

**THE  
NAKED  
COMMUNIST**

## **BOOKS IN THE FREEDOM IN AMERICA SERIES**

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*How to Read the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence*

by Paul B. Skousen

*The Naked Communist: Exposing Communism and Restoring Freedom*

by W. Cleon Skousen

*The Naked Socialist*

by Paul B. Skousen

# THE NAKED COMMUNIST

EXPOSING COMMUNISM AND  
RESTORING FREEDOM

W. CLEON SKOUSEN



IZZARD INK  
— PUBLISHING —



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*“The conflict between communism and freedom is the problem of our time. It overshadows all other problems. This conflict mirrors our age, its toils, its tensions, its troubles, and its tasks. On the outcome of this conflict depends the future of all mankind.”*

—George Meany

PRESIDENT, AFL-CIO PRESIDENT, AFL-CIO



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# PREFACE

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RONALD REAGAN

Much has happened in the 60 years since *The Naked Communist: Exposing Communism and Restoring Freedom* first appeared as a privately published book in 1958. It hit bookstores at the height of the anti-communist movement in America. W. Cleon Skousen had studied communism and its ruthless expansion around the world for several decades. Confusion over the movement's ultimate goals, and the philosophies and theories that drove it into popularity, spurred Skousen into writing this book. It was an instant hit and became a national best seller with copies appearing on the shelves of more than a million homes across America.

Today, after the spread of communism has slaughtered an estimated 150 million people, and now threatens to reignite its consuming global reach, *The Naked Communist* is as relevant as it was 60 years ago.

In July 2014, the noted surgeon and political commentator, Dr. Ben Carson, appeared on Fox News and said, "*The Naked Communist* lays out the whole progressive agenda. You would think by reading it that it was written last year. It shows what the progressives are trying to do to the American family and what they are trying to do to destroy our Judeo Christian values and morality."

President Ronald Reagan had worked with Skousen in the 1950s

## X PREFACE

and 1960s to combat the spread of communism's destructive ideas, and said "No one is better qualified to discuss the threat to this nation from communism. You will be alarmed, you will be informed and you'll be glad you heard W. Cleon Skousen."

In 1961, Skousen added to his book the 45 Communist Goals that laid out the steps aimed at ruining the culture of America. Their purpose was to abolish the Constitution and turn the United States into the "fold" of Marx's theoretical one-world government. As of 2017, all but one of those 45 goals had been reached.

Today, 60 years later, it is more important than ever to understand these communist ideas, and to know how they have eroded freedom around the world. With that understanding readers will be prepared to take action. They will know what steps are needed to rescue liberty in this, the last nation still standing in opposition to the failure formula that has wrecked hundreds of millions of lives over the past century.

*Izzard Ink Publishing*

MAY, 2017

# THE MAKING OF THE NAKED COMMUNIST

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BY PAUL B. SKOUSEN

**A**t the end of World War II, W. Cleon Skousen had no intention of writing a national best seller. He especially didn't expect to write a book that eventually would be counted among the great classics of Cold War writings.

He was looking for a single, concise volume that gave an easy-to-read and unobstructed view of Communism, its tactics and its strategies. He hoped to find a clean description of Communism's self-defined morality, its rejection of Judeo-Christian ethics, its lust for power and control, and its threat against freedom around the world.

Skousen was well aware that scholarly libraries already carried some books and articles on the subject. Even the encyclopedia had a page or two on Communism. But he wasn't happy with their tepid discourses, and observed that the most important insights about Communism were scattered too broadly among too many sources to be obtained and understood by the average reader.

## TOO MANY "-ISM'S"

In those post-war years of the late 1940s Americans didn't pay much attention to Communism, at least not at first. They had their fill of world wars and all of the stress and deprivation that came with it. As a culture, they now wanted to focus on building their "American dream." That political thing called *Communism* seemed an insignificant worry, just another of those "-ism's" that belonged to Europe or some other far away place—a political or economic abstraction that the politicians were supposed to handle so that everyone else could happily anticipate taking

that vacation to Yellowstone, or buying that new car, or house, or flashy radio console.

And yet, that thing wouldn't leave Americans alone—it kept creeping into the morning headlines and radio news almost every day.

By 1947, the Soviet Union had severed its fair-weather cooperation with the U.S. and was dragging Eastern Europe into an economic and military alliance. Any whimpering of anti-Stalinist uprising within the budding Soviet empire was quickly smashed with a merciless war machine. Sadly, when the rising chorus of cries for help finally crossed the ocean to American shores, the big Soviet bully warned the west to stay out, and threatened World War III if they didn't. The result was a standoff between East and West that in 1947 took on the foreboding moniker of the Cold War.

The West thought it stood pretty strong in those days. The CIA assured the administration that any Soviet threat remained confined to conventional capabilities on the European continent. “Among foreign powers, only the USSR is capable of threatening the security of the United States,” the SECRET report stated on September 26, 1947. “The USSR is presently incapable of military aggression outside of Europe and Asia, but is capable of overrunning most of continental Europe, the Near East, northern China, and Korea.”<sup>1</sup>

And then, just two years later, that fairly benign view was nullified with a big bang.

### **WORLD POWER SHIFTS AWAY FROM THE U.S.**

In 1949, the Soviets detonated their first nuclear bomb, and the West's confident hold on nuclear superiority was suddenly checked. Four years later the Soviets exploded a thermonuclear hydrogen bomb, expanding the Cold War into a true race for nuclear superiority.

Meanwhile, Chinese Communists drove out their archenemy, the Chinese Nationalists, and declared to the world on October 1, 1949, that

<sup>1</sup> *Review of the World Situation as it Relates to the Security of the United States*, Central Intelligence Agency, CIA 1, 26 September 1947, Copy No. 23, declassified.

another Communist power had arrived on the world stage. It was called the People's Republic of China, with Mao Tse-tung at its head.

Eight years later, the Soviets successfully launched the world's first man-made satellite on October 4, 1957. Sputnik 1 circled the earth about 1,400 times, and terrorized tens of millions into believing that one day there could be nuclear bombs orbiting overhead.

These events left busy Americans wondering aloud, just what is this ill-defined but violent and growing force called Communism that seems to be making so much progress?

For the most part, Americans didn't understand Communism. To some it was a tool for social justice, the "Russian way" of imposing equality in nations where dictatorships ruled. To others it was an economic ideology that promised fair pay to laborers everywhere. Trade unions around the world that adopted Communism's tactics of force to win better pay and benefits watched happily as their membership rolls magnified under the new Marxist rules. To others, Communism was a continuation of the Bolshevik Russian Revolution of 1917, that had garnered enough persuasive powers of anarchy and social agitation to overthrow the American way of life.

Added to this was the worrisome Korean War, spy rings, infiltration, espionage, the arrest of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, the great Iron Curtain, and the ever-increasing military buildup by the Soviets.

## **WAS THERE NO STOPPING COMMUNISM?**

In the early 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy took a lead role in an effort to expose Communist infiltration in the U.S. government. He called for appropriate steps to secure the safety of America. The House Un-American Activities Committee ran a parallel although unconnected investigation of its own at the same time.

By 1957, the public face of Communism in America seemed to have crested and was dwindling away. The end of the decade found the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) losing membership with numbers declining from almost 100,000 to less than 10,000. Even so, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover knew it was still expanding

underground, and the Bureau had 1,500 informants in the CPUSA keeping watch.<sup>2</sup>

## ELIZABETH BENTLEY

Espionage was a difficult and terrible problem for the FBI. The Bureau had invested enormous efforts to expose subversive groups and undertake the painful chore of rooting out Communism from the most sensitive and high-ranking levels of government.

Once in a while, the hard work paid off. In 1945, for example, Soviet agent Elizabeth Bentley defected and told authorities about the existence of 150 Soviet spies who were active in the U.S. The list included three prominent names, Harry Dexter White, Whitaker Chambers, and Alger Hiss. Their amazing story is fleshed out in Chapter 7 of Skousen's *The Naked Communist*.

At the time, newspaper reporters sympathetic to the Communist cause tried to destroy Bentley's credibility, one calling her the "Nutmeg Mata Hari." On the other side she was described as naive, and as that "shapely blonde and blue-eyed New Yorker" who was duped by the Communists.

## SECRET SOVIET VAULTS FINALLY OPENED

Was Bentley right about her fellow spies? Skousen laid out the case in her favor, showing that not only was she correct, but that she represented the tip of a red iceberg that was stealthily ripping through the hull of the great United States. The debates over her testimony were left to stagnate into forgetfulness for more than 30 years after Skousen's book was published.

And then, an amazing series of events unfolded. The mighty Soviet empire weakened in the 1980s and collapsed in 1991. Shortly afterwards, the secret Soviet vaults and KGB-NKVD<sup>3</sup> archives were opened to Western eyes.<sup>4</sup>

2 Gentry, Kurt, *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and the Secrets*. W. W. Norton & Company 1991. p. 442. ISBN 0-393-02404-0.

3 NKVD is short for the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. It was the Soviet's law enforcement agency primarily during Stalin's era, and was best known for running the Gulag, conducting mass executions, forcing mass deportations, committing espionage and political assassinations abroad.

4 See John Haynes, Harvey Klehr and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America*, Yale University Press, 2009, 704 pages, ISBN: 9780300123906.

After thousands of declassified spy documents were translated and examined, there emerged confirmation that vindicated Bentley's testimony—

Harry Dexter White, a senior officer in the Treasury Department, had indeed been a spy and committed espionage against the U.S.<sup>5</sup> Additional corroboration came from NSA cryptographers who successfully connected him to his secret Soviet code name—"Jurist."<sup>6</sup>

Whittaker Chambers' involvement in the spy ring was verified, as Chambers had so confessed years earlier in his books and speeches.

And Alger Hiss, a senior U.S. diplomat in the State Department, was identified with the "Ware Group," an underground Communist cell operating in Washington D.C. A degree of doubt about his guilt persisted long after he was imprisoned for perjury in 1950. That same collection of Soviet documents showed that Hiss had been a longtime agent of Soviet military intelligence. It also validated the analysts in the Venona Project who concluded that "Ales," a code name used in Soviet cables, was Alger Hiss.<sup>7</sup>

## ATTEMPTING TO TAME THE BEAR

It was into this swirling mess of intrigue, espionage, and international suspicion that author W. Cleon Skousen embarked on a difficult path to expose Communism for what it actually was.

"I wanted to portray the innermost thoughts of the Communist," Skousen said in 1958, "so Americans could feel that they truly understood the motivations and ambitions of a Communist."

Consolidating the mounds of complex research into an easy-to-understand collection was the cornerstone of unfinished business.

5 Schecter, Jerrold L. (2003), *Sacred Secrets: How Soviet Intelligence Operations Changed American History*, Potomac Books, p. 122, ISBN 1-57488-522-7.

6 FBI Memorandum Mr. Ladd to J. Edgar Hoover, "To advise you the positive identification of agent Jurist (the cover name of a Soviet agent operating in 1944 and named by Venona project) as Harry Dexter White, deceased. White was formerly the Administrative Assistant to former Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau." October 16, 1950, FBI Venona file pp. 17-18.

7 Venona Project is one of many code names for a long-running effort by the U.S. and the U.K. to decipher Soviet coded messages intercepted primarily during World War II. The project's materials were released in 1995 and supported evidence already gathered involving several high-profile spy cases. The program ran from 1943 until 1980.

“I hoped that if we put all of this material under one cover,” he told reporters in 1958, “the ordinary American would see the Communist picture sufficiently clear to analyze Soviet strategy as they read it from day to day in the newspapers.”

Skousen was a great student of history. He loved political science and earned his law degree hoping to delve deeper into the science of constitutional freedom and the threats it faced. After graduation from George Washington University Law School, he began a 16-year career with the FBI in 1935.

## SERVING IN MANY CAPACITIES

Skousen gained broad exposure to the workings of the FBI. He started out on the lowest rung as a messenger. Soon he became a trainer, an administrator over various groups of agents, firearms instructor, police instructor, inspector’s aid, and supervisor over the 25-man communication section. As with all agents, he was transferred to numerous cities around the country to “season him” as they called it in those days.

In addition, his official duties were often interrupted with special projects and assignments that took advantage of Skousen’s many skills, such as speaking, teaching, training, and writing.

In 1945 he wrote a public relations document called “The Story of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.” It was produced as an official publication of the FBI, and was printed in the millions and distributed over a period of several years.<sup>8</sup>

Skousen usually gave 100-200 speeches a year all across the country. One of his immediate supervisors said of him, “He is one of the best speakers in the Bureau. He is thoroughly loyal and thoroughly enthusiastic....”<sup>9</sup>

While serving in California, Skousen arrived at work one morning to an impromptu meeting. The agent in charge, Mr. R. B. Hood, had

8 WCS notation on a file copy of “The Story of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.”

9 FBI Memorandum, L. B. Nichols to Mr. Tolson, April 6, 1945; and, Inspection Report from SAC R.B. Hood dated July 16, 1946, “Agent Skousen makes an excellent personal appearance. He dresses in a neat and conservative manner and has an affable personality ... He also makes numerous speeches on behalf of the Bureau, for which he has received numerous letters of commendation. He makes an excellent Bureau representative. Status: Excellent.”



gathered together about 30 of the Bureau's approved speakers, and told them they were to take notes on a model speech they were about to hear. Then he turned to Skousen and told him to give said model speech. Skousen remarked later that he did the best he could but "I lost ten pounds in the process!" Afterwards, Hood announced that Skousen would be the new instructor for a course on speech-giving that would last several weeks.<sup>10</sup>

## SCHOLARS OF COMMUNISM AT THE FBI

Skousen's official assignments at the FBI did not place him in the counter-espionage unit where Communism was examined, nor did he produce any research documents on the subject as part of his job.<sup>11</sup> However, agents were not assigned exclusively to just "crime" or just "security." They were trained in both fields and were continually moved back and forth from one type of work to another. Skousen's regular duties brought him in contact with Communists and Communist sympathizers. He had a great deal of opportunity to talk to those in the FBI who were "read in," authoritative, and expert on the subject. Skousen's journals mention by name several at the FBI who helped guide him in his studies of Communism:

D. M. "Mickey" Ladd, who "probably knew more about the espionage operations of the Communist apparatus than any other FBI official," Skousen wrote. Ladd was the number-three man in the FBI for a short time, and was a leader in the Bureau's counterintelligence work. He supervised the major Cold War national security investigations including the cases of Alger Hiss, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.

Lee R. Pennington, Jr., "One of my good friends and mentor on Communism in FBI days," Skousen wrote. Pennington was a senior FBI agent who worked closely with Mr. Hoover, and specialized in identifying activists and Communist sympathizers. When he retired in 1953, he was the third highest ranking agent in the FBI.

<sup>10</sup> March 4, 1949, the *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*.

<sup>11</sup> FBI Memorandum, A. Jones to Mr. DeLoach, October 12, 1961, validates Skousen's work on Communism as a private endeavor by noting that Skousen had no official assignment with an FBI division to study Communism.

Guy Hottel who “was my SAC when I did my preliminary training as a new agent in Washington, D.C. He was deeply involved in the investigation of Communist and criminal intrigue in the nation’s capital.”<sup>12</sup> Hottel was very close to Hoover and served for a period of time as Hoover’s personal bodyguard.

William C. Sullivan was the head of the domestic intelligence division, an expert in Communism, and briefly stood as the number-three man at the FBI. He was the principal ghostwriter for *A Study of Communism* that was published in 1962, listing J. Edgar Hoover as the author.<sup>13</sup>

## WILLIAM C. SULLIVAN BECOMES A FRIEND

In one of several letters between the two, Skousen told Sullivan that *The Naked Communist* would be printed in a couple of weeks, and “I should really call it ‘our’ book because I will be everlastingly grateful to you for all the wonderful guidance you gave me in it. My only regret was that I could not write two or three paragraphs in the introduction giving you proper credit for your contribution. However, when you read it I am sure you will appreciate the feelings which I have for your fine research which dug out many of the nuggets that are used in this material.”<sup>14</sup>

Subsequent letters from Sullivan helped Skousen correct and flesh out some additional details and quotes.<sup>15</sup>

From these several friends in the FBI, and other first-hand experiences, Skousen gained very specific knowledge and insight into what makes Communism work and what makes a Communist tick.

Skousen explained: “When I asked one of these [FBI] experts why we didn’t distribute this information [on Communism], he told me because ‘it’s not in any form that you could give to the public, yet.’ He said, ‘You’ll appreciate that after you’ve read about 175 volumes of dialectical materialism.’ I said, ‘Well, start me out on a symposium, let me kind

12 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, entry undated but located in 1998-Jan-Mar binder.

13 *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide*, Athan G. Theoharis, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999.

14 W. Cleon Skousen to William C. Sullivan, December 30, 1957, written in response to a cordial Christmas greetings letter from Sullivan to Skousen, December 16, 1957.

15 For example, Sullivan to Skousen, September 11, 1958, provides Stalin quotes more accurately translated than those Skousen originally used. See the *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, 1958.

of get my teeth into it.’ He said there isn’t any symposium, nobody has written one.”<sup>16</sup>

## CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH HOLLYWOOD

Hands-on experience with Communism could come at the most unexpected times, Skousen said. One instance was when he was the FBI liaison to the Hollywood studios. Mr. Hoover asked him to try “turning” a leading star who performed in *Gone With The Wind* from financially supporting the local Communist party and participating in the alleged Communist-front advocacy group, the Independent Citizens’ Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions.<sup>17</sup>

“I made an appointment to visit her at the beautiful home she and her sister had in Hollywood,” Skousen said of Olivia de Havilland, “but like all of the stars, they had a very pretentious mansion in front but lived in a condo-type of apartment in the rear.”

Skousen started by telling Ms. de Havilland how impressed Mr. Hoover was with her portrayal in the movie, and felt if someone could refresh her memory about how great America had been to her life and career, maybe she could be of great help. After 45 minutes, she wasn’t convinced and vowed that nothing could change her mind about the warm relationship she had with her advocacy friends.

Skousen returned to the FBI office to work on an idea that might help. He asked a technician to retrieve the secret recordings the FBI had made of the Communists when Ms. de Havilland was absent from their regular meetings. He discovered that behind her back, these so-called “friends” mocked and ridiculed her naïveté, referring to her with profane names, etc. Skousen had several of these discussions spliced into a 30-minute tape and returned to the actress’s home with a portable tape player.

“I told her I would wait out on the porch until she had finished listening, and then we’d talk if she wanted to.” Not five minutes later

16 From a speech by W. Cleon Skousen at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1967, “The Naked Communist,” the History and Philosophy of Socialism Today.”

17 John Meroney, *Olivia de Havilland Recalls her Role—In the Cold War*, Wall Street Journal, September 7, 2006.

Ms. de Havilland stormed back “swearing like a mule skinner,” Skousen said. She was livid and vowed never to go back. That’s when Skousen suggested she consider putting on one of her greatest performances ever. That caught her attention. He asked her to divulge everything she knew about the party’s plans to infiltrate the Hollywood unions and he would make sure that some of the information was leaked to the press. Then, she should return to the next meeting pretending to be incensed that somebody was talking to the FBI, and declare that she refused to donate another penny until the dirty spy, whoever he was, is rooted out and dealt with.<sup>18</sup>

The star did just that and she was able to separate from the group without creating suspicion. Her subsequent suspicions about the Citizen’s Committee led herself and other Hollywood supporters to resign from that group as well. She and Skousen became friends, and worked together some years later to set up a large rally called “Hollywood’s Answer to Communism.”<sup>19</sup> The regionally televised event included 40 of her fellow actors and producers, and a live audience of 15,000 with millions of television viewers.

## EDUCATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL

Skousen was frustrated that so many knowledgeable people who were trying to unravel the workings of Communism had so little impact and influence with national decision-makers.

“I listened to experts on Communism during World War II tell us in the FBI the alternatives,” he said, “and what would happen if the United States chose the wrong alternative. Invariably, we fell into the booby trap. I said to myself, ‘Here we are being enlightened by Americans who know the answers and yet the leadership has the tendency to choose the wrong answers.’”<sup>20</sup>

Skousen said he wanted to “get so many people informed on the subject [of freedom and Communism] that it wouldn’t matter who

18 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, December 28, 2002, reflections on Skousen’s FBI career.

19 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, 1948-49.

20 W. Cleon Skousen, Pepperrdine College Freedom Forum, April 13, 1960.

becomes head of the Democratic party, or who becomes head of the Republican party—they'll be, first of all, Americans."<sup>21</sup>

Skousen lamented that there was no reference document that could guide the public to a better understanding of Communism, and people were left wallowing in ignorance and misinformation.

"I thought to myself, this is crazy, this isn't possible, and yet it was true," Skousen said in 1958. "As a result, down through the years, all Army intelligence personnel, FBI personnel, naval intelligence personnel, and professors in political science, have been wading through a lot of material [on Communism] and hoping that they were properly interpreting the double-talk."

## J. EDGAR HOOVER

Whenever Mr. Hoover was unable to accept an invitation to speak, other agents or administrators who were properly trained could fill in as substitutes. Skousen's topics for such assignments typically covered espionage, juvenile delinquency, and exciting stories from the gangster era. He was also assigned to address foreign threats.

"I was into Communism almost at the beginning of my FBI experience," Skousen said, not only for personal interests, but because Hoover had all agents study Communism. "Only two of us took it really seriously: Bill Sullivan and myself, and it wasn't long after I came back from the field until Bill Sullivan and I were the only two agents allowed to speak on Communism, besides Mr. Hoover. ...Bill and I prepared our speeches in a way that didn't put the Director on the spot. We made Communism ideologically obnoxious, citing things they were saying and doing."<sup>22, 23</sup>

Skousen told a biographer that the whole Communism situation was too delicate for just anyone to address. "You've got the head of the

21 Ibid.

22 Crismon Lewis interview of W. Cleon Skousen, 1998; *ibid.* *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, 1998.

23 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, January 28, 1948, mentions speaking in behalf of Mr. R. B. Hood on espionage and crime in light of the growing Communist menace in America. Audience was 400 guests at the Jewish Men's Club of the Wilshire Hebrew Temple, the largest and wealthiest group of Jews outside of New York. Afterwards, "nearly all of those present came by to shake my hand."

Communist Party in the basement of the White House, they had control of about eight unions, and the president wanted to cultivate them to get those big unions to vote for him. It was tricky stuff.”<sup>24</sup>

In addition, the mandate for the FBI was to investigate Nazism not Communism. “Hoover put his neck on the line investigating Communists,” Skousen said. “He thought they were a greater threat than Nazis. He also fed information to McCarthy.”<sup>25</sup>

As the number of speakers on Communism increased over the years, Hoover made it clear that approved speakers had his full approval. “Representatives of the FBI who are privileged to speak before various groups throughout the country,” Hoover said, “do so with my full knowledge and approval. Their remarks on Communism do not repudiate in any way statements I have made in my speeches.”<sup>26</sup>

Skousen’s relationship with J. Edgar Hoover was friendly and supportive. During the years that Skousen was assigned to FBI headquarters he was brought into frequent and regular contact with the Director. When Skousen was director of the communications section, his offices were right across the hall from the Director’s suite.

“J. Edgar Hoover was the dynamo that put the fuel in the FBI tank,” Skousen wrote in his journals. “He was sharp and professional, very precise in everything he did, and usually spoke with the rapidity of a machine gun. I counted him a great friend and one of the truly superior human beings I have known in my life.”<sup>27</sup>

## **"MY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT"**

During World War II, Mr. Hoover attributed to Skousen a degree of executive standing by referring to him in dozens of letters as “one of my administrative assistants,” even though such a position did not formally

24 Crismon Lewis interview, *op. cit.*, 1998.

25 *Ibid.*

26 J. Edgar Hoover to William E. Fort, Jr., March 20, 1962.

27 J. Edgar Hoover to W. Cleon Skousen, January 6, 1959. Hoover laments, “I, too, am sorry that your schedule did not permit you to drop by my office—it would have indeed been a pleasure to have had the opportunity of talking to you.”

exist in the Bureau at the time.<sup>28</sup> Hoover also called Skousen “a most effective administrator at the Seat of Government.”<sup>29</sup> These attributions inadvertently led to assumptions that agent Skousen held positions at the FBI that he did not.

“There was a lot of hiring in anticipation of possible war,” Skousen said. “They were calling in all personnel in the field with administrative experience. All who were over divisions were called administrative assistants. There were eight administrative assistants but they reported to the Assistant Director, Mr. Nichols.”<sup>30</sup>

Were such letters to prospective audiences wherein Skousen was called “my administrative assistant” actually made by Hoover?

“Mr. Hoover was criticized for never allowing mail to go out of the FBI except over his signature,” Skousen said. “Every letter that came out of FBI headquarters had one name on it. The buck stopped here on the desk of J. Edgar Hoover. All his letters were signed personally by him or his immediate secretary and over his personal responsibility.”<sup>31</sup>

Skousen’s friendship with Hoover continued long after Skousen’s 16-year career with the FBI ended. In 1951, he was offered a job at Brigham Young University, an assignment he accepted as a calling from his church to help build up the university and the faculty. On Skousen’s last day with the FBI, he stopped by Mr. Hoover’s office to say goodbye. Hoover stood up and demanded, “Who are you mad at?”

“I’m not mad at anyone,” Skousen replied.

“Why did you resign?”

“Well, you know how it is in the Mormon Church. They reach out and pick you up no matter what profession you’re in.”

Hoover then took Skousen’s hand in a warm handshake. “Well, I guess you’re going from the defensive team to the offensive team,”

28 Dozens of examples citing Skousen as “one of my administrative assistants” were mailed from Mr. Hoover to prospective audiences announcing Skousen as his substitute. For example, in Hoover to Mr. Bernard Batty, dated March 20, 1944, “...I am very happy to suggest Mr. W. Cleon Skousen, one of my administrative assistants. Mr. Skousen makes an excellent speech ... Sincerely yours, J. Edgar Hoover.” *WCS Journals, 1944.*

29 J. Edgar Hoover to J. Willard Marriott, May 7, 1958. See FBI personnel file on W. Cleon Skousen

30 Crismon Lewis interview, op. cit., 1998

31 W. Cleon Skousen, “J. Edgar Hoover As I Knew Him,” speech at a memorial service honoring J. Edgar Hoover who had recently died, Hilton Hotel, Boston, Mass., 1972.

he said. "I always knew where you stood. If you ever want to come back, you know you'll always be welcome, just let me know."<sup>32</sup>

## THE DIRECTOR DOES NOT ENDORSE

For years afterwards, Skousen periodically sent gift copies of his new books to Mr. Hoover, or dropped by to say hello when he was in town. Hoover faithfully wrote back warm greetings and noted important events in Skousen's private and professional life with a kind note or letter.<sup>33</sup> Hoover also inscribed a personal note in a copy of his own *Masters of Deceit* that Skousen had mailed to FBI headquarters to obtain an autograph.

As for *The Naked Communist*, it was a long established policy of Mr. Hoover's to never endorse other people's projects, programs or books. Whenever people asked about the writings of former agents, Hoover properly declined to comment and distanced the FBI from them so he could retain a position of political neutrality.<sup>34</sup>

Even so, Hoover came close to endorsing *The Naked Communist*. After he received his autographed copy<sup>35</sup> he wrote a friendly note back to Skousen, "I feel certain that your efforts in this important subject will receive widespread attention and consideration. It was good of you to remember me with a copy bearing my name."<sup>36</sup> Later, Hoover took time to send Skousen some favorable book reviews of *The Naked Communist*.

32 Crismon Lewis interview, op. cit, 1998; see also W. Cleon Skousen, "J. Edgar Hoover As I Knew Him"; see also *Behind the Scenes*, The Freeman Institute, November 1979.

33 Private correspondence from Mr. Hoover included comments on Skousen's role as Chief of Police in Salt Lake City and his dismissal, the publication of *The Naked Communist*, congratulatory letters regarding private family events, a visit from the BYU Madrigal Singers, invitations to BYU, etc., *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*.

34 W. Cleon Skousen to Jerry L. Rowley, January 20, 1966.

35 Skousen sent a leather-bound copy with the inscription, "March 18, 1958, To John Edgar Hoover, Whose wisdom, loyalty and integrity have powerfully bolstered this nation and the thinking of its people for nearly two generations. Please accept a copy of this volume as an expression of my deep admiration for you both as a person and as the leader of the great American institution you have built. Sincerely, [signed] W. Cleon Skousen."

36 J. Edgar Hoover to W. Cleon Skousen, April 2, 1958.



“These enclosures are very complimentary to your new book,” he said in 1959, “and I thought you would be interested in seeing them. With best wishes, Sincerely yours, J. Edgar Hoover.”<sup>37</sup>

## FINALIZING THE BOOK

The actual consolidation of Skousen’s research into a completed book was given a strong push after he left the FBI. In 1953, after he was into his new university job for just a couple of years, the university president asked Skousen if he would participate on a committee to produce a book on Communism, perhaps developing it into a college textbook. Skousen gladly accepted and went to work on what was to be called “Communism and the American Heritage.”<sup>38</sup>

After a couple of years, things bogged down. Skousen wrote the university president to express his concern that too much time was being wasted debating the basics of Communism’s history and Marxist theory that was already documented.

“In many ways this turned out to be the most difficult assignment of all,” Skousen said in 1962. “At that time the literature on Communism was not only technical but spotty and scattered. Furthermore, no comprehensive text, in English, on the entire history, philosophy and subversive nature of Communism had been developed. Therefore, the committee struggled along for months trying to reach a few fundamental criteria upon which to construct a text but there was such divergence of opinion that it soon became apparent that the text would eventually have to be written by a single individual and then submitted to the rest for suggestions.”

With the university president’s urging, the other professors agreed to free Skousen from his commitments so he could finish a book on his own. It took Skousen another five years.

37 J. Edgar Hoover to W. Cleon Skousen, May 21, 1959.

38 A copy of the first 17 chapters, with title page, resides in Skousen’s files.

## FINDING THE RIGHT TITLE

Originally, Skousen named his book “Communism and the American Heritage.” Later he changed it to “The Cry of Communism.” He wasn’t settled on a name but was leaning toward the latter.<sup>39</sup>

And then one day he happened to broach the subject with his friend and famed movie producer, Cecil B. DeMille, who was also strongly anti-Communist and an advocate for freedom. Mr. DeMille was just finishing up his epic movie, *The Ten Commandments*, when Skousen offered a final draft of his manuscript for DeMille’s reaction. After a few weeks, DeMille responded back, “Cleon, what you’ve done here is strip the Communists of all pretense and propaganda. Therefore I should call the book, *The Naked Communist*.” Skousen did, and the rest is history.<sup>40</sup>

Upon receiving a first edition, DeMille replied, “Your new book, *The Naked Communist*, is a very useful treatment of a subject to which Americans need to be continually alert.”<sup>41</sup>

## A BEST SELLER

In 1958, Skousen was so passionate about spreading “the word,” that he bypassed the large publishing houses and took from his own savings to pay for the first printing of 5,000 copies of *The Naked Communist*. At first the books didn’t sell and sat on pallets in a friend’s garage. It took about a year before the book finally caught on. And when it did, it caught like fire.

The first printing quickly sold out in just a few months. Shortly after, the second was on its way, and the third was almost sold out before it even came off the press. Within two years, the press runs grew from 10,000 copies to 20,000, and at one point the book was printed in lots of 50,000.

Praise for *The Naked Communist* poured in from all corners. In addition to Mr. Hoover’s note mentioned earlier, other Bureau friends

39 Monroe Stearns, editor, Prentice-Hall, Inc. to W. Cleon Skousen, May 26, 1955.

40 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, December 28, 2002.

41 Cecil B. DeMille to W. Cleon Skousen, April 10, 1958.

congratulated him on a work well done. Skousen wrote in his journals that he sold “several hundred copies to former FBI associates.”<sup>42</sup>

The former Assistant Director of the FBI, Stanley J. Tracy, commented, “This is the most powerful book on the subject of Communism I have ever read. It is the logical sequence of J. Edgar Hoover’s book, *Masters of Deceit*. It is the perfect book for college professors to teach from and it belongs on the library shelves of every university and public library in the country.”<sup>43</sup>

Paul Harvey, news analyst on coast-to-coast radio, told his audience, “I have never given any volume such an unqualified endorsement.”<sup>44</sup>

The Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. wrote to say, “We have sent several copies of the book to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei suggesting that the book be translated for distribution. We shall keep you informed of further developments.”<sup>45</sup>

The Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. wrote, “In stripping Communism of its aura of ‘rationalism’ and ‘inevitability’ and exposing it in all its naked ugliness, you have charted a course of action for the free world in this crucial period of human history.”<sup>46</sup>

The nationally-syndicated newspaper columnist and radio commentator George E. Sokolsky challenged American supporters of Communism to wake up and pay attention: “For those Chicago lawyers, and others, who really like to know what they are applauding, I recommend a book. It is entitled *The Naked Communist*.”<sup>47</sup>

The American Bar Association recommended it in its 1958 Annual Report. The U.S. Army Intelligence School listed it as recommended reading. Congressmen, senators, schools and universities across the land wrote to express gratitude and endorse Skousen’s book.

42 *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen*, 1958-1961.

43 Skousen said Stanley Tracy “was the immediate assistant to Mr. Hoover for many years. I worked closely with him on a number of important projects for the Director. ... When I wrote the *Naked Communist* he was one of the first FBI officials to give it a warm endorsement.” *Journals of W. Cleon Skousen* 1998-Jan-Mar binder.

44 Paul Harvey to W. Cleon Skousen, October 7, 1958.

45 Samuel C. H. Ling to W. Cleon Skousen, December 1, 1958.

46 Dr. George K. C. Yeh to W. Cleon Skousen, October 8, 1958.

47 George E. Sokolsky, *These Days* newspaper column, January 14, 1959.

Of Skousen, Ronald Reagan wrote in 1964, “No one is better qualified to discuss the threat to this nation from Communism.”<sup>48</sup>

There was nothing about *The Naked Communist* that appealed to the liberal press. *Look Magazine* said in its issue dated March 13, 1962, that the popular reception of the book was “fabulous because [it] was never reviewed by *The New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune* or the *Saturday Review*, the three musts in the field,” yet it was selling “... 1,000 copies a day and is now in its 11th printing.”<sup>49</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

Part of the great contribution by *The Naked Communist* toward learning Communism’s history and goals was due largely to Skousen’s research practices and procedures. The problem he faced was language barriers and accessibility. At the time, a vast majority of historical facts, quotes, and biographies regarding Communism and its founders were in French, German or Russian, and were printed in Europe. Very few books were available to American students. The answer for Skousen was to adhere to original source materials which were available in English.

“I preferred to make my analysis from the original Communist sources and draw my own conclusions because I had found that many modern apologists for Communist theory had tried to twist the original doctrines in an effort to rationalize away their inconsistencies.”

As for more modern events, he quoted current authors who were actively researching Communist conspiracy. These are cited in the bibliography.

“My bibliography includes a large percentage of original Communist sources,” Skousen said. “Practically all of these were published in America for the first time by the International Publishers of New York between 1930 and 1940. These are the books I have in my library and the ones which I quote.”<sup>50</sup>

48 Ronald Reagan to Mrs. John Mathias, February 19, 1964, op. cit, *WCS Journals*, 1964.

49 *Look Magazine*, March 13, 1962.

50 W. Cleon Skousen, “My Reply to Dr. Richard D. Poll and His Critique of *The Naked Communist*,” self-published.

## ANTI-COMMUNISM MOVEMENT

The anti-Communism movement of the 1950s and '60s swallowed up Skousen and his book in a rush of pro-America and anti-Communism fervor. Skousen gave an average 400 speeches a year for an exhausting five-year stretch—he gave six speeches on one day, setting a personal record. That level of intensity was a marked increase compared with his speech-giving duties at the FBI. That much public exposure spawned a great deal of enquiry into Skousen's background and expertise on Communism.

As his name became widely known, his credentials underwent exaggeration to the point that some people started bragging that he was “a top aide to J. Edgar Hoover,” and “the FBI's top expert on Communism,” attributions that Skousen never claimed, and he labored to correct.

## FBI TAKES A CLOSER LOOK

Shortly after *The Naked Communist* was published in 1958, the FBI decided to formally review the book. The Bureau's Domestic Intelligence Division wanted to see how the FBI was treated, and Skousen's overall handling of the subject matter of Communism.

Aside from some minor errors they identified “which should not detract from its overall effectiveness,” the review was favorable and fell just shy of the forbidden endorsement.

“The book is well written,” the report stated. “It does add considerably to the growing number of anti-Communist books. It clearly points out the Communist threat to the free world. It incorporates in one volume many aspects of Communism including Communist theories, the lives of Communist leaders, brutality of Communism in its march for world conquest, fallacies of Communism and suggestions on how to fight Communism in the crucial period between now and 1970.”<sup>51</sup>

## CIA TAKES A CLOSER LOOK

The nation's spy agency was also interested in *The Naked Communist*, and the few copies they had on hand were constantly checked out of

51 FBI Memorandum, A. H. Belmont to L. V. Boardman, April 8, 1958, ref. 67-69602.

the CIA library. Skousen had written a letter of introduction to Director Dulles at the CIA, but the response came from the acting assistant, Paul W. Howerton.

“We have been well aware of the book, and in fact, placed orders for it as long ago as last May,” Howerton wrote in September 1958. “We have copies in our regular library and our training library. You might be interested to know that when I tried to get one of our copies to refresh my memory, they were all out on loan to members of the organization.”

In 1986, almost 30 years after Howerton’s letter, Skousen was being given a private tour through the CIA’s headquarters building in Langley, Virginia. He was led to the main library and then to a small side room with a sign above the door that read, “H. I. C. — Historical Intelligence Collection.” Inside were hundreds of old books lining shelves from floor to ceiling, most in English, some in Cyrillic and Chinese, others in Arabic and modern Hebrew. The topics ranged from the spy novels of Tom Clancy, Ian Fleming and dozens of others, to manuals on war tactics, intelligence workbooks, and domestic and foreign spy-craft books. Most of them were first editions, and many were signed. Then the librarian directed Skousen’s attention to the shelf against the wall, towards the corner. There stood three copies of *The Naked Communist*, one of them in Spanish.

“It was our bible during the cold war,” the librarian told him. “We didn’t have anything to work with that helped us understand the enemy until this book came along. It was our best reference until other materials arrived, and was an enormous help. All of us in intelligence had a copy—well worn and dog-eared, just like those. Would you autograph them, please?”<sup>52</sup>

## HOLLYWOOD’S ANSWER TO COMMUNISM

The anti-Communism excitement was not just a rabble-rousing of American passions as some have dismissed it, but a reaction to continued taunts and threats by Khrushchev and other leading Communists around

52 Visit to the CIA headquarters building, May 1986, with son Paul B. Skousen.