



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on January 21, 2012

Alger Hiss Conviction Highlighted Communist Subversion of U.S. Gov't

The Soviet Union since its earliest days described the United States as the “main enemy.” The penetration of American government and society was a natural goal of the Soviets, and the totalitarian state would resort to any lies to achieve that goal. Deception and power have always been the heart of Marxism. For example, Lenin wrote, “The scientific concept, dictatorship, means nothing more nor less than power which directly rests on violence, which is not limited by any laws or restricted by any absolute rules.”



Alger Hiss, a lawyer and State Department official directly involved in establishing the United Nations, was accused in 1948 of being a Soviet spy. Witnesses stated in testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities that Hiss had been a Communist while he was employed by the U.S. government. He was convicted of perjury related to this charge in 1950.

But long before Americans learned that Hiss was a Communist spy in the U.S. government, former Communists in the United States were trying to warn their countrymen of the grave danger they faced. Benjamin Gitlow, a well-known socialist politician early last century, was a founding member of the Communist Party, USA. He actually served a prison term for advocating the overthrow of the U.S. government. Gitlow eventually became disillusioned with communism and was converted into a powerful anti-communist, testifying before congressional committees about the extent of Soviet penetration of the U.S. government.

Louis Budenz, who had once been editor of the Communist Party USA's newspaper *The Daily Worker* during WWII, later renounced communism and became a strong anti-communist. He described the internal machinations of American communism in his 1947 book, *This is My Story*.

Max Eastman, once a notable American Communist, wrote in 1943 in *Reader's Digest* that “We Must Face Facts About Russia.” This clear warning that the Soviets were our enemies was published while many duped Americans were still convinced that the murderous Josef Stalin was benign “Uncle Joe.”

Disillusioned Communists outside of America were also informing the free world of Communist influence. Arthur Koestler, in his 1941 book, *Scum of the Earth*, as well as his magisterial *Darkness at Noon*, sounded the warning. Victor Kravchenko's two personal histories of the evils of the Soviet Union — *I Chose Freedom* and the later *I Chose Justice* — were both best sellers before the depth of Soviet penetration of America was revealed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities and by Senator Joseph McCarthy's Senate hearings.

President Truman had received credible information long before the perjury conviction of Alger Hiss that his administration was riddled with Soviet agents. As early as 1945, J. Edgar Hoover warned the President that Harry Dexter White, a senior Treasury Department official, was a Soviet agent. Wikipedia



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notes, "a number of sources, including the FBI and Soviet archives, indicated that he passed secret state information to the Soviet Union during World War II."

Alger Hiss was head of the State Department's Office of Special Political Affairs, and Harry Dexter White was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. FDR's administration was so infiltrated with Soviet agents that Duncan Lee, the personal assistant of OSS head Bill Donovan, was a Soviet agent. On FDR's personal instructions, the small bit of information the OSS obtained (an NKVD code book) was ordered returned to the Soviet Embassy. There were several hundred Soviet agents within the American government, and yet not one single OSS agent in Moscow.

On January 21, 1950, Alger Hiss was convicted of two counts of perjury. Those who wished to defend him faced not only the conviction but the failure of Hiss to mount a successful defense and clear his name, despite extraordinarily support from the Washington insiders and the fact that Hiss himself was a well qualified lawyer. In 1971, Hiss allowed a liberal who believed that he was not guilty of the charges, Allen Weinstein, to examine his personal records in order to write a book establishing his innocence. Instead, this sympathetic author concluded that Alger Hiss was absolutely guilty as charged. Until the day he died, Hiss maintained his innocence.

Still the portrait presented in establishment media and academia is not of an America that had many willing traitors who sided against their homeland in favor of a regime which created the Gulag and allied itself with Adolph Hitler. But despite this, Alger Hiss on January 21, 2012 remains just as guilty as he was 62 years ago. Sadly, brave patriots such as [Whitaker Chambers](#), Senator [Joseph McCarthy](#), and [J. Edgar Hoover](#), are still often mocked and smeared posthumously for their efforts to keep us free.

Photo of Alger Hiss in Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary: Federal Bureau of Prisons



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