

TWENTY CENTS

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# TIME

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Boris Chaliapin

OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND

A lost day is hard to find.

(Cinema)

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### INVESTIGATIONS

#### Two Men

Two men were being swept along last week by an onrush of events which were now well beyond their control—or the control of any other individual. They were two men of more than ordinary intelligence—well educated, quiet men caught in what one of them described as a “tragedy of history.” Their paths first crossed



CHAMBERS  
A simple answer . . .

13 years ago; but their separate stories began much earlier: one in a commercial artist's household in Philadelphia, the other in a dry-goods merchant's respectable home in Baltimore.

**The Profanist.** Whittaker Chambers was born in 1901 in Philadelphia, the elder of two sons of Jay Chambers, who made a precarious living as a commercial artist. The family stock was a mixture of Dutch, German, French and English. When young Whittaker was three, his family moved to Lynbrook, L.I., where Mrs. Chambers raised chickens and vegetables to piece out the family income. As a child, Chambers slaughtered fowl and peddled vegetables. He was a boy of insatiable curiosity who read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* at eleven, and wandered on solitary walks through the woods, which he loved.

He went to South Side High School in

Rockville Centre, and then, rather than go to college, which his mother wanted him to do, went south to look for a job. He got one in Washington working on the street railway tracks. From there he went to New Orleans, found no job at all.

Broke and hungry, he returned home, listened to his mother's advice and set out for Williams College. Already a cynical, worldly young man, he took one look at what he recalled later as “those young collegiate faces,” stayed one night and decided to try Columbia University in New York. He was there two years. He wrote poetry, edited the literary *Morningside*, and shocked the campus by bringing out a blasphemous, so-called “Profanist” issue in which he wrote a story dealing “objectionably” with the Resurrection. A student committee invited the editor to resign. He left college and went off to Europe.

**“Grease the Guillotine.”** He found Germany bankrupt, its economy collapsing. One night in Berlin he heard a Communist mob marching under his window singing: “Grease the guillotine with the fat of tyrants . . . Blood must flow.” It seemed to him that Western civilization was dying.

The U.S. to which he returned was celebrating the Jazz Age; and drinking bootleg gin. Chambers' brother Richard, to whom he was deeply attached, committed suicide. He visited Richard's grave one winter day and found it covered with ice. He wrote: “The cold earth holds him round, a sheet of ice is over his face. My brother has no more the cold rain to face.”

Intellectually and morally frustrated, looking for a creed, he read the entire Socialist writings of Sidney & Beatrice Webb, discarded them as unpractical. One of his young Columbia friends put a copy of the Communist *Manifesto* in his hands. To Chambers, it was an awakening.

**“The Evil Thing.”** He was to explain later to the House Un-American Activities Committee how Marxism could appeal not only to the bitter young intellectual but to more or less sheltered middle-class persons as well. They were attracted, he said, “by the very vigor of the project.” They felt “a great intellectual concern—an almost Christian concern—for the underprivileged, for economic crises, for the problem of war. They say: ‘What shall I do?’ At that crossroad the evil thing, Communism, lies in wait with a simple answer.”

Chambers read Georges Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* and was converted to an acceptance of the evil thing as a worthy

means to a clear and simple end. In 1924, he joined the Communist Party in New York. For the next 14 years, as he admitted later, he lived a lie—a disloyal citizen plotting against his country.\*

He was a find for the party—a taciturn, even secretive man, an awkward, fiery writer, a self-taught linguist who read and spoke German, French, Spanish and Italian. He wrote for the *Daily Worker*, became its foreign news editor, finally (while



Hiss  
... at a crossroad.

Cartoonist Robert Minor was listed at the top of the masthead) became its editor in fact. On the side he did translations. Two of his translations (from the German) were Franz Werfel's *Class Reunion* and Felix Salten's *Bambi*. In 1929, disturbed by reports of Stalin's heavy-handed tactics and stories of the first party purges, he quit the *Worker* and in defiance

\* All through the 1930s the majority of Americans thought of American Communists as being critical of the U.S. but not actively hostile to it. The U.S. had recognized Russia, had not yet recognized that all Communists' allegiance is to Moscow, that they are therefore disloyal citizens of every non-Communist country. No major U.S. political leader, from F.D.R. to any of his political opponents, ever suggested that the Communist Party be outlawed. It was a legal party then—and still is today (although some states bar it from the ballot).



of party discipline lit out for the Midwest.

He did not abandon Communism, however, and returned to New York. He had met and married a young labor organizer and painter named Esther Shemitz. They set up housekeeping in a poverty-stricken tenement on the East Side.

His great effort now was on proletarian fiction, published in the Communists' intellectual organ, the *New Masses*. His stories, full of romanticism and melodrama, were a summons to violence. Moscow was enraptured, cited him as "the first writer to introduce the Bolshevik into American writing."

**The Man in the Linen Suit.** In 1932 the party ordered him to go underground—in other words, wipe out his identity and become a secret agent, a spy. His wife cried; he himself was reluctant. But like any good Communist, he obeyed. The *New Masses'* Whittaker Chambers vanished. A man known simply as "Carl" appeared in the Red "cells" and in the innermost circles of the Communist underground. He buried his identity so successfully that some of his accomplices thought he was a Russian; one of them was positive that he was a Russian ex-colonel. The little boy who had peddled vegetables in Lynbrook became a skillful and consecrated agent of a Communist "apparatus."

One of the apparatus' assignments was to infiltrate the U.S. Government with Communist Party members. One day in Washington, in the summer of 1935, a dumpy little man, feeling self-conscious in the first white linen suit he had ever worn, confronted a tall, well-dressed young Government attorney. The little man was Whittaker Chambers; the other was Alger Hiss.

**The Bright Star.** Alger Hiss was born in Baltimore in 1904, the fourth of five children of Charles Alger Hiss, whose father had been a great admirer of Horatio Alger. Alger's father, a wholesale dry-goods merchant, committed suicide when Alger was three years old. Later, one of his sisters also took her own life.

The Hisses lived in a respectable Baltimore neighborhood. Young Alger peddled spring water to the neighbors and raised and sold squabs. He went to camp in Maine, attended P.S. 14, a city high school, and finally entered Johns Hopkins University.

There, a quiet, good-looking young man with an easy charm, he shone with a luster that is still remembered. He ran on the track team, headed the dramatic society, edited the campus daily, became colonel in the R.O.T.C., belonged to the best fraternity, won a Phi Beta Kappa key and was voted "most popular, best handshaker, best all around."

Said the yearbook: "Alger must be the most cultured and learned bozo in this neck of the woods. Many and various are the discussions that we have had with him. Many and various the topics—they range from Soviet to style, from liberty

to liquor, from guelphs to Goodnow [Frank J. Goodnow, then president of Johns Hopkins]. And like Socrates we admit our ignorance in the force of his irresistible logic and rhetoric."

After he graduated, Hiss went to Harvard Law School. There he was on the staff of the *Harvard Law Review*. Hiss's star continued to rise. He studied under Felix Frankfurter, graduated *cum laude*, and went to Washington to serve for a year as secretary to the late great Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes.

**Path of Honor.** After three years of private practice in New York and Boston, Hiss went back to Washington as an as-



MRS. HISS  
*Birds along the Potomac.*

sistant general counsel in the AAA in Henry Wallace's Department of Agriculture. There he attracted the attention of Senator Gerald P. Nye, who was just starting his munitions investigations. Hiss served as a legal assistant through that sensational probe, then moved over to the Solicitor General's office.

By this time he was married and living quietly in Georgetown. His wife was Priscilla Fansler, a Quaker, the daughter of an insurance man. She was known as "Prossy." She had lived on Philadelphia's "Main Line" and had graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1924. She had worked as a copy chief on *TIME* (1927-28) and had been married once before, to Manhattan Publisher Thayer Hobson (William Morrow & Co.). They had one son, Timothy. She and Alger were to have another boy,

Anthony. They were an attractive, retiring couple, although some people thought Hiss's manner arrogant. The Hisses were usually the first to leave a party, preferring the company of a small circle of friends, or merely each other's company at home, reading or listening to music, or taking bird walks along the Potomac. Alger was an amateur ornithologist.

This was the path of apparent probity and honor which crossed Whittaker Chambers' path on that summer day in 1935. Chambers was to testify later that Hiss was already a member of a Washington Communist cell, that he and Hiss became fast friends, and that subsequently Hiss, with the help of Mrs. Hiss, began feeding secret Government documents into the Communist apparatus. Hiss was to deny the whole accusation with cold contempt. He and Prossy knew Chambers, he said, but only as a free-lance writer named "George Crosley" who had come to him to write an article on the Nye Committee.

**General Secretary.** Alger Hiss's ascendant star did not pause. In 1936 he went into the Department of State, where he worked under Assistant Secretary Francis B. Sayre, first on the Trade Agreement Act, then in the offices of Far Eastern affairs and special political affairs. In 1944 he served as executive secretary at the Dumbarton Oaks conference which laid the foundation for the United Nations.

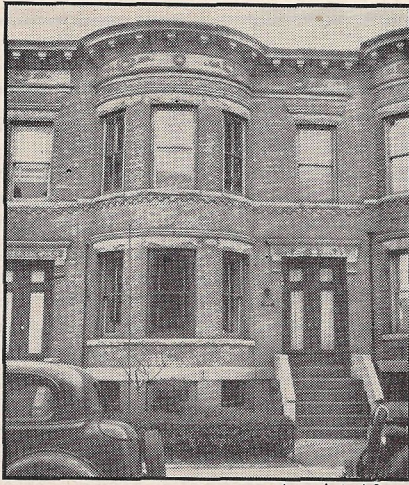
In 1945, he went to Yalta with Franklin Roosevelt and helped draft the agreements which came out of that conference. Later that year he was general secretary at U.N.'s founding conference at San Francisco. Conferees unanimously commended him for the way in which he directed proceedings and managed the agenda. He was given the honor of carrying the U.N. charter to Washington for deposit in the Federal Archives.

**Charges Denied.** There were some vague stories about him. Secretary of State Byrnes was disturbed by reports that some Congressmen were going to accuse Hiss of being a Communist. Byrnes asked Hiss about it, told him the charges centered "from the FBI." Hiss went to the FBI and denied the charges categorically.

They cropped up again. In 1946 Hiss was proposed as president of the \$10 million Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, whose major objective now is informing the public about U.N. John Foster Dulles, Thomas Dewey's adviser on foreign affairs, and one of Hiss's backers for the Carnegie job, asked him again about the charges. Again Hiss categorically denied them. He was elected to the job, which was enough to cap any public servant's career.

**"Faceless Man."** As for Whittaker Chambers—some time in 1938, three years after his meeting with Alger Hiss, his way had taken a turning. He renounced Com-





Associated Press  
THE HOUSE IN BROOKLYN

*March 3 Johnson U.S. charge at  
London cabled that Lord Chalfield  
had told the Naval Attache that  
whether escalation was eventually  
decided on or not he would not  
change his plans for cruisers this  
year and in any case new battle ships  
would not be laid down before the  
end of the current year.*



Harris & Ewing  
NATHAN LEVINE

munism. He had learned what all men learn sooner or later, that the agents of the Kremlin are assassins not only of men's bodies but of their minds and hearts. In fear and revulsion he quit the party. He was to testify later that he had tried to persuade Alger and Prossy to pull out with him, that Prossy indignantly rejected the idea, that Hiss had wept but had refused.

Chambers and his family, his wife Esther and their children Ellen and John, went into hiding. "I was a faceless man," he said. He moved in a shadowy world of terror, carrying a gun. Finally he emerged cautiously from the shadows to begin a new life. In 1937 he had bought a small farm near Westminster, Md., which Hiss himself had once thought of buying.

As quietly as they could, the Chambers family settled into this haven. Chambers began his way back through the profession he knew best. He ventured into New York's literary world, did some research, reviewed some books and in April 1939 was hired to review books by TIME.

**The Informer.** To some of his colleagues, his fear of Communism seemed a morbid preoccupation, a kind of King Charles's head. He was valued, nevertheless, not only for his firsthand knowledge of Communism but for his outstanding skill in writing and his wide cultural background. He had also become a genuinely religious man: a Quaker.

In 1939, a little while after he came to TIME, he went to Adolph Berle, then Assistant Secretary of State, and disclosed to him the names of certain men who he said were Communists working in the government. He gave the same information, in two interviews, to the FBI. Last summer, he made his dramatic tale public before the House Un-American Activities Committee.

But on none of these occasions did he say anything about the packet of stolen State Department papers which he had stashed away after he broke with the party. When he brought forward his dusty bomb from Brooklyn, he raised a whole new clamor.

In the midst of that clamor last week, Chambers resigned as a senior editor of

#### THE MEMO

*A dusty package in the dumbwaiter shaft.*

TIME. "When TIME hired me in 1939," he wrote in his statement, "its editors knew that I was an ex-Communist; they did not know that espionage was involved . . . After nine years of work done in good conscience, I have been called upon to expose the darkest and most dangerous side of Communism—espionage. This can be done only if a man who knows the facts will stand up and tell them without regard to the cost or consequences to himself. I cannot share this indispensable ordeal with anyone."

TIME accepted the resignation, neither judging nor pre-judging his recent disclosures. "Against the admitted disservice to his country of a decade ago," said TIME, "must be set the service we are convinced he is trying to perform for his country now."

**The Final Lines.** This week Alger Hiss resigned his \$20,000-a-year Carnegie post. Legal proceedings, he said, "will occupy almost all of my time for some weeks to come." The trustees tabled the resignation



Thomas D. McAvoy—LIFE  
JULIAN WADLEIGH  
*A log cabin in Virginia.*

and gave him a leave of absence with pay for three months.

Meanwhile Hiss clung staunchly to his impeccable role. If Chambers had lied, then Hiss had been incredibly maligned and made the victim of a monstrous slander. If Chambers spoke the truth, then Alger Hiss had led an almost incredibly clever double life. The two of them could do little more now than stand to one side, speaking their final lines, spectators more than actors in their own drama.

#### Three Rings

As if it were not complicated enough in itself, the Hiss-Chambers case had become a legal three-ring circus.

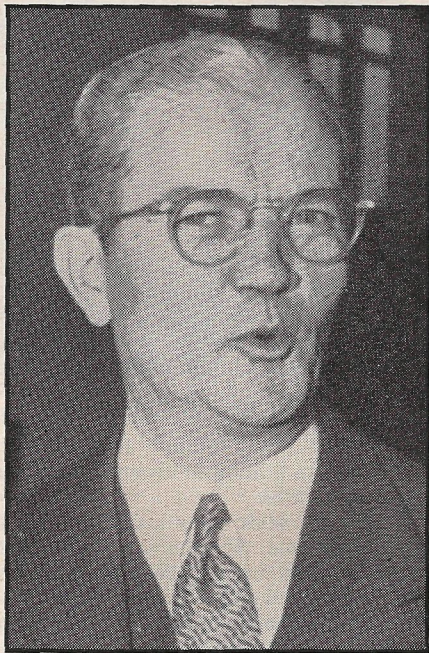
In the first ring was the House Un-American Activities Committee, which opened the case last summer when it subpoenaed Whittaker Chambers, heard him confess his past complicity and charge that Alger Hiss had also been a Communist.

After weeks of examining witnesses, the committee had more or less dropped the case, without having developed sufficient evidence to prove whether Hiss or Chambers was lying. But Alger Hiss did not drop the case. After Chambers repeated his charges over radio's *Meet the Press* program, Hiss filed a \$75,000 libel suit against Chambers in Baltimore's Federal Court. This was the second ring.

In the third ring was a New York federal grand jury, sworn in 18 months ago to investigate spies and subversive activities.\* It had paid little attention to the Hiss-Chambers case, although it had heard testimony from both men last summer. After Chambers had produced the stolen State Department documents and after the House committee had obtained the "pumpkin papers," the grand jury moved in rapidly. On orders from Attorney General Tom Clark, U.S. Attorney John F. X. McGohey summoned Chambers and Hiss again, along with Hiss's wife, his brother,

\* Last July it indicted twelve top Communist Party members on charges of conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. Government by force. Their trial, after four delays, is now set for Jan. 17.





Associated Press  
ATTORNEY MCGOHEY  
*A decision was needed.*

and a parade of other witnesses and new suspects.

**The Nub of the Matter.** The grand jury and the House committee each truculently proclaimed its authority, competed for witnesses. Committeeman Richard Nixon said angrily that a whitewashing was in the making in the grand jury.

But the public had a right to think that the case was getting somewhere, that it was now in appropriate hands. Everyone could hope and expect that the case would be tried and decided by due process of law—and the first step in that process was action by the grand jury.

Beyond any shadow of doubt was one fact: that documents\* had been systematically stolen from the State Department. By whom? And for how long? Over & above the questions of Chambers' truthfulness and Hiss's innocence or guilt loomed the still dark answers to these larger questions.

**"Holy Cow!"** At week's end new light had been thrown into some murky corners.

One witness who appeared before the

\* Chambers' cache of stolen documents was brought to light in two sections. On Nov. 17, while giving a deposition in the libel suit in Baltimore, he presented 47 exhibits (consisting of 65 sheets of paper). Of these, 43 were typewritten copies of State Department dispatches; four were handwritten memoranda (three in the handwriting of Alger Hiss—see cut—a fact which Hiss has not denied, though he denied giving them to Chambers). The "pumpkin papers" are the second part of the cache. This consisted of three metal capsules containing five rolls of microfilm, of which two rolls were developed and three undeveloped (one of the undeveloped rolls was light-struck). These were taken out of Chambers' pumpkin by House committee investigators on the night of Dec. 2. Chambers had put them there only that morning.

House committee was Nathan Levine, a New York attorney and a nephew of Mrs. Chambers, who said he had been the innocent custodian of the papers for the past ten years. In 1938, he said, Chambers had given him a large manila envelope to keep, instructing him to open it if anything happened to Chambers and his wife. "You are a lawyer, and will know what to do," Chambers had said.

One day last month, Levine continued, he received a telegram from Chambers: "Arriving Sunday at 10 o'clock. Have my things ready." Levine said he was not sure what Chambers meant. When Chambers arrived, he reminded Levine of the envelope. Together they went to Levine's mother's house at 260 Rochester Avenue, Brooklyn, where Levine had hidden the envelope on top of an unused dumbwaiter shaft. Levine testified that Chambers blew

Va. After questioning by the grand jury, the committee subpoenaed him, hampered him with questions but got nowhere. He said he was not a Communist, but he refused to answer almost all other questions on the grounds that it would "tend to incriminate or degrade me."

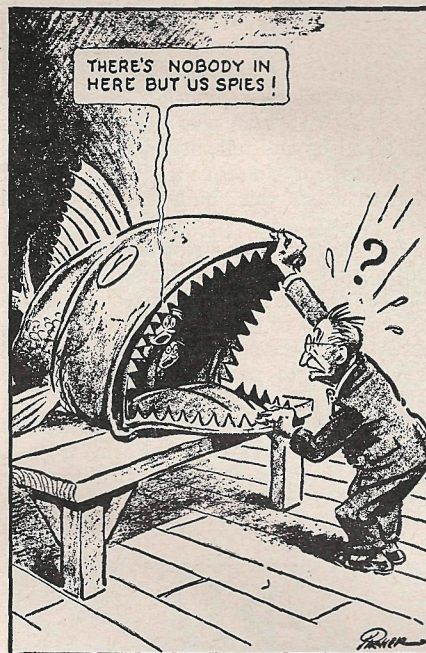
This week the jury's term would expire. But a new jury, already called, would take over immediately. If the old jury failed to reach any conclusions—i.e., hand down any indictments—it would be the new jury's duty to press its search into the last and farthest corner of the mystery.

## The Durable Herring

Repeatedly during the campaign, President Truman had charged that the House committee's investigation of the Hiss-Chambers case was nothing but a red herring to divert the voters' attention from campaign issues. But in view of the shocking new evidence, reporters trooping into Truman's press conference last week wondered what he would say now.

One of the first questions was whether the President thought that all arms of the Government should now be devoted to finding out who stole the "pumpkin papers" from the State Department. Why, certainly, the President replied, with an expression indicating that he thought the question was silly. Well, had he given any instructions to the Justice Department? The Justice Department, the President replied, had standing instructions to enforce the law. But it had no specific presidential instructions on the Hiss-Chambers case.

From a political standpoint, Truman's previous red-herring charges were understandable. They had been made at a stage when the Hiss-Chambers case was largely a debate between the two men as to



Courtesy N.Y. Daily Mirror  
"A WHALE OF A HERRING"  
*It was hard to let go.*

the dust off the envelope, opened it, glanced at the contents and exclaimed: "Holy cow! I didn't think this still existed." Chambers then took the envelope back to his Maryland farm.

**Man in a Cocoon.** Two more men entered the case. Both had been accused by Chambers as having given him papers from Government offices. One of them was William Ward Pigman, former employee of the Bureau of Standards, now a chemist with the Institute of Paper Chemistry at Appleton, Wis. He was questioned only by the grand jury; in a public statement he denied the charge.

The other was Henry Julian Wadleigh, 44, former State Department economist. A nervous, bushy-haired man, son of an Episcopal minister, father of three small children, Wadleigh lives in a still unfinished log cabin he is building in Vienna,



Harris & Ewing  
CONGRESSMAN NIXON  
*A whitewash was feared.*



*Merry Christmas  
for every Smoker*



# Camel Cigarettes

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