in the growing cold war.

The Yalta agreements pertaining to the Far East were more easily determined. FDR held high hopes of obtaining Stalin's aid to defeat Japan, something the Soviet leader was willing to do in exchange for concessions in the Far East. Roosevelt considered this a bargain. Stalin would receive what Imperial Russia had lost at the beginning of the century in the Russo-Japanese War: the Kurile Islands and southern Sakhalin Island. In addition,

the Soviets would receive joint control, with the Chinese, of Manchuria's railways and control of Port Arthur (Lu-shun). Roosevelt also insisted that Stalin recognize Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek) and the Nationalist Chinese as the only legitimate government in China. This was important to FDR's greater plan for East Asia because it denied Soviet support to Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists, then holed up in northern China around Yan'nan in Shaanxi province. The Nationalists and the Communists had been locked in a bloody civil war since the late 1920s, and it was the common wisdom that once the war against Japan ended, the Chinese Civil War would resume. Roosevelt feared that another hot war in Asia between Communist and noncommunist forces might damage U.S.–Soviet relations or, worse, draw the United States and the Soviet Union into a third world war. He hoped that by pushing Stalin to support the Nationalist Chinese instead of the Communists, the Communists would be forced to join a coalition government with the Nationalists and a resumption of the Chinese Civil War would be averted. Ultimately, the plan failed because Jiang would not agree to a coalition with the Communists and, more important, because Mao and his Red Army had little need for Soviet aid against the already crumbling Nationalists.

Roosevelt returned to the United States following Yalta and told Congress that the Big Three had agreed on all issues, especially on the question of democratic elections in eastern Europe. The agreement, he said, "ought to spell the end of the system of unilateral action, the exclusive alliances, the spheres of influence, the balances of power, and all the other expedients that have been tried for centuries and have always failed."[4] *Time* hailed the event: "By any standard, the Crimea Conference was a great achievement."[5] Walter Lippmann chimed in: "There has been no more impressive international conference in our time." It seemed a triumph, which added to the nation's disillusionment when the Yalta accords broke down almost immediately. The agreements at Yalta had in no way bound Stalin to remove his troops from eastern Europe or to hold free elections there; and clearly FDR realized the shortcomings of the agreement, holding to the hope that Stalin would allow the elections.

Just two weeks after Yalta the Soviets placed a puppet government in Rumania, and the failure of the conference became clear. Roosevelt seemed prepared to respond by applying economic pressure on Moscow. He wrote to Stalin of his "astonishment," "anxiety," and "bitter resentment" over the situation, and admonished the Soviet premier for not allowing elections in Poland. To Churchill, Roosevelt wrote of his growing distrust of Stalin and of his intentions to increase the pressure on the Soviets: "Our armies will in a very few days be in a position that will permit us to become 'tougher' than has heretofore appeared advantageous to the war effort."[6] Just as the Soviet stranglehold on eastern Europe grew tighter in mid-April,

FDR died, taking with him the hope that goodwill would somehow shape a secure postwar world order.

The new president, Harry Truman, had no experience in foreign policy, and to make matters worse, FDR had not bothered to keep his vice president informed on international issues, including the Manhattan Project that resulted in the atomic bomb. In fact, all Truman knew of U.S. foreign policy in April 1945 was what he read in the newspapers. His only venture into foreign affairs as a public official had come in 1941, when he made a comment that the press marked as an example of unbelievable ignorance: "If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible, although," he added "I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances."[7] Clearly, Truman was not prepared to handle America's foreign affairs in this complex period. When he came to office, the battle on Okinawa was still raging in the Pacific, while in Europe, U.S. and Allied armies moved more quickly than expected toward Soviet forces racing into Germany from the east. On April 30 the Soviets entered Berlin and Hitler committed suicide. It was the beginning of a new era; the stage was being set for the future, but the new American president was not yet up to the challenge.

Truman's response was natural: he consulted Roosevelt's foreign affairs advisers for the answers. But FDR had operated as his own secretary of state; his official secretary of state, Edward Stettinius, was little more than a State Department spokesman. Truman replaced him almost immediately with James F. Byrnes, a domestic politician who quickly developed an anti-Soviet line. Truman also sought the advice of Roosevelt's ambassador to the Soviet Union, Averell Harriman. Harriman was a career diplomat who had been in Moscow since 1943, and in those two years he had grown to distrust the Soviets. He spoke of a new "barbarian invasion of Europe," and he told Truman that there were "irreconcilable differences" between the United States and the Soviet Union. Truman also consulted Churchill, whose anticommunism was notoriously fervent. The British prime minister counseled Truman to use U.S. and British troops to keep the Soviets out of as much of Germany as possible. Other Roosevelt advisers, such as Joseph Grew at the State Department, Chief of Staff William Leahy, and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal all favored a policy of firmness toward the Soviets. The only clear voice for a close, strong relationship with Moscow came from Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace, the man Truman most distrusted among Roosevelt's close advisers. Small wonder that Truman, coming to office with nearly a blank slate on foreign policy issues, began moving toward a hard line with the Soviet Union.

Truman got off to a bad start with Moscow when in May 1945, after Germany collapsed, he halted all Lend-Lease aid to Moscow. Lend-Lease had been a Roosevelt plan to aid the Allies with supplies and equipment.

Its revocation by Truman was immediately interpreted by the Soviets as diplomatic pressure. Stalin called Truman's decision "brutal. . . . If the refusal to continue Lend-Lease was designed as pressure on the Russians in order to soften them up, then it was a fundamental mistake."[8] Compromises, Stalin added, could be reached through friendly approaches, but not through pressure or intimidation. Truman had to send Harry Hopkins, a Roosevelt aide during the war, to Moscow to smooth Stalin's feathers over the issue, but the Lend-Lease incident added to the growing distrust that was developing between the two nations.

At the same time the Soviets were not helping the deteriorating situation. They had signed a separate peace with the Lublin Poles, and then insisted that the pro-Soviet Lublin government be represented in the United Nations. Truman told his aides that he was tired of walking "a one-way street" with Stalin. Against the urgings of Secretary of State Stettinius, Truman responded to Stalin's actions in Poland by lecturing the Soviet foreign secretary, Vyacheslav Molotov, in "words of one syllable," as the president later recalled. He demanded that a new Polish government be organized with more representation for the London Poles. In the now famous exchange between Truman and Molotov, the president insisted "sharply" three separate times that the Soviet Union carry out its part of the agreements made at Yalta in regard to Poland. Molotov replied to Truman's belligerence: "I have never been talked to like that in my life." "Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that," Truman shot back.[9] He later gloated: "I gave it to him straight 'one two to the jaw.' I let him have it straight."[10] Clearly, Truman wanted to show his toughness against the Soviets, and probably he thought that he was simply carrying out Roosevelt's policy as stated at Yalta. But the encounter served to alienate Molotov and further damaged U.S.–Soviet relations at a highly sensitive time.

Stalin seemed to respond by putting sixteen of the London Poles on trial in Moscow for inciting underground resistance against the Soviet occupation troops in Poland. Four others (certainly intimidated) were allowed to become a part of the Warsaw government. Stalin made it clear that he would remove his support from the United Nations if he did not get his way in Poland, and Truman was unwilling to let the United Nations die over the issue. In May 1946, the United States recognized the new Warsaw government—now a puppet of Moscow.

Truman and Stalin finally met at the Potsdam Conference outside Berlin in July 1945. There Truman and his new secretary of state, James Byrnes, hoped to clear up the nagging foreign affairs problems as quickly as possible, so the United States could terminate its military and economic responsibilities in Europe. The Soviets by then (despite no agreement at Yalta on reparations) had stripped the areas they controlled in eastern Europe of almost everything that could be transported to the Soviet Union: heavy

machinery, entire factories, art treasures, railroad rolling stock, even farm machinery, cattle, and home furnishings. They called it "war booty" and not reparations; Reparations Commissioner Edwin Pauley called it "organized vandalism."[11] The Soviets demanded monetary reparations from Germany in the amount of $20 billion, but the German economy was on the verge of collapse, and Truman and his advisers saw the future—with the United States again supporting an insolvent Germany and paying the German war debt, as it had in the early 1920s. "We did not," said Truman, "intend to pay, under any circumstances, the reparations bill for Europe."[12]

A compromise was reached in which the Soviets were allowed to strip eastern Germany, a process that had already been completed. In addition, 15 percent of the industrial development in the western zones would be given to the Soviets in exchange for foodstuffs from the agricultural Soviet zone. This plan, in effect, forced the creation of two separate economic zones; and it went a long way toward establishing the two primary symbols of the cold war: East Germany and West Germany. It also was not what Stalin wanted, but he was forced to accept it, which added to the growing animosity and distrust.

Very little was resolved at Potsdam, but after the conference there was still room for negotiation. The Soviets had allowed a friendly government to exist unfettered in Finland, and Stalin had renewed his commitment to enter the war against Japan in the east. But clearly, the two sides had less room to maneuver by the summer of 1945. The participants at Potsdam all agreed that there was much left to be done, but no final peace conference was ever planned, and Truman and Stalin never met again. The situation tightened up even more when, on his way back to Washington from Potsdam, Truman received the news that the United States had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, instantly killing some 80,000 civilians.

It was on the second day of the Potsdam Conference that Truman received the information that the nuclear test at Alamogordo, New Mexico, had been a success (he had scheduled the conference to coincide with the test). The president notified Churchill immediately but said nothing to Stalin for several days. The Manhattan Project had been under way since 1942 with the full knowledge and cooperation of the British, and with the understanding that the two nations would share the atomic secrets. Stalin and the Soviets—allies, supposedly equals in the Grand Alliance against fascism—were left out of these secret transactions; and to add to the mistrust that surrounded all this, Stalin (as early as 1943) had learned about the Manhattan Project and the U.S.–British secret agreements through his own intelligence network. The result was increased distrust, a Soviet fear that the West was, again, building a coalition and rallying its forces in opposition to Moscow.

The atomic bomb, and its use against the Japanese on August 6, 1945, had an impact on world history that was so momentous it is difficult to

recount. But for Truman in the summer of 1945 the decision to drop the bomb was not a difficult one. It would end the war as quickly as possible and before perhaps a million casualties resulted from an American invasion of the Japanese home islands. Truman's primary concern had to be military; the bomb was a military weapon, and the United States was at war. Also, from the start it had always been assumed that the bomb, if it were developed, would be used; and Truman inherited that assumption from the Roosevelt administration. Not to have used the bomb would have been a divergence from a Roosevelt policy that had its origins in 1942 and had cost some $2 billion. But Truman may well have had other considerations. By the summer of 1945 he and Byrnes, now with the bomb "rather ostentatiously on our hip," as Secretary of War Henry Stimson put it, began to realize the consequences of a Soviet sweep into Manchuria. Once there, as the lesson of eastern Europe had shown, the Soviets would be tough to dislodge. In addition, it would put Soviet troops very close to Japan, and possibly mean a surrendering of Korea. The bomb, on the other hand, would end the war before the Soviets could occupy Manchuria. But on August 8, two days after Hiroshima, the Soviet Red Army flooded into China's northeastern province. The next day a second atomic bomb destroyed Nagasaki. A few days later Japan surrendered and the war was over.

The bomb hardened the cold war, whether Truman intended to intimidate the Soviets by its use or not. Stalin immediately began pushing hard for a Soviet bomb to counter America's new power. "A single demand of you comrades," he told members of the Politburo in late 1945, "provide us with atomic weapons in the shortest possible time. You know that Hiroshima has shaken the whole world. The equilibrium has been destroyed. Provide the bomb. It will remove a great danger from us."[13] The Soviets were intimidated and fearful of America's new power in a world that was becoming more hostile and uncertain almost daily. The bomb, Ambassador Harriman wrote to Secretary Byrnes in late 1945, "must have revived their own feeling of insecurity. . . . The Russian people have been aroused to feel that they must again face an antagonistic world."[14] Before the end of 1945 the Soviet press had already accused the United States of "atomic diplomacy." The bomb helped solidify the cold war.

The U.S. attitude toward the Soviets and the bomb, however, had not yet hardened. In January 1946 the president appointed a committee to draw up a proposal for international control of atomic energy. The committee, headed by Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson and chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority David Lilienthal, recommended in its report in March that the United Nations assume control of all raw material and production plants for nuclear weapons, and that nuclear power be used in the future only for peaceful purposes. The Acheson–Lilienthal report showed that the Truman administration had come to realize the significance

of atomic weapons in world events and was willing to surrender its atomic advantage in exchange for a peaceful settlement with the Soviets—at least on this issue. But conservatives in Congress would have none of it. Republican Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, a key figure in the administration's attempt at a bipartisan foreign policy, called the plan "sheer appeasement." Tom Connally of Texas complained that Truman was simply "giving away [our] atomic secrets."

In order to satisfy those who wanted to maintain the U.S. monopoly on atomic weapons, the Acheson–Lilienthal plan was handed over to Bernard Baruch, a political gadfly and self-appointed adviser to presidents, to review and alter. Baruch was popular with Congress, and Truman probably hoped to give some weight to the Acheson–Lilienthal report by attaching Baruch's name to it. But Baruch altered the plan. When he presented the proposal to the United Nations, it sounded more like a threat than a plan to internationalize nuclear power. The Soviets, under the Baruch plan, would have to accept the entire proposal or none of it; and they would have to abandon their own atomic energy research and development, give up their fissionable material, and submit to inspections before the United States would agree to abandon its nuclear monopoly. The Soviets blocked the proposal immediately, declaring it a thinly disguised plan for a permanent Anglo-American atomic monopoly, and responded with their own plan, which included the destruction of all nuclear weapons stockpiles. The United States rejected that plan. The result was the beginning of an arms buildup on both sides, leading to the Soviet acquisition of the bomb in 1949, and then decisions by both sides to continue with the development of thermonuclear devices in the 1950s.

In September 1945 and again in December, Molotov and Byrnes met in an attempt to solve these growing problems, but nothing was resolved: Washington and Moscow had finally reached an impasse. Through 1946 the level of the rhetoric increased substantially as the two sides became frustrated with the course of events. In February, Stalin, in a rare public address, called for enormous sacrifices from the Soviet people in the face of the growing hostility from the West. He then claimed that communism and capitalism were incompatible in the new world order. The "capitalist ruling class," he said, would eventually resort to war as a solution to its economic problems. He announced a new Five-Year Plan to begin the process of preparing for the eventuality of another war with the West. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas called it "the Declaration of World War III."[15]

A month later Churchill replied to Stalin's statement in a speech (introduced by Truman) at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic," he said, "an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent."[16] Truman never endorsed Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech as a break with the Soviets, but Stalin clearly saw

it that way, and he denounced the speech as a "call to war against the USSR." In a public opinion poll taken in the same month, 71 percent of those Americans interviewed said they were hostile to Soviet policy, and 60 percent said the United States was being "too soft" on the Soviets. Speaking in Stuttgart, Germany, in September, Byrnes made it clear that the United States would not allow a unification of Germany under Soviet influence and that, in fact, the United States would maintain its forces in the western sectors as long as the Soviets maintained their army in the east. That same month, Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace spoke at Madison Square Garden and assailed the administration for its "Get tough with Russia policy." He was promptly fired.

In August 1945 the Soviets rushed into Manchuria to encounter an already defeated Japanese army. Truman wanted to hold back the Red Army as much as possible in Asia, and in General Order Number One he announced that the United States would occupy Japan alone. Truman's new ambassador to Moscow, Edwin Pauley, tried to convince the president that something needed to be done or the Soviets would overrun all of Manchuria and Korea. "Conclusions I have reached," Pauley wrote to Truman, "lead me to the belief that our forces should occupy quickly as much of the industrial areas of Korea and Manchuria as we can."[17] With troops no closer to the Asian mainland than Okinawa, the United States proposed a division of Korea at the 38th parallel. To the surprise of Pentagon experts, the Soviets accepted the proposal and halted their advance. The United States then brought in troops from Okinawa to maintain their southern half of Korea. For the first time the United States had drawn a line that was designed to stop Soviet expansion.

In China, Mao had become isolated by the Soviet–Chinese Nationalist Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed on August 14, 1945. Stalin had agreed as part of the treaty that he would not support Mao, and that he would remove his troops from Manchuria once operations against the Japanese were completed. Obviously, there was no love lost between the two Communist leaders. Stalin saw Mao as an adventurer whose revolution, supported by the Chinese peasantry, was outside the Marxist–Leninist philosophy that called for a revolution of urban industrial workers against the middle class. When the Soviets left Manchuria in the spring of 1946, however, they left behind for the Chinese Communists a vast store of Japanese weapons and matériel that increased their strength considerably—although Stalin was probably more interested in fueling the civil war to keep China divided and weak than in actually aiding the Communists. Truman tried to keep these arms from falling into the hands of Mao's army by sending in 100,000 U.S. soldiers to aid Jiang's drive north into Manchuria, but the Communists got there first and claimed the prize.

Truman tried to head off a resumption of the Chinese Civil War by

sending Patrick Hurley, and later General George Marshall, to mediate the differences between the Communists and the Nationalists, and to push the two sides into a coalition government before hostilities could resume. Truman, like Roosevelt before him, believed that a stable China was necessary to American interests in the Far East. A destabilized and weak China racked with civil war would almost certainly enable the Soviets to extend their control over Manchuria, and then possibly into China proper; and that might well lead to U.S. intervention on the Asian mainland against the Soviets, something no one in Washington wanted. But the problem in the negotiations for the United States was Jiang. He had concluded that the United States must support his cause or lose China either to Mao and the Chinese Communists or to the Soviets—or parts to both. Consequently, he rejected American insistence that he deal with the Communists.

The United States had another problem in the negotiations: while claiming neutrality in the mediation, it continued to aid the Nationalists, completely undermining its credibility as a mediator. However, U.S. pressure on Jiang did force the two sides to move toward an agreement several times in 1946, but constant breaches in the agreements caused fighting to resume. Finally, in December, Marshall gave up trying to mediate a settlement and the Truman administration began distancing itself from Jiang and the Nationalists. A Communist victory seemed certain, a victory that surprised Washington in 1949 only because of the speed of the Nationalist collapse, not its inevitability. Truman could only bemoan the loss: "We picked a bad horse," he said.[18] The fall of China would have far-reaching implications for American foreign policy in the Far East, and it would affect American domestic politics for at least thirty years.

Korea was a cold war hot spot in the making. In the U.S.-occupied zone in southern Korea, the U.S. forces had allowed the political right to organize the government, restore order in the streets, and suppress the left. By the end of 1945 the United States had crushed both the left and the center, and had succeeded in establishing a pro-American right-wing police state in the southern occupation zone. But immediately Washington reduced its military presence there, a reflection of the postwar economic policy of military cutbacks. As U.S. troops went home, a Korean constabulary force was born in the south to take control. Through 1946 several attempts were made to unify Korea. One plan for a five-year trusteeship was rejected by the south. In 1947 the Soviets rejected an American plan for free elections throughout the peninsula, and came up with their own plan of a single united legislative body designed to give the Communists in the north a majority. That proposal was rejected by the Americans. A U.N. attempt to unify Korea failed in September 1947, and in May 1948, Syngman Rhee, a fierce Korean nationalist and ardent anticommunist, proclaimed the Republic of Korea under his leadership. In December the new nation received

a seat in the United Nations as the only legitimate Korean government. The north responded in kind by creating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its capital at Pyongyang and Kim Il Sung as its leader. Kim was a staunch Communist with strong ties to Moscow, and an ex-guerrilla commander in the war against Japan. In Washington all eyes were focused on Germany and eastern Europe; no one envisioned Korea as a growing problem.

Other problems were developing in Vietnam. This poorly run French colony was occupied by the Japanese in 1941. After the war a group of Vietnamese nationalists led by Ho Chi Minh demanded independence for Vietnam. And Roosevelt, who opposed almost every demand from the French after the war, was willing to grant it. "France has had the country—thirty million inhabitants [—] for nearly one hundred years, and the people are worse off than they were at the beginning."[19] But French President Charles de Gaulle made it clear that France intended to reoccupy the French colony of Indochina (which included Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam) after the war, and England supported him against FDR's insistence that colonialism in postwar Asia should come to an end. Faced with a split in the Allied ranks over the issue, FDR was forced to capitulate, and France moved in troops to reoccupy its old colony.

But on September 2, 1945, at Hanoi in the north, Ho Chi Minh announced the independence of Vietnam. An American intelligence agent helped him write the declaration: "All men are created equal," it began. "They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness."[20] At the independence day celebration, a military band played "The Star Spangled Banner" and a formation of U.S. P-38s flew over the field. It appeared to be an American-sponsored event, an American-sponsored government. But at the same time French troops were landing in the south and consolidating their position there. In October 1946 the French proclaimed a separate government in the south, and in late November a French cruiser opened fire on the port city of Haiphong in the north. Finally, in December, Ho Chi Minh's forces, known as Vietminh, counterattacked the French troops, and the first Indochina war began.

The grip of the cold war tightened first in Europe, then in Asia, but also in the Middle East. During World War II the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union had moved troops into Iran to stop the Germans from grabbing that oil-rich nation. The Allies agreed at the Tehran Conference in late 1943 that within six months after the war's end, all Allied forces would be withdrawn from Iran; and Churchill and Roosevelt both assured Stalin that Soviet interests in the area would be protected for the future. But in late 1945 the Western powers began to fear Soviet control of Iran, an area of immense strategic importance with its access to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean—in addition to the significant oil reserves there. It

became clear in the last months of 1945 that the Soviets might try to annex the northern Iranian province of Azerbaijan and from there place a puppet government in Tehran and cast its influence over all of Iran and possibly the entire Middle East.

By early 1946 the United States and Britain had withdrawn from Iran in accordance with the Tehran agreements, but Soviet troops remained in place, demanding oil concessions from Iran in exchange for their withdrawal. The United States took the issue to the first session of the United Nations, but little was resolved in the sharp exchanges between the two sides. On March 2, when the deadline passed for the Soviets to remove their troops, tensions mounted and a brief war scare spread through Washington as Soviet tanks moved toward Azerbaijan. On March 5 (the same day as Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech) Byrnes sent a strongly worded message to the Kremlin, demanding an immediate Soviet withdrawal from Iran. By March 12 Washington had received no reply, and U.S. intelligence detected major Soviet troop movements in northern Iran. In late March, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, Andrei Gromyko, stormed out of a Security Council meeting over the issue. Finally, the situation was resolved when the Soviets agreed to leave Iran in early May.

In the late summer of 1946 the United States again made it clear that it would not allow any further expansion of Soviet influence. This time Turkey was the issue. During the war Churchill and Roosevelt acknowledged Stalin's need for access to the Mediterranean Sea through the Bosporus and Dardanelles, a long-time Russian demand to the West for warm-water ports. At Potsdam, Stalin suggested that the two straits be internationalized, and in August 1947 he suggested a joint Soviet–Turkish defense of the straits—obviously a plan to build Soviet bases in the region. To Washington policy makers it seemed that the Soviets were trying to push out everywhere: east into Manchuria and Korea, west into eastern Europe, and south into Iran and Turkey. Acheson warned of a collapse of "the whole Near and Middle East," and then "India and China." The U.S. ambassador to Turkey warned that if the Soviets were allowed to dominate Turkey, they would spread their influence over the Persian Gulf oil reserves and the Suez Canal. Truman responded by sending a fleet of warships to the eastern Mediterranean, and the Soviets immediately dropped their demands.

Another confrontation was developing over Greece. In the turmoil since the end of the war, Greece had come under the control of a reactionary government supported by the British. A Communist-led guerrilla war had broken out in the last months of World War II, although Stalin apparently did not expect a Communist victory there and offered no aid to the guerrillas. On February 21, 1947, the British ambassador to the United States delivered a message to the State Department that was blunt and to the point: The British, having "already strained their resources to the utmost," wished to inform the United States that their assistance to Greece and Tur-

key (where British financial and military aid had been significant) would terminate on March 31. They could no longer pay the tab for supporting those two governments. With little debate, the Truman administration decided to support the anticommunist efforts in both Greece and Turkey—to continue the U.S. policy of containing Soviet expansion.

All of these postwar events brought the United States to the foreign policy of containment. It was hardly a new idea in February 1946 when George Kennan, a counselor at the U.S. embassy in Moscow, sent his "long telegram" to the State Department in Washington, analyzing the Soviet foreign policy and recommending an American policy designed to "contain" Soviet expansionist tendencies. Kennan wrote that the Soviets had inherited from the tsarist Russians a great fear of invasion, first from barbarians to the east and then from the European nations in the west. They "have learned," he added, "to seek security only in patient but deadly struggle for the total destruction of rival power, never in compacts and compromises with it." In fact, he wrote, they welcomed conflict because it allowed them to maintain and justify their autocratic rule. He called the Soviets "neurotic" and "insecure."[21] Clearly, it would not work to deal with them through the normal channels of diplomacy. They would have to be handled firmly to keep them contained inside their sphere.

Kennan had not come up with anything new; the Truman administration had already implemented a containment policy against the Soviets on several occasions. It was, however, Kennan's analysis of the Soviets as dark, uncompromising, neurotic autocrats that changed the way American foreign policy experts saw the Soviet Union. Kennan's telegram immediately became famous among Washington insiders. He was summoned from Moscow to become an adviser to policy makers, and then placed at the head of the Policy Planning Staff, where (along with Dean Acheson and George Marshall) he set out to reevaluate and set down the American foreign policy of containment.

In July 1946 Truman's chief adviser, Clark Clifford, added to Kennan's warnings his own memo, this one to the president. Clifford, with the assistance of George Elsey, consulted foreign policy experts throughout the government and produced the first postwar interagency foreign policy review of American–Soviet relations, and it was even more hard-line than Kennan's telegram. Clifford and Elsey called for an integrated policy and a coherent strategy to resist Soviet expansion. "Until Soviet leaders abandon their aggressive policies," they warned, "the United States must assume that the USSR may at any time embark on a course of expansion effected by open warfare and therefore must maintain sufficient military strength to restrain the Soviet Union."[22] The Clifford–Elsey report, along with Kennan's telegram, pushed the administration deeper into a hard-line anticommunist stance.

The growing problems in Greece and Turkey burdened Washington pol-

icy makers in late February 1947. With the British about to walk away from that area of the world, the most common concern was that the Soviets would unilaterally fill the vacuum if something was not done immediately. On February 26, Truman met with congressional leaders to outline the crisis. The briefing was led by the new secretary of state, George Marshall, but Acheson took the floor and presented the case for containment with the passion of an evangelist. He warned that the fall of Greece or Turkey might open Soviet expansion toward Italy in the west, Iran in the east, and the Suez Canal to the south; and he referred to "apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one." In his memoirs Acheson recalled that "The Soviet Union was playing one of the greatest gambles in history at a minimal cost. . . . We and we alone were in a position to break up the play." In those brief statements, Acheson had evoked the new policy of containment, the American revulsion at appeasement, and the origins of what would become the domino theory—that the collapse of one nation would inevitably bring on the collapse of others. These three concepts would be fused into one policy that would become the foundation of America's foreign policy during the cold war.

Following the meeting, Senator Vandenberg convinced Truman that if he presented the crisis to Congress in just such terms, he would receive the support he needed to provide massive aid to Greece and Turkey. Vandenberg insisted, however, that Truman himself present the plan to Congress and that he link the crisis specifically to the survival of the Western world. The result would be the Truman Doctrine.

Truman's speech of March 12, 1947, was what Clifford recalled in his memoirs as "the opening gun in a campaign to bring people to the realization that the war isn't over by any means."[23] It was the institutionalization of a policy of worldwide containment, it was a clear break with the Soviets, and it was a watershed in the origins of the cold war. It went a long way toward solidifying the spheres of influence around the world, and it sent the United States and the Soviet Union down a long road of irreconcilable differences, misunderstandings, and minor and major confrontations.

Truman's remarks before Congress on March 12 focused chiefly on the ideological differences between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was an alarmist, black-and-white view of the world. "At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life," Truman said. "One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, the suppression of personal freedoms." He insisted that the United

States support "free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."[24] This was simply a commitment to aid anticommunists everywhere, the guide to the cold war that each of Truman's successors would follow. Kennan complained that it was not quite what he had in mind when he argued in favor of a policy of containment in the "long telegram"; that he never intended that the United States should implement a worldwide policy of containment through military force. It was, he said, a dangerous overreaction to the situation in Greece, "more grandiose and more sweeping than anything that I, at least, have ever envisioned."[25] Acheson backpedaled for the administration later, insisting that the aid to Greece was not a precedent for future military aid to other countries. The Truman Doctrine became, however, the origin of the U.S. commitment to aid anticommunists everywhere, the origin of American involvement in literally hundreds of large and small encounters around the globe designed to stem the tide of communism.

In early May, Congress voted for the aid that Truman had requested for Greece and Turkey. But by then Congress was more concerned with the deteriorating economic condition throughout western Europe. U.S. attempts to rebuild the economies of Europe through loans to Britain, through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund had all failed. Europe remained crippled and vulnerable to the forces of Soviet communism. This seemed especially true in France and Italy, where Communist parties were gaining strength. Influenced by the memories of Hitler's rise to power during the worst of Germany's economic times after World War I, the United States moved to shore up the economies of western Europe with American dollars. The plan was a success, but it drew the line more sharply between the East and the West in Europe, and it ultimately became the economic arm of the Truman Doctrine and the foreign policy of containment.

This plan was proposed by General George Marshall in his Harvard University commencement address in June 1947. The offer of aid to Europe was, Marshall said, to facilitate "the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist."[26] The administration did not reveal which nations would benefit from this new European Recovery Program proposed by Marshall, but clearly the policy makers in Washington had no intention of including the Soviets. However, the Soviets accommodated the Americans by refusing the money. They were offended by the Truman Doctrine, to say nothing of its harsh wording, and as the two sides turned up the fire under the cold war, it was inconceivable that the Soviets would agree to take American aid along with, as they saw it, the political and economic pressures that accompanied it. The Soviets forced the eastern European nations under their control to reject the U.S. offer as well. Only

Czechoslovakia agreed to accept the aid, a move quickly squelched by Moscow that eventually led to a Soviet-sponsored coup there in February 1948.

The coup in Czechoslovakia forced that beleaguered eastern European nation into the Soviet system. It also pushed Congress to pass the European Recovery Program—now known as the Marshall Plan. By December 1951, the United States had spent over $12 billion for the recovery of western Europe. The Soviets responded by initiating their own Molotov Plan for eastern Europe, but it did little to revitalize the economies of those nations beyond forcing them to trade with Moscow. The Marshall Plan, however, proved to be a success at rebuilding the western European economies. But from the standpoint of the growing cold war, it also created a deeper rift between Washington and Moscow, between the now solid Eastern and Western spheres of influence in Europe. The economies of eastern Europe became dependent on the Soviet Union, and the economies of western Europe became dependent on the United States. A "two camp" world was developing.

Following the 1947 announcements of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, Stalin moved to consolidate his power in eastern Europe. In May, the popularly elected noncommunist (even pro-Western) Ferenc Nagy was removed from office in Hungary and Communists seized control. The coup caused a great stir in the United States: It was more evidence, it seemed, of the expanding Soviet menace in eastern Europe. In Czechoslovakia the Soviet takeover was even more disturbing. The Czechs had forged a peaceful coexistence with the Soviets since the war. Czech leaders had succeeded in resisting Soviet control, despite the Czech–Soviet treaty of 1943 that seemed to place Czechoslovakia inside the Soviet sphere. But in late 1947, the Czech government responded to offers of U.S. aid, and Soviet troops moved into place along Czechoslovakia's eastern border. The democratically elected government of Eduard Beneš fell and the Communists assumed control on February 25, 1948. This was followed by the suspicious death of the popular Czech foreign minister, Jan Masaryk, and then the implausible explanation from Moscow that he had committed suicide. Truman saw these takeovers as "exactly the same situation with which Britain and France faced in 1938–9 with Hitler."[27] On March 17, Truman went before Congress to ask for universal military training, a resumption of the Selective Service, and a speedy passage of the Marshall Plan. Congress responded by passing the Selective Service Bill and funding a seventy-group air force. There was a sense of urgency.

The problem of Germany had not been resolved, mainly because each side saw the future of central Europe differently. The Americans and the British had concluded that there must be German industrial recovery if there was to be stability in Europe. Moscow, on the other hand, wanted a weak, neutralized Germany capable of little more than paying reparations. The Soviets opposed the rebuilding of its old enemy for the obvious rea-

sons, but for ideological reasons they also feared a rebuilt, capitalist, and Western-oriented West Berlin inside its sphere of influence. Neither side wanted a permanent division of Germany, but their opposing views of Germany's future made for another irreconcilable difference that pushed both sides toward that end.

The British and American zones of western Germany were united in December 1946, and in June 1948 the United States and Britain issued a new German currency in an attempt to end inflation and stop the growth of the black market in the western zone. The Soviets read this as an attempt by the West to create a west German nation tied to the Western democracies, and they responded by sealing off land access to Berlin on June 24. The Americans saw this as an attempt by Moscow to force the Western powers to abandon Berlin, and they responded with an airlift of supplies to the isolated city. The United States and Britain delivered some 13,000 tons of supplies to West Berlin each day for eleven months. Truman escalated the affair by sending to Britain several B-29 bombers of the type designed to carry atomic weapons. He then refused to answer questions about whether the bombers were carrying atomic bombs. By the spring of 1949 the relief flights into Tempelhof airfield in West Berlin had increased to over a thousand per day, and the Soviets were tiring of the tactic. In May they gave in and allowed overland traffic to commence, but the repercussions from the Berlin airlift crisis were immense.

The crisis convinced both sides that resolution of the problem of a divided Germany was impossible, and their responses were to give up on solving the problem and harden their positions. The French zone was incorporated into the western zone almost immediately, and the Federal Republic of Germany was born. The Soviets responded with the creation of the German Democratic Republic in October. Across the border the armies of the Soviet Union and the United States would stare at each other for another four decades.

The cold war hardened significantly in the months that followed. In April 1949 the United States took the lead in forming the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a mutual defense treaty that committed the United States to defend eleven nations from Iceland to Italy. A few Republican senators, like Robert Taft, objected to NATO on age-old isolationist grounds, but with support from Senator Vandenberg, the Republican point man on foreign policy issues, Congress approved the treaty and the United States went into the 1950s as the chief player in NATO, a military organization designed specifically to contain Soviet aggressions in Europe. Moscow responded in 1955 with its own defensive structure in eastern Europe, the Warsaw Pact.

In the fall of 1949 two events changed the face of the cold war world. In late August the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb, and through most of 1949 Mao Zedong and the Communists increasingly pushed back

Jiang Jieshi and the Chinese Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War. On October 1, a victorious Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China with its capital at Beijing. In December, Jiang and his defeated Nationalists fled to Formosa (Taiwan). China, as many proclaimed, had been "lost" to communism, and two of the largest populations on earth were united ideologically in opposition to the United States. These two events brought home the realizations that, first, Soviet power was increasing more quickly than anyone expected; and second, that communism was spreading. The Truman administration calmed America's nerves by insisting that the Soviets did not have what it took to equal U.S. stockpiles of the bomb, and that it would be several years before Moscow could deliver an atomic device to North America, or even western Europe. Similarly, the administration seemed to take the fall of China in stride. Truman and his people had seen Jiang's collapse coming for over a year, and presented with the choice of either intervening with massive military support or backing away from the situation, the administration had opted for the latter. Dean Acheson, now secretary of state, believed that the future of world diplomacy was in Europe and not in Asia, and he took some comfort in advice from Kennan and others that China probably would not ally itself with the Soviets, and that China lacked the resources to become a great power in this century. Despite the administration's seeming lack of concern over these incidents, it was becoming increasingly clear that the postwar world would not be one dominated by the United States and the American system.

On August 19, 1945, just as the war was coming to a close, Admiral William Leahy told the American people that the United States was the most powerful nation on earth. Its navy was unrivaled, its ground forces were the best-equipped in the world, its air force was the "largest and most efficient." And "With our British allies [we control] the secret of the world's most fearsome weapon."[28] Clearly, the United States was in a position to work its will on the world. It had the military force to stop future aggressions (therefore there would be peace), and it had the institutions it believed the rest of the world wanted and needed. Through conversion and moral suasion (as opposed to colonization and oppression), the United States hoped to take its message to the world—to share the American way. From that would spring a U.S.-dominated new world order, a new world economy, rising incomes. Everyone would benefit as a result. And if the Soviets did not agree just now, well, the U.S. military would buy the time needed for the strategy to succeed. "To the extent that we are able to manage our domestic affairs successfully," Secretary of State James Byrnes wrote, "we shall win converts to our creed in every land."[29] Americans were committed to a world of peace and prosperity on their terms.

But the American people fell quickly from the heights of exultation to the depths of anxiety as the cold war unfolded and it became clear that

their nation was not the only player on the world scene. "We are forced to act in the world as it is," Henry Stimson admitted in 1947, "and not in the world as we wish it were, or as we would like it to become." As incidents, disagreements, misunderstandings, and just plain belligerence pitted the Americans and the Soviets against each other during the first three years after World War II, the result was a cold war, a diplomatic battleground that was, for the United States, shrouded in the philosophy of containment and a revulsion for appeasement. As a result, for the next forty years, the United States became involved in hundreds of incidents and situations, small and large, throughout the globe for the expressed purpose of containing the spread of communism. Americans were frustrated by the events, but they believed they had the power and the will in the postwar world to contain Soviet aggression if necessary. Often the objective was achieved, but occasionally the United States found itself in bed with far right-wing dictators; involved deeply, and even tragically, in minor situations; and, most important, too often found itself compromising cherished American values to achieve the goal of containment. Between 1945 and 1948 Truman and his administration put the mechanisms in place that would fuel and govern the cold war in America.

3

DOMESTIC FEARS AND THE RED SCARE

It is ironic that in the early postwar years, just as anticommunism was beginning to run rampant through the nation, membership in the American Communist Party was the lowest it had been since the 1920s, its numbers cut in half since the peak periods of the 1930s. As the fear of communism grabbed at the heart and soul of America, as it threatened to tear America apart, the threat itself was actually diminishing. Clearly, America was insecure, anxious.

The nation's fear of communism, real or imagined, became a hot political issue in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The entire era is branded with the name "McCarthyism" after the Republican senator from Wisconsin, Joseph McCarthy, the man who dragged America through the muck of anticommunism to the climax of the movement and then, finally, to its logical conclusion. History identifies McCarthy as the nefarious link to America's dark side, the personification of the weakness in the American character and in the democratic system itself. And he deserves much of history's treatment, but he was not the organizer of the Red Scare, nor was he the first to see Communists in places they should not be; and the blame for McCarthyism does not fall solely in the laps of the Republicans.

Americans succumbed to this irrationality for a number of reasons. The cold war itself and, more important, the early setbacks in the cold war

suffered by the United States fueled the distrust and hysteria. The "loss" of China and the Soviet atomic bomb had a great impact and led to American feelings that such events could not have occurred without some sort of Soviet-sponsored espionage carried on deep inside the U.S. government. A series of sensational spy cases informed the American public that Soviet spies did, in fact, exist, which in turn gave birth to the question that was on everyone's lips: "How many more are there?" The war in Korea added to the fear. There American boys, in an attempt to contain communism, were being killed by Communists. All of this fear and hysteria was exacerbated by the Republican Party's search for an issue to use against the Democrats in the postwar elections, and when they found it in America's fear of communism, they played it for all it was worth.

The mechanisms for the postwar Red Scare were first put in place in 1938 with the establishment of the permanent House Committee on Un-American Activities. Known almost exclusively by the inaccurate acronym HUAC, the committee was designed to ferret out subversives on both the left and the right—both fascists and Communists. In fact, HUAC was established as the result of a compromise between those who wanted to investigate Communists, socialists, and leftist radicals, and those who wanted to investigate fascists. In 1940 the Smith Act (the Alien Registration Act) made it illegal to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force, and in the 1940s several states established un-American activities committees in their legislatures. States also passed laws denying employment to subversives, or to anyone belonging to organizations deemed subversive or un-American.

In the spring of 1945, before the war ended, Americans got their first taste of a Communist spy scandal. In an illegal raid on the office of *Amerasia*, a radical journal of Asian affairs, agents from the Office of Strategic Services (the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency) uncovered a large number of classified government documents. Indictments were returned against six people, of whom only one pleaded guilty and received a small fine. Their crime was described as "journalistic zeal." But the Republicans smelled a cover-up, and the House Judiciary Committee held hearings but found nothing. The incident would have died, but as the news was breaking in the case, the federal government was trying desperately to force Jiang Jieshi and his Nationalists to form a postwar coalition government with Mao Zedong and his Communists. Americans like Henry Luce, the publisher of *Time* magazine, and other anticommunist types believed strongly that the U.S. government should try to achieve the goal of a Nationalist China under Jiang—free of communism. They began voicing their opinion that Jiang's problems were not incompetence and corruption, as liberals in the administration claimed, but the machinations of Communists in the U.S. State Department who were pushing for the unholy Communist–Nationalist coalition in China. In addition, those indicted in the *Amerasia*

case had State Department connections, and the documents that were seized dealt exclusively with Far Eastern concerns. From then on, the State Department was always a target, and after Jiang's collapse in 1949 the spotlight on the State Department became even more focused.

In the fall of 1946, the first big international spy story broke, the story that would ultimately lead Americans to realize that the Soviets had been spying on the United States for some time. It would also be a major factor in destroying Soviet credibility in the American mind. The story revolved around a disgruntled and disenchanted agent at the Soviet embassy in Toronto named Igor Gouzenko. Gouzenko decided to defect to the West, taking with him secret documents that implicated the Soviet government in a spy network and identified several Soviet spies working in the United States and Canada. The roundup brought in fifteen spies in all, including Alan Nunn May, a British scientist who had worked on atomic energy research in Canada during the war. May admitted spying for the Soviets and turning over information on American and Canadian nuclear programs. May then implicated Klaus Fuchs, a German-born physicist who had worked on the Los Alamos Project; he in turn pointed to several coconspirators who led directly to several other Los Alamos alumni and eventually to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. The Rosenbergs were Communists and probably spies (Nikita Khrushchev mentioned them in his memoirs as being of some assistance to the Soviet nuclear program).

It was the Rosenbergs who became the center of attention, and the center of the nation's anticommunist debate, at least in part because they were apprehended in the fall of 1949, just after the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb. It quickly became the popular opinion in America (which was probably incorrect) that the Soviets could not have developed the bomb alone, that they needed some assistance from spies in the West, and that the Rosenbergs (and probably others) had provided the necessary scientific secrets. Judge Irving R. Kaufman, in sentencing the Rosenbergs, accused them of a "diabolical conspiracy to destroy a God-fearing nation." They had given the bomb to the Soviets, he added, "years before our best scientists predicted." On June 19, 1953, at the height of the anticommunist hysteria in the country, the Rosenbergs were executed.

Anticommunism entered politics as a major issue for the first time in the 1946 congressional elections when the Republicans accused the Democratic Party of being riddled with Communists and sympathetic to communism—both at home and abroad. The Republican campaign slogan accused the Democrats of the "Three C's": "Confusion, Corruption, and Communism." The result was a stunning victory that placed Republicans in control of Congress for the first time since 1930. It also awakened the Democrats to the power of the issue of anticommunism. *U.S. News and World Report* characterized the Republican campaign as "accusing the Democratic

Party of being one that preaches radical doctrines and engages in radical practices. The main tenor of the Republican campaign theme is that the Democratic Party is leading the country toward Communism. . . . The Republicans are . . . accusing the Administration of being pro-Russian in its policies and are accusing the Democrats of permitting men with communistic ideas to dictate the Administration policy."[1] After the election, journalist Marquis Childs concluded that the anticommunist issue "was one of the most potent forces in the shift from the party in power to the opposition."[2]

Truman responded to the election results by getting tough on communism. He issued Executive Order 9835, requiring loyalty tests for federal employees, and he allowed HUAC files to be used as a source of evidence tying employees to subversive groups. Truman's motives were clearly political, with an eye toward the 1948 election campaign, when he expected to be tagged by Republicans with the soft-on-communism label—a fate his advisers were telling him he must avoid at all costs. The president may also have hoped that his loyalty order would remove the anticommunist issue entirely from American politics, but instead it seemed to verify that Communists had infiltrated federal government offices and were, in fact, a real danger to the nation's security.

As a result of the order, all new federal employees underwent a loyalty investigation, and government department heads were given the responsibility of firing disloyal employees. The order also established the attorney general's list of subversive organizations. Of the 16,000 federal employees who were investigated, not one was found to be disloyal to the U.S. government or a card-carrying Communist. Two government workers were, however, fired because they were deemed "security risks," and about 200 were forced to resign because they were judged "unsuitable" for such reasons as homosexuality and alcohol abuse. Another 100 or so federal employees were fired because they were suspected of possible disloyalty. At no time were any of these people allowed to face their accusers or present evidence in their own defense. Truman's order, probably more than anything except the establishment of HUAC itself in 1938, set the stage for what was to come.

Truman's loyalty order was designed to let the electorate know that he, too, was concerned about the supposedly growing threat of domestic communism. His fiery anti-Soviet Truman Doctrine speech, delivered to Congress just a few days before the executive order was signed, made it clear that he was going after Communists abroad as well. He also used the fear of communism to sell the expensive Marshall Plan to the budget-minded Republican Congress later in 1947. In 1949 he used the same tactic to promote and finance NATO. Clearly, Truman's political approach to the issue of anticommunism, along with his need to compromise with con-

gressional Republicans, did a lot to fuel anticommunist sentiment in the nation in the postwar years.

In the fall of 1947 HUAC went after the motion picture industry. HUAC chairman J. Parnell Thomas had accused the industry of turning out Communist propaganda. There followed several years of sensational attacks by HUAC on Hollywood that finally revealed little, except possibly the modest intelligence of some actors. "From what I hear," Gary Cooper told the committee, "I don't like it [communism] much because it isn't on the level." As a result of the Hollywood hearings, ten writers were ultimately jailed for failure to cooperate with the committee, and over the next few years dozens more Hollywood operatives were blacklisted and banned from their professions for invoking the Fifth Amendment rather than give the members of HUAC what they wanted: the names of Communists (or former Communists) working in the film industry.

In the spring of 1948 HUAC received word that a senior editor at *Time* magazine named Whittaker Chambers had confessed to being a top-level Communist in Washington in the 1930s. In addition, Chambers was willing to testify about his one-time Communist association, and he agreed to identify his associates—he would name names. HUAC put Chambers on the stand in August, and among those he identified as former Communists was Alger Hiss, the director of the prestigious Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Hiss, if HUAC could prove he was a Communist, would be quite a catch. He was on the inside in the federal government, one of the many bright young Ivy League-educated intellectuals who came to Washington in the 1930s to offer their farsightedness to the workings of the New Deal. After clerking for Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Hiss rose auspiciously through the State Department maze to the level of director of the office in charge of United Nations affairs. From there he organized the U.N. planning conferences at Dumbarton Oaks and San Francisco, and (although a minor player) he was with FDR at Yalta. It was Hiss's Yalta connection that raised the most eyebrows among the HUAC committee members; by 1948 Yalta was being portrayed by conservatives as the great betrayal. Hiss's rebuttal before HUAC was a firm denial, almost a challenge to the committee to prove any relationship between his past and any aspect of communism. The committee backed off. Chambers proved to be an unimpressive witness, an admitted ex-Communist who had nothing to offer but his dubious "word." In the face of Hiss's indelible credibility HUAC appeared gullible, ready to believe anyone who had a story. But one HUAC member, California Congressman Richard Nixon, concluded that Hiss was lying. Based on Nixon's hunch, a HUAC subcommittee, chaired by Nixon, went after Hiss—the big fish.

Chambers claimed to have known Hiss personally in the 1930s when the two men worked as part of a Soviet-sponsored Communist cell assigned to infiltrate the federal government apparatus (particularly the State Depart-

ment) in an attempt to influence foreign policy. Nixon's objective was to establish the personal relationship between Chambers and Hiss through some common knowledge. He achieved this by interrogating each man separately and then comparing notes. Incredibly, the one common denominator turned out to be the prothonotary warbler, a bird rare in the Potomac area, that both Hiss and Chambers said they had observed. Chambers insisted that the two men were avid bird-watchers in the 1930s and that together they had observed the bird on a walk along the Potomac. From there, Nixon built his case.

The statute of limitations prevented Hiss from being tried for treason, leaving only the question of perjury. Had Hiss lied to HUAC during his testimony? In late August, on the television news program *Meet the Press*, Chambers openly accused Hiss of being a Communist. After some delay (*The Washington Post* insisted Hiss either "put up or shut up") Hiss sued Chambers for libel. In the trial that followed, Chambers produced a series of documents on microfilm that had been stored in a pumpkin on his farm in Maryland. These "pumpkin papers," as they came to be called, were sensitive State Department papers; some were in Hiss's own hand, others were written on a typewriter traced to Hiss. With these revelations the implications were more than just some government infiltration and the possible influence on foreign policy. This was espionage. Few seemed to notice that Chambers had denied that espionage had been a motive in his own workings in the 1930s. Nevertheless, the production of the "pumpkin papers" seemed to prove that Hiss had lied to HUAC.

Hiss was indicted on two counts of perjury. By the time the case went to trial, it had taken on a momentum all its own. For many Americans liberalism itself was on trial. It was the Republicans accusing the Democrats of the sins of the past, of cavorting with Communists and pro-Soviet subversives at the expense of the nation's foreign policy. Much of this hysteria had to do with the new medium of television, which broadcast the Hiss perjury trials to much of the east coast. The first trial ended in a hung jury. In November 1949 Hiss went on trial again and was found guilty on two counts of perjury. He was sentenced to five years in prison, the maximum sentence.

Much of the significance of the Hiss case revolves around the willingness of prominent liberal Americans and Democratic Party leaders to rally around Hiss—and even to follow him down in flames when he was found guilty. Everyone from Eleanor Roosevelt to Dean Acheson to Max Lerner insisted that Hiss was innocent and that HUAC had stepped beyond its legal limits. Even Truman called the episode a "red herring." When Hiss was found guilty, many Americans were willing to lump together Alger Hiss, the Democratic Party, and domestic communism. And of course, a question was immediately raised in the American mind: How many more Alger Hisses are there out there—in the government, in the State Depart-

ment, involved in espionage, influencing American foreign policy? The incident added to the growing fears.

Hiss was convicted on January 21, 1950. Eighteen days later, on February 9, Senator Joseph McCarthy told a Republican Women's Club in Wheeling, West Virginia, that he had in his hand a list of Communist Party members serving in the State Department. "While I cannot take the time to name all the men in the State Department who have been named as members of the Communist Party and members of a spy ring," he said, "I have in my hand a list of 205 . . . a list of names that were known to the Secretary of State and who nevertheless are still working and shaping the policy of the State Department."[3] A few days later in Reno, Nevada, and then in Salt Lake City, he claimed there were first fifty-seven, and then eighty-one, Communists in the State Department. With that, the claims and counterclaims, the revelations and accusations, came to a head. One of America's ugliest periods was about to unfold.

Joe McCarthy was little more than a Senate Republican sideliner with a doubtful future. He entered the Senate in 1947, and by 1950 he was two years from having to stand for reelection in a state where the grassroots-style liberalism of Robert La Follette had won the day for Democratic presidential candidates in four of the last five elections. Desperately in need of an issue, he stumbled on anticommunism when he received favorable publicity after attacking a Wisconsin newspaper and its editor for what he called "Communist leanings." But McCarthy's infamous Wheeling speech, and the five years of tirades against communism in America that followed, was hardly more than jumping into the lead on an issue that was already hot on Capitol Hill, an issue that Republicans had been using against the Democrats since 1946—and that the Democrats had themselves used to destroy Henry Wallace's third-party run in 1948. By the time McCarthy spoke to the ladies of Wheeling, the topic of anticommunism was old hat.

But for McCarthy there were a few new twists and turns. First of all, McCarthy presented a sense of urgency. His boisterous character seemed to say to millions of Americans that a fifth column (something Americans had been conditioned to fear since the 1930s and Nazi infiltration of Europe) of Communists was gaining strength in the United States, directing U.S. policy, and in fact preparing to take over the nation—as it seemed Communists had taken over other countries. For impressionable Americans the evidence of McCarthy's charges was everywhere: Communist spies like Hiss and the Rosenbergs; Soviet aggressions (both covert and overt); the re-formation of the Comintern in Moscow to direct international Communist activity; communism in the labor unions, in Hollywood, in government. The fear of communism had grown to an irrational level by 1950, and Americans began seeing Communists everywhere. But more important, McCarthy was specific about where they were; he said they were

in the State Department, where they were directing American foreign policy.

By 1950 America's foreign policy was, to many Americans, a horrible failure because it had not delivered what was expected from the efforts and total victories of World War II. China had fallen to communism, the Soviets had taken over eastern Europe, and now they had the atomic bomb. In addition, just as McCarthy was making his accusations, North Korea invaded South Korea and the United States was in a full-scale war (even though it was being called a "police action") against the forces of communism—American soldiers were being killed by Communists. All of this coalesced around McCarthy, the man with the answers, the man with the lists, the names of the culprits, those responsible, the scapegoats.

The Senate responded to McCarthy and his accusations by appointing a committee to investigate his charges. The Tydings Committee, headed by Democratic Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland, accused McCarthy of perpetrating a "fraud and a hoax . . . on the Senate of the United States and the American people." The Tydings Committee report was endorsed by the Senate, but strictly along partisan lines and only after a few high-pitched shouting matches and at least one shoving incident on the floor of the Senate. McCarthyism, as it was quickly being called, was now a full-blown political issue; but more important, it was also an emotional issue, one that would divide America and change the nation.

Of course, McCarthy did not stand alone in making his accusations. McCarthyism was a volatile political issue that many Republicans believed could embarrass the administration and sweep them back into the seats of power in 1952. Robert Taft egged on McCarthy, telling him that "if one case [doesn't] work, bring up another." House Minority Leader Joseph Martin praised McCarthy for exposing "the tremendous infiltration of pinks and fellow-travelers into our government."[4] And clearly, much of the Old Guard in the Republican Party jumped on the McCarthy bandwagon as their main vehicle to a 1952 victory. But moderate Republicans were apprehensive. Through all his wailings, McCarthy had produced virtually nothing except a group of outdated dossiers compiled from the State Department's loyalty files in 1947; and all of those people either were no longer at the State Department or were later cleared by the FBI. In June 1950, Republican Senator Margaret Chase Smith and several other moderates in the party issued their "Declaration of Conscience," deriding McCarthy and his supporters for exploiting "fear, bigotry, ignorance, and intolerance" for their own political gain.[5] A group of Republicans standing somewhere between the McCarthyites and the moderates, such as Richard Nixon, feared that McCarthy's histrionics would backfire and destroy a perfectly good political issue.

All of this was not being confined to Capitol Hill. McCarthy also received the support of the Hearst, McCormick, and Scripps-Howard news-

papers. Right-wing reporters, columnists, and radio commentators like Paul Harvey also sang his praises. The old Roosevelt haters who had found the New Deal to be tainted with socialism now found their place in the sun, along with anti-intellectuals, antiliberals, midwestern isolationists, and a large number of right-wing fringe groups who hoped to liken New Deal liberalism to communism. By the early years of the 1950s, divergence from the mainstream of any sort—social, economic, political, cultural—might lead to questioning of loyalty, to charges of being what McCarthy himself often called "communistically inclined." Private businesses often conducted investigations of their own employees, the FBI compiled lists of suspected "travelers," the CIO purged itself of Communists, and college professors lost their jobs by the hundreds for having had vague associations with liberal groups in the 1930s. In September 1950, Nixon, along with Republican Senator Karl Mundt and conservative Democratic Senator Pat McCarran, pushed through Congress the McCarran Internal Security Act requiring Communist organizations to register with the attorney general. Although the law stopped short of making it against the law to be a Communist in the United States, it made life difficult for anyone who had ever been a Communist or had been a member of a Communist organization—as defined by the newly established Subversive Activities Control Board. Anyone, for instance, could be jailed if they were considered "likely" to commit espionage. Truman's veto of the McCarran Act was overridden and the tone was set. "Communistically inclined" by someone else's definition might cost a career, upset a life. Americans slipped into conformity. They threw away their Paul Robeson records and red neckties; they stopped drinking vodka and eating Russian caviar. Many denied their pasts and did all they could to fit into the new mainstream to avoid detection for whatever reason. Scholars discovered conformity and conservatism in many university disciplines, including history, economics, and sociology. Hollywood movies now warned of the Communist threat. Dress codes were introduced in schools and businesses, and soon "standing out" became undesirable. It was the new period of conformity, the "paranoid style," as Richard Hofstader called it; the "homogenized society," according to William Leuchtenberg. But above all, it was the supreme manifestation of the cold war at home.

4

AMERICA AND THE FORGOTTEN WAR: STOPPING THE MARCH OF COMMUNISM IN KOREA

The Korean War broke out in June 1950, just five years after World War II ended. By then containment was a fixture in the American foreign policy arsenal, not only at the Pentagon and at the State Department, but also in the minds of the American people. Few in 1950 would disagree with the opinion that the spread of communism had to be stopped—lines had to be drawn and defended. The North Korean invasion of the South was an obvious example of communism breaking out of its boundaries, and most Americans felt, at least at first, that military force was the correct response to this thrust of world communism. At the same time, it also seemed clear in the summer of 1950 that if the United States shied away from a forceful response in Korea, American influence abroad would lose ground to the Soviets.

The situation in Korea was clearly dangerous, but Americans were secure in the belief that their military was up to the challenge. The United States had emerged from World War II as the strongest power in the world, and most Americans believed in June 1950 that their armed forces still held that place. It was not even a war; it was only a "police action," as President Truman called it. And this police action was being conducted by a coalition of forces representing the "free world" (as the noncommunist world was

called) and under the auspices of the United Nations. Few Americans saw Korea as the war it would become.

At the end of World War II, Korea was just one of several power vacuums on the Asian mainland immediately threatened by Soviet encroachments. In August 1945 Soviet troops rushed into northern Korea as an extension of their occupation of Manchuria. This move was a consequence of the Yalta agreement that sent Stalin's armies against the Japanese on the Asian mainland once the Germans were defeated in Europe. President Truman responded by issuing General Order Number One, designed to limit any further unilateral advances by the Soviets. The order stated that Japanese forces on the Asian mainland were to surrender to Jiang Jieshi and the Nationalist Chinese (and not the Chinese Communists); and the United States would occupy the Japanese home islands alone. Operatives at the Pentagon then drew a line in Korea at the 38th parallel and insisted that the Soviets not move south of it. The United States then moved in troops from Okinawa to enforce the position. It was September 1945.

Through the next two years America's interest in Korea dropped in priority, partly because of budget restraints in Washington, partly because of America's false sense of security as the world's only nuclear power, and partly because Washington was concentrating on Japan and the Philippines as America's Far Eastern outposts. In September 1947 the Soviets proposed a bilateral withdrawal of troops from Korea. For the United States it seemed like an easy way out of an unwanted zone of occupation.

In August 1948 Syngman Rhee proclaimed the Republic of Korea in the south and in the same month the Koreans in the north, under Soviet leadership, responded in kind by creating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with Kim Il Sung as the new nation's president. In their inaugural addresses both Kim and Rhee threatened to unite Korea by force. The country was divided. Two opposing governments were set up, one right-wing and capitalist, the other Communist. Each was backed by the opposing superpower in the growing cold war.

As the Soviets and Americans withdrew their troops from the Korean peninsula, each created local armies in their own image to hold the line against the other side. The Soviets left quickly; the last American troops left in the summer of 1949. No one saw the potential conflict that was about to become the first major hot spot of the cold war.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops, led by about 150 Soviet-made T-34 tanks, rushed into South Korea without warning. Within two days the South Korean army had been pushed well back from its positions along the 38th parallel and was beginning to disintegrate. Truman responded quickly. Within twelve hours of being notified of the invasion, he had made the decision to intervene. "By God," Truman told Secretary of State Dean Acheson, "I'm going to let them have it."[1] He told Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson that he intended to "hit them hard."[2]

His decision, however, was not impulsive. In the charged political climate of 1950, Truman could have done little else. A year or two before, Korea was to most Americans a remote, poverty-stricken, generally worthless piece of real estate on the Asian mainland. Its value was not much greater to foreign policy strategists in Washington. The United States had sufficient defenses to protect its interests in Asia; and besides, the cold war was in Europe, not in the Far East. But in 1949 and early 1950 things changed drastically. In September 1949 the Soviets acquired the atom bomb and America's monopoly on nuclear weapons was broken. In October, Mao Zedong inaugurated the People's Republic of China, and the world's largest nation went over to the other side. In January 1950, Alger Hiss was convicted, and a month later Joseph McCarthy was blaming it all on Communists in the federal government and claiming boldly that the Democrats were "soft on communism" and knowingly harboring Communists in the State Department. Truman, the Republicans declared, had "lost" China. He would not lose Korea.

There were other considerations. Under U.S. leadership the United Nations had condemned the North Korean invasion, and Truman believed that if this U.N. resolution were not upheld, the United Nations would, as he told aide Clark Clifford, go the way of the League of Nations. In his memoirs, the president wrote: "The foundations and the principles of the United Nations were at stake unless this unprovoked attack on Korea could be stopped."[3] After all, the United Nations was an American creation; its credibility would have to be protected.

Truman also looked to the past for reasons to intervene in Korea. To him (and to an entire generation of Americans) appeasement was the chief cause of World War II. To appease an aggressor with a small concession, history had shown, only led to further demands, further aggressions, and finally an expanded war. The "Munich Syndrome," named after the 1938 Munich Accords that unsuccessfully appeased Hitler, haunted Truman, and for the United States to allow the invasion of South Korea to go unchallenged would be appeasement of the worse sort. He recalled in his memoirs:

> Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. I felt that if South Korea was allowed to fall Communist leaders would be emboldened to override [other] nations. . . . If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors. If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on the second world war.[4]

The Korean War, and America's decision to enter it, provoked an attitude that had been growing strong in America since 1945: that the United States was the savior of freedom, the protector of the weak, the force that was able and willing to stand up to Communist encroachments. America had the will, the power, and the inclination.

In April 1950, just two months before the outbreak of the Korean War, President Truman was presented with a document that would change the course of American foreign policy. National Security Council Paper Number 68 (NSC-68) was written by Secretary of State Acheson and Paul Nitze of the State Department's policy planning staff. It argued that the United States should begin a massive rearmament plan, expand its covert activities, and generally increase its power and that of its allies in the face of the growing Communist threat. Containment of communism was clearly the objective, but NSC-68 also suggested that the United States should work to push communism out of many of the areas it had come to occupy since the war. This became ingrained in the foreign policy jargon of the time as "rollback." "The assault on free institutions is worldwide now," the report asserted, "and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere." NSC-68 also invoked the old myth of "monolithic communism," that Communists worldwide were of one mind directed from the Kremlin—and of one goal: to control the world. "The Soviet Union is developing the military capacity to support its design for world domination," the report claimed. NSC-68 also argued that the United States must not allow the Soviets to thwart the actions of the United Nations; at the same time it gave Truman and his advisers the justification for using the United Nations as a tool of American foreign policy to contain Soviet expansion wherever possible. "The overthrow . . . of a regime established under the aegis of the U.N. would . . . constitute a severe blow to the prestige and influence of the UN; in this respect the interests of the U.S. are parallel to, if not identical with, those of the U.N."[5]

Truman initially rejected NSC-68 as simply too expensive. In 1950 conservatives in Congress were still calling for a balanced budget, and at the same time, Truman was convinced that America's superior air force (and its ability to deliver the atomic bomb) was all the nation needed to maintain its place as the most powerful nation on earth. But the war in Korea showed that conventional-style warfare might erupt in a number of places around the world, and that the United States military needed the strength to meet those challenges. In September, four months after the invasion of South Korea, Truman accepted NSC-68 and the United States began an immediate mass arms buildup. Within a year the first cold war arms race was well under way—and NSC-68 fell into place as the guidebook of American foreign policy.

The American army that went to Korea in the summer of 1950 was not

the American army that had defeated Germany and Japan just five years earlier. Underfunded, undersupplied, and notoriously overweight and out of training, this U.S. Army of 1950 was a reflection in many ways of America's belief that the war to end all wars had been fought and won, and there was little need to prepare for the next war—certainly not the next conventional war. In addition, the United States had developed almost nothing new in conventional weapons (with the notable exception of jet aircraft) since World War II. It is always said that Americans were surprised to find themselves involved in another war in just five years; clearly the American military was just as surprised.

The U.N. army in Korea was made up of soldiers from sixteen nations (out of sixty U.N. members). Another thirty nations sent noncombat aid. At any given time in the war, only about 5 percent of the U.N. troops were from countries other than South Korea and the United States. Slightly more than half of that number were from the British Commonwealth. General Douglas MacArthur commanded all troops in Korea from his headquarters in Tokyo; and all division-level command and grand strategy was in the hands of American generals. It was clearly an American war, fought under the auspices of the United Nations, to further Washington's foreign policy goals of containing communism.

The Korean War was America's first limited war of the post–World War II atomic era. It demanded a strategy necessitated by politics and foreign policy, and not by the rationale of raw military power. To define the war for the American people, Truman conducted a press conference on June 29, and referred to this limited war as a "police action," a term that would return to haunt him. The United States had been involved in police actions before, particularly in South and Central America, but as casualty lists began coming in from Korea, and photographs began to appear in *Life* magazine and then in newspapers and newsmagazines all over the country, it was obvious that Truman's "police action" in Korea was nothing less than a war of major magnitude and consequences. It might have been a limited war, but it was a war nevertheless.

The North Korean army, about 135,000 strong, raced across the 38th parallel and captured Seoul in just two days. On June 30 Truman authorized the use of American ground combat forces, and on July 1 two U.S. Army divisions arrived from Japan. But the Americans hardly saved the day. By the first week of August, the U.S. and South Korean troops had retreated to a defensive line about fifty miles around the South Korean port of Pusan. This Pusan Perimeter held for over a month against North Korean attacks while the United States and its allies built up their strength inside the perimeter. At the same time, American air power pounded the enemy lines that stretched far back into North Korea. By early September, MacArthur had built a force inside the perimeter that was superior to the North Korean army, and he prepared to take the offensive. In a brilliant strategic

play he capitalized on the American air and naval superiority and initiated a daring amphibious landing at Inchon on the Korean west coast near Seoul, deep behind North Korean lines. The assault was a superb success, and together with a coordinated attack that burst out of the Pusan Perimeter, the U.N. forces had the North Koreans on the run and pushed behind the 38th parallel within two weeks.

Truman's original goal, in keeping with his "police action" definition, was simply to contain the North Koreans behind the 38th parallel, but as U.N. troops approached the parallel, Truman began talking about unifying Korea and of "rolling back" the Red tide. Again, much of this came directly from political pressure. There was a midterm election coming up, and a military victory in Korea could score big vote numbers for Democratic candidates. Also, Truman would have been strongly criticized by many top figures in the military—just before the election—if he chose to stop at the 38th parallel when U.S. troops had the enemy on the run. In addition, Truman was being influenced by those who argued that if the North Korean government (and its army) were allowed to survive, the military effort would have been in vain, and possibly U.S. troops would have to return at a later date to fight a stronger, more mechanized North Korean force. And of course, American boys had died in the effort. To many Americans, Truman had a choice; he could either punish the offenders or let them get away with their crimes. The president soon came to believe he had to finish the job in Korea. On September 11, with the approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the president authorized MacArthur to cross the 38th parallel and invade North Korea with the intention of unifying all of Korea to the Yalu River, on the Chinese border. It seemed to occur to no one at the time, however, that an American "rollback" was, in fact, only an invasion by another name, an invasion that might provoke the Chinese to implement their own containment policy.

But all such fears and doubts were dispelled by MacArthur. At a triumphant meeting between the president and his general on Wake Island on October 15, MacArthur told Truman that the Chinese would not intervene. The war would be over soon, MacArthur promised. He would "bring the boys home by Christmas." If the Chinese were foolish enough to intervene, however, "there would be the greatest slaughter." Back in Washington, Acheson assured America that it would be "sheer madness" for the Chinese to intervene. But Beijing was seeing things differently. In early October, Zhou Enlai, Mao's foreign minister, warned the United States (through the Indian embassy in Beijing) that the Chinese would, in fact, enter the war if U.S. troops crossed into North Korea. On October 9, U.N. forces headed into North Korea for what they saw as little more than a mopping-up campaign. By the middle of the month, while Truman and MacArthur were basking in the sun of their achievements on Wake Island, some 250,000 Chinese troops were beginning to infiltrate

silently into North Korea. By late October the Chinese were in the fray on a massive scale. But even though Chinese prisoners were being captured in battle, the command levels in Korea, Tokyo, and Washington all refused to consider the possibility of a Chinese intervention. On October 26 several South Korean units reached the Yalu River. Victory was close.

The first Chinese attack came on October 25 and virtually wiped out an entire South Korean division. But the Chinese disappeared from the battlefield as quickly as they came, and the analysis in Tokyo was that possibly a few regiments (between 40,000 and 80,000) of Chinese volunteers had crossed the Yalu and joined the war. A month later, on November 24, MacArthur renewed his offensive as his men moved up to the Yalu River. The next day Chinese waves smashed the U.N. forces hard, and several South Korean divisions were overwhelmed and torn apart. But still American commanders in the field and intelligence sources in Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Washington refused to believe that China had entered the war in any significant way. On November 26 the Chinese hit again, and then again the next day and the next. The Americans finally believed it. The Chinese had "come in with both feet," Joint Chiefs Chairman General Omar Bradley told Truman.[6] It was, said MacArthur, "an entirely new war."[7]

As U.N. troops retreated south before the advancing Chinese army, MacArthur made it clear to Truman that the United States could either win or lose the war, choose between victory and defeat, a role in the future of the world or not. To win, MacArthur demanded a broader, expanded war. He wanted a naval blockade of China, air attacks on Chinese forces and their installations in Manchuria, considerable reinforcements, the use of Jiang Jieshi's troops from Taiwan, and a free hand to use nuclear weapons if necessary. Clearly, MacArthur was prepared to carry the United States into a full-scale war with the Chinese, and possibly the Soviets. But Truman refused to expand the conflict. In fact, the administration's new objective after the Chinese intervention was to get out of the situation as quickly as possible while maintaining American integrity. An expansion of the war like the one MacArthur wanted was the opposite direction for Truman. Consequently, a conflict arose between the president and the general over the conduct of the war. MacArthur, the old soldier who had brought America total victory in the Pacific in World War II, could not see himself fighting brushfires on the Asian continent. Truman, the first president of a new era, had come to see the necessity of a limited war. He knew that conflicts in the nuclear age could spread quickly, situations were tense all over the world, and an expansion of the Korean War of the type demanded by MacArthur could easily bring in the Soviet Union, and then spread rapidly to Europe. Truman was not prepared to preside over World War III.

The third Chinese attack came on the last day of December 1950, and drove the U.N. troops south of the 38th parallel. But by mid-January it

became clear that the Chinese had overextended themselves and had withdrawn back north. The U.N. troops followed them roughly to the 38th parallel. And that is how the war was fought until the summer of 1951. The Chinese would attack in force; after several days their advance would lose momentum and they would withdraw, followed northward by U.N. forces. MacArthur called it the "accordion war." There was a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth attack, the last major one coming in May. By then the U.N. troops could hold their own against the Chinese, and in many places they succeeded in pushing the Chinese north of the 38th parallel. The war moved into a stalemate phase.

As the war on the ground escalated, the Truman–MacArthur conflict heated up. In March 1950 Truman planned to make a statement that the United Nations was willing to discuss conditions for settling the war. MacArthur, however, had other ideas. He issued his own statement insisting that if the United Nations would "depart from its tolerant effort to contain the war to the area of Korea, through an expansion of our military operations to [China's] coastal areas and interior bases," China would face "imminent military collapse."[8] Truman responded by telling MacArthur to keep his opinions to himself. A few days later, on April 5, a leading Republican congressman read an open letter from MacArthur on the floor of the House of Representatives. "We must win," MacArthur wrote. "There is no substitute for victory."[9] Acheson called the letter "an open declaration of war on the Administration's foreign policy."[10] By then, Truman was considering removing MacArthur from the Far East command, but the general made the decison easy. He gave an interview to a British news correspondent in which he said that "the true objective of a commander in war [is] to destroy the forces opposed to him." But he was not being allowed to do that in Korea. "The situation would be ludicrous," he added "if men's lives were not involved."[11]

It was all Truman could take. On April 9 he assembled his military policy makers: Acheson, Harriman, General Marshall (now secretary of defense), and the members of the Joint Chiefs including their chairman, Omar Bradley. The decision was unanimous: MacArthur would be removed from command. On April 11 Truman made the announcement that Matthew Ridgway would replace MacArthur as Far Eastern commander. There would now be one voice on the American war policy in Korea, and the policy would be to move toward ending the war.

MacArthur became a symbol to those who felt that the Truman administration had fallen back on a policy of appeasing the Communists in Asia. They believed, as MacArthur had, that the real enemy was the Soviet Union and China, and that the United States, now provoked in Korea, should "finish the job," as the saying went at the time. Republicans in Congress led those who were outraged by Truman's actions. William Jenner, a Republican senator from Indiana who was riding McCarthy's coattails, said

that MacArthur's firing proved that the Truman administration was made up of "a secret coterie which is directed by agents of the Soviet Union." McCarthy himself charged that Truman was drunk when he made the decision to fire MacArthur.

Through that summer the Senate conducted an investigation into the administration's policies in Korea. It largely vindicated Truman and his management of the war, but it also gave MacArthur a forum to explain his view of how the war in Korea should be fought. Before the investigating committee MacArthur again argued that the real enemy was the Chinese, and that the war in Asia should be escalated by bombing and blockading China, and by sending in Nationalist Chinese troops from Taiwan. The United States should bring to bear its full power, he added, and not hold back in the face of this Communist aggression. To do otherwise was "appeasement" of the worst kind, and he accused the Truman administration of retreating in the face of spreading communism. The cost, he added, was the lives of American boys.

The administration countered that MacArthur's approach would plunge the nation into another world war. The Joint Chiefs argued individually before the committee that the United oStates was not prepared to go to war with China or the Soviet Union, and certainly the military was not ready to fight both at the same time. They added that the use of Nationalist Chinese troops would further escalate the war unnecessarily, and that their place in Asia was to defend Taiwan, not Korea. In the final analysis the Senate committee came to no conclusions; its members simply split along party lines, with the Republicans filing a minority report.

The question of MacArthur's dismissal divided America. Either he was an American hero, or he had overstepped his bounds. Some realized the central issue—the question of limited versus total war—but most saw it in the context of the nation's role in dealing with the expansion of communism. Others saw the necessity of maintaining civilian authority over military power. And still others held MacArthur up as a martyr to the cause of anticommunism. Truman's act, necessary as it was, did his administration irreparable damage. He never recovered popularity in the polls, and the issue gave the Republicans a groundswell of support that carried the party and their candidate, Dwight Eisenhower, into the next election.

In Korea, the war turned into stalemate as the two sides faced each other near where it all began, along the 38th parallel. In Washington, Truman felt the heat of having to fight a war he essentially could not win.

5

THE FAIR DEAL AND TRUMAN'S SECOND TERM

Liberalism was vindicated after the 1948 election. Truman reached the height of his popularity and power, and the new 81st Congress had a Democratic majority. In his State of the Union address the president seemed prepared to pay back the northern liberal coalition that had elected him. In a rousing speech he told the nation that "every segment of our population and every individual has a right to expect from our Government a fair deal."[1] Truman called for an increase in the minimum wage from forty cents to seventy-five cents per hour, an expansion of Social Security, national health insurance, federal aid to education, low-cost housing, repeal of Taft–Hartley—and, to pay for it all, an increase in the federal income tax of $4 billion. It was clear that Truman (now with his own election mandate in hand) would put a liberal stamp on the next four years. But political roadblocks turned the Fair Deal into a mass of frustration.

Truman's main problem was that the 81st Congress again forged a conservative coalition of Republicans and powerful southern Democrats. This coalition was based at least in part on the South's efforts to obstruct civil rights measures; southern Democrats agreed to throw their support behind conservative Republican measures in exchange for Republican support in opposition to civil rights bills. This alliance sounded a death knell for the administration's civil rights initiatives in this period—and for much of the

liberal Fair Deal. The growing cold war proved to be another obstruction. Truman's greatest successes had been in foreign policy, and he was always willing to sacrifice domestic legislation to further that cause. Consequently, several liberal Fair Deal measures opposed by conservatives were dispatched to the ash heap in order for Truman to receive Republican support for his foreign policy agenda. But probably the most important reason for the failure of Truman's domestic program was that the tone of America in 1949 was not liberal. The heady days of the New Deal had passed; America was already enjoying much of the prosperity and consumerism that would be associated with the 1950s. The blockage of Fair Deal proposals was probably an accurate reflection of the American temper at that time. Others have said that Truman tried to achieve too much; but more important, he failed because he tried to push through Congress a liberal agenda in a period when the prevailing winds were blowing to the right.

The 81st Congress got off to a strong start, at least from the administration's vantage point. In January 1949 Democrats in the House succeeded in pushing through the "Twenty-one-day rule" that effectively sapped much of the strength from the powerful (and conservative) House Rules Committee, giving liberal legislation a stronger chance of passage. But liberal successes seemed to stop there. In the Senate, Democrats introduced a resolution to invoke cloture with a two-thirds vote—in effect ending filibusters by southern senators on civil rights legislation. Truman stood firm in support of the rule change; and southern senators threatened to hold their ground as well. A bitter filibuster followed that destroyed any chance of a postelection honeymoon and an early passage of the administration's agenda. The rule change was finally taken to the Senate floor, where it was soundly defeated by the Republican–southern Democratic coalition, effectively putting to rest any opportunity to push the president's civil rights initiatives through the Senate. The defeat was more than a setback for the administration. It was the solidification of a coalition in the Senate that would put a halt to the Fair Deal and frustrate the president and his administration for four more years.

If the Fair Deal had a distinct philosophy beyond simply expanding the New Deal, it was to redistribute the new postwar prosperity. A good example of this philosophy was the Brannan Plan, an agricultural redistribution plan named after Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan. The bill called for the government to support farm income through direct payments based upon the size of a farmer's crop (instead of forcing prices up by cutting production, as during the New Deal). The result would be much lower prices to the consumer because overproduction would naturally drive prices down, and farmers would receive a guaranteed income from the government. This would give Americans something they never thought possible: low consumer prices *and* a living income for farmers. The plan also paid more to small family farmers than to factory-type farms, thereby en-

couraging the smaller family enterprises. This gave the Brannan Plan a Jeffersonian-type liberal image that was designed to foster agrarian individualism. But Republicans called the bill "socialistic," and southern Democrats responded to the fears of big cotton farmers who would lose their New Deal subsidies; the bill died in the House in July 1949. Much of what made up the Brannan Plan would be revived and passed in the 1970s.

The Fair Deal harbored a philosophy designed to distribute the new abundance, but it was also designed to pay back those who voted for Truman in 1948, and that included labor as well as farmers. One of Truman's biggest campaign messages was the repeal of Taft–Hartley, the "slave-labor bill," as he and labor leaders called it throughout the campaign. The passage of the antilabor Taft–Hartley Act in 1947 by the Republican-dominated 80th Congress had been a big Republican victory, but by 1949 that victory seemed a bit shallow. The act had done little to curb the powers of big labor while handing Truman and the Democrats a club that they used to beat the Republicans at every turn in the 1948 election. Truman's postelection analysis that "labor did it" might not have been entirely correct, but clearly, without labor's support he would have lost some key states, and in 1949 he set out to pay back the favor by working to repeal Taft–Hartley. But despite the defeats handed congressional Republicans in the 1948 election, there still remained in both houses a majority who had voted for Taft–Hartley in 1947. Through 1949 conservatives killed all substitute bills and all amendments to the original bill. Taft–Hartley was retained in its original form.

Truman's plan for aid to education crashed and burned under the heavy weights of racism and religion. The president's education bill included aid for private schools, which touched off a rousing debate in the press between Francis Cardinal Spellman, the archbishop of New York, and Eleanor Roosevelt. Southerners in Congress supported a bill similar to the president's, but they restricted it to public schools, and they avoided the question of equal apportionment to segregated schools in the South. The bill finally flamed out in House committee.

Truman's national health insurance plan called for prepaid medical care to be financed by a combination of employee and employer contributions matched by government subsidies. It was a popular plan, but the American Medical Association, touting the horrors of "socialized medicine," forced its untimely death in Congress.

Even some of the Fair Deal's biggest successes failed to achieve the administration's goals. Congress passed the president's request for an increased minimum wage, but it reduced the number of eligible recipients. In the president's most significant victory, the National Housing Act of 1949, Congress authorized extensive slum clearance and the construction of over

800,000 low-income housing units. Fifteen years later, however, fewer than half of those units had been built.

There were some successes. Congress rejected Truman's plan to expand Social Security in 1949, but in 1950 it agreed to increase Social Security benefits by 80 percent and extend the program's coverage to an additional 10 million people. In 1950 appropriations were increased for the Rural Electrification Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Farmer's Home Administration. But these were minor victories at best.

The Fair Deal was clearly a failure within the boundaries of U.S. domestic politics between 1949 and 1952. It is, however, usually judged a success in two ways. First, Truman's Fair Deal either maintained the New Deal in place, modified New Deal programs to meet the new economic times, or extended New Deal programs (and the New Deal philosophy) into another era. Second, the Fair Deal set the agenda for the reforms of the 1960s, particularly in civil rights, federal housing, Medicare, slum clearance, and federal aid to education. There would be a time, coming soon, when much of the New Deal would become obsolete and unnecessary, when even Democratic Party sacred cows had grown fat and wasteful. But in 1950 the New Deal, now somewhat modified, could meet the demands of the new age and be a plan in place for the distribution of the new abundance. One of Truman's many legacies to the nation was an expanding capitalist economic order supported in Keynesian economic theory and shored up by an extensive social welfare safety net.

The conservative coalition in Congress killed the president's initiatives on civil rights. Truman's sincerity on civil rights issues has always been questioned, but clearly he felt some need to repay African-American voters for their support in 1948. Conservatives in Congress, however, were not bound to the issue, and the administration's civil rights agenda went down to defeat at the hands of the powerful southern Democrat–Republican coalition. Legislation outlawing the poll tax, making lynching a federal crime, establishing a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC), and prohibiting segregation and discrimination in interstate transportation met defeat. Compromises were offered: a constitutional amendment eliminating the poll tax, a voluntary FEPC, and an antilynching bill that depended entirely on state action. But to African-American leaders the compromises were inadequate. Truman apparently underestimated the power of the conservative coalition because he continued to believe he could push the original proposals through Congress. But the conservative coalition in the Senate, led by Richard Russell of Georgia, was strong enough to control the boards on civil rights, and the bills died.

By the fall of 1949 Truman had acknowledged defeat and could only tell civil rights leaders that he would push hard for an FEPC bill in the next session. In January, when the members of the 81st Congress, now in its second session, took their seats, Truman promised an FEPC law "if it took

all summer." But the president saw that the roadblocks in the path of civil rights legislation were insurmountable, and he did little to push the bill through. A seriously weakened version of the FEPC bill was finally passed by the House, but it died in a Senate filibuster.

Truman's civil rights initiatives received short shrift in Congress, but the president seemed determined to do something to fulfill his campaign promises to African Americans and their leaders. In October 1949 he named William Hastie, then the governor of the Virgin Islands and former dean of the Howard Law School, to a seat on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals, placing him in the highest court seat ever held by an African American. Truman also strengthened the civil rights section of the Justice Department by increasing its budget significantly and appointing more staff lawyers. The result was that the federal government was able to enter a large number of cases as an amicus curiae and argue the unconstitutionality of such laws and policies as restrictive covenants and segregated facilities in interstate transportation and higher education. Truman also followed up on his preelection promises to desegregate the military. Just prior to the 1948 election he had issued an executive order aimed at ending segregation in the armed forces; in 1949 the Fahy Committee (named after the former solicitor general who chaired the committee) was appointed by Truman to carry out that pledge. By early 1950 the committee had decreed that all branches of the armed services should desegregate at once. Although the procedure was interrupted by the Korean War, the process had its origins under Truman's direction and was generally completed by the early 1950s.

Truman is often derided for being insincere on civil rights, for being all rhetoric and no action, and for conceding to African-American leaders only what was necessary to get as many black votes as possible. But the coalition in Congress made up of Republicans and conservative southern Democrats was clearly an insurmountable obstacle standing squarely in the way of significant civil rights legislation between 1949 and 1952. This was an era of growing conservatism; liberal reforms like civil rights did not have significant public support, and consequently they had little chance of becoming law. Also, the rhetoric from the White House may seem shallow compared with what was needed at the time and compared with what would be proposed and accomplished fifteen years later, but that rhetoric maintained the Democratic Party conviction that it would continue to lead on the civil rights issue.

Moreover, Truman could not spend a great deal of political capital on civil rights because the same conservative coalition that stood in the way of the president's civil rights initiative was also key to congressional support for the administration's foreign policy. And, whether rightly or wrongly, Truman always made it clear that he would not subordinate foreign policy to domestic policy. He believed (as did most Americans) that the American home front was basically sound. World affairs, on the other hand, were

unstable, even a threat to the future of mankind. If Truman left an ambiguous legacy on civil rights, it was because of the strength of the conservative coalition in Congress and the seeming urgency of international affairs during these first, and highly volatile, years of the cold war.

Things were not going well in Washington for Truman in the latter part of his administration, and to add to the growing misery, some illegal dealings cropped up in Washington and the press pushed hard to hang a corruption label on the White House. The corruption existed, but it was minor. The situation, however, grew well beyond its actual size because Truman handled it badly.

Truman fought against the corruption tag all his life. The old Pendergast connection was a difficult burden for him to bear even as president of the United States. Ever since 1945, when he began replacing FDR's people with his own, several of whom were from Missouri, his cabinet and advisers were dubbed the "Missouri Gang" in the press, a derisive reference to President Warren Harding's corrupt circle of buddies known as the "Ohio Gang." But, for the most part, Truman and his administration remained free of any serious charges of corruption until 1949, when a Truman aide was accused of using Reconstruction Finance Corporation money to grant loans to friends. In the second half of 1951 a major scandal broke at the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) that required drastic damage control from the White House. It all began with investigations by the press, particularly the *New Republic*, of corruption in Washington; it was followed by a series of resignations by employees at the bureau, and eventually by prosecutions. When it ended, sixty-six officials and employees were forced to resign or were dismissed, and nine regional revenue collectors were fired.

The scandals struck a tender nerve in America because taxpayers were clearly sensitive to corruption in an agency that so closely affected their personal interests—consequently the public outcry was enormous. The president's responses, however, never seemed to meet the public demand for action, and he allowed the scandals to damage the integrity of his administration in its last year. In several press conferences, Truman insisted that there was, in fact, no scandal, only a few unscrupulous characters in the bureau who had betrayed the public trust. Finally, pushed by his advisers, he agreed to reorganize the bureau, and he directed an independent Republican, Newbold Morris, to investigate the scandal charges. Morris might well have succeeded in controlling the political damage (and, in fact, Republicans in Congress feared he might), but Truman announced that Attorney General J. Howard McGrath, an old political crony, would oversee Morris' cleanup operations. But McGrath (whose own Justice Department was under investigation for corruption) had little zeal for the investigation, and soon he and Morris were at loggerheads over procedure. In April, McGrath fired Morris without consulting Truman. Truman then had little choice but to fire McGrath. The incident was embarrassing to the

administration, and the political fallout was immense. The corruption, whether severe or not, gave the Republicans additional fodder as they prepared to take back the government in 1952.

Just as the BIR scandal reached its apex, Truman found himself in the middle of yet another labor dispute—and again in a no-win situation. At the end of 1951 the labor contract for the nation's steelworkers expired, and labor and management could not come to a new agreement. After a ninety-day cooling-off period, the Wage Stabilization Board recommended a modest wage increase for workers with no offsetting steel price increase. The union agreed, but the companies rejected the offer, insisting that prices be allowed to rise accordingly so that profits would be maintained in the industry. On April 8, one day before the strike deadline, the president announced that he could not allow a steel strike to impair the country's military effort in Korea and that, invoking his executive war powers, he would seize the steel mills. The immediate response from Congress was negative—from both sides of the aisle. The press joined in the consensus against the move. Once again, Truman stood alone. On June 2 the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Youngstown Sheet and Tube* v. *Sawyer* that the president's actions were unconstitutional, in part because the nation was not, in fact, engaged in a declared war. The next day the mills were returned to the companies and the workers walked out; the strike continued into late July. The court had literally thrown Truman out of the conflict and scolded him for his unwarranted intrusion into the nation's economy. The administration appeared weak.

Truman's second term seemed to sink slowly from adulation in early 1949 to reproach in 1952. Congress was shamelessly deadlocked on the president's domestic initiatives; the war had reached a stalemate both on the battlefield and at the negotiating table, and Truman was being blamed for getting the nation into a war but not being able to win it; McCarthy was gaining more and more support for his bogus investigations; charges of corruption in Washington were sweeping through the press; Truman was losing major battles; and America was clearly moving to the right. A Gallup poll at the end of 1951 gave Truman a dismal approval rating of only 23 percent. The Republicans called it, with great effect, "that mess in Washington." As the election approached, the Truman administration began to take on the stench of rotting from the inside out, and the postmortems came rolling in.

In November 1951 Truman announced to his staff that he would not run in 1952. He then moved to pick his own successor. His first choice was Chief Justice Fred Vinson, who declined; he then approached Eisenhower, who made it clear he was a Republican. Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois declined, insisting on serving his elected term in Springfield. In desperation Truman turned to his vice president, Alben Barkley, but he was too unpopular with the leaders of organized labor. By the spring of 1952

Truman still had no heir apparent, and Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver was beginning to roll in the primaries. The president then toyed with the idea of running for another term. But when a poll of his closest advisers revealed a serious lack of confidence (they were unanimously opposed), Truman announced on March 21, 1952, that he would not run.

Stevenson won the Democratic nomination in July, and Truman immediately threw his support to the candidate. But Stevenson, probably wisely, refused to be "Truman's candidate" and kept his distance from "that mess in Washington" as much as possible. Truman, however, refused to be left out of the campaign fight, and he hit the rails, campaigning tirelessly in 1948 whistle-stop style in favor of Stevenson, an effort that may well have hurt Stevenson's campaign. Much of Truman's effort was aimed at vindicating his own policies and accomplishments, then under attack by the Republicans—as much as to aid Stevenson. In November, Eisenhower and the Republicans rode an insurmountable tide and won the election easily. On Inauguration Day, January 20, 1953, the twenty-year Roosevelt–Truman era came to an end.

Truman left office a very unpopular man. But his stock as a past president increased almost immediately, until in the 1970s he reached an almost folk hero status, and in many ways that place in history has been maintained. He remains in the minds of Americans the simple man from Missouri who stood up to the Russians after the war, and who battled for the common man in the face of overwhelming odds, a man who succeeded when all said he could not. It is difficult to name anyone in the postwar period who has had more impact on the nation than Harry Truman. Winston Churchill once told Truman, "You, more than any other man, have saved Western civilization."[2] Possibly by default the nature of the nation's politics, and its domestic and foreign policies for the future, would have been shaped by the president who occupied the White House in that turbulent period from 1945 to 1952. That president happened to be Harry Truman.

6

EISENHOWER IN THE WHITE HOUSE—AND THE FALL OF McCARTHY

Both parties had hoped that Eisenhower would come to their aid in 1948, and clearly he toyed with the idea of running—confiding to his brother Milton that under the right circumstances he would take the plunge. But the broad voter base he needed to win the presidency was not there, and he also lacked significant financial support. It took more, Ike discovered, to run for president than just popularity. But after the election he worked quietly to keep his name in the limelight; he cultivated wealthy friends, mostly in the business world and in the Republican Party, and he kept his eye on 1952—while continually denying any interest in running for office.

Eisenhower spoke often of retirement, and at various times that was clearly his only plan for the future. But Ike quickly found out that he disliked not being a major player on the world stage. Immediately after the war he agreed to take over as army chief of staff, but he promised Truman that he would stay in that position for only two years, and that afterward he would retire. In October 1947, he left the Pentagon. Only fifty-seven and in good health, he was an unemployed hero at a time when the nation seemed to need strong leadership. Offers of prestigious corporate positions came in, and in fact several of his fellow soldiers, such as General Lucius Clay, had accepted such lucrative positions. But finally he was prevailed upon to accept the presidency of Columbia University, and he took office

in June 1948. The Columbia position appealed to him because it would give him time to write his memoirs and, he thought incorrectly, remove his name from political speculation. He probably expected Columbia to be a quiet but prestigious semiretirement. In a virtual writing frenzy he completed his memoir, *Crusade in Europe*, in the spring of 1948; it was published late that year.

Columbia was far outside the flow of world events, and soon Ike found that he wanted back in the action. In January 1949, he accepted an offer from Truman to be the informal military adviser to the new (and first) secretary of defense, James Forrestal. As a five-star general, Eisenhower was still officially on active duty, so he accepted the appointment and made, usually, one trip each week to Washington to advise Forrestal and the Joint Chiefs. By spring he was serving as the informal chairman of the Joint Chiefs. But within months Eisenhower broke with the administration over Truman's plans to cut military spending in order to balance the budget, and he asked to be relieved of his assignment. He wrote to a friend: "Of course the results [of defense budget cuts] will not show up until we get into serious trouble."[1] This was June 1949, just one year before Truman intervened in Korea with an army that was sorely inadequate for the mission.

Eisenhower continued to deny that he wanted to become president—not only to the press but also to friends and even to himself, in his diary. Nevertheless, he maintained important contacts with the inner circle of the Republican Party. These men—"the gang," Eisenhower called them—in turn began grooming the general for a future in politics, as well as establishing a power base from which funds and energy could be drawn. Eisenhower continued to refuse all offers, but he confided to these men that he was, in fact, a Republican and that he had voted for Dewey in 1948.

In October 1950, Truman called on Eisenhower again, this time to serve as supreme Allied commander in Europe, the chief of NATO operations. Ike accepted. It was an opportunity to return to the mainstream of world affairs and to secure the peace he had won in 1945. It also again placed him in the public eye as a doer on the international level.

Eisenhower might well not have run in 1952 had the Republicans been prepared to nominate a candidate whose beliefs and philosophy paralleled his own. But as the election approached, it appeared that Robert Taft would take the Republican standard by default; there were no serious challengers. Eisenhower, as it turned out, was at least as conservative as Taft on most domestic issues, but Taft's old-time isolationism was more than the general could stand. Ike was an ardent internationalist and he strongly believed in the American commitment to containment, NATO, and the preservation of a free Europe. He often said that war with the Soviets would become imminent if the United States withdrew to "fortress America," as was being advocated by Taft and other Republican right-wing iso-

lationists. As Taft moved closer to the nomination, Ike moved closer to running.

By the summer of 1951, Ike Clubs began forming around the country, and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge became the leading supporter of Eisenhower's candidacy. Lodge and other influential Republicans made pilgrimages to NATO headquarters in Europe to persuade the general to run. Their arguments, at first, centered on convincing Eisenhower that it was his duty, that in its crises the nation needed him at the helm. But only when it became clear that the voters might be given a choice between Truman and Taft did Eisenhower begin to take his own candidacy seriously. In March he allowed his name to be placed on the ballot in the New Hampshire primary, where he won handily over Taft and Harold Stassen. But as the campaign progressed into the spring, it became apparent that it was time to decide: Would he run or not? In June 1952 he returned to the United States and prepared to take charge of his own campaign—and his own destiny. Taft's supporters dug deep into their bag of dirty tricks and began spreading rumors that Mamie Eisenhower was an alcoholic, that the general had been romantically involved with his wartime secretary, Kay Summersby, and that he was Jewish, or that he was Catholic and had been baptized by the pope. But Ike's character dominated the campaign, and the general rode to an easy nomination in July, although the party split between the Taftites on the right and the Eisenhower moderates. The party's two wings did make peace, but they continued to disagree on the direction of the nation's foreign policy. In an attempt to keep the right in line, Eisenhower was prevailed upon to accept Senator Richard Nixon as his running mate.

The Democrats also introduced a new face, probably something they needed more than anything else in 1952: Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois. Stevenson, not unlike Eisenhower, was reluctant to accept his party's nomination. But he decided to run when it appeared that the nomination would go to Tennessee Senator Estes Kefauver by default. Kefauver was unpopular with the Democratic Party leaders, but he had racked up several impressive primary wins and was headed into the convention atop a groundswell of grassroots support. But party hacks saw him as unelectable and began throwing their weight behind Stevenson at the convention. After three ballots, Stevenson won the Democratic nomination.

Throughout the campaign the Republicans hit hard at the Democrats for "creeping socialism" and what they called K^1C^2, an acronym for Korea, communism, and corruption. Eisenhower detested McCarthy and his group of Red baiters, mainly because of recent accusations from McCarthy and Indiana senator William Jenner that General Marshall, Eisenhower's own personal hero, was somehow a traitor. The press and American liberals saw Eisenhower's handling of the Marshall–McCarthy business as a test of the general's leadership qualities and abilities in the political arena, an area in which he was untried and inexperienced. Would he stand up to Mc-

Carthy? Would he defend his mentor against the obviously ridiculous accusations of treason? Ike failed the test when, in October, he agreed to remove a reference to Marshall's patriotism from a speech he was about to deliver in Milwaukee, McCarthy's backyard. The press picked up the story and blasted Eisenhower for being "weak-kneed" and "spineless." The political damage was severe, and Eisenhower regretted the incident for the rest of his life.

At about the same time Eisenhower was grappling with how to handle McCarthy, it was revealed in the press that Nixon had used a secret slush fund to meet his political expenses. The slush fund did exist, but in fact Nixon had handled the money well within the bounds of the law. However, Nixon was particularly vulnerable to these accusations because he had presented himself to the voters as just an average guy trying to make it in the world spoiled by the Democrats—and average guys did not have $20,000 at their disposal in 1952. Also, the revelation put an immediate damper on the Republican's charges of corruption inside the Truman administration, and the moderates in Eisenhower's camp feared they might lose that issue; they therefore pushed the general to drop Nixon from the ticket.

Nixon—always able, it seems, to resurrect himself from certain political death—took advantage of the new medium of television and went on the air to speak directly to the American people. He told his audience about his wife's "respectable Republican cloth coat" and, in an obvious mimicking of FDR's "Fala speech" of 1944, talked about his dog Checkers, the only personal gift he ever accepted from a supporter. "And you know the kids love that dog and I just want to say this right now, that regardless of what they say about it, we're going to keep it."[2] It is little Checkers that gets most of the attention from those discussing this maudlin speech, but Nixon successfully convinced a good majority of the 56 million watchers that he had done nothing wrong. The next day Ike summoned Nixon to his train in West Virginia, and the campaign of Eisenhower and Nixon rolled on.

If the election was ever in doubt, all doubts faded when, on October 24, in Detroit, Eisenhower announced that if elected, he would go to Korea. It was a ploy that the Republicans had been saving for the last, and it worked famously. The military hero would again serve the nation in the role of commander of American forces in war, and it sewed up the election for the general; the Democrats could not answer. For some, Ike's pronouncement was a promise to end the war by military means; others believed he would finally force the negotiations to an end. Either way, "I will go to Korea" brought big votes. Ike won the election with a comfortable margin of over 55 percent of the popular vote and 442 electoral votes, and he brought in a Republican Congress on his coattails. He also broke into the Solid South, grabbing fifty-seven electoral votes, eighteen more than the Dixiecrats received four years earlier. The conservative white South was beginning its

slow move away from the Democrats (and their appeals to black voters) and toward the Republican Party. For Ike and the Republicans in 1952 the long drought was over, and the twenty-year Democratic domination of the White House was finally at an end.

"America is tired of earthmovers," one observer said. "It needs a dirt smoother." After twenty tumultuous years of economic cataclysm, followed by economic experimentation, and then war, economic controls, inflation, labor strife, and then another war, Americans in 1952 were ready for more than a change. They were ready for Eisenhower, a man who could return America to the good life of prosperity, predictability, and security. Ike was comfortable. In his State of the Union message in January 1953, he used the term "middle way" to describe his approach to domestic issues. It seemed to strike a chord in the American soul. Ike was middle of the road. There would be no surprises, no experimenting, no wars.

What America saw in Ike was a genial grandfather figure who played bridge and Scrabble in the evenings with his wife Mamie, and golf on the weekends with his buddies. His smile was ear-to-ear, and he presented a warm, comforting appearance that seemed to exude reservation, security, and moderation. He kept himself above politics, was never down in the mud, where Truman always seemed to be wallowing. His words were not high-minded and his thoughts, it seemed, were not complex. Also, his syntax, rhetoric, and grammar were often awkward and rambling, all of which seemed to endear him to the nation even more. He was also modest, and there are few things more appealing to Americans than a modest hero. America liked Ike.

But behind the infectious smile and the Scrabble games was a strong, complex figure with his hand on the pulse of the nation and the world, a man with a ferocious temper who kept the major decisions of the nation for himself. He was, in fact, a man with a strong intellect, and a more than adequate grasp of politics and the political system. He made conscious use of television (the first president to do so) to market himself aggressively by presenting a specific image to the American people. He was the first president to use campaign advertisements on television and to "speak to the people" through formal televised addresses. Ike's hidden hand, as Fred I. Greenstein has called Eisenhower's firm control on his office, was balanced by the completely different image he showed to the American people.

The question is, then, was this all an intentional act? Was Ike so brilliant, as many have contended, that he was able to gauge what the American public wanted in a president and then mold himself to fill that image? The answer clearly is "no." As Stephen Ambrose has pointed out over and over again in his extensive work on Eisenhower, the man was of simple character and simple background. Consequently, he virtually oozed that image. At the same time, this was the man who had spent his life in the role of decision maker, policy maker, and diplomat. Should it be a wonder that

he would run the government the way a general would run an army, and that when decisions had to be made, he was comfortable making them? In Eisenhower, the public grandfatherly image is not at all incompatible with Eisenhower the decisive, hard-nosed decision maker. The most significant point is that Ike was the president America wanted in the 1950s, and the result of his dual image was that he made the job look easy, and thus he was one of the most popular presidents in the modern era.

The Republicans in 1952 still carried the stigma of the party of the Great Depression, the party of Hoover. But after the war the Republican Party's message of lower taxes, reduced government spending, and an end to inflation appealed to the small-propertied middle class, a group whose numbers had grown tremendously in the postwar years, mostly as a result of New Deal programs, wartime economic expansion, and the postwar prosperity. Although the vast majority of this group owed their improved condition to the New Deal and other Democratic Party programs and initiatives through the two prior decades, they were generally apolitical, neither conservative nor liberal, which prompted them to vote for Eisenhower and his middle way in huge numbers. After their 1952 victory the Republicans came to believe that if they could keep the fires of prosperity burning, this rapidly growing class of Americans might become the backbone of a newly rejuvenated Republican Party. The Republicans' biggest test by far would be in the management of the nation's economy.

Eisenhower's cabinet appointments set the tone for the new administration. As the new secretary of the interior, Douglas McKay, said, "We're here in the saddle as an Administration representing business and industry."[3] Nearly all the appointees were self-made businessmen, a type of person Eisenhower had grown to appreciate. They were also inexperienced in government administration; only one, Henry Cabot Lodge, had any knowledge of the workings of the U.S. government. For secretary of defense, Eisenhower tapped Charles Wilson, the president of General Motors. McKay had been a successful auto distributor before becoming the governor of Oregon. Another auto distributor, Arthur Summerfield, was named postmaster general. ("The New Dealers," Adlai Stevenson said, "have been replaced by the car dealers"[4]). George Humphrey, president of the Mark A. Hanna Company, a Cleveland holding company, was named secretary of the treasury. Lodge was appointed ambassador to the United Nations, now a cabinet post. New York attorney (and Dewey's campaign manager in 1948) Herbert Brownell was named attorney general. The new secretary of agriculture was Ezra Taft Benson. The secretary of labor was Martin Durkin, a Democrat, and president of the AFL's plumbers' union. He resigned after only a few months when it became clear that Eisenhower had broken his campaign promise to make significant changes in Taft–Hartley. John Foster Dulles, the Republican Party's foreign policy guru, was named secretary of state, a job Eisenhower said Dulles had prepared for his whole

life. The *New Republic* called this group "eight millionaires and a plumber." For those who saw government as the protector of the average person against the abuses of big business, this was not an ideal group.

But Eisenhower's choices did not reflect a business-in-control-of-the-government attitude so much as Ike's desire for a government run by professional managers, people who were experienced in managing executive departments—decision makers and policy makers much like himself. He had grown to appreciate these people and their abilities. His cabinet choices also exhibit a distrust of intellectuals, of idealists, and even in some ways of popular democracy, of government run by the people.

Eisenhower's cabinet choices also reflected the president's plan for a new government–business cooperation, something that had not been apparent for twenty years. In addition to the businessman cabinet, Ike named hundreds of businessmen to government regulatory boards and advisory commissions. This reliance on corporate executives was always beneficial to both business and the administration, but it often did little to solve the nation's social problems. The National Housing Act of 1954, for example, originated with the administration but was designed by the housing industry. The result was a program that successfully cleared slums but did almost nothing to relocate the families who were displaced.

The administration's "dynamic conservatism," as it was called, was aimed at putting an end to those government programs that conflicted with private enterprise. To that end, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation was allowed to expire in 1953. Eisenhower also moved to privatize all aspects of the production of electric power, although he was not as successful in this as he had hoped. In 1954 the Atomic Energy Act placed the development of nuclear power plants in the hands of private utilities. Also, the administration refused several times to support large-scale public power projects, preferring to encourage private ownership of power production. Despite all this, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) remained intact, surviving deep appropriations cuts from $185 million in 1952 to $12 million in 1960. Eisenhower dubbed the TVA "creeping socialism," and insisted he would "sell the whole thing if I could." The Rural Electrification Administration also survived, although it was reorganized and placed under the control of the Department of Agriculture.

Government–business cooperation was also evident in the administration's work to head off all forms of government-sponsored medical programs, mostly at the behest of the American Medical Association. A plan to have Dr. Jonas Salk's polio vaccine provided free to all American children came under fire from the administration as "socialized medicine through the backdoor." Using the same fear of socialism on the march, the administration continued to oppose all government-sponsored medical insurance programs, even for the aged and the poor.

Eisenhower's farm policy was aimed at getting the government out of

the agriculture business—something that all Republicans seemed to want but no one seemed to know how to achieve without antagonizing America's farmers. Ike's point man here was secretary of agriculture Ezra Taft Benson, a member of the Council of Twelve of the Mormon Church, and a devout opponent of the New Deal and its dependence on price supports as a means of achieving agricultural parity. Benson talked long and hard about returning the free market to agriculture, a concept that made most farmers (particularly small farmers) nervous. He came up with the idea of flexible support payments: government payments tied to production of a commodity. Support payments would rise when production declined, and fall during times of increased production. The chief aim was to lower government support payments and make farm products more responsive to market prices. But surpluses continued to rise and prices remained low.

In 1956 Eisenhower vetoed a Democratic bill boosting support payments back to their 1952 level and approved instead the passage of a "soil bank" program, a New Deal-type concept that would pay farmers to take portions of their land out of production. But that plan did not hold down the cost of government agricultural spending, and farmers concentrated production on their best land and took their worst land out of production. Soon farmers were producing more on less land than before 1956. In addition, commodity prices, farm income, and the rural population all declined during the 1950s, while surpluses continued to grow and the cost of the entire program rose dramatically. The Eisenhower–Benson agricultural program was hardly a departure from the older New Deal plans, and Republican candidates in the Midwest and the Plains states felt the brunt of the program's failure in the 1960 elections.

Lower taxes and a balanced budget were familiar Republican campaign slogans in 1952: end the excesses of the New Deal. But as Republicans have failed to learn throughout the twentieth century, doing both at the same time is nearly impossible. A Republican bill to reduce taxes was the first bill thrown into the House hopper in 1953. It called for the elimination of the 11 percent increase in personal income taxes that had been adopted by the Truman administration to pay for the Korean War. Eisenhower responded that he would not reduce taxes until the budget was balanced. Only after a great deal of pushing and shoving between the administration and Republicans in Congress was Eisenhower able to get his way—much to the disgust of the Republican right, who saw a tax cut as their own Holy Grail. Ike had convinced Taft and others on the right to support him on this issue in exchange for promised budget cuts. But in April 1953, when Eisenhower presented his first budget, with a deficit of $5.5 billion, to Republican congressional leaders, Taft was livid. "You're taking us down the same road Truman traveled," he barked.[5] Although Eisenhower and his people had cut Truman's budget almost in half, the Republican right refused to accept that the first Republican budget submitted in twenty years

was not balanced. The big disparity, of course, was in defense. Eisenhower, the internationalist, believed strongly that the nation must pay for a powerful military defense. Taft, the isolationist, wanted a balanced budget at the expense of military spending.

When the Korean War ended, Eisenhower managed to bring his deficit down to $3.1 billion, but in 1955 the deficit jumped to $4 billion. When he left office, Eisenhower had been able to balance only three of his eight budgets. The chief problem was that the administration's budget-balancing acts were the chief cause of three separate recessions during Eisenhower's eight years in office; the recessions caused unemployment to rise, which in turn reduced tax revenues, making it even more difficult to balance the budgets. As each recession bottomed out and the economy began its slow recovery, the administration would again put on the brakes by cutting expenses, which would send the economy into another downward spiral. To make matters worse, the Republican plan of economic austerity did not achieve the goal of slowing inflation.

These economic problems forced the administration to abandon any hope of achieving its all-important goal of cutting taxes. By 1960 the economy had become a hot political issue, with the Republicans unable to claim that they had done much more than keep the nation from sinking into a major depression. The members of the now large middle class who had deserted the Democrats to protect their prosperity under the Republican promises of lower taxes, lower inflation, and government spending austerity were disenchanted by the failure of the Republican economic philosophy. In the 1960 election the Democrats found themselves with an effective issue (but really the same old one): that the Republican economic philosophy impeded economic growth and prosperity.

At times Eisenhower got along better with the Democrats in Congress than with the Republicans. This was particularly true on most social legislation issues. Eisenhower was willing to accept the need for some social welfare programs, declaring them "the floor that covers the pit of disaster." Through a series of amendments he broadened the Social Security system, adding over 11 million workers to the Social Security rolls. In 1956 he supported Democratic proposals to raise the minimum wage to $1.00 per hour. He also signed a bill that authorized construction of some 35,000 public housing units, and supported a small federal appropriation for education despite charges from the right of burgeoning Communist-style totalitarianism.

Ironically, American education in this period got its biggest boost from the Soviets. In 1957, when Moscow succeeded in launching *Sputnik I* into space (and the U.S. attempt that followed was a dismal failure), the reaction that belched from Congress was the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958. The NDEA provided federal aid to education, but only in the sciences and mathematics, and with a goal of shoring up the sagging

U.S. educational system in the face of what had become a Soviet challenge in space and technology. NDEA also provided federal loans for college students, which helped make a college education available to nearly everyone who could qualify for it. For the first time in U.S. history, the federal government accepted at least some responsibility for its educational system—but only when it appeared that its place as a world leader might be eclipsed if something were not done.

Eisenhower's policy on states' rights and reduced government intervention was somewhat ambiguous. He returned offshore tideland oil leases to the states along the Gulf of Mexico, thereby giving over billions of dollars from the federal treasury to those states. Ike had made inroads into the Solid South in 1952 by winning Texas (a state that stood to gain a great deal through tidelands oil revenues), Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, Maryland, and Missouri. This strong states' rights stand endeared the president to the South, which was becoming increasingly disenchanted with the Democrats and their growing civil rights stands at the expense of states' rights and southern values.

At the same time Eisenhower was willing to promote the interests of big business and industry through large-scale interstate and even international projects. In 1954, after three decades of delay, he accepted a joint U.S.–Canadian project to convert the St. Lawrence River into an inland waterway connecting the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean. It was a mammoth undertaking that was completed in 1959, giving the American midwest, with its immense natural resources and its manufactured products, a deep-water outlet to the Atlantic. The president also endorsed the Federal Highway Act of 1956, a plan to build over 40,000 miles of superhighways and freeways. Eisenhower was apparently impressed by the German autobahn system and had come to believe that it had facilitated the rapid deployment of German troops and armor during the war. Consequently, the federal highway plan, like the St. Lawrence Seaway project, was justified as a national defense measure. The new highway system, however, was also vital to the nation's infrastructure, which was in desperate need of repair after Depression-era and wartime neglect. Both projects served the nation's business and industry well as transportation arteries that moved raw materials and goods to the world's factories and markets more quickly and cheaply.

The construction of these superhighways that crisscrossed the nation changed the face of America. The automobile became the chief means of transportation, a phenomenon that made the United States unique in the world. Automobile manufacturing increased to meet the demand, providing jobs and a real surge in the postwar economy. Americans demanded larger and larger cars (and ultimately more expensive cars) to go greater distances at greater speeds; and two cars became the essential status symbol of the American family. The new highways, and the cars used to traverse them,

made it relatively simple, even advantageous, to commute long distances to work, leading to the birth of the bedroom suburb and its corresponding lifestyle. But with the change came problems, including the death of the inner city, smog, and rush-hour traffic jams.

Eisenhower's domestic program can hardly be counted as successful. In fact, his only real successes came in the form of government intervention and expansion, such as the establishment of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, construction of the federal highway system, the expansion of Social Security, and federal aid to education after 1958. His real goals and the goals of the Republican Party were not achieved: lower taxes, a balanced budget, and an agricultural program more dependent on market forces and less dependent on federal subsidies. His administration was not able to manage the economy effectively, and consequently much of the growing middle class, virtually in the Republicans' back pocket after 1952, would desert the party in 1960. Most analysts credit Eisenhower with institutionalizing the New Deal, not dismantling it, and making it accepted domestic policy for both parties. The only real point of contention over New Deal programs in the future would be one of degree, and it would remain so until at least 1980. One of the most important observations about the age of Eisenhower is that whatever it was that Ike possessed, America loved it, because he remained popular for almost all of his eight years in the White House. He brought the tumultuous years between 1929 and 1952 to an end, and certainly the nation wanted that. But even more, he represented the 1950s. He was an earth smoother.

The election of 1952 brought Joe McCarthy his second Senate victory and at least the appearance that his power was growing. He maintained support in the Senate from such powerhouses (and powerhouses-to-be) as Everett Dirksen from Illinois, William Jenner from Indiana, Herman Welker from Idaho, Pat McCarran and George Malone from Nevada, and Styles Bridges from New Hampshire. Several senators who had stood up to McCarthy were summarily booted out, including the once-powerful Millard Tydings (Democrat from Maryland) and William Benton (Democrat from Connecticut), both of whom had led investigations of McCarthy's charges, and Ernest McFarland (Democrat from Arizona and Democratic majority leader). But McCarthy's power after the 1952 elections was not nearly what it seemed. All the Democrats ran behind the national ticket in that election. It was, in fact, Eisenhower, and not McCarthy and the anticommunist issue, that defeated the congressional Democrats. But because of the big Republican victories, McCarthy was perceived to be more powerful than ever.

So for the Democrats in Congress after 1952, anti-McCarthyism became a political dead end. Consequently, they allowed their hands to be tied (and their voices silenced) over the issue. The Republican "soft on communism" campaign had finally worked, and the Democrats feared that an attack on

McCarthy could only strengthen the Republican charge and hurt them worse in the future. As Lyndon Johnson, the Senate minority leader, argued, "I will not commit my party to some high school debate on the subject, 'Resolved that Communism is good for the United States,' with my party taking the affirmative."[6] There was no voice of opposition from the opposition.

Even the president and the Republican moderates found themselves deferring to McCarthy and his group. In 1953 the McCarthyites in the Senate verged upon creating a potentially embarrassing situation when they moved to block several of Eisenhower's most important appointments. Only after the president prevailed upon Taft to support the appointments was the administration spared the embarrassment of having the president's choices rejected by members of his own party.

Ike, in his usual character, refused to join this inner-party political squabble. Several of his assistants, particularly Sherman Adams and C. D. Jackson, pushed the president to speak out against McCarthy. Nixon, however, warned that an attack on McCarthy would damage the administration's domestic initiatives in Congress. Eisenhower finally agreed, saying he refused "to get into a pissing contest with that skunk." Consequently he backed away from any confrontations with McCarthy.

But Eisenhower was not above the anticommunist issue. He pushed hard to strengthen the federal loyalty program in his first term, and by 1954 he boasted that he had removed over 3,000 security risks from the government. Most of these "security risks" were dismissed for behavior quite unrelated to disloyalty, and none were ever brought to trial. Among this sweep of "security risks" was J. Robert Oppenheimer, who had played a key role in the development of the atomic bomb. Unlike most of those who lost their jobs and remained on blacklists, Oppenheimer was exonerated several years later.

The State Department had been at the heart of McCarthy's accusations since February 1950, and the new secretary of state, the religiously fervent John Foster Dulles, knuckled under to McCarthy by immediately purging the State Department of its sinologists and Soviet experts, leaving a tremendous and serious gap in the American knowledge bank. Such eminent figures as John Paton Davies, John Carter Vincent, and John Stewart Service were removed. Dulles blinded the nation even further when he failed to support the reappointment of George Kennan as ambassador to the Soviet Union. The dismissal of the author of containment and the nation's foremost authority on the Soviets damaged the nation's ability to understand its rival. It was undoubtedly a lack of understanding between the two sides that was a major cause of the escalations of the cold war in the 1950s and 1960s; the removal of these figures from the State Department in the early 1950s (and their replacement with less knowledgeable types like Dean Rusk) added to this misunderstanding.

The Red Scare was much more than a misdirected crusade carried on by one man in the confines of the U.S. Senate. McCarthy was riding a tremendous crest of anticommunism that began before the end of World War II and finally reached a peak about 1950, when the Korean War broke out. It was McCarthy who stole the national headlines, but the movement may have had its greatest impact at the state level, where loyalty oaths were imposed as a condition of state employment, where teachers in public schools and professors in the nation's colleges and universities were fired for any sort of alleged subversive activity. Thousands of books were removed from libraries all over the nation, books deemed in some way subversive by a committee or by politicians looking for votes from a frightened public. Entertainers and writers were blacklisted, many for having done nothing more than participate in the WPA's Federal Theater Project during the 1930s. It was a fire that raged throughout the country partly because of the Communist bugaboo itself, partly because the Republicans refused to extinguish it, and partly because the Democrats were afraid to extinguish it. In the end it was the American people (as in many ways it had to be) who finally brought McCarthy down.

It was McCarthy's growing conflict with the army that toppled the shaky house of cards that supported him. This conflict had its origins in McCarthy's denunciation of George Marshall in the summer of 1951, and it continued to grow for two years. In the fall of 1953 McCarthy demanded from the Department of Defense the army's confidential files on loyalty and security. The army refused. From then into 1954, McCarthy focused his investigations on some supposedly subversive activity among a few scientists at the Army Signal Corps center at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. In November 1953, a New York dentist, Irving Peress, was commissioned by the army and promoted to the rank of major. When it was discovered that he had refused to sign his loyalty certificate when he joined the army, he was rounded up and placed before McCarthy's committee, where he invoked the Fifth Amendment in answer to questions about his political opinions. Rather than slog through a court-martial, the army chose to do nothing more than discharge Peress. For McCarthy, however, the army had let the big one get away. He immediately called General Ralph Zwicker, Peress' commanding officer, before his committee and browbeat him for hours, calling Zwicker "a disgrace to the uniform" and demanding an explanation for the army's actions. By early 1954 the animosity between McCarthy and the army was peaking.

Finally, on March 11, the army counterattacked—with the silent support of the administration. In a detailed report the army accused McCarthy and his chief counsel, Roy Cohn, of trying to bulldoze the army into giving an officer's commission to McCarthy's sometime "consultant," David Shine, a private in the army at Fort Dix and a college dropout. The next day McCarthy responded by accusing the army of "blackmail" by sidetracking

his own investigations, and he lodged forty-six charges against the army. In response the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations voted to investigate the entire matter, leading to the Army–McCarthy hearings, a televised circus that began on April 22 with the antics of Joe McCarthy as the main attraction.

For thirty-six days, in front of the discerning eyes of the American people, McCarthy tried to browbeat witnesses, attorneys, and the army's counsel into submission. But what television caught was little more than an uncouth bully, charging and countercharging, name-calling, and continually interrupting the proceedings at crucial points with his belligerent "Mr. Chairman, point of order!" Soon comedians were imitating McCarthy's gruff language, his bearlike mannerisms, and his annoying "point of order." The original issues of the hearings were lost almost immediately. And very quickly the hearings turned from McCarthy's stage to his undoing. Near the end of the hearings Missouri Senator Stuart Symington stood up to McCarthy in a face-to-face attack that brought those in the hearing room to their feet—and applause in support of Symington and his courage and convictions.

McCarthy's political death seemed only a matter of time as "Tailgunner Joe" fought under the hot television lights for his political life. Gallup polls taken during the hearings showed McCarthy's popularity sinking fast. Within weeks his support (both in Congress and among the American people) had evaporated, and the press now turned on him with a magnificent ferocity. He quickly became a liability to the Republicans, even an embarrassment. When McCarthy attacked Fredrick Fisher, a young aide to the army's counsel, Joseph Welch, Welch drove in the last nail. "Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last?" Welch asked, staring directly at McCarthy. "Have you no sense of decency?" For millions of Americans the answer was an obvious "no."

No longer fearful of what anti-McCarthyism might do to their careers, the members of the Senate moved almost immediately to remove McCarthy from their midst. In July, a censure resolution was introduced in the Senate that led to the establishment of a special committee and a hearing on McCarthy's charges and tactics. The committee, headed by Senator Arthur Watkins (Republican from Utah), voted unanimously in late September to recommend McCarthy's censure to the main body. And in December the Senate voted 67 to 22 to censure McCarthy. America's second Red scare of the twentieth century had ended. Unable to intimidate other senators, McCarthy passed into the oblivion from whence he had come. He died in 1957, at age forty-nine.

McCarthyism may have given the Republican Party many of its wins in the 1952 elections, but ultimately it hurt the party. Although the Democrats were by no means blameless, by the 1960s McCarthyism had become associated with the Republicans in the American mind. McCarthyism was

considered nefarious, the darkest side of American politics and society. And the Democrats would not let the American voters forget the time in American history when the Republicans took the nation down the wrong road, and when McCarthy and his supporters took over the American psyche with what became little more than a pack of lies. Through the remainder of the decade and beyond, many Republicans had to live with the ghost of Joe McCarthy as they stood for election against a growing sense of liberalism, civil rights, human rights, and a desire for peace with the Soviet Union.

McCarthyism now stands for the entire period from the end of the war (and in many ways before then) until late 1954. It includes the censure of the film industry, the press, and publishing houses; it encompasses state and local actions against Communists, the dismissal of thousands of "subversives" from state, local, and federal government jobs; it was the frequent violation of constitutional rights, and the denial of passports to U.S. citizens who did not meet someone's standards of loyalty. It was loyalty oaths, investigations, and background checks. It was Alger Hiss, J. Edgar Hoover, the Rosenbergs, and "Commie" dentists. It was McCarthy himself, his show trials, his browbeating, his imposing figure, his "point of order." He rose out of a fear that was not real, and he declined mostly because the American people realized it. At the same time, he left a legacy of fear that permeated American society through the 1950s.

7

KOREA AND FOREIGN POLICY IN THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

Eisenhower, of course, went to Korea after the election. His promise had been little more than a Republican campaign stratagem; obviously Ike the president-elect could do nothing more in Korea than he could do from Washington, but his appearance raised the morale of the troops—and also the morale of the American people, who were, by then, clearly frustrated by the war. Since 1951 there had been several important American victories over the Chinese, but they were victories only in a limited sense. The U.N. troops held the line against enemy attacks, and on occasion pushed the Chinese back. But for many Americans this was simply not enough. Boys were being killed and wounded with nothing to show for it. Gallup polls continually showed that only about 30 percent of the public approved of the war. Although no antiwar movement arose, as it did in the 1960s, it was clear that a strong dissenting opinion had developed among the American people. A limited war of attrition was a difficult commodity to sell to a nation that had come to see its military objectives only in terms of total victory.

The replacement of MacArthur with General Matthew Ridgway may have hurt the Truman administration at the polls, but at least the U.S. policy in Korea was now of one mind. Ridgway prosecuted the war the way Washington wanted it prosecuted: limited and with the primary ob-

jective of bringing the conflict to an end as rapidly as possible. Ridgway himself may not have actually believed in this philosophy, but unlike MacArthur, he knew his place in the chain of command, and that was to fight the war the way Washington wanted it fought.

In July 1951 talks finally began between U.S. and Chinese negotiators, and everyone expected a quick settlement to the fighting. But the negotiations soon bogged down over the question of prisoners of war. The United States refused to turn over to the Chinese those POWs who did not want to return to North Korea or to China—and that number in UN custody was a whopping 70,000 out of the 170,000 held. In addition, Truman refused to be shackled with the political ramifications of repatriating unwilling anticommunists with an election approaching. So the arguing went on.

Just after Stalin died in March 1953, there was a break in the negotiations. Zhou Enlai announced that China was willing to soften its stance by allowing the POW issue to be settled by a third party. As the armies jockeyed for position along the front, negotiations finally came to a head, and again the world anticipated and predicted an end to the fighting. An agreement on the POWs was finally reached on June 8, and a truce was signed by all parties on July 27. Three long years of the Korean War were finally over. The United States had lost 54,246 killed, of whom 33,629 were combat casualties. Something over 50,000 South Koreans were killed fighting in their civil war that turned into a superpower conflict. The enemy lost an estimated 1.4 million.

The Korean War forced the United States to reevaluate its post–World War II strategy, to give at least some credence to the containment of Chinese communism in Asia—as well as Soviet communism in Europe. The Korean War also promoted the acceptance of NSC-68 and the eventual development of a tremendous conventional military force designed to fight such wars as the one in Korea—as opposed to simply relying on nuclear weapons. From that decision came what Eisenhower would call the "military–industrial complex," the wedding of the needs of the nation's military to the output of American industrial might. It would fuel the economy through the Vietnam War and after, and increase the nation's economic growth, which would in turn fuel its own growth. The Soviets, of course, responded, and history's greatest arms race ensued.

The Korean War also stoked the fires of the Red scare. McCarthyism, begun under its own steam as a domestic phenomenon, was fueled enormously by the Korean War. Communists, it seemed, were everywhere, and in Korea, American soldiers were being killed by Communists every day. To the American people the Korean War made communism a real threat; not just some figment of Joe McCarthy's imagination, but Communists with real guns trying to take a country and being stopped by American boys. The war also strengthened the Republican anticommunist stance, and

it allowed the Republicans to continue their claim that the Democrats were "soft on communism." By the time the war ended, the Republicans carried the national flag of anticommunism.

The Korean War also served to push China and the Soviet Union into a long-term relationship that, in fact, established what the United States had so feared since the Chinese Revolution in 1949: a Sino-Soviet monolith in control of central Asia. The war also made it clear that the United States would maintain Jiang Jieshi and the Nationalist Chinese on Taiwan. America's China policy would keep mainland China out of the United Nations (despite the protests of most of the world) and place the United States in the ridiculous position of insisting that the Nationalists on Taiwan somehow represented the nearly 1 billion Chinese living on the mainland under the obviously legitimate Beijing government of Mao Zedong.

Korea was America's first limited war of the post–World War II period. It quickly became a forgotten war, and its lessons were not learned. No sooner had the United States gotten out of Korea than it began its involvement in Vietnam, for many of the same reasons.

For the Republicans, the 1952 campaign virtually demanded a strong anticommunist stance. The issue had the Democrats on the run, and as the election approached, the Republicans drove the issue home. The Republican Party platform statement on how a Republican administration would deal with the spread of communism was only a little less than a declaration of war. They promised to "repudiate all commitments . . . such as those of Yalta which aid Communist enslavement." They would end "the negative, futile and immoral policy of 'containment' which abandons countless human beings to a despotism and godless terror." The new American policy, now called "liberation," would "inevitably set up strains and stresses within the captive world which will make the rulers impotent to continue in their monstrous ways and mark the beginning of the end."[1]

This ominous policy was the handiwork of John Foster Dulles, the Republican Party's chief on foreign policy matters, the man who would have been secretary of state in 1944 and in 1948 had Dewey won either of those elections. Dulles' life (and his pedigree) had followed a direct line to the State Department. He was the grandson of Benjamin Harrison's secretary of state and the nephew of Woodrow Wilson's. He was at Versailles in 1919, and he worked most of his life as a senior partner in a Wall Street law firm specializing in international law. During the Truman administration, as a gesture toward the bipartisan foreign policy, he was placed in the Asian division at the State Department. He was prepared for the job.

Dulles was a Presbyterian lay minister who took from his Calvinist background a sense of morality that viewed the world in a good-versus-evil atmosphere that in turn placed the United States in a to-the-death struggle with the Soviets. "They believe," he once said of the Soviets, "that human

beings are nothing more than somewhat superior animals . . . and that the best kind of a world is that which is organized as a well-managed farm. I do not see how, as long as Soviet Communism holds those views . . . there can be any permanent reconciliation. This is an irreconcilable conflict."[2] In addition, Dulles allowed for no gray areas to be explored, no third world. Only *us* and *them*. India, for instance, refused to take sides in the cold war. Dulles responded by assuming that India had sided with the Communists, and he responded by making a pact with India's enemy, Pakistan. Such a stance also pushed the Eisenhower administration into supporting right-wing governments (often repressive dictatorships) simply because they opposed communism. Much of that support destroyed American integrity abroad, as rightist dictators took power under U.S. auspices in Guatemala, Iran, South Vietnam, and the Philippines, while others were maintained through U.S. support in major and minor spots around the globe.

The 1952 Republican platform was harsh, even a battle cry, but once in office, Ike and Dulles began to back away—in both words and deeds. Dulles admitted that the administration had no intention of forcible liberation, and Eisenhower settled for containment as the objective for ending the Korean War almost immediately. In June 1953, just months after moving to Washington, the Eisenhower administration sat silently while Soviet tanks rolled into East Germany to put down an open protest against poor living conditions. Clearly, liberation was rhetoric only; but other aspects of Dulles' influence steered the administration toward a new and distinct foreign policy course.

The entire foreign policy initiative in the Eisenhower administration was called "New Look." It reflected as much the Republican need to cut the federal budget as an active plan to further American interests overseas. It was first of all intended to be aggressive (either rhetorically or in fact), but second it was also to be inexpensive, a foreign policy on the cheap. Rather than rely on the expensive ground forces and conventional weapons that seemed so inconclusive in Korea, the Eisenhower administration would return to an aggressive nuclear strategy. "We have adopted a new principle," the president told the nation. "Rather than let the Communists nibble us to death all over the world in little wars, we will rely in [the] future on [our] massive mobile retaliatory powers."[3]

Massive retaliation, as it was called, was a warning to Moscow that the United States would respond with its nuclear power as a deterrent against any Soviet-sponsored aggression. While reducing its conventional ground forces (and thereby reducing the budget), the United States would build up its air force from 115 to 137 wings and add 30,000 men. It would be the left arm of massive retaliation, it would deliver the bombs (nuclear or conventional) when the time came. New Look was inexpensive, it was decisive, it was an economy of scale in military defense. And it allowed the president to keep military spending to roughly $40 billion per year, below what even

many Democrats in Congress believed was necessary. To Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, it was "more bang for the buck." In March 1954 the United States raised the ante on the cold war (and pushed its point home to the Soviets) by exploding a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific.

Another aspect of New Look was Dulles' concept of "brinkmanship," a policy of taking greater risks in foreign policy than in the past, of making the Soviets believe that the United States would go to war when, in fact, it would not. Brinkmanship fit well with the New Look foreign policy because, by definition, it was the threat of strategic weapons without their use—and it was inexpensive. The term comes from an interview Dulles gave to *Life* magazine in early 1956, an interview he probably wished he had not given: "The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into the war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared to go to the brink, you are lost."[4] It seemed like a frightening concept, but like "liberation," "brinkmanship" proved to be little more than rhetoric.

New Look was also designed to keep American soldiers out of combat—out of wars that could not be won, like Korea. In the case of an outbreak of conventional warfare, particularly in Asia, Eisenhower and Dulles wanted to rely on either friendly indigenous forces to fight the Communists or to give matériel to support America's allies fighting the war in Washington's interest. The plan was inexpensive; it kept American soldiers out of war—which quelled antiwar sentiment at home; and it furthered America's interests abroad.

Another aspect of the Ike–Dulles foreign policy was what has been called "pactomania," the perceived need to surround the Soviet Union and China with nations friendly to the United States—all done through a series of pacts, unilateral declarations, and mutual defense treaties. In Europe, Eisenhower and Dulles accepted NATO as the instrument of defense there. In Southeast Asia, Dulles built the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO); and in the Middle East it was the Baghdad Pact. By the time Eisenhower left office in 1961, the Soviet–Chinese Communist bloc was effectively surrounded. The Eisenhower–Dulles attitude toward these nations, however, was different from Truman's. In fact, through a number of treaties the Truman administration, between 1947 and 1951, had brought all these same nations except Pakistan and Thailand into the U.S. sphere. To Truman and Acheson these treaties were military instruments, agreements of mutual defense and assistance if a war broke out in certain areas of the world. But to Eisenhower and Dulles the treaties and agreements they negotiated were to serve as instruments of deterrent, to encircle the Communist bloc with nations friendly to the United States, in hopes that the act of surrounding would deter an attack from the Soviets or the Chinese.

Last in the arsenal of New Look was the nasty business of covert military

operations, an aspect of the Eisenhower foreign policy that, of course, was kept from the American people. The chief force here was the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), a mostly secret organization authorized by the National Security Act of 1947 to consolidate all the various intelligence services that had grown up in Washington and in the several services. During Eisenhower's administration the CIA grew enormously in size and importance as another means of furthering American interests abroad—on the cheap. CIA-initiated operations were seldom expensive, and the results were often immediately effective. Much of the New Look was a mere juggling of old weapons and resources in order to redirect the nation's strengths while cutting spending. But the use of covert activities as an arm of foreign policy during peacetime was definitely something new.

Much of this New Look policy was laid down officially in NSC-162/2, adopted by the administration on October 30, 1953. It called for "a strong military posture, with emphasis on the capability of inflicting massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power." And "in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions."[5]

The Eisenhower–Dulles foreign policy was not popular with America's allies; it frightened the nation's enemies; and in many ways it came back to haunt the country in later years. Liberation, as was clear to anyone looking for lessons in the Korean War, was nothing more than military invasion, and it would provoke the enemy to initiate its own containment policy in response. The threat of massive retaliation, while it might deter the Soviets in Europe, had little meaning against insurgent groups in the jungles of Southeast Asia or against anti-American nationalists in the Middle East. Dulles' brinkmanship was at best reckless; pulling the nation back from the brink of war might present an aggressive image to America's advantage, but it was only a unilateral response. Dulles might have the control to pull the United States back from the brink, but what of the enemy? Might they be prepared to go past the brink? Clearly, brinkmanship could start a war. Also, how would America's allies react to being used as mercenary troops, fed U.S. money and supplies so their boys could die fighting Washington's war against communism? Certainly they would come to resent it. And could indigenous troops be counted on to do an effective job in fighting these wars? Just as clearly that answer was "no." Last, covert action, the newest aspect of New Look, turned into a disaster for the United States in the long run. CIA activity may have saved money for the Eisenhower administration, but the policy was enormously destructive to the nation's prestige abroad at a time when the United States was striving to be a world leader in the face of what was touted as oppressive totalitarian communism. New Look also raised the level of rhetoric in the cold war, and with that came corresponding increases in the armaments race and in the dangers of nuclear war.

All this sounded dangerous, ominous, a long-term plan that might easily plunge the world into the next world war, but Eisenhower was as moderate in his foreign policy as he was in his domestic policy. There would be no going to the brink of war, no pulling back from the abyss at the last second. There would also be no massive retaliation. When Soviet tanks rolled into East Germany in 1953 and into Hungary in 1956, Eisenhower did not respond by annihilating Moscow; and when hostilities escalated in Southeast Asia, he did not nuke Beijing. Eisenhower realized that going to the brink meant risking war and that massive retaliation would probably bring an equal response. Consequently, the president maintained a cool finger on the nuclear button. Parts of the Eisenhower–Dulles harsh militarist stance were, of course, Republican campaign rhetoric, and parts of it came from the mind of Dulles. Most of it was simply threat.

When Stalin died in 1953, there was a definite and almost immediate relaxing of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. This came despite the 1952 hard-line Republican campaign rhetoric, and despite Dulles' obvious opposition to any thaw in the cold war. In the summer of 1953, just after Eisenhower took office, Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov (seemingly Stalin's successor at that time) called for better relations with the West. The British wanted to take advantage of the thaw and called for a summit conference, but Dulles declined the offer and thereby possibly missed an opportunity to change the course of history. However, McCarthy was still pointing his finger at those who would dare appease the Soviets; and now sold on the notion of the evil Russian empire, the American people would be unlikely to support a sudden shift in foreign policy. In addition, the Soviet leadership was deeply involved in a power struggle (from which Nikita Khrushchev would finally emerge the victor) that was not at all conducive to constructive negotiations.

But the obstructions to talks passed, and in July 1955 the two sides met at Geneva, the first meeting between Washington and Moscow since Potsdam. Dulles feared another Yalta and urged Eisenhower to scotch the meeting and stay home; and at the conference he seemed to keep the president's optimism and hopes in check, as Khrushchev later recalled: "That vicious cur Dulles was always prowling around Eisenhower, snapping at him if he got out of line."[6] Very little came out of Geneva. Eisenhower surprised the Soviets with a proposal he called "open skies," a plan in which the two sides would exchange maps of their military installations and permit aerial inspection, all designed to end the possibility of surprise attacks. Eisenhower's sincerity in making this proposal has always been questioned. It could be marked as a cynical cold war pretension, and certainly it would have benefited Washington much more than Moscow because the Soviets knew the location of most American installations, while Washington knew almost nothing of Soviet facilities. But Robert Divine and others have concluded that Eisenhower was sincere, that he was searching for some limited

measures that would break the East–West deadlock and help bring the arms race under at least some degree of control. Had the Soviets accepted "open skies," tensions between the two sides would certainly have lessened because the fear of surprise attacks and secret military buildups would have been removed.

At first Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin seemed receptive to the "open skies" proposal, but by July, Khrushchev had grasped the real power. At a cocktail party on the evening of Eisenhower's proposal, Khrushchev approached the president and tersely rejected "open skies," accusing Eisenhower of scheming to implement "a very transparent espionage device. . . . You could hardly expect us to take this seriously."[7] And "open skies" died.

However, the "spirit of Geneva," as the press called the mostly friendly relations, did live on, although nothing specific came from the negotiations. The real achievement was that the two sides met face-to-face and discussed the issues that divided them. For many on both sides, however, the meeting ended with two grim assumptions: that the United States and the Soviet Union maintained irreconcilable differences, and that the two superpowers would eventually be plunged into a third world war. At the same time, Geneva also seemed to convince the negotiators that nuclear war was unthinkable and senseless, and that it could never be an effective instrument of foreign policy. The Geneva summit also led to formal cultural, economic, and scientific exchanges between the two nations, developing better understanding in a few areas.

While Geneva may have evoked a new spirit among the cold warriors, the two spheres of influence in Europe hardened. West Germany, under the hard-line anticommunist Konrad Adenauer, joined NATO (despite French anxiety) in 1955; and in that same year the Warsaw Treaty Organization solidified the Eastern bloc. The military division of Europe, which had been evolving since the war, was now completed.

Much of the Eisenhower–Dulles rhetoric may have been designed for domestic consumption, but the policy of covert actions was no bluff. In 1953 the CIA pulled off its first big-time political coup. Two years earlier the seventy-year-old Iranian premier, Mohammed Mosaddeq, had led an anticolonial nationalist movement that threatened the power of the shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. Mosaddeq had whipped up popular feelings in Iran against the British control of Iranian oil production, then nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden turned to Eisenhower for help, with the result that an Anglo-American operation, code-named "Ajax," was devised to overthrow Mosaddeq. Eden hoped that a covert operation would return Iranian oil production to British hands while keeping U.S. oil companies out of Iran.

The CIA head in this period was Allen Dulles, the brother of the secretary of state, and this was his first big operation. He put his best agents on the job: Kermit Roosevelt (the grandson of Theodore) and H. Norman Schwarzkopf (the head of the New Jersey State Police and the father of the

Desert Storm commander). Schwarzkopf had been in Iran since 1946, training and organizing the shah's secret police, Savak.

Eden, American oilmen, and John Foster Dulles convinced Eisenhower that Mosaddeq was moving too close to the Iranian Communist Party, the Tudeh, and that he must be overthrown before he floated into the Soviet sphere. Eisenhower agreed, and approved the operation. The CIA funneled millions of dollars into the hands of Schwarzkopf and Roosevelt, who literally purchased an army of thugs, including a group of weight lifters recruited from Tehran's health clubs, and toppled Mosaddeq. For Eisenhower it was a quick, cheap, and easy solution to a problem, and the results seemed to more than justify the means. However, it set a dangerous precedent, one that Eisenhower would continue to follow, and one that his successors would follow as well. The CIA, it was clear, could get the job done.

The final outcome was that the shah was restored to power, and he showed his gratitude to the United States by dividing up the Iranian oil output to include the Americans—much to the disappointment of the British, who wanted to maintain their monopoly on Iranian oil. Everyone seemed to benefit from the ouster of Mosaddeq except, of course, the Iranian people, who finally in the late 1970s showed their true feelings for the United States, the shah, Schwarzkopf's hated Savak, and the CIA.

A year after its success in Iran, the CIA took its show on the road again, this time to Guatemala. There, Colonel Jacobo Arbenz Guzman had been elected to office in 1951 and was instituting labor and land reforms in an attempt to drag his country out of economic blight. But when Arbenz accepted support from Guatemalan Communists and then nationalized the United Fruit Company in 1954, Dulles (who served on the board of directors of United Fruit) claimed before the Court of Arbitration at The Hague that Guatemala had fallen into the web of international communism. Dulles's nightmare seemed to come true when Arbenz received a shipment of military supplies from Czechoslovakia. Eisenhower responded by authorizing a CIA-directed coup, and he told the Dulles brothers that he was prepared to take any steps short of sending in troops to see that it succeeded. Not unlike the coup in Iran, the CIA moved in and purchased an army, here led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas. Castillo ran his operations from Honduras with the aid of World War II surplus aircraft flown by CIA pilots and supplied by the Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza. After a few bombing missions over Guatemala City, Arbenz fled. When he went before the United Nations to complain about America's obvious involvement, several U.S. allies, including England and France, prepared to vote with the Soviets to censure the United States. Ike, however, pressured them to abstain. The American-devised coup in Guatemala remained a sore point in U.S.–Latin American relations for years to come.

When the Korean War ended, the cold war's hottest spot moved to Southeast Asia. The French attempt there to defeat the Vietminh-led war

for independence, and thus reestablish power over their colony, had begun in 1946, but by 1950 the war was going badly for France. Its cost was more than Paris could manage, and the United States had begun to pick up the tab. This situation actually fell in well with the Eisenhower–Dulles foreign policy, which called for the use of Allied forces, supplied with American money and weapons, to fight the spread of communism abroad. In 1950 the United States pumped in some $150 million to shore up the French effort. A year later that figure had jumped to $450 million, about 40 percent of the total cost of the war. In 1953 Eisenhower pushed the figure up to $785 million, and then to over a billion dollars the next year, nearly 70 percent of the war's total cost. The American interest in Vietnam was growing annually.

For the French, Vietnam was their attempt to return to the world stage by rebuilding an outmoded, nineteenth-century empire. Once the effort became difficult and expensive, the French were willing to back away and abandon the effort. For Washington, however, the crisis in Southeast Asia was being played on a much bigger stage; it was the cold war, it was the expansion of communism, it was the fight for control of the southern tier of Asia. So the United States persuaded France to stay on.

The war against France in Vietnam was clearly an independence movement, a fight for freedom from colonial rule. But the people of France disapproved of their government's role in suppressing an independence movement. Therefore the Paris government set up a common imperialist scenario that would create an acceptable situation in Vietnam for French public consumption. It would invent a friendly government, argue that it was the legitimate political entity representing the people of Vietnam, and then operate the government through a puppet. The only problem was that Vietnamese nationalism had coalesced around Ho Chi Minh and his organization, the Vietminh, in the north; if France wanted to turn the Vietnamese war for independence into a civil war, its friendly government would have to be an anti-Vietminh nationalist movement. And in the late 1940s there was no such movement. Hence the birth of the myth (which the United States inherited and perpetuated) that there were two warring courses of nationalism in Vietnam, and that the French (and later the Americans) supported the legitimate group of nationalists in the south against what was perceived as nothing more than Communist insurgents in the north. The French attempt to build up this opposing nationalism, and thus turn a war for independence into a civil war, was never successful.

In opposition to the Vietminh, the French created Cochin China in the south and placed the deposed emperor and Japanese wartime collaborator, Bao Dai, at the head of the government in Saigon. After 1952, at the insistence of the Eisenhower administration, the French began training an army of Vietnamese soldiers. The French also planned to take the war to

the countryside by building large fortresses in enemy territory. It was the defeat at one of those fortresses, Dien Bien Phu, that would bring the French war in Indochina to an end.

Dien Bien Phu was located in northern Vietnam near the Laotian border. In 1954 the French had placed some 16,000 men there as a means of controlling that sector of enemy-held territory, but the fortress simply became bait for the enemy, and later a trap for the soldiers in it. On March 13, Vietminh forces under Vo Nguyen Giap began shelling the fortress from the surrounding mountains. It was quickly clear that Dien Bien Phu would fall unless the United States intervened. Eisenhower was pushed by Nixon, Dulles, and Chief of Staff Admiral Arthur Radford to intervene, and for a time it looked as though Washington would send in air support. At a news conference on April 7, the president talked of dominoes: "You have a row of dominoes set up," he said, "you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it would go over very quickly."[8] But Ike had just pulled the United States out of one land war in Asia, and he was not going to drag the nation into another. When Republican congressmen insisted on a military response, he said he would save Dien Bien Phu only if the British would help, but the Brits had no stomach for such a campaign, and Ike backed off. Dien Bien Phu fell on May 7. The French were through in Vietnam.

Meanwhile, as the situation at Dien Bien Phu unfolded, France insisted (over Dulles's objections) that a Vietnam settlement be added to the agenda of a multitopic conference about to convene in Geneva. By the time Vietnam reached the table for discussion, Dien Bien Phu had fallen, and the French, with virtually no bargaining position left, were ready to sign an armistice with the Vietminh and withdraw their troops under almost any conditions. But Dulles threatened U.S. intervention in Vietnam if France did not receive concessions at Geneva. The Vietminh, however, saw that if the United States had not intervened to save the French at Dien Bien Phu, it would not intervene to obtain concessions for the French at Geneva, and Dulles was forced to back down from the brink. The agreement that was reached hinged on elections, to be held in 1956, that would unify Vietnam under one government. Until then there would be a temporary line of demarcation, set at the sixteenth parallel, separating the two sides. In addition, it was agreed that no foreign nation would introduce troops or establish bases in Vietnam.

The French were gone, and Vietnam was not yet an American war. To shore up U.S. interests in the region, Dulles organized the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), signed by the two major colonial powers in Southeast Asia, Britain and France, along with Britain's Commonwealth nations in the region, Australia and New Zealand. The only Asian nations that Dulles could induce to become part of the pact were Thailand, Paki-

stan, and the Philippines. Although South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were forbidden by the Geneva accords to sign a mutual defense treaty of any sort, a protocol was added to the SEATO treaty and signed the same day, September 8, 1954, extending protection to those three countries in the event of an attack. The SEATO treaty was a clear threat of multilateral U.S.-led intervention in the affairs of Southeast Asia.

The French withdrawal left a vacuum in Vietnam that the Eisenhower administration believed it would have to fill—but on the cheap, without committing U.S. forces. One problem was that Bao Dai was an unacceptable representative of American interests in Vietnam, and it was obvious to the world that the anticommunist nationalist movement led by him was little more than a charade with no support. The United States then chose its man to lead what was to be the new nation of the Republic of Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, a nationalist to be sure, but (not unlike Bao Dai) a leader without followers. With a very convincing $12 million the CIA bought off two rival nationalist-religious sects in the south, and Diem was able to consolidate his power and build a small, ragtag army from their remnants. In an election staged in October 1955, Diem won a ridiculous 98.2 percent of the votes over Bao Dai (even though U.S. advisers suggested that 60 percent would be an adequate majority). The Eisenhower administration pumped over $270 million per year to keep Diem propped up in Saigon—and to train an army of some 280,000 Vietnamese soldiers.

Ho Chi Minh and his advisers in Hanoi fully expected that the election scheduled for 1956 and agreed to in Geneva would give them the mandate they needed to reunite Vietnam under Vietminh leadership. But attempts to orchestrate that election were ignored in Saigon at the insistence of Washington, and the deadline passed. The United States refused to allow the election, and its reasoning was simply ridiculous in retrospect: The Vietminh, Washington reasoned, had more followers in Vietnam than the Diem government in the south, and therefore the Communists would win the election. And that, of course, could not be allowed to happen in the anticommunist 1950s. "Almost any type of election that could conceivably be held in Vietnam in 1956," a State Department research document disclosed, "would . . . give the Communists a very significant if not decisive advantage."[9] The document concluded that the Diem government should avoid elections at all costs.

By the last years of the 1950s the southern cadre, or Vietcong, began building its forces in the south and initiating on its own (without support from Hanoi) small engagements with South Vietnamese troops. Late in 1961 the National Liberation Front was formed out of all anti-Diem forces. Hanoi had given up on a peaceful resolution and was again preparing to oust an imperialist power from its territory.

Politically and diplomatically the Eisenhower administration increased the American commitment in Vietnam considerably. The establishment of

SEATO, and then the refusal of Washington to allow elections in Vietnam, added a great deal to the U.S. commitment. Also, America's nation-building in South Vietnam further escalated the situation by producing from nothing a U.S.-supported enemy of Hanoi, and then a U.S.-sponsored puppet in Saigon. At the same time, if commitment is to be measured in ground forces, the Eisenhower administration did little to escalate the situation. When Ike left office in 1961, and handed the Vietnam commitment over to John Kennedy, there were fewer than 400 U.S. advisers in all of South Vietnam.

For Eisenhower and Dulles the real problem in Asia, of course, was not Hanoi but Beijing. In his inaugural address Eisenhower talked of "unleashing" the Nationalist forces of Jiang Jieshi against the mainland Chinese, and then he immediately removed the Seventh Fleet from the Formosa Straits, supposedly to make Jiang's job easier. It was no secret, however, that Jiang was a long way from having the force or the inclination to take on the armies of Beijing, and a Communist invasion of Taiwan seemed much more likely in 1954. However, Jiang did begin bombing and commando raids, along with a propaganda campaign against the mainland, much of it staged from a group of small islands in the Formosa Straits held by the Nationalists since 1949: Quemoy, Matsu, and the Tachens. These attacks were little more than annoyances to the Chinese on the mainland, but in January 1955, Beijing struck back by bombarding the islands. Eisenhower decided that if Quemoy and Matsu fell (he had little concern for the indefensible Tachens), Taiwan would fall, "seriously jeopardizing the anti-Communist barrier consisting of . . . Japan, Republic of Korea, Republic of China, Republic of the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam." He added that Indonesia, Malaya, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma also "would probably come under Communist influence."[10] To Eisenhower, Quemoy and Matsu had become the first dominoes.

Overruling those in Congress and in his administration who were pushing for direct military intervention, Eisenhower looked for a diplomatic solution and worked out a plan with Jiang. The president agreed to defend Taiwan and the nearby Pescadores Islands if Jiang would agree to stop harassing the mainland, which seemed to have precipitated the problem in the first place. He then asked Congress for the authority to "employ the armed forces of the United States as [the president] deems necessary" to defend Taiwan, the Pescadores, and "related positions," meaning Quemoy and Matsu. Congress granted him the power, thus establishing a precedent. It was intended to solve for future presidents the problem Truman encountered in Korea, and it was the basis for the Eisenhower Doctrine that gave the president much the same power in the Middle East just a year later; but it also became the basis for the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that granted Lyndon Johnson the power he wanted to begin the Americanization of the

Vietnam War in 1965. In retrospect the Quemoy–Matsu crisis was of little significance, but it had a lasting effect on American foreign policy.

Eisenhower's agreements with Jiang did not stop the bombing of the islands, which continued until May. Finally, only after Dulles threatened mainland China with tactical nuclear weapons did the Chinese stop the bombing. To make the Eisenhower victory in the incident even more complete, Zhou Enlai issued a formal statement in May that China would "strive for the liberation of Taiwan by peaceful means so far as it is possible."

In 1958, however, the situation flared up again when Jiang moved nearly 100,000 soldiers to Quemoy and again began conducting commando raids onto the mainland. The mainland Chinese once more responded with shelling, and another major crisis developed. Eisenhower again threatened to draw his nuclear guns, and this time he gave Jiang several eight-inch howitzers capable of firing tactical nuclear weapons. "There is not going to be any appeasement," he told the American people in a televised address, "but I also believe there is not going to be any war."[11] The crisis eased when the mainland Chinese reduced their bombardment, agreeing to a strange stipulation of shelling only on odd-numbered days of the month. Eisenhower gets a great deal of credit for his cool handling of these two minor crises, but in fact he did almost nothing. The incidents resolved themselves when the Chinese decided to stop the shelling from the mainland.

The only weak spot in Dulles's plan to encircle the Communist monolith of Eastern Europe and Asia was in the Middle East, and that area of the world turned out to be his toughest nut to crack and ultimately his greatest failure. The key to the Middle East was Egypt, the strongest Arab power in the region, and its leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, the freewheeling Arab nationalist who had deposed King Farouk in 1952. Dulles's problem with Nasser was that he refused to worship at the altar of anticommunism. "The Soviet Union," he told Dulles, "is more than a thousand miles away and we've never had any trouble with them. They have never attacked us. They have never occupied our territory. They have never had a base here."[12] Nasser also refused to join the American anticommunist crusade because of Washington's continued support of Israel. In an attempt to woo Nasser and other Arab state leaders, the Eisenhower administration pulled back from the all-out support the Truman administration had given the Jewish state, but Nasser was never satisfied.

American interests in the Middle East went well beyond diplomacy. In 1953 American oil companies produced nearly 70 percent of the region's oil. It was the fuel that ran the industrial economies of the West, and Eisenhower considered it his duty to protect that resource, and certainly to keep it from falling into the hands of the Soviets.

Nasser's obstinacy forced Dulles to change his focus from Egypt to what

he called the "northern tier" of Arab states, and in 1955 Britain joined the United States in organizing the Middle East Treaty Organization, which included Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan. This Baghdad Pact, as it was more commonly known, was to be the pact that linked the other pacts, the completion of Dulles's pactomania that would finally encircle the Soviet Union and China. Turkey was a signatory of both the Baghdad Pact and NATO, and Pakistan had signed both the Baghdad Pact and SEATO. But the Baghdad Pact was weak; it did not protect American oil interests outside of Iran; and Iraq, the only Arab state to sign the pact, dropped out of the association in 19509.

Nasser denounced the Baghdad Pact as a device of the Western imperialists, a scheme to split the Arab world, and a pro-Israel alliance. One month after its signing, Nasser orchestrated an alliance with Saudi Arabia and Syria, and announced that if the United States refused aid, he would search for it elsewhere—presumably from the Soviet Union. Dulles responded by applying economic sanctions against Egypt, which included halting all aid for the construction of the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River, the cornerstone of the nation's economic development plans. Nasser continued to flirt with the Soviet Union, often holding the threat above Dulles's head. And just as often Dulles pronounced it a bluff.

On July 26, 1956, Nasser surprised the world by announcing that he would nationalize the Suez Canal and use its revenues to build Aswan. He also made good on his threats and accepted economic aid from the Soviets—nearly $500 million, two and a half times the amount offered by the United States and Britain. Nasser, for his courage in standing up to the Americans, was vaulted into the role of Arab leader and hero. Dulles's bungling had allowed what seemed to be a Soviet break into the Middle East, and he had jeopardized the flow of oil to the NATO nations. "Don't think we intend to stand impotent and let this one man get away with it," Eisenhower told a group of congressmen.[13]

Through the summer and fall (as the 1956 election approached in the United States) France and England mumbled under their breath about a military campaign to take back the Suez canal. Israel, fearing a greatly enhanced Egyptian power on its southern border as a result of Soviet aid, agreed that it might be willing to join in an invasion of Egypt. Dulles held them all off, promising a peaceful settlement of the issue through a compromise to internationalize the canal. But on October 29, without consulting Washington, Israel invaded the Sinai and rushed toward the canal. Two days later British and French planes began bombing Egypt, and on November 5, British and French paratroopers invaded. This might have been a tough spot for Eisenhower, caught between supporting his European allies (and allowing the troublesome Nasser to be crushed) or supporting the anticolonial underdog against the imperialist aggressors. But for Ike it was a simple decision. He felt betrayed. "Alright, Foster," he told Dulles, "you

tell 'em, goddam it, we're going to apply sanctions, we're going to the United Nations, we're going to do everything that there is so we can stop this thing."[14] To the American people he said he would not accept "one code of international conduct for those who oppose us and another for our friends." The United States introduced a resolution in the United Nations condemning the invasion. It was supported by the Soviets and vetoed by the invaders. Eisenhower threatened sanctions, and finally on Election Day, November 6, England and France stood down. Israel agreed to a cease-fire two days later.

The Suez crisis helped increase U.S. prestige among the Arab states, but it had hurt the NATO alliance, increased Nasser's prestige, and added to the Arab–Israeli tensions. The Eisenhower administration began looking for a new Middle East policy, one that would maintain American influence in the region, lessen Nasser's influence, and keep the Soviets contained. The result was the Eisenhower Doctrine, a plan to aid the nations of the Middle East against Communist expansion in the area. Eisenhower and Dulles used the Truman Doctrine as their pattern, even to the point of evoking Truman's exaggerated anticommunist rhetoric to push Congress into supporting the resolution. "Russia's rulers have long sought to dominate the Middle East," he began. "This was true of the Czars and it is true of the Bolsheviks."[15] He requested $200 million in economic assistance for "any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East," and he asked Congress to allow him to use the armed forces to protect the nations of the Middle East "requesting such aid" against "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism." Congress passed the resolution.

It was mostly rhetoric. Egypt and Syria, the only nations in the region that might possibly come under Soviet influence, were not likely to request U.S. aid. If there was a threat to the region at all, it was from the rising tide of "Nasserism," or Arab nationalism, and not Eisenhower's bugaboo of "International Communism." Certainly the Soviets were willing to exploit problems in the Middle East by lending money in exchange for influence, and even by sending an arms shipment or two, but Moscow was not the problem in the Middle East.

Syria, Egypt, and Jordan rejected the Eisenhower Doctrine immediately, and Iraq showed little interest. Israel saw it as a plan for the United States to strengthen the Arab nations and denounced it. Only Lebanon, Iran, and (after some cajoling) Saudi Arabia came around to supporting the doctrine. But to most of the Arab nations the Eisenhower Doctrine was at best influence-building in their region; at worst it was the exchange of one imperialist power (England) for another (the United States).

Just one month after Congress gave Eisenhower the power to deal with the Communist threat in the Middle East, one emerged. Or did it? A strong Nasserite rebellion in Jordan threatened the government of King Hussein.

Hussein appealed to Washington to save him from the forces of "international communism and its followers." Eisenhower was not foolish enough to intervene in what was clearly an Arab–Arab conflict by blaming it on communism, but he would intervene to keep Nasser's influence from spreading to Jordan. He explained his action as safeguarding "the preservation of the independence and integrity of the nations of the Middle East." He sent $10 million to Hussein and the Sixth Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean. Hussein held. What had been a congressional resolution giving the president the power to aid Middle East nations under attack from "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism" had now become the power to intervene in the Middle East simply to restore the integrity of any of the nations there.

In July 1957 a military coup in Iraq placed a pro-Nasser government in power and removed a key Arab nation from the Baghdad Pact. In Lebanon, repercussions from the Iraqi coup gave pro-Nasser elements there the power they needed to mount a strong challenge to the government of Camille Chamoun. Again there were no Communists, but when Chamoun requested U.S. help, Eisenhower moved quickly. The next day U.S. troops from the Sixth Fleet bounded ashore at Beirut and soon occupied the city. Within three days 7,000 U.S. soldiers were in Beirut. The force would eventually grow to 14,000, including tanks and tactical nuclear weapons flown in from West Germany. In an evening address Eisenhower told the American people that he had sent troops to Lebanon to stop Communist aggression, and he likened Lebanon to Greece in 1947, Czechoslovakia in 1948, China in 1949, Korea in 1950, and Vietnam in 1954. The troops left in October. Lebanon had been saved, but many asked: Saved from what?

The Eisenhower–Dulles Middle East policy had gone nowhere. In fact, American influence in the region had lost ground rather than gained it. That the Soviets also had not gained any significant influence was a testament more to Arab nationalism than to U.S. foreign policy. The Baghdad Pact turned out to be the weakest link in Dulles's attempt to surround the Soviet Union and China with U.S.-friendly nations. Of all the Middle East states, only Iran was truly an ally. King Saud of Saudi Arabia came in a far second, at best a reluctant supporter. However, American oil production continued in the region, for oil was now the fuel of choice for the Western industrial democracies. The Eisenhower Doctrine itself died a quick and almost silent death. It failed in its objective to isolate Nasser, and it did not stop the spread of communism into the region because, simply, there had been none there in the first place. Partly because of its unqualified support for Israel and partly because of its meddling in the area during the decade, the United States had managed to replace Britain as the Middle East villain by the end of the Eisenhower era.

During the Suez crisis, the Soviets took advantage of the diversion of the world's eyes to crush a revolt in Hungary. In February, at a closed session of the Twentieth Communist Party Congress, Khrushchev surprised party members by denouncing Stalin for domestic crimes and mistakes in foreign policy, endorsing "peaceful coexistence" with the West and an end to the arms race, and hinting that he would liberalize Soviet control of Eastern Europe. Copies of the speech were obtained by the CIA and spread throughout Eastern Europe. In the summer and fall Poland began to liberalize, even to the point of challenging Moscow's authority. Polish leader Wladyslaw Gomulka talked of democracy and independent socialism. Khrushchev prepared to crush the movement, but Gomulka responded by threatening a Polish uprising. The Polish people would "defend themselves with all means," Gomulka said, "they will not be pushed off the road of democratization." Khrushchev wavered, then backed down.

It seemed to be a break, and the excitement spread to Hungary, where students took to the streets to demand that the Stalinist Erno Gero be replaced with a liberal, Imre Nagy. Workers joined the students. Again Khrushchev backed down and allowed Nagy to replace Gero on October 23. But the crowds grew larger and more violent. A large group of demonstrators pulled down a statue of Stalin in Budapest Square, then demanded immediate democratic reforms and the expulsion of Soviet troops from Hungarian soil. Again Khrushchev backed down and began withdrawing Soviet tanks from the outskirts of Budapest. Dulles spurred the revolt by promising aid to those nations that would break from the Warsaw Pact, and Radio Free Europe and Voice of America encouraged the revolts still further, even to the point of urging the Hungarians to take up arms.

At just that moment, as Hungary seemed to have won its freedom, on October 28, Israel attacked Egypt and the world looked the other way. On October 31 Nagy announced that Hungary would withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, and Khrushchev decided to move. On November 4 and 5 Soviet tanks moved into Budapest and crushed the Hungarian uprising. The Hungarians fought back, mostly with Molotov cocktails and other homemade weapons. The world watched as the battle turned into a bloodbath; 30,000 Hungarian civilians and 7,000 Russian soldiers died in the two days of fighting. The Soviets captured Nagy and executed him early the next year. All the Republican Party talk about the liberation of communism, it was now clear, was a sham, little more than a political war cry designed for public consumption. Unfortunately, the Hungarians believed it.

Eisenhower could have done nothing to save brave Hungary, and with the exception of some CIA requests to drop arms to the Hungarians, there was never any serious consideration at the State Department or the White House that the United States would intervene. Eisenhower, of course, would have risked a world war with the Soviets by moving to save

Hungary, and he was not willing to do that. Nevertheless, it was irresponsible to dangle the promise of liberation before a people so obviously desirous of freedom from Soviet repression. After Hungary, the liberation rhetoric was dropped from all foreign policy statements and campaign slogans.

The crises of Hungary and Suez, both coming just days before the 1956 election, vaulted Eisenhower into a landslide reelection victory. Americans do not like to change leaders in times of crisis, and in 1956 Americans definitely saw the world as being in crisis. And by 1956 Ike had not lost his luster, despite a heart attack the year before. The Democrats again turned to Stevenson, who won the nomination for a second time over Estes Kefauver. The campaign was less than eventful. Eisenhower carried all but seven states, and made even more inroads into the South as southern whites increasingly voted Republican in national elections. But despite the landslide the voters apparently wanted Democrats in Congress, and Eisenhower failed to bring in a Republican-dominated legislature on his coattails.

America's technological dominance in the world was a major comfort to the nation's people. The Soviets had possessed the bomb since 1949, but possession was one thing and delivery was quite another. All that security evaporated in the summer of 1957 when the Soviets announced that they had successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), considered the ultimate atomic delivery system for the future. Then in October the Soviets boasted that they had sent the world's first man-made satellite, the *Sputnik I*, into orbit. A month later they launched *Sputnik II*, which was six times heavier than *Sputnik I* and carried a dog. For the first time the ominous prospect of Soviet nuclear missiles raining destruction on U.S. cities entered the American psyche. Actually the Soviets were a long way from developing such weapons. For instance, they had barely begun research on the sophisticated guidance system that would be necessary to direct a warhead to a target, but fear about the not-too-distant future brought the United States to the verge of hysteria. To make matters worse, the first American attempt to match the Soviet accomplishments in space was a humiliating failure, seen live on television by most of the nation.

The questions that were raised centered around "What had gone wrong?" How could the Soviets surpass the United States so quickly? The Soviets had the largest and most powerful land force in the world; now they were moving into the role of world technological leader as well. Add to all this the numerical strength of the Red Chinese army, and to most Americans in the late 1950s the United States did not seem to be in a very powerful position in the world. The "*Sputnik* syndrome" gave way to cries (mostly from the Democrats) of a "missile gap," and Americans began blaming the Eisenhower administration for cutting military spending and for allowing the American technological advantage to slip away.

The response from Washington to the criticism was quick and decisive. NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, was set up to coordinate rocket research, and funding for that agency was virtually unlimited. NATO was sent intermediate-range missiles, and in 1958 newly developed larger ICBMs were placed in Britain, Italy, and Turkey. In 1958 accusations of a "missile gap" jolted Congress into passing the National Defense Education Act, authorizing money for education in mathematics, the sciences, and foreign languages, as well as to fund college and university student loans. Finally, the army launched the tiny *Explorer* spacecraft and placed a transmitter satellite in orbit in January 1958, and that seemed to calm the anxieties of the American people somewhat. The two superpowers had jumped headlong into the space race, a race that would ultimately determine technological and military superiority.

All this placed Eisenhower in an unusual position. He knew, through secret U-2 spy plane flyovers of the Soviet Union, that there was not a missile gap, that in fact the United States had maintained its superiority over the Soviets in nearly every technological area. But the top-secret flights could not be revealed to the American people. *Sputnik* "does not raise my apprehensions, not one iota," Eisenhower told America. But Eisenhower's complacency gave the Democrats an issue that aided them in their 1958 midterm election victories, and again in the 1960 presidential election. Ike, the Democrats said, had failed in (of all areas) national defense.

In late 1959 and early 1960 another thaw developed in the cold war that looked promising for the future, but again it was not to be. It rose out of the ever-festering problem of Berlin. On November 10, 1958, Khrushchev demanded that the United States and its allies withdraw their forces from West Berlin and negotiate with East Germany for access routes. He set a six-month deadline, at which time access would be cut off. Dulles responded that the United States would not be intimidated or threatened, and that the president would use force, if necessary, to keep the access routes open. Khrushchev responded that such action would be a cause for Soviet retaliation. It was the sharpest exchange between the two sides since the early days of the Korean War.

Clearly realizing that he had overstated his case, Khrushchev modified his threats, insisted he had issued no ultimatums, and (over sharp protests from Beijing) accepted an invitation from Eisenhower to visit the United States in September 1959 to iron out the problem. As the meeting date approached, Eisenhower traveled to Bonn, London, and Paris to assure the Allied leaders that they had nothing to fear from the growing détente between the two superpowers. Khrushchev's visit to the United States was hardly eventful. The two world leaders again, as they had in Geneva in 1955, agreed to disagree on the status of Taiwan, Berlin, and disarmament. Eisenhower tried to convince the Soviet premier of the success of American capitalism; Khrushchev said he was not impressed. Both men stated that

they did not want war, and (probably more important than anything else) they agreed to meet again in May at Paris, after which Ike would go to Moscow. The promises for a further thawing in relations were great.

But the thaw froze tightly again on May 5, just ten days before Eisenhower was to leave for the Paris summit, when Khrushchev announced to the Supreme Soviet that the Soviet Union had shot down an American spy plane over Soviet airspace. Khrushchev had more information than that, but he held his cards close and waited for a response from Washington. The incident had, in fact, occurred four days before, on May 1, when Eisenhower had been notified that a U-2 reconnaissance plane flying out of Pakistan was missing. The pilot, Colonel Francis Gary Powers, was presumed dead; and the plane itself, along with its reconnaissance film, was armed to self-destruct. Eisenhower had hoped that Khrushchev would ignore the incident and avoid jeopardizing the Paris summit, but the premier's May 5 speech made it clear he viewed it as nothing less than the international incident that it was.

Khrushchev may well have had ulterior motives here. Had he wanted a productive exchange at the summit, his logical response to the U-2 incident would have been to make it public after Paris, or more likely to keep quiet about the entire affair, satisfied that he had taught the CIA a lesson. In addition, the approaching Paris summit was vehemently opposed by the Chinese, and Khrushchev may have wanted to avoid further aggravating the already shaky Moscow–Beijing relationship. Khrushchev was also in desperate need of a cold war victory, not only to shore up his own home base and maintain control in the Kremlin, but also to enhance the Soviet Union's international prestige in the face of a new rival for worldwide Communist influence: China. For whatever reason, Khrushchev seemed intent on playing the spoiler just when the world was moving toward a cold war thaw. Of course, one might wonder why Eisenhower did not suspend the flights in the days before the summit, and thus avoid an explosive incident that would torpedo the summit conference.

Eisenhower at first reacted, characteristically, by doing nothing—hoping the illness would cure itself with time. As Stephen Ambrose has pointed out, Eisenhower might have defused the entire situation by explaining to the American people that the U-2 flyovers were necessary to U.S. national security because of the closed nature of the Soviet Union and the very real possibility of a nuclear Pearl Harbor. He might then have cut the cord on the Democratic Party's strongest campaign issue, the missile gap: that the U-2 reconnaissance had shown conclusively that there was no missile gap, that the United States was still well out front in technological development. But instead of confessing, taking the blame, and apologizing, Ike launched a cover-up to protect the secret of the U-2 spy plane, a piece of apparatus that every high-level military and civilian policy maker on both sides of the cold war knew about. It was the wrong decision.

On May 4, the day before Khrushchev's speech, the State Department (obviously anticipating a problem) had told reporters that the United States had never knowingly violated Soviet airspace. The day before that, NASA had planted a story in U.S. newspapers that a weather plane was missing. After Khrushchev's May 5 speech, the president ordered the State Department to stand by the NASA weather plane story—and Khrushchev reeled in his catch. On May 8 the Soviet premier stunned the Eisenhower administration and the world by producing parts of the U-2 wreckage (including the camera equipment), and then by producing Powers. Eisenhower did the only thing he could do: He announced (through Secretary of State Christian Herter) that the United States had indeed been caught spying on the Soviets; he took full responsibility for the incident; and then he justified it on the grounds of national defense—to protect the nation from sneak attack. Eisenhower, later in his own explanation, implied that the overflights would continue. "No one wants another Pearl Harbor," he told newsmen on May 11.[16]

At the Paris summit, Eisenhower intended to announce that the U-2 flights would end, but Khrushchev spoke first and in harsh language demanded just that from the president. Not wanting to appear to be giving in to Khrushchev's demands, Eisenhower did not mention the issue when he spoke. Khrushchev replied by walking out of the conference chamber. The Paris summit was over, and any chance for ending cold war tensions went with him. Eisenhower was on the verge of ending his terms in office on a foreign policy high note that might have had mammoth implications for the future. Instead, his foreign policy was in disarray, and the cold war moved into a new, tension-filled era that was reminiscent of the Truman–Stalin years.

Eisenhower's foreign policy suffered another blow in his last years in office when Fidel Castro and a small band of ardent revolutionaries overthrew the Cuban dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. At first, few saw problems. Most Americans cast Castro in a romantic mold, a charismatic character who came to New York and spoke on talk shows of democracy and reforms in Cuba. But the CIA found evidence of Communist infiltration into Castro's government, and CIA head Allen Dulles suggested to the president that the United States withdraw support. Eisenhower decided that both Batista and Castro were unacceptable and began covert operations to find a third figure he called "neither Castroite nor Batistiano," in the meantime turning down Castro's loan requests. Castro began nationalizing American-owned property, and finally he accepted loans from Moscow. As relations worsened, the CIA began planning to retake the island by building an army made up of anti-Castro Cubans who had fled to the United States. It also initiated a series of sometimes bizarre attempts to assassinate Castro. Finally, Eisenhower suspended the purchase of Cuban sugar. The Soviets

responded by agreeing to buy all the sugar Cuba could produce. Castro announced that he was a follower of Marxist–Leninist doctrine, and in fact always had been. Eisenhower responded by cutting diplomatic ties, and Cuba immediately fell into the Soviet sphere—just ninety miles from Florida. Khrushchev proudly declared the Monroe Doctrine a dead issue and welcomed his new comrade.

It has been popular among New Left historians to charge the Eisenhower administration with forcing Castro to align with the Soviets as the only means of protecting his revolution from an American-sponsored coup. But a recent analysis by Theodore Draper, *Castro's Revolution: Myth and Realities*, argues instead that Castro intentionally provoked a confrontation with Washington in order to induce a reluctant Moscow to come to Cuba's aid; and that in fact there was probably little Washington could have done to keep Castro inside the U.S. sphere. Through 1959 the Eisenhower administration often attempted to contact Castro's organization, and in each case the overtures were spurned.

Castro's revolution placed a new wrinkle in the cloth of American foreign policy. It was assumed in Washington after 1960 that all Latin American revolutions were Communist-based, Communist-inspired, and Communist-run, when in fact almost none were. Cuba was seen as a Communist beachhead in the western hemisphere, and if the United States did not act aggressively, the cancer would spread to other Latin American nations, all of which seemed to be in about the same poor economic condition as Cuba in 1959. Consequently, the United States tightened its grip on Latin America. Friendly dictators and military juntas, almost always right-wing, became Washington's means of controlling the region. However, the analysis was generally wrong. Almost all Latin American revolutionary movements have been indigenous and nationalistic, and hostile to communism. Any sly moves toward communism, as Washington saw it, usually had to do with much-needed land reforms and not a tilt toward Moscow. Not unlike the situations in much of the world in this period, the United States confused revolutions of nationalism with Soviet-dominated communism. The confusion caused mistakes.

When Eisenhower left office, he commented that he was disappointed that no "lasting peace is in sight," only that "war has been avoided." Compared with those presidents before him and those who would follow, it seems clear that Ike should not have been so modest. Between 1941 and 1973 Eisenhower was the only true peace president. By far his most outstanding foreign policy achievement was to avoid war while maintaining U.S. superiority over the Soviets.

However, Eisenhower institutionalized the cold war as a global confrontation. The Ike–Dulles "pactomania" built a threatening fortress of U.S.-friendly nations around the Communist bloc that widened the stage for potential confrontations. Eisenhower carried the Monroe Doctrine to the

Middle East with the Baghdad Pact and to Southeast Asia with SEATO, forcing dangerous U.S.–Soviet confrontations in those already volatile regions.

Eisenhower did not escalate the situation in Vietnam, but he kept America's commitment there strong, and he and Dulles perpetuated the French myth that there was a legitimate government in Saigon worth supporting. Extensive covert activities throughout the world damaged U.S. prestige irreparably, often subverting democratic and liberal ideals, and ultimately making the cold war colder. The 1956 revolution in Hungary made a mockery of Eisenhower's call for liberation and turned that incident into an embarrassing administration failure, although clearly there was nothing Eisenhower could have done to stop it.

When Eisenhower left office, he was dogged by the failures at Paris and the growing Soviet influence in Cuba. His popularity had slipped for the first time in eight years. But he was truly the president America had wanted for the 1950s: secure, a conservative occupying the middle of the road, friendly, clearly firm when necessary. The next administration would bring with it a mandate for change in the domestic arena, but in foreign policy little would change. In fact, the American stance would harden and the cold war would become more dangerous. Eisenhower, in retrospect, kept America at peace.

8

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN THE POSTWAR YEARS

Ike owed nothing to African Americans when he came to the White House in 1953. The victory over the Democrats had not been close enough (as it had been in 1948) for the black vote to make any real difference for either candidate. Besides, African Americans were now sold on the Democrats; a full 73 percent voted for Stevenson in 1952 even though the Democrats removed their strong 1948 civil rights plank from the platform that year, and even though John Sparkman, a senator from Alabama who had opposed Truman's civil rights initiatives, joined the ticket with Stevenson. At the same time Ike was clearly popular among white southerners. He won Tennessee, Virginia, Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Maryland, and Florida, and only the votes of African Americans (newly expanded since 1948) gave Louisiana, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Arkansas to Stevenson. Several Democratic governors openly supported Eisenhower, including James Byrnes of South Carolina, Allan Shivers of Texas, and John Kennon of Louisiana. For the first time in America's history, the Republicans had an opportunity to make significant inroads into the South. Most observers believed that African Americans would receive little from the new Republican administration.

Nevertheless, Eisenhower came to the White House with a civil rights agenda dictated by the Republican platform and by his own campaign

promises as he courted African-American votes during the campaign. He pledged to end segregation in Washington, D.C., and to work for federal legislation that would eliminate lynching and poll taxes. He also said he would end discrimination in the federal government and continue the process of desegregating the armed forces. Only on one minor point did the Republican platform promise less than the Democrats in 1952: The Republicans insisted that the states (rather than the federal government, as the Democrats had proposed) be responsible for regulating employment discrimination. That is, there would be no support for a Fair Employment Practices Commission during the Republican tenure.

But Eisenhower was far from being an advocate of civil rights. To him, race was deeply ingrained in the mind of the South, and no legislation from Washington would ever change that. "I personally believe," he said, "if you try to go too far too fast in laws in this delicate field that has involved the emotions of so many Americans, you are making a mistake."[1] He also said, "I don't believe you can change the hearts of men with laws or decisions."[2] In addition, through most of his eight years in office, Eisenhower needed the support of powerful conservative southern Democrats in Congress to pass his foreign policy initiatives, and like Truman he considered foreign policy paramount to domestic issues. Consequently, he could not afford to alienate white southerners by trying to force them to change their long-standing racial customs.

The road to *Brown* v. *Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* was a long one. Prior to the end of World War II the greatest victories for black Americans had come in the courts, working within the system, first to force institutions in the South to provide not only separate facilities but equal ones as well. This court fight was spearheaded through the first half of the century by the NAACP. In the case of *Missouri* v. *Gaines* in 1939, the Supreme Court agreed with NAACP lawyers that Missouri must provide a law school for African Americans, that sending black law students outside the state did not in fact provide equal facilities. This case was argued before the court by Charles Houston, the dean of Howard University Law School and, possibly more important, the teacher and mentor of Thurgood Marshall, a young attorney who would take the NAACP's court fight to eventual victory.

Following the *Gaines* decision the Oklahoma University Law School admitted a young black man, George McLaurin, but segregated him from the other students. McLaurin was forced to eat his meals behind a wire cage, he studied in a dark part of the library, and he attended his classes in a designated roped-off area. Marshall argued before the court in *McLaurin* v. *Oklahoma State Regents* that this treatment was inherently unequal, and the court agreed. Also in 1950, in the case of *Sweatt* v. *Painter*, Marshall again argued successfully that a separate law school at the University of Texas was not equal, but mostly for intangible reasons, such as a lack of

opportunity for the segregated black students to interact with the white students and faculty. Such actions would eventually guarantee better educational facilities for African Americans, and they were big steps toward overturning *Plessy* v. *Ferguson*, the 1896 case that institutionalized Jim Crow laws in the South.

In September 1950 the case that would become *Brown* v. *Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* originated when Oliver Brown was told he could not register his daughter in an all-white neighborhood school in Topeka, Kansas. The case quietly ran the course of appeals proceedings until 1953, when it finally reached the Supreme Court. By then Earl Warren had been chosen by Eisenhower to replace Chief Justice Fred Vinson, who had died suddenly earlier that year. Warren had been governor of California and the Republican vice-presidential candidate in the 1948 loss to Truman. He was considered an Eisenhower middle-roader, a political appointee, just another part of the new Republican wave that was surging over Washington in the early 1950s. Also by this time the question before the court had changed. There was no longer a question that the Fourteenth Amendment gave equal protection to African Americans; and it was no longer questioned that the courts would consistently uphold demands for facilities that were in fact equal. The new question was whether a separation of the races, even though the facilities were equal, was a denial of equal protection under the law as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

The court began to shift in favor of this philosophy when it became clear that Warren was a strong believer in civil rights. Warren had allowed the internment of California's Japanese population during the war, and many still believe that in 1954 he sought some sort of atonement for his sins by pushing the Court members to side with Brown and civil rights for African Americans. For whatever reason, Warren succeeded, and the court handed down a unanimous decision on May 17, 1954. "Does segregation of children in the public schools solely on the basis of race," the court asked, "deprive the children of the minority group of equal education opportunities?" Answering for the Court, Warren answered: "We believe it does. . . . We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."[3]

It was another big step; in fact, it was the most important Supreme Court decision of the twentieth century, and the most important turning point in the movement for civil rights since emancipation. But it was also incomplete. To achieve the unanimous opinion, Warren and those justices who followed him compromised and added no provisions, no details, no timetable for implementing the decree, leaving it up to local school districts to carry out the law. A year after the initial ruling, the court addressed the question of implementation in what is referred to as the second *Brown* ruling and, despite an Eisenhower administration amicus curiae brief calling

for gradualism, the court ordered schools to desegregate "with all deliberate speed." It was intended as a call to move forward. It became instead an excuse to stonewall.

The initial response from the South was not rebellion. Only one or two southern governors invoked the old southern battle cries of interposition, nullification, and states' rights. Most of the major southern cities began moving toward integration of public schools, and the general attitude in the South was more a feeling that such a decision was inevitable than a resurgence of the old emotions of hate and fear. In most areas of the South it appeared that desegregation of the schools would happen; there would certainly be some resistance, but school segregation would end. However, the Eisenhower administration balked at its constitutional responsibility to enforce the Court's decisions, and what could have been the beginning of the end of the Jim Crow South turned into a delaying action and war by attrition. With no discernible pressure from above, those in the South who were willing to accept and even aid in the implementation of the Court rulings found themselves isolated. Unwilling and unable to carry out the federal government's responsibility of enforcement, they backed away.

Eisenhower's lack of leadership at this crucial time came from his doctrine of gradualism, a sort of behind-the-scenes, quiet pressure that he believed would force some changes over time. Rocking the boat on local social issues like race was far beyond what Ike believed was the role of the federal government, and he had little faith in the law as an instrument of social change. He did move swiftly to integrate the District of Columbia schools—he could hardly have blocked such an initiative there—but on all other incidents and issues involving desegregation in the South he was silent.

Ten years after *Brown* the border states had essentially complied with the desegregation rule, but the Deep South was still segregated and defiant. Had Eisenhower thrown his weight behind the *Brown* decision and forced its immediate implementation, desegregation might have begun voluntarily in the 1950s instead of by federal force as a result of riots and disorder in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Eisenhower carried with him the great power of moral authority in 1954. Decisive and immediate leadership (even an endorsement of the decision) from the most popular man in the United States might have completely changed American society. Ike stumbled here; it was the greatest failure of his administration.

The biggest test of the Court's decision, and the most important modern test of federal versus state power, came at Little Rock, Arkansas, in the fall of 1957. The Little Rock Board of Education had intended to integrate the city's school system gradually. Under the board's plan, the city would proceed with integration grade by grade, achieving full desegregation in 1963. Tempers flared over the plan, but the situation burst into flames when the NAACP insisted in federal court that integration be immediate and at all

levels. In response, a federal judge demanded that Little Rock start integrating its system at once, beginning with Central High School. When the school opened in September, Governor Orval Faubus (who had won election in 1954 on a platform calling for a progressive, modern Arkansas) announced, without consulting with Washington, that the Arkansas National Guard would stop the integration of Central High School—on the pretext of maintaining law and order in the city.

Faubus was about to run for a third term, and the segregationist forces in Arkansas were rallying in the wake of the *Brown* decision; the challenge to Faubus was certain to be strong. "I'm going to run for a third term," Faubus told Winthrop Rockefeller, who tried to talk the governor out of intervention, "and if I don't do this [the segregationists] will tear me to shreds."[4]

On September 20, a federal judge issued a court order demanding that Faubus remove the troops from Central High School and proceed with integration "forthwith." Faubus balked, questioning the authority of the order. As tensions mounted, Eisenhower continued to back away, making his beliefs clear in a press conference: "You cannot change people's hearts merely by laws."[5] A similar situation had occurred earlier in Mansfield, Texas, and Eisenhower had refused to intervene there. Few believed he would intervene here, although this situation involved a state governor's outright defiance of a federal court order. On the day after school opened, nine African-American students approached Central High School and were turned back by the National Guardsmen amid a crowd of several thousand jeering whites.

Among those nine students was fifteen-year-old Elizabeth Eckford. A photograph of her, wearing a white dress and being taunted by white students whose eyes and mouths spewed hate and viciousness, hit the national press the next day and was shown on national television the next evening. For the first time many Americans saw the ugly face of southern racism. It would not be the last time.

Eisenhower continued to vacillate, denying the crisis existed and hoping it would go away. Faubus finally complied with the court order and removed the troops, but he replaced them with members of the Arkansas State Police and continued to obstruct the registration of the nine students. On the next Monday the students were allowed to enter the building, but when white Little Rock got the word that Central High had been integrated, a mob of about 500 whites gathered around the school, chanting "two, four, six, eight, we ain't gonna integrate." As the crowd grew in size and got uglier, the nine black students were sent home; nevertheless, violence erupted and whites rampaged through the city for two days. Finally, on September 21, the mayor of Little Rock sent an urgent telegram to the president, who had done nothing beyond putting a bit of a squeeze on Faubus. "Situation is out of control," he informed the president, "and po-

lice cannot disperse the mob."[6] Eisenhower's hand was finally forced. With obvious reluctance, he called the Arkansas National Guard into federal service and sent in the 101st Airborne Division. By nightfall on September 22, General Maxwell Taylor and 1,000 paratroopers were in Little Rock, and the incident ended. The next day the nine black students entered the school. It was a preview of the future; desegregation in the South would be a forced process.

In the entire incident, it was Eisenhower who was the big loser. His chief aide, Sherman Adams, later called it "the most repugnant to him of all [Eisenhower's] acts in his eight years in the White House." Instead of explaining to the nation the need to integrate southern schools, or even the need to maintain law and order, Eisenhower, following the incident, moved to pacify southerners and southern lawmakers by claiming that he had no other choice in the matter, that he was simply carrying out his oath of office. As Stephen Ambrose has written, Eisenhower had to act as he did: "He could not have done otherwise and still been President."[7] As a result of the incidents in Little Rock, segregation in the South slowed as other state governors insisted (for the benefit of their white electorate) that they, too, would fight to stop integration. By the time Eisenhower left office three years later, only 7 percent of black students in the South were enrolled in integrated schools.

On December 1, 1955, the face of the civil rights movement changed when Rosa Parks, a black seamstress in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to surrender her seat to a white man on a Montgomery city bus, as required by a city ordinance. To protest her arrest, the Montgomery African-American community joined in a bus boycott organized first by Reverend Ralph Abernathy and then by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., the twenty-seven-year-old pastor of the Dexter Street Baptist Church in Montgomery. As a result of the boycott, King was catapulted into prominence as the spiritual leader of the American civil rights movement, and from there he went on to become the man who, more than any other, is today credited with bringing an end to the segregated South.

Born in Atlanta in 1929, the son of a well-known Baptist minister, Martin Luther King, Jr., attended Morehouse College in Atlanta, then Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, and in 1955 he received his Ph.D. in theology from Boston University. He studied the works of Henry David Thoreau, of Reinhold Niebuhr, and of Mohandas Gandhi, who taught direct action through civil disobedience and nonviolent protest. An intellectual with a remarkable ability to bring an audience to its feet, King rallied the black community of Montgomery around the cause of Rosa Parks and the reality of the segregated South. He told the black citizens of Montgomery:

> We are here to say to those who have mistreated us so long that we are tired—tired of being segregated and humiliated, tired of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression. . . . If you protest with courage and yet with dignity and Christian love, in the history books that are written in future generations, historians will have to pause and say, "there lived a great people—a black people—who injected a new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization."[8]

The Montgomery bus boycott was a success partly because of King's leadership and partly because of the perseverance of the African-American community, who protested with their feet for over a year. For 381 days the city buses, owned by a private corporation, traveled the streets nearly empty. The victory came not because the city backed down, but because the Supreme Court stepped in and finally ruled that segregation of Montgomery's bus system was unconstitutional. It was, however, a victory—a tangible one, in which southern blacks had banded together and forced change. Unlike the *Brown* decision, which seemed to produce more rhetoric and good intentions than results, the Montgomery boycott became a rallying point for southern blacks. It also, for the first time at least since Booker T. Washington died, placed the central focus of the civil rights movement where it belonged: in the South and among southern blacks. For years the movement had been led by the NAACP from its offices in New York, and by leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey, also from New York. The Montgomery boycott also elevated the African-American minister, who had always been the chief leader of the southern black community, to the place of civil rights leader and spokesman of the people; and it elevated the southern black church into the role of gathering place for local civil rights activists and for teaching, a place where the black community could congregate and plan actions against the forces opposing racial justice.

In February 1960, a little over three years after the Montgomery bus boycott ended, four black freshmen from the all-black North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College sat down at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, and asked to be served. When service was denied ("The waitress looked at me as if I were from outer space," one student later recalled), they remained seated and refused to leave. The next morning they occupied the seats again, accompanied by twenty-five fellow students, and the following day sixty-three students filled the lunch counter. Inspired by King's philosophy of nonviolence, the sit-in movement spread like wildfire across the lunch counters of the American South, reenergizing a sagging protest movement that had recorded no significant victories since Montgomery. Within two months sit-ins had occurred in sixty cities in nine

states and involved thousands of young African Americans who defied the South's segregation laws en masse. It was a call to action.

At first, news of the events spread through southern black communities only by word of mouth—before they finally became big stories in the national press. Leadership was virtually nonexistent. Young African Americans, often high school and college students, responded almost spontaneously by organizing, taking a seat, and closing down the segregated lunch counters—and then movie theaters, municipal swimming pools, and public transit facilities all over the South.

King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the NAACP, and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) all tried to aid protesters in certain areas (mostly working to get them released from local jails), but it was not until the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was set up in April that the sit-ins became actively organized and planned. The SNCC, made up of younger and more militant black activists, insisted, however, on maintaining control of its destiny. The organization's leaders continued to subscribe to King's teachings, but they refused to become a student auxiliary of any of the other groups and in fact often expressed dissatisfaction with King's considerably more moderate SCLC. The SNCC soon attracted the most aggressive civil rights crusaders and eventually became the focal point for the movement's most militant wing.

By the end of 1960, some 70,000 people had taken part in the sit-ins in over 100 southern cities and towns. It took six months, but Greensboro finally desegregated its lunch counters. Charlotte and Atlanta followed a year later. By August 1960, lunch counters in fifteen states had been desegregated. In some places the cost was high. Over 3,600 protesters were arrested; many were harassed and beaten by local toughs as they sat in their seats. High-pressure hoses were used against demonstrators in Orangeburg, South Carolina, and there was a great deal of violence in Nashville. The efforts were not always successful, and by no means did the sit-in movement succeed in desegregating the great majority of the South's public facilities. But it had many little victories, and it instilled courage and confidence in the young people who participated. "We had the confidence of a Mack truck," one of the protesters recalled. "I felt better that day than I had ever felt in my life. I felt as though I had gained my manhood. Not only gained it, but had developed quite a respect for it."[9] The sit-in movement also trained a generation of young black militants and readied them for the major confrontations that lay ahead.

After the sit-ins in 1960, the civil rights movement changed dramatically, heading down two divergent paths. One path was militant and led by the young leaders of the SNCC. The other path was moderate and guided by King and his church-based followers in the SCLC. The young radicals be-

came disillusioned and disenchanted with King, accusing him of pandering to the white liberal establishment, and finally they became scornful of the entire nonviolence movement. By 1965 the movement was seriously divided and weakened, and the nation stood on the verge of a white backlash.

9

THE USE OF ABUNDANCE: CULTURE AND SOCIETY, 1945–1960

America changed after 1945. It was a new America with a new attitude, new goals, new demands, new opportunities, and a new style. It was as if the nation had seen only hardship, despair, and sacrifice since the late 1920s, and now, after almost twenty years of depression and war, America was prosperous and secure again, strong and healthy. But above all, Americans were confident. All the postwar depression fears proved groundless, and the great majority of the nation's people began living more comfortably than ever before. The gap between the middle class and the poor in this period was narrower than at any time in the nation's history. Whatever America and Americans wanted, they seemed to get. No one spoke of a utopia, but clearly more Americans than ever before believed they were living the American dream, succeeding at life, achieving their goals. Certainly there were social problems, but for the average American they seemed small, solvable, and often far away. A new day had dawned. *Fortune* magazine proclaimed in 1946, "The Great American Boom is on."

World War II was the catalyst. In 1945 wartime workers were about to erupt with saved money and pent-up urges for consumer products. For more than five years military necessity had taken priority over the production of consumer goods, and by the end of the war almost everyone had a long list of unfulfilled material wants. When the war ended, consumer prod-

ucts became available again, and American consumers spent their money. It flooded into the economy, threatening a postwar inflation that Truman tried to bridle by extending unpopular wartime regulations and controls. But the economy caught up quickly, and real growth exceeded the inflation rate.

If World War II was the catalyst, the cold war was the driving force. Federal expenditures on military-related products increased dramatically after the Truman administration's acceptance of the rearmament policy endorsed by NSC-68 and the outbreak of the Korean War. In 1951, at the height of the war in Korea, military expenditures totaled more than all private domestic investment. That money, pumped into the economy, represented the single most important economic stimulant in the 1950s, even despite the Eisenhower administration's attempts at budget balancing through military cutbacks. By 1960 military spending was nearly 20 percent of the nation's gross national product (GNP). It was, as Richard Hofstader called it, "military Keynsianism," and it fueled the economy.

While America's economy was soaring, the rest of the industrialized world sat in postwar rubble. England, Japan, Germany, France, and the Soviet Union were physically and economically shattered by the war, giving U.S. manufacturers a virtual monopoly in international trade. American products sold cheaply and well overseas, and in much of the world there was simply no other supplier; there were no products to buy except those being sold by U.S. firms. Consequently, American overseas trade expanded dramatically and American manufacturing thrived.

In response the U.S. economy swelled. The GNP grew an astounding 250 percent between 1945 and 1960. Per capita income rose 35 percent in the same period, and there was a steady growth rate of 4.7 percent. Personal income grew through the period, reaching a record high rate of 3.9 percent in 1960. With only 6 percent of the world's population, the United States, by 1960, was producing and consuming an enormous one-third of the world's goods and services. All this translated into a remarkable increase in the standard of living of most Americans between 1945 and 1960.

As a result of this prosperity, life became easier after the war. The grinding fifty-to-sixty-hour workweek was no longer a necessity for most blue-collar workers. Instead they had spare time and greater purchasing power. This fueled the economy even further, making large segments of the national economy dependent upon consumer spending. At the same time, worker productivity rose by a significant 35 percent between 1945 and 1960. Much of this had to do with automation—the replacement of workers with machines. Between 1946 and 1960 American industrialists put $10 billion a year into new plants and machinery. In 1947 it took 1,300 man-hours to produce 1,000 tons of coal; by 1962 it took less than 500 man-hours, with the result that the cost of production was lowered significantly. But for labor, automation became a scourge; it was impersonal, and it was

blamed for displacing workers and taking food from their families' mouths. The groups that suffered the most were the unskilled, uneducated laborers and farmhands. Unskilled labor was not a thing of the past, but it was quickly becoming possible to replace unskilled workers with machines that could do the job easier, cheaper, and almost always better. This greater efficiency brought lower costs, better products, and ultimately a stronger economy that benefited society as a whole.

With the new prosperity and growth in business and industry came new types of jobs, mostly white-collar jobs in the service sector. There were automobile salesmen, bureaucrats, middle-management personnel, hospital workers, advertising agents, stockbrokers, real estate agents, engineers, salesclerks, telephone operators, and on and on. These white-collar workers quickly replaced the blue-collar factory workers as the basis of the American labor force in this period. The change reflected a surging growth of the American middle class, and it gave the social makeup of the nation a new appearance.

This new prosperity, however, inevitably gave rise to the waste. One aspect of the new white-collar workforce was the "organization man," the business or industrial manager whose greatest asset was the ability to get along with others and not rock the boat, or upset the delicate balance of the corporate or bureaucratic structure. He embodied conformity and in every way shunned genius, daring, and inventiveness; and he moved through the system with ease, more on his personal appeal than on his creativity or his ability to get things done. Originating in the late 1940s and early 1950s, this organization man had, within a decade, effectively weakened American business and industry—by then no longer innovative and aggressive but sluggish, wasteful, and overconfident. By the late 1960s, American business and industry began falling behind, and American markets (both domestic and foreign) lay vulnerable to the surging industrial economies of Germany and Japan. This phenomenon in American business was criticized by William H. Whyte in *The Organization Man* (1956), by David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), and by C. Wright Mills in *The Power Elite* (1956).

On the other side of the economy, organized labor remained strong in the postwar years, reaching peak membership in the mid-1950s. But labor unions clearly had problems. The new white-collar workers saw themselves on a course of upward mobility, and they often resisted unionization. Also, automation reduced the number of factory workers, and ultimately the number of labor union members. As the nation's prosperity expanded into the South and Southwest after the war, organized labor found itself powerless to infiltrate those areas—areas that were not only traditionally nonunion but antiunion. "Operation Dixie," a big push by the CIO to organize southern industrial workers, ended in a dismal failure. The Taft–Hartley Act in 1947 and the Landrum–Griffin Act in 1959 both sought to halt the

abuses of organized labor. Also, several states passed "right-to-work laws," outlawing the closed shop that forced workers to join unions in order to get jobs. The labor movement itself had become unpopular. Long shutdowns like the 113-day strike against General Motors in 1946 hurt the union cause with the American people; the unions in that way had become their own worst enemy. By 1959 a Gallup poll reported that as much as 41 percent of the nation believed that organized labor was a major threat to the economy; only 15 percent said the same of big business. When popular support waned, much of the unions' strength was sapped. While the organized labor movement reached its peak in 1956, the unionized portion of the nation's nonagricultural workers actually dropped by 14 percent between the end of the war and 1960.

On the defensive in a hostile world, the AFL and the CIO decided to combine their power and influence. The merger, consummated in 1955, was hailed as a great event. The ideological lines that had divided the two labor organizations in the 1930s and 1940s had nearly disappeared, and now, in the hostile 1950s, the two needed each other to face, among other challenges, a populace that no longer saw organized labor as an asset to American society.

After the war American farmers, like the rest of the nation, found themselves on the verge of major change. While the income of urban dwellers rose, farmers' income dropped drastically. Between the end of the war and 1960 the annual net farm income fell from $3,667 to $2,640; the eight years between 1952 and 1960 alone saw farm income drop by 23 percent. The problem, as it usually was for America's farmers, was overproduction—created by new farm mechanization and greater efficiency that replaced field hands with machinery. Tenant farmers and sharecroppers, once the labor force that kept large parcels of land under cultivation, were no longer needed; large landowners (now known as agribusinessmen) with enough machinery could farm huge parcels of land with very few employees, and consequently the average size of farms increased from roughly 200 acres in 1950 to 300 acres a decade later. Farmers left their family farms and moved to the cities to find new opportunities. Between 1940 and 1960 the nation's farm population declined by one-third; in 1956 alone, one farmer in eleven moved off the land. By the end of the 1960s only 5 percent of the country's population lived on farms. Americans had started the process of moving off farms at the turn of the century; during the 1950s that process was being completed.

If farm life was not prosperous, it became a bit more comfortable after the war thanks to electricity. The Rural Electrification Administration (REA) was one of the long-term successes of the New Deal. Created in 1935, it allowed rural cooperatives to borrow money from the federal government to purchase electricity or to generate their own. At the beginning of the war only four out of ten American farms had electricity. By 1950

the REA could claim nine out of ten. And it brought more than lights. It brought power and efficiency to the farm. It brought refrigeration, milking machines, telephones, indoor toilets, and running water. It also brought radio and then television—certainly not always the purveyors of wisdom and sophistication, but definitely a source of information and entertainment. By the mid-1950s America's rural population knew as much about *I Love Lucy* and the missile gap as urbanites and suburbanites. In many ways, as a result of electric power, rural America settled into the nation's mainstream.

One major aspect of this era was the rising marriage rate, which began in 1940 as the prospect of war became increasingly likely—and the possibility of a long separation caused some quick decision-making. The birth rate first began to rise in 1942 and 1943 as a result of "good-bye babies," those conceived just before the father was shipped off to war; and through the remainder of the decade the population grew by 19 million, doubling the rate of the 1930s. The U.S. Census Bureau blamed the increase on "occasional furloughs," but another cause may have been allotment checks issued to soldiers during the war. A married soldier received an additional $50 per month that went directly to his wife, and that allotment increased with each additional dependent. When those soldiers returned from duty (15 million of them), the birth rate, not surprisingly, soared. The result was the baby boom. Between 1945 and 1960 the population of the nation grew by almost 40 million, an increase of nearly 30 percent, the largest in the nation's history. In the 1950s alone the population grew by 29 million, 25 births per 1,000 people. This increase, as William Leuchtenburg has pointed out, was about the same as that in India in the same period. The children of the baby boom generation, "the boomers" as they would be called, have made their mark on the nation's social history, and will probably continue to do so well into the next century.

This increase in population and family formation confronted a housing industry that had been dormant for nearly twenty years. The result was a housing shortage that plagued almost the entire nation in 1945. By 1947, 6 million families were living with friends or relatives and another half-million were living in Quonset huts or other temporary housing provided by the government.

One part of the answer was to make money available to these families, mostly those of ex-servicemen, to buy new homes. That was provided by the G. I. Bill of Rights (the Servicemen's Readjustment Act) in 1944, in which the federal government guaranteed home mortgages to veterans. The second part of the answer was to build the homes, and guaranteed federal money made that easy. The result was an unprecedented building boom. Single-family housing starts increased from 114,000 in 1944 to 937,000 just two years later, to 1,183,000 in 1948, and then to 1,692,000 in 1950. The growth was a spectacular tribute to American capitalism and the forces

of supply and demand. When Khrushchev visited the United States in September 1959, Eisenhower took him on a helicopter tour of Washington to show him the achievements of postwar America. Before the premier's visit Ike was asked by reporters how he would entertain Khrushchev. He wanted him to "fly along in my chopper and just make a circuit of the District . . . to see the uncountable homes that have been built all around, modest but decent, fine, comfortable homes."[1]

The leaders in the building boom were the Levitts, a family of builders who emerged from the war with experience in the industry and the ability (as a result of building military tract housing during the war) for mass-producing large numbers of homes very quickly. Their Levittown in Hempstead, Long Island, was the largest housing development in history, encompassing 17,400 new homes and accommodating some 82,000 residents. The first issue of the Levittown community newspaper remarked: "Our lives are held closely together because most of us are within the same age bracket, in similar income groups, live in almost identical houses and have common problems." Suburbia would breed conformity.

It was low-cost housing, along with government-sponsored loans and a desire to get away from all that was "wrong" in the cities, that sent Americans on a massive move to the suburbs after the war—a move that was facilitated by the automobile and government-built roads. Between 1945 and 1960 the number of cars in the nation increased by 133 percent; they got longer, wider, and more powerful—finally, in the late 1950s, resembling chrome dinosaurs with fins. By the end of the 1960s one-fourth of the U.S. population had made the move to the suburbs, finding space, green grass, clean air, barbecues, and like-minded neighbors. Those advantages, however, did not come without a price to society.

While America's postwar suburbanites often did find some of the tranquillity and peace that rural life offered, they had removed themselves from the urbanity and sophistication of the city. The American suburbanite was neither urban nor rural, and to a number of late 1950s sociologists and social critics suburbia had become the new American nightmare instead of the American dream. In *The City in History* (1961), Lewis Mumford characterized the American suburb as "a multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances, on uniform roads, in a treeless communal waste, inhabited by people of the same class, the same income, the same age group, witnessing the same television performances, eating the same tasteless prefabricated foods, from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward respect to a common mold."[2]

The flood tide to suburbia was also lily-white and middle class, leaving mostly African Americans and poor whites in the cities. That gap between the city dwellers and the suburbanites widened considerably as the cities lost their tax base and began their journey on the long road to decay. At the same time life in the suburbs turned American women into isolated

housewives, often bored, frustrated, and lonely. The American dream home was not, argued Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), an emotionally fulfilling experience for women. The suburbs offered space and possibly better schools, but they lacked the city's advantages of cultural enrichment and diversity. It is no wonder that suburbanites flew into a tailspin of conformity and bourgeois smugness.

During the war women showed their patriotism by joining the workforce in record numbers. As many as 6.5 million women took jobs to replace men who headed overseas to fight, and to fill the huge wartime demand for factory labor. After the war many of these women left their jobs, returning them to soldiers who had sacrificed on the battlefield. That also was part of the war effort. But in the late 1940s women began returning to work. The number of working women increased through the 1950s. By 1960 a full 40 percent of the nation's women over age sixteen had entered the work force. But the reason was not fulfillment. Young couples (usually before they had children) often needed a second income to maintain the 1950s suburban standard of living, to "keep up with the Joneses," as the saying went, or simply to get on their feet. And the jobs women took were "women's jobs": secretaries, bank tellers, waitresses, telephone operators. There were a limited number of jobs for professional women: nurses, schoolteachers, and librarians. If women insisted on entering the workforce (for a short time, until they had children—or even beyond) the 1950s had a place for them—complete with limited pay and lack of promotion.

But in the 1950s America knew that a woman's place was in the home. If there was any question about that, society was reminded constantly through advertising. Television, billboards, and print advertising depicted the phenomenon of the perfect woman. She was pretty and popular; she had children, a Spic-n-Span home, and a successful husband. She was a volunteer, den mother, PTA leader. She sang in the church choir, made her own clothes, gave dinner parties, and most of all she was devoted to her husband and family. She was Donna Reed, Harriet Nelson, and June Cleaver. The woman's place was obvious, but by the end of the 1950s it was clear that the place designated for women—mostly by men—was less than fulfilling.

Getting married, of course, was defined as the key to achieving domestic success. By 1950 the average age for men to marry was twenty-two; for women it was twenty, the lowest since the turn of the century. By 1957, a full 97 percent of Americans over the age of eighteen had gotten married and were headed down the road toward the American dream. Occasionally, as was the case with so many things in the postwar era, reality did not quite meet expectations.

Despite the postwar affluence, poverty endured. But at the same time it was remarkably unseen. As Michael Harrington wrote in *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (1962), the new suburban middle class

had succeeded in removing itself from the sight of poverty. "The very development of American society is creating a new kind of blindness about poverty," he wrote. "In short the very development of the American city has removed poverty from the living, emotional experience of millions upon millions of middle-class Americans. Living out in the suburbs it is easy to assume that ours is, indeed, an affluent society."[3] The newly affluent whites of American suburbia did not tread in the inner-city ghettos, in the California lettuce fields, in the isolated and unseen mountain hollows of Appalachia, on the Indian reservations of the northern Plains, or in the rural Deep South. Writers like John Kenneth Galbraith (in *The Affluent Society*, 1958) questioned whether economic growth alone could eradicate poverty. In 1950, in this age of affluence, 30 percent of the nation lived below the poverty line. Within ten years, however, the wheels of the booming economy had begun to spin at the bottom as well as the top, and that figure was reduced to 18 percent. Nevertheless, poverty remained in America, to be more or less rediscovered as a social problem and a political issue in the 1960s.

There is probably no greater symbol of American society between 1945 and 1960 than television, that wondrous medium that brought humor, drama, sports, and news directly into the nation's living rooms. The impact, of course, was enormous. Just after the war television was little more than a promise made by engineers at RCA that Americans would soon have moving pictures right in their own homes. By 1947 only a few thousand sets had been sold, mostly in the limited network broadcasting area around New York City. But by 1960 there were some 45 million sets in use, and three national networks broadcasting everything from variety shows to quiz programs to the news and sporting events. It radically changed America's entertainment patterns, the conduct of its politics, and the nature of advertising forever.

Television also nationalized and homogenized American society in a way it had never been before. Certainly, it served to inform the nation, and by 1961, for the first time, more than half the American population was willing to admit that television was their main source of news. And it entertained; that was, after all, its primary purpose. But was it good entertainment? Many thought it was not. Newton Minow, the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, in 1961 called television "a vast wasteland." However, Jack R. Poppele, president of the Television Broadcasters Association, had a vision of something much more redeeming. To him it was "as expansive as the human mind can comprehend. Television holds the key to enlightenment which may unlock the door to world understanding."[4] But at its best, most early television entertainment was lowbrow, even anti-intellectual, "chewing gum for the mind," as a critic would call it later. Soap operas, so named because they were at first spon-

sored primarily by soap companies, provided probably the lowest form of television entertainment with their long-running stories, their superficial dramas, and their heart-wrenching tragedies. They came to be associated with the bored white suburban housewife who had little more to do than iron her husband's shirts while watching *The Guiding Light* to "see what happens next." But men did not escape "the tube's" hypnotic spell. Professional wrestling, a pseudo sport at best, provided America with its first television media star, "Gorgeous George," a handsome, flaxen-blond, egomaniac who represented the forces of good, always winning his matches against his evil rivals, often Nazi or Russian types. Even children were subjected to the banality. Saturday morning cartoons (viewed while the parents slept in) were filled with endless violence and little entertainment, a trend that has had tremendous staying power. Quickly, teachers blamed the evil forces of TV for their students' low reading scores and shortened attention spans.

In the early 1950s the networks were clearly in an experimental stage. Their executives offered all sorts of programs in an attempt to determine what the nation would watch. They fed America the opening of Congress in 1947, the national political conventions in 1948, the Kefauver Crime Commission hearings in 1950, the Army–McCarthy hearings in 1954. In 1946 sports was guaranteed a future in television when an estimated 100,000 Americans watched Joe Louis pound Billy Conn into unconsciousness at Yankee Stadium. By 1954, though, it was clear that what America wanted most was not politics and sports. It wanted to see itself—or at least its great expectations of itself. Thus was born the situation comedy (the sitcom), and the executives in the New York network boardrooms and washrooms had their answer.

Today, Americans hold the television sitcom genre from the 1950s in a sort of nostalgic awe, as an example of TV that was especially entertaining and appealing. Of course, the vast majority of 1950s sitcoms were terrible. But those sitcoms that have endured through incessant reruns remind us of a time when Lucy and Ethel conspired in their never-ending struggle to get Lucy into showbiz despite Ricky's insistence that his wife remain at home. And of Ralph Kramden, the New York bus driver dreaming up some get-rich-quick scheme while his wife and neighbors seemed quite content with their humble lot in life. These, of course, were the exceptions. The most common examples of the 1950s sitcom genre were filled with lighter comedy, always a family of two parents and two, but more typically three, children, usually in a generic suburb in an unnamed part of the country. The father obviously worked, but the viewers were rarely told where. The mother was a model homemaker with no aspirations beyond that, but she was often witty and firmly in control of her environment. And it was not uncommon for the teenager in the family to be a pseudo teen idol. Some of the best-known examples include *Leave It to Beaver, The Adventures of*

Ozzie and Harriet, *The Danny Thomas Show, The Donna Reed Show, Burns and Allen*, and *Father Knows Best*. It was *Father Knows Best* that probably reached the highest form of this light comedy genre. The show portrayed a comfortable but simple middle-class home, a husband who worked at some unknown place but always seemed to be at home, a doting wife who allowed her husband to believe that he ran the household when in fact she did, a young, tempestuous daughter in pigtails, a teenage son/teen idol, and an older teenage daughter. It was optimistic, uplifting, and occasionally funny. It was what Americans wanted to see when they looked at themselves in the mirror. Unfortunately, some saw Ralph Kramden and his lost dreams instead.

Other TV genres developed. The comedy-variety show became a television staple after Milton Berle hit it big in 1949 with *Texaco Star Theater*. It was hardly high-quality programming, but Uncle Miltie kept 'em laughin' for five years. His show was the most popular program in history, with 750,000 of the nation's 1 million sets tuned in every Tuesday night. If Berle had a theory about comedy, it was that there were no new jokes. (The press called him "the Thief of Badgags.") He grimaced, grinned, winked, and leered his way into television history, often in garish drag.

The talk show had its birth in 1951 with *Today* and its easy-mannered host Dave Garroway. Essentially a radio show produced for television, *Today*, and dozens of shows like it, became an American early-morning requirement. At about the same time Steve Allen entered America's bedrooms with his late-night talk show *Tonight*. Both shows featured low-impact chitchat with celebrities, and it became clear to network producers that celebrities drew audiences. From such thought came the birth of the panel shows *What's My Line?* and *I've Got a Secret*, game shows that were popular more for the celebrity of the panelists than for the guessing games they played.

Then there was the genuine game show where average Americans tried to win money or prizes. Along with soap operas, pseudo sports, and children's programming, game shows can be considered a true failing of the television medium. *Queen for a Day* pitted women against each other for "fabulous prizes" as the audience determined, by their applause, which one had experienced the worst tragedy in her life. *Truth or Consequences* and *Beat the Clock* encouraged "normal" people to make fools of themselves on national television. But it was *The $64,000 Question, Dotto*, and then *Twenty-One* that exposed a serious weakness in the entire medium. These shows became hits because America was mesmerized by what appeared to be ordinary people who knew masses of trivia about specific topics, and won more and more money as they answered more and more questions: the policeman who knew about art, the female psychologist (Dr. Joyce Brothers) who knew about boxing, the cobbler who knew everything there was to know about opera. Then came a true intellectual, a true master of

knowledge: Charles Van Doren, a Columbia University professor and son of literary scholar Mark Van Doren. Week after week on *Twenty-One* he would grimace painfully to come up with the right answers that required knowledge of seemingly unknowable trivia. His opponent was Herb Stemple, a sort of counterbalance to Van Doren: unattractive, from a working-class background, he was wimpish, Jewish, even greasy. When Van Doren became a genuine national hero by beating Stemple to $129,000 in 1958, Stemple blew the whistle. He told the *New York Times* that Van Doren had been coached by the show's producers and provided the answers in advance; and he admitted he had been paid to throw the game in Van Doren's favor—and even appear unsavory on camera. The whole thing had been staged, not unike TV's wrestling, with the good guy defeating the bad guy. Van Doren then lied to a congressional investigative committee in 1959 and received a suspended sentence for perjury in 1962. The show's producers ultimately blamed the sponsor, Revlon cosmetics, for insisting that the show be rigged in order to make it more dramatic and interesting to viewers.

The scandal was more than just a distasteful episode. It revealed that those ordinary people admired by millions were in fact cheats, liars, and phonies. It also showed that the medium of television could not be trusted. By implication, then, might the networks' news broadcasts be fabricated or inaccurate? The quiz show scandals forced an abrupt change in the networks' policies. They shored up their credibility in all areas, but particularly in news coverage. Instead of playing down the news, it was emphasized, and network news became a television staple—accurately covered, and disseminated to the public with on-camera evidence that the story being reported was, in fact, the truth. Also as a result of the quiz show scandals the Federal Communications Commission ordered the three networks each to produce at least one public affairs program each week and to put an end to advertisers' manipulation of shows' contents. In 1961 President Kennedy threatened to regulate the industry if it did not become more responsible. Consequently, as the many crises of the next decade unfolded, TV cameras were there—and so was America.

The television industry reacted by upgrading its bill of fare. Its first effort was to reproduce theater on television, in effect to film a New York Broadway theater production. In 1949 America tuned in to the *Kraft Theater*, then the *General Electric Theater* and the *Alcoa Playhouse*. Later, *Playhouse 90* produced some excellent programs, including Rod Serling's "Requiem for a Heavyweight" and Paddy Chayefsky's "Marty," which, because of its television popularity, was made into a movie and won an Oscar for best picture in 1955.

The birth of television did not bring death to the cinema, as many feared it would. Television did not put a small movie theater into America's living

rooms; at best, it brought substandard entertainment. The two industries, however, saw themselves locked in competition for viewers through the 1950s, and for the most part the big-time movie actors were forced by the Hollywood studios to stay off the TV screens. One result of this aura of competition was the rise of an entirely new group of actors and stars whose faces were seen only on television, or got their start on television and then moved to the big screen once Hollywood realized that TV offered no real competition. Rod Steiger, James Dean, Grace Kelly, Paul Newman, Anne Bancroft, Joanne Woodward, Eddie Albert, and Eva Marie Saint got their start in television before becoming big film stars. Another result of this competitive atmosphere was an effort by the movie industry to upgrade its product by presenting the movie "spectacular," the "epic," with "a cast of thousands"—just the type of entertainment that television could not produce. Hollywood also upgraded its technology with such gimmicks as Cinemascope and 3-D, again to present a product superior to what could be produced for the small television screen.

The movie industry, however, was confronted by some real problems in the period. In the fifteen years from the end of the war to 1960, Hollywood found itself constricted by the Red scare and McCarthyism, and severely limited by the trappings of conformity and censorship. The climate of the times forbade any treatment of controversial topics such as drug addiction, sexual deviation, or even political extremism. But Hollywood showed its resiliency by producing a few exceptions, often with strong underlying meanings. *High Noon*, released in 1952 and directed by Fred Zinnemann, a German Jew, starred Gary Cooper, and was variously interpreted as a criticism of conformity and also of McCarthyism. A Western sheriff is abandoned by his town's citizens and left to fight the forces of evil alone. When he is victorious, the people of the town exalt him as their hero. In the classic sci-fi flick of the 1950s, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956), the inhabitants of a small town (and later, presumably the entire world) are turned into emotionless, mindless automatons by giant pods from outer space. To join the pod people, as one convert explains, means being "reborn into an untroubled world, where everyone is the same." Some saw it as a warning against the forces of communism, while others interpreted it as a criticism of conformity in American society. The era also introduced American film watchers to the zombie, a sort of ultimate conformist. However, when international politics was the topic, moviegoers were always told frankly that the Communists were the bad guys—absolutely vile people with only sinister motives and generally no will of their own.

Of course, Hollywood was not entirely barren in the postwar years. The most memorable genre to emerge was the biblical-classical epic, the Cecil B. DeMille-made extravaganza, and its innumerable copies. *The Ten Commandments* (1956) clearly led the field, but there were also *Ben-Hur* (1959), *Samson and Delilah* (1949), *Spartacus* (1960), and a group of lesser-than

copies, many of which starred Victor Mature, including the first movie filmed in Cinemascope, *The Robe* (1953), and its sequel, *Demetrius and the Gladiators* (1954).

A number of other movie genres were developed (or were significantly expanded) during the 1950s. One was the horror film, a genre that originated in the 1930s with the classics *Frankenstein* (1931) and *Dracula* (1931), and, in 1941 *The Wolf Man*. It returned to haunt Americans in the 1950s with a number of variations on these original themes, plus the new dimension of outer space, where any number and type of creepy "its" could get into a spaceship and invade Earth. Some of these were well done, and a few, like *War of the Worlds* (1953) and *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957), have stood the test of time. But most were bad—so bad, in fact, that it is worth celebrating their awfulness. Many of the creatures (particularly those coming from Japan like Godzilla and Rodan) were created by nuclear accidents, or they simply walked (or, in the case of Rodan, flew) out of the Earth near nuclear testing sites.

Others were designed to appeal to the baby boom audience and dealt with teenage topics, such as *I Was a Teenage Frankenstein* (1957) and (with Michael Landon) *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1957). *The Blob* (1958), starring Steve McQueen, dealt as much with youth alienation in a small town as it did with the monster that was devouring the hapless adults—adults who consistently refused to listen to the warnings from the teenagers. Not surprisingly, the makers of these movies have since become cult heroes: Sam Arkof (*I Was a Teenage Werewolf*), Roger Corman (*The Monster from the Ocean Floor* [1954, shot in four days on a $12,000 budget), William Castle (*House on Haunted Hill* [1959] and, a year later, *Thirteen Ghosts*, shot in "Illusion-O"), and the "king" of them all, Edward D. Wood, Jr. Wood made what are undoubtedly two of the worst movies in Hollywood history: *Plan Nine from Outer Space* (1959), starring Bela Lugosi and Vampira, a pathetic attempt to combine the horror movie genre with science fiction; and *Glen or Glenda?* (1953), the very strange case of a man who could change his sex at will—narrated by Lugosi.

By the mid-1950s the movie industry had developed a successful youth-oriented genre, almost always targeting alienated youth and the futility and hopelessness of growing up middle class in 1950s America. The first of these to hit the theaters was *The Wild One* (1954), starring a snotty, inarticulate, but ultimately "cool" Marlon Brando. It became a mumbled utterance for the ages when Brando's character, asked what he was rebelling against, answered, "Whadda ya got?" James Dean, however, became the real personification of the 1950s. Defiant, moody, with a quiet personality that seethed and burned slowly beneath the surface, he was the ultimate in "cool," the ultimate symbol of alienated youth. In *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) his character, Jim, was unable to deal with the paternal failings of his wimpy father (Jim Backus), unable to focus his defiance, but

at the same time all too aware of the compromises and complacencies of the world around him. He wanted only to be understood, but the world was pushing him to conform; he could only push back. Other movies, like *Blackboard Jungle* (1955), which opened with Bill Haley and the Comets' early rock 'n' roll hit "Rock Around the Clock," showed that the alienation of America's inner-city youth was also a growing problem—and with that the dreaded juvenile delinquent was born. These alienated youth films were successful, and possibly for the first time Hollywood succeeded in capturing the essence of an era without exploiting it too much.

Americans liked to reflect on their total victory over their enemies in World War II, with the result that the war movie was born, and John Wayne became a star. *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), starring "The Duke," topped the list, but on a higher plane there was *From Here to Eternity* (1953), starring Burt Lancaster in a steamy scene on the beach with Deborah Kerr that raised some eyebrows in the hinterlands. Hollywood thought that a genuine war hero might also become a genuine star in war movies, but Audie Murphy, the most decorated American soldier in World War II, did not draw well at the box office. Throughout the late 1940s and the 1950s, Americans delighted in seeing the hapless "Japs" and the jackbooted "Krauts" take their lumps over and over again.

The American Western hit a high note in the 1950s. It was hardly a new genre, but it became more popular than ever in the years after the war. Most of these movies did little more than replace the Germans and the Japanese with the Indians and the bad guys, but several were exceptional productions, including Howard Hawks's *Red River* (1948) with John Wayne, arguably the best Western ever made; and John Ford's *The Searchers* (1956), again with Wayne and a strong supporting cast. Alan Ladd starred in the panoramic *Shane* (1953) as the mysterious ex-gunslinger–father figure who rides off into the sunset at the end of the movie as little Billy (Brandon de Wilde) calls sadly: "Shane, Shane, come back, Shane!" The genre produced such enduring American cinematic characters as the indefatigable frontiersman, the heartless gunslinger, the barmaid with a heart, the stalwart sheriff, the antihero, the doomed Indian, the cavalry soldier to the rescue, and on and on. By the end of the 1950s the genre had spilled over into television with such familiar Western characters as Matt Dillon, Cheyenne, Paladin, and Maverick.

Alfred Hitchcock established his own sort of antigenre genre in the 1950s with such thriller mysteries as *Rope* (1948), *Rear Window* (1954), *Vertigo* (1958), and one of the most frightening movies ever made, *Psycho* (1960). *Psycho* is the story of a psychotic hotel entrepreneur–taxidermist, Norman Bates (Anthony Perkins), a visibly normal fellow in a typical town, who takes on the personality of his dead mother and murders attractive women. From his antics the word "psycho" entered the vernacular as a noun, meaning a mentally deranged killer.

One of the most popular personalities of the 1950s was Marilyn Monroe. It seemed that whatever she touched, whatever movie she made, became an instant hit. Starting off in Hollywood in dumb blonde bit parts in the late 1940s, she hit it big in John Huston's *Asphalt Jungle* in 1950. In 1951 she had a small part in the successful *All About Eve* with George Sanders, who later claimed that he knew Marilyn would become a star "because she desperately needed to be one." In 1955 she made *The Seven Year Itch*, directed by Billy Wilder, and Joshua Logan's *Bus Stop* a year later. In 1959 she reached her comic peak in Billy Wilder's *Some Like It Hot*, playing wonderfully off Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon. Her comic performances were appealingly childlike and vulnerable, but at the same time she was amazingly sexy, provocative, even erotic. Laurence Olivier said she had "the mind and soul of a little girl wrapped in the body of a whore." She was a star among stars, but her personal life became a symbol of personal tragedy. She was the illegitimate child of an emotionally unstable mother and spent most of her childhood in orphanages. She was raped at age eight and married at fourteen. In Hollywood she slept her way into her early roles, and when she reached the top in the mid-1950s, her failed love affairs and marriages were constantly in the headlines. She became addicted to barbiturates and alcohol, and by 1960 she had become outrageously difficult to work with, and much of the luster was gone. In 1962 she was found dead of an alchohol and barbiturate overdose. She remains the most written-about movie star in American history, one of several glorious and glamorous symbols of the 1950s.

The music of the age was rock 'n' roll, music that would touch the soul and spirit of American youth and link teenagers around the nation while creating a generation of cultural renegades who would, a decade later, answer the call of hip. Rock 'n' roll was rough and raw; it was rebellion against the music it replaced: the sexless ballads of Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, and Frankie Lane. It was rebellion against parental tastes, and against the boring adult conformity and complacency of the 1950s. It was intentionally loud, usually electronic; but it was the heavy beat that made it distinctive, and it was the heavy beat that electrified the nation's young. It was an invitation to dance, and an invitation to sex—just as parents feared. It was a magical deliverance from the days of old.

Rock 'n' roll had its origins in blues and gospel in the South, and then in the urban centers of the North as African Americans moved there for jobs during the war. In the late 1940s it became "rhythm and blues" (R&B), music by and for African Americans, played with electric instruments, with a pounding beat and raunchy lyrics. By the early 1950s white Americans in these northern urban centers were beginning to tap into R&B. By then being black was "cool," and hip white Americans began exploring the culture of the nation's black youth. The result was a crossover in music.

In June 1951 Alan Freed, a Cleveland disc jockey, broke through the sound barrier and hosted the first R&B record show for white audiences. He called the music "rock 'n' roll."

Whites in the Deep South added their own mixture of country styles to get "rockabilly," a rock 'n' roll form that would fuse with the emerging northern R&B and become the driving force of rock 'n' roll through the 1950s. Rockabilly had its birth near Memphis—in the Texas–Arkansas–Mississippi–Louisiana area of the South—and grew from there with performers like Buddy Holly, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, and of course Elvis.

One key to understanding the spread of rock 'n' roll in this period is the place of radio in the early 1950s. It was a medium in search of a message and an audience, and rock 'n' roll provided both. Television was in the process of replacing radio as the nation's main medium for advertising and entertainment. At the same time, radios improved, became smaller and cheaper; and, most important, there was one in every car. Radio quickly moved from its longtime story-line format (now totally monopolized by television) to a low-cost musical format. Teenagers, now driving cars, became an almost captive audience. The youth market was tremendous and quickly lucrative for advertisers, and of course the music of the young was rock 'n' roll. Add to that the jukebox, and the new music spread like wildfire, first throughout the nation and then the world. New singers emerged daily, along with new record labels, new instruments, new technology and experiments. By the end of the 1950s, as the nation's youth stood on the precipice of the next decade, the industry was huge and prepared to take the boomer generation into the new age of the 1960s.

In the early 1950s a Memphis record producer named Sam Phillips came to the conclusion that there might be a market among whites for R&B—but sung by whites. "If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel," Phillips said, "I could make a million dollars."[5] As the story goes, he found a young Memphis truck driver named Elvis Presley, taught him how to mimic the black R&B sound, and sent him on the road to stardom. Parts of this story are true, but there is one significant aspect that is not. Elvis was Elvis. He did not copy the style or the music of Muddy Waters or Fats Domino or B. B. King. He was not, as one writer has called him, "bleached blackness" or "vanilla-coated chocolate." He was unique, not only in his music but also in his talent and his style. His later life left an image that invites ridicule, but in the mid-to-late 1950s—when Elvis was Elvis—the nation's youth rocked. He gyrated before screaming crowds, charging them with electricity, energy, and emotion. He was *the* icon of the fifties.

Elvis was way out front, but those crossing the line after him were much more than just Elvis copiers, and that in itself is what has made rock 'n' roll so dynamic. It was innovative from the top down. Artists like Chuck

Berry and Little Richard (both black R&B artists who made the transition to rock 'n' roll with no difficulty), Buddy Holly, Bill Haley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins all brought something new to the scene. The result was an expansion, even an explosion, of style, a need to be different before an audience of teenagers ready to soak up anything with wailing guitar licks and a pounding beat.

It can be argued that America has always harbored a counterculture, a group that is aberrant, different, rebellious against the mainstream and (always it seems) living in Greenwich Village. In the fifties it was the Beats, the leaders of a counterculture movement that was legitimate, intelligent, and prophetic, a distinct and clear reaction to the affluence and material prosperity of the postwar period.

The Beats had their antecedents in the black hipsters of the 1930s. The hipster, in turn, was born out of the Great Migration of African Americans from the rural South to the northern urban ghettos after World War I. They were the second generation of African Americans in the city, and openly contemptuous of the white world that oppressed them. Their philosophy was hedonism and sexual freedom, and their style was sensual and ultimately cool. Their language was jive, their uniform was the zoot suit, their music was jazz, and their drug of choice was marijuana. By the mid-1940s, the zoot suit was replaced by more conservative attire, jazz was replaced by bebop, and marijuana was replaced by heroin. But their style remained cool, and alienation from mainstream society was still their motivating force. Also by then, hip was not exclusively black; whites living in the big cities in racially integrated areas like Greenwich Village had caught on to cool, found the bebop sounds of Charlie "the Bird" Parker, and picked up on the dress and the drugs. Novelist Norman Mailer called them "the white Negro." But their alienation and their rebellion were against the postwar middle-class values and affluence. They became the Beats.

The Beat movement did not engulf America's youth in the 1950s the way the hippie movement would affect the next decade. In fact, there were perhaps only a few thousand genuine Beats at the movement's peak—albeit many thousand more wannabees who found the Beat trademark goatee and black beret appealing. They had at their epicenter Allen Ginsberg, a young poet whose remarkable poem *Howl*, read first in 1955, was an indictment of 1950s America, a gross blasphemy against all that was American.

Surrounding Ginsberg was a group of friends and lovers who defined the Beats. Jack Kerouac, an athlete who went to Columbia University to play football, found Ginsberg and the movement instead. In the late 1940s Kerouac and Neal Cassady took off for California, living a life filled with drugs, sex, and jazz. In 1951 Kerouac wrote a fictionalized account of their wanderings, their lives, their movement, in *On the Road*. Truman Capote

said it was closer to typing than writing, but it spoke to a generation about spontaneity, freedom, adventure, and the mystique of "the road." The book's hero, Dean Moriarty (Cassady), an alienated dropout from civilization—the "holy goof," as Kerouac calls him—asks, and then answers: "What's your road man?—holy boy road, madman road, rainbow road, guppy road, any road." After six years of rejections, *On the Road* was finally published in 1957 and became an immediate best-seller.

Much of the Beat movement was defined by its literature. Ginsberg was a successful poet. Kerouac went on to write two more novels, both of which were received well: *The Subterraneans* and *The Dharma Bums* (both published in 1958). There were several other important writers of the movement, some predating Kerouac and *On the Road*, including R. V. Cassill (*The Eagle on the Coin*, 1950), John Clellon Holmes (*Go*, 1952), Chandler Brossard (*Who Walk in Darkness*, 1952), and Norman Mailer (*The Deer Park*, 1955); and later, Lawrence Ferlinghetti (*Her*, 1960), Alexander Trocchi (*Cain's Book*, 1960), and Ken Kesey (*One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, 1962). These writers wrote of crime, drugs, perversion, hedonism, and nihilism—the dark side of American society. They developed their own genre and their own writing style. Most, although by no means all, wrote in San Francisco; the literary press called them "San Francisco writers." But the notices were not all good. Many of the New York intellectuals of the period found them more akin to spoiled brats than the purveyors of new ideas. Norman Podhoretz, writing in the *Partisan Review*, was not impressed. He saw only "a revolt of all the forces hostile to civilization itself . . . a movement of brute stupidity and know-nothingism that is trying to take over the country from a middle class which is supposed to be the guardian of civilization but which has practically dislocated its shoulder in its eagerness to throw in the towel. . . . What juvenile delinquency is to life, the San Francisco writers are to literature."[6]

While the Beat movement was unique, it also sowed seeds that would bear fruit in the next decade. Ginsberg spent the sixties as an antiwar activist, preaching the virtues of psychedelic drugs, a super guru of sorts to the younger hippies; many of the Beats survived the sixties as teachers and guides. Allen J. Matusow and others have made much of the December 1960 meeting of Ginsberg and Timothy Leary, the LSD apostle of the 1960s counterculture, but the hippie movement was so wide and diverse that it seems difficult to place more than a symbolic meaning on that connection. Kerouac later denied there ever was a Beat movement: "I wasn't trying to create any kind of new consciousness or anything like that," he told an interviewer in 1968. "We didn't have a whole lot of heavy abstract thoughts. We were just a bunch of guys who were trying to get laid."[7] Despite Kerouac's cynicism, the creed of the Beats clearly carried over to the sixties counterculture movement: the free love, the drugs, the alienation, the music, even a love for "the road" and nature and life away from home.

The Beat movement and the sixties counterculture movement died of the same cause. By the late fifties, Beatniks were in vogue, a new style, a fad made up by the American press and then by television. And fads in America become overexposed and quickly fade.

Through the postwar period books flooded the market that criticized the materialism of the era and the culture that fed off it. Several mentioned above, including William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956), David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), and C. Wright Mills's *The Power Elite* (1956), warned of the effects of the subtle revisions of American individualism and the Protestant work ethic. The American male, Riesman wrote, had come to fear being different and had slowly changed his values from achievement and industry to adjustment and conformity. Other popular works of nonfiction critical of what Americans had become included Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957) and *The Status Seekers* (1959), John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* (1958), and Max Lerner's *America as a Civilization* (1957).

This period also saw an interest in anthropology, psychology, and the scientific study of human sexual behavior. Margaret Mead's epic *Coming of Age in Samoa*, originally published in 1928, became popular just after the war at least partly because it came out in paperback—a new postwar "industry." Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, first published in 1934, received much the same attention. The German-born Erik Erikson led the virtual popularization of social psychology. His books *Childhood and Society* (1950) and *Young Man Luther* (1958) were widely read, and they informed Americans on the concepts of personality development and personality conflicts. Interest in the recesses of the human psyche also produced behaviorism, born in the mind of B. F. Skinner. Skinner, a Harvard psychology professor, argued that thought processes could be controlled as a means of modifying student behavior; that is, by controlling the stimuli to which students are subjected, their behavior could be controlled and directed. His method of conveying knowledge was not through the classroom teacher but through impersonal teaching machines such as those used in language laboratories. "Any teacher who can be replaced by a machine should be," he said.[8]

America's curiosity about the mind was surpassed only by its curiosity about the body—and its sexual function, a curiosity that would cause a change of attitude toward society's sexual mores a decade later. The first wave of the coming sexual revolution was launched by Alfred Kinsey in his controversial *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, which appeared in 1948. "The Kinsey Report," as it was popularly known, hit the bookstores amid a storm of fury. Kinsey was a zoology professor at Indiana University and the world's foremost expert on, of all things, the wasp. The university, however, asked Kinsey to teach a course on marriage and the family. Lack-

ing published data on human sexual activity, he began compiling his own. After ten years he collected and analyzed data on over 5,000 males. The report quickly became a publishing and cultural phenomenon. Kinsey's data showed that there was a tremendous gap between public myth and private reality about sex, that the old social mores and taboos had largely collapsed, and that Americans were seeking and enjoying the pleasures of the body with tremendous gusto. The popularity of this pedantic 804-page tome, however, rested on only a few revelations. The two most striking were that about half of the men had had extramarital intercourse at some time in their lives, and that sexual activity begins at a much earlier age than had been thought. It also revealed that male masturbation was common, and that 37 percent of all males had had some overt homosexual experience to the point of orgasm during their adult lives. The reaction was immediate, coming first from the scientific community, and then from theologians and sociologists.

Ultimately, the work was discredited because of Kinsey's poor sampling data, which were collected almost exclusively from white male college graduates in six northeastern and midwestern states. But the press reported the book's results, and its message was clear: America was sexually active, and if you're doing it, don't worry, your neighbors are probably doing it, too. In 1953, Kinsey published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, and the result was a similar media fuss. The Kinsey reports revealed to Americans the first stirrings of what was to come in the sexual revolution of the 1960s.

If the era had a bible, it was Dr. Benjamin M. Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care*, published in 1946. By the mid-1980s, Spock's book had sold a remarkable 40 million copies, ranking it second only to the real Bible in total sales. "Spock's Baby Book," as it was most commonly known, included more than what to do for a baby's sore throat. Spock told mothers to have confidence in their natural instincts, to meet a child's basic needs not only of nutrition but also of "comfort and loving." He provided a basis for a genuine consensus on child rearing in the postwar years.

There were two great literary eras in the twentieth century: the interwar period and the postwar period. Most of the notable writers of the interwar period (John Dos Passos, Erskine Caldwell, Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, Eugene O'Neill, John Steinbeck, and William Faulkner) continued to write after the war, but their masterpieces, along with the exuberance of their youth, were behind them. The great masters of the 1930s, America's Lost Generation, had completed their mission by the postwar period, and not surprisingly a new group of writers emerged.

If a new literary genre developed in the postwar, it was the war novel—which in turn provided a deep reservoir for Hollywood movie scripts that established the war movie as a new film genre. Norman Mailer's *The Na-*

ked and the Dead, published in 1948, produced the nation's first postwar literary figure. At age twenty-eight, Mailer shocked the country with his graphic realism, his cynicism, and his disillusionment. He wrote from experience about the war in the Pacific, about an army platoon on an arduous, dangerous (but at the same time a somewhat meaningless) patrol on an insignificant Pacific atoll. Mailer forced his readers to confront some of the same anxieties that Americans would be forced to confront during the Vietnam War: that there are dark shadows, even evil forces, lurking in the minds of American soldiers, just as there are in the minds of all soldiers. Soldiers do not fight for the high moral principles of achieving a better life and liberty at home; they fight because they have been told to, and trained to, and because they fear the wrath of their officers if they refuse. American soldiers in World War II had to kill, and the process was not always pleasant, certainly not humane; and occasionally killing was easy, too easy, even sadistic. As one critic wrote, Mailer became a certifiable son-of-a-bitch for "revealing the unspoken secrets of the barracks and the battlefield to the mothers of America." There is nothing that shakes the idealism of America more than gritty realism, and Mailer shoveled up a hefty dose for the nation's idealists to sift through.

The war became the topic of other works. James Jones's *From Here to Eternity* (1951) showed the inability of one soldier, Private Pruitt, to maintain his individuality in the prewar service. *Mister Roberts*, written by Thomas Heggen and published in 1946, became a Broadway play and then a movie with a superb cast starring Henry Fonda, James Cagney, Jack Lemmon, William Powell, and a host of cinema's soon-to-be greats. It told not of alienation but of one sailor's desire to enter the fight. Stuck, however, on the *USS Reluctant* with a mission to transport toilet paper to soldiers in the South Pacific, Mr. Roberts chafed at the bit while he tried to navigate between his friends, the swabs, and the oppressive and demanding ship's captain.

One of the literary anthems of the postwar era was J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, published in 1951. *Catcher*, typically touted as a favorite of high school and college students, fits all too well into this era of alienation, affluence, and youth neglect. Salinger's protagonist, Holden Caulfield, roams New York City, encountering only phoniness and dishonesty. The novel mocks the hypocrisy, conformity, egoism, and compromise of the day. Salinger wrote two more novellas in the early 1960s and then disappeared into seclusion, nearly forgotten by a generation that once found solace in his tales.

The southern novel continued on, maintaining its own character in the postwar period. Faulkner continued writing until his death in 1962, and his style was carried on by such writers as Robert Penn Warren, whose *All the King's Men* (1946) stands as one of the literary masterpieces of the postwar. Willie Stark, an idealistic southern politician (patterned after

Huey Long) finds his ideals corrupted by the means used to realize them. Other major works from southern writers of the period include Carson McCullers's *The Ballad of the Sad Cafe* (1951); Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* (1952), *A Good Man Is Hard to Find* (1955), and *The Violent Bear It Away* (1960); and Eudora Welty's *The Golden Apples* (1949) and *The Ponder Heart* (1954).

Two African-American writers emerged after the war, and both were filled with the new cultural and political sense that permeated the black community. The first, Ralph Ellison, wrote eloquently of the difficulties of being a sophisticated and sensitive black man living in the white man's world, a world that refused to recognize his humanity. His outstanding *Invisible Man* (1952) is more than just an excellent example of postwar black fiction; it is also a landmark in twentieth-century African-American culture, and it has stood up well against all of postwar American literature. The second, James Baldwin, entered the literary scene with *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), a semiautobiographical account of coming of age in Harlem amid the torrents of a lust-driven religious stepfather. Baldwin, disenchanted with America, its values, and its racism, went into exile in Paris between 1948 and 1958. Another African-American writer of the period was Richard Wright. Wright had been one of the pioneers in African-American literature in the 1930s with his *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938) and in the 1940s with his masterpiece *Native Son* (1940), which made him the most distinguished African-American novelist of the prewar years. In 1945 he published the autobiographical *Black Boy*. In 1947 Wright found himself alienated by what he called "the ethics of living Jim Crow," and he, like Baldwin, sought refuge from oppression in Europe. The major theme of all three of these writers was the rage and disgust brought on by growing up and living in a white man's world, experiencing the racism, the hate, and the alienation of being a black man in America.

Drama and the American theater, like literature, made a strong showing in the postwar years, mainly because of the superb works of Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. After a spectacular failure in 1940 with *Battle of Angels*, Williams became famous with the production of *The Glass Menagerie* five years later. The story of a fragile, shy girl who seeks escape from reality (and the expectations of her southern mother) through her assortment of glass animal figurines, *The Glass Menagerie* is a tender saga of sadness, unhappiness, and expectations unfulfilled—topics that fill Williams's dramas. In *A Streetcar Named Desire*, produced in 1947, Williams gives us one of the most enduring characters in American theater, Blanche Dubois, an aging beauty steeped in the myths of Old South gentility who is forced to confront the brutish reality of her sister's husband, Stanley Kowalski, in New Orleans' Desire slum. Its original production, directed by Elia Kazan, starred Jessica Tandy, Marlon Brando, and Kim Hunter. It

was a winner. Williams scored again in 1955 with *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, in which money, homosexuality, alcohol, mendacity, and greed tear apart a prominent southern family. Williams became prolific in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but his works never equaled *The Glass Menagerie*, *Streetcar*, or *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Plays, such as *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959), *Night of the Iguana* (1961), and *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* (1963) achieved only minor fame.

Arthur Miller, like Williams, had his failures before his successes, but the comparison stops there. Miller's greatest achievement was his third play, *Death of a Salesman*, produced in 1949. If there is a more enduring or tragic character in American theater than Blanche Dubois, it must be Willie Loman, the aging salesman whose life has added up to nothing—a failure as a husband, as a father, and even as a salesman. Willie's objective in life is to be well-liked; and success, he believes, comes from *who* you know rather than *what* you know. Cheating and lying, he tells his sons, are acceptable in a world where getting along is the only objective. Miller not only puts Willie on trial; he puts American society on trial as well. Willie is, in many ways, the personification of William H. Whyte's "organization man." He goes along and gets along through compromise, conformity, and even deceit. The play was staged by Elia Kazan and ran on Broadway for nearly two years.

Miller found himself forced to answer charges leveled by the House Committee on Un-American Activities in the early 1950s, and he seemed to fight back with *The Crucible* (1953), a drama about the Salem witch trials that was clearly an allegory for modern times. Miller went on to write *A View from the Bridge*, produced in 1955, and *A Memory of Two Mondays*, staged that same year. He then went silent for almost ten years, producing only the screenplay for *The Misfits*, which starred Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable in their last screen appearances.

There were, of course, other plays and other playwrights, but it was Williams and Miller who determined the direction of the postwar theater. Eugene O'Neill produced some of his best works after the war, including *The Iceman Cometh* (1946) and *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1956). As O'Neill's long career was ending, Edward Albee's long career was just beginning—in 1959, with *Zoo Story* and *The Death of Bessie Smith*. His works would have a much greater impact in the 1960s and beyond. A number of novels were adapted for the theater after the war, including Thomas Heggen's *Mister Roberts* (1948), Herman Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny* (1954), and Harvey Breit and Budd Schulberg's *The Disenchanted* (1959). Several Broadway successes were adaptations of television plays, including N. Richard Nash's *The Rainmaker* (1955) and William Gibson's *The Miracle Worker* (1960).

The artists of American literature and drama after the war were haunted by the difference between the promises and the dreams, and the reality of

life in America. It was a common thread running through the minds of intellectuals, playwrights, novelists, and other writers and artists of the postwar years. Their ideas would have no small impact on the next decade.

If postwar affluence (and the reaction to it) had its literature, its drama, its underground, its worshipers, and its gurus, it must also have had its religion. And that was provided by Norman Vincent Peale, Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, and Billy Graham. There was a distinct religious revival after the war. Americans joined churches in record numbers: In 1940 less than half the adults in the nation belonged to a church; by 1960 that number was over 65 percent. Much of this had to do with the use by various religious groups of modern and aggressive advertising techniques, such as television and radio advertisements, billboards, and even house-to-house proselytizing. Americans were constantly told that "The family that prays together, stays together." Washington added its encouragement, seemingly (at least in part) to counter the "godless" Soviets on another front. Eisenhower told Americans in 1952 that "Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deep felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is!"[9] In 1954 Congress added the phrase "One nation under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance, and the next year it made mandatory the phrase "In God We Trust" on all currency.

The nature of suburbia itself offered another reason for this increase in popular piety. The suburban church building was often a place for social gatherings of various types. To belong meant to be a part of the suburban community, to have friends, and, for businessmen, to make business contacts. In many ways the church in the 1950s was what the country club became in the 1960s and 1970s. And with all that came the 1950s social standard of conformity. Not to belong to the community church was to be different—and in the 1950s no one wanted to be different. The House Committee on Un-American Activities often asked the religious affiliation of those they suspected of subversive activities, with the tacit assumption that those who were unaffiliated might be "godless" Communists. The same attitude and prejudice may well have permeated throughout American society in the 1950s. To be ungodly was not a popular stance in postwar America; the only alternative was to join a church.

Among the preachers of the movement probably the most popular was Billy Graham. A Southern Baptist evangelist who spoke with a charismatic combination of passion and honesty that had a powerful effect on his mass audiences, Graham quickly established himself as the most famous evangelist in the country, and then the world. He got his start speaking before a religious rally at Los Angeles in 1949 that caught the attention of the Hearst newspaper chain. He went on to conduct extraordinary mass conversions and huge "crusades" throughout the world; some were televised,

and they were always covered by the press. At one point he spoke to a crowd of 60,000 in Yankee Stadium.

At the other end of the religious spectrum, but still very much out in front, was the Reverend Norman Vincent Peale. His books, *A Guide to Confident Living* (1948) and *The Power of Positive Thinking* (1952), drew on an age-old American concept of "positive thinking" that preached mostly good fellowship and good works. But to many theologians positive thinking as a religious concept (as Peale sold the idea) was an extremely shallow piety at best. In his book *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (1956), theologian Will Herberg wrote: "By and large, the religion which actually prevails among Americans today has lost much of the authentic Christian (or Jewish) content." He called it "religiousness without religion, a religiousness with almost any kind of content or none, a way of sociability or 'belonging,' rather than a way of reorienting life toward God." But clearly, Peale was speaking to the American people of the 1950s, a mass society and culture stuck in the banality of the status quo. They wanted to be told that their lives were good, that they had achieved what they wanted to achieve, and Peale made them feel good about themselves and about their lives. It was a religion of mass appeal and material success. If religion was personal sacrifice for the well-being of the entire human race, if it was a deep, cathartic soul search for the inner self, if it was knowing God, Americans in the 1950s instead would stick with self-assurance, they would "stop worrying and start living," as Peale told them.

The 1950s are often compared to the 1920s as periods of postwar upheaval. But the social and cultural changes that occurred in the 1920s were not widespread in a nation that was still principally rural, even backward in many ways. In the fifteen years following World War II, the vast majority of the American people were touched by the tremendous cultural and social changes that engulfed the nation. The average American was considerably better off than at any time in the nation's history; it was, in fact, the era of greatest abundance. Society and culture, of course, reflected that. It was reflected in everything from electricity in the rural areas, to a television set in every home, to an automobile in every garage. And with all that, America changed dramatically. But the changes were not always for the better. The tremendous anxiety of the cold war brought on a fierce conformity in America that stifled and even strangled various aspects of culture and society.

The year 1960 seemed magical somehow. It was the beginning of a new decade that held tremendous promise for everyone. The new catch phrase was "Goin' like sixty." Some people talked of the dawning of a new age, the frontiers of space, America ascendant, new horizons, even a new enlightenment. And with the new decade would come new leadership. Eisenhower, the dirt smoother, had done his job, the first president to be limited

by law to two terms in office. His vice president, Richard Nixon, promised to carry on where Eisenhower had left off, and for American conservatives he represented the Republican Party for the future of the nation—generally what it had been for the past. To others, Nixon simply represented the past, a McCarthy holdover; a candidate, it seemed, with nothing new to offer, little charisma, and a great deal of plainness. His opponent, the dashing John Kennedy, seemed to exude all the opposites. For his supporters he literally personified the future. The word often used to describe him was "vigor." The election of 1960 seemed to pit the past against the future, the postwar forties and fifties against the new age to come—the sixties.

10

THE ELECTION OF 1960 AND THE END OF AN ERA

Most Americans approached the 1960 election with great anticipation. The Republicans seemed to be in the driver's seat. They hoped to maintain the momentum Eisenhower had provided and sustained since 1952, and Vice President Nixon would undoubtedly be the party's nominee. The moderate Republican governor of New York, Nelson Rockefeller, had made some noises about challenging Nixon, but opinion polls in 1959 gave him virtually no chance and he stood down. Nixon looked strong in 1960, but he had suffered from a very bad reputation through most of the Eisenhower years. As McCarthyism in the American mind went from simple disrepute in 1953 to one of the ugliest episodes in the twentieth century, politicians from both parties found themselves explaining why they had not tried harder to stop the excesses of Joe McCarthy and McCarthyism. Nixon, of course, was continually associated with that era—and with McCarthy. He and the Republicans still got plenty of political mileage out of the threat of communism from abroad, but the Red scare in America was over. For most observers it had done little more than jeopardize the rights and liberties of the nation's citizens, and by 1960 many Americans were beginning to blame the Republicans for it. It was Nixon (the prosecutor of Alger Hiss) who, in 1960, was the chief survivor of that era. All of this led Eisenhower

in 1956 to try to ease Nixon out of his administration, but Nixon prevailed when Ike finally realized that he would not go quietly.

The indomitable Nixon rose above all the controversy and bad press. He first tried to portray himself as the understudy to the star, learning how to run America at the feet of Ike. But the vice president's position is often invisible, and he came across as little more than the president's lapdog with a five o'clock shadow. But then came his big break. While on a tour of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1959, Nixon engaged Nikita Khrushchev in a furious debate before television cameras in the kitchen of an American model home display in Moscow. Nixon got remarkable media coverage as Americans saw their vice president "stand up to Khrushchev," toe to toe, at one point with his finger in Khrushchev's face. America loved it, Nixon's political stock soared, and he headed into the campaign a year later as the guy who defended the nation against the big, ugly Russian bully. He looked like a winner.

The Democrats also looked at the 1960 election with a great deal of hope. They had maintained control of Congress after 1954, and now they expected to capitalize on that popularity by putting one of their own in the White House. They were at no loss for candidates. Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota entered the race early, running as a liberal, the successor to the New Deal with a strong civil rights record—but with embarrassingly little money. Senate majority leader Lyndon Johnson ran as the uncandidate, working hard behind the scenes to get the nomination but refusing to announce his candidacy. Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri ran as a compromise candidate with only marginal appeal. Adlai Stevenson, the two-time loser, was sniffing around for the nomination again, but despite the support of liberal intellectuals, the Democratic Party's big bosses considered him unelectable and shut the door in his face. The front-runner, of course, was John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the good-looking war hero, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, successful senator from Massachusetts, the healthy, vigorous son of "the Ambassador," Joseph P. Kennedy. It seemed John Kennedy had everything in 1960. But did he?

Kennedy was mostly manufactured goods by 1960. His World War II heroism was dubious at best; his Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Profiles in Courage*, had been ghostwritten by historian Jules Davids, Theodore Sorensen, and others; his record in the Senate was only mediocre; and he had Addison's disease, malaria, asthma, an ulcer, and a chronic disk problem. But his father's influence, advice, and money had created a spectacular image of youth, vigor, liberalism, and intelligence that would carry Kennedy into the White House.

Kennedy's record as a senator was exceptionally conservative—certainly when compared with his liberal image. When Nixon said during the presidential debates, "Our disagreement is not about the goals of America, only

about the means to reach those goals," his analysis was for the most part correct.[1] Kennedy entered the lower house with the "class of 1946," in the notorious 80th Congress. In 1952 he upset the Boston Brahmin, Henry Cabot Lodge, and took his seat in the Senate. By the mid-to-late 1950s, when Americans began asking their congressmen why McCarthy had not been stopped, and in fact criticizing their representatives for not standing up to him, Kennedy had as much trouble answering the questions as most of the Republicans. In 1947 he served on the Education and Labor Committee in the House and investigated Communists in the Milwaukee United Auto Workers local, and in that case he orchestrated one of the first indictments of a Communist for perjury. In 1950, in a speech at Harvard, he expressed his support for the McCarran Act (which required Communist-sponsored groups to register with the attorney general, and gave the government the power to detain and deport Communists), and for McCarthy and Nixon in their anticommunist quest. Kennedy did support public housing, the broadening of Social Security, a higher minimum wage, and a liberalization of immigration controls. He also opposed Taft–Hartley. But on most fiscal issues he voted conservatively. On foreign policy, he was a straight-line cold warrior, supporting all of Truman's hard-line stances against the Soviets.

Kennedy first became a national figure when he made a bid for the second spot on Stevenson's 1956 ticket. He lost to Estes Kefauver, but he immediately began working for the 1960 nomination to head the ticket. As the primaries opened in early 1960, he had a strong lead in the polls. For most party members, however, Kennedy was, as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., later recalled, "too cool and ambitious, too bored by the conditioned reflexes of stereotyped liberalism, too much a young man in a hurry. He did not respond in anticipated ways and phrases and he wore no liberal heart on his sleeve."[2] Eleanor Roosevelt, still very much a force in Democratic Party politics in 1960, said of Kennedy, with an obvious reference to *Profiles in Courage* and the advice Kennedy often received from his less-than-liberal father: "I feel that I would hesitate to place the difficult decisions that the next President will have to make with someone who understands what courage is and admires it, but has not quite the independence to have it."[3] Lyndon Johnson saw Kennedy as a playboy, the spoiled son of a rich man. And Sam Rayburn, the powerful Democratic speaker of the House, disliked Kennedy intensely, mainly because (with no need for Democratic Party campaign money) he worked entirely outside the Democratic Party's political structure. With the party bigwigs in the corners of others, and with the weighty baggage of his religion (which also turned away party leaders' support because they still believed a Catholic was unelectable), Kennedy headed into the primaries determined to show that he was popular with the people and clearly electable, and that religion was no longer a factor in American politics.

Rayburn was right: Kennedy had no real need for the Democratic Party structure or its money. His family money covered his campaign expenses, and his campaign workers were mostly young volunteers, not party regulars. At the same time, Kennedy shunned the traditional political scene, where politicians knew each other on a one-on-one basis and were bound to each other by patronage, party loyalty, and past favors. Kennedy had not (like Humphrey) paid his dues to the party and to the party hacks. Instead of working for inside support from the party leadership, he developed a new and different campaign style that worked completely outside the system. When victory came in November 1960, Kennedy owed few favors to the party leadership.

He swept the New Hampshire primary in March, but his first real test came in Wisconsin, where he would confront Hubert Humphrey head-on in an area of the country where Humphrey was strongest. Kennedy won a narrow victory in Wisconsin, and Humphrey then virtually challenged him to step into the ring in West Virginia, a state that was 95 percent Protestant and had a large population of not well-educated country people who were prone to anti-Catholic prejudice. Kennedy family money poured into West Virginia. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. (who had been selling cars in Washington, D.C.), was hired to go around the state and tell voters of the close relationship (which was fiery at best) between his father and Joseph Kennedy. Kennedy the candidate emphasized his war record, which brought him support from the large number of veterans in the state. And he constantly confronted his religion, which, as he had predicted, was by now less than the issue politicians thought it was. He wore his religion lightly anyway, telling listeners, "I do not take orders from any Pope, any Cardinal, any Bishop, or any Priest—not that they would try to give me orders."[4] "Over and over again," Theodore H. White wrote in *The Making of the President, 1960*, "there was the handsome, open-faced candidate on the TV screen, showing himself, proving that a Catholic wears no horns."[5] Humphrey's response was pathetic by comparison. He traveled the state in a bus carrying a sign: "Over the Hump with Humphrey," and playing his campaign song "Give Me That Old Time Religion" in a pitiable attempt to raise awareness of his opponent's faith. Kennedy swept West Virginia, carrying forty-eight of the state's fifty-five counties. Humphrey threw in the towel. "You can't beat a billion dollars," he told a reporter.[6]

Kennedy's West Virginia victory did what he wanted it to do: It impressed Democratic bigwigs and party voters alike, and started a bandwagon rolling right to the convention. In one last challenge, however, Lyndon Johnson made an eleventh-hour surge just before the convention with the forces of the party regulars behind him. But Kennedy was simply too strong by then and too much in control of a smooth-working political machine to be stopped. He took the nomination on the first ballot and quickly chose Johnson as his running mate. It was a balanced ticket: North–

South, East–West, young–old, a party insider–a party outsider. The only problem was that the two candidates virtually hated each other.

In the summer of 1960, in the heat of the campaign, Eisenhower faced a number of difficult situations that gave ammunition to Kennedy's campaign, which had, for the most part, centered on the Republicans' inability to halt the spread of communism—the same accusation that the Republicans had been throwing at the Democrats since at least 1946. In Cuba, Castro continued his defiant ways. Eisenhower responded by securing a congressional authorization to curtail the Cuban sugar quota, and Castro reacted by embracing the Soviets. Nixon encouraged Ike to react with military force, but the president decided that such action might push other Latin American nations into Moscow's arms. Khrushchev made the situation worse for Eisenhower by declaring the Monroe Doctrine a dead issue. Kennedy capitalized by reminding voters that "In 1952 the Republicans ran on a program of rolling back the Iron Curtain in Eastern Europe. Today the Iron Curtain is 90 miles off the coast of the United States."[7] In Africa, Belgium's hasty withdrawal from its Congo colony set off an uprising there that was reportedly directed by Communists. Eisenhower supported a UN military intervention that was mostly helpless to stop the uprising. America, it seemed, was watching the march of communism on television. The president's prestige was further damaged when 10,000 leftist students rioted in Japan to keep Eisenhower from visiting their country, and the Japanese premier withdrew his invitation.

Immediately following the summer political conventions, the three television networks invited Kennedy and Nixon to engage in a series of primetime debates. Kennedy, the lesser known of the two, had everything to gain here; Nixon, who had been in the public eye since 1952, had everything to lose. But despite advice from his campaign manager and from Eisenhower, Nixon agreed to meet Kennedy face-to-face on national television. Nixon had believed, ever since the "Checkers" speech that saved his political life in 1952, that television was his medium, that in front of the American people he could tear the less-experienced Kennedy apart.

The first extravaganza, the Great Debate of 1960, took place in Chicago on September 26. Nixon showed up exhausted, haggard, and sick. He had been campaigning hard just two weeks before when he caught a serious case of the flu and his recovery had been slow. He had been hospitalized earlier for a knee infection, and as he got out of the car at the Chicago television studio, he cracked the knee on the car door. He nearly fainted from the pain. He was ten pounds underweight, tired, and ashen. He did not take advice to wear a shirt that fit better, and his suit was light gray, a color that did not show up well on the black-and-white screens of the nation's television sets. He refused makeup, except for some pancake makeup called "Lazy Shave," designed to conceal his ever-present five

o'clock shadow. He clearly believed that America would listen to what he had to say that night, that the issues would win the day.

But Americans, faced with their first televised presidential campaign, were looking for style and not substance in 1960—and Nixon lacked style. Kennedy, at the same time, oozed it. He had spent the week in California; he was rested and tanned. Even Nixon said he had never seen Kennedy look so fit. Kennedy speechwriter Theodore Sorensen recalled that "Nixon looked weak. Between the bleak gray walls and the bright floodlights of the television studio, his gray suit and heavily powered jowls looked flabby and pallid beside Kennedy's dark suit and healthy tan."[8] Theodore White wrote: "Kennedy was calm and nerveless." Nixon was "tense, almost frightened, at turns glowering and, occasionally, haggard-looking to the point of sickness." By the end of the debate, Nixon stood "half slouched, his 'Lazy Shave' powder faintly streaked with sweat, his eyes exaggerated hollows of blackness, his jaw, jowls, and face drooped with strain."[9] Both Sorensen and White were partial to Kennedy, but it was clear to all of America (80 million watched, the largest television audience to that time) that Nixon did not make much of an impression on television, and that Kennedy did. When the debates (there were four) ended, one survey group concluded that "Kennedy did not necessarily win the debates, but Nixon lost them."[10] The headlines and the pundits called it a draw, but even a draw was a Kennedy victory. Millions of Americans had seen Kennedy for the first time, and in a favorable light.

The campaign was generally upbeat. Nixon spent most of his time trying to convince voters that he was a participant in the Eisenhower administration rather than just an observer, and that he was more able than Kennedy to deal with Khrushchev and the Soviets. Kennedy spoke in eloquent terms of "getting the country moving again." The implication was always that the United States must recover its lost prestige in order to maintain a competitive edge over the Soviet Union. In Hartford, Connecticut, just days before the election, Kennedy listed the differences between a Kennedy presidency and a Nixon presidency: "First," he said, he had a "different view of the present state of the American economy; secondly, a different view of our prestige in the world, and therefore, our ability to lead the free world; and thirdly, whether the balance of power in the world is shifting in our direction or that of our adversaries."[11] Foreign policy was the chief issue throughout the campaign: How would the United States deal with Soviet expansion? And on that issue both men generally agreed. It is no wonder, then, that Americans turned to image as the deciding factor in casting their votes.

Kennedy won the election by a squeak; less than 0.10 percent (about 118,500 votes) separated the two candidates. It was the closest popular election since 1888. But the electoral vote revealed a different story. Kennedy took twenty-three states with 303 electoral votes, to twenty-six states

and 219 votes for Nixon. Another southern Dixiecrat-type revolt was led by Harry Byrd of Virginia; he took fifteen electoral votes in the Deep South and one in Oklahoma. Kennedy was strongest in the urban and suburban North and Northeast, carrying seven of the nation's nine largest states. Nixon was strongest in rural areas and in the West. The Catholic issue was of little consequence; votes lost to Kennedy because of anti-Catholic bias were easily made up by Catholic Republicans who voted for Kennedy because of his religion. Kennedy captured the black vote (which was already relatively secure in the Democratic Party camp) by interceding during the campaign to have Martin Luther King, Jr., released from a Georgia jail. Nixon, hoping to continue the movement of southern whites into the Republican Party, remained silent during the incident. For his lack of effort he won only Florida, Tennessee, and Virginia—African-American votes kept the remainder of the South safely in the Democratic column.

Kennedy's ascension to the White House brought with it the style, vigor, and charisma that Americans had seen during the campaign. He was the torchbearer of a new generation: smart, young, attractive. The press fell in line with the Camelot comparison.[12] *Camelot*, then a popular Broadway musical, depicted a popular, enlightened king, his beautiful wife, and the bold and brilliant Knights of the Round Table ruling a kingdom in a period of peace and prosperity. Americans usually send to the White House aging, wise, and experienced men (along with their plain wives and sober advisers). Here, for the first time since Teddy Roosevelt, there was youth and action in Washington. Kennedy was the first president born in the twentieth century, energetic, enthusiastic, attractive, articulate. He had kids, and his wife looked like a movie star. His "Knights," those men around him, were also young, energetic doers. Several of his advisers, including Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and McGeorge Bundy, were from the academic world—where Roosevelt had gotten much of his advice. And there were those the press called the "whiz kids," men like Robert McNamara, who had reorganized Ford Motor Company through systems analysis, and Ted Sorensen, whose brilliant writing ability turned those magnificent Kennedyesque phrases. Robert Kennedy seemed to have all the prominent qualities of his brother. Almost all the faces were new and young, and they all promised to take the nation in a new direction, to get America moving again.

The image that the Kennedy administration presented seemed to show that the election of 1960 had oriented the United States in a new direction. As it turned out, that was true in only a few ways; the new administration did not achieve the boldness and aggressiveness that it promised, except possibly in its rhetoric. But the Kennedy image of youth, and even rebirth, seemed to make the 1960 election a major watershed in American history, at least in the history of post-World War II America. In January 1961, the

new replaced the old; youth and vigor now resided in Washington. Jack and Jackie represented the nation's future.

What Americans wanted in the first fifteen years after the war (good or bad), they mostly got. America was prosperous, the nation was out front in nearly every field of endeavor while the rest of the world spent most of the period digging out of the wartime rubble. In 1960 the nation was in a mild recession, but the U.S. economy was well beyond anything anyone before the war could imagine, and pundits argued about how the Americans of the future would spend their money, the assumption being that the growth would continue at the same enormous rate. The suburban lifestyle, the most obvious result of personal wealth, seemed to be the answer to everyone's dreams—the American dream, and all that was affirmed on television and in the press. Americans, it seemed, had found it.

In January 1960 a poll conducted by *Look* magazine revealed that Americans were satisfied with their lot—and they expected things to get better; their standard of living would improve in the future. Adolescents, also polled, agreed with their parents. In the final analysis, *Look* summarized, Americans "naturally expect to go on enjoying their peaceable, plentiful existence—right through the sixties and maybe forever."[13]

But it was not a perfect world; the abundance was fraught with anxiety. There was the cold war. What once had been armies looking at each other across borders in Europe and then Asia was now, in 1960, nations armed with missiles that could strike halfway around the world, and the talk was not simply of war but of "mutually assured destruction"—and the devastation of cities and entire civilian populations on both sides. But that was only the half of it. Communist expansion, and the American need to contain it, threatened to send the nation's boys into wars (not unlike Korea) all over the world. Eisenhower had maintained peace through the 1950s, but would future presidents be as prudent?

And suburbia, with all its bucolic pleasantries, developed its own unique problems. Not only did it in many ways provide a sterile lifestyle that offered little beyond greater physical space, but it led to the demise of the nation's cities through an erosion of the urban tax base, a further separation of the nation's poor and middle class, and of poor African Americans in the cities and middle-class whites in the suburbs.

The American civil rights movement would successfully remove de jure segregation from the nation's statutes in the 1960s, but it would not be able to end the social patterns of de facto segregation that began when white Americans took flight to the suburbs in the 1950s. All of these social problems became the seeds of the enormous difficulties and uncertainties that America would have to face in the next decades.

And then there were the children, the boomers—rebellious, almost quaint and innocent to Americans looking back at them from later decades. They

had not known the anguish of the Great Depression or the hardships of wartime America. As they reached college age, the nation's affluence was not enough for them, and in fact the wealth that had made their parents proud made the children feel guilty as it became increasingly clear that the fruits of America's booming postwar economy had not been spread very evenly, and that the equality the nation's leaders touted was equality for only a few. And rather than simply be satisfied to be among those few, the youth of the 1960s decided to try and force some changes. Their successes barely scratched the surface, but one thing is certain: They lost their innocence.

By 1960 the nation was ready for some action in the White House. Eisenhower, for a vast majority of the nation, had been a good president. He was still popular in his last years in office, but his sheen would not rub off on Richard Nixon. It was time for new faces, new names, new ideas, a new era. The year 1960 seemed to offer something special for the future, a new dynamism. A new age was dawning.

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10. *PP*, Eisenhower, 1955, 207–11.
11. Quoted in Alexander, *Holding the Line*, 235.
12. Quoted in Thomas G. Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan* (New York, 1988), 165–66.
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CHAPTER 8

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2. Quoted in William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*, 3d ed. (New York, 1995), 154.
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4. Quoted in Harry Ashmore, *Hearts and Minds: The Anatomy of Racism from Roosevelt to Reagan* (New York, 1982), 259.
5. Quoted in Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954–1980* (New York, 1981), 31.
6. Quoted in Dwight Eisenhower, *Waging Peace* (New York, 1965), 170.
7. Quoted in Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, 448.
8. Quoted in Sitkoff, *Struggle for Black Equality*, 50.
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CHAPTER 9

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3. Michael Harrington, *The Other America* (New York, 1962), 121.
4. Quoted in James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking and Broadcasting in America Since 1941* (Baltimore, Md., 1992), 95; and Goulden, *Best Years*, 1980.
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7. Quoted in John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace, 1941–1960* (New York, 1988), 270.
8. Quoted in Leuchtenburg, *Troubled Feast*, 108.
9. Quoted in William L. O'Neill, *American High: The Years of Confidence, 1945–1960* (New York, 1986), 213.

CHAPTER 10

1. Quoted in Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1960* (New York, 1961), 345.
2. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston, Mass., 1965), 14.
3. Quoted in Leuchtenburg, *In the Shadow of FDR*, 79.
4. *NYT* (April 19, 1960).
5. White, *Making of the President*, 129.

6. Quoted in Thomas C. Reeves, *A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy* (New York, 1991), 167.
7. Quoted in Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913–1962* (New York, 1987), 570.
8. Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York, 1965), 199.
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10. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 201.
11. *NYT* (November 30, 1960).
12. The Camelot analogy was apparently suggested to journalist Theodore H. White by Mrs. Kennedy. See Reeves, *A Question of Character*, 4.
13. *Look* (January 1960).

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

CHAPTER 1

Truman's first term was tumultuous and complicated. The best sources on the politics of the time are Truman's many biographers. Alonzo Hamby's *Man of the People* (1995) is the latest of several massive biographies of Truman. It is also the most balanced of the many laudatory treatments of the Man from Missouri. Hamby's *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism* (1978) has been the standard for the Truman presidency since its publication. It has only now been superseded by Hamby's 1995 biography. David McCullough's triumphantly popular *Truman* (1992) borders on hagiography, but it is wonderfully written and stuffed with interesting anecdotes and stories—good movie material. It is by far the best source for the casual reader. Robert Donovan's two volume work, *Conflict and Crisis* (1977) and *Tumultuous Years* (1977) is an excellent look at Truman in office. Donovan was a news reporter during the Truman years. Other biographies include two by Robert Ferrell. One, in the very popular Library of American Biography series, is *Harry S. Truman and the Modern American Presidency* (1983). It is a good treatment at less than 200 pages. The other, *Harry S. Truman: A Life* (1994), is similar. Donald R. McCoy's *The Presidency of Harry S. Truman* (1984)

is a well-researched look inside the Truman White House. All of these books see Truman as a great man in history, a feisty campaigner, a man of the people, a pragmatist with a near-perfect sense of what was right and wrong. For some revisions, see Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Policies and Politics in the Truman Administration* (1970); and William E. Pemberton's highly critical *Harry S. Truman; Fair Dealer and Cold Warrior* (1989). An excellent compilation of articles about the Truman administration is Michael Lacey, ed., *The Truman Presidency* (1989).

Several works cover politics in the period as part of larger surveys. One of the best is John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: 1941–1960* (1988), particularly Chapter 3. Two standard surveys are William Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (3rd ed., 1995); and William E. Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945* (1983). Alonzo Hamby also has dealt with the era. His *The Imperial Years: The U.S. Since 1939* (1976) is easily surpassed by his *Liberalism and Its Challengers: From F. D. R. to Bush* (2d ed., 1992). See also William E. Leuchtenburg's *In the Shadow of F. D. R.: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan* (2d ed., 1989) for a look at the problems Truman had filling Roosevelt's shoes. It is also an excellent analysis of Truman. A somewhat anecdotal and nostalgic look at the period is Joseph C. Goulden, *The Best Years: 1945–1950* (1976). A work on the period covered here is William L. O'Neill, *American High: The Years of Confidence, 1945–1960* (1986). The former standard for the period is Eric F. Goldman, *The Crucial Decade—and After: America, 1945–1960* (2d ed., 1960).

On the Republicans in this period an excellent source is David W. Reinhard's *The Republican Right Since 1945* (1983). On Robert Taft, the best work is James T. Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (1972). On Dewey, see Richard Norton Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey and His Times* (1982). These three works hold the best keys to understanding the Republican Party in the postwar era.

Works on other topics discussed in this chapter include R. Alton Lee, *Truman and Taft–Hartley: A Question of Mandate* (1966); and Susan Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress* (1971). Both of these works go a long way toward understanding the politics of this period. For a work dealing specifically with the 1948 election, see Irvin Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948* (1968). This journalist's account is, however, a far from satisfactory treatment of the topic.

A more detailed bibliography on civil rights is in the essay for Chapter 8. There are, however, four important books that deal specifically with civil rights in the Truman administration: Robert Garson, *The Democratic Party and the Politics of Sectionalism, 1941–1948* (1974); Donald McCoy and Richard T. Reuten, *Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration* (1973); William C. Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in*

the Truman Administration (1970); and Steven F. Lawson, *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944–1969* (1976).

On the South in this period there are two good, but short, surveys: Charles P. Roland, *The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II* (1976); and David Goldfield, *Promised Land: The South Since 1945* (1987). On the Dixiecrats, see William D. Barnard, *Dixiecrats and Democrats: Alabama Politics, 1942–1950* (1974). Although it focuses on Alabama, the national movement is covered better here than anywhere else. On Strom Thurmond, see Nadine Cohodas, *Strom Thurmond and the Politics of Southern Change* (1993). She borrows a great deal from Barnard.

On Henry Wallace, see Allen Yarnell, *Democrats and Progressives: The 1948 Presidential Election as a Test of Postwar Liberalism* (1974); and John Morton Blum's editorial comments in *The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942–1946* (1973). Curtis Macdougal's 3-volume *Gideon's Army* (1965) is so bloated with adulation for Wallace and his movement that it is not very useful.

On labor in the postwar period, see Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO: 1935–1955* (1995) and *American Workers, American Unions, 1920–1985* (1986). On John L. Lewis, the best work is Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tyne, *John L. Lewis: A Biography* (1977; abridged ed., 1986). The Americans for Democratic Action was a major part of the labor–liberal coalition in the postwar era. On the ADA see Steven M. Gillon, *Politics and Vision: The ADA and American Liberalism, 1947–1985* (1987). This is a well-researched and useful analysis of the American left. Memoirs of the major players in the postwar era are few and far between. Truman's 2-volume memoir, *1945: Year of Decisions* (1955) and *1946–1952: Years of Trial and Hope* (1956), gives his own slant on events that is often self-serving and unreliable. The best memoir from the period is by the consummate insider: Clark Clifford, *Counsel to the President* (1991).

CHAPTER 2

There is a great deal of material on the origins of the cold war. The best place to begin is with works that look at that topic as part of larger concerns. A standard is Stephen Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938* (7th ed., 1985). See also Walter LaFeber's excellent *America, Russia and the Cold War, 1945–1990* (6th ed., 1991); and two books by Thomas G. Paterson: *Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan* (1988) and *Soviet–American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* (1973). In the *Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations*, volume 5 is Warren I. Cohen, *America in the Age of Soviet Power, 1945–1991* (1995). As might be expected, this work is especially strong on the cold war in East Asia. There are several

important works by John Lewis Gaddis. His *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (1982) focuses on the containment strategy as the basis of U.S. foreign policy in the postwar period and is essentially a survey of the cold war through Vietnam. Another Gaddis work is *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History* (2d ed., 1990), which looks at U.S.–Russian relations through history leading to the cold war. A good survey aimed at undergraduates is Ralph Levering, *The Cold War, 1945–1987* (2d ed., 1988). Another is Edward H. Judge and John W. Langdon, *A Hard and Bitter Peace: A Global History of the Cold War* (1996).

Revisionist works include Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War: The World and the United States Foreign Policy* (1968); Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* (2d ed., 1987); and Lloyd Gardner, *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941–1949* (1971).

Many events near the end of World War II set the stage for the cold war. That topic is best studied in Robert Dallek, *Franklin Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945* (1979). See also John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (1972). The best biography of FDR in the period is still James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: Soldier of Freedom* (1970).

For the origins of the cold war in the Far East, see two works by Michael Schaller: *The U.S. Crusade in China, 1938–1945* (1979) and *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (1985). See also Mark S. Gallichio, *The Cold War Begins in Asia* (1988); Akira Iriye, *War in Asia* (1974); and Gary Hess's excellent *The United States' Emergence as a Southeast Asian Power, 1940–1950* (1987).

Atomic diplomacy is a topic of constant debate. Gar Alperovitz's *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* (2nd ed., 1987) is a revisionist view that is highly critical of Truman's use of the bomb. See also Martin J. Sherwin, *A World Destroyed: Hiroshima and the Origins of the Arms Race* (3d ed., 1987); David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb* (1994); and Herbert Feis, *The Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II* (1966).

The interaction between politics and diplomacy in the Truman administration is an important key to understanding the origins of the cold war. On this topic a good survey is Robert A. Divine, *Since 1945: Politics and Diplomacy in Recent American History* (1985). Still useful is H. Bradford Westerfield, *Foreign Policy and Party Politics* (1955). On foreign policy in the Truman administration, Melvyn Lefler's *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War* (1992) is an excellent work.

Memoirs are an important source. Truman's reflect a selective memory, but they are useful. They are in two volumes, published in 1955 and 1956. Volume I, *1945: Year of Decisions* covers his first year in office and many

of the events that brought on the cold war. Volume II, *1946–1952: Years of Trial and Hope*, cover the remainder of his years in office. Clark Clifford's *Counsel to the President* (1991) is more politics than foreign policy, but Clifford had a tremendous impact on Truman, and that is recounted here. George Kennan's *Memoirs, 1925–1950* (1967) presents the origins of the cold war from the viewpoint of the so-called father of containment. See also Dean Acheson's *Present at the Creation* (1969); and, from Truman's secretary of state, James Byrnes's *Frankly Speaking* (1947).

Major biographies of the cold warriors include Gaddis Smith, *Dean Acheson* (1972); David McLellan, *Dean Acheson* (1976); Robert H. Ferrell, *George C. Marshall* (1966); and Rudy Abramson, *Spanning the Century: The Life of W. Averell Harriman* (1992). There are three good works on Kennan: Walter L. Hixon, *George Kennan: Cold War Iconoclast* (1989); David Mayers, *George Kennan and the Dilemmas of U.S. Foreign Policy* (1988); and Wilson D. Miscamble, *George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947–1950* (1992). To counter Kennan's ideas, consult anything by or about Walter Lippmann. See particularly Ronald Steel's *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (1980).

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CHAPTER 3

The Red Scare still evokes animosities and some biased reporting. A good beginning is Richard Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (1990). See also Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (1994). For the complicated relationship between the cold war and the politics of anticommunism, see David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (1978); and Allen Harper, *The Politics of Loyalty: The White House and*

the Communist Issue, 1946–1952 (1959). For a look at the roots of McCarthyism, see Michael Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter* (1967). A series of interesting essays on McCarthyism is Robert Griffith and Athan G. Theoharis, eds., *The Specter: Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1974). On America's reaction to the cold war and McCarthyism, see Stephen Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (1991). On the Red Scare in academe, see Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (1986).

Two works that criticize Truman's role in the origins of the Red Scare are Athan Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1972); and Richard Freeland, *The Truman Administration and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1972). Their arguments are convincing.

On HUAC, see Walter Goodman, *The Committee* (1968). There are several biographies of McCarthy. See David Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joseph McCarthy* (1983); Thomas Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy* (1982); and Richard Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy* (1960). The one-time standard work on McCarthy is Robert Griffith's well-researched *The Politics of Fear* (2d ed., 1987).

The Hiss–Chambers case is covered in Allan Weinstein, *Perjury: The Hiss–Chambers Case* (1978). Weinstein finally argues that Hiss was guilty. See also Athan G. Theoharis, ed., *Beyond the Hiss Case: The FBI, Congress and the Cold War* (1982). On the Red Scare and Hollywood, see Victor S. Navasky, *Naming Names* (2nd ed., 1991). Navasky relies heavily on interviews with the participants in the Hollywood hearings. See also Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *The Inquisition in Hollywood* (1983).

On Nixon's rise and his role in HUAC and the Red scare, see Stephen Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913–1962* (1987); and Herbert Parmet, *Richard Nixon and His America* (1990).

CHAPTER 4

General histories on the Korean War include David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (1964), still arguably the best overall account of the U.S. involvement. See also Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (2 vols., 1981–1990); Burton I. Kaufman's excellent overview, *The Korean War: Challenges in Crisis, Credibility, and Command* (1986); Harry J. Middleton, *The Compact History of the Korean War* (1965); William W. Stueck, Jr., *The Road to Confrontation* (1981); Alexander Bevin, *Korea* (1987); John Merrill, *Korea* (1989); Robert Leckie's massive *Conflict: The History of the Korean War* (1962); and Clay Blair's equally massive *The Forgotten War: America in Korea, 1950–1953* (1987). See also Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War: American Policy and the Dimensions of the Korean Conflict, 1950–1953* (1985); Glen Paige, *The Korean Decision* (1975); Cal-

lum A. MacDonald, *Korea: The War Before Vietnam* (1987); Carl Berger, *The Korean Knot: A Military–Political History* (1964); and the popular Joseph C. Goulden, *Korea: The Untold Story of the War* (1982). A short and useful narrative that is a part of a series on U.S. involvement in the wars of the twentieth century is James L. Stokesbury, *A Short History of the Korean War* (1988). See also Barton Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and the Korean War," in Michael Lacy, ed., *The Truman Presidency* (1991).

On Korea's history in the years after World War II and the origins of the complicated political and military situations that developed there, see Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (1981 to 1990). See also William Whitney Stueck, Jr., *The Road to Confrontation* (1981); Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (1985); Charles M. Dobbs, *The Unwanted Symbol: American Foreign Policy, the Cold War, and Korea, 1945–1950* (1981); and Robert R. Simmons, *The Strained Alliance: Peking, Pyongyang, Moscow and the Politics of the Korean Civil War* (1975). An important collection of works on foreign policy is Yonosuke Nagai and Akira Iriye, eds., *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (1977), which contains a number of significant articles, particularly Walter LaFeber, "American Policy-makers, Public Opinion, and the Outbreak of the Cold War, 1945–1950."

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Works on MacArthur seem both massive and endless. The best is D. Clayton James, *The Years of MacArthur: Triumph and Disaster, 1945–1964* (1985); but it is difficult to ignore William Manchester's ambitious *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880–1964* (1978). A critical look at the general is Robert Smith, *MacArthur in Korea: The Naked Emperor* (1982). Michael Schaller's *MacArthur* (1989) focuses largely on Korea. See also MacArthur's own accounts in *Reminiscences* (1964). On the MacArthur–Truman controversy and its impact on the conduct of the war, see particularly Trumbull Higgins, *Korea and the Fall of MacArthur: A Precis in Limited War* (1960); John Spanier, *The Truman–MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War* (1959); and Richard H. Rovere and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *The MacArthur Controversy and American Foreign Policy* (1951).

The war from the Chinese viewpoint is important to any study of Korea. I have argued that China's involvement was little more than its implementation of its own containment policy. For that same opinion, see Allen Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (1960), still an excellent work despite its age and limitations. See also Edwin P. Hoyt, *The Day the Chinese Attacked: Korea, 1950* (1993); and Russell Spurr, *Enter the Dragon: China's Undeclared War Against the US in Korea, 1950–1951* (1988). Other works from the Chinese side of the situation include John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (1967); William Whitson, *The Chinese High Command: A History of Chinese Military Politics, 1927–1970* (1972); Harvey Nelson, *The Chinese Military System: An Organizational Study of the People's Liberation Army* (1977); Gerard H. Corr, *The Chinese Red Army* (1974); and Michael Ying-mao Kao, *The People's Liberation Army and China's Nation Building* (1973).

CHAPTER 5

Politics in the Truman administration is best discussed in Truman's biographies, most of which are listed in the essay for Chapter 1. See particularly Alonzo Hamby, *Man of the People* (1995) and *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism* (1978); David McCullough, *Truman* (1992); Robert Donovan's *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry Truman, 1945–1948* (1977); Robert Ferrell, *Harry S. Truman and the Modern American Presidency* (1983) and *Harry S. Truman: A Life* (1994); Donald R. McCoy, *The Presidency of Harry S. Truman* (1984); Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Policies and Politics in the Truman Administration* (1970); William E. Pemberton, *Harry S. Truman: Fair Dealer and Cold Warrior* (1989).

Books on domestic issues in the Truman administration that cover the second term and the Fair Deal include Richard O. Davies, *Housing Reform During the Truman Administration* (1966); Andrew J. Dunbar, *The Truman Scandals and the Politics of Morality* (1984); Allen J. Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics in the Truman Years* (1967); Monte M. Poen, *Harry S. Truman Versus the Medical Lobby: The Genesis of Medicare* (1979).

Truman's second administration is covered in larger works, many of which have already been mentioned. See particularly John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: 1941–1960* (1988); William Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (3d ed., 1995); William Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945* (1983) and *In the Shadow of F. D. R.: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan* (2d ed., 1989); and Alonzo Hamby, *Liberalism and Its Challengers: From F. D. R. to Bush* (2d ed., 1992). David Halberstam covers part of the period, and has a good analysis of Truman, in his *The Fifties* (1993). David W. Reinhard's *The*

Republican Right Since 1945 (1983) deals with the Republican Party in the period.

Books that cover civil rights in Truman's second term include Donald McCoy and Richard T. Reuten, *Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration* (1973); and William C. Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration* (1970). On the South and the dynamics of southern politics in this period, see Charles P. Roland, *The Improbable Era: The South Since World War II* (1976); and David Goldfield, *Promised Land: The South Since 1945* (1987). The best source on desegregation in the military is Richard M. Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces: Fighting on Two Fronts, 1939–1953* (1969).

On labor in this era, see Maeva Marcus, *Truman and the Steel Seizure* (1976).

CHAPTER 6

Many of the topics discussed in this chapter are best covered in biographies of Eisenhower. See particularly Stephen Ambrose's two-volume work, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-elect, 1890–1952* (1983) and *Eisenhower the President* (1984). Possibly more useful to the average reader and undergraduate student is Ambrose's single volume, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President* (1990). Ambrose is comprehensive and sympathetic. Other biographies include Robert F. Burk's short but useful *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Hero and Politician* (1986); R. Alton Lee, *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Soldier and Statesman* (1981); Peter Lyon, *Eisenhower: Portrait of a Hero* (1974); Herbert S. Parmet, *Eisenhower and the American Crusades* (1972); Elmo Richardson, *The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower* (1979); Piers Brendon, *Ike: The Life and Times of Dwight D. Eisenhower* (1987); and William B. Pickett, *Dwight David Eisenhower and American Power* (1995).

Ike's presidential memoirs are *Mandate for Change* and *Waging Peace* (1965). Robert Ferrell, ed., *The Eisenhower Diaries* (1981), is indispensable.

For an excellent look at America during the Eisenhower years, see Charles C. Alexander, *Holding the Line: The Eisenhower Era, 1952–1961* (1975). For Eisenhower's place in postwar politics, see the chapter on Eisenhower in William E. Leuchtenburg, *In the Shadow of F. D. R.: From Harry Truman to Ronald Reagan* (2d ed., 1989). See also Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents* (3rd ed., 1990); and Heinz Eulau, *Class and Party in the Eisenhower Years, Class Roles and Perspectives in the 1952 and 1956 Elections* (1962). For Eisenhower's management style, see what is now being called a revisionist account in F. I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (1982). Two earlier positive reevaluations of Eisenhower are Richard Rovere, "Ei-

senhower Revisited—A Political Genius? A Brilliant Man?" *New York Times Magazine* (September 7, 1971); and Murray Kempton, "The Underestimation of Dwight D. Eisenhower," *Esquire* (September 1967).

On Nixon, Stephen Ambrose's three-volume work is superb. For topics discussed in this chapter, see volume I, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913–1962* (1987). Herbert Parmet's *Richard Nixon and His America* (1990) is also useful. Gary Wills's, *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man* (1971), has an excellent section on Nixon's "Checkers" speech. Works by Nixon that deal with this period include *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (1978) and *Six Crises* (1962).

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The importance of the *Sputnik* shot to American politics and education can be found in Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower's Response to the Soviet Satellite* (1993); and James R. Killian, *Sputnik, Scientists, and Eisenhower* (1977). One might also wish to consult Kay Summersby, *Eisenhower Was My Boss* (1948). On Ike's opponent in 1952 and 1956, see John Bartlow Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois* (1976).

A more extensive bibliography on the Red scare, McCarthy, and McCarthyism is available in the essay for Chapter 3. See particularly Richard Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (1990); David Caute, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (1978); Allen Harper, *The Politics of Loyalty: The White House and the Communist Issue, 1946–1952* (1959); Athan Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1972); Richard Freeland, *The Truman Administration and the Origins of McCarthyism* (1972); David Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joseph McCarthy* (1983); Thomas Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy* (1982); Richard Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy* (1960); Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear* (2nd ed., 1987); and Allan Weinstein, *Perjury: The Hiss–Chambers Case* (1978).

CHAPTER 7

Works on the Korean War are included in the bibliographic essay for Chapter 4. A short list includes David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (1964); Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (2 vols., 1981–1990); Burton I. Kaufman, *The Korean War* (1986); Rosemary Foot, *The Wrong War* (1985); Callum A. MacDonald, *Korea: The War Before Viet-*

nam (1987); and James L. Stokesbury, *A Short History of the Korean War* (1988).

Eisenhower's foreign policy is covered well in several important works on U.S. postwar foreign policy. Many of the following are mentioned in the bibliographic essay for Chapter 2. See particularly Stephen Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism* (7th ed., 1985); Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War* (6th ed., 1991); Thomas G. Paterson, *Meeting the Communist Threat* (1988); Warren Cohen, *America in the Age of Soviet Power, 1945–1991* (1995); John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (1982); Ralph Levering, *The Cold War: 1945–1987* (2d ed., 1988); Edward H. Judge and John W. Langdon, *A Hard and Bitter Peace* (1996); and Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (1968).

Biographies of Eisenhower were discussed in the essay for Chapter 6. A short list includes Stephen Ambrose's *Eisenhower the President* (1984); Robert F. Burk, *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Hero and Politician* (1986); R. Alton Lee, *Dwight D. Eisenhower: Soldier and Statesman* (1981); Peter Lyon, *Eisenhower: Portrait of a Hero* (1974); and Herbert S. Parmet, *Eisenhower and the American Crusades* (1972).

Good studies of the Eisenhower era are Charles C. Alexander, *Holding the Line: The Eisenhower Era, 1952–1961* (1975); and H. W. Brands, Jr., *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower's Generation and American Foreign Policy* (1988).

There is an excellent collection of writings on Eisenhower's foreign policy in Richard A. Melanson and David Mayers, ed., *Reevaluating Eisenhower: American Foreign Policy in the Fifties* (1989). Other works that look specifically at Eisenhower and his foreign policy include Robert A. Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (1981); Norman A. Graebner, *Cold War Diplomacy, 1945–1960* (1972); Richard Aliano, *American Defense Policy from Eisenhower to Kennedy* (1975); and Burton I. Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower's Foreign Economic Policy* (1982).

On the interaction of politics and foreign policy in the Eisenhower years, see two books by Robert A. Divine: *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, 1952–1960* (1974) and *Since 1945: Politics and Diplomacy in Recent American History* (3d ed., 1985).

On Eisenhower's use of the CIA and covert activity as an arm of diplomacy, see Stephen Ambrose and Richard H. Immerman, *Ike's Spies: Eisenhower and the Espionage Establishment* (1981). See also Peter Grose's account of the CIA director in the Eisenhower administration, *Gentleman Spy: The Life of Allen Dulles* (1994); and a history of the agency itself in John Ranelagh, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (1986).

On John Foster Dulles, the best work is Ronald W. Preussen, *John Foster Dulles* (1982). See also Michael Guhin, *John Foster Dulles: A Statesman and His Times* (1972); Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dul-*

les (1973); Andrew Berding, *Dulles on Diplomacy* (1965); and Louis L. Gerson, *John Foster Dulles* (1968).

On the Cuban revolution, an excellent work is Jules R. Benjamin, *The U.S. and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution* (1990). See also Richard E. Welch, Jr., *The Response to Revolution: The United States and the Cuban Revolution, 1959–1961* (1985); Morris Morley, *Imperial State and Revolution: The United States and Cuba, 1952–1985* (1987); and Louis A. Perez, Jr., *Cuba and the United States* (1990). Theodore Draper, in his *Castro's Revolution: Myth and Realities*, (1961) makes an important point reiterated in the text.

For U.S. policy toward Latin America in general during the Eisenhower era, see Stephen Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America* (1988).

The Suez crisis is covered in the following works: Diane B. Kunz, *The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis* (1991); Peter L. Hahn, *The U.S., Great Britain and Egypt, 1945–1956* (1991); Donald Neff, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower Takes America into the Middle East* (1981); and W. Roger Louis and Roger Owen, eds., *Suez 1956* (1989). More broadly, see John C. Campbell, *Defense of the Middle East* (1960); William J. Burns, *Economic Aid and American Policy Toward Egypt, 1955–1981* (1985); Cheryl Rubenberg, *Israel and the American National Interest* (1986); Kermit Roosevelt, *Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran* (1979); and David W. Lesch, *Syria and the United States: Eisenhower's Cold War in the Middle East* (1992).

Eisenhower's interest in South Asia is dealt with in Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (1994). The origins of U.S. involvement in Vietnam are discussed in George McT. Kahin, *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam* (1986)—see the first four chapters for U.S. involvement during the Eisenhower administration.

The U-2 affair is discussed in Michael R. Beschloss, *Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev, and the U-2 Affair* (1986). On the Hungarian revolution, see Paul Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary* (1961). On the Berlin crisis, see Jack M. Schick, *The Berlin Crisis, 1958–1962* (1971).

The importance of *Sputnik* is discussed in Robert A. Divine, *The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower's Response to the Soviet Satellite* (1993); and more broadly in Walter A. McDougall, *The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age* (1985).

CHAPTER 8

There are several excellent works on the civil rights movement that cover all or part of the 1945–1960 period. Two good surveys are Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1945–1980* (1981); and Steven F. Lawson, *Running for Freedom: Civil Rights and Black Politics in America Since*

1941 (1991). Other works on various portions of the movement (or attempts to cover the entire movement) include Thomas Brooks, *Walls Come Tumbling Down: A History of the Civil Rights Movement, 1940–1970* (1974); Robert Weisbrot, *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement* (1990); Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change* (1984); Fred Powledge, *Free at Last? The Civil Rights Movement and the People Who Made It* (1991); Manning Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945–1982* (2d ed., 1991); and Benjamin Muse: *Ten Years of Prelude: The Story of Integration Since the Supreme Court's 1954 Decision* (1964).

The best work on civil rights during the Eisenhower administration is Robert F. Burk's *The Eisenhower Administration and Black Civil Rights* (1984). Burk is highly critical of Ike's handling of civil rights issues. The impact of the *Brown* decision is covered well in Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice* (1975). On southern politics in the era discussed here, Steven Lawson's *Black Ballots: Voting Rights in the South, 1944–1969* (1976) is indispensable.

The best work on the sit-in movement is William H. Chafe, *Civilities and Civil Rights* (1980). On the rise of SNCC and the sit-in movement, see Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (1981).

On Martin Luther King, the place to begin is King's own *Why We Can't Wait* (1964), which includes his "Letter from Birmingham City Jail." There are, of course, many good biographies of King. A good start is Stephen B. Oates's excellent *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (1982). See also David Carrow's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1955–1968* (1986); and Adam Fairclough's similarly titled *To Redeem the Soul of a Nation: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* (1987). A fairly straightforward biography is David L. Lewis, *King: A Biography* (2d ed., 1978). For a look at the civil rights movement with an emphasis on King and his influence, see Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–1963* (1988).

The best work on white resistance to the *Brown* decision and the civil rights movement in the 1950s is Newman V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance* (1969). See also Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens' Councils: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954–1964* (1971).

To recall many of the images and words of the early years of the civil rights movement, see the excellent videos *Eyes on the Prize I* and *II* (1986). There is a good companion volume edited by Juan Williams, *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954–1965* (1987).

From the historian's viewpoint, Steven F. Lawson has put together an

excellent historiography of the movement in "Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil Rights Movement," *American Historical Review* (April 1991): 456–471.

CHAPTER 9

The best source on society and culture in the postwar period is John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace* (1988). See also John C. Goulden's anecdotal *The Best Years, 1945–1950* (1976); Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (1977); Jeffrey Hart, *When the Going Was Good: American Life in the Fifties* (1982). Add to these David Halberstam's characteristically massive *The Fifties* (1993); and William L. O'Neill, *American High: The Years of Confidence, 1945–1960* (1986). All of these works cover more than just culture and society, but they are particularly strong in that area. A work on the history of American culture that provides good coverage of the postwar period is Loren Baritz, *The Good Life: The Meaning of Success for the American Middle Class* (2nd ed., 1990).

Contemporary social commentary and criticism on the postwar era can be explored in a number of works cited in the text. See also John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (1958); Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization: Life and Thought in the United States Today* (1957); C. Wright Mills, *White Collar: The American Middle Classes* (1951); and David Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (1954).

On the postwar economy, see Alvin H. Hanson, *Postwar American Economy: Performance and Problems* (1964); Harold Vatter, *The U.S. Economy in the 1950s* (1963); and Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics: The Making of Economic Policy from Roosevelt to Reagan and Beyond* (1984). The rise of suburbia and the problems associated with it can be found in the following works: Scott Donaldson, *The Suburban Myth* (1969); and Kenneth Jackson's excellent *The Crabgrass Frontier* (1985). On the Levitts and their contribution, see Herbert Gans, *The Levittowners* (1957).

A discussion of postwar poverty should begin with Michael Harrington, *The Other America* (1962). Another contemporary work critical of the American system is Gabriel Kolko, *Wealth and Power in America* (1962). See also James T. Patterson's more balanced *America's Struggle Against Poverty* (1981).

The best place to begin on the topic of postwar women's issues and the origins of feminism in America is Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), the wake-up call for the feminist movement. For women's issues as history, see William H. Chafe, *The American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic and Political Roles, 1920–1970* (1976) and *The Paradox*

of Change: American Women in the 20th Century (1991). Chafe makes important observations regarding the postwar years. See also Wini Breines, *Young, White and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (1992); and Elaine T. May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (1988).

On television's immense impact on the nation, see Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty: The Evolution of American Television* (1975); Max Wilk, *Golden Age of Television* (1976); William Boddy, *Fifties Television: The Industry and Its Critics* (1990); and David Mark, *Democratic Vistas: Television in American Culture* (1984). On the quiz show investigations, the best source is Chapter 3 in Richard N. Goodwin, *Remembering America: A Voice from the Sixties* (1988). Goodwin was the Justice Department attorney who broke the case against Van Doren. *Remembering America* is his memoir.

An excellent work on film as history is Steven Mintz and Randy Roberts, eds., *Hollywood's America: United States History Through Its Films* (1993). Designed primarily for classroom use, it is filled with primary material and a large number of short articles on film. Two surveys of American film are Jowett Garth, *Film: The Democratic Art* (1975); and David Cood, *A History of Narrative Film* (1981). For the specific era, see Andy Rooney, *Movies Are Better Than Ever: Wide-Screen Memories of the Fifties* (1973); Paul Monaco, *Ribbons in Time: Movies and Society Since 1945* (1987); Peter Biskind, *Seeing Is Believing: How Hollywood Movies Taught Us to Stop Worrying and Love the Fifties* (1983); and Leonard Quart and Albert Auster, *American Film and Society Since 1945* (1991). An excellent work on media in general that covers the immediate postwar years is James L. Baughman, *The Republic of Mass Culture: Journalism, Filmmaking, and Broadcasting in America Since 1941* (1992).

Most books on rock 'n' roll cover generally the same territory in generally the same way. Four useful sources are Gail Marcus, *The Mystery Train* (1982); Karl Belz, *The Story of Rock* (1969); Jerry Hopkins, *The Rock Story* (1970); and John Gabree, *The World of Rock* (1968). Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties* (1977), is particularly good on the origins of rock 'n' roll. On the Beats, the standard work is John Tytell, *Naked Angels: The Lives and Literature of the Beat Generation* (1976). Three excellent works on postwar American literature are Marcus Klein, *After Alienation: The American Novel at Mid-Century* (1978); Josephine Hendine, *Vulnerable People* (1978); and Malcolm Bradbury, *The Modern American Novel* (1984).

On the shallowness of postwar religion, see Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches* (1960); and Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (1956). On Billy Graham, see Marshall Frady, *Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness* (1979).

CHAPTER 10

It can be argued that modern American politics had its birth in the election of 1960. I have tried to show that it was a watershed in postwar American history. If not that, it was one of the most interesting elections in the twentieth century. The best account is still Theodore White's Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Making of the President, 1960* (1961). This is an excellent analysis if only for White's understanding of the impact that television had on the election. On that same topic, works that have stood on White's shoulders include Mary Ann Watson, *The Expanding Vista* (1990); and Joseph P. Berry, *John F. Kennedy and the Media* (1987).

Richard Nixon's *Six Crises* (1962) gives his account of the election. Kennedy, of course, left no account. The next best thing is Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days* (1965), which remains one of the most complete insider histories of an American presidency. A close second is Theodore Sorensen, *Kennedy* (1965).

A balanced biography of Kennedy that gives a good account of the 1960 election is Herbert S. Parmet, *JFK: The Presidency of John F. Kennedy* (1983). From the other side, see Parmet's *Richard Nixon and His America* (1990). Stephen Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913–1962* (1987), is the best biography of Nixon and gives a good account of the election of 1960.

Theodore White was not the only contemporary writer who saw the 1960 election as important. See also Eric Sevareid, ed., *Candidates, 1960* (1959); Stewart Alsop, *Nixon and Rockefeller: A Double Portrait* (1960); T. David et al., *The Presidential Election and Transition, 1960–1961* (1961); and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., *Kennedy or Nixon; Does It Make Any Difference?* (1960).

Two works—Garry Wills, *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man* (1969); and Tom Wicker, *JFK and LBJ* (1968)—are important in their understanding of the election.

A transcript of the Kennedy–Nixon debates is in Sidney Kraus, ed., *The Great Debates: Kennedy vs. Nixon, 1960* (1962). An important article that looks at one aspect of the election is Kent M. Beck, "Necessary Lies, Hidden Truths: Cuba in the 1960 Campaign," *Diplomatic History* (Winter 1984): 37–59.

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About the Author

GARY A. DONALDSON is associate professor of history at Xavier University in New Orleans. In 1991 he spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar in the People's Republic of China. He is author of *America at War Since 1945: U.S. Involvement in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War* (Praeger, 1996) and *A History of African Americans in the Military* (1991).