

How Cries of 'McCarthyism'

Aided Philby

By FREDERIC NELSON

Back in 1953 Rebecca West did a pair of articles for the London *Sunday Times* in which she sought to inform the British public that all the talk they had been hearing of how the U.S.A. was in the grip of hysteria in the course of which "people of liberal opinions are dragged before inquisitorial committees to be defamed and insulted on the unsupported evidence of informers of the lowest character," was a lot of bilge.

In the course of her article Miss West reviewed the successes which the Communists had had in penetrating the American "power structure," and then raised the question: Why do people in America and Britain denounce those who seek to expose the Communists as "witch hunters"?

Miss West's answer was this: "The immediate reason is the hypnotic power of the word 'McCarthyism': the belief that the United States is at present practically governed by a dictator named Joe McCarthy, that he invented and controls the investigations and uses them as the instruments of his tyranny."

Miss West went on to demonstrate the absurdity of this myth and added that the myth has been of tremendous use to the Communists, for one reason because it caused a large section of the public to "regard persons called before the committees as delicate Davids braving a gross Goliath, and such of them as were Communists would get the benefit of the doubt."

Despite Miss West's thoughtful analysis—to say nothing of what those of us who "lived through McCarthyism" could see with our own eyes—the myth is still routine doctrine among liberals and is taken seriously by too many others who ought to know better.

It is no surprise to find Archibald MacLeish blasting off with the plain fabrication that in the "McCarthy era"



British/Soviet double agent Harold (Kim) Philby's disclosure of his espionage activities may help awaken even doctrinaire liberals to the Communist threat.

to dedicate a public library was "an act of defiance and protest—defiance not of a demagogue in Congress alone, but of the whole miasma of suspicion and censorship he had let loose on the country." This is the kind of fiction which liberals feed each other.

More disturbing is to find a careful historian like A. L. Rowse in *The Churchills* comparing the anti-Papist hysteria in 17th Century England to "that which the United States experienced under McCarthy." However, in the American edition of the book the phrase "under McCarthy" is changed to "a short while ago," and Mr. Rowse concedes that "there was a certain amount of justification for this fear."

And how! Now we have the Philby case, and with it the revelation that the belief in "McCarthyism" is not just something to argue about with liberals, but, as Miss West predicted, a weapon which the Communists have used most effectively in their effort to paralyze the will of the anti-Communist West.

Who doesn't recall the obscene performances of liberal columnists doing their best to be "persecuted" by Sen. McCarthy in order to pose as heroic fighters in the battle for free speech? But how many of us then recognized these exhibitionists as instruments, willing or deluded, in the Communist plan to blunt public authority in its far from determined effort to thwart the conspiracy?

The extent of the damage caused and the number of lives lost because of the success of Soviet agent Harold Philby in worming his way to the top in British intelligence may never be fully known. Through the virtually unimpeded operations of Philby, George Blake and the two dipsodiplomats Burgess and McLean, the Soviet apparatus doubtless possesses an impressive dossier on Western anti-Red activity, supposedly "secret" and otherwise.

We do not know, of course, how many other Communist agents and their local subordinates have managed to carry on without interference because government officialdom has been hesitant to act lest the cry of "McCarthyism!" be raised.

In Great Britain, the former Tory Prime Minister Harold Macmillan used McCarthyism to explain the outcry against Philby, after our own CIA had tipped off the British on Philby's activities. This was as early as 1955, but Mr. Macmillan fatuously dismissed

MORI/CDF Page 1

Continued

the matter with the approval of Mr. Philby had at any time betrayed the interests of this country."

Old Boy network? Well, Philby and Macmillan are both "public school" Old Boys, but the more probable answer is the same one that Mr. Macmillan gave in another crisis over a suspected spy (Vassall): fear of being sneered at as a McCarthyite. As Peter Simple of the London *Telegraph* put it, "the word McCarthyism [has] the paralyzing effect of nerve gas."

It is indeed a shocking indictment of liberalism that its major contribution to "social advance" was to hand the Communist conspirators a defensive weapon probably more potent than the 5th Amendment's provision against self-incrimination.

The fiction of "McCarthyism," which deluded even some of Joe McCarthy's colleagues in the Senate, has become a sort of Terror operating against anybody in public life, or in the press and education system, who undertook to expose or frustrate the Communist drive to take over the world.

It has been, as Miss West wrote 14 years ago, "much easier, much more popular, much safer, to follow the middle-class fashion of today and repeat what may or may not be true, but is certainly irrelevant: that we are all much superior to Sen. McCarthy."

It's all pretty humiliating, but Americans have a distaste for being "had" twice and we may be fortunate enough to experience a New Wave of McCarthyism. Should that happen, the Communists might conceivably find their erstwhile liberal errand boys really terrified, this time terrified enough to refuse to pull more Communist chestnuts out of the fire. Or is that just too naive?

NOV 25 1967