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PRISONER OF CONTEXT: THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE SPEECH AND J. EDGAR HOOVER'S RHETORICAL REALISM

STEPHEN M. UNDERHILL

In this project, I argue that J. Edgar Hoover's style of political realism should be studied by critics because it long preceded that of President Harry S. Truman. The style belonged to a stockpile of anti-Communist imagery that helped to shape how the Truman Doctrine speech was drafted and how audiences interpreted its meanings in more local domestic politics. When Truman finally announced that the Soviet Union had challenged international protocol, I argue that he confirmed the vision that his Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director and other detractors had developed throughout the New Deal to discredit reformers who challenged issues of race, labor, and police technique. In this way, anti-Communist containment rhetoric limited the president's ability to control the domestic security and economic agendas. The stockpile of anti-Communist discourse belonged to, I also argue, a relative of political realism—literary realism and its spinoff, literary naturalism. My final argument is that the FBI director refurbished key tropes in the stockpile, which helped Truman's congressional opponents invoke Hoover's authority within the executive branch and thereby displace the president's credibility as commander in chief. Combined, Hoover and his allies in Congress and elsewhere used rhetorical realism to communicate a deterministic philosophy about human nature through a diffuse mythic narrative, coordinated between Congress, Hollywood, the press, and official FBI discourse.

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When President Harry S. Truman delivered the Truman Doctrine speech before Congress on March 12, 1947, he closed his remarks with an ornamental statement that was uncharacteristic of his plain style.¹ He first introduced the problems of “subjugation by armed minorities” and “outside pressures” as well as that of “such subterfuges as political infiltration.” He then drew a biological analogy to belligerence that highlighted the problem of Communist expansion. “The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want,” he argued. “They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died.”² Rather than limit where the Soviet Union might spread its influence to faraway places, the president implied otherwise when he issued Executive Order 9835 on March 22. The order decreed that “the presence within the Government service of any disloyal or subversive person constitutes a threat to our democratic processes” and therefore ordered a loyalty investigation of all current members of, and future applicants to, the executive branch. Among other things, these reviews were to include reference to “Federal Bureau of Investigation files.”³ The president appeared before Congress to help defend Greece and Turkey from Soviet belligerence. The juxtaposition of these two texts, however, led some to mistakenly conclude that the purpose of the speech was to prepare the way for loyalty investigations.⁴

In the same timeframe, Truman’s rival in the FBI also used biological and naturalist discourse to discuss the spread of Soviet ideology. J. Edgar Hoover told the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) on March 26 that communism was a “way of life—an evil and malignant way of life. It reveal[ed] a condition akin to disease that spreads like an epidemic and like an epidemic a quarantine [was] necessary to keep it from infecting the Nation.” Like Truman, Hoover also warned against political infiltration. He advocated for the “necessity of alertness in keeping Communists and sympathizers out of Government services.” The FBI director made clear that Communists did not “have a right to Government jobs.” By authority of the “Hatch Act,” Hoover boasted that the FBI had already ensured that a “total of 1,906 individuals [were] no longer employed in the Government.” They were removed before they could spread the “virus of communism” under the “window dressing” of “old-age security, houses for veterans, child assistance,” and other social-democratic New Deal programs.⁵ Hoover’s

remarks to HUAC worked intertextually with his previous discourses, and with the statements of Republicans and Southern Democrats hostile to the president, to situate the Truman Doctrine speech in a context that worked against social-democratic New Dealers, with their support of organized labor and civil rights legislation.⁶ Richard Gid Powers concludes that Hoover's speech signified a transfer of loyalty from the Oval Office to congressional conservatives.⁷

Rhetorical critics have already examined how the Truman Doctrine speech helped to displace political idealism with realism. Denise M. Bostdorff observes that Truman attempted to balance his own entrenched commitments to lofty ideals with the apparent necessity of adopting a more realistic interpretation of Soviet actions. She contends that the administration's perceptions were constrained by a "rhetoric of the past—and the reality that it had generated."⁸ Moreover, Martin J. Medhurst suggests that the speech shattered the president's reticence about how American-Soviet relations had soured after the war. His previous silence created a vacuum of presidential rhetoric about international relations that was filled by opponents who set the agenda with xenophobic anticommunism. Medhurst concludes that Truman had trapped himself with his "prior commitment to an idealistic world and the rhetorical reticence entailed by that vision," and so he entered the debate on communism, subversion, and loyalty too late and "found himself a prisoner of historical events."⁹

The Truman Doctrine speech has also been examined in terms of how it fit a naturalist language pattern. Bostdorff and Robert L. Ivie illustrate how White House speech writers embedded metaphors of natural phenomena like fire, flood, and fever within the text, which borrowed from an anti-Communist stockpile of imagery that highlighted visions of health and disease.¹⁰ Similarly, Paul A. Chilton suggests that the finalized text was structured according to preliminary drafts that featured infectious disease metaphors and container images. He links containment rhetoric to a container schema in security logic, which entails an interior, boundary surface, and exterior. National borders figuratively separate insiders from outsiders and maintain order by limiting movement. The boundary surface is frequently personified as a human body, and disease as something that infiltrates the boundary to attack and disrupt interior organs.¹¹ The language adopted by the administration, the linguist concludes, created the "impression of a naturally based description," which influenced how policy was

drafted.¹² Whereas biological imagery placed humans in a Darwinian contest for survival, container discourse suggested how the spread of a biosocial problem could be stopped.

While Truman kept silent about Soviet belligerence for almost two years (April 1945–March 1947), his FBI director spent that time and many years beforehand publicly warning of a vast conspiracy in naturalist terms that shaped how Americans would experience the Cold War at home. Republicans and Southern Democrats praised and repeated the FBI director's warnings against the New Deal in the timeframe of the Truman Doctrine speech. Republicans appreciated how Hoover's discourse made the government's support of organized labor vulnerable to fears of Communist infiltration. For Southern Democrats, such rhetoric weakened the momentum of social-democratic New Dealers who wanted to integrate the South.¹³ When the postwar crisis emerged, Hoover was ready to use the international situation as a context to help reform domestic politics according to the more exclusive value structure of Anglo-American nationalism.

Unlike Truman, Hoover defined the problem of Soviet expansion in ways that stretched into the orbit of mass culture, organized labor, and race relations. The FBI director warned that "the poisonous pills of Communist propaganda" were disbursed by Hollywood. Moscow had allegedly inserted lines, scenes, and sequences into films that conveyed the "Communist lesson," and had worked to censor "anti-Communist lessons." The Kremlin supposedly accomplished this message campaign by ordering American Communists to infiltrate labor unions and the arts.¹⁴ The FBI director shared an interest in the film industry with HUAC. Both the FBI and committee members investigated Hollywood filmmakers in search of Communist agents, and both identified films with social-democratic themes like *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946) as Communist propaganda.¹⁵ According to Hoover, the purpose of the propaganda and infiltration strategies was to exploit workers and African Americans in a Communist uprising. Hoover quoted Vladimir Lenin to argue that the ultimate objective was revolution, "by exerting pressure from without as a political movement . . . 'The economic strike develops into a political strike and the latter develops into insurrection'" to "overthrow the American way of life" and for the "overthrow of our Government."¹⁶ Hoover, moreover, saw in the film industry a resource to tell far-flung stories about the FBI. His publicists worked relent-

lessly during the New Deal to help script urban-crime and film noir movies that framed the bureau in terms of realistic fiction.¹⁷

Hoover's style of political realism should be studied by critics because it long preceded that of the president. The style helped to shape how the Truman Doctrine speech was drafted and how audiences interpreted its meanings in more local domestic politics. When Truman finally announced that the Soviet Union had challenged international protocol, I argue that he confirmed the vision that his FBI director and other detractors had developed throughout the New Deal to discredit reformers who challenged issues of race, labor, and police technique. In this way, anti-Communist containment rhetoric limited the president's ability to control the domestic security and economic agendas. The stockpile of anti-Communist discourse belonged to, I also argue, a relative of political realism—literary realism and its spinoff, literary naturalism.¹⁸ My final argument is that the FBI director refurbished key tropes in the stockpile, which helped Truman's congressional opponents invoke Hoover's authority within the executive branch and thereby displace the president's credibility as commander in chief. Combined, Hoover and his allies in Congress and elsewhere used rhetorical realism to communicate a deterministic philosophy about human nature through a diffuse mythic narrative, coordinated between Congress, Hollywood, the press, and more official FBI discourse. In what follows, I discuss the relationship between political and literary realisms. I then focus on how anti-Communists used the pattern to frame the Truman Doctrine speech against the New Deal. This backdrop allows for an examination of how rhetorical realism constructed idealistic, social-democratic New Dealers as Communist dupes that needed to be culturally contained by Anglo-American nationalists.

POLITICAL AND LITERARY MODES OF REALISM

Political and literary realisms share key formal attributes that are related to similar functional properties. Realistic fiction emerged as a popular genre in the years following the Civil War and would, in time, heavily influence early film genres that focused on cowboys, gangsters, and spies. With the emphasis of these genres, not surprisingly, the language of film noir offered a framework for twentieth-century political realists to communicate a deterministic philosophy of human nature and the

kind of law enforcement and national security that it necessitated. Indeed, both realisms shared a common philosophy and were drafted in response to respective idealisms.¹⁹ What policy planners took as natural divisions between manliness and domesticity, between reality and naïveté, between what was essentially American and what was foreign, were patterns sown deep into Anglo-American culture by generations of artists who attempted to adapt their world to the stresses of mass urbanization, immigration, and industrialization.

The rise of political realism as the dominant American foreign policy paradigm is rooted in the historical experience of German belligerence in World Wars I and II and the pressure to reorganize the world in a way that would prevent the pattern of global catastrophe from repeating. The Truman Doctrine speech sits in a key place in the canon of realist texts because it announced a new direction in foreign policy planning after the idealist paradigm had collapsed under the gravity of the Axis powers. The rhetoric of political realism conceptualizes the nation-state as the primary unit of action in world politics and the commander in chief as the state's centralized authority. This philosophy suggests that nation-states naturally exist in a condition of anarchy and are thus forced to define their foreign policy objectives in terms of a more singular national interest that can be achieved by diplomatic and military power. Such singularity benefits the dominant groups that control the nation's strategic resources, as the dominant group's needs are viewed as the needs of the nation.²⁰ Conformity was insisted upon in issues of race, class, sexuality, and gender because of fear that Communists would exploit differences in U.S. multicultural life to destabilize order. Preserving dominant cultural hierarchies thus became a matter of national security in what has been described as Cold War containment culture.²¹

Realists naturalized their perspective in response to the rhetorical patterns of political idealism. Planners frequently dismissed idealistic discourse with claims that it was naïvely sentimental, moralistic, utopian, legalistic, rhetorical, or partisan. These missives contrasted idealism with more realistic discourse, which implied that the latter was grounded outside of language or was extratextual. Because idealism was unreal and existed only on paper, argued realists, the mistakes it caused could be contained by limiting the spread of its symbolism.²² Realism grew, in part, from the experience of realists with Wilsonian idealism and its advocates during the interwar era. The idealists, for example, placed their faith in the rationality

and basic goodness of white people, in the belief of a harmony of interests between white Christian nations, and in the possibility of an absolute form of justice.²³ Idealists even viewed oppositional ideology and radical activities as forms of protected speech, and they reframed law enforcement and prison as a means to reform the criminal.²⁴ Their emphasis on harmony and goodness lent a helpful political value to racial, economic, and religious minorities interested in social equality.

These values extended from President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points. Although he supported racial segregation in America, his foreign policy framework promoted a democratic world order, open diplomacy, free trade, labor safeguards, disarmament, and national autonomy.²⁵ The general failure of the League of Nations to maintain order soon raised skepticism about its feasibility. E. H. Carr suggested in 1939, for example, that "wishing prevails over thinking" in idealism and that the outbreak of war "revealed the inadequacy of pure aspiration" as the framework of politics and scholarship. Instead, he argued that planners should analyze "political reality" to correct the "wish-dreams" of political idealism and encouraged a more realistic perspective that would emphasize the irresistible strength of force.²⁶

The rhetoric of twentieth-century political realism appropriated key patterns from realistic fiction. In the decades following the Civil War, writers of literary realism and naturalism presented themselves akin to ethnographers, anthropologists, linguists, psychologists, sociologists, and other supposedly neutral scientific experts of their day.²⁷ They worked to outline the problems of urbanization, immigration, and industrialization, which political reformers were expected to address. Realist writers and their audiences experienced the genres of realism and naturalism as representative of the world they inhabited. Readers and writers believed that they could come into contact with the kinds of villains and problems portrayed in their stories.²⁸

In the Progressive Era, naturalists turned their backs on the previous generation of literary realists. Naturalists sometimes referred to the fiction of their forebears as "teacup tragedies" and thereby ridiculed a previous focus on domestic life. Naturalists failed to see irony in that the first generation of literary realists distinguished themselves from their own predecessors along similarly gendered lines.²⁹ Male writers pioneered realism soon after the Civil War and thereby challenged the feminine associa-

tions of novelists before the war. Novel writing became a respectable profession for men at a time when America suffered from the posttraumatic stresses of war. These realists denigrated the work of women novelists to justify their own. They jeered the work of women as mere sentimentalism when it invoked idealistic Christian virtues like peace, joy, grace, hope, mercy, and charity. Such literary idealism was flawed, they argued, because it presupposed the possibility of universal truth as well as harmony between different types of peoples.³⁰ Instead, realists imagined a world marked by agony and conflict. They raided the language of biological science, especially Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1872), to imagine public life in terms of competition for survival.³¹

At the turn of the century, naturalists went still further and infused the genre with the frontier myth to create what was then called "red-blooded realism."³² These writers located their stories at sea, in deserts, on mountaintops, among other archetypal frontier settings, and even imagined urban centers as a new frontier that needed to be reclaimed from foreign, non-Anglo, working class inhabitants.³³ Writers used a rich array of metaphors to imagine marginal groups in terms of brutes, savages, disease, and animals. They grounded their discourses in scientific theories on race and eugenics and cultivated fantasies of criminality, genetic deficiencies, political conspiracies, and threats to national security.³⁴ Richard Slotkin argues that naturalism communicated the frontier myth. Beginning with the Puritans, stories of survival in the wilderness were told and retold over centuries, and their recurring elements were eventually abstracted and reduced to icons, keywords, symbols, and clichés. As such, they circulated in naturalist stories as metaphors and thereby constructed historical situations in mythic terms. When fragments of rustic or natural imagery from the nation's past were placed in narratives about American cultural conflict, the language activated a sense of cosmological being and purpose that traced back to the Puritan mission into the wilderness.³⁵ Though the naturalist novel was largely confined to the Progressive Era, its conventions were transferred to cinema, first in Westerns, then in the urban-crime films of the 1930s, and then in the spy vs. spy of film noir at the end of the decade, which remained popular throughout the wartime and Cold War eras.

Without identifying its literary origins, critics have already documented how the language and logic of naturalism preceded the Cold War and laid in wait as a stockpile of anti-Communist imagery. Lynn Boyd Hinds and

Theodore Otto Windt Jr. describe a “rhetorical prism through which Americans viewed the Soviets” that was “refracted by the American self-image, a blending of the political and the religious that portrayed America as a people with a special relationship to God” and placed American and Soviet “manifest destinies” in rhetorical competition with each other. The scholars cite figurative language grounded in the natural environment that was deployed against organized labor during the first red scare of the twentieth century (1919–20) and then again against the New Deal, which helped to link alien doctrines and domestic radicals.³⁶ Bostdorff observes that the Truman Doctrine speech’s reliance upon this “rhetorical stockpile of anti-Communist words and images from the American past made Truman’s message compelling in the short term but simultaneously seemed to verify earlier right-wing attacks on the administration.” In fact, dissenters to the president’s foreign policy message were soon dismissed as naïve, idealistic, or Communist sympathizers by Hoover, congressional conservatives, and others of their ilk.³⁷

Critics have also examined some of Hoover’s rhetorical and media strategies. One of my earlier studies illustrates how the FBI director worked closely with the press during the Roosevelt administration’s war on crime (1933–38) to reframe federal law enforcement in militaristic language and thereby elevated himself in the political-cultural hierarchy.³⁸ I also link Hoover’s Cold War discourse to his experience with the FBI’s campaign against radicals during the Palmer Raids and the First Red Scare.³⁹ Moreover, Matthew Cecil focuses on Hoover’s relationship with the press throughout his career. Cecil argues that no other organization “could match the cultural capital of Hoover’s FBI” with the thousands of FBI stories that “appeared in newspapers, magazines, comic strips, radio programs, and motion pictures, and ultimately on television. Most of those stories were produced with the assistance” of the FBI.⁴⁰ He writes elsewhere that the FBI represented itself in “articles, books, radio dramas, and motion pictures” as a “responsible and even reluctant, logical, and deductive law enforcement agency.” This image obscured FBI abuses of power.⁴¹

Hoover’s rhetorical leadership has also been examined in terms of his gendered performances. Charles E. Morris, for example, argues that the director’s “sexual identity was significant to FBI policy in the years prior to Hoover’s Cold War dominance.”⁴² The current study examines mediated gendered constraints placed by anti-Communist frameworks on the rhetorical

presidency. I argue that Hoover helped saturate mass culture with realistic rhetoric, that the presence and authority of his discourse was amplified by Truman's congressional opponents and the press who often repeated it, and that Hoover's core anti-New Deal message and its delivery system extended the Truman Doctrine speech into the realm of race and class politics.

NATURALIST DISCOURSE AND THE RHETORICAL PRESIDENCY

When Hoover deployed naturalist discourse in his March 1947 speech to HUAC, he perpetuated a style that he first adopted in the early years of the New Deal to describe police and prison reformers. This origin reveals a framework that was valued because the style rebutted a perspective that insisted upon restraint in law enforcement, especially with how law enforcement treated immigrants. When Southern Democrats began to defect from the New Deal, the style helped frame their clash with social-democratic New Dealers as one between patriotism and disloyalty. The style was so flexible, in part, because it was first used by Hollywood to structure discourse in urban-crime films and then again to describe the problem of espionage in film noir just a few years later. The language system would frame, in part, the Truman Doctrine speech in ways that conflated domestic politics with the international situation and thereby helped to malign the New Deal.

After he issued Executive Order 9835, Truman advised the Loyalty Review Board to limit the role of the FBI in an attempt to curtail Hoover's influence.⁴³ Truman would learn over the course of his presidency, however, that Hoover had amassed too much rhetorical power to be controlled. The FBI engaged in an unfriendly competition with the Civil Service Commission over jurisdiction for loyalty reviews. George Elsey, assistant to Clark Clifford, the special counsel to the president, noted in May 1947 that Truman felt "very strongly anti-FBI" and sided with the Civil Service commissioners. He added that Truman wanted to constrain the FBI because he was "afraid" of building up a "Gestapo."⁴⁴ Truman confirmed this view and acknowledged that he feared anti-Communist hysteria. The president mistakenly appointed a Hoover loyalist from the Department of Justice to chair the Temporary Commission on Employee Loyalty. Clifford wrote weeks later to the president that the chair was making "mountains out of molehills" in a successful attempt to make the FBI "fully responsible for all investigations in every case in which there [was] a suspicion of disloyalty in

an applicant for Federal employment.” Truman wrote in the margin of this memo that “J. Edgar will in all probability get this backward looking Congress to give him what he wants. It’s dangerous.”⁴⁵

The president had distrusted the FBI director since his time in the Senate. In his first term (1935–41), Truman worked with chief counsel Max Lowenthal of the Interstate Commerce Committee (ICC), chaired by Burton K. Wheeler (D-MT), who was victimized by the Teapot Dome scandal. In 1923, the Bureau of Investigation tapped Wheeler’s phone, opened his mail, broke into his office, and “even attempted to lure Wheeler into a compromising sexual liaison,” observes Athan G. Theoharis.⁴⁶ The scandal forced the closure of young Hoover’s antiradical unit, created by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer in 1919 amid the red scare.⁴⁷

Lowenthal’s research helped the ICC connect Hoover’s new wartime power with controversies that besieged his bureau in the 1920s and jeopardized his authority afterward.⁴⁸ With Teapot Dome fresh in mind, President Herbert Hoover used his 1929 State of the Union address to inaugurate the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. It was chaired by former Attorney General George W. Wickersham (1909–13) and employed Lowenthal as its executive secretary. President Hoover called for the “widest inquiry into the shortcomings of the administration of justice and into the causes and remedies for them.” He also wanted to promote a new system that would prepare prisoners “for return to duties of citizenship.”⁴⁹ The commission reported in 1931 on “lawlessness in law enforcement” and condemned the use of torture against marginal groups. With Lowenthal’s help, Wickersham reprimanded police officials for a “secret and illegal practice” identified as the “third-degree,” which inflicted “suffering, physical or mental, upon a person, in order to obtain from that person information about a crime.”⁵⁰ Wickersham blamed police brutality on xenophobes who emphasized “only the difficulties connected with immigration” and “lost sight of all its beneficial effects.” The commission reported that immigrants were routinely scapegoated by police because it was an “easy theory that our social difficulties are not to be charged to our own mistakes and failures” but the fault of “nationals of other countries.”⁵¹ Instead, Wickersham blamed the move of industry into neighborhoods, which turned them into what he called “slum areas.”⁵²

The friendship that Truman kept with Lowenthal was adversarial to Hoover. Ted Morgan writes that “Truman’s antipathy toward the bureau

was nurtured and reinforced by his friend Max Lowenthal,” who “took the line, to which Truman was receptive, that the postwar spy scare had been concocted by his political enemies.”⁵³ When Truman entered the presidency in 1945, therefore, he did so with reservations about the FBI’s long history of political and ideological scandal that targeted people with whom the president sympathized. It was in the early years of the New Deal, however, that the director learned to better manage his public image with the help of Hollywood.

SPIES, DUPES, AND TRAITORS

The fear of political infiltration had captured the American imagination in mass culture since before World War II. Beginning in 1935, Hoover routinely lent the assistance of his department to film producers in return for various levels of influence over their scripts, which helped to signify and normalize the enhanced role of the federal government in public life.⁵⁴ Hoover first collaborated with Hollywood to make Warner Brothers’ *G Men* (1935), MGM’s *Whipsaw* (1935), United Artists’ *Let ‘Em Have It* (1935), Twentieth Century Fox’s *Show Them No Mercy!* (1935), and Paramount Pictures’ *Mary Burns, Fugitive* (1935).⁵⁵ In these films, the FBI represented gangsters as human vermin and thus reproduced the naturalist language schema found in earlier urban-crime movies like United Artists’ *Scarface* (1932).⁵⁶ These films draped the FBI in the conventions of realistic fiction and illustrated what Hoover called the “Machine Gun School of Criminology.”⁵⁷ By 1939, Warner Brothers had helped to cultivate an audience for G-man films but also challenged Hoover’s creative control when it released *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* without his consent.⁵⁸ Regardless of the backstage bickering that followed, the film helped transition the world in which the FBI operated from one that needed gangbusters to another that required spy chasers. *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* was first released in April 1939 and rereleased in June 1940 with updated newsreel footage. The film laid out the rhetorical foundations upon which Hoover would thereafter promote his containment tactics throughout the war and after.

Based on the 1938 discovery of Nazi intrigue in New York, *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* used naturalist discourse to suggest that Germany and the Soviet Union had organized to penetrate U.S. society and wreck its defenses. For

example, a federal prosecutor in the film announced that the “invasions of Poland, Norway, and Denmark by Nazi Germany and Russia, and Finland’s invasion by Communist Russia” illustrated how “peaceful nations had their entire national structures eaten away by the boring of the enemies within,” by the “bacteria of aggressive dictatorships and totalitarian states.” He warned that “Trojan Horses and fifth column Bundists in these countries threw off their masks and stabbed these countries in the back while the wanton Nazi war machine attacked in the front.” German military forces were described as a “plague of locusts” that were helped by “Nazi fifth columnists.”⁵⁹ General Emilio Mola coined the fifth column metaphor during the Spanish Civil War when he boasted in 1936 that “four columns of troops” had surrounded the capital city and a fifth column of subversives coordinated from within.⁶⁰ At their core, the fifth column and Trojan Horse metaphors communicated an unlawful and secret relationship between insiders and outsiders in advance of an external attack. The agony, conflict, and competition for survival embedded within the linguistic framework of realistic fiction, therefore, presented a political world governed by deterministic self-destruction that needed to be contained.

Confessions of a Nazi Spy helped popularize archetypal characters that Hoover would continually reference in his official discourse. Keith Booker explains that the “three central Nazi figures, the fanatic intellectual, the evil sadist, and the gullible dupe, established most the central stereotypes of Nazis that would reappear in the numerous anti-Nazi films of the 1940s.”⁶¹ The identities imposed upon Nazis would be reinvented and redeployed against Communists in later FBI collaborations like Columbia Pictures’ *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), Warner Brothers’ *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1951), and Columbia Pictures’ *Walk East on Beacon* (1952).⁶² In these films, pacifists and teachers frequently played the role of dupes to Communist agents.⁶³ And, like the Nazis before them, Communists were regularly portrayed as hysterical fanatics or shysters.⁶⁴ These roles were not new, however; they had been a mainstay of FBI storytelling since the start of the New Deal.

Hoover invited former circus promoter Courtney Ryley Cooper to advertise the bureau through fiction and nonfiction formats in 1933. Cooper reinvented the FBI according to the conventions of urban-crime storylines and set its agents against a cast of degenerates who made containment the only possible police strategy. Powers explains that Hoover worked with

Cooper to develop an “FBI formula” for law enforcement propaganda. It unified “all aspects of the FBI’s operations . . . into one coherent image” and it “became the model for all future FBI publicity.”⁶⁵ The formula promoted containment rhetoric. In films, books, newspapers, magazines, journals, radio programs, and comic books, Cooper tapped this framework to lump criminals, lawyers, and politicians as well as police and prison reformers like Wickersham and Lowenthal together in a foreign conspiracy against Anglo America.

The formula was structured according to a popular Hollywood schema. According to a memorandum written by Hoover in September 1934, Cooper wanted to prove that a setup existed in practically every town whereby the gangster had “naturally assumed the place whereby he [could] control bonds, paroles” and the like through political affiliations and to “lick’ the crime problem all this must be uprooted.” Hoover told Cooper that this generic underworld conspiracy theory was absolutely sound.⁶⁶ Although Hoover admitted to Cooper that FBI files contained no information along these lines, Hoover still encouraged him to write a story about “political affiliations in gangster activities.”⁶⁷ Cooper’s theory did not emanate from historical records but instead from realistic fiction.⁶⁸ Foreignness was first assigned to members of the mafia before it was reassigned to Nazis and Communists.

Cooper helped to circulate archetypal characters that insisted upon forms of containment. In October 1933, he proposed a story to Hoover on an “insidious creeping process” invented by the “convicts themselves and persons who perhaps meant well but who [had] brought about a serious condition in this country.” In the wake of the Wickersham Commission’s report and President Hoover’s drive for criminal rehabilitation, Cooper wanted to write about prisons and how they had been turned into “country clubs.” Cooper’s editor at the *American Magazine* sought a focus on the manner in which various convict organizations were behind the prison reform program and how the convicts accomplished it by threat, force, and bribery. He suggested that this would “arouse the country to such a point that something could be done about it” if the story indicted “the SYSTEM and the people of the United States who [had] permitted convict coddlers to get the upper hand.” The charge of softness mimicked the first generation of realist writers who scoffed at the female novelists who preceded them as well as the naturalists who later ridiculed the older realists for their own domes-

ticity. The charge also preceded the accusation made by political realists against idealists of being somehow utopian, moralistic, legalistic, or emotional. Cooper suggested that his storylines should tell of “meddling women” and how they had “freed guilty man after guilty man.”⁶⁹ This finer point of Cooper’s conspiracy theory was also the subject of urban-crime plotlines; female defense attorneys were repeatedly portrayed as conflicted by the love they felt for the men they defended.⁷⁰ The character logics circulated by Hollywood, therefore, interacted with the FBI formula and set the bureau against soft or sentimental dupes.

Hoover’s relationship with the press not only helped him invent discourse but also to amplify his cultural presence and authority. Former Assistant Director William C. Sullivan later revealed that the network of field offices allowed Hoover to “place ‘news’ stories—invented and written in the bureau, really nothing more than press releases, puff pieces for the FBI—in newspapers around the country.” The FBI’s strength “was in the small dailies and weeklies; and with hundreds of these papers behind him, Hoover didn’t give a damn about papers like the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.” However, Sullivan noted that “scores of Washington-based reporters printed stories we gave them too, and they usually printed them under their own bylines.”⁷¹ This system of dissemination generated thousands of news articles and editorials published in local newspapers, credited to local newsmen, and written in the naturalist style.

Hoover used the formula and the system of dissemination to frame his critics as dangerously naïve or disloyal. When Hoover spoke to HUAC two weeks after the Truman Doctrine speech, for example, he argued that the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) was a “Fifth Column if there ever was one,” and that the “open, avowed Communist who carries a card and pays dues is no different from a security standpoint than the person who does the party’s work but pays no dues, carries no card and is not on the party rolls.” He suggested that the latter was a “greater menace because of his opportunity to work in stealth.” This character type was that of the dupe, who was guilty of criminal naïveté. The director scoffed that “fellow travelers and sympathizers can deny party membership but they can never escape the undeniable fact that they have played into the Communist hands, thus furthering the Communist cause by playing the role of innocent, gullible or willful allies.”⁷² The next morning, newspapers across the country flashed headlines that framed the CPUSA in terms of the fifth

column metaphor.⁷³ The dupe identity helped Hoover limit the positional-ity of his critics between idealistic fools and fanatical traitors.

HUAC was sympathetic to how other quarters of Congress had chastised the FBI director for his treatment of minorities. For example, the ICC charged in March 1940 that Hoover's technocratic "spy systems" and "wire tapping" increased the "power of law-enforcement agencies to oppress factory employees" who were under investigation "only by reason of their views and activities in regard to labor unions and other economic movements."⁷⁴

In February, Senator George W. Norris (Independent-NE) warned that the "methods resorted to by the representatives of the Bureau" were "abhorrent" to "constitutional liberty" and the "rights" presumably enjoyed by "citizens of the United States under the Constitution."⁷⁵ In January, Representative Vito Marcantonio (American Labor Party-NY) announced on the House floor that Hoover had built a "system of terror by index cards" that reflected "Himmler's super secret service in Germany." The congressman warned that Hoover had laid the foundation for "Palmer raids, for a Palmer system, and for a Gestapo system in the United States."⁷⁶ In response to this realm of oversight, one of Hoover's assistants highlighted that Lowenthal had closely "worked with the Wickersham Committee," which examined a bureau case that had been "reversed by an appellate court because of 'third degree' or other improper treatment of defendants." The assistant concluded that Lowenthal was behind this "smear campaign."⁷⁷

The character logic of the dupe helped Hoover frame his contest with Truman and congressional idealists as that between security and vulnerability. Hoover complained to HUAC in March 1947, for example, that Communists deployed "professional smear brigades . . . against the FBI" and enlisted "support often from apparently well-meaning but thoroughly duped persons."⁷⁸ Oversight in law enforcement had long been described as a Communist enterprise that exploited naïve idealism. In May 1940, for example, Hoover told the Federation of Women's Clubs that "the Communist charge" that he sought to create a "Gestapo" was "blustering ballyhoo designed to cover their own 'Trojan Horse' activities. The Communists hope[d] that with the FBI shackled, they can proceed without interferences as they go their boring, undermining way to overthrow our Government" like "infectious and deep-seated germs."⁷⁹ Hoover clearly had his long-standing feud with Lowenthal's sympathizers in mind. The next month, for

example, his assistant told the Michigan Banker's Association that the "same subversive forces which attempted to wreck America twenty years ago . . . still hate the Federal Bureau of Investigation with rankling venom. I am proud and happy to say that this Bureau has never weakened before its unwarranted and false attacks in defending the principles of freedom, democracy and liberty, in the American way."⁸⁰ The message was amplified three days later when the *Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record* reprinted the speech in its entirety.⁸¹ Hoover's speechwriters deployed the dupe persona in ways that aligned prison and police reformers with enemies of the state and thereby constrained what might be said against the FBI.

Hoover worked assiduously to build a rhetorical framework that Republicans and Southern Democrats would share in a united front against the New Deal and in the name of national security. Certainly, he did not act alone, but his office helped him provide rhetorical leadership to those who did act against Truman. Ivie argues that right-wing orators like Everett Dirksen (R-IL) filled the rhetorical vacuum created by Truman's reticence and thereby informed how the administration perceived Soviet actions and drafted the Truman Doctrine speech as well as how the speech was interpreted by the president's audiences. Ivie notes that "voices other than Truman's spoke regularly of fire, flood, and red fever, which set the rhetorical stage for a presidential declaration of global emergency. Working within a common political culture, Truman's speechwriters crafted an address that prompted similar images."⁸² Bostdorff adds that the congressman rose to the House floor in January 1947 to "warn his colleagues about Communist expansion abroad. He spoke of the 'virus' of Communism, 'red fever,' and the 'plague' of what he termed 'red fascism.'"⁸³ But Dirksen also made the threat more local. In that speech, he warned of Communist infiltration into government, the film industry, labor unions, and educational systems before he praised the work of HUAC. His speech was reprinted in *Vital Speeches of the Day* in April 1947 under the title "Red Fascism: Freedom Is in Jeopardy."⁸⁴

Dirksen's rhetoric amplified language already deployed by Hoover. The FBI director told the Annual Convention of the American Legion in September 1946, for example, that the "Hitler, Tojo, and Mussolini brands of Fascism were met and defeated on the battle field. All those who stand for the American way of life must arise and defeat Red Fascism in America by focusing upon it the spotlight of public opinion and by building up barriers

of common decency through which it cannot penetrate.”⁸⁵ Hoover reprinted the speech in the December 1946 issue of the *Washington News Digest*, and he titled a February 1947 *American Magazine* article, “Red Fascism in the United States Today.”⁸⁶ Moreover, Ivie observes that the language of disease combined with “images of fire, flood, crime, and bestiality to symbolize darkness descending over the civilized world, a darkness that reminded many of the nightmare of Munich. In the words of Congressman [Henderson] Lanham [D-GA], sending aid to Greece and Turkey was fighting the spread of ‘Red fascism.’”⁸⁷ Lanham made this statement in May 1947 and mistakenly elaborated that this “description of the Russian system is not original with me but was used first, I believe, by J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the FBI.”⁸⁸ As Hinds and Windt explain, the metaphor was invented in the 1930s and merged divergent sets of motives, ideas, and goals into a more singular concept of totalitarianism.⁸⁹

Rather, Hoover helped repurpose and amplify the metaphor in a campaign that had always, in part, been about discrediting his political, cultural, and institutional adversaries and limiting their potential for oversight. Lanham celebrated that the president’s foreign policy planning had “declared war upon” Communist infiltration and would force the “Government to purge from its pay rolls any who are believers in, and followers of, the communistic idea.”⁹⁰ In practice, these people were reformers like Wickersham and Lowenthal. Hoover directly connected the Truman Doctrine to issues of domestic security when he told HUAC in March that the “mad march of Red Fascism” accelerated after “President Truman called for aid to Greece and Turkey” just two weeks earlier.⁹¹ The trope deployed by Hoover, the press, and members of Congress, therefore, compressed years of meaning derived from past rhetoric and experiences into a more singular expression that expanded the scope of the Truman Doctrine speech into the realm of domestic security, or into the realm of New Deal reform politics.

Dirksen’s address illustrates the influence of the FBI’s system for disseminating messages. Hoover developed the Crime Records Division (CRD) in the 1930s, according to Douglass M. Charles, to write articles and speeches and thereby alter U.S. public opinion, especially in regard to the perils of Communists and sex offenders, who were often conflated. Effectively, the CRD operated as a liaison office between Hoover, the press, and Congress.⁹² It is not surprising, therefore, that many major tracts on red fascism from different sources, draped in natural imagery, were printed or delivered

between September 1946 and May 1947, all of which appeared uncoordinated and contextualized the Truman Doctrine speech. By repetition and diversification of speakers with different relationships to the president, the FBI created a perceived consensus among public officials about the vulnerability of internal security to Communist intrigue, which the president substantiated with the Truman Doctrine speech.

Some members of Congress had already accepted Hoover's rhetorical leadership even before George F. Kennan sent the Long Telegram on February 22, 1946. One day earlier, Congressman John E. Rankin (D-MS) read a speech by eugenicist Lothrop Stoddard into the *Congressional Record* in which he proclaimed that the "only high-placed official of our Government who has had the guts to speak out frankly about our Communists is the one official who knows by far the most about their nefarious plans, acts and methods. This courageous individual is none other than J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI." Stoddard closed his address by asking with naturalist language if there was a "hidden hand, reaching out from afar to envenom our local problems and synchronize them in a manner which, unless sternly checked and constructively dealt with, may make us helpless at the very moment when our strength and unity are most needed in the world?"⁹³ Such language emerged at a time when Rankin and other congressional conservatives warned that "Reds and their fellow travelers" in the Truman administration sought to "abolish the Committee on Un-American Activities and to get rid of J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI."⁹⁴ Truman's critics not only filled the rhetorical vacuum with right-wing commentary, they filled it with arguments that displaced the president's rhetorical authority on national security with claims that elevated and protected Hoover in the political-cultural hierarchy.

The Truman Doctrine speech, therefore, operated in and borrowed from the context of an anti-New Deal style, and the speech substantiated what Truman's rivals had long said against the New Deal. Hoover's speech to HUAC two weeks later was significant not for any new revelation about national security but for how it lent rhetorical authority to the president's critics. What made Hoover's anti-Communist discourse appear politically "real" was how it appropriated language from biological science to analogically explain the motivations of people who challenged the normative structure of Anglo-American nationalism. What made his alliance with

HUAC seem natural was the rhetorical foundations of realistic fiction and the containment culture it encouraged in the name of America.

RACE, LABOR, AND THE AMERICAN WAY

The FBI director encouraged a nationalist response against New Deal encroachments of traditional Anglo-American culture. Hoover reported to HUAC in his speech of March 26, for example, that the “best anecdote to communism [was] vigorous, intelligent, old-fashioned Americanism with eternal vigilance.”⁹⁵ This language echoed his wartime rhetoric. He exclaimed at the University of Notre Dame in May 1942, for example, that “Red-blooded Americanism” would “not permit our Nation to bow in defeat.”⁹⁶ His discourse resuscitated rhetorical patterns born in the Progressive Era. In “What ‘Americanism’ Means” (1894), Theodore Roosevelt addressed the state of popular fiction with gendered concerns against more domiciliary literature. He lamented how “over-civilized, over-sensitive, over-refined . . . weaklings” might “write graceful and pretty verses, essays, novels” but “lost the hardihood and manly courage” that was kept by those “Americans” who were “strong enough to stand” on their own feet. He further described the “undersized man of letters” as the one who fled his “country because he, with his delicate, effeminate sensitiveness,” found the “conditions of life on this side of the water crude” and thus took “abode in Europe.” In particular, his words targeted the “leaders of the so-called social world” from the “northeastern cities” who harbored a “colonial habit of thought” and a “provincial spirit of admiration for things foreign.” He wanted, instead, an “American literature” that encouraged “waging relentless war on rank-growing evils of all kind.”⁹⁷

Roosevelt was not alone in his criticism. Reviewers soon celebrated fiction that was “infused with red blood—the red blood that stimulates men to the vigorous exercise of body and mind,” which was the stuff of “Americanism.” Literary critics praised the work of authors who would go on to write the canon of literary naturalism as well as the work of Roosevelt’s friend Owen Wister, who founded the American Western, all of who based their work on the frontier myth.⁹⁸ The *Atlantic Monthly* printed in 1897 that a “Feminine Principle” in “American letters” had been replaced by a “Masculine Principle,” and that the “faith of the nation” stood “ready to be transferred to it.” The magazine observed that American fiction was at a

junction that separated the departing supremacy of one principle from the arrival of another. The new "supremacy" was related to the "Anglo-Saxon race" and its quest to "win the entire earth for the measure of its strength."⁹⁹ Roosevelt was certainly satisfied, for as Leroy G. Dorsey and Rachel M. Harlow observe, he used stories of "how the North American frontier influenced individual character" to offer a "means by which newer immigrants could become true Americans" in ways that "preserved native citizens' understanding of American culture" with the frontier myth.¹⁰⁰ Hoover's appeals to red-blooded Americanism rearticulated the gendered, militant social order that literary critics, naturalists, and political progressives promoted to adapt Anglo-American culture to the stresses of change.

The FBI director grounded Americanism in a branch of frontier mythology that emphasized Anglo-American Protestant nationalism. In June 1942, for example, he celebrated the "early Colonists who settled on our Eastern shores," the "Patriots who fought for freedom," and the "Pioneers who opened the Westward trails" in a speech at St. John's University. Those were the "times when faith in God, superior physical endurance, high courage, utter fearlessness, and the ability to thrive on adversity were requisites of success." Such attributes, he argued, needed to be "duplicated by our Country's defenders if we are to preserve America for tomorrow," because "Americans allowed the spirit of Americanism to be drugged with alien ideologies." This battle was cosmic in nature and was against the "Axis forces and the pagan evil," which could only be met by a "superior force of spiritual development."¹⁰¹ Americanism for Hoover, like with Roosevelt and the naturalists, was a militantly gendered construct. As he explained to the Knights of Columbus in March 1942, the nation needed a "reborn consecration to the militant spirit of liberty which is fundamentally American. Red-blooded men rise to action" and answer the "call to arms" when things "American in soul and action have been challenged." This mission was also Puritanical. He suggested, for example, that the world was "bruised and bleeding because the forces of the anti-Christ" had ascended "over the forces of decency."¹⁰² He elaborated before the New York Federation of Women's Clubs in May 1940 that the state of affairs called for "Americanism" and "present-day pioneering" to "perpetuate a heritage that will continue to be a beacon light of freedom and equality to oppressed peoples the world over."¹⁰³ The rhetoric of Americanism, therefore, situated Hoover's

accusations against New Deal reformers in a cosmic battle between good and evil.

What emerged from how Hoover deployed the frontier myth was a philosophy of human nature. He told the Catholic Youth Organization in January 1946, for example, that the FBI was an “idealistic organization” that was “forced to deal with the harshest realities of life . . . the very dregs of humanity, who, impelled by an anti-social attitude, prey upon society.” From this tension, he argued, came a “sense of realism to the men and women of the FBI.”¹⁰⁴ Unlike the sentimentalism that Courtney Ryley Cooper assigned to prison reformers, therefore, Hoover defined realism in terms of a militantly gendered attitude, hardened in a cosmic battle rooted in the old missions to spread and perfect Christianity and democracy. This prism, in part, informed the Truman Doctrine speech and what it implied about New Dealers.

The FBI director first deployed the Americanist framework before the wartime era, and in a way that encouraged the containment of reformers. He applauded the American Legion as early as September 1938 for how it protected the “principles of Americanism” from “viciously anti-American, alien ideas and ideals, systems and policies” soon after the Legion aligned with FDR’s congressional critics.¹⁰⁵ In August, the Legion’s National Americanism Commission reported to Martin Dies’s (D-TX) Special Committee on Un-American Activities that the New Deal employed Communists.¹⁰⁶ Ira Katznelson explains that while Dies had once been an ardent New Dealer when “he discerned no contradiction between his racism and progressive populism,” he turned against Roosevelt when the New Deal threatened racial segregation. Dies and other Southern Democrats began to work with Republicans when Democrats from the North and the West moved to federally outlaw lynching and support the effort to organize black workers in the South and ultimately challenge Jim Crow after the National Labor Relations Act (1935) was passed.¹⁰⁷ The Dies Committee was an early manifestation of Democratic defectors who sided with Republicans to stall the New Deal, a form of coalition politics and containment culture that would be continued by HUAC and escalated by Hoover and the FBI in the name of anticommunism during the Cold War.

Hoover aligned his own Anglo-American nationalist rhetoric with the discourse of mass culture in ways that implied New Dealers were fifth columnists. In *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, for example, Joseph Goebbels

explained to an American-Nazi propagandist that “our aim must always be to discredit conditions there in the United States.” In particular, the German official insisted that “racial and religious hatred must be fostered” and “class hatreds must be encouraged in such a way that labor and the middle classes will become confused and antagonistic. In the ensuing chaos, we will be able to take control.” This scene followed another in which a member of the American Legion shouted down the propagandist at a public assembly: “We don’t want any ‘isms’ in this country except Americanism!”¹⁰⁸ Hoover substantiated this theme in a radio address delivered before the International Association of Chiefs of Police in August 1943, when he announced that recent outbursts had pitted “race against race, creed against creed” in which some sought to “destroy, incite, subvert, and misrepresent the truth.” For this problem, he blamed the

subversive group—those termites of discontent and discord, always alert to seize upon racial differences, economic stresses and political difficulties to advance their selfish and venal purposes. These “ism” termites scoff at our Democracy and belittle the cherished freedom, liberty and fair play that characterize America. The threat against the American people from within is not merely a Nazi threat. It is the insidious infection of other foreign ‘isms’ creeping up the pillars of the Republic under the false guise of Democracy.¹⁰⁹

He said much the same to B’nai B’rith in a speech that was reprinted in the *Boston Post* one month before *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* was rereleased in June 1940.¹¹⁰

Hoover raised more explicit fears about civil rights reformers and organized labor in the early Cold War era, which helped shape the way Americans understood the Truman Doctrine speech. The FBI director quoted from CPUSA literature in his February 1947 article in the *American Magazine*, for example, that the “American Communist” aimed to enlist the “support of the American Negro. Under the guise of championing a just cause, the Communist seeks to further his own diabolical ends. . . . The class-conscious Communists recognize Negroes as merely ‘allies of the American working class.’”¹¹¹ The black community was vulnerable to communism, argued Hoover, because it would likely be hoodwinked by communists disguised as labor organizers. This arrangement was punctuated by Republican hostility to the National Labor Relations Board and Southern-

Democratic anxiety about how it opened the possibility to challenge Jim Crow. Such discourse cast suspicions upon reformers inside and outside government.

Hoover's accusations destabilized Truman's broader domestic agenda and the future of the New Deal. In September 1945, for example, the president pledged to continue FDR's "economic bill of rights" and to expand programs for health, housing, education, employment, and catastrophic protection.¹¹² Four days after Hoover spoke to Congress, however, the *New York Times* paraphrased from Hoover, in part, that Communists had built a united front so that a few leaders could influence a broad area of American affairs. These "Russian fifth columnists" allegedly appealed to "workers, to Negroes, to veterans, to young peoples, and to 'progressives' of every persuasion." The line between Communist and New Dealer was effectively blurred. The *Times* emphasized that Communists wanted to outlaw the Ku Klux Klan, wanted to abolish HUAC, and supported "higher taxes on high incomes and lower taxes on low incomes; more housing; bigger social security and veterans' benefits; Federal subsidies to farmers; [and] legislation to protect Negroes." The "Trojan horse," said Hoover, had become a "Trojan snake." The newspaper recapped that the Communist Party was then in a fight for its life that "began with President Truman's message on foreign policy" and escalated with his executive order.¹¹³ While the Truman Doctrine speech was constrained by a rhetoric of the past, as Bostdorff observes, it also evidenced the presence of that familiar past and was used by Hoover to unhinge the constraint that Truman wanted to impose on the FBI and to undercut his social-democratic agenda.

Hoover encouraged containment culture in ways that framed the Truman Doctrine speech against the New Deal. He wrote in the February 1947 issue of the *American Magazine*, for example, that "the menace of Communism must be met and its forward march halted" by "Americans" if they were to "preserve the American way of life." He worked to redefine what counted as acceptable liberalism in the Cold War context. In particular, Hoover asked his readers to dismiss a "counter tactic" that claimed "anti-Communist statements" were false "denunciations of liberals and progressives" rather than real warning against "Communists."¹¹⁴ One month later—and just two weeks after the Truman Doctrine speech—Hoover told HUAC that "Communist propaganda" sought to be "aligned with liberal progressive causes. The honest liberal and progressive should be alert to

this, and I believe the Communists' most effective foes can be real liberals and progressives who understand their devious machinations."¹¹⁵ Such use of dissociation helped Hoover to position himself as someone who was not opposed to liberals and progressives, only opposed to those who were not honest or real. By limiting the spectrum of politics that liberals could advance or the positions that liberals could occupy, he practiced a mode of cultural containment that enabled his brand of anticommunism to spread. Bolstered by international events, Hoover's schema located social-democratic reformers and reform culture, itself, beyond the horizon of possibility.

CONCLUSION

The FBI director rhetorically limited the presidency in ways that accelerated Cold War realism and the red-blooded Americanism that it encouraged. One of the president's former colleagues from the ICC opened a law practice and defended federal employees accused of disloyalty in the wake of Executive Order 9835. He complained to the president in 1949 and 1950 that "FBI employees" exhibited "intellectual limitations" that were manifest in their "investigations of the social, economic and political views and associations of private citizens." He suggested that Hoover used this power to investigate "Americans suspected of no criminal activity," which marked a "dangerous tendency toward a police state." Accordingly, the lawyer called upon the "executive branch of government" to examine the "extent to which the FBI" had become a "dangerous political secret police."¹¹⁶ Although sympathetic, the president was constrained. One of Hoover's assistants confirmed in July 1949 that Hoover had by then successfully consolidated his rhetorical power in the federal government. The assistant relayed a private conversation between Truman and one of his advisors about the emerging police structure. He wrote that the "President had made up his mind to let the Director go" but the advisor encouraged Truman to "face certain facts, namely the Director [was] tremendously popular throughout the country and that if the President did anything which would cause the Director to leave, it would reflect adversely on the elections in 1950 and 1952." Truman admitted that he knew "this was so" and decided not to act.¹¹⁷

Critics trace Truman's rhetorical appeals to what has been summarized as a stockpile of anti-Communist tropes and imagery that circulated in public culture. An investigation of the naturalist stockpile illustrates Hoover's overarching persuasive strategy. Hoover delivered at least 21 major speeches on the subject of communism or fifth columns between September 1938 and March 1947, published at least 27 major articles on the topic under his own name, and lent the FBI's credibility to Truman's congressional opponents and films like *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, much of which was further amplified by the press.¹¹⁸ Collectively, this media repeated, in part, a message crafted in the early 1930s about New Deal reform culture and the reformers. Among other sources, the stockpile was thus refurbished by a sophisticated anti-New Deal message campaign that cut across speeches, newspapers, magazines, comic strips, radio programs, and motion pictures. The language helped create a prism that transformed international events into evidence for Hoover's own claims about more local politics. Hoover did not singularly cultivate the stockpile of anti-Communist tropes, but it is difficult to imagine any single person who did more to keep it freshly stocked and relevant, to circulate, inform, and lend official credibility to anti-Communist rhetoric. After all, Hoover did not operate singularly but made himself an American institution, made his name synonymous with the organization that he operated with little oversight, having done much to malign his more hostile overseers as fifth columnists.¹¹⁹

The Truman Doctrine speech is rhetorically significant for not only how it formalized realism in foreign policy planning but also for its meanings about more localized politics that arose from overlapping historical and rhetorical contexts. Whereas Wilsonian idealism celebrated human rationality, the basic goodness of different white Christian peoples, and a harmony of interests between white Christian nations, the president's new, realistic perspective substantiated Hoover's pessimistic determinism, which placed different types of peoples in perpetual conflict. Whereas idealism had once held out hope for an absolute form of justice, conceptualized oppositional ideology and radical activities as forms of protected speech, and treated prison as a place of social uplift and rehabilitation, Truman's anti-communism seemed to substantiate Hoover's discourses on issues of law and order, subversion, and containment. And, whereas idealism was grounded in appeals to grace, hope, mercy, and charity, the Truman Doc-

trine appeared to substantiate Hoover's vision of the human condition as naturally marked by anguish and agony. No longer could reformers talk about racial, economic, and religious equality without raising suspicions about disloyalty or foreign loyalties. No longer could reformers talk about labor safeguards, disarmament, or national autonomy without raising suspicions of fanatic intellectualism, of being dupes, or of being aligned with evil sadists. The president communicated that the contours of political reality had suddenly changed in ways that worked against the New Deal.

NOTES

1. Robert L. Ivie, "Literalizing the Metaphor of Soviet Savagery: President Truman's Plain Style," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 51 (1986): 91–105.
2. Harry S. Truman, "Special Message to Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine, March 12, 1947," in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, January 1 to December 31, 1947* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1963), 178–80.
3. Executive Order 9835, *Prescribing Procedures for the Administration of an Employees Loyalty Program in the Executive Branch of the Government*, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1947 (1947 CIS microfiche EO 9818-9855).
4. Martin J. Medhurst, "Truman's Rhetorical Reticence, 1945–1947, an Interpretive Essay," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 67.
5. J. Edgar Hoover, "Statement of J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation," March 26, 1947 (House Committee on Un-American Activities), pp. 4–5, 9, 12, 13, Record Group 65, Entry 51, Box 2, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA—CP).
6. The concept of social-democracy is admittedly vague, but I use it here to describe a perspective that seeks to balance the tendency of capitalism toward inequality with economic and social intervention by the state as a custodian of the public interest. Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 128.
7. Richard Gid Powers, *Secrecy and Power: The Life of J. Edgar Hoover* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 289.
8. Denise M. Bostdorff, *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: The Cold War Call to Arms* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2008), 36–37, 134, 60.
9. Medhurst, "Truman's Rhetorical Reticence," 64, 67.

10. Bostdorff, *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine*, 128; and Robert L. Ivie, "Fire, Flood, and Red Fever: Motivating Metaphors of Global Emergency in the Truman Doctrine Speech," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29 (1999): 571.
11. Paul A. Chilton, "The Meaning of Security," in *Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations*, ed. Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996), 197–98, 208.
12. Paul A. Chilton, *Security Metaphors: Cold War Discourse from Containment to Common House* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 197, 133–34, 153.
13. Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time* (New York: Liveright, 2013), 163, 271–77.
14. Hoover, "Statement of J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation," March 26, 1947, 7–8, 12.
15. For example, FBI agents suspected that Soviet agents had influenced films like Columbia Pictures' *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936), Columbia Pictures' *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), Warner Brothers' *Mission to Moscow* (1943), RKO Radio Pictures' *The Master Race* (1944), Samuel Goldwyn Company's *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946), and RKO Radio Pictures' *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946). John Sbardellati, *J. Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies: The FBI and the Origins of Hollywood's Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 71, 113–14, 121–23, 194–96.
16. Hoover, "Statement of J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation," March 26, 1947, 6, 8, 10–12.
17. During the presidencies of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman, the FBI helped make the following films: Warner Brothers' *G-Men* (1935), MGM's *Whipsaw* (1935), United Artists' *Let 'Em Have It* (1935), Twentieth Century Fox's *Show Them No Mercy!* (1935), Paramount Pictures' *Mary Burns, Fugitive* (1935), Warner Brothers' *Public Enemy's Wife* (1936), RKO Radio Pictures' *Special Investigator* (1936), RKO Radio Pictures' *Smashing the Rackets* (1938), Universal Pictures' *Missing Evidence* (1939), Paramount Pictures' *Persons in Hiding* (1939), Warner Brothers' *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939), Paramount Pictures' *Queen of the Mob* (1940), MGM's *Joe Smith, American* (1942), Twentieth Century Fox's *They Came to Blow Up America* (1943), Twentieth Century Fox's *Roger Touhy, Gangster* (1944), Monogram Pictures' *Allotment Wives* (1945), Twentieth Century Fox's *The House on 92nd Street* (1945), King Brothers Productions' *Dillinger* (1945), Universal Pictures' *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), Columbia Pictures' *Walk a Crooked Mile* (1948), Twentieth Century Fox's *Street with No Name* (1948), Republic Pictures' *Federal Agents vs. Underworld, Inc.* (1949), Twentieth Century Fox's *Mister 880* (1950), King Brothers Productions' *Southside 1-1000* (1950), Jedgar Productions' *FBI Girl* (1951), Republic Pictures'

- Government Agents vs. the Phantom Legion* (1951), Warner Brothers' *I Was a Communist for the FBI* (1951), and Columbia Pictures' *Walk East on Beacon!* (1952); Richard Gid Powers, "The FBI in American Popular Culture," in *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide*, ed. Athan. G. Theoharis (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1999), 272–83.
18. Literary critics continue to debate whether naturalism is a movement within realism or if they are distinct but related genres. I mean to sidestep this debate and describe naturalism as a spinoff of realism to address the historical flow of style and emphases that emerged between the Civil War and World War I within the literary world.
 19. Phillip J. Barrish, *The Cambridge Introduction to American Literary Realism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2; Donna M. Campbell, *Resisting Regionalism: Gender and Naturalism in American Fiction, 1885–1915* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), 4; Bert Bender, "Nature and Naturalism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Literary Naturalism*, ed. Keith Newlin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 52–54; and Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman, "Realism and Rhetoric in International Relations," in *Post-Realism*, ed. Beer and Hariman, 6.
 20. Beer and Hariman, "Realism and Rhetoric in International Relations," 4, 6, 9.
 21. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 8–13; and Steven Belletto and Daniel Grausam, *American Literature and Culture in an Age of Cold War: A Critical Reassessment* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2012), 5.
 22. Beer and Hariman, "Realism and Rhetoric in International Relations," 6; and Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman, "Strategic Intelligence and Discursive Realities," in *Post-Realism*, ed. Beer and Hariman, 388.
 23. Markku Ruotsila, *The Origins of Christian Anti-Internationalism: Conservative Evangelicals and the League of Nations* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 8–9, 14.
 24. Trevor Taylor, "Utopianism," in *International Relations: British and American Perspectives*, ed. Steve Smith (Oxford, UK: British International Studies Association, 1985), 93–95; Michael Joseph Smith, *Realist Thought from Weber to Kissinger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1986), 57–58; and John H. Herz, *Political Realism and Political Idealism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 162, 37, 32.
 25. Woodrow Wilson, "An Address to a Joint Session of Congress: January 8, 1918," in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, vol. 45, *November 11, 1917–January 15, 1918*, ed. Arthur S. Link (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 534–38.
 26. Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1939), 11, 13, 14.

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 71. William C. Sullivan and Bill Brown, *The Bureau: My Thirty Years on Hoover's FBI* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 84.
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