

THE RISE OF SOCIALISM IN POLITICS IN THE USA, Part VII

President Franklin Roosevelt's abrupt death a few months after the start of his fourth term in 1945 thrust Harry Truman, his new vice-president, into the top executive office without much briefing from his predecessor. President Truman (1946-53), however, continued with FDR's domestic policy, the New Deal, which had furthered the rise of socialism in our government with a series of executive orders and bills that indelibly changed the face of American politics by initiating greater governmental control in agriculture, banking, and many other areas. Truman called his program, the Fair Deal, which built on some of the established ideas of Roosevelt like expanding his Social Security and raising the minimum wage. Truman had a Republican Congress to buck against, unlike Roosevelt's first few terms when a Democrat, carte-blanche majority in the legislature affirmed many of his radical policies.

With foreign policy, however, Truman began to deviate from Roosevelt in the critical juncture after World War II, during which Russia had been an ally with the USA against Hitler. At the same time, there was the Second Red Scare (1947-57), growing in our country and fueled by the expansion of Communist countries in Eastern Europe after the war. Also In 1949 the Chinese communists won the civil war in China and gained control of this country. There was no longer just one communist country, Russia, but many more, as communism became an international threat. At the same time, trials like the Alger Hiss case in 1950 uncovered communist spies operating in top governmental positions during Roosevelt's reign. Also it was discovered that Julius, who worked for the Army Corp Engineering laboratory in New Jersey, and his wife, Ethel Rosenberg, had passed on and encouraged others to reveal nuclear secrets to the Russians. As a result, Russia quickly acquired a bomb like the one Truman used to defeat the Japanese. They went to trial in 1951 and were executed in 1953. Joseph McCarthy, a senator from Wisconsin, sensationalized accusing government employees of communism first in a speech he made in West Virginia in 1950 that went viral through the press. "McCarthyism" was later minimized as a mindless witch-hunt and sometimes whitewashed and covered-up, but the Venona Papers released in the mid-90's have affirmed many of his and others' discoveries, in spite of the accompanying hysteria. The direct results of world and domestic events were Truman's policy of containment of communism and the birth of the Cold War between Russia and the USA with increased polarization between the East and West, communism versus non-communism.

During Truman's presidency, loyalty oaths, requiring employees to swear allegiance to the USA and no connection with the Communist Party, were common, as well as taking the Fifth Amendment as a way of avoiding declaring one's political affiliations. In 1951, *Dennis v. United States*, the Supreme Court declared that it was unlawful to advocate or teach the overthrow of government by force or violence as a limit on free speech. The rise of communism was quelled during this time in our history.