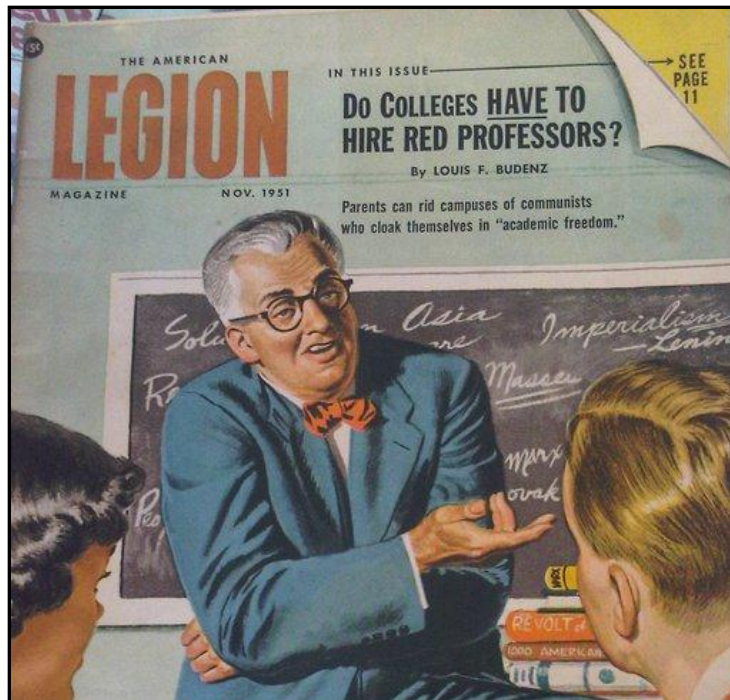


# The Impact of the (Early) Cold War on American Society

## An Online Professional Development Seminar



**Michael Kazin**

Professor of History  
Georgetown University

**AMERICA *in* CLASS®**

from the National Humanities Center

We will begin promptly on the hour.

The silence you hear is normal.

If you do not hear anything when the images change, e-mail Caryn Koplik [ckoplik@nationalhumanitiescenter.org](mailto:ckoplik@nationalhumanitiescenter.org) for assistance.

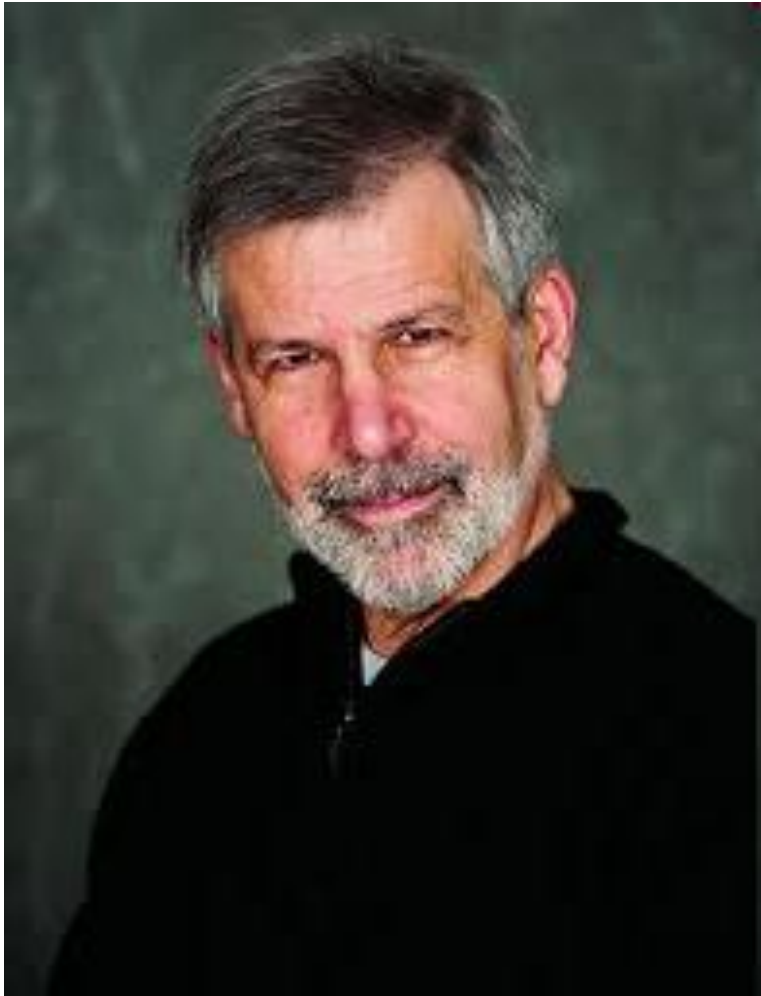
## GOALS

- To provide new materials and approaches for use with students.
- Through the lens of religion, to deepen your understanding of the ways in which the Cold War affected life in the United States in the 1950s and early 1960s.

## FROM THE FORUM

### Challenges, Issues, Questions

- How strong and widespread was the anti-Communist bias or mindset of Americans during the Cold War?
- How can the Cold War and the civil rights movement be taught at the same time?
- During the Cold War much was made of the differences between capitalistic and communistic societies. Were there significant similarities?
- What was the relationship to anti-Communism at home and our foreign policy abroad?
- What was the balance between what was really going on and what we perceived as the Communist threat?
- How handicapped was the press during the McCarthy era?
- How did our competition with the Soviet Union shape American life?
- Was this a prevailing motivation throughout the cold war?
- How did the Cold War affect the lives of American children?
- Around what themes might a teacher synthesize a course on the Cold War?
- How valid are comparisons between Cold War events and contemporary affairs: for example, is Iraq another Vietnam?



## Michael Kazin

Professor of History  
Georgetown University

Nineteenth and twentieth century U.S. politics  
and social movements

*A Godly Hero:  
The Life of Williams Jennings Bryan*

*America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*  
(co-author, Maurice Isserman) (1999)

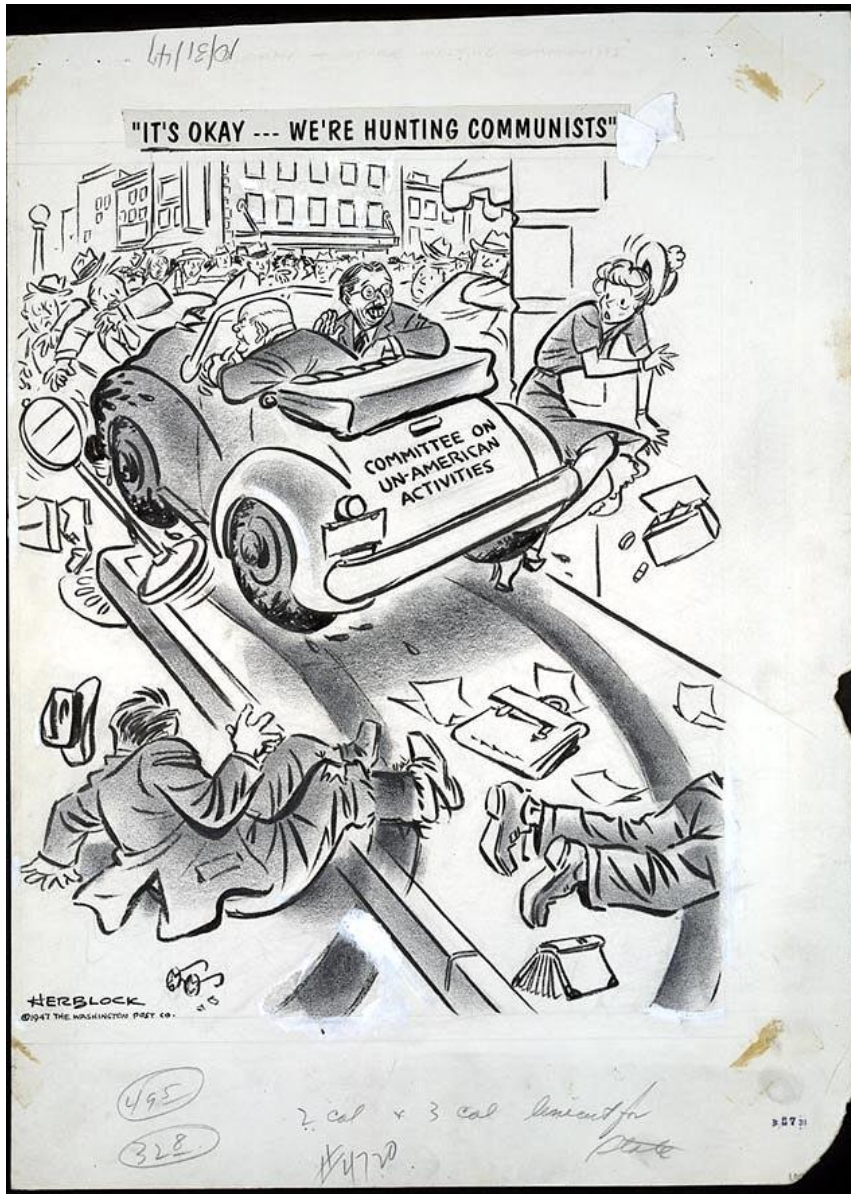
*The Populist Persuasion: An American History*  
(1995)

*Barons of Labor: The San Francisco Building  
Trades and Union Power in the Progressive Era*  
(1987)

1. Introduction – Religion and Anti-Communism
2. McCarthy and McCarthyism
3. Billy Graham and Martin Luther King, Jr.
4. Impact of the 1960s

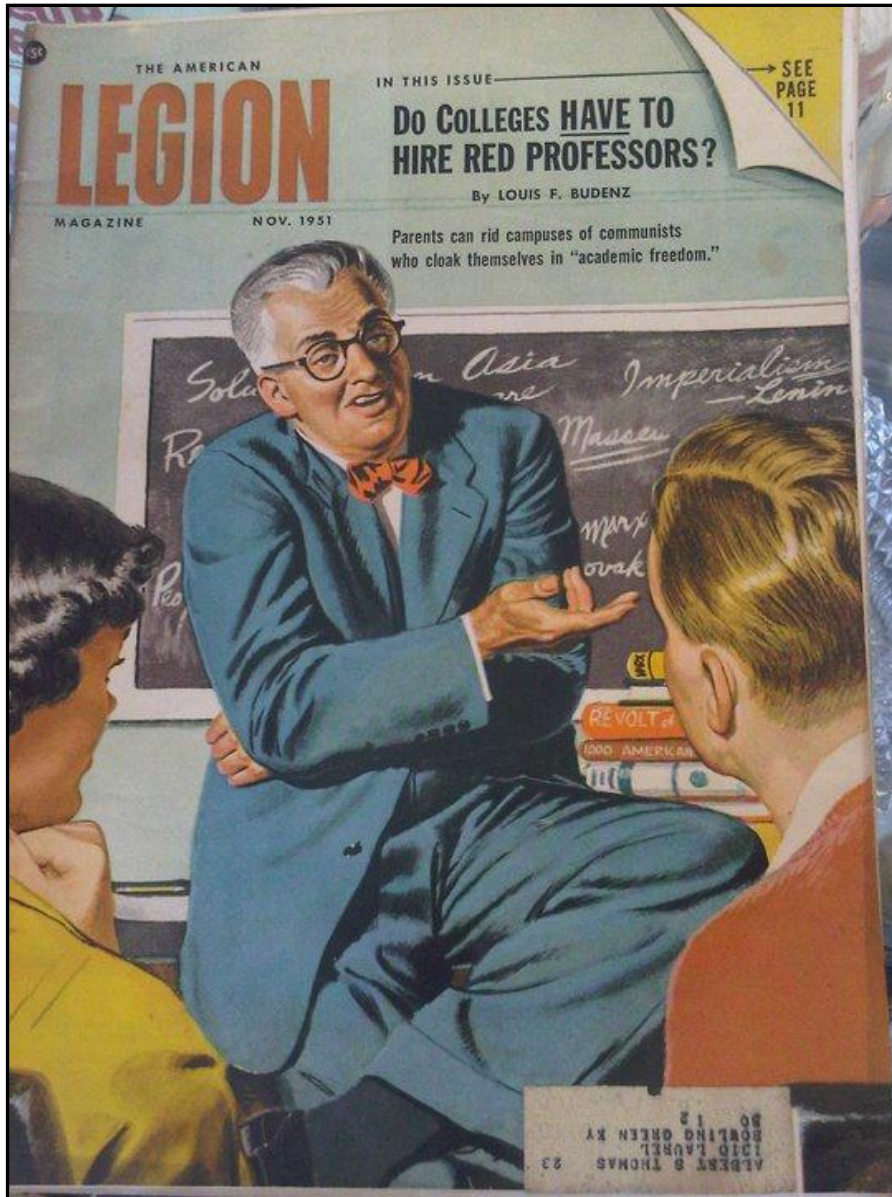


# The Impact of the (Early) Cold War



“It’s Okay ... We’re Hunting Communists” by Herblock, *The Washington Post*, October 31, 1947.

# The Impact of the (Early) Cold War



Cover page,  
*The American Legion*,  
November 1951.



# The Impact of the (Early) Cold War



Senator Joseph McCarthy



“The great difference between our western Christian world and the atheistic Communist world is not political,...it is moral.... The real, basic difference lies in the religion of immorality . . . invented by Marx, preached feverishly by Lenin, and carried to unimaginable extremes by Stalin.

This religion of immorality, if the Red half of the world triumphs—and well it may, gentlemen—this religion of immorality will more deeply wound and damage mankind than any conceivable economic or political system.

Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between communistic atheism and Christianity. The modern champions of communism have selected this as the time, and ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down—they are truly down.”

While nobody likes a watchdog, and for that reason many investigation committees are unpopular, I thank God for men who, in the face of public denouncement and ridicule, go loyally on in their work of exposing the pinks, the lavenders and the reds who have sought refuge beneath the wings of the American eagle and from that vantage point try in every subtle, undercover way to bring comfort, aid and help to the greatest enemy we have ever known — communism.

## ON TELEVISION

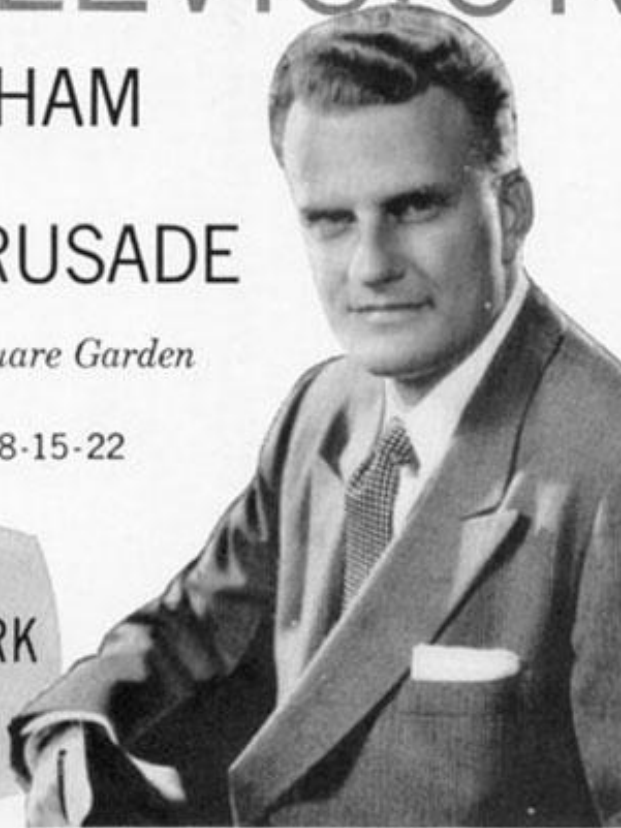
### BILLY GRAHAM and NEW YORK CRUSADE

*direct from Madison Square Garden*

**SATURDAYS** June 1-8-15-22

COAST TO COAST  
ABC-TV NETWORK

8:00 p.m. E.T.  
see your newspaper for local  
time and station



Graham Crusade, 1957

# The Impact of the (Early) Cold War



Martin Luther King, Jr. and  
Billy Graham, c. 1960



# Martin Luther King, Jr., 1955

“We believe in the Christian religion.

We believe in the teachings of Jesus.

The only weapon that we have in our hands this evening is the weapon of protest...

And certainly, certainly, this is the glory of America, with all of its faults.

This is the glory of our democracy. If we were incarcerated behind the iron curtains of a Communistic nation we couldn't do this. If we were dropped in the dungeon of a totalitarian regime we couldn't do this.

But the great glory of American democracy is the right to protest for right...

If we are wrong, the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong.

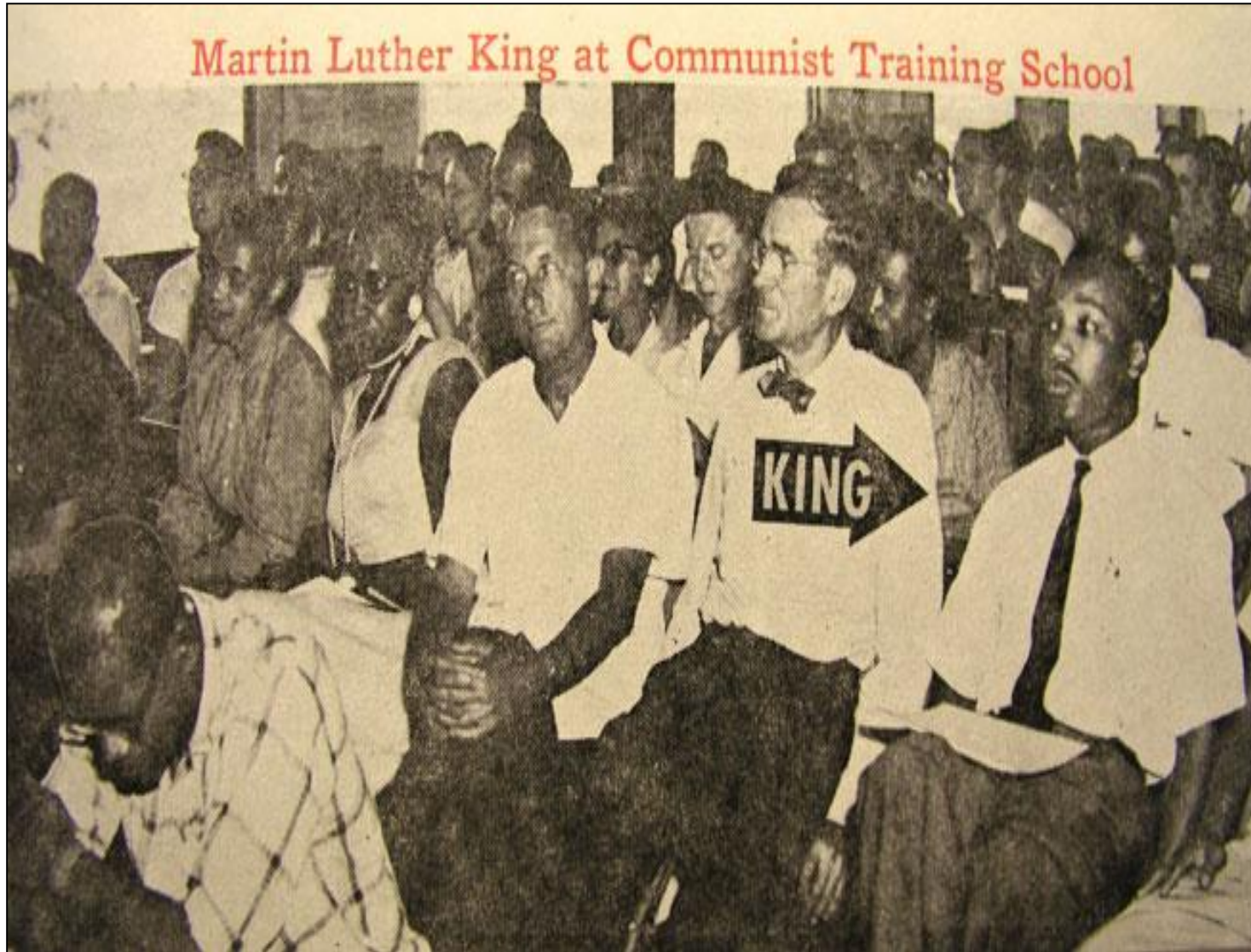
If we are wrong, the Constitution of the United States is wrong.

If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong.

If we are wrong, Jesus of Nazareth was merely a utopian dreamer that never came down to earth.

And we are determined here in Montgomery to work and fight until justice runs down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream.<sup>3</sup>”

# White Citizens' Council Billboard, c. 1957



# Martin Luther King, Jr., 1962

...I feel obligated as a Christian minister to talk to you about communism...

More than a billion of the peoples of the world believe in communism. And many of these people have accepted it as a new religion, and they are willing to surrender their total being to this system. A force so potent cannot be ignored.

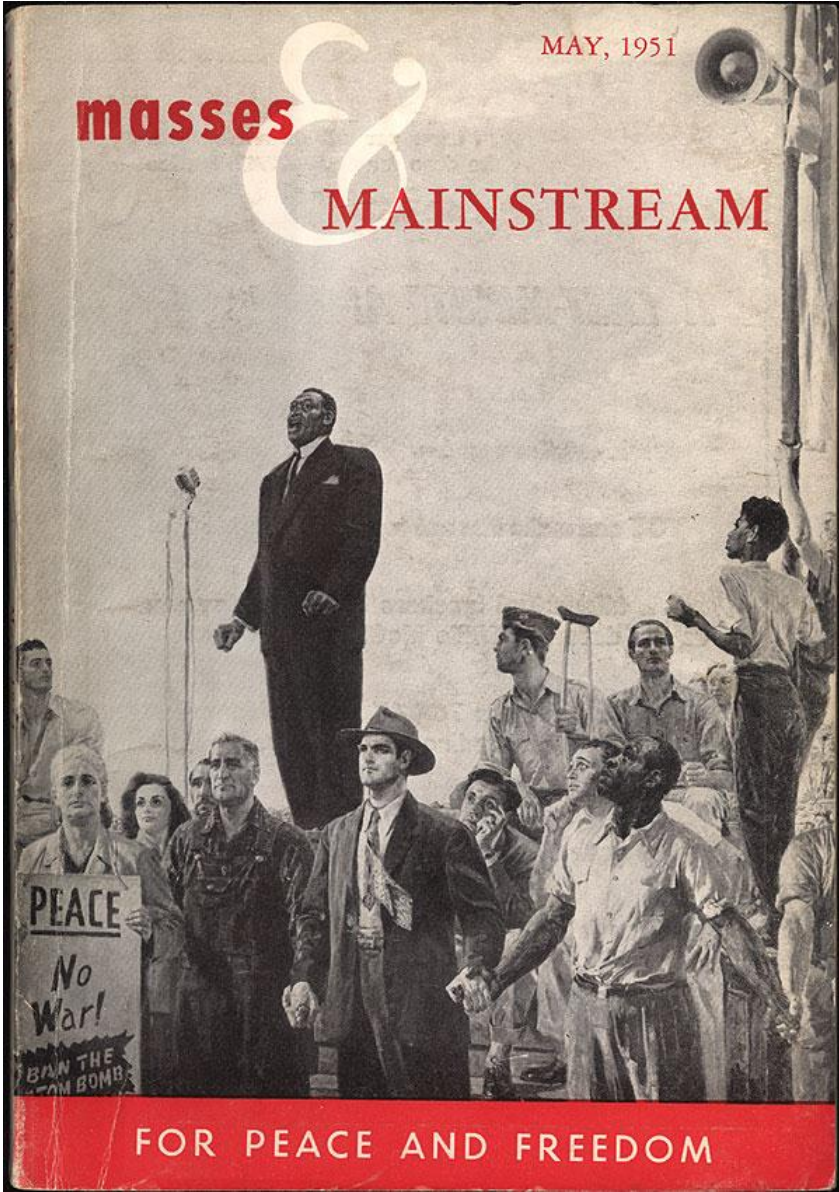
No one conversant with the hard facts of modern life can deny the truth that communism is Christianity's most serious rival...for the communist there is no divine government or no absolute moral order, there are no fixed, immutable principles. So force, violence, murder, and lying are all justifiable means to bring about the millennial end.

Yet, we must realize that there is something in communism which challenges us all...it emphasizes many essential truths that must forever challenge us as Christians. Indeed, it may be that communism is a necessary corrective for a Christianity that has been all too passive and a democracy that has been all too inert.

Communism should challenge us to be more concerned about social justice. However much is wrong with communism, we must admit that it arose as a protest against the hardships of the underprivileged.



# Masses & Mainstream, May 1951





# Paul Robeson, before HUAC, 1956

“I am not being tried for whether I am a Communist, I am being tried for fighting for the rights of my people, who are still second-class citizens in this United States of America. My mother was born in your state, Mr. Walter, and my mother was a Quaker, and my ancestors in the time of Washington baked bread for George Washington’s troops when they crossed the Delaware, and my own father was a slave. I stand here struggling for the rights of my people to be full citizens in this country. And they are not. They are not in Mississippi. And they are not in Montgomery, Alabama. And they are not in Washington. They are nowhere, and that is why I am here today. You want to shut up every Negro who has the courage to stand up and fight for the rights of his people, for the rights of workers...

In Russia I felt for the first time like a full human being. No color prejudice like in Mississippi, no color prejudice like in Washington. It was the first time I felt like a human being. Where I did not feel the pressure of color as I feel [it] in this Committee today.”

**FINAL SLIDE**

**Thank you**