

# COUNTERATTACK

FACTS TO COMBAT COMMUNISM

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Dear Subscriber:

"DO AS YOU DAMN PLEASE, MR. PETERS!" This is what a Communist front lawyer said this week in a public hearing to her Communist client. The remark was symbolic. For the Mr Peterses have been doing as they "damn please", or pretty much so, for a very long time. They've been getting away with worse than murder. Question now is whether American people will insist on taking hard, effective action to stop Peters and the rest of the Communists from doing as they "damn please" any more.

The important underground agent known as J Peters was up before the Immigration authorities in a deportation hearing. He was represented by Mrs Carol King, chief lawyer for the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, a Communist front. She has represented every leading Communist who has got entangled in an immigration or naturalization case. And Henry Wallace recently sent her a message of warm admiration.

The name "J Peters" is a handicap now, because the Govt can prove that the man of that name advocated violent revolution. So Peters now denies he's Peters. He calls himself Alexander Stevens. In the deportation hearing he was served with a subpoena to appear before a subcommittee of the House Comm on Un-American Activities (where Whittaker Chambers later identified him as Peters). "Wave that subpoena, Mr Peters!" cried the newspaper photographers, trying to get a good shot. And it was then that Carol King, the lawyer for "Alexander Stevens", cried out in mockery of the photographers: "Do as you damn please, Mr Peters!"

But this jesting remark had a serious significance. First of all, Peters has broken the immigration and passport laws with constant impunity. He was sent here by Communist International in 1924. He has made trips to Moscow on passports with different names. How has he been able to stay here so long? Why have many leading Communists escaped deportation 10 or 20 years or longer? Because of poor laws and poor enforcement. Many officials are honest & conscientious, but they've been obstructed by the inadequate laws, by judicial rulings which favor Communists, and by the sabotage of Communist officials and employees.

Every President and every Attorney General ought to have made specific recommendations for better laws, and ought to have cleaned out the Communists. This hasn't been done. And that's why J Peters and Harry Bridges and other high Communists are still here to serve Stalin and knife America.

Now what should be done about Peters and his like? Of course the immigration and espionage laws should be improved. But the main immediate legislative action should be enactment of a revised Mundt-Nixon bill. This would cripple Communist Party by forcing registration of CP members, and by other provisions. It would do much to clean the Communists out of the Govt. Congress should get busy on this bill when it meets in January...and thus stop the Peterses from doing as they "damn please".

THE ESSENTIAL FACTS ABOUT ADOLF BERLE, HISS BROTHERS, AND DEAN ACHESON, as Berle told them to a House subcommittee this week, were first published in Counterattack Aug 6.

One thing should be added about the Chambers-Berle conversation in September, 1939, at which Isaac Don Levine was present. Levine, who is now editor of the anti-Communist magazine, Plain Talk (240 Madison Ave, NYCity), arranged this meeting so that Chambers could tell Berle what he knew about the ACTIONS of two interlocking rings in various Govt departments & agencies. He said purpose of one ring was patronage...to get jobs for Communists & their supporters...and purpose of other ring was to steal secret information from Govt. Documents were taken from files, microfilmed, and returned.

Chambers gave names of many persons involved, saying they were CP members, other Communists, fellow-travelers, and sympathizers. But, as Levine recalls it, he didn't try to classify each of these persons specifically, naming those who were party members and those who weren't. That question never came up. Whole subject of the conversation was what these persons were DOING. Among those named were Alger & Donald Hiss.

MRS ROOSEVELT RUSHES IN WITH ANOTHER ACCUSATION. It wasn't enough for her to denounce Elizabeth Bentley several weeks ago and in effect call her a liar (Counterattack Aug 13, p 3). This week, in her column, she has made a similar attack on Whittaker Chambers. Her reasons? None given.

She didn't try to argue the case at all. She simply assailed Chambers' veracity. Alger Hiss is a friend of hers, and therefore Chambers can't be believed. Besides, if Chambers' story is true, Mrs Roosevelt and her husband's Administration were obviously at fault. This must never be admitted. So Mrs Roosevelt attacks Chambers.

WHY ISN'T THE CASE OF ALGER HISS DEFINITELY CLEARED UP? The House Comm on Un-American Activities has issued an interim report. Although this committee has faults, they have been vastly exaggerated by the Communists, their sympathizers, and the softheads. And this interim report issued by the committee is a thoughtful document.

The confrontation of Chambers and Hiss "and the attendant testimony from both witnesses has definitely shifted the burden of proof from Chambers to Hiss," says the committee. Also: "The verifiable portions of Chambers' testimony have stood up strongly; the verifiable portions of the Hiss testimony have been badly shaken and are primarily refuted by the testimony of Hiss versus Hiss, as the complete text of the printed hearings will reveal."

What is delaying the clearing up of the case? The lack of enough corroborative witnesses. There are witnesses who know the truth but they're still Communists...and so when they appear before the committee they either decline to answer questions or they lie.

But there are other witnesses...former Communists...who might tell interesting stories. Why don't they? Well, why SHOULD they? If you were a former Communist who knew about the underground apparatus in the Govt, and if you had definitely turned against the party, would you be willing to testify, in view of the smears that Chambers & Elizabeth Bentley are receiving?

Some people are actually demanding that Chambers and Miss Bentley be prosecuted for the acts which they admit. What would be main effect of such prosecution (even if statute of limitations didn't prevent this in Chambers' case)? Effect would be to warn all former Communists never to tell

the truth about the Communist Party. Keep your mouth shut and be safe. Talk and you'll be punished.

But the same warning to ex-Communists is being issued now, even though Chambers and Miss Bentley aren't being prosecuted and won't be. Current smearing of them has the same effect. When Mrs Roosevelt practically calls Chambers and Miss Bentley liars...when Sec'y of the Treas Snyder makes a sarcastic speech sneering at both these witnesses...when such a leading newspaper as the Washington Post rips into them...what do you suppose the effect is on other ex-Communists who might be inclined to tell the truth?

They are forced back into silence. Truth is muzzled. Communists who have been in high Govt places are enabled to pose as heroes and martyrs. And other Communists who're still in the Govt are helped to stay there.

Thus Mrs Roosevelt, Sec'y Snyder and the Washington Post are unintentionally helping the Communist Fifth Column right now. Thus Stalin is able to confuse and weaken the U S in its defense against his imperialist aggression. Stalin's work is being done for him by people who are against Communism but who don't understand Communists and ex-Communists, and who don't know the facts and who think shallowly and talk cheaply.

So the most urgent thing right now is to clear up American public opinion...to tell the people the truth about the actions and motives of Communists and ex-Communists...in order that the people may understand that the statements of ex-Communists about their former colleagues are generally the truth...the sober truth...the truth we all need to know.

WHAT MAKES COMMUNISTS AND EX-COMMUNISTS TICK? Here are several questions that many people ask, consciously or unconsciously:

1. If Whittaker Chambers & Elizabeth Bentley are okay today, how did they ever become Communists in the first place?
2. Why were they ever willing to become traitors?
3. Why did they suddenly reform?
4. Why do they speak up so bluntly and damagingly against their former confederates, and why do they now seem as passionately anti-Communist as they were formerly pro-Communist? Aren't they just letting themselves go out of spite, like gangsters squealing on their old pals?

These are questions on which people are uninformed or misinformed. And not only average people but many editors and columnists and radio commentators have wrong notions on these matters and are in need of some plain information to set them right.

1. People become Communists for various reasons. Main reason, especially in case of middle-class and rich people, is a sort of idealism...in the broad meaning of that word. They have a streak of rebelliousness in their temperaments, and they see a lot in the world to rebel against. They see injustice and suffering. And they come to believe that Communism is a surgical operation that will cure this. And although most of them don't realize it, they are fascinated by the enormousness and remoteness of Stalin Russia. As Arthur Koestler has pointed out in one of his books, they regard that gigantic empire as a Heaven on earth...or at least a Heaven in the making (Counterattack March 19 '48, p 3).

But how can they shut their eyes to the evils of the Communist dictatorship in Russia and other countries? What about the slave labor, the lack of democracy, the tremendous differences in incomes? And what about the lying, the hypocrisy? Well, devout Communists regard this lying as a



sort of military necessity. And they minimize the evils of the Stalin regime, and accept the excuse that these evils are largely caused by persecution of USSR by the capitalist countries. And, besides, the evils are only temporary...and there are evils in other countries too, where conditions will get worse...but the Soviet Union is on the way to perfection.

2. But why was Elizabeth Bentley willing to become a traitor (as she was in effect, even though treason is technically defined as aiding a military enemy in wartime)? Answer is that all CP members are traitors, actually or potentially. Miss Bentley was doing what all other trained Communists would be willing to do in same circumstances. Communists don't consider U S their country. They're really citizens of Stalin Russia...though they tell themselves they're citizens of international Communism. Any fully developed Communist will eagerly help Stalin Russia in preference to the U S any day...if it's safe. He may hesitate for reasons of caution, but not on account of morality or patriotism. Miss Bentley was a party member for six years, from 1935 to 1941, without doing any spying. Then, through her association with Jacob Golos, she was led into it. And any one of thousands of other women Communists would have done the same thing in her situation.

3. Why do Communists suddenly reform? Answer is that it usually isn't sudden. Doubts arise but they're quelled. To break with the party is generally like breaking away from one's religion and from all one's friends at the same time...and often it means losing one's job or career too. So the doubts are beaten back. But finally they burst through...and the Communist admits to himself that the evils of the Soviet Union and of Communist methods are much greater than he formerly thought...and that they AREN'T temporary, they aren't leading to a better world, but are making the world WORSE. Both Chambers and Miss Bentley were a long time in making their break. So were most of the witnesses in the Peters case this week.

4. Why do these ex-Communists become such ardent anti-Communists, and why are they willing to fight their former comrades? Fact is it usually takes a long time before they're willing to make such a fight. But, little by little, they are forced into it through their ardent opposition to Communism. If they didn't have this feeling they could never have broken with the party. They didn't quit the party just because they no longer thought it was very good...they quit it because they reluctantly concluded that it was BAD...that it was making the world much worse, instead of better. Feeling this way, they had to quit the party. And feeling this way, they want to fight against the party now. Their main way of fighting it is by truthfully telling what they know of it.

What they're telling is the TRUTH. That's the big fact which the country must grasp. It's the TRUTH. And this truth is a weapon for the American people. If we fail to use this weapon, we're discriminating against FORMER Communists in favor of PRESENT Communists. We must accept this weapon...we must welcome those who bring it to us...and we must beat back the smear campaign against people like Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley, who know they run great risks when they decide to tell us the truth.

Yours faithfully,

September 1, 1948

*Counterattack*