

## **PART FOUR**

### **The Fields and Friends and Enemies and the Cold War**

When World War II ended the older battles between the socialist/liberal groups and America's Communists were renewed, as were the allied struggles within the Unitarian Church. Then, the Unitarians' and Noel Field's World War II links to espionage led to some of the strangest episodes of the Cold War. Noel Field, his wife, his brother, and his foster daughter were kidnapped, imprisoned, and tortured as the Soviet bloc launched another round of widespread and deadly political purges. As strange was Noel Field's decision to again "see no evil" and to become a permanent expatriate in his captor's country.

## Chapter 18

### Poor Noel, It Was Liberals, Not the Right, Who Did It to Him

In early 1946, Noel, although still employed by the USC needed to reduce his aid work as his health deteriorated and as he was coping with the Unitarian conflicts, his marital problems, and his financial anxieties. However, he still had a meaningful life in Switzerland and he and Herta were soon able to overcome some threatening frictions---including Noel's drift towards a love affair.<sup>1</sup> At the war's end they had decided to stay together and moved from their wartime Geneva residence on rue de Contamines to an apartment at 37 Quai Wilson, a street named for his father Herbert's great hero, Woodrow Wilson, where Noel contemplated his postwar.<sup>2</sup> Noel needed a rest. He was 6' 1" tall, but he seemed to be shorter because he had a tendency to slump-over, as if ready to drop. His health was already poor. Noel had many recurring ailments and he never failed to mention them to his friends. In addition to his blindness in one eye he had tooth and stomach problems, and he had an ulcer. He was not quite fifty years old, but his hair had turned grey. Herta also had health difficulties. She was having recurring brief emotional disturbances as well as suffering from increasingly painful arthritis. In addition to what friends had interpreted as hypochondria, there were recurrent bouts of exhaustion. As well, she was developing severe rheumatism, and she long-term thyroid related issues .

In January 1947, tired of his long battles with the Unitarian's conservatives and frustrated by the lack of a final decision on Jo Tempì, Noel flew to Boston to demand her full recognition as head of the Paris branch of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). Perhaps unknown to Noel, his visit had been preceded by a series of laudatory letters from France to Boston's leaders---ones that backfired. The letters were so similar in wording it indicated Tempì or a supporter had

manufactured them. That was one of the reasons why Raymond Bragg, the new Unitarian Service Committee's administrator, refused to make a commitment before Noel returned to Europe.<sup>3</sup>

There are puzzling gaps in the USC's discussions about Tempi, Noel, and the situation in Europe. Although Noel and the USC had many sources of information about what was happening in Germany and the Soviet occupied East, neither Noel nor the committee said much about the millions of ethnic Germans forced out of their homes in Central and Eastern Europe or about the thousands sent to labor camps by the Russians and the governments they had installed in the occupied nations. Noel never mentioned the postwar ethnic cleansings or the thousands of men and women forced to mine uranium for the Soviet's atomic bomb project. He probably also knew about but kept to himself knowledge of the slaughter by the French Communists of thousands of their opponents as the war ended.<sup>4</sup>

### **A Fritchman Win, Unitarians in Conflict**

Before Noel's 1947 Boston visit, when the Charles Joy-Jo Tempi sexual relation matter seemed to be successfully put-aside Stephen Fritchman once again triumphed over his critics. In August 1946, after a short investigation, the Unitarian's executive board cleared him of all charges, but by a close five to four vote. Troubling doubts remained and the conservative Free Unitarians group that was protesting the denomination's too liberal orientation made the situation difficult. In hopes of a final decision, Frank Frederick, an association lawyer, wrote to the FBI asking it to either confirm or deny Linscott Tyler's assertions about the bureau's evidence on Fritchman's Communist Party membership. The agency responded by stating that it could not supply any information because of legal regulations. Requests from other Unitarians during the

1940s and 1950s who sought confirmation of serious accusations against Fritchman, including those by Herbert Philbrick the FBI's informer in Boston, received similar agency responses.<sup>5</sup>

The Fritchman matter was not the only issue. The Unitarians' investigation of Noel and Tempi's Communism was renewed. All the association's special investigating group's meetings, led by Judge Lawrence Brooks, with Donald Harrington, Lawrence Davidow, and Linscott Tyler supplying more facts, failed to unearth any hard evidence against Noel or Jo but suspicions remained. Efforts to contact the people the Harrington group cited as the sources of the charges against the two were unsuccessful. Soon, William Emerson, the USC's chairman grew tired of the frictions caused by the Noel investigation. Believing in Noel and all his efforts in Europe, Emerson formed his own three- man internal Service Committee group to go to France to conduct a final review of the Unitarians' programs and to bring all the investigation of Noel and Jo to a close.<sup>6</sup>

### **To HUAC With Apprehension about Martha Sharp**

While Emerson was arranging the expensive flight to Paris, the Unitarians received another shock. Ernie Adamson, the lead attorney for the Wood-Rankin House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) asked the USC's leadership (and Stephen Fritchman) to be prepared to submit documents and to testify in Washington, perhaps at the end of October. The Unitarian's link to Edward Barsky and his Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee (JAFRC) was one of the reasons for the request. Another reason was Fritchman's membership in several "front" organizations that had connections to Barsky's operations. Adamson had a special interest in Fritchman, so much so that one source claims the Unitarians would not have had to testify if they had fired Fritchman.<sup>7</sup> There was another HUAC concern, a politically charged one.<sup>8</sup> The committee wanted documents and information on Martha Sharp who had done heroic relief work

during the war and returned to America to run for political office as a liberal. HUAC wanted to investigate her ostensibly because of her possible involvement in Barsky's helping Spanish Communists and those of other nations to flee to the Americas during both of her tours of Unitarian work in Lisbon. Another was her connection to Harlow Shapley, Walter Cannon's close friend. Shapley was a famous Harvard astronomer and a known fellow traveler who was under separate investigation by HUAC.

The Unitarian's leaders believed the Wood-Rankin HIAC hearings had another and devious goal: to undermine Martha Sharp's political career. After Martha returned to Massachusetts from her second Lisbon assignment she decided to run for Congress as a Democrat against Joe Martin, the powerful Republican Speaker of the House. Martin had been instrumental in reviving HUAC and its drive to "remove the Red menace from America." Martha ran on a "peace" ticket, one that served as a prelude to Henry Wallace's anti-HUAC, anti-capitalist, and Soviet-friendly presidential campaign of 1948.<sup>9</sup> Martha had accepted support from Stephen Fritchman and organizations that, like Wallace's Progressive Party, were deeply influenced by Communists. The Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions was the most visible of them. Martha also had the support of Massachusetts Communist Party's and even met with the Party official Joe Figueiredo (future husband of Joy Clark) for campaign advice.<sup>10</sup> When support from the far-left, Martha's link to Barsky, and her possible call to testify at HUAC were made public by a Catholic priest during a Fall River, Massachusetts political meeting, the more liberal Unitarians became convinced HUAC was serving as an arm of Martin's campaign and of a growing anti-Soviet and "anti-peace" movement.

### **To and From Paris with Love**

Martha would lose the election, but in September 1946 William Emerson, although still distraught over the Charles Joy' problem,<sup>11</sup> was optimistic about his team's trip to Paris. He was sure its inquiry would put an end, a final one, to the charges against Noel and Jo Temp. In Paris, Emerson was joined by Edward Cahill and John Howard Lathrop, USC members and ministers already in Europe. Jo had arranged a day-long presentation for the group by leaders of each of the USC's French operations.<sup>12</sup> The reports by the staffs helped dispel a worry that had bothered Boston's administrators since March when it was discovered the aid program for the Spanish Republicans in France had accumulated an enormous deficit, almost a half-million dollars, while the Barsky contributions had dropped to one-third of what the USC had expected. To Boston's relief, the September discussions led to a dismissal of any fears the deficit was due to corruption or inefficiencies--or, that Noel and Temp had been using the Unitarians' scarce funds for Barsky's special purposes.<sup>13</sup>

After the day of presentations Lathrop and Cahill went to Toulouse to see the hospital Barsky established in 1939. It had become the Walter Cannon Hospital and was being operated by the USC. The trip had a critical goal: to have meetings with representatives of the many Spanish refugee groups. The visit led to a conclusion that only one of the twenty-nine Spanish groups had any complaints about Communist influence at the hospital and that group, a Socialist organization, had an obvious political bias that warped its perceptions. Three other charges of Communist control were dismissed. Jo and her workers explained that a Communist banner on one of the Service's warehouses was the result of a hurried handover from the French Resistance at the end of the war; that the use of the service's supplies at a Communist picnic was a mistake, a trivial one; and, that the new Pablo Picasso-led Spanish Aid Advisory Committee that oversaw all programs for the refugee camps was responsive to the needs of all groups.

### **Old, Angry Socialists Return**

The next phase of the Emerson investigation took place in Paris. Emerson, accompanied by William Carey, Jo's American assistant, as well as by Noel and Jo<sup>14</sup>, met face-to-face with Francis Henson. Henson had a long history of conflicts with Barsky's organizations and was a close ally of the Socialist-Dubinsky-Lovestone-Strunsky groups that had battled American Communists since the 1930s. After serving in the American army during the war, Henson was hired to lead the Socialist-oriented relief agency, the International Relief and Rescue Committee (IRRC) that was the successor to Sheba Strunsky's International Relief Association and Varian Fry's Emergency Rescue Committee. Henson was quite willing to admit to Emerson that he was "crusading against totalitarianism of any type." He restated the charges against Tempi and Noel he sent to Reinhold Niebuhr in summer 1946, but he could not produce the evidence the Unitarians demanded. Henson recommended that Emerson visit the American Embassy and talk to Hugh Fullerton to obtain it.<sup>15</sup> Fullerton had been the counsel in Marseille who had so many conflicts with Varian Fry and Charles Joy during the Vichy period. He returned to the United States after the German's occupied Vichy and remained in Washington until he was assigned to Paris as the war ended. His role as manager of the American Hospital in the city was well publicized, but there are hints there was more to his assignment. At the 1946 meeting with the Unitarians, Fullerton restated the charges against Noel, Tempi, and the French programs, but he did not convince Emerson.<sup>16</sup>

### **Liar-Liar, But Unitarians Not on Fire--as Yet**

Emerson had a very embarrassing and delicate task to fulfill before he could return to America. He felt obliged to privately explore all the accusations against them with Noel and Jo Tempi. A confidential meeting was held. After examining the allegations, Noel responded with shock and

an unqualified denial of any bias. He stated that he had never been a Communist (even though it was not illegal to be one, he remarked), that he had not been fired from the State Department because of his communism, and that he was not colonizing the service's centers with Communists. Jo made similar declarations, emphasizing the non-political nature of her aid work.

Emerson believed Noel and Tempi. He left Paris feeling he had all he needed to counter the efforts of the "anti-progressive" Free Unitarians who had been leading the association's internal anti-Communist campaign and to quiet the Socialists like Davidow and Harrington who had "unjustified" hatreds of the USC's work. Once back in the United States, Emerson began to help draft reports he believed would silence all the criticisms, bring peace within the Unitarian Association, and help prepare its leaders for their appearance before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

Aiding Emerson's cause was another win by Stephen Fritchman. On October 9, by an overwhelming vote, the full Unitarian executive board cleared him of all charges of communist bias in his editorial and youth work. As well, during his testimony at HUAC Fritchman was able to appear an innocent martyr, one courageous enough to resist "un-American" questions about his political beliefs.<sup>17</sup> The Unitarian Service Committee's representatives also scored a minor victory during their closed-door Wood-Rankin meeting. Howard Brooks' calmness and non-confrontational manner led the HUAC committee to conclude the Unitarian organization had no responsibility for any of Barsky or Stephen Fritchman's possible misdeeds.<sup>18</sup>

### **Ungentle Unitarians?**

Then, a critical decision was made in Boston. To ward-off potential complaints about bias in the Unitarian's magazines, Melvin Arnold, the newly appointed director of all Unitarian publications, created an advisory board for the Fritchman edited, *Christian Register*, with an

expectation that Fritchman would submit drafts for review before he published articles or editorials.<sup>19</sup> Boston's leaders at 9 Park Street were now confident they had solved the Noel and Fritchman problems and thus had reestablished the association's reputation as being "above politics." They were so confident they went on the offensive as they awaited the publication of their major report on the Noel issues.

In October 1946, the usually polite William Emerson wrote his "Open Letter" to HUAC's members more than implying that its attorney, and by implication the committee itself, had participated in a campaign to smear the reputation of Martha Sharp. Howard Brooks also became accusatory. During an October 27<sup>th</sup> address at a major Unitarian meeting, he voiced pointed criticisms of the IRA, Sheba Strunsky, HUAC, and even all Southerners and Catholics, for their attempts to undermine all the association's great humanitarian work.

The association's publishing advisory group was also assertive. It felt comfortable in allowing the *Register* to continue including articles that were left-leaning, political, and critical of the United States government's policies. One article by Noel called the United States "degraded," demanded international control of the atomic bomb, and condemned the lack of aid to Soviet-linked countries.<sup>20</sup>

However, the centerpiece of the Unitarian rejoinders to the accusations against it was more in the denominations' gentle and liberal-objective tradition. . The special section of the December 1946 issue of the *Christian Register* gave the history of the USC-Barsky relationship, detailed the results of the fact-finding mission to France about Noel and Tempi, and emphasized the lack of any but hearsay evidence against the USC and its workers. A point that was stressed was that only one of the twenty-nine Spanish refugee groups had a complaint about the Service's French efforts.<sup>21</sup> That special issue of the *Register* became a foundation for later histories of the

association's investigations. Unfortunately, whether by accident or design, the 1946 report and those histories lacked critical components.

### **The Missing 'Facts', Liberals' Warnings Ignored**

Those who composed the December 1946 report and the USC's later historical works ignored credible and important documents held in the association's files. More important, the authors failed to follow-up on a vital lead. Emerson and the historians should have dealt with an October 1946 letter from the ultra-liberal Roger Baldwin, Walter Cannon's friend, which informed the Unitarian leader Howard Brooks of Baldwin's own investigation of Noel Field. Baldwin reported that most of his many Communist and ex-Communist friends knew Noel was a Communist and that he had been under investigation by American intelligence for years. Brooks' only response was to show the letter to Noel who declared it another example of a rampaging anti-Communist hysteria –the new Red Scare.<sup>22</sup>

Donald Harrington's communications were also not given the attention they deserved. Throughout the last-half of 1946 he provided the Unitarians with many facts that were ignored. One significant one was a report by Henry Mueller, the director of operations at USC's New York center. He had just returned from Europe with great concern over Noel's colonizing the service's many branches with Communists.<sup>23</sup> Harrington also reported he had received complaints about the service's work in France and about Noel from several other Spanish refugee groups, two members of the service's own staff (who wished to remain anonymous), a church group, and some Hungarian organizations. In addition, Harrington passed-on a conversation he had in New York with an official of the State Department's security service. The man said the department had been aware of Noel's Communist ties since the Soviet agent General Walter Krivitsky defected to the United States in 1938. He then told Harrington

something that indicated the USC was not the only relief agency working with American intelligence---and that Noel was suspected of being an active Soviet agent. The American security official said that because so many “operators” in France were being lost, if Francis Henson (of the IRC) disappeared he would have Noel Field “picked up.”<sup>24</sup> Although those reports might have been difficult to verify at the time, there was one lead the Unitarians could have explored. It was an important one because it pointed to the source of many of the allegations against Noel, Barsky, and all the USC’s work in Europe.

### **It Was Dexter, Not Joe McCarthy!**

The USC’s files contained a special report on that September 1946 meeting in Paris between Emerson and Hugh Fullerton. During the meeting, Fullerton revealed the source of the accusations against Noel was “a former executive director” of the Unitarian Service Committee.<sup>25</sup> He said the man’s charges were already on file at the State Department. At the time, there had been only two ex-executive directors, Robert Dexter, and Charles Joy. Given Charles Joy’s attraction to Jo Tempi and Noel, Dexter must have been the source. Other documents support Dexter being Fullerton’s informant. The Unitarian archive holds two unsigned memoranda. The contents of both reinforce the conclusion that Robert was the accuser because they have facts that only a Unitarian insider could have known. They also reflect an animosity that can be traced to the 1944 battle between Joy and Dexter. Dexter, it seems, had come to believe that Joy was a Communist, even consciously helping the Party.<sup>26</sup> Phrases such as, “poses as a Quaker,” also indicate that Dexter’s friendship with Noel Field had ended.<sup>27</sup>

One of those anonymous (Dexter) documents in the archive may have been in the Central Intelligence Agency’s (the Office of Strategic Services’ successor) files and sent to the USC in the 1980s. The other probably had been in the Unitarian’s hands since 1946. Even if Boston had

been unaware of the letters in 1946, a question remains as to why the Unitarians did not contact Robert Dexter after Fullerton informed them in September about the “ex-executive director”. Why Dexter’s involvements were not reported in later Unitarian histories is as much a puzzle. One plausible explanation is although some of the association’s leaders became aware of Dexter’s role and his letters, they did not wish to entangle the association in a conflict that would go public and re-ignite controversies over Noel, Tempie, and Fritchman. But that is conjecture.<sup>28</sup>

### **1947, Noel Pushes Too Hard**

The Boston Unitarian leaders’ hope their long 1946 report would end the conflicts in the association was soon defeated. One of the first indications was a resurgence of discontent over the association’s youth work, especially the link Stephen Fritchman had established to the Soviet-backed World Federation of Democratic Youth. Stephen had dodged-the-bullet during the first round of protests about it, but after famed liberal A. Powell Davies complained and after the scholarly and mid-mannered Unitarian Charles Eddis completed his study of the federation, Fritchman resigned from his post as youth leader in early 1947. However, Stephen followed his resignation with campaigns to energize his supporters to ensure he would remain as editor of the *Christian Register*.<sup>29</sup> Fritchman also continued his public support of fronts, left-inspired peace rallies, and demands for the internationalization of atomic energy and weapons. He certainly caused the Unitarians great embarrassments by actions such as supporting the radical United Electrical Workers union strike at General Electric’s East Boston plant (it was manufacturing classified military technologies) and by issuing harsh criticisms of famous critics of the Soviets ranging from Max Eastman on the left to Walter Winchell on the right.<sup>30</sup>

Noel Field contributed to the emerging unrest of early 1947. He flew to Boston in January and launched his attempt to convince the association to give a clear, final, and positive approval

of Jo Tempi as the permanent head of the French office. He failed at that and created some ill-will---although the association finalized his new and generous salary in appreciation of his work.<sup>31</sup> Noel's renewed aggressive support of Jo seems to have alienated even Raymond Bragg, a very influential man who was about to become the USC's new executive director, replacing Howard Brooks. Raymond Bragg had been working in various positions at the committee's headquarters in Boston during summers and was involved with some of the interactions with the OSS during the war.<sup>32</sup> Frederick Eliot's decision to have Bragg replace Brooks fit with his attempt to reduce tensions. Eliot concluded that Brooks had been involved in too many of the service's struggles to serve as a peace-maker. Yet in retrospect, s Bragg seems an unlikely choice if Eliot's goal was to please the denomination's theological conservatives.<sup>33</sup> Bragg was known as one of the more radical humanistic Unitarian ministers. He had a reputation for advocating a clear break from any of the premises of traditional religions and of having Unitarianism clearly recognized as a "religion without religion." However, Bragg was a wise choice if Eliot wanted to satisfy the likes of Arthur Schlesinger and Donald Harrington, the association's political moderates. Bragg had been a friend of Hubert Humphrey, another Americans for Democratic Action founder, and he had a long record of supporting ADA-like anti-Communist policies.<sup>34</sup>

### **Towards the Unitarians' Own Cold War,**

Although very liberal Bragg was cautious. Months before his formal appointment as Executive Director in March 1947, he began his own review of the Noel-Fritchman-Tempi problems. He soon formed an opinion that was less favorable than Emerson or Brooks', one partly driven by a new national political context. By early 1947, there were indications the Soviets would not abide by the wartime agreements to establish representative democracies in Eastern Europe and that

brutal political purges were about to, or had, taken place there. It was also believed the Soviets were underwriting the Communist movements in countries such as France, Albania, Italy, Greece, and Turkey and there were hints of past and ongoing Soviet espionage in the United States. In addition, there was the association's embarrassment stemming from HUAC's formal accusations against the JAFRC's leaders and from the Congress of Industrial Workers union dropping the JAFRC from its approved list. Bragg was also dealing with a serious decline in the USC's funding, calling for a close examination of all its programs.

### **A Summer of Great Discontent, with a Willi Munzenberg Accent**

Stephen Fritchman's newest actions reinforced Bragg's emerging negative view of the service's past. Just after President Truman, in reaction to growing fears of Communist influence, signed a bill requiring loyalty oaths by government employees, and just after Truman made his famous Containment Speech announcing the United States would provide aid to the anti-Communists in Greece and Turkey to prevent the Soviets from taking-over more countries, Fritchman published a "scathing and vitriolic" editorial in the Register in March 1947 that condemned Truman and his latest decisions. As irritating to the Unitarian's leadership, Fritchman had not, as had been agreed, submitted a draft to his advisory board before publishing the editorial.

This time, Fritchman did not "get-a-pass." He was immediately suspended. Then, at a full membership meeting in May, the vote was overwhelmingly against him: 1000 against and only 100 for Fritchman.<sup>35</sup> That was not all. At the meeting, Lawrence Davidow stood up and openly called Fritchman a Communist, daring Stephen to sue him for libel. Fritchman did not sue--but he was not silent. He acted, forming a support group, and began a campaign for "free speech." He also wrote many emotional protest pieces. Most had the flavor and vocabulary of Willi Munzenberg agitation publications. In a June 1947 "Open Letter to Frederick May Eliot,"

Fritchman blamed his problems on the Free Unitarians who desired to destroy all the association's good works and who sought to purge what they called the "subversive" leadership of the association. He accused them of having a purpose "nothing less than the assassination of the Unitarian Church as it had historically existed." According to Fritchman, his enemies wanted the Unitarians to neglect "the struggle of the disposed."<sup>36</sup> Fritchman's onslaught not work .He was forced out. .<sup>37</sup>

### **Stephen Fritchman Stayed the Course Throughout The Cold War**

Stephen Fritchman, Margot Clark's hero, did not let the 1947 battle with the Unitarians change his philosophy, divert him from his leftist crusades, or leave him unemployed. In 1948, he had a new job, one with a near perfect fit with his politics and his need to be an activist during the Cold War. In 1947, his first opportunity came when he was asked to head the Soviet American Friendship Council that Edwin Smith had led before he went to teach at the Putney School. Stephen considered it but received a much better offer. Although he had not held a ministry for a decade he was asked by a large, wealthy, and already left-leaning church to become its director.<sup>1</sup> In 1948, he went west to Los Angeles, California to head the city's already radical First Unitarian Church, and to become involved with the Hollywood Ten and with the homosexual crusades of Harry Hay.

The church had a long record of having one of the most liberal and active congregations in the Unitarian Association. That reputation was on-the-mark. For example, the congregation's members joined Dalton Trumbo, the famous Hollywood writer, in opposing America's entry into World War II, at least before Russia was invaded. Then, like him, the church became an all-out supporter of the struggle against fascism. As well, Martin Hall, a German immigrant Comintern spokesman was reported to be close to important members of the congregation during the 1930s.

From the day he arrived in Los Angeles, January 11, 1948, Fritchman was given the freedom and resources to make himself and the church major players in Hollywood's and the nation's left-wing, if not Communist, activities. He and Frances, his wealthy wife, immediately made friends on-the-left but managed to return to the good standing in the national Unitarian Association. The couple became close to Albert Maltz, Dalton Trumbo, and Alvah Bessie of the Hollywood Ten, the writers and producers who faced prison terms because they refused to cooperate with the Un-American Activities Committee's 1947 investigation of Communist influence in the film industry. Others important to the Hollywood Ten affair, such as John Howard Lawson, Herbert Biberman, Howard da Silva, Will Geer, and Jeff Corey also were in contact with Stephen and his Los Angeles church. Stephen became so engaged with the cause of the Hollywood Ten he accepted the responsibility of being Alvah Bessie's parole advisor once Alvah served his one-year prison sentence.

Without children, Stephen and Frances had time to join and contribute to scores of front organizations. Among the page-long list the FBI compiled in 1952 were the Emergency Civil Liberties Union (the radical's version of the American Civil Liberties Union), the American Russian Institute, the Communist led Council of the Arts, Science and Professions, the National Council on American Policy in China, and the national and Los Angeles chapters of the Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born. He aided Gerald Tannenbaum by serving on the China Welfare Appeal's board.<sup>38</sup> Stephen also continued his support for Edward Barsky's Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, he became a leader in the American Humanist Association that was beginning to aggressively fight any links between the government and religion. Stephen was always active in left-wing "peace" organizations and continued lobbying for international control of atomic energy and weapons. He was a vocal

opponent of the Korean War, the military draft, and ROTC programs in the schools. Partly because of those views, Stephen and Frances became life-long friends of Linus Pauling. Pauling became famous as the founder of molecular biology and for winning two Nobel prizes, one for chemistry, the other for his peace activities.<sup>39</sup> Stephen gave speeches advocating government-funded medical care, the need for a socialist-progressive government in an independent Israel, and the rights of organized labor. He lectured at the California Labor School's campuses in Los Angeles and San Francisco and spoke in Marin County, California. He declared the United States was re-Nazifying Germany while the Soviets remained the only large nation working for peace.<sup>40</sup> One of his lectures in San Rafael gave him the chance to reunite with old Massachusetts "left" friends such as Jean and Sali Lieberman and Leslie Arnold, the ex-head of Boston's Progressive book store and assistant director of that city's Sam Adams School.

Stephen's lectures and sermons were justified, he thought, by the Unitarian's belief in a pragmatic (not absolutist) philosophy and the professed reliance on intellectual exchanges among those with varied beliefs to arrive at conclusions of right and wrong. However, it was typical of Fritchman to include only those on the left in the discussions in Los Angeles and he rarely, if ever, criticized the absolutes of Marxism.<sup>1</sup> Fritchman also devoted much time to a Negro cause célèbre, the case of Willi McGee. McGee was sentenced to death for raping a white woman, a charge he always denied. As with the old Sacco and Vanzetti case, McGee's became a Munzenberg-like international "left cause." There was another cause that Stephen, the self-proclaimed heretic supported. Soon after he arrived in Los Angeles his church hosted Harry Hay's Mattachine Society, the nation's first homosexuality advocacy organization. Giving at least implicit approval to sodomy was a radical step for any denomination especially since The Party had disowned Hay when it learned of his "sexual deviation." Hay, once an active Party

member in Los Angeles and New York City, had been a long-time friend of Stephen's. Ironic, Fritchman had presided at Hay's 1938 heterosexual marriage ceremony.

Frequent targets of Stephen's speeches and sermons was the Un-American Activities Committee's actions and the prosecution and deportation of Party leaders. Stephen found it difficult to keep his temper when speaking on those issues. One reason for that was his second appearance before the committee. His behavior put him in danger of losing his ministry, even to have to serve prison time. Unlike his 1946 appearance, when he admitted membership in some front organizations, in September 1951 he "took the Fifth" on every question. He refused to testify on the grounds of self-incrimination and launched into a condemnation of the committee.

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The government did not prosecute him, but his refusal to testify led many Unitarians to think he was a Party man and that he had lied to them during the 1946-7 debates over his editorship of the *Christian Register*. His using the Fifth Amendment's protections, and more accusations from Herbert Philbrick, the undercover informant in Susan Clark's cell, almost led the Unitarian's to dismiss Stephen from his ministry in 1952. Frederick May Eliot, the Unitarian's national president would have done so if his inquiries to the FBI had led to substantiation of the claims that Fritchman had used church properties for Party-related meetings. As before, the FBI refused any comment and Stephen avoided dismissal. However, even the friendly board of trustees of the Los Angeles church gave warnings to Fritchman that his leftist activities were hindering the association's fund raising ability .

### **More Than a Liberal**

Again, Stephen did not retreat. He continued to denounce right-wing America and to proclaim the Cold War was the creation of capitalism. He hosted a weekly radio broadcast and made

frequent television appearances, even joining Jessica Mitford, the San Francisco-based ex-Party member, in a 1960s national broadcast about *The American Way of Death*, her expose of the funeral industry. Fritchman was also a prolific writer, penning several books about the need for and nature of religious activism, and he contributed to many journals including Communist publications such as *Mainstream* and *People's World*.

Stephen's church hosted almost every famous American leftist, featuring them as speakers and panel members, usually for left-oriented discussions of social and ideological issues. In his 1977, *Heretic: a Partisan Autobiography*, Stephen justified his approach to political discussions. His version of ethics demanded "correct" answers and he proclaimed the beliefs of his old religious mentors who were not activists deserved little if any attention. Stephen was not really a liberal and, of course, found little justification for open discussions of the Korean or Vietnam wars.

By 1950 Fritchman was famous in America's and the world's leftist circles. State organizations invited him to speak on topics ranging from the ethics of contraception to the support of the Cuban Revolution and Castro's Communism. Stephen received a special honor in 1966. He was asked to sponsor and speak at the grand testimonial dinner for Herbert Aptheker, the American Communist Party's leading historian and intellectual. Before then, after a brief conflict with the State Department in 1952 when he was refused a visa to travel to Australia to address its admittedly radical Unitarians, Stephen had become somewhat of a world traveler—usually to leftist destinations. There were several trips to Mexico, trips to "peace" congresses in Sweden and England, and stops in Communist Poland and East Berlin. He was so well regarded he was invited to anniversary celebrations in the Soviet Union and China.

Although the FBI could not prove Fritchman's Party membership, the agency logged enough information during the late 1940s and early 1950s to justifiably picture him as at least a devoted fellow traveler. Stephen's record was so long and deep that he was put on the agency's security index and be labeled a "Key Figure" by the Los Angeles office. Frances, his wealthy wife, was also active enough that the FBI created a separate file on her. The agency kept an open folder on both the Fritchmans until the mid-1970s although there were a few times when it appeared Stephen might have thrown-off his commitments to the Party and old hardline communism to become just an energetic political and cultural liberal. In 1948, when Anna Louise Strong, the famed American journalist and Soviet supporter, was banished from Russia after the Soviet's branded her a spy, Stephen and Frances came to her rescue despite the American Party declaring her a "non-person," There was another episode that hinted Stephen had become flexible. In 1963, he joined with liberals to criticize the Soviet Union for executing persons for economic crimes.

However, those actions seem just temporary deviations from Stephen's devotion to the Cause.<sup>1</sup> For example, he saluted the Watts riots of 1965 as a sign that a true revolution was beginning and he supported a huge racial set-aside of the denomination's funds for a Black church interest group, even approving the group's seizing the microphones during a meeting when other church members questioned the size of and demanded accountability for the set-aside's monies. There were other indicators of the continued commitment. Some are based on the Fritchmans lack of action. He made no public denunciations after the 1956 revelations of Stalin's brutality, the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, the ruthlessness of China's Cultural Revolution, or the Cambodian massacres. Other indicators of Stephen's commitment are positive. He made a trip to Russia in 1967 and in the early 1970s he and Frances sponsored the

New American Movement, a radical group led by Party stalwarts such as Dorothy Healy and the Jarrico brothers. They had decided the old Communist Party had become moribund. Their new party, its journal, and its policy research group made little effort to hide their Marxism and revolutionary premises. As well, the Los Angeles Unitarian church continued to reflect Fritchman's influence. In 2013, for example, it and the Electronic Freedom Foundation sponsored a lawsuit against the National Security Agency's telephone and internet monitoring programs.

### **1947, An Ungentle Tempi and Noel Adrift**

The battles that led to Fritchman's dismissal and move to Los Angeles were not the only problems for the Unitarians during 1947. There were additional heated conflicts after the once ultra-liberal Raymond Bragg went to Europe in May and made the final decision about Jo Tempi. He fired her in July 1947 and began, according to Arthur Schlesinger Jr., to finally bring the association back to its true roots. Although being given several weeks of severance pay Jo did not leave gracefully. She trashed the Paris office, destroyed its records, allowed the service's truck to be disabled, and tolerated her employees raiding the warehouses. Noel Field then arranged Swiss travel permits for her as a USC employee, although she had already been dismissed.<sup>41</sup> Noel, meanwhile, reacted to Jo's dismissal with letters and cables to Boston. They had the same rhetorical flavor as Fritchman's broadsides. There was a plot against all progressives and peace, Noel asserted. According to him "sworn enemies of liberalism," and "enemies of all decent liberal organizations," were behind the treatment of Jo and Charles Joy and those enemies were after much more than repressing a few heroic individuals.<sup>42</sup>

Unlike the war years when Noel's threats resulted in compromises by the Unitarian leadership, his protests now received emphatic rejections. William Emerson responded to a

nine-page letter from Noel with a harsh refutation of his arguments and a statement that he and Noel were now so far apart in thinking there was no need for an explanation of his rejection. Raymond Bragg was as direct in his dismissal of Noel's protests.<sup>43</sup>

There was a greater disappointment for Noel. In August 1947, a month after his mother's death from cancer, Noel was told the USC no longer needed him in Europe. That shocked some at the Unitarian's Boston headquarters. Howard Brooks and Edward Cahill were upset and offered to step-down from their USC jobs to make room for Noel at the Boston center. Raymond Bragg said no to that. There was some mention of work in the New York office, but Noel showed no indication of wanting it although he had no leads for other work in America or Europe.<sup>44</sup>

That was not the end of the Unitarians' troubles. Despite the actions against Noel and Temp and Joy, the Socialist -ADA-related Unitarians and the Free Unitarians continued criticizing Boston's leadership. Harrington sent a flow of letters, even ones to the FBI.<sup>45</sup> The Free Unitarians were so aggressive that Raymond Bragg wrote his own "Open Letter" in November to Wilton E. Cross, one of the group's leaders, demanding an end to "reckless besmirching" of the service's new European work.<sup>46</sup>

Despite Bragg's declaration, there were indications the Unitarian's leaders were in the process of deciding the era of cooperation with the far-left was over. The leadership sought peace with its critics. As a result, Charles Joy, Robert Dexter, and Martha Sharp were not returned to positions of leadership. Charles spent two decades working for international aid agencies, and then retired to a quiet writer's life. Dexter worked for the Church Peace Union for some years then, after what was reported to be a long period of "severe depression," passed away in 1955. Martha seems to have backed-away from her pro-Soviet stance. She struggled through a

divorce and accepted a position on a national board that planned the mobilization of American resources in the event of a Soviet attack. She had not become apolitical, however. She resigned from that position when Eisenhower and the Republicans came to power.<sup>47</sup>

The Unitarian's retreat from its cooperative policies was made clear in a letter from Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to Frederick Eliot in 1948. Schlesinger applauded the Unitarians' ending of requests for money from Barsky and the termination of the relationship with the Cannon Hospital in Toulouse. But Schlesinger wondered why Eliot had not made it clear the hospital had been Communist-controlled and asserted that it was time for the Unitarians to recognize because America had entered a period of great moral crisis, the Cold War.<sup>48</sup>

### **Noel and Herta Alone and Afraid, 1947**

Before that, in late 1947, Noel Field struggled to adjust to the end of his Unitarian job and to the emerging Cold War. He was out of work, near blind in one eye, suffering from stomach problems, and fearful. Herta, his wife, was also dealing with health issues and deep anxieties. One reason for Noel's increasing fears was that Hede Massing, his friend and Communist controller, might talk about Noel's Communist connection and his possible espionage activities. As a result, Noel had greater worries than before about the legal consequences of returning to America..<sup>49</sup>

Traumatized by the Unitarian Service Committee conflicts, weakened by years of hectic work, and carrying their life-long burdens of marginal health, Noel and Herta decided to delay any major career decisions until they rested and recuperated.<sup>50</sup> In October 1947, after Noel had completed his work for the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) and CRALOG, the organization supervising relief agencies in Germany, the couple temporarily moved to a villa in the hills above

Geneva, Switzerland to convalesce and plan their postwar lives. While recuperating in their mountain retreat, Noel and Herta considered their problems and options. How would Noel make a living if the USC battles and government hearings had badly damaged his professional reputation as a relief worker? Should they return to the United States as they had planned in 1946? Although they were concerned about such practicalities, political and ideological issues were of great importance to them. Should they continue to publicly support the Soviet Union and Communist causes when the United States' policies, such as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, and the Communists' take-over of Eastern European nations, were making it clear the era of East-West cooperation was ending?

Noel and Herta remained devoted believers in communism, but the new trends in Soviet-American relations were creating conditions that made keeping-the-faith dangerous. The couple sensed that communism among American intellectuals was no longer regarded as a harmless ideological dalliance and that careers and livelihoods were threatened by new anti-Communist investigations and laws. On the other hand, for people like Noel and Herta, keeping silent about the emerging Cold War's troubles had a high cost in terms of personal integrity.

By the end of 1947, the couple realized they faced an uncertain if not threatening future. However, neither they nor anyone else could have foreseen their strange lives as the centerpieces of one of the most bizarre episodes of the Cold War. Nor could Noel have predicted that many of the institutions and people that had been so important to him, and to the creation of America's liberal culture, would have to confront unprecedented challenges, partly because of their links to him.

### **For The First Time, Out There Alone**

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Noel had much to think about. He was unemployed and for the first time in his life there were no jobs on his horizon. He was also receiving chilling news from his brother Hermann about anti-Communism sweeping America and he learned government investigators were leaking hints he was a Communist, perhaps a Soviet agent. Adding to his burdens, Noel was still upset over his mother Nina's death from cancer during summer 1947 while she was alone in New York City. She had been undergoing twice-weekly radiation treatments for years, but Noel had never been able to find much time for her.<sup>51</sup>

Noel was struggling with many (sometimes fanciful) life-challenges although he had little experience at being on-his-own. All his life influential people and supportive institutions had aided and protected him. Now, he and Herta were alone in a foreign land, and, like his parents, Noel had become accustomed to a comfortable life-style. His financial resources, ones that most families could only have wished-for, seemed inadequate to him. Although well-off by common standards, Noel felt he was on the verge of poverty, with only enough to maintain his style of genteel living for a few months. But he was exaggerating any financial problems. His overreaction was caused by his extremely high expectations and his general anxiety. His last salary from the USC was a handsome \$60,000<sup>52</sup> plus monies for expenses. However, there now was no income from work so he had to rely on the returns from his investments. That frightened him. He also fussed over his tax situation in the United States, hoping that his friends might arrange a remission. He soon became irate over how his investments in America had been handled. He grumbled about what the Great Depression had done to the trust fund his father had established and how his cousin Henry had made unwise investments of his other savings, including the funds from his salary he always had the USC set-aside and deposit in his American bank.<sup>53</sup>

Noel's complaints continued although he had over a half-million dollars in assets that yielded a yearly income equal that of a typical American worker--and he knew he would soon receive a cash settlement of \$10,000 from the USC to compensate for his months in the hospital in 1944 for his eye problem. The USC had also paid him an extra three months' salary, \$15,000, for the time he needed to wind-up the committee's Geneva office after its closure in August 1947. In addition, Noel expected the settlement of his mother's estate in early 1948 would add a sizeable amount to his investment portfolio. As a result, his American holdings were soon worth almost one million dollars and he had additional funds in Europe. Even with an investment income less than one-half his last USC salary, he was not poor. As well, in 1947 American money was very strong. A dollar in Europe, even in high-cost Switzerland, went much further than in the United States. In addition to his financial anxieties was a real and immediate problem. There was little sign that any relief agency would call on him to work in Europe.

### **Not Brooklyn or Cambridge, But Where?**

While at the mountain retreat in late 1947, Noel and Herta had made several commitments. By the time they returned to Geneva in early 1948, they had decided to stay in Europe, at least for the next few years, and to stand-by the Cause. Fortunately, they were relieved of one worry when the Swiss authorities extended their residency permits and after they were allowed to renew the lease on their small apartment in Geneva. They never explained their decision to not return to America in 1948, even for a family visit. Perhaps they refrained from a trip there was because all of Noel's closest relatives were now in the "wilds" of the seemingly unsophisticated American mid-West, or perhaps it was because of Herta's love for Europe, or because of Noel's fear of the anti-Communist movement. It is clear, however, that Noel made few if any explorations of job possibilities in the United States.

The problems with the USC and with Robert Dexter, Francis Henson, and Hugh Fullerton explain why he thought it useless to seek a position with the American State Department. Noel did consider a job with the United Nations. Working for the new version of the League of Nations might, Noel thought, allow a continuation of his relief efforts and allow him to help re-energize Paul Otlet's and his father's work on international information standards and cooperation. But Noel worried that United Nations employment might require a residence in America because the League decided to locate its headquarters outside of Europe. New York City seemed its future home because of the anticipated generosity of the Rockefellers.

Why Noel was not approached by one of the many liberal American relief agencies operating in Europe remains a puzzle. Whatever the cause, by spring 1948, his health was better, and he began travelling throughout Europe, even to England, exploiting job opportunities including work as journalist. During his stop in England, he visited with his foster-daughter Erica Glasser and her German-Jewish parents who had established a medical practice in Surrey after escaping from occupied Europe in 1939. Noel wanted to persuade Erica to remain faithful and active in the Communist Party. He was concerned because Erica just had a falling-out with the German Communists and because, now some months pregnant, she seemed intent on marrying Robert Wallach, the American army captain from a well-connected Virginia family whose demobilization finally allowed him to wed a German. Noel did not want Erica to live in the United States.<sup>54</sup>

### **Erica Promises to Keep-to -the-Cause , but....**

Erica refused Noel's demand to leave Wallach but she pledged she would remain faithful to Communism. She also promised that if she moved to the United States with Robert she would join the American Communist Party. That last promise was not tested for a decade, partly

because the United States' authorities refused to allow Erica to enter the country due to her Communist connections. So, in 1948 she and Robert moved from England to Paris. He enrolled in college as she had her first child and she began working with France's Party. Then, Robert found a better college situation and they moved to Geneva. Erica had her second baby in early 1950 while the family was living in small hotel room and surviving on Robert's minimal income from the GI Bill. Despite her marriage, Erica remained a German citizen and the American government continued to refuse her entry into the United States. But, as the Cold War progressed she began fearing she would be kidnapped by the Communists because of her World War OSS work.<sup>55</sup>

### **Noel's Near Frantic Search for a Job**

Meanwhile, 1948 had become a frustrating year for Noel and Herta. While they were still not in the best of physical or emotional conditions to craft wise decisions about the future they began making additional commitments, poor ones. Noel wanted to continue making his ideological contributions. Unfortunately, he was not sure how to do it. He reconsidered returning to the America to campaign for the left-leaning Henry Wallace and his One-World ideas. That was ruled out when Herta again declared she would never live in the United States. So, Noel decided to concentrate on finding work in Europe, thinking that for at least for the short-term he would be an independent journalist-researcher, one who would contribute to world peace, if not the Party. Noel put -out feelers about becoming a stringer for American magazines and about becoming an author on European reconstruction programs. One of his first moves was to inquire if he could work as a reporter-representative in Europe for the Party-backed American presidential campaign of Henry Wallace. Noel's friend Alger Hiss made some inquiries for him, and the editors of Wallace's *National Guardian* magazine made an offer. It came a bit too late,

however.<sup>56</sup> That did not stop Noel from supporting Wallace's program. He let friends and acquaintances know he believed America was pushing the world toward war and that only a man like Wallace could reverse the dangerous "reactionary" policies of Truman's Containment program.

Noel continued his search for a new career. He had already completed a draft of a proposal for an 'Inquiry into Conditions in Eastern Europe, one intending to show how well reconstruction was progressing in the Soviet-controlled areas. His brother Hermann had made explorations into the architectural aspects of the rebuilding and had provided some guidance. Noel sent copies of his proposal to close friends, such as Stephen Fritchman and Laurence Duggan, and to the editor of Viking Press. Noel had great hopes and was already traveling in Eastern Europe gathering more information for the project. But no offers of a book subsidy appeared. Noel was frustrated but he and his friends did not abandon his hope for a journalism career.

### **Hiss and Duggan to the Rescue?**

Laurence Duggan (then the head of the influential Institute of International Education in New York City) continued to help. He made inquiries at other book publishers and sent his own letter to Alger Hiss, the new head of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, asking for suggestions.<sup>57</sup> In May 1948, Hiss, who already had been communicating with Noel, wrote that the endowment had no related program, but suggested that Noel become a regular contributor to journals edited by left-leaning opinion leaders. Hiss had contacted Freda Kirchwey of *The Nation* in Noel's behalf and predicted that Louis Dolivet of *The United Nations World* would welcome long articles from Noel. Another suggestion Hiss gave was to contact *Harper's*

*Magazine*. Once Noel had published in such magazines, Hiss stated, he would be recognized enough to begin a career as a professional writer on Eastern Europe.

If Noel pursued those leads is an unknown, but he did not launch a career as a professional journalist. Nor did he produce a manuscript on European reconstruction in 1948 or 1949. He remained without paid employment and continued to complain about his finances. Yet, he was spending a great deal of money, something that was arousing concerns in both the East and West. Besides his information-gathering visits to his friends in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Hungary, he paid his own way to several “peace” conventions run by Soviet and European Communists. One of those was August 1948’s World Congress of Intellectuals in Poland.

### **A Peacenik and Party Faithful**

The Polish meeting was where Stalin’s new version of the COMINTERN, the COMINFORM, unleashed its tirade against Western thought and writing and where the leftist Jean-Paul Sartre was called a “hyena” because of his break with strict Marxist doctrine. Despite the Soviet blockade of Berlin in June, Noel, as well as ideological allies in America and Europe, gave the meeting their versions of blessings. Acquaintances of Noel, such as Edward Barsky and Howard Fast of the Joint Anti-Fascist Committee, as well as France’s Madame Joliot-Curie and her husband, lauded the convention. Joliot-Curie was a noted French physicist, science information advocate, and avowed Communist. Ironically, Joliot-Curie’s Communist husband Frederick was a prime mover in France’s program for an atomic bomb. The couple’s political commitments went beyond France, however. For example, both frequently aided their American ideological compatriots such as Edward Barsky and Howard Fast. So, to American observers of the 1948 Polish meeting, it was clear that Noel was still close to international Reds.

Noel also attended April 1949's great "peace" congress in Paris, one sponsored by a long list of Americans on-the-left including W. E. B. DuBois, Edward Barsky, Sam Jaffe, Howard Fast, and John Howard Lawson. Noel regarded the meeting as another triumph for world peace.<sup>58</sup>

### **Noel Sees No Evil, Again**

Noel's personal letters during the later 1940s reflected his continuing deep and romantic commitments to communism. He had ignored the first round of political purges in the Soviet satellites that ended any pretenses of coalition and democratic political life. He focused on what he held to be the timeless and great ideas of the Revolution, with no attention to the current social and political conditions in Soviet Russia and the Satellite nations. Predictably, Noel, and his letter-sharing brother Hermann failed to mention some of the less acceptable trends in the recovering Communist nations. Despite world-coverage of the Eastern bloc's intensifying purges, elimination of churches, and the cleansing of libraries of unworthy books, Noel failed to comment on such actions. Noel was also oblivious to the United Nation's protests over forced-labor camps, the arrests of tens of thousands of middle-class men and women, and massive property confiscations.

At the same time, Noel was growing more fearful in reaction to additional accusations about his leftist beliefs and actions. He was noticing what was developing in the United States during the summer of 1948 as America's liberal institutions came under question and as old rumors about Communist influence in the "liberal establishment" dating from the late 1930s became front-page news. As Noel became aware of the new round of congressional un-American investigations, rumors about impending arrests of American Communist Party leaders, and of a renewed drive to deport foreign radicals he and Herta became more fretful, and angry.

### **A Summer and Winter of the Liberals' Discontents and Tragedies**

The new hearings by the House un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) began in summer 1948, just as a dozen top-level leaders of the American Communist Party were arrested under the Smith Act that outlawed revolutionary organizations. This cycle of HUAC hearings was different from the earlier postwar investigations. Those hearings had focused on low-level Party members, suspected Communist-influenced organizations such as Barsky's Joint Anti-Fascist Rescue Committee, foreign Party agents, and Hollywood's Communist writers and producers. None of the people or institutions investigated were of high social or political status and even the witnesses used by the committee typically were immigrants, Red-diaper babies, or ex-Party members. That was because, at the time, the Communist threat appeared to be caused by outsiders whose beliefs and actions had been caused by their European heritage. As well, the 1930's and earlier 1940's committees attempted to be discreet when they dealt with those who had social standing, such as the Unitarians' leaders and Stephen Fritchman. In contrast, in 1948 the investigators' approach was unrestrained and, significantly, had new targets. The subjects of its investigations, and the committee's witnesses, were Americans of high status and from (and "of") the country's liberal culture. Within a few months, the nation learned that many of its leading institutions and government departments housed influential people who had aided the Cause. Noel's close friends were among those who became public figures just as charges about his long-suspected Communism reemerged. Some of America's most respected institutions also had to face exposure in the press as well as in congress.

The featured witnesses in 1948 were not the likes of 1946's Louis Budnez. He was the son of a mid-West radical Irish Catholic mother and had struggled to earn a college degree from a less than prestigious Jesuit institution. He had progressed through decades of union organizing to the editorship of the *Daily Worker*, only to renounce his faith in the Party in 1945. He returned

to Catholicism and become a perennial anti-Communist witness and author, but not a famous or rich one. Unlike Budnez, the two most prominent HUAC-friendly witnesses of July and August 1948 were of the liberal elite. Elizabeth Bentley was from a moderately wealthy, strait-laced old Episcopalian family, one with enough wealth to support her through the Seven Sister Vassar College and through graduate work at Columbia University. Attracted to radical ideas of all types, she became a Party member in the 1930s and then the lover and helper of Jacob Golos, a key figure in all the Party's espionage work. Most of the information from the various underground Red networks passed through his and Elizabeth's hands. In 1945, for various reasons, including Jacob's sudden death and orders to turn over control of her networks to a Russian agent, Elizabeth began informing the FBI of the contacts she had with important network members on the East Coast. The information she gave to the FBI remained unnoticed until she was one of the first to be called to testify at HUAC's 1948 investigations.

While Bentley was important, the star of summer 1948's hearings was Whitaker Chambers, a man who had been making accusations about Communist influences much longer than Elizabeth--since the late 1930s. Chambers was also more of a product and part of America's liberal culture than Elizabeth. Like her, he came from an old-line American family and was raised on the East Coast. He attended Williams College, then Columbia University, but left both before completing his degree. He drifted into the Party and did much writing for it before he was ordered to go underground in the 1930s to work as a secret courier between networks. That brought him into contact with many members and followers in Washington and New York who were supplying information about government activities. In the late 1930s, fearing "reprisals with prejudice" because of possible deviations from Party directives, Chambers left the Party and began informing officials in the State Department about men such as Alger Hiss, Noel Field, and

the Duggan brothers. He was also providing long lists of people and organizations to anti-Communists such as Sydney Hook. Like Elizabeth's, his lists contained the names of many important people and institutions in America's liberal circles. Of significance for the postwar HUAC investigations, Whitaker soon climbed in the ranks of the most important voices of American culture : He became a highly paid senior editor at *Time Magazine*.<sup>59</sup>

### **The Harvard and Seven Sister Connections, Once Again**

Bentley and Chambers' testimony led to follow-up investigations of government departments suspected of having been penetrated by those who might have supplied information to the Party and Soviet intelligence. The names of those departments and people started to become public in October 1948 and newspapers in America and Europe began publishing reports of accusations against major figures in the White House, the OSS, the Treasury and Agriculture Departments, the atomic projects, the State Department, the Institute of International Education (the foreign-education partner of the State Department), and even the crown jewel of the American educational system, the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton University. Shocking, the men and women named were native born and had been schooled at the nation's most liberal higher education institutions. Harvard University, Noel's alma mater, had educated a significant proportion of them, as had the Seven Sister colleges.

Especially worrisome for Noel and Herta, two of the men identified during the 1948 HUAC investigations, Alger Hiss and Laurence Duggan, were close friends as well as highly regarded members of the liberal elite. Hiss was a graduate of Johns Hopkins University and Harvard University's law school. His abilities were saluted immediately after graduation by a clerkship with Justice of the Supreme Court Oliver Wendell Holmes and then by a position at Choate, Hall & Stewart, a prestigious Boston law firm. Hiss worked as a government lawyer for President

Roosevelt's New Deal, including a stint in the left-leaning Agricultural Adjustment Agency. He then joined the State Department and became known as one of the department's brightest young men, eventually becoming a protégé of John Foster Dulles, a future Secretary of State. Hiss was active in the highest levels of World War II's diplomatic policy making. He was at the Yalta Conference where Roosevelt and Stalin divided-up postwar Europe and he was central to the founding of the United Nations. In 1946, he was so well-regarded he was asked to replace the famous Nicholas Murray Butler as head of the venerated Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. It is difficult to imagine anyone more of an Eastern-elite liberal than Alger Hiss.

Laurence Duggan, Noel's "closet friend," was the son of Stephen Duggan who had led the International Institute of Education (IIE) since its beginnings in 1919. He and his student-faculty exchange programs played a significant role in the lives of two generations of the Fields. Stephen was a New York City second generation Irish boy who went to the public schools, graduated from the tuition-free City College of New York, earned a graduate degree at Columbia University, then returned to a professorship at City College and took leadership of the institute which was quickly becoming a near branch of the State Department. His son Laurence benefitted from Stephen's rise to importance in liberal circles. Laurence attended the exclusive Philips Exeter preparatory school and graduated from Harvard University. He joined the State Department and, like Alger Hiss, was regarded as a very, very promising young man. He progressed through the departmental ranks and in 1940, although there was some concern about his politics, he was made the head of the South and Central American section, becoming a personal advisor about the region to the Secretary of State.<sup>60</sup>

In 1944, perhaps because of rumors of his left-wing activities, Laurence resigned from the department and took a position with UNRRA, the new international relief organization.

Laurence soon found a better job. In 1946, he assumed the leadership of his father's IIE and was again climbing in the ranks of America's liberal politics and institutions. He was repeatedly honored, received a handsome salary, became a member of influential organizations, and Henry Wallace considered making him Secretary of State if he was elected president.<sup>61</sup> Duggan's lifestyle fit his new career. He cared for his family in a handsome house in the very up-scale New York City suburb of Scarsdale and continued to host political gatherings. Laurence also had great plans for the expansion of his father's old academic exchange program, intending to make the IIE the administrator of the new federally-funded scholarly initiative established in 1946 by Senator William Fulbright, another liberal-internationalist. Fulbright was also a friend of Henry Wallace's as well as Hubert Humphrey's great "socialistic" science and technology information proposals.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to his friends, Noel was mentioned during the 1948 hearings. The mentions pointed to spying. The initial accusations concerning Noel, Hiss, and Duggan's espionage work had some weaknesses, but Whittaker Chamber's allegations led to Hiss being called before HUAC, then to charges of espionage, and to a series of lawsuits that resulted in his 1950 imprisonment for lying under oath because of false statements at the HUAC hearings, rather than espionage. He avoided an espionage conviction because his reported acts had taken place too far in the past.

Elizabeth Bentley's testimony about the links between Noel and Hiss endangered both men. After learning of the new investigations, but continuing to voice his support for Henry Wallace's presidential campaign, Noel wrote his brother that he and Herta had been taking sleeping pills to curb their anxieties.<sup>63</sup> Noel deeply feared prosecution if he returned to the United States and earlier bravado about revealing his Communist connections ended. During

his 1945 visit to America when his ex-controller Hede Massing told Noel that she was going to testify before a congressional hearing about her and Noel's espionage activities, he had responded that he "did not care" and indicated that he and Herta considered the Massings traitors to the Communist cause.<sup>64</sup> Then, in 1946, he published articles in the *Christian Register* that more than hinted about his loyalty to the Cause. The political climate and Noel were different by 1948. After his encounters with the Unitarian's investigatory committees and Bentley and Massing's revelations, the most he would admit in 1948 was that he had been a "progressive".

### **Even Boas**

After news reached Noel that Massing and other ex-Communists were disclosing the work of the Washington Communist underground networks of the 1930s, Noel and Herta feared long-term imprisonment of their friends. Word of the government's investigation of an old family acquaintance's anti-fascist activities during the 1930s was especially troubling. Franz Boas, the Columbia University anthropologist and noted Jewish liberal, whose daughter studied art with Noel's uncle Hamilton's protégé Robert Laurent, was being linked to many Communist front groups.<sup>65</sup> The news of the hearings on Communist influences in Hollywood also troubled Noel and Herta. Noel had connections to some of the movie's Reds. So did his ex-sister-in-law, Jean Clark Lieberman. Noel also suspected that he was becoming caught in a battle between conservatives and liberals in the American intelligence community, including his old friends from his Office of Strategic Services' days in Switzerland. To a degree, he was correct about that.

<sup>1</sup> BU b28 f4; FBI FOIA, hermann field; Marton,” *True Believer*, “*Op. cit.*,” 127, suggests but does not prove that Jo Tempi was ‘the other woman’ in this period.

<sup>2</sup> BU b28 f4; Sharp “*Stalin’s*,” *Op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> USC 16031/1 (3-7), contains much concerning the later stages of the Tempi problem.

<sup>4</sup> Giles, “After the Reich,” *Op. cit.*, 213; Grombach, John V., *The Great Liquidator* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980).

<sup>5</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman , esp.. 9-17 46, Frederick to FBI. An internal FBI memorandum stated that while its ‘tap’ files had many references to Fritchman as a Party member, the agency had no hard evidence on Fritchman or on Tyler’s specific accusations about the taps. Budnez had told the FBI that Fritchman was listed as a member in the Party’s New York files and Boston informants had placed him as a member of city’s professional cell.

<sup>6</sup> USC 16171/1 (13), 16031/1 (6), 16035/2 (3).

<sup>7</sup> USC 16031/1 (7); *NYT* 10-23-1946.

<sup>8</sup> USC 16135/1 esp. Emerson, Open Letter to HUAC 10-11-1946; 160241/5 Brooks ;speech; 10-27-1946;16031/1 (7)..

<sup>9</sup> *NYT* 2-9-1947 p42; 11-14 1947 p3.

<sup>10</sup> FBI FOIA, joe figueiredo .

<sup>11</sup> USC 16171/1 (13), 7-31-1946, Emerson to Gano, Joy and Tempi lying.

<sup>12</sup> USC 16031/1; (6);16035/2 (3).

<sup>13</sup> USC 16035/4 (9),

<sup>14</sup> di Figlia, *Op. cit.*; USC 16031/1 (6); 16035/2 (3)..

<sup>15</sup> USC, 16031/1 (5);

<sup>16</sup> Harrington to Gano 10-1-46, USC 16031/1 (6). Harrington believed Noel and Jo were also at the meetings, something unacceptable in any investigation.

<sup>17</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman.

<sup>18</sup> Faber, Sebastian, “Scenes of Bravery and Determination,” *The Volunteer* 26 1 (1-3-2009): 2, 5, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Eddis, “Research Note.” *Op. cit.*; 16135/1 (9); 16024/1 (15); Noel, *Christian Register* 125, Dec. 1946.

<sup>20</sup> USC 16135/1. Emerson, Open Letter to HUAC 10-11-1946; 160241/5 Brooks speech; 10-27-1946;16031/1 (7); Noel, *Christian Register*, Dec. 1946, “Reconstruction Requires Skill,” 22-35.

<sup>21</sup> *Christian Register*, Vol 125 no 11a, section 2 Special Report; Unitarian Service Committee. A similar documents had been given to HUAC earlier 16031/1 (6).

<sup>22</sup> USC 16031/1 (7) Baldwin to Brooks10-30-46.

<sup>23</sup> USC 19114/5 (9e); Mueller 7-31-46 colonization 19114/5 (83) / 16031/1 (8)

<sup>24</sup> 16031/1, 16031/1 (8).

<sup>25</sup> USC 161031/1 (6).

<sup>26</sup> On Dexter’s view of Joy’s communism, 16024/4, Dexter to Gano, 8-9-1947. Joy’s schedules fit the description of the Service employee who carried a letter from Earl Browder, the head of the American Communist Party, to London in 1952. Haynes and Klehr, “*The Venona Secrets*,” *Op.cit.*.

<sup>27</sup> 16031/1 (6) ,16114/5 (91).On Dexter’s distaste for Charles Joy and perhaps his belief that Joy was the Soviet source “Dr. Joe”; Haynes and Klehr; 0076-77, 16024/4, 16135.4 (14), 16114/6 (106).

<sup>28</sup> Gano letter 16135/1 (9) 1-27-1947,1 The Dexter family continued to side with liberalism and remained anti-Communist. For example, Dexter’s son., Lewis, held a position at the CIA-run Center for International Studies at MIT in 1959. Lewis Dexter Letter to USC 11-18-1978, ‘Stalinists’ 16114/3 (50).

<sup>29</sup> Eddis, “Stephen Fritchman,” *Op. cit.*; FBI FOIA, fritchman; Roy, “Communism,” *Op. cit.*

<sup>30</sup> O’Neill, William L., *The last romantic; a life of Max Eastman* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1978); Eastman, Max, *Love, and Revolution; My journeyThrough an Epoch*, (New York, Random House, 1964).

<sup>31</sup> BU b28 f4; USC 16031/1 (7), 16114/8 (149).

<sup>32</sup> USC 16024/1 (1), 16146.3 (13)..Bragg took charge formally in March but seems to have taken on more and more responsibilities earlier in the year,

<sup>33</sup> <http://uudb.org/articles/raymondbragg.html>; Wilson, Edwin H., *The Genesis of a Humanist Manifesto* (Amherst, NY: Humanist Press, 1995).

<sup>34</sup> USC 16114/6 (106), Bragg vs Conservatives.

<sup>35</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman.

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- <sup>36</sup> “Open Letter to Dr. Frederick May Eliot”, June 1947, FBI FOI, „fritchman.
- <sup>37</sup> Fritchman, “*Heretic*,” *Op. cit.*
- <sup>38</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman.
- <sup>39</sup> CIA CREST, Nat’l Conference on American Policy in China and the Far East, Jan 1948,
- <sup>40</sup> CIA CREST re (Oct., 24th 1949 speech.
- <sup>41</sup> USC 16146/3 (13);<sup>41</sup> CIA CREST re (Oct., 24th 1949 speech..
- <sup>41</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman, 6114/8 (100 149), 16031/1 97); Eddis, “Stephen Fritchman,” *Op. Cit.*, 116.
- <sup>42</sup> USC 16146/3 (13), 1613<http://pds.lib.Harvard.edu/pds/temp/async/14251967-23-14.pdf>..
- <sup>43</sup> USC 16146/3 (13), 16135/4, 16031/1 (6); Marton, “*True Believer*,” *Op. Cit.*, .p 130-31 reports that Bragg came to believe that Noel was guilty, was a Communist, and had helped in the assassination of Reiss.
- <sup>44</sup> Subak. “*Flight Op. cit.* p112.
- <sup>45</sup> FBI FOIA, fritchman , 2-19-1949,
- <sup>46</sup> USC 16114/6 (106).
- <sup>47</sup> USC files, *passim*, contain the biographies.,
- <sup>48</sup> USC 16030/1, 10-29-58.
- <sup>49</sup> Chambers told of Noel during his October 1948 testimony.
- <sup>50</sup> BU b28 f4 ; FBI FOIA, hermann field.
- <sup>51</sup> FBI FOIA, hermann field , Massing, ‘This Deception’ 284-; Schmidt, Maria, “Noel Field--The American Communist at the center of Stalin's East European Purges: From the Hungarian Archives,” *American Communist History* 3 2 (2004): 215-245; Email with Alan Field, 8-0-2105.
- <sup>52</sup> USC 16031/1 (8) in 2015 constant dollars.
- <sup>53</sup> BU b28 f4; FBI FOIA, hermann field.
- <sup>54</sup> Sharp “Stalin’s,” *Op. cit.* p126; Kreider, Robert S., *My Early Years: An Autobiography* (Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 2002); USC 16114/5 92.
- <sup>55</sup> FBI FOIA, noel and hermann field of 3 17.. *Evening Star* April 14 `1950.
- <sup>56</sup> “‘Documentstalk’,” *Op. cit.*
- <sup>57</sup> FBI FOIA, noel field
- <sup>58</sup> BU b28 f4
- <sup>59</sup> Weinstein, Allen, *Perjury: the Hiss-Chambers Case* (NY: Random House, 1997); Hartshorn, Lewis, *Alger Hiss, Whittaker Chambers, and the Case That Ignited McCarthyism* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 2013).
- <sup>60</sup> On the earlier periods of Stephen and Laurence’s lives, Burke ‘Information,’”*Op. cit.*
- <sup>61</sup> Andrew, “The Sword.” *Op. cit.*, 109,
- <sup>62</sup> United States Senate, *Science and Technology Act of 1958, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee of Government Operations, United States Senate Eighty-Fifth Congress, Second Session, on S.31026, on May 2, 6, and 7, 1958. (Humphrey Committee)*
- <sup>63</sup> FBI FOIA, hermann field.
- <sup>64</sup> Massing , “*This Deception*,” *Op. cit.* 309.
- <sup>65</sup> Alexander, Edward P., *The Museum in America, Innovators and Pioneers* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alamoira Press, 1997).