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Freedom Betrayed: Herbert Hoover's Secret History of the Second World War and Its Aftermath

Herbert Hoover and George H. Nash

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4 Highlight(s) | 0 Note(s)

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In a sense, the Magnum Opus was born on December 7, 1941. Hoover was convinced that the Roosevelt administration, by its "trade restrictions" against Japan and other "provocations," had driven the Japanese government into a corner, from which, like a rattlesnake, it had struck back at Pearl Harbor. The very next day, Hoover asked his intimate friend William R. Castle Jr., who had served as his undersecretary of state, to "preserve every record and every recollection" bearing on the background of the war with Japan that had just begun (see appendix, Document 1). He told Castle and Edgar Rickard that he intended to write a book on the diplomatic negotiations leading up to Pearl Harbor. He was positive that he could demonstrate that the war in the Pacific could have been averted.²⁵⁹

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Hoover's writing now developed along two tracks. In the autumn of 1944 he began to compose what was in effect the fourth volume of his projected memoirs. He entitled it *Twelve Years 1932–1944*; eventually he renamed it *Collectivism Comes to America*.²⁷⁶ Its subject was his crusade in the 1930s against "the creeping collectivism of the New Deal."²⁷⁷

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The Communists made a major advance toward their goal of control of the labor unions when John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers of America, created the Committee for Industrial Organization

(C.I.O.) in 1935 and 1936. He employed known Communists to assist him. Lewis himself was far from a Communist, but in his labor organization battles, he used any weapon available. The C.I.O. plunged into the political arena from its start. In 1943, it welded its unions into the Political Action Committee called the "P.A.C." The purpose of this group in turn was to defeat Congressional and Presidential candidates hostile to its program. When the House Un-American Activities Committee scrutinized this operation, it stated:

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The head of the Political Action Committee was Sidney Hillman, who was high in the Roosevelt Administration's councils, both as "labor advisor" to the President and labor representative in the wartime Office of Production Management. Born in Russia and a participant in early revolutionary activities there, Hillman had come to the United States in 1907 and worked as a labor organizer, rising in 1914 to the presidency of the powerful Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. According to sworn testimony before a Senate Committee,⁷ he was in 1922 a member of the Communist Party. In that year he visited Moscow. He also wrote articles in support of Communist Russia. A long listing of his association with Communist activities was published by the House Committee. One of Hillman's principal assistants was the lawyer for the Political Action Committee, Lee Pressman. Pressman was a Communist Party member in 1934, and from 1934 to 1935 held high positions in the Federal Government. He publicly confessed his one-time Communist Party membership on August 27, 1950.⁸ The Political Action Committee instituted a compulsory assessment upon members of many of the C.I.O. unions, thus creating a political fund estimated at \$2,000,000 per annum. Hillman refused to submit the Political Action Committee's books to the Congressional Committee. The C.I.O., from the first, and later the Political Action Committee, systematically and in highly organized fashion listed, for the benefit of their members, the names of the candidates who were to be opposed. Practically the same lists were issued by the Communist party itself. Sidney Hillman became so politically powerful that at the 1944 Democratic National Convention, Mr. Roosevelt, when the question of the choice of Vice President arose, issued his famous order to "Clear it with Sidney." A number of important American Federation of Labor unions also fell under Communist domination. This Communist take-over was certainly not deterred by the National Labor Relations Board whose chairman and attorney were themselves party members.⁹ 1.

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