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## *Lattimore's Views and the Question of His Loyalty*

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Two facts make the Owen Lattimore case possibly the most celebrated and controversial incident involving an academic during the Cold War era. First, Lattimore, a recognized authority on the Far East, was one of the most visible and influential academics challenged to prove his loyalty. Second, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, the most visible and influential anti-Communist zealot, identified Lattimore as a Soviet operative. An overview of the government's inquiry into Lattimore's views and activities, and the reasons why his loyalty came under question must first be understood before considering the involvement of the Johns Hopkins University in the case.

### Lattimore's Career and Writing

Lattimore was first appointed to the faculty of Hopkins in 1938, and in 1939 was made director of its Walter Hines Page School of International Relations. During the 1930s he had established a worldwide reputation as a sinologist, with particular expertise in the economic, political, social, and cultural life of Mongolia. His extensive travel, writing, and lecturing had put him in contact with, and made his ideas known to, a wider audience than is usual, then or now, for college or university faculty. He was the sort of intellectual involved in public discourse; his writing addressed an interested public on a public issue, American foreign policy.

Over the years, Lattimore had been a consultant to a number of government officials. He had even been an advisor to Chiang Kai-shek in the months before and after America's entry into World

War II. However, after the war he had conspicuously spoken out against Chiang's autocracy, and had questioned many of the policies and actions of Chiang's Nationalist government. He had become convinced that because the corruption in Chiang's regime was so pervasive, reform was unlikely. In two books, *Solution in Asia* (1945) and *The Situation in Asia* (1949), and in a number of newspaper and magazine articles, Lattimore warned that it was a dead-end policy to back Chiang as a matter of course, and that in pursuing its interest in Asia the United States would at some point have to negotiate with the Soviet Union as an equal. Lattimore had also become convinced that due to the growth of nationalism in Asia, the West would no longer be able to control events there. It was beyond the power of the United States, even with the help of its allies, to restore the old colonial order, under any guise. Lattimore believed that world conflict, whether rooted in Asia or elsewhere, could be settled only if all the major powers made compromises; it would certainly never be settled if they ignored or confronted one another.

To many Americans, the loss of China to the Communists in 1949 was an avoidable calamity, and a calamity, in large part, because it seemed to enhance the Soviet Union's power. Lattimore disagreed. He believed that the changes in China could not have been prevented. In a quite controversial and widely read article in the January 1950 *Atlantic Monthly*,<sup>1</sup> Lattimore pointed out that although Chiang Kai-shek had been an effective leader during World War II, in the postwar years he had failed to hold his people's confidence as an architect of a new and viable social and political structure. Largely due to this fact, the United States policy backing Chiang was a failure, and this reality had to be acknowledged. Lattimore was convinced that a State Department policy of determined support for Chiang had done, and would continue to do, more harm than good to American interests. It seemed self-evident to Lattimore that the fall of Chiang had damaged American prestige. The Nationalist cause may have been good and just and for that reason should have been won. However, it had been poorly defended, and it had failed. Given the incompetence of the Nationalists, it could not possibly have succeeded.

Lattimore argued that neither India nor Japan could become satisfactory instruments of American policy. He reviewed the reasons that he believed also made it unlikely that Southeast Asia, the Philippines, or Korea would end up as major bases of American action. Lattimore went on to express the view that the Communist regime of Mao Tse-tung could not be brought into line by economic

coercion. He predicted that it had only to achieve a minimum level of economic stability to make itself politically tolerable to the majority of the Chinese people. He believed that it would win popular support, that it could feed the masses.

Contrary to almost everyone else's expectation, Lattimore doubted that the Soviet Union could easily move in and take over direct control in China. The matter was much more complex; the Soviet Union's primary interests were in Europe. On the other hand, American interests could only be advanced with a more positive approach to Communist China. As a start, he suggested that if the United States did not directly want to recognize the legitimacy of the Communist government in China, it should at least not block the United Nations' efforts to do so.

In looking toward the future, Lattimore argued that Asian nondependence on the Soviet Union should become a central tenet of American foreign policy. Toward this end, the United States could encourage the nations of Asia to do without the Soviet Union through improving the three-way economic relationship between Asia, Europe, and America.

Peace around the world, Lattimore again argued, could come about only if there was stability in the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The grounds for compromise therefore exist. They are: less control over Asia than Europe wants; less political independence in some countries, and less economic independence in most countries, than Asia wants; more socialism, more state enterprise, and more neighborly relations with Russia than America wants.

On these grounds of compromise, United States policy in Asia can be rebuilt successfully enough not only to stabilize Asia, but to contribute to the stabilization of the world.<sup>2</sup>

These views were not part of the main current of American thought in 1950, or for many years after, although in the end they proved, in large measure, to be correct.

A few months after the *Atlantic Monthly* article appeared, Lattimore began yet another magazine article, "Asia Reconquers Asia,"<sup>3</sup> with the assertion that the change in power in China was not a victory for the Communist armies or Communist ideas:

The chief phenomenon has been the moral and political bankruptcy of the National government of China, whose "ability" to

collapse greatly exceeded the ability of the Communists to push it over.

He again expressed the view that the new Asia was controlled neither by the Western powers nor the Soviet Union. He wrote that Russia's role in the Communist victory in China was insignificant: "Whatever the Russian strength [in Asia], it remains behind the Russian frontier—undeployed, unexposed, a card unplayed."

The importance of this relative absence of Russian intervention in China has been overlooked partly because of the human tendency toward wishful thinking.

The American policy in China costs a great deal. It is somehow more comforting to provide an alibi by claiming that the American intervention failed because of a stronger Russian intervention than to confess that the effort failed of its own ineptness.<sup>4</sup>

It was Lattimore's contention that the Communist ascendancy in China meant that for the first time in a hundred years the country was beyond the control of the most powerful of the Western nations. He predicted that Europe would never again regain its old power over Asia, and would probably lose most of the power it still retained. Moreover, he believed that "experience in China is a warning that very little of Europe's former power over Asia has passed into the hands of the United States."<sup>5</sup>

Lattimore was adamant in his belief that the security of the United States would be enhanced if it helped to promote the evolution of democracy in Asia by the peoples of Asia. America should not attempt to subordinate Asia to the defense of its interests, Lattimore concluded, but should link American and Asian interests in a common cause. Again, this line of thinking was clearly a minority view, and, because of who Lattimore was, it generated considerable criticism.

In the months before the United States became involved in World War II, Lattimore was closely involved in the U.S. government's attempts to make peace between Chiang's Nationalists and the Communist forces. The Roosevelt administration was determined to prevent American military aid to China from being dissipated in a civil war. Thus, when he was appointed as the political advisor of Chiang Kai-shek, it was hoped that Lattimore would effect some compromises between the hostile factions. President Roosevelt was convinced that Lattimore could be successful, and

gave him considerable latitude. In a letter to Chiang Kai-shek, Roosevelt stated:

My dear Generalissimo:

I take great pleasure in introducing to you Mr. Owen Lattimore. I have the highest opinion of his capabilities and I know that he is intimate with and in complete accord with my basic political attitudes. I trust that you will find his advice helpful. I fully appreciate, as does he, that while serving as your political advisor he will be working solely in China's interests and that his complete loyalty will be to you.

It has taken some time to work up a comprehensive and detailed lease-lend aid program for China and to fit it in with our own and the British programs.

Mrs. Roosevelt joins me in extending to you and Madame Chiang our heartiest wishes for your personal health and prosperity.<sup>6</sup>

On their face, Lattimore's efforts to minimize conflict between competing political forces in China acknowledged the legitimacy of the Communist cause. Given his views and the role it was believed he had played in implementing policies that seemed to work to Chiang's disadvantage, it is hardly surprising that Lattimore was very much out of favor with those friendly to the Nationalist Chinese cause and opposed to all Communist governments. In the months after the forces of Mao Tse-tung overthrew Chiang's regime and forced him from the mainland to Formosa, this annoyance turned to acute and open antipathy. The climate of the Cold War insured that Lattimore and his ideas of coexistence would be forcefully attacked.

#### The 1940s: Before the Cold War

Actually, doubts about Lattimore's political sympathies were voiced even before the Cold War. A few months after he was appointed as liaison between Chiang Kai-shek and President Roosevelt, it was reported that even the Nationalist government had some concerns:

He is likewise suspected of leaning rather toward left-wing causes, and there was the feeling in some quarters that the recent announcement by the official Chinese Central News Agency of the outbreak of new fighting between the Kuo-mintang (Nationalists) and Red forces, the first of such press

announcements ever to be made, was synchronized with the arrival in Chungking of Mr. Lattimore to impress him with the wickedness of the Chinese Communists.

Advocates of this interpretation pointed out that the clashes apparently were not of any great seriousness and that in the past even larger outbreaks had been regarded with no great alarm.<sup>7</sup>

Questions were again raised about Lattimore not long after he was appointed as the chief economist of the Reparations Commission in Japan in 1945. The congressional committee investigating the delivery of government secrets to the magazine *Amerasia* made formal inquiries into why he, having been a member of the magazine's editorial board, was an instructor at a training school for diplomats run by the State Department. It was made public that he had five listings in an index of Communist-front organizations previously issued by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, that he lectured jointly with someone who had twenty-three such listings, and that he was "one of the principal writers for the Institute of Pacific Relations, a veritable mill of Russian propaganda."<sup>8</sup> In the October 1945 issue of the *China Monthly*,<sup>9</sup> Alfred Kohlberg, a virulent and early critic of Lattimore and State Department policy in the Far East, quotes unidentified Chinese as having "asked their American friends why, if President Roosevelt wanted to send an advisor [to Chiang Kai-shek], did he have to pick a Red?"<sup>10</sup> He went on to assert that under Lattimore's editorship, the tenor of articles in *Pacific Affairs* largely followed the Communist line, particularly refraining from any criticism of the government of China between the United Front agreement of February 1937 and the Hitler-Stalin pact of August 23, 1939. "During the seven years of Mr. Lattimore's editorship, *Pacific Affairs* featured numerous articles by well-known pro-Soviet and Communist writers."<sup>11</sup> He accused Lattimore of wanting to "lock China into the Communist world system."<sup>12</sup> In a lengthy reply,<sup>13</sup> Lattimore took issue with many of Kohlberg's statements, and angrily dismissed as ridiculous the charges that he was a Communist or had Communist sympathies. He, in turn, accused Kohlberg of drawing unjustified conclusions "from a mass of incorrect statements and unwarranted imputations." He called the allegation that he was a Communist "slanderous."<sup>14</sup>

In a 1945 article in *Reader's Digest*,<sup>15</sup> "The Fate of the World Is at Stake in China," Max Eastman and J. B. Powell described Lattimore as "perhaps the most subtle evangelist" in promulgating the

"deception" that "Russia is a democracy," and that it is therefore safe to leave China to its influence. Not only had Lattimore irresponsibly not condemned Stalin's reign of terror in the 1930s, but, Eastman and Powell argued, in the 1940s he had been urging the U.S. government and people "to accept cheerfully the spread of 'the Soviet form of democracy' in Central Asia."<sup>16</sup> This sort of thinking would surely bring nearly one-half billion people under totalitarian regimentation. Eastman and Powell concluded that this number, added to the 200 million enslaved in the Soviet Union, was a threat to any hope for a truly democratic world and would ensure that Iran and India would follow the same path as China. Lattimore's thinking was contradictory to the "clear-headed, informed and resolute campaign" needed to promote popular forms of government.<sup>17</sup>

Individuals in the government joined in condemning Lattimore and his work in China. Senator Kenneth S. Wherry, a Republican from Nebraska, took up the theme that because of his Communist sympathies, Lattimore had worked against American interests.

But when that plan [to avert the attack on Pearl Harbor] reached Chiang Kai-shek, in that momentous hour when the fate of America was hanging between peace and war, there stood at Chiang Kai-shek's elbow another one of the Communist fellow travelers, Owen Lattimore, a notorious champion of Communist revolutionary tactics and philosophy. There he stood in that critical moment, as the agent of the United States government, the State Department, not only did Chiang Kai-shek turn this plan down, but Owen Lattimore wrote to the President's representative . . . a passionate appeal against the sending of that note to the Japanese. How does it come about that Communists or Communist sympathizers in this country and worshippers of Soviet Russia managed to find themselves so often at the very point where the switch must be turned one way or the other to determine the course of our government?<sup>18</sup>

In 1947, Lattimore was one of 102 artists, writers, actors, and others named by the American Legion's National Americanism Commission as unsuitable for sponsorship as speakers or entertainers. According to the American Legion, those placed on the list "do not adhere to the same beliefs that we adhere to," and therefore it would be inappropriate to invite them to functions or meetings.

Lattimore barely reacted to the publication of the list, claiming that the only other person named with whom he was acquainted was William L. Shirer (he did not know any of the others—e.g., Margaret Bourke-White, Lee J. Cobb, José Ferrer, John Garfield, Dashiell Hammett, Burl Ives, Gene Kelly, Ring Lardner, Jr., Frederick March, Arthur Miller, Zero Mostel, Clifford Odets, Artie Shaw, Kurt Weill), and that he would “always be glad to be on any list with him.”<sup>19</sup>

In the late 1940s, the charge was frequently made that Lattimore had secretly written Henry Wallace’s report on China, following his 1944 mission there, which purportedly advocated shifting support away from the Nationalist government to the Communists. Many, in and out of government, were convinced that Lattimore had been central in a clique working on behalf of the Communists to destroy the Nationalists. In the October 1948 issue of the *China Monthly*,<sup>20</sup> Kohlberg charged that Lattimore was part of a “plot [which] developed in May, 1943 . . . [that] planned to slowly choke to death and destroy the government of the Republic of China and build up the Chinese Communists for post-war success.”<sup>21</sup>

In the fall of 1949, a memorandum was prepared for J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), reviewing intelligence that Lattimore was a spy or foreign agent.<sup>22</sup> Lattimore had been placed “under investigation by the Bureau as a Soviet espionage agent” primarily because of his contacts with suspected subversives. The FBI believed what it had learned

coincides with the belief expressed by—admitted Soviet agents who expressed the belief that Lattimore is a Russian agent . . . . advised that he considered Lattimore to be an unswerving devotee to Communist ideology and that as a member of the State Department during World War II, Lattimore was a disrupting and disloyal influence. . . . Undoubtedly Lattimore is not a card carrying member of the Communist party as he is too useful to them otherwise and that his membership and affiliation could only be proved by a comparison of Lattimore’s writings and expressions with the Communist party line.

The FBI was especially concerned about Lattimore’s appointment by the secretary of state to a three-person advisory committee charged with reviewing the situation in China and Central Asia in order to determine American foreign policy.

Assuming Owen Lattimore is a Soviet agent as alleged, a fact which has not been proved or disproved, it is reasonable



that Lattimore could be of immense importance to the Russians both as an advisor to this committee in that it will formulate United States foreign policy with relation to the Far East and also because of the authoritativeness with which his writings are accepted by the American public.

At the bottom of the memorandum, Hoover responded: "This is shocking. Press vigorously investigation of Lattimore."

The criticism of the State Department over the loss of China to the Communists was particularly virulent. Public figures representing a variety of political views, but most particularly Republican members of Congress, were relentless in their attacks on policy and personnel. "Who lost China?" was asked repeatedly. Asking the question presupposed an answer, and people expected one. Purely by personalizing the issue of subversion, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy was becoming a national political figure. Featured in the conservative press, the denunciations helped foster the widespread public perception that a number of career diplomats had sold out China, had betrayed American interests, had actually abetted the Communist takeover of a wartime ally and friend. From the first, Lattimore became enmeshed in the attack on the State Department and its China policy.

#### Senator McCarthy's Attack

Against the backdrop of Alger Hiss's conviction for perjury (which to many simply meant that he was guilty of treason) two and a half weeks earlier, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy galvanized the assault with his often-quoted and controversial speech to the Republican Women's Club in Wheeling, West Virginia, on February 9, 1950. In that address, he asserted that he had a list of 205 individuals involved in "a spy ring" known to the secretary of state as "members of the Communist party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy in the State Department." Senator McCarthy more than once modified his charges (e.g., "Last night I discussed the Communists in the State Department. I stated that I had the names of fifty-seven card-carrying members of the Communist party"), but most Americans hardly noticed the inconsistencies.<sup>23</sup> The charges readily captured the public's imagination. It did not much matter how true McCarthy's allegations were; the speech and what was to follow were hardly about truth.

While in Afghanistan with a United Nations technical assistance mission in late March 1950, Lattimore received word that he

had been accused by Senator McCarthy of being the "top Soviet [Russian] espionage agent" in the United States.<sup>24</sup> Earlier in the month (on March 13), Senator McCarthy had told a senate committee that Lattimore had Communist sympathies and that his record as a pro-Communist went back many years. When he initially gave his testimony about Lattimore, Senator McCarthy referred to him as "a policy-making State Department attaché collaborating with those who have sworn to destroy the Nation by force of violence."<sup>25</sup>

Almost daily, it seemed, there were leaks to the press linking Lattimore to a variety of improprieties. Lattimore's was called the "No. 1 case";<sup>26</sup> what followed would rival the Hiss case and rock the country. Although Senator McCarthy downgraded his original charge, first to "one of the top Communist agents" in the country, and finally to a "bad policy risk,"<sup>27</sup> few seemed to notice the difference.

Senator McCarthy asserted that Lattimore, who was without question "a Soviet agent,"<sup>28</sup> had taken the opportunity during those times when he was employed by, and was an advisor to, the State Department to infect America's foreign policy toward China. Lattimore was described as the chief or principal "architect" of American Far Eastern policy. McCarthy expressed concern about Ambassador-at-Large Philip C. Jessup's "apparent wholehearted trust in and reliance on" Lattimore's judgment, which made him the "voice of Lattimore"—"a dangerously efficient Lattimore front."<sup>29</sup> He stated that U.S. Far Eastern policy, and especially China policy, followed Lattimore's recommendations "step for step."<sup>30</sup> Since, the accusation continued, Lattimore was the "former boss of Alger Hiss" in an "espionage ring in the Department,"<sup>31</sup> it was hardly surprising that official government policy had become pro-Communist. The charge that Lattimore was instrumental in formulating American foreign policy was partly based on a memorandum that he had submitted to the State Department Round Table on Far Eastern Policy the previous October. His central theme was that

the aim of the United States policy should be to enable the countries of the Far East to do without Russia to the maximum extent. This is a much more modest aim than insistence on an organization of hostility to Russia; but it is an attainable aim, and the other is not.<sup>32</sup>

In a four-hour speech in the Senate at the end of March, Senator McCarthy asserted that he had an important witness who would swear that for years Lattimore had been a member of the

Communist party. He accused the secretary of state of being "the voice for the mind of Lattimore," and charged that every major aspect of the State Department's Far Eastern policy had followed a line welcomed by the Soviet Union and recommended by Lattimore. He promised that he would "give some documentation to show that [Lattimore] is a Soviet agent and also that he either is, or at least has been, a member of the Communist party." He said that he possessed a deposition in which it was sworn that Lattimore had acknowledged that he was "declassifying [removing the restrictions on] secret documents in favor of some friends."<sup>33</sup> Senator McCarthy added that he was less interested in whether Lattimore was a paid espionage agent than in seeking to prove that he was a dominant influence in the development and implementation of the policy which delivered China to the Communists.

Establishing Lattimore's culpability was clearly important to McCarthy. It was to be a test case upon which he would risk his reputation. He stated that he would stake his case that the government had been penetrated by Communists on proving Lattimore guilty. He told the press:

I am willing to stand or fall on this one. If I am shown to be wrong on this I think the subcommittee would be justified in not taking my other cases too seriously. If they find I am 100 percent right—as they will—it should convince them of the seriousness of the situation.<sup>34</sup>

This attention and offensive by Senator McCarthy was of grave significance. McCarthy was a great deal more than a powerful politician; he was to become towering. As Richard Rovere observed, "He held two presidents captive—or as nearly captive as any presidents of the United States had ever been held. . . ."<sup>35</sup>

On returning to the United States, Lattimore called Senator McCarthy's charges "base and contemptible lies." He referred to him as a "madman," a "base and miserable creature," and a "hit-and-run politician." He said that Senator McCarthy's charges against him had been made "falsely, irresponsibly and libelously." He added that the Soviet Union should decorate Senator McCarthy for "telling the kind of lies about the United States that Russian propagandists could not invent."<sup>36</sup>

The principal witness supporting Senator McCarthy's charges was Louis F. Budenz, former managing editor of the *Daily Worker* and member of the national committee of the Communist party. Senator McCarthy promised that Budenz would testify that Latti-

more "was known to him to be a member of the Communist party, a member over whom they had disciplinary powers."<sup>37</sup> When he later gave public testimony, Budenz recounted how he had been told by high-ranking party officials Earl Browder and Frederick V. Field that Lattimore's assignment was to organize writers to put out stories to lull the American public into believing that the Chinese Communists were merely reformers and not dangerous revolutionaries.

### The Tydings Committee

On February 22, 1950, the U.S. Senate adopted a resolution authorizing the Committee on Foreign Relations to conduct an investigation into the loyalty of employees of the State Department. A subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations (the Tydings committee) was appointed, and between March 8 and July 7 it called thirty-five witnesses over thirty-one days to give testimony in public or executive session. Among those who gave evidence to the committee were Senator McCarthy and Lattimore.

When Senator McCarthy appeared before the committee in open session, he testified that Lattimore had held numerous positions with the State Department, and had been one of its most regular consultants. He told the committee in executive session that it was his understanding that Lattimore had free access to a desk and all of the files in the State Department. McCarthy insisted that Lattimore's FBI file would show "in detail not the case merely of a man who appears to favor Russia, not the case of a man who might disagree with what we think about Russia, but a man who is definitely an espionage agent."<sup>38</sup>

In addition to Budenz, Freda Utley, a former member of the British Communist party, appeared as a witness and made a determined effort to tie Lattimore to the cause of communism. In her testimony, Utley attempted to demonstrate that by the early 1940s Lattimore's writings consistently followed the Communist party line; he had become a defender of Communists and communism. She did disagree with Senator McCarthy that Lattimore worked as an operative for the Soviet Union, but this was not really to defend him, as in her mind McCarthy erred by understatement:

I think that Senator McCarthy was wrong in his original statement that Owen Lattimore is the Soviet government's top

espionage agent in America. I think the senator underestimated Lattimore. Mr. Lattimore is such a renowned scholar, such an excellent writer, so adept at teaching the American people that they ought to stop opposing the great, good and progressive Soviet government, that it is impossible to believe that Moscow would regard him as expendable, as all spies are. To suggest that Mr. Lattimore's great talents have been utilized in espionage seems to me as absurd as to suggest that Mr. Gromyko or Mr. Molotov employ their leisure hours at Lake Success, or at international conferences, in snitching documents.

I do not know whether Mr. Lattimore is a member of the Communist party or know the influence he has devoted to the detriment of America, but, as I say, his function has been to lead us to destruction.

Although Utley conceded that she had no concrete proof or personal knowledge that Lattimore had Communist ties, she compared him to a "Judas cow" that in a stockyard leads other animals to slaughter. She was convinced that he knew that what he was writing and saying was false. He cleverly hid his intent.<sup>39</sup>

Lattimore had been openly and plainly labeled; there seemed to be a good deal to which he needed to respond. In early April, he was given an opportunity to defend himself. Appearing before the Tydings committee with his principal attorney, Abe Fortas, of the prestigious Washington law firm of [Thurman] Arnold, Fortas & [Paul] Porter, Lattimore denied the charges, and in a forty-two page prepared statement, directly and aggressively counterattacked Senator McCarthy. He questioned McCarthy's methods and probity, repeating his contention that the charges were "base and contemptible lies."<sup>40</sup> (For the temper of this testimony, see Appendix B.) He was most concerned that Senator McCarthy ultimately would silence those whose views were contrary to his and who were opposed to further military or economic aid to the Chinese Nationalists' cause.

Now it is obvious that Senator McCarthy and I differ on each of these points. Judging from his unquestioning acceptance and extensive use of the propaganda of the so-called China Lobby, he is at least its willing tool. The senator seems to feel that everyone is disloyal whose opinions do not agree

with those of himself and the China Lobby with respect to total and complete commitment of the United States to the Nationalist government of China. Some of his denunciations are understandable only on the theory that he believes that anyone is disloyal whose opinions on China policy during the last 9 or 10 years parallel or support those of the government of the United States. In the latter category the senator would have to include General George C. Marshall, General Stilwell and presumably the various Secretaries of State, Messrs. Hull, Stettinius, Byrnes and Acheson.<sup>41</sup>

He vigorously denied the charge that he was a Communist:

I am not and never have been a member of the Communist party. I have never been affiliated or associated with the Communist party. I have never believed in the principles of communism nor subscribed to nor advocated the Communist or Soviet form of government either within the United States, in China, in the Far East, or anywhere in the world. I have never consciously or deliberately advocated or participated in promoting the cause of communism anywhere in the world.<sup>42</sup>

The Democratic majority on the Tydings committee was predisposed to believe Lattimore. During Lattimore's testimony, Senator Tydings informed him:

I think as chairman of this committee that I owe it to you and to the country to tell you that four of the five members of this committee, in the presence of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI, had a complete summary of your file made available to them. Mr. Hoover himself prepared those data. It was quite lengthy. And at the conclusion of the reading of that summary in great detail, it was the universal opinion of all of the members of the committee present, and all others in the room, of which there were two more [the attorney general and the first assistant attorney general], that there was nothing in that file to show that you were a Communist or had ever been a Communist, or that you were in any way connected with any espionage information or charges, so that the FBI file puts you completely, up to this moment, at least, in the clear.<sup>43</sup>

Even after these encouraging words, Lattimore's attorneys were not sanguine. There was a danger that Lattimore could be overwhelmed by the political climate, or worse.

Washington today is in a state of hysteria which you wouldn't believe unless you were here. The fantastic cloak and dagger intrigue, the bribery which we suspect surrounds the Lattimore case, is unthinkable.<sup>44</sup>

In July, the Tydings committee concluded that there was no basis for Senator McCarthy's accusations. The Democratic members on the committee denounced his charges of communism in the State Department as false and "contemptible." They accused their colleague of conscious falsehoods and of serving the interests of communism by raising baseless suspicions. In the most blistering terms, the report characterized Senator McCarthy's charges and methods as a "fraud and a hoax perpetuated on the Senate of the United States and the American people."<sup>45</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that Lattimore was exonerated: "From the foregoing we are left with no alternative but to believe that every possible unfavorable twist has been applied to the information concerning Mr. Lattimore by those presenting it against him. The misrepresentations are clear and demonstrable." The committee did not believe that Lattimore had been, as Senator McCarthy had charged, the "architect of our Far Eastern policy." It left no question of where it stood with regard to Senator McCarthy's basic accusation.

We find no evidence to support the charge that Owen Lattimore is the "top Russian spy" or, for that matter, any other sort of spy. . . . We have every confidence that were Mr. Lattimore an espionage agent the efficient FBI would long since have taken action against him. . . .

We do not find that Mr. Lattimore's writings follow the Communist or any other line, save as his very consistent position on the Far East may be called the Lattimore line.

The committee's majority found that Budenz's testimony against Lattimore could establish no more than that the Communists used him "to project a propaganda line anent China."<sup>46</sup> It concluded that Lattimore had never been connected in any proper sense with the State Department except as a one-time advisor. The committee did suggest that perhaps Lattimore was not always discreet in his associations.

Many critics of the State Department saw the Tydings committee's work as little more than a whitewash. Senator McCarthy

called the committee report "an evil fraud" giving a "clean bill of health to Stalin's fifth column in this country." He predicted that it would give "a green light to the Red fifth column in the United States." He added that it would be a signal to the "traitors, Communists and fellow travelers" in government that they need have no fear of exposure from the Truman administration.<sup>47</sup>

In his capacity as an official of the American China Policy Association, Alfred Kohlberg, the long-time and committed adversary of Lattimore, sent an open letter to Senator Tydings charging that the report had made numerous factual statements "in large part not taken from the testimony." Kohlberg suggested that some outside source may have been drawn upon in drafting the report, and asked Senator Tydings if Lattimore or his attorney had helped write it. As far as Kohlberg was concerned, Lattimore was not peripheral to what many saw as the problems in the State Department.

You left the real question unanswered. Who so advised President Truman that though he stepped into office as commander of the most powerful armed forces in the history of the world heading an alliance of 1,890,000,000 people, he is today the commander of skeletonized forces fighting the armies of a satellite of Red China, which is in turn a satellite of the Soviet Union?

Professor Lattimore may claim "clearance" by you; the administration that permits Communist meetings and the Communist press to cheer North Korea and blackguard Americans who are dying tonight for liberty in that far-off country may claim "clearance" by you; the 1,700 *Amerasia* documents may be "cleared": but who will do the "clearing" when the bill is paid in "blood, sweat and tears?"<sup>48</sup>

In spite of the Tydings committee conclusions, the attacks on Lattimore were far from over. Even before the committee issued its report, Senator McCarthy had asked President Truman to "silence" Lattimore. Speaking at a convention of the Sons of the American Revolution in May, McCarthy asserted that Secretary of State Dean Acheson "bought" a plan for the Far East, masterminded by Lattimore, that was "gigantic in its fraud and complete in its deceit." The plan, which McCarthy had characterized as the "Acheson-Lattimore axis," would enslave Asia as it involved "hitting Communists at the front door with a silk handkerchief while they beat the brains out of your friends at the back door". . . . "That was the plan



for China; that is Lattimore's plan for South Korea." McCarthy argued that by their actions, Secretary Acheson and Lattimore had forfeited their right to speak for America.<sup>49</sup>

There was no pause in Senator McCarthy's attacks on Lattimore even after the Tydings committee report had been made public in July. Ten days after its release, McCarthy told his colleagues in the Senate that Lattimore had sold his summer home in Vermont to an "avowed" Communist for a \$3,000 profit, and suggested that the transaction might have been a "pay-off" by the Communists. McCarthy added that Alger Hiss, the former State Department official convicted of perjury for denying Communist ties, had a summer home near Lattimore's.<sup>50</sup> Lattimore continued to repay in kind, calling McCarthy a publicity-seeking demagogue who was prompted by pro-fascists, ex-Communists, anti-Semites, and "similar fringe fanatics of the political underworld."<sup>51</sup>

#### The McCarran Committee

In November 1950, the Senate Committee on the Judiciary was authorized to make an investigation and study of the Internal Security Act of 1950; of the administration, operation, and enforcement of other laws relating to espionage, sabotage, and the protection of the internal security of the country; and of the extent, nature, and effects of subversive activities in the United States.

In part due to a dissatisfaction with the work of the Tydings committee, as well as to specific charges made by Senator McCarthy, it was decided to investigate the Institute of Pacific Relations, an international body organized in Honolulu in 1923 under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) as a clearinghouse for information about the Far East, and composed of countries with interests in the region. Its founders hoped to promote understanding of the area and its problems. The Soviet Union had long been a member. The purpose of this specific inquiry was to determine the extent to which the institute may have been infiltrated or controlled by Communists and dominated by Communist ideology, and—whatever the influence of communism—what effect the institute may have had on American foreign policy and public opinion in the 1930s and 1940s. The investigation was designed to determine whether subversive influences softened the policy of the United States toward Mao Tse-tung's Communist forces in China, and as a consequence harmed Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists. When it held its hearings between July 1951 and June 1952, this

second investigatory body, the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary, chaired by Pat McCarran of Nevada (the McCarran committee), was considerably less friendly toward Lattimore than the Tydings committee.

As far as the inquiry into the Institute of Pacific Relations was concerned, the McCarran committee narrowed its focus to determine whether or to what extent the institute was part of the Communist world conspiracy and how it may have exerted an influence on U.S. foreign policy. The investigation was informed by the premise that a number of officials and staff of the institute had disseminated pro-Communist propaganda about economic, political, and social conditions in the Far East, and had successfully oriented American foreign policy toward Communist objectives. The inquiry was to unravel who was involved and how the goal had been achieved.

The Institute of Pacific Relations was believed to have had a substantial influence on American foreign policy in the Far East in the 1930s and 1940s, the years that the country's power in that region declined. Some in and out of government had come to believe that this was because the Institute of Pacific Relations, and particularly its leadership, was secretly under Communist control and for many years had been used as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

Lattimore's long-standing relationship with the Institute of Pacific Relations put him again directly in the spotlight. As had become apparent when the Tydings committee had investigated him, Lattimore was indeed visible and had a following, actually, more than he was willing to acknowledge. He claimed he was merely a writer, reporting on what he had observed, and that he did not try to impose his ideas on others. Indeed, he contended his views had had virtually no effect on government policy. His work and ideas were known to government officials. Among other things, he was known to some in the State Department, had been a presidential appointee to the Chinese Nationalist government when he was serving as the political advisor to Chiang Kai-shek, had been the deputy director of the Office of War Information in the Pacific area during World War II, and was a member of Henry Wallace's mission to Siberia and China. He had also been a member of the board of trustees and for a short time a member of the executive committee of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Moreover, for seven years, from 1934 until 1941, he had been the editor of *Pacific Affairs*, a quarterly published by the institute and taken quite seriously by policy makers and in the academic community. The charge had been made

that under the editorship of Lattimore, *Pacific Affairs* had become a vehicle for Soviet propaganda, and like Lattimore had had considerable influence on the thinking of those in the State Department who determined and carried out American foreign policy. Instead of preventing the fall of China to the Communists, American foreign policy, badly distorted by *Pacific Affairs*, Lattimore, and those whom he had published, contributed to the process. Thus, in the eyes of some, Lattimore was seen as having a major responsibility for the defeat of the Nationalists by the Communists.

Few doubted that Lattimore was one of the half dozen or so experts on Asia—nearly all in one way or another affiliated with the Institute of Pacific Relations—who, as World War II came to an end, had attempted to move American foreign policy with respect to China away from full and unqualified support of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government. He was seen as being instrumental when after the war the United States seemed to adopt a policy less favorable to the Nationalists. Once more it was alleged Lattimore had argued that Mao Tse-tung and his followers were basically reformers who would bring about democratic changes, that their real goal was agrarian reform, and that their movement had no connection with communism in the Soviet Union. When the McCarran committee decided to look into the activities of the Institute of Pacific Relations, it was hardly surprising that Lattimore became a central figure to the inquiry.

Although in his testimony Lattimore adamantly denied most of the allegations made against him ("I never believed that the Chinese Communists were merely agrarian reformers. I have always believed that they were right straight down-the-line Communists"<sup>52</sup>), the proceeding did not go well for him. The head of the Russian Department of the Voice of America in the State Department who had been a general in the Russian army testified that Lattimore and a friend were designated in the mid-1930s by another general, the chief of the Soviet military intelligence, as "our men" who could be depended on to use the Institute of Pacific Relations to work with Soviet military intelligence. The generals were discussing individuals who might help in a Russian scheme to build up secret caches of arms in China. He further stated that this information had been repeated—"they are still our men"<sup>53</sup>—by another general, the underground leader of Soviet military intelligence, some years later. Lattimore denied these accusations, stating that in 1934, he had no contact with Russia and had never been in Russia. (For relevant testimony, see Appendix C.)

As he did before the Tydings committee, Louis F. Budenz again claimed he had been told by party officials that Lattimore was a member of the Communist party.

**Mr. Budenz.** He was specifically mentioned as a member of the Communist cell under instructions. There was no loose mention of his name.

**Senator Ferguson.** Was it ever discussed in these [Politburo] meetings that Owen Lattimore was a man who could put out propaganda and conceal the Communist activity, but still have it carry out the policy of the Communists?

**Mr. Budenz.** That was precisely the estimate given, that the weight of his discussions was always along the lines of the Soviet policy, but that they were expressed in that language which was non-Soviet in character.<sup>54</sup>

An Asia specialist from Yale University, David Rowe, told the committee: "As of today, among Far East specialists in the United States, Lattimore is probably the principal agent of Stalinism. . . ." <sup>55</sup> It was also said that Lattimore made trips to Communist China and the Soviet Union, "receiving extensive privileges there. . . ." <sup>56</sup> He was accused of "trying to advocate the Stalinist approach" <sup>57</sup> in *Pacific Affairs*. His book, *Solution in Asia*, was described by an employee of a Communist bookstore as a publication used to give the party viewpoint. (For relevant testimony, see Appendix D.)

Lattimore engaged in a protracted *pas de deux* with one or another of the senators on the McCarran committee. Not counting his testimony in executive session, he appeared publicly before the committee for twelve days between February 26 and March 21, 1952.<sup>58</sup> His testimony was the high point of the committee's hearing. From the beginning, Lattimore vigorously assailed the committee as being deliberately unfair, determined to find Communist designs even where none existed. In language forceful and unequivocal, he argued that the committee was so intent to find evil that it had given undue credence to "a nightmare of outrageous lies, shady hearsay and undisguised personal spite."<sup>59</sup> He bitterly accused the committee of suppression and distortion of evidence and of welcoming "stacked"<sup>60</sup> testimony that was harming individuals and the Nation.

All kinds of attempts have been made to depict me as a Communist or a Soviet agent. I have in fact been falsely iden-