FAIR ENOUGH

By Westbrook Pegler

THE charge against Alger Hiss was perjury, which is bad enough of itself, but the jury held that he lied when he denied that he gave secret documents out of our State department to an agent of the Soviet government. It follows that the conviction of perjury implies a finding of traitorous conduct by a man who then held a position of great trust.

Some of the reactions to this proof of historic betrayal, incomparably worse than Benedict Arnold's, indicate the extent of the depravity which set in with the "recognition" of Soviet Russia in December 1933 and became an awful corruption as the plan developed.

The Washington Post editorially said: "Hiss had the misfortune of being tempted to betray his country in an era of widespread illusions about communism and of being tried for perjury . . . in a period of cold war when the pendulum of public sentiment had swung far in the other direction . . . It is difficult to believe that a man of Mr. Hiss' training and reputation could commit a similar offense in the climate of today's international politics."

THIS argues the revolting proposition that the offense of betraying the United States to Russia was not as bad when the deed was done as it is deemed to be today, and might be a mere social error in time to come.

I think we might thank that paper, the propaganda horn and a loud one at that, of Eugene Meyer, one of our richest men and an intimate friend of Felix Frankfurter, the political and intellectual patron of Alger Hiss.

It frankly states its considered opinion that Hiss was unfortunate in coming under temptation and then twice implies that but for a change in the international political "climate" his crime would have been less detestable than it was. So public temper, not Alger Hiss, is the more at fault.

It expressed a subtle and baffling idea that those hundreds of traitors planted in all the departments of our government were the victims of "widespread illusions about communism," although the fact is notorious that they were highly educated and many of them members of the Frankfurter cult from Harvard Law school. This clarifies the Post's standards of patriotism and fidelity in very few words. Now we know where it stands.

HOW widespread were those "illusions" about communism? I never was a victim of them. Were you? I never had any doubt that Soviet Russia was a ruthless, bloody dictatorship as Franklin D. Roosevelt finally came to admit in a moment of anger many years later. Did you? Did Eugene Meyer?

The truth is that those "illusions" were not "widespread" at any time. There is absolutely no doubt that Roosevelt did permit Communists to filter into the government well knowing, for he was an all-wise leader, that communism was fundamentally hostile to the American Constitution which he was sworn to uphold.

Communists were few at most and those who served the Soviet from positions of trust in the United States were not victims of illusions but deliberate traitors, all mentally qualified to know what they were doing because party membership is restricted to expert hair-splitters in Marxian dialectics.

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