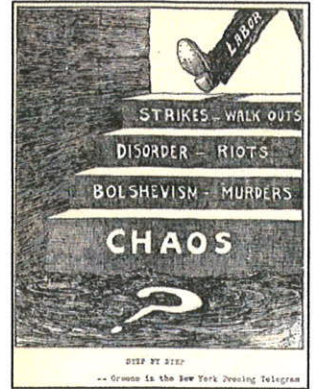


THE RED SCARE

The climate of repression that was established during WWI continued after the war ended: this time, government interest focused on communists, Bolsheviks, and "reds", generally. The climactic phase of this anti-communist crusade occurred during the "Palmer Raids" of 1918-1921. A Mitchell Palmer, Wilson's Attorney General, believed communism was "eating its way into the homes of the American workman." In his essay "The Case Against the Reds," Palmer charged that "tongues of revolutionary heat were licking the alters of the churches, leaping into the belfry of the school bell, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes, seeking to replace marriage vows with libertine laws, burning up the foundations of society." With a broad base of popular support, in 1919 Palmer intensified the attacks on political dissent, or disagreement with the opinions of the government, that had begun during the war.



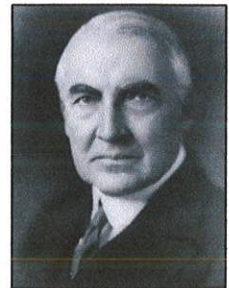
The Spread of Communism



Russia had direct intention to spread communism throughout the world. In 1919, Russian backed communist groups tried to overthrow the new government of Germany. Also in 1919, the CPUSA (The Communist Party of the United States of America) was founded. In Hungary, a communist-ruled government came to power. Some Americans were concerned that European immigrants entering the United States were Communists or other radicals.

Warren G. Harding

Republican President Harding called for a "return to normalcy" after WWI, which included getting the economy back on track and returning to the policy of isolationism, which meant avoiding political or economic alliances with foreign nations. Many Americans hoped that this "return to normalcy" would protect them from the spread of Russia's communism, which was openly hostile to capitalism and First Amendment freedoms.

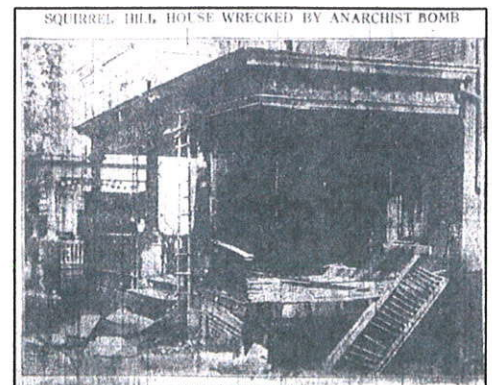


1919 Bombings

In late April 1919, at least 30 booby trap bombs were mailed to several prominent politicians, justice officials, newspaper editors, and businessmen, including John D. Rockefeller. The mail bombs were wrapped in bright green paper and stamped, "Gimbel Brothers- Novelty Samples". Opening one end of the box (the end marked, "open this end") released a coil spring that detonated the dynamite. On April 29th, Georgia Senator Thomas Hardwick, who had co-sponsored the Anarchist Exclusion Act, received a similarly disguised bomb. It blew off the hands of his housekeeper when she attempted to open the package. The senator's wife was also injured in the blast, which severely burned her face and neck, and a piece of shrapnel cut her lip and loosened several of her teeth.



On the evening of June 2nd, 1919, the Galleanists Gang managed to explode eight large bombs nearly simultaneously in eight different US cities. These bombs were much larger than those sent in April. Flyers declaring war on capitalists in the name of anarchist (people who



believe in the absence of government) principles accompanied each bomb. One of the bombs exploded in the front of Attorney General Palmer's home. Though not injured, Palmer and his family were shaken by the blast. Early in 1920, a bomb exploded in the street in front of the New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street. The bombings, issues at home, and the attempts to spread Communism by Russia brought about the Red Scare, an intense fear of communism and other radical ideas.

The Palmer Raids

In reaction to the attack on his home, Palmer began working to discover and arrest radicals within the United States. Although there were only about 70,000 self-professed Communists in the United



States in 1919, Palmer viewed them as responsible for a wide range of social ills, including the bombings. He stated that evidence promised that radicals would "on a certain day...rise up and destroy the government



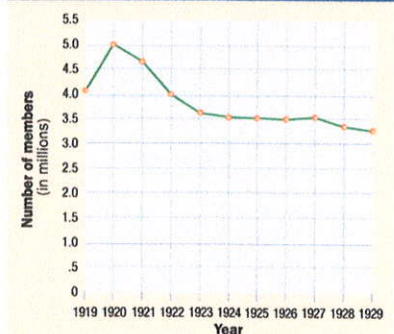
in one fell swoop." Encouraged by Congress, Palmer began a series of showy and well-publicized raids to root out radicals. He ordered the arrest of thousands of suspected "subversives" (people who try to overthrow the government) without evidence. Striking without warning and without warrants, Palmer's men smashed union offices and the headquarters' of Communist and Socialist organizations. They concentrated whenever possible on aliens (foreigners) rather than citizens, because aliens had fewer rights. In December of 1919,

in their most famous act, Palmer's agents seized 249 resident aliens. Those seized were placed on board a ship, the *Buford*, bound for the Soviet Union. More than 10,000 people were arrested during the raids. Many were innocent; yet 556 resident aliens were deported.

Other Red Scare Events

Schenck v. U.S.	Charles Schenck mailed letters urging men to avoid military service. Schenck was convicted of breaking the Espionage Act. In his appeals, Schenck said he was exercising his freedom of speech. The Supreme Court said that the government is justified in silencing free speech when there is a "clear and present danger."
Gitlow v. New York	Socialist Bernard Gitlow published calls for the violent overthrow of the government. He was convicted of criminal anarchy. The Supreme Court upheld his conviction, stating that he had urged people to engage in violent revolution.
Sacco and Vanzetti	Two anarchists were accused of a robbery and murder. Many people believed that they were singled out because they were both radicals and immigrants. After a trial that many believed was unfair, the jury found them guilty and sentenced them to death.
Domestic Issues	As Americans became more isolationist during the Red Scare, they also became more nativist. Nativism is a movement favoring native-born Americans over immigrants. In 1921, Congress passed a law restricting immigration. The law included a quota, or a numerical limit imposed on immigrants.
Decline in Strikes And Unions	Most Americans opposed strikes. They saw strikes as anti-American and likely to result in violence. Many Americans distrusted labor unions and the immigrants they represented.

Union Membership, 1919-1929



SOURCE: Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970