



ALGER HISS

How an Amateur Spy Garnered the Attention of a Nation



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One of the greatest mysteries of the Cold War is that of Alger Hiss, an alleged Soviet spy. Whether or not he was guilty of the charge is up for debate. This essay seeks to provide a road map for the aforementioned conflict claiming the guilt or innocence of a man who may have betrayed his country. Here, this paper will analyze the Alger Hiss trials, books covering the events in detail, and declassified documentation that may be the final nail in the coffin for this debate.

John Ehrman, Directorate of Intelligence and frequent contributor to the library of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), provides a deep backstory to the Alger Hiss case in his unclassified article “A Half Century of Controversy: The Alger Hiss Case.” Ehrman explains that Whittaker Chambers joined the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) in February 1925.¹ Between 1925 and 1932, Chambers worked as a journalist for the Party’s newspaper, the *Daily Worker*.² However, in 1932, he was asked by the Party to become anonymous and join an intelligence network in the United States spying for the Soviet Union.³ Chambers accomplished this task by obtaining and trading information with other Soviet spies who worked in the United States government.⁴ Ehrman argues that Chambers would take important documents from various government offices, photograph them, and then bring the documents back to the government offices from which they were taken.⁵ Whittaker Chambers continued this practice until the fear of Stalin’s regime motivated him to abandon the Party in April 1938.⁶ After he left

¹ John Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” *Central Intelligence Agency* 8 (2007): 1.

² Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 1.

³ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 1.

⁴ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 2.

⁵ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 2.

⁶ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 2.

the Party, Chambers took a job working for *Time* magazine and was promoted to foreign editor where he pushed for strong anti-communist publications.⁷

Ehrman argues that after Chambers left the Party, and at risk of incriminating himself, attempted to inform President Roosevelt about the Soviet espionage taking place in the country, but the administration tossed his testimony aside due to the overwhelming threats of Japan and Germany. After World War II, the national tone regarding communism and the threat of Soviet espionage changed. On August 3, 1948, now seeing the Soviet Union as a threat, the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) summoned Chambers to testify. In his testimony, Whittaker Chambers names several people, including Alger Hiss, as potential communists.⁸

At the time of his case, Alger Hiss was a young man with a promising career in law and politics. He attended Harvard Law School and clerked for Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. After practicing law for a bit, Hiss accepted a position working for the State Department as an aid to the Assistant Secretary of State. Hiss was heavily involved in the post-war effort to establish the United Nations and attended the conference at Yalta as a member of President Roosevelt's special party.⁹

Even though many believed Hiss to be a spy, John Lowenthal, author of "Venona and Alger Hiss," argues that Alger Hiss did not match the testimony given by Chambers.¹⁰ Lowenthal heavily supported Hiss and his works are best known for their efforts to exonerate Alger Hiss. Lowenthal's writing exemplifies the tension many people felt during the trial of Alger Hiss. While some people thought Hiss to be innocent, others were stubborn in their belief

⁷ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 2.

⁸ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 2.

⁹ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 2.

¹⁰ John Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 99.

that he was guilty. Ehrman explains that Alger Hiss resigned his position within the State Department in December 1946 due to the political pressure created by the testimony claiming his communist affiliation.¹¹ Alger Hiss denied the charges and even went so far as to sue Whittaker Chambers for libel.¹² After Hiss filed the lawsuit, Chambers altered his testimony to include the fact that Hiss has been a Soviet spy.¹³

At trial, Chambers presented evidence stating that Hiss copied State Department documents on his typewriter and stored handwritten notes that summarized documents that had not yet been copied via the typewriter.¹⁴ He was also accused of hiding microfilm of the aforementioned documents in pumpkins for the handler to pick up. Those microfilms were later referred to as the pumpkin papers. Ehrman explains that the evidence Chambers presented was authenticated and Alger Hiss was indicted on the charge of perjury.¹⁵ Ellen Schrecker, author of “Soviet Espionage in America: An Oft-Told tale,” explains that the statute of limitations for espionage had expired and perjury was the only other charge that would have fit the alleged crimes committed by Alger Hiss.¹⁶

At trial, Hiss attempted to tarnish the credibility of Chambers by highlighting the fact that Chambers was an admitted communist and ex-Soviet agent.¹⁷ Ehrman explains that during the first trial, the key piece of evidence was Hiss’s personal typewriter that was allegedly used to fabricate the copies of government documents.¹⁸ Ehrman further explains that Hiss claimed to

¹¹ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 2.

¹² Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

¹³ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

¹⁴ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

¹⁵ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

¹⁶ Ellen Schrecker, “Soviet Espionage in America: An Oft-Told tale.” *Reviews in American History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 356.

¹⁷ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

¹⁸ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

have given the typewriter to his maid Claudia Catlett before the date in which the documents could have been created – effectively making the pumpkin papers ineffective as compelling evidence.¹⁹ Additionally, Ehrman clarified that Catlett and her sons supported Hiss’s argument, but their memory on the specific time they received the typewriter was not clear and presented inconsistent dates.²⁰ Therefore, the inconsistent testimony and presence of questionable evidence led to the government being unable to convict Hiss.

After the loss of the first trial, Ehrman explains that the government sought a retrial on the grounds of new evidence, and this time, Hiss was convicted and sentenced to 44 months in prison.²¹ Ehrman argues that the second trial was heavily influenced by the testimony of Hede Massing, a Soviet spy, who argued that Hiss tried to poach one of her potential recruits, Noel Field, for his Soviet spy ring.²² That testimony was enough to convict Hiss despite his numerous claims of innocence. After the trial, both Chambers and Hiss published memoirs recounting their past and the Alger Hiss trials.

In his book *Witness*, Whittaker Chambers explains his past and tells the story of his life. Ehrman explains that *Witness* shows the troubles backstory of Chambers while also discussing his life as a communist and Soviet spy.²³ Ehrman argues that *Witness* is a literary classic that tells a compelling story by showing how a man can go from one end of the ideological spectrum to another.²⁴ In 1957, Alger Hiss published *In the Court of Public Opinion* where he strongly asserted his innocence. Ehrman argues that unlike *Witness*, *In the Court of Public Opinion* does

¹⁹ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

²⁰ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

²¹ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 4.

²² Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 3.

²³ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 5.

²⁴ Ehrman, “The Alger Hiss Case,” 5.

not recount the life of its author, but instead acts as a published argument for Hiss being set up by the FBI, congressman Richard Nixon, who was a member of the HUAC, and Chambers.²⁵ While neither of these books brought up new evidence, Hiss argues in his book that the papers could have been typed at any time before November 17, 1948, and should not count as compelling evidence against him.²⁶ Reviewing *Witness*, Sidney Hook argues that the book proves without a doubt that Hiss is guilty of being a Soviet spy.²⁷ Furthermore, when Hook reviewed Alger Hiss's *In the Court of Public Opinion*, they argued that Hiss's claims are inconsistent with the testimonies given at the trials and contribute nothing factual to the overall discussion about the trials.²⁸ Hook continues by explaining that defenders of Hiss make the unnecessary assumption that loyalty to the New Deal demands the support of Hiss due to his liberal background and the liberalism surrounding the New Deal.²⁹

After the two memoirs were published, two more books were released about the Hiss case from a journalist's perspective. Both *The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss* by Fred Cook and *Alger Hiss: The True Story* by John Chabot Smith fail to present any new evidence, but do find space to argue theories of the investigation and trials.³⁰ Cook argues that the papers were given to Chambers by someone other than Hiss and that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) planted the typewriter to tie Hiss to the crime.³¹ However, John Cabot Smith argues that Chambers himself typed the documents and that Nixon, with the aid of the FBI and other HUAC

²⁵ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 5.

²⁶ Alger Hiss, *In the Court of Public Opinion* (New York, 1957): 275.

²⁷ Sidney Hook, "The Faiths of Whittaker Chambers," *New York Times Book Review*, (1952): 1, 28.

²⁸ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 6.

²⁹ Hook, "The Faiths of Whittaker Chambers," 1, 28.

³⁰ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 6.

³¹ Fred J. Cook, *The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss*, (New York: William Morrow, 1958): 122, 137, 153-155.

investigators, created an identical typewriter and planted it to incriminate Hiss.³² While both books offer entertaining stories about how someone might go about framing Hiss for espionage, neither of them have any new evidence to back up their bold claims. Likewise, Ehrman argues that neither of these books are analytically sound and they both fail to contribute anything to the case.³³

In 1958, Fred Rodell reviewed *The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss* and ended up siding with Hiss. He explains that Chambers, in a secret session with HUAC investigators, argued that he knew Hiss personally and could show them that he was not lying about Hiss being a spy.³⁴ Chambers used his knowledge of Hiss's bird watching hobby and went into detail about specific birds Hiss found. When the committee investigators asked Hiss about this, he affirmed his enthusiasm about finding the specific birds and his hobby overall. Rodell argues that after that connection was proven, despite Chambers being a former communist, HUAC investigators believed everything he said about Hiss. Rodell, writing for the *Yale Law Review*, argues that this absurd test of credibility is abnormal in the legal profession and should be questioned by the general public for its authenticity and unprofessionalism.³⁵

Likewise, John Lowenthal, author of "Venona and Alger Hiss," argues that the credibility standard used at the trial was outrageous and failed to reliably establish credibility among witnesses.³⁶ Lowenthal proves his point by tracking down and presenting the typewriter evidence

³² Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 6.

³³ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 6.

³⁴ Fred Rodell, review of *The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss* by Fred J. Cook, *Yale Law Review* 67, (1958): 1318.

³⁵ Rodell, review of *The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss* by Fred J. Cook, 1318.

³⁶ John Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 111.

from the trial to Gussie Feinstein, a juror from the second trial.³⁷ Here, Feinstein explains that had the jury known that the typewriter shown at trial was not Hiss's actual typewriter, he might have walked away a free man.³⁸ Lowenthal also spoke with Vincent Shaw, one of the eight jurors who convicted Hiss.³⁹ Shaw explains that if this information surfaced during the events of the Hiss case, then there would have been no case.⁴⁰ Shaw continues by stating that the jury may have been tricked by the prosecution.⁴¹ The trial was likely motivated and influenced by aspects of the Red Scare, like the fear of communist spies within the United States. Additionally, it may have attributed to the quick rise of McCarthyism throughout the country as people feared communism above all else.

In 1967, Meyer Zeligs wrote a book called *Friendship and Fratricide* which attempted to psychoanalyze Hiss based on psychoanalysis theory which was rising in popularity at the time.⁴² Needless to say, this book also failed to present new evidence and was equated to absurdity by professional scholars, historians, and critics alike.⁴³ Meyer Schapiro, in his review of *Friendship and Fratricide*, argues that nobody would have ever known about the espionage had Hiss not sued Chambers for libel.⁴⁴ This argument suggests that had Hiss not filed suit against Chambers, he would not have felt threatened enough to change his statement about Hiss. In turn, Hiss would have not been subject to criminal charges. At the time, most writings about the Hiss case did not attempt to find new evidence or explore existing documentation. Instead, most books were filled

³⁷ Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," 111.

³⁸ Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," 111.

³⁹ Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," 112.

⁴⁰ Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," 112.

⁴¹ Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," 112.

⁴² Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 7.

⁴³ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 7.

⁴⁴ Meyer Schapiro, "Dangerous Acquaintances," *The New York Review of Books* (1967): 5, 6, 8.

with unsubstantiated theories that reviewers and academics equated to fiction. It was not until Allen Weinstein published *Perjury* in 1978 that scholars found interest in the Hiss case once more.

In preparation for *Perjury*, Allen Weinstein tracked down the widow of a Soviet handler to confirm, which she did, the story Chambers presented at the trials.⁴⁵ Ehrman explains that Weinstein found FBI records indicating that the Catlett's misled the bureau on the original date they received the typewriter from Alger Hiss.⁴⁶ Ehrman argues that the most significant contribution of *Witness* was that Weinstein provided evidence that countered the forgery theory that the aforementioned books utilized.⁴⁷ Despite its great success, *Perjury* was not without critics. Weinstein received criticism from Victor Navasky who reviewed his book and claimed that he misquoted his interviewees out of context and failed to show the documentation used in context to the alleged events implicating Hiss.⁴⁸ Weinstein countered Navasky by claiming that all testimony mentioned in the book was recorded on tape. Regardless of the few critics, *Perjury* remains one of the most influential and important books about the Alger Hiss case to date.

Since the Hiss investigation, there have been no documents or evidence that directly, and without question, tie Alger Hiss to the Soviet Union as an agent or a spy. Additionally, outside of Weinstein's *Perjury*, most books about Hiss have been dismissed. It was not until the fall of the Soviet Union did the general public, academics, and journalists become exposed to secret transmission, meetings, transcripts, and documents through the Venona project, declassified KGB documents, and declassified GRU documents.

⁴⁵ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁴⁶ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁴⁷ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁴⁸ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 7.

In May 1992, Hiss reached out to General Dimitri Volkogonov, chairman of Russia's military archive and respected historian, asking him to look into the old files relating to the Hiss case.⁴⁹ After conducting his investigation, Volkogonov replied explaining that he found no mention of Alger Hiss among the files.⁵⁰ While this proved good news for Hiss, many still doubted its reliability in exonerating him from his crimes. In November of the same year, Volkogonov retracted his statement explaining that he only looked at KGB documentation, but continued to argue that he found no connection to Alger Hiss.⁵¹ Another important finding was from Maria Schmidt, a prominent Hungarian Historian. In 1992, Maria Schmidt found Noel Field's original transcript from when he was interrogated by Hungarian secret police in 1954.⁵² She reported that the transcript supported the argument and testimony from the second trial where Hiss tried to recruit Field for his own spy ring.⁵³ While this revelation seemed to have solidified Hiss as a Soviet spy, there were still those who continued to claim his innocence.

In October 1996, the CIA and the National Security Agency (NSA) released a secret investigation of Soviet intelligence cables called the Venona files.⁵⁴ While more information about spies in the United States continued to surface, Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev, former KGB officer turned journalist, bought their way into Stalin-era KGB files from the years 1994 to 1996. Here, they found documentation that confirmed Hiss's attempt to recruit Field and several references to a Soviet spy known as codename ALES.⁵⁵ In their book *The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America – The Stalin Era*, which was based on their aforementioned

⁴⁹ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁵⁰ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁵¹ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 8.

⁵² Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 9.

⁵³ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 9.

⁵⁴ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 10.

⁵⁵ Ehrman, "The Alger Hiss Case," 10.

research, Weinstein and Vassiliev provided additional evidence about Hiss and his ties to the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ Ellen Schrecker, author of “Soviet Espionage in America: An Oft-Told tale.” argues that *The Haunted Wood*, while providing additional information on Hiss, also identified several other agents of the Soviet Union made public in Venona.⁵⁷

However, John Lowenthal, in his article “Venona and Alger Hiss,” argues that the declassified Venona documents do not correctly identify Alger Hiss as ALES and are based on assumptions. In this article, Lowenthal analyzed two cables from the Venona project. The cables are no. 1822 naming Alger Hiss in a footnote of the document and no. 1579 in which Hiss is specifically named in a Soviet message.⁵⁸ To begin, Lowenthal argues that all of the Venona identification work was done by FBI Special Agent Robert J. Lamphere.⁵⁹ The accusation regarding Lamphere was that he careless in his analysis. Lowenthal further argues that the inclusion of Hiss in no. 1822 was a mistake and carelessly carried over from edited versions of the cable to the publicly released version of Venona.⁶⁰ He uses this revelation to call into question the authenticity of Venona and works to dismiss the claim that Hiss was associated with the Soviet Union.⁶¹ While the debate about Venona continues, Hiss remains vigilant in his claims of innocence.

⁵⁶ Ellen Schrecker, “Soviet Espionage in America: An Oft-Told tale.” *Reviews in American History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 357.

⁵⁷ Schrecker, “Soviet Espionage in America: An Oft-Told tale.” 357.

⁵⁸ John Lowenthal, “Venona and Alger Hiss,” *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 106.

⁵⁹ John Lowenthal, “Venona and Alger Hiss,” *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 105.

⁶⁰ John Lowenthal, “Venona and Alger Hiss,” *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 106.

⁶¹ John Lowenthal, “Venona and Alger Hiss,” *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 106.

Mark Kramer, David Lowenthal, John Earl Haynes, and Harvey Klehr contributed to the debate on Venona in the article “Exchange on Vassiliev Notebooks and Alger Hiss.” Here, Lowenthal, a staunch advocate for Hiss’s innocence, argues that calling codename LEONARD, a Soviet spy thought to also be Alger Hiss, a Soviet agent, does not make him a spy.⁶² Lowenthal makes a poor argument by differentiating between the words spy and agent. Lowenthal uses Ernest Hemmingway, and Hemmingway’s alleged lack of affiliation with the KGB, to bolster his claim about Hiss. In response to Lowenthal, Haynes and Klehr argue that Lowenthal is misguided in thinking that because ALES or LEONARD were regarded as an agent, then they cannot also be a spy for the Soviet Union. They further argue that Lowenthal fails to recognize that Alexander Vassiliev only took summarized notes of Soviet information with him when he fled Russia. They explain that it was not until 2001 did Vassiliev regain access to his uncensored notes.⁶³ Through this argument, Haynes and Klehr reinforce the claims made by Vassiliev and Weinstein in *Haunted Wood* and further bury Lowenthal into his unconvincing rhetoric.

Eduard Mark, in his article “*In Re* Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB,” explains that he compiled all of the information from biographies of the small party from the United States that went to Yalta and that they leave little doubt that Hiss was the Soviet spy known as ALES and LEONARD.⁶⁴ While the classifications in his article may be confusing, he argues that ALES and LEONARD are both Alger Hiss. Here, he explains that Alger Hiss, a

⁶² Mark Kramer, David Lowenthal, John Earl Haynes, and Harvey Klehr, “Exchange on Vassiliev Notebooks and Alger Hiss,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16, no. 1 (2014): 205.

⁶³ Kramer, Lowenthal, Haynes, and Klehr, “Exchange on Vassiliev Notebooks and Alger Hiss,” 205.

⁶⁴ Edward Mark, “*In Re* Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11, no. 3 (2009): 26.

former employee for the State Department, is explicitly identified as LEONARD in a KGB file.⁶⁵ Mark also argues that codename ALES worked for the GRU since 1935, headed a small group of spies in the United States consisting of relatives, worked at obtaining military information, and knew another agent by the name of POL.⁶⁶ Hiss, as Mark argues, matches all of these established truths about ALES. Mark argues that Hiss was an alleged agent of the GRU in the mid to late 1930s.⁶⁷ Furthermore, Hiss's brother, Donald Hiss, was a known communist agent in the same spy ring as Hiss and Chambers.⁶⁸ Likewise, Hiss's affiliation with the State Department at Yalta allowed him access to sensitive military information and decisions.⁶⁹ Finally, Mark argues that Maxim Lieber and Paul, a person referenced in *Witness* and argued by Chambers to have Soviet ties, were the same person under the codename POL.⁷⁰ He continues by explaining that POL and ALES were operating in the same city with Harold Glasser, who is a known Soviet agent under the codename RUBLE.⁷¹ Here is the kicker, Alger Hiss knew Maxim Lieber through their mutual friend Harold Glasser.⁷²

The Yalta conference is one of the most important events in World War II history. Likewise, it is important to the Hiss case by the potential identification of Hiss as the Soviet agents' codename ALES and LEONARD. Alger Hiss wrote a memorandum for President

⁶⁵ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 36; Anatolii V. Gorskii, "Failures in the USA," December 1948, KGB File 43173, v. 2c, pp. 49–55, in Black Notebook, pp. 77–79. This is how the KGB file was cited in other historical journals.

⁶⁶ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 53–58.

⁶⁷ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 53.

⁶⁸ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 54.

⁶⁹ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 55.

⁷⁰ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 57–58.

⁷¹ Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 61.

⁷² Mark, "In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB," 61.

Roosevelt, which was not one of his official duties at Yalta, to use during the conference.⁷³ Here, he advocated against the membership of Soviet republics into the United Nations (UN).⁷⁴ This memo was likely drafted between the end of the plenary session and the opening of the Foreign Ministers' Conference.⁷⁵ It is unclear as to who, if anyone, requested that Hiss write the memo for President Roosevelt.⁷⁶ However, Hiss's argument against Soviet membership effectively trapped President Roosevelt into admitting them into the UN despite the known dangers of doing so.⁷⁷ Here, Hiss's arguments for not including Soviet nations into the UN are as follows: First, nations must be signatories of the United Nations Declaration; Second, Soviet Republics are not sovereign states under international law.⁷⁸ By challenging the sovereignty of Soviet Republics, Hiss failed to consider the fact that India, not a sovereign nation of its own and under British rule, was a member of the UN.⁷⁹ By injecting the status of India into the discussion, Hiss opened up a dialogue between Roosevelt and Stalin which eventually led to the inclusion of the Soviet Republics.⁸⁰ This concession was needed by President Roosevelt to get the inclusion of the associated nations of Latin America to declare war on Germany and, in turn, gain membership as

⁷³ Henry D. Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 22, no. 1 (2020): 50.

⁷⁴ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 50.

⁷⁵ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 68.

⁷⁶ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 68.

⁷⁷ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 78.

⁷⁸ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 78.

⁷⁹ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 79.

⁸⁰ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 79-80.

well.⁸¹ Whether it was because he was acting as a Soviet agent, or that he was just incompetent, Alger Hiss contributed to a conflict at Yalta that worked against the United States and played into the best interest of the Soviet Union.

In conclusion, the grand debate over whether or not Alger Hiss was a spy continues to impact politicians in the status quo. For example, Anthony Lake, a cabinet appointee made by President Clinton, was denied confirmation due to his belief that Alger Hiss could have been, but also may not have been a spy for the Soviet Union.⁸² From the details of the Hiss trials to the mysteries of the declassified documents, the question of Alger Hiss as a Soviet spy is still unknown. While many, if not most, of the scholars today agree that Hiss was a spy, some still hold out and advocate for his innocence. This topic needs more time and research to provide a truly comprehensive recount of the past, but declassified documents help historians piece together the intricate puzzle that is spy craft that took place during the most paranoid moments of the Cold War.

⁸¹ Fetter, "Alger Hiss at Yalta: A Reassessment of Hiss's Arguments against Including Any of the Soviet Republics as Initial UN Members," 76.

⁸² John Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, no. 3 (2000): 98.

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