

RED, WHITE, AND BLACK: ANTI-COMMUNISM, MASSIVE RESISTANCE,
AND THE CASE OF ORVAL FAUBUS

A Master's Thesis

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RESISTANCE, AND THE CASE OF ORVAL FAUBUS**

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ABSTRACT

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AND THE CASE OF ORVAL FAUBUS

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In 1954, The Supreme Court of the United States declared in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that racial segregation in the nation's public schools was against the U.S. Constitution. In the South, where racial segregation was the norm, the decision triggered a region wide reaction called the Massive Resistance. The resistance movement also coincided with the domestic anti-communist consensus of the Cold War, but the historical southern tendency to brand racial reform as communistic was more central. One focus of the thesis is this continuity. The other focus is on how a moderate Upper South state, Arkansas, became the site of the greatest Massive Resistance crisis in 1957 over the integration of the Little Rock High School, owing to the anti-communist and segregationist propaganda emanating from the Deep South. Although the movement was initiated by a conservative white elite, the support of local southern community and the intimidation of moderately inclined white southerners, was a key to its success. In reaching down to grassroots and pushing moderacy to inactivity, the combination of an anti-communist and anti-integrationist rhetoric had specific importance in

Arkansas. It was with such combination that the resistance could contribute greatly to the building up of the 1957 integration crisis in Little Rock, by mostly mobilizing the otherwise silent grassroots and by giving the previously moderate Governor Orval Faibus an opportunity to assert a new and more acceptable conservative stance. To get down to local circumstances personal papers of southern leaders, mostly including propaganda material, Faibus's personal papers and autobiographies, and memoirs of Arkansas figures were consulted, as well as secondary sources.

Keywords: Anti-communism, Massive Resistance, Arkansas, Little Rock Crisis, Orval Faibus, Southern Conservatism.

ÖZET

KIZIL, BEYAZ, VE SİYAH: ANTI-KOMÜNİZM, KİTLESEL DİRENİŞ VE ORVAL FAUBUS

Özdemir, Fatma Dođuş
Yüksek Lisans, Tarih Bölümü
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1954'te ABD Temyiz Mahkemesi, aldığı bir kararla ülke çapında devlet okullarında ırka dayalı ayrımcılığı anayasaya aykırı bulmuştur. Bu karar, ırksal ayrımcılığın çoğunlukla toplum düzeninin temel bir parçası olduğu güney eyaletlerinde, Kitlesele Direniş olarak adlandırılan, bölgesel çapta bir hareketi tetiklemiştir. Bu direniş hareketi, Soğuk Savaş'ın getirdiği ulusal anti-komünist görüş birliği ile zamansal olarak örtüşse de, güneydeki tarihsel eğilim zaten ırksal reform çabalarını komünizm ile bağdaştırma yönündeydi. Bu tezde üzerine eğilinen bir konu söz konusu tarihsel sürekliliktir. Diğer bir konu ise, önceleri ılımlı olan Yukarı Güney eyaleti Arkansas'nın, 1957'de Little Rock Lisesi'nin entegrasyonu sırasında yaşanan krizle, Kitlesele Direniş'in merkezi konumuna gelmesidir. Bu değişimde, Merkez Güney'den yayılan anti-komünist ve ayrımcı propaganda büyük rol oynamıştır. Direniş hareketi Muhafazakâr beyaz bir seçkin zümre tarafından başlatılmış olsa da, güneyli yerel halkın desteği ve ılımlı eğilimlere sahip beyaz güneyli liderlere göz dağı verilmesi hareketin başarısındaki temel etken olmuştur. Direnişçi söylemin Arkansas'ya ulaşarak tabana hitap edebilmesinde ve eyaletteki

ılımlı kesimi pasifize etmesinde, aynı anda anti-komünist ve ayrımcı olan söylemin etkisi özellikle önem kazanmıştır. Bu bileşim sayesinde direniş, 1957 entegrasyon krizinin doğmasında önemli bir etken olmuştur ve aksi takdirde sessiz kalabilecek olan tabanı hareketlendirerek önceleri ılımlı olan vali Orval Faubus'u yeni, muhafazakâr ve toplumda kolay kabul görebilecek bir duruşu benimsemeye sevk etmiştir. Yerel koşulları kavrayabilmek amacıyla, ikincil kaynaklara ek olarak, güneyli liderlerin daha çok propaganda malzemeleri içeren kişisel koleksiyonlarının yanı sıra, Faubus'un özel koleksiyonu ile otobiyografileri ve Arkansas'da öne çıkan kişilerin basılmış hatıralarına başvurulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anti-komünizm, Kitlesele Direniş, Arkansas, Little Rock Krizi, Orval Faubus, Amerika'nın güneyindeki muhafazakârlık.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States rendered the most critical decision in terms of race relations in the country, with *Brown v. Board of Education*. The decision declared unconstitutional the racial segregation in public schools, which had long been practiced in the South since the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision that had allowed the separation of the races “in equal terms.” The decision touched a very fundamental aspect of Southern life at a critical time, and thus resulted in a region wide reaction, referred to as the Massive Resistance.

In August, 1954, in response to the decision, Virginia governor Thomas B. Stanley appointed a commission on public education headed by Senator Garland Gray, with a gradual and moderate program of accepting token desegregation and leaving the implementation to local authorities. However, even before a constitutional convention met, Senator Harry Flood Byrd had successfully advertised the passage of an interposition resolution by the legislature. He had “issued a call for ‘massive resistance’ to desegregation, and an all-out defense of white supremacy had become the dominant theme of Virginia politics.” And in early February 1956, the Virginia general assembly approved an interposition resolution, Stanley announced

his support of interposition, and the Gray Commission discarded its gradualist local provisions, bringing them into alignment with the governor's position.¹

This doctrine soon spread to legislatures of other states; and as Massive Resistance gained prominence and regional unity was established, the southern congressional delegation announced in March 1956, a "Declaration of Constitutional Principles". Known as the Southern Manifesto, the declaration was signed by 19 of the southern states' 22 senators and 82 of its 106 representatives. It embraced interposition declaring the *Brown* decision unconstitutional.² Preservation of the racial status quo lay at the heart of the reaction; however, this legal reaction depended heavily on constitutional arguments and favored states' rights against the centralized power of the federal government. Indeed, the rhetoric employed by the leaders of the resistance, reflected a varying range of ideas. One of the most prominent of these was anti-communism, which by 1954 had a nationwide resonance as well. Moreover, the most prominent Massive Resistance crisis happened at a time that coincided with the high tide of the Cold War, in 1957, in Little Rock, Arkansas. This thesis will thus be looking into the ways in which anti-communism and forces of Massive Resistance played out in Arkansas. Such background to the crisis reveals several formerly unnoticed conditions about the crisis. The particular combination of anti-communist and segregationist rhetoric of the Massive Resistance contributed greatly to the building up of the crisis, by both easily appealing to the grassroots prejudices and by pushing the moderate state officials to the right of the political spectrum – Governor Orval Faubus being the foremost.

¹ Numan V. Bartley, *A History of the South: The New South 1945-1980*, (Texas: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 193-94.

² *Ibid.*, 198. Interposition was the legal procedure that had been adopted back in the Virginia Resolution of 1798 and revived during the Massive Resistance. It enabled the states to nullify federal laws which they consider as unconstitutionally undermining states' rights.

As to the historical context in which the Brown decision triggered the Massive Resistance, especially for the South, it was a time of insecurity in the face of change, and southern states resisted the ruling with arguments extending beyond mere white supremacy. At the same time that the region was undergoing economic and social changes such as industrialization and urbanization in the post World War II period; the civil rights movement was gaining momentum and the federal government was increasingly acting in its favor. Southerners already had doubts about the social and racial liberalism of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, despite the overall support for his wartime policy. It was in the late 1930s that forces of white southern conservatism began to rise against New Deal policies' undermining of states' rights and the region's racial order.³ Harry S. Truman's presidency went on feeding southern fears. In 1946, he issued the Executive Order 9008 to create the President's Committee on Civil Rights. In 1947, he issued a formal report entitled "To Secure These Rights" that called nationwide for protecting civil rights. In the presidential election of 1948, he declared his support to a permanent Fair Employment Protection Commission, anti-lynching legislation, anti-poll tax laws, and measures to end discrimination in interstate transportation facilities.⁴ This resulted in the breaking of the Democratic Party, with a southern faction forming the third party under Strom Thurmond's leadership. Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected in 1952 with a conservative stance against the "softness" of Truman both in terms of anti-communism and in matters of race. However he would disappoint white southerners during the crisis in Little Rock, although he opposed desegregation of the armed forces in 1948, resisted federal intervention in racial

³ Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 24-25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

issues since 1953, refused to endorse the 1954 *Brown* decision, and declared in 1956 that racial issues were “matters of the heart not of legislation.”

Moreover, beginning with late 1940s, a series of Supreme Court cases had already begun chipping away at segregation, feeding white southerners’ perception about the Court’s revolutionary and even tyrannical nature. In the 1948 *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* decision, the Court reaffirmed its 1938 decision in the Missouri *Gaines* case. In 1938 Lloyd Gaines was denied admission to University of Missouri Law School, because of his race. The state did not have a separate law school for blacks, but just provided tuition for those who wanted to study elsewhere. When he brought suit, with the help of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People, the court ruled that “the state either provide a ‘separate but equal’ law school or admit Gaines to the white school.”⁵ *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* was a similar case involving the University of Oklahoma Law School. In 1950, three more cases that threatened institutionalized white supremacy followed. Herman Sweatt applied to the University of Texas Law School and was denied admission, again because of his race. Unlike the situation in Oklahoma and Missouri, Texas opted for creating a separate law school for blacks. This time Sweatt’s lawyers attacked the practice of segregation, claiming that “Sweatt’s constitutional right of equal protection of the laws could be satisfied only by admission to the state university.” The Court determined that the separate law school was never close to being equal to the white one, and ordered the admission of Sweatt to the white law school. Thus in *Sweatt v. Painter*, the court came very close to destroying the “separate but equal” doctrine. *McLaurin v. Board of Regents* and *Henderson v. United States* were the two others handed down on the same day, June 5, 1950. In *McLaurin*, after the University

⁵ Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950’s* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), 5.

of Oklahoma began admitting black students in alignment with the *Sipuel* decision, the Court upheld graduate student G. W. MacLaurin's pleas that segregated facilities in the campus denied equality before the law. In *Henderson*, it prohibited segregation on railway dining cars.⁶

The period also coincided with the high tide of the Cold War in the international arena and its culmination in the domestic sphere with the rising tide of anti-communism. In 1946, at the same time that Winston Churchill made his "Iron Curtain" speech, the United States Chamber of Commerce distributed two hundred copies of a pamphlet entitled "Communist Infiltration in the United States," and the Canadian government uncovered a Soviet spy ring. The following year Truman announced his containment policy, and around the same time the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the House Un-American Activities Committee intensified their hunt on domestic subversion. A series of espionage cases, such as the Alger Hiss case of 1948, Klaus Fuchs case of 1949, and that of the Rosenbergs in 1951, and the rise in national politics of Senator Joseph McCarthy, were simultaneous with such international Cold War developments as the Communist victory in China, the fall of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union's detonation of the Atomic Bomb, and the deployment of American troops to Korea.⁷ The south had an important role to play, both in the conservative coalition that brought Eisenhower's presidential victory in 1952 and the anti-communist consensus that had taken hold by then. Federal institutions such as FBI and HUAC, and other similar committees, were either dominated by or paid considerable attention to conservative Southern Democrats who saw a communist conspiracy behind the crystallization of the civil rights movement and the federal support they enjoyed.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁷ M. J. Heale, *American Anticommunism: Combating the Enemy Within, 1830-1970*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990), 132-154.

This latter context added a significant element to the revival of southern solidarity in defense of preserving the racial status quo. It gave the advocates of resistance an effective weapon. The south already had an exceptionally strong anti-radical, anti-outsider, and anti-communist tradition, which supplied the political leadership of the resistance with an already receptive public. During the mid-fifties, anti-communism increasingly became an important part of the rhetoric employed by southern leaders, greatly strengthening the effectiveness of segregationist propaganda, at a time in which an overtly and solely racist rhetoric would be less effective. This thesis will evaluate the use of anti-communism by southern resisters in the post-Brown era, showing first the deep-rooted nature of a southern brand of anti-communism, merged with ideas of white supremacy, through historical continuities. Then, variations will be revealed through the specific ways in which it was integrated into broader Massive Resistance rhetoric; such as the defense of states' rights, the Constitution, and white supremacy. Finally, it will conclude by examining the ways in which this rhetoric contributed to the Little Rock crisis in Arkansas.

The Massive Resistance movement materialized especially after the 1955 ruling that brought a gradualist approach to the implementation of the 1954 decision, assigning responsibility for desegregation plans to local school boards. Right after the first Brown decision, the Deep South states initiated the wave of propaganda that urged a legislative resistance strategy to take hold in the whole region by the time the second decision that regulated the implementation of the first came, and that eventually resulted in the "Southern Manifesto". The Deep South also became the center for the dissemination of segregationist and anti-communist ideology. However, it was mostly the states of the Upper South that eventually determined the

long-term direction of the movement, with a more hesitant and prudent attitude. The severity of anti-communism's deployment as a weapon seemed to be directly proportional to the extremity of the segregationist rhetoric. Thus, while it was more obvious and outspoken in the Deep South, it was more complicated and its impact uncertain in the periphery where forces of moderation were more at stake. Still, the Massive Resistance manifested itself in 1957 in an upper south state, with the most notable and internationally acknowledged Massive Resistance crisis of the Cold War era. The crisis over integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, brought the Federal Government and a southern State in direct conflict. And Arkansas governor Orval Eugene Faubus opted for resistance.

Although Arkansas suddenly turned into a stronghold of Massive Resistance with the crisis, before the incident it had been one of the most moderate states in the south in terms of race relations. While important victories that contributed most to the rise of Massive Resistance politics were taking place in the Deep South – that of the leading segregationist and anti-communist Herman Talmadge in Georgia, and of the strongest anti-Truman and anti-integration force in the region James F. Byrnes in South Carolina – liberal politics could survive in the State. Right after the Supreme Court handed down the *Brown* decision in 1954, Faubus's predecessor Francis Cherry had already announced that Arkansas would not defy the order. Although Faubus's own personal history as well did not point to a prejudice against blacks, he eventually became the icon of Massive Resistance in 1957. An anti-communist sentiment combined with the forces of Massive Resistance working in the background seemed to contribute greatly to Faubus's unexpected segregationist stance during the crisis. Moreover his own personal ambitions and the specific conditions of the Arkansas atmosphere were other ingredients that fed the eventual

crisis. As will be demonstrated with the Arkansas example too, it is important to pay close attention to what happened on the local level to come to a better understanding of both the Massive Resistance and southern anti-communism. On the local level, even personalities and their interaction with their specific constituencies played an important role. Looking at local politics would also contribute to a better comprehension of events, such as the Little Rock integration crisis, that had important implications in the broader issues of national politics such as the Civil Rights Movement, McCarthyism, and even the Cold War.

Up until the 1990s in American historiography, white southern resistance to desegregation was studied mostly as a side issue within the historiography of the Civil Rights Movement, thus mostly in isolation with issues such as domestic anti-communism or the Cold War, which had their own treatment in a wholly separate historiographical realm.⁸ Historians of the civil rights movement, as Charles W. Eagles points out, “have tended to emphasize one side of the struggle, the movement side, and to neglect their professional obligation to understand the other side, the segregationist side.”⁹ He noted that it was after a burst of books around 1970 that historians and other academics began to dominate the field and the two most prominent southern historians included were Numan V. Bartley and Neil R. McMillen, whose works did offer a significant insight into the opposition to the movement.¹⁰

⁸ The best account that got down to the locality of domestic anti-communism was M. J. Heale, *McCarthy's Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation, 1935-1965*, (London: McMillan Press Ltd., 1998). Heale also studied southern anti-communism and its importance in the national red scare, by focusing on Georgia. Another useful account tracing the anticommunism as a long tradition was Joel Kovel, *Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anticommunism and the Making of America*, (New York: Perseus Book Group, 1994).

⁹ Charles W. Eagles, “Toward New Histories of the Civil Rights Era,” *Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 66, No. 4. (Nov., 2000), pp.815-848, 816.

¹⁰ Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South During the 1950's* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969); Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction, 1954-64* (Urbana, Chivago: University

Numan V. Bartley's 1969 book on the Massive Resistance is an extensive study that gave a whole account of the consolidation and rise of conservative southern politics during the 1950s.¹¹ He placed in his work a considerable emphasis on the anti-communist propaganda that the political leadership of the resistance undertook by talking about how the political leadership placed anti-communist charges into the resistance propaganda, especially during the mid 1950s, when their aspirations grew to include nationalized arguments. Bartley briefly focused on the legislative and investigative committees in various states, whose efforts to discredit racial reform as part of a communist conspiracy, "went hand-in-hand with interposition and with neobourbon efforts to oppose progressive policies on the national political level."¹² In his account, however, both the Massive Resistance movement and its use of anti-communism, was treated on the whole as a monolith and highly organized effort, led by a group of conscious elites. Although he noted the existence of southern dissent within the movement and the limitations brought by urbanization and corporate business, his account lacked the varieties, complexities and failures that reveal themselves when specific locales and persons are at focus.

Neil McMillen's detailed focus on The Citizens' Councils was complementary of Bartley's work, in that he revealed the variety of the resistance.¹³

of Illinois Press, 1971). Another work in the same light was L. A. Newby, *Challenge to the Court: Social Scientists and Defense of Segregation, 1954-1966* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967).

¹¹ His main argument was that the South could not adjust itself to the quick economic and demographic changes that took place in the mid century in a manner that increasingly threatened a basic southern social system, segregation. Thus it responded by attaching itself more and more to an inherited southern identity and launching "a determined program of 'massive resistance'... [which was led by a group of] politicians and political activists... [whose] outlook was in the tradition of nineteenth century bourbonism" He named this leading elite, 'the neobourbons', resembling their organization and resistance to desegregation to the nineteenth century southern elites that had resisted the post Civil War Reconstruction. See Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 17.

¹² *Ibid.*, 189. He explained the actions of these state organizations, along with "a southern informational offensive", accompanied by the Citizens' Councils that contributed greatly to the dissemination of anti-communist propaganda.

¹³ Intensively studying the Councils and council like organizations on a state by state basis, he also paid attention to the character of the membership, the varying degrees of the effectiveness and success

He showed the “boom-in-crisis” pattern inherent in the movement, rather than a perfectly organized structure. However his treatment of anti-communism’s use did not venture beyond Bartley’s. In his account anti-communism was used systematically, outside the region when the council leaders allied themselves with other fronts of the radical right in the Cold War era, and inside, to discredit civil rights movement organization and intimidate white moderate tendencies. Despite rightly noting that “Council leaders were not of a single mind on the relationship between Communism and the integration crisis,” he dismissed the issue by adding that “the question of whether the Communists caused the problem or merely complicated it did not diminish their determination to deny the Negro full equality before the law.”¹⁴

Thus, both works remained uninterested in such a specific issue as anti-communism’s place in the Massive Resistance and as Eagles noted in 2000, “in the three decades since the studies of Numan Bartley and Neil McMillen, however, historians have generally ignored whites, and particularly the powerful white resistance.”¹⁵ And the treatment of the Little Rock incident as well, still occupied a peripheral place in the historical analysis of the Massive Resistance. McMillen looked at Arkansas focusing on the council activity in the state, which he regarded as “a disruptive force of no little consequence” and of no comparable scope to the Deep South, that took its strength from the bipolarization of public sentiment rather than

each enjoyed in the Deep and peripheral souths, or even in different counties. In this way he reflected on the complexity that Bartley’s “neobourbon” argument lacked.

¹⁴ McMillen, *The Citizens’ Council*, 200.

¹⁵ Eagles, “Toward New Histories of the Civil Rights Era,” 842. Eagles connected this absence to the fact that the early accounts of the movement were written by insiders, mostly journalists, who mostly wrote from the perspective of the movement without considering the larger history of the south. In the field of political science, there was the extensive work examining southern politics, V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984), though not necessarily talking about the resistance to civil rights

the number of its members.¹⁶ Bartley spared a chapter for the analysis of the situation in Little Rock which he deemed “the most decisive test of the decade”, and stated that the crisis resulted from “not massive resistance strategy but from an accumulation of failures by well-meaning leaders in Little Rock.”¹⁷ In line with his argument about neobourbons, he focused on the leadership concluding that “three governments – local, state, and, federal – failed to avert a debacle that reasonable planning and a modicum of responsible leadership could have halted at any of the several stages in its development.”¹⁸ His account of the incident revealed a “growing talent for demagoguery” on Faubus’ part, who happened to find himself defending segregation and defying the Court, and then held on to that upon realizing the popularity he enjoyed. Thus what was happening behind the scenes, how the leadership interacted with the grassroots and eventually the exact impact of anti-communism was not examined.

Meanwhile, the civil rights movement scholarship on race relations greatly improved so as to pay attention to such specifics as the Cold War atmosphere that coincided the movement.¹⁹ And in the absence of such focused studies into the segregationist side, Little Rock found its place more in this civil rights scholarship. However without taking into consideration the segregationist side and the limitations caused by anti-communism’s use on the local level, they tended to reach an

¹⁶ McMillen, 96-97.

¹⁷ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 252. The chapter was a revision of, Numan V. Bartley, “Looking back at Little Rock,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, XXV (Summer, 1966), pp. 101-16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 269.

¹⁹ The interaction between U.S. domestic and foreign policy has long been an issue of interest for scholars of American history, especially during the revisionist period and the focus of various scholars on the relationship between U.S. foreign affairs and the civil rights policies was one embodiment of this. Examples to such trend were Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935-1960*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), which emphasized very comprehensively both the benefits and limitations that an international outreach brought on the movement; and Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anti-colonialism, 1937-1957* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), which was a work completely in line with Plummer’s study, only looking specifically at the central role anti-colonial sentiment had on the movement.

overstated conclusion that the Cold War helped the civil rights movement by merely urging an unwilling federal government to act. The most prominent of these was Mary L. Dudziak, with her recent book entitled *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*.²⁰ In her account, the Massive Resistance in the South was dealt with only superficially, as a factor that “threatened to undermine the narrative of race and democracy carefully told in U.S. [Cold War] propaganda.”²¹ She devoted a chapter to the Little Rock incident as the event carrying the already existing white dissent to a massive scale.²² However, she paid insufficient attention to the internal dynamics of the resistance, preferring to place the opposition more into its international context, rather than the local, as it fitted to her thesis. She talked about segregationists such as Senator Herman Talmage, Richard Russell and James O. Eastland’s use of an international rhetoric in their claims about the suppression of states’ rights by the central government.²³ This did little to intimidate the administration to stop asserting executive authority, and indeed, it was aimed more to garner segregationist support. Neglecting the segregationist opposition, she ended up paying too little attention to the possibility that Eisenhower was also acting to maintain domestic order, reassert the Constitution or his presidential authority, against the segregationist resistance. Specifically for Arkansas and anti-communism, she noted that “the state of Arkansas had its own suspicions of Communist

²⁰ She was a Professor of Law and History, and was the first scholar to make the connection between the Cold War and the civil rights movement a main concern in 1988, with her article “Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative” reprinted in Michael L. Krenn, ed. *Race and U.S. Foreign Policy During the Cold War* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998) In many of the later similar articles she wrote, she talked about the international appeals of the civil rights activists and analyzed the impact of the Cold War on the movement. In Mary L. Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), she emphasized the pressure of Cold War foreign policy concerns on the executive branch in its support of the civil rights struggle, and segregationist resistance in Little Rock only found a limited place in this broad argument. See Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 13-15.

²¹ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 16.

²² *Ibid.*, 116-18. The events before Little Rock that she referred to as evidencing the already existing white dissent were Emmet Till’s murder in 1955, Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-56, and Autherine Lucy’s attempt to enroll in The University of Alabama in 1956.

²³ *Ibid.*, 136.

influence,” and talked about how anti-communism was embraced by such an influential segregationist figure as State Attorney General Bruce Bennett.²⁴ However she downplayed this impediment on racial reform, and then selectively emphasized a red baiting incident against Faubus, as an indication of anti-communism’s effect in the opposite direction – to prove that Faubus’ actions helped Soviet propaganda.²⁵ Thus in her very general argument, she concluded that international pressures of the Cold War helped the civil rights movement by making it a must for the executive branch (especially Eisenhower’s) to support it – ignoring the local and domestic reasons as a source for federal policy’s conflict with that of resisting southern states and ignoring the negative impact of southern anti-communism on civil rights organization.²⁶

In 2001, Thomas Borstelmann’s *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Era* was a major work in white resistance scholarship, comparable to Dudziak’s.²⁷ His book slightly reversed Dudziak’s argument, saying

²⁴ Ibid., 124.

²⁵ Ibid. The magazine *Confidential* declared a full-page headline “The Commies Trained Gov. Faubus of Arkansas,” claiming that Faubus might actually be part of a communist plot himself – a conclusion the magazine reached because Faubus’ actions helped Soviet propaganda. One thing Dudziak failed to spot here was that Faubus really did not have a strong enough past record of anti-communism, which made him vulnerable to such attack. This also pushed him to the right of the political spectrum, to confirm his tough anti-communist and segregationist stance.

²⁶ Dudziak’s work was the result of the earlier trend that looked at the civil rights movement in an international context. Her exclusive context was the Cold War. Another work in line with hers, in the field of political science was, Azza Salama Layton, *International Politics and Civil Rights Policies in the United States 1941-1960*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Layton, focusing mostly on the foreign policy implications of domestic racial inequality reported in the briefs for *Brown*, fell to a similar generalization and overstatement, caused mostly by neglect of the southern resistance movement and the local politics involved. Besides both scholars’ main concerns were the actions and motivations of the federal government, rather than the internal dynamics of neither the civil rights movement nor the segregationist opposition.

²⁷ Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001). Borstelmann, focused on the relationship between the Cold War and the white supremacy, like Dudziak had focused on the one between Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement. He drew a parallel between a global pattern of white supremacy and the domestic racial issues of the U.S., and revealed the global evolution of race relations from colonialism to the final liberation movements in the Third World and the parallel evolution of the civil rights movements in the U.S. Although his account at times reads like an international relations study on the relations between South Africa and the United States, the way he connected the British white-ruling dominion, the dilemma U.S. faced in having to go along with the apartheid to hold on to the Cold War alliance (in the face of the anti-colonialist rhetoric against the Soviet Union in the Third

that American race relations also affected the Cold War.²⁸ He also noted, specifically about the white resistance in mid 1950s, that the anti-communist language that conservatives and segregationists employed, was as equally effective as the Cold War language of liberals and racial egalitarians, and that the Eisenhower administration agreed with elements of both arguments, “recogniz[ing] the logic of not driving African states toward the Soviet bloc for assistance, but shar[ing] an underlying assumption about the potential subversiveness of alienated African Americans.”²⁹ Besides, he noted that no one in the administration disagreed with “the nation’s chief policeman, [J. Edgar Hoover, who] argued that the civil rights movement in the South, being angry and reformist, was thoroughly penetrated by Communist Party operatives.”³⁰ He then went on however with the ways in which the administration interacted with Africa and the Third World, seeing the demise of white supremacy in the rest of the world. Thus the segregationist resistance in the American South and the domestic incident of Little Rock remained as side issues in his account.

Another book published the following year by Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, finally revived an interest in the American South by presenting a broad historical account of the important influence that the white conservative southerners

World), and the parallel features of the evolution of the nationalist struggles of black Africans and civil rights struggles of African Americans shed some new light on the extent of complexity facing the United States in foreign policy decision making all during the Cold War.

²⁸ Similarly in Brenda Gayle Plummer, ed. *Window on Freedom: Race, Civil Rights, and Foreign Affairs, 1945-1988*, (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), the complexities involved in the historical analysis of the impact of various international factors on the domestic sphere of race relations would be emphasized. The collection included a variety of essays paying attention to the segregationists, but still within the context of the civil rights movement. In the compilation “Bleached Souls and Red Negroes: The NAACP and Black Communists in the Early Cold War, 1948-1952” by Carol focused on the negative and divisive impact of domestic anti-communism on the movement, “Segregationists and the World: The Foreign Policy of White Resistance” by Thomas Noer focused on the segregationists’ making use of the global racial circumstances of the Cold War, and “Race from Power: U.S. Foreign Policy and the General Crisis of White Supremacy” by Gerald Horne put the white supremacist point of view into a global context.

²⁹ Borstelmann, 108.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

had on U.S. foreign policy, including the Cold War era.³¹ In southerners' foreign policy stance, internationalism had been embraced at some point with Woodrow Wilson's presidency, however, conceptions such as the inferiority of the non-white people, the futility of trying to help them or trying to cooperate with them remained constant. Another constant attached to race that Fry emphasized was the anti-radical and anti-communist tradition, which actually existed long before the rise of domestic anti-communism during the mid-1950s. The impact of the Cold War on such southern perceptions was strengthening them further. When confronted with the new threat of communism early in the Cold War, one defensive reaction in the region was to favor unilateral action abroad (over the long supported Wilsonian internationalism) and to cling to anti-communism more than ever at home.³² Showing the continuity of the Southern anti-communist tradition as stretching beyond the Cold War, Fry also stressed the importance of this aspect in the negative reaction of many southerners to internationalism abroad and to racial reform at home.

Adding to Fry's account, two key studies emerged in year 2004, in terms of elaborating on the specifics of southern segregationist thought and anti-communism. The first was Jeff Woods' focused study on the rise of southern regional solidarity coinciding the Cold War era and the simultaneous rise of a southern red scare.³³ Like Fry, Woods too pointed to the continuity in southern views, stating that both segregation and anti-communism had been important components of the south's regional identity, and the rise of the national red scare gave the segregationist

³¹ Joseph A. Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad: The South and the U.S. Foreign Relations, 1789-1973* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002). In Fry's account, attached most of the times to economic calculations, racial assumptions had an important influence on such southern foreign policy stances as "justification for Indian removal and territorial expansion prior to the Civil War, opposition to the acquisition of an island empire at the turn of the century, growing distress at membership at a United Nations increasingly populated by Africans and Asians in the 1960s, or chronic hostility to immigration in the twentieth century." See Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, 5.

³² *Ibid.*, 223-26.

³³ Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968*. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004)

resistance an effective tool to assert this solidarity. He said that “the southern red scare was in many ways a byproduct of the region’s massive resistance to integration” and it was directed through “an interlocking network of local, state, and federal institutions.”³⁴ Tying the regional red scare to the national one, Woods specifically noted the southern domination of national political bodies such as the House Un-American Activities Committee and Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, and the cooperation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation with similar state and local bodies (“little HUACs” and “little FBIs”, as he named them) in tracing the subversives in the south – who mostly happened to be integrationists or black civil rights activists. While talking about the Little Rock integration crisis, he stated that the crisis “and the Soviet Union’s launching of *Sputnik* had created a nexus within which the southerners could claim that the twin evils of Communism and integration were on the rise.”³⁵ He also gave a detailed account on the efforts of the Attorney General Bruce Bennett to use the Education Committee of the Arkansas Legislative Council in exposing a Communist conspiracy behind the racial unrest in the state, through televised hearings.³⁶ Moreover he mentioned how Faubus signed into law, in a special session of the Legislative Council, two anti-subversive acts a day before he closed the Little Rock schools – Act 10 required state employees to list their organizational affiliations and Act 115 outlawed public employment of NAACP members.³⁷ Although Woods’ study resembled Bartley’s and McMillen’s in that it saw the movement as a monolith and mostly elite driven, perhaps mostly due to the wide scope of the book, his study was the first of such a professional and scholarly attempt in looking at the Massive Resistance, the internal

³⁴ Ibid., 5.

³⁵ Ibid., 113.

³⁶ Ibid., 127.

³⁷ Ibid., 73-74.

dynamics of the South and issues related to Cold War atmosphere, within the framework of a complex web of relations.

The latest work that complemented Woods' account, by revealing the varieties and complexities in which the mechanism of southern anti-communism worked, or at times did not work, was published the same year by George Lewis.³⁸ His book, *The White South and the Red Menace*, was a detailed study on the various aspects of anti-communism in segregationist thought and practice. Reminding of continuities as Woods did, Lewis firstly showed that the antagonisms between the civil rights advocates or the federal government and the South, had a broader historical context, not necessarily an issue specific to the so-called Civil Rights era or the Cold War era. He frequently noted that southern leaders of the resistance used anti-communism to tone down an outright racist rhetoric. Moreover, just as anti-communism enabled an easier reach for the national audience, locally it proved an effective complement to such arguments as states' rights, fears of miscegenation and amalgamation of the races.³⁹ In attempting to analyze the exact impact of anti-communism on the Massive Resistance, he also paid attention to complicating factors, by dividing the resistance movement into two strands as the anti-communist side and the side focusing more on constitutional doctrines such as states' rights. His work complemented previous works by challenging the notion that the Massive Resistance movement was an elite driven, well organized, and monolithic formation. The basic strength of his work was revealing a "symbiotic relationship between leaders and the led, elite and populist, politician and constituent voter that lay at the heart of the Massive Resistance."⁴⁰ Lewis also pointed to various examples of

³⁸ George Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace: Segregationists, Anticommunism, and Massive Resistance, 1945-1965*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

moderacy and dissent in the region, in terms of the employment of anti-communism as a segregationist weapon. He contended that anti-communism proved flexible enough a weapon both on the local and national context to counter moderacy on racial progress. However, he also reminded of the importance of looking at specific events and even individual differences, as he did by specifically focusing on North Carolina and Virginia in his last chapter. Thus he brought much greater understanding to the movement and its utilization of domestic anti-communism, more than any other scholar so far. Although his work was specifically concerned with the issue of anti-communism's utilization by the resistance movement, the broader context he provided – revealing the variety of mindsets and methods, the various social and political forces lying beneath resistance politics – both challenged the oversimplified notion of the Massive Resistance movement as a monolith, and the oversimplified notion that treats the Cold War as an highly exceptional era.⁴¹ However, in his account Little Rock occupied a similar place it occupied in Woods' study, as an incident that segregationists used in their arguments about the Communist conspiracy involved in the Federal governments actions, and from which “by 1961, their focus had shifted to another set piece in the battle to desegregate the South, Freedom Rides.”⁴²

Thus, this thesis will be an attempt to assemble the information on the Massive Resistance and southern anti-communism found in the secondary sources, mostly produced beginning with the twenty-first century, to address the neglect of the segregationist opposition in the historiography of the civil rights movement. And in the light of the most recent historiography of the opposition, it will try to measure

⁴¹ One year later a compilation comparable to Plummer's 2003 compilation *Window on Freedom*, came from the scholars of white resistance; Clive Webb ed., *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

⁴² Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace*, 79.

the implications of southern anti-communism in the Little Rock integration crisis in Arkansas. This event was not sufficiently looked into in its local context, integrating the issue of anti-communism as well, despite its being a key incident in the culmination of both the Massive Resistance and the Cold War. Apart from the historical accounts mentioned above, other secondary and primary sources will be utilized specifically for the analysis of the Arkansas case. The most comprehensive guide in this light will be Elizabeth Jacoway's 2007 publication, *Turn Away Thy Son*, which was the most recent product of an extensive historical research into the background of local politics surrounding the Little Rock crisis.⁴³ She talked about many previously unnoticed figures such as the *Arkansas Gazette* editor Harry Ashmore, or the conciliatory representative Brook Hays, and many others, also at times exploring such issues of anti-communism, FBI investigations, and the impact of other Massive Resistance leaders or the Arkansas Citizens Council during the crisis. Another secondary source will be the biography of Faubus written by Roy Reed, who had been a reporter for the *Arkansas Gazette* in late 1950s.⁴⁴ Another account by the native Little Rock journalist John F. Wells, *Time Bomb: The Faubus Revolt*, was personally published first in 1962. It was primarily a presentation of the journalist's findings on various controversies surrounding the crisis and Faubus' reaction, including the Commonwealth controversy.⁴⁵ His account also included various excerpts from press and primary documents. Also the work of Beth Roy, in which she commented on various interviews with local people, will be consulted.⁴⁶ The first set of primary sources that will be utilized in this thesis are the two

⁴³ Elizabeth Jacoway, *Turn Away Thy Son: The Crisis that Shocked the Nation*, (New York: Free Press, 2007).

⁴⁴ Roy Reed, *Faubus: The Life and Times of an American Prodigal*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1997)

⁴⁵ John F. Wells, *Time Bomb: The Faubus Revolt*, (Little Rock: General Publishing, 1977)

⁴⁶ Beth Roy, *Bitters in the Honey: Tales of Hope and Disappointment across Divides of Race and Time*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999).

autobiographies by Orval Faubus, another two by Brooks Hays, and one by Harry Ashmore. In the two volumes of *Down from the Hills*, Faubus mostly attempted to explain and justify his political actions after about two decades following the crisis.⁴⁷ Although all autobiographies will present the first person accounts, and the secondary sources mentioned above might tend to lose objectivity as insiders, all will be valuable in terms of getting at the very local circumstances.

The archival sources that will be incorporated into the study are from various collections held in some Southern libraries. Among the Orval Faubus papers held at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, mostly personal correspondences, records pertaining to the Little Rock crisis and to race relations in Arkansas will be utilized. Held in the same library, The Citizens' Council of America Literature will provide an insight into the segregationist and anti-communist propaganda that reached Arkansas, through various booklets and pamphlets.⁴⁸ The other collections that are utilized in the general analysis of the Massive Resistance movement and anti-communism are the James O. Eastland Collection held in the University of Mississippi, and the William D. McCain Pamphlet Collection held in the University of Southern Mississippi.⁴⁹ In the utilization of all these sources, special attention will be placed in trying to analyze the coming together of anti-communism and a segregationist stance on the grassroots level and its role in local politics.

⁴⁷ Orval Eugene Faubus, *Down From the Hills*, (Little Rock: Little Rock: Democrat Printing & Lithographing Company, 1980); and Orval Eugene Faubus, *Down From the Hills, Two*, (Little Rock: Democrat Printing & Lithographing Company, 1986); Brooks Hays, *A Southern Moderate Speaks*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959); Brooks Hays, *Politics is My Parish*, (Baton Rouge and London, Louisiana State University Press, 1981); Harry S. Ashmore, *Civil Rights and Wrongs: A Memoir of Race and Politics*, 1944-94, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994).

⁴⁸ Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas; Citizens' Councils of America Literature, 1947-1969, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas.

⁴⁹ James O. Eastland Collection, The Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Mississippi Libraries, J.D. Williams Library, Oxford, Mississippi; McCain (William D.) Pamphlet Collection, The University of Southern Mississippi, McCain Library and Archives, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

The following section, Chapter 2, will present a general overview of the segregationist and anti-communist thought in the whole region, focusing mostly on the Deep South, with the two states Mississippi and Georgia, as the account goes into the Massive Resistance era. It will begin with a small introduction into the kind of anti-communism that was employed in the South, as part of a conservative tradition, revealing how race was central to such conservatism, and how anti-communism could include various regional concerns other than Communism itself. It will then account for the harm done to liberalism in the region, with the coming of Cold War beginning in early 1950s, by the conservative consensus that also used anti-communism as an effective tool. Going on with the rise of the Massive Resistance movement, it will evaluate the kind of anti-communism employed during the movement, with such issues as its comparison to McCarthyism, or the ways in which it operated – the interplay between the leaders and the grassroots, the continuity and the longstanding locality of anti-communism, and the toning down of the racist rhetoric by an emphasis on anti-communism during this era. Meanwhile the state of Georgia will be looked into, as one example of the mutual existence of anti-communism and segregationist outlook in the region before the peak of the resistance in mid 1950s. It will exemplify how anti-communism had from the start been part of the peculiar Southern antipathy to, and fear of, any kind of radicalism that might go against the rigid racial order of white supremacy in southern society. The coming of the Cold War enhanced these fears, forged the regional solidarity further, and anti-communism gained an increasing importance in the defense of this solidarity. Also Mississippi will be a focus, further projecting the local level, detailed by introducing important figures in the movement and their anti-communist rhetoric and introducing the Citizens' Councils. Chapter 3, will be an examination of Arkansas and

specifically the conditions preceding the crisis in Little Rock, in terms of the combination of segregationist resistance and anti-communism, followed by a concluding chapter about the exploration of the theme in Arkansas and further elaboration on the importance of understanding the local for a better historical conception of broader issues such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Cold War, or even American Politics in general.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUTHERN CONTEXT

2.1 The Conservative Base in the South

While trying to understand the South and its resistance to civil rights progress during the high tide of the Cold War, one must look beyond the Cold War era and focus more on continuities. This way it would be possible to be on a safer ground in terms of coming to an understanding of the local and the federal policies, their own domestic motivations, and even the interplay of all this in determining national policy. This aspect gains specific importance when the use of anti-communism by defenders of white supremacy during the movement is to be understood. The kind of anti-communism employed by the massive resisters, which brings together various other concerns (the preservation of the existing racial order being the most prominent), had a much longer history than the anti-communism of the Cold War on the national level.

The way the relationship between the Massive Resistance movement in the South and anti-communism is examined in this thesis, mostly confirms the “the paranoid style” in American politics that Richard Hofstadter had detected, in its

specific focus on rhetoric and social atmosphere.⁵⁰ In terms of the southern brand of anti-communism that will be looked at, Joel Kovel's definition of the kind of anti-communism that he tried to reflect in his *Red Hunting in the Promised Land*, fits best into this thesis. In the introduction to his work he said:

...the notion of anticommunism is entirely associated with the recently concluded struggle with the Soviet Union and its affiliates in Communist movements around the World. I would hold, however, that this is a one-dimensional way of looking at things, which sees the lesser dimension at that, and sheds little light on the extraordinary power this ideology holds over our national life. For anticommunism is not primarily, in my view, about Communism at all. It is, rather, a way of being American that proceeds from a deep historical wound.⁵¹

No matter how overstated the argument may be, when the kind of anti-communism employed in the South and its use against the perceived threat to the pattern of racial relations in the region is to be considered, such an emphasis in both the historical continuities and the flexibility of the meanings that anti-communism came to include, gains specific importance. Similarly, M. J. Heale, in his account of the history of what he called "the anticommunist tradition" traced the origins of this kind of anti-communism that resurfaced during the Massive Resistance era, as far back as the middle of the nineteenth century. Heale established a link between the fragilities of the republican form of government, and the readiness of Americans to hunt subversives. Even the Civil War involved "northern perceptions that the South represented the very negation of republican liberty, a mighty cancer in a republic of freemen, and...southern perceptions that northerners were bent on reducing the

⁵⁰ Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays*, (New York : Knopf, 1965).

⁵¹ Joel Kovel, *Red Hunting in the Promised Land: Anticommunism and the Making of America* (New York: Perseus Book Group, 1994), 3-4. The "deep historical wound" in Kovel's judgement denoted the whole process of the formation of the American nation, going as far back as the Salem witch trials and the removal of Indians. The whole experience involved a fear of the outsider and "the notion of 'America' ...has been shaped around just such an aversion." He claimed that, what the anticommunism of the Cold War did was to "organize this abyss and feed from it." See Kovel, *Red Hunting in the Promised Land*, 6.

South to colonial dependency.”⁵² In such fragility, the preservation of the republic depended on the “active vigilance” of its citizens, and the voluntary associations such as the temperance and antislavery, along with the vigilante groups appearing before the Civil War, supplemented the political parties, in “creating a tradition of energetic citizenship.”⁵³ And the nineteenth century America, this duty was most effectively performed by those Americans of Anglo-Saxon heritage, white people with property who were mostly small farmers, businessmen and southern planters.⁵⁴ The rising antagonism between the North and the South, increasing racial fears also left a strong anti radical legacy among white southerners, which would loom into the following decades, to resurface in the late 1940s in the form of real counter subversive, anti-communist measures, when the South would rise once again in defense of its racial ways, with the Dixiecrat movement.

This fear of inside agitators, a strong attachment to republican tradition, and readiness to brand the racially inferior as un-American, continued most strongly in the post-Civil War South. “It was the South that most anxiously attempted to reconcile American republican doctrine with racial privilege” and southerners’

⁵² As Heale noted, “The republican heritage” brought together a “fluid social and political order” and a sense of security that caused Americans to “fear the enemy within” beginning with the colonial opposition to the British government. The founding of political parties in the 1790s, “those hitherto unacceptable forms,” was justified as a result of the perceived threat to the republic. In the 1820s, the institution of Freemasonry was one perceived threat. During the next two decades the suspicions were on Roman Catholics. And it was the same conviction about the “fragility of the republican form of government” that made Democrats and Whigs accuse each other. See Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 9-11.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁴ Race became increasingly important in the American mind, as the country expanded geographically with ethnic wars and demographically with immigration, and as Heale pointed out; “American endorsement of revolution did not extend much beyond constitutional and liberal change and [this peculiar experience] reinforced the apparent connection between radicals and aliens.” Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 14. Even before the Civil War, socialism was perceived in the South as a “form of egalitarianism that might disturb the prevailing racial patterns.” German radicals were openly hostile to slavery and by 1850s, they had been publishing anti-slavery bulletins. In 1853, a future leading Marxist Adolph Douai, was driven out of San Antonio, Texas for publishing an antislavery newspaper. In the North too, many Forty-eighters were antislavery advocates – The Communist Club of Cleveland resolved in 1851 “to use all means to abolish slavery.” And as early as 1850s, southern planters regarded the institution of slavery as something that would protect the South from “anti-rent troubles, strikes of workmen...diseased philanthropy, radical democracy and the progress of socialistic ideas in general.” Quoted in Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 17.

earliest encounter with socialism made communism one of the forms in which their extra fragile social order, with slavery and a crowded dangerous population at the center, was threatened.⁵⁵ The South, which “characteristically combined a suspicion of outside influences with a veneration for local traditions”, did this with the inheritance of a common “sectional identity” shaped by the memories of slavery, and the traumas of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In terms of the implication of this kind of regional solitary, with the “Black Belt” at its core, Heale noted that,

the parochial elites of the South, intent on the preservation of racial and economic privilege, presided over a traditionalist political culture in which radicalism seemed indistinguishable from subversion. From the Russian Revolution onward every labor organizer or civil libertarian in the Deep South risked being labeled a red, an alien ‘other’ to whom the normal constitutional protections need not apply.⁵⁶

The Bolshevik victory in Russia and the following national red scare also had an important racial context to it, adding to southern conceptions about the subversiveness of blacks. The massive labor unrest in northern urban centers immediately after World War I, was accompanied by violent racial clashes. That year’s race riots in Washington D.C. and Chicago, and the comments in the northern press about a red and black alliance also confirmed southern fears. Indeed after some clashes in the south the same year, mostly related to an increased awareness brought by the black war experience and the white reaction to it, such an alliance became a regional concern.⁵⁷ This perception continued into the following decades. However,

⁵⁵ M. J. Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans: Red Scare Politics in State and Nation, 1935 – 1965*, (London: McMillan Press Ltd., 1998), 124.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Woods, *Black Struggle Red Scare*, 18-19. In Arkansas in October, 1919, the semisecret order Progressive Farmer and Household Union of America, which was established by black tenant farmers, sought legal aid and greater control over their earnings. To uncover the group’s secrets, an armed group of white men in the state, joined by others from Mississippi and Tennessee, initiated a fight with union members. Arkansas governor mobilized the National Guard to round up the black militants. Five whites and twenty five blacks were reported dead. See Woods, 17. In Congress, the South Carolina representative James F. Byrnes reflected southern fears that the unrest of southern black community was the result of outside agitation. He claimed that “the disturbances in the nation’s cities were the result of incendiary propaganda distributed by northern Negro magazines, [and]

as Heale noted, it was not until the late 1940s that a “full-scale anticommunist crusade” was initiated in the region. Heale explained this absence with the existence of a one-party system in the region till that time and the disfranchisement of almost all African Americans.⁵⁸ And it was in early 1950s that systemized anti-communist programs began to be seen in the Deep South. Apart from an exclusively Cold War anti-communist outlook, Heale, like Key, looked into the southern response to change and progress to explain this surfacing of red scare politics.

As noted earlier, it was with the Dixiecrat movement that this response most clearly culminated. V.O. Key, Jr. noted in his lengthy volume on southern politics, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* that, the most intense support for the southern revolt came from the areas with the greatest black population.⁵⁹ As with the Massive Resistance case in the following decade, in which the South united in reaction to a perceived threat to its own peculiar ways, the Deep South was again at the center. And this center was stirred from time to time in the nation’s history. For the southern revolt of 1948 Key mentioned the incoming of “a new ingredient”, by which he meant “a closer alliance of the black-belt counties with industry”, that had been added since 1928. An important part of the Dixiecrat campaign was its anti-New Deal aspect and even in the Deep South “the will to bolt the national party was by no

demanding that Negro editors be prosecuted under the Espionage Act.” The Justice Department confirmed his claims with a report talking about the existence of a class of black leaders who became “a determined and persistent source of radical opposition” openly expressing demands of racial equality and identifying blacks with “such radical organizations as the I.W.W.” while “advocating Bolshevik or Soviet Doctrines.” As quoted in Woods, 18.

⁵⁸ The only meaningful elections were the Democratic primaries, in which personal traits rather than ideological differences set the tone, and the only thing that needed to be done was to gain the support of small farmers and lower-class whites. Thus, citing “Washington bureaucrats, interfering Yankees, uppity blacks – or Communists” was sufficient for that purpose and “the somewhat insular ruling classes of the Deep South saw little need for a sustained red scare.” See Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 215.

⁵⁹ The response to Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s 1944 campaign marked the beginnings of the Dixiecrat revolt of 1948. Key further pointed out that it was already clear by 1946 that “the country was moving to the right, and the conservative wing of the southern Democracy took heart, along with the Republicans.” Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, 330.

means universal.”⁶⁰ Along with race, the anti-New Deal business conservatives were important in overcoming this and among the southern states that remained loyal to national Democrat ticket, in Arkansas for example, the center of agitation was the plantation counties of eastern Arkansas where the Arkansas Free Enterprise Association was headquartered – the association was comprised of big planters and industrialists and “was prominent in all the Dixiecrat maneuvers.”⁶¹

While Key noted the beginnings of such trend in 1928, M. J. Heale noted that it was around the same time that evidences of the red and black alliance began to emerge. After 1928 the Communist Party’s support of the cause of blacks “reinforced the anti-communism of the white supremacists.”⁶² Also in 1928 in Birmingham, Alabama, “the mostly black Share Croppers’ Union openly accepted the calls of the Moscow Congress of the Communist International for ‘self-determination of the black belt’ in the United States” and in 1931 violent clashes would occur between union members and local protesters.⁶³ Such episodes further encouraged the increasing alliance between business conservatives and the defenders of the racial status quo.⁶⁴ Although the international Cold War atmosphere was one pretext to a systematized assault on anti-communism both in the South and in the nation, the

⁶⁰ Ibid., 329-42. He treated the issue of a southern solidarity within the context of two crises in presidential politics, one of 1928 and the next one of 1948, to be able to “identify the fundamental elements of unity in the South.” In his analysis of the former crisis, in addition to the concentration of the black population and “anxieties about the racial equilibrium” that marked the Democratic areas, a variety of factors was at stake – namely “ruralism, cotton-growing, plantation organization, and intense Reconstruction memories.” Thus traditional elements fostered party loyalty and race was at the center. See Key, 318-29.

⁶¹ Ibid., 338.

⁶² Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 215.

⁶³ The same year, another important incident in Scottsboro, Alabama, would attract attention to the Communist Party of the United States. In the Scottsboro trial in which nine black teenagers were charged with the rape of two white women, the party’s legal branch, the International Labor Defense immediately announced its support of the boys. In another case of the same year in Atlanta, Georgia, a black Communist was convicted while leading a biracial demonstration to protest unemployment. See Woods, 19-20.

⁶⁴ This was also important in the emergence of the national red-scare in the late 1940s and of the southern anti-communist segregationist tide of the 1950s. Especially in the South, anti-communist sentiment was an important ally to the segregationist sentiment for a long time.

historical accumulation of the idea at local and domestic contexts was another important component.

The culmination of simultaneous anti-communist and white supremacist sentiment was also within the context of a general rightward trend in the nation. Indeed, the South was an important element in this conservative swing. Thomas Borstelmann noted the “apex of Southern influence in Congress”, all throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s. It was a time when Democrats of the Dixie revolution had gained an important influence as chairs of the most powerful committees of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, as a result of seniority rules and the one-party character of Southern politics.⁶⁵ This Dixiecrat influence, along with a rising regional solidarity in the South, formed the basis of the Massive Resistance that emerged in the next decade. And, anti-communism, which had long been an important component of the ideological basis to this solidarity, would gain increasing importance in the following decade in terms of its place in the resistance to civil rights.

Charles Wallace Collins’ *Whither Solid South* published in 1947, which Bartley called “the Bible of the Dixiecrats”, showed both the rising sense of regional solidarity in the South and how anti-communism was an important component on the eve of the Dixiecrat revolt.⁶⁶ Bartley’s analysis of Collins’ viewpoint was a key explanation to the simultaneous rise of the southern resistance against the centralism of the federal government, communism and any attempt at racial reform in the following decade:

⁶⁵ Borstelmann, 52.

⁶⁶ Collins was a planter from Alabama and a lawyer in Washington D. C., described the “enormous power wielded by forces bent on destroying southern civilization” and noted two most dangerous threats. One was the black movement that was “on the offensive” and the other was groups supporting “State Capitalism” as practiced in the Soviet Union. Bartley, *A History of the South*, 37.

In Collins' judgment, influential admirers of the Soviet System, self-seeking federal bureaucrats, cynical politicians, African Americans, the CIO, and northern church groups misled by "oversimplified slogans" had turned their crusade for black equality and state capitalism to the South, which was the most important bastion of conservative opposition to their plans. Collins outlined strategies of resistance and expressed confidence that the southern people would never permit racial amalgamation or police-state capitalism.⁶⁷

After noting on the same document, Jeff Woods also pointed out that although "the Dixiecrats' appeals to segregationists and anti-Communists never made the electoral impact" they desired, they still "made significant showings in the plantation counties of Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Louisiana." These areas, he rightly noted, would become during the following two decades, "the established centers of the southern red scare."⁶⁸

Besides, anti-communism had from the start a great role to play in the failure of the post-war southern liberalism in surviving into the following decade, which turned out to be the high tide of the Massive Resistance movement.⁶⁹ Before the anti-communist sentiment reached its zenith, there was a rising tide of liberalism that did find some appeal among southerners, as part of the progressive sentiment in the post-war period. Tony Badger noted that liberal politicians were elected to state legislatures, state houses, and Congress and they represented an alliance of lower income whites, blacks, veterans, women, and labor. However, they mostly had their

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Woods, *Black Struggle Red Scare*, 37-38.

⁶⁹ Southerners already had doubts about the social and racial liberalism of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, despite the overall support. It was in the late 1930s that forces of white southern conservatism began to rise against New Deal policies' undermining of states' rights and the region's racial order. Woods, 24-25. After Roosevelt's presidential victory in 1936, a process had already begun, in which gradual and constant Republican gains finally "culminated in the stunning Republican victory of 1946." In the 1944 elections, Roosevelt tried to resist the rightward swing with a reformist agenda calling for the labor vote, but his re-election was more thanks to his experience as a world leader than his reform programs. Moreover, the number of Republicans entering the Senate was highest since the days of Herbert Hoover and more than a third of the electoral votes he received came from the southern states, which mostly had conservative anti-reform representatives in Congress. And in the 1946 elections "the notion of a broad alliance of liberals and radicals had suffered a severe rebuff... and pressure on the administration to dissociate itself from the left was becoming all but irresistible." See Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 136. The rise of McCarthyism also had this domestic background to it.

faith in the economic progress that New Deal like policies would bring, and thus they mostly adopted a gradualist position on issues of race.⁷⁰ Another challenge to segregation could have been the modernizing impact of post war urbanization and industrialization, bringing such improvements as better education or a higher per capita income, however, as Bartley noted, “the South remained more rural in outlook than economic and demographic reality justified...[and] clinging to part ideas of Dixie customs and traditions, southern whites had changed their racial attitudes and practices very little in terms of day-to-day relationships.”⁷¹

The economic liberalism present in the south, let alone racial liberalism, failed in the face of the peculiarly southern brand of conservatism and anti-communism. The two curtailed attempts at racial and economic reform best illustrated this failure. The Southern Conference on Human Welfare had been established in 1938 as a response to Roosevelt administration’s “Report on Economic Conditions of the South,” by middle-class white New Dealers and pre-war liberals and leftists. Burdened also by internal mismanagement, the SCHW had to disband in 1948.⁷² Another failure was the failure of the Operation Dixie, which was a 1946 project of the Congress of Industrial Organization aiming to unionize traditional southern industries in collaboration with the SCHW, and which openly

⁷⁰ Tony Badger, “Brown and Backlash” in Clive Webb, ed. *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 39-55. Furthermore, the amount of black participants in politics and the number of black voters was not sufficient to support racially liberal politicians, especially in the Deep South, even through the 1950s. Office holding by blacks was both limited and confined to the urban atmosphere and blacks represented less than twenty percent of total registration in all southern states. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 7.

⁷¹ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 10 - 12.

⁷² A June, 1947 HUAC report, issued mostly under southern Democrat leadership declared the SCHW a Communist front organization. A second report in August would similarly declare the Civil Rights Congress an unlawful organization with Communist ties. Both reports would provide the segregationists an important reference in their anti-communist charges against both southern liberalism and the civil rights movement. The interracial organization aimed to challenge the conservative traditions of the South and was openly committed to improving the conditions of the black labor force in the region. Southern conservatives were, from the start, comparing the organization to reconstruction era reformers. With the rise of the national anti-communist consensus, they added charges of communist influence in the organization. See Woods, 29-31.

appealed to blacks. Conservative business leaders and politicians in the South again opposed the movement with charges of communism and racial disruption, allying with local chambers of commerce, and even local law enforcement agencies. As Bartley noted, anti-union publications declared that the CIO aimed to “arouse class-hatred and race-hatred for the purpose of creating strikes, riots, bloodshed, anarchy, and revolution.”⁷³ The group had already begun to be dominated by right-wing leaders during the rise of the anti-communist sentiment of the Truman administration, and by 1949 all left-wing elements, the SCHW included, was purged from the union and meetings began to be held on a segregated basis.⁷⁴

Indeed, the white South held a position as one of the factors that undermined the progressive aspects of the post war industrial boom, throughout the nation.⁷⁵ Anti-communism in the south, compared to the one at the national level, showed much deeper continuities and understanding of this southern background is also important for explaining the rapid rise of national anti-communism during the 1940s.⁷⁶ Furthermore, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and The House Un-American Activities Committee increasingly began to target biracial organizations. The FBI declared interracial association among subversion criteria making “left-

⁷³ The union was also harassed by local police officers, who were, as Gunnar Myrdal observed, behaving “as the agents of the planters and other white employers.” A Georgia county sheriff’s remarks to a CIO staff revealed the southern prejudice: “You been associating with niggers and white trash – you ain’t seen no decent people since you got here.” As quoted in Bartley, *A History of the South*, 41-42.

⁷⁴ Woods., 33 – 35.

⁷⁵ Heale counted the region as one of the several anti-communist interest groups, along with others such as “the AFL, the Roman Catholic Church, Protestant fundamentalists, the right-wing press...[who were] as obdurately hostile to Communism as ever, whether domestic or foreign.” Heale, *American Anticommunism*, 133.

⁷⁶ Such developments on the national level as the Taft-Hartley Labor Management Relations Act, the congressional approval of the Truman Doctrine and the establishment of the Federal Employee Loyalty Board in 1947 and their anti-communist focus were all signaling the escalation of the Cold War on the home front. Southern conservatism fed from this escalation in countering liberal efforts and it would again borrow tactics from this escalation during the next decade to counter desegregation attempts. The Taft-Hartley Act enabled the states to set right-to-work requirements and several southern states found the opportunity to weaken union activity by doing so. The Federal Employee Loyalty program would also be suspicious of the subversive potential of blacks. Bartley, *A History of the South*, 49-55.

wing unions and other popular-front groups prime suspects.” And the HUAC released the report in 1947 that declared the SCHW “perhaps the most deviously camouflaged Communist-front organization in the nation.”⁷⁷

As the economic liberalism collapsed, both in the nation and in the south, any remaining ideas of reform were in the field of race relations. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, as Bartley pointed out, was “at the forefront of national liberalism, and during the 1950s no other reform group had an equal impact on developments in the South,” owing its survival mostly to the purge of leftist elements in its body and to its being a middle-class establishment in alliance with “white liberals and labor bureaucrats.”⁷⁸ Moreover, liberals began to see the improvement in business as the key to progress in the south, and racial issues, especially segregation, came to be a moral, rather than an economic, problem that would gradually be solved. The rising Cold War concerns reinforced this moral aspect and it was also reflected in the administration’s piecemeal actions.⁷⁹ However, despite these limited actions, the conservative anti-communist coalition with the South at the center would not permit radical challenges to its racial order.

This coalition discarded liberalism and gave way to a stance of “moderacy,” which was almost synonymous with inactivity. It was on this domestic background of simultaneous rise of black activism and crushing of liberalism that anti-communist measures rose in the South to counter attempts at racial integration, accompanying the national red scare. Moreover, the South had always been a staunchly anti-communist region and the reason why it was not recognized was that no systematical

⁷⁷ Quoted in Bartley, *A History of the South*, 55.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁷⁹ In 1946, Truman issued the Executive Order 9008 to create the President’s Committee on Civil Rights. In 1947, he issued a formal report entitled “To Secure These Rights” that called nationwide for protecting civil rights. In 1948 he issued another executive order barring discrimination in the Armed Forces. In the presidential election of 1948, he declared his support to a permanent Fair Employment Protection Commission, anti-lynching legislation, anti-poll tax laws, and measures to end discrimination in interstate transportation facilities. See Woods, 35.

and outstandingly recognizable red scare programs were launched. However, anti-communism had always been a very important part of the southern regional solidarity that rose at times of certain crisis; mostly inseparable from other themes in this solidarity such as state's rights or racial order. Thus, the South always had this conservative, white supremacist and anti-communist base, upon which it developed whatever required strategies when it felt insecure, and the rise of the Massive Resistance in 1950s was one example.

The tension brought by international circumstances of the Cold War further contributed to the continuation of southern conservatism and resistance to civil rights. Indeed, far from being a condition specific to the Cold War, racial assumptions had extensively shaped the way white southerners "consistently viewed the world through a distinctly southern lens."⁸⁰ The impact of the Cold War on this southern perception was strengthening it further. As Fry pointed out, the dramatic changes in the South's economy, society and politics after World War II already "heightened southern insecurities and strengthened the region's preexisting foreign policy proclivities." The decline of agriculture, growth of industrial and service sectors, and urbanization, were simultaneous with the increasing restiveness of the southern black population, growing presidential inclination to support racial reform, the activist federal courts, and the national and international focus on the issue of

⁸⁰ As Fry noted, attached most of the times to economic calculations, racial assumptions had an important influence on such southern foreign policy stances as "justification for Indian removal and territorial expansion prior to the Civil War, opposition to the acquisition of an island empire at the turn of the century, growing distress at membership at a United Nations increasingly populated by Africans and Asians in the 1960s, or chronic hostility to immigration in the twentieth century." Fry, *Dixie Looks Abroad*, 5. Although internationalism had been embraced with Woodrow Wilson's presidency, conceptions such as the inferiority of the non-white people, the futility of trying to help them or trying to cooperate with them remained constant. Another constant attached to race was the anti-radical and anti-communist tradition, which existed long before the rise of domestic anti-communism during the mid-1950s.

race. When confronted with the new threat of communism early in the Cold War, clinging to anti-communism was one defensive reaction in the region.⁸¹

2.2. Anti-communism in the South during the Massive Resistance

When the Dixiecrat campaign failed outside the Deep South and Truman was elected in 1948, a brief period signaled positive developments in terms of southern liberalism's rise. However this lasted till 1950 and the conservative setback in politics went on to prepare the groundwork for the gradual rise of the Massive Resistance movement in the new decade. After Truman's victory the Democratic Party moved on to remove Dixiecrat members from the Deep South states and liberal political victories were won in the upper South. However, as Bartley noted, the movement "represented a substantial regional dissent from national trends. It was in a real sense a premature expression of massive resistance."⁸² Moreover the liberal political gains, mostly in the upper South, would give way to conservative victories in 1950.

The federal judiciary's increasing focus on racial injustice would touch seriously on segregation in higher education in 1950, and this was one factor that raised a racial reaction and revived the Dixiecrat spirit in the region.⁸³ In 1950, three important cases were decided, the most important of which was *Sweatt v. Painter*. Herman Sweatt applied to the University of Texas Law School and was denied

⁸¹ Ibid., 223-26.

⁸² Still, some Dixiecrats from all over the South met in Mississippi in 1949 for the movement's anniversary to organize the National States' Rights Committee, aiming to lobby in Washington and advertise the southern concerns nationally. However, next year's meeting was a failure with very low attendance, including the absence of Georgia. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 36.

⁸³ In the 1948 *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* decision, the Court had reaffirmed its 1938 decision in the Missouri *Gaines* case. In 1938 Lloyd Gaines was denied admission to University of Missouri Law School, because of his race. The state did not have a separate law school for blacks, but just provided tuition for those who wanted to study elsewhere. When he brought suit, with the help of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People, the court ruled that "the state either provide a 'separate but equal' law school or admit Gaines to the white school." Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 5.

admission, again because of his race and Texas opted for creating a separate law school for blacks. This time Sweatt's lawyers attacked the practice of segregation, claiming that "Sweatt's constitutional right of equal protection of the laws could be satisfied only by admission to the state university." The Court determined that the separate law school was never close to being equal to the white one, and ordered the admission of Sweatt to the white law school. Thus in *Sweatt v. Painter*, the court came very close to destroying the "separate but equal" doctrine.⁸⁴

Besides, during 1949 and 1950, southerners gave a "bitter congressional wrangle" in Washington over the Fair Employment Practices Commission legislation, which weakly passed in the House but was filibustered in the Senate. The final component to this backdrop was the "mounting crescendo of hysteria" brought about by the investigations led by McCarthy.⁸⁵ The following statement by Bartley briefly explained this background to the Massive Resistance:

The federal courts were laying the legal groundwork for destruction of the southern social system, and the FEPC provided the direct link between social separation and property rights. The whole integrationist campaign against segregation, states' rights, and private property emerged hand-in-hand with "Communist subversion" in government. A vague uneasiness was soon apparent in the behavior of many southern voters, a fact that was soon to make itself felt in politics.⁸⁶

1950 also became the year in which many liberal candidates lost primary elections against more conservative ones, who "interspersed generous portions of racist oratory with attacks on their opponents' alleged softness towards Trumanism, communism, and labor bossism," and thus appealing both to the white rural vote with their stance in racial issues and to the urban business conservatives with their

⁸⁴ *McLaurin v. Board of Regents* and *Henderson v. United States* were the two others handed down on the same day, June 5, 1950. In *McLaurin*, after the University of Oklahoma began admitting black students in alignment with the *Sipuel* decision, the Court upheld graduate student G. W. MacLaurin's pleas that segregated facilities in the campus denied equality before the law. In *Henderson*, it prohibited segregation on railway dining cars. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 5-6.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

stance in issues of communism and “Trumanism.”⁸⁷ In 1949, a series of HUAC hearings entitled “Hearings Regarding Communist Infiltration of Minority Groups” had further enhanced the anti-communist arguments of racial conservatives. The proceedings would end, just as Senator Joseph McCarthy’s hunt of Communists in government and military ranks began, and contributed greatly to the victory of the Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower in the 1952 presidential election.⁸⁸ The two Cold War crises during the Truman administration’s second term, the beginning of the Korean War abroad and the rise of McCarthyism at home, had turned attention away from social reform and divisive issues such as racial reform.⁸⁹ With a southern conservative base and a deadlock in Congress during most of the decade, the executive branch remained generally inactive on racial issues and did little more than continue Truman administration’s policies.⁹⁰

While Eisenhower took no position on segregation, the focus of federal judiciary on segregated education went on and cases began to culminate in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, and voices of dissent would begin to rise, even before the first decision in May 1954. The decision that came on a “Black Monday,” as segregationists labeled it concluded that segregated education facilities

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ The hearings were led by the Georgian Congressman John S. Wood, and the testimonies of especially two witnesses would attract attention – that of Manning Johnson, a former black Communist Party member, warning of Communist front plans on the South to organize masses for self determination; and of Joshua Daniel White, a black singer, who testified that he was once used by the Communist Party without his knowledge. Woods, 38-41.

⁸⁹ Borstelmann, 60-61.

⁹⁰ Increasing concerns of southern business conservatives about issues of communism, corruption, and Korea; and Eisenhower’s “good government” conservatism, contributed to the Republican victory in four southern states, Virginia, Tennessee, Texas, and Florida and good standing in North Carolina and Arkansas. Although he did not win in any of the Deep South states, he won support from whites in counties with high percentage of blacks and in the urban areas. As Bartley noted, “throughout the Deep South there was a clear correlation – most pronounced in Georgia, South Carolina, and Louisiana – between counties that had been high in Dixiecrat strength and those that were enthusiastic for Eisenhower.” Limits to Eisenhower’s southern appeal was mostly thanks to the compromise in the Democratic National Convention, which chose not to alienate southern conservatives and toned down the civil rights plank, and chose a segregationist Senator John Sparkman of Alabama as Adlai E. Stevenson’s running mate. Bartley, *Massive Resistance*, 47-61.

were inherently unequal and thus in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. In August, 1954, in response to the first Supreme Court decision, Virginia governor Thomas B. Stanley had appointed a commission on public education headed by Senator Garland Gray, which presented in 1955 a gradual and moderate program of accepting token desegregation and leaving the implementation to local authorities. However even before a constitutional convention met, Senator Harry Flood Byrd had successfully advertised the passage of an interposition resolution by the legislature, [he had] issued a call for ‘massive resistance’ to desegregation, and an all-out defense of white supremacy had become the dominant theme of Virginia politics.”⁹¹ The *Brown* decision overtly confirmed Byrd’s disappointment with the administration’s unwillingness to “turn the federal executive power to the support of white southern concepts of racial justice,” and as he saw it, “the very Court assigned guardianship of the federal Constitution had overturned precedent and assaulted cherished traditions by basing its decision not on the words of the Constitution itself, but on the writings of a group of social scientists that included Negroes, a European – probably leftists all.”⁹²

In early February 1956, Virginia general assembly approved of a bill consisting of various segregationist measures, including an interpositionist one leaving the control of any school targeted by the Court to the direct responsibility of the State. Stanley announced his support of interposition and the Gray Commission discarded its gradualist local provisions, bringing them into alignment with the

⁹¹ Bartley, *A History of the South*, 193 -94. Senator Byrd was one example to what Bartley called “the neobourbon base” and the general dynamics of race politics in the South. His white supremacy was built around a central interest in a balanced budget in government, states’ rights, a “static society and an aristocratic prerogative.” In 1952, he had welcomed and advertised for Eisenhower’s presidency “because it represented perhaps the last opportunity for the vindication of the philosophy of conservatism in government.” Quoted in Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 108.

⁹² Quoted in Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 109. Gathered around such ideology, the Byrd organization’s prestige and ability to influence counties outside the black belt, combined with the black belt and its white supremacist grassroots organization, the Defenders, to generate the resistance movement in Virginia. See Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 114.

governor's position.⁹³ Then this doctrine soon spread to legislatures of other states; and as Massive Resistance gained prominence, the southern congressional delegation announced in March 1956, a "Declaration of Constitutional Principles". Known as the Southern Manifesto, the declaration was signed by 19 of the southern states' 22 senators and 82 of its 106 representatives. It embraced interposition declaring the *Brown* decision unconstitutional.⁹⁴ This reaction depended heavily on constitutional arguments and favored states' rights against the centralized power of the federal government.

The movement materialized especially after the second *Brown* decision on May 31, 1955, that brought a gradualist approach to the implementation of the 1954 decision. The ruling had assigned responsibility for desegregation plans to local school boards and the vagueness about the implementation of the decision in the long term "appeared to strengthen the position of the southern moderates and further to sunder regional unity."⁹⁵ The gradualist and vague nature of this implementation decree, was mostly in line with the southern demands. The two most important issues that pressured the Court were; first, the impossibility of the Court's "ventur[ing] beyond the executive department's position", and second, the inability to "do little

⁹³ Bartley, *A History of the South*, 193 - 94.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 188. The vague statement "with all deliberate speed" contributed greatly to the shaping of the movement's strategy in favor of interposition. Bartley, *A History of the South*, 193. However, the Warren Court that was renowned for its highly progressive attitude was obviously not the only authority to be blamed responsible for this delay. Although an important part of the attacks on the Supreme Court by the massive resisters was for its tyrannical position in policy making in the nation, the implementation decision of 1955 revealed the limits of the challenging nature of its law making. As Bartley pointed out, what delayed the implementation decree was the practical difficulty in applying the decision in varied conditions. In order to enable "further arguments concerning the proper method," Justice Earl Warren opted for inviting every related state to submit briefs to the Court, in addition to the United States as *amici curiae*, and the already involved states of South Carolina, Virginia, Delaware, and Kansas, and the NAACP. Arkansas, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Texas were the six states that responded to the invitation and the briefs they submitted were requesting in general "the least specific and most indirect implementation decree possible." In contrast, NAACP lawyers asked for a "specific decree with a definite time limit." The *amici curiae*'s request was, not surprisingly, closer to the southern states' position. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 59.

more than establish the basis for realistic adjustments in race relations.” And similarly, the crystallization of the resistance benefited not only from the one-year time interval between the two decisions, but also from the “dearth of leadership in the political branches of the national government”, especially during that time.⁹⁶

Actually, the resistance was not exclusively a direct sudden reaction to the *Brown* decision and it already had what Bartley called the “neobourbon” base, which “represented southern reaction and aimed at imposing a fixed agrarian social and ideological structure upon an urban-industrial south” and which imposed itself during hard times. Hard times were signaled in the South by “rural-urban cleavages, the threat of desegregation, and the continuing urban cultural invasion of the countryside.”⁹⁷ These forces had, by 1950, heightened southern insecurities and revived the Dixiecrat spirit that seemed to back down by then, and by the time the Supreme Court cases were handed, the south had already coalesced, ready for the outright expression of its resistance through legal means after the 1955 decision.

Far from being a purely legislative strategy at the political level, the movement was knit around rigid racial assumptions, as it went also hand in hand with the white elite and the grassroots. As Lewis noted, the leaders of the movement were not willing to take radical stances in the segregation issue without checking the public sentiment. The series of public referenda held in the wake of *Brown* were the clearest guide for the movement elites. Moreover, state legislators all over the South sought their white constituencies’ approval before taking a stand on segregation. As Lewis pointed out, “one of the reasons that Massive Resistance had taken hold by

⁹⁶ This “dearth of leadership” was due to both a general ineffectiveness of the Congress throughout the decade in all matters – civil rights issues being no exception, and to the inactivity “from choice” of the executive branch. “Cohesion, the committee system, and seniority gave southern legislators a strong position in the Congressional wing of the Democratic Party, and this fact, combined with the support from conservative Republicans, kept Congress deadlocked during most of the decade.” Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 60.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

mid-1956 is that, on every occasion upon which the white South's political constituencies were asked to vote on a measure of legislative resistance, they approved it, and did so by substantial margins."⁹⁸ The crystallization of the resistance also depended on the existence of an already a receptive public.

Moreover, the Massive Resistance movement employed various tools other than legislation and involved various other arguments and ideas in the defense and implementation of the constitutional doctrine of interposition and states' rights. The increasing use of an anti-communist rhetoric, in the height of the Cold War, was one of these. Indeed, as Lewis noted, it was "the fluid nature of resistance rhetoric and the broad panoply of devices that fell within the rubric of the Southern Manifesto's 'all legal means' that allowed communism to play such a central role in the armory of Massive Resistance."⁹⁹ As it was with the legislative aspect, anti-communism had the same receptive public, as the national anti-communist consensus assisted its development. However, anti-communism itself in the South had always been part of a conservative, anti-radical tradition which made its deployment even easier in the region.

As Woods noted, by late 1940s and early 1950s, "the south had Communists, patriots, anti-communist networks, political elites, and a federal example."¹⁰⁰ The south did look to the example displayed by McCarthy on the federal level; however the southern red scare had an important distinction, which was the complicating impact of the centrality of race. As Jeff Woods points out, "the southern red scare was in many ways a byproduct of the region's massive resistance to integration" and the intensity of the anti-communist sentiment had always been directly proportional

⁹⁸ In Virginia for example, the Byrd organization decided to move on with a more direct resistance plan, when the relatively moderate Gray Plan was voted overwhelmingly in January, 1956. Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace*, 42.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁰⁰ Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare*, 4.

to the extent of the “national criticism of the region’s racial institutions.”¹⁰¹ Unlike the explicitly Cold War context of the national red scare, the one in the south had an internal and regional sanctuary as the source of origin.

One result of this was its being much more of a complex process than McCarthyism in terms of its operation as a mechanism. The complexities in the South’s own red scare were also the direct result of the complexity of the resistance movement, of which it was a tool. George Lewis in general best described this complexity of the Massive Resistance movement:

If the constant interchange of ideas between resistance elites and the grassroots suggests a mutual reliance born out of unprecedented pressure on the region’s established ways of life, certain political events of the period also suggest that neither section of segregationist society was willing to go forward without the express support of the other.¹⁰²

While McCarthyism was more directed from above, imposed on the public, and was thus short-lived, its southern counterpart, was the result of an interplay of various elements of society where the grassroots was more incorporated in its promotion, was more sincere in its ideology enriched with other common regional concerns, and thus much more long lived.¹⁰³ Although southerners avoided outright and systemized red scare programs like McCarthy did, at least till mid-1950s and avoided any direct association with McCarthy personally, they welcomed most of his anti-communist ideas. And even after McCarthy was discarded in 1954, this aspect of his legacy lived on in the south, combined with the rapid resurfacing of regional solidarity in the resistance to *Brown*.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰² Lewis, 41-42.

¹⁰³ In fact, anti-communism was the only common denominator that brought the south and McCarthy together. As Jeff Woods pointed out, “his anti-communist convictions and flamboyant political style resonated with the doctrines and political techniques of southern conservatism.”¹⁰³ Otherwise, he was not appreciated personally in the south compared to the rest of the nation; mostly for his Republicanism, Catholicism, and “attempted purge of the army”, which contrasted the Democratic, Protestant, and pro-military aspects of the South. Woods, 41-42.

A more favorable example to southern anti-communists was actually J. Edgar Hoover of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Compared to McCarthy, he had much more in common with the segregationist and anti-communist South, which resulted both from the personal proximity of his approving of Jim Crow where he grew up in Washington D.C. and his being the most powerful and respected investigator of Communist influence among blacks. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, the FBI under Hoover's leadership, had investigated various black organizations such as the Civil Rights Congress, the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the National Negro Congress, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. An FBI report in 1953 entitled "The Communist Party and the Negro" confirmed southern perceptions, just as the HUAC reports resulting from the hearings of 1949.¹⁰⁴

Although the Brown decision that came one year later pressured Hoover and the FBI to stay away from the struggle between segregationists and civil rights advocates in the South, Hoover's views were more in favor of the segregationist side and he quietly went on feeding both HUAC and southern state investigators with information. Furthermore he went on presenting Washington with a confidential reports during the years between 1954 and 1956, which began to include the NAACP in its warnings and also affected many in the Eisenhower administration's cabinet, and more confidential reports went on to leak to HUAC and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee – a central agency headed by the Mississippi Senator James O. Eastland, which was also an important platform from which Eastland conducted his anti-communist and segregationist propaganda.¹⁰⁵ The

¹⁰⁴ Though noting the possible failure of Communist aims in the NAACP, the report concluded, as Woods noted, that communists "had made significant headway in other groups and were determined to continue their infiltration of civil rights organizations." As Quoted in Woods, 85-87.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 88-91.

southern domination of the two national political bodies during late 1940s and mid 1950s, House Un-American Activities Committee and Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, were valuable experiences for the south that guided its politicians in their own regional red scare. The material that were mounted during the hearings of these committees greatly helped the southern leaders of the red scare in developing the anti-communist warfare that fitted very nicely into their Massive Resistance strategies following *Brown*.

The experience of southern leaders with national anti-communism was mounted mostly during this period. Moreover, as noted earlier, in the wake of the *Brown* decision, both anti-communism and political regional solidarity – centered on concerns about the attempted reversal of the racial order – had been established as a much-consolidated base. What happened during the national red scare was, in a way, providing the South with efficient tools to address its already heightened insecurities about race and communism. Although the southern red scare was modeled after and fed from the sources of the federal example, anti-communism in the south was always accompanied by a disdain of federal rule and a strong ideology of states' rights, along with the need to preserve the racial status quo.

Other than the HUAC, or the FBI, the loyalty program Truman adopted in 1947, his usage of the Smith Act of 1940 against American Communists beginning with 1948, the Mundt-Nixon Bill and the Internal Security Act of 1950 had been setting examples on how to fight communism at home; and even before the rise of McCarthy on the national scene, states had begun adopting similar measures. Even outside the south, as Heale pointed out, the Congress had always set the example for inquiry through investigations and legislations, however beginning with the Red Scare following the First World War, “policing sedition had been more a state than a

federal responsibility, one which the New York legislature had sought to discharge by dispatching a committee to investigate the Bolshevik menace.”¹⁰⁶ And when it was the south in question, it was not surprising that states’ rights became an integral part of “policing sedition.”

Thus, there had long been forces at stake in the South that gradually prepared the simultaneous rise and conjunction of anti-communism and white resistance to racial reform. And for both, the developments at the state level were central. It was also noted earlier that the southern red scare was a more complex process than its national counterpart, in terms of its organization and development, in that; it was less of an upright imposition on the public from the top. However, despite the role played by the grassroots and the obvious public support, leading political figures had from the start initiated both the Massive Resistance and its anti-communist agenda. The earlier mentioned one party character that made personalities an important political preference and this peculiar southern political trait, required special attention to the leading elite and their activities on the local level. In this regard, the most outstanding figures in leading the anti-communist resistance strategies in the Deep South, pre-Brown Georgia and post-Brown Mississippi, will be at focus.

2.3 The Deep South: Georgia and Mississippi

In Georgia, the most influential figure in terms of anti-communism and defense of segregation preceding *Brown*, was Eugene Talmadge, who served as

¹⁰⁶ “Congress had conducted its first investigation in 1792....[during] the 1930s Congress greatly expanded its investigative operations, as the Nye Committee pursued the ‘merchants of death’ who had allegedly been responsible for the American involvement in the First World War, as the La Follette Committee sought to expose violations of labor rights – and as the Dies Committee struck back at such Progressive inquisitors and the New Deal....by the 1940s Congress had provided the states with ample precedents for legislative investigations.” Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 9.

governor from 1932 to the early 1940s. As noted before, personalities had great importance in the one-party politics of the South and thus they might have much to offer in terms of an insight into understanding the region. Talmadge, “the fiercely anti-labor champion of the ‘wool hat boys’ and critic of Franklin Roosevelt, whose New Deal he denounced as communistic” happened to be the governor in 1935, when the state adopted its first formal anti-communist measure. He was also the father of Herman Talmadge who would be a McCarthy admirer and governor to the state during the Massive Resistance of the 1950s. The Talmadges were, in Heale’s words, “ ‘good ole boys’ who vigorously upheld white supremacy, fought to retain the county-unit system, and drew their support from rural Georgia and from some working class whites in the cities”, where the liberal minded people – African Americans and poor whites – couldn’t vote.¹⁰⁷

Governor Talmadge even developed presidential aspirations in 1936, when with the support of some right wing and northern business elements outside the south backed his anti-New Deal ‘Grassroots convention’ bringing together other defenders of white supremacy and those “oppose[ed] to Negroes, the New Deal and...Karl Marx.”¹⁰⁸ Although the convention was a failure, his presidential

¹⁰⁷ Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 218. Before his election to office in 1932, Eugene Talmadge was the member of the earliest and most typical formation in Georgia exemplifying a white supremacist and anti-communist outlook - a local group called the Black Shirts, that emerged in the early 1930s “when the shattering economic conditions...unnerved local elites and ejected many poor whites from their farms and jobs, urban areas simmered with class and racial resentments,” and that aimed to “combat the Communist Party and to discourage the teachings of Communism and to foster white supremacy.” Centered in the emerging metropolitan Atlanta, it was motivated mostly towards driving blacks away from jobs, being a defender of white supremacy and anti-communism at the same time. Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 219.

¹⁰⁸ In Atlanta, a city Georgians disliked for its liberal tendencies, a few more occasions showed how “protest and integrationist activity”, could mean “insurrection” in the southern metropolitan. “The Communist organizers for an integrated meeting in 1930 were arrested for insurrection. In 1932, Angelo Herndon, a teenage African American Communist, was arrested in Atlanta for inciting insurrection after helping to organize a hunger march; he was brutally sentenced to 20 years in a chain gang. More fortunate were two sisters arrested in 1934 for distributing ‘Communist literature’ among striking mill workers but released when it was conceded that they had committed no crime.” Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 220-21. It was in such an atmosphere that Talmadge developed presidential aspirations.

aspirations were shattered, and it turned out that Roosevelt and his New Deal was still popular, this did not mean that outwardly liberal tendencies were welcome in the state. Indeed, the next most revealing occurrence in 1935 - the passing of a teacher loyalty oath bill requiring teachers “to refrain from directly or indirectly subscribing to or teaching any theory which is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of patriotism and high ideals of Americanism” - was initiated by a New Dealer.¹⁰⁹

The rise of anti-communism went on with a 1938 law barring aliens from public employment, along with a general nativist sentiment. 1938 was also the year in which local patriotism rose in the state, partly in response to Roosevelt’s attempt to purge a conservative Georgian off the Senate, and in which a “Georgian Creed” was adopted in the legislature. And when the threat to segregation came with the NAACP’s success at “chipping away at the ‘separate but equal’ doctrine” in the Missouri *Gaines* case, Talmadge ran a double campaign in 1940 to “keep the education of the races separate” and to remove “any person in the university system advocating communism or racial equality.” Eugene Talmadge, was elected governor in 1946 once again with an “anti-black and anti-red campaign.” However upon his death the new voice of the Talmadge faction became his son Herman Talmadge, who was elected governor in 1948, running against the civil rights stance of Truman administration and the reformist stance of Governor Melvin E. Thompson.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. The bill was introduced by E. D. Rivers, who was the speaker around which a reform group coalesced in the legislature, and Richard B. Russell ran successfully for the US Senate against Talmadge on a pro-New Deal program. Indeed, as Heale noted, the New Deal was never a direct assault on race relations in the South, and a red-scare would begin to be fully initiated as a program when such a threat – especially one directed towards segregation – was perceived. See Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 220.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 222-32. In 1942, he lost the primary to a reformist administration, which during the wartime economic boom identified with urban and suburban elites and promoted economic growth. However Talmadge’s faction still remained an influential base, which would resurface in the mid 1940s, when the CIO’s Operation Dixie played again on southern fears, with its increasing support of African Americans. By the time Operation Dixie failed in late 1940s, Truman administration’s national civil

Intensifying Cold War circumstances added onto such concerns and segregationists became more vocal in their anti-communist stance. And it was during Herman Talmadge's governorship till 1955, in which McCarthy-like strategies were fully embraced in the state and the red scare was carried to a level more than just election issues. In 1953, the state legislature passed The Floyd Anti-Subversion Act, which was patterned after Maryland's Ober Law.¹¹¹ One vocal supporter of the bill was former HUAC chairman John S. Wood, under whose leadership the 1949 HUAC hearings assaulted black civil rights organizations. Wood assured the critics of the bill that it was not in conflict with federal agencies. Governor Talmadge also advertised its passage by emphasizing his commitment to responsible government and promising that it would not result in the harassment of any individual. Another supporter was the Attorney General Eugene Cook. Then by the end of the Korean War, security questionnaires, investigations, university purges came about and an un-American activities committee was on the agenda.¹¹² The impending Supreme Court decision in *Brown* towards the end of 1953 had great role to play in the full-scale assault on communism.

Indeed Georgia was among the three states that formed the core of the resistance, along with Mississippi and South Carolina.¹¹³ And early supporters of the anti-communist control laws would also be vociferous defenders of segregation.

rights campaign reflected by the FEPC bill and later, his Committee on Civil Rights, immediately took over as a source for southern insecurities.

¹¹¹ Ober Act proposed in the 1949 Maryland state legislature demanded that states should be able to outlaw the communists. As Heale pointed out, it was after the Ober Act of 1949 of Maryland that the states' "attempts to outlaw communism really gained momentum." Although the Ober Law was ineffective in the long run, it became "the most widely imitated communist-control law" and it was particularly popular among the Deep South states. In 1950, Mississippi became an early imitator when it "reproduced a large part of the Ober Law in its own statute books, although according to the FBI there was only one Communist in the state." As Heale noted, another particularly popular kind of communist control law in the South were registration laws, with which Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and North and South Carolina experimented during the 1950s. See Heale, *McCarthy's Americans*, 60-76.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 241-46.

¹¹³ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 46.

During Talmadge's time, the issue of segregation became totally associated with the anti-communist crusade, and Talmadge became "the first major political figure to take a strong segregationist position on college desegregation."¹¹⁴ After the Court had asked for "further argument about the compatibility of segregation with the Constitution", Talmadge reconvened the legislature in which a two-pronged plan was launched –communist-control laws were strengthened and solid measures were taken towards preserving segregated schooling.¹¹⁵

In the 1954 gubernatorial primary elections, both *Brown* and anti-communism was the campaign issue. The winner was Marvin Griffin, the candidate of the state Democratic Party's Talmadge faction, who would simply campaign by saying that "the meddlers, demagogues, race baiters, and Communists are determined to destroy every vestige of states' rights."¹¹⁶ As Heale noted, Herman Talmadge (now seeking reelection as a US senator), Roy Harris (an influential political figure who was the campaign manager to both Eugene and Herman Talmadges), the Atlanta Congressman James C. Davis, Attorney General Eugene Cook, and the new governor, without the opposition of the liberal faction that was defused by then, would constitute "the group that put its considerable wits to the twin causes of resisting integration and exposing red subversion in Georgia in the mid-1950s."¹¹⁷

In 1955, Talmadge would publish a book entitled *You and Segregation*, in which he claimed that "for over a decade now, the American people have been undergoing...vicious and dangerous brainwashing" by the international

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 41.

¹¹⁵ Heale, *McCarthy's Americans*, 246-47.

¹¹⁶ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 68-69.

¹¹⁷ Heale, *McCarthy's Americans*, 250.

Communists.¹¹⁸ In the book, he would also defend rights of property, conciliate industry, noted his hostility toward CIO, which he claimed was in association with the NAACP. As Bartley noted, depending on the only book of his and his public speeches, he “was a states’ rights nationalist...and tended to confuse nationalism with orthodoxy and non-conformity with communism...[he] idolized a static society although approving economic change, and he elevated white supremacy to a position of paramount importance, clinging as he did to long-discredited racial interpretations of history.”¹¹⁹ During the Massive Resistance era, the book would be a key text for the rest of the South, which increasingly cooperated in the cause to resist integration.

In a speech before the Georgia Bar Association in 1956, Georgia Congressman James C. Davis came forward with a totally legislative argument, downplaying race and directing communist charges against both the Supreme Court justices and such organizations as the NAACP and Americans for Democratic Action.¹²⁰ Designating the 1954 desegregation decision as the “hardest blow struck at our Constitution,” he went on to say that “instead of citing legal authority, it cited only sociological works and treatises. Many of the authors of the authorities cited are well-known to have numerous Communist front connections.”¹²¹ Reciting James F. Byrnes’ warning in 1954 about the need to “curb the court,” or otherwise the rest of the Nation, along with the South that was already hurt would be threatened by “this

¹¹⁸ Mary L. Dudziak, “Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative” in *Race and U.S. Foreign Policy During the Cold War*, ed. Michael L. Krenn, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998), 233.

¹¹⁹ Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 43.

¹²⁰ The address of Representative James C. Davis to the Georgia Bar Association Convention in Savannah, Georgia May 25, 1956, James O. Eastland Collection, The Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Mississippi Libraries, J.D. Williams Library, Oxford, Mississippi, Series 18, Box 3, Folder 32.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

usurpation by the Court,” he went on by explaining its influence outside the South as well:

The Court...[has a] dictatorial attitude and evident determination to centralize power in Washington,..., has already struck at other States far from Georgia and the South. In the case of *Slochower vs. City of New York*, just decided, the Court struck down a law of the City of New York which required the discharge of a teacher who invoked the Fifth Amendment and refused to answer when questioned as to membership in the Communist Party. From the State of Pennsylvania,..., the Court held that a Pennsylvania statute making subversive activities a criminal offense was unconstitutional...This ties the hands of law enforcement officers in every one of the 48 States so far as Communists and subversives are concerned...In the case of *Communist Party of the United States of America vs. Subversive Activities Control Board*, decided less than a month ago,..., the Supreme Court rendered one of its most amazing decisions.¹²²

It had decided against the findings of the board reached through the Court of Appeals, saying that the witnesses of the board (Paul Crouch, Harvey Matusow, and Manning Johnson) and the evidence surrounding them lack credibility, and should be rechecked. Seeing this as an intended process in which the actions of the Court of Appeals are delayed, he then went on with explaining his own research into the 17 year period beginning with the year 1939, and into the ways in which the Supreme Court dealt with 28 Communism and subversion related cases, deciding in favor of Communists. He went on with a conspiratorial view, a radical change in the behavior of the Court is perceived, that threatened the American form of government and that allowed radical movements: “The strange tactics of this court within the past twenty years have ... [changed] so radically as to transform itself from a dependable, responsible, and respected Court into an agency, which, ...[lends] comfort and encouragement to radical movements and organizations which have grown bold and powerful during that period.”¹²³ And from such pattern, he concluded that:

¹²² *Ibid.*, 5.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

...the Court is a packed Court, and the personnel of the Court are reformers whose primary goal is to change this government of ours from a republic of Sovereign States into a bureaucratic central government, which shall be devoted not to the preservation of States' Rights, local self-government and individual liberty, but shall be devoted to the promotion of socialistic doctrines, one-world government, and the radical philosophies of such groups as the Americans for Democratic Action, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and similar left wing organizations.¹²⁴

He then went on to explain in detail the so-called Communist affiliations of four Supreme Court appointments between the years 1937 and 1939, and concluded with the following section:

One of the principal reasons that liberty has survived in America, while perishing in nearly every other section of the world, is that our government has been a government of laws and not a government of men...Our Constitution has been man-handled by political appointees, screened and approved by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Americans for Democratic Action. Their practice has been, during their incumbency on the bench, to say the law is one thing today and something else tomorrow. They are destroying our Constitution and the rights of States and individuals, and we are being told that we must accept these outrageous and fraudulent violations of our Constitutional rights.¹²⁵

His speech was a confirmation of the kind of propaganda in which several issues of white southern concerns were brought together during the Massive Resistance era. Another similar speech by Eugene Cook in 1955, which was published and widely distributed throughout the region, was entitled "The Ugly Truth about the NAACP." In the copy of the speech that he made before the 55th Annual Convention of the Peace Officers Association of Georgia in Atlanta, Cook presented the "the facts [that] have been uncovered, checked, assembled and correlated through many weeks of intensive investigation and cooperative effort by my Staff and the Staffs of Congressman James C. Davis of Georgia and Senator James O. Eastland of

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 8.

Mississippi”.¹²⁶ Beginning by stating that “the issue involved is not of race but rather of subversion” he went back to the origins of the NAACP and with reference to the Civil War, he declared:

The record shows that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was neither founded nor is presently directed by colored people. It was originated in New York City 46 years ago as the brain child of a Southern scalawag journalist and Russian-trained revolutionary named William W. Walling. Its principal personalities during its early years were descendants of the rabble-rousing abolitionists who fomented the strife which precipitated the War Between the States, a conflict which would have been avoided but for the activities of those abolitionists.¹²⁷

He then went on with the communist affiliations of the only black founder and the current “honorary member” W.E.B. DuBois, which he reached through the files of the HUAC. As his most recent activity, Cook noted about “the donation of his services in the preparation of legal briefs defending since-executed Communist spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and the imprisoned leaders of the Communist Party of the United States,” and added that in 1953 he was awarded the International Peace Prize, by the World Peace Council, which he defined as being a Communist front. He also noted that the series of conferences held by the council since 1949, to whose sponsorship DuBois participated, were “an attempt to undermine the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.”¹²⁸ After going on with the subversive affiliations of many members, he went back to DuBois’ contributions to Gunnar Myrdal’s book, *An American Dilemma*, which “was cited in its entirety by the Supreme Court as an authority for its ruling.” Again referring to HUAC findings, he noted that “15 other contributors to ‘An American Dilemma’ also have lengthy records of pro-

¹²⁶ McCain (William D.) Pamphlet Collection, The University of Southern Mississippi, McCain Library and Archives, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, M393, Box2, Folder 24, 1.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 2.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

Communist activity” and went on to elaborate on various other connections between the NAACP and communist activity.¹²⁹

Such key addresses and various others were widely disseminated throughout the region, all echoing similar conspiratorial arguments. In the dissemination of the knowledge of these leaders throughout the region, the founding of the Citizens’ Councils all over the south would be a key development. Representative of the grassroots of the Massive Resistance as a “respectable alternative” to the radicalism of the Ku Klux Klan, these councils were the best examples of the merging of regional solidarity and anti-communism in the Cold War south. The first council was found in July, 1954, in Indianola, Mississippi and in April, 1956 an interstate meeting was held in New Orleans. These varied grassroots organization would also symbolize the earlier mentioned “civic minded” aspect of the people of the South. Along with many others, Georgia too, would establish its version of the citizens’ council, the States’ Rights Council of Georgia, with the cooperation of Roy Harris, Herman Talmadge and Governor Marvin Griffin.¹³⁰

The school cases pending before the Supreme Court encouraged the concerned and civic minded leaders of Mississippi too. Indeed, Mississippi, which Neil R. McMillen rightfully called “the mother of the movement,” was the state that formed the core of the resistance and the anti-communist outlook that accompanied it.¹³¹ The first council-like formation emerged here under the leadership of Robert B. Patterson. As early as 1953, he began lobbying among his close circle upon learning in a meeting in the Indianola School about the impending Supreme Court cases. And

¹²⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹³⁰ Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 250.

¹³¹ Organized resistance to segregation materialized in Indianola, Sunflower County, “the drowsy trading center [that] lay at the heart of Mississippi’s cotton-rich and politically conservative Delta region...[where] organized segregation would flourish nearly as well as premium staple cotton.” McMillen, *The Citizens’ Council*, 19.

anti-communism had from the start been an important issue of emphasis for Patterson. Even in the early letter that he wrote in response to the danger he perceived in the pending school cases, and that he published for distribution to friends, he warned about the need to “stand firm against communism and mongrelization.”¹³²

After the Mississippi Circuit Judge Thomas Pickens Brady delivered a key speech that encouraged Patterson, he began to recruit the cadre that would form the first Council. Patterson was at the time the manager of a large plantation, a former Mississippi University football star and a World War II paratrooper; and Brady was a Yale educated lawyer, and a former Dixiecrat (chairman of the speakers’ bureau of the States’ Rights Democratic Party). Made immediately after the Brown decision, Brady’s address noted that the ruling “like the Truman administration’s civil rights program, was “socialistic.” He then expanded the speech into a ninety-page booklet under the title *Black Monday*, which would become the “inspiration and first handbook of the council movement.”¹³³ Indeed, Patterson would say years later that “his decision to devote his life to resisting desegregation came after reading *Black Monday*.”¹³⁴

The councils are important for understanding the local origins of the Massive Resistance movement. However their rhetoric and ideology are particularly important in realizing how the segregationists increasingly took to an anti-communist campaign. Anti-communism would indeed be a key emphasis in the later stages of the resistance movement, when council activity began to seek national recognition and “the hard line on race was frequently muted in deference to broader issues of

¹³² Ibid., 17.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 18.

concern to conservatives generally.”¹³⁵ Judge Brady’s speech before the conservative Commonwealth Club of California in 1956 was illustrative of this ideological framework:

[desegregation is] a small segment in the over-all plan to first socialize and then communize America...all constitutional, liberty loving citizens in this country will rise up in our defense and join hands with us in waging our lonely fight to protect and preserve America from Godless Communism!¹³⁶

The effectiveness of the councils and their specific effectiveness in red-baiting was also made clear by James C. Corman – Democrat Representative from California and a member of the House Judiciary Committee. Upon his trip to the South to explore the need for civil rights legislation, he shared his findings with the Californian newspaper *Valley Times Today*:

With but few exceptions, we found that every level of public and private opinion was committed to maintaining...segregation.... The White Citizens Councils are active throughout the state ...In this atmosphere it came as no surprise to us when several people told us that they believed that Communists were behind the Negro movement for equal rights.... There are only a few white citizens who have the courage to publicly support the Negro cause...[for fear of] economic reprisals and threats of physical violence.¹³⁷

This description established a direct connection between the activities of the Citizens Councils and the extent of anti-communist and segregationist public opinion. One other important conclusion in this was the fact that grassroots behavior was an important player in shaping the attitudes of the policy makers as well.

The speech of a Mississippi educated lawyer, banker, and a tree farmer of forty years, owning several hundred acres, Hugh V. Wall, was one example to the

¹³⁵ Ibid., 139.

¹³⁶ Quoted in Ibid.

¹³⁷ Typed letter by Corman entitled “Mississippi – Dixie’s Stronghold of ‘Racial Integrity,’ re: civil rights, segregation, Citizens Councils”, James O. Eastland Collection, The Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Mississippi Libraries, J.D. Williams Library, Oxford, Mississippi, Subseries 18, box 3, Folder 3-20.

anti-communist and segregationist sentiment in the simple language of the grassroots. He was also a member of the Democratic Advisory Council of the State of Mississippi appointed by the National Democratic Committee. Made before the Mississippi Bar Association in 1955, his speech was an assault on the legitimacy of the desegregation decision of the Supreme Court. Wall began by stating that “the United States of America has been considered by our people and known to civilized world as a government by the people. This historic and sacred right was taken away from the people by nine men... [to change] our form of government from that of a government by the people to that of a government by the Supreme Court of the United States.”¹³⁸ Further explaining how the state governments were constitutionally designed to deal with the problems of their own people, he said that the desegregation decision of the Court “assumed that nine men were better qualified than the parents of the children, or the local community, or the state to say how our public schools should be run.”¹³⁹ He then went on by stating that the decision was “based upon the unreasonable foundation of psychology, sociology and anthropology” and that “there is involved in this segregation of the races in our public schools, a deliberate plan on the part of the Communists to destroy our form of government.”¹⁴⁰ His evidence was a list of goals stated by the Communist Party Convention in 1928 defending the abolition of racially unjust practices, and the Supreme Court’s “following so closely [this] Communist Party platform.”¹⁴¹ In the closing section, he outwardly defended his position against the mixing of the two races. Referring to the statement of the court that segregation created a feeling of

¹³⁸ Reprint of the address entitled “A Lawyer Challenges the U.S. Supreme Court,” June 1955, McCain (William D.) Pamphlet Collection, The University of Southern Mississippi, McCain Library and Archives, Hattiesburg, Mississippi, M393, Box3, Folder 19, 3.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 7.

inferiority that might affect the hearts and minds of black children “in a way unlikely ever to be undone”, he said:

....they [referring to those who endorse the decision] appear to forget that white children have a heart and mind that will be affected in a way unlikely ever to be undone, and they forget that the mixing of the races in the public schools would inevitably mean the mixing of the blood and the mixing of the blood would mean a destruction of both the white race and the negro race. Then the question is, are we more interested in the hearts and minds of the negro children than we are in the perpetuation of the purity of each race, and the life of the white race?....[Then quoting the famous statesman of the Antebellum period, Daniel Webster, he concluded:] “...if the blood of our white race should become corrupted and mingled with the blood of Africa, then the present greatness of the United States of America would be destroyed and all hope for the future would be forever gone. The maintenance of the American civilization would be as impossible for a negroid America as would the redemption and restoration of the white man’s blood which had been mixed with that of a negro.”¹⁴²

Another key figure in Mississippi was William J. Simmons, whom McMillen defined as the most responsible person in the coming together of the various councils across the region and to “begin effectively to coordinate organized racism in the South.” Unlike the “parochial former football captain Patterson,” Simmons was the educated son of one of the most successful bankers. He had widely traveled Europe in his youth and went to Sorbonne, France to study French Literature, and when World War II broke out, he came back to the United States to serve in the Navy. “Projecting the image of respectability that the movement so ardently sought,” the center of Mississippi council’s organization would shift to Jackson under Simmons’ leadership (by 1960s), with Patterson still the executive secretary in the Greenwood office.¹⁴³

Simmons too resorted to anti-communism in public campaigns, although he personally had doubts about too much of an emphasis on communism that would divert attention from the issue of race. In an occasion similar to Judge Brady’s, he

¹⁴² Ibid., 7 – 8.

¹⁴³ Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens’ Council*, 121-23.

resorted to a softer rhetoric, still revolving around conservative anti-communistic themes. In a 1958 speech in Iowa, “he sketched a fearful portrait of encroaching federalism and creeping collectivism in which the *Brown* decision was but one of many portentous deviations from constitutionalism effected by New Dealers, Fair Dealers and “totalitarian ‘liberals’.”¹⁴⁴ In fact the more entrenched problem that lay beneath “the conspiracy theory of racial problems” as he saw it was “the wave of equalitarian philosophy that started in the early part of the twentieth century with...John Dewey...[that] permeated the very fabric of American education and,...this spirit of equality [that] “resulted directly in the Supreme Court school-integration decision”. ”¹⁴⁵ However, when he made public addresses or wrote columns on the Council’s journal, he repeatedly used the adjectives “communist-inspired” or “communist-dominated” while referring to the integration movement.¹⁴⁶ Despite the insincerity, the fact that he resorted to communist influences revealed the effectiveness of such rhetoric.

As the addresses of these Mississippian resisters reveal, anti-communism proved flexible enough a weapon both on the local and national context, to counter moderacy on racial progress. George Lewis frequently noted in his *The White South and the Red Menace* that southern leaders of the resistance used anti-communism to tone down an outright racist rhetoric. Moreover, just as anti-communism enabled an easier reach for the national audience; in the locale it proved an effective complement to such arguments as states’ rights, fears of miscegenation and amalgamation of the races.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 139.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 199.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ George Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace*, 48.

Such respectable and civic minded citizens who were in close proximity to the grassroots were the initiators of both the movement and the anti-communist frame the rhetoric gained. However, important political figures of the state, with political experience in the U. S. Congress or the Senate also had their contribution. As noted before, such federal institutions as HUAC, FBI, or SISS happened to be the centers of information and tactics that southern leaders used during the Massive Resistance era, along with local ones.

One such important person in Mississippi was Congressman John Rankin, who was the chairman to HUAC during 1945-1946. Just as Brady, Simmons, and Patterson attached communism to their anti-New Deal, anti-Truman, or anti-equalitarian ideas, Rankin's focus was mostly on miscegenation. Warning about the intention of fellow travelers to mongrelize the whole nation and the communist plan to create social chaos, he told in a speech before the Speaker of the House, that "the Communists and pink parlors of this country...are trying to browbeat the American Red Cross into taking the labels off the blood bank they are building up for our boys in the service so that it will not show whether it is Negro blood or white blood."¹⁴⁸ As Jeff Woods pointed out, southerners had used HUAC to "wrap their region's racial agenda in the American flag and tie southern security to national security...[and to] apply racist doctrines to the anti-Communist cause since the committee's beginning."¹⁴⁹ Although Rankin gave up HUAC chairmanship in 1947, he continued to be what Woods called the "spiritual leader." And it was under his leadership that year that the committee began pursuing radicalism among blacks with most sincerity. He talked in 1947 about a "great octopus, communism, which is out to destroy everything," explaining the racial disturbances in the South. In 1948 there

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in Lewis, 49.

¹⁴⁹ Woods, 27-28.

had been some more disturbances in the South during Henry Wallace's presidential campaign, in which his supporters were attacked during rallies and he was thrown rotten vegetables with appellations such as "Communist" and "nigger lover."¹⁵⁰ Rankin again declared in Congress, blaming the events on Wallace and Communists, that the racial reforms they sought were the cover for "Marxist subversion."¹⁵¹

During the following years, the committee would produce reports and hold hearings to point out to subversive elements within such civil rights organizations as CIO, CRC, and SCHW. This according to Woods, along with the southern response to Truman's racial policies, was "a clear indication that red and black fears had become a defining element of the region's ideology; [and, that] the southern red scare was under way."¹⁵² On the eve of the founding of the State Rights party, Rankin would issue a call to fellow southerners to "stop these smearing Communists who would creep into every bureau and every commission that is appointed and attempt to undermine and destroy everything our people have fought for and everything we hold dear."¹⁵³ During the Massive Resistance era, such rhetoric would continue with increasing intensity and federal tactics would be transferred down south, allying itself with the longstanding southern local anti-communist sentiment.

McMillen also highlighted this continuity by stating that "just as an earlier generation of conservative Americans had seen a frightful red specter lurking behind labor unrest, the New Deal's "coddling" of the Negro, and such wartime innovations as the FECP, the disquieted Southerner of the post-Brown period regarded the Negro revolution as a product of the "Communist conspiracy"."¹⁵⁴ The most influential figure in Mississippi during this period that echoed Rankin, was Senator James O.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Woods, 35.

¹⁵³ Quoted in Woods, 35.

¹⁵⁴ McMillen, 194-95.

Eastland. Just as Rankin developed his anti-communist ideas and strategies under HUAC, Eastland developed his in the Senate. He was a young lawyer and a cotton-plantation owner, who grew up in a small town near Jackson, having “the lifestyle and world view of the conservative white ruling elite.”¹⁵⁵ After a brief experience in national politics, upon his appointment by the governor to a temporary position in the Senate in 1941, he won reelection to a full term next year, thanks to the support of the agricultural community.¹⁵⁶ His racism and his belief in the ties between civil rights reform and subversion were often reflected in his remarks, even before he rose to his seat in the SISS. During the Dixiecrat movement, of which he was a staunch supporter¹⁵⁷, he declared that Truman’s civil rights stance showed how “organized mongrel minorities control[ed] the government... [and how they were trying to] Harlemize the country.”¹⁵⁸ In 1950, he gained membership in the new SISS, upon his support to a fellow Democrat in his call for the resignation of the secretary of state Dean Acheson, “whom Eastland accused of sympathizing with pro-Soviet advisers in the State Department.”¹⁵⁹

Just as Rankin used his position in HUAC, Senator Eastland used his seniority position in the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee “to import federal red-baiting committees to the South.”¹⁶⁰ Even before he was preaching the interposition resolution all over the South as the best possible solution to the problem of states’ rights in 1956, he had already begun tracing communists in the region. In 1954, he was the central figure in one of the events that M. J. Heale characterizes as “well-publicized congressional episodes...[that] brought reminders of the threat of

¹⁵⁵ Woods, 42.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 43.

¹⁵⁷ Eastland, together with the Mississippi Governor, had helped make Charles Wallace Collins’ *Whither Solid South*, the handbook of the Dixiecrat movement. See Bartley, *The New South*, 89.

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Ibid., 82.

¹⁵⁹ Woods, 43.

¹⁶⁰ Lewis, 16.

red subversion” down South.¹⁶¹ Early that year, he led “a one-man visitation” to New Orleans, to investigate into the Southern Conference Educational Fund. SCEF was a tax exempt organization headed by James Dombrowski, which was initiated by the SCHW in 1946, and which saw segregation and discrimination as the reason to South’s problems. The organization also had the support of many New Dealers, leftist southerners, and civil rights activists. Early in March 1954, its board members were called in by the subcommittee to be present at the New Orleans hearings. Two of the board members, Aubrey Williams and Virginia Durr, requested the senate majority leader Lyndon Baines Johnson’s help, upon which Johnson persuaded two key subcommittee members into not attending the hearings.¹⁶² Hearings went on under Eastland’s leadership and SCEF’s lineage to SCHW was traced, Dombrowski and an attorney he had once worked with (despite having no official connection to SCEF) were charged with having ties to the Communist Party. When Eastland ordered another board member Myles Horton be ejected, he was forcibly dragged out of the room. While Eastland closed the hearings, he still declared a “pledge to continue his general investigation into the activities of the Communist Party in the South. As the crowd was leaving the room, heated discussions resulted in the interference of Federal marshals in the scene. The hearings were a failure, and again faced with pressures from Lyndon Johnson, the SISS had to cancel another set of hearings in Birmingham, Alabama.¹⁶³ However, despite the failure and even the opposition of some fellow southerners to Eastland’s McCarthy-like tactics, “the hearings implicated a number of prominent southern liberals in the Communist conspiracy...[and] the loyalty of southerners sympathetic to integration had been

¹⁶¹ Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 247.

¹⁶² “Johnson had been a long-time admirer of Mrs. Durr and had worked with Williams on the National Youth Administration in Texas.” Woods, 45.

¹⁶³ Woods, 45-47.

impugned.”¹⁶⁴ Moreover, simultaneous on the federal scene, were the Army-McCarthy hearings, upon which many southerners felt McCarthy was being “crucified” by a federal government that increasingly and disappointingly supported racial integration. The earlier mentioned influential Georgia political figure Roy Harris, commented on the episode, saying “the ghost of Communism will rise to haunt Eisenhower and all these peanut officials in Washington who are joining up with the howling mob today.”¹⁶⁵

Thus, just as the red scare on the federal level was coming to an end, its legacy came down south, making use of the federal tactics and material that had been built up in the previous decade. As Jeff Woods pointed out, two months after the hearings in New Orleans, the *Brown* decision came along, and seven months later, the Senate censured McCarthy. Although both McCarthy’s and Eastland’s extreme and reckless tactics were disfavored as more dangerous to American ideals than the threat that might be posed by groups such as the SCEF, “the renewed interest among racially conservative southerners in attributing the civil rights movement to alien influences...would carry the red scare into the looming battle against school integration.”¹⁶⁶

Eastland of Mississippi would still be the central figure in the South who led the anti-communist aspect of the resistance. He paid visits to other southern states and frequently made key addresses in Citizens’ Councils meetings. One such address was made into a booklet entitled “We have reached an era of Judicial Tyranny”, which was basically the text of his speech before the statewide convention of the Association of the Citizens’ Councils of Mississippi, held in December 1, 1955. The address stated that the Court “[had] perpetrated a monstrous crime. It presents a clear

¹⁶⁴ Heale, *McCarthy’s Americans*, 247.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Woods, 47.

threat...not only to the law, customs, traditions, and racial integrity of Southern people, but also to the foundations of our Republican form of Government.”¹⁶⁷ This statement combining a southern regional identity, white supremacy and a perceived threat to governmental structure was a powerful common stance in the South to take to appease the public, without regard to the extent of extremity or the leniency of the rhetoric. Merging the above statement into an introduction talking about the founding fathers, he went on explaining how the government was threatened by subversive groups:

...these decisions [for integration] were dictated by political pressure groups bent upon the destruction of the American system of government, and the mongrelization of the white race...the Court has responded to a radical pro-communist political movement in this country.... This thing is broader and deeper than the N.A.A.C.P. It is true that N.A.A.C.P. is the front and the weapon to force integration...It is backed by large organizations with tremendous power, who are attempting with success to mold the climate of public opinion, to brainwash and indoctrinate the American people to accept racial integration and mongrelization...In general they are church groups, radical organizations, labor unions and liberal groups of all shades of Red.¹⁶⁸

Eastland then went on with this simultaneously segregationist, anti-communist, and conspiratorial Cold Warrior rhetoric, noting that children were brainwashed and indoctrinated in public schools and that the real danger was the more moderate states of the south, as Mississippi would not let this succeed.

Some fellow politicians also encouraged this special interest of the senator in subversives within the context of civil rights reform. For example, in a private letter to Eastland dated March 15, 1956 (the year Eastland assumed the Chairmanship of

¹⁶⁷ Citizens' Councils of America Literature, 1947-1969, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas. Series V. Items 1-15, Acc.No.66, Loc.146, 4.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 5.

the whole judiciary Committee¹⁶⁹), the South Carolina Senator Olin D. Johnston, warned him that an investigation resolution into the desegregation decision of the Court, which they co-sponsored the year before, had been delayed for a year.¹⁷⁰ He reminded Eastland of the conclusion they reached that much of the material used by the Supreme Court in reaching its decision “originated from writings and other works developed from pink, red or actually communistic sources.”¹⁷¹ He noted that the resolution should be resumed immediately and requested the Chair to appoint a special subcommittee “as there is nothing more urgent on this subject at this time than this investigation.... It would be tragic indeed for a decree of the Supreme Court be implemented upon the people of this country should that decree be based on communistic-inspired writings.”¹⁷² Such small scale but direct political pressures, along with the one from the grassroots, was an important element of the ideology building process of such figures as Eastland. Eastland would produce another pamphlet that took its place among propaganda circles, which was entitled “Is the Supreme Court pro-Communist?” It was the text of Eastland’s speech in the Senate on May 2, 1962. He was then the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The pamphlet noted in the preface that it would make clear “the major trend of our times – our relinquishment of personal liberty, our sidle into socialism.”¹⁷³ Regarding the authority of the Supreme Court to shape states’ politics, the document talked greatly

¹⁶⁹ Finding Aid for the James O. Eastland Collection, <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/general_library/files/archives/collections/guides/latesthtml/MUM00117.html>

¹⁷⁰ South Carolina was the third state along with Georgia and Mississippi, which Bartley referred to in his *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, as the “neobourbon” center of the Massive Resistance in the Deep South.

¹⁷¹ Typed letter signed dated 15 March 1956 from Johnston to Eastland, re: Supreme Court, school desegregation; 2 pages. James O. Eastland Collection, The Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Mississippi Libraries, J.D. Williams Library, Oxford, Mississippi, File Series 1, Subseries 18, box 5, Folder 5-46.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 1 – 2.

¹⁷³ “Is the Supreme Court Pro-Communist”, 1969. Citizens’ Councils of America Literature, 1947-1969, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series V, Items 16-26, Acc.No.66, Loc.146.

about the tyrannical and socialistic aspect of the Court and historical aspect of this.

Referring to the statistical research he had brought together, he said:

In the 24 years – 1919 to 1942 – the Court decided only 11 cases in this category [involving Communism and subversion]. Of these 11, the first 7 were decided against the Communist position and in favor of the Government.... from 1943 through 1953, a total of 34 cases in the described category were considered. A majority of the Court voted in favor of the position advocated by the Communists in 15 cases, and held contrary to what the Communists wanted in 19 cases...In the 7 ½ years since [Earl Warren became Chief Justice], the Court had the enormous total of 70 cases or more...46 of these sustained the position advocated by the communists...¹⁷⁴

What he revealed was both an increase in the number of Communism related cases and an increase in the tendency to decide in favor of the Communist side. With the sharp increase he suggested in 1953, he saw the behavior of Warren Court as an indication of the realization of a long-term communist influence. He contextualized this remark by stating that “in the recent constitutional history of this Nation, the Supreme Court of the United States has infringed, invaded, and usurped the powers vested by the Constitution in the legislative branch of the Federal Government.”¹⁷⁵ He then went on saying “it is a mockery for Congress when...nine men appointed for life.... can arrogate onto themselves the power to dictate to the sovereign States how they shall conduct their internal affairs...”¹⁷⁶ He then went on again with the anti-communist rhetoric warning of the danger “that threatens the basic security of our country from the onslaught of the Communist conspiracy from without and within....” It was after these remarks combining the pro states’ rights and anti-communist that he went into the details of his statistical survey, which he had

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 10-11.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 4.

prepared during the years that encompassed the Little Rock integration crisis of 1957 and completed in 1958.

CHAPTER III

THE CASE OF ORVAL FAUBUS

3.1 Ineffective Moderacy in Arkansas

The Deep South States, as explained in the preceding sections, played a central role in the crystallization of resistance to desegregation in public schools as a movement all throughout the South, by providing the ideological basis and promoting this collection of ideas through various means of effective propaganda. Moreover, simultaneously with the tendency in federal court decisions towards desegregation in public schools long before the 1954 *Brown* decision of the Supreme Court, the Deep South, with Georgia, South Carolina and Mississippi on the lead, had already begun very early in the decade initiating legislation and programs that openly challenged this trend.¹⁷⁷

Interestingly, however, it was in one of the states of the upper south that the Massive Resistance reached its peak and manifested itself in 1957, with the most notable and internationally acknowledged Massive Resistance crisis of the Cold War era. The crisis over integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, brought the Federal Government and a southern State in direct conflict, in which the Arkansas Governor Orval Eugene Faubus opted for resistance. The event would turn

¹⁷⁷ Bartley, *Massive Resistance*, 46.

Arkansas into a fortress of Massive Resistance, despite its being, one of the most moderate states in the South in terms of race relations and the critical developments in Little Rock would determine the eventual fate of the movement.

In the following sections, the focus will be on how the dual dynamics of Massive Resistance and anti-communism played out in Arkansas, “transforming” this Upper South state not only into a silent legislative center for resistance, but differently from the rest of the Upper South, into a place where outwardly segregationist and vocal resistance turned into a showdown. Although Faubus’ own personal decision - to act in favor of segregation and overtly challenge the authority of the Federal Government – created the crisis, the background to his eventual behavior as a political opportunist exhibited important insights into the mostly overlooked conservative base in the state. This conservative base had much in common with the Deep South, in terms of its views of both segregation and anti-communism, and offered a receptive audience to the rhetoric of Massive Resistance, that already reached Arkansas and made visible an important majority for Faubus to play to.

George Lewis, in his *The White South and the Red Menace*, treated North Carolina and Virginia in a similar context, as the two states of the Upper South that “in particular...provided the legislative foundations for determined, long-term resistance.”¹⁷⁸ Looking at the occasional failures of anti-communism as a Massive Resistance tool, he also challenged the oversimplified notion of the Massive Resistance movement as a monolith, elite driven and highly-organized effort. He demonstrated that the Massive Resistance rhetoric and the extent of determination in the defiance of *Brown*, showed important variations, which revealed itself in the

¹⁷⁸ Lewis, *The White South and the Red Menace*, 124.

variety of the ways anti-communism was employed as a tool. Lewis assigned this difference from the Deep South, to the fact that “the politicians [of the Upper South] were forced to take into account more diverse constituencies and a broader range of opinions on the race issue.”¹⁷⁹ For both states, he traced a general split among resisters that put forward two main factions, between defenders of a purely legislative strategy and deniers of even token desegregation. Among the two factions, the latter camp tended to include those who preferred an anti-communist rhetoric.¹⁸⁰

Notwithstanding this side of the issue, the following treatment of the dual forces of Massive Resistance and anti-communism in Arkansas, will focus more on the conservative commonalities in the South culminating in the incidents in Little Rock, also trying to reveal certain conditions and personalities complicating the events. Indeed, Arkansas was the state in which the political scientist V. O. Key Jr. could locate “no state-wide factional organization with either cohesion or continuity... [but instead a] multiplicity of transient and personal factions.”¹⁸¹ Key also stated that in Arkansas, “more than in almost any other southern state, social and economic issues of significance to people have lain ignored in the confusion and paralysis of disorganized factional politics.”¹⁸² Fitting with such analysis, the politics in Arkansas, before and during the outbreak of the crisis in Little Rock revolved around a state-wide conservative consensus about the double issues of anti-

¹⁷⁹ Lewis, 124.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 124-27. However, this anti-communism, not so much differently from the Deep South, was built upon substantial traditions and had their examples in both states’ history. In both states, there were some past episodes of mostly late 1940s, that evidenced the existence of both the anti-communism as opposed to the Communist Party, and the anti-communism that was attached to other regional concerns with “wider appeals for a strengthening of states’ rights” at the center. See Lewis, 130.

¹⁸¹ Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation*, 183. Key noted that “Alabama’s sectionalism, Virginia’s Byrd machine, Georgia’s Talmadge and anti-Talmadge groupings, Tennessee’s Shelby-East Tennessee coalition give the politics of those states a recognizable quality and color. Arkansas politics manifests no such singular trait.” Even compared with, the “fluidity of factions” in both Virginia and North Carolina, he treated the multiplicity in Arkansas to the extent of the existence of a “useless politics...free of anything save the petty argument and personal loyalty of the moment.” See Key, 183-204.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 84.

communism and segregation, which were made visible only during election campaigns, when brought up by certain competing politicians.

The controversy in Little Rock unexpectedly revealed this conservative sentiment in the State that resisted immediate integration. Otherwise, in 1954, the Central High school board had declared to comply with the Supreme Court's decision to integrate public schools. Despite Arkansas' becoming like a fortress of Massive Resistance with the Little Rock integration crisis, it had been before the incident, one of the most promising states in the south in terms of race relations. Both Faubus and Governor Sid McMath before him were "the two leading practitioners of biracial politics in the region."¹⁸³ Faubus was indeed raised in the political school of McMath and together they represented a liberal wing of Arkansas politics for years. They both had liberal economic policies that helped lower income whites and blacks, and their policies considered the increasing black voters' concerns. They defended increased support for black institutions, appointed blacks to important political positions, and took public stance against lynching and poll tax.¹⁸⁴

Unlike the situation in most southern states during late 1940s and early 1950s, both governors won gubernatorial elections against conservative and segregationist candidates. Even in the South's most critical year, 1950, McMath won over the conservative governor Ben Laney. That year, the Supreme Court handed down the three segregation related cases, *Sweatt*, *McLaurin*, and *Henderson*, triggering a white conservative response in most of the Southern states. Even in North Carolina and Florida, gubernatorial elections were dominated by segregationist campaigns and resulted in the loss of liberals. And in the Deep South, most important victories that contributed most to the rise of Massive Resistance politics took place –

¹⁸³ Elizabeth Jacoway and C. Fred Williams, ed. *Understanding the Little Rock Crisis: An Exercise in Remembrance and Reconciliation*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999), 83-84.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 83.

that of the leading segregationist and anti-communist Herman Talmadge in Georgia, and of the strongest anti-Truman and anti-integration force in the region James F. Byrnes in South Carolina. While these segregationist white southern forces were in consolidation, McMath defeated Governor Ben Laney, who was a renowned Dixiecrat and also the chairman to the National States' Rights Committee in 1949, without "letting" matters of race become a campaign issue.

Only in 1952 McMath lost against Francis Cherry in the race for governorship, but the campaign was again centered on his liberal economic policies and pro-Truman and left wing stance. Even in Faubus's gubernatorial victory against Cherry in 1954, race was not an issue. Cherry had already announced, right after the Supreme Court handed down the *Brown* decision, that Arkansas would not defy the order. Instead, he preferred to resort to anti-communist tactics that had taken its hold in the rest of the region. What he did to counter Faubus was to carry his tactic (that he previously used against McMath) of appealing to the conservative backlash and anti-communist consensus, to a level compared to McCarthy's. He developed the campaign on his findings that, as a youth, Faubus had attended the Commonwealth College, notorious for being a socialistic establishment. He also drew attention to the socialist background that Faubus's family had.

Faubus was still victorious, although his political boss McMath had to face defeat that year in the race for the Senate against conservative and anti-communist John L. McClellan. Thus, still in his 1954 gubernatorial victory that took place in the immediate context of *Brown*, anti-communism rather than segregation was on the agenda. However, during the next gubernatorial election, he had to counter James D. Johnson, who combined a staunch anti-communist and segregationist campaign and it was during this term as governor that Faubus' tone began to change. Although his

own personal history as well did not point to a prejudice against blacks, Faubus eventually turned in 1957 into the icon that personified the intolerant white southern racist, and Arkansas became the fortress of Massive Resistance. Although, his own personal decisions and the specific conditions of the Arkansas atmosphere initially fed the events in Little Rock, the segregationist forces of Massive Resistance and an anti-communist sentiment, working in the background seemed to contribute greatly to Faubus's unexpected segregationist stance during the crisis.

The magnitude of the confrontation in Little Rock was unexpected, especially among liberal and moderate circles, which were initially supporters of Orval Faubus and expected their State to be the possible forerunner in the peaceful implementation of *Brown*. However in the state, there was a mostly unpronounced anti-integration sentiment, which produced the silence that they assumed as consent. Moreover, even less pronounced was an anti-communist, anti-outsider sentiment that added onto the difficult position of moderacy. Thus, their own definition of themselves as “moderates” was part of the unnoticed obstacle before the reorganization of the racial norms in their community. All of them were part of the liberal southern politicians, who, in the definition of Tony Badger, “appealed to a cross alliance of lower-income whites, blacks, veterans, women, and labor...[and who] believed that the economic progress that New-Deal style policies could achieve would gradually eliminate racial tensions. They played down the race issue, and espoused a policy of gradualism, rarely challenging segregation itself.”¹⁸⁵ Although it was the safest course for politicians, it was also a stressful position to maintain, especially in Arkansas where the general constituency that Badger noted was much more complicated.

¹⁸⁵ Tony Badger, “Brown and Backlash,” in *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction*, ed. Clive Webb, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 40.

Moreover, for most black people at the time, moderation had different overtones. Interviewed by Beth Roy, Jerome Muldrew, a black student attending the all-black Dunbar High School during the crisis at Little Rock, reflected this dilemma. Although feeling betrayed and hurt by Faubus' turn into the segregationist camp, he said he "just simply signed it off as being politics...Because you see, we were considered a moderate state, but then if you're a moderate state it meant you can turn either way, you could either become a segregationist, or not-a-segregationist."¹⁸⁶

It was a flexible position that might bend to either side, offering both hopes for progress and a risk of equal strength toward the other end. Moreover, in such a delicate political atmosphere, both the personal decisions of politicians and their own conception of themselves about whether they were politically qualified enough in the eyes of the public tended to have great importance. As Key rightly noted in his specific analysis of Arkansas politics, the overall consensus in basic political issues left only the issue about "who is the 'best qualified' candidate, or what is the best way to do what everyone...who has a hand in the state's politics, agrees ought to be done...[in the common assumption that] all persons are loyal to the state."¹⁸⁷ Thus, where "personalities and emotions of the moment" defined election returns and where the personal competence of the politician meant a lot, personal insecurities had a lot to offer in the understanding of events – especially the ones unfolding in Little Rock. In the face of a rising appeal for Massive Resistance, which made segregation

¹⁸⁶ Roy, *Bitters in the Honey*, 90 - 91. While telling Jerome's story, Beth Roy noted that in the one-party politics of Arkansas, "the only vote that mattered was the primary" and as it was with the rest of the South, the legalistically local affair of primaries made the disfranchisement of blacks much easier. However, Jerome told her that "they had surreptitiously voted anyhow. The joke was that they had thereby helped elect Faubus, believing him to be a liberal because he was associated with the Commonwealth College..." See Roy, 91. This might be one reason why Cherry's McCarthyite campaign backfired in 1954, apart from the help that he took from the *Arkansas Gazette* editor Harry Ashmore - one of the few out rightly liberal influences in Arkansas politics.

¹⁸⁷ Key, 186.

“the issue” in the wake of the crisis, all moderate politicians contributed to what amounted to Faubus’ segregationist stance.

One example of the delicate position of moderacy in the State was that of the conciliatory congressman Brooks Hays. In hopes of preventing the crisis, Hays personally directed a secret conference between Faubus and Eisenhower, using his Washington ties and the sympathy he held in national politics as a liberal southerner. That was a meeting that took place at the Naval Base in New Port, Rhode Island – only 11 days before the President federalized the Arkansas National Guard and announced that he would deploy additional federal troops to Little Rock in September 24, 1957.¹⁸⁸ He was a moderate, an advocate of gradual integration, who avoided taking sides and considered both the proponents of an all-out segregation and the insistent NAACP as extremist “creatures of freedom” born out of the “risks our governmental system include.” According to him, “one [could] oppose, as I do, the national organization’s [NAACP’s] strategy and still believe strongly in their right to function as an agent of their people’s interests, just as I believe that White Citizens Councils should not be prevented by court procedures or otherwise from holding meetings or propagating their views.”¹⁸⁹ He was requested by Mayor Mann to appear in a secret meeting of the moderate leaders of the state, right after Faubus withdrew the National Guard on September 20 and flew to Georgia to attend the Southern Governors Conference. Hays attended on superintendent Virgil Blossom’s advice, informing him that his help might be needed in devising strategies to prevent violence. Thus, he attended the meeting against his worries that “it might draw me into the orbit of political opposition to Governor Faubus.” He made the above mentioned remark about the extremism of NAACP, for explaining his unwillingness

¹⁸⁸ Hays, *A Southern Moderate Speaks*, 144.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 167.

to have any contact with the organization “either national or local”, upon realizing that the meeting’s purpose developed into protecting the black kids rather than preventing violence.¹⁹⁰ Hays was worried and insecure, because he was aware of the peoples’ growing uneasiness in the community about the changes imposed on the very local and sensitive issue of desegregation in public schools, plus his own unwillingness to appear to public as taking the integrationist side. In this insecurity, like Faubus, a liberal political and personal record had an important part.

During the 1930s, Hays had been serving as a member of the Democratic National Committee, during which time he unsuccessfully ran twice for governorship and once for Congress, as a young social reformer. In 1934 he was also appointed as chief of the legal and labor compliance responsibilities in the National Recovery Administration’s Arkansas office. That year he was invited by the Virginian scholar and politician Francis Pickens Miller (a later leader of the anti-Byrd forces in Virginia) to join a meeting in Atlanta, with representatives from all over the south aiming to organize “to alert southern leadership to the grave problems of farm tenancy, low incomes, racial discrimination, disfranchisement due to poll tax laws, discriminatory freight rates, elective irregularities, and other social ills.” He traveled extensively throughout the South, on missions for the Southern Policy Committee, born out of that meeting, although “the conservative farm groups looked askance at us, largely because of our emphasis upon the plight of the tenants and sharecroppers.” In 1935 he met Henry A. Wallace, who was then the Secretary of Agriculture, and he was appointed to the Farm Security Administration (then called Resettlement Administration.)¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ He still “agreed to use” his Washington contacts to find the phone number of Thurgood Marshall, representing the national NAACP, in case they decide to contact him. But to Hays knowledge, no one in the group made that call. Hays, *A Southern Moderate Speaks*, 169.

¹⁹¹ Hays, *Politics is My Parish*, 115-20.

Such liberal record would trouble him in his career as a Congressman. When in 1942 he ran for Congress, his opponent campaigned by “great bundles of circulars, page sized, inflaming feelings on the race issue” and brought up Hays’ attendance at the 1938 Southern Conference on Human Welfare (which would have to disband in 1948) meeting in Birmingham. He made his defense, with the help of *Arkansas Gazette* editor John F. Wells, being careful not to “negate [his] concern for the welfare of the black people.”¹⁹² The advertisements they produced included newspaper clippings “showing that [he] had left the 1939 Birmingham conference before an active minority, some of whom had been influenced by Communist propaganda, put through all kinds of extreme and unrealistic resolutions that were later repudiated” and finished with a resolution of the Women’s society of the Methodist Church condemning the use of the issue of race in political campaigns.¹⁹³ Hays noted that his opponent’s campaign was “an attack upon me as ‘a dangerous radical.’” Thus, being too interested in the improvement of the lot of blacks was immediately perceived as a radical left wing tendency. He also mentioned how, during his years as a congressman, his “efforts in the Roosevelt-inspired program of relating the rural poor more viably, and thus more equitably, to the land sometimes brought recriminations and violent personal attacks... [including the one when he] was once denounced by a representative in the Arkansas legislature as ‘a Communist’;” and how he was constantly blocked for “being persona non grata to some members of the Arkansas political establishment...even in the more acceptable conservation measures.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² John F. Wells would later politicize against both Faubus and Ashmore as the two communist leaning liberals conspiring in Little Rock crisis.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 143. The meeting that Hays talked about was probably the one where Eleanor Roosevelt protested the segregation laws in the state by sitting in the center aisle, between whites and blacks.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 141-48.

Another early Faubus supporter was Sid McMath, who had been the governor between the years 1949 – 1952 with a post-war progressive business approach, assisted by others in Arkansas politics such as the Senator J. William Fulbright, Congressman Hays, and who indeed introduced Faubus to Arkansas politics. McMath was also supported by the *Arkansas Gazette* editor Harry Ashmore, who joined the *Gazette* in the fall of 1947 in the immediate context of Truman’s special commission released its report, *To Secure These Rights*. On his arrival, he immediately began politicizing against Governor Ben T. Laney - McMath’s conservative predecessor, who had assumed the chairmanship of the southern faction that would be called Dixiecrats, committed to opposing Truman’s nomination. In an early radio debate, Ashmore forcefully argued against Laney who “emphasized his opposition to the president’s endorsement of anti-lynching, anti-poll tax, anti-segregation, and Fair Employment Practices Commission legislation, calling all of it unconstitutional and even communistic.”¹⁹⁵

Such anti-communist and segregationist sentiment would also be directed against McMath and Ashmore. McMath’s 1952 defeat in the gubernatorial elections was the result of “a combination of popular outrage over questionable dealings in his highway department [chaired by Faubus], opposition from the mighty Arkansas Power & Light Company, and a revulsion against Truman.”¹⁹⁶ In the victory of Francis Cherry, the company was an important sponsor, revealing the restricting impact of conservative business, which was also anti-communist and had an interest in preserving the racial statu quo although the issue was not directly raised in this particular election. The company’s president was one of the several “leading industrial managers and promoters,” whom Ashmore conferred during the “Ashmore

¹⁹⁵ Jacoway, *Turn Away Thy Son*, 13.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 17-18.

Project” and whose “style of a country preacher on behalf of the private utilities’ crusade against the ‘creeping socialism’ of public power...was typical.”¹⁹⁷ After Francis Cherry’s assuming governorship, the letter that an associate justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court wrote to Cherry also signaled the increasing suspicion against the liberal camp, resembling the anti-communist rhetoric of resistance spreading from the Deep South: “One of the most tragic phases of the McMath fiasco was that he followed, blindly and explicitly, the Harry-Harry (Truman-Ashmore) philosophy of socialism....I predict that your worst headache will not be with the Legislature, as Mr.Ashmore assumes, but rather with the Gazette and its policy of higher taxes and more socialism.”¹⁹⁸ In 1954, McMath ran for the senate and lost against John L. McClellan, who had gained his seat in 1942 together with the Mississippi Senator James O. Eastland representing “an anti-New Deal, anti-communist, and anti-black force in the South that hoped to reassert its power against Roosevelt’s unionized, ethnic, and statist coalition.”¹⁹⁹

Thus, a tendency of quickly associating racial and social reform with radicalism and communism was not nonexistent in Arkansas’ history and it had great role to play in both shaping the hesitant and insecure behavior of policy makers and reminding of the overall conservatism prevalent in the community, especially when racial issues were at stake – which was mostly what happened in Little Rock in 1957. Moreover, it revealed the complexity of the coexistence of anti-communism and

¹⁹⁷ He worked in a project funded and directly administered by the Ford Foundation’s Fund for the Advancement of Education to inspect into the dual education system in the South and he published his findings just before the *Brown* decision of 1954, under the title “The Negro and the Schools”. This would be one factor that made Ashmore a target for anti-communist charges, as having contributed to the communistic data used by the Supreme Court in its desegregation decision. Ashmore, *Civil Rights and Wrongs*, 98-104.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁹⁹ Woods, 25. He did not participate in the SCEF hearings of Senator Eastland, only with Lyndon Johnson’s persuasion. During the sixties he worked under McCarthy’s Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and carried the issue of the “communist infiltration of the civil rights movement back to forefront.” See Woods, 246-47.

segregationist sentiment in the “moderate” state of the Upper South. In the Deep South, both sentiments were solid and obviously more entrenched, although both communist activity and racially reformist activity were almost nonexistent. Moreover, the negative public reaction against the Court was so obvious in the Deep South that, a few governors like James P. Coleman of Mississippi, Earl K. Long of Louisiana, and James E. Folsom of Alabama “cautioned their segregationist citizens against overreacting.”²⁰⁰

In contrast to the Deep South, Arkansas did have a progressive “establishment” which was both liberal and racially moderate and it did have some episodes evoking an anti-communist response.²⁰¹ What complicated the situation in Arkansas was the fact that this liberal circle was cut off from the grassroots in social matters, thus mostly unaware of the extent of both segregationist sentiment in the white community, which would easily be affected by the forced of Massive Resistance emanating from the Deep South, and of the discontent among the black population. This hesitant and fragile status of moderacy made it possible for the forces of Massive Resistance reach out to the people of Arkansas during the Little Rock integration crisis; and the anti-communist rhetoric it employed greatly increased its success, by further intimidating the governor, whose past proved to be even more troubling than Hays’, McMath’s or even Ashmore’s.

²⁰⁰ Reed, *Faubus*, 165. However, the increasing pressure from the grassroots would result in an aggressive stand in these states, and lead to the downfall of all these officials – a development that, by 1956, would illustrate Faubus where the future of moderacy lied.

²⁰¹ In Arkansas in October, 1919, the semisecret order Progressive Farmer and Household Union of America, which was established by black tenant farmers, sought legal aid and greater control over their earnings. To uncover the group’s secrets, an armed group of white men in the state, joined by others from Mississippi and Tennessee, initiated a fight with union members. Arkansas governor mobilized the National Guard to round up the black militants. Five whites and twenty five blacks were reported dead. See Woods, *Black Struggle Red Scare*, 18-19. In 1930s, an integrated union activity organized by “a pair of home-grown Socialists”, was responded by an outbreak of racial violence. Reed, 162

3.2 1954 Gubernatorial – Red Scare Politics

Faubus defined his “moderate” stance in the same fashion that Hays did. In the section of his autobiography, *Down From the Hills*, where he explained his signing of the Southern Manifesto, he remarked that “the voices of reason, speaking for law and proper means, were already being drowned out by the integration extremists and political opportunists on both sides...the main question for all office holders faced with the problem [whether to sign the manifesto] was political death or survival.”²⁰² Hays, was also among the officials who signed it, when it came before the Arkansas Congressional delegation in March, 1956. Like Hays, Faubus had a liberal record, having been raised in the political school of Sid McMath, from whom he took over in 1954. As a returning GI, Faubus had campaigned for McMath in the 1948 gubernatorial election and brought about McMath’s victory in his home county, after which he became a member to the Highway Commission. He later assumed the chairmanship of the commission and became McMath’s administrative assistant.²⁰³ In 1954, the same year McMath lost the seat in the Senate against McClellan, Faubus ran against Cherry in the governors’ race.

The race was initially of a nature that V. O. Key Jr. described – one with no serious philosophical differences (about the Court Ruling), discussing instead how things should be run and revolving around the personal competence of candidates to run things (mostly economic reform.) In contrast to the situation in the Deep South, the gubernatorial race in Arkansas completely ignored the matter. As Bartley noted, in Georgia and South Carolina where the *Brown* decision of May 17, 1954 became “the issue...inundating all others, as politicians maneuvered frantically to occupy the

²⁰² Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 119.

²⁰³ Jacoway, 21.

extreme segregationist position.”²⁰⁴ The day the decision was announced by the Court, Governor Cherry had announced compliance and stated that Arkansas would “meet the requirements of the decision.”²⁰⁵ However, as Faubus recorded, Cherry’s mood began to change – something that Faubus related to the turmoil in Sheridan on May 22, in which the “patrons of the district” insisted on the dismissal of an entire school board and the superintendent of the school system, although the board quickly rescinded an integration plan; and some outside developments such as Georgia Governor Talmadge’s public defiance of the ruling, the passing of segregation bills in the Louisiana General Assembly, and protests boycotting the schools in Washington D.C. following the decision. He also observed Cherry’s attendance at a conference in Virginia “on means of opposing the Supreme Court decision”, just a few days before he “urged the schools to wait, to postpone integration as ‘premature’.”²⁰⁶ Meanwhile he had already stated his “stand for local school determination, and the matter was largely considered to be settled.”²⁰⁷

In fact, Faubus had attempted to capitalize on the race issue by “deal[ing] with the matter of integration” at his official campaign opening, but as he recalled “the matter was [not]mentioned again during the campaign.”²⁰⁸ Besides he backed off when the *Arkansas Gazette* “scolded him for an early pronouncement” of the issue.²⁰⁹ As Reed noted, Faubus, “well ahead of other public figures, had spotted the explosive potential” of the issue, which was not yet ripe, but which he thought early

²⁰⁴ “In Texas, Tennessee, and North Carolina...efforts to capitalize on the racial reaction achieved little success...Outside Georgia and South Carolina, there were no major statewide political contests in the Deep South during the period immediately following the *Brown* decision.” The winner in Georgia was Marvin Griffin, who would simply campaign by saying that “the meddlers, demagogues, race baiters, and Communists are determined to destroy every vestige of states’ rights.” Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance*, 68 – 81. Griffin would soon begin preaching segregation in Little Rock.

²⁰⁵ Quoted in Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 19.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ Jacoway, 40.

in 1954 “would elect a governor of Arkansas.”²¹⁰ However, the moderate Arkansas was not anticipating an immediate threat in the decision, which was not surprising. Reed pointed out that, by 1950, after years of black flight to the North, Arkansas found it “easy to be a little high-minded on the issue... [with] only six counties with black majorities,” most of it concentrated on the low country Mississippi delta.²¹¹ However, as Faubus observed, this was mostly because people assumed they would have the last word in what they perceived as a long-term process, and also because they were more interested in the more urgent and short-term economic issues of high utility costs or taxes. Thus, in line with the most obvious public demand, Cherry’s campaign began capitalizing on Faubus’ McMath connections, saying also that “the old political highway commissioners were trying to regain control by putting their friend Faubus into the governor’s office,” which was mostly the case.²¹² Meanwhile Faubus’ campaign was revolving around the corresponding issues such as welfare, 100 percent assessment, utility rates, and the feed, seed, and fertilizer tax.²¹³ However, in the runoff, the Cherry camp brought up the Commonwealth issue, which suddenly occupied the top place in the agenda.

Actually, Cherry was hesitant to make it an issue, when John F. Wells, the former editor and reporter of the *Arkansas Gazette*, brought it before him, very early in the race. Wells obviously had a keen interest in the issue of communism, as he had helped Hays, during his 1942 campaign for Congress, to overcome charges of attendance in the communist tainted SCHW meeting. He was, however, a conservative, who could tolerate Hays’ moderacy, but strongly disapproved of the

²¹⁰ Reed wrote that “he matter-of-factly told a small gathering of campaign associates...one day in 1954 that if he could find a way to capitalize on the race issue, ‘they will never get me out of office’.” Reed, 169.

²¹¹ Reed, 168.

²¹² Ibid., 93.

²¹³ Ibid.

McMath administration for its support for Truman. Still, his worst enemy was Ashmore, for his “covert espousal of the recommendations of President Truman’s Committee on Civil Rights,” which was according to Wells, “in reality an agency for the promotion of racial integration and discord...”²¹⁴ In the description of Little Rock native Wells, Ashmore was an outside agitator,

a native South Carolinian who had studied at Harvard University on a Nieman (tax-exempt foundation) fellowship, moved to the Arkansas scene from North Carolina and plunged into the mire of Arkansas politics in 1948, ...wrote, spoke and acted more to impress the Liberals dispensing tax-exempt foundation money.....and transformed the Arkansas Gazette from an outstanding news medium to a propaganda dispenser...²¹⁵

Wells’ first reaction to *Brown* had been to cry out for a new party to rise “to carry out the burden of disciplined self government that both Democrats and Republicans have cast off in bidding votes of organized minorities. Its time the majority organized.”²¹⁶ The figure he felt the most disdain was Ashmore, who was increasingly coming forward in state politics, as a central figure among this “organized minority.”

In 1954, when he came before Cherry with the Commonwealth suggestion, Wells was editing and publishing the conservative weekly *The Arkansas Recorder*, and was already chipping away communist charges against Ashmore. Ashmore had just published the findings of what he called the “Ashmore Project,” funded and directly administered by the Ford Foundation and aimed to inspect into the dual education system in the South - The book was published under the title “The Negro and the Schools” just before the *Brown* decision, and found its place among the sources that the Court made use of.²¹⁷ Ashmore’s integrationist status was also made clear, when he joined the founding board of Arkansas Council on Human Relations,

²¹⁴ Wells, *Time Bomb (The Faubus Revolt)*, 201.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Quoted in Jacoway, 21.

²¹⁷ Ashmore, *Civil Rights and Wrongs*, 98-104.

set up by the interracial organization to Southern Regional Council, specifically aimed at helping the implementation of the *Brown* decision. As a board member of the SRC, he also had helped the NAACP's Arkansas chapter secure a large grant from the Ford Foundation's Fund for the Republic, by establishing a "good working relationship" with its president Mrs. Daisy Bates. As Jacoway noted, by joining the national board of "the aggressive and well endowed Fund for the Republic" and by affiliating himself with it when it became an ardent supporter of civil rights in the South, "Ashmore placed himself in the line of fire of people such as John Wells, who felt certain that Ashmore was the agent of a vast communist conspiracy to undermine southern institutions, especially segregation."²¹⁸

Wells's reaction was very similar to the ardent segregationist and anti-communist Eastland of Mississippi, calling for people to organize before the statewide convention of the Association of the Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, held in 1955. Speaking of the same minority organization, Eastland claimed that such tax-exempt organizations with origins outside the south "[ran] from the blood red of the Communist Party to the almost equally Red of the National Churches of Christ in the U.S.A."²¹⁹ Specifically attacking the Ford Foundation (from where Ashmore got the most of its support) as the largest and most generous of these, he noted the vast sums of money flowing from its Fund for the Republic into such groups as the SRC, The National Council of Churches of Christ, and the NAACP for destroying the white South.²²⁰ After listing some others, he warned that "these and other anti-segregation organizations control news services, the magazines, the radio and television

²¹⁸ Jacoway, 23-24

²¹⁹ James O. Eastland, Address before the statewide convention of the Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, entitled "We have Reached an Era of Judicial Tyranny." Citizens' Councils of America Literature, 1947-1969, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series V. Items 1-15, Acc.No.66, Loc.146, 5.

²²⁰ He also reminded that the Carnegie Foundation had financed Gunnar Myrdal's "An American Dilemma," which, like Ashmore's "The Negro and he Schools," were among the Supreme Court files before the decision.

chains...[attempting] to mould public opinion to accept full social equality and amalgamation.”²²¹

Wells clearly had in mind the same connections, when he decided to disclose Faubus, seeing another communist leaning McMath follower in Arkansas politics. He thought that the Court deliberately delayed the second ruling, until “it and the tax-exempt foundations with which it was collaborating believed the time was propitious.”²²² Writing just after Faubus took office in *The Recorder*, he would also elaborate on what he saw was among the “post-1954 steps” taken towards this end. With “Orval Faubus in the governor’s office and Harry Ashmore running the Arkansas Gazette,” a Little Rock Chapter of the Religion and Labor Foundation was formed, whose background “few of those enticed into...were aware.”²²³ Seeing Ashmore and Faubus in the center of racial discord, he would continue feeding the public against both, even after Faubus took side with segregationists – thinking that he was insincere and a mere political opportunist, who created a crisis that only benefited personally to himself, Ashmore, and Mrs. Daisy Bates.²²⁴ Wells was an extreme example in Arkansas, who came closest to the Deep South rhetoric before the controversies surrounding desegregation. Indeed, the part of his Commonwealth findings pertaining to a red and black alliance, would still be downplayed during the 1954 campaign. Focusing rather on Faubus’s denial and lying, anti-Faubus ads would even hesitate to directly label him a communist or subversive.

In the primary Faubus was doing very well, with welfare as his most effective issue reaching out to the poor rural whites whom Cherry greatly offended. Cherry had also antagonized many prominent political figures, with his straightforward

²²¹ Ibid., 6.

²²² Wells, 219.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid., 209.

attitude refusing to play the game. As Reed described Cherry, he was a “man of so little tolerance for the shadowy artistry....[and]ordinary niceties of politics,” and by 1954 “political kingpins all over Arkansas....were ready to jump to someone else” because of the disinterest on part of Cherry to meet their demands. His campaign was not aggressive and was bad politics, as he was “confident that virtue would reward him and that the voters would understand the logic of what he had been doing as governor.”²²⁵ Along with the rural vote, Faubus carried the domain of these political bosses and the domain of the poultry industry leaders who were already infuriated by the only real disadvantage Cherry had – his veto of a bill to repeal the sales tax on feed, seed, and fertilizer.²²⁶ Still, if it was not for a last minute public speech that Ashmore wrote for Faubus, the Commonwealth issue was highly likely to carry the election in Cherry’s favor, despite the fact that Cherry was proving a terrible campaigner.

Although Faubus’s success was evidenced in the primary, the Cherry staff decided that someone other than the governor himself should raise the anti-communist charges, if it would be raised. It would indeed be Faubus who first publicly mentioned it and made it part of the campaign officially. Rumors of it were already circulating, and Faubus took defense when he realized, during his runoff campaign opening speech, that “Cherry workers were busily distributing literature among [his] listeners...[and that the issue] was being handled by the Cherry forces by word-of-mouth and the widespread circulation of the Wells newspaper and photostats of alleged documents show[ed his] presence at the college some 20 years before.”²²⁷ Warning the crowd about “the allegations of the whispering campaign,”

²²⁵ Reed, 88-91.

²²⁶ Wells, 189-90.

²²⁷ Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 32. “Cherry on that same day was still hammering at Faubus’s highway commission experience.” See Reed, 117.

he immediately took to proving his loyalty to the country, which he did by talking about his “four years as a county official, service...in the Armed Forces of World War II including ten months of combat with the infantry, postmaster at Huntsville, membership in civic clubs, Lone Scouts of America, the Baptist Church, the Masonic Order, and the American Legion.” At the next stop of his speech, reporters were curious and now that he mentioned it, they expected a public statement about the charges. What Faubus told them was complete denial – he simply wrote a note on a piece of paper saying “I was never a student or faculty member at Commonwealth College.”²²⁸

Two days later, after several ads entitled “Who is this man Faubus?” and headlines in *The Recorder*, Cherry went on television over a Little Rock station. As Faubus described, Cherry “was a lawyer and an effective speaker. His speech was like presenting one side of a lawsuit in a courtroom. He did this job well using photostats of news stories and headlines dating back to 1935.”²²⁹ That same evening, Faubus called a lawyer friend and hurriedly took over the phone the dictation of a telegram, which basically threatened Cherry, Wells and Boyd Tackett (the other top advisor to Cherry) by suing them if they ever called him a subversive. He read the confident telegram in another speech he made the same evening in Little Rock. However, as he entered the Marion Hotel lobby that night he observed that “those present averted their eyes or turned away.”²³⁰

Ashmore knew that Cherry was considering raising the issue and was ready to editorialize against Cherry if that happened.²³¹ He knew that his longtime enemy

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid., 36.

²³⁰ Ibid., 36-39. Tackett was a former congressman and one-time prosecuting attorney for the Mena district who had investigated Commonwealth. Reed, 118.

²³¹ Harry S. Ashmore, interview by Roy Reed, 6/20/1992, Arkansas Gazette Project, Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries,

Wells was behind it and he greatly disapproved of McCarty-like tactics, and he decided to help Faubus in disposing of the issue. He wrote a speech for Faubus to read in an open air meeting, scheduled to be on the entire radio network, on the fourth day into the campaign. Ashmore remembered upon speaking to Faubus that

he was desperate, and he was in an absolute funk...he just fell apart. He didn't know what the hell to do about this. He had already made this stupid press conference statement where he denied it all... It took some pretty fancy footwork [to bring together a coherent story].²³²

After Faubus's denial, both Faubus and the campaign staff had already come forward with conflicting statements about the time he spent in the college and why he left it. Indeed, Ashmore considered the reason that Faubus stated for his leaving "the biggest lie he told...[which was]he left because they were practicing free love and that deeply offended him."²³³ Ashmore's text presented the story as "a poor boy down from the mountains trying to get an education [who] realizes he's gotten in the wrong place and left," and focused more on "condemning unequivocally and harshly the smear tactics that were used"²³⁴ It worked, and as Faubus also stated, the speech was a turning point, and perhaps what saved him from losing even at this very late stage in the campaign.

The surfacing of Faubus's brief attendance in the college had important implications. The episode revealed the complexities involved in the relationship between the segregationist sentiment and anti-communism, with Arkansas as an Upper South state as the locale. In the Deep South, the support for resistance was immediate and solid, and its anti-communist rhetoric highly effective; because the

Fayetteville.URL: <http://libinfo.uark.edu/specialcollections/pryorcenter/> (accessed 9/11/2008), 1. Before the issue rose, somebody from among Cherry campaign staff came to the Gazette headquarters and told him that they have the Commonwealth files and thinking of making it public, upon which Ashmore was outraged.

²³² Ibid., 4.

²³³ Ibid., 6.

²³⁴ Ibid.

public was much more receptive to the combination of red and race baiting, and the conspiratorial thinking it included. In Arkansas, however, both segregation and communism were not normally issues to be urgently discussed, and were not as quickly brought together as it was in the Deep South, at least not before the Little Rock crisis carried the emotions to its height. This tendency of not falling into the Deep South kind of conspiratorial thinking was in parallel to the relative ease brought by much fewer occurrences of racial antagonism.

Moreover, in Arkansas, as it was with the rest of the Upper South, anti-communist measures had been an integral part of its history, most prominent of which was the 1935 investigation into the Commonwealth. Thus it was mostly settled, without any need to elaborate too much on a black and red conspiracy. Besides, McCarthyism was more easily denounced in Arkansas. As Reed pointed out, even some conservatives in the state would be disdainful of Cherry's campaign, and the same week that Commonwealth began to appear in newspapers as an issue of the gubernatorial race, on the headlines was also news of the debate in the Senate over whether to censure the Senator.²³⁵ However, as Ashmore recalled, "everybody, including Orval, thought he was beaten" during the controversial runoff. As Reed pointed out and Ashmore agreed, for the common Arkansan in 1954 "McCarthyism was [still] riding high, meaning most Americans thought Joe McCarthy was probably right. Only people like you [Ashmore] and Ed Dunaway and people who are now considered sensible were offended by McCarthyism."²³⁶ As it turned out, what saved Faubus was the fact that the character of the campaign was rid of communism itself,

²³⁵ Reed, 117-22. In the debate, Senator Fulbright of Arkansas was leading the fight against him.

²³⁶ Ashmore interview by Roy Reed, 8. Ed Dunaway was a former Cherry supporter who turned against him after the commonwealth charges, and who, together with former McCarthy staff Henry Woods, went to Ashmore to help him prepare the speech for Faubus. Dunaway bought the radio time for the speech. See Reed, 122-23.

mostly by the Ashmore speech, focusing instead on “dirty pool, last-minute trickery [of Cherry].”²³⁷ Ashmore defined the tone of the moment saying

regardless of what the charges—if there had been a foot massage—I think there would have been some of the same kind of reaction. Orval was running with the [campaign as an] underdog anyway...The chief critic of Joe McCarthy was Bill Fulbright...I think there was a reaction against McCarthy as a bully boy. Ideologically, it probably didn’t make a whole lot of difference, but I don’t know how much I can appraise that.²³⁸

Thus the Faubus victory did not really prove that anti-communist charges would not hold. Apart from political leadership, anti-communist sentiment was still alive in the community and alone, it could have lost him the election if it was not for the way Cherry, who had already antagonized his constituency, mis-handled the issue; and for the effective Faubus campaign helped by Ashmore. Still, it was obvious that no charges of racial liberalism were directed at Faubus along with the Commonwealth charge. Unlike the Deep South, Arkansas did not necessarily attach communism with the segregationist sentiment, at least not as immediately. Both anti-communist and segregationist sentiment readily waited however for the next election, to become more visible, as soon as racial feelings were aroused.

3.3 1956 Gubernatorial – Race Politics

After the eventful runoff, Faubus surrounded himself with “businessmen, planters, hungry lawyers, and political operatives.” One of the most influential among them was, Stephen Witts who shared a lot with Faubus despite their “finances and economic philosophies,” and despite his being a Cherry supporter before the Faubus victory.²³⁹ In Reed’s description,

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Reed, 129.

Both came from farms and knew hard physical work as youngsters. They feared failure...They were proud. They distrusted city people and took satisfaction from besting them. Each rose to top, but neither was accepted by the elite of the state. They represented the populist ideal in all its yearnings, rewards, and disappointments.²⁴⁰

This aspect of Faubus was of considerable importance in understanding his insecurity, his obstinate passion for holding his political office, and also why his “moderacy” was much more inclined to change in line with his own political interests, compared to others like Hays. A similar observation about the Faubus character was also made by Ashmore, early in the times when he was with the McMath staff. In one confession Ashmore said:

I don't think I've ever done entire justice in writing about Orval or in writing about the whole period, [is] the class aspect of this and the resentment against Ed Dunaway and me and the town of Little Rock and the fact that Orval was an outsider...he[Faubus] had been around the state house, and he knew that a lot of people didn't take him very seriously, including me. I didn't take him very seriously.²⁴¹

To make up for this injustice, Ashmore went on to explain the circumstances in which Faubus finally got rid of the Depression hit poverty of his youth and became the governor:

...another big factor in this[Faubus's insecurity and political opportunism] is that Orval came back from the war, where he had a pretty good record. He was a captain and got some kind of medal, I guess. Orval—that was a pretty high cotton experience for him, and he had been a man of some substance, an officer, gentleman, and whatever. He comes back up there to the country and runs a piss-ass newspaper and barely makes a living, and then being postmaster or whatever. It's [a] pretty miserable existence for him when he plunged back into that. Then Sid brings him down, ...and he [comes] down to Little Rock. Then he finally gets into politics.²⁴²

Faubus simply did not have a career to get back to if he got out of state politics, and had “no skills” unlike most governors who were “a lawyer or something.”²⁴³ Signs of

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ashmore interview by Roy Reed, 10.

²⁴² Ibid., 42-43.

²⁴³ Ibid.

such insecurity of a man of the hills and disdain towards the city elite, were evident in Faubus's own frequent remarks in his autobiography. Where he talked about the first time he announced his official campaign opening, he paid special attention to mentioning the "\$10 per plate breakfast held...to raise funds for the Cherry campaign...[where]many of them[state employees] with members of their families were in attendance," and also the "the novel way of advertising the candidacy of Guy 'Mutt' Jones" in which balloons went up in four of the states' major cities including Little Rock. He wrote that such occurrences were about the same time that he announced his own opening but the news of it was carried on page 2 of a newspaper, under a Cherry story headline. Although he entered the race at the very last moment, he perceived this as "a strong indication that the editors didn't consider my candidacy of sufficient importance to warrant a separate story."²⁴⁴ Once making it to the governor's office, the ultimate chance to make himself accepted in high circles, he would do whatever it took to keep it.

When he took office in 1955, Faubus had to deal with both a legislature of the General Assembly consisting of Cherry supporters and with the resentment of particularly the Little Rock elite. He also had to reinforce the difficult alliance that was forming – the conservative element of business interests gathering around him and whose support he needed, and the liberal element his own constituency - the rural and labor vote that was highly sensitive to tax increases. More focused on that, he did not yet mention integration, after he had backed off in the beginning of the previous elections in 1954.

After fulfilling some campaign promises by repealing two laws – the seed and feed tax, and the law that required people to seek help from relatives before

²⁴⁴ Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 21.

being eligible for welfare – he followed hands off policy towards the legislature.²⁴⁵ He also worked on overcoming the resentment of the city elite. One of the first meetings he attended after assuming his office was with a group of Little Rock businessmen and county clubbers, whom Reed called “the capital’s best” and who threw him endless questions about his ideas of communism or if his liberalism would hurt them. Meanwhile Wells continued to publish news in *The Recorder*, accusing Faubus of lying about his Commonwealth experience in the loyalty oath he signed to become an army officer in 1942. Faubus was then interviewed by a general who had been investigating the issue, and was cleared.²⁴⁶

Meanwhile however, he had pushed through the legislature the politically risky reform in the county property-tax system to equalize the taxes, which looked good on paper but in practice created an unfavorable reaction, as it also burdened some districts with heavier taxes.²⁴⁷ Moreover, as Reed pointed out, he went on “sending gestures of friendship to the black community of Arkansas,” such as opening the state Democratic Party to black participation, equalizing salaries of black and white employees, not voicing concern over desegregation taking place in five districts and giving Mrs. Daisy Bates an Arkansas Traveler certificate.²⁴⁸ All contributed to hurt his administration further.

Thus, as he was preparing to ask for a second term in 1956 he realized that he needed to capitalize on the integration issue this time, which he knew was the only issue that would emotionally outweigh the obsession with the taxes and fix his liberal record. Although he observed a sentiment was already building up, he was still continuing the hands off policy and waiting, until state senator James D. Johnson

²⁴⁵ Reed, 134-35.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 133.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 139.

²⁴⁸ Reed, 163.

announced his candidacy. Meanwhile he was carefully observing the mostly unrecognized and downplayed difficulties the state was having in implementing desegregation.

After the first *Brown* decision, as John A. Kirk noted, the regional differences were already revealing the difficulty of implementation. Following the first incident in Sheridan, which urged both Faubus and Cherry refrain from concrete statements back in 1954, the General Assembly meeting in January 1955 further evidenced “the politically ambiguous role of the desegregation issue.”²⁴⁹ Two eastern Arkansas senators, introduced a pupil assignment bill aimed at circumventing the *Brown* decision geographically without mentioning the issue of race. The main opponent was Senator Max Howell, who had the white suburbs of Little Rock among his constituency, and he could only win a delay in its implementation until the Court issued a statement on the implementation of the first decision.

In the delicate balance, the importance of Little Rock came from its having the largest school system in the state and its geographical location between eastern and northwestern regions. Whatever course taken there would prevent the eastern section from further trying to prevent implementation. Virgil Blossom, The Superintendent of Schools had declared four days after first ruling that the school board would not immediately begin and instead devise plans until the second ruling. Only with NAACP’s pressure he announced a plan to build two new schools first – one in the predominantly black eastern part of the city, Horace Mann High, and one in the white suburbs of the western part, Hall High – and then to open all three (including Central High) in 1957 on a desegregated basis. However, right after the second ruling came, Blossom devised his plan to minimize the impact of

²⁴⁹ John A. Kirk, “Massive Resistance and Minimum Compliance: The Origins of the 1957 Little Rock School Crisis and the Failure of School Desegregation in the South,” in *Massive Resistance: Southern Opposition to the Second Reconstruction*, Clive Webb ed., 68-69.

desegregation further, by allowing whites to transfer out of Horace Mann. Other three school districts followed suit and drew up plans delaying any action until Little Rock made the first move.²⁵⁰

Both the absence of strong defiance – which was mostly owing to the absence of outright measures toward immediate implementation – and Faubus’ early moderate announcement about the importance of relying on the goodwill between the people of both races, convinced many that Arkansas would go on serving as a model for the rest of the South.²⁵¹ Ashmore did not even feel that he should lobby for the governor.²⁵² However, signs of white resistance began to upset the balance before moderacy could afford real positive change. Just a month after *Brown II*, the very positive development in Hoxie, a rural trading centre in the northeastern region, became the event through which the white resistance made its appearance in the State.

In June, the Hoxie school board voted to stop the very expensive practice of busing its very few black children and instead integrate them into formerly all-white schools.²⁵³ However, Chris Merger, a black attorney who went to the district as part of the Arkansas Council on Human Relations, stated that “the White Citizens Council and other segregationist groups were just rantin’ and pantin’ about and picketing and zeroing in on that community...there was so much outside pressure...working up the frenzy of people...” Therefore he found a white lawyer “whom [he]thought might be sympathetic” to represent the board and they filed a petition in federal district court, which eventually prevented the demonstrations and

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 70-74.

²⁵¹ Ashmore, *Civil Rights and Wrongs*, 124.

²⁵² Jacoway, 25., McMillen, 95.

²⁵³ Ibid., 34.

integrated the Hoxie schools.²⁵⁴ However, the board had to close the schools two weeks before the normal end of semester to “provide a cooling off period.”²⁵⁵

The groups Merger described as outsiders were, the White Citizens’ Councils of Arkansas founded by Senator James D. Johnson, White America Inc. founded by a railroad official L. D. Poynter, and the Citizens Committee Representing Segregation headed by a local soy-bean farmer and auctioneer Herbert Brewer.²⁵⁶ However, a corresponding description of outside agitators was also found in the September 1955 issue of the *Recorder*. The John Wells publication firstly criticized “the daily newspapers in this area, especially the *Arkansas Gazette* which sent its Southern School News correspondent to Hoxie, [for]attempting to create the impression that all would have been well at Hoxie except for interference from the ‘outside,’ meaning White America, Inc.” Then the article listed the “real” outsiders without which, it asserted, there would be no White America, Inc.:

1. The U. S. Supreme Court, by promulgation of an opinion in May, 1954....
2. The National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People....by assigning to Arkansas many months ago a field worker....whose mission has been to encourage Negroes to demand integration at once....
3. The Ford Foundation, through its Soutehr Education Reporting Service , which has constantly dinned into school boards and administrators (they are on the mailing list of Southern School News)....that it is futile to resist...[which] is the brainwashing technique, financed with tax-exempt foundation funds...
4. The Arkansas Council on Human Relations...a bi-racial outfit financed with Fund for the Republic tax-exempt money...[dispatching] its executive secretary to Hoxie...Life Magazine, which arranged for the kind of pictures it wanted , to implant in the public mind a distorted conception of what was involved in Hoxie, where only 21 Negro children were to be assigned to white schools attended by about 1,000 pupils...
6. Daily newspapers, notably the *Gazette* and *Memphis Commercial Appeal*....by overplaying the Hoxie story, and in consequence inciting stern opposition...²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Roy, 116.

²⁵⁵ Kirk, 75.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.; McMillen, 95.

²⁵⁷ Wells, 254-55.

Thus the event was still open to interpretation and rather than being a positive step toward peaceful integration, it had many things to offer in the opposite direction. Apart from the controversy surrounding who the real agitator was, there was the fact that forces of Massive Resistance found an event to capitalize on and stir the racial feeling in the community. Indeed, it was owing to the Hoxie episode that the segregationist Senator Johnson, found the opportunity to be heard all over the state and eventually run against Faubus in 1956. The Recorder article got it mostly right when it mentioned *Life* magazine's impact. As also noted by Kirk, all the segregationists groups appeared in Hoxie right after the *Life* magazine article entitled "A 'Morally Right' Decision" also enclosed photographs of white and black kids attending classes and playing together made it into nationwide news.²⁵⁸ This extent of publicity would also draw the attention of the organizers of the Massive Resistance movement.

By the time the election was on the way, Johnson had garnered forces statewide, also with enormous support from the Deep South organization, which poured into Arkansas following the Hoxie incident. The summer of 1955 was also the year that Citizens Councils were speedily spreading across the South, from Mississippi, just across the river from Johnson's home. Johnson also found the White Citizens' Council of Arkansas that summer and began publishing the *Arkansas Faith* its official media, both propagandizing for his planned candidacy in the 1956 race for governor.

The setting in Hoxie that Johnson found himself in, when he went there to join the other segregationist organizations, further infuriated him. Meeting in Brewer's house with the local council organization, he learned of the unpleasant

²⁵⁸ Kirk, 75.

presence of the FBI agents in town. The FBI had been authorized with full investigation and sent into the area, when the school board sought assistance from the justice department after they were presented a petition that included 1,100 signatures protesting its action, but the agents. The agents visited every house with the photocopies of the petition and caused both panic in the community and caused, as Jacoway noted, Johnson's "all paranoid tendencies come to fore." After the episode he traveled to Virginia and South Carolina to gather information on the "emerging doctrines of the massive resistance" and came back with the proposal of an amendment to the Arkansas Constitution, which mainly talked about the doctrine of interposition.²⁵⁹

Meanwhile the in winter of 1955 Senator Eastland of Mississippi gave one of his key speeches of the Resistance Movement in the statewide convention of the Mississippi Citizens Council. In December, his speech entitled "We Have Reached an Era of Judicial Tyranny" noted the situation in Hoxie as the first evidence of such tendency. Noting about the FBI presence in Mississippi in an "attempt to bluff and intimidate Southern people, " he went on warning that it was not unnatural for the agency to investigate crime but "the political investigations such as occurred in Homes County and in Arkansas are another matter. They went to Hoxie, Arkansas and attempted to intimidate the people to agree to an interracial school."²⁶⁰ Like Wells, he further elaborated on the "vast sums of money, much of it tax-exempt..[that] are being thrown into a vast program of propaganda and outright falsehoods to misrepresent Southern views and conditions in the South." He further detailed his argument by saying:

²⁵⁹ Jacoway, 35-36.

²⁶⁰ James O. Eastland, Address before the statewide convention of the Citizens' Councils of Mississippi, entitled "We have Reached an Era of Judicial Tyranny." Citizens' Councils of America Literature, 1947-1969, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series V. Items 1-15, Acc.No.66, Loc.146, 8.

Millions of fair-minded Americans in other regions denied access to the truth, are being hoodwinked, misled, and deceived by this cunning campaign. In its essence it is an attack upon the American system of government. The Negro is being used as a pawn by those who plot the destruction of our Government. The Communist conspiracy can never succeed in America unless there is first destroyed the powers of the States. It can never succeed until the people are deprived of the power to control their local institutions.²⁶¹

After stating the importance of local governance he talked about the very pleasant way that the state of Virginia had been dealing with the issue. He then began his critique of the Arkansas failure to take such a stand, and he directly singled out Faubus, saying:

One high official of the State government [Faubus] is quoted in the public press as stating that it is a matter for each school district to decide, and that each school district can formulate its own policies and conduct its own defense. There are instances of integrated schools in Arkansas. These instances have occurred against the will of the great majority of the people.²⁶²

Condemning the “instances of integrated schools in Arkansas” which were the Hoxie incident and the preceding Sheridan, the even earlier one in Fayetteville in which the University of Arkansas had admitted black students and a few others, Eastland, blamed it on the lack of a viable state policy. Thus, as well as reaching out to the public and warning them of the dangerous communist conspiracy inherent in the desegregation decisions, he also addressed the political authority of the moderately inclined states such as Arkansas. Such call for action to state governors, within the context of anti-communism, must have compelled the Arkansas governor to take a stance, especially if his vulnerability to communist conspiracies is considered. Indeed, about one month later he would take his first step towards the segregationist

²⁶¹ Ibid., 10.

²⁶² Ibid., 13.

side by sending the Bird Committee of Arkansas to Virginia to study the integration situation.²⁶³

It is within this context that Johnson traveled to Mississippi and after getting the Eastland's comments, he put his amendment into final form. Returning to Arkansas he went to Faubus and publicly requested he call for a special session of the legislature to reconsider the bill that had failed in the regular session of 1955. Faubus thought that "many prominent people, including most political leaders, did not yet realize what was happening or the intensity of the feeling of the people on this emotional issue," and what Johnson did by calling for this special session was "to put [him] on the spot and place [him] in disfavor with the great majority of the people..."²⁶⁴ Early in February 1956, Johnson went on to advertise his bill and organized a segregationist rally in England, with such speakers as former Governor Ben Laney, Massive Resistance leaders Roy V. Harris of Georgia and Robert B. Patterson of Mississippi, and Attorney Amis Guthridge who was by then the head of the Capital Citizens Council, Little Rock chapter of the Citizens' Councils of Arkansas.²⁶⁵ To this background, Johnson went on to advertise his proposed legislation. Beginning in the fall of 1955, the recurring themes that appeared in his widely and freely distributed campaign publication, *Arkansas Faith*, were the following:

the illegalities of the *Brown* decision; the threat of communism; the dangers presented by the left-wing *Arkansas Gazette* and especially the "pinko," foundation-funded Harry Ashmore; the horrors of miscegenation; demonstrated by photographs of black men dating and kissing white women, the inadequacies of Orval Faubus (Awful Fabalouse)..., the glories of interposition, and the ultimate salvation of the Johnson Amendment.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 117.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 117.

²⁶⁶ Jacoway, 39.

The arrival of such Deep South rhetoric in the state, and the fact that it was the only audible position on the desegregation issue, had great importance in shaping the course of events during the Little Rock crisis.

Arkansas events would also echo in the Massive Resistance propaganda which increasingly gained nationwide appeal. In 1956, Georgia Congressman James C. Davis would use Arkansas Congressman Ezekiel C. Gathings' speech in which he defended in Congress numbers and statistics showing the communist affiliations of the civil rights organizations. Gathings had its constituency in the eastern Arkansas region. The Atlanta Congressman used Gathings' survey results, in a TV and radio program, to argue his point against Republican Congressman Kenneth Keating of New York.²⁶⁷ In response to Keating's defense of the federal government's goodwill and moral impetus in helping the civil rights struggle, Davis said:

...I don't think that the better classes of the colored people are pushing for these so-called civil rights...this agitation is being done by the radical organization the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Now, Congressman Gathings of Arkansas on February 23rd put the record on the Congressional Record...[that] the executive secretary of that organization has been listed six times by the House Committee on Un-American Activities as having participated in Communist front activities, that the Chairman of the Board of Directors has been listed as participating in three Communist fronts...[list goes on]; that in 1954 the total officers and directors were 193 and of that number 89 or 46.1 percent had been listed in the files of [H.U.A.C.] as having participated in Communist front organizations.²⁶⁸

In response, Keating didn't even question his claims but just tried to point out to the other side of the issue – that the Russians were using this as a propaganda tool and

²⁶⁷ Transcript of the appearance of Congressman James C. Davis and Congressman Kenneth Keating on the American Forum of the Air Television and Radio Program, May 6, 1956. James O. Eastland Collection, The Department of Archives and Special Collections, The University of Mississippi Libraries, J.D. Williams Library, Oxford, Mississippi, File Series 1, Subseries 18, box 3, Folder 3-32.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 5.

overseas “the black and yellow races yearn for brotherhood.”²⁶⁹ Like earlier response of Herman Talmadge of Georgia, Davis responded by dismissing such concern. He said: “Well, when America formulated its own foreign policy, and made its own plans, we fared much better in world opinion than we have done since we began trying to checkmate Russian propaganda...It’s not worth a nickel to try to please Russia.”²⁷⁰ Such rhetoric was a best example of coming together such Southern regionalist notions as unilateralism in foreign affairs, rejection of centralized power, anti-communism, conspiratorial thinking, and racism. Such vocal and confident remarks from the Deep South, would also contribute to the mounting pressure on the still passively waiting Faubus.

The impact of such intimidation by the resistance forces, both in and out of state, showed in Faubus’ actions even before Johnson announced his candidacy. In early March, one key development was the arrival of the Southern Manifesto before the Arkansas Congressional delegation. After several members signed it, including Fulbright who had heard that Laney might oppose his bid for re-election, Faubus lobbied and convinced the two others, Hays and Jim Trimble (whom he visited in an hospital where he was confined to his bed) to sign.²⁷¹ About ten days later, he announced his sponsorship of the two measures that the Bird Committee had recommended on their return from Virginia – the pupil assignment bill which he described as “an initiated act to grant to the schools boards...full power and authority over the assignment of students for attendance to the various school facilities,” but which was so open ended as to allow no integration; and the Massive Resistance weapon, a resolution of interposition which was basically a reduced version of

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 6.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 119.

Johnson's amendment.²⁷² One month later Johnson announced his candidacy, at another segregation rally, with Griffin as the featured speaker. The *Arkansas Gazette* defined the gathering as being "the largest at any segregation rally in Arkansas. The previous record was about 1,400 at a rally at England February 24."²⁷³ And in early July, Faubus opened his campaign for re-election by declaring that "his record was trustworthy" unlike his opponents claim, and as a news article reported "his best round of applause came when he said no school district would be forced to integrate against its will while he was governor."²⁷⁴ This was the statement that won Faubus his second term.

Meanwhile Ashmore was back in Arkansas after his service to Adlai Stevenson in the 1956 Democratic Convention, and resumed his mission with the *Arkansas Gazette*. Missing many of the events of the year and the tone of the campaign, he immediately began editorializing against the Johnson Amendment (which Johnson kept alive even after his failure to get elected) in a way that Jacoway considered, "may even contributed to the ultimate success of the amendment, especially among many people who believed Ashmore and the *Gazette* were agents of the left-wing conspiracy."²⁷⁵ Faubus observed, it passed the House but "pigeon-holed in the Senate," when "many of the senators didn't want to risk inflaming the issue of race at the time."²⁷⁶ However, after Faubus endorsed as governor four of the bills that had passed the House, the Senate amended two of them in the General Assembly that came into session in the winter of 1957.²⁷⁷ Along with the one that provided legal assistance for any school board that opted for segregation, the other

²⁷² Ibid., 123.

²⁷³ Quoted in *ibid.*, 127.

²⁷⁴ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁷⁵ Jacoway, 43.

²⁷⁶ Faubus, *Down from the Hills*, 116.

²⁷⁷ Jacoway, 44.

important result of the amendment was to allow a State Sovereignty Commission which would act just as the anti-subversive bodies in the Deep South. As Faubus would tell Jacoway in an interview, what he did was to avoid “the detriment of being classified as an extreme liberal in order to survive in Arkansas politics.”²⁷⁸

The Capital Citizens Council chaired by Amis Guthridge would take on the mission of pressuring Faubus, as the fall semester integration at Central High drew near. After the open letter that they publicized and sent to Faubus calling him to “exercise his police powers”, the second most important intimidation was the gathering that took place on Johnson’s request from Griffin and Harris of Georgia.²⁷⁹ On August 22, 1957 both leaders of the Massive Resistance spoke at a \$10 per plate dinner in Little Rock to raise funds to stop integration – the Georgia governor exclaimed before some 350 people that he would never permit the schools of his state to integrate and Harris added that Griffin “would use the National Guard, the state patrol, and every able-bodied man in Georgia to keep the Negroes out.”²⁸⁰ As Hays pointed out, there was already a pressure on Faubus from the east Arkansas political figures, where race was more of a problem compared to the rest of the state, and this visit “greatly encouraged local extremists and exacerbated the problem considerably from the standpoint of spreading fear of violence,”²⁸¹ However one other factor was to urge Faubus in his stand against the federal government. As Ashmore commented:

Well, Brooks said...that all he was trying to do was to keep Orval from being pushed into the hands of the adamant people of the Citizens’ Council, into the adamant company of the resistant Southern governors. Well, the son of a bitch was already there, and that was what the problem was. It wasn’t a matter of pushing. Marvin Griffin and these folks had

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Hays, *A Southern Moderate Speaks*, 131.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 153.

sold him this interposition package, and so once he had gotten in there, there was really no way he could get out of it.²⁸²

Indeed Faubus had hosted Griffin and Harris in the Governor's Mansion for an overnight stay right before the event. Regardless of the nature of the matters they discussed in the meeting, it was a clear sign that they were welcome in Arkansas. As Harris later recalled, they "had to apologize to the Council folks for staying there...[by saying that] having us two there at the Mansion's the worst thing could happen to Faubus. It'll ruin him with the integrationists and liberals."²⁸³ One week later Faubus would appear before Justice Murray Reed of the state court, as a witness to the Mothers of Central High League that was seeking temporary injunction against school integration with charges that integration would lead to violence – an injunction that Murray would grant, but federal judge Ronald N. Davies would nullify on August 30. Despite the nullification, Faubus would order the National Guard to surround the school on September 2. After that Faubus received a massive amount of letters and telegrams celebrating his stand, which further urged him to take on the Massive Resistance rhetoric that increasingly downplayed the issue of race and elevated concerns about invasion of states' rights and anti-communism.

In a telegram to President Eisenhower, he explained that "the question at issue in Little Rock this moment is not integration vs. segregation.... [but rather, whether] or not the head of a sovereign state can exercise his constitutional powers and discretion in maintaining peace and good order within his jurisdiction, being accountable to his own conscience and to his own people."²⁸⁴ Insisting that he placed the National Guard to "preserve the peace and good order of this community" he

²⁸² Ashmore interview by Roy Reed, 21.

²⁸³ Hays, *A Southern Moderate Speaks*, 132.

²⁸⁴ Telegram from Orval Faubus to President Eisenhower, Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14, Subseries 3, Box 496, Folder 9.

added that he received “reliable information” as to the plans of the Federal Authorities in Little Rock to unconstitutionally “take into custody, the head of a sovereign state.” He later complained that he had “reasons to believe that the telephone lines to the Arkansas Executive Mansion have been tapped – I suspect the Federal Agents.” In line with Eastland’s warning after the events in Hoxie, he noted that “the situation is further aggravated by the impending unwarranted interference of federal agents.” Then an intimidating tone: “If these actions continue, or if my executive authority as Governor to maintain the peace is breached, then I can no longer be responsible for the results. The injury to persons and property that would be caused – the blood that may be shed will be on the hands of the federal government and its agents.”²⁸⁵

However, regardless of the time that Faubus decided to focus on the issue of race or finally call out the National Guard to prevent the black students from entering Central High, it was obvious that he did it to cover up for his insecurities and prove to public that he was an eligible man to govern them in the way they wanted. He observed passively, during all the time he went on with his hands-off policy, the ongoing vocalization of racial sentiments on the grassroots level, brought by the forces of Massive Resistance. The rhetoric and methods proposed by the Massive Resistance (among which states’ rights was the most suitable for Faubus) and Johnson’s opposition that echoed extreme Massive Resistance rhetoric, enabled him to make it an issue easily – without necessarily putting forward an out rightly racist argument and alienating some “moderate” segments of his constituency. Along with Faubus’s, the inactivity and silence on part of other moderates contributed to this rise. And Faubus chose to go along with the visible public opinion rather than taking

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

the difficult task of reshaping it, let alone trying to prevent it from the start. Thus he secured a safe political ground for himself. His own insecurity, which was greatly swelled by a liberal record on race and a questionable record on communism, from the start, contributed to this political maneuver.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The crystallization of a Massive Resistance movement in the South during the 1950s and its culmination in a worldwide-acknowledged integration crisis revealed that the racial prejudices and anti-communist sentiment had been part of a Southern tradition extending well beyond the Cold War. However, American historiography has tended to ignore this very domestic context in its interpretation of the Little Rock integration crisis of 1957 in Arkansas. The most obvious reason for this failure was the fact that Little Rock crisis had been a primary interest for scholars of the civil rights movement as a turning point in the struggle for civil rights. Although the event proved to be a key development in terms of finally confirming the Federal Government's open support for the cause, the background to the whole episode suggests a much broader understanding.

In their specific treatment of the Little Rock crisis, such recent civil rights scholars as Brenda Gayle Plummer, Penny Von Eschen, Mary L. Dudziak, or Azza Salama Layton, showed how the civil rights movement successfully and with great awareness and organization, benefited from the Cold War atmosphere, by revealing the racial injustice within its borders and finally urging the federal government to act to eliminate it. Though not incorrect, this analysis tends to ignore the corresponding

usefulness of the Cold War atmosphere for the white resistance to civil rights. The white resistance in Little Rock had much to do with the culmination the Massive Resistance movement, making use of increased concerns of domestic anti-communism during the height of the Cold War. More than anything else, it showed how the local regional feelings about race and subversion were fed to create a very insecure atmosphere for moderacy that existed in the Upper South, pushing it to a position of inactivity.

As revealed by the developments that provided the background to the crisis, the grassroots organization in Arkansas, no matter how limited compared to the Deep South, played an important role in convincing Faubus that he could politically survive much more easily if he went along with forces of segregation. Little Rock crisis, which he certainly helped create by a hands-off attitude all along the building up of the segregationist sentiment, came as an opportunity for Faubus to secure his place in state politics. Moreover, the anti-communist rhetoric the resistance movement employed had an exceptional advantage for Faubus' personal gain, substantiating his political image for the years to follow. Taking the strong stand that he finally did in Little Rock, by dispatching the National Guard to Central High in an attempt to prevent integration, was wholly motivated by aspirations of local politics. The event that scholars came to interpret largely in global terms had very local, and even personal resonations.

What Little Rock also contributed was the gradual disappearance of the extremist rhetoric of Massive Resistance, renewing itself to further downplay the concerns about race, focusing rather on the unpleasant extent of centralization of government, and later, on the subversive nature of the civil rights movement. That would eventually bring great national appeal to the cause of the movement,

especially during the next decade, when integration moved southward and signs of radicalism were perceived in the new generation of young civil rights protesters. Indeed Faubus received private letters of approval and support from both in and outside Arkansas during the course of events in Little Rock. In one such letter from Texas dated September 5, 1957, attorney Thomas W. Fulton remarked:

I have read with deep concern the fears expressed by you in this morning's press that agents of the federal government may be planning to arrest you for your constitutional stand in using the National Guard troops to prevent violence in your state which might arise out of the unconstitutional attempt of the federal government to force integration in your public school system...[if it happens and the federal government arrests the head of a sovereign state]then the constitutional rights of every citizen of this country have been done away with and we are now all under the rule of a dictatorship.²⁸⁶

His letter was also evidencing the increasing distrust of the Federal Bureau of Investigation on part of the proponents of the Massive Resistance movement, which once made use of Hoover's open support and later his private leaking of documents to southern leadership. Fulton, in the same letter that he also forwarded to Lyndon Johnson and J. Edgar Hoover, went on to comment of the presence of FBI in Arkansas, saying that "in the past ...[he]had the greatest respect for the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation due to the numerous ways in which he has in the past jealously safeguarded the constitutional rights of all citizens of this country...[but Hoover contributes to Faubus' arrest]...then I feel that Mr. Hoover's personal integrity is gone and that he is merely the head of an American 'Gestapo' agency."²⁸⁷ Another letter Faubus received two days later from a lawyer at Washington D.C., he complained about the insincerity of the Republican Party in pursuing black civil rights. The letter pointed to Eastland's speech before the Senate a few years ago, "in

²⁸⁶ Letter from Thomas W. Fulton (Attorney at Law, Houston, Texas) to Orval Faubus. Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14 Subseries 5 Box 497 Folder 5

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

which speech that illustrious Senator exposed the Communist background of all the pseudo scientists in the sociological and psychological fields upon which the Supreme Court based its decision in total disregard of the long-established law of the land...”²⁸⁸ He also mentioned how the District Judge Robert N. Wilkins decided in favor of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, in a case that he defended against the granting of membership to black attorneys. His account revealed the increasing tendency to relate desegregation and subversion, and increasing will to resist it in the community:

...we have several social functions and dinners a year. We are opposed to any breakdown in the social barrier separating the races, and for that reason brought suit against the association last year when the Negro-loving the president of our Association took a voice vote on a bylaw amendment to admit the Negro attorney to membership...Judge Wilkins heard the case and granted our injunction, throwing out the voice vote. A new vote by written and secret ballot has just been completed, and the membership has rejected the proposed amendment – thus keeping our Association 100% WHITE, except of course for the ‘White Niggers’ and Communists who may be among us.²⁸⁹

Apart from the fear of subversive elements in their midst, people also voiced concerns about the dangers inherent in a possible change in the American form of government. Greene Chandler Furman, an attorney from the nation’s capital, perceived the use of federal troops in Little Rock to implement the desegregation decisions of the Court, which “largely depended upon modern psychological and sociological texts of a controversial nature...instead of the usual methods of legal and constitutional reasoning,” as “a strange and novel development of justice.”²⁹⁰ Furman sent this article to Faubus for corrections before publication, two weeks before

²⁸⁸ Letter from Alfred W. Goshorn (from Law Offices, Washington D. C.) to Orval Faubus. Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14 Subseries 5 Box 497 Folder 5.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Letter from Greene Chandler Furman (Attorney at Law, Washington D.C.) to Orval Faubus. Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14 Subseries 5 Box 497 Folder 3.

Eisenhower deployed the 101st Airborne Division to Little Rock and federalized the Arkansas National Guard. He concluded stating that “As we come to grips with the problem it is certain that our form of government must undergo a profound change. Let us hope it is for the better, but for better or worse we are on our way.”²⁹¹

During the course of the crisis, Faubus would embrace much of the anti-communist rhetoric of the Massive Resistance. The rhetoric did not subside even after the Supreme Court re-affirmed the *Brown* decision in September, 1958, by judging in *Cooper v. Aaron* that, popular hostility to integration didn’t justify segregation. Indeed, Faubus grew more vociferous and bold, to maintain political support. As Bartley put it, by 1958 he “had developed a latent talent for demagoguery,” and by the time the state Democratic convention met in the summer of that year “he was arguing that school desegregation was a communist plot and that Little Rock school board should reimpose segregation, or resign and make way for a board with the backbone to do it.”²⁹² In response to the presence of federal troops in his state, he compared the “occupation of Little Rock by federal troops to the German occupation of Paris and the Soviet attack on Budapest.”²⁹³ Drawing on the same comparison, Senator Talmadge also condemned the “the president of the United States...for [destroying] the sovereignty of the state of Arkansas...by using tanks and troops in the streets of Little Rock.”²⁹⁴ Moreover, late in that year a hearing before the Special Education Committee of the Arkansas Legislative Council, made clear the suspicions of communist influence. State Attorney General Bruce Bennett told the audience that the hearings would prove the “intensive communist conspiracy that climaxed in Little Rock ... [and that had been in place from 1928 to 1958].” To

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Bartley, *New South*, 241.

²⁹³ Layton, 125.

²⁹⁴ Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 136.

him, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which had been heavily involved in the promotion of desegregation in the city, involved many officials with “an almost incredible tie-in with Communists and Communist front organizations.”²⁹⁵

The search for communist-ties in the civil rights movement gained speed and privately made its way to the governor’s office as well. In a telegram to the Police Department, dated 4 February 1958 and entitled “Sputnik,” M. G. Lowman, Executive Secretary to Circuit Riders Inc. included a long and detailed list of the various so-called communist ties and affiliations of the staff of Philander Smith College in Little Rock. He included such names as the member of faculty Lee Lorch (who had also testified in Congressional hearings and during the investigation of the Commonwealth College back in the thirties) and Grace Lorch, and the college president M. Lafayette Harris.²⁹⁶ Asking Faubus, “Are we to regard as coincidental the Communist affiliations and relationships of these individuals, whose public records are attached hereto?,” he warned that:

Every sputnik requires a launching platform. Whether or not M. Lafayette Harris, and the administration leaders at Philander Smith College, claim unwitting use of a church-connected institution, the fact still remains that a Little Rock church-connected college has been a launching platform for an Arkansas Sputnik.²⁹⁷

Around the same time the magazine *The Confidential* dug up Faubus’s Commonwealth story, and published an article entitled “The Commies Trained

²⁹⁵ Dudziak, 124 – 25.

²⁹⁶ Letter from M. G. Lowman to Orval Faubus, Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14, Subseries 6 Box 497, Folder 11. “Circuit Riders, Incorporated was a group, formed in Cincinnati, Ohio, whose purpose was to spread the gospel of Christ. However, during the late fifties and sixties the focus of the Circuit Riders expanded to include the investigation of socialist-communist infiltration into all churches, government, education and the civil rights movement.” See URL: <http://nwda-db.wsulibs.wsu.edu/findaid/ark:/80444/xv69783>

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

Governor Faubus.”²⁹⁸ The article condemned Faubus saying that “he handed to the Communists the handsomest gift they could possibly have received from any American.” It gave a detailed history of the College and mentioned how it was “accused before an Arkansas Joint Legislative Committee of being a nest of ‘free love’ in the Communist tradition of disregarding ordinary standards of sexual morality,” closed in 1940, but still stood “listed as ‘subversive and Communist’ by the Attorney General of the United States and it stands condemned as pro-Soviet by the House Un-American Activities Committee.”²⁹⁹ It stated how well-entrenched Faubus’s connections had been in the college as the head of a student body or as the principal speaker at a May Day celebration. The main argument was that Faubus’s actions greatly helped Soviet propaganda, and “alienated half the world’s peoples against USA.”³⁰⁰ It expressed suspicions about Faubus’s sincerity, in both his stance in Little Rock and public explanations about his naiveté in being involved in Commonwealth, it stated that:

He was a full-grown man of 25 and he had been teaching school for seven years when he went to Commonwealth. Just five months before he was elected president of the student body the Legislative committee had begun its investigation of the place and news of its probe had been trumpeted to every corner of Arkansas.³⁰¹

The following month, a photo editorial in *Ebony*, pointed to the climaxed southern fears about a racial and political threat and wrote:

“Our two most vexing problems,” said a Dixiecrat at a what-shall-we-do-with-them-now meeting, are “moons and coons.” To put it less crudely the Southerner was referring to the twin dangers that threaten his supremacy: red rockets flying over his head and black neighbors moving in next door.³⁰²

²⁹⁸ “The Commies Trained Governor Faubus,” *Confidential*, February, 1958. Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 1, Subseries 2 Box 3, Folder 5.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁰² “Race vs. Space: Ebony Photo-Editorial,” *Ebony* (March 1958), 90.

The letters he received, the resurfacing of his communist ties, and climaxing tendency in the South to use a Cold War rhetoric, contributed to his elevated segregationist and anti-communist stance. In August of the same year, the anti-communist and segregationist Attorney General Bruce Bennett offered a set of bills in a special session of the legislature aimed at the NAACP, in which sixteen interposition bills were enacted.³⁰³ He reintroduced Gregory's affidavit law as part of his anti-NAACP package and it was adopted as Act 10, which required state employees to list all their organizational affiliations of the past five years and declared it illegal for employees to be affiliated with communist front organizations (NAACP included). The session also adopted Act 115, which directly outlawed public employment of NAACP members.³⁰⁴ Faubus signed all the bills enacted in the session into law, a few hours after the Court handed down *Cooper v. Aaron*. As Woods also noted, both Acts 10 and 115 "were extremely popular among Arkansas conservatives and meshed conveniently with Governor Faubus's move to the right."³⁰⁵ The

The law which authorized the governor to close any school threatened by violence and integration was also enacted in that same session. Faubus used this authority granted to him, again a few hours after the Supreme Court decision, and closed four public schools.³⁰⁶ The re-opening of schools in 1959 would again be owing to a grassroots organization, bringing together a strong but belated alliance - a progressive group of women called The Women's Emergency Committee, who were perhaps the only sincere proponents of racial justice, and a group of business leaders

³⁰³ Woods, 73.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.; "Arkansas Anti-Integration Acts of 1958," *The Arkansas Recorder*, September 1958, 6-7. Orval Eugene Faubus Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, Arkansas, Series 14, Subseries 4 Box 497, Folder 1.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 75.

³⁰⁶ Bartley, *A History of the South*, 240-41.

who, like all moderates, had been silent during the building up of the crisis but finally decided to act upon realizing the damaging impact of closed schools in the state. In Arkansas and elsewhere in the upper South, closed schools were gradually opposed and the Massive Resistance movement began to disintegrate. State governments increasingly withdrew from the issue and left local authorities to settle their own disputes. As they retreated from the doctrine of interposition, however, the Massive Resistance left the legacy of “token desegregation”.³⁰⁷ Many schools came to be regarded officially as desegregated schools, in spite of the very few numbers of African Americans. The pace of integration was also slowed down through bureaucratization. As the attention turned to the even more eventful integration attempts in the Deep South, and the Alabama Governor George Wallace was climbing in his popularity with his strongly segregationist and anti-communist stance, Faubus went on and won four more elections, with, as Reed put it, “the momentum...[and] became a man of the right for the rest of his life.” While even Wallace would apologize for “the harm he had caused,” Faubus would never admit he had caused any.³⁰⁸

The coming of the Cold War had rather complex influences on the various players in Arkansas. It encouraged the federal government to act in favor of the civil rights advocates, and supplied for the movement a favorable environment for international appeal. However, as the whole Little Rock episode showed, it also discouraged moderate state officials to act, and made it easier for the Massive Resistance movement to reach out to the otherwise silent and convertible grassroots. Thus, anti-communist feelings intensified by the Cold War did speed up the process of elimination of moderate politics in the local scope and the elimination of all liberal

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 248-49.

³⁰⁸ Reed, 369.

politics in national scope. It did hurt the civil rights struggle and federal attempts to help it, by giving one more effective tool to the white resistance and seriously slowing down the pace of progress.

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