

CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS OF COMMUNISM ABROAD

A CASE STUDY OF THE PUBLIC OPINION FUNCTION OF CONGRESS

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I

Potwar Congressional behavior permits at least one exception from the dictum, generally accepted in 1945, that Congress is delinquent in its leadership of American public opinion.¹ Although usually trailing behind the President in recognition of the pressing problems of the times and slow in sharing its superior knowledge with the country with the purpose of guiding opinion on the great issues of the day, Congress played a different role in matters pertaining to domestic and international communism. Not only did Congress recognize the essence of the implacable struggle between the Communist and Democratic civilizations before the Executive branch surmised the danger, but also "it was Congress," writes Ernest Griffith, Director of the Legislative Reference Service, "that forced the purges of communists and fellow travellers; it was Congress that analyzed correctly the nature of Chinese communism; it was Congress that forced precautions (albeit too late) surrounding the atomic bomb."² The postwar Congressional initiative in informing the American people about the true nature of communism and the Congressional efforts to correct certain misconceived notions that Americans had inherited about the Soviet Union from the days of the wartime "Grand Alliance" with the Soviets, are excellent examples of the successful exercise of the Congressional function of public opinion. This function, generally, is defined as reflection, expression, and with the aid of the press, information and guidance of public opinion on the great issues of the day.³

Two main Congressional achievements concerning communism abroad must be noted: first, the several studies of international communism,⁴ and second, the committee investigations of Soviet Communist activities.⁵

The first Congressional study was published in 1946, at a time when research on the Soviet country and its affairs was still at an embryo stage and when good books on the Soviet Union were rare. According to Rep. Dirksen (R-Ill.) who had requested the study, at that time it was difficult to find a "short, simple treatise on how communism operates which dealt fairly and impartially (italics added) with the subject and which did not employ a heavily slanted or biased approach."⁶ The main purpose of the study was to present truthful facts about the Soviet Union and communism in action, a subject that then was surrounded with emotionalism which had beclouded the perception of facts. The second study, prepared during the 80th Congress under the auspices of the Subcommittee on International Movements of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, provided an excellent analysis of the strategies and tactics of world communism. Conceding that communism had been misinterpreted and that therefore there was "a deficit to catch up", the authors of the study re-examined the theory and practice of communism and the goals of the Communist revolution. The picture that emerged from this re-examination is an image of international communism to which nothing of substance has been added by any subsequent Congressional study or investigation. On the basis of its findings, the Subcommittee made several policy recommendations to help in the shaping of the policy of containment, which was gradually put in action by Mr. Truman's Administration.

The third Congressional study was a series of reports on tensions in the Soviet Union and the captive Eastern European countries, written for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations during the 81st Congress. The idea pervading these

reports was that no Communist country was as monolithic as had been generally assumed and that Russians in the Soviet Union and other native people in their captive countries were potential allies of the United States because of their opposition to the Communist regime. The reports encouraged the intensification of psychological warfare.

The high scholastic standard of these studies was assured by the very conscientious work of the Legislative Reference Service whose specialists wrote all the studies and reports. This fact indicates how important the Legislative Reference Service is to the exercise of the Congressional function of public opinion. It must be mentioned also that, in preparation of these studies, the Service did not hesitate to use the talents of considerable number of specialists on Central-Eastern European affairs who were natives of the area and had personally experienced the Communist rule.

II

The present article, however, is not concerned with Congressional studies but with Congressional investigations of Communism abroad. These investigations are interesting and important for several reasons. First, they were conducted by select (special* committees and consequently share the many advantages and shortcomings of select committee investigations. Second, the establishment of select committees to study problems of foreign relations was a new phenomenon in the national legislative process, and, furthermore, their creation by the House of Representatives during the postwar period points to the increased role of the House in moulding and formulating American foreign policy. Third, the work and achievements of these committees serve as a good example of potentialities that Congress may develop and the complexities that Congress must face in exercising its function of public opinion. This latter point is of our primary interest.

The House of Representatives had established two committees that were authorized to examine Soviet practices and politics in the captive Eastern European countries. During the 81st Congress It was The Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation and Study of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre.⁷

The second committee, established during the 83rd Congress was entitled The Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R.⁸ Later its name was changed to The Select Committee to Investigate Communist Aggression Against Poland, Hungary Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, East Germany, Russia, and the Non-Russian Nations of the U.S.S.R.⁹ Popularly the committee was known as The Committee on Communist Aggression.

The establishment of the Katyn committee was a result of the combined efforts of the Polish American Congress and the American Committee for the Investigation of the Katyn Massacre, Inc. Congressmen of Polish descent and from Polish districts were the principal supporters of this inquiry which was initiated only after numerous and persistent appeals to the House. When the Congressional opinion was prepared and the international situation considered favorable, the House authorized the establishment of a special investigating committee on September 18, 1951. Composed of seven members¹⁰ and chaired by Mr. Ray J. Madden (D-Ind.), the committee was authorized to investigate the mass murder of Polish prisoners of war, all of them officers, whose graves were found in the Katyn forest, near Smolensk, and to determine "why certain reports and files concerning the Katyn massacre disappeared or were suppressed by departments of our Government."¹¹ The committee held numerous hearings in the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, and Italy. During these sessions 81 witnesses were heard, 183 exhibits studied, and more than 100 depositions accepted.

The responsibility for the Katyn massacre had been placed alternately with the Nazis and the Soviets. It was the duty of the committee to determine who really was guilty of this most heinous international crime.

The narrative of the Katyn events reads like a cloak and dagger story. The infamous Dr. Goebbels was the first to announce the discovery of the mass murder in a broadcast in 1943. The Polish Government in Exile immediately proposed an investigation by the International Red Cross for the purpose of determining the responsibility for the atrocities. Although the Germans agreed to the plan, the Soviets rejected it. Furthermore, the latter immediately accused the London Poles of collaboration with the Germans, a charge which was more than ridiculous, and used the incident as an excuse for terminating Soviet diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in Exile. Meanwhile, an international commission was formed under German auspices to investigate the discovered graves.

The commission was composed of European specialists in forensic medicine, among them a professor from neutral Switzerland. At the same time an investigation at the place of the crime was conducted by the Polish Red Cross working under the auspices of the Polish anti-German Underground in occupied Poland. Both investigations came to separate but identical conclusions — that the crime was committed in the spring of 1941 when the Soviets were in full possession of the area, and consequently that the Polish officers whose bodies were found in the Katyn forest, were destroyed by the Soviets.

However, after reconquering the territory in 1944, the Soviets conducted their own investigation which, of course, blamed the Germans. Although, in the words of Mr. Henry C. Cassidy, chief of the Associated Press bureau in Moscow who witnessed the Soviet "investigation", that inquiry was "entirely staged",¹² the Soviets successfully used their "findings" to convince many an indiscriminating mind of their innocence. During the war, the Office of War Information in the United

States and similar agencies in some other countries supported the Soviet version of the story. There was also an American source of information available in the case. In 1943 the Germans had taken several American and British prisoners of war to the site of exhumations in Katyn. One of those prisoners, Col. Van Vliet, immediately upon his return from captivity in the spring of 1945, reported his experiences to Army Intelligence (G-2). However, the report, although classified "top secret", had mysteriously disappeared from a locked safe in the office of the chief of G-2. Other reports on Katyn were buried in the files and, with difficulty, were found under dust some six years later. None of these reports was ever seen by any responsible policy making official in the State Department.

Thus, the committee had German, Polish, Soviet, and American testimony on the case. Furthermore, many Polish witnesses whose relatives had perished in Katyn presented to the committee their correspondence with the Katyn prisoners before the spring of 1941. Former members of the German forces described circumstances under which they discovered the mass graves. Former Polish diplomatic and military functionaries supplied documents and testimony of their investigation of the fate of some 14,000 Polish officers in Soviet camps after Stalin had agreed to the use of those officers for the Polish Army then being formed on Soviet soil. Except for about 4,000 bodies in Katyn, these 14,000 officers were never found.

Although the evidence was circumstantial, since no dead corpse could be brought to testify before the committee, all of it pointed to the Soviet guilt. On the basis of this information, the Katyn committee unmistakably placed the responsibility for the crime at the Kremlin's door.

The usefulness of the committee investigation for the purpose of opinion formation was indispensable. Aply directed, the committee helped to rectify false opinions spread in the United States and abroad about the Katyn massacre and Soviet behavior during the last war. The committee received or exacted cooperation from Executive departments and had the support of President Truman, who agreed to "let chips fall where they may." The committee work received a very generous spread in newspaper columns from coast to coast. Its hearings frequently made front page news in the **New York Times** and other metropolitan papers.

Furthermore, the investigation, as committee members came to realize, proved to be an excellent weapon in the psychological warfare against the Soviet Union. Soviet and satellite reaction to the committee work was violent, and a campaign of countercharges was conducted on all Communist broadcasting systems and in the press. The Polish Embassy in the United States launched a scurrilous campaign against the committee. The violent nature of this Embassy publicity let the Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, to interfere with the privilege of the embassy to publish English propaganda bulletins, a move that was generally applauded even by those who disagreed with the necessity for the Katyn inquiry. The Voice of America which, according to Representative Shee-han (R-Ill.), had followed a "wishy-washy, spineless policy"¹³ on matters concerning Katyn now very successfully used the committee findings in its broadcasts to the world.

It must be noted also that, by uncovering the facts, the committee played not only the role of opinion maker and was an instrument in the propaganda battle of the cold war, but it also provided a forum for the examination of American policy and attitudes towards the Soviets during and after the war. The committee's inquiry into ' the handling of Katyn reports by American intelligence agencies was very revealing. On the basis of the testimony received, the committee came to the conclusion that "there unfortunately existed in high government and military circles a strange psychosis that military necessity required the sacrifice of loyal allies and our own principles in order to keep Soviet Russia from making a separate peace with the Nazis. For reasons less clear to this committee, this psychosis continued even after the conclusion of the war."¹⁴ The committee was also convinced that the Office of War Information and the Federal Communications Commission more than once silenced Polish radio commentators who broadcast commentaries unfavorable to the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the group recommended that the Department of Defense take action against General Bissell, chief of wartime Army Intelligence, under whom the Katyn reports had disappeared, and that the wartime policies of G-2 during 1944-45 be thoroughly examined. It also urged the Voice of America to use available material "more forcefully and effectively." Moreover, the committee noted that there was a "striking similarity between crimes committed against the Poles at Katyn and those being inflicted on American and other United Nations troops in Korea."¹⁵ Therefore, the committee recommended that Congress undertake an investigation of the Korean war atrocities.

Finally, the committee submitted the American wartime policy toward the Soviet Union to forceful, although sober, criticisms and came up with very convincing conclusions that "through the disastrous failure to recognize the danger signs which then existed and in following a policy of satisfying the Kremlin leaders, our Government unwittingly strengthened their hand and contributed to a situation which had grown to be a menace to the United States and the entire free world."¹⁶ In commenting on the results of this policy, the committee expressed its conviction that "whatever the justification may be, the committee is convinced the United States in its relations with the Soviets found itself in the tragic position of winning the war but losing the peace."¹⁷ Postwar events have proven that this was a very candid and essentially correct reappraisal of events and policies. The committee did not search for scapegoats, but had the courage and integrity to indicate the share of American responsibility for the development of the present danger of international Communism, a fact that is too readily forgotten or is found too embarrassing to be discussed. It is also important to note that all these deliberations were not condemned to gather dust on some office shelves, but that, through the medium of the press, they were widely read over the country, thus helping the agonizing and soulsearching, although during Presidential electoral

campaigns often distorted, American postwar effort of re-examining the nation's mistakes, obligations, and responsibilities in the face of the Soviet Communist threat that by now had reached global proportions.

III

THE KATYN investigation by the House was initiated after considerable efforts were made by groups outside of Congress to organize favorable publics in the country to support the idea of investigation and to identify the demand for the inquiry with national American interests. The Select Committee To Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R., later renamed The Select Committee on Communist Aggression, was originated without the benefit of an extensive publicity campaign. However, the Lithuanian American Council, which proposed the idea, had a previous express support from the President. Mr. Eisenhower had stated his interest in the investigation in an interview given to the Lithuanian American Council. Later, when the idea was considered in the House, he gave it his written endorsement. Furthermore, the success that the Katyn investigation had achieved and the prestige that the Katyn committee had enjoyed in the House of Representatives convinced the legislators that an investigation of the Baltic occupation, which was not recognized by the United States, might be as useful as that of the Katyn massacre. It must also be said that the persistence with which the leaders of the Lithuanian American Council, Mssrs. šimutis, Grigaitis, Rudis, and Vaidyla of Illinois, Mr. Kvetkas of Pennsylvania, and especially Miss Kizis of New York, expounded their cause in Washington, had a favorable and, under circumstances, quick effect. On July 27, 1954, a resolution proposing the investigation of the forced "incorporation" of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia into the Soviet Union was unanimously approved by the House and a seven man select committee was appointed by the speaker. Mr. Kersten (R-Wis.), who had introduced the resolution upon the request of the Lithuanian American Council, became the committee's chairman. During the second session of the 83rd Congress, the committee was enlarged to nine members¹⁸ and was authorized to investigate Communist aggression against Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, East Germany, Russia, and the non-Russian nations of the Soviet Union. Thus, in contrast to the Katyn group, the Committee on Communist Aggression had to investigate a subject of very broad dimensions. It held 50 public hearings during which the testimony of 335 persons was taken. Like its predecessor, the Katyn group, the committee travelled to Great Britain, West Germany, and West Berlin where it held semi-public or executive hearings. In its efforts the group enjoyed the help and support of the State Department, the United States Information Agency, the Committee for Free Europe, The Escapee Program, the Legislative Reference Service, Georgetown University, and some thirty private American nationality organizations.

According to the findings of the committee, "no nation, including the Russian federated Soviet Republic, has ever voluntarily adopted communism."¹⁹ All of them were enslaved by the use of infiltration, subversion, and force. In the opinion of the group, communism is a "criminal conspiracy" aiming at the creation of a Communistic world empire. Capitalizing on the weakness and indecision shown by the non-Communist world, the Kremlin fortifies the gains made without resorting to general war and thus is granted time to prepare for the "final showdown" with the free world. Trade with Soviet dominated countries helps the Kremlin to achieve its aims. The committee was convinced that the "basic cause" of the danger of war and of a threat to American security was the Soviet occupation of the captive nations, which the committee regarded as "a great potential force against communism."

The philosophy behind the American policy toward communism and the Soviet Union is the most interesting and important part of the committee's conclusions. First, the committee recognized morality and adherence to international law as the basis for relations between nations. Without this foundation, the rule of the jungle and the advances of tyranny are inescapable. American foreign policy toward the Communist enslaved nations, the committee stated, must be guided by "the moral and political principles of the American Declaration of Independence". The present generation of Americans, the committee suggested, should recognize that the bonds which many Americans have with the enslaved lands of their ancestry are a great asset to the struggle against communism and that, furthermore, the Communist danger should be abolished during the present generation. **"It is incumbent upon the present generation of Americans to solve the imminent Communist threat so that the Communists shall not have the time and opportunity to launch their intended full-scale attack on the free world and in order that the coming generation of America may not be confronted with a new and vastly increased Sovietized generation,** fully indoctrinated with a fanatic hatred for the non-Communist world, (italics added) ."²⁰ The only hope of avoiding a new world war, according to the committee, is a "bold, positive political offensive by the United States and the entire free world."

What was the committee's conception of this "bold, positive action"? The group did not advocate war. However, it rejected as "alien to the national interests" the contention that only two alternatives were open: either preventive war or peaceful coexistence. The committee chastised the supporters of peaceful coexistence and emphasized that it was vain to wait for the Soviet Union eventually to become a peaceful member of international society. Acceptance of the policy of peaceful coexistence, the group opined, would "lull the West into impotence" and give the Communists time to build up their economic, military, and human resources. In the end, "coexistence with communism means war."²¹ The committee also rejected the contention that if the United States takes position and overt action against the Communist conspiracy a new world war would result.²² Therefore, the committee's proposals for a bold and positive policy were of a radical nature. They included a declaration by Congress which stated that the eventual liberation and self-determination of nations are "firm and unchanging parts of our policy." The committee suggested that the liberation of enslaved nations be made the basis of an American program for world peace and freedom. The committee also proposed the strengthening and broadening of the

American agencies public and private, engaged in psychological warfare against the Soviets. In relation to the American information programs, a very interesting proposal was made — to establish a joint Congressional committee "on all United States overseas information programs in order that maximum results may be assured in bringing the full force of truth to all the people in the free world and increased hope to the millions of people enslaved by communism."²³ The committee also urged these information programs to try to keep the spirit of resistance alive behind the Iron Curtain and expressed its support of the Political Asylum Act of 1954, which was designed to encourage defection from the captive countries. Furthermore, the group demanded that the President establish national military units made up of escapees, as authorized by section 101 (a) of the Mutual Security Act of 1951. Finally, the committee recommended that the United States, together with its allies, withdraw diplomatic recognition from the Moscow controlled Communist governments and terminate all commercial treaties and trade with them.

Another important point in the committee's conclusions was its conception of the Soviet Union as a nation. Contrary to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations which, in its study of tensions within the Soviet Union, considered the Russians to be the potential allies of America and treated other nations within the Soviet Union as national minorities, the committee suggested "that the term 'territorial minorities' is a Russian propaganda term."²⁴ In this respect the committee members shared the views of Mr. Dobriansky, a professor at Georgetown University and the President of the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America. Mr. Dobriansky stated before the committee that "the Soviet Union is not Russia, but, in a real sense, an empire within an empire",²⁵ in which the non-Russian nations constitute a numerical majority. "It is therefore," continued Mr. Dobriansky, "a current fallacy, born either of habitual error or purposeful misinformation, to view these non-Russian nations as 'national minorities'." It was the committee's view that all non-Russian nations in the Soviet Union were victims of Communist aggression. Consequently, they had the right of self-de-termination under circumstances which would eventually permit the establishment of a non-Communist Russian state. These views were directly opposed to those of Mr. Kennan, the author of the containment policy, who had argued that the Ukraine was as much a part of Russia as Pennsylvania was of the United States.

The philosophy the Committee on Communist Aggression developed was, in effect, a series of severe criticisms of the containment policy adopted by Mr. Truman's Administration and continued by Mr. Eisenhower. Although the committee was authorized to collect and analyze documents and other evidence revealing the Soviet strategies of aggression, an examination of the pattern of questioning witnesses reveals that the study of Soviet strategies was not the only purpose of the committee. One of the main functions of the group, as understood by its members, was to provide a forum for the re-examination of the policy of containment. This was especially true of the enlarged committee. By confining the list of witnesses to American representatives of nationality groups, the exiled political leaders of the captive countries, and persons who had experienced Communist occupation and imprisonment, the committee was able to collect an impressive amount of evidence to prove that the policy of containment was indeed immoral and wrong. On the one hand, the wording of the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the committee reads like a very strong indictment of American foreign policy under the Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower administrations. On the other hand, the policy of liberation and self-determination advocated by the committee has a deeper meaning than the references made to liberation in the Republican Party platform of 1952. To the committee, liberation apparently signified a policy of overt action — the disestablishment of the Soviet domination of the captive countries and, ultimately, the dismemberment of the Soviet Union itself.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the Soviets found it necessary to denounce the committee as a pernicious capitalist instrument. The Soviets considered the ideas spread by the committee dangerous to their objectives. Without question, the activities of the committee, which were strongly supported by the State Department and the United States Information Agency, were very vulnerable to the Soviets and their propaganda in the captive countries and abroad. As expected, the committee work provided much fuel to keep the spark of freedom and resistance burning in the hearts of men and women behind the Iron Curtain. Like the Katyn committee, it was a successful and efficient instrument for the psychological warfare conducted by the United States abroad.

On the domestic front, however, the success of the Kersten committee was more limited.

IV

NEITHER the Katyn committee nor the Committee on Communist Aggression achieved any appreciable legislative results. So far, their recommendations have remained paper proposals. This is not due to any lack of diligence or interest on the part of the committee members. According to the rules of the House of Representatives, select committees have no power to report legislation. They therefore must act as lobbyists for their own proposals before the standing committees and the House itself. In the case of both committees, the odds were heavily stacked against them. The Committee on Foreign Affairs refused, on the advice of the Department of State, to act upon the recommendations of the Katyn committee. The Department of State also refused to encourage any Congressional action on the Katyn committee recommendations, because it regarded the committee as serving only educational purposes. The Committee on Communist Aggression did not fare much better. In a memorandum to Mr. Kersten, Undersecretary of State, General Walter Bedell Smith, clearly expressed the Department's view by indicating that the function of the Committee on Communist Aggression should be to assure the captive peoples that "they are not forgotten" and "to educate public opinion in the free world regarding Communist techniques in seizing power and the terrible realities of life under the Communist rule."—" In other words, the

committees were regarded as instruments for forming opinion in psychological warfare, and second, as instruments of opinion for purposes of educating domestic and foreign people about Communism. The Department of State, therefore, was not interested in the enactment of the policy proposals made by the committees. Thus, the efficiency of the work of these committees must be judged in terms of their success in mouldering public opinion while acting under the very severe handicap that results from the lack of legislative powers.

The performance of the Congressional function of public opinion is impossible without generous support from the press and wide use of other means of communication. The volume of their cooperation is a good measurement of the success of a committee which largely depends upon the available means of communications for making itself effectively heard throughout the country. The Committee on Communist Aggression was well aware of this fact and, consequently, assigned a staff member as a press officer and public relations man. However, the committee did not receive the same amount of publicity from the press as the Katyn committee had enjoyed. Several reasons explain this.

First, the news on Katyn was new news. Apart from several articles published in influential papers by Mr. Julius Epstein, former executive secretary of the American Committee for the Investigation of the Katyn Massacre, the country at large was either misinformed or had no information on the Katyn case. Mr. Epstein was the first person to break the case in the metropolitan press. On the contrary, the main facts and stories compiled by the Committee on Communist Aggression, except for the testimony and documents relating to the Baltic States and to several Soviet Socialist Republics, had been widely publicized by the press for several years. Second, the Katyn committee investigated not only facts relating to the massacre, but also the behavior of several very sensitive American agencies. Such an inquiry greatly attracted the press, especially at a time, just before the 1952 Presidential election, when American wartime policies toward the Soviet Union were subject to close scrutiny. The Committee on Communist Aggression did not exercise the supervisory function of Congress. It criticized the general assumptions of American foreign policy without investigating the behavior of the Administration. In effect, the committee was relegated to the function of a mere discussion group.

Third, the Katyn committee had earned greater prestige because of its effective performance. It was able to do so largely because of the limited objectives of its investigation which, under efficient management, permitted the concentration of all available talent and effort. The Committee on Communist Aggression, on the contrary, had a very broad and complex subject to study, a very short time in which to do so, and a big and cumbersome staff organization to carry the preparatory load.

The committee itself stated that because of reasons of time "it has not been able to complete the inquiry."²⁷ As a result, it did not publish a final, but only a summary, report.

Furthermore, largely because of local partisan reasons, committee subdivisions were not organized on the basis of individual countries or individual problems, but on the basis of clientele, e.g., it had a subcommittee for the study of Poland, Lithuania, and Slovakia, another for Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, and still another for Poland, Rumania, and Slovakia. Such a division of labor made it possible for the committee to hold hearings in marginal districts in which the Polish, Slovak, or Lithuanian vote was considered decisive for the re-election of the chairmen of these subcommittees. These hearings — held in Chicago, Wilkes Barre, and Milwaukee, where Messrs. Busbey, Bonin, and Kersten were struggling for re-election — were timed to coincide with the closing publicity campaigns of individual Congressmen before the 1954 Congressional election. As it would appear, such a use of investigative power did not produce the desired results: all three committee members lost. At the same time these practices hurt the committee's prestige and the efficiency of its work.

Moreover, the committee's staff was almost continuously being increased, people going and coming with completely different ideas about the investigation. In addition, the committee, to its own disadvantage, changed its research staff. The third interim report, a book on the Baltic States, was prepared by the Legislative Reference Service with its usual thoroughness, and was based upon consultations held with various experts on the Baltic area and on carefully checked sources. The thirteen special reports on individual countries were prepared by "Georgetown University, its faculty," and a "group of experts from various parts of the United States who cooperated with the university."²⁸ The quality of these reports is lower than that of the study made by the Legislative Reference Service under the editorship of Ernest Griffith. This was due, partly, to the fact that the Georgetown staff under the direction of a Hungarian professor had only two months to prepare the summary and the special reports.

Finally, the inability of the committee to control the effects of nationality group pressures resulted in the committee's incapacity to limit the subject under investigation. It also diminished the value of several of its special reports. To control the nationality group pressures was a difficult task. The Katyn committee could avoid complications in this respect because it dealt primarily with one nationality group. The Committee on Communist Aggression cooperated with some thirty such groups throughout the country, some of which were at one time or another very close to the committee chairman, members, and the staff. As one example of the result of this pressure, the committee highly favored the Slovaks over the Czechs. By refusing to hear the testimony of many Czech and Masaryk-Slovak witnesses, the committee was able to collect testimony that fit their preconceived ideas about Czech-Slovak relations. In effect, the committee advocated a Slovakia independent of the Czechs. On this basis, the committee prepared a report that was more concerned with arguments for a separate Slovak state than with Communist aggression against Czechoslovakia. "The investigation of

Communist Aggression in the case of Czechoslovakia," stated the Council of Free Czechoslovakia, a unit of the Committee for a Free Europe, "was incomplete, in many respects inaccurate, and often distorted."²⁹ Consequently, in a twelve page memorandum to the committee members in which the Council listed the "more important shortcomings" of the investigation, the Council demanded the continuation of the committee work in order to rectify the misinterpretations and misstatements.

Similarly, in a special report on Byelorussia, the authors stated Byelorussian pretensions to the neighboring Lithuanian, Polish, and Latvian lands, and usurped the history of Lithuania. The report claimed that the old Lithuanian Grand Duchy which, during the Middle Ages, had consolidated the present Byelorussian and Ukrainian lands into a powerful empire was a Byelorussian kingdom ruled by Byelorussian kings. No competent Eastern European historian supports this theory. The Lithuanian American Council called this phenomenon "distortion of Lithuania's history"³⁰ and protested to former committee members by submitting a scholarly 14 page document.

The committee's special reports on Hungary and Rumania also show an unfortunate bias in favor of the Hungarians.³¹

Needless to say, such a tampering with facts and histories created great discontent among the involved nationality groups. The Lithuanian American Council correctly charged that "it did not fall within the committee's scope to investigate the relations of the enslaved lands with one another."³² The committee greatly diminished the effectiveness of its work and recommendations by attempting to adjudicate conflicts between Eastern European nations. The cause of freedom for the captive countries, as one former Balkan statesman put it to the author of this article, was by no means enhanced by such a practice because it presented a distorted picture of Eastern European problems by exaggerating mutual Eastern European misunderstandings and conflicts, which in all probability do not exist among the captive people themselves at the present time.

Needless to say, these liabilities considerably lowered the committee's prestige — a prestige that any group severely criticizing the fundamentals of foreign politics needs in abundance. These shortcomings, however, should not prevent us from recognizing the value of the committee as an instrument in psychological warfare. The results it achieved in collecting evidence in its numerous hearings and the opportunity that it afforded nationality groups to express the needs of enslaved countries and their own impatience with the present American foreign policy must also be regarded as genuine gains. Yet the foremost achievement of the committee was its functioning as a forum to criticize and discuss the present American policies toward the Soviet Union.

As we commemorate the tenth anniversary of the United Nations, our conscience cannot but be troubled by the spectacle of millions of human beings languishing in subhuman conditions in the labor camps of Eastern Europe and Asia, of many more millions who are denied the freedom of religion, occupation and election. We cannot and should not forget them. They are our fellow human beings. Furthermore, world peace and human freedom are inseparable. As long as a large section of the world's population continues to live under conditions of abject slavery, there can be no durable peace. Those who do not respect the rights of men at home are not likely to respect the rights of smaller and weaker nations. Recent history has made this demonstrably clear.

*Dr. George K. C. Yeh, Foreign
Minister of China*

. . . When I hear the Soviet Union telling others not to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, I really feel that I can honestly say that I have heard everything.

Henry Cabot Lodge

FOOTNOTES:

1. **Reorganization of Congress.** A Report of the Committee on Congress of the American Political Science Association. Washington. D. C., 1945. p. 15
2. Ernest S. Griffith. **Congress: Its Contemporary Role.** New York. 1951, pi 92-93.
3. **APSA.** op. cit., p. 14.
4. **Communism in Action.** 79th Congress, 2nd session. House Doc. No. 754. A documented study and analysis of communism in operation in the Soviet Union. Prepared at the instance and under the direction of Rep. Everett M. Ridsen of Illinois by the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress under the direction of Ernest S. Griffith. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee No. 5. Report: **The Strategy and Tactics of World Communism** and supplements 1. 2. 3. 4. 8th Congress. 2nd session. House Doc. No. 619 and 707.

- Committee on Foreign Relations. **Tensions Within the Soviet Union**. (Revised). Prepared at the request of the Committee on Foreign Relations by the Legislative Reference Service of Library of Congress. 83rd Congress. 1st session. Senate Doc. No. 69.
- Committee on Foreign Relations. **Tensions Within the Soviet Captive Countries**. Seven parts. 83rd Congress, 1st session. Senate Doc. No. 70.
5. **The Katyn Forest Massacre**. Hearings before the Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre. 32nd Congress. 1st and 2nd sessions. House of Representatives.
- Baltic States Investigation**. Hearings before the Select Committee to Investigate the Incorporation of the Baltic States into the U.S.S.R. 83rd Congress. 1st session. House of Representatives.
- Communist Aggression Investigation**. Hearings before the Select Committee on Communist Aggression. 83rd Congress. 2nd session. House of Representatives.
6. **Communism in Action**, p. III.
7. H. Res. 390. 82nd Cong., 1st session. Committee membership: Ray J. Madden (D.-Ind.) chairman: Daniel J. Flood (D-Pa.), Thaddeus M. Machrowicz (D-Mich.), Foster Furcolo (D-Mass.), George A. Dondero (R-Mich.), Alvin R. O'Konski (R-Wis.), Timothy P. Sheehan (R-Ill.).
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9. H. Res. 438. 83rd Cong., 1st session. New members added: Patrick J. Hillings (R-Cal.) and Michael A. Feighan (D-Ohio).
10. See 6.
11. Katyn Committee, **Final Report**, p. 3.
12. Katyn Committee, **Hearings**, part 2, p. 209.
13. Katyn Committee. **Final Report**, p. 14.
14. Katyn Committee. **Final Report**, p. 11.
15. *Ib.*
16. *Ib.*
17. *Ib.*, p. 6.
18. See 9.
19. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Summary Report**, p. 3.
20. *Ib.*, p. 6.
21. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Second Interim Report**, p. 22.
22. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Summary Report**, p. 5.
23. *Ib.*, p. 7.
24. Committee on Communist Aggression. **Hearings**, seventh int. rep., p. 100.
25. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Hearings**, eighth int. rep., p. 285.
26. Baltic States Investigation, p. XII.
27. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Summary Report**, p. 2.
28. Committee on Communist Aggression, **Special Report**, introd.
29. **Memorandum of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia on the Investigations of the Communist Takeover and Occupation of Czechoslovakia**, mimeogr., p. 2.
30. **Distortion of Lithuania's History in the Special Report No. 9 on Byelorussia**. Comments and corrections by the Lithuanian American Council. Mimeogr., p. 1.
31. Statement based on a comparative analysis of the Hungarian and Rumanian special reports and respective testimony during the hearings.
32. American Lithuanian Council, *op. cit.*, p. 1.