THE TRUMAN PERIOD AS A RESEARCH FIELD

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A REAPPRAISAL, 1972

EDITED BY RICHARD S. KIRKENDALL

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TO PHILIP C. BROOKS

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BOOK

RICHARD S. KIRKENDALL

THIS is a new edition of a book that first appeared in 1967. It is therefore a second effort to assist scholars in their study of the Truman period. Its publication assumes that the first edition contributed to the progress of the field, that much still remains to be done, and that the recent developments in research and interpretation and the prospects for additional work justify a new edition. Although the earlier papers continue to be valuable, their mere reprinting would not serve the needs of scholars at the present time; this new edition is intended to help toward fuller development of the field in the 1970s.

Dissatisfaction with the progress in study of the Truman period influenced the initial decision to develop the first edition. I expressed this dissatisfaction in a paper at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in 1965. Speaking in the auditorium of the Truman Library on April 24, I maintained that while many scholars had worked at the library, "the results so far, measured in terms of publication, have been disappointing. Publication on Truman has progressed much more slowly than on Roosevelt." Output, I concluded, "has not fulfilled the great expectations generated by the example of the Roosevelt Library." In attempting to explain this failure, I argued that "the Truman Library is not the equal" of the first presidential library "in the value of the manuscripts made available."¹

Looking back, my complaint seems premature, impatient, and perhaps unfair, and so it seemed at the time to some of my colleagues. Nevertheless, several people who were interested in research on the Truman period and in the Truman Library, including some members of the Board of Directors of the Truman Library Institute, were similarly dissatisfied and were looking for ways to stimulate research in the period.

On August 25, 1965, a meeting was held in Lawrence, Kansas, to consider what steps might be taken to remedy the situation. Dean Francis Heller, the new chairman of the Truman Library Institute's Committee

¹"A Second Look at Presidential Libraries," *American Archivist*, 29 (July 1966), 371, 386.

on Relations with Universities and Historical Societies, was the host; two other committee members, William D. Aeschbacher and W. Howard Adams, also attended the meeting. Philip C. Brooks, the director of the library and the secretary of the institute, and I also participated. We concluded that a conference, which had been authorized by the institute's board for 1966, should be devoted to an examination of research in the Truman period—exploration of the research that had been completed and that was in progress and suggestions for additional studies. We assumed that such a conference could provide stimulus and guidance to research directors, scholars contemplating work in the Truman period, the library's staff, and the institute, especially its Committee on Grants-in-Aid. We decided also that the papers should be published. As I was actively involved in research on Truman, I was asked to provide leadership in the undertaking—to select topics, to recruit scholars to prepare the papers, and to invite others to participate in the discussion. Since I was a proponent of the project and therefore convinced of its value, I agreed—with enthusiasm—to accept the responsibility and to work closely with Brooks on formulation of a detailed plan for the conference and for publication of the papers. It was assumed that I should also edit the volume.

After the proposal was approved by the board, including its honorary president, Harry S. Truman, I organized the conference during the fall and winter. Five scholars—David S. McLellan, Barton J. Bernstein, Richard O. Davies, William C. Berman, and Elmer E. Cornwell, Jr.—agreed to present papers. A larger group of historians, political scientists, and archivists agreed to participate in the discussion of the papers. Nearly all were involved in research on aspects of the Truman period and had used the Truman Library. All had made significant contributions to the study of recent United States history.

The response to the invitations to participate, like the earlier response from the board, was very encouraging. Almost every scholar we invited agreed to join in the venture. Apparently, the plans for the conference served needs felt by many scholars in the field. To be sure, some of those consulted expressed reservations about its value, including concern that the conference might generate interests that could not be satisfied, given the existing restrictions on access to source materials. This was not, however, a concern of the scholars who were asked to participate. They and most members of the board agreed that research in the Truman period could be assisted significantly by an assessment of its accomplishments and needs.

The conference was held in the Truman Library from April 13 to April 16, 1966. It was not the first conference held there; it was the fourth, but it was the most ambitious. It extended over a longer period, and it was the first before which several prepared papers were presented.

Earlier conferences had been less formal as well as much shorter. In addition to the presentation and discussion of the five papers, the conference included a report to the board, which was represented by several of its members in the final session.

To the conferees, the meeting was stimulating as well as informative. For three days we debated with one another and thereby became more fully aware of the conflicts that were developing in Truman historiography. All of the participants agreed that the Truman period was of sufficient significance to be studied seriously, but they did not agree in their interpretations of it. Many participants admired Truman and his administration; others were predominantly negative in their appraisals. Some represented the view of Truman that dominated scholarship on him at the time and rated him as one of the nation's greatest Presidents, chiefly because of his major decisions on foreign policy, but others represented the emergence of a "revisionist" interpretation characterized by doubts about the necessity and value of the containment policy and by a belief that Truman could and should have accomplished much more than he did in domestic affairs.

The papers and the discussion served the chief purpose of the conference. Many conclusions emerged regarding the work that remained to be done. Many aspects of the administration's background, situation, thought, and behavior awaited the attention of scholars willing to explore the sources in the Truman Library and related research centers. In the book that resulted there was recognition of the limits at the time on scholars' ability to follow the suggestions made in the conference; many of the sources, especially those for foreign and military affairs, were not yet open to scholars. Nevertheless, I concluded in the introductory essay that much research was possible even with these limitations, and much more could be done in the near future, for the quantity of available materials in the Truman Library was growing and restrictions on access to sources there and elsewhere would soon be removed.

The University of Missouri Press published the book in November of 1967. There was criticism of it, both before and after publication. The most significant criticism challenged our estimates of the status of research in the period. "Some of the essayists in their zeal to list suggestions for research have," Sidney Warren suggested, "created . . . the misleading impression that the task of dissecting the Truman administration has hardly begun."²

Nevertheless, reactions, at least those that came to my attention, were predominately favorable. To many, the book was a useful research tool. In spite of his reservations, Warren regarded it as "indispensable to the scholar interested in examining various facets of the Truman period,"

²*Journal of American History*, 55 (June 1968), 182.

and he later suggested that a similar book "that would include assessments of important research already accomplished and areas of inquiry that still require exploration" should be written on the Kennedy era.³ Dewey W. Grantham applauded the "critical appraisals of the literature" and the "many suggestions concerning research needs and opportunities," maintaining that they made the book "especially useful to specialists in recent history";⁴ Richard M. Dalfiume wrote that, "for students interested in the period, this is an excellent place to start";⁵ J. Joseph Huthmacher referred to the book as "an invaluable reference work for the Truman administration and the postwar era."⁶ Conversations between archivists and researchers in the Truman Library and informal testimony from others suggested that the book helped graduate students, other scholars in the field, and the staff of the Truman Library, as had been hoped.

The book was not a best seller, but by 1971 sales justified a second printing. By then, however, a new edition seemed more desirable, for Truman historiography had been developing rapidly and significantly in the interim. Many valuable books and articles had been published since 1966, and the controversy concerning the interpretation of Truman and his administration had grown. A poll of historians in 1968 suggested that the positive appraisal—an interpretation that could be called liberal—was then the dominant view among historians;⁷ other evidence, such as the publication by Barton Bernstein of a collection of essays in 1970, indicated that the revisionist view had grown in importance since the 1966 conference.⁸

The prospect that the field would continue to develop impressively, it was clear, justified a new edition. The controversial character of it guaranteed that. Many scholars obviously regarded the period as significant and worthy of study. The increasing availability of primary sources also guaranteed that the scholarship in the field would flourish during the 1970s.

In a note to me early in August 1970, Phil Brooks asked, "Wouldn't you like to bring the book up to date?" As I had already concluded that a new edition was desirable, I welcomed the suggestion and readily agreed to play the roles that I had played earlier. It seemed to me that we should call upon well-qualified scholars for substantial papers on

³Ibid., 56 (September 1969), 439.

⁴*American Historical Review*, 73 (June 1968), 1677.

⁵*Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 52 (Autumn 1968), 73–74.

⁶*The Truman Years: The Reconstruction of Postwar America* (Hinsdale, Ill., 1972), p. 224.

⁷Gary M. Maranell, "The Evaluation of Presidents: An Extension of the Schlesinger Polls," *Journal of American History*, 57 (June 1970), 104–13.

⁸*Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago, 1970).

several subjects: What has been done since 1966 on the questions with which we were concerned in the first book? Did we ask the important questions? What have been the most significant developments since 1966? What are the most important problems that need now to be explored? I also believed that, given the conflict concerning the period that had developed, the new edition should present two papers in each area, foreign and domestic, to represent both the liberal and the revisionist views and represent them adequately. Phil agreed. He hoped that the essays for the new edition could be ready by the time the Truman Institute's board met the following spring, but, as this was impractical, we planned for the contributors to supply the board with "previews" of their papers at that time. They would conduct a panel discussion on the present state of research in the field that would constitute the first stage in the production of the new edition, would inform the board of recent developments in research and interpretation, and would discuss these developments with the members. Brooks and I also agreed to ask the University of Missouri Press to publish the new volume.

With the initial decisions made, the project moved forward. The board quickly approved of the plans, and four scholars in the field soon agreed to present papers. Robert H. Ferrell and Lloyd C. Gardner accepted invitations to write essays on foreign affairs from their significantly different points of view, and Harvard Sitkoff and Alonzo L. Hamby agreed to write papers on domestic matters. The response of these historians and other scholars with whom the project was discussed at the time supported the assumption that we did indeed need a new edition.

In February 1971, the University of Missouri Press agreed to publish the new edition, and the director, Thomas Lloyd, made some valuable suggestions for the enlargement and improvement of the book. In response to them, I concluded that we should call upon the contributors to the earlier edition to write appraisals of the new essays that would be included in the new edition. We assumed that these additions would tie the two volumes together and illustrate the dynamic character of the field. Each of the contributors to the earlier book was asked to prepare a short commentary dealing with those aspects of the essays that seemed especially significant to him and especially relevant to his interests, and each agreed.

On March 27, 1971, the four essayists and I discussed the project with the board of the Truman Institute. The session supplied the two groups with an opportunity to become better acquainted with one another and with the different points of view and interests focusing on the Truman period. The discussion emphasized recent developments in the field, especially the growth of conflict in interpretation, and provoked a vigorous response from members of the board, which included several men who had been members of the Truman administration. The discussions in

this session and in the board meeting later in the day demonstrated once again that the Truman period had become highly controversial. Sharp disagreements were expressed about its significance and about the interpretations scholars were developing. The board's action also supplied fresh evidence of the institute's commitment to the principle of free inquiry.

After this point had been reached, progress slowed. We were frustrated by one of the standard problems of multiauthor books. Several of the contributors could not deliver their manuscripts on schedule, and thus, in spite of the splendid cooperation of the University of Missouri Press, the book did not appear in late 1972 or early 1973 as had been planned. While the first essay was finished early in 1972, the last commentary was not completed until the spring of 1973.

In spite of these frustrations, the book serves the purposes for which it was planned. It should, as did its predecessor, contribute to the further development of the historiography of the Truman period. The essays and the commentaries, as designed, provide a guide to the research that has been accomplished and to the research that remains to be done.

First of all, the contributors document the very active character of the field in the past six years. Many scholars have been hard at work as researchers and writers, and they have produced a substantial number of books and articles. While they have published some broad works, they have emphasized the specialized study.

The contributors also demonstrate that the field has become much more controversial. By 1966, only a few scholars had published negative appraisals of Truman and his administration. Since then, appraisals from that point of view have become a large part of the historical literature. They may, in fact, have become the dominant interpretation, at least among the younger scholars. Few of them, apparently, regard Truman as a great or near great President. The negative appraisal has not, however, been the only interpretation. The contributors call attention to and illustrate conflict between this rising interpretation—often radical in character—and the liberal interpretation that developed earlier. The latter continues to be a part of the recent literature.

To the contributors, the controversy seems much hotter as well as much more fully developed than it was only a few years ago. The heat results in part from the importance for the discipline of the questions involved. The participants are dealing with large issues of a historical period, and they regard them as important issues. The heat results also from their relationship to controversies of our own day. The debate, in other words, has been affected by present concerns about the nation's role abroad and about poverty, racism, and other ills of life within the United States.

The contributors stress the rise of revisionism—perhaps the most significant development in historiography. It has become an especially

important influence in the writing on diplomatic history, but it is not limited to that field. A revisionist critique of Truman's domestic policy has also taken shape, characterized by a strong animosity toward Truman and also toward American liberalism.

The contributors also call attention to a conflict within revisionism itself. Recent developments in historical writing have made this tension very clear. It is a conflict between an emphasis upon the political and economic system—especially capitalism—and an emphasis upon individuals—especially Truman—in efforts to explain undesirable developments. Bernstein suggests that it is a division between radicals who emphasize “imperialism and elite- or class-domination” and left-liberals who “minimize concentration of power and ideology (or economic expansion), and emphasize domestic politics, personality and bureaucracy.” The division appears in studies of domestic matters as well as in studies of the nation's conduct of international affairs. While it separates some scholars from others, the thinking of another group is affected by both points of view.

To make matters still more complex, Bernstein detects disagreements among the radical revisionists, and Gardner indicates that the radical and left-liberal revisionists are not the only scholars who have developed critical appraisals of Truman's foreign policies. He also surveys the rise of a “realist” critique, perhaps it could be labeled “conservative” or “right-liberal.” This view emphasizes political considerations, especially the distribution and scope of power, and does not stress economics as does the New Left revisionism.

Thus, the field has become more complex and controversial than it was when the first edition was prepared. The controversies have given impetus to research, but the scholars have not yet exhausted all possibilities. In fact, the contributors seem to believe that the most important work lies ahead. Ferrell goes so far as to suggest that almost all of the administration's most basic foreign policies and problems need to be explored again, for he believes that the research that has been done rests upon inadequate sources, due to the earlier restrictions on access, now being relaxed. And Sitkoff suggests that the “crucial questions” have not been answered, for they have not been asked!

The contributors make specific suggestions for fresh work. They call for more attention to background—especially the domestic aspects of World War II—and to developments after the Truman period—especially in the Eisenhower years—and they recommend a substantial, comprehensive, and provocative general study of the Truman administration that would help others to see their work in perspective. More specific suggestions concern the administration's basic assumptions and strategy, the bureaucratic process, and Truman's second term.

The first edition advocated more biographical work, and the second

indicates that scholars continue to be dissatisfied with the available biographical work. They want to know much more about Truman, his traits, the determinants of his behavior, his approach to politics, his methods, and his contributions to the origins of the Cold War. More needs to be done on other individuals, and collective biographies should be written.

In spite of the recent outpouring of monographs on the Truman period, more are needed to explore such subjects as the reasons for the Russian withdrawal from Iran in 1946; the American role in this episode; the sources of American expansion; I. F. Stone's hypotheses concerning the Korean War and Japan; and the administration's definition of the Soviet threat. Much more examination of the relationship between the military and foreign policies and of military spending is necessary. We need, too, a legislative history of the proposal for Universal Military Training as well as thorough studies of the interactions between domestic and foreign policies, including the frequently asserted impact of the Cold War on domestic reform.

Studies of the social and economic policies of the Truman period would illuminate other aspects of the time. The contributors suggest studies of the political economy of liberalism, the administration's approach to the economy as a whole, and the relations between government and business. And there are proposals for examinations of the administration's assumptions concerning the problem of poverty in American life, its conceptions of and attention to urban problems, and its influence on the mushrooming of suburbia.

Many of the proposals would continue the White House emphasis of the recent literature, but one of the most persistent and important themes in the essays and commentaries is a plea for broader work. They call for a move beyond the Presidency; more attention to other parts of the political process, to social, economic, and intellectual developments, and to local history; comparisons of the United States with other parts of the world; and greater use of the insights and methods of the social sciences.

Specific suggestions for improvements in the study of the political history of the period emphasize more thorough examination of the structure of politics. What could have been accomplished at the time? To deal satisfactorily with this problem, scholars need to explore the distribution of power, the parties, their leaders and factions, political alliances, the class structure, the role of public opinion, popular attitudes and values, voter behavior, the structure of Congress, the interactions between Congress and the White House, and the ideas of organized groups and intellectuals, including their perceptions of what needed to be done and what could be done to improve life in the United States.

Contributors also encourage diplomatic historians to broaden their

work. They advocate comparative studies of the contributions of different nations and their systems to the outbreak and development of the Cold War and comparisons of American behavior with the behavior of other great powers at different times in history. Scholars are advised to make more thorough analyses of European politics and perceptions and also to break with the "Eurocentric" approach that, it is claimed, dominates the writing of the diplomatic history of the Truman period.

At least two contributors call for another type of change in approach to and interpretation of the field. Sitkoff maintains that we should now move to the "second stage" in Truman research and that the characteristic of that stage would be "analysis rather than celebration and condemnation." Cornwell makes a similar suggestion. He advises scholars to break the hold of "ideological" interpretations and to develop new models of the American political process in order to interpret the period.

Clearly, although the results of much research are now available, much more is needed. This study may underestimate the contributions that have been made, although it does demonstrate that the list is very long. But it should also persuade us that we need to reconsider our ways of looking at the period. And the book might suggest, even more clearly and strongly, that the opportunities for work in the field will be enlarged substantially in the near future by the relaxation and removal of restrictions on access to many manuscript collections. They, as well as the development of fresh points of view and the desire to test the products of older ones, will surely stimulate research and publication.

As the field moves forward, it will continue to benefit greatly from the work of Philip C. Brooks. The contributors to this volume disagree with one another on many subjects, but they are united in their high regard for him. The decision to dedicate the book to him was unanimous. As this introduction has indicated, he contributed significantly to the development of both editions. They, however, are only two of his many contributions to the field. Now retired from his duties as director of the Harry S. Truman Library and secretary of the Truman Library Institute, he has been a figure of fundamental importance for the development of the Truman period as a research field. The list of his contributions as administrator, manuscript collector, promoter of research, oral historian, and friend of scholars is impressive. Those of us who have worked in the field are deeply grateful for his help and friendship, and those who move into it in the future will also benefit from his imaginative and industrious labors.

TRUMAN FOREIGN POLICY A TRADITIONALIST VIEW

ROBERT H. FERRELL

IN THE EARLY 1960s a well-known student of American history, the late John L. Snell, published an article in the *American Historical Review* in which he dealt with several books on the origins of the Cold War, and after criticizing two of them severely he urged historians to turn their attention to that part of the recent past and write about it in the best traditions of their discipline.¹ He could not have known then that in the next few years some able historians, just out of graduate school, together with a young student of English literature, a disillusioned foreign service officer, a linguist, and other interested individuals would radically reverse the views Snell and his contemporaries had advanced about American-Russian relations in 1945 and subsequently and stand them on their heads. Soon there would be a sizable literature on the origins of the Cold War that would find enthusiastic acceptance among college and university students throughout the country. It would describe Snell and his aging colleagues as traditionalists, their historical opinions as received truths, and their conclusions as Cold War rhetoric.

Consider the ideas about the origins of the Cold War that were being proposed in the early 1970s: How different from the views of a decade earlier! So-called revisionist historians were writing that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's subtle treatment of the Soviet Union had been reversed by his successor Harry S. Truman, who saw foreign affairs as a checker game instead of the chess game it really is; that the United States Government under Truman's direction had tried to oust the Soviet Union from Eastern Europe, giving little or no consideration to Russia's security needs in an area close to its borders; that to alert the Russians to U.S. power the Americans dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese; that the Government strove to keep the Russians aware of the Americans' monopoly of atomic power and, largely for such a purpose, advanced a system of international control of atomic weapons—the Baruch Plan—which was almost bound to fail. Meanwhile, the United States Government used every economic device at hand, such as cutting off lend-lease

The substance of this essay appeared in *The Alternative*, 6 (April 1973), 9–14, 28–29; (May 1973), 9–13, 31.

¹"The Cold War: Four Contemporary Appraisals," *American Historical Review*, 68 (1962–1963), 69–75.

to the USSR, reneging on the reparations agreements concluded at the end of the war, and refusing to consider seriously the Russians' pressing need for a postwar loan. Then, early in 1946, the Americans seized upon an admitted Soviet reluctance to get out of northern Iran and, in a confrontation at the United Nations, virtually forced the Russians out. The next year, 1947, marked a rapid increase in American-Russian antagonism, for President Truman intervened in the Greek civil war with the Truman Doctrine, and in order to gain support scared hell out of the country, to use a phrase attributed to Sen. Arthur H. Vandenberg. (Somewhat later, beginning in 1950, the administration would get what it deserved for this tactic, at the hands of a senator who took a free ride on the anti-Communist bandwagon.) The Truman Doctrine inspired the administration to sponsor the Marshall Plan, a program worthy in itself but which had the unfortunate effect of dividing Europe; the President, the revisionists believe, probably had this divisive effect in mind from the outset, for in his memoirs he described the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan as being two halves of the same walnut. All the while, through a series of careful moves, the administration was creating a new state in Europe, West Germany, for the purpose of enlisting German industry and eventually a German army to protect the free world against world communism. By the early 1970s the revisionists had begun to turn their attention to the nation's postwar policies in the Far East and were reexamining the origins of the Korean War; the outbreak of that conflict, they believed, was at least in part attributable to the policies of the United States.

1

The new historical views of the Cold War were fascinating interpretations, and in seeking to understand how such a literature could arise, the inquiring observer noticed, first of all, the relative youth of the interpreters. The authors of the revisionist books and articles were young men who remembered little or nothing about World War II. Lloyd C. Gardner, presently professor of history and chairman of the department at Rutgers, had no thoughts about a career in history in 1939, when he was five years old. Barton J. Bernstein was born in 1936, Gar Alperovitz in 1937, and David J. Horowitz in 1939. It is possible to list the ages of other revisionists such as that of the later foreign service officer and journalist—and a markedly good one—Ronald Steel, born in 1934. It is true that the teacher of some of the leading revisionists, a charismatic figure who inspired them to adopt his own "Open Door" approach to their historical judgments about the Cold War, William A. Williams, was an adult in 1939, a first-year student at the United States Naval Academy. The point remains that most of the revisionists could not have

remembered much if anything about World War II, the beginning of the Cold War, and even the Korean War. They came of age in the middle and late 1950s and shortly thereafter were in graduate school preparing to enter the teaching profession in colleges and universities in the early 1960s.

At the risk of seeming unduly analytical about a group of young men as fascinating as their interpretations—individuals who are good, sharp writers, who have a way of cutting quickly to their point or points, who must all of them be fine lecturers and impressive seminar teachers—one should venture to suggest another factor in their professional growth. They came into the teaching profession in a heady decade when the student population was doubling, faculties were doubling, grants were easy to come by, and books easy to publish. Indeed, anyone with brains and ambition could attain the titles of doctor and professor in a phenomenally short time, with quite a decent salary and the prospects of quick promotions and more salary.

And always there was that generation gap, the feeling that the older scholars—not so old, the oldsters themselves might have thought, but it made no difference what they thought—were, if not over the hill, then intellectually trapped in fantasies about World War II and what they believed had happened afterward. These men were judged able to think of few international influences other than Hitler, Munich, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the long war, and especially the Russians' refusal of friendship after the fighting ended. This older generation had written the textbooks and the monographs and was in control of the departments and the deanships and it could not get Hitler out of its thinking. The contemporaries of the Hitler-generation professors were running the federal government and dominating foreign policy, and as there were many stupidities in the conduct of universities in the 1960s, so too the domestic and foreign policies of the United States Government during the decade were demonstrating questionable judgment. The young men who came into the teaching profession in the early 1960s viewed this scene with the impatience of all young men, an impatience in fair part generated by the fact of youth—their having been too young to have made many mistakes or to have known deep disappointment—and by the fact that they came to manhood at a time when the draft calls for the U.S. Army were small because no large war was being waged or even a police action like Korea, so their careers were not blighted or interrupted by military service. Having come to their own stations of life without interruption, they considered the preceding generation to be a fountainhead of stupidity:

Our elders seem mired in the dead past: the Depression, the War, and the competition with Russia. The Second World War, which most of us are too young to remember except through the movies, was the last war that conceivably could

be defined as just. What followed the defeat of Germany and Japan was a series of dynastic struggles between the new super-powers. Korea, like Vietnam, now seems like just another imperial war for spheres of influence, and the cold war itself little more than a power contest between rival empires, both prevented from launching a full-scale war from fear of suffering instant obliteration. Can there be anybody under forty who sincerely believes in the *morality* of American foreign policy, or that such a word is relevant to any nation's diplomacy?²

One should perhaps explain at this point that the older generation has not been charmed by the Cold War revisionists. But behind their hurt feelings, these critics of the Cold War revisionists constantly wonder why the New Left writers (as some of them describe themselves) have adopted one special interpretation of U.S. foreign policy, the Williams interpretation about the Open Door. The generation gap may have been responsible; for the most part the older generation could not believe in absolutes. Whatever the reason, the majority of older historians have been incredulous as they observe the easy way in which the revisionists picked up the favorite thesis of Williams and used it as a basis for their writings. One of their impulses for using the thesis is understandable. Walter LaFeber and Lloyd Gardner had been trained at the University of Wisconsin and were Williams's students. It is difficult to understand why at Wisconsin, where a half century earlier Frederick Jackson Turner had taught about the importance of the frontier in the development of the nation, Williams was able to capture so much attention for another monocausal interpretation. I recall keenly the first time I heard this interpretation—from Williams himself in the mid-1950s—during a little seminar for historians conducted by George L. Anderson at the University of Kansas. Williams gave a paper showing how the Open Door policy was naught but an extension of Turner's old frontier thesis, and how hope for an Open Door for American commerce had dominated U.S. foreign policy since the 1890s, if not earlier. I was chosen to respond first to the paper and could only express my simple-minded wonder that such an all-encompassing thesis should be developed, considering that the author's generation had been brought up on a historical diet of the essays of Charles A. Beard and Carl L. Becker, which taught that historical truths are relative.

Whatever one might think of the datedness of one-cause history, the revisionists almost without exception have espoused the Open Door theory of U.S. foreign policy and in books and articles have pushed the theory for all the traffic will bear, and a good deal more. LaFeber's doctoral thesis, entitled *The New Empire*, a survey of U.S. foreign policy from 1860 until 1898, concluded that a search for raw materials and markets was the dominant force of the time.³ Gardner's thesis, also

²Ronald Steel, *Imperialists and Other Heroes: A Chronicle of the American Empire* (New York, 1971), pp. 6-7.

³*The New Empire*, winner of the Beveridge Prize of the American Historical Association, was published by Cornell University Press in 1963.

published and also now available in a paperback edition, comes very close to saying that in the 1930s the effort to push a diplomacy of U.S. commerce, the Open Door for U.S. products, led to a clash with the Axis Powers and eventually war.⁴ As Irwin Unger has said, how much more easily could the younger generation have hoped to tangle with the older than to assert that the war against Hitler was only a war for American markets?⁵ LaFeber and Gardner passed from their doctoral theses into analyses of the Cold War, using the Williams principle. They not merely gathered around their arguments against U.S. management of the Cold War an old-fashioned aura of the Open Door (everyone knew, of course, that the Open Door policy failed in China when tried at the turn of the century), but they pointed out that such a recent piece of journalism as Henry Luce's "American Century" editorial in *Life* magazine in 1941 was only an assertion of the Open Door. According to LaFeber, in the post-1945 years the United States' Open Door policy toward trade and politics in Eastern Europe (the American Century) clashed with the USSR's desire for security around its borders. The young military historian Stephen E. Ambrose, who recently has slipped into Cold War revisionism, can write agreeably that the policy of containment of Russia "was never more than a euphemism for the expansion of American influence and dominance."⁶

Perhaps the revisionists' fascination with the Williams theory of the Open Door, a belief that American commercial expansion was at the bottom of the Cold War as of other discreditable episodes in the nation's history, derives from the politics of several of the revisionists. Williams and Gardner are socialists, and so are Horowitz and Gabriel Kolko; the latter two subject their readers to heavy doses of socialism. Kolko is constantly talking about the necessary preconditions of this event or that, and the preconditions are almost always economic.

The fallaciousness of such an approach as the Open Door has often been pointed out, but the explanations evidently have not been convincing. The winner of the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1972, Carl Degler, in a review of Williams's latest book has shown the improbability of an economic cause of the Spanish-American War of 1898, which Williams attributes in fair part to the desire of American farmers to

⁴*Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* was published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 1964.

⁵"The 'New Left' and American History: Some Recent Trends in United States Historiography," *American Historical Review*, 72 (1966-1967), 1248.

⁶Walter LaFeber, ed., *Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947: Documents and Problems* (New York, 1971), p. 3; Stephen E. Ambrose, "The Failure of a Policy Rooted in Fear," *Progressive*, November, 1970.

expand their markets.⁷ If the farmers wanted markets, Degler has countered, that desire might explain their support of the war, but how about the city folk who, if the farmers had been denied foreign markets, would have had cheaper food because of overproduction at home? What did they have to gain by supporting the farmers? Williams, Gardner, and other revisionists—good socialists—are bothered, indeed haunted, by capitalism, a kind of bogey. Are they not sophisticated enough as students of American history to know that if there ever was a predatory, power-seeking era, an unabashedly exploitive period when the capitalists prowled through the cottages of the proletariat like wolves, that time has long since passed? As for U.S. goals in World War II, John L. Gaddis, in a paper at the Boston meeting of the American Historical Association in 1970, has shown that economics cannot possibly explain the United States' motives in fighting the Axis Powers:

Public and private statements made by policy-makers at the time . . . indicate that they did not accord the Open Door the importance revisionist historians have given it. President Roosevelt and his advisers did place great emphasis on reviving a multilateral system of world trade, but this was only one element of a larger scheme for avoiding future wars, influenced primarily by a determination to avoid the mistakes of World War I and the interwar period. Washington officials articulated with at least equal emphasis such other goals as unconditional surrender, the disarmament of defeated enemies, self-determination, and the establishment of a new collective security organization.⁸

Carried to its logical conclusion, the revisionist economic interpretation indicates, of course, that the Cold War was an unavoidable conflict, a clash for which individuals could bear no responsibility. But then the revisionists wobble on their one-cause interpretation and spend much analysis on how certain individuals, had they been listened to, could have changed history.⁹

Might it not be that the concern of the revisionists with their Open Door theory shows that they are bothered by the enormous international, domestic, political, economic, and social transformations during the past decade and the decades prior to it—changes that many of the revisionists do not like and for which they are seeking a satisfying explanation? In a recent article Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., has pointed out how, in the course of the changes of the past quarter century, the individual has often found himself in the hands of a kind of soulless, uncontrollable

⁷Review of *The Roots of the Modern American Empire* (New York, 1969), in *American Historical Review*, 75 (1969–1970), 1780–82.

⁸"Domestic Influences on American Policy Toward the Soviet Union, 1941–1947." I am much indebted to Gaddis for a copy of this perceptive paper.

⁹Gaddis, "Domestic Influences"; see also the thoroughgoing analysis in Charles S. Maier, "Revisionism and the Interpretation of Cold War Origins," *Perspectives in American History*, 4 (1970), 313–47.

organization, and, rather than seeking to control change so as to allow for the continuing movement of the individual will, many people are railing against change or attributing some single, simple cause for the change when, in fact, it is due to the interaction in almost cosmic proportions of a vast complex of ideas and interests. "The basic task," as Schlesinger proposes it, is not to ride off against some windmill, but "to control and humanize the forces of change in order to prevent them from tearing our society apart."¹⁰

But all this discussion of what is at the center of revisionist thought about the Cold War or what might be at the center is to say nothing about the scholarly techniques of revisionist writers—about which something needs to be remarked in general before turning to specific points of revision and how the revisionists seek to prove them. Here one comes to the issue, so much discussed in recent years, of a usable past. Let no reader hesitate to accuse the Cold War revisionists of taking the present into the past. And in the course of observing their uses of the past it is not necessary to agree with Unger, who sees a good deal of historical revision as an effort to domesticate American radicalism, in order to conclude that Cold War revisionists are not very tidy in their methods. Adam Ulam has written an injunction about historical scholarship that the revisionists would do well to take to heart; the historian, Ulam says, must accept the past as he finds it:

Before he becomes a philosopher of history or a judge, he must tell us what actually happened. His primary duty is not to be attuned to the currently fashionable trends in public thinking or to be a counselor to statesmen. It is to ascertain what, in terms of our knowledge, is a fact, what could be a reasonable hypothesis, and what must remain a conjecture. If he does not meet that test, he is a moralist or a publicist but not an historian.¹¹

The Cold War revisionists surely have fallen into several errors of historical method. For one, whatever their view of U.S. responsibility for the Cold War, the revisionists have adopted an unhistorical—and also unfair—tactic by virtually assuming that a statesman is wrong until proved right. Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence holds the opposite view. But most historians would assert that such a presumption about the nation's leaders has not squared with the record of, now, almost two hundred years. Should historians conclude that the era after 1945 was a sudden throwback, not to American practice, but to the statecraft of renaissance Italy?

The revisionists also are expert in using some of the old ploys of

¹⁰"The Velocity of History," *Newsweek*, July 6, 1970.

¹¹"On Modern History: Re-reading the Cold War," *Interplay Magazine*, 2 (March 1968), 51–53, reprinted in part in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *The Origins of the Cold War* (Lexington, Mass., 1970).

writers who attempt to make points, as when they try to run in arguments on the unsuspecting reader. It is amusing to observe the virtuoso performances, up and down the literary keyboard, of Barton Bernstein, who can write, "A year before the global crusade of the Truman Doctrine . . .," to introduce his account of an event. In similar manner he manages to bring into sudden focus a highly dubious point made by Alperovitz and assert it as truth: "In 1945, when the United States sought to liberate Eastern Europe with 'atomic diplomacy,' Lippmann subtly warned . . ."; and again: "[Lippmann] did not know that Secretary Byrnes had already tried to use atomic diplomacy to frighten the Soviets out of Eastern Europe."¹² In a small meeting that I attended at the Truman Library, the assembled scholars were treated to a bland assumption of the Alperovitz thesis by Bernstein; when challenged on the subject he answered, "I thought everyone agreed with Alperovitz." Similar examples of oneupmanship appear in the writings of another revisionist, Gardner, who among other tricks can juxtapose two irrelevant facts: "Even before Bullitt's note arrived in the White House, the President had acted."¹³

Gardner's essay on William C. Bullitt in *Architects of Illusion* is a masterly example of how to influence readers—a combination of fact and surmise, a kind of glancing commentary about the era of Bullitt, based on the assumption that the U.S. ambassador to Russia and to France during the 1930s represented some large body of American opinion. In truth, Bullitt was one of the oddest ducks ever to inhabit any duck run of foreign policy, a most quixotic individual who, contrary to the innuendo in Gardner's essay, had almost no influence on Roosevelt by the time FDR began to think about the country's entrance into war, not to mention later years when "Bill" Bullitt was painfully isolated from influence on anyone except, possibly, Henry Luce.¹⁴

John Gimbel, the author of a much-cited study of the U.S. occupation of Germany, has complained at length about "the kind of hocus-pocus that is often passed off as historical research by those who write cold-war history," and this prestidigitation is sometimes observable in the summoning of nonexperts to give expert—that is, convenient—explanations.¹⁵

¹²Walter Lippmann and the Early Cold War," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics: Alternatives to American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 32, 46, 56.

¹³*Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941–1949* (Chicago, 1970), p. 6.

¹⁴Beatrice Farnsworth, *William C. Bullitt and the Soviet Union* (Bloomington, Ind., 1967).

¹⁵John Gimbel, *The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945–1949* (Stanford, Calif., 1968). The quotation appears in "Cold War: German Front," *The Maryland Historian*, 2 (1971), 41–55.

LaFeber's revisionist *America, Russia, and the Cold War* makes much out of a letter from Alfred P. Sloan to Bernard Baruch, written in 1945, that LaFeber found in the Baruch Papers at Princeton.¹⁶ Sloan wanted the American government to revive German industry, contrary to the Joint Chiefs of Staff paper numbered 1067, which was supposed to guide American military governors. Yet Sloan's view of what should be postwar policy toward Germany was Sloan's view, and whether it figured in the calculus of the United States Government must at the least be suspect. The letter does play into the beliefs of many present-day students who are sure that General Motors is up to monkey business.

David Donald, in what for the most part is an attack on Cold War revisionism, has praised the books of Kolko and LaFeber, saying that these revisionist authors and not the older scholars of the establishment "have written the basic books, resting upon massive research, on the last three decades of our foreign relations."¹⁷ Donald is an expert on the American Civil War and on Reconstruction, the Pulitzer prize biographer of Charles Sumner, but he is dead wrong about Cold War revisionism, for he obviously has not checked out the revisionists' footnotes. Much of their footnoting is as defective as Charles C. Tansill's documentation of twenty years ago about the coming of war with Japan.¹⁸ As Tansill

¹⁶*America, Russia, and the Cold War* (New York, 1967; 2d ed., 1972), p. 20. LaFeber's documentary volume, *Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947*, prints the Sloan letter (pp. 129-31) as Document 34; Document 33 is the Potsdam agreement on Germany, and Document 35 is Secretary of State James F. Byrnes's Stuttgart speech of September 6, 1946.

¹⁷"Radical Historians on the Move," *New York Times Book Review*, July 19, 1970.

¹⁸The revisionists have had a field day with their scholarship because historians have failed to examine their footnotes other than to be impressed with their variety and quantity. At last a historian has gone behind those notes, back to the sources, and has checked out the contexts of quotations, watching closely for the revisionists' use of ellipsis points. It turns out that their footnotes are a mosaic of misrepresentation. See Robert J. Maddox, "Cold War Revisionism: Abusing History," *Freedom at Issue* (September-October 1972), 3-6, 16-19. This article is introduced by Oscar Handlin, the distinguished Harvard historian, who has been in the fore of the disbelievers in revisionism. Maddox's *The New Left and the Origins of the Cold War* (Princeton, 1973) enlarges on the above theme with chapters on Williams, D. F. Fleming, Horowitz, Alperovitz, Kolko, Diane Shaver Clemens, and Gardner. With its publication in June, 1973, a furious debate opened between revisionists and their opponents, with one perceptive individual describing the confrontation as "the historians' Watergate." As for Tansill's use of materials, I was once shown confidentially a most painstaking analysis of the footnotes to his *Back Door to War* (Chicago, 1952), the volume he and his supporters claimed was based on the Department of State archives. It certainly was—whenever Tansill was proving a commonplace. When he came to crucial points, his State Department documentation thinned down to nothing. But he discovered the unpublished Department records helpful in other ways; his many impressive citations to newspapers indicated that he used the Department's press surveys without attribution, an odd procedure for a scholar who maintained that one could not trust the Department of State in any way.

documented the irrelevant and the well known, so Kolko and LaFeber have produced an array of footnotes that appear significant. But underneath those awesome citations can be a remarkable thinness. How otherwise explain the constant appearance in LaFeber's text on the origins of the Cold War of citations to the unpublished Baruch Papers at Princeton? Most writers about the post-1945 period—and surely a majority of the individuals alive today who took part in the politics of the era—know that Baruch was a vain, pompous, egotistical self-advertiser who, by his own recounting, had made a fortune in the stock market. His opinions were grossly unrepresentative, but he occasionally had to be brought in on political issues because his conservative politics tended to scare away Republican and crackpot critics.¹⁹ LaFeber knows these facts, but the Baruch Papers happened to be open and they were full of opinions, a convenient quarry from which to mine commentaries, such as the letter from Sloan about free enterprise in Germany. Responsible historians, one might conclude, should not use the memorabilia of “old goats,” a label Truman pinned on Baruch. Much of the other documentation by revisionists cycles around the commentaries of critics of policy, such as Walter Lippmann, Henry A. Wallace, Claude Pepper, Glen Taylor, or James A. Warburg, who always were operating on the outside of affairs and whose opinions were so flighty that no sensible statesman could have welcomed them into the inner councils of power.²⁰

To add another detail to the above points about documentation, one should not fail to notice how the revisionists love to cite the works of each other. Alperovitz, in a footnote for his paperback of collected

¹⁹Baruch had threatened to get off the reservation during debate over the Truman Doctrine, largely because the President had the temerity to recommend Greek-Turkish aid to the country without consulting Baruch. The President's advisers had difficulty in bringing Baruch around, for Truman flatly refused to court the old man. The President's counsel, Clark Clifford, told Lilienthal, who put the remark in his diary (entry of March 23, 1947, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, II [New York, 1964], 163–64), that the President said, “I'm just *not* going to do it. I'm not going to spend hours and hours on that old goat, come what may. If you take his advice, then you have him on your hands for hours and hours, and it is *his* policy. I'm not going to do it.” The President said there was a decision to make and it was going to be made. Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal gave a dinner for Baruch at which Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson and Secretary of Commerce W. Averell Harriman were guests; beforehand, Forrestal called up Lewis Strauss, who also was to attend, and told him that the purpose of the meeting was “to grease the old boy.” About this time Lilienthal was moving carefully with Baruch for another reason, and he noted, “They really work at it, too. Everyone does. Everyone, apparently, but the President, who says he just won't.” For another piece of Baruchiana, see my *George C. Marshall* (New York, 1966), p. 223.

²⁰The revisionist Paterson, in his edited volume, *Cold War Critics*, has brought together essays on these men, together with chapters on Robert A. Taft, black critics of colonialism and the Cold War, I. F. Stone and the Korean War, and the threat to civil liberties.

essays, recommends LaFeber's *America, Russia, and the Cold War* as "the best brief one-volume survey of the postwar period"; it can be "usefully supplemented" by Richard J. Barnet's *Intervention and Revolution: America's Confrontation with Insurgent Movements Around the World*. Both, he states, "are excellent, especially for college teaching." Gardner, in his *Architects of Illusion*, found his good friend LaFeber's *America, Russia, and the Cold War* an "excellent survey" and remarked his "indebtedness to Professor LaFeber." LaFeber's subsequently published *Origins of the Cold War*, a book of documents and pseudo documents (he includes the Sloan letter), credits Gardner's *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* as "the best synthesis of the entire 1933-1945 period" and states that *Architects of Illusion* "is the best work covering the entire 1940s."²¹

In regard to documentation, John Gaddis, in the Preface to his new and very able nonrevisionist study, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War: 1941-1947*, cautions historians of the era after 1945 that they must constantly remember that they are dealing almost entirely with American materials. Scholars, he says, face a peculiar problem in that "we have little reliable information about what went on inside the Kremlin during the same period."²² Unless they can gain access to the information about Russian activities and thought of the time, they surely must write with something less than dogmatism.

Speaking of the American side, I comment on the fact—not well understood even within the historical profession, much less among the public at large—that Cold War revisionists and other scholars interested in our foreign policy following World War II have used government archival materials to only slight extent because almost all of these materials have been closed until recently. At the present writing (1973), the State Department's archives have just become available for events through the year 1947. Access to the archives of the Department of State is tied to publication of annual volumes in the documentary series *Foreign Relations of the United States*; the series is now dealing with 1948, and one may assume that the records for 1948 will be opened in the near future. The eminent diplomatic historian Dexter Perkins, eighty-four years old, a past president of the American Historical Association, author of twenty-three books, most of them about American foreign policy, in a recent communication to the *Newsletter* of the American Historical Association has cautioned his young colleagues, the revisionists, in a pointed manner. "There are . . . reasons," he writes, "for great modesty

²¹Gar Alperovitz, *Cold War Essays* (Garden City, N.Y., 1970), p. 92n; Barnet's book was published by the New American Library and World Publishing Company, New York and Cleveland, 1968. See also *Architects*, p. 354; *Origins of the Cold War*, p. 171.

²²*The United States and the Origins of the Cold War: 1941-1947* (New York, 1972).

in dogmatizing about the history of American foreign policy in the last quarter century. The documentation is incomplete."²³ How can David Donald say that some of the revisionists have produced the basic books, resting upon massive research, when for the most part they have not even had the benefit of published volumes in the *Foreign Relations* series, not to mention the mountain of documentation that lies behind *Foreign Relations*?²⁴

The size of the American unpublished records leads to a final observation about the methods of the Cold War revisionists, although this observation is only indirectly related to the State Department files in Washington. It concerns generally the mass of material, unpublished and published, that a researcher finds available. The heterogeneous, huge body of documentation makes the historian of the Cold War, revisionist or traditionalist, long for the task of the scholar of the Middle Ages who, in confronting a problem of documentation, may need to deal with three documents, two of which are fakes (his task being to determine which is the original). Any researcher on the Cold War, even if he delves into the huge body of material that lies outside the State Department archives, must, if he is looking for some meaning amidst the near-chaos, quickly fix upon two or three or four principles and from them try to derive some overreaching theme or thesis by which, at least in his own mind, he can order the material. Otherwise, he could spend a lifetime behind the paper barricades. But the revisionist will perhaps refuse to change his thesis when contrary evidence appears. If he feels strongly that Vietnam was not merely a great error but only the most recent collapse in a row of dominoes, he will tend to believe that—to use Kolko's Marxist phrase—the necessary preconditions are there and hence the thesis cannot be wrong, despite the evidence. At such a point the trap of the present will close, not with a bang but ever so softly, over the would-be student of the past.

2

In analyzing the revisionist view of the Cold War in some detail it is necessary to say at the outset that there is no accepted body of revisionist doctrine, that the loose aggregation of young scholars, a few older scholars, and some journalists who have received the name of revisionists are not agreed even upon the name, which to some of them is a foolish

²³AHA, *Newsletter*, May, 1971.

²⁴A conference of researchers and archivists, sponsored by the General Services Administration and held at the National Archives in the summer of 1969, introduced many scholars to the complexities of the national records, and further details have appeared in successive issues of *Prologue*, the new Archives journal ably edited by Herman Viola.

term. There are very considerable disagreements in regard to the origins of the Cold War; no simple listing of revisionist views can do justice to individual, dissenting members of the group. Even so, there are generally held theories and hypotheses.

For the first year of the Cold War, 1945, the revisionists have advanced three theories, the initial one of which is that President Roosevelt was a subtle, sophisticated operator in foreign relations as in domestic politics, and that President Truman was pretty much the opposite; hence, for a personal reason alone, the change in the Presidency, U.S. foreign relations took a downward plunge, once the feisty, hard-hitting Missouri politician became President. Gardner is not, apparently, sure of this argument, although it is perhaps in another particular that he has spoken of a devil theory of history. Kolko has cavalierly brushed this personal argument aside and has accused some of the revisionists of being enamored with personalities in history, instead of being concerned with forces, the latter of which, according to Kolko, are the determinants in the inexorable movement of capitalism toward its Waterloo. Whatever the dissenting opinions, there does seem to be a belief on the part of most revisionists that Truman stiffened up U.S. diplomacy to such an extent that he may have reversed it. Athan G. Theoharis, who is concerned about the effect of foreign policy in bringing on the McCarthyist excesses, is convinced that Truman's new outlook was of major importance.²⁵ Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, in one of their explanations of their rambunctious article on "red fascism," assert that Truman "was clearly more blustering, less cautious, and less willing to compromise."²⁶ This view, one might add, echoes the contemporary opinion of many New Deal Democrats who, for a while after the war, moved toward support of Henry Wallace; at the outset of the Truman Presidency these liberals believed that the country's leader from Missouri was junking FDR's foreign policies, just as he was abandoning the Roosevelt heritage in domestic politics.²⁷ The usual demonstration of Truman's tough attitude toward the Russians is to point to his treatment of Molotov when

²⁵*The Yalta Myths: An Issue in U.S. Politics, 1945-1955* (Columbia, Mo., 1970); *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (Chicago, 1971).

²⁶"Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930's-1950's," *American Historical Review*, 75 (1969-1970), 1046-64. It produced an utterly unprecedented flow of letters to the editor, to which the authors responded with as much heat and sarcasm as the critics bestowed. See *AHR*, 75, 2155-64; 76 (1970-1971), 575-80, 856-58. It all reminded me of the nineteenth-century railleries from and to Thomas Carlyle, in which critics did not fail to mention Carlyle's wife Jane, one of them remarking that Thomas and Jane deserved each other.

²⁷Alonzo Hamby, "The Liberals, Truman, and FDR as Symbol and Myth," *Journal of American History*, 56 (1969-1970), 863.

the Soviet Foreign Minister passed through Washington in April, 1945, en route to the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations.²⁸

It is an interesting speculation to think of one leader reversing the policy of his predecessor, and Schlesinger has pointed out the dramatic temptation here, yet this theory about a change in policies has less to it than meets the eye.²⁹ Roosevelt was a compromiser, sometimes to the point of dissimulation. At other times he could be so devious or so unable to communicate his purposes that to the present day one is uncertain what he originally had in mind, if anything. An individual with this make-up could drive his straightforward subordinates to distraction or to fury. Gen. George C. Marshall never completely trusted Roosevelt; the only time Marshall went to Hyde Park to see the President, despite many invitations, was on the occasion of Roosevelt's funeral. As compared to Roosevelt, Truman was a breath of fresh air, open and businesslike. All these points have been made many times and are well known, but to push them into a conclusion that Truman, whose *modus operandi* was so different, sought to reverse Roosevelt's foreign policy is to make a historical mistake.

Truman in 1941 had delivered himself of a snap judgment that Soviet publicists, and the revisionists, would never forget. Shortly after the Germans attacked the Soviet Union he had said that he was delighted and he hoped they would fight each other to the death, with the United States helping whichever side was losing. But this opinion had given way to more maturity of thought long before 1945 and his inheritance of the Presidency, and there is every reason to believe that, despite the little talk session with Molotov, the President loyally undertook to carry out the foreign policy of his predecessor. For one circumstance, he was too new in the office to have formed many detailed opinions on foreign policy. For another, he was properly sensitive to the fact that he had been elected Vice President only because he was on the ticket with Roosevelt, and it would have been presumptuous of him in April 1945, to have started off on his own presidential policies, foreign or domestic. For a third, his actions in the spring of 1945 showed that he wanted to get along with Stalin. Churchill was pressing the new President to act, for the old Britisher as well as many members of Roosevelt's disgruntled official family eagerly anticipated a more straightforward Presidency. As is well known, the Prime Minister wanted a showdown with the Russians. To

²⁸"He had never been spoken to like that before, exclaimed Molotov. But knowing who his boss was, one must assume that the Soviet statesman was exaggerating." Adam B. Ulam, *The Rivals: America and Russia Since World War II* (New York, 1971), p. 64.

²⁹"Origins of the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs*, 46 (1967-1968), 22-52. This article, which still impresses me as an admirable piece in every way, stirred the revisionists to fury. From the heartfelt nature of the wrath, one had the feeling that Schlesinger had skewered several of their favorite "illusions," to use Gardner's word.

Churchill's intense chagrin, Truman refused to allow American troops to remain in the parts of the Soviet-designated zone of Germany they had entered in the last days of the war against Hitler.³⁰

The revisionists like to show that at the outset of his Presidency Truman was listening to some hard-line advisers (to use a later expression). Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson was upset because of the anti-Russian feeling among Truman's advisers, notably Averell Harriman and the latter's Moscow assistant in charge of Russian lend-lease, Maj. Gen. John R. Deane. But Herbert Feis's latest book, *From Trust to Terror*, points out that, at this time, Harriman was not on the inside of Truman's group of advisers, nor for that matter was Stimson. The new President had turned for advice to FDR's chief of staff, now his own, Adm. William D. Leahy.³¹ At the outset Truman's opinions on foreign policy seem to have been so uncertain that at the same time he sent Harry Hopkins to Moscow to assure Stalin of the new administration's desire to cooperate with the Soviets to achieve European peace he dispatched Joseph E. Davies to see Churchill in England. Davies, to be sure, was well known to be "soft" on communism, and he must have impressed Churchill negatively. While he was serving as ambassador to Russia, prior to World War II, Davies had justified the purge trials and in his book *Mission to Moscow*, had described Stalin as no tyrant, a judgment he supported with the statement that a child would sit on the dictator's lap and a dog would sidle up to him.

In trying to demonstrate that Truman took a hard line after Roosevelt's more subtle approach, the revisionists in one respect have struck some fire, at least some good quotations. In addition to relying for diplomatic advice upon Admiral Leahy, Truman turned to James F. Byrnes, and almost immediately after the end of the San Francisco Conference, when it was possible to ease the hopelessly naive Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., out of the secretaryship, he designated the South Carolinian as Secretary of State. The arrangement was to propel Stettinius into the United Nations.³² Byrnes talked tough within administration circles in the sum-

³⁰On this point, which surely needs a book, see William M. Franklin, "Zonal Boundaries and Access to Berlin," *World Politics*, 16 (1963-1964), 1-31; David Herschler, "The Grand Alliance and Germany-1945: The Decision to Withdraw the Anglo-American Forces from the Soviet Zone of Occupation," M.A. thesis at Brooklyn College, 1972, done under the direction of Hans L. Trefousse.

³¹*From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York, 1970), pp. 17-19.

³²*From Trust to Terror*; also, the important analysis in Richard L. Walker and George Curry, *Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., and James F. Byrnes* (New York, 1965). Curry's account deserves careful attention, for he based it on close personal consultation with Byrnes and also had full access to the Byrnes Papers. Prior to publishing in the *American Secretaries* series, Curry had assisted the Secretary in research and writing of his autobiography.

mer of 1945, and the revisionists have found several good quotations to show that he was no naïf. But contrary to the revisionists, Byrnes's views on Russian-American relations in 1945 are difficult to pin down. Probably the highly intelligent man was himself unsure of his position, as was true of most Americans at the time. Underneath his geniality he resented being pushed around. He had the impression—which was as good as true, considering what the Russians were doing in Eastern Europe—that the Soviets were being extremely difficult. But then in the autumn and winter of 1945–1946, Byrnes appears to have weakened toward the Russians to the extent that—so Truman in a famous section of his memoirs was to state—he, the President, was forced to rebuke the Secretary of State for “babying” the Soviets. Byrnes denied this allegation, and there is no reason to doubt his denial. The point is that, in Byrnes, the revisionists clearly are dealing with no doctrinaire on the Russian question. How does that fact fit some of their hard-line commentaries about Byrnes's Machiavellian influence on the inexperienced President? Moreover, the Byrnes Papers at the Clemson University Library have recently (1971) been opened, and it would behoove the revisionists, who have written at great length about Byrnes's baneful influence, to take a look at the Secretary's private correspondence.

It would be possible to relate in detail the evidence, which is undeniable, that Roosevelt was hardening his own view of the Russians just before his death.³³ It should suffice to say of the point that Truman reversed Roosevelt's policy, however, that it is at the least unproved and that most signs point in the direction of continuity.

In considering the responsibility of leading personalities there seems much more reason to believe that Stalin, rather than Truman, forced the Cold War, though the reasoning for that conclusion must be widely open to debate. Perhaps the Jacques Duclos letter of April 1945, was a Communist declaration of war on the West, though perhaps it was not.³⁴

³³To the chagrin of the revisionists, Schlesinger, in “Origins of the Cold War,” p. 24*n*, published an account of a conversation between Anna Rosenberg Hoffman and FDR on March 24, 1945, the last day Roosevelt spent in Washington. After luncheon the President was handed a cable, read it, and became quite angry. He banged his fists on the arms of his wheelchair and said, “Averell is right; we can't do business with Stalin. He has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta.” See also the article in the *New York Times*, March 27, 1972, by Francis L. Loewenheim, containing a hitherto unpublished cable from FDR to Churchill, dated April 6, 1945.

³⁴“Frère Jacques” Duclos, the Comintern official in charge of the Western Communist parties, in *Cahiers du Communisme* for April, 1945, launched an attack on the American Communist party, condemning Earl Browder's revisionism. Schlesinger, in “Origins of the Cold War,” says that he could not have planned and written this piece much later than the Yalta Conference, therefore it shows that Stalin was turning against the West well before the incidents the revisionists often cite to demonstrate American responsibility for the Cold War. The revisionists refuse to believe this evidence and stress the unimportance of the letter or else Schlesinger's misinterpretation of it.

Perhaps Stalin was mad; perhaps he was not, although of his later madness there is excellent testimony by N. S. Khrushchev. As Melvin Croan, a political scientist at the University of Wisconsin, remarked at a scholarly conference in London several years ago, the internal compulsions of the Soviet state in 1945—the political unreliability of large sections of the Soviet people, the need to force a rebuilding of Soviet industry after the war's devastation—made it highly convenient, maybe even necessary, for Stalin to have an external enemy, for him to have a Cold War.³⁵ It is clear that nothing short of the conversion of the United States into a satellite would have sufficed to abolish Stalin's distrust. Even that might not have sufficed, considering the manner in which he could assail his closest friends, or states with the most friendly political systems, for some mythical deviation or other.

A second hypothesis of the revisionists concerning diplomacy during the year 1945, on which they have shown considerable agreement, is that after the Yalta Conference the United States Government sought to intervene in Russia's security zone in Eastern Europe, trying to gain influence, perhaps even dominance, over the *cordon sanitaire* of weak nations lying between Western Europe and the Soviet borders. Henry Wallace was saying in 1946 that the United States was being self-righteous in trying to force its ways into supervision of the politics of the Eastern European nations and that Russian "efforts to develop a security zone in Eastern Europe . . . are small change from the point of view of military power as compared with our air bases in Greenland, Okinawa and many other places thousands of miles from our shores." Walter Lippmann soon was pointing to a double standard in that, at the end of the war, the Anglo-Americans had dominated the reorganization of the Italian government. Stalin, in a cable to Truman in 1945, had remarked that he had not sought to intervene in the politics of Belgium or Greece. What to the revisionists has seemed a proof of the Truman administration's hypocrisy in trying to give the Soviets advice on Eastern Europe was the telephone conversation on May 8, 1945, between John J. McCloy, present at the San Francisco Conference, and Secretary Stimson, in the course of which these two administration stalwarts agreed that the United States could maintain its sphere of influence in Latin America and still reasonably ask the Soviets for concessions in Eastern Europe; McCloy and Stimson spoke of having their cake and eating it too, a metaphor not soon forgotten by their critics of the 1960s.

The revisionists have pointed out that, during the war, President Roosevelt had tried to avoid talk of division of Europe or of the world into spheres of influence and had favored a kind of universalism that,

³⁵"Origins of the Post-War Crisis—a Discussion," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (1967–1968), 233–37, excerpted in Paterson, ed., *Origins of the Cold War*, p. 112.

some of the revisionists have said, was nothing less than the Open Door for American commerce. The revisionists have noted that this presidential strategy of delaying decisions about the character of the postwar political map had its special advantage in Eastern Europe, the homeland of large numbers of the Democratic party's supporters. It is true that Roosevelt at Teheran told Stalin that he hoped there would be no decision affecting the map of Eastern Europe until after the 1944 presidential election, and he mentioned the Polish problem in particular. There is no question but that the strategy of delaying the drawing of postwar boundaries and the establishment of political regimes allowed Roosevelt to avoid telling the American people, especially his Polish supporters, some hard truths about what the Red Army might do in the regions it occupied. Stalin's outrageous refusal to send the Red Army across the Vistula to assist the Warsaw uprising in 1944 while the Germans blew up the city, block by block, however, should have carried a message to any American Poles who wondered about the postwar policies of the Soviets. Then, at Yalta, Roosevelt almost openly yielded to the Russians' wishes about boundaries, politics, and human rights in Eastern Europe. When Admiral Leahy protested, FDR said there was nothing the United States could do. He glossed over his inaction by arranging the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, and the revisionists are quite right in pointing out also that the terms for operation of the Allied Control councils in the occupied territories gave complete control to Soviet troops.

After his initial angry outburst at Molotov, Truman accepted this state of affairs, as well he might have, the revisionists to the contrary. As the Soviet Union in the next two years committed outrage after outrage in Eastern Europe, the protests that issued from Washington were protests and could be nothing more. The revisionists interpret them as efforts at interference, failing to understand the President's political problem in dealing with such senators as Vandenberg of Michigan who represented a large group of Polish constituents, failing also to understand the need for any decent human being to speak out against the repression behind the Iron Curtain. The revisionists, as moral men, spoke out against the war in Vietnam, but they cannot understand similar efforts by the United States Government for the suffering peoples of Eastern Europe. Should one mention again the phrase "double standard"?

Herbert Feis believed in retrospect that the Western allies should have risked a break with Stalin at Yalta rather than make the Eastern European agreements, but the bleakness of the Western position emerges clearly in Feis's estimate of the result in such a case. "I think," he wrote, "that if they had taken that risk, Stalin would have given in slightly about Poland."³⁶

³⁶*From Trust to Terror*, p. 26.

What in retrospect strikes one as peculiar about the situation in Eastern Europe is not that the Soviets feared an open door to American trade and therefore erected barriers to American capitalism (it never seems to have bothered them much), nor that the Americans saw Soviet domination as the camel's nose of socialism under the tent of Western Europe (there is not much American official testimony in this regard), nor that the Russians were sensitive about the politics of the states along their borders (undoubtedly this was the case), but that the Soviets found it necessary to make the Eastern European countries utterly subservient to Russian rule. They had for examples their neighbor Finland, a little country that behaved and paid its reparations on time, and Czechoslovakia prior to 1948, which likewise showed care for Soviet sensibilities. Apparently the Russians, for all their supposed political savvy, could not understand the impossibly weak position of the little countries of Eastern Europe and came to think that even a small evidence of democracy was dangerous. Stalin made the well-known remark at Potsdam that "any freely elected government would be anti-Soviet, and that we cannot permit," but was this really an astute observation? There is either a doctrinaire politics here or the operation of an irrational will. Either belies the assertions of the revisionists that an American policy of universalism, in particular the Open Door in Eastern Europe, was a major reason for the origins of the Cold War.

The military advantage of an Eastern European *cordon sanitaire* proved to be slight. The satellite armies were unreliable, and after Soviet and American acquisition of medium-range and intercontinental ballistic missiles in the 1950s and 1960s the territory of the satellites was of no discernible military value.

The revisionists have advanced a third theory about U.S. foreign policy during 1945 and the origins of the Cold War: The United States Government dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese, not so much to end the war, which was drawing to a finish anyway, but to impress the Russians, who were giving trouble in Eastern Europe. It is pleasant indeed to be able to relate that the brouhaha over Gar Alperovitz's *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam, the Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power*, which began with publication of that sensational volume in 1965, is now virtually at an end.³⁷ Most of the revisionists have so hedged their acceptance of Alperovitz's thesis as almost to remove it from sight, and Alperovitz himself has retired from the scene of his triumph, or near disaster, and turned to other matters. In the Preface to his collection of his essays published in 1970 he related that they were his last on foreign policy and that he hoped "to help edit a reader and perhaps help devise some ways to constrain policy, by

³⁷Simon and Schuster published Alperovitz's book.

making it more responsive to popular sentiment. . . . My future work will be concerned almost exclusively with domestic policy matters and with efforts to transform the political economy of our domestic institutions."³⁸

The truth is that, after stimulating much comment with a dramatic thesis and after engaging in several polemical articles in the *New York Review of Books* and so irritating Herbert Feis that the latter in his book on the origins of the Cold War refused to mention the author of *Atomic Diplomacy* by name, Alperovitz could not prove his major contention. Adam Ulam, in a caustic analysis of "Dr. Alperovitz," has written,

One would expect Alperovitz to adduce at least a single instance of an American negotiator saying in effect to a Russian during the period in question (1945-46), "You ought to remember we have the bomb," or "If you go easy on the Poles we might share our nuclear know-how with you." Or he might offer a *public* statement by an American official that "the Russians ought to keep in mind before they go too far in Rumania that we have this weapon." Dr. Alperovitz does not cite any such instances because there weren't any.³⁹

His supporters were reduced to saying that Alperovitz had widened their horizons, had made them see that some officials in the United States Government had believed that the threat of the atomic bomb might help them resolve their troubles with the Russians. Alperovitz was reduced to relying on the powers of psychology: Possession of the bomb, he declared, influenced American officials more than they knew or said. In a sideways movement in one of his *New York Review* essays, Alperovitz also took refuge in logic. American military leaders, he remarked, believed the bomb unnecessary for victory over Japan, but the United States Government failed to reassess the military situation. Why did "the momentum remain when the military reasons disappeared?" Answer: "A *diplomatic* momentum had by this time taken control of policy."⁴⁰

By the time he had made his retreat, half of the graduate students in the country were believing his original thesis and the other half were looking for holes in his argument. One of the latter at the University of Tennessee found that in Alperovitz's claim that on June 18, 1945, Truman's military advisers had agreed that Japan could be forced to surrender unconditionally without the use of the bomb and without an invasion (and the diplomatic momentum was, therefore, about to set in) and had quoted General Marshall as saying, "The impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action

³⁸*Cold War Essays*, p. 4.

³⁹"On Modern History: Re-reading the Cold War," excerpted in Paterson, ed., *Origins of the Cold War*, p. 115.

⁴⁰*Cold War Essays*, p. 3. The psychology is on p. 71: "Thus it appears that the natural military assumption that the bomb would be used became intermeshed with diplomatic strategy in a way so subtle it was probably not completely understood by the participants themselves."

levering them into capitulation," he had trimmed the quotation so as to give it a quite different meaning from what Marshall intended.⁴¹ But just as the Tennessee sharpshooter was about to draw a bead on Alperovitz, the *enfant terrible* of 1965 was, as mentioned, rapidly disappearing over the historiographical horizon.

3

Revisionist critics of U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War era have encountered three problems or issues or aspects of policy that came to decision in the year 1946 that bother them in varying degree. Like the contentions discussed in preceding pages, these also are worth careful notice in what by this juncture may be beginning to appear as an effort to knock down every theory the revisionists have put up. Frankly, and at risk of appearing to be a traditionalist, a defender of received truths, and a victim of Cold War rhetoric (after all, is there not *some* merit in

⁴¹Alperovitz needs to show that there was no military justification for the bomb. This is his key piece of evidence, because it would mean that President Truman obviously had ulterior reasons for using atomic weapons. On pp. 237–38 of *Atomic Diplomacy*, Alperovitz writes as follows: "*Before the atomic bomb was dropped each of the Joint Chiefs of Staff advised that it was highly likely that Japan could be forced to surrender 'unconditionally,' without use of the bomb and without an invasion.* [Alperovitz's italics.] Indeed, this characterization of the position taken by the senior military advisers is a conservative one. General Marshall's June 18 appraisal was the most cautiously phrased advice offered by any of the Joint Chiefs: 'The impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation. . . .'" The ellipsis points at the end of this quotation are Alperovitz's, after which he passes to the opinion of Admiral Leahy. For the quotation from Marshall, Alperovitz cites the Potsdam documents in *Foreign Relations*, but from a careful reading of *Foreign Relations: The Conference of Berlin, 1945, I* (Washington, 1960), 905, the same page used by Alperovitz, it is clear that Marshall anticipated the necessity of American troops landing on Kyushu, an operation then being planned for November 1, and that it might even be necessary to land troops on Honshu, the island containing Tokyo, which latter landing eventually was scheduled for April 15, 1946. Following is a properly full quotation of Marshall's opinion (in the document the general was reading, the designation "Japan" meant the Honshu landing): "There is reason to believe that the first 30 days in Kyushu should not exceed the price we have paid for Luzon. It is a grim fact that there is not an easy, bloodless way to victory in war and it is the thankless task of the leaders to maintain their firm outward front which holds the resolution of their subordinates. Any irresolution in the leaders may result in costly weakening and indecision in the subordinates. . . . [Ellipsis marks in original.] An important point about Russian participation in the war is that the impact of Russian entry on the already hopeless Japanese may well be the decisive action levering them into capitulation *at that time or shortly thereafter if we land in Japan.*" Alperovitz omitted these final, italicized words and failed to print the preceding two sentences, lifting his quotation completely out of context. I am greatly indebted to John Garry Clifford of the University of Connecticut, who in 1968–1969 taught at Tennessee and devoted part of a seminar to the Alperovitz book, for calling my attention to this use of quotation.

any position?), I may as well admit that I find it difficult to believe any of their arguments. Still, the arguments are worth looking into, if only to point to places in which future scholars, who will enjoy the full benefit of at least the U.S. diplomatic archives, should attempt to concentrate their researches.

The first of the concerns of the revisionists that came to decision in 1946 was a U.S. offer to limit atomic weapons, which to the revisionists has appeared not altogether sincere. In view of the developing troubles with the Russians, why would the Americans want to give away the atomic bomb? In the months immediately following Hiroshima and Nagasaki did they not in fact try to use the atomic monopoly to persuade the Russians to be more reasonable? Could not the Baruch Plan of 1946 have been itself a ploy, for instead of making an outright effort to share the atomic secret with the Soviets the United States Government passed the whole issue to the United Nations and proposed an impossibly hedged program, which only affronted the Russians? These questions, one must say, are germane. The conclusions of Alperovitz, unacceptable in themselves, called attention to the possible use of atomic diplomacy later. Much later, in the 1950s and early 1960s, Khrushchev had been adept at scaring other nations and had some reason to complain of similar ungentlemanly behavior by American leaders. It was understandable that the revisionists would look back into the American atomic past and ask how the United States Government had behaved during the era when it was Mr. Atomic Bomb. The revisionists are also concerned about what political scientists have described as atomic blackmail, which they properly consider indistinguishable from atomic diplomacy (everything depends on who gives and who receives; blackmail is always received).

Now, it is undeniable that Secretary Byrnes, whose actions had never amused the revisionists, told Assistant Secretary of War McCloy in August, 1945, that he intended to go to the forthcoming London Foreign Ministers Conference with the implied threat of the bomb in his pocket, and Secretary of War Stimson on September 4 recorded in his diary a similar conversation with Byrnes:

I took up the question . . . how to handle Russia with the big bomb. I found that Byrnes was very much against any attempt to cooperate with Russia. His mind is full of his problems with the coming meeting of foreign ministers and he looks to having the presence of the bomb in his pocket, so to speak, as a great weapon to get through the thing.⁴²

Stimson was accustomed to dictating into a machine six, eight—even ten or twelve doublespaced pages of diary every morning while shaving. The words poured forth without any deliberate thought, so, shortly after the

⁴²Unpublished Stimson diary deposited in the Yale University Library. I am greatly indebted to Lisle A. Rose for this quotation.

end of World War II his detailed diary became a quarry for investigators of the Pearl Harbor disaster. It is now becoming a mine for all sorts of information about the Cold War. While the diary's account of the Byrnes conversation may be a little stark, it probably is close to the gist of the conversation.

What the historian has to add is that, once Byrnes arrived in London for the meeting that began in September and ran into early October 1945, he does not seem to have threatened anyone. The closest that researchers can come to evidence of stern talk at London is some casual conversation that may not have had any importance. At a cocktail party Molotov, who according to Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin was drinking "rather much, even for him," raised his glass and said, "Here's to the Atom Bomb." And added, "We've got it." As is now known, this claim was an exaggeration. Bevin admittedly had become nervous because, during one conference session, Molotov had proposed that if Britain would not agree to allot a former Italian colony in Africa to Russia, the USSR would be content to have the Belgian Congo. Did that, Bevin wondered, mean that the Russians wanted uranium?⁴³ Meanwhile, on the third day of the conference, Byrnes and Molotov had indulged in some kidding that took a form that might have had diplomatic overtones but, as most Americans would admit upon reading what Byrnes said, probably was just kidding. Molotov in his peculiar way—the Russian possessed a sardonic sense of humor and liked the droll and sometimes the slightly macabre—asked Byrnes, rather out of the blue, if the Secretary had an atomic bomb in his side pocket. "You don't know Southerners," was Byrnes's response. "We carry our artillery in our hip pocket. If you don't cut out all this stalling and let us get down to work, I am going to pull an atomic bomb out of my hip pocket and let you have it." Whereupon Molotov laughed, as did the interpreter. Four nights later, Byrnes was making a lyrical speech about harmony and cooperation, perhaps a bit on the Irish side, and Molotov paid him a tribute by saying that he really was gifted and, in addition, Byrnes had an atomic bomb.⁴⁴

If the above badinage—not in the best of taste, considering that it occurred only a few weeks after Hiroshima and Nagasaki—amounted to atomic diplomacy, it was deft to the point of being difficult to recognize. And it is necessary to add that while Byrnes was in London the Truman administration, contrary to his desire, was considering a proposal by Stimson to open conversations with the Russians on atomic matters, with prior approval by the British, before taking a plan for control of atomic energy to the United Nations. In an often misunderstood letter accom-

⁴³Diary of Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Dalton, quoted in Feis, *From Trust to Terror*, p. 98.

⁴⁴Lisle A. Rose, *After Yalta* (New York, 1973), p. 124.

panying his proposition, as the then Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, explained years later in *Present at the Creation*, the Secretary of War had spoken loosely of "sharing the atomic bomb with Russia," but that was not really the issue. Still, talk of "sharing" got into the newspapers, and there was more interest in a cooperative approach to the Russians on international limitation of atomic energy than the Secretary of State thought desirable.

What bothers the revisionists about the issue of atomic diplomacy is that, within a month, Truman changed his mind about conferring initially with the Russians on atomic matters and began to talk about going directly to the United Nations. What happened, according to Acheson, was that the cabinet talk had been preceded by very little thought or preparation, and the press leak about the discussion threw Congress into an uproar and brought a proposal from Prime Minister Clement Attlee for a joint British-Canadian-American conference. The President came to see that he would have an enormously difficult time getting congressional and popular and perhaps even London-Ottawa approval for any sort of atomic *pourparlers* with the Russians.⁴⁵

The revisionists believe that the wartime effort to keep a secret from the Russians was itself almost enough to ensure the postwar breakup of the grand alliance and that only an immediate postwar offer to discuss the problem *à deux* could have atoned for it, whatever the domestic political results. They also contend that the addition of the Baruch Plan, so full of American safeguards that the Russians could not accept it, made the entire chapter of policy impossible to view with any other feeling than that, as the Russians put it, the Americans were scheming to maintain their atomic monopoly.

Still, it is difficult to conclude that the Truman administration did its worst in regard to limitation of atomic weapons. The effort to limit atomic weapons was an unprecedented proposition. The administration had to pay attention to a very sensitive Congress and public. By defying American desires in Eastern Europe the Russians were not exactly helping their own case. When at last the Truman administration, in June 1946, went to the United Nations with the Baruch Plan, it was no effort to dump the issue into the hands of an international body that could do nothing; the UN was clearly not a dispose-all for American negotiators who wanted to keep the bomb. The choice of Baruch as the chief American negotiator may have been unwise, but the time invested in drawing up the Acheson-Lilienthal Report and then the Baruch Plan was so extensive as to suggest a serious effort on the part of the Americans. If the plan failed, the failure is no proof that the administration wanted

⁴⁵*Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York, 1969), pp. 123-24.

it to fail so as to be able to continue to threaten the Soviets with atomic bombs. There is evidence that the President himself had little faith in the bomb as a diplomatic or even military weapon. In the autumn of 1945 he was talking with Budget Director Harold D. Smith and, according to Smith, commented, "There are some people in the world who do not seem to understand anything except the number of divisions you have." "Mr. President," said Smith, "you have an atomic bomb up your sleeve." "Yes," was the reply, "but I am not sure it can ever be used."⁴⁶

In seeking to find some way of dealing with the Russians, the administration, according to the revisionists, tried economic pressure and botched the job. Could this have been so? One really must raise several doubts, and there is no proof to support the charge. It is possible that, as Schlesinger has related, the Russians misinterpreted the abrupt cancellation of lend-lease on May 12, 1945, as blackmail, the American handling of the USSR's request for a large postwar loan as deliberate sabotage, and the ending of reparations from the Western zones of Germany as pro-Germanism. But then, perhaps if the Americans had done everything the Russians wanted on economic issues, nothing would have changed. According to Schlesinger, it "is not clear . . . that satisfying Moscow on any of these financial scores would have made much essential difference."⁴⁷ Moreover, with the exception of one admitted instance of internal administrative confusion, it is hard to see what alternative the Americans had.

Such revisionists as Alperovitz, Williams, and Gardner have interpreted the sudden cutting off of lend-lease on May 12, 1945, as the use of crude pressure by the Truman administration, but a recent article by George C. Herring, based on the Stettinius Papers at the University of Virginia and unpublished State Department and other records, proves that there was no operant other than administrative failure. The decision to cut off lend-lease was an overly legal decision taken by a few subordinate officials; it applied to all countries and not exclusively to Russia; it was violently opposed by Harriman, Assistant Secretary of State Will Clayton, and Stettinius, and new orders allowed ships at sea to turn around and head for their foreign ports. The Herring article shows how privileged a position Russian lend-lease enjoyed, that the Soviet-American "protocols" or treaties were never the detailed, binding instruments the United States demanded and obtained from the other allies, and that the Soviets anyway were asking, by May, for many items that were not really usable in the war against Japan.⁴⁸ The episode bothered American leaders, aware of Russian sensitivity, and Truman's memoirs relate that Stalin at

⁴⁶Rose, *After Yalta*, p. 130.

⁴⁷"Origins of the Cold War," p. 45.

⁴⁸"Lend-Lease to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-1945," *Journal of American History*, 56 (1969-1970), 93-114.

Potsdam was full of talk about the cutting off of lend-lease, although the Potsdam records do not so indicate.

If the American handling of lend-lease in May 1945 was no attempt at economic pressure—and perhaps the revisionists now would admit as much—there remain the questions of the Russian loan and of American treatment of German reparations. Molotov in January 1945 had mentioned a large postwar credit, \$6 billion, and had said the Soviets would be willing to use the money to buy American goods because such purchases would help to prevent a postwar depression in the United States. Roosevelt asked that nothing be done until he could talk to Stalin. The latter said nothing about a loan during the Yalta Conference, nor did the dictator mention the loan proposal during the talks with Hopkins in Moscow in May 1945, nor during the Potsdam Conference. Why didn't Stalin, so fond of calling attention to the enormous damage the Germans had wreaked upon Russia and the unhurt nature of the American economy, then ask the Americans for a loan? Was he too shy?⁴⁹

Not until early 1946 were any steps taken toward negotiating a loan, at which point the proposal of Molotov for \$6 billion was cut to \$2 billion and conditions put on it which the Russians refused. They wanted a no-strings loan, which made no sense to the Americans. A report within the United States Government estimated that the Soviet economy could recover without American aid, that the Russians could regain their prewar level of capital investment by 1948, and that a loan of \$2 billion would speed up reconstruction by only three to four months.⁵⁰ It is quite true that during the war the Soviets had engaged two-thirds of the German army, that Russian deaths had reached from fifteen to twenty million, compared to perhaps one million for the Western allies, that the output of Russian industry was halved by the German invasion and transfer of factories to the east. The conclusion is almost inescapable that the Soviets, despite their enormous losses and needs, did not want the loan except under impractically lenient conditions.

As for whether a freely granted loan—what good Methodists sometimes refer to as a free-will offering—might have softened the Soviets' international policies, the revisionist expert on the loan question, Thomas G. Paterson, can come to no firmer a conclusion than the following:

The evidence suggests [*sic*] that America's refusal to aid Russia through a loan similar to that granted to the British in early 1946, perhaps [*sic*] contributed [*sic*] to a continuation of a low standard of living for the Russian people with detrimental international effects [*sic*], to a less conciliatory and harsher Russian

⁴⁹Soviet unwillingness in 1945 to follow up the Molotov proposal produced a difficult situation for the Americans. Should the United States have taken the initiative?

⁵⁰Thomas G. Paterson, "The Abortive American Loan to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1943-1946," *Journal of American History*, 56 (1969-1970), 77.

policy toward Germany and Eastern Europe, and to unsettled and inimical postwar Soviet-American relations.⁵¹

The revisionists have also cited the failure of the Western allies to live up to the reparations agreements at Yalta and Potsdam as evidence of callousness toward the Russians' wartime suffering and postwar need. Here one must remark that the accords were exceptionally loose, the figure of \$20 billion in German reparations—half to go to Russia—being only tentative. When, in subsequent months, the British discovered that their large dollar loan of 1946 was going in fair part to feed, as Chancellor of the Exchequer Hugh Dalton put it, "these bloody Germans," when the Americans discovered that the Germans in the U.S. occupation zone were also on the American taxpayer's back, and when it became evident in 1946 that JCS 1067 would ensure that the Germans and perhaps the rest of the Continent would be on welfare for years, nothing remained but to halt reparations.⁵²

In addition to the presentation of the Baruch Plan and the failure of the United States to improve relations with the USSR through economic means, a third concern of the revisionists in reexamining American diplomacy in 1946 has been the development, early in the year, of what they like to describe as Cold War rhetoric. Stalin on February 9 spoke of the antagonisms of communism and modern monopoly capitalism; George F. Kennan's 8,000-word cable from Moscow arrived in the State Department, analyzing the historic and ideological and psychological roots of Russian intransigence; Churchill in March spoke at Fulton, Missouri, and Stalin riposted with a newspaper interview comparing Churchill and Hitler. Also in March, the United States Government expelled the Russians from northern Iran, in which locality the Russians were trying to get an oil concession and were encouraging Azerbaijani separatism.

The oratorical aspect of the first weeks of 1946 is undeniable. Although largely a Russian-British argument, with the Soviets attacking America's British ally in the person of its former leader, the contentions on both sides were surely intended for their effect on the United States. The oil aspect of the Iranian crisis is difficult to measure, may not have been serious, and in any event was secondary. Russian encouragement of Azerbaijani separatism followed a pattern in Eastern Europe, where the Red Army had dominated politics in the areas it occupied. The Soviets had certainly overstayed their leave in Iran; by agreement with the Americans and British they had committed themselves to depart by March 2, 1946. What prompted the Russians to get out is still unclear.

⁵¹Paterson, "American Loan," pp. 70-71.

⁵²Dalton diary, quoted in *George C. Marshall*, p. 117.

That the Americans were giving in to Churchill's anticommunism seems doubtful and has not been proved. Adam Ulam recently advanced the piquant theory that the Russians scampered out of Iran because Churchill had just accused them of imperialism and they did not want to provide an obvious proof of his accusation.⁵³ There is some indication that the Iranian premier of the moment was a wily old operator who held a diplomatic card or two under the table for dickering with the Soviets when his American partner was not looking. Truman, in a press conference in 1952, told of a presidential ultimatum to the Russians and repeated this account in his memoirs as well as in a book entitled *Truman Speaks*, published in 1960, and in a conversation with Herbert Druks in 1962. A recently issued volume of *Foreign Relations* contains an editorial note to the effect that records in the State Department and in the Department of Defense contain absolutely no indication of an ultimatum and that several former high officers of State who were queried about this issue had no memory of one.⁵⁴ The State Department's records are now open to researchers, who can check the Department's veracity on this interesting point and perhaps uncover some real skulduggery in the Iranian crisis—maybe some Anglo-American cooperation concerning the Churchillian half of “the appropriate declarations of Cold War,” as LaFeber calls the exchanges between Churchill and Stalin.⁵⁵

4

In the year 1947, which Theodore H. White in *Fire in the Ashes* has termed “the Year of Divergence,” U.S. foreign policy took an avowed turn against Soviet foreign policy that could either be accounted the beginning of the Cold War or, as the *New York Times* put the situation in terms of U.S. foreign relations since 1775, the end of an epoch of isolation and occasional intervention and the beginning of an epoch of American responsibility.⁵⁶ So historic a situation has not escaped the Cold War revisionists, and they have labored mightily to show how the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the decision to give the Western Germans independence were not the great, signal chapters marking the beginning of a new epoch of American responsibility but merely more evidences of the Truman administration's depravity and stupidity. No anti-Communistic horn of Roland sounds forth from

⁵³*The Rivals*, p. 119.

⁵⁴*Foreign Relations of the United States: 1946*, VII (Washington, 1969), 348–49.

⁵⁵*America, Russia, and the Cold War*, p. 30.

⁵⁶“The epoch of isolation and occasional intervention is ended. It is being replaced by an epoch of American responsibility.” *New York Times*, March 12, 1947.

revisionist books to echo through the valleys and across the mountains of civilization. None of that nonsense for them. Readers of their books and articles will have no feeling at all for the alarm, the confusion, the sinking hopes of individuals, leaders and publics alike, in Washington and in Western Europe, when the rigorous winter of 1946–1947 brought Europe's economies almost to a standstill and when the early springtime gave every evidence of what the military analyst for the *New York Times*, Hanson W. Baldwin (who to the revisionists is a repellent old hawk), reported as a crisis akin to the fall of the Roman Empire. The revisionists hear only a few tumbles backstage as they quietly analyze the scene in Washington and Western Europe that spring of 1947, and though they concede some nobility to the Marshall Plan, they on balance find American policy of that time to have been no great, successful rescue operation but a deplorable, uncalled-for movement into Cold War confrontation.

The Truman Doctrine, they say, was first of all unnecessary because the administration misread the situation in Greece. The truth was, they aver (and in this single observation they are probably correct) that the Greek guerrillas were not receiving help from Stalin, that the dictator later told Milovan Djilas that the guerrillas were not getting support, that instead they were receiving it from Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia. Only a year or so after the American intervention in the Greek civil war, Tito for his own good reason—his split with the Russians—closed his country's border with Greece and began to force an end to the civil war, after which the Greek Stalinists gained control of the guerrillas, went over from guerrilla to set-piece battles with the revived Greek army, and lost, giving up the fight in October 1949. The revisionists, leaning heavily on a thirty-five-page account by Barnet, relate that at no time during the American decision to create the Truman Doctrine did the Department of State try to analyze the guerrilla situation in Greece to determine if intervention was really necessary.⁵⁷

To take the latter point first, until 1972 the revisionists did not have much knowledge of what the Department of State knew in 1947 because the American documents had not yet been published in *Foreign Relations*. Offhand, it did seem unlikely that so large and smart an outfit as the State Department would have failed to do its homework on the guerrilla problem, although the Department could not have known about Stalin's conversation with Djilas, which took place in 1948 and was not published until 1962. The fifth volume of the *Foreign Relations* series for 1947 appeared in 1972, and contains 484 pages on the Greek-Turkish situation. It does not include any detailed Department analysis

⁵⁷*Intervention and Revolution*, pp. 97–131.

of the Greek guerrilla problem prior to announcement of the Truman Doctrine. But this was no proof that the Department had failed to make such an analysis, for the documents in *Foreign Relations* were only a selection. The Department's archives for 1947 were not opened to researchers until mid-1973.

As for the allegiance of the Greek Communists, there seems little reason to dispute Barnet's analysis—except its conclusions. After all, was the factionalism of the Greek Communists—their willingness to defy Stalin and accept aid from Tito—important? Three arguments say it was not. First, no one in 1947 anticipated Tito's expulsion from the Cominform in 1948; whatever Stalin's desires in regard to the guerrillas' behavior, the Department of State had to proceed on the assumption that, if Stalin could not get to the guerrillas, then he could get to Tito, who could do the job. Second, it is an interesting and pertinent fact that after Tito's expulsion the Greek Communists split on tactics and the Stalinist faction got control; which says that the faction on top in earlier years might not have stayed on top. The third point is that, if it had not been for the outbreak of the Korean War, Stalin might have wiped out Tito, in which case where would have been the Titoist, national Greek Communists? The whole business of the Greek guerrillas, to whom (Greece, Tito, or Stalin) they momentarily owed allegiance, strikes one as too volatile a situation for any prudent statesman at the time to have relied on.

The revisionists have aptly pointed out, maybe with some exaggeration, the undemocratic nature of the regime in Athens, a fact that was well known in Washington in 1947. They have enjoyed showing how the regime in Ankara also did not exactly represent the apotheosis of democracy, likewise a commonplace of the time. The Greek and Turkish foreign situations were different, in that the Russians were not employing guerrillas but putting direct diplomatic pressure on Turkey to get concessions along the Straits and on the Turkish-Soviet border, forcing the Turks to maintain an army that the impoverished country could not afford. There was indeed a threat to Turkey, but the United States Government in 1945 and 1946 had said little about it publicly. As in many other conflicts with the Soviets, the United States hoped this one could be quietly resolved. Some people at the time, however, thought that the administration had gratuitously included Turkey in the Truman Doctrine. Gardner, who has an unerring eye for a good quotation, has noted the remark of a witness at one of the congressional hearings in 1947 that when "the new dish was being prepared for American consumption, Turkey was slipped into the oven with Greece because that seemed to be the surest way to cook a tough bird." The revisionists have also repeated with approval the judgment of Byrnes's *Speaking Frankly*, "We did not have to decide that the Turkish Government

and the Greek monarchy were outstanding examples of free and democratic governments.”⁵⁸

But what has bothered the Cold War critics more than anything else about the Truman Doctrine is that they see it as an appalling piece of Cold War rhetoric. They believe that the doctrine gave an enormous push to the anticommunism of American public opinion and that it eventually turned upon its authors when Senator Joseph R. McCarthy accused the Truman administration of being itself soft on communism; they believe also that the rhetoric (they are fond of the word) lasted into the 1950s with bad results, for the Secretary of State for most of that decade believed in anticommunism as fervently as he did in presbyterianism; and then in the 1960s the rhetoric took us into Vietnam.

This is a remarkable accusation, and it has been ventilated not merely in the random assertions of revisionist books and articles but in two recent volumes devoted to the point. One of them, by Richard M. Freeland, suggested to its *New York Times* reviewer, Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, the simile of an airplane ride, whereby foreign policy looks different from the air (where Freeland is, with his documents, quotations, and theories) than from the ground (where Lehmann-Haupt himself could view it with his recollections of the occasions and purposes of 1947).⁵⁹ It should be impossible to believe that Harry S Truman was the inventor or, if not that, the chief distributor of anticommunism. It is true, however, that anyone can believe anything he wants, like the White Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*, who made it her business to believe three impossible things every morning before breakfast. Ronald Steel believes that Dean Acheson was the real villain in the anticommunization of his fellow citizens: Acheson knew what might happen, but to get the administration's measures through Congress and to win the approbation of the public he willingly gave the American people strong injections of anticommunism.⁶⁰ The allegation is so large that it is difficult to put down. Suffice to say that it shows more faith in the efficacy of a single speech than one ordinarily would expect. Moreover, if Acheson, as Steel says, showed a contempt for the American people by subjecting them to all those anticommunism shots, could one not turn this commentary around and say that the revisionists themselves show a contempt for the American people, to think that the public was so gullible that a

⁵⁸*Architects of Illusion*, p. 224; *Speaking Frankly* (New York, 1947), p. 302.

⁵⁹Athan G. Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression*; Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1971). Reviewed in *New York Times Book Review*, January 21, 1972.

⁶⁰*Imperialists and Other Heroes*, p. 23. Steel entitles his chapter on Acheson, a reprinted review of *Present at the Creation*, "Commissar of the Cold War."

little campaign from official Washington could have manipulated their minds? Arthur Vandenberg is alleged to have said to Truman, a few days before the President delivered the Truman Doctrine address of March 12, that it was necessary to scare hell out of the country. Memories of the Vandenberg remark differ, and he may not have said just that. The address was not all that scary, though the administration sought to put the Greek-Turkish issue into the large framework it deserved. Years later, George Kennan remarked his personal sadness that the Truman Doctrine had become a world-wide program—though it is not clear that it ever did, even under John Foster Dulles, not to mention the administrations of Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon. It is certain that the Truman administration had no such intention before the speech, nor did it behave that way afterward. If in subsequent months and years there was a lot of talk about anticommunism, the talk had something to do with such non-Truman-connected occurrences as the collapse of China, the invasion of South Korea, Whittaker Chambers's production of the pumpkin papers, the confession of Klaus Fuchs, Senator McCarthy's rare gifts for invention and invective. As another *New York Times* reviewer, William Shannon put it, "Truman was more often the victim than the progenitor of that time of troubles."⁶¹

As the revisionists have nitpicked the Truman Doctrine, they have similarly attempted to do a job on the Marshall Plan. They say that it divided Europe, as Marshall expected it to do, and that even in its largesse it was an American policy instead of an international policy. Once more they fail to show the enormous need for a program, the hectic pressure of events, and the unattractive prospect of aiding Russia when the Soviets were opposing American policy in Europe, and they do not stress the program's economic success. The Cold War critics have averred, as mentioned, that the invitation Marshall extended to the Soviets was meant to be a ploy, and Charles E. Bohlen in recent lectures has confessed that both he and Kennan gave Marshall this advice. It does not follow, however, that "the Marshall Plan was," as Thomas Paterson has suggested, "a weapon against Russia rather than a magnanimous, no-strings-attached undertaking to relieve destitute Europeans."⁶² As for Paterson's objection to unilateral American action and his suggestion that the Marshall Plan could have been handled by an international organization unconnected with Cold War rhetoric, such as the Economic Commission for Europe, it carries a surface plausibility today, when so many individuals have so little comprehension of the problems of 1947. There are some who recall the weakness of international organizations, the need to prevent the turning of U.S. funds against their donor, the

⁶¹*New York Times*, January 16, 1972.

⁶²*Cold War Critics*, p. 132.

need to prevent funds being poured down the drain (with or without Russian connivance), the unwillingness of Congress and the public to give money without strings, the fact that no banker in his right mind will lend (it was of course a gift, but the analogy holds) money on a house he has not seen and without a financial statement.⁶³

A third allegation against the Truman administration's policies in 1947 deserves little discussion in detail. This is the charge that they helped bring on the Cold War by dividing Germany, which thereby created the postwar result the Russians most feared, a rich, strong, rearmed, if somewhat fragmented German nation. The result is beyond question, but no good historian should work back from the result to the cause unless he wants to go all the way—which the revisionists do not, for that would mess up their usable past. The prime responsibility for the present state of affairs in Germany, as Klaus Epstein wrote some years ago, must rest with the late Adolf Hitler.⁶⁴ An award for the Division of Germany, Second Class, must go to the Russians who, in their German policy faced a serious problem at the end of World War II. The Germans, because of a long heritage of anti-Russian feeling, anti-communism, the appalling behavior of the occupying Red Army, the expulsion of twelve million East Germans, and impossible reparations—the Germans hated the Russians. It was clear that in any fair election East Germany would vote to unite with the West. Russian offers to unify Germany, as Epstein has contended, could have been nothing other than propaganda, for the Soviets would not have gained control of the other zones and would have lost their own. But over the years the Russians produced a mighty propaganda about their desire to unify Germany, and many people have begun to believe it, and in this manner the West divided Germany. Gradually, on the American side, the economic and military reasons for unifying the western zones began to become apparent. Bizonia was created on January 1, 1947, and everything followed therefrom, albeit with skillful Russian assistance (the murder of Jan Masaryk ensured passage of the Marshall Plan, and the plan included participation by West Germany; the Berlin blockade ensured the carrying out of the London Recommendations of June, 1948, for a West German government; the Korean War galvanized the United States Government into incorporating West Germany into NATO).

On two occasions, early in 1947 and then much later, in 1952, the Soviets gave some sign of willingness to unify Germany. In 1952 they

⁶³Paterson suggested use of ECE in his "The Quest for Peace and Prosperity: International Trade, Communism, and the Marshall Plan," an essay in Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago, 1970), p. 100.

⁶⁴"The German Problem, 1945–1950," *World Politics*, 20 (1967–1968), 279–300. See also U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, 92d Cong., 1st sess., *Documents on Germany: 1944–1970*, especially pp. 195 ff. for the 1952 proposal.

said they would allow "elections" in East Germany so long as there was neutralization. The West turned down these opportunities because, as Acheson described the offer of 1952, the timing was so suspicious that it looked like a golden apple of discord tossed over the Iron Curtain. The revisionists think the United States should have taken a bite out of these apples, and their opponents will agree with Acheson.

Gardner, looking for some earlier evidence of American stupidity in Germany, claims that the creation of Bizonia occurred in part because Gen. Lucius D. Clay was worried stiff about socialism. Gimbel says this theory is a figment of imagination.⁶⁵

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In summary, what is there to be said about Cold War revisionists and revisionism? To begin with, it is of course certain that the revisionists have not reached the end of their investigations. They are turning to issues and problems of the Truman administration in the Far East, and Stephen Ambrose already feels sure that in the spring of 1950 the administration was in a peculiar crisis. The National Security Council had produced NSC 68, a document that still is classified "Secret," even if more people seem to have seen it and written about it than is easily comprehensible. This document, the first full survey of national security, asked for a tripling of the national defense budget. Meanwhile, the United States was awaiting the loss of Formosa to the Red Chinese. Syngman Rhee, the American satrap in Seoul, was in trouble with his Assembly, the members of which wanted to consider unification with the North, facing Rhee with the loss of his position. Early in June the North Koreans proposed all-Korean "elections," but Rhee refused to go along.

By June 1950, a series of desperate needs had come together. Mr. Truman had to have a crisis to sell the NSC 68 program of a huge U.S. military buildup. Chiang could not hold on, nor could Rhee, without an American commitment; the U.S. Air Force and Navy needed a justification to retain their bases in Japan; the Democrats had to prove that they could get tough with the Communists. Most of all, the Americans had to establish themselves on the mainland before the white man was driven out of Asia and its islands forever. The needs were met on June 25, 1950.⁶⁶

Leaving this pipe dream to the author or authors of a later edition of *The Truman Period As a Research Field*, it is more gratifying to make a

⁶⁵Lloyd C. Gardner, "America and the German 'Problem,' 1945-1949," in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies*, pp. 113-48; John Gimbel, "Cold War: German Front." Clay was concerned about communism born of desperation. As for any fear for the virus of socialism, an ideological concern, that surely is a dubious point.

⁶⁶"The Failure of a Policy Rooted in Fear."

second observation about Cold War revisionism, namely, that the revisionists have not proved a single one of their points—no great achievement for a group of scholars who now have been working for several years and have not been bashful about revealing their conclusions.

A third estimate of Cold War revisionism is that, while the revisionists doubtless will busy themselves with the Far East for two or three years, they are now facing extinction as a breed. They have been able in fair part to present their interpretations because the United States archives have not been open, but those archives are now due to open rapidly, according to the President of the United States. Mr. Nixon in 1972 instructed the Department of State and other government departments to assist the scholars in the Department's Historical Office in bringing *Foreign Relations* rapidly up to a twenty-year line, meaning that the archives might well be open not merely through the Truman period but into the Eisenhower period. Historians will have much to do, for in regard to the Truman administration the judgment of David S. McLellan and John W. Reuss of 1966 still stands, that studies are needed for almost all of the administration's most basic policies and problems—Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, Berlin blockade, NATO, Korean War.⁶⁷

In conclusion, becoming somewhat philosophical, it is worth saying that whatever the occasional results, whether the past has been used or not, it is a good thing that American historians have taken so much interest in recent American foreign policy. There is an admirable tradition among political scientists and historians in this country that the present and the near present is too important to be left to the journalists. Consider the attitude of British and continental historians, for whom history ended with Napoleon. According to one anecdote, an American student in London was told some years ago by an official at one of the offices set up to help visiting American scholars that history ended in 1815, and if the student wished to know about events of recent times he perhaps could inquire at the London School of Economics, where some strange people were at work. Such a point of view would be incomprehensible in this country, and it is becoming less accepted in England. For American scholars in recent years it has been saddening to witness the nation's enmeshment in Vietnam, but most of them have continued to believe that, by and large, the nation's record of foreign policy has been a good one, and at no time more so than during the Truman administration. In the next few years both doubters and believers will have an opportunity to judge for themselves.

⁶⁷"Foreign and Military Policies," in *The Truman Period As a Research Field* (Columbia, Mo., 1967), pp. 15–85.

TRUMAN ERA FOREIGN POLICY RECENT HISTORICAL TRENDS

LLOYD C. GARDNER

STIMULATED and broadened by the Vietnam War controversy, critical scholarship on all aspects and periods of United States foreign relations has a much larger audience today than it did as recently as a few years ago.¹ At the fore of the early teach-in movement against the war were academics, many of whom were still seeking explanations for the United States' involvement in Southeast Asia. After digesting and disseminating the information contained in older critiques, these concerned citizen-scholars often went on to produce significant new works. What had been a small, if steadily growing, body of "revisionist" literature suddenly became the inspiration for a copious outpouring of articles and books reopening historical questions once thought settled or of so little importance as to be forgotten.

The Cold War became, as it were, a jumping-off place into all points in the past. To some dissenters, for example, the Mylai massacre of 1968 was not unique either in itself or to the Vietnam War, but only a new chapter in a story that included the bloody suppression of Philippine insurrectionists in 1900 and remote incidents in the long-neglected reality of the Indian Wars.

While these writings sometimes came into being to serve immediate political or polemical purposes rather than those of pure historical inquiry, the Vietnam debate speeded up a long-overdue review of established Cold War "truths." Even in a less emotional time, though no period in the Cold War could be called "normal" by traditional standards, the judgments of revisionists had begun to be accorded a place in textbook surveys. It would be a very serious mistake indeed to attempt to explain away this phenomenon as part of the Vietnam uproar.

¹This essay presumes the reader's familiarity with Cold War scholarship and should be read in conjunction, not only with the other essays in this volume, but also with David S. McLellan's and John W. Reuss's "Foreign and Military Policies," in the first edition of *The Truman Period As a Research Field*. It is not, however, an extension or reply to their remarks. The questions discussed in their essay arose at the end of one period of historical scholarship, and while many remain unanswered today and some obviously overlap, I am primarily concerned with problems raised in the books under discussion in this essay.

To begin with, *all* of the books discussed in this essay had their genesis in pre-Vietnam thinking, though the war most certainly influenced writers of orthodox, realist, and revisionist persuasions, and not just dissenters. A related, but far more important, point is suggested by this recent experience; there has never been a time when the nation's political consciousness was separate and apart from its historical consciousness. It won't do to try to explain away revisionism on these grounds, unless one is prepared to do the same for other interpretations.

Critics and dissenters, realist and orthodox alike, are involved in the ongoing process of interaction between the historian and the politician. The historian has always been the less important in shaping our view of the past; it is the policymaker who calls upon Clio to reassure him and to remove his enemies with her analogies. What may be happening today, for the first time, is the liberation of Clio from that bondage, which, once begun in studying grade-school and high-school texts, usually continues through the writing of most scholarly monographs.

In 1870, to review a classic example from an era sufficiently removed from present controversies to permit us to illustrate a general problem, Secretary of State Hamilton Fish sent a document to American embassies and consulates that explained to the diplomats why previous attempts to foster closer inter-American relations had not succeeded. The answer was really very simple: they had all "struck against the rock of African slavery." Now that the Civil War had been won, that obstacle had been removed, and it was possible to move toward a closer hemisphere union based on mutually profitable commercial relations.

The Secretary's argument was a good "Republican" history of the past five decades, establishing that, from the time of the first Pan-American conference in 1826, through the Mexican War, and into the 1850s, the Democratic party, in combination with the Southern slave interests, had been responsible for the anxiety and anger felt in Mexico and the Central American states concerning their northern neighbor. With "filibusterism" put down once and for all and with the nation at last liberated from the slaveholders, the United States could rightfully challenge the British for commercial supremacy in Latin America. As far as it went, the Secretary's compendium offered his readers a logical and coherent explanation of the expansionist thrust of recent U.S. administrations and of the unhappy consequences it had produced in the hemisphere's political relations.

As far as it went; but it did not go far enough. The memorandum did not, for example, note that there were other reasons for the failure (from a United States point of view) of the first Pan-American conference, nor did it reveal that, throughout the period under consideration, the principal factor in British success was not its antislavery stance, but economic superiority. Great Britain had the industrial ability and

surplus capital to take good advantage of Latin America's new political freedom from the Old World; the United States did not have near enough of either to pick up the option on empire implied in the Monroe Doctrine.

Since Fish's "Latin American Circular" was written as an instruction for U.S. diplomats in those countries, the historical consciousness it sought to inculcate would succeed if (and as) the new policy succeeded. And since the Secretary spoke for the triumphant order in a rapidly maturing industrial power, success was all but assured. Yet, it was important to build on the proper historical foundation. Moreover, Fish struck a note in his memorandum that persisted in U.S. policy statements down to and including the Cold War era. Democratic party "filibusterism" was on the wrong side of history, he had said, and his successors simply substituted other nations for that party and "colonialism" or "spheres of influence" for filibusterism. They would also presume, as Fish had, that where territorial expansionism led nations to political rivalry and war, commercial expansionism produced international harmony.

All of which brings us back to the more recent past and to an example of a different, albeit closely related, sort. In his letter to the *New York Review of Books*, printed in the October 20, 1966, issue, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., declared that it was time "to blow the whistle before the current outburst of revisionism regarding the origins of the cold war goes much further." Some might dispute the appellation—including Schlesinger—but he probably comes as close to being the "official" historian of the nonofficial policymaking establishment as we have in the postwar period. However that may be, the editors of *Foreign Affairs* printed his article, "Origins of the Cold War," in their special issue of October 1967, devoted to an analysis of the history and impact of the Bolshevik Revolution on its fiftieth anniversary. Here was an opportunity to set the "revisionists" right or at least to demonstrate their errors with solid evidence reestablishing the original premises.

Instead, Schlesinger commented that he had been "somewhat intemperate" in deploring the rise of Cold War revisionism, and he affirmed its usefulness as "an essential part of the process by which history, through the posing of new problems and the investigation of new possibilities, enlarges its perspectives and enriches its insights."² Other reviews of the state of Cold War historiography soon began to appear, such as those

²While new books have appeared that might have a stronger claim to Cold War "orthodoxy" than Schlesinger's article, it seems to me that the "sifting down" process will eventually leave this article at the vital center of future textbook interpretations, especially as Cold War emotions wane. It has already been reprinted as a standard item in readings books, and as centerpiece in Lloyd C. Gardner, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Hans J. Morgenthau, *The Origins of the Cold War* (Waltham, Mass., 1970), where it is flanked by examples of the revisionist and realist positions.

by Paul Seabury and Brian Thomas in the *Journal of Contemporary History* and that of Christopher Lasch in the *New York Times Magazine*.³ While these authors all approached the problem from different perspectives, they concluded on a common note: The history of the Cold War has yet to be written.

Schlesinger certainly did not agree with the revisionists. Far from it. But he did now suggest that perhaps it was necessary to look into the question of American "universalism" as a contributing factor in the development of the Cold War. He hastened to point out, however, that on the American side there were men who "fundamentally believed that, over a long run, a *modus vivendi* with Russia was possible," while in Russia no one believed in more than a short-run *modus vivendi* with the United States. The difference was accounted for by the rigidities of Marxism-Leninism. Paradoxically, the only man in the Kremlin who was not a prisoner of these beliefs was himself imprisoned in a welter of his own "deep and morbid obsessions and compulsions." The record "makes it clear that in the end nothing could satisfy Stalin's paranoia. His own associates failed. Why does anyone suppose that any conceivable American policy would have succeeded?"

Leaving aside his unanswered assertion, Schlesinger's 1967 article poses its own problem of interpretation. At the end of the article he remarks, "One might wish that America had preserved the poise and proportion of the first years of the Cold War and had not in time succumbed to its own forms of self-righteousness." He does not give the reader a precise date for that occurrence, though he makes it plain it happened in the Dulles years. Nor does Schlesinger tell us when *he* reached this conclusion. His adjusted model of reality accounts for everything else, however, and even suggests a historical foundation for a post-Cold War foreign policy.

Schlesinger reached his solutions by reviewing the positions of three dissenters—or perhaps *nonuniversalists* better describes two of them—in the Truman era. The first was Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, a classical balance-of-power man, who became increasingly skeptical of those who hung on to "exaggerated views of the Monroe Doctrine," yet were eager to "butt into every question that comes up in Central Europe." A second was George Frost Kennan, author of the Mr. "X" article in 1947 that advocated "containment" of the Soviet threat, but at heart a spheres-of-influence man, too, who felt that the Russians should be left to stew in their own juices in Eastern Europe. The third was

³Seabury and Thomas, "Cold War Origins I and II," 3:1 (1968), 169–98; Lasch, "The Cold War, Revisited and Revisioned," January 14, 1968; see also Henry Pachter's angry review of the literature in *Dissent*, "Revisionist Historians and the Cold War" (November–December 1968), 505–18. His tone suggests that not all "liberals" will accept the new vital center.

Henry Agard Wallace, a liberal with a strong universalist background in the New Deal, who nonetheless "stated the sphere-of-influence case with trenchancy in the famous Madison Square Garden speech of September 1946 which led to his dismissal by President Truman."

The universalists, who believed that world security was indivisible (politically and economically), won the postwar intra-administration debate with ease—as, according to Schlesinger, they should have, given American traditions and policies. Kennan's "containment" policy, after all, could hardly have been carried out from the Western Hemisphere, but the important thing for Schlesinger is that Kennan (and "sophisticated" universalists such as Averell Harriman) felt that this policy was meant only "to tide us over a difficult time" until we could discuss sensible arrangements for a better status quo with the Russians. Thus, while the universalists were following the right path in 1945, the changed conditions of the 1960s might well require us to reexamine their assumptions to meet new occasions.

Schlesinger's piece is a *tour de force*. Its strength lies in his ability to take from the revisionists what he needs in order to argue that U.S. leaders pursued the correct policy in responding to the Stalinist challenge in the Truman period, while giving that President's critics credit for foresight in predicting what would happen if universalism were carried to its logical ends. He presents no new evidence, save for one recollection of an angry Roosevelt banging his fists on his wheelchair and declaring on March 24, 1945, "Averell [Harriman] is right; we can't do business with Stalin. He has broken every one of the promises he made at Yalta." And his argument concerning Stalin's paranoia is substantiated only by Nikita Khrushchev's tirade at the famous 20th Party Congress in 1956. Neither Khrushchev nor Schlesinger is very helpful in reducing the Soviet dictator's megalomania and applying its effects to specific foreign policy decisions. He avoids completely, on the other hand, any effort to determine if American policymakers made their Cold War plans on the basis of Stalin's supposed illness.

Nevertheless, Schlesinger's essay represents the most successful effort of the defenders of the old orthodoxy to "contain" the revisionist challenge and absorb it into the *vital center* (which has apparently moved considerably leftwards since 1948, when Schlesinger wrote the book of that name to warn liberals against Henry Wallace's dangerous heresy). If revisionism has been made useful for nonrevisionists, Schlesinger can claim much of the credit.

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Two books by former policymakers, George F. Kennan's *Memoirs, 1925–1950*, and Louis J. Halle's *The Cold War as History*, appeared in

1967, offering the student and the general public the latest developments in what has come to be known as the "realist" approach to the Cold War and the history of American foreign policy. With these books, some said, it should now be called the "realist-revisionist" approach, but the argument (similar in many respects to that put forward in Schlesinger's *Foreign Affairs* article), had been advanced even earlier by Marshall D. Shulman in *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (1963) and in lectures he delivered before the Council on Foreign Relations, later published as *Beyond the Cold War* (1966). Taken together, the gist of these writings seems to be that the Cold War resulted from mutual "mistaken identity."

Puzzled, then hurt, and finally made fearful by their unrequited efforts to establish a lasting friendship with the Soviet rulers, U.S. policymakers mistook Russia's crude behavior in Eastern Europe for a world-wide offensive against the capitalist nations. The Russians just as mistakenly saw in America's bumptious and naive (above all, naive) exuberance for incorporating Eastern Europe into the United Nations system a clever disguise for encircling the Soviet Union, preparatory to forcing a breakup of Communist power. Early postwar rhetoric confused perceptions and intentions even more seriously, especially Stalin's February 1946 "election" speech calling for a new five-year plan to rebuild Russia's heavy industry in anticipation of a new war, and Truman's March 12, 1947, "Truman Doctrine" speech setting forth his administration's determination to "support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." Relations between the nations might have calmed down following the settlement of the Berlin Blockade in 1949, but then came the Chinese Communist victory over Chiang Kai-shek's dispirited legions, and the Cold War escalated into a world power struggle.

As Shulman put it, "The steps by which this situation had come about show a pattern of action and reaction, challenge and response. It would perhaps require extraordinary detachment to trace the process to its origins, since it is clear that fundamental differences in the perception of the situation were involved." The Russians may well have believed that their plans to consolidate Soviet power as far west as possible were primarily defensive, Shulman continued—even legitimate, given wartime agreements regarding spheres of military operations. "To those in the West who did not share this perception of inevitable conflict or the same approach to a 'sphere of interest' disposition of other people, Soviet actions were baldly expansionist."⁴

Referring briefly to this "school of academic criticism [which] has con-

⁴*Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 14. It is interesting that this book failed to receive such attention from readers and reviewers as was given to Halle's and Kennan's. In some ways it is the best argued of the three. Perhaps it was too far ahead of its time.

cluded that we overreacted to Stalin, which in turn caused him to overreact to policies of the United States," Dean Acheson noted in his memoirs, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, "This may be true." Then, in his typical style, a unique combination of clerical astringency and Oxford Union understatement, he raises the crucial question (from his viewpoint) about the "realist" position. "Fortunately, perhaps, these authors were not called upon to analyze a situation in which the United States had not taken the action which it did take."⁵

Acheson's point is that policymakers are historians, but they cannot be extraordinarily detached academic critics. Put another way, "realism" in policy matters for men who share the same assumptions about the larger issues is a question of what works; "realist" historical writing is second-guessing at the expense of men whose perceptions had to be translated into policy almost instantaneously. Acheson's dismissal of the "realist" exercises in reconsideration, like his off-handed reference to Senator Robert A. Taft in November 1950 as a "re-examinist,"—a new species of creatures without memory or constancy—sounds too pat, but the former Secretary of State had good and sufficient reason to be annoyed at Halle and Kennan or, at least, with their books.

Indeed, both men's latest writings make strange reading beside their own contemporary assessments, as policymakers, of the Russian threat. Various historical circumstances, Halle wrote in the Preface to his 1967 work, cast "Russia in the role of challenger—superficially, at least, in the role of aggressor." The Russians had little choice but to move as they did, and the Americans hardly more in responding as they did. "This is not fundamentally a case of the wicked against the virtuous. Fundamentally, it is like the case of the scorpion and the tarantula in the bottle, and we may properly feel sorry for both parties, caught, as they are, in a situation of irreducible dilemma."⁶ In his 1955 book, *Civilization and Foreign Policy*, a very different theme dominated: The struggle between Russia and the West was nothing less than the final chapter in a conflict that began with the early threat to "civilization" from the Mongol invaders.⁷

Halle's earlier belief was common on all levels of policymaking, put into words on different occasions by almost all of the participants. Per-

⁵ (New York, 1969), p. 753.

⁶Halle, *Cold War as History*, p. xiii.

⁷ (New York, 1955), p. 167. One cannot help but wonder at this gap between present realist writings and attitudes held by many of the same men when they made policy. A helpful guide along the corridors of this State Department mystery is H. Stuart Hughes's article, "The Second Year of the Cold War: A Memoir and an Anticipation," in the August 1969 issue of *Commentary*. In 1968, on the other hand, even the State Department's spokesmen were careful to stress the new Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia as something that was bound to happen within Russia's sphere of influence and did not represent a new outward thrust. When Kennan and Halle were in the State Department such a statement was forbidden.

happened the most interesting of these statements came from Truman himself in discussing his conversations with Franklin Roosevelt during a "seminar" with college students: "I recall we once talked about the Islamite approach to the conquest of Europe, and how Charles Martel turned them back at Tours. We discussed such episodes in history as the turning back of the Turks at Vienna, and how Genghis Khan was stopped before he could reach Austria."⁸ Whether Truman remembered the conversation accurately and what each man had to say on the subject is somewhat less important than his conviction that they shared a common understanding of the "history" of the West's response to past threats.

Clearly, also, as he was to say again and again during the Cold War, Truman believed he was only carrying out Roosevelt's policies. But since the latter's legacy was as ambiguous and subjective as Truman's memory of their discussion of how past "containment" policies had "turned them back" at each critical junction, the responsibility for formulating (and sustaining) the Cold War world view depended to a large extent on others. These were men like Halle, professional foreign service officers—a point the author of *The Cold War as History* implicitly recognizes in his account of the publication of the Mr. "X" article in 1947.

When the responsible State Department committee, of which Halle was a member, took up George Kennan's request for permission to publish the article under the title, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," it concluded that not only did the rules of the foreign service require anonymity in such a situation, but also—and more importantly—that it would have been self-defeating to put the article forward as the thought of one man, since it represented "the newly formulated position of the United States Government."⁹

Kennan's own account is somewhat different. In fact, he is now more than willing to relinquish any claims to having expressed the "containment doctrine," except through inadvertence—a slip of the pen, as it were. To substantiate the position he takes in his *Memoirs*, Kennan reminds his readers that he opposed the Truman Doctrine in intragovernment debates. Otherwise, he blames himself for not making it clear in the article that he meant containment of a political threat by political means, in a limited geographical area or areas, and only for so long as was necessary to bring the Soviet leaders "to a point where they would talk reasonably about some of the problems flowing from the outcome of the war."¹⁰

Actually, continues the policymaker as historian, he was in close agree-

⁸Truman, quoting himself, in *Mr. Citizen* (New York, 1960), p. 165.

⁹Halle, *Cold War as History*, p. 106.

¹⁰Kennan, *Memoirs*, p. 365. It is hard to see, at least from the Mr. "X" article, how Kennan expected his readers to draw such a conclusion. The opening paragraph explains that Soviet power is the product of ideology and circumstances, but circumstances defined by internal conditions. Nowhere does he speak of the outside world as a

ment with the principal "realist" critic of the day, Walter Lippmann, who dismantled the "X" article sentence by sentence, tactically and strategically, and left it scattered over the Washington policymaking scene in a series of articles later published as *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy* (1947). Kennan's colleagues and superiors had little difficulty in putting it back together again, however; in fact, Lippmann's devastating critique almost went unnoticed at the time; it came into its own only much later. In brief, Lippmann asserted that "containment" would force the United States to overextend itself politically and militarily, leading thus to unwise commitments to dubious allies and the danger of excessive military budgets.

It is possible to reconcile some of Kennan's later views with the "X" article and his other papers from this period, but there is an "irreducible dilemma" about the realist writings of these former policymakers that cannot be explained in this way or, perhaps, in any other.¹¹ How was it possible, for example, to meet the political threat by limiting one's response to certain geographical areas or by resorting only to certain means? Kennan and other "containment" thinkers have done some serious rethinking of these problems in recent years, but in its original form the doctrine was an ideological call to arms, and it was generally recognized as such by both sides.

The former High Commissioner for Germany, and long-time friend of government, John J. McCloy, has clarified this problem of what was and what was not meant by the Truman administration's "containment" policy in Western Europe. Kennan has complained that Secretary Acheson and others drew unwarranted military assumptions from his writings and overmilitarized the Russian-American conflict; McCloy, in the course of remarks directed against the "revisionists," tries to set the record straight on the question of a Russian military threat, but in so doing demonstrates conclusively the indivisibility of political and military factors when set in a "containment" definition of the world. Chiding the "revisionists" for making too much of their discovery that there was never any likelihood of a Russian attack early in the Cold War, McCloy states that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization "was not exclusively or even primarily to deter an impending or threatened Soviet military attack."¹² Economically and politically prostrate, Western Europe was clearly un-

significant influence on the Bolshevik mentality. More than an unfortunate slip of the pen is involved here. Herbert Feis, for one, is not satisfied with such an explanation; see *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950* (New York, 1970), p. 223.

¹¹See also my *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941-1949* (Chicago, 1970), especially Chap. 10.

¹²John J. McCloy, *The Atlantic Alliance: Its Origins and Its Future* (New York, 1969), pp. 22-25.

able to revive itself unassisted, at least not in an acceptable period of time. Lacking a strong sense of common purpose, Western governments might have taken the easy way out and succumbed to the blandishments of the Russians and their own Communist minorities.

As McCloy put the situation, "It was this contrast between Soviet strength and purpose on the one hand and Western European weakness and lack of concentrated direction on the other which prompted the formation of a Western security system." If the High Commissioner is correct, then attempts to distinguish between political and military "containment" policies are pretty much beside the point. In addition, the rationale for NATO then appears to be largely the same as that for the Truman administration's repeated efforts to secure legislation enabling it to build up Latin-American military establishments.

Latin America has thus far received the least attention in histories of the Cold War. There is a parallel here with the behavior of policymakers, who all but ignored protests about America's "sphere of influence" in the Western Hemisphere while demanding equal access to Eastern Europe. But there was a positive correlation between postwar policies in Europe and Latin America from the beginning of the Cold War, a correlation that puts McCloy's insightful analysis of the basic political considerations underlying NATO into a broader context.

At the San Francisco Conference on the organization of the United Nations in April 1945, the key issues involved Argentina and Poland. The United States, having accepted Argentine promises of good behavior, had already constructed the foundations for the postwar inter-American system in the Act of Chapultepec.¹³ The hitch was in finding the right arguments to persuade the other delegations at San Francisco to accept Juan Perón's proto-Fascist regime into the United Nations. It was an especially sensitive question because the most bitter denunciations leveled at Perón's government had emanated from official Washington. The Russian delegation, whose leader, Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov, had just been lectured by Truman on his nation's uncooperativeness on the Polish issue, tried to link the two questions. If the United States was now willing to deal with Buenos Aires and even to sponsor Argentina for UN membership, he said, why did it oppose a Polish government that held anti-Fascist credentials and had given similar promises of good behavior toward other East European governments and the Soviet Union?

U.S. spokesmen rejected the parallel—there were no U.S. occupation forces in Argentina guaranteeing Perón's rule—but it took some doing. Molotov had touched a sensitive point, perhaps without fully realizing that he had. Franklin D. Roosevelt had withdrawn the last American occupation forces from the Caribbean and Central America, a point the

¹³See my *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* (Madison, 1964), Chap. 10.

State Department had made repeatedly in prewar discussions with the Japanese in an effort to persuade Tokyo to abandon the path of military conquest. But in postwar planning, American military and civilian policy-makers were determined to establish a monopoly over military supplies and advice in Latin America.

As American policies evolved in the immediate postwar period, at least two assumptions were applicable to both Latin America and Western Europe: First, in order to deal with fascism or militant socialism in either place, the key was to isolate outbreaks of radicalism (either local or national) within a larger community of nations. Nonvirulent fascism such as Franco's Spain could be tolerated and even turned to good purpose so long as the area's "security system" leaned in the proper direction. And that was the second assumption: If the "security system" leaned properly, the policy would succeed.

There was no need for a Latin-American Marshall Plan; private enterprise could do the job. But it was essential to establish a United States Government monopoly over arms sales to Latin-American countries. As in Europe, these countries needed the "concentrated direction" of a security system. Besides enabling their governments to keep order at home, participation in an international military partnership would divert unwanted nationalistic passions into safe outlets. Their pride satisfied by the acquisition of nearly up-to-date weapons systems, the generals could be counted on to support Washington's policy aims. Intra-American squabbles and territorial conflicts would not lead to the misuse of United States military aid in local wars for the same reason that West Germany could later be trusted to work in harness with the multinational NATO force.

The analogy is far from perfect, of course, but even including such other uses of NATO as a "trip-wire" to bring into action American air power, the comparison is helpful as a reminder that Washington's Cold War policies did not come into being willy-nilly in response to the Soviet menace. Rep. Charles Eaton posed the central issue so far as Latin America was concerned during 1947 hearings on the proposed Inter-American Military Cooperation Act:

Can we be sure that thought will be given under this legislation, and arrangements made, to protect the national interests of the United States by putting into the bargain, "secure access to and protection of United States property, rights, or its citizens' rights, in strategic minerals or materials in Latin America?"

"My answer to that," Secretary of State George C. Marshall replied, "is in the affirmative."¹⁴ Despite heavy pressure from the administration, the

¹⁴See David Green, *The Containment of Latin America: A History of the Myths and Realities of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Chicago, 1970), p. 264.

act failed in Congress, but its military purposes were served by a series of bilateral agreements, and its economic aims achieved in provisions of the later mutual security acts, which guaranteed access to key raw materials.

Europe-centered realist writings on the Cold War (including those not written by former policymakers) are least helpful in regard to Latin America and the Far East, yet it is precisely in these areas that the Cold War presents its most challenging historical problems. Realist critiques are often complaints that the United States does not behave like a European power in international relations, and they show a tendency to put all issues through the balance-of-power test. From this point of view, the major nemesis American policymakers face is a meddlesome public opinion, manipulated by particularistic interest groups in and out of Congress.

The Korean War is a good example. Most realists still give Truman and Acheson high marks for meeting Stalin's proxy challenge in a measured fashion—at least until MacArthur crossed the 38th parallel—although a note of doubt seems to be creeping in at the edges. Halle, for example, regrets many things about America's Far Eastern policy before Korea, all the way back to the Spanish-American War, which led to the "entirely inadvertent and unwanted acquisition of the Philippines" (p. 190). The mistake was then compounded by "an offhand and unconsidered gesture" (p. 190), the Open Door policy, which ultimately brought the nation into conflict with Japan (a classic violation of realist thinking about the Orient, which begins and ends with the Anglo-Japanese Alliance).

The Truman administration, then, inherited a bad situation and was slow to understand that Japan's defeat made it responsible for all Asia. Moreover, its chief foreign policy officials knew little about Korea, and cared less. Hence, while the Russians were arming North Korea, Americans were concerned only about finding a way out and did a slipshod job of preparing their half of the divided peninsula for coping with whatever might come. When Secretary Acheson, on January 12, 1950, told the National Press Club that South Korea was outside America's strategic defense perimeter, the men sitting at the "American" Desk in the Soviet Foreign Ministry drew the conclusion—incorrect—that the United States would not intervene. Moscow launched the attack, expecting to encounter nothing more serious from the Americans than a few harsh words. Both sides had mistaken the other's intentions and badly misinterpreted one another's diplomatic signals. Once set loose, the war dogs could not be penned up without great difficulty. Nor could the Cold War ever be brought under tight control again, a most regrettable outcome for both sides.

This short summary cannot do more than highlight the realists' current

writing on the Korean War, but it is enough to demonstrate that their arguments are very different from those used by the President and his advisers to explain and justify American response to the North Korean attack. At the time, Truman told the nation that the invasion of the South proved that "communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war." The realists agree that resistance was necessary, if only to prevent the Soviets from drawing a wrong conclusion about American willingness to take a stand. But they deplore, in retrospect, the crusading rhetoric surrounding the decision, however necessary it might have seemed to Truman in order to pacify public discontent and to ward off the rising force of McCarthyism. Some would say that the administration's reaction was caused by more than a concern to contain public opinion and was a symptom of its own lack of sophistication and narrowing perspective.

Halle sees the Russians as purely opportunistic in launching the attack: American lack of interest in Korea had "seemed to imply impunity for the Communists if they should now move to add it to their empire." But like Truman in 1950, Halle avoids the troublesome matter of whether "Russians" and "Communists" are to be equated, and whose empire is being talked about when one uses the pronoun "their." He suggests that the Korean War increased the voice of the military in American policy decisions and weakened the State Department's more cautious evaluation. Yet, it was the Joint Chiefs of Staff who had previously warned against becoming involved in a civil war on that peninsula—for any reason, whether it had been launched by the Soviets or by the North Koreans themselves.

But assuming that Stalin pulled all the strings, what of this other assumption that he was acting opportunistically? It is out of character with what the realists now say about his behavior in Europe, but that might be accounted for by Secretary Acheson's seeming ambiguity about American responsibility for the military defense of South Korea. Kennan suggests another interpretation, which goes beyond opportunism without leaving the basic framework of the realist position. The author of the Mr. "X" article points out in his *Memoirs* that it occurred to him, but apparently not to any of his colleagues, that there might have been a connection between Washington's decision to go ahead unilaterally with a Japanese peace settlement designed to win that country as a Cold War ally and the Russian decision to "unleash a civil war in Korea." The notion of one nation "unleashing" a civil war in another country warrants close examination, but Kennan's somewhat surprising reference to Japan's central role in the background of the Korean situation brought an offhand reply from retired Secretary of State Acheson, who dismissed it in a six-word sentence: "Mr. Kennan has written that he has seen no

evidence that such a causal connection 'ever entered the mind of anyone in Washington except [him]self.' I believe this to be true."¹⁵

Acheson then reasserted the Truman administration's original justification that it did not matter what intermediary goals the Russians or North Koreans might have had in mind. By 1948 the Communists had given ample proof of their ultimate goals, and the Soviet Union had already armed North Korea for offensive warfare. Kennan did not develop his argument, but it could be extended along these lines: Since the Russians also "knew" that the Americans were dedicated to encircling them, what were they to make of congressional authorization of \$58 million to build offensive long-range atomic bomber bases on Okinawa, the Pacific counterpart to facilities under construction in Iceland and Greenland?¹⁶ Or, for that matter, what were Russian generals to think about the heightening tensions inside Korea itself, tensions cited by U.S. Army officers as harbingers of civil war and reasons for withdrawing their forces before they became embroiled in a conflict caused by the unnatural division of the peninsula into nonviable occupation zones? While this division might have suited some useful purpose at war's end, it now constituted a positive danger to everyone concerned. If Americans worried about Kim Il-Sung, they also worried that Syngman Rhee might provoke the North Koreans into an attack that would bring them into the fray. In some ways it was China all over again.

Nor did the U.S. command believe, by the way, that the South Korean forces were inferior to the "offensively" armed North Koreans. The Joint Chiefs of Staff found this inferiority to be actual after the fighting began, but back in 1949 Maj. Gen. Charles Bolté had testified before Congress, "We feel that the [native] forces in Korea now are better equipped than the North Korean troops."¹⁷ From Moscow the Korean situation probably seemed more ominous than opportunistic, more defensive than offensive (remembering that Japan had attacked Russia in that area once before), and more geopolitical than ideological. If any-

¹⁵Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, pp. 429-30.

¹⁶See John W. Dower, "Occupied Japan and the American Lake, 1945-1950," in Edward Friedman and Mark Selden, eds., *America's Asia: Dissenting Essays on Asian-American Relations* (New York, 1971 ed.), pp. 186-205. The other essays in this volume are also a useful corrective to traditional scholarship on postwar Asian policy.

¹⁷J. Lawton Collins, *War in Peacetime: The History and Lessons of Korea* (Boston, 1969), p. 42. Collins records that the Joint Chiefs were shocked when the South Korean forces could not hold back the invaders. Another shock, he recalls, was the conviction in the minds of those who met with Truman following the initial attack, that it was "the Soviet Union, not merely a Communist puppet, that was challenging the United States and the United Nations" (p. 44). Was this a case involving a *non sequitur* in the form of a false syllogism: South Korean forces were strong enough to withstand a North Korean attack; they could not withstand the attack of June 25, 1950; therefore, that attack was not a North Korean attack, but something else?

one saw the situation as opportunistic, it was the Americans, not the Russians. Truman's speech describing the attack as proof that "communism" had passed beyond subversion to outright conquest was not intended for American public opinion alone, but to bring about changes in European (especially French) attitudes as well.

Having unmasked the real enemy as international communism, the administration could now take a forthright stand behind the French against Ho Chi Minh in Indochina. With the publication of various editions of the famous *Pentagon Papers*, reviewers have noted that we now have a much fuller picture of the Truman administration's struggles with the first stages of the Indochinese tangle. The documents reveal the administration at first perplexed by the phenomenon represented in the person of Ho Chi Minh, whose nationalist credentials were beyond question but whose allegiance to Marxism made him the wrong kind of anticolonialist leader. Gradually, the administration slipped into a position of supporting the French in Indochina, although it was certainly not happy in this posture, either. Once the Korean War began, however, it was easy to put aside past doubts. Moreover, as the United States increased its aid to the French, it could raise questions about what Paris was doing to make Bao Dai see his responsibilities to undertake, as Secretary Acheson put it in an October 18, 1950, cable to the American legation in Saigon, an energetic campaign against the "COMMIE menace."¹⁸

Overnight, also, the dilemma of Chiang Kai-shek's rump government on Formosa resolved itself into a military problem, although again in this situation American policymakers were only putting off the day when the chickens would come home to roost. Domestic politics no doubt accounted for the administration's public reconciliation with Chiang, but by moving the Seventh Fleet into the Formosan straits, it also put an insurmountable obstacle in the way of any moves the Kuomintang leader might have had up his sleeve for reopening the civil war on the mainland of China and thereby forcing his powerful ally's hand.

Republished in 1969 at the zenith of the Vietnam War debate, I. F. Stone's 1952 book, *The Hidden History of the Korean War*, gained a new prominence. Reviewers treated it with respect and, in some instances, with high praise. When it was first published, the polemical tone of the book had ruled out serious consideration of the author's less sensational findings. The first two chapters, which suggested that the South Koreans had deliberately lured the North into an attack, presumably to engage the reluctant Americans on Syngman Rhee's side of a war

¹⁸Acheson to American Legation in Saigon, October 18, 1950, reprinted in Mike Gravel, *The Senator Gravel Edition of The Pentagon Papers* (4 vols.; Boston, 1971), I, 70-71. The publication of these documents has given us much new documentation on larger questions at the time of the Korean War, especially on the matter of Communist revolution in Southeast Asia and Japan.

to unite Korea, made Stone's readers too skeptical to read the other forty-six chapters with the interest or understanding they deserved.

By present-day realist standards and in light of documents published that indicate the military's concern about Rhee's actions, not even those first two chapters now seem outrageous. Furthermore, Stone was the first to draw attention to a still-neglected aspect of the Korean War and America's Asian troubles in the postwar period: What to do about Japan? Gen. Douglas MacArthur had arrogated unto himself powers the Emperor had never enjoyed, but despite the reforms and changes he had carried out, Japan teetered on the edge of "neutralism" (or something worse) in 1950. In conversations with Truman's special emissary, John Foster Dulles, MacArthur warned that the occupation had to be ended soon—and ended in a way that would leave Japan economically viable and politically committed to the West in the Cold War.

"To end the occupation of Japan and Germany with their 'neutralization,'" Stone wrote,

would be to leave them free to resume their normal trade ties, the former with China, the latter with Eastern Europe. But to permit this trade to be resumed with a Communist China and a Communist East Europe would be to free Germany and Japan from the economic needs which bound them to the dollar and made it possible to use them for that war which obsessed this particular [Cold War] mentality. Worse, this trade would mean allowing Germany and Japan to contribute to the reconstruction and industrialization of these backward areas, ending their exploitation as reservoirs of cheap materials and cheap labor, and demonstrating the creative possibility of socialism for such areas, however repellent the regimes from the standpoint of personal liberty and intellectual freedom. Capitalist America's evident fear of peaceful competition testified to an ignominious lack of faith.¹⁹

Corroborating evidence for Stone's view came from an unusual source: John Foster Dulles himself, in private remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations and in public testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1952 to support the proposed peace treaty with Japan. On both occasions, and indeed whenever he spoke about the problem, Dulles stressed the imperative need to assure the Japanese outlets in Southeast Asia to compensate for lost markets in China.²⁰

The issue is not so much whether Stone has exposed "hidden" secrets about the Korean War, but whether his book raises questions that need further examination. As in his later works, Stone relied exclusively on published sources, especially the *New York Times* and government

¹⁹I. F. Stone, *The Hidden History of the Korean War* (New York, 1969 ed.), p. 34.

²⁰See Dulles's remarks in Transcript of Meetings at the Council on Foreign Relations, October 23, 1950, in the John Foster Dulles Papers, Princeton University Library, Princeton, N.J., and his testimony in the U. S., Congress, Senate, Foreign Relations Committee, *Hearings: The Japanese Peace Treaty and Other Treaties Relating to Security in the Pacific*, 82d Cong., 2d sess., 1952, pp. 27–28.

hearings. As new sources become available, it will be possible to test his conclusions to a much greater degree against the thinking of the administration. One hypothesis worth investigating would combine elements of realist criticism and Stone's argument, taking from the former a geopolitical emphasis upon Korea's strategic position between Russia and Japan and from the latter a concern about the Japanese internal political situation plus the economic problem of keeping the "workshop of Asia" integrated into the American-led capitalist system.

Together, these considerations might have determined the administration's decision, not to provoke a North Korean attack, but to overrule previous military conclusions that South Korea was not worth defending for strategic purposes. From this perspective, the "limited war" in Korea becomes something more than a brave stand against further Communist aggression; it takes on a much wider historical significance as the beginning step in an Asian policy fraught with tremendous consequences for the nation.

At the first conference President Truman held with congressional leaders following the North Korean attack, he recited what would become in the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson years the litany of the falling dominoes: "If we let Korea down, the Soviet will keep right on going and swallow up one piece of Asia after another. We had to make a stand some time, or else let all of Asia go by the board. If we were to let Asia go, the Near East would collapse and no telling what would happen in Europe."²¹ Secretary Acheson told the group that the President was deliberately avoiding use of the terms *Soviet Union* or *Russia* in his statement to the people explaining the administration's actions, in the hope that this avoidance would leave open to the Kremlin a way to back out of the confrontation without losing face. But it would have taken more than a Soviet disavowal to reverse the long-term decisions that had been made concerning Japan and Southeast Asia, decisions that were predicated upon a continuing struggle against the "Communist menace" no matter what happened in Korea, nor whether Russian support could be documented in any way beyond expressions of sympathy for the struggling peoples of the colonial world.

Two more books, Herbert Feis's *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950*, and Adam B. Ulam's *The Rivals: America and Russia Since World War II*, appeared as the new decade began in 1970 and 1971. Both carried on the realist side of what had become a three-sided discussion with the old orthodoxy and the revisionist challenge, although neither was willing to come to grips with the specifics

²¹Minutes of the President's Meeting with a Group of Senators and Congressmen, June 27, 1950, in the Papers of George Elsey, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri.

of the revisionist argument. Feis has written the more sympathetic account, full of understanding for the weaknesses of American policy-makers caught in the torrents of Cold War. With one or two exceptions, however, he still sees the men in the Kremlin as responsible for those torrents. The tone is perfectly summed up in the final paragraph of the book:

At this dark groove of history, having tried to trace the trails of separation that were trodden in the five years since the Allies had defeated the Axis, we must turn over the tale to the philosophers, and the future to the since-born. Will they merely resign themselves? Or will East as well as West rebel against that past, and reform?

Unfortunately, Feis has also chosen to leave much of the tale up to 1950 in the same hands. Eschewing a strong interpretive line, he settles the reader down comfortably to hear a story of circumstance and character. There are occasional hints at convictions in the author's mind deeper than appear in the narrative,²² but there is no trace of the professional economic analyses Feis once supplied in policy memoranda to Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson or to his successor Cordell Hull during the many years he held the Economic Adviser's post in the Department of State.

Nor, for that matter, are there traces of the international rivalries over raw materials he discussed in his 1946 book, *Seen From E. A.: Three International Episodes*. A comparison of Feis's treatment of Big Three rivalry in Iran, one of the first serious Cold War issues, in *Seen From E. A.* with his later discussion of the same problem in *From Trust to Terror* suggests the depth to which economic factors have been submerged, to remain out of sight even today in realist writings. In what remains one of the best brief discussions of the growth of American interests in the Middle East during World War II, Feis, in the earlier book, put the Iranian crisis into the context of Washington's concern to establish an international order guaranteeing equal access to the whole region's vast oil reserves. It was first necessary, he wrote, to formulate an Anglo-American plan, since these two nations approached the problem "with the same economic conceptions." Moreover, "it was impossible to guess what types of proposals the USSR might make; they might bring the whole pattern of ownership into question."²³ But in Iran itself, the British and Americans were already "hustling" for new concessions before war's end. Then came the Russians. It was idle to speculate, wrote Feis, whether they were spurred on

²²See the short discussion, "The Ordeal of Decision," pp. 6-12, and the general treatment of Germany throughout the book.

²³*Seen From E. A.*, pp. 136-37.

by a newly felt need for oil, lured by a wish to establish . . . [their] influence more firmly in Iran, or provoked by the apparently unlimited quest of American and British interests for oil rights everywhere. . . . [T]he Russian demand for a concession in Northern Iran must have seemed but a counterpart to American and British activities. The brisk bidding of foreign companies and the appointment of an American firm as counsellors may have been read to mean that there was little time left if the USSR wished to share in the control of Iranian oil. Such a wish might also have been strengthened by the view that if American interests acquired a permanent position in Iran, that might some day prove disadvantageous, or even dangerous to the USSR.²⁴

In *From Trust to Terror* these complicated maneuverings (with their long historical antecedents) are reduced to an eight-page chapter entitled, simply, "The Russian Intrusion into Iran." And the American role has shrunk to Edward R. Stettinius's public explanation of "our purpose, [which was], . . . the United States can contribute substantially to world security by assisting to create a strong Iran, free from internal weakness which invites foreign intervention and aggression."²⁵

Students of the Truman era can only regret that Herbert Feis, of all former policymakers the best qualified to deal with economic issues, has decided to conclude his study of wartime and postwar diplomacy, which began in 1950 with the publication of *The Road to Pearl Harbor*, without suggesting how the "since-born" might pursue the relevant questions he raised long ago in *Seen From E. A.*

With Adam Ulam's *The Rivals*, we have the most forceful statement to date of the "Immorality of Unrealism," the basic theme of realist critiques from George Kennan and Hans Morgenthau through Marshall Shulman and Louis Halle. Over the years, however, the emphasis has shifted from a condemnation of Wilsonian moralism to an indictment of overcommitment. The change is a subtle one, not always apparent from a first reading, in large part because overcommitment obviously flows from Wilsonian universalism. Realists stress this point, as does Arthur Schlesinger in "Origins of the Cold War," but overcommitment also flows as easily from realism. Thus, for example, a realist in 1950 might have argued that Franco's Spain was necessary to Western defense, and strictures about his Fascist-like regime should have no place in the statesman's calculations of national interest; but today the same realist critic might find the American commitment to Spain unwise and, possibly, even dangerous.

It is well to keep this shift in mind because Ulam, in summing up his case, draws a distinction between those he calls the "moralist-fatalists" who, in Acheson's and Dulles's days, demanded that the Soviet Union publicly repudiate its previous evil deeds and beg the world's forgiveness,

²⁴*Seen From E. A.*, pp. 176-77.

²⁵*From Trust to Terror*, p. 64.

and who, in this generation, have turned their missionary fervor inward and demand that their own leaders expiate all their many sins before mankind, from those, like himself, who see present troubles "as largely compounded of past errors and miscalculations." But was the commitment to Spain either an error or a miscalculation, given the historical circumstances of another day? And are questions of ideology simply reflections of misguided moralism?

Ulam's readers will have to decide these matters for themselves; he is interested in other questions. Since present troubles are compounds of past errors and miscalculations, there has to be someone to blame: Roosevelt for his foolish efforts to win over Stalin with geniality and appeasement, Truman and Acheson for failing to understand China and Chinese Communists, and the United States for its determination to speed up the process of decolonization after the war, thus creating situations that produced political instability.

Instead of considering the rival to be the USSR, "with its problems, its strengths, and its weaknesses, we persisted in seeing 'godless Communism' or 'international Communism.'" ²⁶ Relations with the Soviet Union should have been manageable, except for the "moralist-fatalist" influence, which beclouded the vision of American policymakers. "How suggestive in this respect has been the lesson of the economy," concludes Ulam:

The prodigious performance of American industry and agriculture during the war stilled the doctrinaire debate about the relative virtues of pure "capitalism" and a strict "planned economy," discredited the fatalism which ever since the Great Depression had proclaimed that any nonsocialist system must mean huge unemployment and stagnation, or, contrariwise, that social-welfare measures were the "road to serfdom." The result has been the prodigious recovery and economic growth of Western Europe and an unparalleled period of prosperity for the United States.²⁷

Ulam has surprised us! Without any warning we have suddenly come upon a central argument in some revisionist presentations—albeit in very strange circumstances—phrased to illustrate his conclusions. Elsewhere in the book, the author had taken on the revisionists over specific points, but not on these grounds. And even here he avoids stating the argument fully.

But taking it as presented, what are we to make of Ulam's insistence that the "moralist-fatalists" of both generations, and both left and right, read into policymakers' decisions motives that suit their prejudices, when his own discussion of the brilliant performance of the wartime economy puts into the minds of policymakers the thoughts of a man writing about postwar events from the distance of twenty-five years. Were American

²⁶Ulam, *The Rivals*, p. 384.

²⁷*The Rivals*, p. 388.

policymakers at the outset of the Cold War so sure that the "doctrinaire debate" over the future of capitalism had been decided in favor of New Deal pragmatism, as is assumed in this paragraph? Did they believe that American capitalism could survive the strains of reconversion and reconstruction without the assurance that Western Europe also would restore its capitalist economy? And did not Western Europe depend upon "friendly" capitalist states on its eastern borders and in Germany?

These uncertainties, argue one group of revisionists, account for early reactions to the Soviet challenge. Writing about Khrushchev's Russia, Isaac Deutscher suggested that American concerns were also of importance to Russian reactions in Stalin's time and since: "Even if they [Russian leaders in the 1950s] know or guess that Stalin had all too often needlessly provoked the West and produced hostility, they still wonder to what extent capitalism remains dangerously hostile towards the Soviet Union, because it is jealous of communist progress and fearful of its own prospects."²⁸

To dismiss such considerations as unimportant in the minds of Russian and American policymakers as the Cold War began and to assume that errors and miscalculations are responsible for most of our present troubles reduces the historical debate to a two-dimensional level. Instead of the "Immorality of Unrealism," we are left with the "Unreality of Realism."

2

Despite all that has been (and has not been) written about the revisionist position, there is as yet very little available on what Christopher Lasch identified as the ambiguities "presently submerged in the revisionists' common quarrel with official explanations." These have special significance for any student of the Truman era. In 1965 the *enfant terrible* of revisionism, Gar Alperovitz, published *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*, a study of post-Roosevelt diplomacy which argued that Truman changed the late leader's policy of conciliation into a plan for confrontation with the Russians. The key determinants in this situation were said to be Truman's personality and the ace he had been dealt with the successful test of the United States' new atomic weapon just as the Potsdam Conference got under way. Previous writers had hinted at a similar set of determinants or had pondered the connection between the atomic bomb and newly adopted political policies,²⁹ but none documented his case so thoroughly as Alperovitz, who seemed

²⁸*The Great Contest* (New York, 1960), p. 44.

²⁹The best known example, of course, is P.M.S. Blackett, *Fear, War and the Bomb* (New York, 1949), pp. 127-43. Besides the matter of documentation, it might be suggested that Blackett's study received so little attention one way or another because at the height of the Cold War such a position seemed absurd. Alperovitz wrote at a time when people would take such an assertion more seriously, even if only to refute it.

bent on using traditional methods to undermine orthodox apologists for America's Cold War policy.

Perhaps it was his determination to footnote every paragraph—or even every sentence—with primary sources that so infuriated critics, who began picking apart his argument on the basis of misuse of evidence. Perhaps some were angered by Alperovitz's dedication of the book to Henry L. Stimson, the conservative Secretary of War who advised Truman against atomic diplomacy as a means for getting the Russians out of Eastern Europe. Whatever the reasons, the book raised an immense furor in the “liberal” academic community. It has not died down. New arguments on both sides continue to be advanced by anxious young scholars at political science and history conventions.

Ironically, the Alperovitz book (and its successors in print and rhetoric) may have triggered a chain of explosions within American liberalism, not because it was so startling, but because it turned upside-down long-held assumptions. Using traditional liberal arguments about the very special role Roosevelt had played in U.S. history, Alperovitz simply confirmed such beliefs, but turned them against Truman. If one believed Roosevelt was special, an exception to the rule of U.S. imperialism, then why not blame his successors for the Cold War? It provided a serious dilemma for liberals, especially after the Bay of Pigs and the beginning of the Vietnam War: If they went the other way, by denying Truman's responsibility for the change, then they came up against a more radical critique.

Revisionists who quarreled with Alperovitz, such as Gabriel Kolko in *The Politics of War* (1968), shifted the argument to containment of the dual menace of the Left and the Soviet Union, and stability for the essential social and economic system of prewar European capitalism and colonialism. In this schema, Roosevelt and Truman fared about the same—badly, at least from a liberal point of view. From a radical point of view, they seemed, not bad, but less significant than the larger forces determining policy in East and West.

And that was the difficulty, or the ambiguity in revisionist writing. As Lasch put it in the *New York Times* (January 14, 1968):

Two quite different conclusions can be drawn from the body of revisionist scholarship. One is that American policy-makers had in their power to choose different policies from the ones they chose. . . . The other is that they have no such choice, because the inner requirements of American capitalism force them to pursue a consistent policy of economic and political expansion.³⁰

³⁰Other commentators have probed this ambiguity; see Charles S. Maier, “Revisionism and Beyond: Considerations on the Origins of the Cold War,” in *Perspectives in American History*, IV (Cambridge: The Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, 1970), and Robert W. Tucker, *The Radical Left and American Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, 1971). Of the two, Tucker's study is the more useful for this essay. He touches upon what seem to be the deepest problems in the revisionist overview and schism.

Nor does it help matters that many revisionists want to have it both ways, that is, they want to condemn U.S. policymakers for Cold War deeds, yet all the while they insist that there were no options open to them because of the "system" itself. In a collection of pieces originally written for the *New York Review of Books* to which he has added some afterthoughts on the prospects for American policy and republished under the title *Cold War Essays* (1970), Alperovitz has declared, "My ideas changed as I reflected upon the expanding stream of evidence." The essays make clear that they have changed in the direction of the more radical revisionist critique. But Christopher Lasch, who contributes an introduction to the collection and traces the revisionist writings back to the pioneer work (in America) of William Appleman Williams, praises Alperovitz for not adopting a "mechanistic theory of American imperialism."

Where does that leave the argument? Still in a state of ambiguity or, some would say, in flat contradiction. Others who began with Alperovitz, such as David Horowitz in *The Free World Colossus* (1965), moved even more sharply to the left in *Empire and Revolution* (1969) and the volumes he edited, *Containment and Revolution* (1967) and *The Corporations and the Cold War* (1969). In all of these books, Truman moves deeper into the background until it is almost impossible to identify him among the other members of the American "power elite" who made Cold War policy.

Yet other movements were also apparent in the ranks of the revisionists. The broad synthesis offered in Walter LaFeber's *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1966* (1967), began with a commonplace observation suggested by the title: The Cold War was something (*is something?*) apart from Russian-American relations. Yet, many early writers failed to grasp the implications of that observation or, having grasped them, were unable to challenge it because of the methods they adopted in writing Cold War histories. LaFeber apologizes in his Introduction for having to "skip around" a bit in handling certain problems, "but then that is how it happened, together in both time and space, not just in space."³¹ Writers on the next stage of Cold War historiography will need to skip around more than a bit, because that *is* how it happened.

Policymakers who function in both time and space obviously do not have the opportunity to review and reformulate their world views for each new contingency, but neither do they always react mechanically to every external stimulus. The process of interaction between men, their ideas, and their institutions is continuous. And external events appear to them through the prism of these concerns. Thus, what men think about the "system" and what it needs to function well at a given time is often as important as its supposed determinants. Indeed, what men think about helps to determine the "system." And so on, through

³¹LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1966*, p. ix.

time and space. Moreover, as this formula would suggest, disagreements within the policymaking group are often at the level of real options, not simply at the second level of tactical choices.

The effort to understand why options that, from any "rational" calculation of "objective" factors, seemed open to American policymakers were not even considered or were considered closed will take the historian beyond "economic determinism" into other fields of inquiry, even if he continues to emphasize the underlying force of political economy. My own interest in these problems resulted in *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Affairs, 1941-1949* (1970). What I attempted in that work was to study a variety of U.S. citizens on different levels within the policymaking group to determine what common factors influenced them, what different ideas they held, and how these combined to produce this nation's response to the postwar challenge.

Following up his excellent cameo study, "The Abortive American Loan to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1943-1946," which appeared in the June 1969 issue of the *Journal of American History*, Thomas Paterson edited *Cold War Critics: Alternatives to American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years* (1971), which included essays on an even more diverse group than I studied. His spanned ideological extremes from Robert A. Taft to Henry Wallace and journalistic commentators as different as I. F. Stone and Walter Lippmann. "There are few clear instances in which the critics changed national policies or initiated new ones," notes Paterson. "Yet their questioning, their vigilance, their suggestions, and their interest were checks of varying degrees upon the Truman Administration in the first few years of the Cold War."³²

Explaining that the Truman administration had become in fact a prisoner of critics, Emmett John Hughes, a lifelong Democrat, jumped on the Eisenhower bandwagon in 1952 and then hopped off again when it became apparent to him that John Foster Dulles was holding the foreign policy reins. Fortunately, he lived to tell us all about it in *The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years* (1963). "The ruthless facts of American political life seemed to have driven Democratic foreign policy into a dangerous dead end," wrote Hughes. "Only a Republican administration would have the *freedom—the chance—to think anew and act anew*" (p. 13).

Hughes's immediate, or almost immediate, disappointment with the Eisenhower Republicans has an ironic echo today, when some revisionists have once again turned their attention to the way "Ike" managed the "system" for eight years without getting the country embroiled in a new Korea. "Despite intense pressure and great temptation," Stephen Ambrose writes of Eisenhower and Dulles, "they entered no wars. They were

³²Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics*, p. 15.

willing to supply material, on a limited scale, to others so that they could fight the enemy, but they would not commit American boys to the struggle. Like Truman they did their best to contain communism; unlike him they did not use troops to do so.”³³ Domestic politics shaped their rhetoric of “liberation,” but it also limited what they could do about it.

The domestic political situation, obviously, was inherited from the Truman period. Efforts to demonstrate the interaction of Cold War politics and policies and the politics of the Cold War at home have just begun. Barton J. Bernstein began the task in *Politics & Policies of the Truman Administration* (1970), a collection of essays by scholars dealing with both general and specific foreign policy questions, along with pieces on internal security, the loyalty program, and civil rights. The administration's predicament, Bernstein concludes, came down to this: “[The] struggles against foreign instability and communism were intimately linked with the administration's concern about domestic loyalty and security. Yet, ironically, by 1950 the administration could no longer persuade Americans that it was resisting communist expansion abroad and rooting out subversives at home.”³⁴

The most ambitious effort to explain this seeming paradox in what is still a very new area of Truman era scholarship is Richard Freeland's *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946–1948* (1971). With such a complicated title, an author must be very ambitious indeed; but even critical reviewers have given Freeland high marks for confronting the issues directly and for bringing to light connections that had been ignored during the Cold War and in Cold War histories of widely different points of view. “The technique of the Truman Doctrine,” Freeland writes in one place,

was to invert reality by imputing the urgency of a political crisis in the United States to the movement of events in the international sphere, particularly in Greece, thereby affecting an alteration of the domestic political situation, which, in turn, significantly influenced the international situation.³⁵

Beginning his story in World War II, Freeland reviews the increasingly familiar outline of American hopes for a “multilateral” world after the war. Without changing our picture of an administration (under both Roosevelt and Truman) dedicated almost to a man to this vision, the author reminds us that there were powerful groups opposed to anything that smacked of New Dealism either at home or abroad. That Republican leaders would come to the same conclusion, once they were in power,

³³Rise to Globalism, *American Foreign Policy 1938–1970* (Baltimore, 1971), p. 220.

³⁴Bernstein, *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration*, p. 8.

³⁵Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism*, p. 94.

does not, it seems to me, invalidate Freeland's further conclusion that anticommunism was used to sell, not only the Truman Doctrine, but also the Marshall Plan and other economic foreign policies. Reversing the previously assumed order of things, Freeland suggests that Truman may have preempted the internal subversion issue, not out of fear of Republican retaliation following their successes in the 1946 congressional elections, but as part of a well-conceived consciousness-raising plan "to promote public concern about subversion and thus whet rather than slake Republican thirst for new action in the field of internal security" (p. 128).

To what end? asks the reader. To make the Congress and the public more sensitive to new initiatives in foreign policy, answers Freeland. Truman's knowledge of the course ahead in foreign policy denied him any possibility of resisting Republican "housecleaning" demands, so why not make the most of them in a positive way? Critics have charged that Freeland's reconstruction of this complicated period is all too pat. And it probably is; but his use of manuscript sources from the Truman Library gives the book both stature and depth. Future studies may displace it, but not by circumlocution or assertion.

Sometimes the response to revisionism is to refuse to acknowledge its existence: the gentleman's reaction to a bothersome unpleasantness, lest it actually become worse; eventually it will go away—when the sources become available. Such a stance is simply no longer possible. The revisionists have been the most eager to take advantage of new sources and to treat them seriously. Moreover, the body of Cold War revisionist writing far surpasses in quantity and quality anything comparable following World War I. Indeed, Cold War revisionism is stimulating the development of a revisionist view of that earlier conflict, as Arno Mayer's impressive studies of Wilson and Lenin and Versailles peacemaking demonstrate.³⁶

3

What happens to revisionism, however, will be less important than the questions historians must ask in their writings. This is not a matter of availability of sources alone, although fully satisfactory answers will have to wait upon such access. Even then, of course, historical debate will not end.

Already, the Truman Library collections have been augmented with the addition of papers from the President's close advisers, among which those of Clark Clifford and George Elsey seem especially important for

³⁶See *Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy* (New York, 1964 ed.) and *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918–1919* (New York, 1967).

diplomatic historians. But, significant as these new materials are, they will not determine the questions historians will be concerned with in the next ten years—and beyond.

In the last five years, on the other hand, the most frequent issue raised by Cold War students, regardless of interpretive position, has been concerned with “universalism” and “spheres of influence” in both Russian and American postwar policies. It had always been assumed that Stalin’s foreign policy after the war was “universalist,” in the sense that he was pursuing world revolution or, in some interpretations, world conquest. Little new evidence has become available from Russian sources, but new questions have been asked about Russian behavior, and the answers suggest Stalin was little interested in promoting world revolution, especially if it would produce more Titos and Maos. Similarly, it was taken for granted that U.S. policy was purely defensive, limited to containing the world Communist menace. While many authors would stop short of the label “expansionist” to describe American actions, they would now admit that “universalism” has been a powerful force, whether for good or ill, in this nation’s diplomacy, dating back to the beginning.³⁷

Undoubtedly, there will be more specific studies on various aspects of this general problem. One, David Green’s *The Containment of Latin America* (1971), has already appeared. But we need to know much more about other problems as well. The answers to these will involve historians in the new techniques of “psycho-history” and “quantitative” research. The consensus among historians of twentieth-century America, for example, would be that Roosevelt’s leadership was characterized by pragmatism, which stretched into procrastination during World War II; that Truman made quick decisions and often shot from the hip; and that Eisenhower proved a master of energetic inactivity. How valid are these generalizations, with or without refinements? More important, is presidential leadership the key to understanding Cold War policies?

We have only begun to study the domestic politics of Cold War. Content to explain “McCarthyism” as a neopopulist uprising emerging from the “isolationist” Middle West, intellectuals and historians too long neglected other factors as causative agents in this phenomenon. Instead of understanding the changes within sections and interest groups that could account for McCarthy’s rural support, writers in the 1950s assumed that political extremism, first Left and then Right, was simply an inherent characteristic of certain people in certain areas; it was in their blood. Michael Paul Rogin’s *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: the Radical Specter* (1967) shattered that illusion once and for all. Moreover, he focused attention on McCarthyism as a reaction, not to modern

³⁷See Richard W. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (New York, 1960) and Felix Gilbert, *The Beginnings of American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1965 ed.).

industrial society and its foreign policy counterparts, but to specific foreign policy issues, especially Korea. Richard Freeland has pursued this insight in one direction; others need to be explored by both diplomatic and political historians. In fact, the deeper we get into the Truman era, the less meaningful such a distinction between historical tasks will become.

Much remains to be learned about the relationship between military and foreign policies in the Truman administration. No matter what view one takes on "atomic diplomacy" or past writings on the subject, it seems clear that the bomb strengthened certain tendencies in traditional American thinking. Truman was not the first to count on technological superiority as the key to political success. His immediate predecessor had stressed air power as a substitute for manpower, before the war and during the war for the future. Truman carried out that policy faithfully. The question is, what restraints or options did this choice impose upon Cold War political policies? Specifically, did the Korean War have to be fought to reestablish the atomic deterrent in light of the most recent Russian A-bomb test?

Still undetermined is the question of how the President and his advisers defined the Soviet threat. Was it primarily regarded as a military problem? Did they consciously adopt a counterrevolutionary stance and label it a military necessity? Or did memories of the Nazi "Fifth Column" make the distinction unimportant?

With that question (although many others have not been discussed), we have come full circle. Sophisticated Cold Warriors have told us that there was never a military threat and that recent revisionist critics mistakenly accuse the administration on these grounds. Thus, John J. McCloy: NATO "was not exclusively or even primarily to deter an impending or threatened Soviet military attack." Future historians will be wrestling with the implications of that remark for some time to come.

YEARS OF THE LOCUST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TRUMAN PRESIDENCY SINCE 1965

HARVARD SITKOFF

EARLY in my education as an historian, a more jaundiced colleague repeated to me the maxim about the historiography of heads of state inevitably being bunk, debunk and rebunk. I scoffed then. But now, after studying the scores of articles, books, dissertations, and reviews on the Truman Presidency, I am beginning to understand his point. Although many of these recent studies are of value, exhibiting skill in methodology, research, and writing, they all fail to grapple with the root problems of the how's and why's of history. Locked into the liberal historiographical tradition of the presidential synthesis, they remain content to vote for or against Truman, self-consciously revising a previous revisionist and adding yet another interpretation to the hopper. While concentration on "Who is to blame?" makes for diverting controversies in print and at historical conventions, it has left most of the crucial questions about the Truman years unanswered, even unasked.¹

The debunking of the past half-dozen years, however, has taken us two giant steps forward toward a meaningful framework for the Truman Presidency. First, the recent literature on Truman at last provides us with the building blocks necessary for the task. Enough monographs are now available for historians to venture beyond unsupported narration

¹Thomas C. Cochran, "The 'Presidential Synthesis' in American History," *American Historical Review*, 53 (1948), 748-59. On the dominant trend in American historiography during the Truman years, see John Higham, "The Cult of the Consensus," *Commentary*, 37 (February 1959), 93-100. Irwin Unger, "The 'New Left' and American History: Some Recent Trends in United States Historiography," *American Historical Review*, 72 (July 1967), 1237-63, provides a general critique of current revisionism, while Jerold Auerbach, "New Deal, Old Deal, or Raw Deal: Some Thoughts on New Left Historiography," *Journal of Southern History*, 35 (February 1969), 18-30, and Otis L. Graham, Jr., "New Deal Historiography: Retrospect and Prospect," in Graham, ed., *The New Deal, The Critical Issues* (Boston, 1971), pp. 171-79, focus on the Roosevelt years. Many of their criticisms are equally valid for the historiographical controversy over Truman, but should be read in conjunction with John P. Diggins, "Consciousness and Ideology in American History: The Burden of Daniel J. Boorstin," *American Historical Review*, 76 (February 1971), 99-118.

and declamation. Unlike the scholars attending the 1966 conference and those contributing to the 1967 edition of *The Truman Period As a Research Field*, the historians writing for this volume are no longer in the awkward position of having to survey and generalize about topics on which nearly nothing had yet been published. In the past five years the period has flourished as a research field. Doctoral candidates have flocked to the library at Independence, Missouri, to work on dissertations; journal articles and convention papers have alerted the profession to recent interpretations, and a growing number of published monographs now crowd the shelf solely occupied in 1966 by Richard Davies's study of housing reform during the Truman administration. Much, of course, remains to be done. Many of the questions posed in the 1967 volume have still not been answered. And many of the papers of key policy-makers in the administration, including the personal papers of the President, are still restricted. But each year brings a new harvest of published works and additional manuscript material, and this combined with the studies completed so far gives cause to believe that we are now ready for the second stage: analysis, rather than celebration and condemnation.

The demythologizing tone of the recent Truman literature is also encouraging. While critics of the so-called New Left or revisionist historians are undoubtedly correct in asserting that some recent accounts have gone too far in blaming Truman for all the ills of succeeding administrations, the debunking process has been a necessary and healthy step toward sounder history. For during the better part of the quarter of a century after the Second World War, American historians had taken too much for granted about the workings of our society and the nature of liberalism. Anxious to end their youthful romance with Marxism and its satellite approaches to history, Daniel Bell's twice-born generation leaped to embrace the President's view of what was wise and necessary. Thus, thinking like Truman, they accorded him the rating of a "near great" President.²

²In a presidential address to the American Historical Association in the midst of the Truman era, a distinguished historian said: "I am inclined to think that the first prerequisite of a historian is a sound social philosophy. Actually he finds in the past what he looks for." Conyers Read, "The Social Responsibilities of the Historian," *American Historical Review*, 55 (January 1950), 285. Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology, On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* (New York, 1961), especially "The Mood of Three Generations." Three other seminal works that helped to redefine liberalism for a generation of scholars were Max Ascoli, *The Power of Freedom* (New York, 1949); Irwin Ross, *Strategy for Liberals* (New York, 1949); and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center* (Boston, 1949). For an early revisionist view, see I. F. Stone, *The Truman Era* (New York, 1953). The basic revisionist critique is summed up by Athan Theoharis, "The Truman Presidency: Trial and Error," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 55 (Autumn 1971), 49-58; and Barton J. Bernstein, "The Presidency Under Truman," *Yale Political Review*, 4 (Fall 1964), 8 ff.; "Truman's Record," *Progressive*, 30 (October

This accolade, bestowed on Truman by historians responding to the 1962 Schlesinger poll, primarily reflects the Cold War consensus that containment and a "get-tough" attitude toward the Soviet Union had been correct. By 1966–1967, a small group of revisionists was vigorously challenging that view. Today, the revisionist approach is clearly in the ascendancy. Even the textbooks now apportion some of the blame for the conflict with Russia on the United States. Whether stressing the limited vision or ideology of Truman and his advisers or the expansionist needs of a capitalistic society, the composite picture that emerges from the revisionist works is of an aggressive United States foreign policy, distrustful of the United Nations and disarmament and cynically exaggerating the threat of Russia and communism in order to legitimate its refusal to work out a detente. Rather than emphasizing Stalin's paranoia, the rigidity of Communist ideology and Russia's avowed dedication to enslave the globe, the revisionists have forced us to be aware of the United States' atomic blackmail, search for markets, support for corrupt and reactionary regimes, maintenance of colonial subserviency, misrepresentation and suppression of the Left both at home and abroad, and desire to expand the American way throughout the world. In this light, almost all the Cold War interpretations of the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, and the Korean War have been stood on their heads. Although the revisionist view remains beset by conflicting and often contradictory explanations of American belligerence, it has nevertheless profoundly shaken the verities of the Cold War for a generation of younger scholars and their students, and with it the reputation of Harry S Truman.³

The 1962 rating of Truman also underscored the powerful grip of the New Deal political persuasion on the elders of the historical profession. Viewing him as the successor to this tradition and the Fair Deal as another logical step toward true social and economic justice, historians have lavished praise on the thirty-third President for thwarting the Neanderthal Republican drive to repeal the New Deal and for promoting needed liberal reforms. Despite sufficient evidence to the contrary, this myth of Truman as a heroic, scrappy individual responding eagerly and

1966), 46–48; and "America in War and Peace: The Test of Liberalism," in Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past: Dissenting Essays in American History* (New York, 1968), pp. 289–321. For an excellent evaluation of the revisionist literature on both domestic and foreign policy, see Robert Griffith, "Truman and the Historians: The Reconstruction of Postwar American History," an unpublished paper read at the annual meeting of the Organization of American Historians in 1972.

³The poll is in Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Paths to the Present* (Boston, 1964, rev. ed.), 105–6. Absolutely essential to understanding the controversy is Charles S. Maier, "Revisionism and the Interpretation of the Cold War Origins," *Perspectives in American History*, 4 (1970), 313–50.

decisively to all the great challenges of his difficult tenure in office remains standard in most textbook accounts of modern American history. Louis W. Koenig, Mario Einaudi, Eric Goldman, and J. Joseph Huthmacher take pains to stress Truman's positive achievement in consolidating and updating the New Deal. Thomas Bailey sees his program as a sweeping extension of FDR's and credits the Missourian with being a "big" man when it counted. Frank Freidel, John Garraty, and Arthur Link emphasize the President's dedication and purposefulness in continuing the "progressive tradition." The latest edition of the popular *The Growth of the American Republic*, by Samuel Eliot Morison, Henry Steele Commager, and William E. Leuchtenburg, couples Truman with Lincoln and Wilson for his "astonishing capacity for growth" and spotlights such virtues as "boldness, decisiveness, and courage." And not to be outdone, Forrest McDonald asserts that Truman's Presidency "well may be . . . America's 'finest hour.'"⁴

What the almost desperate desire to perpetuate the "near great" view and yet acknowledge the recent findings to the contrary will lead textbook writers to is clearly foreshadowed in the new edition of Morton Borden's *America's Ten Greatest Presidents*, which changes *Ten* to *Eleven* in the title and adds a chapter on Truman. Although Borden pragmatically defines presidential greatness as success—"the degree to which each has solved or resolved the crucial issues of the period"—the new chapter by Kirkendall concludes by cautioning scholars to be realistic in their expectations and emphasizing the reasons for Truman's lack of success. Apparently accepting at face value the President's commitment to reform and the value of the measures he proposed, Kirkendall's essay becomes an extended apology for the failings of the Fair Deal, particularly vis-à-vis the New Deal:

Depression had generated public support for innovation in Roosevelt's early years, while Truman functioned in a relatively prosperous period. Furthermore, international problems seemed to him to be much more demanding than they had seemed to Roosevelt in his years of domestic victories, and the character

⁴Louis W. Koenig, "Truman's Global Leadership," *Current History*, 38 (October 1960), 227; Mario Einaudi, *The Roosevelt Revolution* (New York, 1959), p. 125; Eric F. Goldman, *The Crucial Decade and After, America 1945-1960* (New York, 1960), *passim*; J. Joseph Huthmacher, *Twentieth Century America: An Interpretation with Readings* (Boston, 1966), pp. 344-45; Frank Freidel, *America in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1965), p. 503; John Garraty, *The American Nation: A History of the United States* (New York, 1966), p. 806; Arthur S. Link, *American Epoch: A History of the United States Since the Late 1890's* (New York, 1967), pp. 667-68; Samuel Eliot Morison, Henry Steele Commager, and William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Growth of the American Republic* (New York, 1969), p. 618; and Forrest McDonald, *The Torch Is Passed: The United States in the 20th Century* (Reading, Mass., 1968), p. 327. These works have been cited, not for their uniqueness, but because they were close at hand. All other textbooks I am familiar with would have equally sufficed.

of those problems strengthened conservative forces. Finally, Truman faced a powerful conservative coalition that had already demonstrated, even when Roosevelt had occupied the White House, that it could thwart a president. Truman, after all, inherited domestic deadlock. He did not create it.

Not content, however, to regard Truman merely as a helpless victim of the forces of deadlock, Kirkendall affirms the President's greatness by stressing the importance of rhetoric in publicizing reform issues and the ways in which executive action expanded New Deal programs.⁵

Although a partial corrective to the textbooks that gloss over Truman's domestic failings, the Kirkendall synthesis does not answer the major challenges of the recent revisionist historians. They stress the difficulties that faced Truman when he assumed office, but rather than leaving the matter there, they demonstrate how his own actions augmented the opposition to liberal legislation. To replace the image of a gutsy President made popular by such phrases as "The buck stops here" and "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen," they picture the man as an overly cautious, vacillating, often inept politician of limited vision. Without minimizing the power of the conservative coalition in Congress, the revisionists argue that his appointments, deception of the public, deference to the Democratic right wing, and abandonment of New Deal liberalism in favor of a more moderate, centrist concept of government, all contributed to the weakening of liberal forces after World War II. They refuse to accept the conservatism of the period as an inevitable "given." Thus, although no one denies Richard Neustadt's contention that the administration could never afford "to trade a major objective in the foreign field for some advantage in the domestic," it is similarly necessary to observe the ways in which Truman's foreign policy inhibited the movement for domestic reforms. By so focusing on the President's own contributions to conservatism, however inadvertent at times, the revisionists have abruptly shifted the estimate of him. While most young scholars continued to accept the rating of Truman as a "near great" President at the time of the initial publication of *The Truman Period As a Research Field*, few do so today. We may hope that

⁵Richard S. Kirkendall, "Harry Truman," in Morton Borden, ed., *America's Eleven Greatest Presidents* (Chicago, 1971, rev. ed.), pp. 225-88. The landmark work on the restraints limiting a President is Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership* (New York, 1960). Also see James MacGregor Burns, *The Deadlock of Democracy: Four Party Politics in America* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963). James Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal* (Lexington, Ky., 1967), is still the best in its field and an absolute necessity for anyone writing about the Truman years. Its thesis needs to be expanded into the 1940s. Roland Young's *Congressional Politics in the Second World War* (New York, 1956) is a less than satisfactory beginning of that effort. Also, see James T. Patterson, *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft* (Boston, 1972). Highly suggestive is R. Alan Lawson, *The Failure of Independent Liberalism, 1930-1941* (New York, 1971).

the result of this debunking, or demythologizing, will be, not a revised rating of the President, but a new level of questioning and evaluation.⁶

1

"I don't know whether you fellows ever had a load of hay or a bull fall on you," Truman told a group of reporters the day after he took the oath of office as President of the United States, "but last night the moon, the stars and all the planets fell on me." So begins the traditional account of Truman's assumption of the awesome responsibilities for concluding a global war and guiding the nation's transition to peace. Much is made of the magnitude of the problems, of the fact that he had been chosen in 1944, not for his prior accomplishments, but for being the best available compromise of the differences splitting the Democratic party, for the disparities in style between the polished, urbane Squire of Hyde Park and the midwestern, small-town exhaberdasher, and for the new President's lack of knowledge of what Roosevelt intended on a host of critical matters that required immediate attention. But do these circumstances alone explain Truman's ineptitude in handling demobilization and reconversion? his inability to control inflation? his alienation of many segments of the Roosevelt coalition? The standard interpretation does not take into account the advantages granted him by the timing and manner of his accession to the White House, a fact attested by the unprecedented popularity rating of 80-plus per cent given the President in the polls taken during his first few months in office. Given the honeymoon mood of Congress and the receptivity of the public toward him, just how well did Truman handle his immediate tasks?⁷

⁶Richard E. Neustadt, "Congress and the Fair Deal: A Legislative Balance Sheet," in Carl Friedrich and John K. Galbraith, eds., *Public Policy*, V (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), 354. This study has been the single most influential work in fixing the President's favorable rating among historians. For the contrary position, see the works cited in note 2 and the impressions of Rexford G. Tugwell, *Off Course: From Truman to Nixon* (New York, 1971), especially pp. 178, 209-11, 285.

⁷Goldman, *The Crucial Decade*, *passim*; Alonzo L. Hamby, "The Liberals, Truman, and FDR as Symbol and Myth," *Journal of American History*, 56 (March 1970), 859-67, and "Sixty Million Jobs and the People's Revolution: The Liberals, the New Deal, and World War II," *The Historian*, 30 (August 1968), 578-98. The two most complete accounts upon which the revisionists depend for their analysis of Truman's early months as President are Barton J. Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and the Politics of Inflation" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1963), and Mary H. Hinchey, "The Frustration of the New Deal Revival" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1965). Hinchey, while more favorable to Truman than Bernstein, provides a great deal of evidence on Truman's failures in leadership on economic issues. An early analysis still worth reading is Richard Rovere, "President Harry," *Harper's Magazine*, 197 (July 1948), 27-35.

On demobilization, the revisionists need only quote the President's own conclusion a year after the war's end: it "was no longer demobilization . . . it was disintegration." No President could have fully resisted the public pressure in late 1945 and 1946 to "bring the boys home" as quickly as possible, but Truman compounded the problem by playing politics with the issue, inconsistently administering the demobilization program agreed upon by the military in 1943, and failing to explain to the American people their postwar obligations. Despite the military's warnings about the level of manpower needed to maintain the national security and to meet our occupation responsibilities overseas, Truman courted popularity at home by promising to step up with increasing rapidity the daily discharge rate. Within months after V-J Day, there were not enough ships of any kind to transport those servicemen already assured of an early discharge. The broken promises then stimulated resentment against the President and increased the pressure for rapid demobilization, to which he surrendered. By mid-1946 the armed forces had been reduced from twelve million to less than three million.⁸

On the draft, Truman displayed the same combination of simplistic partisanship and uninspired leadership. In both 1946 and 1947, with the least possible publicity, the Chief Executive reluctantly requested and received extensions of the wartime Selective Service Act from Congress. Each time, he hid from the electorate the personal cost of his policy of standing firm to the Communist threat. When he appointed an advisory commission at the end of 1946 to study universal military training, he deliberately included several distinguished citizens who were vigorously and vocally opposed to a peacetime draft so as to soften the impact of the recommendations. Administrative spokesmen embarrassedly admitted before Congress in 1948 that the White House had not yet done the background work necessary for congressional action, and the President himself would not fully support his own administration's proposal until the Berlin blockade and Communist seizure of power in Czechoslovakia provoked the scare of war. On the eve of the Korean War, the Army consisted of only ten active divisions.⁹

Military expenditures similarly revealed the weaknesses of the President's leadership and the lengths to which he would go to deceive the

⁸The Truman quotation is in Henry Bamford Parkes and Vincent P. Carosso, *Recent America, Book Two: Since 1933* (New York, 1963), p. 289. R. Alton Lee, "The Army 'Mutiny' of 1946," *Journal of American History*, 53 (December 1966), 555-71; and Davis R. B. Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans during World War II* (New York, 1969), pp. 160-89.

⁹The legislative history of Universal Military Training is a vital task that remains undone. For the view of a Truman opponent, see F. Ross Peterson, "Fighting the Drive Toward War: Glen H. Taylor, the 1948 Progressives, and the Draft," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 61 (January 1970), 41-45.

public about the cost of expanding the United States' commitments abroad. In 1946 Truman joined forces with the economy bloc in Congress to reduce defense expenditures, and in several major messages in 1947 he tied cuts in military spending to his desire for a balanced budget. Quite clearly, he felt it impolitic to inform the people of the relationship between high taxes and the containment of communism. Immediately preceding the Korean War, while still preaching a militant opposition to international communism and the virtues of fiscal conservatism and of a mothball armed forces, he cooperated with Congress to limit defense spending to thirteen billion dollars, an act Walter Millis would shortly term "surely one of the most expensive economies—in terms of life and effort as well as of money—in which the United States ever indulged." Two decades later, the revisionists find it difficult to conclude differently and are further troubled by the aura of deception and elitism that pervaded Truman's handling of the related issues of demobilization, the draft, and military expenditures.¹⁰

On reconversion the revisionists give Truman even lower marks than on his dismantling of the military. As every historian writing about this period emphasizes, the President faced a Herculean task. It was his unpopular job to say no to each of the interest groups who were demanding more advantages. After years of receiving benefits from New Deal programs and a full-employment war economy, organized labor, big business, and farmers would not tolerate a government now trying to curb their demands. Each interest group put forth persuasive claims for its needs, and each saw in the gains of the others an added justification for its own persistence. Labor sought wage increases to make up for lost overtime and to protect against the inflation caused by farm and business price boosts. Farmers, beset by fears of a postwar depression and agricultural surpluses, demanded rigid and high price supports from the government. And big business, concerned about the loss of profits as a result of reduced government spending as well as from the costs of reconversion and higher wages, wanted an end to all price controls. The consumer, meanwhile, desired continued prosperity and a minimum of government interference without rationing, black markets, and an inflationary wage-price spiral. These conflicting pressures all converged on the Office of Price Administration and its director, Chester Bowles.¹¹

¹⁰Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diary* (New York, 1951), p. 111; Paul Y. Hammond, *Organizing for Defense: The American Military Establishment in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1961); and Warner R. Schilling, "The Politics of National Defense: Fiscal 1950," in Schilling, et al., *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets* (New York, 1962), pp. 1-266. This whole area requires more attention from historians.

¹¹The traditionalist account is summarized by John Dunlop, "The Decontrol of Wages and Prices," in Colston E. Warne, et al., *Labor in Postwar America* (Brooklyn,

Certainly a difficult situation, but the failure of Bowles's efforts to enforce an equitable and noninflationary reconversion policy was not inevitable, as many pro-Truman historians imply. What if Bowles had had a fully supportive President at his back, both publicly and within the bureaucracy? What if the President had demonstrated firm impartiality and a clear understanding of the government's role in the economy? What if there had been a President with the wisdom and tact to negotiate with skilled, powerful adversaries? Or a President with the courage to hold to a course he believed right while attempting to educate the public about what must be done for the benefit of all? Instead, Bowles had Truman, who vacillated in his public backing of OPA, yielded to outcries against regulations and control, blundered in his relations with labor and business leaders, and permitted his more conservative advisers to undercut Bowles. In less than two years, prices soared to nearly a third more than they had been on V-J Day, a rise greater than that for the whole war period. Shortages and black marketeering grew acute, nobody seemed satisfied, Truman appeared bewildered and hapless, and the Republicans, asking voters in 1946 if they had "Had Enough?", swept control of Congress for the first time since 1928 and elected governors in twenty-five of the states outside the South. Not facetiously, Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright, with the endorsement of several leading Democratic newspapers, suggested that the President appoint a Republican Secretary of State and then resign, permitting the GOP to control the White House. Less than a year after the new President had commanded the heights of public affection and support, he stood discredited, an object of ridicule, a party leader whom the Democrats would not allow to campaign in 1946.

Although most of Truman's political woes were inherited, he never demonstrated during his first two years in office the capacity to be a "fighting liberal." He listlessly went through the motions of a man who knew he was beaten and relied unduly on subordinates. His Secretary of Agriculture, Clinton P. Anderson, a prosperous businessman-farmer with properties in New Mexico and South Dakota and a former congressional centrist linked neither with the New Dealers nor conservatives, fought to increase farm prices and lift controls in complete disregard for Bowles's policies. Anderson conceived of his role as the representative of commercial farmers and foe of any bureaucrat who sought to lower food prices. While Truman still paid lip service to OPA, Anderson testified against it and energetically worked with the congressional farm bloc to thwart Bowles's attempts to curb inflation by controlling food prices

1949), pp. 3-24. Compare with Bernstein, "The Presidency Under Truman," and his excellent analysis of the early literature, in Richard S. Kirkendall, ed., *The Truman Period As a Research Field*, pp. 98-105.

and continuing government subsidies to regulate production. After months of wrangling between the two presidential subordinates, with Truman doing nothing to clarify the government's policy, the European famine temporarily solved the problem of overproduction. Truman then gave in to Anderson and permitted farmers to raise their prices, adding another nail to OPA's coffin and proving how feasible and profitable it was for an interest group to defy the reconversion program. The meat packers evidently got this message and shortly before the elections of 1946 called a meat strike to force Truman to end price ceilings on meat. The Chief Executive had repeatedly said he would not do this, but when the packers clamored loudly enough, he again gave in and meat prices soared.¹²

Indecisiveness and an extreme reliance on conservative advisers also marked Truman's efforts to work with big business during reconversion. Like most Americans, he viewed trusts and monopolies as somehow sinful, yet he remained in awe of the sinners. Almost an idle spectator, he did little to minimize or counter the governmental influence of corporate power. Rather, he permitted his inner circle of John Snyder, Dr. John Steelman, Tom Clark, and Harry Vaughan to bring businessmen in droves into his administration, to give them most of what they wanted in new tax and spending programs, to dispose of government-owned war plants in the interest of large corporations, to administer the antitrust program in a way that would do nothing to slow the accelerating disparity between big business and the rest of the economy, and to permit the steel corporations and General Motors to get the price increases they wanted and thus wreck the stabilization program. The "power elite" of corporate and military leaders forged in the War Production Board truly came of age in the Truman years. The President and the men around him, when not actually doing the bidding of the military-industrial complex, did nothing to thwart its growth.¹³

¹²Allen J. Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics in the Truman Years* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), pp. 1-62; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Postwar Famine and Price Control, 1946," *Agricultural History*, 38 (October 1964), 235-40, and "Clash of Interests: The Postwar Battle Between the Office of Price Administration and the Department of Agriculture," *ibid.*, 41 (January 1967), 45-57. A more favorable view of Anderson is James L. Forsythe, "Clinton P. Anderson: Politician and Businessman as Truman's Secretary of Agriculture" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1970). Forsythe's evidence, however, does not contradict the interpretation of Bernstein and Matusow.

¹³Elmo Roper, "The Public Looks at Business," *Harvard Business Review*, 27 (March 1949), 165-74; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Removal of War Production Board Controls on Business, 1944-1946," *Business History Review*, 39 (Summer 1965), 243-60, "The Debate on Industrial Conversion: The Protection of Oligopoly and Military Control of the War Economy," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology*, 26 (April 1967), 159-72, and "Charting a Course Between Inflation and Depression: Secretary of the Treasury Fred Vinson and the Truman Administration's Tax Bill," *The Register of the Kentucky*

The regulation of labor, however, was another matter. The President, who showed no lust for combat when confronted with corporate intransigence, seemed eager to battle to the death those labor leaders who crossed him. The same advisers, suspicious of liberals, respectful of men who had "met a payroll," and fearful of conflict with big business, provoked the battle with organized labor. Their misunderstanding of the possibilities for peaceful dealings with labor and their unwillingness to deal directly with labor leaders helped bring on the postwar rash of strikes and conservative reaction that led to the passage of the Taft-Hartley Labor-Management Relations Act. Poorly advised, Truman blundered into the dismemberment of the War Labor Board and the abrogation of labor's no-strike pledge. Then, with typical ineffectiveness, in November 1945, he established the totally impotent National Labor-Management Conference, which did nothing to stop the runaway wage-price spiral.¹⁴

Rebuffed by labor, management, and the farmers although constantly yielding to their demands, Truman struck back in the spring of 1946 by launching an offensive against the strikes of the United Mine Workers, the Locomotive Engineers, and the Railway Trainmen. To prevent strikes by the John L. Lewis-led UMW, Truman seized control of the mines, secured a court injunction against the union and Lewis, and publicly denounced the UMW leadership for seeking inflationary hourly increases and other fringe benefits. Despite the fact that the government twice relented and conceded to Lewis almost all his demands, the image of strikebreaker was now added to HST's portrait. Meanwhile, Truman also took control of the nation's railroads when the two railway brotherhoods refused the government's wage compromise solution and threatened a strike that would have stopped all rail transportation in the United States. To intimidate the workers, he delivered on radio the most blistering antilabor speech by a President since that of Grover Cleveland, warning the brotherhoods that if they did not immediately return to work he would draft them and give the Army authority to operate the trains. While the administration successfully completed a settlement

Historical Society, 66 (January 1968), 53-64. Also see Jack Peltason, "The Reconversion Controversy," in Harold Stein, ed., *Public Administration and Policy Development* (New York, 1952), pp. 215-84; Louis Smith, "The Garrison State, Offspring of the Cold War," *The Nation*, 177 (December 1956), 461-64; and Lloyd Manning Wells, "The Defense of 'Big Business' 1933-1953: A Study in the Development of an Ideology" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1955). William S. Hill, Jr., of Stanford University is presently working on a study of the business community and national defense, 1943-1950.

¹⁴R. Alton Lee, *Truman and Taft-Hartley: A Question of Mandate* (Lexington, Ky., 1966), presents the administration's case. Compare with Barton J. Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and Its Reconversion Wage Policy," *Labor History*, 6 (Fall 1965), 214-31, and "The Truman Administration and the Steel Strike of 1946," *Journal of American History*, 52 (March 1966), 791-803.

between the railroad operators and the unions, he personally appeared before Congress to ask for legislation empowering the President to declare a state of national emergency whenever a strike in a vital industry imperiled the national safety, to draft workers who persisted in striking, to deny the strikers employment and security benefits, and to fine and imprison union leaders who encouraged such strikes. He delivered this extraordinary speech, even though the necessity for congressional action had passed. While his rhetoric and actions against the unions helped stimulate the rising chorus of antilabor sentiment, they did little to stem inflation. The government continued to acquiesce to union demands, which, in turn, justified increases in prices by farmers and business and then further hikes in wages and benefits for organized labor. Consumers—those on fixed incomes and social security, small businessmen, unorganized workers, and all those who were powerless to press their demands on government—consequently paid dearly for this inconsistency. More immediately, Truman's strikebreaking posture contributed to the Democratic debacle in the 1946 elections and legitimized the most virulent antiunion campaigns by conservative businessmen and their political representatives on both the state and federal levels.¹⁵

Truman's inability to control his own administration or to work effectively with Congress hastened the demise of OPA. His ambivalence on the matter confused both Congress and the public. While his subordinates openly fought Bowles's efforts for a calculated and gradual cessation of wartime controls over prices and traveled the country making speeches in favor of an end to government regulations and a return to a "free" economy that sounded like publicity handouts from the National Association of Manufacturers, the President proposed an extension of OPA that would strengthen many of its powers. Given the administration's own past action on OPA, this proposal stood no chance of passage in 1946. Expectedly, Congress presented Truman with its own bill, which critically weakened OPA and called for an end to all controls "as rapidly as possible." The Chief Executive responded with a veto, allowing all price controls to come to an abrupt end. Prices skyrocketed in the midst of the nation's worst inflationary period since 1942. Still, he insisted on his original measure. Finally, Congress passed another OPA bill and the President signed it, although many believed it to be a

¹⁵Bernstein, "The Politics of Inflation," 255-75; Saul Alinsky, *John L. Lewis: An Unauthorized Biography* (Chicago, 1956); and Arthur McClure, *The Truman Administration and the Problems of Postwar Labor, 1945-1948* (Rutherford, N.J., 1969). An interesting early account is John Carl Cabe, Jr., "Governmental Intervention in Labor Disputes from 1945 to 1952" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1952). Currently under way are studies of John L. Lewis by John Hutchinson at the University of California at Los Angeles, and of the steel seizure case of 1952 by Maeva Marcus at Columbia University.

weaker act than the one he had vetoed. Unwilling to use the powers granted him, however, Truman continued to permit inflationary forces to operate and to blame Congress for the mess. Shortly after the November elections, he ended all controls on wages and prices except those pertaining to rents, sugar, and rice, completing for all practical purposes the death of OPA. Subsequent sessions of Congress would merely play out the charade of trading accusations for the end of controls and continued inflation. Both the Chief Executive and his conservative opponents sought advantages in politicizing the issue, and neither would move toward a solution.¹⁶

On other legislation Truman fared no better. Although he submitted a twenty-one-point program to Congress in September 1945, which embodied many of Roosevelt's proposals for the postwar period, he never fought for them. Determined to get along with Congress better than his predecessor had, he refused to push or prod congressmen who resisted his bills. His legislative failures are exemplified by the struggle over a full employment bill. In his "economic bill of rights," Roosevelt had called for legislation to guarantee every citizen the opportunity for a job, and liberals after the war began a major campaign to embody in law the Keynesian principle that the federal government should ensure full employment by deficit and compensatory spending. In a nation fearful of a postwar depression, liberals hoped for a quick victory in Congress of the full employment bill introduced by Senator James E. Murray. But Truman gave the measure only sporadic support, and many of his subordinates worked to weaken it. The administration's lack of firmness buoyed those congressional conservatives most opposed to extensive planning and spending, and the bill that emerged from Congress in 1946 substituted "maximum" for "full" employment and provided no new governmental powers or resources to achieve this reduced end. Instead of initiating a bold new venture in government economic involvement, the President accepted an act that affirmed both the government's responsibility to promote employment and its need "to foster and promote free competitive enterprise" and provided the Council of Economic Advisers and the Joint Congressional Committee on the Economic Report as the only tools to get the job done. Not surprisingly, in the quarter of a century since passage of the bill nothing approaching peacetime full employment has been achieved. Although nonrevisionist historians continue to laud the act as a milestone in the development of progressivism for its acknowledgment of the government's economic responsibilities, the measure's critical weaknesses and the halfhearted attempts to administer it have left us with a permanent body of unemployed and underemployed. Whether a stronger bill could have been

¹⁶Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics*, pp. 38-79; and Bernstein, "Clash of Interest."

passed is problematic, but the President's unwillingness to struggle for such a bill certainly doomed it.¹⁷

Truman's appointments generally dismayed liberals at the time and historians since. Beginning in June 1945 with the replacement of Attorney General Francis Biddle by Tom Clark, the conservative protégé of Texas Senator Tom Connally, Truman filled the spots vacated by crusading New Dealers with cronies from Missouri, centrists, and businessmen. Old friends and poker buddies of the President suddenly sat in high, critical positions. Truman commissioned Harry Vaughan as a brigadier general and "Military Aide to the President." Edward McKim, an insurance executive without government experience, was made Assistant to the President and John Caskie Collet, a previously unknown Missouri judge with little more experience than McKim, Director of Economic Stabilization. Such pals as George Allen and Jake Vardaman wound up on the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, even though the extremely probusiness Allen refused to give up his thirteen corporate directorships when appointed to the RFC. John Snyder, a bitter opponent of labor unions and price controls, became Reconversion Director and eventually Secretary of the Treasury, replacing the Kentucky centrist, Fred M. Vinson, whom Truman appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Closely working with Snyder was Dr. John Steelman, another presidential assistant openly opposed to OPA. Truman dumped James Landis, a prominent New Deal liberal, for too prominently opposing monopoly control of airlines and installed an Air Force general as Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board. Similarly, he forced Marriner Eccles to resign as Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board and picked as his successor a Republican banker. The appointment of such prominent Wall Street bankers as W. Averell Harriman, Robert Lovett, and Charles Saltzman, a former vice-president of the New York Stock Exchange, to policymaking positions in the State Department further worried liberals. So did his early judicial appointments. He replaced three New Dealers on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals with confirmed conservatives, chose a James Byrnes conservative protégé as Chief Justice of the Claims Court, and nominated four men to the Supreme Court—Vinson, Clark, Harold Burton, and Sherman Minton—who on most issues ranged from moderate to conservative, emphasizing judicial restraint, absolute support of the government in loyalty and free speech cases, and slow action on the constitutionality of segregation. In the Justice Department,

¹⁷Stephen Bailey, *Congress Makes a Law: The Story Behind the Employment Act of 1946* (New York, 1950), remains indispensable. Also see Howard Elbert Mitchell, "The Employment Act of 1946 and the Economic Role of Government: Trends in Economic Thinking and Prescription" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1958). For references to traditional accounts, see Bernstein, in Kirkendall, ed., *Truman Period*, p. 99.

moreover, such key New Deal veterans as Hugh Cox, Fowler Hamilton, and William McGovern were removed in favor of mediocre party regulars. Little wonder that many in 1946 saw the pattern of Truman appointments as signaling the end of an era for liberalism in national affairs.¹⁸

These appointments quickly set the tone of the administration. In place of the daring young academic liberals of the New Deal, there was now a reincarnation of the Harding courthouse gang, interested in popularity and votes, but plodding, unimaginative, and mediocre in the exercise of their offices. Snyder, for example, the second most powerful man in Washington, with authority over all aspects of the economy, never understood the complexity of the problems facing him. Innocent of any training in economics, when questioned at a congressional hearing on the employment bill, he admitted he had no idea of what "gross national product" meant. Others, who had a better sense of what they were doing, gained wide latitude from the President to make policy in their own image. Thus, Attorney General Clark would not press for modification of the immigration quotas after the war or display any vigor in prosecuting lynchers in the South, but he did take the lead in urging establishment of a loyalty review board, the forceable repatriation of aliens of doubtful loyalty, and the greatest possible powers for the Federal Bureau of Investigation to ferret out possible subversives.¹⁹

The two gravest disappointments to New Deal liberals came with the departure from government service of Harold Ickes and Henry Wallace. No two men at that time were more closely identified with the Roosevelt tradition. Secretary of Interior Ickes, a member of FDR's original cabinet and a staunch foe of corruption and of favoritism to business, left his post with a mighty blast at the administration when Truman insisted on nominating Edwin W. Pauley as Under Secretary of the Navy. Ickes had protested against Pauley, a millionaire oil man and conservative Democratic benefactor, because of Pauley's public opposition to the federal

¹⁸The most detailed accounts of the new appointments are in Alonzo L. Hamby, "Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1965); Hinchey, "The Frustration of the New Deal Revival"; and Robert Allen and William Shannon, *The Truman Merry-Go-Round* (New York, 1950). C. H. Pritchett, *Civil Liberties and the Vinson Court* (Chicago, 1954), clarifies the differences between Roosevelt and Truman appointees. Eccles's views are presented in Marriner Eccles, *Beckoning Frontiers: Personal and Public Recollections* (New York, 1951). A good biography of Truman's press secretary is Ronald Farrar, *Reluctant Servant: The Story of Charles G. Ross* (Columbia, Mo., 1969).

¹⁹Perceptive early analyses include James Wechsler, "Did Truman Scuttle Liberalism?" *Commentary*, 3 (March 1947), 222-27; and John Fischer, "Truman: A Little West of Center," *Harper's Magazine*, 191 (December 1945), 481-88, and "Mr. Truman Reorganizes," *ibid.*, 192 (January 1946), 26-35. Robert C. Pierce, University of Wisconsin, is working on a study of Truman's relations with liberals of the Americans for Democratic Action. More needs to be done on the domestic criticism of Truman by men such as Daniel Bell and John Dewey and organizations like the Progressive Citizens of America.

government's control of the offshore oil fields in California; his new position would give him jurisdiction over the very matter on which he had been fighting the government, and he had offered the Democrats \$400,000 in campaign contributions prior to the 1944 election if they would not press the tidelands issue. When Truman continued to support Pauley for the position, Ickes departed. The President replaced him with Julius W. Krug, a former War Production Board chairman, and after prolonged Senate criticism embarrassingly withdrew Pauley's nomination. Truman fired Wallace, regarded by most liberals as FDR's "true heir," when Secretary of State James Byrnes threatened to resign unless the President dumped the Commerce Secretary for speaking out against United States foreign policy. But even worse to liberals than the dismissal of Wallace was the President's choice of a successor. Averell Harriman, a Wall Street banker and a conservative on domestic affairs, outspokenly probusiness in his criticism of price controls and organized labor, symbolized everything Wallace opposed within the Democratic party.²⁰

Considering the foregoing, it is no wonder that Truman's friends among historians slight his first two years in office (as well as his last two) in order to emphasize his fight against the Eightieth Congress and his struggle for reelection. With 1945 and 1946 quickly written off as merely a holding period in which the New Deal was consolidated and a postwar reaction averted, traditional historians can find comfort in recounting the clashes between give-'em-hell Harry and the forces of conservatism. After all, with the Republicans controlling Congress, it was not his fault that the legislative branch did not enact a national health plan, higher minimum wage, new price controls, and civil rights legislation. Nor can he be blamed for the passage of Taft-Hartley or the witch-hunting expeditions of reactionary congressmen. Moreover, it is far easier to defend the President's liberalism in view of his choice of advisers such as Clark Clifford, Oscar Ewing, David Morse, and Charles Murphy than his hobnobbing with the courthouse clique of Allen, Clark, Snyder, and Vaughan.²¹ But as the revisionists demonstrate, Truman's liberalism consisted almost entirely of an election campaign and standoff with Congress; the major contribution of his new advisers was a liberal

²⁰Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs*, I (New York, 1955, Signet edition), 607-16; James Byrnes, *All in One Lifetime* (New York, 1958), p. 349; Karl M. Schmidt, *Henry A. Wallace: Quixotic Crusade 1948* (Syracuse, 1960), pp. 15-40; Theodore Rosenof, "The Economic Ideas of Henry Wallace, 1933-1948," *Agricultural History*, 41 (April 1967), 143-53; and Alonzo L. Hamby, "Henry Wallace, the Liberals, and Soviet-American Relations," *Review of Politics*, 30 (April 1968), 153-69. Also see Lucius J. Barker, "Offshore Oil Politics: A Study in Public Policy Making" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1954).

²¹See in particular Goldman, *The Crucial Decade*, and Cabell Phillips, *The Truman Presidency: The History of a Triumphant Succession* (New York, 1966).

electoral strategy and not a program for liberal legislation; many of his actions remained profoundly illiberal, and his liberal posture was neither sincere nor effective.

The Eightieth Congress must share its fame with Truman in accounting for the continued disarray of liberalism. While the President spoke more liberally than he had previously, old habits persisted. He continued unwilling to consult or cooperate with loyal congressional Democrats, and on matters such as civil rights, tax cuts, and inflation control he sprung his proposals on them without giving them a chance to help formulate legislative strategy. Most critical posts in his administration still went to conservatives (both Democratic and Republican), and they dominated the formation of his domestic policies. On many legislative matters he stayed content merely to state the need for some kind of solution without supplying a detailed formula. More often, the President badgered Congress for what he knew he would never get. He would not work for the increase of the minimum wage to 65¢ an hour that he requested in 1947, when it might have passed, but demanded a rise to 75¢ in 1948, when it stood no hope of being enacted; he did nothing to push his national health care proposal while the Democrats controlled Congress, but he made it one of his "must" pieces of legislation when the Republicans came to power; to avoid responsibility for inflation, he crusaded for a far stricter price-controls bill than anyone believed workable. Still other vestiges of the "old" Truman remained. With little regard for the electorate's intelligence, he called for lower taxes, a balanced budget, and debt reduction alongside new, ambitious social welfare programs costing many millions. Presidential subordinates conflicted in their testimony before Congress as to the nature of administration policies, and many a proposal suffered when it became apparent that the White House had failed to do the background work necessary for congressional action. In sum, Truman's actions were calculated to build a record against the Republicans for his reelection rather than to adjust to the new political alignments to gain some advances in social and economic legislation. Administration strategy, Clifford would later sum up, must be premised on the assumption that "it will get no major part of its program approved. Its tactics must, therefore, be entirely different than if there were any real point to bargaining and compromise. Its recommendations . . . must be tailored for the voter, not the Congressmen; they must display a label which reads 'no compromises.'" By so doing, Clifford assured the President, he would appear "as the Galahad of reform, pluckily fighting the dragon of privilege."²²

²²The best over-all treatment is Susan M. Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress* (Columbia, Mo., 1971). Far from satisfactory is Kenneth W. Street, "Harry S. Truman: His Role as Legislative Leader, 1945-1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of

The legislative history of Taft-Hartley is one apt example of how Truman pursued this strategy. While the combination of conservative supremacy in Congress and a public inflamed by the vast number of postwar strikes precluded the possibility of totally forestalling a labor-control bill, Truman had two options. He could work with Congress and try to moderate its efforts or remain aloof and then pin the blame on the Republicans for shackling labor. He chose the latter in order to gain Clifford's promised political dividend from a Republican-authored bill. Rather than attempting to head off the punitive Republican bill by submitting its own to Congress, the administration delayed the drafting of its views into legislative form until Taft-Hartley was on the verge of passage. Nor did Truman provide leadership to the Democratic congressmen who were fighting against the bill. Thus, when James Murray tried to substitute a milder alternative to the Taft proposal, without assistance from the administration he could muster only 19 Senate votes. On the final tally, only 79 congressmen voted no, and Congress overrode the President's veto by votes of 68 to 25 in the Senate and 331 to 83 in the House.²³

This opposition set the stage for Truman's searing veto message and the opening of his campaign for reelection. He launched a vigorous attack on the Republicans for passing a "slave labor act" that violated "economic freedom," encouraged "distrust, suspicion, and arbitrary attitudes," posed a "clear threat to the successful working of our democratic society," and would wreck "industrial peace . . . economic stability and progress." Further, he asserted that the act would seriously weaken organized labor and increase the resort to strikes. Such a statement obviated any hope for a revised, more circumspect bill. By failing to admit that the act contained many of his own recommendations to previous sessions of Congress, or that specific abuses by the unions of their power were a problem, or that the Wagner Act indeed stood in need of some revision, Truman had thrown down the gauntlet. For political reasons he was demanding all or nothing. In the short run, this tactic undoubtedly gained for him the gratitude and electoral support of labor. But it also further undermined his credibility with Congress and the people. Once again, Truman seemed to be interested in nothing

Texas, 1963). Also see R. Alton Lee, "The Turnip Session of the Do-Nothing Congress: Presidential Campaign Strategy," *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, 46 (December 1963), 256-67, and "The Truman-80th Congress Struggle over Tax Policy," *The Historian*, 33 (November 1970), 68-82. Gary A. May of the University of California at Los Angeles is now working on a study of Clark Clifford's role in the White House.

²³ McClure, *Truman Administration and the Problems of Postwar Labor*; Lee, *Truman and Taft-Hartley*; and Seymour T. Mann, "Policy Formation in the Executive Branch: The Taft-Hartley Experience," *Western Political Quarterly*, 13 (September 1960), 597-608.

more fundamental than winning the next election. The gap between his rhetoric and his actions seemed as wide as ever. In 1948 alone, Truman invoked the Taft-Hartley Act seven times, more than Dwight Eisenhower was to use it throughout his two terms as President. Nor, in retrospect, do Truman's powers of prediction appear any better than his leadership qualities. Taft-Hartley probably slowed or stopped unionization in some areas, but over all, despite what the President forecast, organized labor has grown in bargaining power and management is more disposed to accept unionism than ever before in history. Rather than fostering the "seeds of discord which would plague this nation for years to come," as the President said, Taft-Hartley has minimized the intensity and violence of strikes, lessened tensions between unions and management, and helped gain increasing public approval for organized labor. All these benefits were, of course, in the future. For 1948, Truman had his major campaign issue against the Republicans.²⁴

The election of 1948, despite some recent accounts, is no longer seen by historians as "one gutsy man's greatest hour of glory." Most interpretations now view it as a "maintaining" election. Neither Truman nor his Republican opponent, Thomas E. Dewey, inspired or changed the political faith of many voters. Truman won because of the combination of Dewey's lackluster campaign, the continued minority status of Republicanism, and his own successful identification with FDR and the New Deal. By promising something to everyone, he rallied just enough of the Roosevelt coalition to win another term. His veto of Taft-Hartley and his campaign for higher minimum wages, increases in social security, rent and price controls, and other social welfare legislation maintained the Democratic hold on the working classes of urban-industrial areas. Traditionally Democratic Catholic voters were pleased by his firm opposition to communism at home and abroad, as were Jews by his recognition of Israel. The revolt of the Dixiecrats ensured the continued movement of Negro voters into the Democratic fold; and Truman scored an upset in the farm belt by skillfully exploiting congressional actions that permitted a drop in farm prices and a shortage of storage facilities. No group was forgotten by the Democratic National Committee in its efforts to revive the memories of a Republican depression and to remind voters of the gains they had made since 1933. In this vein, Truman's record-building against the Republican Congress, his politics of gesture and not deed, proved sufficient. But just barely so.²⁵

²⁴The veto message is in *Public Papers of the Presidents, Harry S. Truman, 1947* (Washington, D.C., 1963), pp. 288-97. An early analysis that should be consulted is Daniel Bell, "Taft-Hartley, Five Years Old," *Fortune*, 46 (July 1952), 69, 172.

²⁵Jules Abels, *Out of the Jaws of Victory* (New York, 1959), is typical of the worst in romantic history; Irwin Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948* (New York, 1968), is much sounder but still emphasizes individual heroics; the best

Historians today are disquieted by the ways in which campaign rhetoric further weakened liberalism as well as the narrow margin of victory and the low turnout of voters. Dewey added nearly a hundred more electoral votes to his 1944 total, despite the universally acknowledged dullness and inadequacy of his campaign. The President's popular vote margin of victory, about 4.5 per cent, was the lowest since 1916 and far below FDR's average of 14.75 in his four elections. Unlike Roosevelt, Truman ran behind his party in congressional and state races. Reversing the standard twentieth-century pattern of a presidential candidate leading his local tickets, Truman rode to victory on the coattails of Democratic governors and congressmen. Some 700,000 who voted for local candidates, moreover, failed to vote for President, underscoring Angus Campbell's conclusion that the "most striking feature" of the presidential election was its "extraordinarily low turnout." Fewer than 49 million voted—about 1 million less than in 1940 or 1944 and some 12 million under the total for 1952. These figures hardly constitute a personal triumph for Truman. He had maintained control of the White House to be sure, but had not received a mandate to break the politics of stalemate. Finally, it is necessary to note how his strategy and tactics accentuated the deep-seated fears and doubts of the American people and how this climate gave credence and support to the conservative onslaught bent on destroying liberal spokesmen and their beliefs. Holding the New Deal coalition together one more time required Truman to play "crisis politics." He appealed to the self-interest of voting blocs rather than articulating the necessity for a unified national interest. He unraveled conspiracy theories to stir anxiety. He red-baited Henry Wallace and avoided all the questions raised in the campaign by oversimplification, exaggeration, stereotyping, and scapegoating. While this strategy worked in 1948, much of it would quickly boomerang against him in his second term. Truman would soon become the victim of his own undermined credibility and stature.²⁶

account is Richard S. Kirkendall, "Election of 1948," in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Fred L. Israel, eds., *History of American Presidential Elections, 1789–1968* (New York, 1971), pp. 3099–3145. Samuel Lubell, *The Future of American Politics* (New York, 1951), and Walter Dean Burnham, "The Changing Shape of the American Political Universe," *American Political Science Review*, 59 (March 1965), 7–28, are indispensable. Several recent studies detail the Democrats' success in record-building; Harold Barto, "Clark Clifford and the Presidential Election of 1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 1970); William R. Mofield, "The Speaking Role of Alben Barkley in the Campaign of 1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1964); William W. Stacy, "The Campaign Speaking of Harry S. Truman in the 1948 Presidential Election" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1968); and Ian James Bickerton, "President Truman's Recognition of Israel," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, 58 (December 1968), 173–240.

²⁶Angus Campbell and Robert L. Kahn, *The People Elect a President* (New York,

Before that steep decline in Truman's reputation, however, traditional historians followed Richard Neustadt in waxing eloquent over the achievements of Truman and the Eighty-first Congress. They particularly hailed the Housing Act of 1949 as Truman's greatest legislative triumph, resulting as it did in a "comprehensive housing program, providing generously for slum clearance, urban redevelopment and public housing." But examined more closely, the act appears as a "hollow victory" that primarily benefited private real estate and construction interests. Given Truman's earlier record on housing, this revelation should occasion no surprise. In response to the pressure of some 10 million American families who were searching for homes at the end of the war, Truman asked Congress for subsidies to spur construction of 1.2 million homes in 1946 and 1.5 million the following year. Congress complied, but his ineffectual leadership kept construction down to less than half the legislation's goal. When Wilson Wyatt antagonized the private housing interests by pushing too hard to expedite new housing for veterans, the President sacrificed him to those interests. Time and again, Truman sided with the construction and real estate lobbies against his own housing administrators in conflicts over how to provide for those most in need. And the 1949 act itself was the product of four years of compromise necessary to retain the support of Robert Taft Republicans and the Southern Democrats led by Allen J. Ellender. The Southerners demanded and received guarantees against any breach of residential segregation, and the Republicans won a minimum of public housing and a maximum of assistance for private housing. At a time when government experts estimated the need at more than 12 million new housing units, the act authorized the construction of 810,000 units. And despite the act's objective of providing a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family, the Truman administration actually constructed only 60,000 new units, permitting the nation to fall further and further behind its goal and doing little to stop the decay of urban centers. The slum clearance provisions of the Housing Act were completely emasculated to permit the rude dispossessing of blacks, the poor, and the elderly in order to construct luxury apartments, shopping centers, and new university and library facilities. Over all, the housing program's greatest

1952). Also see Bernard Berelson, et al., *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign* (Chicago, 1954). Harold Wallace, "The Campaign of 1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1970), is particularly critical of Truman's "crisis politics." So is Allen Yarnell, "The Impact of the Progressive Party on the Democratic Party in the 1948 Presidential Campaign" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1969), "The Democratic Party's Response to the Progressive Party in 1948," *Research Studies*, 39 (March 1971), 20-32, and "Liberals in Action: The Americans for Democratic Action and the 1948 Presidential Election," an unpublished paper read at the American Historical Association annual meeting in 1971.

success was its expansion of FHA mortgage insurance. By providing the capital for private middle- and higher-income housing, the 1949 act gave the real estate and construction interests what they most desired. Robert Taft would have been pleased at the results of the bill he co-sponsored.²⁷

The Eighty-first Congress is also praised for giving Truman legislation for a higher minimum wage, extension of social security, and an expanded reclamation and public-power program. A closer look, however, reveals the disparity between rhetoric and reality. The administration did indeed increase federal spending on public power, flood control, and reclamation, but it did so in a manner to destroy the New Deal hopes for centralized control and regional planning and development. The President's refusal to support the "little TVA's" provided a windfall for private utilities. During the Truman years they succeeded in halting the expansion of federal power projects into new regions and in securing the right to purchase cheap, federally produced power and then to distribute it over their own lines at a markedly higher price. While the administration did gain an increase in social security benefits as well as a loosening of the eligibility requirements to expand its coverage to many who had been excluded in the original act, millions of those most in need continued to receive nothing at all. Their exclusion was the price of support from a conservative Congress. The economically marginal and the "invisible" poor—largely black, farm laborers, and those doing seasonal and domestic work—remained without a spokesman. Similarly, the price of Truman's winning a minimum wage of 75¢ was the reduction of nearly a million workers from the list of those previously included under the law. Again, those most in need suffered most. The Fair Deal did nothing for the more than 10 million American families who were struggling to survive on cash incomes of less than \$2,000 a year. Nor did the law redistribute any wealth. While the share of wealth received by upper-income groups decreased and the poorest families' share in-

²⁷Neustadt, "Congress and the Fair Deal," 366–67; Richard O. Davies, *Housing Reform During the Truman Administration* (Columbia, Mo., 1966), following the pattern of other monographs done under the direction of Kirkendall at the University of Missouri—such as those already cited for Hamby, Hinchey, and Hartmann—avoids condemning Truman outrightly as do other revisionists but, nevertheless, provides the evidence for his condemnation. Thus, while Davies is generally favorable to the President, he presents the case for the opposite view and concludes with the judgment that passage of the bill was a "hollow victory." The differences between Davies and Barton J. Bernstein, "Reluctance and Resistance: Wilson Wyatt and Veterans' Housing in the Truman Administration," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 65 (January 1967), 47–66, are more matters of style and emphasis than of conflicting evidence. Also see Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, pp. 238–74; and Richard O. Davies, "Mr. Republican Turns 'Socialist': Robert A. Taft and Public Housing," *Ohio History*, 73 (Summer 1964), 135–43.

creased in the thirties and in World War II, there was no real change in the shares of either group after 1944.²⁸

The remainder of the Fair Deal—national health insurance, civil rights, repeal of Taft–Hartley, price and wage controls, and a new agricultural program—Congress refused to enact. The President, therefore, has been praised for fighting for these measures and for educating the public to prepare the way for their passage in more favorable times. No historian disputes the President's right to praise for these actions, but today's revisionists are questioning both the extent of Truman's commitment to reform and the liberalism of the measures themselves. The Brannan Plan, named for Truman's new Secretary of Agriculture, promised farmers continued prosperity and consumers lower prices but did nothing to aid the sharecroppers, tenants, and migrants who desperately needed a minimal fair deal. Nor does Truman appear to have made any real effort to win congressional backing. Incredibly, the administration introduced the new farm bill in Congress without first discussing it either with representatives of the farm bloc or with the leaders of the major farm organizations. If farm legislation was truly his goal, no better political strategy could have been devised to ensure defeat. The President eventually accepted the farm bloc's bill with rigid and high price supports and no provisions for consumer protection. On repeal of Taft–Hartley and enactment of wage and price controls, Truman played the same game as with the Eightieth Congress. He demanded what he knew he could not get and refused to compromise. By so doing he satisfied the proponents of change without alienating those factions of the party that were content with the *status quo*. No conservative Democrat minded the President speaking out on these

²⁸John R. Waltrip, "Public Power During the Truman Administration (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1965); Willard Shelton, "Presidential Appointments," *The Nation*, 174 (February 16, 1952), 149; William E. Leuchtenburg, *Flood Control Politics: The Connecticut River Valley Problem, 1927–1950* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953); and Gordon B. Dodds, "The Historiography of American Conservation: Past and Prospects," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 52 (April 1965), 75–81. On poverty and distribution of income, see Sumner H. Slichter, "The High Cost of Low Incomes," *New York Times Magazine*, March 5, 1950; Gabriel Kolko, *Wealth and Power in America* (New York, 1962); and Herman P. Miller, *Rich Man, Poor Man* (New York, 1964). For an over-all view of the Eighty-first Congress, see David B. Truman, *The Congressional Party: A Case Study* (New York, 1959); the revisionist conclusion is stated by Bernstein, "America in War and Peace," 302–3. David Kathka of the University of Missouri is now working on a study of the Reclamation Bureau in the Truman administration. The President also failed to liberalize the immigration laws. He unsuccessfully vetoed the harsh bill that his Justice and State departments had supported. Sister M. Madeline Lorimer, "America's Response to Europe's Displaced Persons, 1948–1952: A Preliminary Report" (Ph.D. dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1964); and M. Albert Dimmitt, Sr., "The Enactment of the McCarran–Walter Act of 1952" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1970).

issues, just as long as he let Congress control their destiny. Similarly, Truman made much of national health insurance as a campaign issue but threw away an opportunity to gain a modest bill from Congress in 1949–1950.²⁹

The revisionists are even more seriously concerned about the gap between the President's speeches and his accomplishments on antitrust and antimonopoly matters. While he paid homage before the altars of a free marketplace and small competitive business, Truman permitted the rate of corporate concentration to accelerate rapidly. During the Truman years, the Justice Department only once invoked the amended Clayton Act, which contained provisions for inhibiting corporate mergers. The administration never secured enough funds for the traditional anti-monopoly agencies to enforce the antitrust laws. Although the President verbally attacked industrial concentration, he accommodated himself to the realities of corporate capitalism. As a report of the Federal Trade Commission on interlocking directorates in 1951 pointed out, the concentration of economic power into fewer and fewer hands had increased since Roosevelt's Temporary National Economic Committee had investigated the problem in the late 1930s. The FTC reported that the larger corporations in almost every major industry had grown steadily more closely interlocked, either directly or indirectly. In this area, the Fair Deal perpetuated the tragic ambivalence of the New Deal toward the problem of private economic power so brilliantly delineated by Ellis Hawley.³⁰

²⁹Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics*, pp. 191–221; Reo M. Christenson, *The Brannan Plan: Farm Politics and Policies* (Ann Arbor, 1959); Lee, *Taft–Hartley*, and McClure, *Postwar Labor*; and Gerald Pomper, "Labor and Congress: The Repeal of Taft–Hartley," *Labor History*, 2 (Fall 1961), 232–43; Monte Poen, "The Truman Administration and National Health Insurance" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1967). Compare with Neustadt, "Congress and the Fair Deal," 367–68. A study of federal aid to education is now being completed by Gilbert E. Smith of Columbia University.

³⁰Robert L. Branyan, "Anti-Monopoly Activities During the Truman Administration" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1961); *Report of the Federal Trade Commission on Interlocking Directorates* (Washington, D.C., 1951); FTC Report, *Interlocks in Corporate Management* (Washington, D.C., 1965); the findings of the TNEC are summarized by David Lynch, *The Concentration of Economic Power* (New York, 1946). Much more work in this crucial area remains to be done to supplement Branyan's early and moderately successful effort. Studies currently under way by Gale E. Peterson at the University of Maryland on the independent regulatory commissions, Elmo R. Richardson on federal resource policies, and James R. Sweeney at the University of Notre Dame on Attorney General J. Howard McGrath are eagerly awaited. In the meantime, a number of earlier commentaries should be consulted: symposia on "The Effectiveness of the Federal Antitrust Laws," *American Economic Review*, 39 (June 1949), 689–724, and "Fundamental Characteristics of the American Economy: Degrees of Competition, of Monopoly, and of Countervailing Power," *ibid.*, 44 (May 1954), 1–34; Carl Kayser, "Big Business and the Liberals, Then and Now," *New Republic*, 131 (November 22, 1954), 118–20; Walter Adams and Horace Gray, *Monopoly in America: The Government*

Less continuity, however, characterizes the New and the Fair Deals' approaches to other economic questions. Most fundamentally, the Truman administration tried to substitute an abundant, expanding economy for the scarcity liberalism of the thirties. By concentrating on the triumph of the liberal Leon Keyserling of the Council of Economic Advisers over its orthodox chairman, Edwin G. Nourse, most Truman historians have overlooked the critical differences between the New Deal and Keyserling's policies. Keyserling continually angered liberals by his opposition to price controls, coolness to Keynesian spending, reluctance toward trust busting, and criticism of traditional Democratic antibusiness rhetoric. His politics of consensus relied on voluntarism, a faith in education, and the belief that "group conflict could be mitigated by alluring vistas which promised gains for all." Herbert Hoover would hardly have objected to these views. For Keyserling, suspicion is directed toward big government, not big business; doubt is felt, not about the goodness of corporations but of human nature; and in place of utopian hopes about what the government can do to assist the common man, there is utopianism about the ability of an ever-expanding economy to care for all. In economic terms this meant government action to ensure business prosperity: The greater the gross national product, the more benefits would trickle down to the middle and lower classes, and the less obligation would fall on the state to provide for the welfare of the people. Translated politically, liberalism under Truman had become centrism. The "vital center" in retrospect would be barely distinguishable from the "new conservatism" of the Eisenhower years.³¹

The acid test of Truman's economic policies came during the recession of 1949 and the Korean War. As spelled out in the Council of Economic

as *Promoter* (New York, 1955); Edward S. Mason, *Economic Concentration and the Monopoly Problem* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957); and Andrew Shonfield, *Modern Capitalism, The Changing Balance of Public and Private Power* (New York, 1965). Ellis W. Hawley, *The New Deal and the Problem of Monopoly* (Princeton, 1966).

³¹Alonzo L. Hamby, "The Vital Center, the Fair Deal, and the Quest for a Liberal Political Economy," *American Historical Review*, 77 (1972), 653-78. Also see the contemporary statement by economists supporting the administration, Seymour Harris, ed., *Saving American Capitalism* (New York, 1948). The traditional view appears in Corinne Silverman, *The President's Economic Advisers* (Inter-University Case Study 48, University of Alabama, 1959). Other studies worth consulting include: John Roger Fredland, "Keynesian Ideas as Reflected in the Domestic Fiscal and Monetary Policies of the United States, 1945-1953" (Ph.D. dissertation, American University, 1957); Robert J. Gates, "The Role of the First Council of Economic Advisers" (M.A. thesis, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1968); John M. C. Olson, Jr., "An Analysis of Fiscal Policy During the Truman Administration (1945-1953)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1966); E. Terence Jones, "Congressional Voting on Keynesian Legislation, 1945-1964," *Western Political Quarterly*, 21 (June 1968), 240-51; and Robert Carson, "Changes in Federal Fiscal Policy and Public Attitudes Since the Employment Act of 1946," *Social Studies*, 58 (December 1967), 308-14.

Advisers 1949 report, *Business and Government*, the maintenance of an ever-expanding economy required unprecedented business-government cooperation. This meant an end to antitrust rhetoric, a reduction in expenditures for social-welfare programs, and a government effort to bolster business confidence and encourage expansion of investment. Accordingly, Truman strove to hold down federal spending and to balance the budget. Despite widespread unemployment and business failures, he would not support the frankly Keynesian economic expansion bill sponsored by Wright Patman and James Murray nor any of the liberal proposals for public works, deficit spending, and centralized planning. Throughout the recession he relied on Keyserling's advice to stimulate prosperity by cooperating with the private sector. The outbreak of the Korean War inconclusively postponed the debate on how to achieve economic growth. Now the problem became one of attaining stability. Liberal congressmen demanded strong government economic controls modeled after those applied in World War II, but Truman and Keyserling resisted, preferring to underwrite economic expansion through tax incentives for business. They wanted both guns and butter, even at the cost of a slight inflation. But the inflationary spiral soon became intense and Truman yielded; the new Office of Price Stabilization imposed controls. In Truman's typical centrist manner, they were not the tough controls called for by the administration's liberal critics but were far more than Keyserling thought desirable.³²

Civil rights is the Fair Deal issue that has attracted the closest scrutiny by the revisionists. The President's credentials here are most impressive: executive orders to end discrimination in federal employment and to desegregate the armed services; a pocket veto of a bill that would have required segregation in all schools on military bases and other federal property; Justice Department briefs arguing the unconstitutionality of restrictive covenants and segregation in public education; the liberal 1948 Democratic plank on civil rights in the party platform; and the creation of a committee concerned with job discrimination during the Korean War. His list of "firsts" is equally persuasive. Harry S Truman was the first President of modern times to proclaim the equality of blacks, to assail discrimination and violence against them, to appoint a commission on civil rights and present Congress with a special message requesting legislation on civil rights, to campaign personally in Harlem, and most importantly, to identify his office and administration with the broad goals of the civil rights movement. Moreover, at least on this one

³²William O. Wagon, Jr., "The Politics of Economic Growth: The Truman Administration and the 1949 Recession" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1970); A. E. Holmans, *United States Fiscal Policy, 1945-1959: Its Contribution to Economic Stability* (London, 1961), 102-94; and Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics*, 222-54.

issue, Truman's reputation as a reformer shines far more brightly than that of Franklin Roosevelt. At the same time, revisionists find the President's limitations most clearly revealed in his handling of civil rights. Without denying his achievements, they indict him for being narrowly partisan, primarily concerned with his reelection, generally substituting rhetoric for action and gestures for accomplishment and, at a time when the racial situation was most fluid and before any significant white backlash had developed, leaving to future generations a volcanic racial problem that had been only rumbling when his administration came into power.³³

Much of the revisionist view harks back to the thesis put forth by Samuel Lubell at the end of Truman's Presidency: "All his skills and energies . . . were directed to standing still. . . . When he took vigorous action in one direction, it was axiomatic that he would contrive soon afterward to move in the conflicting direction." Or, as phrased by Philleo Nash, a presidential assistant for civil rights: "The strategy was to start with a bold measure and then temporize to pick up the right-wing forces. Simply stated, back track after the bang." In this light, the revisionists view Truman as a modern "Missouri Compromise" with a border-state mentality on racial affairs and a fierce commitment to the center of the Democratic party. (What he did he did grudgingly because he felt he had to and not because he wanted to.) The pressures stemming from the demands of the Cold War and the need to win Negro votes overshadowed any assessment he might have made about the nature of the American dilemma. The growth of black voting power, the spectre of Henry Wallace, the NAACP petition to the United Nations, and the propaganda uses of American racism made by the Soviet Union forced him to move in an area that by heritage and temperament he feared. Yet even when forced, except for the desegregation of the armed forces—an accomplishment that, given the disproportionate rate of black casualties in the war in Indochina takes on new meaning—the President's civil rights actions appear mainly as stalls, as temporizing to avoid fundamental changes. All the gains made by Afro-Americans during the

³³The views of both revisionists and traditionalists are clearly stated in the *Conference of Scholars on the Truman Administration and Civil Rights* (Independence, Mo., 1968); see especially the address of John Hope Franklin. Since Truman's most concrete success in this area was the desegregation of the armed services, it is not surprising that the most favorable treatments of Truman deal with this issue: Richard Dalfiume, *Desegregation of the U.S. Armed Forces; Fighting on Two Fronts, 1939-1953* (Columbia, Mo., 1969), and "The Fahy Committee and Desegregation of the Armed Forces," *The Historian*, 31 (November 1968), 1-20; Monroe Billington, "Freedom to Serve: The President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Forces, 1949-1950," *Journal of Negro History*, 51 (October 1966), 262-74; and Lawrence J. Paszek, "Negroes and the Air Forces, 1939-1949," *Military Affairs*, 31 (Spring 1967), 1-9.

Truman administration barely altered the quality of black life in America and left untouched the structures of institutional racism.³⁴

In his first year in office, Truman publicly asked Congress for civil rights legislation he knew he could not get, while at the same time he refrained from the kind of executive acts that could have changed the quality of life for blacks. Uppermost in his mind were friendly relations with Congress and the achievement of a working balance between Northern and Southern Democrats. Effective action on civil rights would have to wait until a more propitious time. Thus, he endorsed a bill for a permanent FEPC that had no chance of withstanding a Senate filibuster, but he did not fight for appropriations for the existing wartime FEPC. After emasculating it in the Capital Transit strike by denying the committee the power to issue "cease and desist" orders and thereby reducing its status to that of a fact-finding body, Truman quietly acquiesced in the congressional decision to kill the FEPC. In addition, the President avoided confronting the issues of lynching and the poll tax, did nothing to seek out and correct discrimination in his federal bureaucracy, and refused to criticize the Senate filibuster or to rally support for a cloture vote—all actions the leading civil right organizations pleaded for.³⁵

Truman began to support civil rights legislation and condemn racial violence sporadically in his second year but still would not move beyond rhetoric. Not until after a series of gruesome lynchings in the South had aroused the national conscience and provided new grist for the Communist propaganda mill did Truman move to appoint a commission, an act that leading liberals, church and labor officials, and civil rights groups had long clamored for. Carefully waiting until after the elections of 1946, the President announced the appointment of his Committee on Civil Rights and mandated it to investigate law enforcement procedures and to recommend measures to safeguard minorities. But the movement for civil rights could not be easily contained within those limits. By the mid-forties, those directing the drive for civil rights had achieved great sophistication in presenting their case. They commanded access to the

³⁴Lubell, *Future of American Politics*, p. 10. This paragraph and the six that follow are based mainly on William C. Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration* (Columbus, Ohio, 1970); Barton J. Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy: The Truman Administration and Civil Rights," in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago, 1970), 269-314; and Harvard Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics," *Journal of Southern History*, 37 (November 1971), 597-616. The background for the pressures converging on Truman are discussed by Richard Dalfiume, "The 'Forgotten Years' of the Negro Revolution," *Journal of American History*, 55 (June 1968), 90-106, and Harvard Sitkoff, "Racial Militancy and Interracial Violence in the Second World War," *ibid.*, 58 (December 1971), 661-81.

³⁵Will Maslow, "FEPC—A Case History in Parliamentary Maneuver," *University of Chicago Law Review*, 13 (April 1946), 422-33.

public media and worked closely with many key church, academic, labor, and political leaders. Moreover, the civil rights movement had already moved beyond narrow legal definitions of equality and now propagated a vision of American democracy that required the dismantling of every vestige of Jim Crow. Its influence on the deliberations of the President's committee from first to last was direct, personal, and profound. The nature of this influence became manifest in October 1947, when the committee presented its report, *To Secure These Rights*, to the President. Ranging far beyond its instructions, the committee specifically recommended the end of discrimination and segregation in public education, employment, housing, the military, public accommodations, and interstate transportation.³⁶

Truman was on the spot. With a presidential election coming up, he feared alienating either Southern politicians or Northern liberal and black voters. To remain silent on his own highly prestigious committee's report would have been awkward in the extreme, leaving him vulnerable to Russian propaganda and the party's factions unsatisfied in their demands for some commitment from the President on this now highly visible issue. Truman decided to appear to act, but in such a way as to signal clearly to Southern and moderate Democrats that the executive branch would mount no crusade of its own. He did this by endorsing only those recommendations of his committee which required congressional approval, knowing full well that a filibuster could not be broken to allow such legislation to be enacted; by refusing to submit to Congress the report's more controversial proposals, such as withdrawing federal grants from states that practiced racial discrimination and outlawing segregation in the nation's capital; by neither commenting publicly on the issue after his congressional message nor sending the omnibus civil rights bill drafted in the White House to the Hill; by hesitating on the committee's proposals for executive orders; and by letting the Democratic National Convention know that he favored re-adoption of the vague, noncommittal 1944 plank and not the uncompromising civil rights plank being pushed by a coalition of liberal, labor, and black groups. Given his situation, he had done all he could to preserve party unity and placate all but the Democratic extremists.

Over all, his strategy worked. The traditional histories have placed too much emphasis on the convention fight over the civil rights plank, the President's speech in Harlem, and the promulgation of the executive orders; they have missed the meaning of Truman's success in keeping the South within the party. Despite all the ballyhoo about civil rights at

³⁶Walter F. White, *A Man Called White: The Autobiography of Walter White* (New York, 1948), pp. 322-33; and *To Secure These Rights: The Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights* (Washington, D.C., 1947).

the convention, only a small minority of Southern delegates (35 from Mississippi and Alabama) walked out, only a tiny handful of Southern politicians attended the States' Rights Democratic party convention in Birmingham, and only four states (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—in all of which the Dixiecrats appeared on the ballot as the official Democratic party) failed to deliver their electoral votes for Truman. Politicians in the South evidently understood Truman better than most historians, for in his second term he took no actions that again raised the possibility of a Southern revolt, asked for no retribution against those Dixiecrats who had deserted the party, and even requested Richard B. Russell of Georgia, the Southern architect of congressional opposition to civil rights, to assume the office of Democratic leader in the Senate.³⁷

Throughout his second term, despite platform promises and campaign oratory, Truman continually subordinated civil rights to secure Southern support for his other measures. He would neither bring pressure to bear on congressional opponents nor take to the stump to build public backing for civil rights. All liberal items in the Fair Deal—and particularly civil rights—were shelved during the Korean War to ensure Southern approval of his foreign and military policies. He repeatedly demurred on liberal demands for a Korean War Fair Employment Practices Committee, even though black unemployment was more than twice as great as white. Finally, in December 1951, he established the ineffective Committee on Government Contract Compliance, a far weaker committee than Roosevelt had authorized a decade earlier. Denied presidential support, an adequate budget, the right to hold public hearings, and powers of enforcement, the committee failed to halt job discrimination against blacks.³⁸

For these reasons, despite their acknowledgment of his achievements, the revisionists have concluded that Truman was at best a "reluctant tribune" of civil rights. Too obsessed with political calculus, he lacked the commitment necessary to see his reforms through. He remained too moderate and legalistic, refusing to grapple with the tenacity of racism or to consider the possibility of new approaches. He did only what he thought politically necessary. Not ironically, the Democratic party platform in 1952, written with the President's approval, retreated from the bold stand on civil rights it had taken four years earlier and left unspecified the steps necessary to end racial discrimination.

³⁷In "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948" I noted the long-term implications of the controversy over civil rights. They should not obscure the more immediate conservative results of that conflict. During his final four years in office, Truman definitely retreated from the position he took during the election year.

³⁸Richard Polenberg of Cornell University is now at work on a needed study of the impact of the Korean War on domestic affairs.

Finally, on civil liberties the revisionists see Truman, not as an unwitting victim of an intolerant, hysterical McCarthyism, but as a Chief Executive who generated and legitimated the mania of extremely conservative anticommunism that undermined his own credibility and unleashed the forces of reaction. Rather than follow the traditional accounts that highlight his veto of the McCarran Internal Security Act, defense of the executive branch against red-baiting congressmen, and partisanship of Republicans, the revisionists concentrate on explaining the marked shift in the political winds between 1945 and 1950. By so doing, new light has been shed on Truman's rabidly anti-Communist ideology, his desire to "steal the thunder" of the Republicans, who were hoping to capitalize on red-baiting as an issue, his needs to discredit Henry Wallace and to appeal to conservative Catholic voters, and, in Senator Arthur Vandenberg's words, his obligation to "scare the hell out of the country" to win support for his anti-Soviet Union foreign policy.³⁹

McCarthyism is viewed by the revisionists as not populist radicalism gone sour but as the product of actions taken or neglected by the White House years before Senator Joseph McCarthy delivered his famous speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, on February 9, 1950. Between 1945 and 1948, Truman launched a rhetorical war against communism both at home and abroad. He feared that the United States might retreat into isolationism again or optimistically conclude that the United Nations could keep the peace. Therefore, he needed to jolt the public into an awareness of the Communist menace. Moreover, to appease the leading Republicans in Congress, he sanctioned a crusade against domestic radicals. The 1947 Federal Employee Loyalty Program, which authorized investigations into the political beliefs and associations of all government employees, regardless of the position they held, was designed to accomplish both objectives. It worked for a time. The people supported an anti-Communist foreign policy, and the Republican-controlled Eightieth

³⁹This paragraph and the five that follow are primarily based on Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and International Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1972); F. H. Thompson, "Truman and Congress: The Issue of Loyalty, 1946-1952" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Technological University, 1970); and Athan Theoharis, "The Rhetoric of Politics: Foreign Policy, Internal Security, and Domestic Politics in the Truman Era, 1945-1950," and "The Escalation of the Loyalty Program," in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration*, pp. 146-268, "The Threat to Civil Liberties," in Thomas Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics, Alternatives to American Foreign Policy in the Truman Years* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 266-98, "Attorney General Clark, Internal Security and the Truman Administration," *New University Thought*, 6 (Spring 1968), 16-23, and *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (Chicago, 1971). This section should be compared with William Berman, "Civil Rights and Civil Liberties," in Kirkendall, ed., *The Truman Period*, pp. 187-209, to see how greatly interpretations have shifted since 1966.

Congress voted the diplomatic and defense measures he requested. But by emphasizing the quest for "total security," denying the accused the right to confront and cross-examine his anonymous accusers, and failing to clarify the distinction between radicalism and disloyalty, Truman legitimized red-baiting and stoked the fires of paranoia that the extreme right thrived on.⁴⁰

From its inception, Executive Order 9835, creating the machinery of the Truman loyalty program, stirred the liberals' criticism. For more than a decade following its inception, a series of carefully researched studies pinpointed the program's procedural errors and flagrant disregard for the First Amendment. Ralph Brown emphasized its adverse affects, not only on the "major casualties," but on the many "walking wounded" and "untouched millions" as well, and a most important critique by Morton Grodzins specified the "loss of competence" within the State Department and among scientists, civil servants, and teachers caused by the loyalty probe. The program's lack of concern for civil liberties is summed up by Seth Richardson, a conservative Republican the President appointed as chairman of the Loyalty Review Board. Richardson took the position that "the government is entitled to discharge any employee for reasons which seem sufficient to the government and without extending to such employee any hearing whatsoever." Further poisoning the atmosphere, Attorney General Clark promulgated his official list of subversive private associations. Ostensibly designed as a tool to help the government rid itself of disloyal employees, the Attorney General's list, secretly drawn up by the Justice Department and lacking any statement regarding the criteria for its designations, also became, in Grodzins's words, "a test of employability in state and local governments, defense-related industries, and schools, and of eligibility for passports, occupancy of federally financed housing, and tax exemptions. . . . In this sense, the impact of the list's publication was to enroll the whole country in a vast loyalty program." The zealous Clark also expanded the FBI's investigatory role in loyalty examinations and mobilized the Bureau of Immigra-

⁴⁰The "status anxiety" explanations of McCarthyism made popular by the essays in Daniel Bell, ed., *The New American Right* (New York, 1955), and *The Radical Right* (New York, 1963), have been severely challenged by Dennis Wrong, "Theories of McCarthyism: A Survey," *Dissent*, 1 (Autumn 1954), 385-97; Nelson Polsby, "Towards an Explanation of McCarthyism," *Political Studies*, 8 (October 1960), 250-71; Philip Chapman, "The New Conservatism: Cultural Criticism vs. Political Philosophy," *Political Science Quarterly*, 75 (March 1960), 17-34; John Steinke and James Weinstein, "McCarthy and the Liberals," *Studies on the Left*, 2 (1962), 43-50; Michael P. Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967); Michael Parenti, *The Anti-Communist Impulse* (New York, 1969); and Robert Griffith, *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Lexington, Ky., 1970), "The Political Context of McCarthyism," *Review of Politics*, 33 (January 1971), 24-35, and a review of the recent literature, "The Politics of Anti-Communism," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 54 (Summer 1971), 299-308.

tion and Naturalization for a full-scale drive to deport potentially subversive aliens. The Truman administration, moreover, cooperated with the House Un-American Activities Committee to conduct a highly publicized series of investigations in 1946–1947 and delegated many of its key cabinet members to travel the country and make pronouncements exaggerating the danger of international and domestic communism.⁴¹

In 1948, the President's crusade against communism took on additional dimensions through its efforts to discredit Henry Wallace's Progressive party, to deny to Republicans the use of anticommunism as a campaign issue, to placate Catholic Democrats who were disturbed by Soviet gains in Eastern Europe, and to silence leftist critics of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. The State Department announced a new policy of denying passports to those American reporters whose overseas travel it considered "not in the interest of the United States." New controls upon alien visitors and upon access to official information quickly followed. The administration moved to deport several leading union officials it considered Communists. And in July, the Justice Department initiated proceedings before a New York federal grand jury to indict eleven members of the American Communist party's national board for having violated the Smith Act. Although its members had never been accused of conspiracy against the United States or of revolutionary acts, the Communist hierarchy was arrested, tried, and convicted for advocating proscribed ideas. Such actions, in 1948, helped the administration free

⁴¹Ralph Brown, *Loyalty and Security: Employment Tests in the United States* (New Haven, 1958), pp. 183–93; Morton Grodzins, *The Loyal and the Disloyal* (Chicago, 1956), pp. 220–30. Among the many early criticisms of the loyalty program are: Bert Andrews, *Washington Witch Hunt* (New York, 1948); American Civil Liberties Union, *Our Uncertain Liberties, 1947–1948* (New York, 1949); Carey McWilliams, *Witch Hunt: The Revival of Heresy* (Boston, 1949); Walter Gellhorn, *Security, Loyalty and Science* (Ithaca, 1950); Alan Barth, *The Loyalty of Free Men* (New York, 1951); Francis Biddle, *The Fear of Freedom* (New York, 1951); Clair Wilcox, ed., *Civil Liberties Under Attack* (Philadelphia, 1951); Eleanor Bontecou, *The Federal Loyalty-Security Program* (Ithaca, 1953); Harold Chase, *Security and Liberty: The Problem of Native Communists, 1947–1955* (New York, 1955); and Adam Yarmolinsky, *Case Studies in Personnel Security* (Washington, D.C., 1955). The number of journal articles is legion. See Thomas Emerson and David Helfeld, "Loyalty Among Government Employees," *Yale Law Journal*, 58 (December 1948), 1–143; John Lord O'Brian, "Loyalty Tests and Guilt by Association," *Harvard Law Review*, 61 (April 1948), 592–611, and "New Encroachments on Individual Freedom," *ibid.*, 66 (November 1952), 1–27; and Arthur Sutherland, "Freedom and Internal Security," *ibid.*, 64 (January 1951), 383–416, for examples of the legal criticism of the programs written during the Truman administration. The most recent account is Alan D. Harper, *The Politics of Loyalty: The White House and the Communist Issue, 1946–1952* (Westport, Conn., 1969). Although critical of the revisionists, Harper documents much of their case against the loyalty probe: Truman's appointment of conservatives to critical posts, his simplistic view of disloyalty, his failure to define limits, his political weakness and inability to control both his party and bureaucracy, and the complete lack of zeal by the administration to reform its procedures.

itself of the charge that it was soft on communism. They also laid the foundation for the eventual discrediting of the President because he was not effectively anti-Communist. The monster, once created, soon devoured its own.⁴²

In 1949, congressional conservatives succeeded in taking the initiative away from the President in exploiting the red issue. For the next three years they used the anti-Communist, garrison-state ideology, which the administration had fashioned, to pillory Truman and besmirch any idea or organization tainted with liberalism. In the face of a planned, coordinated drive by Congress to enact their own program to safeguard national security, the administration floundered haplessly. While the White House at times protested the need for further laws and at other times suggested the possibility of strengthening the sabotage and espionage statutes, the Justice Department pressed Congress for more effective internal security legislation. At the same time, Truman condemned congressional activity as "witch hunting" and impugned the motives of those critics who charged him with a lack of vigilance. He also alienated Congress by his sporadic resorts to censorship and the invocation of executive privilege. It all added up to a growing public mania over the danger of domestic communism and a doubt that Truman had the will to combat it. Clifford had told the President in April 1949 that he could not beat something with nothing, but that was just what Truman offered Congress until the eve of passage of the McCarran Internal Security bill in September 1950. By then, any action he took was too late. He had lost the confidence of both Congress and the public. Either revealing insensitivity to popular opinion or perhaps making a final gesture for future historians, Truman vetoed the McCarran Act. Like Taft-Hartley, the omnibus security bill contained many of the administration's own suggestions, and Congress immediately overrode the veto by whopping margins. Finally, after the 1950 congressional elections, Truman appointed a new commission, headed by Admiral Nimitz, to strengthen and expand the administration's employee-loyalty program. Upon its recommendations, Truman issued his last executive order on internal security, which shifted the standard from "reasonable grounds" for dismissal to "reasonable doubt as to the loyalty of the person involved" and required the employee to prove his innocence rather than the Loyalty Review Board having to prove his guilt.⁴³

⁴²See studies by Yarnell and Wallace cited in note 26.

⁴³In addition to the Thompson study, see William R. Tanner, "The Passage of the Internal Security Act of 1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kansas, 1971). Further light on Congress is shed by Donald J. Kemper, *Decade of Fear: Senator Hennings and Civil Liberties* (Columbia, Mo., 1965); and Earl Latham, *The Communist Controversy in Washington, From the New Deal to McCarthy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966). Robert L. Pritchard of Los Angeles Valley College is now engaged in a study of the Truman administration's views of civil liberties.

This, in brief, is the composite portrait of Harry S Truman that emerges from the revisionist studies of the past half-dozen years. Admittedly, it is overdrawn. It lacks the subtlety and sense of complexity expressed in many of the studies themselves. Truman's villainy has been exaggerated at times and the role of conservative forces underestimated; the President's liberal accomplishments have been minimized and his errors magnified. The only reason for such interpretations is that past distortions necessitate such a corrective. Any balanced treatment of the Truman years must stop obscuring his failings, confusing rhetoric with achievement, and blithely assuming that "vital center" liberalism is the path to economic and social justice for all. Too much of Truman's "predicament" has been accepted as inevitable and not enough attention has been paid to the limited vision and the mentality of stalemate in the White House. We may hope that historians will, in the future, stop asking "Who is to blame?" and begin analyzing the roots of postwar conservatism.

Such a project will require far more knowledge than we now have of the President himself. No adequate, unbiased biography exists. Earlier campaign tracts and bits of hagiography are next to useless, and the more recent monographs treat Truman as a one-dimensional man simplistically responding to a given issue. We know his political calculations, but what other factors determined his behavior? It is clear now that Truman and others in his administration were haunted by the image of Munich and caught up in the notion that Hitler could have been stopped if the Allies had acted earlier with enough force and determination. This view undoubtedly affected the foreign policy of the United States after World War II, but what other images—of childhood, of an earlier era, of depression, of personal hardship or rejection—dominated the mind and psyche of the President? Can we understand what he did without knowing these subtle influences? It is almost two decades since William Langer called upon historians to apply the findings of psychoanalysis to the past, yet few dare to do so. Obviously, the historical profession's reception of some recent attempts is not encouraging. Yet the task Langer urged is as necessary as it is hazardous, and without psychological and psychoanalytic concepts we will continue mistakenly to write history as the sum product of rational behavior.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Frank McNaughton and Walter Hehmer, *This Man Truman* (New York, 1945); Tris Coffin, *Missouri Compromise* (Boston, 1947); Jonathan Daniels, *The Man From Independence* (Philadelphia, 1950); Alfred Steinberg, *The Man from Missouri: The Life and Times of Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1962); and Eugene F. Schmdtlein, "Truman the Senator" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1962), are all disappointing. William L. Langer, "The Next Assignment," *American Historical Review*, 63 (January 1958), 283-304. Among the better attempts are Alexander George and Juliette George,

Other such biographies are just as urgently needed. Suggestions for them abound in the 1967 volume, but only a slight beginning has been made since then. More necessary than studies of individual senators or members of the cabinet are collective biographies and multiple career-line analyses like those of C. Wright Mills to define more accurately just what kinds of men dominated which areas of decision making. Clichés about dollar-a-year men, business control of government, or Southern hegemony no longer suffice. In many cases this new direction will involve oral history, and we may hope that tomorrow's scholars will not repeat the shallow performance of yesterday's, who conducted interviews without the barest understanding of psychoanalytic methods or social anthropology. The Truman monographs produced so far have been so narrowly political and diplomatic that they caricature Ranke. There is no evidence that any of the authors have profited from the insights of an Eric Wolf in anthropology or a Neil Smelser in sociology or are even aware of the many exciting developments in social history of the past two decades. And, amazingly, despite the great mass of data on almost every aspect of the Truman era, we lack a single quantitative study. In sum, we are still a long way from knowing just who did what and why.⁴⁵

Even more vital to understanding the period—if only because it has been virtually ignored by Truman scholars to date—is the basic socio-

Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: *A Personality Study* (New York, 1956); Lewis J. Edinger, *Kurt Schumacher: A Study of Political Behavior* (Stanford, 1965); and Rudolph Binion, *Frau Lou: Nietzsche's Wayward Disciple* (Princeton, 1968). Truman scholars should consult Urie Bronfenbrenner, "The Mirror Image in Soviet-American Relations: A Social Psychologist's Report," *Journal of Social Issues*, 17 (1961), 45-56; and Les K. Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, "Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930's-1950's," *American Historical Review*, 85 (April 1970), 1046-64.

⁴⁵Biographical studies not already cited include: Samuel Burton Hand, "Samuel I. Rosenman: His Career" (Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1960); Polly Ann Davis, "Alben W. Barkley: Senate Majority Leader and Vice President" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1963); Karl Adams Dalstrom, "Kenneth S. Wherry" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1965); Alan Schaffer, *Vito Marcantonio: Radical in Congress* (Syracuse, 1966); Frank Ross Peterson, "Liberal from Idaho: The Public Career of Senator Glen H. Taylor" (Ph.D. dissertation, Washington State University, 1968); Edward L. Schapsmeier and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, *Prophet in Politics: Henry A. Wallace and the War Years, 1940-1965* (Ames, Iowa, 1970); and Dwayne L. Little, "The Political Leadership of Speaker Sam Rayburn, 1940-1961" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1970). Far more useful is Robert Pritchard, "Southern Politics and the Truman Administration: Georgia as a Test Case" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1970). Two examples of worth-while models to follow are Donald R. Matthews, *Social Background of the Political Decision Makers* (New York, 1954), and P. M. G. Harris, "The Social Origins of American Leaders: The Demographic Foundations," *Perspectives in American History*, 3 (1969), 159-346.

economic transformation of the postwar United States. Our focus on the White House and presidential synthesis has truncated history and misconstrued the nature of causation. The problems of the Truman administration were largely inherited, and their consequences extended beyond the inauguration of Dwight Eisenhower. They must be viewed more broadly. It is time to abandon the narrowly conceived topics and methodologies of the earlier "Truman and . . ." studies. Also, the revisionists must stop writing like rejected lovers upset by the lack of miracles wrought by the Presidency. Future research must come to grips with the tenacity of liberal capitalism and must analyze its strengths and contradictions. It must plumb the premises of our political system to understand how and why groups organized to exercise power, why so few options or alternatives appeared politically acceptable, and how electoral disaggregation circumscribed the innovative capacity of government. Finally, to explain the disarray of liberalism and resurgence of conservatism, Truman scholars must examine the whole context of American culture in the years following the war. Boorstin to the contrary, it is necessary to know American thought to know American life. What mattered to us, how we perceived reality, where we thought we were, and how we thought we ought to proceed form but the tip of the iceberg of questions that require study. Did the shock of the Cold War, postwar prosperity, and the threat of nuclear destruction produce a new American, anxiety-ridden, frustrated, engaged in reexamining his fundamental beliefs? Do the shibboleths of David Riesman's "other-directed" person and William Whyte's "organization man" tell us what we now need to know? Did our values shift? If so, to what and why? Perhaps we have been too introspective about our own profession at the expense of the rest of society and have let the change from progressive historiography to the neoconservative consensus-continuity school stand as a metaphor for social change. But do the historians in the Truman era necessarily reflect their age any more truly than the New Left historians today?⁴⁶

This is our task: not preaching or judging, but answering the problems

⁴⁶Some perceptive comments on the errors in the liberal historiographic concept of the Presidency appear in Thomas E. Cronin, "The Textbook Presidency and Political Science," an unpublished paper read at the American Political Science Association annual meeting in 1970. Contrast with Dorothy June Rudoni, "Harry S. Truman: A Study in Presidential Perspective" (Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University, 1968). More helpful studies are Ekard Vance Toy, Jr., "Ideology and Conflict in American Ultra-Conservatism, 1945-1960" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1965); Norman Markowitz, "The Rise and Fall of the People's Century: Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1970); Peter Kellogg, "Northern Liberals and Black America: A History of White Attitudes, 1936-1952" (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1970); and Leslie K. Adler, "The Red Image: American Attitudes Toward Communism in the Cold War Era" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1970).

referred to above so we can begin to understand the full complexity of events and their alternatives. The choice need not lie between Carlyle and Marx. Men do not make history exactly as they please; they make it under circumstances encountered and transmitted from the past, but the beliefs and actions of men in power do matter. Nor need the choice lie between Beard and Boorstin. As John Higham has written, we do not need the progressive categories of explanation to "rediscover their grandeur and urgency. . . . But we pay a cruel price in dispensing with their deeper values: an appreciation of the crusading spirit, a responsiveness to indignation, a sense of injustice." Armed thus, we must concern ourselves with the "why" of events, with alternatives and values, and with the needs of those on the periphery of events and thereby recapture the moral dimension of history.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Higham, "The Cult of Consensus," p. 100.

THE CLASH OF PERSPECTIVES AND THE NEED FOR NEW SYNTHESSES

ALONZO L. HAMBY

TEN YEARS AGO, serious historical work on the era of Harry S Truman had barely begun; in the interval, the Truman period has developed as rapidly as any field in American historiography. Much of the credit is due the Harry S. Truman Library for centralizing a vast amount of sources and the Truman Library Institute for initiating an outstanding program of financial encouragement. But interest in the field has been great also because many scholars, seeking to discover perspectives that will help them to understand contemporary social and political crises, are drawn to the Truman era as the period in which these problems became visible. The historical literature that has emerged from the convergence of these factors displays many of the characteristics one might expect from the rapid growth of a field—spotty coverage, monographic narrowness, and perspectives that frequently suggest that historians are the prisoners of contemporary events rather than interpreters of past ones.

1

Writing on the Truman period has, in effect, developed in a historiographical vacuum, freed from the necessity of relating to generally accepted themes or scholarly debates from the eras that either preceded or followed. Until recently, there was no respectable scholarly synthesis of the domestic side of World War II, and historians necessarily had to write on the Truman period with half-formed ideas about the impact of the war upon American life and with no clear point of departure.¹ At

Author's note: This article, with its distinct focus, in no way supersedes the analyses of economic policies by Barton Bernstein, of social welfare policies by Richard Davies, of civil rights and civil liberties by William Berman, and of the Truman Presidency by Elmer Cornwell, all in the first edition of *The Truman Period As a Research Field*. These essays discuss their issues at greater length than space permits here.

¹Richard Lingeman, *Don't You Know There's a War On?* (New York, 1970), is a good journalistic survey, but Richard Polenberg, *War and Society* (Philadelphia, 1972), was the first truly scholarly account. Geoffrey Perrett, *Days of Sadness, Years of Triumph: The American People, 1939-1945* (New York, 1973), appeared as this essay went to press.

the other end of the time span, serious study of the Eisenhower Presidency is just beginning.² The result is a situation in which the student does not have the facts or theses necessary for the comparisons that should be a large part of his evaluation of the Truman Presidency. Under such circumstances, the temptation may become irresistible to use more immediate experiences and expectations as a basing-point for one's judgments.

The difficulty of finding a context within which to treat the Truman administration is aggravated by the absence of a major, over-all study of either the man or his tenure in the White House. Alfred Steinberg's *The Man from Missouri*³ is an adequate sketch by an experienced Washington journalist. Steinberg interviewed extensively and exploited the rather scanty materials available at the Truman Library during the years immediately after it had begun to serve scholars. The result was a useful book more notable for its breadth and readability than for its depth of analysis or grasp of the problems that engage historians. It made little impression upon either the academic world or the reading public and soon went out of print.

Cabell Phillips's *The Truman Presidency*⁴ soon superseded Steinberg's volume. The first book of a talented and astute Washington reporter beginning a second career as a popular historian, *The Truman Presidency* unfortunately exemplified all too well the needless gap between journalism and professional history. The interviews Phillips conducted made genuine contributions to knowledge, especially in their disclosure of the existence of an organized group of liberals within the administration led by Oscar Ewing and Clark Clifford. (Phillips may at times have handled these interviews with insufficient skepticism, but one can level

James MacGregor Burns, *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (New York, 1970), is too immersed in diplomatic-military problems to make more than a marginal contribution to domestic political history. Jim F. Heath surveys a wide range of literature in "Domestic America during World War II: Research Opportunities for Historians," *Journal of American History*, 58 (September 1971), 384-414.

²Herbert S. Parmet, *Eisenhower and the American Crusades* (New York, 1972) is the first full-scale scholarly account of the Ike Age. Robert L. Branyan and Lawrence H. Larsen, *The Eisenhower Administration, 1953-1961: A Documentary History*, 2 vols. (New York, 1971), is a useful collection of source materials.

³(New York, 1962).

⁴(New York, 1966). Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1972), and Bert Cochran, *Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency* (New York, 1973), appeared just before this essay went to press. Miss Truman's book, a spirited defense of her father's administration, is of interest mainly for its personal recollections and its reproduction of a few primary sources not available to other historians. Cochran's volume provides new proof for the adage that the newest is not necessarily the best. A pedestrian attempt at debunking which demonstrates little original thought or research, it draws heavily upon the work of more serious historians, revisionist and nonrevisionist, but frequently fails to give proper acknowledgment.

the same accusation against many academic historians.) He used the *New York Times* to construct a factual outline for his work but apparently made no effort to master the secondary literature that was available by the mid-sixties, trusting to luck (as he phrased it) that the books he selected were the best on the topics they covered. Resentful at being no better able than any other historian to gain access to materials still in President Truman's possession, he refused to make use of the worth-while manuscript sources then available and attacked the presidential library system in an unfair and misleading postscript. Highly selective in his choice of topics, he all but ignored such basic domestic problems as the nature and development of the Fair Deal or the political economy of the Korean War. On balance, *The Truman Presidency* was more useful than Steinberg's work, but it was also sketchy, based on inadequate research, and filled with minor mistakes. Withal, it quickly took its place as the standard account of the administration and, for all its flaws, may remain so for some years.

Good "standard" accounts of any period are vitally important to scholarship. They give the researcher of a specific topic within that period a sense of direction and perspective; frequently, they provide questions to ask and hypotheses to test. Eric Goldman's *Rendezvous with Destiny* and Richard Hofstadter's *The Age of Reform* stimulated much of the outpouring of historical scholarship about the progressive era in the fifties and sixties. James MacGregor Burns's *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s *The Age of Roosevelt* did much to stimulate monographic work on the New Deal. Such achievements are rare, but Truman period scholarship may not reach maturity until it has as a reference point a comprehensive and provocative general study, preferably in one or two volumes.

At present, the best guide to the politics of the Truman years is Richard Neustadt's article, "Congress and the Fair Deal,"⁵ a brief but systematic and comprehensive outline of the legislative history of the Truman Presidency. In a few pages Neustadt does a better job of factual exposition and political analysis than either Steinberg or Phillips. Perhaps his most important contribution is to establish a basic political periodization that breaks the Truman years into four segments, each with a distinct theme: (1) the reaffirmation and systematization of the New Deal in 1945-1946; (2) the effort to pillory the Republican opposition in 1947-1948; (3) the attempt to create a liberal Fair Deal majority in 1949-1950; and after the "great divide" of Korea (4) "mobilization and reluctant retreat" in 1951-1952. The basic structure is a sound one, most in need of a historian to build a book around it.

⁵Neustadt, "Congress and the Fair Deal: A Legislative Balance Sheet," *Public Policy*, 5 (1954), 349-81. Richard S. Kirkendall surveys both the foreign and domestic aspects of the Truman Presidency in his contribution to Morton Borden, ed., *America's Eleven Greatest Presidents* (Chicago, 1971), pp. 255-88.

Another fundamental problem of perspective involves the tendency of almost all Americans to focus their political attention upon the Presidency, which is at once more visible and more comprehensible than the Congress, the independent regulatory agencies, or the federal judiciary. The tendency of historians to structure their work around manuscript collections increases the problem, for the bulk of the collections in the Truman Library are naturally linked in one way or another to the White House. Obviously, the solution is not to abolish the presidential library system, which has rendered great services to scholarship. Rather, historians should beware of tunnel vision, attempt to develop a broad view of the American political system, and realize that most of their studies need to go beyond an account of White House actions and reactions, although such work can be useful. The Truman Library can encourage such new directions by considering itself a center for study of the years 1945–1952 in general rather than a depository concerned primarily with the administration. The Truman Institute might pay less attention to the question of whether its prospective grantees need to use materials at the library. Most fundamentally, the historians themselves need to develop a larger frame of reference if their work is going to move into new and more mature phases.

Another matter of perspective involves the youth of historians of the Truman period. Most of the scholars who have done studies of the Truman era began their work in the 1960s as doctoral students in their mid- or late twenties; for the most part, even the “elder statesmen” of the field are but a decade or so older. In general, these historians came to political consciousness during the later Eisenhower years, shared in the exhilaration of the New Frontier, and experienced the turmoil and frustration, domestic and foreign, that characterized the Johnson administration. This range of political experience—intense yet relatively limited—has necessarily served as one of the fundamental points of departure for many of the historical assessments of the Truman administration. It was no doubt the major factor in giving rise to a school of interpretation fundamentally at variance with the impressions of those whose political memories extend back into the 1940s.

2

Not all young historians are revisionists, but most revisionists are young historians. This generalization probably would hold true for almost any movement to reevaluate a historical epoch. Young intellectuals are usually quick to question established orthodoxies, and the historical profession's tendency to put a premium upon “new interpretations” encourages revisionism. The reevaluation of the Truman administration that began to emerge in the mid-sixties was but part of a larger rein-

terpretation of American history connected with the rise of a predominately youthful New Left radicalism. The New Left, in its broadest sense, is a diverse movement with objectives ranging from the reshaping of American culture to the effectuation of a revolution in American politics. The aspects of New Left thought most evident in the historiography of the Truman period include a repudiation of the Cold War, a distrust of established, organized groups ("the Establishment"), a rejection of "the old politics," and an effort to formulate a critique of traditional American liberalism.

The New Left interpretations of the Cold War itself are beyond the scope of this essay, but revulsion against the Cold War is one fundamental source of the New Left critique of the domestic actions of the Truman administration. Whether they consider the Cold War a product of the wrongheadedness of Truman and his associates or of the economic imperialist drives of capitalism, New Left historians agree that its impact upon American domestic politics was nothing short of disastrous. The Cold War, so the argument runs, undermined civil liberties, diverted public attention and political resources from much-needed reforms, and disrupted and divided a vigorous American Left.

In addition, many New Left writers demonstrate a strong personal animosity toward Truman, a hostility so great that it appears irrational until one realizes just how perfectly Truman symbolizes the "old politics" of the machines, the unions, and the ethnic groups and how he himself appeared as the machine man and quintessential political pro. From such a viewpoint, Truman epitomizes everything the New Left finds wrong with American politics—its tendency to blur ideological distinctions, to engage in group coalition politics at the expense of the unorganized and underprivileged, to produce political leaders who practice compromise rather than commitment. Most New Left historians have been quick to seize upon Samuel Lubell's description of Truman as a President whose furious activity concealed a quest for the stalemate that promised to keep his party unified.⁶ They have been equally quick to pass over the fact that Lubell produces little evidence for this assertion; he devotes most of his work to demonstrating in impressive detail the deep-rooted social-political forces that operated independently of Truman to bring deadlock to the Democratic party and is at the least a bit ambiguous about whether the President was cause or effect.

At the same time, New Left revisionists have argued that the reform programs the administration professed and most liberals supported were not really fundamental enough anyway; this criticism of the Fair Deal is intimately connected to the over-all New Left attack on modern American liberalism as a movement that failed to produce solutions for

⁶Lubell, *The Future of American Politics*, 3d ed., rev. (New York, 1965), Ch. 2.

desperate social problems, occupied itself with the largely imaginary fears of the middle class, and frequently served as an unwitting tool for the corporate power elite.

Barton J. Bernstein, who has done the most important New Left critique of the Truman administration, goes further than most of the revisionists in trying to build a genuinely radical analysis, which transcends personal criticism of Truman, although his work expresses a great deal of that also.⁷ Many of the revisionists seem to be less genuine radicals than frustrated liberals who find in Truman a convenient scapegoat for the failure of many reform measures; many of their attitudes and comments in fact duplicate the frequent criticism of the President that appeared in the *New Republic*, the *Nation*, and other sources of liberal opinion in the immediate postwar era. By placing the burden of political deadlock upon Truman's alleged inadequacies or failures of leadership, these revisionists avoid the searching investigation of the American political system which might form the basis for a truly radical critique. The demand for vigorous presidential leadership as the means for overcoming the multiple obstacles to meaningful reform is nothing if not a liberal demand, most consistently and elaborately advocated by James MacGregor Burns, one of the foremost intellectuals of the liberal establishment.

It may be worth while to state in general terms the case the so-called "conventional liberal" can make for the Truman administration. (Here, as in most areas of American historical writing, the debate is between radicals and liberals.) First of all, Truman was successful in securing considerable increases in important New Deal programs—an accomplishment obscured by the failure of his new legislative proposals. Second, it was Truman's successful defense of the New Deal heritage in the campaign of 1948, not some political-intellectual osmosis, that institutionalized the legacy of the thirties. This may not be an impressive achievement to New Leftists who are almost as critical of Roosevelt's accomplishments as of Truman's, but it was vital to the many ordinary people who had won real benefits from FDR's programs. During the 1948 campaign, Truman demonstrated great skill in mobilizing the latent majority, which was disposed to support the New Deal. He showed that, given the right issues, he could lead the public, and he made the national consensus so clear that no politician who sought the Presidency could ignore it. Third, Truman here and there expanded the New Deal legacy with such accomplishments as the establishment of the Council of Economic

⁷Bernstein, "America in War and Peace: The Test of Liberalism," in Bernstein, ed., *Towards a New Past* (New York, 1967), 289-321 (this and subsequent page references are to the Vintage paperback edition). Bernstein's many articles on the Truman era will receive further discussion in the topical segments of this essay.

Advisers—the first institutional mechanism for giving the White House the means to develop a coherent economic policy—and the advocacy of a civil rights program that went well beyond the Roosevelt heritage. Fourth, he provided the liberal movement with a Presidency that responded to its pressures in a manner that foreclosed any slackening of progressive goals and spurred the liberals to demand new gains. If the liberals at times kept Truman honest, the reverse also was true. The creative tension that existed between Truman and the progressives outside his administration may have postponed the flabbiness and complacency that characterized the liberal movement during the Eisenhower years. Such achievements, if hardly as memorable as those of the New Deal and far removed from the utopian aspirations of the New Left, nevertheless add up to a respectable record of accomplishment.

3

The argument between the liberals and the New Leftists boils down to differing assessments of the degree of accomplishment the American political system permitted during the Truman era. On both sides, these assessments have tended to be impressionistic assumptions rather than carefully developed analyses. They deserve more thought and attention than most historians have given them.

The liberals have tended to assume that political power was fragmented throughout the American system in such a manner that different interest groups found it relatively easy to wield vetoes at some point in the political process against measures that seemed to threaten them. Their point of departure is a belief that the political system actually worked in the manner anticipated by James Madison and most of the Founding Fathers, who feared vigorous active government and thought in terms of dividing and diffusing power. Some have seen this system of deadlock as the creature of a weak party structure and cumbersome congressional procedures; essentially they follow an analysis most effectively advanced by James MacGregor Burns in *The Deadlock of Democracy*.⁸ Others, influenced by Samuel Lubell's *Future of American Politics*, assume that political stalemate existed fundamentally because a clear majority of the electorate in the forties was apathetic to most new reforms and was mainly concerned with preserving past gains. A "new middle class," which emerged from the depression and war years, felt threatened by the demands of the underprivileged; it would vote to retain the benefits it had received from the New Deal but wanted legislation to go no further. This situation paralyzed the Roosevelt coalition,

⁸ (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963).

strengthened the conservatives in Congress, and locked the American political structure into a stalemate.

The New Left revisionists have assumed that political power was, or could be, centered in the White House and that Truman failed to achieve necessary reforms because he lacked qualities of presidential leadership or because he really was not interested in moving reform legislation through Congress. Accepting this set of premises, the revisionists consider Truman a weak, cynical politician. Ironically, they draw upon some of the same scholars as do the liberals. Lubell's view of Truman provides them with negative evidence, and James MacGregor Burns's theory of the Presidency gives them a positive foundation for their conception of presidential power.

In a sense, the argument over the nature of the Presidency amounts to a debate between those most influenced by Richard Neustadt and those who follow Burns. Neustadt's *Presidential Power*,⁹ probably the best analysis of the Presidency ever written and surely the most influential, emphasizes the fragility of its topics; to Neustadt, presidential power is essentially the power to persuade, varying in strength from situation to situation, always slippery and hard to manage. Burns, although one of the most perceptive analysts of the politics of stalemate, has outlined a quite different view. Through all his widely read and influential works, Burns has expressed the conviction that a truly great President, alive to the potential of his office, can break through even the most intractable political stalemate. In *The Deadlock of Democracy* (1963), he brought forth the "Jeffersonian model" of the Presidency as the force that effectuates the majority will through strong, responsible party leadership. In *Presidential Government* (1965),¹⁰ he appeared at least equally drawn to a "Hamiltonian model" of the President as a leader who, acting as more than a party chieftain, would establish a "heroic" image and would relentlessly and pragmatically mobilize every resource of personal and executive power to achieve his objectives—at the expense of party discipline and regularity if need be. Both models, however, carry the same promise of political breakthrough; both assert that the Presidency needs only a man of strength and vision to smash even the most obstructive barriers to social reform.

It is safe to say that every historian who has written on the Truman Presidency has been to some degree familiar with the work of both Neustadt and Burns; his choice between them must of necessity profoundly influence his evaluation of Truman. Those who opt for one of Burns's models as a realistic description of the potential of the Presi-

⁹ (New York, 1960).

¹⁰ (Boston, 1965). Burns, *Congress on Trial* (New York, 1949) foreshadowed the Jeffersonian analysis.

dency might charge that Neustadt mistakenly attempts to universalize the meager accomplishments of Truman and Eisenhower, who provide most of the examples for his analysis. Those who choose Neustadt probably would assert that Burns's models, drawn from the very dawn of the American political system, no longer fit the realities of the mid-twentieth century; they might also observe that no less an operator than Franklin D. Roosevelt fails to meet Burns's standards for true presidential greatness.¹¹

We need to know much more about the Democratic party, both in its congressional and presidential manifestations. Several writers have tossed off generalizations about the possibilities for leadership or about the factional structure of the party with little more than faith as evidence. What we know—especially the fact that the party had been divided and deadlocked for seven years by the time Truman entered the White House—seems to support those who argue that opportunities for presidential leadership were severely restricted. Nonetheless, the situation deserves a much fuller exploration than either school of thought has given it.

The opposition to the Truman administration, whether Republican or conservative Democratic, requires much more investigation than it has thus far received. Historians and social scientists have produced much research on some of its more extreme manifestations, chiefly neoisolationism and McCarthyism, but it is important to develop a better understanding of the strength and dynamics of anti-New and Fair Deal conservatism before McCarthy. A solid and thorough investigation might provide some more tangible basis for judging the strength of the obstacles Truman had to face.¹²

Another aspect of the American political structure that needs more careful attention from the historian is the cluster of problems connected with public opinion and electoral behavior. What did the electorate and the major groups in the political system demand of the government in the Truman years? In what issues were they uninterested? The political scientists and opinion analysts have provided mounds of data, most of them incorporated in easily comprehended studies; with a few exceptions, historians have passed over this material too rapidly.

¹¹See Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (New York, 1956).

¹²James T. Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal* (Lexington, 1967), is a deservedly acclaimed study of the origins of the conservative coalition, and his *Mr. Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft*. (New York, 1972) is an important contribution to the study of post-New Deal conservatism. See also John Moore, "The Conservative Coalition in the United States Senate, 1942-1945," *Journal of Southern History*, 33 (August 1967), 368-76; Donald McCoy, "Republican Opposition during Wartime, 1941-1945," *Mid-America*, 49 (July 1967), 174-89; Roland Young, *Congressional Politics in the Second World War* (New York, 1956).

Perhaps the major question of Truman historiography is whether the President ever had a mandate for new reform programs. The polls reproduced in every issue of the *Public Opinion Quarterly* during the Truman years go a long way toward answering this question (in the negative), but neither Truman's defenders nor his detractors appear to have made full use of them. During the Truman years, political scientists began to undertake extensive surveys of electoral behavior, especially as it related to presidential campaigns. Some of this work, it is true, seems more concerned with technique than substance, and some of it labors mightily to demonstrate the obvious—for example, that Democrats were more likely to agree with Truman's policy positions than Republicans.¹³ Most of it, however, comes to grips with questions of real importance—electoral attitudes toward ideologically sharp party divisions, the manner in which people arrive at opinions on foreign policy, the reasons that impel people to cast their votes as they do; almost all of it contains valuable raw data.¹⁴

The Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan began its systematic study of electoral response to presidential campaigns with a pamphlet-size analysis of the election of 1948; in 1952 it produced a larger book, which contained extensive comparisons to 1948.¹⁵ Elections since 1952 have brought forth increasingly larger, more complex, and—unfortunately—less readable volumes. There is no completely satisfactory synthesis of these and other electoral surveys. Perhaps the most notable and valiant attempt is V. O. Key's posthumously published *The Responsible Electorate*, but Key was not given the time even to finish his manuscript much less to engage in the level of thinking and refinement

¹³In this vein, see Warren E. Miller, "Party Preference and Attitudes on Political Issues: 1948–1951," *American Political Science Review*, 47 (March 1953), 45–60; Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, "Political Issues and the Vote: November, 1952," *ibid.*, pp. 359–85; Erwin R. Linn, "The Influence of Liberalism and Conservatism on Voting Behavior," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 13 (Summer 1949), 299–309. E. Terrence Jones, "Congressional Voting on Keynesian Legislation, 1945–1964," *Western Political Quarterly*, 21 (June 1968), 240–51, concludes that rural or small-town congressmen were more suspicious of Keynesian legislation than their urban counterparts.

¹⁴See, for example, George Horsley Smith and Richard P. Davis, "Do the Voters Want the Parties Changed?" *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 11 (Summer 1947), 236–43; George Belknap and Angus Campbell, "Political Party Identification and Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy," *ibid.*, 15 (Fall 1951), 601–23; Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, William N. McPhee, *Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign* (Chicago, 1954).

¹⁵Angus Campbell and Robert L. Kahn, *The People Elect a President* (Ann Arbor, 1952); Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, *The Voter Decides* (Evanston, Illinois, and White Plains, New York, 1954).

that might have produced a book worthy of the same acclaim as his earlier work.¹⁶

The historian may find survey data difficult to use, in the absence of a really good synthesis; he may with good reason believe that the political scientist's quest for methodological sophistication has passed the point of diminishing returns; and he may still feel more drawn to Samuel Lubell's more humanized and highly convincing, if less elaborate, analyses of electoral attitudes and behavior. Nevertheless, the political scientists have produced data that, for the Truman years at least, are easy enough for a historian to grasp and valuable enough to merit his attention.

Political science studies of the structure of Congress have been, on the whole, much less successful. Perhaps the best for Truman historians is David R. Mayhew's *Party Loyalty Among Congressmen*.¹⁷ Mayhew, a student of V. O. Key, utilized congressional roll-call data from the years 1947–1962 to measure degrees of party cohesion on certain major broad issues (farm programs, urban problems, labor, Western needs). He demonstrates historical perspective, makes his method clear, and writes in plain English. His conclusions are less than astonishing: The Republicans, a party of "exclusive compromise," generally achieved domestic cohesion only on probusiness or budget-slashing measures; the Democrats, a party of "inclusive compromise," appealed to a wider variety of interests and managed to achieve substantial cohesion on benefits for all the interests he examines; the Southern Democrats, however, gained more from the process of inclusive compromise than they contributed, and they tended to defect in significant numbers on labor and urban issues. The basic pattern, if not the terminology, is familiar enough, but Mayhew's exposition of it is welcome; his concluding discussion of the sort of majorities the Democrats needed to secure passage of certain reforms is especially useful.

Even Mayhew, however, does not go far past the roll-call data to discuss the dynamics of congressional politics. The historian who is interested in lines of power and influence—frequently informal—will find more information, for the Truman era at least, in the work of perceptive journalists and some congressmen, although such sources present real problems of verification. It is especially regrettable that a political scientist as talented as David B. Truman relies so heavily upon roll-call analysis in his study of the Eighty-first Congress.¹⁸ The rather sterile result overemphasizes the importance of party fragmentation and contains few insights of use to the historian.

¹⁶Angus Campbell, et al., *The American Voter* (New York, 1960), and Campbell, et al., *Elections and the Political Order* (New York, 1966); Key, *Responsible Electorate* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

¹⁷(Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

¹⁸David B. Truman, *The Congressional Party* (New York, 1959).

Gerald Marwell's "Party, Region and the Dimensions of Conflict in the House of Representatives, 1949-1954"¹⁹ is a less useful work, mentioned primarily because it serves as an example of all the characteristics that tend to alienate historians from the social sciences. Marwell's methodology is obscure to those who lack extensive training in quantitative analysis; his use of the English language is abominable; the categories he devises to describe the voting clusters he discovers are so broad and abstract as to approach meaninglessness. One can only hope that Mayhew rather than Marwell represents the trend in legislative voting analysis. Unless the social scientists prefer to talk to themselves (a distinct possibility), they need to devote more effort to intelligibility and to develop a readiness to go beyond the quantitative data. Despite these faults, historians who study the nature of Congress during the Truman period will find useful starting points in some of their work.

Political scientists have made contributions in other ways. V. O. Key's brilliant and exhaustive study of *Southern Politics in State and Nation*²⁰ is essential reading for anyone concerned with the political history of the Truman era. David B. Truman's important exposition of the group theory of politics, *The Governmental Process*,²¹ is packed with examples from the Truman years. Even a cursory glance at the literature reveals a large amount of work on specific issues and problems, some of it well known to historians.

The foundations of Truman's approach to politics lie, of course, in his prepresidential career, the standard account of which is still Jonathan Daniels's *Man of Independence*,²² a perceptive and emphatic study published in 1950. Although it is not very useful for the post-1945 period, *Man of Independence* skillfully reconstructs Truman's earlier life through the use of newspaper files, personal interviews, and, perhaps most importantly, projects an instinctive feel for the forces that form the modern Democratic party. The essential task of the academic historian is to refine and build upon Daniels's impressive beginning.

Lyle Dorsett with his work on the Pendergast machine and Franklin Mitchell with his research on the Missouri Democracy have added in small ways to the Daniels account.²³ Richard S. Kirkendall has published

¹⁹*American Political Science Review*, 61 (June 1967), 380-99. Unlike most of the other authors cited, Marwell is a sociologist.

²⁰ (New York, 1949).

²¹ (New York, 1951).

²² (Philadelphia, 1950).

²³Mitchell, "Who is Judge Truman?: The Truman-for-Governor Movement of 1931," and Dorsett, "Truman and the Pendergast Machine," *Mid-Continent American Studies Journal*, 7 (Fall 1966), 3-15, 16-27. See also the commentaries, *ibid.*, by Eugene Schmidlein (28-35), and Richard S. Kirkendall (36-39); Dorsett, *The Pendergast Machine* (New York, 1968), and Mitchell, *Embattled Democracy: Missouri Democratic Politics, 1919-1932*

a brief essay that is important as the forerunner of substantial work yet to come. Kirkendall engages in some psychological analysis, arguing that Truman entered politics out of a need for satisfying personal relationships with other men rather than out of a drive for power. His article is undocumented, but still it demonstrates more extensive research than does *Man of Independence*. Nevertheless, the main effect is to confirm Daniels's view that Truman's experience aligned him at one time or another with all the factions of the Democratic party and that he accepted them all as legitimate components of the party.²⁴

One of a President's major functions is to establish a leadership that will bring the public to support his programs. Few historians would consider Truman a virtuoso at this endeavor, but none has pursued a systematic examination of his strengths and weaknesses as a public leader. Elmer Cornwell's *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion* contains a good comparison of the ways in which Roosevelt and Truman used the press conference and some perceptive ideas about Truman's public image. Hamby's "The Liberals, Truman, and FDR as Symbol and Myth" examines unfavorable comparisons made by a group of articulate and influential opinion shapers. John E. Mueller's "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson" provides some perspectives, but its overuse of mathematics will put off many historians. At best, these studies barely provide a starting point for a full-scale analysis.²⁵

Truman's leadership of Congress has received more attention. Kenneth Street's dissertation on the period 1945-1948 is an adequate first study, but it was done before many important manuscript sources became available. Susan Hartmann's *Truman and the 80th Congress* is an excellent product that demonstrates the way in which Truman used the Republican legislative branch to lay the groundwork for the 1948 campaign. However, although she has researched deeply in congressional manuscript collections, Hartmann engages in little exploration of the structure of Congress itself. She depicts Truman as successful in achieving his

(Columbia, Mo., 1968). Arthur F. McClure and Donna Costigan, "The Truman Vice Presidency: Constructive Apprenticeship or Brief Interlude?" *Missouri Historical Review*, 65 (April 1971), 318-41, adds little to what we already know about the topic. Eugene F. Schmittlein, "Truman the Senator" (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1962), provides good coverage.

²⁴Kirkendall, "Truman's Path to Power," *Social Science*, 43 (April 1968), 67-73. Kirkendall also explores Truman's concept of the Democratic party in "Truman and the South" (paper delivered at the Southern Historical Association meeting, 1969). Robert A. Garson, "The Alienation of the South," *Missouri Historical Review*, 65 (July 1970), 448-71, covers much of the same ground but with less authority.

²⁵Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion* (Bloomington, 1965); Hamby, "The Liberals, Truman, and FDR as Symbol and Myth," *Journal of American History*, 56 (March 1970), 859-67; Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson," *American Political Science Review*, 64 (March 1970), 18-34.

major objectives, but displays great uncertainty that his goals were constructive or his leadership altogether good for the nation.²⁶

Hartmann's topic is important and her book very well done, but the Eightieth Congress presented Truman less with problems of legislative leadership than of manipulation—on domestic problems at least. In a sense, she has written a study of Truman's techniques of leading public opinion. The President relied heavily upon issue identification rather than personal image-making, and the Eightieth Congress was a perfect instrument for his methods. Any work on Truman's relationships with it inevitably contributes much more to our understanding of the 1948 election than to a grasp of Truman's legislative leadership. A book on the Eighty-first Congress, a body in which there was promise of real accomplishment, would go further toward the second objective. Ultimately, we need a comprehensive study of White House–Congress interaction throughout the Truman administration with equal emphasis upon White House approaches and the structure of Congress.

Most of the historical writing on Congress in the Truman era has instead taken the form of biography. An occasional specimen can be very good. J. Joseph Huthmacher's life of Robert F. Wagner is outstanding as a study of its topic and useful to Truman historians who are interested in the legislative struggles of the first term. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, in their first-rate journalistic study of Lyndon Johnson, credibly re-create the structure of power in the Senate during the Truman era. But these and a few other studies are exceptional. For the most part, there is something in congressional biography that seems to bring out the pedestrian in historical scholarship. Perhaps historians become trapped in the papers of the individual about whom they are writing, and the manuscript collections of former congressmen are seldom rewarding. Journalists, who work closer to the real world of politics, may have a better grasp on questions of power and influence, but most of their products are designed to capitalize on current interests and are hence turned out under deadline pressures that force catch-as-catch-can methods, superficial thinking, and ephemeral work. Congressional autobiographies generally have an off-the-top-of-the-head, anecdotal quality that makes them very dangerous sources.²⁷

Most Presidents probably consider the election-year effort to mobilize a popular majority as the ultimate test of their leadership. Truman ap-

²⁶Street, "Harry S. Truman: His Role as Legislative Leader, 1945–1948" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1963); Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress* (Columbia, Mo., 1971).

²⁷See the appendix for a fairly complete list of biographical and autobiographical studies of Truman period congressmen. The list makes no attempt to include everything written about the more prominent figures. It has doubtless missed some fugitive works, especially doctoral dissertations.

pears to have been no exception, and his own successful effort in 1948 has captured the imagination and interest of many historians, both for its drama and its importance in recent American political history. In writing the most thorough account of the 1948 campaign, Irwin Ross has demonstrated that it is possible to blend the skills of the journalist and of the historian with great success. Ross conducted personal interviews, dug through the manuscripts, read the relevant published material, and secured a special analysis of the Midwestern farm vote. The resulting monograph, readable and perceptive, is an important contribution. Richard Kirkendall's essay on the 1948 election gives us another strong account and is especially good at untangling the lines of influence and advice that converged upon Truman. Kirkendall demonstrates that Truman was hardly a man alone in his fight for reelection, but he concludes that the President was perhaps his own greatest asset in his ability to sort out the best advice and play the role necessary to rally the Democratic coalition behind him.²⁸

One important aspect of the 1948 campaign was the prominence of the Progressive and Dixiecrat parties, but much remains to be done with both. The Dixiecrat movement has called forth little in the way of significant research. The Progressives have attracted more attention, but the work on them is far from definitive. Karl Schmidt and Curtis MacDougall repeat Popular Front clichés at the expense of serious analysis, although MacDougall's lengthy work is an important primary source of sorts. Edward and Frederick Schapsmeier present a sympathetic liberal critique of Henry Wallace, but their analysis of Wallace and the Progressives, if unexceptional, is less than penetrating. Norman D. Markowitz's recent study is the best of the lot, strong in the detail of its research, weak in a rather confused frame of reference which moves back and forth between an acceptance of Wallace's world view and a polemical critique of the American liberal tradition.²⁹

²⁸Ross, *The Loneliest Campaign* (New York, 1968); Kirkendall, "The Election of 1948" in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Fred L. Israel, eds., *A History of American Presidential Elections, 1789-1968* (New York, 1971), IV, 3099-3145. Robert A. Divine, "The Cold War and the Election of 1948," *Journal of American History*, 59 (June 1972), 90-110, fails rather badly in my estimate to demonstrate its thesis that Cold War issues crucially influenced the voters. The concluding paragraph, which attempts to connect the outcome to the Vietnam war, reveals more about the intellectual history of the late sixties and early seventies than about the effect of the 1948 election.

²⁹Emile B. Adler, "Why the Dixiecrats Failed," *Journal of Politics*, 15 (August 1953), 356-69; Frank Watts Ashley, "Selected Southern Liberal Editors and the States' Rights Movement of 1948" (Ph.D. diss., University of South Carolina, 1959); Schmidt, *Henry A. Wallace: Quixotic Crusade, 1948* (Syracuse, 1960); MacDougall, *Gideon's Army*, 3 vols. (New York, 1965); Schapsmeier and Schapsmeier, *Prophet in Politics: Henry A. Wallace and the War Years* (Ames, Iowa, 1970); Norman D. Markowitz, *The Rise and*

The only good full-scale coverage of the 1952 campaign is Barton Bernstein's essay, a solid piece that is most interesting for its interpretations of Robert A. Taft and Adlai Stevenson and for its dissection of the large areas of disagreement in the various voting surveys. Paul David and his associates have published an exhaustive study on nominating politics. For the rest, the historian must go to biographies of the various participants. The relative paucity of work on 1952 as compared to 1948 is symptomatic of the way in which chronology has influenced the progress of Truman scholarship. In general, we know a lot about Truman's first term but much less about the second—in large measure a result of the fact that it was convenient and doubtless necessary in many cases to terminate doctoral dissertations with the close of the first term.³⁰

A final problem concerning Truman's leadership involves the way he made decisions—or, to state it more baldly, *whether* he made decisions. The question is a difficult one because scholars now have rather full access to the papers of most of Truman's staff while Truman himself retained possession of many personal papers until his death. As a result, on many issues the President becomes almost an invisible man. Many historians, following the limited manuscript sources as well as they can, glide into the assumption that he was a puppet of his advisers. The lack of any good in-depth analysis of either the staff or Truman's management of the Presidency makes the glide especially easy. Most policies are, of course, shaped by staff members or advisers; Presidents simply are not permitted the time to sit alone for hours in the Oval Office and ponder issues. The analyst, however, must consider whether the President sets broad policies and especially whether he insists that his advisers provide alternatives from which to choose. By and large, Truman appears to have met both tests.

Many writers, although not Ross and Kirkendall, seem to believe that Truman was almost wholly the instrument of Clark Clifford. Accounts of the campaign of 1948 tend to take Clifford's November 1947 memorandum on political strategy as a starting point and proceed from there,

Fall of the People's Century: Henry Agard Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941–1948 (New York, 1973).

³⁰Bernstein, "Election of 1952," in Schlesinger and Israel, *American Presidential Elections*, 3215–66. David, et al., *Presidential Nominating Politics in 1952*, 5 vols. (Baltimore, 1954). Of the several biographies of Stevenson, Bernstein's interpretation most reflects Bert Cochran, *Adlai Stevenson: Patrician among the Politicians* (New York, 1969). Bernstein's interpretation of Taft shows the manner in which contemporary neo-isolationism is leading toward a reevaluation of post-World War II neoisolationism. The trend is in my mind an unfortunate one which threatens to obscure the rationality and common sense of the contemporary variety by identifying it with the right-wing extremism of the 1940s. See also Henry Berger, "Senator Robert A. Taft Dissents From Military Escalation," in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics* (Chicago, 1971), 167–204.

apparently with the idea that they are recounting a story of the way in which Truman followed Clifford's directions. But it surely is no derogation of Clifford, a very great and shrewd presidential adviser, to observe that Truman did not invariably follow his tactical advice and to remember that the broad outline of the 1948 campaign was remarkably similar to Truman's desperate senatorial primary campaign of 1940. On questions of political tactics and patronage, Truman had several lines of information and advice. Clifford was the strongest and most visible of several rivals around the presidential chair. On questions of broad policy, Clifford's extraordinary influence may be attributable less to any Svengali-like qualities than to the fact that his advice, persuasively presented to be sure, appealed to both Truman's instincts and conception of self-interest. Given our present state of knowledge about Truman's management of the Presidency, it is premature to assume that any individual or group made up his mind for him.³¹

4

The major factor hanging over the entire American political scene during the Truman era was the Cold War, which ultimately endangered civil liberties and gave rise to McCarthyism. It is easier to state this truism than to go beyond it and specifically distinguish those areas in which the Cold War had a major impact and those in which it probably changed little.

There is a general assumption, especially in the work of the revisionists, that the Cold War torpedoed the Fair Deal by diverting public attention from reform needs and forcing Truman to employ whatever congressional leverage he possessed in working for his foreign policy objectives. As plausible as this may sound, however, it seems a bit of an oversimplification to believe that, in the absence of the Cold War, the public would have given the administration a mandate for new reform breakthroughs. The New Deal, after all, had been stalemated in 1937-1938 with a depression still on and foreign policy a secondary concern. Truman's success in securing important additions to New Deal programs even as most of his own innovations went under in 1949-1950 might

³¹Patrick Anderson, *The President's Men* (New York, 1968) contains a chapter on the Truman administration. It is intelligent and well written but rather shallow, in the manner of a *New York Times Magazine* article. Richard E. Neustadt, "Notes on the White House Staff under President Truman" (mimeographed paper; copy at the Truman Library) is a good brief survey. Ronald T. Farrar, *Reluctant Servant: The Story of Charles G. Ross* (Columbia, Mo., 1969) covers the career of Truman's press secretary. Harold Barto, "Clark Clifford and the Presidential Election of 1948" (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1970) is not very successful in its effort to get at a tricky topic. Franklin Mitchell is preparing a study of White House organization under Truman.

suggest that the Cold War was not nearly as important a factor as the mood of an electorate that was happy with old reforms and wary of new ones. At the least, we need some close examination of the contradictions, if any existed, between building a foreign policy coalition and a domestic reform coalition; until some analyst shows us in solid, practical terms that the accomplishment of the first greatly hindered the execution of the second, we might do well to assume that other, deeper factors were responsible.

It seems certain that the Cold War actually gave a boost to the cause of civil rights, just as had World War II. The Cold War made it seem all the more imperative to demonstrate that the United States was the democratic society it claimed to be and thus significantly reinforced Black political power. No serious historian would argue that either World War I or World War II simply killed reform impulses; we know the story is much more complex. It is time we assumed the same effects from the Cold War.

All historians agree that the Cold War had a dangerous and profoundly antiliberal impact upon individual liberties and that the Truman administration seriously blotted its record by prosecutions of Communist party leaders based on the Smith Act and by the establishment of a loyalty program that committed many acts of injustice and imposed an atmosphere of Big Brotherism throughout the government. There are, however, important differences of opinion about the responsibility for these threats to civil liberties and their subsequent impact upon American politics. To the liberals, the Truman administration was as much victim as villain, more interested in staving off worse injustices than in persecuting the innocent, and constantly fighting a losing battle to push back a tide of anti-Communist repression. To the radicals, the administration, through a remarkable combination of intemperate rhetoric, narrow-minded partisanship, and wrongheaded incompetence, practically created the crisis in civil liberties and paved the way for McCarthyism.

In the main, Allen Harper's *The Politics of Loyalty*—a well-balanced account that is particularly good for an understanding of the loyalty program—presents the liberal view.³² Harper unsparingly documents the administration's sins of omission and commission, especially its confusion of loyalty with security and its failure to write elementary procedural safeguards into the loyalty program. At the same time, he makes it clear that Truman was saddled with an obdurate bureaucracy, a weak congressional leadership, and Cold War events that he could not control.

³²Harper, *The Politics of Loyalty: The White House and the Communist Issue, 1946–1952* (Westport, Conn., 1969). Other significant studies of the loyalty program are Eleanor Bontecou, *The Federal Loyalty–Security Program* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1953); Walter Gellhorn, *Security Loyalty, and Science* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1960); Richard P. Longaker, *The President and Individual Liberties* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1961).

Where Harper emphasizes the ambiguity of political situations and distributes blame widely, Athan Theoharis focuses much more sharply upon Truman and places a heavy moral burden of guilt on his shoulders. Theoharis is nothing if not original and provocative, and he has been one of the most influential of revisionist thinkers. His essay "The Rhetoric of Politics," in large measure the basis for his subsequent *Seeds of Repression*, became a seminal work of New Left historiography even before it was published.³³ Its basic premises appear in almost every revisionist account of the domestic impact of the Cold War and the origins of McCarthyism. Yet, even more than most examples of revisionism Theoharis's work is narrow and one-dimensional, overly selective in its use of evidence, and so prone to emphasize the Truman administration's misdeeds that it overlooks the broader and more significant causes of McCarthyism.

Theoharis begins with the argument that Truman, having precipitated the Cold War with his diplomatic ineptness, used exaggerated anti-Communist rhetoric to divert public attention from domestic reform issues and to win public support for his foreign policies; thus he created a situation in which a loyalty program and eventually McCarthyism became almost inevitable. In a narrow, partisan manner, he attempted to monopolize the anti-Communist issue by red-baiting his left-wing critics and dismissing the right-wingers as isolationists or self-serving politicians, thereby encouraging the right to turn to McCarthyism as soon as events provided a suitable opening.

The diplomatic historians can argue about Theoharis's assumption that Truman was responsible for the Cold War; the rest of his thesis contains many debatable points of interest to a historian of politics. First and foremost, he assumes that presidential rhetoric on foreign policy controls public opinion. Presidential pronouncements on foreign policy probably do have a greater impact upon the public mind than pronouncements on domestic policy, but Theoharis seems to believe that Truman practically told the public what to think about communism. In

³³The most relevant of Theoharis's publications are "The Rhetoric of Politics: Foreign Policy, Internal Security, and Domestic Politics in the Truman Era, 1945-1950," and "The Escalation of the Loyalty Program," both in Barton J. Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago, 1970); "The Threat to Civil Liberties," in Thomas Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics* (Chicago, 1971), 266-98; *Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism* (Chicago, 1971). Theoharis had made extensive use of the public opinion polls, but his use of these data strikes me as extremely questionable. Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York, 1972), arrives at much the same viewpoint as does Theoharis and adds an economic analysis of American foreign policy akin to that of his mentor, Gabriel Kolko. Like Theoharis, Freeland assumes that the Cold War was a one-sided affair and makes no effort to examine Soviet foreign policy or assess its contributions to the growth of American anti-Communist extremism.

reality, Presidents are seldom so all-powerful. Theoharis does not give a satisfactory explanation of why, if Truman's rhetoric exercised such a pervasive influence upon the public mind, the President began to lose control of the Communist issue after 1948.

Rather than consider Truman's rhetoric in isolation, Theoharis might have compared it with that of spokesmen for the Soviet Union. During the formative period of the Cold War, Stalin, Molotov, and Vishinsky were much less restrained in their pronouncements than Truman, Byrnes, and Marshall. It seems quite possible that the crude anti-American statements of the Russians (not to mention their behavior) were more important in determining public attitudes than anything Truman said.

Nor was Truman's rhetoric as consistently and harshly anti-Communist as Theoharis depicts it. Consider the President's reaction at a press conference in March 1948 to a question on the death of Jan Masaryk: "I cannot make any official statement. . . . I think, though, that we should be careful, as General Marshall said, not to let any passions get the better of us until we know the facts."³⁴ Other Truman statements were, of course, less restrained; it would be distortion in reverse to present this remark as a typical comment. His rhetoric was, however, much more mixed than Theoharis admits—at least until the Cold War reached that point in 1948 or 1949 at which both sides gave up any effort at civil diplomatic exchange.

Moreover, when Truman's rhetoric was exaggerated, as in the Truman Doctrine speech, the reason appears to have been less administration incompetence than a calculated evaluation of what the political system demanded. It is well known that, in requesting aid to Greece and Turkey, Truman resorted to universalistic rhetoric only after being convinced that this was the only way to secure passage of his program. It may well be that the American political system requires a crisis atmosphere for the passage of important foreign policy measures; at the least, we should be aware that the administration was not itching to establish one.

Of course, Truman had an option that Theoharis thinks would have been infinitely preferable—he could have forsworn containment and kept his mouth shut. Presumably, such a course of action would have prevented domestic anti-Communist hysteria. At the least, however, it would have entailed a Communist-dominated, Moscow-oriented government in Athens and, unless a European recovery scheme without anti-Communist overtones could have been established, the probability of similar regimes in Rome and Paris. Can anyone believe that such developments would have averted McCarthyism?

It is understandable that a revisionist should attack Truman for "red-baiting" the Progressive party in 1948, but he might also observe that

³⁴*Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry S. Truman, 1948* (Washington, 1964), 178–79.

Truman mentioned the Wallace Progressives in public only a few times during the entire year rather than leave the impression that the President said little else. Perhaps some sort of definition of "red-baiting" is needed also. If the phrase is anything more than a bludgeon used by Popular Fronters to attack those who disagree with them, it must have one of two meanings: (1) false accusations of communism or Communist influence; (2) denunciation of communism in lieu of a positive program. Some revisionists might dissent, but most historians probably would agree that the Progressive party was indeed Communist-influenced and that Truman won the election of 1948 on the basis of a positive program rather than on red-baiting.

Theoharis blasts the President even for actions that civil libertarians at the time applauded. He does not really consider the possibility that Truman may have been correct in dismissing his right-wing opponents as isolationists and self-serving politicians. He censures Truman for refusing to turn uncensored loyalty files over to the House Committee on Un-American Activities or, at least, for his manner of refusing. He even criticizes Truman's veto of the McCarran Act as a bit of partisan sniping whose foremost objective was to establish the administration as anti-Communist. His interpretation of this incident conveniently ignores the fact that, if Truman's major objective was to establish himself as anti-Communist, he needed only to sign the McCarran bill. Having determined not to put his name on any sedition bill—even one that had overwhelming support in Congress—Truman faced the problem—very serious in the fall of 1950—of refuting charges that he was indifferent to internal subversion. As a result, a substantial portion of his veto message was addressed to this problem, but the document also contained a lengthy and ringing defense of individual liberties that at the time drew enthusiastic praise from persons concerned with such issues.

Truman's record on civil liberties was erratic; he was more effective in opposing abuses outside his administration than in correcting injustices within it. The loyalty program he initiated may have injured comparatively few persons, compared to the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution or the Soviet purges of the thirties, but it remained a disgrace which violated the very principles the administration was sworn to uphold. The President and his advisers, moreover, may have had a faulty perspective when they talked about *balancing* individual rights against the demands of national security; there is a sound case for the argument that certain rights and liberties are absolute and paramount.

At the same time, it would be unfair and unrealistic to assume that Chief Executives are free agents who therefore deserve sole responsibility for their actions. (During a much earlier era of hysteria—the "Popish Plot" controversy of Stuart England in the 1670s—Charles II, a king who claimed to rule by divine right, considered himself forced to sign the

death warrants of supporters he knew to be innocent of the preposterous charges against them.) Even Theoharis admits that the establishment of a loyalty program was motivated in large measure by the hope of staving off worse action from the Eightieth Congress; although Truman defended the program in public, there is evidence to indicate that he was never convinced of its necessity or happy with its methods. There can be little doubt that he was more comfortable as a defender of civil liberties.

Truman's opposition to communism certainly must have contributed to public concern over it, as did the very existence of the Cold War, but to assume that McCarthyism grew naturally out of Truman's actions not only ignores the problem of what might have happened had Truman done nothing but also inflicts a crude consensus interpretation (all anti-Communists are fundamentally alike) upon the period. In fact, Truman stood for one manner of fighting communism, McCarthyism for another, very different. The revisionist interpretation fails to explain why the Truman method gained an initial ascendancy then began to lose ground to the McCarthyite method after the beginning of 1950. Provocative though it is, Theoharis's work describes the tail of the elephant, to the neglect of the rest of the beast.

There is no satisfactory account that explains the origins and nature of McCarthyism and traces it through to its ultimate demise. Richard Rovere's pioneering *Senator Joe McCarthy* remains a valuable and compelling personality sketch. Robert Griffith's *The Politics of Fear* is a fine book as long as it sticks to its central purpose of demonstrating McCarthy's skill at exploiting the rules and traditions of the Senate to his advantage.³⁵ Michael Paul Rogin's *The Intellectuals and McCarthy* is wide-ranging and superficially impressive but much over-praised. Content for the most part to expend his efforts in disproving the contention of the pluralist theorists who wrote *The Radical Right* that McCarthyism was in part a species of anomic or alienated mass politics motivated by status anxieties, Rogin fails to develop a wholly credible analysis of his own. At times penetrating and useful, his critique of the pluralists becomes a trap from which he fails to escape.³⁶

Rogin's commitment to "mass protest politics" deepens his difficulty, for he is anxious to refute any assertion that McCarthyism drew even part of its strength from this type of politics. Thus, he rather lamely describes the sources of McCarthy's strength as (1) traditional right-wing Midwestern Republican conservatives, whom he characterizes as one of the "elite" groups within the party, and (2) those citizens concerned with

³⁵Rovere, *Senator Joe McCarthy* (New York, 1959); Griffith, *The Politics of Fear* (Lexington, Ky., 1970).

³⁶Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967); Daniel Bell, ed., *The Radical Right* (Garden City, N.Y., 1963).

communism for reasons never fully explored but presumably unrelated to mass alienation or status considerations. Moreover, he insists, McCarthy's success was the product, not of mass backing, but of the action and inaction of elites. Even if we grant Rogin all these general propositions, we may legitimately wonder if he has taken us very far toward a positive understanding of McCarthyism.

Earl Latham's *The Communist Controversy in Washington*³⁷ is the most ambitious attempt to deal with McCarthyism and its origins in something of a narrative fashion over an extended period. Latham's account runs from the problem of communism and the New Deal to the censure of McCarthy, and he makes a useful distinction between the Communist *issue* as employed by politicians and the Communist *problem* as a real threat to American security. Yet, the book is ill-organized and marred by a tendency to accept right-wing interpretations of such controversial episodes as the *Amerasia* incident and the Harry Dexter White case. Latham's conclusion that McCarthyism is best understood as a political phenomenon, specifically a manifestation of the conservative Republican drive for power, is solid enough but no more satisfactory than Rogin's partially developed explanation.

Samuel Lubell has come up with a good description of the impulses that motivated McCarthy—"The Politics of Revenge"—but he fails to develop this insight adequately and actually mars it by making strained comparisons between McCarthy, Aneurin Bevan, and Robert La Follette, Sr.³⁸ The concept of a movement of revenge may indeed be the best organizing principle for a historian who is seeking to understand the forces behind McCarthyism; it can explain why certain Republicans supported McCarthy while others did not, and why McCarthy had a powerful appeal to certain types of Democrats. A "revenge synthesis" would avoid the abstract debate over pluralism and go beyond the valid but insufficient explanation that McCarthyism was a Republican drive for power. Specifically, it would interpret McCarthyism as a coalition of groups who were seeking retribution in the form of internal scapegoats for the imposition of the New Deal upon America, the United States' entry into World War II, and the loss of Eastern Europe; it would assume that the Republican drive for power encouraged and absorbed this movement because it meshed well with Midwestern Republican conservatism and neoisolationism and because important events during and subsequent to 1949 gave it a degree of credibility it would not otherwise have enjoyed.³⁹

³⁷(Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

³⁸Lubell, *The Revolt of the Moderates* (New York, 1956).

³⁹The most useful works for an exploration of these dimensions of Cold War politics are H. Bradford Westerfield, *Foreign Policy and Party Politics: Pearl Harbor to Korea* (New Haven, 1955); Athan Theoharis, *The Yalta Myths: An Issue in U.S. Politics*,

Any study of McCarthyism that can combine both a coherent and fairly complete narrative with a fully satisfactory analysis of so difficult and complex a phenomenon might rank as the eighth wonder of the world. One can only emphasize that such a study is badly needed and hope that somewhere there is a historian with the patience, determination, and talent to make the effort.

5

Liberal historians have generally assumed that the Truman administration's major claim to achievement in domestic affairs rested in the support it gave the civil rights movement. Truman was the first twentieth-century U.S. President to advocate a full-scale civil rights program; it was under him that the Justice Department began a policy of filing *amicus curiae* briefs in key civil rights cases and that the armed forces were desegregated. The radicals respond that such achievements were relatively inconsequential, compared with what should have been accomplished; moreover, the worth of these activities is diminished because they were undertaken reluctantly and for the wrong reasons. The debate boils down primarily to an estimate of the possibilities of civil rights politics and secondarily to an opinion of the kind of behavior one can reasonably expect of politicians who must function within the American political system.

The best study of civil rights in the Truman era is the large, long-awaited volume, *Quest and Response*, by Donald R. McCoy and Richard T. Ruetten. Based on research that is unlikely to be surpassed, it possibly is the finest example of the liberal approach to the Truman era. The authors' evaluation of Truman is balanced—they admit that some of his civil rights action were weak, and they understand that he had shifting priorities that at times led him to downplay civil rights. But, evaluating him against the standards of his time rather than against the far more advanced criteria of the present, they conclude that his contributions to the cause of equal justice for minorities were great indeed.⁴⁰

1945–1955 (Columbia, Mo., 1970); John L. Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1972); Hartmann, *Truman and the 80th Congress*; Belknap and Campbell, "Political Party Identification and Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 15 (Fall 1951); Norman Graebner, *The New Isolationism* (New York, 1956); John Spanier, *The Truman–MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*, rev. ed. (New York, 1965); Ronald J. Caridi, *The Korean War and American Politics: The Republican Party as a Case Study* (Philadelphia, 1968); James Patterson's *Mr. Republican*. C. David Tompkins's second volume on Arthur H. Vandenberg should be an important contribution to the story.

⁴⁰Donald R. McCoy and Richard T. Ruetten, *Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1973). Kirkendall's "Truman and the South" has a similar viewpoint.

Richard M. Dalfume's *Desegregation of the U. S. Armed Forces*⁴¹ is another important and well-done expression of the liberal viewpoint. More than half the book covers pre-1945 developments, but this is a basic strength. Dalfume's sensitive analysis of white public, political, and military attitudes and of "the Negro's mind and morale" before and during World War II lays the basis for a thorough understanding of the forces that confronted Truman when he became President. The author accepts both the President and the civil rights leaders on their own terms and makes his judgments within that framework. He demonstrates the pivotal importance of Negro militancy and political pressure, but he also gives Truman high marks for personal growth and shows that the support of the President was decisive in securing Army adoption of a policy of integration.

The revisionists would not argue categorically with Dalfume. On civil rights they display much more ambivalence toward Truman than on civil liberties. William Berman oscillates between accusations of insincerity and what appears to be praise for Truman's achievements. Barton J. Bernstein admits that Truman made significant contributions to the civil rights cause but stresses the limitations of his vision and the ambiguity of his legacy. Harvard Sitkoff, although he describes Truman as a "reluctant champion," agrees that the President's identification with civil rights gave a powerful stimulus to the Negro movement. The argument between the liberals and the radicals thus seems a matter more of emphasis than of substance.⁴²

One question of emphasis, however, is rather fundamental, for it involves an assessment of the magnitude of Truman's accomplishments. The revisionists would agree that the legal briefs and military desegregation were significant steps forward but would also observe that their impact was limited; they pass over them quickly. (Liberals would reply that military desegregation touched the lives and affected the attitudes of millions of people and that the briefs led straight toward the epochal Brown decision of 1954.) The radicals prefer to dwell upon the legislative side of the civil rights controversy. Here they can linger over a record devoid of positive results and studded with periodic episodes of equivocation and backtracking; here they have a basis for accusing Truman of insincere, pseudo commitment, forced by a political self-interest that dictated both an appeal to the Negro vote and an effort to keep the South in the Democratic party.

⁴¹(Columbia, Mo., 1969).

⁴²Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration* (Columbus, O., 1970); Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy: The Truman Administration and Civil Rights," in Bernstein, *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration*, 269-314; Sitkoff, "Harry Truman and the Election of 1948: The Coming of Age of Civil Rights in American Politics," *Journal of Southern History*, 37 (November 1971), 597-616.

In the larger sense, the question of insincerity is impossible for the historian to determine; we do not have the evidence to verify Truman's private attitudes, assuming that they were clear even to him. One can only note that, whatever the President's innermost feelings, his commitments were deemed meaningful by both Negro leaders and Southerners. It is true that the struggles for civil rights legislation usually took on the characteristics of a charade in which the White House assumed defeat and sought only to put as good a face as possible on the results, but this situation appears to have reflected a legislative judgment, not a question of sincerity. The question of whether or not that judgment was a good one leads us back to the larger problem of the structure of American politics in the Truman years.

It is undeniable that at times Truman relegated civil rights to a low priority—in 1945–1946, he subordinated the issue to the demands of economic reconversion; in 1948, his zigs and zags were patently tied to his campaign for renomination and reelection; in 1951, he stalled on demands for a Korean War FEPC in order to unite the Democratic party against the challenges of MacArthur and McCarthy. Historians will continue to debate whether such courses were proper. Authors of single-issue monographs frequently seem to assume that a President should devote himself entirely to their issue, but real political situations rarely permit such single-mindedness.

Revisionist questioning of Truman's motives goes beyond the matter of insincerity. Even if he was more or less sincere, they seem to ask, was his heart pure? Did he and other members of his administration back civil rights for the "correct" reasons? Sitkoff asserts and Berman seems to agree that Truman appointed his special Committee on Civil Rights in late 1946 in order to temporize and thus avoid a split in the Democratic party. Bernstein assumes that the *amicus curiae* briefs were the result of a Solicitor General's initiative to which the White House was indifferent. Sitkoff and Bernstein would both agree with Berman's conclusion that Truman was motivated essentially by foreign policy considerations and self-interest: "Truman moved only because he had no choice: Negro votes and the demands of the cold war, not simply humanitarianism—though there may have been some of that—produced whatever token gains Negroes were to make."⁴³

Sitkoff's interpretation of the establishment of the Civil Rights Committee is probably best met by the observation that Truman packed the committee with eminent liberals sure to recommend an activist program that could only create division in the party. Bernstein shows that the White House did not participate in the drafting of the *amicus* briefs, but he misses the fact that they originated in response to a recommenda-

⁴³Sitkoff, "Truman and the Election of 1948," 599; Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy," 296–97, 311–12 (note 49); Berman, *Politics of Civil Rights*, 240.

tion by the committee and overlooks the probability that Attorney General Clark secured Truman's approval before allowing the policy to proceed. The far broader and more fundamental thesis about the Cold War and political self-interest may be essentially correct, but is it necessarily damaging? One may at the least wonder if it makes sense to chastise Truman for arriving at enlightened conceptions of the imperatives of the Cold War and his own political self-interest.

The revisionists are committed to the contemporary Black Revolution; unable to transcend the perspectives of the present, they frequently criticize Truman for failing to meet problems that had not been articulated by major civil rights leaders during his Presidency. It would be sounder historical analysis to recognize that the Black Revolution was still in a very early and limited phase during Truman's Presidency and that Truman's actions gave it a strong impetus forward—by the sixties into areas that extended beyond both his own reformism and the liberalism of his era.

Whatever criticism one may make of revisionist emphases, the literature on Truman and civil rights totals up to a very good body of work—well written, well researched, and frequently thoughtful. No other area of the administration has been so well covered.

6

Most of the major "social welfare" or economic issues of the Truman period have been examined in studies that range from adequate to excellent. For the most part, however, these works, organized around specific issues or pieces of legislation, have been quite limited in scope. When one considers that they are the products of an initial phase of historical inquiry, they add up to an impressive body of work. Truman historiography should be ready to enter a new phase that will transcend the artificial division between social and economic problems and thereby construct an inclusive view of the administration's "political economy"—that is, its comprehensive social-economic-political viewpoint and strategy.

The social welfare studies are quite strong. Richard Davies's monograph on the housing issue is a solid work with an astute critique of liberal illusions about public housing. Davis R. B. Ross's *Preparing for Ulysses* provides an excellent account of the development of veterans' programs during and immediately following World War II. The book is especially valuable for its discussion of the way in which new attitudes toward veterans' benefits grew out of the New Deal and for its demonstration that both Roosevelt and Truman sought to tie veterans' benefits to broader social welfare proposals. Monte Poen has written a good dissertation on the controversy over national health insurance.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Davies, *Housing Reform during the Truman Administration* (Columbia, Mo., 1966);

The work on administration policies toward various segments of the economy is much more spotty. Allen Matusow's book on agriculture is an important study that does a very fine job of integrating politics and economics, although it is a bit thin on Truman's second term. Reo Christenson's account of *The Brannan Plan* is a standard source. Labor-management relations receive basic coverage in volumes by R. Alton Lee and Arthur McClure, but neither book approaches the standard of Barton Bernstein's coverage for the reconversion period. Grant McConnell and Harold Enarson have produced good accounts of the steel dispute of 1952. Robert Branyan has written a dissertation that surveys anti-monopoly activities, but historians have done little else with government-business relations under Truman.⁴⁵

The administration approaches to the economy as a whole have received less satisfactory coverage. The relevant chapters in A. E. Holmans's book on fiscal policy and Bert Hickman's *Growth and Stability of the Postwar Economy* are useful. Two chapters on the Truman period in Herbert Stein's much-acclaimed *The Fiscal Revolution* are sketchy and at times misleading. Stephen K. Bailey's *Congress Makes a Law* is a model study of the forces that resulted in the Employment Act of 1946, but it examines formulation rather than execution. A dissertation by William O. Wagnon does a good job of analyzing the White House's response to the 1949 recession. Edward Flash, in the initial chapters of his book on the Council of Economic Advisers, comes closest to providing an over-all account of administration policies.⁴⁶

Roughly speaking, the history of the political economy of the Truman administration may be divided into two periods. The first was dominated

Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans during World War II* (New York, 1969); Monte M. Poen, "The Truman Administration and National Health Insurance" (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1967).

⁴⁵Matusow, *Farm Policies and Politics in the Truman Years* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967); Christenson, *The Brannan Plan: Farm Politics and Policy* (Ann Arbor, 1959); Lee, *Truman and Taft-Hartley: A Question of Mandate* (Lexington, Ky., 1966); McClure, *The Truman Administration and the Problems of Postwar Labor* (Rutherford, N.J., 1969); McConnell, *The Steel Seizure of 1952* (University, Ala., 1960); Enarson, "The Politics of an Emergency Dispute," in Irving Bernstein, et al., eds., *Emergency Disputes and National Policy* (New York, 1955); Branyan, "Anti-Monopoly Activities During the Truman Administration" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1961). See also Charles Sawyer, *Concerns of a Conservative Democrat* (Carbondale, Ill., 1968), especially on the steel seizure.

⁴⁶Holmans, *United States Fiscal Policy, 1945-1959: Its Contribution to Economic Stability* (London, 1961); Hickman, *Growth and Stability of the Postwar Economy* (Washington, 1960); Stein, *The Fiscal Revolution in America* (Chicago, 1969); Bailey, *Congress Makes a Law: The Story Behind the Employment Act of 1946* (New York, 1950); Wagnon, "The Politics of Economic Growth: The Truman Administration and the 1949 Recession" (Ph.D. diss., University of Missouri, 1970); Edward S. Flash, Jr., *Economic Advice and Presidential Leadership: The Council of Economic Advisers* (New York, 1965). See also C. A. Blyth, *American Business Cycles, 1945-1950* (New York, 1969).

by the crises of reconversion and the effort to create a political-economic strategy attuned to an inflationary full-employment economy; the process involved some alterations of the depression-oriented New Deal heritage and was hindered by substantial uncertainty about the direction of the economy. The second phase, evident by 1949, was signaled by the jelling of a Fair Deal political economy, based upon the New Deal tradition but with enough differences to vindicate a claim to a separate identity; resting on concepts of abundance and expansion, Fair Deal political economy repudiated fears of depression and anticipated use of a growth dividend to raise standards of living for the poor and the middle class, finance a systematized New Deal welfare agenda, and establish via the mechanism of the Brannan Plan a rural-urban political coalition.

Barton Bernstein's many fine articles on reconversion form a sound basis for study of the first phase.⁴⁷ In general, they indict the administration for fumbling and incompetence. Bernstein concedes that poor economic forecasts, congressional conservatism, and the unexpectedly swift end of the war all presented serious obstacles to the formulation of a coherent, ideally liberal reconversion policy. Still, he argues that the situation was unnecessarily aggravated by the administration's ideological confusion, especially on matters of technique, and by reliance upon third-rate talent in key policymaking positions. One might quarrel with Bernstein's emphases, but these articles, extracted in the main from his doctoral dissertation, are thoroughly researched and well written; they constitute an impressive achievement. It is unfortunate, however, that Bernstein has not yet published his reconversion work in book form, a mode that would make it more accessible and allow fuller development of an over-all synthesis.

Hamby's "The Vital Center, the Fair Deal, and the Quest for a Liberal

⁴⁷"Charting a Course Between Inflation and Depression: Secretary of the Treasury Fred Vinson and the Truman Administration's Tax Bill," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 66 (January 1968), 53-64; "Clash of Interests: The Postwar Battle Between the Office of Price Administration and Agriculture," *Agricultural History*, 41 (January 1967), 45-57; "Reluctance and Resistance: Wilson Wyatt and Veterans' Housing in the Truman Administration," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 65 (January 1967), 47-66; "The Debate on Industrial Reconversion: The Protection of Oligopoly and Military Control of the War Economy," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* (April 1967), 159-72; "The Postwar Famine and Price Control, 1946," *Agricultural History*, 38 (October 1964), 235-40; "The Removal of War Production Controls on Business, 1944-1946," *Business History Review*, 39 (Summer 1965), 243-60; "The Truman Administration and Its Reconversion Wage Policy," *Labor History*, 6 (Fall 1965), 214-31; "The Truman Administration and the Steel Strike of 1946," *Journal of American History*, 52 (March 1966), 791-803; "Walter Reuther and the General Motors Strike of 1945-46," *Michigan History*, 49 (September 1965), 260-77. R. Alton Lee, "The Truman-80th Congress Struggle Over Tax Policy," *Historian*, 33 (November 1970), 68-82, covers the political ramifications of Truman's opposition to large tax cuts.

Political Economy" ⁴⁸ provides a brief overview of sorts for the second phase and may suggest some areas for debate or in-depth research. Hamby believes that the emphasis on economic growth and abundance was constructive and appropriate for the Truman period but that the political strategy which developed along with it was unrealistic; unable to perceive more promising alternatives, however, he is restrained in his criticism. His treatment of the Korean War period emphasizes the administration's accomplishments far more than most earlier accounts.

In his influential and widely read essay on "America in War and Peace," ⁴⁹ Bernstein states a brief, over-all critique of the political economy of the liberals and the Truman administration. (He rightly stresses the large areas of agreement between the two.) They tilted at windmills, he argues, in their belief that corporate conservatives wanted to destroy the unions or repudiate Keynesian economics. Their preoccupation with such matters and with the Cold War led them to celebrate token reforms and to ignore the existence of large-scale poverty.

Bernstein probably is taking a consensus that developed in the fifties and sixties and is trying to inflict it upon the forties. The bitter debates over the Taft-Hartley Act indicate that wide segments of business and the public still did not accept organized labor as a legitimate force in American society. That the act failed to ruin the established unions tells us more about their economic and political strength than about the intentions of its supporters. Moreover, Taft-Hartley did hamper organizational efforts in nonunion regional or occupational areas, frequently to the detriment of workers hardly a step removed from poverty. No historian can pick a specific date at which labor and management "learned to live together" or "accepted each other's legitimacy," because the process varied from one industry to another. It seems reasonable, however, to declare the fading of the Taft-Hartley controversy as the point at which mutual acceptance began to take hold.

Bernstein also overstresses the acceptance of Keynesianism during the postwar era. His article on Fred Vinson's tax policy demonstrates that there was little agreement between liberals and conservatives in 1945 beyond a general realization that it would be foolhardy to strive for a balanced budget and that the conservatives were especially muddled and confused in their fiscal thinking.⁵⁰ The struggle over the Employment Act of 1946 hardly indicates a consensus either; the law that emerged from Congress plunged most leading Keynesians into despair. Herbert Stein writes that a consensus had emerged by the recession of 1949, but

⁴⁸*American Historical Review*, 77 (June 1972), 653-78.

⁴⁹In *Towards a New Past*, 289-321.

⁵⁰"Charting a Course Between Inflation and Depression."

it amounted to little more than a general understanding that the government should not aggravate recessionary economic situations by raising taxes. When Truman finally got around to asking for some very mild countercyclical measures, Congress refused to act. The arrival of a full-blown consensus would await the Kennedy-Johnson tax cut, Richard Nixon's embrace of the Keynesian label, and Stein's appointment to the Council of Economic Advisers.

By the same token, it is difficult to accept Bernstein's complaint that the Truman-liberal objectives were shallow and limited, to the neglect of fundamental problems. Most historians would agree that Truman's actual accomplishments were sparse when set against his own expectations and that some of the programs finally passed—most notably the Housing Act of 1949—were disappointing. Bernstein, however, stresses the inadequacy of the goals themselves and, despite his protests, does so with little reference to the limitations upon both political possibility and reform conceptualization that existed in the 1940s.

The Fair Deal, like all the twentieth-century reform movements that preceded it, had little in the way of programs for the hard-core poor. On this point, the historian may deplore the blindness of the liberals or he may assume that compelling forces necessitated a postponement of a large-scale attempt to fight poverty until the sixties; perhaps the middle class required a degree of security and affluence before it was possible to direct reform attention toward the poor. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that the Fair Dealers had some awareness of the existence of poverty and hoped to mitigate it through social welfare programs and economic expansion. Leon Keyserling, the major economist of the Fair Deal, may have been guilty of excessive optimism in his hope that growth economics could lift every American family into the middle class, but it is safe to say that the inadequacies of the Fair Deal seem much more obvious to a radical historian writing from contemporary perspectives than to either liberals or conservatives in the Truman era. At the time, both sides felt that the Fair Deal was pushing at the limits of political legitimacy.

Many of Bernstein's criticisms seem more applicable to the liberalism of the fifties. Without a President in the White House to advocate a militant reform program, the liberal intellectuals began to feel drawn to the virtues of a moderation epitomized by the leadership of Adlai Stevenson and the rise of "qualitative liberalism." The key assumptions were that the distributive, "quantitative" problems of American life had been solved by the New and Fair Deals, that poverty was no longer a major problem, and that the progressives' task was to improve the quality of American life. Few today would doubt that adoption of this point of view was something of an intellectual disaster for the liberals, but the assignment of responsibility for its acceptance is a trickier problem. *The*

Affluent Society was, after all, published by John Kenneth Galbraith in 1958; at the same time, Leon Keyserling was still arguing for quantitative liberalism and gathering statistics to demonstrate the persistence of poverty. The Fair Deal may well have postponed the complacency of the fifties.⁵¹

Research needs in the area of political economy are broad and stimulating; our knowledge has reached the point where historians can concentrate on the large problems. One obvious possibility would be an in-depth study of the political economy of liberalism in postwar America, with emphasis upon the quantitative-qualitative debate and careful distinctions between liberal intellectuals outside the administration and the policy formulators within it. Another approach might involve a synthesis of the administration's social welfare policies and the assumptions underlying them, especially with regard to the problem of poverty. A study of the Truman administration's conception of urban problems would be welcome. A project on administration relations with the business community is under way and promises to contribute substantially to our knowledge. Full-scale histories of postwar labor⁵² and agriculture would add new dimensions to the monographs now in print. Here, as elsewhere, the time has come for historians to start investigating the big questions.

7

Until now, the characteristic mode of research into the Truman period has been the doctoral dissertation, published in book form with some revisions. Only the host of young graduate students drawn to the Truman Library by the newness and relevance of the field, the easy accessibility of an extensive group of sources, and the possibility of financial aid could have created the impressive body of scholarship that now exists. But the doctoral dissertation is usually quite limited in scope and frequently too closely tied to the availability of manuscript collections. As a result, Truman scholarship has been fragmented and all too often has

⁵¹On the concept of qualitative liberalism, see in addition to Galbraith, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "The Future of Liberalism: I. The Challenge of Abundance," *Reporter*, 14 (May 3, 1956), 8-11, and "Where Does The Liberal Go From Here?" *New York Times Magazine* (August 4, 1957), 7, 36-38; and Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960). For Keyserling's dissents, see "Liberal Government Is Not Enough," *Reporter*, 14 (May 31, 1956), 17-19; "Eggheads and Politics," *New Republic*, 139 (October 27, 1958), 13-17; and "Leon Keyserling on Economic Expansion," *ibid.*, 139 (November 17, 1958), 16-17.

⁵²For a good exposition of the needs in labor research, see David Brody's review of McClure's book on postwar labor in the *American Historical Review*, 75 (February 1970), 959-60.

concentrated upon the White House with insufficient coverage of the other factors that should be considered political history. Much of this work is quite valuable and the possibilities for more of it are by no means exhausted, but we appear to have reached a point at which scholars can widen their vision.⁵³

The exceptional graduate student or the historian with a book already to his credit needs to think in terms of the larger issues of postwar America and to consider the earlier monographs as useful building blocks. If his perspectives are broad and his ambitions large, it will not matter whether his frame of reference is liberal or radical or whether he makes extensive use of the manuscripts at the Truman Library; he will still have an excellent chance of making an enduring contribution to his profession. When work of this sort gets under way on a large scale, the historiography of the Truman era will have achieved maturity.

⁵³The American Historical Association's 1967 list of dissertations in progress names more than thirty projects touching on the domestic political history of the Truman period. A few appear to be of genuine importance, but several are on topics that have already been well covered and a good many treat problems that could be handled adequately in seminar papers or in M.A. theses. Aside from the consideration that a doctoral dissertation should be a genuine and substantial contribution to knowledge, it hardly seems fair in today's glutted market to launch a young Ph.D. into an increasingly cruel world with a manuscript that will attract little interest even if it finds a publisher.

APPENDIX

*Autobiographies of Individuals Who Served in Congress
During the Truman Era*

- Anderson, Clinton. *Outsider in the Senate*. New York: World Publishing Co., 1970.
- Barkley, Alben. *That Reminds Me*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1954.
- Bloom, Sol. *The Autobiography of Sol Bloom*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1948.
- Connally, Tom. *My Name Is Tom Connally*. As told to Alfred Steinberg. New York: Crowell, 1954.
- Douglas, Paul. *In the Fullness of Time*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.
- Flanders, Ralph. *Senator From Vermont*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1961.
- Hays, Brooks. *A Hotbed of Tranquility*. New York: Macmillan, 1968.
- Lodge, Henry Cabot, Jr. *The Storm Has Many Eyes*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1973.
- Martin, Joe. *My First Fifty Years in Politics*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.
- Nixon, Richard. *Six Crises*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962.
- Powell, Adam Clayton, Jr. *Adam by Adam*. New York: Dial Press, 1971.
- Smith, Frank E. *Congressman from Mississippi*. New York: Pantheon, 1964.
- Smith, Margaret Chase. *Declaration of Conscience*. Ed., William C. Lewis, Jr. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1972.
- Voorhis, Jerry. *Confessions of a Congressman*. New York: Doubleday, 1947.
- Wheeler, Burton K. *Yankee from the West*. With Paul F. Healy. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1962.

*Biographies of Individuals Who Served in Congress
During the Truman Era*

(Listed alphabetically by the name of the congressman)

- Moore, John Robert. *Senator Josiah William Bailey of North Carolina*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1968.
- Davis, Polly Ann. "Alben W. Barkley: Senate Majority Leader and Vice President." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1963.
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- Johnson, Haynes, and Bernard M. Gwertzman. *Fulbright the Dissenter*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1968.
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- Kemper, Donald J. *Decade of Fear: Senator Hennings and Civil Liberties*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1965.
- Griffith, Winthrop. *Humphrey: A Candid Biography*. New York: William Morrow & Co., 1965.
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- Gorman, Joseph Bruce. *Kefauver: A Political Biography*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Burns, James MacGregor. *John Kennedy: A Political Profile*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1960.
- Smith, Glenn Henry. "Senator William Langer: A Study in Isolationism." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1968.
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- Griffith, Robert. *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1970.
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- Schaffer, Alan. *Vito Marcantonio*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966.
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- Stoesen, Alexander R. "The Senatorial Career of Claude D. Pepper." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1965.
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- Little, Dwayne Lee. "The Political Leadership of Speaker Sam Rayburn." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 1970.
- Leary, William Matthew, Jr. "Smith of New Jersey: A Biography of H. Alexander Smith, United States Senator from New Jersey, 1944-1959." Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1966.
- Kirk, Russell, and James McClellan. *The Political Principles of Robert A. Taft*. New York: Fleet Press, 1967.
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- Huthmacher, J. Joseph. *Senator Robert F. Wagner and the Rise of Urban Liberalism*. New York: Atheneum, 1968.
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ONE MUST SAY that these four essays when juxtaposed provide a challenging set of conflicting interpretations about the Truman administration. The scholar who is planning to do research on the Truman period now has well-defined alternative interpretations and hypotheses to consider. On almost every aspect, views are polarized or near polarized. What Sitkoff defines as Truman's rabidly anti-Communist ideology, exploited to secure reelection and support for his Cold War foreign policies, Hamby characterizes quite differently. What Gardner sees as the liberation of Clio from bondage to the policymaker, Ferrell interprets as a striving for exaggerated effects. On issue after issue our scholars have drawn opposing views and interpretations, each supported by a wealth of research and evidence.

To the extent that the war in Vietnam and general dissatisfaction with American policies both at home and abroad have prompted a thoroughgoing reexamination of the Truman era is all to the good. The new critics, building upon the earlier writings of William A. Williams and earlier revisionists and inspired by the moral and political crisis over Vietnam, have undertaken a sweeping reexamination and reinterpretation of the sources and dynamics of American foreign policy.

As these studies show, we are indebted to the New Left and revisionist historiography for inspiring a really fundamental reappraisal of American foreign policy. Despite the outrageous human and political consequences of the Cold War, traditional scholars have appeared content to explain the situation in conventional terms as if there could be no better explanation for a world condition, which any civilized person must agree is intolerable. Revisionist scholars, appalled by the role that the United States has assumed in world affairs, have been determined to find a causal explanation that, once understood, would free us from the toils of power politics, racism, and imperialism. In their zeal to find a cause or an explanation, they seem to have stood Cold War history on its head and precipitated the polarization we see revealed in this set of essays.

The promise of revisionist scholarship has been that it would provide a more subtle, powerful, and comprehensive explanation of the Cold War than traditional scholarship has been able to deliver and that it would demonstrate the connection between the economic and social structure of the American system and its domestic and foreign policy actions. Many

of the aspects and outcomes of recent American life that have not been adequately explained by traditional historiography were to be explained by a more frank and unsparing examination of the requirements of the capitalist—specifically, the American capitalist—economic and social system. “A society’s goals, in the last analysis, reflect its objective needs—economic, strategic, and political—in the light of the requirements of its specific structure of power,” the Kolkos write. “Since this power structure in America has extended over many decades in its capitalist form, its demands are the common premises for the application of American power—one that theorists attribute to social consensus and sanction, but which in reality has always reflected the class structure and class needs.”¹ The promise of revisionist scholarship has been that in one form or another it would reveal the subtle connections between American capitalism or between the American psychology of racism and imperialism and the expansionist ethic of the political and bureaucratic system which brought about the Cold War with Russia and willed us into the Vietnam tragedy. Traditional scholars like Ferrell point to the many errors and forced interpretations as evidence that the revisionists have been “cooking the books” and that their accounts do not square with the historical balance sheet. Perhaps one reason revisionist history has seemed so flat to the historian’s palate is that it is such plain fare, devoid of any historical seasoning. One looks in vain for the canons of judgment with which the revisionist historian is working, beyond the simple American belief that if there is evil there must be a villain. Let me explain what I mean.

The socioeconomic approach calls for inquiry into the subtle relationship between economic and social forces and foreign policy on the basis not only of American society but also of comparisons from other societies and civilizations. We must know how far the limits of human nature and of social life can be transformed at any point in time so as to produce a radically different situation. And we can only know these possibilities if there is some evidence—either explicit or implicit—that the historian is measuring American behavior and American failings against some objective or comparative standard.

However unadmirable and subject to the malignant influence of capitalism the behavior of the American society may be, it cannot be just tagged with a label and then used as a scapegoat to explain all the undesirable conditions of the postwar era. Some attempt must be made to assess the foreign policies of the other societies involved and some effort made to define the elements of American behavior that are common to most societies and to most states in the international system. These elements, not exclusive to the United States, must then be sepa-

¹*The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York, 1972), p. 19.

rated from that portion of America's foreign policy that can be identified as a specific manifestation of American values and of the American economic and political system. Revisionists also have some obligation to take into account the implications for international peace and freedom of the nature of the Soviet regime. An interpretation based upon the social structure of one of the protagonists does not justify the scholar's ignoring the international consequences of the other protagonist's economic and political structure or the character of its ruling elite.

Logically, international relations are a product of state interactions, and they cannot be explained exclusively in terms of the needs, however objectively determined, of one protagonist only. Unless we are to believe that the Communist system as it exists in Russia has achieved a truly humanistic and nonaggressive character, then no analysis of Truman's foreign policy alone, however rooted in the verities of economic determinism, can make much sense. This is especially true for the Truman period because the principal focus of the administration's foreign policy attention was the implication for Europe of the Soviet phenomenon, especially as it revealed itself in Eastern Europe, and less with the overseas extension of the American domain in Asia and the Middle East. Contrary to the image of a ubiquitously expansionist America, the lukewarm support for Nationalist China represented a net retrenchment in U.S. commitments after 1945.

Secondly, the revisionist scholar who postulates a rigid economic determinism cannot then blame Truman for all the failures and shortcomings of his domestic program or of his foreign policy. Either the scholar is interested in analyzing the so-called objective relationships between different economic and social structures—including the Soviet—and the incidence of imperialism and war, or he is interested in examining the objective possibilities of the American situation in the immediate postwar era and how well or badly Truman succeeded in managing or overcoming the worst possibilities inherent in the so-called objective conditions.

Gardner is quite right in quoting Lasch to the effect that revisionists cannot have it both ways: They cannot argue that American policymakers had it in their power to choose policies different from those they chose and at the same time argue that American capitalism, with its inner requirements, "forces them to pursue a consistent policy of economic and political expansion." The Truman administration may provide a case study for those who believe that only a radical transformation in the American economy and political system can ever produce a truly enlightened and humanistic policy, or it may provide material for those who believe that the Truman administration did not do as well as it could have in the situations it had to deal with. It cannot be used to prove both cases at one and the same time.

The historian cannot impute to the capitalist system exclusive responsibility for the Cold War without paying some attention to the behavior of other major social systems or to the conditions under which international relations have generally been carried on—even between socialist states (*vide*, between the USSR and Communist Yugoslavia and between the USSR and the People's Republic of China). Or if he is more intent upon analyzing the failures of Truman's leadership than with critiquing the system, then the historian must show some acquaintance with the nature of politics, of public opinion, of bureaucracy, and of diplomatic calculations both generally and in the specifically American context.

Either the economic and social system of all states are controlling, in which case all must be taken into account to explain why one is more evil and more responsible than another; or we start with the economic, social, and political systems as given, with presumably common motives in matters of foreign policy. Then we ask how well or badly this or that leadership or statesman mastered the possibilities of the international situation without bringing down disaster. The trouble with most revisionist scholarship is that it has picked only the behavior of one country—the United States—to analyze, without either explicit or implicit recognition of the general standards that prevail among states of a size similar to the United States or of the generally low standard of enlightenment and humanity that characterizes the internal regimes of all but a few societies in the world. As a result of "overkill" or of straining to prove some "way-out" hypothesis, revisionists may fail to enlighten us as to what faults of the system or of judgment on the part of leaders of the Truman administration might have been avoided. They may not inform us about the faults or misjudgments or tendencies that were responsible for getting us where we are and that may be repeated unless there is a fundamental change in human behavior everywhere or in the present form of international relations.

The promise of revisionist scholarship has been that it would reveal the subtle connections between American capitalism and the American psychology and its expression in foreign policy, that it would show where and why America nurtures those excesses and contradictions which carried us into the garrison state and into the war in Vietnam, and that it would point out how and why opportunities were missed because Truman or his advisers were unable or unwilling to make better choices. We have models of such types of analysis in Arthur Rosenberg's study of Imperial Germany,² in Neumann's *Behemoth*,³ in the writings of

²Arthur Rosenberg, *The Birth of the German Republic, 1871–1918*. Translated by Ian F. D. Morrow and Marie Sieverking (New York, 1962).

³Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933–1944* (New York, 1944).

Bracher,⁴ Peter Gay,⁵ and Carl Schorske,⁶ in histories of the collapse of the French Third Republic and of specific episodes of postwar American history, but nothing as yet for the whole sweep of the Truman era. The Kolkos, in their study *The Limits of Power*, however impressive a monument of scholarship, are too intent upon imposing a single-factor explanation to permit them to present a convincing account of even the psychological dimension of the capitalist influence upon American life, not to mention those decisions and policies whose motives were rooted in sources quite other than economic.

Sitkoff begins by criticizing a historiography that is too intent upon "who is to blame" to raise itself to a more magisterial level of analysis, but he immediately falls back into the same trap. It is not simply that the revisionists have gone too far in blaming the Truman administration for all the ills of the succeeding generation; it is the absence of any clear standard of measurement, either with past societies or with other contemporary societies, that is so disconcerting.

So much attention is being concentrated on scapegoats that much of the analysis becomes a caricature, more intent on quoting statements out of context or in proving some connection that is to be taken more on emotional faith than on any clearly demonstrated evidence.⁷ Time after time, more compelling explanations are missed because the observer is so intent upon riding his hobbyhorse.

A much more direct and powerful explanation for the Cold War from the American side can be found in the political and strategic calculations of the Truman leadership rather than in the needs of capitalism, however significant the latter may have been. Truman, parochial and impatient, lacked the temperament and understanding to deal with the Kremlin in the manner of his predecessor. He was terribly vulnerable to pressure both from the Republicans and from his own advisers like Harriman, Leahy, Forrestal, and Acheson. Many of his crudest moves were the direct consequence of advice and judgments coming directly from advisers who based their reasoning, not on economics, but on the alleged political and strategic threat that Russia presented to the postwar recovery of Western Europe and the Middle East and to American security as it related to those areas. Who can read a single memoir or biography or diplomatic paper of the period without being overwhelmed

⁴Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism*. Translated from the German by Jean Steinberg (New York, 1970).

⁵Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider* (New York, 1968).

⁶Carl E. Schorske, *German Social Democracy: 1905-1917* (Cambridge, 1955).

⁷See the critiques of the Kolkos by Ole R. Holsti: "The Study of International Politics Makes Strange Bedfellows: Theories of the 'Old Right' and 'New Left'" and "The Abuse of Statistics: Examples from Studies of American Public Politics." These effective essays will soon be published.

by the evidence of a consuming preoccupation with the political and strategic implications of Soviet behavior, so soon after the experience with totalitarian aggression, and only secondarily and indirectly with its economic implications? Long before the Truman Doctrine, we have Kennan writing, "The idea of a Germany run jointly with the Russians is a chimera. . . . We have no choice but to lead our section of Germany—the section of which we and the British have accepted responsibility—to a form of independence so prosperous, so secure, so superior that the East cannot threaten it."⁸ Kennan, like other foreign service officers in Moscow, Ankara, Teheran, Athens, and the capitals of Eastern and Western Europe, early and persistently called for a tough, unrelenting opposition to Soviet pretensions long before the Cold War took shape. They did it, and they were influential in doing it, not for economic reasons, but because by training and temperament they viewed what was happening as a threat to America's political and strategic interests. Can one really believe that George Kennan, one of the most alienated Americans of all time, rivaling Henry James in his consummate hostility to the commercial and material values of capitalist society, was consciously or even unconsciously advancing the expansionist needs of American capitalism when he sent in his famous cable? Yet Kennan was one of the most influential shapers of U.S. foreign policy between 1945–1947. He was moved by an ideal of civilization of which the Soviet was only marginally worse than the American, but the margin was important, and it bore upon the ability of Western Europe to survive.

How about Acheson? Are we to assume that his consuming preoccupation with the political and military ability of the North Atlantic Community to hold back the Soviet Union was dictated or is explainable even indirectly by the needs of American capitalism except as capitalism enables individual rights and a high standard of living to exist? If one wishes to indict Acheson for causing the Cold War, surely one would be better advised to study, as Gaddis Smith has done, Acheson's admiration for the stability the British Empire imparted to the nineteenth-century world and to study his obsession with situations of strength as a political and strategic concept *not* as a springboard for American capitalism.⁹ There is no end of criticism and judgment possible against Acheson for subordinating everything, including the possibility of East–West negotiation, to the objective of European security. But it could be done more profitably in terms of *raison d'état* than economic determinism. The weight of the evidence is far more direct and substantial that American decision makers were acting out of a view of the Soviet Union rooted in

⁸George Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925–1950* (Boston, 1967), p. 258.

⁹Gaddis Smith, *Dean Acheson*, in *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, edited by R. Ferrell (New York, 1972).

fear of the political consequences abroad and at home of another gain for the Communist system, and this was doubly or triply true after the fall of China and the Korean War. The motives for this fear can be most directly attributed to the American fear of communism as an ideological and military challenge, and to an excessive reaction rooted in a national psychology obsessed by any challenges to its self-image. And what was the self-image? "To many Americans it was an indication of weakness to maintain a conciliatory attitude, while the Soviet Union was behaving in a manner which appeared clearly aggressive. American officials believed that the eyes of the world were watching and taking measure of the United States and that the appropriate way to behave in order to conform to the requirements of greatness was to stand up to the Russians."¹⁰ There is material in the documents and memoirs for unlimited theses exploring the primarily political and psychological origins of the Cold War. No one doubts that the economic interests of politically influential elites and a psychology imbued by capitalism were important both to the American world view and to the actual shaping of many foreign policies. But it is necessary to distinguish between the needs of capitalism and the advantage to any dynamic economic system of stable secure markets; it is also necessary to distinguish between the primacy of political and strategic considerations that dominate the behavior of every great power, whether capitalist or Communist, and the secondary, albeit important, stake which the corporate rich and propertied Americans had in using the Cold War to preserve the *status quo* at home.

Naturally, the relative weighting of these factors changed as the corporate and bureaucratic stake in the Cold War grew more marked in the fifties and sixties. It would be valuable to study the opposition American capitalism mustered against the costs of political involvement after the war. Like the Republican party, the capitalist community was deeply divided between a group favoring involvement and a group opposed to it as a limitation on America's freedom of action.

Another weakness of revisionist historiography is the tendency to give quotations a meaning or emphasis that was patently not intended. For example, many of the quotations of Truman cited by revisionists might better be understood as consequences of his personality or of his background rather than as expressions of the objective needs of American capitalism or a conspiracy theory of anti-Communist hysteria. After all, statesmen as far back as Demosthenes and Alcibiades have used exaggerated hyperbole without being accused by historians of promoting a conspiracy. Like their traditionalist predecessors, the revisionists have "left most of the crucial questions about the Truman years unanswered, even unasked."

¹⁰Henry T. Nash, *American Foreign Policy* (Homewood, Ill., 1973), p. 17.

Although sensible and well reasoned, Gardner's essay provides a number of illustrations of what I am talking about. Take the old chestnut, Acheson's perimeter speech. Since Acheson did not include South Korea within the American defense perimeter (he did say that its independence was important to us), Gardner holds the United States responsible for misleading Moscow into aggression. But if the United States had maintained a full-scale American military presence in South Korea, one could expect to have Gardner cite it as evidence of the Truman administration's aggressive design as he does with regard to U.S. military preparations in Europe! It never seems to occur to revisionists that the Truman decision makers were being forced to make choices for a number of contingencies; there just were not the means to cover them all in the kind of faultless fashion favored by the revisionists. Another example is the way NSC 68 is treated. It had still not been approved by a budget-conscious Harry Truman when the Korean War broke, proving some of its most significant premises; but revisionists seize upon it as an evidence of American militarism. No effort is made to see the debate over NSC 68 as evidence of cleavages within the administration, rooted in quite fundamentally different perspectives that were washed out only by the war itself.

It is precisely because Gardner does not provide for the ways in which history influenced decision making in the Truman administration that his otherwise interesting study, *Architects of Illusion*, seems so stereotypic. It is also dubious to argue that, because the United States "accepted" the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 as "normal," it was wrong to see it as an "outward" thrust in 1948. Because history (two decades of American containment) had changed perspectives, the 1968 episode did not deliver such a strategic shock as did the 1948 event.

Again like many revisionists, Gardner exaggerates the novelty or newness of some Cold War "findings" of revisionist historians. For example, the intimate connection between domestic and foreign policy has been a commonplace of traditional scholarship since H. Bradford Westerfield's *Foreign Policy and Party Politics: Pearl Harbor to Korea*, published in 1955. No one—at least no political scientist—has ever doubted that to muster support for its European policies the Truman administration had to demonstrate the existence of a Soviet threat. What is new perhaps is the charge that Truman made a virtue of the anti-Communist hysteria and that he emphasized the internal subversion issue to "whet rather than slake Republican thirst for new action in the field of internal security." What is even more strange is to find the McCarthy crew being white-washed as if they and the China lobby were not real forces with which the administration had to cope.

Actually, what is needed by historians is some agreement about the roles of public opinion and of party politics in the dynamics of policy-making in America. We presently have the Kolkos' dismissal of public

opinion as a sham that the power elite can manipulate or ignore as it likes, and then we have scholars like Freeland and Theoharis who take public opinion seriously and purport to show that, once Truman raised the sorcerer's apprentice of anti-communism, he and his administration were swept away! There is no evidence that many revisionist historians have read such landmark studies of public opinion as V. O. Key's.¹¹ Gardner does cite Robert Tucker's study,¹² probably one of the most powerfully reasoned critiques of the economic determinist position, but then he cannot resist linking the economic explanation, which has validity in Latin America, to Europe where Tucker shows it does not have much explanatory power.

The novelty Gardner sees in the connection between the political and military (or security) objectives of NATO is similarly misplaced. Political scientists have always recognized that alliances, especially in the modern age, exist as much to serve political as strategic ends. Gardner could not do better than to bring to the attention of young scholars such treatises as Robert Osgood's *NATO: The Entangling Alliance*¹³ or Thomas W. Wolfe's *Soviet Power and Europe: 1945-1970*.¹⁴ As a political scientist who keeps up with historians, I am often struck by how little attention they pay to the research that has been done by specialists in international relations and foreign policy.

A good measure of the advance that political scientists have gained over historians may be found in an article by J. L. Richardson.¹⁵ While Gardner is still content to cite Lippmann's critique of Kennan's "X" article without asking or examining what the alternatives were, Richardson points out that "Lippmann was the first to admit that his alternative might not have succeeded in restoring a Europe free from occupation by the great powers on its periphery,"¹⁶ and that the Soviets had no convincing incentive to withdraw their military forces from Eastern Europe, despite what Lippmann may have hoped. Richardson has much more to say about the illusions of the Lippmann thesis, including the observation revisionists might take to heart that "whatever the long-term objections to the Truman Doctrine it did not have the immediate effect on Soviet-American relations that is postulated by the revisionists, perhaps because the combination of negotiation with harsh rhetoric was so much in accord with the Soviet *modus operandi*" (p. 601). This is a weakness of

¹¹V. O. Key, *Public Opinion and American Democracy* (New York, 1961).

¹²Robert Tucker, *The Radical Left and American Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, 1970). Also, *Nation or Empire? The Debate Over American Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, 1968).

¹³Robert Endicott Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago, 1962).

¹⁴(Baltimore, 1970).

¹⁵Richardson, "Cold War Revisionism: A Critique," *World Politics* (July 1972).

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 601-2.

the whole revisionist analysis of the Truman period: It is prone to exaggerate the provocative aspects of America's behavior while paying little or no attention to the Soviet pattern, or, as in the Kolkos' case, to practically whitewash the Soviets of responsibility.

In addition to suggestions that we must pay more attention to the interaction between domestic and foreign policy and also to the obviously conscious intent with which American statesmen pursued and/or were influenced by hegemonial goals, the following guidelines should be urged:

1. Pay more attention to the diplomatic and foreign policy behavior of other great powers at other times in history so we learn what is and what is not unique to the American pattern.

2. Give more attention to the international setting at the end of the war instead of evaluating American policy in a vacuum. It is fatuous to replace an image that ascribed primary responsibility for the Cold War to Russia with one that ascribes primary responsibility to the United States. It is also fatuous to replace a "good guys vs. bad guys," security-motivated explanation with one that is essentially if not exclusively rooted in economic causation.

3. Retain the distinction between the motivation for and consequences of American policy toward Western Europe, toward the Far East, and toward Latin America. In trying to find a common denominator for U.S. policy in all three areas, revisionists are forced to engage in all kinds of contortions. Why deny the obvious fact that the administration focused its attention on Europe and practically wrote off Nationalist China and even Southeast Asia (until Acheson let his European objectives become mortgaged to support for France in Indochina)? Let us also acknowledge that Washington did not seek or expect to establish in Europe the type of influence that the United States had in Latin America. The motives, structure of interests, knowledge, and constituent support for policies in one region were significantly different from the other.

4. Distinguish between expansion as a function of economic size and dynamism and expansion as a function of capitalism. The *Supplement to World Politics* for the spring of 1972 (edited by R. Tanter and R. H. Ullman) contains an analysis of the dynamics of great power expansionism that has the merit of being applicable to other imperialist systems besides that of capitalist America.

5. Pay greater attention to European politics apart from a simplistic reductionism found in Kolko between "the Left" and the reactionaries. "It is discouraging," Richardson observes, "when cardboard characters, the Left and the reactionaries, are presented as a sufficient account of

the mosaic of European politics. . . . Kolko and his predecessors neglect the multi-dimensional character of Europe's political cleavages, especially significant in the immediate post-war era" (p. 607). Richardson recommends that we explore European views of early Cold War issues in order to discern how much of American policy was "in accord with a wider Western perception of the threat to liberal values, and how much of it was uniquely American." Seabury, in his essay on the Cold War, suggests that the European fear of a Soviet takeover was much more widespread and psychologically demoralizing than revisionists care to remember.¹⁷

6. Do not move from the view that the Cold War was the unintended consequence of the interaction of the two superpowers into a conflict spiral to an interpretation of the interaction as beyond their control. One can still employ the interaction-conflict spiral paradigm and perhaps discover where the outcome became the product of avoidable decisions and overreactions, abuse of America's majority in the United Nations, or assertion of hegemonial tendencies.

7. Study the Cold War in terms of the breakdown of the prewar international order and the building of a new order out of the chaos and destruction of the old, which is always a painful and complicated process. How much was the ordeal of that task responsible for generating the fanaticism and militarism of the Cold War era? In a recent study, Coral Bell notes that, despite the excesses of the postwar era, America and statesmen in the Communist states might have struggled through to a new framework and a new set of rudimentary understandings for peaceful coexistence.¹⁸ In other words, it is possible for a civilized Britisher, say, to view the toils of the Cold War as an unavoidable prelude to the realization of a new international system on the ruins of the Europe-centered imperialist system.

8. Recognize that revisionist history rests too often on the assumption of an ultimate harmony of interests that is being frustrated by the presence of a villain. The proper study of the Truman administration requires that one acknowledge that harmony may not be man's natural state and that it is certainly not the condition that has prevailed among states in times past. The revisionists' lack of an adequate conception of the international system pervades their writings. Just as their images of other countries' political systems are often two-dimensional, cardboard constructs designed to display American hegemony, so their view of the international system does not take into account the deep uncertainties that dog that system. One would rarely learn from revisionist historians that, following the Czech coup and the death of Jan Masaryk, European leftists, including Aneurin Bevan, were pleading for more American

¹⁷Paul Seabury, *The Rise and Decline of the Cold War* (New York, 1967).

¹⁸*The Conventions of the Cold War* (London, 1971).

troops in Europe. "A systems approach would suggest," Richardson writes, "that hegemonial intervention in support of business interests, for example, is so different from intervention to restrain a competing great power that one explanation is unlikely to fit both cases" (p. 607). Any generalized interpretation of the Truman administration's foreign policy must take account of these distinctions. There are many powerful ideas in the books by Kolko and others, but their value is lost by the data being forced into a rigid *a priori* explanatory mold that ignores the interaction process.

9. Pay more attention to the bureaucratic process.¹⁹ This approach could test theories about the monolithic and elitist character of the decision makers. Unfortunately, Hammond's study of NSC 68 does not seem to have been read by historians bent on showing how the Truman administration was intent on building up the military-industrial complex. Acheson's struggle to gain its acceptance even by the Pentagon might cast doubt on the revisionist thesis.

In part because American foreign policy has fallen into the pattern of other great powers and has become presumptuous of its claims and negligent of the effects of its actions on others, revisionist historians have sought an interpretation to match their anguish and moral outrage. In trying to understand how such monstrous things could be done, they have turned to the objective needs of American capitalism, to the history of American expansion, racism, and genocide, to the social origins of the leadership, etc., and they have read into the history of the Truman administration's actions total responsibility for the Cold War. They have rarely stressed those perennial operating factors common to all regimes, such as ignorance, cupidity, self-interest, and fear. Many of their analytical foci have explanatory power, but their power is vitiated if they are employed in a crude, simplistic, indiscriminating, or tortured fashion so that they exaggerate for effects and caricature the situation. Ferrell's essay provides a pointed corrective to many of the claims and conclusions to which the revisionists have come.

What is now called for is an effort to test the claims and interpretations on both sides by viewing them in the light of new evidence, by employing a more historically balanced and rooted view of policymaking, and by setting forth the canons of judgment. Thus we will achieve a sense of the historical mistakes and of the possibilities that were lost as well as a sense of the forces with which the President and his advisers had to reckon if they were to survive and surmount the problems that faced the country.

¹⁹For an outstanding example, see Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston, 1971).

IN THE LATE SIXTIES, for the first time in American history, scholars, teachers, and students began to engage in a dialogue with the Left and to treat seriously left-liberal and radical analyses of American society and politics. Undoubtedly, the war in Vietnam, the racial upheavals at home, the rediscovery of poverty, and the many failures of liberal reform compelled many Americans to reconsider their assumptions about their nation and society and also created an unexpectedly large audience for revisionism by the Left. The result has been a new interest in such issues as power, class structure, ideology, and imperialism.

Frequently, these radical and left-liberal scholars had embarked upon their projects before there was any evidence that they would gain a serious hearing or a sympathetic audience. When they started, they expected or feared that they might be disregarded, much as the scholarly community had ignored such radicals as C. Wright Mills, Paul Baran, and William Appleman Williams in the fifties. Instead, in the late sixties, scholars on the Left often encountered vigorous intellectual and political responses. Regardless of their own life-styles and attitudes toward rationalism, the university, and violence, some Left scholars found—often to their surprise and dismay—that their work was sometimes treated as a cause or symbol of the counterculture and of the confrontations on campus and in society. Because this new scholarship, often written by younger members of the profession, challenged so much of liberalism, which probably represented the dominant political commitment in the historical profession, revisionism provoked hostility, resentment, and fear in some segments of the profession. In particular, the reanalysis of the New Deal-Fair Deal tradition often encountered anger and outrage—as Ferrell's essay demonstrates.¹

In the past few years, issues about the Cold War that had once seemed settled were reopened and widely held conclusions were challenged. Relying upon manuscript collections that most proponents of orthodoxy had not examined, revisionists contended that the United States was substantially, or even exclusively, responsible for the Cold War. Some reopened the question of why the atomic bomb was dropped, contended

¹On ideology, and the perception and definition of historical polemic, see Bernstein, "Radical History" (OAH paper, 1970).

that the administration had practiced "atomic diplomacy," challenged the need for the Truman Doctrine and the terms of the Marshall Plan, maintained that the Soviet Union was a conservative power, questioned the public justification for NATO, criticized orthodox interpretations of the Korean War, and even held that the Truman administration was substantially responsible for transforming the political culture and making McCarthyism possible. For some revisionists, and especially most radicals, the United States was a counterrevolutionary state.

1

Unfortunately, many critics of revisionism—including Ferrell, despite his caveats—have often treated it as a monolithic, or nearly monolithic, position.² As a result, they have frequently disregarded the significant, as well as the subtle, differences separating revisionists: D. F. Fleming, Diane Shaver Clemens, Ronald Steel, David Horowitz, Richard Barnet, Athan Theoharis, Gabriel Kolko, William Appleman Williams, Harry Magdoff, Gar Alperovitz, Lloyd Gardner, Walter LaFeber, Thomas Paterson, and myself, among others. Probably the simplest fault line dividing radicals and left-liberal revisionists is in terms of whether they analyze American policy within a framework of imperialism and elite- or class-domination or whether they minimize concentration of power and ideology (or economic expansion), and emphasize domestic politics, personality, and bureaucracy.³ Judged primarily on the basis of their published work, Fleming, Clemens, the later Steel, the early Horowitz, the early Barnet, and Theoharis fall into the category of left-liberal.⁴ Kolko, Williams,

²Ferrell describes the revisionists as "virtual slaves to one interpretation."

³This phrasing is indebted to, but slightly modifies, Robert Griffith, "Truman and the Historians: The Reconstruction of Postwar History" (OAH paper, 1972).

⁴Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins, 1917-1960*, 2 vols. (Garden City, 1961) and "Let Him Who Is Without Sin . . .," *Nation*, 216 (January 1, 1973); Clemens, *Yalta* (New York, 1970); Steel, *Pax Americana* (New York, 1967), and *Imperialists and Other Heroes* (New York, 1971); Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus* (New York, 1965); Barnet, *Intervention and Revolution* (New York, 1968); and Theoharis, *Seeds of Repression* (Chicago, 1971) and "The Rhetoric of Politics . . .," in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration* (Chicago, 1970). Some of my categorization may seem surprising, especially for Steel, Barnet, Theoharis, and Horowitz. Let me briefly explain. In the case of Steel, even his latest book, despite its title, can be criticized (as Kolko argued) as imperialists without imperialism, as a mélange of liberalism and cynicism (*New York Times Book Review*, September 12, 1971). In the case of Barnet, see *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18, for his criticism of some radical theory—a criticism that he has substantially modified in *Roots of War* (New York, 1972), which retains the theory of national-security managers but also stresses the business community and economic expansion. (See my forthcoming review in *AHR*.) Theoharis, *The Yalta Myths* (Columbia, Mo., 1970), despite some suspicion of Truman and Byrnes, is quite conventional on the Cold War and has been wrongly lumped

Magdoff, Alperovitz, the later Horowitz, LaFeber, Paterson, Gardner, probably the later Barnett, and I fit the category of radical.⁵

Even within the radical camp there is substantial disagreement on some major theoretical and historical issues. These differences can be clarified and explored by focusing upon the two best-known, and probably most influential, radicals: William A. Williams and Gabriel Kolko. Their most fundamental disagreement lies in whether the capitalist system actually needs continuing overseas economic expansion, as Kolko, Magdoff, and the later Horowitz, among others, contend; or whether

with revisionism by some historians primarily because of his *later* movement to that position. Horowitz, *op. cit.*, is in its early sections a recasting of Fleming's study with an occasional tilt further left.

⁵Kolko, *The Politics of War* (New York, 1968), *The Roots of American Foreign Policy* (Boston, 1969), and (with Joyce Kolko), *The Limits of Power* (New York, 1972); Williams, *American-Soviet Relations, 1781-1947* (New York, 1952), *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland, 1959, rev. ed., 1961 and 1972), "The Cold-War Revisionists," *Nation*, 205 (November 13, 1967); Magdoff, *Age of Imperialism* (New York, 1969); Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy* (New York, 1965) and *Cold War Essays* (Garden City, 1971); Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1943-1947," in Bernstein, ed., *Politics and Policies*, "Introduction" to Carl Marzani, *We Can Be Friends* (New York, 1972, reprint ed.), "The Limitations of Pluck," *Nation*, 216 (January 8, 1973), "Truman, The Eightieth Congress and the Transformation of the Political Culture," *Capitol Studies*, 2 (Summer 1973), and "The Quest for Security: American Foreign Policy and International Control of Atomic Energy," *Journal of American History*, 60 (March 1974), Horowitz, ed., *Containment and Revolution*, which includes an essay by Williams; Horowitz, ed., *Corporations and the Cold War* (New York, 1969), which includes essays by Gardner and Williams; and *Empire and Revolution* (New York, 1971); Paterson, "The Abortive Loan to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1943-1966," *Journal of American History*, 56 (June 1969), "The Economic Cold War" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of California at Berkeley, 1968), and ed., *Cold War Critics* (Chicago, 1971), which includes essays by Theoharis and Bernstein, among others; Gardner, *Economic Aspects of New Deal Diplomacy* (Madison, Wis., 1964) and *Architects of Illusion* (Chicago, 1971); LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1966* (New York, 1967). Some may question placing *Atomic Diplomacy* in the "radical" category. The decision is based partly on occasional statements in the book and largely on acquaintance with the author. His *Cold War Essays*, especially Chapter IV, makes his position more clear. The other essays in that volume, as well as *Atomic Diplomacy*, establish that radicals, especially when dealing with tactics, often rely heavily upon notions of personality and bureaucracy to explain the governmental decisions and differences between policymakers. Put simply, the radical analysis relies upon a radical framework, but that framework can yield quite different answers, partly because of variations within the ranks of policymakers. Their general agreement on larger purposes does not necessarily mean agreement on tactics—often important tactics. See, for example, Gardner, *Architects*, and Bernstein, "The Quest for Security," "The Cuban Missile Crisis," and "Foreign Policy in the Eisenhower Administration." Curiously, many orthodox interpreters of the Cold War, while enamored of stressing the constraints and pressures of public opinion and domestic politics on policymakers in the early Cold War, are offended when these pressures are stressed by revisionists in explaining Kennedy's dangerous tactics in the missile crisis. (Bernstein, "Great Crises Produce Great Men," *Peace and Change*, 1 [Spring 1973], especially 75-76.)

policymakers and big businessmen wrongly think that the system needs this expansion, as William A. Williams argues. Despite this dispute over theory, Kolko and Williams agree that policymakers and big businessmen believe that the great menace to the prosperity of the capitalist system is the surpluses that it supposedly generates—surpluses that cannot be absorbed in the home market because the mass of consumers has too little income. To avoid depressions without resorting to radical reform, business and government leaders turn abroad for markets. As these radical historians see it, the United States Government conducts foreign policy to foster a noncolonial empire for American trade. To protect the empire from the menace posed by the world Left, the United States has been committed to containing Russia and China and putting down revolutions in the Third World. Maintaining access to the underdeveloped world and protecting American investments there has meant (1) supporting undemocratic governments friendly to the United States and (2) condemning to economic subservience countries that produce raw materials.⁶

The relationship of the “Open Door” policy (equal access to markets and materials) to economic expansion and American ideology is also in dispute. For Kolko, the Open Door is primarily a tactic for reconstructing the world economy and facilitating American economic penetration. In *The Politics of War*, Kolko stressed the Open Door vision of Secretary of State Cordell Hull and also noted the contradictions between this vision and state-trading, cartels, and some of the desires of big business. But Kolko left somewhat unclear whether the Open Door was a tactic or ideology, though he seemed to lean toward the “tactic” theory. In the *Roots of American Foreign Policy* (1969), however, he made clear that he endorsed this “tactic” interpretation, and he stressed America’s “dual standard”—the Open Door in most other places but not at home. Put simply, the Open Door policy was one tactic for achieving economic expansion. State-trading was another. The United States, according to Kolko, used both tactics to achieve its purposes.⁷

For Williams, LaFeber, and Gardner, in contrast, the Open Door has become part of the American ideology, not simply a tactic. In their books, as a result, state-trading, cartels, and other American departures from Open Door activities receive little attention. Williams, for example, never directly confronts the problem that state-trading seems

⁶Much of the next five paragraphs draws and largely quotes from Bernstein, “Introduction,” in Bernstein and Allen J. Matusow, eds., *Twentieth-Century America* (New York, 1972, 2d ed.), pp. 345–47. For criticisms of Williams by an admirer, see Bernstein, *ibid.* (1972), pp. 319–23, *ibid.* (1969), pp. 203–5, and “Roots of Empire,” *Progressive* (June 1970), 45–48.

⁷*Politics of War*, pp. 255–66.

to contradict the Open Door ideology, which he ascribes to big businessmen and policymakers.⁸

The third issue of theory on which there is disagreement also involves the nature of American imperialism. For Kolko, among others, the American system operating abroad often requires the self-conscious, intentional exploitation of foreign peoples. To Williams and his associates, however, American policymakers and businessmen usually do not intend to exploit foreign peoples. American leaders, in Williams's framework, operate according to an ideology that both serves their material needs and endows their acts with high moral purpose. Policymakers, say these radicals, usually fail to recognize in their values and conceptions an ideology rooted in a particular history and economy. Instead, the policymakers, according to Williams, mistakenly believe their vision to be transcendentally good and universally applicable. In the ideal world order cherished in American official circles, liberal governments dedicated to capitalism and democracy would offer reforms to their peoples. They would regulate their affairs with each other according to international law. And all nations could participate in an international economy open to the free flow of goods and private capital. Such a world order would simultaneously achieve the stability necessary for American business expansion and bring the blessings of the American way of life to the rest of mankind. Seeing the world from this peculiar perspective (say Williams and his associates), Americans are blinded to the exploitive character of the empire they maintain. Put simply, for Williams, American leaders do not generally intend to exploit colonial peoples; the painful gap between intention and consequence is part of what he terms the "tragedy of American diplomacy."

On a fourth issue—the structure of power—there is, surprisingly, little open disagreement. Kolko and Williams both stress the class domination of foreign policy and deny the importance of the military-industrial complex, maintaining that the military has remained subordinate to civilian leaders. Partly because of the emphasis on class domination, most radical analysts, including Williams and Kolko, are not especially interested in examining the federal bureaucracy, which they assume serves (and may also be recruited from) the dominant class. Nor are Kolko and Williams concerned with decision making beneath the elite level. Put simply, they locate the important decisions at or near the top. For them, the liberal scholar's emphasis upon bureaucracy and the liberal's operating assumption of an independent, often self-serving bureaucracy are methodologically and theoretically dubious: this liberal framework disregards the concentration of power and focuses on the wrong men

⁸See Kolko, "American Business and Germany, 1930-41," *Western Political Quarterly*, 15 (December 1962).

and probably also on the wrong issues. Kolko and Williams, by implication, dissent from Richard Barnet's interpretation of the autonomous power of the "national security bureaucracy" in shaping foreign policy.

On two other related issues—the historical roots of imperialism and the breadth of support for it in the postwar years—there is little explicit disagreement, though many radicals skirt these problems. Kolko, for example, only offers a few suggestions on the first and some brief notions on the second. In looking for the historical roots of imperialism, Kolko, like many other radical historians, traces it back at least to the Wilsonian world view, but never discusses when, or if, this conception became a part of general American convictions. In contrast, Williams, who initially located the sources of expansion in the industrial economy of the 1890s, has recently traced this impulse back to the agrarians of earlier generations; he has long contended that the belief has been widely held, independent of class. Because this world view is widely held, Williams concludes that policymakers operate in an environment where they can often appeal to common American assumptions that support an expansionist foreign policy. As Williams notes, this does not make the leaders' manipulation of the electorate unnecessary, but that manipulation can concentrate on tactics and usually avoid publicly analyzing the *basic* issues. (Kolko, who stresses the manipulation by leaders, also emphasizes the virtual impotence of the postwar party system to embrace critiques of the foreign policy.) Williams's thesis is but one—though probably the most popular—of several possible explanations of a phenomenon that most radicals have noted and lamented: the postwar bipartisan consensus on the Cold War, the capacity of the Truman administration repeatedly to use scare tactics and militant anticommunism to promote the programs of containment and expansion (Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, etc.), and the success of the administration and its congressional allies in both parties in blocking the challenges by the dwindling Left and by right-wing Republicans who questioned the emerging "mythology" of the Cold War.⁹

2

In examining the revisionists, Ferrell has also greatly simplified some of their differences on issues of history—especially the problem of the continuity between Roosevelt and Truman. Ferrell concludes that most revisionists assert that there was discontinuity—that Truman reversed Roosevelt's policies or at least "stiffened up American diplomacy to such

⁹Kolko and Kolko, *Limits*, pp. 330–58. For a similar theory by a student of Kolko, see Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York, 1972).

an extent that he may have reversed it." A quick count would place Gardner and Kolko, whom Ferrell acknowledges, as well as Williams, whom Ferrell disregards, on the side of continuity and Alperovitz, Theoharis, Adler-Paterson, and me on the other side. But the issues are more subtle and complex than Ferrell indicates, and they involve primarily the policies of the two administrations on Eastern Europe. A more thoughtful analysis of these matters requires distinctions between tactics, strategy, and ideology or aims—distinctions that Ferrell's treatment obscures.

Let me briefly sketch a portion of this analysis by focusing on the work of five radicals—Alperovitz, Gardner, Williams, Kolko, and myself. In *Atomic Diplomacy*, Alperovitz generally avoids issues of ideology and economic expansion and focuses on tactics—which he declares changed sharply with Truman, who executed a cleverly orchestrated strategy of confrontation, delay, and then confrontation. My own work stresses the continuity of Open Door ideology between the administrations and the shift in tactics. Gardner, Williams, and Kolko also stress the continuity of ideology or aims between the two administrations but do not agree that strategy or tactics changed. These three, unlike Alperovitz and I, do not agree that Roosevelt reluctantly acceded to Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe. For them, Roosevelt remained committed to universalism and would not countenance—much less endorse—a sphere-of-influence arrangement. Alperovitz and I conclude that the armistice agreements and the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe in effect ratified the earlier Churchill–Stalin agreements on Eastern Europe and granted control to the Soviets. The question remains whether Roosevelt had a grander strategy and was planning to change his tactics to create the Open Door world he preferred.¹⁰

Historians, regardless of their political persuasions, should acknowledge that the evidence is not clear-cut on whether Roosevelt was "hardening his view" of the Russians shortly before his death. Even the recently opened Roosevelt–Churchill correspondence does not allow a comfortable resolution of this troubling issue. It is clear that Roosevelt was becoming more perturbed by Soviet behavior. And there is strong evidence that Roosevelt had long been holding in reserve the options that might permit

¹⁰See Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy . . .," pp. 20–30; Williams, *Tragedy*, pp. 204–25; Gardner, "Liberals, Radicals, and the Origins of the Cold War, 1945" (Socialist Scholars Conference paper, 1967) and "Mr. Truman and the Revisionists" (Vassar Symposium paper, 1968); Bernstein, "The Cold War" (Socialist Scholars Conference paper, 1967) and "Revising the Cold War" (Vassar Symposium paper, 1968). Cf. Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy*, who finds Roosevelt "true to his well-known policy of cooperation and conciliation [with Russia]" (p. 12). Alperovitz, by the design and argument of his book, rejects the notion of a "larger strategy."

him to reverse Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe—the atomic bomb and economic aid.

Let us consider each issue. Security in the Manhattan District Project was directed at concealing even the fact of research not only from Germany, our enemy, but also from Russia, our ally. In December 1942, when Roosevelt concluded that Great Britain would have to share nuclear secrets with Russia (under a special Anglo-Soviet treaty), the President restricted interchange of information on the bomb even though the loss of British aid, in the judgment of his scientific advisers, would “slow down” the building of the bomb. Postwar considerations displaced the issue of winning the war as quickly as possible. Roosevelt did not resume complete interchange until 1943, when Churchill convinced him that the British would withhold nuclear secrets from the Soviets. In 1944, at Hyde Park, the two wartime leaders confirmed the Anglo-American alliance on the bomb and acted again to bar the Soviets. By maintaining the nuclear monopoly, the Anglo-American entente made possible the use of the bomb as a bargaining counter, a counterweight to Soviet armies, or an “implied threat.” Put bluntly, “atomic diplomacy” was made possible by Roosevelt’s policy.¹¹

Roosevelt’s position on economic aid to the Soviets also allowed him to retain the options to demand a *quid pro quo* and thereby seek to reverse policy in Eastern Europe. His decision prior to Yalta to postpone discussion of the Soviet request for a loan was explicitly designed to improve his bargaining position. “I think it’s very important,” Roosevelt told Secretary Henry Morgenthau, “that we hold this [the loan] back and don’t give them any promises of finance until we get what we want.” Later, Roosevelt’s ready acquiescence to Congress’s plan not to allow lend-lease for postwar reconstruction indicates that he thought that the Russians, who seemed eager for assistance, would be compelled to come to (possibly still undefined) terms to gain the loan.¹²

Truman inherited these options and the problems of Eastern Europe. Contrary to Ferrell’s statement, Truman did not accept the state of affairs in Eastern Europe—unless Ferrell simply means that Truman did not go to war to reverse these arrangements and to roll back Soviet influence. He pressed matters on Poland, gained some minor concessions in the reorganization of the Polish government, continued to make demands on Poland and Eastern Europe, withheld recognition of the

¹¹On the nuclear option, Bernstein, “Quest for Security” and “The Bomb and American Foreign Policy: Maintaining The Options for ‘Atomic Diplomacy’” (AHA paper, 1971); and Martin Sherwin, “The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War: U. S. Atomic Energy Policy and Diplomacy, 1941–1945” (AHA paper, 1971), scheduled to appear in revised form in *AHR* (October 1973).

¹²John M. Blum, *From the Morgenthau Diaries, . . . 1941–1945* (Boston, 1967), 305. John Gaddis, *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York, 1972), also used the phrase “extracting political concessions” (p. 194).

Balkan governments for some time, and even used "atomic diplomacy" after Hiroshima. Why did he want to roll back Soviet influence? Ferrell answers in terms of Truman's political problems at home and the "need to speak out against the repression"—the latter reason, according to Ferrell, being one that revisionists neither understand nor sympathize with.

Contrary to Ferrell, some revisionists contend that policymakers believed that they were acting out of moral purposes. For them, communism was evil, a radical evil like fascism. But it would be a mistake to accept this reason, even when linked to domestic politics, as a total explanation of American behavior. Perhaps the issues can be clarified by asking a question that Walter Lippmann,¹³ among others, asked in 1945 and 1946: Why were policymakers so much more troubled about establishing democracy in Eastern Europe, which was in the Soviet sphere and generally without a democratic heritage, than in Latin America? There are basically two related answers: one, communism was viewed as more evil than non- or anti-democratic forms; two, policymakers, when confronted with a choice between creating the conditions for democracy and those for economic expansion, usually chose the latter.

In Eastern Europe, American concern was not primarily for our trade with that area but, rather, for that area's important trade with Western Europe. The removal of Eastern Europe from the Western European economic orbit threatened to impair the already weakened economy of Western Europe, to impede the reconstruction of the Western economy, to disrupt international trade patterns, and ultimately to injure the American economy, which relied heavily upon foreign, and especially Western European, markets. In economic terms, the policymakers feared the so-called "domino effect." In turn, because policymakers believed that the American democratic system required prosperity and might not endure through another sustained depression, they were also acting to maintain the conditions for democracy at home—conditions that might also lead to the extension of capitalist democracy abroad. In this analysis, according to policymakers, the benefits of prosperity and democracy in the United States would ultimately be shared with much of the world.¹⁴

Ferrell quickly glosses over the complicated issues of Soviet treatment of Eastern Europe in 1945, wrongly treats Soviet policy as consistent throughout the year, bluntly contends that the Soviets demanded that these countries be "utterly subservient to Russian rule," and concludes dubiously that Stalin "could not understand the impossibly weak position of the[se] little countries." On the contrary, Stalin did realize how weak they were—a weakness that the West could easily exploit in these anti-Russian nations. He also recognized the dangers of Western economic

¹³See Bernstein, "Walter Lippmann and the Early Cold War," in Paterson, ed., *Cold War Critics*, pp. 30–33, 44–49.

¹⁴See Bernstein, "The Early Cold War," *Progressive* (August 1970), 39–42.

penetration and understood, as Molotov later lectured Byrnes, that these smaller states would "be governed by the orders, injunctions, and instructions of strong foreign trusts and monopolies." Probably this reasoning, as well as the Soviet need for reconstruction capital, explains the Soviet policy of shifting the Eastern European economy from its Western European orientation and integrating the former with Russia's. The aim may not have been to spread communism.¹⁵

Ferrell also glosses over the differing patterns of Soviet influence and the different levels of subservience in the three so-called Balkan nations. In Hungary, after the Communist party suffered a rout in elections in Budapest, the party also met defeat in national free elections. In Bulgaria, a Communist-dominated single ticket triumphed in an election where the United States encouraged some parties to abstain; and some Western observers viewed the election as relatively free. In Rumania, the most anti-Russian of the three states, there was a Soviet-imposed government. In short, Stalin was not rigidly doctrinaire in Eastern Europe, as Ferrell contends. In view of prewar international politics, the efforts of the West to establish a *cordon sanitaire*, the attempts by American diplomats to shore up anti-Soviet factions in Eastern Europe, and America's later tactics of using economic assistance to gain influence in this area, Stalin's fears do not seem unreasonable.¹⁶

At the core of much of the historical dispute on the sources and responsibility for the Cold War is the issue of Stalin's (and Russia's) intentions and aims. If Stalin was an ardent revolutionary or an insatiable expansionist, as orthodox interpretations often argued in the forties, fifties, and early sixties, then American policy was conceivably a necessary response and Stalin was primarily, if not exclusively, responsible for the Cold War. But many proponents of the newer orthodoxy have acknowledged that Stalin was not an ardent revolutionary or an insatiable expansionist; yet they have still concluded that he was primarily, or exclusively, responsible for the Cold War. Their arguments, despite variations, usually rely upon one or both of the following contentions: (1) Stalin was paranoid, and hence, no American action could have overcome his distrust; or (2) he needed the Cold War in order to maintain control at home.¹⁷

¹⁵Molotov, speech of October 10, 1946, in *Problems of Foreign Policy: Speeches and Statements*, April 1945–November 1948 (Moscow, 1949), pp. 213–14.

¹⁶Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy . . .," pp. 40–49. Also see Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin* (New York, 1960), on Stalin's purposes, tactics, and fears.

¹⁷For the first version, with some ambivalence about Stalin's revolutionary aims, see Schlesinger, "Origins of the Cold War," *Foreign Affairs*, 46 (October 1967); for the second, with some wavering, see Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence . . . , 1917–1967* (New York, 1968), pp. 377, 381, 399, 403–4, 413–15. Ulam also stresses Stalin's (and Soviet) suspicion but stops short of labeling it "paranoid."

There are considerable difficulties with the "paranoid" thesis. American policymakers did not consider Stalin paranoid at the time. It is not clear that he was paranoid then. It is possible to demonstrate that Stalin had justifiable objective evidence for his fears. And even paranoids (if Stalin was one) do not always act paranoid. The "paranoid" argument would be more convincing if its proponents could establish that American policymakers recognized the Soviet Union's fears about security, adhered to Roosevelt's spheres-of-influence agreements in Eastern Europe, and did not seek to extend the doctrine of universalism into the Soviet sphere. Put bluntly, if the United States had acceded on these matters, then historians might be justified in moving to the dangerous realm of psychology to explain Soviet behavior.¹⁸

The "need for the Cold War" argument exaggerates the values of the Cold War to Stalin and concludes, dubiously, that it strengthened, not weakened, his position. The analysis seems to minimize or disregard the fact that Stalin greatly cut back the size of the military and that the budget for armaments in the early Cold War undoubtedly still delayed economic reconstruction in the Soviet Union and the production of desired consumer goods. Had reconstruction been easier and consumer goods more plentiful, the potential discontent would have been reduced. The "need" argument also fails to explain why Stalin did not act earlier—at least by V-E Day—to create an "external enemy" for the Soviet people. Interestingly, for Melvin Croan, upon whom Ferrell relies for this "need" theory, Stalin was not a madman but a "rather shrewd power-attuned leader" who sought, not revolution and expansion, but "isolationism."¹⁹

3

In assessing revisionism, Ferrell has also focused upon the work of Gar Alperovitz. In doing so, he manages to overlook that some of the revisionists were among the major early critics of Alperovitz's two major theses: (1) the bomb largely shaped diplomacy between Yalta and Potsdam; and (2) the bomb was dropped not simply to end the war but probably to give the Soviets sober pause in Eastern Europe and Asia. Yet, even though these conclusions have been sharply criticized, Alperovitz's book was justifiably influential because it established that policymakers were not unconcerned about the Soviet Union in 1945, because it looked

¹⁸Williams, "The Cold-War Revisionists"; for a critique of Schlesinger, also see Bernstein, "Introduction," Bernstein and Matusow, eds., *Twentieth-Century America* (2d ed.), pp. 407-9.

¹⁹Croan, in "Origins of the Post-War Crisis," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (April 1968), 236. On Soviet intentions, also see Thomas Taylor, Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence, "Soviet Capabilities . . .," January 21, 1946, Forrestal Papers, Princeton.

closely at events in Eastern Europe, because it helped demolish "myths" of American innocence, and because it argued that the Cold War started well before 1947 and enunciation of the Truman Doctrine. Significantly, the book contributed to the redirection of research, to the criticism of orthodoxy, and to a broadening of the historical dialogue.²⁰

Alperovitz, whose analysis of tactics was heavily influenced by P. M. S. Blackett, also compelled historians to focus more closely on evidence and themes that Herbert Feis and others had obscured or glided over. Consider, for example, the recollection by Leo Szilard of his meeting with Byrnes in May 1945: "Mr. Byrnes did not argue that it was necessary to use the bombs against the cities of Japan in order to win the war. . . . Mr. Byrnes' view [was] that our possessing and demonstrating the bomb would make Russia more manageable in Europe." Or, to cite another important statement on Byrnes: Forrestal recorded that the Secretary of State "was most anxious to get the Japanese affair over with before the Russians got in, with particular reference to Dairen and Port Arthur."²¹

²⁰For criticisms, see Athan Theoharis, "Atomic Diplomacy," *New University Thought*, 5 (May/June 1967), 12 ff.; Ronald Steel, "Doomsday," *New York Review of Books* (November 25, 1965), 8-10; Kolko, *Politics of War*, pp. 538-97; Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy . . .," pp. 34-35, "Introduction," in Bernstein and Matusow, eds., *Twentieth-Century America* (1969), pp. 377-79, and *ibid.* (2d ed.), pp. 395-98. The first five items were written within eighteen months of the publication of *Atomic Diplomacy*. For a recent prickly critique of Alperovitz that views *Atomic Diplomacy* as a "staple [to whom?]" of 'New Left' Historiography," see Robert J. Maddox, "Atomic Diplomacy: A Study in Creative Writing," *Journal of American History*, 59 (March 1973), 925-34, and Alperovitz's reply, pp. 1062-67.

²¹Szilard, "A Personal History of the Atomic Bomb," *University of Chicago Roundtable*, 601 (September 25, 1949), 14-15; entry of July 28, 1945, "Forrestal Diaries," Princeton University Library; also see "W. B.'s book," July 3-October 8, folder 602, James F. Byrnes Papers, Clemson University. On atomic diplomacy, also see Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy . . .," pp. 35-37 and n. 56, and "Quest for Security." Ferrell's report of the events at the meeting in 1966 are in error, for he did not recognize my humor. I certainly did not expect him to accept the interpretation of "atomic diplomacy." (I understand that some or many of Ferrell's *ad hominem* comments were deleted from his revised essay, which I have not seen, but they still appear in an earlier published version by Ferrell, "Truman Foreign Policy: A Traditionalist View," *The Alternative*, 6 [April and May 1973].) That was a difficult, embarrassing meeting for him—as the tapes of the session reveal and as many of the participants recall. At the meeting, he declared that the Stimson diaries were an unreliable source for the war years because the Secretary "was senile" and dictated his diaries while shaving. Only the latter charge is repeated in Ferrell's present essay. In a recent letter, Elting Morison, Stimson's biographer, wrote, "He wasn't shaving [while dictating]; . . . He was, ordinarily, fully dressed, sitting down, and wide awake." Denying that Stimson was senile even in the last three months of his Secretaryship, Morison wrote, "His mind was as good as it ever was" (Morison to Bernstein, September 7, 1972). In some measure, the Stimson diaries are unreliable, for Truman seems never to have indicated to the Secretary that they disagreed. This tactic of appearing to agree seems to have characterized much of Truman's relationships with advisers until late 1945. See, for example, the Joseph Davies Papers, Library of Congress, and Harold Smith Papers, Bureau of the Budget Library (Washington).

In differing with Alperovitz, let me sketch an explanation of why the United States dropped the atomic bomb. Truman inherited the assumption that the bomb was a legitimate weapon and that it would be used. Only a bolder President, when lacking a popular mandate, would have been able to break free of these inherited assumptions and reassess them. For Truman, as for Roosevelt and nearly all their associates, the bomb did not raise serious moral problems. There were *no* reasons not to use it and many reasons for using it. It might speed a surrender and save lives—especially Americans. It also offered additional advantages—as Byrnes clearly understood. In addition, it may have promised retribution. This “retribution” interpretation cannot be proved now, but evidence supporting it appears in a letter that Truman wrote shortly after Hiroshima and Nagasaki:

Nobody is more disturbed over the use of Atomic bombs than I am but I was greatly disturbed over the unwarranted attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor. The only language they seem to understand is the one we have been using to bombard them. When you have to deal with a beast you have to treat him as a beast.²²

Ferrell, following Adam Ulam, asks: Was there “atomic diplomacy”? and answers with a resounding “No.” Of course, both Ferrell and Ulam have narrowly defined the question so that only an explicit, unambiguous threat will suffice. Evidence of statements of intention by Byrnes is disregarded by Ulam and deemed irrelevant by Ferrell. He also disregards Truman’s warning of August 9 that the Balkan states “are not to be spheres of influence of any one power” and that the United States would remain “trustees” of the bomb—which, in effect, was a muted warning.²³

The bomb raised serious problems for Truman. At various times, as at least one revisionist has noted, the President had serious doubts about whether it could be used as a weapon against the Soviets. Before Hiroshima, had Truman wanted to share the secret of the bomb with the Soviets, he would have had to reverse Roosevelt’s policy and risk future political calumny. Apparently, Truman did not want to change policy, and Byrnes and Stimson had both counseled him on the possible postwar advantages resulting from the nuclear monopoly. As a result, Truman operated comfortably within the contours of policy established by his great predecessor. After Hiroshima, especially as the administration publicly revealed the stalemate with the Soviets, domestic politics and public opinion restricted the administration’s options in dealing with the Soviets on atomic energy. Even Byrnes, who had wanted to delay negotiations until the bomb helped him secure Soviet agreement on

²²See Bernstein, “Quest for Security.” Truman to Samuel McCrea Cavert, August 11, 1945, OF 692A, Truman Library.

²³Truman address, August 9, 1945, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Harry S. Truman, 1945* (Washington, 1961), pp. 211–13.

Eastern Europe, found that a powerful bipartisan group of senators was charging him with trying to "give away" the secret. The constraints of public opinion and domestic politics, as Ferrell correctly notes, limited the administration—a theme that Alperovitz overlooked but other revisionists have stressed.²⁴

Some revisionists, such as the Kolkos, and some orthodox historians, such as John Spanier and Joseph Nogee, have suggested that the Acheson-Lilienthal and Baruch plans were devised to maintain the American nuclear monopoly and to offer terms that would be unacceptable to the Soviets. The proposals, according to the interpretation, were a sham or ploy—not serious offers that the administration believed the Soviets could accept. Other historians, including at least one revisionist (myself), have argued that the effort at international control was not a sham or publicity device, but that it was hamstrung by excessive American demands that the Soviets trust the United States, by naive beliefs that the administration was being magnanimous, and by excessive American demands for safeguards. Some in the administration clearly saw the advantage of proffering international control on terms that protected the American nuclear monopoly, that halted Soviet work on the bomb, and that made the Soviets ultimately dependent on American good faith. But Baruch, as well as Acheson, Lilienthal, and many of their associates, seems to have been sincere in the efforts to establish international control. Given the constraints in which they operated, however, they could not devise an acceptable plan. In this interpretation, the Soviet-American disputes over international control were both a cause and consequence of the Cold War in 1945–1946.²⁵

4

Ferrell's treatment of lend-lease and the loan is troubling. He is careless in his analysis of lend-lease, for his secondary source satisfactorily establishes far less than he claims. In following George Herring's essay, Ferrell is probably correct that the President and most of his close advisers did not intend, even briefly, to cut off lend-lease to Russia in May

²⁴On Truman's doubts, see Harold Smith Conference Record, October 5, 1945, and Leahy Diary, May 6, 1948; see Bernstein, "Quest for Security," and review essay of John Gaddis's *U. S. Foreign Policy and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947*, in *Revue d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale*. There is need for a study of early postwar strategic thought and of the conception of the function of the services and of the value and limitations of the atomic bomb as a weapon.

²⁵Kolko and Kolko, *Limits*, Ch. 4, and especially pp. 106 and 109; Spanier and Nogee, *The Politics of Disarmament* (New York, 1962), Ch. 3, and especially pp. 74 and 58. Bernstein, "American Foreign Policy . . .," pp. 45–48, "Walter Lippmann and the Early Cold War," pp. 36–38, and "Quest for Security."

but only to halt materials needed for postwar reconstruction. Herring, who had access to materials closed to other scholars, found that the shipping committee had misinterpreted the order and therefore even called back loaded ships headed toward Russia. But it does not follow, as Herring then argued and as Ferrell now does, that the cutback was "no attempt at economic pressure." The cutback was part of a larger strategy: to shift the emphasis to the loan and thereby allow the United States to extract political concessions from the Soviets.²⁶

In his treatment of the loan, I have difficulty following Ferrell's rambling and elliptical discourse. He seems to believe that Stalin was not interested in the loan, that it was not very important in East-West relations, and that it had no relationship to the Cold War—three very dubious positions. Yet, as early as January 1945, Harriman had cabled the State Department that "Molotov made it very plain that the Soviet government placed high importance on a large post-war credit as a basis for 'Soviet-American relations.' From his statement I sensed an implication that the development of our friendly relations depend upon a generous credit." Two years later, Edwin Pauley, the reparations ambassador, wrote: "It can be assumed . . . that Russia's intransigent position on unification and reparations is due to a desire to obtain the maximum amount of industrial and consumer goods from Germany, to meet internal political prestige needs and to help rebuild the Soviet industrial machine."²⁷

²⁶Herring, "Lend-Lease to Russia and the Origins of the Cold War, 1944-45," *Journal of American History*, 56 (June 1969), especially pp. 106-8. The key document supporting his analysis of the tactical error (turning back the ships) was not available to most historians until about 1970—after publication of his essay. The document is "Minutes, Secretary's Staff Committee," May 14, 1945, Edward Stettinius Papers, University of Virginia. Another document, "Meeting of the Soviet Protocol Subcommittee on Shipping," May 12, 1945, Army Service Forces Papers, was not, by itself, sufficient to establish Herring's point on the tactical error. Herring, when a graduate student at Virginia, helped organize the Stettinius collection and received privileged access to it before it was opened to scholars generally. I note this simply to explain why others did not use this material until some time after the publication of Herring's essay. This explanation is not a criticism of Professor Herring, who has been very generous in sharing his research and work with other scholars. On the strategy of extracting concessions, see Gaddis, *Cold War*, pp. 178-97.

²⁷Harriman, January 6, 1945, in Department of State, *U. S. Foreign Relations: . . . Yalta*, p. 313. Pauley, quoted from Paterson, "The Abortive Loan," p. 90. Certainly a \$1-billion loan did not offer the assistance that a \$6 billion loan promised. Perhaps that is Ferrell's point, for he may simply mean that Stalin had less interest in the smaller amount precisely because it was smaller. It is true that between September 1944 and January 1945, some U. S. officials thought that a loan of \$2-3 billion might only speed up Soviet reconstruction by a few months; but these estimates, variously, also noted the importance of German reparations and reduced expenses for armaments. (Samuel Lubell to Baruch, March 1945, with OSS estimate, Baruch Papers, Princeton University; and Emilio Collada memo, January 4, 1945, *Foreign Relations, 1945*, V, pp. 938-40.)

Ferrell is correct that the Soviets wanted a loan "under impossibly lenient conditions"—but he does not examine the ideological definition of "impossibly." Nor does he deal directly with the questions of why the United States delayed negotiations on the loan and why the Truman administration required, among other points, Soviet participation in the agencies (World Bank and IMF) of the reconstructed international economic system, Soviet rejection of state-trading and acceptance of multilateralism, and Soviet opening of the partly closed door to Western trade and investment in Eastern Europe.

The Russian loan also raises at least one other interesting problem: Why did the State Department falsely claim in March 1946 that it had lost the earlier Soviet request for a loan? And why did much of the public press then, and such critical-minded scholars as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., later, accept this explanation as reasonable and candid? For, even if the actual paper expressing the request had been lost, certainly the State Department had not forgotten that the request had been made.²⁸

5

Ferrell's treatment of the Truman Doctrine is peculiar and his difficulties in dealing with revisionism are formidable. He seems to have trouble with an analysis advanced by some revisionists: The Greek Communists were not receiving aid from Stalin and he was opposing the revolution; therefore the administration seriously misjudged Stalin and the events in Greece. Why? revisionists ask. Was it ideology that misled?

Ferrell avoids these problems and takes another tack. He offers a defense for American policy similar to one that Secretary of State Marshall presented to congressional leaders in February 1947. Ferrell contends that the situation in Greece was volatile, that it did not matter whether Stalin supported the revolution, that Stalinists might come to the fore, that the United States could not predict a split in the Soviet bloc, that the split was irrelevant anyway, and therefore the United States had to intervene. Future *possible* developments had to be prevented. This rationale, some might charge, is an expression of *Pax Americana*. Ferrell's argument seems to rest upon a basic assumption: that American interests were endangered if Soviet communism triumphed in Greece. Perhaps Ferrell would have been more successful in engaging the revisionists if he had sought to explain why he and policymakers believed that American interests were at stake and *then* examined revisionist analyses of American purposes. How, for example, would Ferrell respond to this argument by William L. Clayton, Under Secretary of State for Economic

²⁸*New York Times*, March 2, 1946; *Washington Post*, March 2, 1946; Schlesinger, "Origins," p. 44.

Affairs, who stated: "If Greece and Turkey succumb, the whole Middle East will be lost. France may then capitulate to the Communists. As France goes, all Western Europe and North Africa will go."²⁹

The Truman Doctrine was "an appalling piece of Cold War rhetoric"—as some revisionists have concluded. Not only did the administration misunderstand the events in Greece, but it also eliminated from its public explanation certain key themes in private discussions and chose to distort and simplify the analysis, to exaggerate the crisis, and to define the Cold War as an ideological confrontation between the forces of good and evil. The speech, the public arguments supporting it, and the Government's commitment to Greece and Turkey all contributed to the transformation of the domestic political culture. Other speeches and actions—the loyalty–security program, the Marshall Plan, NATO, and many charges of Soviet malevolence—also helped transform the political culture.³⁰

Ferrell seems unwilling to acknowledge or to understand that the President and other public officials greatly shape the public's comprehension of international affairs and can change the public's attitudes and conclusions. Because the administration had the prestige, expertise, and privileged access to the media, it could often promote successfully its interpretation of international events and thereby change attitudes. Except in times when American politics are unusually rancorous and the administration is distrusted or the media are able to make independent judgments, the administration is often the chief source for the public's interpretation of events. Perhaps Ferrell believes that public opinion is shaped primarily and directly by events, not by the interpretation of events. Yet, consider how most Americans learn of international events and their meaning: through reports of official speeches or through articles and commentaries that normally assume causal relationships and intertwine what we might call "facts" with "analysis."³¹ Public opinion and domestic politics may often seem inflexible and may define narrow parameters for *explicit* foreign policy in the short run, but there are ways of broadening these parameters in the long run—as Roosevelt, Truman, and their successors and associates have understood.

²⁹Statement by Secretary of State, February 27, 1947, *Foreign Relations, 1947*, V, pp. 60–61. Also see Ferrell, *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, George C. Marshall, XV, (New York, 1966), pp. 79–80. For Clayton, see Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, "Assistance to Greece and Turkey," 80th Cong., 1st sess., p. 81.

³⁰On removal of themes, see "Drafts" in George Elsey and Clark Clifford Papers, Truman Library, and Joseph Jones, *Fifteen Days* (New York, 1955), pp. 140–70.

³¹On public understanding, see Ferrell, *Marshall*, p. 84: "Public and congressional debate . . . did not amount to overwhelming popular understanding of what the President had asked. . . . It was perhaps just as well." Some critics might interpret this as an example of "manipulation." For an explanation of the apparent transformation of U. S. policy in terms of "leadership," see Joseph Jones to Francis Russell, July 18, 1947, Jones Papers, Truman Library.

Ferrell's treatment of the Marshall Plan is also troubling. Given his tone, I do not know whether he agrees with many revisionists who have concluded that Marshall's invitation to the Soviet Union to participate in European reconstruction was a ploy. He claims that most revisionists fail to show the enormous need for the program, but most do. He asserts that revisionists do not recognize "the hectic pressure of events"—a phrase whose relevance remains obscure. Perhaps Ferrell is trying to suggest that it was an accident that the plan was conceived to exclude Russia. He also charges that the revisionists do not recognize the "unattractive prospect of aiding Russia,"—a statement that merits examination. Contrary to Ferrell, revisionists have been the leading analysts to explain why Soviet participation in the Marshall Plan was "unattractive" to American policymakers. Given the administration's design for postwar capitalist reconstruction of the European and much of the world economy, policymakers had no desire to assist the Soviets, who represented a rival mode, nor any willingness to admit that the Marshall Plan was part of the larger containment strategy.³²

The Marshall Plan, as Truman later acknowledged, was the other "half of the walnut" with the Truman Doctrine. Marshall's public offer to include the Soviets met dual purposes: It allayed European anxieties about splitting Europe, and it also won favor with many domestic critics of the Truman Doctrine who feared its militarization and thought that it would split Europe and exacerbate East-West tensions. They judged the Marshall Plan humanitarian and generous and believed that the invitation to the Soviets meant a retreat from the Truman Doctrine. When the Soviets rejected the Marshall Plan, their action was publicly explained as additional evidence of their suspicious nature, of the impossibility of reaching accommodation with them. After all, as many Americans concluded, only a suspicious or malevolent nation would refuse generosity and charge the United States with imperialism. Few Americans knew about the "strings" that were attached.³³

What were the "strings"? The Soviets would have been treated as a donor (not recipient) nation, asked to provide secret data on their economy, compelled to allow free access to American experts, required to accept the principles of ending state-trading (upon which their economy was based) and of moving toward economic integration with Western Europe, and expected to allow the West to pry away the satel-

³²See H. B. Price, interviews with Harriman, October 1, 1952, Bohlen, February 6, 1953, and Kennan, February 19, 1953, Price Papers, Truman Library. On maneuvering the Soviets out of the Marshall Plan discussions, see Price, Interview with Harriman, October 1, 1952, Price Papers.

³³On strategy, see Joseph Jones to Dean Acheson, May 20, 1947, and Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York, 1972), pp. 181–84.

lites and to integrate them into the Western orbit as agrarian suppliers. Had the Soviets been more politically astute, perhaps they could have flirted longer with the plan and thereby stiffened congressional opposition to it. For them, the danger was that their flirtation might have made it more difficult to thwart the hopes of satellites and to block their participation.

6

Lamentably, Ferrell slides past the troubling issues raised by NATO. The alliance always lacked a credible land army, depended upon America's nuclear umbrella, and was provocative, as Robert Taft charged at the time. Was it primarily a device for integrating Western Europe more tightly into the American orbit, for allaying Western European fears of a revitalized West Germany, and for discouraging neutralist tendencies?—as the Kolkos contend.³⁴ Much testimony supports these contentions and suggests that NATO was an alliance against an attack that policymakers did not expect—at least not in the short run. As John Foster Dulles told a congressional committee in 1949: "The information given me publicly and privately by our government and by heads and leaders of European governments, does not indicate that the Soviet Union now contemplates open military aggression in Europe. Direct military aggression is not the preferred weapon of the Communist Party that controls the Russian government." Looking back on this period, George Kennan later concluded: NATO was "a military defense against an attack no one was planning."³⁵

For Acheson, NATO was a potential device for integrating a rearmed Germany into the Western system—though he denied this purpose when facing a congressional committee in 1949. There were also other purposes. W. Averell Harriman, testifying at the same hearings, offered an important, often-neglected dimension: Without NATO "there would be a reorientation" in Western Europe strengthening those who believed "in appeasement and neutrality." NATO, in this explanation, was a military technique for maintaining the Cold War and American dominance in Western Europe. Obviously, these explanations are not complete, for they do not necessarily account for Western Europe's enthusiasm for the alliance.³⁶

³⁴On NATO, see Kolko and Kolko, *Limits*, especially Chs. 18 and 24, but also see pp. 660–61, which stress the American need for bases in Europe.

³⁵Dulles, quoted in Robert Osgood, *NATO: The Entangling Alliance* (Chicago, 1962), p. 50; George F. Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925–1950* (Boston, 1967), especially Ch. 17, and *Russia, the Atom and the West* (New York, 1958), pp. 83–98, and p. 85 for quote.

³⁶For Acheson and Harriman, LaFeber, *America, Russia*, p. 78. See Kennan, *Russia, the Atom*, pp. 83–98, for other explanations.

The Korean War, as Gardner indicates, will soon become the "new frontier" for revisionism. Many questions remain unanswered, and soon many of the sources will be opening. There has long been a striking lack of evidence to establish that the Soviets, as Truman contended, had plotted North Korea's attack. Indeed, the Soviets were not even at the United Nations and were apparently unprepared for the attack. In view of this indirect evidence, why, then, did the administration believe, as Truman put it, that Korea was "the Greece of the Far East"? Once more, ironically, the administration had apparently misinterpreted events.³⁷

Some years ago, I. F. Stone suggested that South Korea might actually have attacked North Korea and that General Douglas MacArthur and Syngman Rhee might have conspired to draw the United States into war in the Far East. While that suggestion seems implausible, there are still troubling questions—especially since the administration in late June had to rely so heavily upon MacArthur's reports of events in Korea. Why, for example, did North Korean troops halt shortly after moving South? Was this a full-scale assault or another border clash? The most likely explanation, given the limited evidence, is that North Korea initiated the attack and believed that an attack across the border would unleash a revolution and overthrow Syngman Rhee's tottering government. For North Korea the results were disappointing and surprising—only small upheavals in the South and massive American armed intervention.³⁸

Much of the history of foreign policy in the Cold War years remains to be written. As Williams and the Kolkos have shown, the analysis should move well beyond the problems of Soviet-American confrontation to include an examination of other issues—especially, the expansion of American influence into Europe and the Third World, the struggle with national capitalist systems, and the fear of the Left. An analysis of these policies should also examine popular understanding of American aims and efforts, the understanding and support among powerful groups and

³⁷Quoted in Cabell Phillips, *The Truman Presidency* (New York, 1966), p. 297; and see transcript of Truman's meeting with congressional leaders, June 27, 1950, Elsey Papers. Wilbur Hitchcock, "North Korea Jumps the Gun," *Current History*, 20 (March 1951), noted some of the difficulties with contemporary (orthodox) interpretations that the Soviet Union had plotted the North Korean attack, but concluded that perhaps the Soviet Union was caught unprepared because North Korea "jumped the gun." For serious doubts about who started the Korean War, see Karunker Gupta, "How Did the Korean War Begin?" *China Quarterly*, 52 (October–December 1972) and "The Origins of the Korean War and India's Stand on Korea," *Calcutta Review* (June 1956). For background, see Jon Halliday, *Three Articles on the Korean Revolution, 1945–1953* (London, 1972). Mark Paul of Stanford is writing a Ph.D. thesis on the U. S. and Korea, 1943–1953.

³⁸See "The North Korean Labor Party's Factions," *Jiyu* (May 1967), translated in *Selected Summaries of Japanese Magazines*, June 26–July 3, 1967. For a critique of Ambrose (whom Ferrell discusses), see Bernstein, "Introduction," in James Banner et al., eds., *Understanding the American Experience* (New York, 1973), II, pp. 395–98.

especially the business communities, and the failure of dissenters to formulate an effective critique or to organize significant opposition to American policies.

7

So far, the literature on the domestic policy of the Truman years has raised fewer basic issues. In a usually temperate essay, Hamby has presented a useful survey of this literature and offered a critical appraisal of revisionism—both its general outlines (and presumed motivations) and particular interpretations. Because many critical historians of the Truman period would disagree with Hamby's characterization of revisionism, let me offer a brief sketch of this work before turning to his objections to specific historians. He has astutely warned historians of the dangers of writing narrow monographic studies and of isolating the Truman period from earlier and later periods and their problems. Most historians would certainly agree that it is unfortunate that so much of the early work on Truman's domestic policies was conducted without a well-developed literature on the later Roosevelt years or the Eisenhower period.

Critics of the Truman administration's domestic policy usually focus upon two related, but logically independent, issues—the tactics and the goals of the administration. In examining the tactics, these historians have stressed the choice of poor advisers, the clumsy work of the early administration, the splits within the councils of government, and the occasional sabotage of administration programs. Much of Truman's early problems with reconversion, with price control, with labor and management, and with agriculture can be explained partly in these terms. These historians concluded that part of the administration's difficulties resulted from the President's practice of allowing cabinet members great authority and independence in their bailiwicks—a charge that liberals later advanced about Eisenhower. For Truman, problems often did not reach him until they were crises, and then his range of alternatives was seriously narrowed. Even his own proud boast ("The buck stops here") obscured his practices: He was not as decisive as he claimed.³⁹

In examining Truman's tactics, some historians have also questioned his conception of the Presidency. Frequently sharing certain liberal values about the need for an active President and a vigorous administration, these critics held him partly responsible for his domestic failures. They conclude that a more able politician and skillful leader would have secured more from Congress—and they question his abilities. He did not

³⁹A number of these issues have been treated in Bernstein, "Introduction," *Politics and Policies*, pp. 3-14; and "America in War and Peace: The Test of Liberalism," Bernstein, ed., *Towards A New Past* (New York, 1968), pp. 299-321.

work closely with Congress, and even in the Eightieth Congress the administration did not cooperate with the party's congressional leadership until 1948. At critical times, for example in the fight against Taft-Hartley in 1947, he failed to provide legislative leadership. He also fell short of expectations for vigorous public leadership. Lacking the charisma of Roosevelt, he was unable to rally the nation for many of his domestic programs. He seldom sparked enthusiasm. His formal addresses were often wooden—both in phrasing and in delivery.⁴⁰

In examining the modern Presidency, Richard Neustadt has shrewdly emphasized the limits of its power—as Hamby notes. Neustadt's analyses of bureaucratic politics, of the limits on presidential power within the Executive, and of the multiple internal constituencies have greatly extended our understanding of the modern Presidency. His insights and conclusions have led some to focus upon the shortcomings of Truman. Why, for example, did he not deal more forcefully with his conservative Secretary of Commerce during the steel strike in 1952, or move to a different arrangement that would have permitted implementation of policy? Had Truman acted differently, as Neustadt indicates, the President might have avoided this setback.⁴¹

Moving beyond the issues of tactics, some historians have also questioned whether Truman was wedded to liberal goals. New Left historians, often seeking to assess Truman in his own terms, have been among the leading investigators of this subject. They have found troubling discrepancies between his public rhetoric and private actions. Especially in civil rights, they have found enough evidence to raise serious doubts about Truman's commitment to his program. While he was willing to ask Congress for seemingly bold programs that he knew it would not grant, he would not energetically exercise Executive authority in areas where he could implement programs without congressional approval. Put bluntly, he asked for what he could not achieve but acted more cautiously where he had authority and might impose his will. These critics point to his delay in issuing the famous executive orders in 1948, to the fact that much of the Army was still segregated (contrary to his orders) at the time of the Korean War, and to the limited funding and flaccid behavior of his Committee on Government Compliance, which was charged with ending discrimination among government contractors.⁴²

In civil liberties, a few New Left historians have concluded that Truman was substantially responsible for preparing the conditions for

⁴⁰Susan Hartmann, *Harry S. Truman and the 80th Congress* (Columbia, Mo., 1971), pp. 78–85.

⁴¹Charles Sawyer, *Concerns of a Conservative Democrat* (Carbondale, Ill., 1967), pp. 274–77, disputes Neustadt.

⁴²Bernstein, "The Ambiguous Legacy: The Truman Administration and Civil Rights," in *Politics and Policies*; William Berman, *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration* (Columbus, Ohio, 1970).

McCarthyism. These analysts, despite important variations, agree that the administration exaggerated the dangers of communism at home and abroad, that the administration's loyalty-and-security programs were repressive, that the use of anti-Communist rhetoric manipulated public opinion, and that the administration distorted the terms of the Cold War and presented it as an ideological crusade between good and evil. The Truman administration, partly by its interpretation of events and its redefinition of Soviet policy and communism at home, was able to shift the public's view of the Soviet Union, to increase the fear of communism at home, and to use these new conceptions and fears to try to head off GOP attacks and to secure expensive foreign policy programs. This analysis concludes, among other points, that the significant shift in public understanding resulted largely from the administration's rhetoric and actions—not from the statements of the GOP, whose many ardent anti-Communists had long been publicly suspicious of trusting and dealing with the Soviet Union.⁴³

During the war, the media, often inspired by the government, had created a friendly, even attractive image of the Soviet Union: She was a loyal ally, perhaps moving toward democracy, and, like the United States, committed to prosperity for her citizens and peace for the world. Slowly, beginning in the last year of war, this image began to change. Within two years of Truman's entry into the Presidency, as his government began to treat Russia as an enemy, the image had shifted dramatically. She was portrayed as totalitarian, malevolent, ruthless, atheistic, and expansionist—the leader of the world-wide Communist conspiracy and a “menace” to the United States and its allies (“The Free World”). Part of the process involved nurturing hostility to domestic communism, dramatizing its danger, and associating these negative images with the Soviet Union. The resulting process became reciprocal: emphasis on the menace of the Soviet Union abroad nurtured fear of communism at home, and *vice versa*.⁴⁴

⁴³Bernstein, “America in War and Peace,” pp. 308–12; Theoharis, “Rhetoric” and *Seeds of Repression*; Richard Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism* (New York, 1972); for critiques of the last two, see Bernstein, “Hindsight on McCarthyism,” *Progressive* (June 1971), pp. 43–45, and “Truman . . . and the Transformation of Political Culture.”

⁴⁴See “Who ‘Collaborated’ with Russia?” *Antioch Review*, 14 (September 1954) on the war years; for one survey and interpretation of the transformation of attitudes, see Les Adler and Thomas G. Paterson, “Red Fascism: The Merger of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia in the American Image of Totalitarianism, 1930’s–1950’s,” *American Historical Review*, 75 (April 1970). There is a need to reexamine the activities of Communists in unions and the tactics by non-Communist leaders to eliminate rank-and-file of various dissident views. See James Prickett, “Communism and Factionalism in the United Automobile Workers, 1939–1947,” *Science and Society* (Summer 1968); “The NMU and the Ambiguities of Anti-Communism,” *New Politics* (Winter 1968); and “Some Aspects of the Communist Controversy in the CIO,” *Science and Society* (Summer–Fall 1969).

Anticommunism grew beyond the intentions of its administration purveyors. The administration's loyalty programs, its attacks on portions of the liberal tradition and on critics of the "internationalist" foreign policy, contributed to fears that communism was a domestic danger. In addition, as Athan Theoharis has emphasized, the administration's great emphasis on the dangers of communism at home and abroad, the misunderstanding of revolution, and the commitment to stopping communism, left many Americans "innocent" of the limits of American power and encouraged them to believe that victories abroad and perfect security at home were possible. When defeats occurred abroad, when China was "lost," when Korea became a painful stalemate, and when more "spies" were discovered in the government, how could Americans explain these developments? Were not bungling or betrayal likely interpretations?

New Left critics have also been critical of the administration's and of the liberals' vision. After the recession of 1949–1950, and with the new problems posed by the Korean War, according to one of these critics both the administration and liberals moved toward a belief that the problem of poverty had been solved in America. Their analysis, despite occasional dissents within the government and the liberal community, contrasted sharply with the analyses by the Left at the time. Liberalism had also moved toward a celebration of big business and a heady belief in the existence of political pluralism. In civil rights, the liberal analysis of problems was remarkably shallow and the proposed solutions were quite limited. Beyond the liberal community, as some New Left critics acknowledge, radicalism was not very much more probing or demanding in the area of civil rights: Only a handful were willing to entertain bolder tactics and few recognized the depth of racism in the nation and the formidable problems in eliminating it.⁴⁵

In challenging some of these analyses, Hamby has compelled New Left historians to be more explicit about assumptions and to reconsider conclusions. Undoubtedly, his most vigorous criticisms focus upon the work of Athan Theoharis and his sustained argument that the Truman administration was responsible for McCarthyism. Hamby has raised a number of objections: that Theoharis exaggerated the importance of the President; that he did not explain why Truman began to lose control of the Communist issue after 1948; that Soviet statements had a strong impact upon American attitudes; that Truman's rhetoric was not "consistently and harshly anti-Communist"; that the Truman Doctrine speech was not incompetent but essential to creating the needed crisis to secure

⁴⁵See Bernstein, "Election of 1952," in Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Fred Israel, eds., *History of American Presidential Elections* (New York, 1971), IV, pp. 3255–57; Ch. 7 in forthcoming book on the election of 1952 and the Eisenhower administration; and "America in War and Peace," pp. 306–8.

aid to Greece and Turkey; that containment was necessary to save Greece from communism and the Soviet orbit; that Theoharis has been careless in charging "red-baiting"; and that he relies upon a "crude consensus interpretation (all anti-Communists fundamentally are alike)."

Probably Theoharis should respond to these objections, but let me sketch a brief rejoinder on his behalf. His analysis examines the administration, not just the President, and hence is somewhat broader than Hamby suggests. Theoharis does explain why the administration began to lose control of the issue: The administration created expectations that it could not meet, legitimized attacks on liberalism, and helped encourage a rancorous politics of which it became the victim. Probably, Theoharis would acknowledge that Soviet statements played an important role—a theme he did not explicitly treat. But two questions remain: Why did Soviet policy and statements change? Did Soviet statements contribute to the blame that the administration had to bear for the "loss" of China or the discovery of espionage? The answers to these questions drive us back to Theoharis's analysis.

Hamby has charged Theoharis with offering a relentless analysis that does not take account of the fact that Truman's rhetoric was not "consistently and harshly anti-Communist." Hamby is correct that the President was sometimes cautious and even moderate on these matters, but *many* of his statements "were less restrained," as Hamby admits. Theoharis could acknowledge the accuracy of Hamby's critique on this matter and even concede that Truman's rhetoric did not become sharp and exaggerated until 1947–1948 (about a year short of Hamby's dating), and still contend that the main portions of his analysis remain unimpaired.

Interestingly, Hamby seems to use, or at least to agree with, a part of the Left analysis in order to disagree with Theoharis's alleged charge that the Truman Doctrine was incompetent—a claim he does not make. The rest of Hamby's statement well summarizes portions of Kolko and Freeland:

It is well known that, in requesting aid to Greece and Turkey, Truman resorted to universalistic rhetoric only after being convinced that this was the only way to secure passage of his program. It may well be that the American political system requires a crisis atmosphere for the passage of important foreign policy measures; at the least, we should be aware that the administration was not itching to establish one.

Has any serious historian contended that the administration created a crisis simply because it liked crises? Would Hamby consider this manipulation? If so, his analysis serves as a partial answer to Ferrell.

Hamby has raised an important issue in calling for historians to be more careful in their use of the term "red-baiting." An examination of the Democratic campaign discloses that the President did dismiss Wallace

and his cohorts as Communists or dupes, that other prominent members of the party made more extreme attacks, that the ADA often led the crusade, and that this general approach avoided the necessity of Democrats coming to terms with the arguments and analyses of the Progressives. Applying the Communist label (which fit some members of the Progressive party) became an effective way of disposing of the political threat from the Left. In his famous memorandum of November 1947, Clark Clifford outlined the strategy that the administration usually followed in 1948 in dealing with Wallace: "The Administration must persuade prominent liberals and progressives—and *no one else*—to . . . point out that the core of the Wallace backing is made up of Communists, and fellow-travelers." Exploitation of that theme foreclosed dialogue.⁴⁶

Hamby is quite correct that Theoharis does stress the fundamental similarities between anti-Communists, but this is not necessarily a "crude interpretation." He does not argue that Truman and McCarthy were the same, or that they even had the same domestic enemies, but only that there were important similarities in techniques and that Truman's tactics prepared the way for McCarthy's successes. What Theoharis is stressing is that they were operating from similar frameworks and that their bitter attacks on one another should not obscure the great areas of agreement.

Hamby is also quite correct that there are still puzzling problems about the reasons for McCarthy's support among citizens. While Michael Rogin has brilliantly demolished much of the framework of *The Radical Right*, his explanation of the sources of McCarthyism is more troubling. He is undoubtedly correct that it received support from some elites, that it even served their purposes, and that its chief support was among Republicans. He has also found that "when the influence of party is eliminated and often when it is not, the lower socioeconomic groups, the more poorly educated, and the Catholics tended to support McCarthy, the big business and professional classes, the better educated, and the Protestants to oppose him." Much of this support for McCarthy may be explained, not simply in terms of the political context and McCarthy's Catholicism (and the Church's hostility to communism), but also in terms of the culture of these groups—an often neglected area in postwar history.⁴⁷

In seeking to advance our understanding of McCarthyism and of anti-communism, perhaps historians should also move from the national level and electoral politics to an examination of often dramatic, but usually forgotten, local events involving these questions: the firing of teachers in communities, assaults upon local businessmen and intellectuals, and

⁴⁶Allen Yarnell, "The Democratic Party's Response to the Progressive Party in 1948," (PCB paper, 1969); Clifford, "Memorandum for the President," November 19, 1947, Clifford Papers.

⁴⁷Rogin, *The Intellectuals and McCarthy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), Ch. 8 and quotation on p. 239. On Catholics, see Albert Desbiens, "Catholics as Pre-McCarthyites?" seminar paper, Stanford, 1973.

local efforts at promoting greater uniformity of opinion. Private organizations and communities had their own purges and "red scare" in these years, and these events merit analysis. Local history, as Michael Katz and John Demos, among others, have ably demonstrated, can be a path to reconstructing the larger history of a people.

As Hamby evaluates the civil rights program, he rightly asserts that revisionists split from orthodox analysts on at least three basic issues—the significance of the program, the possibility of securing it, and the President's commitment to it. Hamby's treatment of the significance is oversimplified and fails to present the issues adequately. Has any historian contended that "the worth of [Truman's] activities is diminished because they were undertaken reluctantly and for the wrong reasons"? No. They are trying to get at the problem of determining Truman's commitment. Hamby is not very effective in responding to the revisionist conclusions on this subject. For the most part, he shies away from the evidence about the administration's inaction—especially in areas where congressional approval was unnecessary. But he does imply that the *amicus curiae* briefs of 1947–1950 should be judged heavily as evidence of the President's commitment to civil rights—even though there is no evidence that the White House was concerned about these issues or that Attorney General Clark urged them upon the Solicitor General's Office. In none of the archival collections of Truman's many assistants is there any evidence on any case but *Shelley v. Kraemer* to suggest that the administration inspired these briefs. Nor have interviews with members of the administration provided such evidence. Nor has anyone been able to establish that the briefs "originated in response to a recommendation by the [civil rights] committee." The more reasonable conclusion (not assumption), on the basis of the available evidence, is that members of the Solicitor General's Office pushed for these briefs and that their pressure upon Solicitor General Philip Perlman and his delight in winning favor with civil rights groups provided bureaucratic pressure (in addition to those generated by the civil rights committee) that the administration did not resist.⁴⁸

At a few junctures, Hamby has charged revisionists with reading the present back into the past and thereby locating trends in the Truman period that did not develop until later—in particular (1) the consensus

⁴⁸Bernstein, "Ambiguous Legacy," nn. 49 and 60. After I wrote "The Ambiguous Legacy" I found a letter urging intervention in *Shelley* (Oscar Chapman to Clark, September 11, 1947, Chapman Papers). Also see Clement Vose, *Caucasians Only* (Berkeley, 1959), pp. 169–74. The most recent, and certainly most thoroughly researched study, Donald McCoy and Richard Ruetten, *Quest and Response* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1973), especially pp. 211–21 does not cite any additional evidence about the forces leading to the *amicus curiae* briefs. There is no evidence why Clark cosigned the brief in *Shelley* or why McGrath cosigned the brief in *Henderson* and joined in oral argument before the Supreme Court. See also my forthcoming essay—review in *Journal of Ethnic Studies*.

on Keynesian economics and (2) the acceptance by big business and by plain citizens of unionism. On the first matter, he has clearly misstated my explicit analyses, for I have contended that most businessmen did not accept Keynesianism, that Truman himself was dubious about much of the Keynesian analysis, and that James Forrestal, Secretary of Defense, and many of his associates could not successfully plead for a larger military budget *because* they feared that greater spending might "ruin" the nation. They were prisoners of their unnecessary commitments to a pre-Keynesian orthodoxy. Nor have I ever believed that the Employment Act of 1946 represented the triumph of Keynesianism. At best, the law expressed a very limited consensus: a recognition that the federal government had considerable responsibility for maintaining prosperity. That loose consensus left unresolved the major issues: What actions were necessary, possible, or desirable? What was the role of government and of parts of the private sector?⁴⁹

Hamby, I think, has also misread the debates on Taft-Hartley and the polls on attitudes toward labor unions. Many Americans, sometimes reluctantly, had accepted the legitimate presence of unions in the American political economy. The postwar strikes in major industries lacked the rancor of those in the thirties and were not characterized by efforts at union-busting. Union leaders and management recognized the need for cooperation, and they generally accepted the structure of the political economy and limited their disputes to issues of wages and working conditions that did not threaten the larger system. But he is quite correct that Taft-Hartley did hamper efforts at organization—especially in the South—and in service areas and in activities dominated by small business.⁵⁰

Shifting his focus, Hamby has also raised another issue: "Bernstein's complaint that the Truman-liberal objectives were shallow and limited, to the neglect of fundamental problems . . . , despite [Bernstein's] protests, [is made] with little reference to the limitations upon both political possibility and reform conceptualization that existed in the 1940s." Admittedly, in my few essays that briefly raise these issues of the limited goals of liberalism, only a few paragraphs deal explicitly with the problems of political possibility and of reform conceptualization. Technically, then, Hamby is correct: there is "little reference." But does he mean "little reference"? Or does he mean there are conceptual shortcomings?—I think the latter criticism is what he intends to communicate.

⁴⁹Bernstein, "Economic Policies," in Richard Kirkendall, ed., *The Truman Period As a Research Field* (Columbia, Mo., 1967), pp. 98–100 and 108; "Charting a Course Between Inflation and Depression," *Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*, 66 (January 1968), pp. 53–64, and especially n. 15.

⁵⁰On polls, see *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 11 (Spring 1947), 150; and Hadley Cantril, with Mildred Strunk, eds., *Public Opinion, 1935–1946* (Princeton, 1951), p. 351; Gallup Poll, August 12, 1945, in George Gallup, ed., *The Gallup Poll* (New York, 1972), p. 519.

My work has dealt briefly but explicitly with these matters and anticipated and considered the major issues that Hamby has raised. In the late forties, as I have stressed elsewhere, there were bolder and more accurate conceptualizations on the Left. The issue is, in some measure then, why were the administration and much of liberalism more limited? Hamby, with some wavering, seems to imply that the administration might have been much bolder in its hopes as well as actions, but it was constrained by the actual limits of the system or by a sense of the limits. Probably, the administration's sense of the limits of the system explains why it often asked for so little. But, on the basis of the available materials, there is no evidence that the President and most of his advisers had a deeper understanding of many of America's problems and that they were chafing because they had to conceal their limited vision and hopes and greatly moderate their legislative programs. Obviously, there is the larger question of why the administration and many liberals understood so much less about America's problems than did the Left at the time—a point that Hamby obliquely concedes. My fragmentary answer is that "ideology" and individual experiences made the difference. For many liberals who had experienced upward mobility, their own successes limited their perceptions and led them to assume that their rise up the social ladder marked the general erosion of poverty and perhaps even of a large lower class. Unlike Hamby, who is both willing to concede that the transformation of liberal thought occurred in the Truman years and eager to place it in the Eisenhower years, I think that the marked shift occurred after the slight recession of 1949–1950, when the fears of depression collapsed, and during the Korean War.

Obviously, there is need for a sustained analysis of the changes in liberalism in the postwar years—a problem that Hamby has been studying. Ideally, such analysts will move well beyond the administration to examine the different responses of various organized groups (including organized labor) and of intellectuals—for example, Arthur M. Schlesinger, John K. Galbraith, David Riesman, and Daniel Bell as well as Dwight MacDonald, who abandoned his radicalism, and C. Wright Mills, who moved more fully toward radicalism. More importantly, there is need for a study, or studies, examining the limits of the politicoeconomic system and its relationship to the perceptions by various groups of political possibility, of social problems, and of social needs and conceptions of workable reform. Such analyses should be sensitive to issues of power and the class structure and attentive to theories of corporate liberalism, hegemony, and imperialism.⁵¹

⁵¹See Richard Gillam, "C. Wright Mills: An Intellectual Biography" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1972); and Richard King, *The Party of Eros: Radical Social Thought and the Realm of Freedom* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972).

WE HAVE COME a long way from the time when the standard college textbook account of the Truman administration began with the familiar quotation attributed to Speaker Sam Rayburn: "Truman was right on all the big things and wrong on all the little ones." Harry S Truman, one leading journalist wrote, was the "man of big decisions." Now serious questions have been raised by prominent historians as to whether Truman was really "right" on all those "big decisions." Natural admiration for the courageous and determined little man from Independence who assumed the Presidency under the worst possible circumstances has faded before an increased questioning of the correctness of his decisions and policies. Coming to office in the spring of 1945, Truman had to make far-reaching decisions that shaped the future world order in Europe, Asia, the Mediterranean—and at home. The United States was emerging from the wake of fifteen years of doubt and turbulence left by depression and war to face the uncertainties of a new world. The war had unleashed powerful new forces of change, and Truman's response to them not only set the tone for his administration but also helped shape American society as it would exist for the quarter century after V-J Day.

Because of these circumstances, it is not surprising that many historians have evidenced considerable interest in the Truman period. The thirty-third President and his administration have become a focal point for research—much like the interest in the New Deal among researchers during the 1950s. Interest has been intensified to an undetermined degree by the central geographical location of the Truman Library in Independence, the genial and helpful staff of hard-working archivists under Dr. Brooks and now Dr. Zobrist, and an imaginative and generous grants-in-aid program sponsored by the Truman Institute, which enables scholars to devote large blocks of time to their research. The result has been a flurry of research activity at Independence as well as in other research libraries throughout the nation.

The essays by Ferrell, Gardner, Hamby, and Sitkoff indicate just how much has been accomplished during the past ten years. Our storehouse of information is indeed much richer and our perspectives much sharper. The textbook accounts of ten years ago now seem trite and hopelessly simple-minded. These four new essays provide a useful benchmark by which to judge the progress made in the development of the Truman

era as a research field during the past decade of scholarly effort. They are especially interesting to read in contrast to the essays published in 1967 in the first Truman research volume. At that time few scholarly works of major importance could be cited by the contributors, who were forced to present tentative hypotheses for future testing by scholars and to list many important topics that deserved attention.

The 1966 conference at the Truman Library stands out in my own mind as a turning point in Truman historiography. Although not clearly evident in the published essays, the conference was the place where several dissident interpretations of the Truman record began to coalesce into an identifiable "revisionist" school. Several young historians launched an aggressive critique of the Truman foreign policy, much to the astonishment of several guests and participants. Berman raised serious questions about Truman's record on civil rights and civil liberties, and Bernstein presented a penetrating critique of his economic policies. To several participants, the general tenor of criticism seemed shockingly heretical, but to those of us who were already well acquainted with the Truman period and had worked through our share of manuscript materials, their interpretations seemed to be little more than a potpourri of the angry voices of Harold Ickes, Chester Bowles, and Henry A. Wallace, with a dash of Samuel Lubell tossed in for good measure.

That conference occurred at a pivotal point in America's recent past. The Johnson administration's escalation of the conflict in Vietnam was under way with a fiery vengeance, and the angry protest demonstrations that it triggered were already much in evidence throughout the land. The civil rights movement was disintegrating, a large segment of it in the process of embracing the militancy of such advocates as Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown. Malcolm X had been dead for less than a year, and the flames and terror of Watts were still vividly etched in the minds of us all. "Burn, baby, burn!!" had already become a popular slogan of rebellion, and perhaps we all gloomily recognized that several more long, hot summers lay before us. The tranquility of many college and university campuses had been shattered by the voices of discontent. The "restructuring" of higher education had already begun in the wake of the confrontation between Mario Savio and the academic establishment at Berkeley. The "other America" had been rediscovered just a few years earlier, and the Great Society's much-proclaimed War on Poverty was just leaving the planning tables and entering its first round of fitful skirmishes. The perplexing dilemma of environmental pollution, long the concern of a few lonely critics, was beginning to take on the appearance of a popular crusade. And perhaps most significant of all, the long-developing rebellion of youth had erupted in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. The "Hippie" movement, complete with the glorification of hallucinogenic drugs, free sex, and love beads, had shaken middle America to its foundations.

It was all a blur—that strange but ominous mélange of strident voices, of violent protest, of revolutionary rhetoric. But it was also manifestly evident that “the Establishment” was under a concerted, if uncertain, challenge from many segments of American society. The bumper baby crop of World War II—that generation of Americans who could not recall either the suffering of the depression or the sacrifices of the war—had now reached young adulthood. Many of that new generation, as well as their uneasy allies in the over-thirty group, were obviously determined that far-reaching changes in American society must occur. A young Tom Hayden had aptly summarized the nagging and perplexing discontent of many young Americans a few years earlier at the creation of Students for a Democratic Society: “We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.”

Such then was the scene that helped produce the “New Left” within the usually stuffy chambers of the historical profession. These radical historians have sought to reinterpret United States history in an effort to lend historical credence to the social and political rebellions of the moment. Although Irwin Unger’s much-discussed essay in the *American Historical Review* (1967) provided a reasonably accurate picture of the New Left and the ideological divisions it had produced within the history guild, the essay stopped short of the Truman period.

The Truman years have understandably attracted radical historians, because the immediate postwar years are critical to the development of a credible New Left history. It was during the tumultuous years of post-war America that the Cold War became the dominant fact of national life. In these years also, the “military-industrial complex” proved its staying power and found ways to thrive within a society officially “at peace.” The Truman years also saw an expansion of the movement of black Americans to fight for equality and human decency. At the same time, under the leadership of the junior Senator from Wisconsin, the American right seemed to threaten the destruction of civil liberties at home. At times, this disquieting movement seemed to be aided and abetted by an unsure administration, the President himself engaging in extremist red-baiting rhetoric in an apparent effort to get his new initiatives in foreign policy accepted by a reluctant Congress and a skeptical public.

Then there is the personality of the President to be considered as a factor. As Hamby comments, Truman has come to be personally despised by many New Left historians because his own image (of which he was in fact quite proud) was that of a broker between power blocs and that of an adept practitioner of the old art of the politically possible. He “symbolizes the ‘old politics’ of the machines, the unions, and the ethnic groups,” Hamby notes. “From such a viewpoint, Truman epitomizes everything the New Left finds wrong with American politics—its tendency

to blur ideological distinctions, to engage in group coalition politics at the expense of the unorganized and underprivileged, to produce political leaders who practice compromise rather than commitment."

The four feature essays in this volume accurately reflect the conflicts raging within the confines of Truman historiography. To a considerable extent, the division aligns the "liberals" (or "traditionalists") on one side, pointing to the administration's extension of New Deal economic and welfare policies during a time of conservative reaction while it simultaneously mounted an effective and imaginative foreign policy to meet the strong Soviet challenge abroad. On the other side are the "radicals" (or "revisionists," or "New Leftists"), taking their cue from C. Wright Mills and William A. Williams, who see in Truman's domestic record a gigantic hoax perpetrated upon the American people under a perverted form of "liberalism" and who believe Truman's foreign policy to be the fundamental factor in eroding mutual respect and trust between the Soviets and the United States.

Thus far the debate has been most rigorous in the field of foreign policy, although the important questions of loyalty and civil liberties indicate that the line of demarcation between domestic and foreign matters is blurred. At this point, the battle has yet to be won, and one may reasonably anticipate it to grow even more strenuous (and rancorous!) in the years to come. The war of footnotes and blistering book reviews is far from finished.

Gardner is one of the most talented revisionist historians at work in the quagmire of postwar foreign policy. His essay not only presents a knowledgeable and useful review of recent scholarship but also raises a bundle of important questions that deserve extensive scholarly attention. Throughout, Gardner has remained true to his essential revisionist position and has developed a strong thesis predicated upon a subtle but pervasive assumption of the primacy of economic matters in the development of America's postwar foreign policy. His stimulating and thoughtful essay also holds true to another central revisionist premise—a persistent doubt as to either the moral or political correctness of American policy. If, as he pointedly asks in quoting John J. McCloy, the purpose of NATO was not "to deter an impending or threatened Soviet military attack," then what was it? To Gardner, the answer is obvious.

Yet Gardner writes in a tempered and somewhat surprisingly tentative vein. He has not committed a common error of some revisionists in writing on Truman's foreign policy—that is, overstatement of fact and unwarranted conclusions based upon insufficient evidence.

Where Gardner approaches his material in a restrained and measured manner, Ferrell has elected to attack revisionism with the subtlety of a jilted lover wielding a poleax. The vexatious tone of Ferrell's essay is reminiscent of "give 'em hell, Harry" himself. This is unfortunate, because I

fear that his belligerent approach will drive many a reader into the revisionist camp before giving due consideration to his major arguments. Ferrell has raised many serious questions which the revisionists will ignore at their peril. He calls into court many of the weaknesses of revisionist scholarship, especially the dubious use (or even manipulation) of sources and the development of powerful interpretations based upon questionable assumptions not warranted by available evidence. Because my own instinctive reaction is to agree with the traditionalist viewpoint of Truman foreign policy—meanwhile grudgingly conceding some points to the revisionist—I regret that Ferrell has attempted to argue his considerable case in such a contentious manner. Perhaps he too suffers from an acute case of the generation gap.

The differences readily evident between Sitkoff and Hamby summarize well the divergence between the revisionist and the traditionalist on matters domestic. Their disagreements stem largely from conflicting assumptions and perceptions of the American political system and the manner in which change is effected. As his thoughtful and well-written essay demonstrates, Hamby is one of the most effective of the traditionalist Truman historians at work today. His essay reflects well the general interpretation and assumptions that characterize what I would label the "Missouri School" of Truman scholars, which has grown out of Kirkendall's seminars at the University of Missouri-Columbia. During the past decade, over a dozen doctoral dissertations have been written on Truman, his administration, and closely related subjects under Kirkendall's supervision. Several of these studies have already been published in article or monograph form, and others are on publishers' schedules. Although the Missouri School has tended to emphasize the positive accomplishments of the Truman administration—and perhaps at times to excuse some of its failures by blaming political powers beyond its control—it has at the same time recognized the limitations of that record. It has not attempted, however, to portray Truman as either a hopeless incompetent or, conversely, as a willful tool of sinister forces. Rather, it has attempted to view him as a sincere and dedicated American who faced tremendous problems and attempted to deal with them to the best of his abilities. Perhaps because of Kirkendall's heavy emphasis upon the research methodologies of the sister social sciences, the group has tended to give more emphasis to such factors as public opinion and congressional conservatism than the revisionists.

The Missouri School has sought to study the Truman administration within a reform continuum of progressivism and the New Deal.* My

*Because the debate largely exists between supporters of the New Deal and radicals on the left, one can only express the wish that a solid history from the conservative view might be written. But to my knowledge no enterprising conservative scholar is at work on any major Truman topic.

comments in 1967 summarize this view: Truman "preserved the social welfare programs of the New Deal and, through strong executive action and some enabling legislation, strengthened considerably many existing programs. . . . Circumstances prevented Truman from establishing many new, exciting reform programs, but in a time of public indifference and political stalemate, he labored to provide the American people with his conception of a Fair Deal."

Unlike the radicals, the Missouri School has not attempted to draw moral judgments as to Truman's motivations, or "purity of heart," as Hamby aptly puts it. The group has characteristically been less harsh in judging Truman's record as a political leader than the radicals. This may be a consequence of the fact that most of these scholars were born and reared in the Midwest and were, in the main, educated at state universities. The Truman personality type, which strikes many of the radicals as uncouth and repugnant, is one that many Midwesterners readily recognize, can appreciate, and can identify with. It is not just a coincidence that many of the radical historians are natives of large eastern cities, do not have a first-hand understanding of Main Street, and are, in general, graduates of prestigious private colleges and universities, where many now teach.

Thus, Sitkoff's essay differs most strikingly from Hamby's in the frame of reference in which it is cast. Sitkoff's radical critique—admittedly oversimplified and overdrawn—is grounded upon an idealized view of the workings of the democratic process, an unrealistic (in my opinion) conception of the power of Presidents to control events and, one suspects, a heady dose of presentism that derives its assumptions from the 1960s, not the 1940s. Especially evident, in sharp contrast to Hamby, a native Missourian, is a strong aversion to middle-class values and corporate capitalism.

It is difficult to judge Sitkoff's effort because the reader gets the feeling that his heart is not really in it. Perhaps he is playing a role or simply attempting to climb aboard the popular bandwagon of revisionist scholarship. Whatever the explanation, his efforts amount to something less than a convincing case for revisionism. Perhaps my skepticism as to Sitkoff's commitment to radicalism is that, unlike others, he does not reflect a strong personal dislike of Truman and the value system he represented. In some respects the revisionists have disliked Truman for the same reasons that the intellectuals of the 1960s turned upon Lyndon Johnson. Each was too much the loyal party functionary, too often the promoter of special-interest politics, too often unsympathetic with intellectual causes, too strongly committed to the use of military power to "contain" communism. And as the complete political man, each dared play politics even with such concerns as civil rights for black Americans.

One can attempt to boil the radical position down to basics. Truman

was not a foe of corporate capitalism, and so his economic policies are subject to searing attack; he did not devote his full energies to the cause of black emancipation, and therefore his record on civil rights (even though it makes that of FDR pale in comparison) is dismissed as an "ambiguous legacy"; he failed to stem the rising tide of red-baiting, and so he is portrayed as the perpetrator of McCarthyism; because his Fair Deal did not enjoy entire legislative success, he is dismissed either as a failure as a legislative leader or as a political charlatan who was insincere in his advocacy of reform and who merely played upon the sentiments of the poor and powerless to win votes in 1948.

The radical critique easily laps over into foreign policy. And that is the nub of the matter. The universality of the Truman Doctrine inevitably leads to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. Whether Truman is blamed for starting the Cold War with an aggressive and wrongheaded foreign policy or viewed as a weak and helpless cipher controlled by powerful men and/or overwhelming economic forces beyond his control depends upon which radical historian one chooses to read.

All of this is well and good. Such clash of interpretations is the stuff that makes late-afternoon graduate seminars at least tolerable, and they provide handy questions for doctoral qualifying examinations. One can only hope that the debate that is currently raging will—the inevitable but lamentable personality conflicts between scholars notwithstanding—also further our understanding of the Truman period.

With the completion of the first decade of scholarly attention to the Truman period, an assessment is in order. The number of scholars—comprised largely of doctoral students and younger women and men seeking to establish their academic reputations—that has descended upon the Truman Library in Independence has been impressive. I can recall the deserted research room during my first summer visit to the library in 1961. On many days I was the lone researcher, and often the only person I would talk with except the ever-present archival assistant would be the still peppy Mr. Truman, who would occasionally wander through the room to show off to important visitors some prized pictures displayed on its walls. He would stop and chat for a few minutes, inquiring vaguely about my topic and progress, and then bounce back to his office. Ten years later I returned for another research visit and was astounded by the large number of researchers busily at work, surrounded by small mountains of gray archival boxes, their typewriters busily clicking away. At times it seemed that if one were a few minutes late in the morning he would not find a place to work.

The Truman period has, obviously, attracted many talented and energetic scholars. The number of completed dissertations to be found on the Truman Library's shelves mounts steadily in number. So too do

the monographs and scholarly articles. Yet, in some respects we still know little more than we did ten years ago. On many crucial questions, as Sitkoff succinctly puts it, "we are still a long way from knowing just who did what and why." The conflict of issues has been sharpened, and the length of bibliographies increased, but we still lack authoritative studies on many critical issues.

We need most of all a solid administrative history to replace Cabell Phillips. One would hope that someone with the talent and energy of Bernstein—who probably is more familiar with the primary sources than any other person—would undertake such a task. The role played by White House insiders is also important, and thus far we have only sketchy ideas as to the role played by key advisers in the formulation of policy. The grim judgment as to the quality of key staff personnel drawn by Sitkoff reflects the conventional wisdom given by the press about the "Missouri Gang." But is it fair? Is it right? One hopes that the ambitious study of the White House staff under way by Franklin D. Mitchell will help answer these questions.

Equally important is the need for a solid biography of Mr. Truman. In view of Truman's significant role in the history of modern America, it seems incredible that we still lack a decent biography. Kirkendall has been at work on a multivolume biography for several years, but his heavy teaching and professional obligations have slowed his rate of progress considerably. But until he does publish, the literature on the Truman period will be incomplete.

Beyond doubt the inane and archaic academic processes that place such a high premium upon publication led many a young Truman scholar to direct his energies toward the publication of an early monograph or series of articles to impress tenure and promotion committees. Many of these studies are of minor value. It is to be hoped that, as the first generation of scholars moves inexorably into middle age, its members will settle down to produce the major works of their careers—thoughtful and richly detailed biographies and topical studies of far-reaching import. The availability of important manuscript and document collections to support such scholarship is steadily increasing. Already vital State Department materials related to the postwar period are open to scholars. The industrious acquisitions program at the Truman Library has made available important collections. Until President Truman's personal papers become available, however, it is unlikely that a definitive administrative history or biography can be written.

I strongly endorse Hamby's call for historians to move on to Phase II of Truman historiography. We need to go beyond the dissertation-monograph stage (the "Truman and . . ." approach, as Sitkoff calls it), and begin work on substantial topics that cut across traditional political or administrative history lines. Many of the great historical events of the

postwar period were affected only marginally, if at all, by the occupant of the White House and his coterie of advisers. It is quite possible that the news media and the presidential libraries themselves have tended to place an undue amount of emphasis upon the Presidency.

Many vital developments that have been neglected by historians need mature and detailed attention. The impact of science and technology upon modern America has been pervasive, yet the historian has barely begun to investigate this important subject. It is interesting to note that not one of the four essays mentioned the establishment of the National Science Foundation in 1949, although that government agency has had an enormous impact upon American life with its educational and research programs.

The postwar period will ultimately be recognized by historians as the time of the completion of the great urban transformation of America. It will also be seen as the time when decision makers in the Housing and Home Finance Agency and other federal offices sought to encourage and facilitate—not discourage—the movement to suburbia by the white middle class. It was the time when Truman secured approval of a little-understood program of slum clearance and redevelopment (later called “urban renewal”) that would lead to both creative and counterproductive efforts in the next quarter-century. Many important topics related to the crucial topic of urbanization need exploration. For starters we could use a solid study of why the Roosevelt and Truman administrations failed to perceive (or, more critically, *ignored*) the urban dilemma. My own forthcoming study of the urbanization of America between 1940 and 1970 should provide some of the answers. But on life in the cities, much remains for the historian to investigate.

The historical profession has much to offer the reading public on other crucial questions of our time. It can do much to help elucidate the complexity of modern problems without stooping to a perverse form of presentism. The conundrum of race in America has been treated more thoroughly than most topics, although we do not yet have a good survey of racial relations in the twentieth century that includes the postwar period. While many historians have understandably been lured to study the plight of the black American, little has been done about Spanish-speaking Americans. The television character of Archie Bunker has attracted much attention to the attitudes and situations of white ethnics; the historian should recognize the opportunities for imaginative scholarship in tracing the changing position of these groups within American society over the past century. The sociologists have nearly cornered the market upon studies of poverty in America, but the historian has many insights to contribute. Of special interest in this area of investigation would be why Truman and his advisers failed to perceive the persistence of poverty within the expanding postwar American economy. We are aware of the

tremendous power and influence commanded by the contemporary mass media in the United States, and it would seem apparent that we deserve and need a better analysis than has been provided thus far by Vice President Spiro Agnew. It was, after all, during the Truman era that television sets invaded the American home. The great social upheavals of the 1960s are undoubtedly deeply rooted in the highly mobile and disoriented society of World War II and its aftermath. A historian well versed in the methodologies of the sociologist and the psychologist should write a thoughtful social history of the "shook-up" wartime generation.

Such topics as these, of course, cut across the Truman period. Some of them perhaps touch upon it only in a transitory manner, but they helped to shape the society that Truman sought to govern. They call for imaginative and resourceful historians who are armed with the research tools of the social sciences. They call for mature judgment and unique insights. And they require talented writers who can communicate these findings to a wide readership without the debilitating crutches of sociological jargon.

Important topics also remain for the traditional political historian, although many overlap administrative lines. Hamby correctly points to the dearth of useful studies of the domestic impact of World War II, although several studies under way should help close this yawning gap. What is especially needed is extensive historical treatment of the Eisenhower years. The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library lies just 150 miles west of Independence, but it has been visited by only a small number of scholars. Its relative isolation on the broad plains of central Kansas, as well as the lack of a grants program, have discouraged young (and often impoverished) graduate students and struggling assistant professors from journeying to Abilene. It is obvious, however, that many of the important programs and policies of the Truman administration extended into, and often beyond, Eisenhower's tenure in office.

The Truman period as a field for serious historical inquiry has come of age during the past decade. Much research remains to be done, and certainly much that has been done needs redoing. Yet, one can reflect with considerable satisfaction upon the impressive body of historical literature now available on the Truman administration. In 1962 the second Conference of Scholars met at Independence, and at that time few of the twenty or so participants—many of them prominent historians—could speak with confidence on substantive questions involving Mr. Truman and his record. As I reflect upon what has been accomplished since that conference, a popular cigarette commercial comes to mind.

We've come a long way. But we still have a long way to go.

DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS, the Truman Presidency has become an ever more exciting field for scholarly work, as evidenced by the now many published articles, essays, and monographs on the subject. And complementing this literature is a growing number of still unpublished dissertations that, like the material already in print, have provided us with a vast amount of new data, fresh information, and a more sophisticated analysis of the 1945-1952 era.

Now that work on the Truman administration is well under way, it should be possible, on the basis of current evidence, to develop some useful generalizations about this important period in American and world history. But the four contributors to this volume indicate that they do not agree as to what constitutes a useful generalization. Hamby, Gardner, and Sitkoff present their views with rigor, clarity, and commendable thoughtfulness, and, despite their differences, they have much to say which students of the field should find helpful.

Hamby's provocative analysis of a number of controversial topics in the realm of government and politics deserves some comment and discussion. To begin with, he suggests that the work of revisionist historians is somehow associated with the New Left mobilization of the 1960s. It should be pointed out, however, that the seminal revisionist studies of Samuel Lubell and William A. Williams first appeared in the 1950s. By lumping revisionism together with New Leftism (guilt by association) Hamby also implies that the revisionist critique of the Truman administration is nothing more than a partisan political and ideological undertaking. This is, I submit, an inadequate view of the work of a number of individuals who happen to believe the historian's primary task is to pursue the truth, not to defend a cause, and who also happen to believe that the New Left has played a positive role in advancing a systematic examination of the function of ideology, power, and class organization in the modern liberal state.

Hamby makes a real contribution when he emphasizes the need for more research into the factional alignments within the Democratic party as well as the tapping of public opinion data and other material relating to electoral attitudes and behavior. And his suggestion that a history of the Eighty-first Congress be prepared to complement Susan Hartmann's *Truman and the 80th Congress* is a good one. But why are

these proposed research topics so important? To raise a point not discussed in Hamby's essay, the results of such scholarly investigation should enhance our understanding of how the Democratic party came to terms with the demands of Truman's foreign policy and his domestic political needs. Or to state the problem in slightly altered terms: The tracing of the political careers of such important congressional figures as Hubert Humphrey, Paul Douglas, Richard Russell, Carl Vinson, and John McCormack might help to clarify the process by which the national Democratic party allied with organized labor, the South, the political machines, and the academics in the early years of the Cold War.

When discussing Truman's civil liberties record, Hamby merely recapitulates the now standard argument against what he considers to be the revisionist position. Suffice to say that Hamby's attack on Athan Theoharis's analysis does not, in any substantive way, undermine the validity of Theoharis's contribution. Indeed, what Hamby says about Theoharis underscores the fact that those who defend the "old politics from every conceivable angle," as Hamby puts it, have yet to devise a scenario that explains away the Truman administration's crudely anti-civil libertarian, crisis-oriented politics, which did contribute significantly to the coming of McCarthyism.

What is mainly interesting about Hamby's discussion of Truman and civil rights is the structure of his attack on the revisionists. First of all, he charges that revisionist historians who have produced much of the existing literature on the subject are full of presentist bias. It is regrettable that Hamby has failed to read more critically, otherwise he would have discovered some nuances in tone and approach that distinguish one work from another. Next, by stressing the issue of how revisionists have viewed Truman's sincerity in the cause of civil rights, as if it were a major component of their analysis, Hamby has dragged in a red herring to confuse and complicate the problem. For the purpose of clarification, it should be mentioned that most historians who have written about civil rights did not view the question of Truman's sincerity as a serious issue. They focused instead on the historical context in which Truman operated, a context that compelled him to move from point A to point B and beyond. By approaching the issue of Truman's commitment dialectically, through an analysis of the complex interaction between events and options, motivation and belief, revisionists have achieved a scholarly breakthrough of sufficient quality to impress even Hamby.

Sitkoff's paper provides us with a lucid and temperately phrased restatement of the revisionist case against the traditional or standard textbook interpretations offered by some of the best-known figures in the profession. And it is only recently that those textbook interpretations have been exposed as nothing more than a reflection of intelligently organized prejudice, not the product of sustained scholarly inquiry. Or

to phrase it somewhat differently: Truman revisionism is not challenging a body of established work, as was true in the revisionist attack in the fields of, say, Reconstruction and Progressivism. It is, rather, simply filling a void created when reputable historians who were writing about the period were discovered to possess not a stitch of research to cover their generalizations.

How may Truman scholarship be usefully reoriented? Sitkoff makes various proposals worthy of careful consideration. Among them: the need to move beyond the presidential synthesis into the area of social and intellectual history, and the desirability of using models and insights from several other cognate disciplines to improve our view of the post-1945 field. Of course, careful monographic research is still urgently needed in a number of areas to tell us what happened and why. From this material major syntheses can be shaped. And if other fields in American history are any guide, the more detail we get, the harder it will be to produce a synthesis that will integrate the known information—which is all to the good, since neither the revisionists nor the traditionalists have a final lock on the truth. As Hamby suggests, we will know more confidently where we stand as soon as a one solid overview of the period is published. Perhaps Bert Cochran's recently published study of the Truman Presidency will provide students with a good beginning.¹

Gardner, in his essay, analyzes well the positions taken by various revisionists and realists who have written about the origins and development of the Cold War. He also performs a useful service by stressing the need for more research on topics that have long been of peripheral concern to most students of the Cold War—Latin America and the Far East. This global perspective serves as a healthy corrective to the Eurocentric approach of so many students of American foreign policy, who simply followed Byrnes, Marshall, and, above all, Acheson across the Atlantic.

It is unfortunate, however, that Gardner's piece was prepared before the appearance of Joyce and Gabriel Kolko's *The Limits of Power*, a magisterial tome which must now surely stand as the most brilliantly conceptualized and widely researched revisionist study in print. What makes this book so interesting from Gardner's perspective is that it attempts to answer a number of questions he (Gardner) raises in the last pages of his essay. Whether the Kolkos have succeeded, in Gardner's terms, in moving the debate over the Cold War to a new level of understanding and analysis is for the individual reader to determine.

¹Editor's note: The book to which Berman refers (Bert Cochran, *Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency*) was published by Funk & Wagnalls early in 1973.

THE EXERCISE of reading the draft chapters submitted for inclusion in this volume preparatory to writing these comments underscored anew for me both the outstanding promise of modern scholarship and its weaknesses. All four authors agree on one thing, whatever their other sharp differences: There has been a wealth of scholarly writing on the Truman period and on matters that developed from it. However many questions of interpretation have been raised about this literature, its quantity and quality probably rank well above any similar effort relating to a single presidential administration and its context. Anyone who has worked his way through the outpourings that followed the Wilson incumbency, for instance, will surely agree.

On the other hand, a nonhistorian such as myself cannot help but be somewhat dismayed at the almost total preoccupation in these essays with the good old scholarly game of attacking and revising each others' central theses. If I may risk an analogy that may appear male chauvinistic, one is somewhat embarrassed to see in this kind of scholarly disputation echoes of the recent debate over long versus short skirts and of many previous "philosophical" discussions in the world of style and female attire. (I suppose these days it is chauvinistic to limit the reference to female fashions, in view of the gorgeous plumage of the contemporary male!)

Chauvinism aside, there are styles and fads in scholarship as in other forms of human endeavor, and they are perhaps no better illustrated than in these essays and the literature upon which they comment. Let me hasten to say that I by no means claim that political science is free from faddism or that historians are the chief practitioners. Quite the contrary. In fact, I agree heartily with Hamby that social scientists often write as if they did not care whether they talked to anyone but themselves. All I can claim, perhaps, is that political scientists have sought their fads in somewhat different directions.

Of late, colleagues in my discipline have fought one another over variant methods rather than over interpretations of substantive phenomena. A prewar, New Deal-spawned fad of descriptive/hortatory writing gave way in recent decades to more analytical, mathematical, "hard data," behavioral approaches. And now, of course, while young historians have been responding to the contemporary scene and the Vietnam war by reinterpreting the substance of both the foreign and domestic policies of

the postwar period, young political scientists have embarked on a new quest for relevance. Their focus now is on what is wrong with the American political system, and their effort is to portray its injustices and its failure to achieve genuine participation.

In a sense, we are witnessing a convergence among disciplines like history, political science, and sociology. All are stressing with a new intensity—almost, one might say, a new-found evangelism—not only a revisionist approach to their fields of study, but also the advocacy of radical solutions to apparent problems in the wider community. Even in the area of methodology, differences are narrowing between history and the social science disciplines, as illustrated by the call for more psycho-history by one of the authors in this volume. In political science we are returning to the more descriptive, issue-concerned, and prescriptive approaches of the past while historians are becoming more mathematical and psychologically oriented.

These oscillations and shifts of fad and style are of course not to be wholly deplored. In an imperfect world, where ultimate truth seems thus far to have eluded all disciplines, the kind of dialectic that these swings of the pendulum represent is undoubtedly the best guarantee we have that somehow, if gradually, we are getting closer to basic verities. The principal point that suggested itself to me as I read the essays was not the futility of the efforts they represented, because I feel they are far from futile. Only if we become self-conscious about the dialectics of scholarly effort can we hope to progress toward more valid interpretations. Rather, the question that recurred was whether the theories being used to organize interpretations of the Truman and post-Truman era are the most fruitful.

I write to some degree as an outsider and can thus perhaps be permitted some assertions and suggestions that, coming from a historian, would be unacceptable or even outrageous. I proceed on this basis. I may also display some disciplinary chauvinism in the process, but discussion across disciplinary divides is also fashionable and often fruitful.

The basis of the debate in these four essays is ideological. That is, the essential interpretive themes that have been applied to the analysis of the Truman era in the literature on which the four authors comment are ideologically rooted. Basically, there are two such themes, which might be labeled the liberal and the radical approaches. The liberal, as Sitkoff points out, grows out of the New Deal and has been perpetuated by the generation of scholars—in virtually all of the related disciplines—who came to intellectual maturity under the vast shadow of Franklin Roosevelt.

This liberal New Deal theme is a dual one. For students of the Presidency as an institution it has meant the sanctification of an interpretation of the presidential office that, among other things, places it at the innovative center of the American political system, gives it basic responsibility for meeting national problems, tries to protect it from an obstructionist

legislative branch, and sees its occupants as successes if they are activist, politically skillful, vigorous leaders, and failures otherwise. All of which merely involves describing an idealized vision of what the FDR Presidency was seen to be and offering it as the generalized model.

The other half of the liberal New Deal theme is its liberalism: its "liberal" substantive policy emphasis. This too is drawn from the policy initiatives associated with the Roosevelt years. It is this emphasis, primarily, that Stikoff discusses when he suggests that much of the evaluation of the Truman administration has focused on whether or not he was a true successor to FDR and genuinely attempted to carry forward his liberal initiatives, or whether he was relatively unliberal in this sense, or indeed, in some areas, antiliberal.

The radical critique has much less to say about the nature of the Presidency, though, influenced by the Vietnam experience, especially during the Johnson years, it is far less sanguine about the universal efficacy and desirability of presidential power and leadership. Its emphasis is essentially policy oriented, in any event. It sees fundamental problems in American society and in policy that involve civil rights, civil liberties, "have" versus "have-not" groups, corporate power, and so forth. And it generally asserts that the Truman administration (and indeed the Roosevelt, for that matter) did not succeed in solving these problems in any basic way and did not really try or want to try.

Now my point in all this discussion has far less to do with any effort to decide which approach to the Truman period is the more valid but is, rather, to question the usefulness of both or of any similarly ideological interpretation. To be in a position to interpret a period of executive incumbency in terms of whether it advanced a particular philosophical approach to national problems or not, or in terms of its choice of one ideology over another, one must be able to assume that the system operates in ideological terms. One must be able to assume, that is, that the leaders at least, if not their followers and the citizenry at large, see government as the business of pursuing goals that are ideological or that at least collectively form a more or less consistent ideological pattern.

More specifically, one must be able to assume that Franklin Roosevelt's liberalism was self-conscious and that he was consistent in his choices of a liberal or a more conservative line. For an ideological interpretive approach to be useful or even valid it is not enough to be able to say in retrospect that, on balance, some portion of the individual acts of an administration had a collective liberal cast to them. It has always been too easy in interpreting American politics to conclude that, because a party or administration has more or less consistently served the interests of one configuration of economic interests or another, it was pursuing a liberal or conservative line. Coincidences among perceived political advantages in a series of decisions do not add up to ideology.

Can one assume that Franklin Roosevelt was some kind of doctrinaire liberal? Or Harry Truman? I think not, and to support my view I would offer two arguments, briefly stated. First, FDR was notoriously inconsistent and pragmatic in policy terms. That the net result by 1938 looked "liberal" is less the outcome of conscious design, I would submit, than the post-hoc labeling of a portion of the policy accomplishments achieved during the first two Roosevelt terms as "liberal." Or, put another way, Roosevelt liberalism was in no small measure the cumulative result of a series of efforts to cater to the various elements in the emerging "Roosevelt coalition" of voter groups. If he saw his administration as liberal, it is almost certain that he too did so after the fact, and in a pretty undoc-trinaire way.

Space permits no more than a word or two about Harry Truman as a liberal. His administration, also, as these essays point out, went through phases. The early period, illustrated by the threat to draft railroad strikers, was decidedly not liberal in cast, though the later, perhaps best exemplified by his national health insurance proposals, was. That some at least of this later "liberalism" was purely electoral in motivation seems highly likely, and it probably contributed considerably to the 1948 upset victory. It no doubt reflected the liberal convictions of some staffers around the President, who sold their ideas to him. Whether it made of Harry Truman—or his administration, over all—a genuinely liberal phenomenon is unlikely.

All of these alternatives boil down, in my mind, to the proposition that using liberal or radical categories to measure administrations is not very helpful. They may be useful if one is attempting to assess what the over-all cumulative impact of a period on the complexion of national policy has been, and to do so in shorthand terms that are generally understood in the intellectual community. But to analyze and measure an administration in terms of categories that were not self-consciously accepted or meaningful to the participants in that administration is to distort rather than to clarify.

My assertion is that American politics do not operate in terms of ideology. The most clear-cut efforts to inject ideological approaches to policy into presidential politics in recent years—the Goldwater candidacy in 1964 and that of George McGovern in 1972—make the point with devastating clarity. American politics, for good or ill, are pragmatic, and they seem destined to remain so despite the most concerted efforts to cast them in terms of ideology.

Thus, scholars who attempt to cram the data of an administration into conservative, liberal, or radical categories run the almost certain risk of distorting these data or of arriving at conclusions that bear only marginal relationship to reality. The problem is that we in academe must organize and categorize phenomena in order to make sense of them. We select

familiar themes around which to do this organizing—familiar because they have served in roughly parallel situations elsewhere, or because we find them congenial, or a combination of both. Most of us tend to be liberals or, as with our younger colleagues, devotees of the New Left. We thus naturally gravitate to organizing principles borrowed from analysis of European politics and which, not accidentally, are congenial to our own political preferences.

The fact of the matter is that we do not share an appreciation of these ideological categories or an acceptance of them as modes of viewing politics, with more than a small proportion of the citizenry and with relatively few national politicians. To the overwhelming bulk of the national community, politics are pragmatic: They are a process of solving one problem at a time, and a process in which the rhetoric (read: ideology) through which solutions are sold is far less important than “getting something passed.” Study after study has documented the inability of the public to see issues in other than specific, concrete, case-by-case, non-ideological terms.

In light of these differences in views, is it really useful to analyze an administration as if its central figure was aware of ideological categories to the extent that he consciously made decisions in terms of them and to rank his accomplishments accordingly? Suppose, as I think is normally the case, he in fact made decisions solely in terms of solving individual policy problems in the way that best balanced his political needs with his personal preferences? Then, little more than coincidence will operate to produce whatever correspondence exists between his record and its measure on a liberal yardstick. Or, to put the matter the other way round, it seems to me silly to damn a President for “playing politics,” thereby implying that he should have acted through ideological motivations but, through weakness or willfulness, did not. The American system, again for good or ill, gives the politician little choice but to play politics.

To the extent that there is any merit in the foregoing, I have been following in the time-honored revisionist tradition: destroying the analytical scheme of those whose work is being “revised.” Many revisionists stop there and leave unanswered the question as to what they would substitute for the approach they have demolished. I fear that I too must leave much of that question unanswered. I have nothing startling to offer in place of the ideological categories that I feel are less than useful.

Ultimately, we need better models of the American political process; models based on ideology are not adequate. Neither is the partially discredited group theory approach that was popular in political science a decade or two ago, and therefore, neither is Robert Dahl’s pluralism. But we urgently need to turn our attention to the contriving of a model

that *will* do the job. The new model will probably make room for ideology to the extent that it can be demonstrated to play a role in the decisional process and in the system at large. The new model must also, however, involve propositions about the nature and operation of the presidential institution *qua* institution as it has evolved in the period between FDR and Richard Nixon. There is no question but that new staff procedures and methods of gathering ideas for the program of the President have had an enormous impact on the direction of national policy development. But above all, it must be grounded on a realistic interpretation of the way policies are generated, enacted, and implemented, both individually and cumulatively.

This last point is probably the key one in my argument, and there may well turn out to be no more crucial juncture in our national history to make that assessment than the early 1970s. Can anyone seriously entertain the expectation that it will be possible to apply traditional liberal-conservative categories uncritically in the evaluation of the Nixon Presidency? Given the failure of the movement that culminated in the McGovern candidacy, will any serious student be able to avoid the conclusion that ideological politics simply do not work very well in the American context? And in the aftermath of Watergate, may we not need to focus anew on the institutional framework for policy making and revise basically the expected role of a strong, innovating Presidency?

We may not be in an "end of ideology" era, but we unquestionably are in a period in which the ideological categories inherited from the New Deal—and, yes, from the New Left too—are going to be less than helpful both to those who seek to solve pressing national problems and to those who try to study the process by which solutions are attempted in the arena of presidential politics.

Appendix A

HOLDINGS OF THE TRUMAN LIBRARY*

THE COLLECTIONS listed below have come to the Harry S. Truman Library primarily from former President Truman and from other persons who were active in the Truman administration or were otherwise associated with Mr. Truman. The Library is now urging an even larger number of such persons to deposit their personal papers in the collections for research use. A considerable number of them have already agreed to do so. These include former Cabinet officers, other officials of the Truman administration, and individuals who were significantly associated with Mr. Truman during some part of his career. In most cases the private papers of former government officials complement the official records of their agencies in the National Archives.

Papers and other historical materials in the Library are available to researchers whose study requires use of the unique resources of the depository. Such use is subject to any conditions that may be specified by the donor of the materials or by the Archivist of the United States. The Library has recently opened a significant number of papers previously closed by law, Government regulation or by instructions of the donors, but which, with the passage of time, can now be made available to researchers.

In addition to the papers, the Library has collections of books, transcripts of oral history interviews, microfilm, and audiovisual materials for the use of scholars.

Persons wishing to use papers and other materials should make advance application to the Director of the Library, informing him of the nature and purposes of their projects.

This list has been prepared by the staff of the Truman Library.

Benedict K. Zobrist
Director
Harry S. Truman Library

*This is a list of the holdings at the beginning of 1973. For information on additions, see the Library's publication *Historical Materials in the Harry S. Truman Library*.

MANUSCRIPTS

COLLECTIONS

The figures in brackets are the number of linear feet of shelving required for the collection.

- Acheson, Dean, Assistant Secretary of State, 1941-45; Under Secretary of State, 1945-47; Secretary of State, 1949-53: Papers, 1933-71 [26]
- Adams, Lina D., Receptionist, Democratic National Committee, 1946-50: Papers, 1940-62 [1]
- Alison, John R., Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Aeronautics, 1947-49: Papers, 1947-49 [1]
- Allen, George V., U.S. Ambassador to Iran, 1946-48: Papers, 1944-69 [-1]
- Allied Commission for Austria: Selected records (duplicates), 1946 and 1949-50 [1]
- Anderson, Clinton P., Secretary of Agriculture, 1945-48: Papers, 1945-48 [6]
- Andrews, Mark E., Chief of Procurement, U.S. Navy, 1945-46: Papers, 1942-46 [5]
- Andrews, Stanley, Administrator, Technical Cooperation Administration, 1951-53: Papers, 1935-71 [11]
- Anslinger, Harry J., United States Commissioner of Narcotics, 1946-63: Papers, 1946-68 [2]
- Arnold, Edwin G., Director, Far East Division, Economic Cooperation Administration, Mutual Security Agency, 1951-52: Papers, 1933-52 [-1]
- Aylward, James P., Political associate of Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1932-36 [-1]
- X Baldridge, Holmes, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Civil Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 1951-53: Papers pertaining to the 1952 steel seizure case, 1949-52 [-1]
- Barkley, Alben, Vice President of the United States, 1949-53: Transcripts of taped interviews with Sidney Shalett, 1953 [-1]
- Bell, David, Administrative Assistant to the President, 1951-53: Files, 1949-53 [-1]
- Bellows, Everett H., Director of Productivity and Special Assistance Division, U.S. Representative in Europe, Mutual Security Administration, 1951-53: Papers, 1951-60 [-1]
- Belsley, G. Lyle, Executive Secretary, War Production Board, 1942-45: Papers, 1943-45 [3]
- Bennett, Henry G., President, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1928-51; Administrator, Technical Cooperation Administration, 1950-51: Papers, 1933-51 [2]
- Bentley, Jordan: Papers, 1882-91 (letters from Mary Martha Truman, aunt of Harry S. Truman, to her friend Nan Bentley) [-1]
- Blaisdell, Thomas C., Jr., Assistant Secretary of Commerce, 1949-51: Papers, 1933-51 [5]
- Block, Ralph, General Representative of the Office of War Information in India, 1942-46; Director, General Staff, Policy and Plans Division, Interna-

- tional Information Administration, Department of State, 1952-53: Papers, 1918-54 [-1]
- Boyd, James, Director, U.S. Bureau of Mines, 1947-51: Papers, 1927-64 [5]
- Boyle, William, Jr., Chairman, Democratic National Committee, 1949-51: Papers, 1946-61 [1]
- Brophy, William A., Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1945-48: Papers, 1941-62 [10]
- Budget, Bureau of the: File of reports to the President on pending legislation, 1945-53 [54]
- Bundschu, Henry A., Friend of Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1939-56 [-1]
- Campbell, Wallace J., Director, Washington, D.C. Office, Cooperative League of the USA, 1948-59: Papers, 1939-64 [30]
- Chapman, Oscar L., Secretary of the Interior, 1949-53: Papers, 1931-53 (permission required) [50]
- Clapp, Gordon R., Chairman, Board of Directors, Tennessee Valley Authority, 1946-54: Papers, 1933-63 [2]
- Clark, John D., Vice Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers, 1950-53: Papers, 1946-52 [1]
- Clayton, William L., Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, 1946-47: Papers, 1939-64 [17]
- Clifford, Clark M., Special Counsel to the President, 1946-50: Papers, 1945-52 [16]
- ✓ Clifford, Clark M.: Files, 1946-50 [4]
- Colm, Gerhard, Assistant Chief, Fiscal Division, Bureau of the Budget, 1940-46: Papers, 1944-46 [-1]
- Commission on the Renovation of the Executive Mansion: Selected documents (duplicates) from records of the, 1950-52 [-1]
- Committee for the Marshall Plan: Records, 1947-51 [1]
- Connelly, Matthew J., Secretary to the President, 1945-53: Files, 1945-53 [3]
- Cooperative League of the United States of America, Washington, D.C. Office: Records, 1936-49 [68]
- Cowen, Myron M., Ambassador to Australia, 1948-49; Ambassador to the Philippines, 1949-51; Ambassador to Belgium, 1952-53: Papers, 1948-65 (partly on microfilm, also scrapbooks of Mrs. Cowen) [10]
- Daniels, Jonathan, Press Secretary to the President, 1945; Editor, Raleigh (N.C.) *News and Observer*; author: research notes used in preparing the biography of Harry S. Truman, *Man of Independence* (permission required) [-1]
- Davis, Nathaniel P., Minister-Counselor, United States Embassy, Manila, 1946-47; Ambassador to Costa Rica, 1947-49; Minister to Hungary, 1949-51: Papers, 1916-57 [-1]
- Decker, Clarence R., President, University of Kansas City, 1938-53; Assistant Director, Mutual Security Agency, 1952: Papers, 1943-59 [-1]
- Defense, Secretary of: Public statements, 1947-52 [3]
- Democratic National Committee: Records pertaining to appointments, publicity, and research, 1943-52 [10]
- Democratic National Committee: Newspaper clipping file, 1944-56 [89]
- Dennison, Robert L., Naval Aide to the President, 1948-53: Papers, 1949-71 [1]
- Dennison, Robert L.: Files, 1946-53 [2]

- Dixon, William C., Chief, Los Angeles Office, Anti-Trust Division, Department of Justice, 1948-54: Papers, 1944-54 [10]
- Donaldson, Jesse M., Postmaster General of the United States, 1947-53: Papers, 1947-52 [1]
- Doty, Dale E., Assistant Secretary of Interior, 1950-52; Commissioner, Federal Power Commission, 1952-54: Papers, 1939-54 [8]
- Dunlap, John B., U.S. Commissioner of Internal Revenue, 1951-52: Papers, 1935-64 [1]
- Easley, Harry, Friend and Missouri political associate of Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1935-48 (partly on microfilm) [2]
- Edminster, Lynn R., Vice Chairman, U.S. Tariff Commission, 1952-53: Papers, 1925-69 [8]
- Electors' Certificates, 1948 Presidential Election [1]
- Else, George M., Administrative Assistant to the President, 1949-51; Assistant to the Director for Mutual Security, 1951-53: Papers, 1941-53 [37]
- Else, George M.: Files, 1945-49 [-1]
- Enarson, Harold L., Special Assistant in the White House Office, 1950-52: Papers, 1941-53 [3]
- Evans, Tom L., Kansas City, Mo. businessman, civic leader, and friend of Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1920-67 [7]
- X Executive Orders, Unpublished: 1945-48 [1]
- Fahy, Charles, Chairman, President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services, 1949-50: Papers, 1949-50 [3]
- Fenton, Fleur, Special Consultant, Media Programming Division, Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion: Files, 1946 [1]
- Finletter, Thomas K., Secretary of the Air Force, 1950-53: Papers, 1943-69 [4]
- Fitzgerald, James V., Special Assistant to John R. Steelman: Files, 1948-51 [1]
- Foley, Raymond M., Commissioner, Federal Housing Administration, 1945-47; Administrator, Housing and Home Finance Agency, 1947-53: Papers, 1946-53 [2]
- Foskett, James H., Naval Aide to the President, 1946-48: Papers, 1919-54 [1]
- Freer, Robert E., Member, Federal Trade Commission, 1935-48: Papers, 1933-62 [23]
- Friedman, Martin L., Special Assistant to the President, 1950-53: Files, 1948-52 [19]
- Galvin, Michael J., Under Secretary of Labor, 1949-53: Papers, 1933-63 [10]
- Gardner, Warner W., Assistant Secretary of the Interior, 1946-47: Papers, 1937-47 [2]
- Garwood, Ellen Clayton, Daughter and biographer of William L. Clayton: Papers, 1958-60 [-1]
- General Historical Documents Collection, 1750— [2]
- Gibson, John T., Special Assistant to John R. Steelman: Files, 1945-50 [1]
- Gibson, John W., Assistant Secretary of Labor, 1946-50; Chairman, Displaced Persons Commission, 1950-52: Papers, 1941-53 [19]
- Goodwin, Robert, Administrator, Defense Manpower Administration, 1950-53: Papers, 1943-59 [1]
- Grady, Henry F., Ambassador to India, 1947-48; Ambassador to Greece, 1948-50; Ambassador to Iran, 1950-51: Papers, 1944-57 [2]

- Halverstadt, Dallas C., Special Assistant in the White House Office in charge of motion picture liaison: Files, 1946-48 [3]
- Halvorson, H. H., Kansas City, Mo. businessman and friend of Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1927-37 [-1]
- Harl, Maple T., Member, Board of Directors, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 1946-57; Chairman, 1946-53: Papers, 1918-57 [-1]
- Harry S. Truman Library, Inc.: Records, 1950-63 [25]
- Hassett, William D., Secretary to the President, 1944-52: Copies of papers, 1950-52 [-1]
- Hechler, Kenneth, Special Assistant to the President, 1949-53: Files, 1950-52 [5]
- Hennock, Frieda, Member, Federal Communications Commission, 1948-55: Papers, 1948-55 [9]
- Herzog, Paul M., Chairman, National Labor Relations Board, 1945-53: Papers, 1931-62 [5]
- Heslep, Charter, Radio broadcaster: Papers, 1945-50 [1]
- Hildreth, Melvin D., Chairman, Inaugural Committee, 1949: Papers, 1912-57 [2]
- Holland, Lou E., Kansas City, Mo. businessman and civic leader; Chairman, Smaller War Plants Corporation, 1942-43: Papers, 1916-60 [117]
- Houston, John C., Special Assistant in the White House Office, 1950-51: Papers, 1945-54 [-1]
- Jackson, Charles W., Special Assistant in the White House Office: Files, 1946-52 [10]
- Johnson, Herschel V., Ambassador to Brazil, 1948-53: Papers, 1929-53 [12]
- Jones, J. Weldon, Assistant Director, Bureau of the Budget, 1941-55: Papers, 1929-54 [8]
- Jones, Joseph M., Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, 1946-48: Papers, 1947-48 [1]
- Kaiser, Philip M., Assistant Secretary of Labor in Charge of International Affairs, 1949-52; United States Ambassador to Senegal and Mauritania, 1961-64; Minister at the American Embassy, London, 1964-69: Papers, 1948-69 [4]
- Katz, Milton, Professor of Law, Harvard University, 1939-present; Special U.S. Representative to Europe, 1950-51: Papers, 1932-52 [9]
- Keeley, Mary Paxton, Journalist and friend of Mr. and Mrs. Harry S. Truman: Papers, 1906-63 (closed) [1]
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Allen, George E.	Gardner, Warner W.
Babcock, Gaylon	Gilpatric, Rosewell L.
Barriere, John E.	Granoff, A. J.
Barringer, Lewis T.	Greene, Charles J.
Batt, William L., Jr.	Griffith, Paul H.
Bean, Louis H.	Halvorson, H. H.
Bell, David E.	Hansen, Donald
Bell, Jack L.	Hassett, William D.
Benton, Thomas Hart	Hehmeyer, Walter
Birkhead, Kenneth M.	Hinde, Edgar G.
Blair, William McC., Jr.	Hoeber, Johannes U.
Block, Ralph	Irvin, Robert L.
Bowman, Frederick J.	Jessee, Randall
Brandt, Raymond P.	Jones, Marvin
Bray, William J.	Jones, Roger W.
Brightman, Samuel C.	Keech, Richmond B.
Bucklew, L. L.	Keeley, Mary Paxton (closed)
Carter, John Franklin	Keenan, Joseph D.
Chiles, Henry P.	Kenworthy, Carroll H.
Clague, Ewan	Kenworthy, E. W.
Clarke, Bruce C.	Kronheim, Milton S., Sr.
Connelly, Matthew J.	Lawrence, David L.
Curry, Charles F.	Lawton, Frederick J.
Daniel, Clifton	Leigh, Vere C.
Daniels, Jonathan	Leva, Marx
Dennison, Robert L.	Lincoln, Gould
de Weldon, Felix	Locke, Edwin A., Jr.
Divers, William K.	Loeb, James I.
Dodson, James E.	Lowenthal, Max
Dryden, Mildred L.	Lowry, W. McNeil
Easley, Harry	Maletz, Herbert N.
Edwards, India	Marks, Ted
Evans, Tom L. (closed)	Mason, Lowell B.
Ewing, Oscar R.	Matscheck, Walter
Feeney, Joseph G.	MacDonald, Donald J.
Finletter, Thomas K.	McFall, Jack K.
Folliard, Edward T.	McGowan, Carl
Fox, Joseph A.	McKim, Edward D.

Meader, George
 Menefee, Walter B.
 Miller, Raymond W.
 Muccio, John J.
 Murphy, Charles S.
 Murphy, Harry E.
 Noland, Mary Ethel
 Palmer, Mrs. W. L. C.
 Perlmeter, Irving
 Peters, Mize
 Pruden, Edward Hughes
 Reinsch, J. Leonard
 Renfrow, Louis H.
 Rigdon, William M.
 Riggs, Robert L.
 Roach, Neale
 Robinson, Harold G.
 Rosenman, Samuel I.
 Ruffin, James E.
 Salant, Walter S.

Seidman, Harold
 Sparks, Wilbur D.
 Spingarn, Stephen J.
 Steelman, John R. (closed)
 Stephens, A. J.
 Strauss, Lewis L. (closed)
 Strout, Richard L.
 Sundquist, James L.
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 Theis, William
 Thelen, Edward F.
 Trohan, Walter
 Tubby, Roger
 Turner, J. C.
 Vaughan, Harry H.
 Veatch, Nathan Thomas
 Voltz, Phillip W.
 Walsh, Robert K.
 Zuckert, Eugene

ON EUROPEAN RECOVERY PROGRAM

Adenauer, Konrad (Germany)
 Bernaris, Anthony (Greece)
 de Gruben, Herve (Belgium)
 Doxiadis, Constantinos A. (Greece)
 Franks, Lord Oliver (Great Britain)
 Getz Wold, Knut (Norway)
 Haekkerup, Per (Denmark)
 Hall-Patch, Sir Edmund (Great Britain)
 Hoffman, Paul (United States)
 Kristensen, Thorkil (Denmark)
 Lange, Halvard M. (Norway)
 Lombardo, Ivan Matteo (Italy)
 Makins, Roger (Great Britain)
 Marjolin, Robert (France)
 Mattei, Franco (Italy)

Miall, Leonard (Great Britain)
 Nordahl, Konrad (Norway)
 Pella, Giuseppe (Italy)
 Pesmazoglu, John S. (Greece)
 Plowden, Edwin Noel (Great Britain)
 Sachs, Hans-Georg (Germany)
 Snoy, Jean Charles (Belgium)
 Sonnenhol, Gustav A. (Germany)
 Stikker, Dirk (Netherlands)
 Tsaldaris, Constantine (Greece)
 Van Der Beugel, E. H. (Netherlands)
 Van Kleffens, Eelco (Netherlands)
 Von Susskind, Alexander (Germany)
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Appendix C

THE CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM C. BERMAN, born in Cleveland, Ohio, on January 9, 1932, grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, and attended Ohio State University, where he received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. He is currently affiliated with the University of Toronto. His main contribution to the writings on the Truman period is *The Politics of Civil Rights in the Truman Administration*, published by the Ohio State University Press in 1970.

Born in New York City in 1936, BARTON J. BERNSTEIN attended Queens College (B.A., 1957), Washington University (St. Louis), and Harvard University (Ph.D., 1963), where he worked with Frank Freidel and Oscar Handlin. He taught at Bennington College (1963–1965), and since 1965 has been at Stanford University, where he is an associate professor of history. His many contributions to the Truman period as a research field are documented in the essays and commentaries.

ELMER E. CORNWELL, JR., was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, July 6, 1924, attended Holyoke High School, and received an A.B. degree from Williams College in 1948, his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees from Harvard University in 1951 and 1953, respectively. He served in the Navy from 1943 until 1946. Following receipt of the A.B. he was instructor in political science at Williams for a year. On completion of his graduate work, he taught at Princeton, as instructor in politics, from 1953 until 1955; since 1955 he has been at Brown University. At Brown he served as department chairman from 1962 to 1971. His fields of research and teaching within political science are the American Presidency, parties, politics, and state and local government. His books and articles in these areas include *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion*, published by Indiana University Press in 1965.

RICHARD OAKLEY DAVIES was born October 26, 1937, in Hamilton, Ohio. He grew up in the small town of Camden, Ohio, and received his degrees from Marietta College (B.A., 1959), Ohio University (M.A., 1960), and the University of Missouri (Ph.D., 1963). He joined the faculty of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff in 1963, where he is now professor of history and director of the Center for Integrated Studies. His main contribution to the field is his book, *Housing Reform During the Truman Administration*, published by the University of Missouri Press in 1966. He is at work on a history of urban America since World War II, a biography of John W. Bricker, and several projects on the federal government's relations with the cities in the recent period.

ROBERT H. FERRELL was born in 1921 in Cleveland, Ohio, and educated at Bowling Green State University and Yale, where he received his doctorate in 1951. He has taught at Indiana University since 1953 and has published the

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Born and reared in Delaware, Ohio, LLOYD C. GARDNER received the B.A. degree from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1956. He completed his graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, receiving the M.S. degree in 1957 and the Ph.D. in 1960. He has been at Rutgers University since 1963 and is currently professor of history and chairman of the department. His principal contribution to Truman era scholarship is *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941-1949*, published by Quadrangle Books in 1970.

A native Missourian, ALONZO L. HAMBY was born in 1940 in the Ozarks town of Humansville, where he spent his early years. He holds degrees from Southeast Missouri State College (B.A., 1960), Columbia University (M.A., 1961), and the University of Missouri (Ph.D., 1965). He has published several articles on the Truman era and is the author of *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism*, published by the Columbia University Press in 1973. He is presently completing an interpretive survey of American history since 1939. Since 1965, he has taught American history at Ohio University.

RICHARD S. KIRKENDALL, a native of Spokane, Washington, is professor of history at Indiana University and executive secretary of the Organization of American Historians. Educated at Gonzaga University and the University of Wisconsin, he was for fifteen years a member of the history faculty of the University of Missouri-Columbia. In addition to the two editions of this book, his contributions to the Truman period include his work with graduate students and several publications of his own. For a decade, he has been at work on a large-scale biography of Harry Truman.

DAVID S. McLELLAN was born in New York City on December 24, 1924, and educated at Yale University, where he took his B.A. and M.A. degrees and the Ph.D. in 1954. He also holds a degree from the University of Geneva, Switzerland. He is professor of political science at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His main contribution to the literature of the Truman period is a book entitled *The Cold War in Transition*, published by The Macmillan Company in 1966, as well as a number of articles in the *Political Science Quarterly*, *International Studies Quarterly*, and the *Western Political Quarterly*.

Born in Altoona, Pennsylvania, January 4, 1940, HARVARD SITKOFF was educated at Queens College of the City University of New York and Columbia University, where he completed his work for the M.A. degree in Reconstruction history under Eric McKittrick and has just finished a doctoral dissertation under William Leuchtenburg on civil rights in the New Deal years. That manuscript is part of a three-volume study on the emergence of civil rights as a national issue, 1932-1952. The major themes of Volumes II and III have already appeared in the *Journal of American History* (December 1971) and the *Journal of Southern History* (November 1971). Mr. Sitkoff, presently an assistant professor of history at Washington University, has also written a series of interpretive essays on the careers of prominent officials in the Truman administration, and he is now engaged in research for a social history of the Korean War.

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MAY 22 1993	MAY 18 1995 MU
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