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THE CONGRESSIONAL CAREER OF
CLARE E. HOFFMAN, 1935-63

By
Donald Edwin Walker

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of History

1982

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1982

ABSTRACT

THE CONGRESSIONAL CAREER OF CLARE E. HOFFMAN, 1935-63

By

Donald Edwin Walker

Clare Eugene Hoffman ended a successful legal career at the age of fifty-nine to begin a controversial twenty-eight year career in the United States House of Representatives. The event that first brought him national attention was the 1937 Flint, Michigan, sit-down strike. This episode helped to earn him the reputation as a staunch critic of labor unions. One of the foremost adversaries of the Wagner Act, he introduced numerous bills involving labor unions. While none became law, various ideas of his were embodied in some of the most important labor legislation of the 1940s and 50s, including the Taft-Hartley Act, a measure he helped draft.

With the outbreak of World War II, his isolationism became increasingly evident. His views led to the accusation that he was sabotaging the nation's defense effort. Fostering this belief was the charge that he was acting in collusion with various American fascists.

As chairman of the Government Operations Committee during the 80th and 83d Congresses, he led the House fight for the

Donald Edwin Walker

National Security Act which provided for the unification of the military. It was also Hoffman who first undertook a major inquiry into the Teamsters and Jimmy Hoffa. Outside pressure brought an end to the hearings which were uncovering evidence as important as that later revealed by the more famous investigation by the McClellan Committee.

Thought to be more conservative than his constituents, accused of being a Nazi sympathizer, embroiled in controversy, attacked by magazines such as the New Republic and the Nation, he won re-election thirteen times. While his electoral success was largely due to his being the incumbent in a heavily Republican district, his victories were also due to his willingness to serve his constituents and his courage in fighting for his beliefs.

Hoffman illustrates how a man, despite the vast changes that had occurred both within the United States and abroad, could remain true to the 19th century way of life he experienced as a child, retaining his faith in isolationism, small government, small businesses, and small farms.

DEDICATION

To my wife Julie, daughter Susan, parents
Carl and Verla, and my son Theodore,
who wrote more of this than he knows.

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I would like to express my gratitude for the assistance given me by the members of my committee: Dr. Paul A. Varg, Dr. Donald N. Lammers, and Dr. James H. Soltow. I am especially indebted to Dr. Warren I. Cohen who graciously agreed to assume the duties of chairman just before the end of the dissertation process. His willingness to give freely of his time is sincerely appreciated.

I am most grateful to Dr. Madison Kuhn who labored so diligently as the original chairman. His insightful comments, his ability as a writer, and his knowledge of the sources proved invaluable. His unfailing good humor and patience, as well as the encouragement he provided, made a difficult task much easier.

Others to whom the author owes thanks include: the Kellogg Foundation for a grant making it possible for me to take a leave from Olivet College; those colleagues of Representative Hoffman who shared their recollections and opinions about him; Helen M. Boyer, Hoffman's secretary; Betty W. Havlena of the Detroit News; and the staffs of the Michigan State University Library, the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan, the Walter Reuther Library at Wayne State University, the Allegan Public Library Allegan, Michigan, and the Olivet College Library.

Obviously without the encouragement of one's family such an undertaking would be nearly impossible. Fortunately my family,

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though at times probably questioning the sanity of anyone who spent so much time on what must have seemed a quest for something more challenging than finding the Holy Grail, gave their wholehearted support.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER

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ALPHABETIC

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INTRODUCTION

Before considering the congressional career of Clare Eugene Hoffman, two areas should be discussed. One concerns his place on the political spectrum, while the second is a description of Michigan's 4th congressional district.

One of the problems in discussing Hoffman is to characterize his political philosophy. Friendly observers tended to label him a conservative, whereas his critics (such as the New Republic, Nation, PM, and Time) generally considered him to be an ultra-conservative. Accepting the definitions of conservatives for the period from the New Deal through the Eisenhower years as given by Clinton Rossiter in his book Conservatism in America: The Thankless Persuasion, Hoffman qualified as an ultra-conservative. While noting that no sharp line divided those on the right, Rossiter listed three major categories of conservatives (he dismissed various extreme right-wing elements as being too small in number to be of importance)--the ultra-conservatives, the middling conservatives, and the liberal conservatives.

The three groups were classified according to their support for the New Economy (the domestic New Deal as it was described in the Republican platforms of 1956 and 1960) and the New Internationalism (support for American membership in the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as for foreign aid).

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The liberal conservatives were most inclined to embrace the New Economy and the New Internationalism with some degree of enthusiasm. Hoffman clearly was not a member of this group. The middling conservatives favored stopping the New Economy and the New Internationalism. While Hoffman admired some of the men Rossiter placed in this category, such as Presidents Herbert Hoover and Richard M. Nixon, as well as Senator Robert A. Taft, his views were more in harmony with the ultra-conservatives who sought to reverse the trend in domestic and foreign affairs. Two of the people in this group were Senator Barry Goldwater, who was greatly admired by Hoffman, and Representative Noah Mason, who frequently praised Hoffman. The Chicago Tribune, a paper Hoffman read and lauded, voiced the views of this group. Among the enemies of the ultra-conservatives were President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor, Walter Reuther, and Alger Hiss, all key villains to Hoffman.

Hoffman was strongly against United States membership in the UN, thought that foreign aid would bankrupt the nation, and wanted little to do with Europe. Domestically, he agreed with the ultra-conservatives in resisting new social legislation while advocating the demise of many of the existing programs, opposed civil rights acts and "socialized medicine," and favored repealing, or greatly modifying, the Sixteenth Amendment (income tax).

Hoffman was not a conservative in the Burkean sense, being, as Rossiter noted, outside the mainstream of American conservatism. Like other ultra-conservatives, he rejected the social and economic changes that had become reality, preferring to return to a simpler,

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more idyllic time. The ultra-conservatives lacked political moderation in their assaults against the political institutions and the social-welfare agencies, a characteristic that removed them from the world of the true conservative. Certainly this was a valid description of Hoffman.

Some insight into why he was so strongly supported by his constituents can be gained by looking at the makeup of the area. The 4th district, which consisted of six counties (Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren) tucked in the southwestern corner of Michigan, was heavily rural. The area was characterized by small industries, small businesses, small farms, and small towns.

Allegan, one of the state's leading farming counties, was known for its fruit production, as well as for its poultry and dairy products. Barry, Cass, and St. Joseph were areas of general farming, dairying, and livestock raising. Berrien and Van Buren, the most important fruit region in the state, were known mainly for their apples, peaches, pears, and grapes. They were also a key producer of other fruits, particularly strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries. Benton Harbor in Berrien county was the site of one of the world's great fruit markets.

The industry in the district was concentrated in Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, and Niles, all in Berrien county, which was also the county where organized labor had its greatest numerical strength. The main industries were those engaged in food processing, primary metals, and fabricated metal products. Benton Harbor and St. Joseph were also both lake ports, while Niles was a railroad center. The

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only other county with any significant amount of industry was St. Joseph, which included the industrial and trading centers of Sturgis and Three Rivers. Paper products and fabricated metal products were the main industries. In Hastings (Barry county) there were various companies related to the automobile industry.

The resort trade was another prominent economic activity in the district. It was important mainly in the three counties bordering on Lake Michigan--Allegan, Berrien, and Van Buren.

The largest cities in the district were in Berrien county. In 1930 Benton Harbor was a city of 15,434, while in 1960 it had grown to 19,136. Niles went from 11,326 in 1930 to 13,842 in 1960. During that same period, St. Joseph's population increased from 8,349 to 11,755. In 1930 there were only seven towns of over 5,000 population in the district, while in 1960 the number had risen to nine. In terms of population, the district ranked as one of the smallest in the state.

The residents of the 4th district were largely native born. In 1930 the percentage of foreign born ranged from a high of 13 percent in Berrien to a low of 3 percent in Barry. The percentage of foreign born declined in subsequent years. The Germans, who were by far the most numerous foreign born group in the district, were also the main ethnic group of those native born who were either of foreign or mixed parentage. There was a sizable Dutch population in Allegan county, while Berrien contained a number of

Russians and Poles. There were also some Poles in Cass and Van Buren counties.

It is not surprising that the voters of the 4th district, an area not given to change, supported a conservative Representative. There was no influx of industry to divert the people from their normal agricultural pursuits, nor was there a sizable foreign born population to bring in new viewpoints. Hoffman's constituents shared a faith in the values of the 19th century. The growing role of the federal government with its various regulations, many of which affected the farmers, was seen as a dangerous trend. The rise of unions, and the resulting loss of control by the employers, concerned the farmers who were often, in their own small way, employers themselves. As America became more urbanized, the cities gained political strength. As their political importance increased, more of the state budget was spent on the cities, which in turn required higher taxes. The rural areas naturally opposed larger state expenditures to benefit the cities. If Hoffman was, as many observers claimed, more conservative than his constituents, it was simply a matter of degree. Neither was in harmony with the political and social development of New Deal and post-New Deal America.

Politically the district was solidly Republican. Only once since 1860, and only then in the depths of the Depression, did the Democrats send a Representative to Washington. After one term, the area reverted to its conservative Republican tradition, which it has remained loyal to down to the present time. During the years that Hoffman represented the district, each of the counties, almost

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without exception, was strongly tied to the Republican party. The people's affinity for the GOP was such that the only practical way to defeat a Republican incumbent was in the primary.

CHAPTER 1

"The Black Flag of Piracy"

(1875-1936)

In 1934 at an age (fifty-nine) when many are contemplating retirement, Clare Eugene Hoffman began a new career. Although lacking any legislative experience and having been elected to only one post, that of county prosecuting attorney, an office he had not held for over twenty years, he won election as the United States Representative from Michigan's 4th district. He retained his seat for fourteen terms, making him, at the time of his retirement, the second longest serving member of Congress in Michigan history.¹ During his long service he became known as a vociferous critic of big government, of social reform, of labor unions, of Communism, and of an active foreign policy.

In a career that was both colorful and controversial, he was, as the New York Times obituary concluded, "either stanchly supported or heartily disliked but never ignored," a statement applicable not only to his constituents, but to persons throughout the nation who either knew him or knew of him. It was hard to ignore a congressman who sent a wire to the mayor of Monroe, Michigan, offering to bring a "group of peaceably inclined but armed and well-equipped reliable citizens to aid in the defense of your city" during a labor dispute, or who wore suits without pockets.² And certainly it was

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hard to disregard someone accused of being a fascist or of having fascist ties, charges which led to several appearances before a federal grand jury.

Yet he was more than just colorful and controversial. He played an important part in some major legislation, including the Taft-Hartley Act, and the National Security Act of 1947. Twice chairman of a committee, he utilized his position to head numerous investigations, the most significant being an inquiry into the Teamsters union and particularly into the activities of James Hoffa, a Teamster official, years before the more publicized Senate study of John L. McClellan (D, Arkansas).

While in number his successes seem few, two points must be noted. One is that many of his ideas concerning labor legislation later became laws, but without his name being associated with them. Secondly, being a member of the minority for all but four of his years in Congress certainly limited his achievements. It is, however, debatable how much more successful he would have been had he been in the majority more often given his personality and his set of values, values which he had learned as a child and which remained unchanged throughout his life.

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His values were derived from a simple old-fashioned way of life. Born into a Pennsylvania Dutch family on 10 September 1875, he moved with his parents Samuel D. and Mary V. and his sister Elizabeth from his birthplace in Vicksburg, Pennsylvania, to a farm

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near Constantine, Michigan, when he was about one year old. He led the same hardworking, religious life that his father and grandfather had, which is evident in several of his speeches in which he extolled the virtues of the simple life he had experienced, and in his frequent quoting of the scriptures. (During World War II he noted that he used to teach Sunday school in the Lutheran church, but "I haven't gone much in recent years--been too busy practicing it.")³

Although his grandfather and father were both skilled craftsmen, Hoffman decided to become a doctor. After serving as an apprentice to a country doctor, he enrolled in Northwestern Medical School but soon shifted to law, graduating in 1896. Since he was too young to be admitted to the bar, he went to Valparaiso University to take business courses.⁴

He began his practice in Otsego, Michigan, but the offer of a job as law clerk at six dollars per week from the leading attorney in Allegan was too attractive for a young lawyer to pass up. After a brief move to Muskegon, he returned to Allegan in 1904 to open his own office. He remained for the next thirty years with his wife Florence Wasson (whom he married in 1899) and his two sons, Leo W. and Carl E.⁵

His introduction to politics was not as satisfying as his later efforts. He failed in his try to become county prosecuting attorney in 1900, but in his second attempt four years later he won the first of his two terms as prosecutor. In 1912 he ran unsuccessfully as a member of the Bull Moose party, "marking the last time that a Hoffman and a Roosevelt ever had anything in common."

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Twenty-two years passed before he again sought an elective office, although he stayed in politics being both city and county GOP chairman.⁶

The period between 1912 and 1934 was a successful one for Hoffman who gained a statewide reputation as a "sharp-witted, sharp-tongued" trial lawyer. One paper divided his legal career into three phases. In the first he won fame for handling cases of fraud against unethical horse dealers. He then concerned himself with local realtors who were selling worthless land as valuable farmland. (He claimed that, at one time or another, he had sued every realtor in the county.) Finally he specialized in malpractice cases against physicians, doing it so effectively that he had a statewide practice and a reputation that went beyond Michigan. Many of his real estate and malpractice cases reached the state supreme court, causing it to be said that he "made as much law as any lawyer in Michigan" by establishing precedents which were still being followed at the time of his retirement in 1963. He even gained some national attention in 1933 through his defense of the operators of one of the country's first nudist colonies.⁷ This case is particularly interesting in light of his later lamentations on what he perceived to be a decline in the moral standards.

His legal talents were also shown during Allegan's successful eight-year fight against Consumers Power Co. over the building of a municipal lighting plant. As the city's counsel he handled the entire proceedings all the way to the Circuit Court of Appeals

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of the United States. He also represented Paw Paw and Dowagiac in their battles against power companies.⁸

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Hoffman probably would have been content to remain a successful attorney had the district not gone Democratic in 1932, the first time it had done so since the Civil War. Even then, despite being "a most vocal and vituperative critic" of the New Deal, he was not inclined to run. Although drafted into the 1934 race, he nevertheless waged what was to be the first of many vigorous campaigns.⁹

Contrary to the usual picture of him as an ultra-conservative, he campaigned as one who was progressive but practical, aggressive but not intolerant, loyal to his constituents but willing to listen to others, a doer not an orator, concerned for the needy but also for the Constitution and the laws, and as one who would not take from those who had simply to give to others. Running in the strongly rural district, he attacked the needless and expensive laws dealing with farming, and advocated a protective tariff for the farmers. To show that, despite his age, he could appeal to the younger voters, he had several people in their twenties helping in his campaign.¹⁰

Hoffman found that campaigning agreed with him, although at times he said he became so absorbed in the Republican cause that he neglected to mention his own candidacy. Various charges were hurled at him, including the statement that he was a drunkard (he did not drink), and that his home town would not support him. He said he "wouldn't be surprised to next hear that my wife isn't going to vote

for me." He easily won the Allegan vote, both the city and the county, remarking that the "home vote alone is worth all it cost to win the nomination."¹¹

He won the primary over two state senators and a widely respected physician after a "sharp" battle, partly because of his own intense campaigning, and also because he was supported by the previous congressman, John C. Ketcham. His primary victory led one paper to predict that the general election campaign would be "one of the most spectacular" in years, since both Hoffman and his Democratic opponent, the incumbent George Foulkes, were known as fighters.¹²

One of Hoffman's criticisms of Foulkes concerned the congressman's liberal use of his franking privilege, a most ironic accusation since Hoffman later became embroiled in a major controversy over the use of his frank. He also attacked his opponent for promising to support the New Deal, saying that anyone who blindly followed the administration was of no use to his district.¹³ Certainly Hoffman never blindly endorsed any president, Republican or Democratic.

Hoffman, who "hit the political firmament--something like a rocket," defeated Foulkes by nearly 14,000 votes. While 1934 was not a good year for most Republican congressional candidates, Hoffman was fortunate to live in Michigan, "the outstanding Republican state of the country," and particularly fortunate that Republican strength was especially strong in the rural areas. Another reason for his victory was the scandal involving Foulkes' effort to solicit

campaign funds from federal employees in the district, which later resulted in his being sent to prison.¹⁴

After expending so much effort to win, Hoffman had second thoughts about serving, declaring that he was not going to Washington. At the behest of family and supporters he decided at the last minute to do so. Thus Hoffman, a wiry man of five feet ten inches, who some thought looked like Will Rogers, and who spoke "with the twang of a Midwesterner," took his place in Congress in which his party had just 102 seats, not quite a fourth of the membership.¹⁵ Such a small number was a mixed blessing, offering him the chance to become known to party leaders, while denying him the party support necessary to enact any legislation that he might propose.

Actually the situation threatened to be even less to his liking than the numbers indicated, since President Franklin D. Roosevelt was thought to have the backing of 325 House members. The chance of a conservative coalition did not look promising, although one did begin to appear during 1935-36.¹⁶ Hoffman, a man who placed principle above party regularity, was receptive to such a movement.

Because of the paucity of Republicans, he noted that they were begged to take several committee assignments. He served on three committees. The most important was the Expenditures in the Executive Departments on which he served throughout his years in the House, twice becoming its chairman. He was also a member of the War Claims and the Merchant Marine, Radio and Fisheries Committees. While left off the more important committees, he did not go unnoticed. From the beginning he was a "peppery, strong-willed" man who "never

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stood in the middle on any subject during his 14 terms in the House."¹⁷

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One of the first issues that he faced concerned relief spending. With his ultra-conservative opposition to new social legislation, he scrupulously tried to hold such spending to a minimum. A vigorous watchdog of the public purse, he offered three possible ways to attain a balanced budget, an idea he championed during his twenty-eight years in the House. Congress could cut spending or raise taxes, both of which would cost members votes, or both methods could be tried simultaneously, the position he favored.¹⁸

He advocated passing a tax measure after each appropriation bill so as not to burden future generations with the extravagances of the present. When questioned whether this would not bankrupt the country, he replied that it made little difference if the government went bankrupt now or in the future by amassing an unpayable debt. Paying as one went would cut out many needless programs which was the only way the nation could get out of the Depression.¹⁹

His aversion to spending vast sums of money as a cure for the nation's economic troubles did not mean that he opposed granting relief to those in need. The government should not permit anyone to starve or freeze, a statement he repeated years later regarding foreign aid, but at some point he insisted relief must be curtailed. He predicted that if the government took from those who produced to give to the needy, ultimately everyone would be on relief.²⁰

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Although he voiced his concern for the needy, his voting record indicated less interest in their welfare than in avoiding deficit spending. The only major relief measures that he supported were the veterans' bonus and the home mortgage relief bill. He voted against the nearly \$5 billion Emergency Relief Act, being only one of eighteen to do so.²¹

Steadfast in his belief about economy in government, he opposed, not just billion dollar appropriations, but bills such as one for \$3 million for the Texas Centennial, or for \$50,000 to remove a gas tank which detracted from the beauty of the George Rogers Clark Sesquicentennial Monument. As shown many times in the future, no sum of money was too small to save. Years later he even questioned the spending of \$2,500 for a medal for the poet Robert Frost.²²

Besides the expense of relief and what he considered to be the detrimental effect it had on the moral fibre of its recipients, he was concerned about the nature of some of the programs being supported. Hoffman cited several examples of the fatuous way relief money was being utilized. Why, he asked, did the government spend \$3,993 in Richmond, Wisconsin, to improve a trout stream and increase insect life, when in East Bridgewater, Massachusetts, it spent \$18,590 to drain swamps and ponds to decrease insect life? Why did the government spend \$500,000 to improve bridle paths in Queens, New York?²³

He favored letting the states care for their own needy, contending that the position in which those in need found themselves

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was partly due to conditions permitted by the states. He further argued that state and local governments could give aid more efficiently because they could more readily distinguish the needy from the undeserving, and could better ascertain the amount each family required. Believing that the Constitution justified the federal government's granting of aid to the states, he said that the sum given should equal the amount of assistance rendered by the states to care for their needy.²⁴

Considering the frequency with which he opposed Roosevelt's requests for spending, it is ironic that one of the few relief measures that Hoffman supported, one which caused the "most spectacular difference between Congress and the President," was one that Roosevelt did not favor. Hoffman intended to fulfill his campaign pledge to vote for the immediate payment of the veterans' bonus. Criticizing the Democratic leaders responsible for holding up the bill in the House because Roosevelt would veto it, he said that the veterans were willing to wait for their money if the government was trying to balance the budget, but it was not. Since the debt was already fixed, the only question was when it would be paid. "They should have it now, before we become bankrupt, before we have inflation, and they should have it in sound money." Apparently his support for the bonus stemmed from his belief that the veterans deserved some help for their sacrifices. He said that since so many others benefited from government, it was only proper that the former solidiers, who had earned what they were asking for, should gain as well. That he was sincere can be seen by his support of

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legislation for the World War II veterans, including his efforts to raise the pay of the soldiers during the war.²⁵

He fought large scale relief programs not just for economic reasons, but for political ones as well. He repeatedly charged that the programs of the administration, by attaching voters to the party in office, were in effect buying votes. Claiming that workers in his district who applied for relief were given a questionnaire which asked what their political affiliation was and how much money they had given to the Democratic party, he inquired what one's political preference had to do with either need or working ability. He blamed the political tie to relief on people like James A. Farley, the Postmaster General and Chairman of the Democratic party, and others "who lack the sense of political decency and common honesty." He noted the Republicans' dilemma. If they opposed money for relief, they were made to look indifferent to human suffering, while if they voted such money, they were building the Democratic machine. He admonished his fellow Republicans not to vote another nearly \$5 billion for relief as they had in 1935, since this would merely supply the Democrats with campaign funds.²⁶

He also accused the administration of taking money from industrial Republican states like Michigan and giving it to Democratic states in the South and West. He predicted that "untold sums" would be used in the Republican states to win them over in the 1936 election. Hoffman feared that this buying of votes through relief spending might enable Roosevelt to so entrench himself in the next four years that in the event of the death of any of the Supreme

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Court justices--which considering their ages, Hoffman saw as a real possibility--Roosevelt would be able to change the makeup of the Court, thereby gaining its support for the theories of government that would make him a dictator.²⁷

It was not just through relief policies that Hoffman saw an attempt by Roosevelt to become a dictator; he saw it in the most innocuous events. Noting how the Army band and some soldiers had marched in a political parade when Roosevelt spoke, while the Marine band had been withdrawn from a meeting where the speaker was a critic of the New Deal, he said: "The Army had been used to give color to and to aid a Democratic political rally. How long will it be before it will be used to police the polling booths to determine the result of an election? How long will it be before the members of the C.C.C. camps are mobilized as a political force? Are not some of them being so used at the present time?"²⁸

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Hoffman was always wary that someone, or some group, was seeking to establish a dictatorship. While he was convinced that Roosevelt was working toward this end, it was not until later that he emerged as one of the President's leading critics in the House. Instead he tended to concentrate more attention on the New Dealers, a group he differentiated from the Democrats, whom he accused of plotting to use relief programs to achieve dictatorial control of the government. Lurking behind the various New Deal measures was a plan to destroy the American system of government and to "impose

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upon us a dictatorship." The New Dealers were conducting a campaign "under the guise of being a drive for the benefit of the so-called 'forgotten man,' but which is in reality an effort determined and unrelenting to take from him the liberty which he enjoys, the opportunity which has been his, and to impose upon us a government patterned after the worst form of those oppressive administrations now existing in foreign lands."²⁹

Disapproving of those who comprised Roosevelt's Brain Trust, he said it was time to "Kick out all the horde of professors, or theorists, none of whom knows the cause of sweat, the feeling of a blister or callous; none of whom ever accomplished anything of moment in industry, finance, or agriculture; all of whom believe that they are the Lord's anointed, ordained to save the world rather than America."³⁰

The belief that the New Dealers were more impressed with the world than with the United States was noted in Hoffman's maiden speech in the House. He said the Brain Trusters, "extending to them all charity, are exploiting America, American citizens, American industries, for the benefit of the world at large. They have more interest in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the islands of the sea than they have in American homes and American families." He then asked his colleagues to "wreck and throw on the scrap heap these governmental agencies which have no excuse for existence except the creation of jobs for the faithful Democrats and the laboratory for the trying out of the experiments of political quacks, many of whom would starve to death if thrown upon their own resources."³¹

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Social security, one of the New Deal's major legislative reforms, was dismissed by Hoffman as no more than a modified Share the Wealth plan and a "mild version" of the Townsend plan. Admitting that the Republicans had not thought of it, he explained that that was because it was unnecessary when the GOP was in control of the government. The Democrats required such a program since they had repudiated their promises, platform, and principles. "The quackery practiced by your [Democratic] experts has brought on a disease which you, no doubt, believe can be cured, or at least alleviated, by this remedy. Let us hope and trust you are right," Hoffman said. "We on this side can do naught else. Let us hope and pray that the results will be no worse than your other so-called 'remedies.'" He denounced the measure for taking "from thrifty, saving Peter to pay unfortunate Paul." While conceding that the bill contained some good, he cautioned that it was wrapped up "with a whole lot of other things" which would give more power to Roosevelt, weaken the state governments, and move toward dictatorship.³²

It was his opposition to social security that led the authors of a book on Roosevelt and his critics to say that Hoffman "had long since ceased to look for any merit in New Deal proposals."³³ Whether or not that is a fair statement, it is true that he had begun to appear as a vigorous opponent of the New Deal, a role he continued to play with growing fervor.

Despite his declaration of support for an old age pension, he opposed the plan proffered by a California doctor, Francis

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Townsend, to grant benefits to the elderly. As with other relief legislation, he said he was not against caring for the needy as long as it was done properly. He labeled the Townsend plan the "grandest spending scheme of all." While its purpose, to alleviate suffering and increase happiness, was "highly laudable and justifiable," the plan was "impracticable" as well as "unjust and illegal." He predicted that since the requirements for receiving money was simply age and not need, if the plan did pass, the Supreme Court would strike it down. He also criticized the Townsendites' indifference as to how the money was spent as long as it was gone by the end of the month.³⁴

Hoffman listed three possible courses of action. Estimating that 500 of the between 1,000 and 1,200 voters in Allegan had signed a petition calling for it, the politically wise decision was to support the plan and rely on the Supreme Court to overturn it. Another politically attractive stand was to back it and await the return of prosperity when the people would simply forget about it. He said, however, that he had to retain his self-respect by opposing it and risk the wrath of his constituents. His decision came despite his claim that he and his wife would benefit from the plan since he said they would receive a combined income of \$4,800, more money than they had ever had as net income. His stand showed that from the beginning of his career he was willing to adhere to his beliefs regardless of the political consequences, a trait that even his critics praised.³⁵

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Hoffman, who regarded the plan as an "economic impossibility," claimed that no one had calculated the entire cost of the program, but he said using Townsend's own figures the cost came to over \$19 billion per year. He challenged the Townsendite argument that a 2 percent transaction tax, which would be added to the cost of a product at every stage of production, would pay for the program. As a supporter of small businesses, he was disturbed by the tax because it was particularly unfair to the independent merchants whose products went through several stages, while chain stores, having fewer production steps, could undersell them. He added facetiously that if Townsend was right that a 2 percent tax would bring such beneficial results, why not make the tax 10 percent or more, let everyone be eligible, and thereby make everybody prosperous?³⁶

Although he once characterized himself as being "somewhat hasty, somewhat abrupt at times, and somewhat inclined to form quick conclusions," his objections to the Townsend proposal were based in part on his study of the plan as a member of a special House committee. The committee, the Select Committee to Investigate Old-Age Pension Organizations, commonly called the Bell Committee after its chairman C. Jasper Bell (D, Missouri), was hostile to the Townsend Plan. One writer accused the committee of indulging "in the most unscrupulous brow-beating and questioning of witnesses," noting that Hoffman was "particularly vitriolic and insulting." One reporter said that Hoffman was regarded as second to Bell in his opposition to the plan. Townsend himself later wrote that Hoffman, Scott Lucas (D, Illinois), and Bell were the most rancorous on the eight member

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committee: "no one could have tempered the actions of this clique." Townsend, angered by the treatment he received from the committee, walked out during his third day of testifying, resulting in a sentence of thirty days in jail plus a fine for contempt of the committee. Hoffman, who, despite his personal opposition to Townsend (he criticized him for making money off the elderly and accused him of having "delusions of grandeur," envisioning himself as a presidential candidate), had no desire to see the seventy year old doctor go to jail, offered a resolution to suspend the sentence and waive the fine. Townsend was later pardoned by Roosevelt.³⁷

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Although he said little about his position concerning the major areas of labor, agriculture, and foreign affairs, he did begin to outline his views. While labor was to become an overwhelming interest of his, it was a minor issue in his first term. He did comment on a taxi strike in Washington, D.C., wondering whether "with all the power which has been granted to the Federal Government during the past 2 years," it was not possible to maintain order as an example for the rest of the nation. Unwilling to ask the government to force People back to work, he believed that those who wished to return to work should not be prevented from doing so by those supporting the Strike.³⁸ Here is an early statement of a position that he repeated many times in his career. While claiming to be a defender of unions and their right to strike, he was an even more vigorous exponent of the rights of those who did not wish to join unions. Considering the difficulty of a union functioning under the terms he set, it is

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Although from an agrarian district, and despite owning and operating farms, Hoffman opposed the Agricultural Adjustment Act, favoring what he termed "legitimate" aid for farmers. He thought it was wrong to practice scarcity, lose foreign markets, limit production, and then pay millions to reclaim land. In an article in the Allegan Gazette he deprecated the AAA for costing the farmers their foreign markets without bringing prosperity at home. As he perceived it the AAA was established under the pretense of aiding the farmers, but it was actually an attempt to buy the farm vote.³⁹

It was certainly easier for him to oppose the AAA since the act did not cover fruit, an important commodity in his district. However, since the act was aimed mainly at commercial farmers who raised sizable cash crops, his opposition was also in keeping with his support of small business, small farming, and small government.⁴⁰ He remained a firm opponent of government subsidies to farmers, though, as will be seen, he was not averse to helping them in other ways.

He was also upset by the inconsistency of Roosevelt's farm policies which to Hoffman typified the whole New Deal. He noted how, when the government paid the farmers to limit production, it allowed the importation of food and spent money for irrigation projects which resulted in additional farmland.⁴¹ He could not support what he considered such contradictory and poorly conceived schemes.

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Despite being well known later in his career as a leading isolationist, he gave little evidence of this in his first term. He did vote for the Neutrality Act of 1936, and he put a newspaper article into the Congressional Record praising various critics of the World Court, but there were few indications of his strong isolationist views that made him a center of controversy during World War II.⁴²

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At the end of the 74th Congress, one could begin to discern the positions that Hoffman would take in the future, although the intensity of his views in certain areas had yet to become clear. To solve the economic problems, he favored government regulation of big business, but not in a manner that would destroy small businesses, opposed the government's attempt to control nature and crop production, and criticized it for unfairly taxing those who wanted to work and pay their own way. He advocated the virtues he learned as a child: the value of hard work, self-reliance and a largely laissez-faire role for the federal government. He seemed more interested in the long run consequences of actions rather than in the immediate problems. Too much deviation from the policies of rugged individualism, too much reliance on alphabet agencies rather than private enterprise, while perhaps meeting a present need, would ultimately prove more detrimental than positive. He summed up his overall opinion of the Roosevelt administration by saying: "Flying the flag of humanity, preaching the doctrine of charity and of helpfulness, of kindness, of justice and equality, this administration's army

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of officeholders, marching under the black flag of piracy, has robbed one group of taxpayers to seduce another."⁴³

If his views were not fully known, he had made his positions on some issues clear enough to cause someone to send him a threatening letter. He thought the letter, from a "K.K.K. Member," could possibly have been sent by someone in the Black Legion. It read: "You saps . . . are all going to have a green place two by six before many months unless you get doing something for the people." He was warned that if he did not start soon, the Ku Klux Klan "will give you a ride." The writer, saying that he would like "to punch that dirty mug of yours," called Hoffman a "traitor" who was "not fit to represent a dog house." Hoffman showed his courage by criticizing the Black Legion the next day in a House speech.⁴⁴

His courage and willingness to do what he thought was right even if it was not the politically expedient decision, were traits he exhibited during his twenty-eight years in the House. The wisdom of such behavior was tested in his first try at re-election when both he and Roosevelt sought approval for their policies.

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While it was uncertain what the voters thought of his efforts, various district newspapers praised his actions during his first term. The Cassopolis Vigilant said that he made a greater impression than the typical first term, which may have been true, but certainly it was correct in predicting that if retained, "it is an assured fact that he will grow in power and influence." The Allegan

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News, in endorsing his re-election, said that "it is the best advertising our county could possibly have to appear constantly in the press of the nation."⁴⁵ (Such publicity was mainly the result of his actions concerning the Townsend plan.)

The main primary issue was the Townsend plan. The Townsendites, eager to defeat him for his role in the investigation of the plan, urged the election of Felix A. Racette, a Paw Paw dental surgeon who had sought Townsendite backing for a year. Some district papers claimed that the race was being watched both throughout the state and the nation as a test of Townsendite strength. It would have been difficult to find a more bitter congressional opponent of the plan running against a supporter of it. Racette also ran on the National Union for Social Justice platform and, according to one paper, was endorsed by Father Charles E. Coughlin, the head of the movement.⁴⁶

With Racette wooing the Townsendite vote, Hoffman had to clarify his position on old age pensions. Declaring his support for the concept of such pensions, he favored a maximum payment of \$45 per month for the elderly based on need, of which a maximum of \$30 should be paid by the state and \$15 by the federal government. **When** a heckler interrupted Hoffman to ask for the microphone for **two** minutes, Hoffman retorted: "You're like the Townsendites--on **the** give me end every time." Stating that the plan could not pass, **he** asked if it was not preferable to have a candidate working for **the** people "instead of someone who would be chasing rainbows."⁴⁷

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Hoffman, who, according to one newspaper, entered the race with the odds apparently against him, won a "memorable primary achievement." His "flattering" vote of over 20,000 was almost 9,000 more than Racette's. In commenting on his win, he noted the sizable number of voters who did not realize that the slogan "'something for nothing,' if followed to its logical end, will ruin the country." He urged those who voted against him to unite to fight the important issue: "Shall our country continue under the Constitution, or shall we have a government of men, rather than of law?"⁴⁸ To Hoffman this was a sincere question and a major concern.

Considering that the leading Democratic candidate, Guy M. Tyler, polled just over 4,000 votes, it seemed that Hoffman would have little trouble in November, although because of the Townsendite opposition, he privately noted that it was not going to be easy. His concern was justified as this election was the closest of his career. He defeated Tyler by just over 5,000 votes (49,461 to 44,365). Part of his problem arose because, unlike 1934, Michigan was in step with the national trend toward the Democratic party. Also Racette, who ran in the general election, polled over 4,000 votes which may have held down Hoffman's total. One paper wrote that there was no event more puzzling in the election than his victory considering the strong vote for Roosevelt and the Democratic state ticket. The paper concluded that the answer was that he was "candid, frank, forceful and fearless. The voters know where he stands." He "says what he means and means what he says. It must be that they 'like that kind of a guy.'"⁴⁹

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Although he once admitted that it was "heartbreaking and discouraging to attempt to follow one's convictions while voting," his willingness to say what he thought and to vote for his principles with little concern for the consequences never diminished in his twenty-eight years in the House.⁵⁰

Footnotes Chapter 1

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²5 November 1967; Congressional Record, 75:1 (28 June 1937) p. 6466, hereafter cited as CR.

³CR, 86:2 (25 May 1960) p. 11067; CR, 82:1 (8 March 1951) p. 2147; Volta Torrey, "Clare Hoffman Looks Bad to You--but Here's How He Looks to the Home Folks," PM's Sunday Picture News, 12 September 1943, p. 4 in the file of Helen Boyer, Allegan, Michigan, hereafter referred to as HBF.

⁴CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14370.

⁵CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14369.

⁶CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14369.

⁷CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) pp. 14369-70.

⁸CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14367; political ad in Hoffman Scrapbooks in the Allegan Public Library, Allegan, Michigan, hereafter cited as HS.

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¹⁰James C. Duran, "Supreme Court Packing and the New Deal: The View from Southwestern Michigan," Michigan History 52 (Spring 1968):13; CR, 90:1 (13 November 1967) p. 32208.

¹¹Unidentified article, 18 September 1934 in HS; campaign ad in HS; Orville E. Atwood, comp., Michigan Official Directory and Legislative Manual, 1935-36 (State of Michigan, 1935), p. 213, hereafter cited as Michigan Manual.

¹²Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 9 November 1940 and 8 November 1944; unidentified articles 4 and 18 September 1934. All items in HS.

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¹⁶James T. Patterson, Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal: the Growth of the Conservative Coalition in Congress, 1933-1939 (University Press of Kentucky, 1967), pp. 33, 38.

¹⁷CR, 83:1 (20 June 1953) p. 7367; New York Times, 5 November 1967.

¹⁸CR, 74:2 (24 February 1936) p. 2687.

¹⁹CR, 74:2 (24 February 1936) p. 2689.

²⁰CR, 74:2 (24 February 1936) p. 2687.

²¹CR, 74:2 (10 January 1936) p. 291; CR, 74:1 (12 March 1935) p. 3479; CR, 74:1 (24 January 1935) p. 942.

²²CR, 74:1 (21 June 1935) p. 9879; CR, 74:1 (15 July 1935) p. 11195; CR, 87:1 (7 March 1961) pp. 3378-79.

²³CR, 74:2 (24 February 1936) p. 2687.

²⁴CR, 74:2 (8 January 1936) p. 171; CR, 74:2 (17 June 1936) p. 9765.

²⁵E. Pendleton Herring, "First Session of the Seventy-fourth Congress, January 3, 1935, to August 26, 1935," American Political Science Review 29 (December 1935):993-94; CR, 74:1 (13 May 1935) p. 7415; CR, 74:1 (19 March 1935) pp. 4030-31. For some of his veterans' legislation see CR, 77:2 (18 March 1942) p. 2675; CR, 77:2 (8 June 1942) p. 5015; CR, 78:1 (22 September 1943) pp. 7758-59; and New York Times, 22 December 1943.

²⁶CR, 74:2 (25 March 1936) pp. 4331-32.

²⁷CR, 74:2 (17 June 1936) pp. 9818-19.

²⁸CR, 74:2 (17 June 1936) pp. 9819-20.

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³⁷CR, 74:2 (7 May 1936) p. 6858; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Politics of Upheaval (Houghton Mifflin, 1960), pp. 551-52; Abraham Hoffman, The Townsend Movement: A Political Study (Bookman Associates, 1963), p. 161; unidentified and undated article in HS; Francis E. Townsend, edited by Jesse George Murray, New Horizons: An Autobiography (J. L. Stewart, 1943), pp. 200-12; CR, 74:2 (17 June 1936) p. 9765; New York Times, 19 June 1936; CR, 74:2 (16 March 1937) p. 2259.

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⁴⁰Broadus Mitchell, Depression Decade: From New Era through New Deal, 1929-1941 (Harper & Row, 1947), p. 208.

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⁴⁷Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 16 September 1936; unidentified and undated article. Both items in HS.

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CHAPTER 2

"Silence Shall Never Be My Part"

(1937-39)

It was in his second term that Clare E. Hoffman first gained significant national attention as an anti-labor congressman because of his vigorous condemnation of the sit-down strikes in Flint, Michigan, as well as the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and its head, John L. Lewis. According to the Detroit News, by the end of this term his views on organized labor had earned him a position on every union's purge list and resulted in his being ranked as "Enemy No. 1" on union lists until supplanted by Fred A. Hartley (R, New Jersey) in 1947.¹ The labor issue dominated the remainder of his congressional career.

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If Republicans were disturbed by their party's weakness in the 74th Congress, then the 75th Congress must have been a traumatic experience, especially for the conservatives. With only eighty-nine Republicans in the House, of whom eighty were considered conservative, their opportunities to affect legislation were never less promising.²

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committee, and, considering the makeup of his district, a logical one.³ He was now on the Agricultural Committee, while he continued his service on the Expenditures in the Executive Departments and the War Claims Committee. His tenure on the Agricultural Committee was short, however, as his interests were more in the labor area as this term clearly showed.

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The first session of Congress was described by the New York Times as the "stormiest and the least productive in recent years."⁴ Hoffman may or may not have contributed to the lack of productivity, but his remarks, especially those regarding the sit-down strikes, certainly helped make it stormy.

The sit-down tactic first became prominent during the six week strike at the General Motors plant in Flint, beginning on 31 December 1936. During much of the strike Democratic Governor Frank Murphy, who, along with Labor Secretary Frances Perkins tried to end the dispute, remained in almost daily contact with the Roosevelt administration.⁵

After the police failed to drive the strikers from the plants, many people favored mobilizing the state militia to oust the workers. Murphy, despite believing that the strike was illegal, refused, preferring persuasion and behind-the-scenes maneuvering to a bloody confrontation. He defended his actions on the ground that had he acted otherwise the result would have been the loss of life and the destruction of both democratic values and industrial

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progress. He once told a friend that he was not going down in history as "Bloody Murphy."⁶

While the public originally approved his handling of the problem, the spread of sit-downs across the country weakened his early support and became an important issue in his 1938 re-election attempt. Murphy lost, although whether it was the sit-downs or the recession of 1937-38 that cost him a second term is debatable.⁷

Hoffman was not one to join in the numerous accolades for the Governor. When asked if he would not have managed the Flint situation the same way Murphy had, he replied that he would not, saying, to a burst of applause, that he would have acted like President Grover Cleveland in the Pullman strike of 1894 and sent in troops. When the idea of behaving like Cleveland was suggested to Murphy, he tersely remarked: "But this is not 1894." Hoffman wrote to a friend saying he wished he were governor of Michigan for two-and-a-half days, adding that he might not even need half-a-day to settle the dispute.⁸

He disagreed with those who maintained that Murphy's policies had precluded bloodshed. Conceding that it was true in Flint, he insisted that Murphy had encouraged incidents elsewhere, citing the spread of sit-downs in Detroit.⁹ His contention seems to be at least partially valid. The number of sit-downs did increase. The question remains, however, what the repercussions would have been had numerous deaths resulted from an effort to forceably eject the strikers from the factories. Adopting a peaceful policy allowed people to reflect on the sit-down tactic, with sentiment growing

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against it to the point where it was rarely used. That the popularity of the tactic would have diminished sooner had there been bloodshed may be true, but the cost in other ways, ways that Murphy feared, would seem to have been far more damaging.

Claiming that the lack of action by either Roosevelt or Murphy meant that they were "permitting, if not sanctioning, mob rule," he wondered if Murphy's refusal to enforce a court order against the strikers was payment for the political and financial support given to the Democrats by the CIO. He also speculated as to whether Murphy, a former Governor General of the Philippines who had returned to the United States to run for governor at Roosevelt's request in 1936, had been brought back to do "his master's bidding." That he saw a master-servant relationship is clear in his remark of 23 February 1939 when he called Murphy Roosevelt's Charlie McCarthy.¹⁰

Hoffman, whom historian Sidney Fine called "the most vociferous Congressional critic of the sit-down from the very outset," raised the issue of the strikes in his first speech in the new Congress. He claimed that the strike was a direct result of the President's teachings and the encouragement given by Roosevelt to John L. Lewis, the president of the CIO, and his followers. Later he said that GM owned the factories and no one had the right to take them away, a view shared by many, including persons generally in favor of labor's position in the strike, such as Perkins.¹¹

The New York Times credited Hoffman with bringing the sit-down controversy to the House with his introduction on 29 January

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1937 of a resolution asking Perkins for data regarding the conditions in Flint. The resolution was tabled after the Labor Committee said it would "muddy the waters" and complicate the Labor Department's efforts in the strike. Perkins responded by insisting that her information was hearsay and therefore biased, that she could not obtain accurate information on the number of strikers or pickets, and that any attempt to do so would destroy the impartiality of her department.¹²

Hoffman challenged the validity of Perkins' remarks. Much of the data could have been obtained simply by sending observers to Flint. Hoffman saw sinister designs behind the Flint strike, and Perkins was a part, albeit a minor part, of a dangerous conspiracy involving the administration and the CIO.¹³

One reason that he was upset about the sit-downs was that he believed, according to Sidney Fine correctly, that most workers did not favor the strike and were being kept from working by a minority. He urged Roosevelt to encourage Murphy to uphold the law, saying that there was no justification for not enforcing it. Hoffman seemed unaware, or at least unconcerned, about the possible results of its enforcement. The short run consequences were of less importance to him than the long run harm that would follow from a lack of respect for the law. He saw Murphy's inaction wreaking further damage because the increasing unemployment raised the cost of relief, putting the burden on the American people while the Governor gave succor to the CIO.¹⁴

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Hoffman exhorted his colleagues to decide if they were doing their duty "if we sit idly by until this rebellion covers the whole country," adding with considerable understatement: "I have called the situation to your attention. I have tried to induce action. The responsibility is yours as well as mine." He failed to spur the House into taking action, however, as few members either openly supported or condemned the sit-downs. It was only with the spread of the tactic to other cities that many started speaking against it.¹⁵

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The cessation of the sit-downs did not cause him to temper his attacks on those he deemed responsible for the situation. In April 1938 he called Murphy "a cowardly, traitorous Governor," while the next month he said if neither Murphy nor Roosevelt could live up to their oath of office, they should be impeached. Later, when Murphy was selected to become Attorney-General, Hoffman, placing a suitcase containing clubs and other weapons which he claimed were used by the strikers at Flint on top of an orange crate, spoke against the appointment. When Sam Rayburn (D, Texas) asked if he had any proof that Murphy prevented the enforcement of law and order, Hoffman, twirling a club, replied that "the proof is absolute and uncontradicted," adding that "so far as I know it has never been denied." He finished his remarks with "a few questions"--there were actually eighty of them--regarding Murphy and the strikes. Frank E. Hook (D, Michigan) assailed Hoffman's speech as an echo of "the

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blasphemous, scurrilous and un-called for campaign of the Republican Party in Michigan."¹⁶ Although he continued to criticize Murphy, the Governor became of secondary importance to Hoffman.

From Hoffman's perspective, Frances Perkins was one of the lesser figures in the labor problems, but she played enough of a role to become a target of his remarks. Because of legal limitations (she could not force either side to attend meetings, nor could she order laborers back to work) she was unable to accomplish much of significance regarding the sit-downs. Like Murphy she favored using reason rather than force. Unfortunately, since she was the Secretary of Labor and no solution seemed forthcoming, some of the public's anger was concentrated on her. Her statement that she did not know whether the sit-downs were legal or not, led many people, including Hoffman, to conclude that she endorsed such strikes. She later admitted that her remark was a "careless blunder."¹⁷

Unfortunately Hoffman, not content to attack Perkins solely on the basis of her policies, joined others in making personal comments about her. In one of his speeches he said: "With him [Roosevelt] we find Miss Perkins, the wife of someone, though God alone knows what her true name may be, and no man has yet published the place of her birth." In another speech he noted that she was "born God knows where, but whose destination, if the predictions of many be true is absolutely certain." He also said that he heard that "she has as many birthplaces as some people have husbands." (Most of the concern about Perkin's name, marriage and date of birth came during a smear campaign against her between 1937-39. Part of her

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troubles were self-inflicted--she changed her first name, retained her maiden name after her marriage to Paul Wilson, and claimed the wrong date of birth. Because of the confusion, rumors were circulated that her real name was Matilda Watski and that she was Jewish.)¹⁸

While Perkins and Murphy declined in importance as the objects of Hoffman's criticisms, they were replaced by new ones that he saw as far more dangerous. A major target of his hostility was the CIO in general and John L. Lewis in particular.

It was the CIO which had taken Flint, a "peaceful, happy town, where industry was flourishing, where profits were being made, where labor was satisfied," and "sowed the seeds of rebellion, of mob rule, of anarchy." He criticized the CIO leaders for purporting to know how businesses should be run, challenging them, unfairly, to test their theories. He called on them to set an example for industry by using their money to run their own factory where they could set the wages and hours and determine the working conditions.¹⁹ That union leaders lacked some of the skills required to conduct an entire business either did not concern Hoffman, or, perhaps he was convinced that if such an undertaking were attempted, it would fail, thereby discrediting the CIO.

Not only was the CIO leadership bad in itself, but what was worse was the relationship that existed between the New Dealers and the CIO officials, especially since he accused the New Dealers of being subordinate to the union leaders. "New Dealers may imagine themselves the foundation of a new government; they are but the

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superstructure. They may consider themselves the vast, powerful, heaving bosom of a great political movement; they are but the spume on its wind-whipped surface; they are but as the whirling leaves before an October gale." He continued: "They have taken into their heart and their arms the CIO, which has adopted the 'red' Communists, . . . all too late they will discover themselves to be the tool rather than the master." He then added: "They will find themselves at the mercy of the 'red' Communists, with those heads, which devised so many and varied schemes in violation of Nature's laws, ever in danger of parting from those bodies which carried them so long."²⁰

According to Hoffman the motive behind the strike was to gain recognition for the CIO in the auto industry and build the power of Lewis, a man intensely disliked by Hoffman because of the ties he saw between Lewis and the Communists. He claimed that the Russians were so impressed by Lewis that they renamed Detroit in honor of the CIO leader. He further said that the charge that money from Russia had aided the 1937 CIO recruitment drive had gone unchallenged. Regarding the sit-downs specifically, he said that the purpose of the "invasion was to further the cause of Communism. The leaders were Communists. The methods were those of the Communists."²¹

A weakness in his charge about the role of the Communists in the sit-downs was that although they participated, it did not mean that they led the strike, nor that they were acting contrary to the interests of the workers. He was, however, right in believing that the Communists were involved in the CIO. When questioned about

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his use of Communist organizers, Lewis replied: "I do not turn my organizers or CIO members upside down and shake them to see what kind of literature falls out of their pockets." As CIO president he also shielded the Communists from some members who sought to criticize them.²²

Hoffman was convinced that Lewis aspired to become a dictator. He rejected Time's statement that Lewis was caught unawares by the strike, saying that the CIO leader had added a new Commandment: "Thou shalt not work without the consent of John L. Lewis." Hoffman said, rather dramatically, that he preferred, regardless of the personal consequences, to back the right of men to work freely, rather "than to quietly, shamefully, and without resistance yield to this attempt to destroy our liberties and, in the end, if it succeeds, be led out and shot like a dog, on the orders of a dictator like Lewis."²³

If Lewis continued his campaign of violence, Hoffman, who regarded himself as a peaceful man, resorting to histrionics, said that if Lewis wanted to, he could come to Hoffman's farm, along with United Auto Workers officials Homer Martin, Richard T. Frankenstein, the Reuthers, Roy, Victor, and Walter, "or any of the other of your gangsters." He told Lewis to leave the women and children, "behind whom you Communists so often hide," at home and, "for once in your life, do your own dirty work at the point of actual danger. Let me know the time of your arrival, and I will be there."²⁴

Despite believing that both Roosevelt and Lewis wished to be a dictator, his remarks regarding Lewis were more melodramatic,

probably because he thought the union leader possessed a more violent nature. A strike that Hoffman unfairly but frequently cited to show that Lewis condoned violence was the bloody Herrin, Illinois, strike of 1922. In one of his more dramatic speeches on the topic, he coupled the two men together: "The hands of John L. Lewis are red with their [the workers killed at Herrin] blood. Those red, dripping, bloody hands the President of the United States grasps in friendliness."²⁵

He warned the two "power hungry" men that they had forgotten "the spirit of independence, the determination that right and justice shall prevail, that burns in so many American hearts." Millions of people would not stand idly by while their liberties were taken away. His concern was that they acted before the would-be dictators were too firmly entrenched in power.²⁶ That he was willing to act and, if need be, to lead, was soon made clear.

Hoffman's abhorrence of both Roosevelt and Lewis so blinded him that he insisted on imagining a closeness between the two men which did not exist. When Lewis publicly called on the President to aid labor in the sit-downs, Roosevelt, reluctant to become embroiled in the dispute, remained as impartial as possible, causing the first significant split between the two. While hesitant to announce his position, the President did say privately that the strikes were a "damned unpopular device." The differences between them became so great that Lewis threw his support to the 1940 GOP presidential nominee, Wendell Willkie.²⁷

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Although indebted to Roosevelt for his rise in prominence, Lewis "intensely disliked" the President. Whatever the relationship that had existed between the two men, it was deteriorating in 1937 as can be seen in Lewis' Labor Day speech of that year. Without mentioning the President by name, he made it clear that his address was aimed at Roosevelt.²⁸

Although there were various organizations and individuals that Hoffman disliked, Roosevelt ranked near the top of his list. One of his major objections to Roosevelt was the President's inaction during the GM strike. Years later Roosevelt summed up his dilemma: "Little do people realize how I had to take abuse and criticism for inaction at the time of the Flint strike. I believed, and I was right, that the country including labor would learn the lesson of their own volition without having it forced upon them by marching troops." The evidence supports the President as the number of sit-downs declined steadily after April for the rest of 1937.²⁹

Hoffman frequently charged that Roosevelt sought to become a dictator. After one such accusation, Hugh Scott (R, Pennsylvania) said he was amazed that any member would make such a statement. But to Hoffman there was abundant evidence that this was Roosevelt's intent. Hoffman cited Roosevelt's attempt to restructure the Supreme Court as proof of his charge. Opposed to such a step, he said it would transfer the little legislative power left in Congress to the President. Having turned Congress into a "jellied condition, where the touch of the master's hand sends it quivering into any form desired," Roosevelt was seeking to remove the last impediment to his

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dictatorial ambitions--the Supreme Court. After the proposal's defeat, he correctly predicted that Roosevelt planned a purge of his congressional opposition.³⁰

Another of the President's actions that Hoffman saw as a dangerous portent was the Executive Reorganization bill. First introduced in 1937, it met with "apathy and quite hostility." While its failure "would have seemed impossible" at the start of the 75th Congress, its timing was crucial. Following the Supreme Court struggle, many conservatives viewed it as the "twin" of Roosevelt's effort to reorganize the Court. Despite Roosevelt's denial that it would add power to his office, the bill failed.³¹

When the Reorganization bill was reintroduced in 1938, the fear of Roosevelt "reached a point of near hysteria," producing an effect similar to that of the Supreme Court fight, though "perhaps even more sharp and passionate." That Hoffman was not the only one worried about the possibility of a dictatorship resulting from the measure was shown by the activities of many groups and individuals, including the appearance of 150 "Paul Reveres" who rode to Washington from various parts of the country to protest the pending legislation. Also active was the National Committee to Uphold Constitutional Government, which made this one of its major undertakings, engaging in several endeavors to defeat the measure, including the mailing of over 850,000 pieces of literature in less than two months. Roosevelt, recognizing the public's concern, read a presidential statement to reporters late one night denying any intention of his desiring to become a dictator.³²

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Although the general Republican strategy was to avoid discussion of the reorganization bill, thereby allowing the Democrats to fight among themselves, Hoffman could not remain mute. Saying that his views mirrored the opinion of his constituents, he urged Congress to stop being a doormat for Roosevelt. His hopes were fulfilled when the House, in "the wildest scene of the session, punctuated by boos, laughter and sarcastic comment," inflicted a "staggering" defeat on Roosevelt on a bill one historian termed one of the least controversial measures he ever advocated.³³

Roosevelt, who neither understood nor expected the vote, told his Postmaster General, James A. Farley, that there "wasn't a chance for anyone to become a dictator under that bill." He believed that the opponents of it, seeking some ulterior goal, tried "to discredit the administration so as to block any further thought of social reform, and incidentally, reduce the effectiveness of its reform program by preventing efficiency generally in government." This would partly, but not fully, explain Hoffman's opposition. He was convinced that Roosevelt harbored dictatorial aspirations and that this measure was a reflection of them. Joe Martin (R, Massachusetts) might dismiss the charge of many Republicans that Roosevelt wanted to be a dictator as "partisan exaggeration," but Hoffman was not one of them. Roosevelt was also disingenuous when he protested that reorganization would not add power to his office. Knowing that this was true and hearing the President deny it must have further convinced Hoffman of Roosevelt's pernicious plans.³⁴

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In April 1937 Hoffman introduced a bill which the New York Times called the first sign of a rising sentiment in Congress which could ultimately result in the regulation of labor organizations and compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. The bill required the federal registration of labor unions engaged in interstate or foreign commerce. Unions were made corporate bodies which could be sued for breach of contract or for any injuries to persons or property, while sit-downs were declared illegal. It also called for an annual audit of the labor union's accounts, thereby making both the members and the public aware of the union's financial affairs (a provision which, along with the registration of unions, was later incorporated into the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947).³⁵ This, his first labor bill, was just one of many bills and resolutions that he introduced concerning labor, none of which was accepted.

While the House never embraced the extreme position that the New York Times saw as a possibility, there was a rising interest, pushed mainly by E. E. Cox (D, Georgia), Martin Dies (D, Texas) and Hoffman, for an investigation of the sit-downs and the CIO's involvement in them. In April 1937 Dies presented a resolution calling for such an inquiry, leading to an emotional debate. During Hoffman's speech in favor of the request, a remark was made on the Democratic side of the aisle. Pointing a finger at John Dingell (D, Michigan), Hoffman shook it and said: "Call your names outside if you want to, not in this chamber." He then strode "menacingly" toward the Democratic side precipitating even more

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turmoil. With visitors leaning forward in the galleries, Harold Knutson (R, Minnesota) remarked: "If this were a police court, we'd be held to be drunk and disorderly."³⁶ The resolution was voted down.

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The June 1937 strike at the Republic Steel plant in Monroe, Michigan, a strong anti-union town, gained Hoffman additional national attention. Monroe's Mayor, Daniel A. Knaggs, who had offered his assistance whenever Republic wanted to open its plant, had sworn in 383 untrained deputies and had given them tear gas grenades, guns, police clubs, and bats paid for by the steel company.³⁷

On 13 June Hoffman visited Monroe to view the situation first hand. Convinced that the country was on the "verge of widespread civil strife," he predicted that unless aid was given to those communities which were willing to fight for their rights, the nation faced destruction. Satisfied that neither the President nor the Governor would act to maintain order, and believing that Americans would not meekly see their liberties trampled upon, he decided to take action on his own.³⁸

Returning to Washington, Hoffman sent a telegram to Knaggs saying: "In view of what I saw yesterday in Monroe and having in mind Bittner's [Van A. Bittner, a CIO organizer] threat to invade Monroe, Murphy's yellow streak and previous protection to law violators, I will, if you need them, bring group of peaceably

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inclined but armed and well equipped reliable citizens to aid in the defense of your city." He also telegraphed his Allegan secretary: "Have reliable citizens who are willing to go to Monroe to aid in defending city from invasion promised by CIO organizer Bittner. Leave name, address, list of arms, tents and cots at office. Have Carl [Hoffman's son] locate 200 rounds of 12-gauge No. 1 chilled; 100 rounds of .30-30 automatic." Two weeks later he noted that the offer was made in good faith and still stood.³⁹

The telegrams resulted in a verbal battle between two of "the sharpest orators" in the Republican party, Hoffman and Earl C. Michener (R, Michigan), a hostile article in Time, as well as a question of personal privilege. Michener, whose district included Monroe, called Hoffman's plan unnecessary and unwise. Time said: "Somewhat excitable by temperament, Mr. Hoffman by last week was downright jumpy." Accused of "turning his law office into a recruiting office for a private army," he was described as a "militant" congressman who had gone "berserk." The question of personal privilege (he raised such questions frequently, especially in the first three-quarters of his career) arose because of a letter from a union official attacking Hoffman which was placed in the Congressional Record by Senator Alben Barkley (D, Kentucky).⁴⁰

Believing that the public had a right to work, he introduced a resolution calling on Roosevelt to use military forces to protect the right of those who wanted to work during the steel strike if, after two days, the local authorities were unable to offer such protection. Twenty years later he defined the right to work as

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property which, he argued, was covered by section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment.⁴¹

Viewing the situation as Hoffman must have seen it helps explain his actions. The strike at Monroe was part of a larger CIO move against the steel industry. Several companies, including the giant of the industry, United States Steel, had already been unionized, but the so-called Little Steel companies had not given in as easily as their larger brethren. Finally someone had the courage to stand up to the CIO juggernaut. General Motors had surrendered to it, so had U.S. Steel, and worse yet, so had the President. To Hoffman it must have appeared that there was no alternative but for private citizens to do what others would not do. Expecting too much from the state and federal governments, when it was not forthcoming, he undertook his ill-considered effort at vigilante action. It is interesting that the next month he said that what the nation needed was "respect for law and authority."⁴² Considering his willingness to intervene in Monroe, one wonders just what his concept of law and authority was.

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His remarks on the labor situation disturbed some House members, such as Maury Maverick (D, Texas) who said: "I am getting a little bit tired of constantly hearing this ranting and roaring of the gentleman from Michigan. It is getting very boresome [sic]." Criticizing Hoffman's statement about raising weapons, he said that what "is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander; and a

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Congressman has no more right to violate the law of the land than John Lewis or anybody else."⁴³

Hoffman assured Maverick that he would endeavor to avoid any contest with him, "for I have not the slightest idea of ever at any time, in view of the excellence of his performance in the House, making the slightest effort to compete with him in ranting or roaring." He continued: "May I concede to him all the laurels which would go to the winner of such a competition. If not presumptuous may I suggest that he might have retired to the cloakroom for a few moments and saved himself a bit of weariness."⁴⁴ Hoffman was quite capable of giving as much as he took, and was certainly not intimidated on the floor of the House or anywhere else.

When a colleague asked if "the big brave man from Michigan" had a gun to protect his home, Hoffman answered: "I am not a big brave man. I am the biggest coward in the House. I will run faster and farther and crawl into a smaller hole than any member of this House to get out of trouble; but do not come to my house and tell me you are going to put me out."⁴⁵

He later said regarding the need to prevent a CIO takeover: "Void of all courage, of all love of country and of family must be the man who will not defend his own land, his own institutions, himself and those he loves." He continued: "I believe with the old Quaker, who, when slapped on one cheek, presented the other to his foeman, received the second blow, and then quietly announced that 'The direction of the Lord having been followed, I propose, friend, to lick hell out of you.'"⁴⁶

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The end of the strike-filled year of 1937 did not bring an end to his attacks on the CIO. He persisted to the point where Representative Hook said, with considerable truth, that Hoffman's speeches "can be recognized in the Record without even reading them because practically every other word is 'C.I.O.'"⁴⁷

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His interest in the labor situation transcended the sit-downs. He was convinced that the Wagner Act, the National Labor Relations Board, and the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee were all responsible for the deterioration in the labor situation. He opposed so many of Roosevelt's labor programs that the authors of one book labeled him the congressional "arch-enemy" of the President's labor policies, an apt description.⁴⁸

Before industrial peace could be achieved, Hoffman said it was necessary to repeal, or at least drastically amend, the Wagner Act. Doubting that the bill would ever have passed if people could have foreseen how it would be used, he referred to it as a "monstrosity" and said Congress was lax in its duty by leaving it unchanged. A Gallup poll supported his contention that the act was unpopular. In May 1938 when people were asked whether the act should be revised, repealed, or left unchanged, only 38 percent favored the act as it was. In a similar poll in November, the number favoring it unchanged declined to 30 percent. Most people wanted some revisions of the act. In May 43 percent favored revising it, while in November the number rose to 52 percent.⁴⁹

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The Wagner Act was good as far as it went, but it was "vicious in its shortcomings." With labor playing a bigger role in the economy, he believed it was imperative that unions assume more responsibility. Like other opponents of the act, such as Senators Arthur Vandenberg (R, Michigan) and Edward R. Burke (D, Nebraska), Hoffman criticized the legislation for being unfair in that the obligations were all on business and not on labor. Senator Robert F. Wagner (D, New York) justified his legislation noting that "No one would assail the traffic laws because they regulate the speed at which automobiles travel, and not the speed at which pedestrians walk." He contended that, because the law had been largely inoperative since its passage while its constitutionality was challenged, there should be no tampering with it until the law was given a chance to work. Hoffman, however, not wanting to wait, tried to modify the act by including provisions to benefit industry and also to protect the worker from labor organizers as it already did from employers.⁵⁰

While at times he criticized the content of the Wagner Act, the major problem was the NLRB, which he called the "mouthpiece" of Lewis and the CIO. He said: "as an engine of destruction it has not yet been surpassed. It is a disgrace to our civilization, and the day will come when we will wonder why we were so thoughtless as to give it life or permit it to live."⁵¹

In his assessment of the dangers inherent in the NLRB one sees a tendency to overreact and to visualize various horrendous consequences. In a letter to the New York Times attacking the

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Supreme Court approval of the Wagner Act, he said that, carried to its logical conclusion, the decision meant that the NLRB would fix hours and wages. (It did not have such powers.) He wondered what expertise the members had since even business people with years of experience often failed. Foreseeing government control of industry unless the act was amended, he predicted that the result would be the destruction of all but small businesses. He offered a resolution calling for an investigation of the NLRB to determine the effectiveness of the act and the manner in which it was enforced.⁵²

Hoffman, accusing the NLRB of being slanted in favor of the Communists, questioned how far Congress would permit the Board, "whose activities the English language contains no words to fitly describe, to go in its un-American activities?" He said anyone familiar with some of the Board's decisions could not escape the conclusion that the members were "wirehaired Russian Communists."⁵³

On 5 July 1938 his disagreements with the Board became a personal matter when the NLRB ruled in the Muskin Shoe Co. case. The Board concluded that the Maryland shoe company had violated the Wagner Act by distributing copies of his 1 June 1937 speech, which blasted the CIO and accused the Communists of being involved in the sit-downs, to its employees. The speech had been published, with illustrations, under the title "Communism's Iron Grip on the C.I.O.," by the Constitutional Educational League, which was headed by Joseph P. Kamp.⁵⁴

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The decision evoked considerable opposition in the nation's press over the possible infringement of the freedoms of speech and press. An article in the Pittsburgh Press noted the decision "may go further toward defeating the aims of the Wagner Labor Act than any concerted drive of union-hating employers."⁵⁵

It would have been difficult for Hoffman not to become involved in the Muskin case. Not only was one of his speeches the basis of the decision, but it was made by a Board he did not like, regarding a law of which he did not approve, on behalf of a union that was part of the CIO which he vehemently opposed. He was also incensed that a New Deal agency was denying rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

He wrote to the Board saying that he was making copies of his speech available to anyone interested. (Later he said he had received more than 100,000 requests, but, because of the expense, he was unable to send out that many even using his franking privilege.) He wondered under what authority the Board denied the distribution of his address, citing the Constitutional guarantee of the freedom of speech and press.⁵⁶

Newsweek saw the Muskin case as having the potential of launching a new era in labor relations. If Hoffman took the case to court, or if the Muskin Shoe Co. appealed, it was conceivable that the judiciary would rule that remarks made in Congress were privileged. If that happened, the employer, acting through friendly legislators, could find the means of discussing labor policy with

their employees.⁵⁷ (The issue does not appear to have been pursued.)

After the Board replied that no charge had been filed against him for his intent to distribute his speech, he made public his second letter to the NLRB, stating that he would be giving out copies of his remarks on behalf of Consumer Power Co. in Michigan which was negotiating with the CIO. He questioned whether this was a violation of the Wagner Act, suggesting that if it was perhaps a judicial decision could be obtained to determine if the act "wiped out" the freedom of speech and press. (The American Civil Liberties Union, while saying that employers should have the right to express themselves against unions as long as the language used was not coercive, disagreed with Hoffman in this instance, claiming that the NLRB's decision was not a violation of the freedom of speech.) He also wondered if speeches against CIO activities constituted a crime, since he proposed to speak on this at Buchanan, Michigan, and said the Board could send a representative to see if a complaint should be filed. Although he hoped they would, there is no evidence that any further action was taken by the Board.⁵⁸ More concerned about the long run consequences than the short run, he was not as interested in whether labor needed any special treatment in order to be more equal with business, as he was with the danger of subverting constitutional rights.

Doubting that one could create a "more arbitrary, unfair, vicious, liberty-destroying tribunal" than the NLRB, he thought that Senator Robert La Follette, Jr., (Progressive, Wisconsin) had

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accomplished that feat with his Civil Liberties Committee. "From the time of its birth down to the present moment this illegitimate child of a Communist mother and a politically ambitious father has well served the purpose of La Follette to vent his spleen against those who have provided jobs for the workers."⁵⁹

Hoffman not unfairly accused the committee with being interested only in the CIO viewpoint, saying that it had done as much to aid the growth of the CIO as any single group. The close tie between the committee and the CIO was not planned. With both groups getting started at about the same time, it was to their mutual advantage to cooperate. The sit-downs clearly revealed the committee's bias. Not only did the committee investigator in Flint "shamelessly" favor the union, but four days after the strike ended hearings began in Flint which were meant to offset the public's unfavorable reaction to the strike. (The committee did not ignore the labor violence as many of its critics insisted, but rather it tended to rationalize it.)⁶⁰

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Hoffman, favoring a nation of small businesses and farms, saw anti-trust regulation and opposition to the Fair Labor Standards Act as ways to achieve his image of the ideal America. It was because of the recession of 1937, which Hoffman called "another child of the administration--the direct result of the administration's rape of business," that Roosevelt, whose prestige was tarnished by the economic slump (some members of Congress were calling

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it the "Roosevelt recession"), launched his anti-trust campaign in 1938. Hoffman favored such a program, saying that the federal government should prevent monopolies and the "overreaching" of big business.⁶¹

In keeping with his ultra-conservative distaste for the social and economic changes that were remaking America, he extolled the virtues of a way of life that was becoming increasingly out of date, whatever value it might have had. He had his vision of what America could and should be and he sought to turn that image into reality. Remarking that he was against all 'isms' except Americanism, he said: "I am against anything and everything which is contrary to the principles of government laid down by our forefathers." He wanted a nation where the federal government did only what was essential for the well-being of the country.⁶²

One of the New Deal bills that he saw as inimical to his concept of America was the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. The act, which "Only the hardiest rural Republicans and the most intractable southern Democrats had dared to oppose," passed the House after a "tumultuous" twelve hour session. Hoffman, certainly a hardy rural Republican, voted against the measure for several reasons. First, it would "sound the death knell of unionism," which he claimed not to favor. He argued that if the Secretary of Labor could fix wages and hours, it was just a short step to granting similar power to resolve any other problems employers and employees faced, thereby making unions unnecessary. (Actually the administration of the act was in the hands of a separate division within the

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Labor Department and not directly under the Secretary of Labor.) Second, he asserted that, like the Agricultural Adjustment Act, it would lead to a dictatorship. Third, the use of such devices as the minimum wage would aid the rise of mass production industries and damage small businesses. Fourth, by opposing the bill he was representing the interests of the farmers and fruit growers of his district who favored cheap labor, not guaranteed minimum wages. The increase in wages would be reflected in a greater difficulty in getting farm labor as well as in higher prices.⁶³

He did his best to realize his vision of America by opposing many of the important New Deal measures, while offering several resolutions and bills of his own. Although he was generally unsuccessful at proposing or modifying legislation, he never let the fear of failure prevent him from trying.

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Although representing a largely agrarian district, his main concern was with labor matters. However, since labor questions often affected the farmers, especially the issue of the treatment of the migratory workers, his deep concern with labor issues did not mean he was necessarily acting contrary to the farmer's interests.

He voted against the 1938 Agricultural Adjustment Act, the major farm legislation of this Congress, just as he had the 1935 act, believing that price fixing had generally failed whenever it was tried. Convinced that raising the price of goods to benefit

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some merely caused others to seek similar assistance, he questioned whether anyone really gained. The worst aspect of the bill, however, was that it would bring "the last great independent group, the group which has always been the foundation rock upon which our Government relied, the group which has stood unswayed by political storms," under the control of the federal government.⁶⁴

His interest in helping farmers consisted of more than just opposition to New Deal measures. He offered an amendment to the 1937 Emergency Relief Appropriation bill, stating that employment should not be given to workers who were normally "employed in seasonal agricultural pursuits," certainly an issue of importance in his district. Here he sought to protect the farmers by attempting to prevent agencies like the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration from competing with farmers for labor, thereby driving up the wages paid by his constituents. He also noted how he had earlier supported the fruit growers of his district by being one of the signers of a letter to Secretary of State Cordell Hull protesting the 1936 reduction of the tariff with France regarding maraschino and candied cherries.⁶⁵

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As an ultra-conservative, relief spending was an issue of considerable concern to him. Noting that he seemed to be about the only one practicing restraint, he said he was "very, very tired" of voting against spending bills, while his colleagues favored them in order to fix their "political fences, and pose as friends of mankind

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in general." Admitting that spending was the politically wise move, he said if he could "still my conscience and forget all political honesty and consistency of purpose," he would bring in bills to benefit everyone he knew. However, this course of action did not blend with his convictions. He claimed that his stand on the Townsend Plan had provoked hostility from his constituents and from nearly every organized minority he knew of in his district, and predicted that the same would be true in 1938.⁶⁶

Hoffman accused Roosevelt and his New Dealers of "playing politics with human misery," by using relief money for political purposes. He said he would not allow a "drove of human blood-sucking weasels to sap the lifeblood of the taxpayers, to share in the funds appropriated for those who are suffering." He thought that members of Congress should have "sense enough to refuse to give the President a blank check to purchase the rope which he will use to hang us politically." He continued: "I may be dumb, but to paraphrase Harry Hopkins, I am not so 'damned dumb' as to vote the money to buy the rope which will hang me."⁶⁷

His concern about giving the President a blank check was clear when he said that if Congress insisted on voting Roosevelt large sums of money, he should be limited as to how those funds were spent. Hoffman favored earmarking every dollar of relief money, thereby removing Roosevelt's discretionary powers. When no such action was taken, he introduced a bill seeking such restrictions. While he was unsuccessful, there was a growing move in Congress for the idea.⁶⁸

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Ever alert to apparent inconsistencies in the New Deal relief program, he objected to the taxing of businessmen who provided jobs, thereby limiting their ability to provide work, while the federal government received money to create jobs. Similarly, he professed anger that while federal funds were spent to create employment, Lewis was supporting strikes and preventing people from returning to work.⁶⁹

Hoffman believed that private industry, free from undue federal interference, was willing to expand its economic activity, and that this offered the best hope for economic recovery. There was, however, a weakness in his reasoning. In mid-1937 when Roosevelt significantly reduced government spending, business leaders were not anxious to undertake expansion. Even if they had, the question remains whether they would have provided the types of jobs needed by the majority of the unemployed or whether they could have provided them quickly enough. In fairness to Hoffman, however, he was not alone in his belief that the answer to the recession was a balanced budget coupled with a chance for business to show what it could do. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. also supported this plan, as for a time, did Roosevelt.⁷⁰

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Foreign affairs were still of minor importance to him, although his views were becoming clearer. He voted in favor of the 1937 Neutrality Act later saying: "I will never, if I can avoid it, enlist for any foreign war or do anything to bring about any foreign

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war or domestic strife." He agreed with the Nye Committee that international bankers and traders had caused the last war. Ineligible for the draft in World War I, he did not volunteer, refusing to sacrifice his life to aid trade, financial, or political interests. His concern with preventing another war led to his resolution which, among its provisions, requested a special committee to hold hearings into the possible existence of an organized movement pushing for war between the United States and Japan or some other nation.⁷¹ No action was taken on his request.

Though conceding the need to be adequately defended, he voted against the Naval Appropriation bill of 1938, doubting that any crisis existed of sufficient magnitude to involve the country in a war. He dismissed Roosevelt's talk about foreign emergencies as merely a ploy to take people's minds off the administration's domestic failures. He saw the greatest danger to the nation coming not from abroad, but from within through Communism, claiming that those who would destroy the American system were already in positions of power in Washington.⁷²

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Invited to be the main speaker at a Crystal City, Missouri, Republican rally, Hoffman addressed more than 700 people, among whom were 200 to 300 men "unknown to the community" wearing CIO buttons. His criticism of the CIO leaders and the NLRB provoked hisses, boos, and catcalls from the CIO men. After shouting for some time in order to be heard, he finally requested that one of

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the hecklers be ejected, initiating a fifteen minute fight which resulted in the tearing of his shirt and collar, as well as cuts and injuries to several persons. Hoffman later claimed that the men who broke up the meeting were armed, but the sheriff denied this. His willingness to return for several more previously scheduled speeches reflected either his courage, or, by capitalizing on the publicity, his shrewd political nature. The talks were canceled.⁷³

His tendency to be more vocal in this term was matched somewhat by a rising criticism of him in the House. John Dingell claimed that Hoffman was one of the severest New Deal critics. "In his screaming denunciations of everything which originated with the New Deal he vented his spleen" on both Roosevelt and Murphy. He also accused Hoffman of espousing the candidacy of Daniel J. Shields, Mayor of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, for president. Dingell cited an article in the 7 June 1938 issue of Labor which stated that Hoffman, having made a special trip to praise Shields, said the country needed "a man of such caliber as Dan Shields in the White House." The article noted that Shields was later arrested on charges of bribery, extortion, and malfeasance in office, and predicted that he had a better chance of going to jail (not a new experience since he had already served one year in federal prison for attempted bribery), than of going to the White House.⁷⁴ Dingell may have been too anxious to criticize. Simply because Hoffman praised Shields for having certain attributes that he wished Roosevelt would have

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Another criticism of Hoffman was made by Jerry J. O'Connell (D, Montana) regarding Hoffman's reply to a citizen of Montana who had written to him seeking advice. O'Connell said that other than recommending some Department of Agriculture bulletins, he regretted that Hoffman had chosen to include his reactionary beliefs "which he has so often expressed to the members of this body in his customary breast-beating, 'red' baiting, labor-hating manner." O'Connell said in the future when he sought ways to "alleviate the suffering of my constituents, they will know I am referring to the disastrous results occurring from drought, grasshoppers, windstorms, poor crops, worse markets, the Anaconda Copper Mining Co., the Montana Power Co., and the gentleman from Michigan."⁷⁵

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The fate of the New Deal in the 75th Congress was summed up well by one writer who noted that the "program for the general welfare, had been little advanced--certainly not when compared with the glowing promises of January 1937," a fate clearly to Hoffman's liking. The Nation assessed the overall results as "shabby," saying that "Above all else Congress talked--freely, copiously, noisily, mostly foolishly, but it talked."⁷⁶

Reading over his speeches one finds Hoffman talking freely, copiously, sometimes foolishly, and at times maybe noisily, yet in his reiteration of the same basic themes one finds an obvious

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sincerity. He managed to talk enough that by the time of the election of 1938 he had acquired some national recognition. While much of it was of a negative variety, some viewed his actions favorably. He received letters from people all over the nation regarding labor matters, some simply describing their situation as evidence to support his views, while others encouraged him to continue his efforts against labor abuses.⁷⁷ The question remained whether the people of the 4th district, who had given the Democratic nominee in the last election the largest vote ever for a losing candidate, were in favor of their congressman's reputation and his concern for labor issues.

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Apparently his constituents approved of their Representative, as he encountered little opposition in his quest for a third term. In his easiest primary ever, he disposed of his only challenger by over 20,000 votes, despite facing an opposition that he said included the CIO, the Worker's Alliance, the Townsendites, a Polish and a black organization, and one or two other labor groups. He predicted a tougher race in November.⁷⁸

In his campaign he stressed the issues he had been talking about during his second term, mainly the CIO, Lewis and Roosevelt as possible dictators, and Communism. He also asked for help for the American farmer from the large amount of imported food which he, unfairly, said characterized the New Deal.⁷⁹

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Hoffman, who was being called a national figure in the local press, won re-election by the second smallest margin in his career, although the race was not really close. Dr. Felix A. Racette, an earlier opponent of his, who had "flirted outrageously and boldly with the Townsendites" who "were all worked up into a hot lather against Hoffman," lost by over 15,000 votes. Without the advantage of having the President running, the Democrats suffered not only in the 4th district but in Michigan and the nation.⁸⁰

The 1938 elections constituted the worst performance of the New Deal in congressional elections. Between the conservative Democratic House victories (there were at least 80 who were either hostile or unenthusiastic about the New Deal), and the increase in the Republican strength from 89 to 169, the chances for the passage of New Deal legislation were greatly diminished. This election effectively restored the two party system in the House and marked the end of the New Deal.⁸¹ Hoffman no longer had to concern himself so much with preventing further New Deal legislation as he did with modifying or repealing the old.

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²⁸Rexford G. Tugwell, The Democratic Roosevelt: A Biography of Franklin D. Roosevelt (Doubleday, 1957), pp. 403-04; Newsweek, 13 September 1937, p. 10.

²⁹McFarland, p. 66; Lunt, p. 193.

³⁰CR, 75:1 (25 February 1937) pp. 1621-22; CR, 75:1 (17 August 1937) p. 9131. Hoffman not only publicly charged that Roosevelt sought to be a dictator, he noted it in his private correspondence as well. See Hoffman to Louis H. Fead, 26 February 1937, Louis H. Fead Papers, Box 3 in BHL.

³¹James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox (Harcourt Brace & World, 1956), p. 344; Basil Rauch, The History of the New Deal, 1933-1938 (Capricorn Books, 1963), pp. 285-87; Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 13 vols. (Random House, 1938-50), 5:672. Hereafter cited as Public Papers.

³²William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940 (Harper & Row, 1963), p. 277; Burns, Lion, pp. 345-46; CR, 75:3 (2 April 1938) Appendix, p.1285; Time, 18 April 1938, p. 16; Richard Polenberg, Reorganizing Roosevelt's Government: The Controversy Over Executive Reorganization, 1936-1939 (Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 71.

³³Patterson, p. 225; New York Times, 1 April 1938; CR, 75:3 (8 April 1938) p. 5101; Burns, Lion, p. 344.

³⁴James A. Farley, Jim Farley's Story, the Roosevelt Years (McGraw Hill, 1948), p. 130; Public Papers, 5:191-92; Joe Martin, My First Fifty Years in Politics, told to Robert J. Donovan, (McGraw Hill, 1960), p. 90; Richard Polenberg, "Roosevelt, Carter, and Executive Reorganization: Lessons of the 1930s," Presidential Studies Quarterly 9 (Winter 1979):44.

³⁵New York Times, 6 April 1937.

³⁶J. Woodford Howard, Jr., "Frank Murphy and the Sit-down Strikes of 1937," Labor History 1 (Spring 1960):122; New York Times, 9 April 1937.

³⁷Lunt, p. 184.

³⁸CR, 75:1 (15 June 1937) pp. 5736-39.

³⁹New York Times, 15 June 1937; CR, 75:1 (28 June 1937) pp. 6465-66.

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⁴⁰Detroit News, 15 June 1937; Time, 28 June 1937, p. 13; CR, 75:3 (11 April 1938) pp. 5235-41. For the letter inserted by Barkley see CR, 75:1 (20 August 1937) Appendix, pp. 2204-05.

⁴¹New York Times, 23 June 1937; CR, 85:1 (13 June 1957) p. 9039.

⁴²New York Times, 1 August 1937.

⁴³CR, 75:1 (22 June 1937) p. 6162.

⁴⁴CR, 75:1 (28 June 1937) p. 6465.

⁴⁵CR, 75:1 (2 July 1937) p. 6775.

⁴⁶CR, 75:1 (16 August 1937) Appendix, p. 2113.

⁴⁷CR, 75:3 (12 May 1938) p. 6813.

⁴⁸CR, 75:1 (20 August 1937) Appendix, p. 2225; George Wolfskill and John A. Hudson, All but the People, p. 271.

⁴⁹CR, 75:1 (28 June 1937) p. 6467; CR, 75:3 (24 January 1938) p. 1024; George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971, 3 vols., (Random House, 1972), 1:101, 125.

⁵⁰CR, 75:1 (13 April 1937) pp. 3422-23; J. Joseph Huthmacher, Senator Robert F. Wagner: and the Rise of Urban Liberalism (Atheneum, 1971), p. 234.

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⁵²New York Times, 29 April 1937; CR, 75:3 (10 May 1938) p. 6606.

⁵³CR, 75:3 (13 April 1938) p. 5354.

⁵⁴New York Times, 7 July 1938; Newsweek, 8 August 1938, p. 30.

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⁶⁶CR, 75:1 (5 May 1937) p. 4198.

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CHAPTER 3

"Think of America First"

(1939-41)

During the opening years of World War II, Hoffman's two major concerns were labor and foreign affairs. His interest in labor was such that in January 1940 he moved from the Agriculture Committee to the Labor Committee. Continuing his role as a leading labor critic, especially after the war started in Europe, he was disturbed by the number of strikes in key industries. Labeling one group of strikers "traitors," for jeopardizing the nation's defense effort, he asked: "Are we to sit here and fail to authorize someone to go up there and take them by the neck and shake the shoes and the shirts off and the teeth out of their heads?"¹

These years also clearly revealed the depth of his isolationism. One of the most devout isolationists in the House, he worked incessantly to keep the nation out of war. Summing up his view on what course of action he hoped the country would follow, he said: "A strict neutrality should be our guide and precaution and preparedness our safeguard."²

Involved in controversy, he persisted with his usual diligence and intensity to further his beliefs. He continued speaking "frequently and vociferously," noting: "My hide is as thick as

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In the labor area he was mainly concerned with the Wagner Act, the NLRB, workers having to pay unions in order to get jobs, and John L. Lewis. There were two strikes in particular which he thought showed the indifference of some labor leaders to the nation's welfare. One involved the Bohn Aluminum and Brass Co., Detroit, which made equipment for the Navy, while the second occurred at the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., Kearney, New Jersey.

The Bohn strike, which lasted from August to October 1939, hindered the Navy's effort to prepare itself in the face of World War II. Hoffman utilized the strike for partisan purposes by blaming Roosevelt for causing the labor dispute, saying that he was responsible for strengthening the CIO which was striking at Bohn. He cautioned Roosevelt to be more concerned with protecting American liberties than with policing Europe.⁴

The May 1940 strike at Kearney was criticized by several members of Congress, including E. E. Cox who termed it "treason." It was this dispute that caused Hoffman to present a bill against defense plant strikes as long as the contract was in effect. Concerned about strikes in defense plants, and especially disturbed that an alien was behind this one, he also sought to require anyone calling a strike in a defense plant to be an American citizen.⁵

The Wagner Act remained a favorite target of attack for Hoffman, who was emerging as a leading critic of the law, and, since the 1938 election, for a growing number of his colleagues as well. While most conservatives realized that repeal was unlikely, they hoped to soften its impact by amending or investigating it. Hoffman, however, continued to advocate the act's repeal and its replacement with a new law and a new agency to enforce it. Admitting that there were many reasons for the increase in the number of strikes since the Wagner Act went into effect, he declared that the primary reason was the NLRB. The evidence, however, is not as clear on the role of the Board as he contended. He warned his colleagues that he intended to alert them of the need to amend the act as long as he was in Congress and the law was unchanged, a promise he more than kept.⁶

Although his March 1939 bill, which would have strengthened the employers in their dealings with the unions while weakening the NLRB, was unsuccessful, it was regarded by the authors of a major study of labor legislation as one of the most significant attempts made in the 76th Congress to amend the Wagner Act. He sought to remedy what he claimed to be the inadequacy of the existing law by protecting the workers from both the employers and the labor unions. Disturbed about the loss of freedom when an individual was forced to join a union simply because his co-workers desired to, one of the bill's provisions (a favorite of his) gave the employee the right to join, or not to join, a union.⁷ Such a provision would have had a detrimental effect on labor organizations, especially

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with the growth of the defense industry. Labor leaders were rightly apprehensive that the new workers, while reaping the benefits of the union's efforts, would choose not to join the union, making the future of the labor organizations questionable. Professing to be in favor of unions, Hoffman stressed the democratic nature of his revision and neglected the negative ramifications on the unions themselves.

Continuing his campaign against the Wagner Act, he testified before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, saying that the act deprived persons of their liberty and property without due process of law and was an infringement on an individual's freedom of speech and press. The latter point was especially meaningful to him in light of the Muskin case. He also lauded the Smith Committee's 1940 investigation of the NLRB, chaired by Howard W. Smith (D, Virginia), as being objective and commendable. While approving the report's conclusion calling for the abolition of the NLRB, a goal he had long sought, he argued that the suggested amendments did not go far enough, insisting that the employee should have the choice of joining or not joining a union.⁸

It is ironic that Hoffman, "Congress' most frequent denunciator" of the board, might have saved the NLRB. Hoffman, in St. Louis delivering a speech when the Labor Committee voted nine to eight against a motion to abolish the NLRB and to create a new board, had given his proxy to Clyde H. Smith (R, Maine) who voted to retain the board, saying that he believed he was following Hoffman's wishes! It was believed that once out of committee the amendment

would have passed the House and received strong backing in the Senate. Hoffman sought unsuccessfully to reverse the earlier vote.⁹

Whether or not one shared his views, he was well informed about the NLRB. Observing the difficulty about knowing a great deal about much of the legislation, he had spent two years concentrating on the rulings of the board and the court decisions relating to them. His frequent citing of such decisions is testimony to the thoroughness of his study. His repeated mention of the NLRB, however, annoyed some members, such as John J. Cochran (D, Missouri), who said that Hoffman had the NLRB "on the brain."¹⁰

Distressed by Roosevelt's interest in aiding European democracies while he believed democracy was being lost at home through the actions of some unions, Hoffman asked what benefit there would be if "when the day of battle has ended, when the sun has gone down into a sea of blood, when its light no longer makes visible the graves of the millions of men who have died in vain, our own citizens are deprived of the freedom which for so long has been theirs?" He said the only difference between one who required tribute to gain employment in a defense plant and one who dynamited the plant was that the former was not punished.¹¹

In November 1940, after noting that his two month old charge that the administration was not protecting workers from extortion via unions had gone unchallenged, he repeated it, defying the House Democratic leader John McCormack (Massachusetts) to refute it. McCormack replied that Hoffman was "the greatest Member of the House for indicting innocent people and innocent administrations."

Hoffman replied that McCormack, failing to rebut his assertion, had sought refuge in a countercharge. He insisted he had proven his accusations of a tie between the Democrats and labor racketeers, and said if his proof was untrue "my conduct is reprehensible; if true, a speedy and drastic remedy should be afforded."¹² That the Democrats were associated with labor is true, but whether they were tied to labor racketeers depends upon how one defines "racketeers." In any case asking someone to prove the negative is clearly unfair.

Looking over the labor scene, Hoffman saw his old adversaries, John L. Lewis and the CIO. Although Hoffman did not need another reason to dislike Lewis, the union leader's July 1939 remarks about Vice-President John Nance Garner provided him one. Lewis, hoping to damage Garner's presidential chances in 1940, called the Vice-President "a labor-baiting, poker-playing, whiskey-drinking, evil old man." Garner offered no reply, but Republican Hoffman rushed to the defense of the Democrat, attacking the labor leader in his own acerbic style. He said Lewis' remarks were "nothing less than the verbal vomiting of a putrid mind, the vaporizing of the warped soul, and the wicked heart of an individual whose greedy, grasping, evil designs upon the pocketbooks of the workers of America had been in part thwarted, according to Lewis' idea, by the activities of the Vice-President." He appealed to the House to consider the bill he had introduced earlier calling for an investigation of the union leader.¹³

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As one of the most ardent isolationists in the House, Hoffman became increasingly apprehensive about the deteriorating situation in Europe. Roosevelt, also concerned about the worsening crisis, called Congress into special session in September 1939 to revise the 1937 Neutrality Act by repealing the arms embargo and applying the cash-and-carry idea to munitions. Correctly predicting a hard fight, he prepared for an all-out effort, concentrating entirely on this one item.¹⁴

While the main debate was in the Senate, the House met, but only on Mondays and Thursdays. This arrangement did not please Hoffman who was critical of Roosevelt's policy of having the House meet but not letting it take any action. He wondered if the President could "muzzle" the House, only letting members meet in order to adjourn, how long it would be before Congress was forbidden to meet at all. Calling Congress a "docile, speechless, sheeplike gathering," he refused to consent to extend the existing agreement for three day adjournments and the cessation of all matters except the neutrality issue beyond 9 October. Considering this a waste of time, he said privately that he would stay on the floor through every session to prevent the extension of the agreement. Because of his opposition to the twice a week understanding, the House, beginning 10 October, began meeting daily.¹⁵

Roosevelt was not candid in requesting neutrality revision, making it appear that his motive was to keep the nation out of the war rather than to aid England and France. Preferring to direct

the struggle behind the scene to avoid looking belligerent, Roosevelt even resisted efforts to increase the size of the military. Hoffman, however, was not deceived by the President's ruse. Saying that during the Spanish Civil War a law was passed prohibiting arms sales to either side on the basis that this would keep America out of the war, he questioned if it was true then, why was it not true now?¹⁶

Following Senate revision of the Neutrality Act, the House spent three days "engaged in a fierce debate marked by brief, sharply worded speeches, frequent emotional outbursts, and a brutal frankness that laid bare the central issues." Hoffman participated in the debates, insisting that the United States was not responsible for any lack of preparedness on England's part, nor was it the duty of the United States to go to her aid.¹⁷

Hoffman disingenuously asked the President to inform Congress of any other foreign policy moves that he contemplated so that Congress could work with him.¹⁸ Roosevelt, while hoping for Germany's defeat, was undecided as to the best way to accomplish this. Knowing that the public did not favor becoming involved in the war, Roosevelt preferred not to reveal his intentions. With Hoffman convinced that the Western Hemisphere could remain immune to events in Europe, it is evident that his support for Roosevelt's policies would not have been forthcoming had the President been able to identify them.

A vigorous opponent of Roosevelt's foreign policy, Hoffman, in June 1940, said that ever since Roosevelt's 1937 Quarantine

speech, the President had adhered to a policy designed to provoke Hitler and invite retaliation. He had failed to declare war only because the Constitution forbade it, and because he was convinced he could force Germany and Italy to attack the United States.¹⁹

While correct in accusing the administration of attempting to shift the foreign policy of the nation into a new direction in 1937, and especially after September 1939, his claim that Roosevelt was seeking to invite retaliation from Germany as early as 1937 was clearly an exaggeration.

Convinced that the war scare was largely simulated so that Roosevelt could cover up his domestic failures, and distrusting Roosevelt's dictatorial aspirations, Hoffman imprudently commented on the President's policies. He declared that if Roosevelt was able to utilize the war hysteria and get into the fighting, then "on his shoulders will rest the responsibility for the death of hundreds of thousands of our boys; on his conscience will be the thought that once again the hospitals and the asylums will be filled with the wrecks of humanity, sacrificed on the altar of his ambition." He also contended that Roosevelt would be the nation's worst wartime President. "He has most of the instincts and ambitions of a Hitler without any of the German dictator's abilities."²⁰ With such injudicious statements it is little wonder that he later became involved in a controversy over his anti-Roosevelt remarks.

Roosevelt's receipt of a telegram from 120 prominent individuals urging him to do whatever was necessary to defeat the Axis, disturbed several members of Congress, including Hoffman. Hoffman

was worried not with simply staying out of the war, he was also anxious about the nation's involvement in Europe if Germany were defeated. He wondered if American troops would be used as an occupation army, or if some organization would replace the League of Nations? Finding neither thought appealing, he continued to voice his concerns throughout the war.²¹

Accused of being uninterested in preparedness, he actually supported several, though by no means all, defense bills, noting that "overpreparedness is a virtue rather than a fault." He voted against defense measures which he believed tended to promote the nation's involvement in the war. If the nation was not ready for war, he said it was Roosevelt's fault since Congress had voted every dollar the President had requested. Uneasy about the need to do more to solve domestic problems and to get the country ready to defend itself, he entreated his colleagues to remain in session during the summer of 1940 rather than to go home to campaign.²²

Convinced that there was only a limited amount of money available for defense, he encouraged his colleagues to quit spending money for purposes which, though desirable, were not essential for the preservation of the nation. He showed his frugality several times, as for example in May 1940 when he opposed giving money for the New York World's Fair, or when he urged the House to deny the request for \$100,000 to complete the memorial to the men of the Navy and Marine Corps. Not only did he oppose spending for specific projects, he believed that in time of crisis various New Deal programs had to be jettisoned, thereby utilizing the war to carry out

his ultra-conservative goal of destroying some of the recent social programs.²³

Two major war related actions of Roosevelt in 1940 which Hoffman opposed were the destroyer bases deal and conscription. After signing an Executive agreement in September to trade some World War I destroyers for leases on various British bases, Roosevelt predicted that Congress would "raise hell" about it. While the congressional protest constituted only a "murmur," Hoffman castigated the trade, saying that if the deal was a good one the House would have approved it in less than a week. He believed, however, that Roosevelt had been "skinned." Satisfied that the destroyers were in good condition, a belief given credence by the Navy which just prior to the trade had affirmed their value, he questioned how the nation would be strengthened by trading them away. He said diplomats might see some sense in it, but not a hardheaded farmer who knows one does not get more milk by giving away part of the herd of milch cows. He saw little wisdom in spending millions, or perhaps billions, to build bases which had to be returned to the British.²⁴

Hoffman was not alone in his criticism. The St. Louis Post-Dispatch placed an advertisement in leading newspapers around the nation saying, in part: "Of all the real estate deals in history, this is the worst." Somewhat surprisingly the Chicago Tribune, a paper Joseph P. Lash labeled "the most virulently isolationist newspaper in America," and one which Hoffman called "one of the

greatest of American dailies" (he frequently put editorials from the paper into the Congressional Record), came out in favor of the trade.²⁵

Hoffman, again carrying his reasoning to the extreme, claimed that if Roosevelt could give away part of the Navy, then he could give it all away, or he could give away part of the Army. If he could give away physical property of the nation, then why not part of its territory? Why not give New York to England?²⁶

A second major action by Roosevelt that Hoffman opposed concerned selective service. Hoffman claimed that the bill for conscription gave too much power to the President, who, because of the ties between him and his advisors with Communists and those sympathetic to Communism, could not be trusted. He predicted that if a draft was instituted, the first to be called would be white-collar workers and professionals, then farm boys, and last of all workers in the essential industries, which showed the "viciousness" of Roosevelt's plan. Many of the key industries had been organized by Hoffman's arch-enemy the CIO. He thought it was neither fair nor wise to draft loyal Americans for thirty dollars and keep per month, while CIO members were getting as much as two dollars per hour plus overtime. Questioning what the nation's fate would be after the war if those who had refused to give in to Lewis were sent overseas while members of the CIO remained at home, he asked: "Could any better plan be devised to deliver us into the hands of the Communists?"²⁷

His often repeated suggestion was that everyone should share equally in the crisis. If the draft bill passed, then he favored adding a provision requiring every factory worker and public official to serve at their jobs for a similar time and at a similar pay. Personally willing to work for thirty dollars per month plus board and clothing, he advocated that everyone from the President on down should do likewise, a less than practical idea. He was undoubtedly right, however, when he observed that if everyone was required to make such sacrifices, there would be fewer votes for the draft or for involving the nation in Europe's affairs.²⁸

His desire to see that all Americans shared in the defense effort accounted for his introduction of a multifaceted labor bill in November 1940, which he reintroduced in 1941. Among its provisions was the idea of price stabilization, a key concept to him which he hoped would prevent profiteering during the war. As was true of some of his other legislation, he was ahead of his time in his concern with preventing profiteering. It was not until April 1941 that Roosevelt established the Office of Price Administration, and not until August that an administration backed price control bill was introduced in the House, months after Hoffman urged action on this problem.²⁹ Believing that World War I was caused by bankers, munitions makers, and others seeking to make money out of killing, he was determined to thwart any similar attempt by these groups during World War II.

Hoffman was critical of Roosevelt's defense program in general. In May 1940 the New York Times commented that the one "discordant note" heard from congressional Republicans regarding Roosevelt's policies came from Hoffman who charged that if the President really wanted national unity, he would publicly deny any desire for a third term. Later he called the defense program "a streamlined drive for a third term and a dictatorship." He believed Roosevelt's policies were at least as much a spending program as they were a preparedness one.³⁰

Despite his dissatisfaction with various aspects of the administration's defense efforts, he pledged his support, saying that he would go "to the end of the road, however bitter the traveling may be." While agreeing with Roosevelt's call for unity, he warned that he was not going to shirk his responsibility to the nation. He refused to remake America along New Deal lines: "down the broad and easy road of waste, extravagance, and regimentation not willingly will I ever travel." He promised to condemn and refuse to follow Roosevelt when he "attempts to crucify on the cross of his third term ambition the defenseless youths of our land."³¹

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In the election of 1940, Hoffman endorsed Wendell Willkie, the Republican nominee, whom he called with considerable exaggeration, "a typical Hoosier boy." He said that Willkie, unlike Roosevelt, would live up to his campaign promises and was the one

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candidate who could unite the nation. Willkie aided Hoffman, who was unable to conduct his usual vigorous campaign because of the need to remain in Washington, by appearing with him at Niles to urge his re-election.³²

If Roosevelt was re-elected, Hoffman told the voters to hang their heads in shame, "for no longer may the child, the boy at mother's knee or looking to his father for inspiration, be told the story of the boys of America who have risen from the log cabin, from the tow path, up through poverty, by virtue of hard work and thrift, to sit in the Executive Mansion at Washington." He called Roosevelt "Franklin the indispensable," and said that his thought that he was the only Democrat qualified to lead was a belief shared by all kings and emperors of the past, and was simply "Rot and nonsense."³³

That Hoffman saw Roosevelt as a potential dictator was shown by his proposal to amend the selective service bill to prohibit the President from interfering with the elections or disregarding the results. Hoffman, claiming that he had received numerous letters asking if there would be elections if war broke out before November, challenged the Democrats to go on record to dispel these fears.³⁴ Needless to say, the amendment was rejected.

Unopposed in the primary for the first time, Hoffman summed up his platform as: "America, first, last and always 'God Bless America,'" certainly a fair assessment of his position during his third term. The Democratic winner, Harvey Hope Jarvis, a former

State Representative, appealed to those groups, including the Townsends, who were anti-Hoffman.³⁵

Hoffman responded to charges concerning his stand on preparedness and labor unions. Accused of not supporting preparedness, he declared that he had voted for every single dollar that Roosevelt had requested. (The question of the intensity of his support became a prominent issue in the next Congress.) He pledged if re-elected to do "everything within my power to aid national defense; to keep this country out of a war of aggression." He also denied being anti-labor, saying that some amendments to the Wagner Act that he had fought for for three years were later endorsed by the AFL.³⁶

A potentially damaging episode which occurred during the campaign concerned a scathing letter about Roosevelt that he had written to his Republican colleagues. Unfortunately for Hoffman the letter was publicized by the Democrats. Donald L. O'Toole (D, New York), calling the letter "pathetic" and accusing Hoffman of putting party politics ahead of the nation's welfare, charged that the way Hoffman talked about Roosevelt, democracy "has received a death blow. For the boring-from-within process has started and the 'fifth column' is at work in this Hall." Jerry Voorhis (D, California) judged the letter to be "unworthy" of a member of Congress, noting that with the current crisis in Europe it was inappropriate to make such "irresponsible attacks."³⁷

Understandably irate that his letter had been publicized, he was particularly angry at Adolph J. Sabath (D, Illinois) who

had circulated a reproduction of the letter. As Hoffman stated, it was unfair of the Democrats to disseminate private correspondence. If his remarks were untrue, then, he wondered, why draw attention to them? Observing that in July 1939 no one objected when Roosevelt was described on the House floor as an "egocentric megalomaniac," he questioned why anyone objected to his reference to Roosevelt as a "crazy, conceited megalomaniac" in a private letter.³⁸

The letter seems to have had little impact on his constituents. The Democratic state chairman, though optimistic about his party's chances in Michigan, despaired of defeating Hoffman, an accurate prediction as he beat Jarvis by over 25,000 votes, his biggest margin yet. The Benton Harbor News-Palladium noted that there were some who were perplexed at how "the firebrand of Congress in his criticisms of the New Deal" could be "so free in throwing verbal brickbats about the political landscape and then at election time go out and pile up thumping margins of victory." The paper, which endorsed him, said his friends credited it to his courage and independence in saying what he believed, which helps explain why his controversial letter did not hurt him. His independence in voting was played up in his various campaigns and commented upon favorably by the local press. Another point frequently mentioned was his national reputation. The News-Palladium said: "you can lay your bets on Hoffman not changing his pinsticking tactics." Of course it did not hurt his chances to run in the "rock-ribbed" Republican 4th district.³⁹

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Always interested in labor, the war only heightened his concern. He, like many others in Congress, was particularly disturbed by the 1941 coal strikes. Expecting the country to get involved in the war, Lewis decided to get as much as he could for the miners before the government imposed restrictions. One of his goals was the removal of wage differentials between the North and the South, which was basically accomplished by a three month long strike which ended in July. Hoffman, critical of the strike coming at a time when the nation needed coal for its defense, questioned who was boss, Roosevelt or Lewis.⁴⁰

Lewis next sought to gain the union shop in the "captive" (steel company owned) mines, a struggle which lasted for three months, encompassed three strikes, involved the National Defense Mediation Board, and opened the "floodgates of anti-labor oratory" in Congress. The conflict was resolved only after Roosevelt, aware that conditions in Asia were deteriorating seriously and realizing that any further delay in the mining of coal was intolerable, suggested creating an arbitration panel. Hoffman suspected that Roosevelt would stack the panel in favor of Lewis just as he had tried to stack the Supreme Court. His prophecy proved accurate, and, in November, the NDMB not surprisingly voted for the union shop.⁴¹

Another labor dispute which he frequently cited was the strike at the Allis-Chalmers plant in Milwaukee, which held \$45

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million in defense contracts. If the European situation was as bad as Roosevelt maintained, Hoffman wondered how the administration could allow a small group of people to put their welfare ahead of the nation's. The strike, which began in January 1941 and continued into April, became enough of a problem that the War and Navy Departments seriously considered taking over the plant. Roosevelt, sharing Hoffman's concern, finally warned that if the dispute, which he regarded as the most onerous in the defense industry, was not resolved soon, presidential action might be necessary.⁴²

The political immoderation of the ultra-conservatives can be seen in Hoffman's remarks about the President's policy regarding strikes in defense plants. In January 1941 he charged that by not intervening in such disputes, the administration was "deliberately sabotaging our national defense." Two months later he accused the administration of "giving aid and comfort to Hitler; and this charge, which is made deliberately, cannot be successfully contradicted."⁴³ Clearly the criticism he received for his letter about Roosevelt did not cause him to temper his remarks. A man of strong convictions, he freely expressed them.

Strongly against strikes in defense plants, Hoffman introduced several bills outlawing such strikes, arguing that they not only disrupted preparedness, but they also added to the cost of the nation's defense. In order to reduce the number of such labor disputes, he offered a bill to withhold benefits of the Wagner Act from any union in defiance of the NDMB. His old nemesis, Frances Perkins, agreeing that it would be preferable if there were no

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strikes in defense industries, claimed that the strikes during the first six months of 1941 had not significantly harmed the nation's defense program.⁴⁴ To someone like Hoffman who was concerned about wasting \$100,000 for a memorial when it could have been spent for defense, any loss of production was not only unnecessary but unforgivable.

Another bill contained a provision that he feverently believed in: a secret ballot to determine the number of workers actually in favor of striking. His bill also provided that whenever less than 50 percent voted for a strike, the Army officer in charge of the territory in which the plant was located, was to assure that those who wanted to work could return to their jobs.⁴⁵ Granting the military such power when a civil government existed is unthinkable, as the detrimental effects of such a measure would have more than canceled any benefit from increased production. Not surprisingly the House chose not to take action. Conditions were simply not as desperate as he imagined them to be.

He spoke against defense plant strikes on a broadcast of the American Forum of the Air, saying that in time of crisis, with other segments of society accepting limitations on their rights, organized labor should not exercise its right to strike defense plants. According to a Gallup Poll taken in November 1941, the public was of the same opinion. The problem was that not everyone accepted limitations on their rights. With business profits rising it was understandably difficult to convince labor to remain quiescent.⁴⁶

His bills, while reflecting a genuine concern for the nation's welfare, tended to be unfair. He blamed the unions for the labor troubles, rather than recognizing that at times it was the company's policies that left labor little alternative but to strike. Not only would a law against striking have been extremely difficult to enforce, asking workers to fight against totalitarianism while denying them one of their fundamental rights, showed a lack of understanding about the importance of the worker's morale. In fairness to him, not all of his efforts were aimed at the workers. Desiring everyone to share equally in the crisis, and reflecting his belief that wars were fought to enrich certain business interests, he supported an excess profits tax on business.⁴⁷

Despite being categorized as anti-labor, he sought to protect the rights of workers by opposing the practice of forcing workers to pay union dues in order to get a job. He was an stringent critic of union officials who sought to make money out of defense spending by requiring a license to work. "Digging up and robbing the dead . . . is a mild and comparatively harmless pastime as compared with these hyenas and vultures who know neither humanity nor patriotism. Bloodsuckers and leeches, they not only weaken the nation as a whole but they would, if they could, suck the very blood from the veins of those who must work if they would eat." Noting that he had introduced bills against this practice, he observed that if any members were unaware of the situation, "it is not my fault."⁴⁸

Having sought unsuccessfully to prohibit such a practice on defense work in 1940, he tried again in 1941, introducing the first of his bills in January. His bill, which failed to pass, resulted in some strident criticism of him. An article in the January 1941 issue of the Union Postal Clerk, taken from the Detroit Labor News, called him "noisy and highly obnoxious," and denounced "the Allegan wonder" as being "about the most un-American politician that ever went to Congress." Even the voters were maligned: "The clouded minds of the electors in his district that return him to office every 2 years have won Michigan a rather dubious reputation among the people who have clear minds and face the situations of modern times with a modern approach and understanding."⁴⁹ Some of his opponents were no more temperate than Hoffman in their evaluations.

Not everyone agreed with the conclusion of a Grand Rapids, Michigan, AFL union that he was a "reactionary demagogue." The Detroit News, while characterizing him as an "extremist" on labor matters, denied that he was a demagogue. Noting that they often differed with him on labor issues, the editors conceded that he had performed a valuable service in pointing out labor abuses, of which, paying to get a job was one. He also claimed the support of many union members, saying, in November 1940, that two-thirds of his mail dealing with labor conditions came from union members who opposed the policies of their leaders.⁵⁰

At least as intolerable as strikes in defense plants were those arising from inter-union friction. He regarded them as

foolish, since the consideration was not to benefit the workers as much as to aid the union leaders. Perkins, agreeing that such strikes were unwise, called for an end to them during the war.⁵¹

One example of an inter-union quarrel involved the Carrier Lumber Co. of Detroit which employed CIO labor. Despite placing the lowest bid, the company did not receive a government contract to build housing because the AFL building trades unions threatened a statewide strike. The government spent an extra \$431,000 to avoid a labor dispute. To Hoffman such a quarrel was unjustified considering the need for defense. The problem was that the government, lacking the power to prohibit strikes, had to follow a policy of avoiding labor disputes. Considering that a strike by the AFL unions, which constituted 85 percent of the building trades unions in Michigan, would probably have cost more than \$431,000, the government seems to have made the right choice.⁵²

While Hoffman must have derived some satisfaction from knowing that John L. Lewis' role as a labor leader was declining, his pleasure was limited by the rise of Walter Reuther of the United Auto Workers. Reuther was assuming an important position in the nation's defense program, much to Hoffman's dismay. Admitting that he was unable to prove that Reuther was a Communist, he called him "an admirer of communism, a student of communism, a teacher of communism." Believing that there was "ample evidence" that Reuther shared the Communist view of the need to overthrow the government by force, he said Reuther had no place in the defense program. He claimed that when Reuther was in Russia he had written home asking

the people to fight for a "Soviet America." Victor Reuther, denying the validity of the letter, said that for twenty years after its appearance during the 1937 sit-downs, it tended to turn up whenever the UAW was involved in some significant strike or negotiation. He noted that Hoffman was especially prone to mention it in such cases.⁵³

What particularly incensed Hoffman was Walter Reuther's draft deferment. (He later called him "the No. 1 draft evader.") Victor claimed that Walter wanted to enlist but that others intervened with the government because of Walter's key role in the defense effort. Hoffman, convinced that drafting the "disciple of Stalin" would be "one of the finest contributions that could be made to industrial peace," characterized his union activities as "nothing less than treasonable."⁵⁴

With the threat of war increasing, the government, hoping to keep the number of strikes at a minimum, established the National Defense Mediation Board in March 1941. Hoffman said the NLRB was bad enough, "but it was a sweet-scented baby" when compared to the NDMB, whose policies were enough "to make the gods hide their heads in shame, [and] a self-respecting Congressman cover his face in humiliation." He denounced the NDMB for pushing for the closed shop, which he termed "un-American and unjust to all other workers and American citizens," and asserted that the Board encouraged strikes because union leaders knew the Board was on their side.⁵⁵

The evidence contradicts his claim that the Board supported the closed shop. The question of union security, which arose in fifty-six disputes, was affirmed by the Board in only seven cases when it proposed membership maintenance agreements. Hoffman, like others in Congress, considered such agreements as tantamount to the closed shop. (A membership maintenance agreement provided that during the war workers had fifteen days to leave the union voluntarily while retaining their jobs. After this period, they had to remain in the union for the duration of the contract.) Regarding the charge that the Board encouraged strikes, it is true that the number of labor disputes in 1941 was higher than in any year since 1937, involving about twice as many strikes and four times the number of workers as in 1940. Blaming the Board for this, however, is unfair, since the relatively high strike activity was not unusual for a period of rapidly increasing job opportunities and living costs as was true in 1941.⁵⁶

There were several reasons for his failure to gain passage of his legislation. Part of it can be explained by his being ahead of his time. A few years later some of his goals became reality. Partly his problems stemmed from his being a member of the minority party. Considering the tie between labor and the Democratic Party, it was not easy for a Republican to push through any significant legislation affecting labor. To fully understand his failure, however, one must look further. His personality worked against him. A very witty person (one writer noted that he rarely spoke but what he did not elicit laughter), he at times became caustic in debate.⁵⁷

So assiduously devoted to his principles that he occasionally carried them to the extreme, it must have been difficult for some of his colleagues to abide him. Cast in the role of the critic, many in the House must have viewed him as little more than a crabbed, acerbic old man, and consequently simply wrote off much of what he stood for without studying it objectively.

If he was unsuccessful in getting his legislation adopted, he could take solace in knowing that more members were voicing similar concerns. For four years he had spoken "almost continuously" on the labor problem, which led to his being accused of being "antilabor, mentally incompetent, riding a hobby, and with being several other unpleasant things." Now, however, he noted with satisfaction, others like Dies, Howard W. Smith, and Joe Starnes (D, Alabama), were becoming "aware" that the Communists were behind many of the strikes.⁵⁸

As much as Hoffman was angered at Roosevelt's response to strikes, he thought the administration-supported property seizure bill, which gave the President the right to seize property or supplies he deemed essential for defense, went too far. Hoffman said this bill would allow Roosevelt to reduce the size of the Congressional Record, or to stop the publication of the Chicago Tribune, "which has done so much to keep us out of war," by declaring it necessary to seize its newsprint. It even made it possible for members to lose their franking privileges (a perquisite that Hoffman used extensively) on the basis that the supplies were needed overseas. He suggested that perhaps the motivation behind

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the bill was that Roosevelt was "humiliated because Bloody Joe, his comrade, . . . has more power than has he. Perhaps he wants to show comrade Joe, who has caused the death of thousands of his people, that he, Roosevelt, has a like power over us here in America."⁵⁹ Statements like this, while characteristic of the ultra-conservatives, were hardly likely to win the respect of his colleagues. He might have been more effective had he tempered his criticism.

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Hoffman opposed Lend-Lease, the first major foreign policy issue in 1941, correctly charging that Roosevelt was less than candid in his presentation of the program. Hoffman warned that Lend-Lease would lead the nation into the war. He also said that the bill granted too much authority to the President, by giving him the war making power. He was not alone in this belief. The famous international lawyer, John Bassett Moore, agreed, as did the Christian Century, while even the New Republic, although favoring the bill, thought that some time limit should be imposed. Hoffman stated that his opposition reflected the sentiments of those who had written to him. Clearly he was not unique among Midwestern Republicans in his negative appraisal of Lend-Lease. Of the 81 Republicans, 79 voted against the measure. He was also in harmony with the rest of Michigan's Representatives for all 11 Republicans and 3 of the 6 Democrats voted against the bill.⁶⁰

An incident which occurred during the Lend-Lease debates infuriated Hoffman because he believed it illustrated the government's indifference towards patriotic Americans at a time when he thought it was coddling Communists. In February 1941 Elizabeth Dilling (later tried for sedition in 1944) and a group known as the Mother's Crusade Against Bill 1776 (Lend-Lease) arrived in Washington. The women unsuccessfully attempted to protest outside the office of Senator Carter Glass (D, Virginia), a strong advocate of Lend-Lease. Glass sarcastically observed: "It would be pertinent to inquire whether they are mothers. For the sake of the race, I devoutly hope not."⁶¹

Frustrated in their effort at the Senate Building, the women were welcomed at Hoffman's office. He led the group to the office of his Michigan colleague, Roy O. Woodruff (R), where photos were taken of Hoffman holding an American flag while Dilling held a sign which read: "Kill Bill 1776--Not Our Boys."⁶²

Later he protested that a Communist could hinder the nation's defense effort by leading a strike at Allis-Chalmers, but when one hundred American mothers carrying American flags came to see their elected officials, they were chased out of the building. "These American mothers, who had pinned across their breasts, the breasts which nursed some of the boys of 1917, a piece of cloth which bore the legend 'Kill the bill 1776, not our boys,' were ordered to remove that legend or get out of the building." They "were given the alternative of going to prison or furling the American flag." He compared the treatment given these women with

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the treatment afforded a group representing the American Youth Congress in January 1940. Members of the Youth Congress, a Communist front organization, were entertained at the White House by Mrs. Roosevelt and put up at Ft. Meyer, while the mothers were "pushed and shoved" by the police.⁶³

Though against Lend-Lease, he argued that if Roosevelt was right that the recipients of it were vital to the nation's defense, then interference in the industries making the goods was execrable. While he introduced a bill in March to prevent just such an occurrence, one must question the sincerity of his motives.⁶⁴ Considering that he later voted against sending aid to England, it seems that the purpose of the bill was less to assist Lend-Lease recipients than it was to take advantage of the bill to achieve his long sought goal of prohibiting strikes in defense plants.

Roosevelt's policies in the Atlantic greatly distressed Hoffman. Hoffman, maintaining that the convoying of goods to Europe was unnecessary, said that it was better to sink the entire \$7 billion of aid voted to England than to send over several million American boys. He considered it foolish to talk of convoying ships when not enough were being built because of the strikes in the shipyards. His opposition to Roosevelt's actions finally caused him to call for the President's impeachment in June 1941 on the grounds that he had usurped the powers of Congress by conducting an undeclared war in the Atlantic.⁶⁵

In July Roosevelt, expecting a "vitriolic outburst," sent four thousand men to Iceland. Considering the implications of his

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move, the public and Congress exhibited little concern. Hoffman's challenge to Roosevelt to call a special election to determine the public support for such an act would probably have ended in a victory for the President.⁶⁶

Two months later Roosevelt, using "blunt, biting phrases" in "one of the boldest speeches" of his career, described the incident between the American destroyer Greer and a German submarine. Hoffman, who accused the President of lying about the event in order to create war hysteria, was on strong ground in faulting Roosevelt. Roosevelt's speech, though effective in winning support for his policy, was clearly an erroneous explanation of what took place.⁶⁷

Roosevelt also sought to extend the draft. The one year of military service that was called for by the Selective Service Act of 1940 was fast coming to an end. At a time when conditions were deteriorating abroad, the nation faced the prospect of a sizable reduction in its military strength. The President pushed for a modification in the draft at least as early as July.⁶⁸

Hoffman became the center of a controversy as a result of his August 1941 letter cautioning his colleagues to vote against an extension of the draft if they desired to be re-elected. "If you don't watch your step, your political hide, which is very near and dear to you, will be tanning on the barn door." Charles I. Faddis (D, Pennsylvania) said that he could not recall when he had received a "shock equal to this" in his congressional career. "My God, what have we come to? To what depths have we sunk?" Faddis

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did not believe anyone would weigh his career against the nation's security. Lyndon Johnson (D, Texas) voiced a similar opinion, saying: "We have sunk to a low level if we can be swayed by an appeal like that."⁶⁹

Admitting that one should not vote simply to save one's job, Hoffman listed several reasons that he thought justified opposing the extension. He noted that the original bill was to be a defensive measure. Believing that there were enough men in the military at the time, he argued that any increase, which the new bill called for, would be needed only to wage war. He also stressed the idea that a promise to limit a tour of duty to one year should be kept. He said if it was wrong to send the letter, then he apologized. While his decision to send the letter was unwise, he could not be accused of voting against the extension merely to save his hide, a remark that could not be made of everyone. Principle came before politics. His negative vote was also in harmony with the votes of his Midwestern colleagues and his fellow Michigan Representatives.⁷⁰

Having committed the United States to a shoot-on-sight policy in the Atlantic, Roosevelt's next significant move was to revise the Neutrality Act of 1939 to allow merchant ships to be armed and sent into combat zones. While the bill passed, many members voted against it because of their anger over the administration's labor policies which they thought hindered the defense effort, a point Hoffman had long stressed. Opposed to any measure he believed a step toward war, Hoffman did not need the troubled

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labor situation to vote against revision. "So long as on those sloping hillsides of Arlington there stand in day's bright sun or under weeping clouds, those cold marble reminders that beneath them lie what little is left of those who sacrificed their lives on the false theory that they were fighting a war to end war, never unless to protect my native land will I vote to send another A.E.F. to be a pawn in the game played by the ambitious, war-mad leaders of Europe."⁷¹

Hoffman tersely expressed his foreign policy views in July 1941, saying: "Think of America first." With a flair for the theatrical, he took a fishing pole to which he attached the Union Jack, and, below it, the American flag, and spoke against the move to establish "interdependence" between England and the United States, saying: "union now. That's what they want." Later in a speech to an American First rally (although not a member of the organization, he spoke at several rallies), he quipped that just because the nation had already given Wallis Simpson, the wife of the Duke of Windsor, to England, "it isn't necessary to throw in the whole country as a dowry."⁷²

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Hoffman continued to serve the interests of agriculture and small business in his district. He supported the same basic agricultural policies he had since he entered the House, retaining his belief in the need to keep the farmers as free of federal control as possible. Insisting that his constituents desired justice

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rather than either charity or the dole, he continued to oppose farm subsidies. He warned, however, that if the government's labor policies meant higher prices for the farmers, then he would be "tempted to stick my hand in the pork barrel clear up to the shoulder to get something for the farmers."⁷³

He worked for the sugar beet and apple growers of his district. He complained about the reduction of sugar beet acreage in Michigan at a time it was being increased for the off-shore islands, and sought a more equitable treatment for apple growers in relation to citrus growers.⁷⁴

He frequently said that rather than being against higher wages for industrial workers, he simply wanted more equity between industrial wages and farm income. Instead of talking about raising wages in industry to enable workers to buy more farm goods, he suggested turning it around and raising the prices of farm produce so the farmers could buy more industrial goods. The argument that paying laborers more allowed them to buy more farm produce sounded good, but the extra money was not spent only on farm produce. Not seeing justice in a system that rewarded laborers five to ten times as well as farmers, he favored a law setting the price of farm goods at a level to give the farmer the equivalent of twenty-five cents an hour for a forty hour week.⁷⁵

A major concern of his was the impact of Democratic labor policies on the farmers. Citing his own case as an example of how difficult it was for a farmer to make a living, he said that he had recently sent 400 bushels of apples to Detroit for which he

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received a check for \$5.55. Claiming not to have made a profit from his farm for the previous ten years, he put part of the blame on the high cost of labor. He also pointed out that in the 4th district any farmer going to Chicago had to pay a fee of \$50 plus \$5 per month before he could sell his produce. He later introduced legislation to prevent such practices.⁷⁶

His concern for his district was also shown in his efforts to serve business. In August 1941 he questioned the order of the Office of Production Management reducing the output of washing machines at the 1900 Corporation of St. Joseph. Not only was the company denied critical materials, the agency also refused to let it use the materials it had on hand. He later said: "You'd think they'd want them to make washing machines to sort of clean up those Russians." In December he was disturbed about the OPM order stopping production at the Sturgis Posture Chair Co. To Hoffman these decisions were not only an unwarranted intrusion into business affairs, they were also economically unsound because they threw people out of work. While admitting that there were some war orders in his district, he said that they went to big companies while the owners of little businesses, whom he cared more about, were the "forgotten men."⁷⁷

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He continued his vigorous criticism of the Communist movement, recommending the book The Red Network by Elizabeth Dilling to anyone seeking a brief outline of the Communist International

at work.⁷⁸ (The book listed numerous people and organizations accused by Dilling of being involved in a Communist plot to seize the government. Included in her list were such persons as Chiang Kai-shek, Eleanor Roosevelt, and William Borah, as well as organizations like the American Federation of Labor and the National Education Association.) That he suggested such a book shows that, despite his deep concern about the dangers of Communism, he did not have an overly sophisticated understanding of the movement.

The American League for Peace and Democracy, a Communist controlled organization, was the target of one of Hoffman's bills. He wanted to deny government salaries to anyone who belonged to any organization which was affiliated with, or controlled by any group which taught the overthrow of the government by force. He insisted that this did not violate anyone's rights since it was common sense not to pay those who sought to destroy the government. Although the measure was phrased in general terms, he made it clear that it was aimed at the League. Time criticized the bill, saying that, carried to its logical conclusion in both public and private employment, "this form of retribution would turn up millions of witches in the bespattered League alone."⁷⁹

Considering his staunch anti-Communist views, it was not surprising that he supported the House Committee on Un-American Activities, more popularly known as the Dies Committee. In October 1939 he said that he "heartily" backed the committee and was "in sympathy with its activities." The committee's task was a difficult one, but it was "doing a wonderful job."⁸⁰

That he was considered a dedicated anti-Communist was evident when Gerald L. K. Smith, who headed the Committee of One Million, asked him to present petitions to the House, which reportedly bore 400,000 signatures calling for a continuation of the Dies Committee. Smith wrote: "Because of our great confidence in you, we ask that you present these petitions." When Hoffman did so in January 1940, he noted that the signatures were the "most encouraging proof that all of the vilification, the ridicule, and the unfair attacks" made on the Dies Committee and its members were not believed by the voters.⁸¹

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While he was the target of considerable abuse, not everyone excoriated him. Charles L. Gifford (R, Massachusetts) praised him for his stand on strikes: "Let us not forget his great service. He has been courageous from the beginning. In the sit-down strikes he was almost the only man who raised his voice. The Republicans were just as cowardly as the Democrats . . . I can never forget this man, . . . He is a hero to me. I want to see him get his proper due."⁸²

Hoffman, who seems not to have needed an occasional pat on the back to keep him going, tended to disregard such statements of praise. Elected to do a job, he was willing to do it regardless of whether or not he won accolades from anyone. Duty was important, the chance to fight for his principles was important; praise, while it must have been satisfying, seems to have been well down on his list of needs.

Not only did he not seem to need praise, he rarely seemed comfortable when receiving it. As late as 1961, when some of his colleagues extolled his virtues on the occasion of his eighty-sixth birthday, he sat reading the Chicago Tribune and yawned through the whole proceeding. The speakers referred to how hard working and vigorous he was, although one member, imitating Hoffman's often made call, raised a point of order that a quorum was not present.⁸³

He also seems not to have appreciated anyone interrupting him to buttress his argument. Martha Griffiths (D, Michigan) said that the difference between Hoffman and John Rankin (D, Mississippi) was that if Rankin was speaking and someone rose to help him, he was gracious, whereas if someone tried to assist Hoffman, he cut the person "to ribbons."⁸⁴

There was certainly abundant opportunity to interrupt Hoffman. He was one of the most verbose members of the House. He once joked that anyone running against him could count the number of pages in the Congressional Record containing his speeches, figure the cost per page, and make a good argument that his constituents could save a lot of money by retiring him. (Yet at the same time he boasted--incorrectly--about having the shortest biography in the Congressional Directory.) A device he often employed to gain time to address the House was to move to strike the enacting clause. This was done either to gain the floor to express his opposition to the pending legislation, or, if he had already spoken against it, to get additional time to complete his remarks. That he was not always serious in his motion can be seen in the frequency which he

withdrew his motion before a vote was taken. Yet another way he got extra time to speak was to utilize a neglected rule permitting a one minute talk on any subject before the House began.⁸⁵

He bantered frequently with his colleagues. He once observed that he had "differed violently" with many members, "in fact, I have an argument almost all the time. It is a sort of continuous performance." One of his favorite opponents, especially in 1941, was the Democrat Luther Patrick (Alabama). In one exchange, Patrick said that he was deviating from his original topic. Hoffman replied that that put him in an embarrassing position since he had prepared counterarguments. Patrick said: "I am sure that a man of the giant intellect of the gentleman from Michigan can answer anything I say in a couple of minutes." Hoffman riposted: "I think that is right; not pleading guilty to the giant intellect, but to answering in 2 minutes anything the gentleman from Alabama says in 40 minutes."⁸⁶

Hoffman took abuse well whether it came from the Democrats or from members of his own party. He was fortunate that he had this ability, because in this regard 1941 was but a prelude to 1942.

Footnotes Chapter 3

¹CR, 76:2 (12 October 1939), p. 350. See Detroit News, 17 January 1940 for his reasons for changing committees.

²CR, 76:3 (10 May 1940) p. 5925.

³CR, 76:1 (28 June 1939) p. 8147; CR, 77:1 (19 September 1941) p. 7487.

⁴CR, 76:2 (30 October 1939) p. 1070.

⁵Joel Seidman, American Labor from Defense to Reconversion (University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 42-43; New York Times, 1 June 1940; CR, 76:3 (31 May 1940) p. 7350; CR, 76:3 (7 June 1940) pp. 7793-94.

⁶James T. Patterson, Congressional Conservatism, pp. 316-317; CR, 76:1 (6 February 1939) pp. 1167-69; John V. Spielman, "Strikes Under the Wagner Act," Journal of Political Economy 49 (October 1941):722-31; CR, 76:1 (8 February 1939) p. 1235.

⁷New York Times, 13 March 1939; Harry A. Millis and Emily Clark Brown, From the Wagner Act to Taft-Hartley: A Study of National Labor Policy and Labor Relations (University of Chicago Press, 1950), pp. 346-47. See CR, 76:3 (11 March 1940) Appendix, pp. 1279-97 for a comparison of the Wagner Act, the amendments suggested by the committee chaired by Howard W. Smith (D, Virginia) which investigated the NLRB, and Hoffman's bill.

⁸New York Times, 18 April 1939; CR, 76:3 (3 April 1940) pp. 3940-42.

⁹Detroit News, 20 March 1940; Washington Post, 20 March 1940; Detroit Free Press, 31 March 1940.

¹⁰CR, 76:3 (3 April 1940) pp. 3940-42; CR, 76:3 (15 April 1940) p. 4524. For an example of Hoffman's knowledge of labor related court decisions see CR, 77:1 (14 November 1941) pp. 8899-900.

¹¹CR, 76:3 (5 December 1940) p. 13850; CR, 76:3 (9 December 1940) p. 13875.

¹²CR, 76:3 (20 November 1940) pp. 13703-04.

¹³C. K. McFarland, Roosevelt, Lewis, pp. 99, 101; New York Times, 28 July 1939; CR, 76:1 (27 July 1939) p. 10254. The episode almost did not pass so quickly, see McFarland, pp. 99-100.

¹⁴Wilfred E. Binkley, President and Congress (Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), p. 262; Robert A. Divine, The Illusion of Neutrality: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Struggle Over the Arms Embargo (University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 296-97.

¹⁵CR, 76:2 (9 October 1939) p. 220; CR, 76:2 (25 September 1939) Appendix, p. 31; New York Times, 6 October 1939.

¹⁶Robert Dallek, Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945 (Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 202-03; CR, 76:2 (2 October 1939) Appendix, p. 141.

¹⁷Divine, Illusion, pp. 309, 327; CR, 76:2 (2 November 1939) p. 1284.

¹⁸CR, 76:2 (12 October 1939) p. 348.

¹⁹CR, 76:3 (11 June 1940) pp. 7963-64.

²⁰CR, 76:3 (17 June 1940) Appendix, p. 3932.

²¹New York Times, 27 December 1940.

²²CR, 76:2 (2 October 1939) Appendix, p. 121; CR, 76:3 (11 June 1940) p. 7964; CR, 76:3 (17 May 1940) p. 6323; CR, 76:3 (23 May 1940) pp. 6717-18.

²³CR, 76:3 (19 April 1940) Appendix, p. 3266; CR, 76:3 (10 May 1940) pp. 5925-26; CR, 76:3 (29 May 1940) p. 7130; CR, 76:3 (28 August 1940) p. 11178.

²⁴James MacGregor Burns, Lion, p. 441; Dallek, p. 247; CR, 76:3 (3 September 1940) pp. 11399-400; Leuchtenburg, Roosevelt and the New Deal, p. 304.

²⁵Burns, Lion, p. 441; Joseph P. Lash, Roosevelt and Churchill, 1939-1941: The Partnership That Saved the West (W. W. Norton, 1976), pp. 219-20; CR, 76:3 (1 March 1940) Appendix, p. 1126.

²⁶CR, 76:3 (3 September 1940) p. 11399.

²⁷CR, 76:3 (10 July 1940) Appendix, p. 4419; CR, 76:2 (25 September 1939) Appendix, p. 32; CR, 76:2 (11 October 1939) p. 29.

²⁸CR, 76:3 (10 July 1940) Appendix, p. 4419; CR, 76:3 (28 August 1940) pp. 11177-78.

²⁹CR, 76:3 (19 November 1940) p. 13698; James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), pp. 196-97.

³⁰New York Times, 18 May 1940; CR, 76:3 (6 September 1940) p. 11645; CR, 76:3 (11 June 1940) p. 7964; CR, 76:3 (19 November 1940) Appendix, p. 6622.

³¹CR, 76:3 (19 June 1940) p. 8647.

³²CR, 76:3 (10 October 1940) Appendix, p. 6282; CR, 76:3 (14 October 1940) Appendix, p. 6530; CR, 76:3 (4 September 1940) Appendix, 6276; campaign ads in HS; CR, 76:3 (14 October 1940) Appendix, p. 6530.

³³CR, 76:3 (14 October 1940) Appendix, p. 6454; CR, 76:3 (7 October 1940) p. 13345.

³⁴CR, 76:3 (7 September 1940) pp. 11724-25.

³⁵Campaign ad in HS; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 9 November 1940 in HS.

³⁶Campaign ads in HS.

³⁷CR, 76:3 (12 June 1940) pp. 8090, 8119.

³⁸CR, 76:3 (19 June 1940) pp. 8642-47.

³⁹Detroit Free Press, 4 November 1940; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 11 November 1940 in HS; Michigan Manual, 1941-42, p. 301.

⁴⁰Melvyn Dubofsky and Warren Van Tine, John L. Lewis: A Biography (Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1977), pp. 390-91, 394; CR, 77:1 (16 April 1941) pp. 3143-47; CR, 77:1 (23 April 1941) p. 3253.

⁴¹Dubofsky and Van Tine, pp. 397-404; "Is Labor a Scapegoat?" Christian Century 58 (12 November 1941):1401; James A. Wechsler, Labor Baron, pp. 167-68; CR, 77:1 (19 November 1941) p. 9011.

⁴²New York Times, 22 March 1941; Newsweek, 14 April 1941, p. 46.

⁴³CR, 77:1 (31 January 1941) Appendix, p. 363; CR, 77:1 (5 March 1941) p. 1848.

⁴⁴CR, 76:3 (28 November 1940) p. 13776; New York Times, 6 June 1941; Frances Perkins, "Eight Years," p. 96.

⁴⁵CR, 77:1 (18 March 1941) Appendix, p. 1228.

⁴⁶New York Times, 24 February 1941; George Gallup, Gallup Poll, p. 304; Seidman, p. 27.

⁴⁷CR, 76:3 (17 May 1940) p. 6323.

⁴⁸CR, 77:1 (24 March 1941) p. 2536.

⁴⁹CR, 77:1 (29 January 1941) p. 348.

⁵⁰CR, 77:1 (13 March 1941) pp. 2222-23; Detroit News, 15 March 1941; CR, 77:1 (3 November 1941) p. 8458.

⁵¹CR, 77:1 (9 June 1941) p. 4894; Perkins, "Eight Years," p. 99.

⁵²CR, 77:1 (9 October 1941) p. 2661; Matthew Josephson, Sidney Hillman: Statesman of American Labor (Doubleday, 1952), p. 549. Ralph Volney Harlow, "Defense Problems of Business and Labor," Current History 1 (December 1941):324 gave the Carrier bid as being \$216,000 lower than any other.

⁵³McFarland, pp. 117-18; CR, 77:1 (22 January 1941) p. 245; Victor G. Reuther, The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW (Houghton Mifflin, 1976), pp. 214-19.

⁵⁴CR, 79:1 (27 November 1945) p. 11060; Reuther, pp. 241-42; CR, 77:1 (15 May 1941) pp. 4130-31. Frank Cormier and William J. Eaton, Reuther (Prentice-Hall, 1970) pp. 174-75 said Reuther was deferred because his wife depended on him for a job and not because of his role in the labor movement.

⁵⁵CR, 77:1 (13 August 1941) p. 7109; CR, 77:1 (15 May 1941) p. 4131.

⁵⁶Nelson Lichtenstein, "Ambiguous Legacy: The Union Security Problem During World War II," Labor History 18 (Spring 1977): 218-19; Seidman, pp. 61-63; Foster Rhea Dulles, Labor in America: A History 2d rev. ed., (Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960), p. 327; Don Q. Crowther, "Strikes in 1941," Monthly Labor Review 54 (May 1942): 1107-08; "Congress Considers Abolition of the Forty-Hour Week: Case History," Congressional Digest 21 (May 1942):132. Employers also considered maintenance of membership to be similar to the closed shop, see Richard Polenber, War and Society: The United States, 1941-1945 (J. B. Lippincott, 1972), p. 158.

⁵⁷Neil MacNeil, Forge of Democracy: The House of Representatives (David McKay, 1963), p. 320.

⁵⁸CR, 77:1 (21 March 1941) p. 2472. Victor Reuther agreed that Communists were behind some of the strikes, see his book pp. 223-24.

⁵⁹CR, 77:1 (4 August 1941) p. 6688; CR, 77:1 (5 August 1941) p. 6788.

⁶⁰Warren F. Kimball, The Most Unsordid Act: Lend-Lease, 1939-1941 (Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), pp. 172, 194, 206, 233; CR, 77:1 (13 January 1941) pp. 129-30; CR, 77:1 (6 February 1941) p. 721 and Appendix, p. 473; "The New Battleground," Christian Century 58 (19 March 1941):69-70; "The Battle of 1776," New Republic 104 (20 January 1941):69-70; Newsweek, 17 February 1941, p. 19.

⁶¹Time, 10 March 1941, p. 14.

⁶²John Roy Carlson, Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America--The Amazing Revelation of How Axis Agents and Our Enemies Within Are Now Plotting to Destroy the United States (E. P. Dutton, 1943), pp. 211-13.

⁶³CR, 77:1 (26 February 1941) p. 1439; Joseph P. Lash, Eleanor and Franklin: The Story of Their Relationship, Based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers, with a Foreword by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and an Introduction by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., (New American Library, Signet Books, 1973), pp. 778-80.

⁶⁴CR, 77:1 (17 March 1941) p. 2309. See CR, 77:1 (18 March 1941) Appendix, p. 1228 for an explanation of it.

⁶⁵CR, 77:1 (25 April 1941) p. 3333; CR, 77:1 (15 May 1941) p. 4131; CR, 77:1 (28 June 1941) p. 5520.

⁶⁶William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, The Undeclared War 1940-1941 (Harper & Brothers, 1953), pp. 577-78; CR, 77:1 (9 July 1941) p. 5884; Robert A. Divine, The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II, 2d ed., (John Wiley & Sons, 1979), p. 132.

⁶⁷Divine, Reluctant Belligerent, pp. 148-49; CR, 77:1 (30 October 1941) p. 8365; Dallek, p. 288. For how the Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, attempted to justify Roosevelt's speech, see Langer and Gleason, p. 748.

⁶⁸Divine, Reluctant Belligerent, pp. 135-36.

⁶⁹CR, 77:1 (12 August 1941) p. 7062; New York Times, 13 August 1941.

⁷⁰CR, 77:1 (12 August 1941) p. 7062; Newsweek, 25 August 1941, p. 17. Langer and Gleason quoted Hoffman's statement as an example of the attitude of those who put politics above principle, see p. 574. Joe Martin was one who voted against the bill although he hoped it would pass, see his book Fifty Years, pp. 97-98.

⁷¹Divine, Reluctant Belligerent, p. 147; CR, 77:1 (7 May 1941) p. 3727; CR, 77:1 (10 November 1941) p. 8759.

⁷²CR, 77:1 (30 July 1941) p. 6457; New York Times, 23 September 1941; Detroit News, 1 October 1941.

⁷³CR, 76:3 (1 May 1940) p. 5351; CR, 77:1 (19 February 1941) p. 1194.

⁷⁴CR, 77:1 (16 April 1941) p. 3141; CR, 77:1 (25 April 1941) p. 3332.

⁷⁵CR, 76:2 (31 October 1939) Appendix, p. 639; CR, 76:3 (26 April 1940) p. 5146.

⁷⁶CR, 76:3 (26 April 1940) p. 5145; CR, 77:1 (3 June 1941) p. 4687. See below p. 147 for his legislation.

⁷⁷CR, 77:1 (14 August 1941) pp. 7158-59; Detroit News, 1 October 1941; CR, 77:1 (4 December 1941) p. 9425.

⁷⁸CR, 76:2 (24 October 1939) p. 810.

⁷⁹Lawrence S. Wittner, Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1941-1960 (Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 20; CR, 76:2 (27 October 1939) pp. 1041-43; New York Times, 28 October 1939; Time, 6 November 1939, p. 14.

⁸⁰CR, 76:2 (25 October 1939) p. 883; CR, 76:2 (27 October 1939) p. 1042.

⁸¹William Gellerman, Martin Dies (John Day, 1944), p. 188; CR, 76:3 (23 January 1940) pp. 571-72.

⁸²CR, 77:1 (15 April 1941) p. 3132.

⁸³Detroit Free Press, 10 September 1965; CR, 87:1 (11 September 1961) pp. 18813-14; CR, 87:1 (16 September 1961) pp. 19795-96.

⁸⁴CR, 90:1 (13 November 1967) p. 32209.

⁸⁵Letter from George Meader to author, 17 September 1980; Kalamazoo Gazette, 18 March 1962 in HBF; MacNeil, p. 366; Detroit

Free Press, 30 January 1956 in Michigan AFL-CIO, Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in the Walter Reuther Library, Wayne State University, hereafter cited as WRL.

⁸⁶CR, 78:2 (27 January 1944) p. 821; CR, 77:1 (19 September 1941) p. 7488.

CHAPTER 4

"Don't Haul Down the Stars and Stripes"

(1941-45)

These were tumultuous years for Hoffman. Not only was he criticized by his colleagues, national commentators, and various newspapers and magazines, he even faced the opposition of some state GOP leaders as he defended himself against charges of being pro-fascist. Although some of his difficulties stemmed from his pre-war isolationism, the main source was what was commonly called the Judas speech, but what was actually two highly controversial speeches delivered in January 1942 and later printed together under the title, "Don't Haul Down the Stars and Stripes." Despite his troubles, which included four appearances before a federal grand jury, he survived and continued to espouse the same views as before.

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With the outbreak of war even the anti-Roosevelt members of Congress pledged their support to the administration's war effort. Hoffman was no exception. Noting that he had done his best to avoid war, he vowed to aid in fighting it and promised to leave the military planning to the experts. However, he cautioned that he was not going to blindly follow the leaders, a point he stressed in January in his notorious Judas speech.¹

The motive behind the speech was to prevent Congress from establishing a United Nations and voting the money for it, an idea advocated by an organization known as World Fellowship, Inc. He said Harold Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior, and others such as Clarence Streit, the author of several books promoting a world government, were "Judases" because they would betray the nation's independence. Hoffman, who once said that he would fight against a world government "until I die," claimed that if such an organization were established, other nations would become "glorified participants" in the various federal programs at the expense of the American taxpayer. While agreeing that the Axis leaders were enemies, he contended that an even greater threat was posed by those who sought to destroy American liberties and independence by creating a UN. He urged Roosevelt to offset the fears engendered by the pro-UN propaganda by publicly stating his opposition to it.

(Hoffman's vision of the UN was based on the ideas of Streit who called for a supergovernment including an executive branch and a world congress which would make laws affecting the United States.)²

While some thought his speech was un-American, his basic problem stemmed from the way it was utilized by American fascists. After his speech was found in mail sent out by fascists, at times in the same envelope with their propaganda, a federal grand jury which had been investigating sedition in the United States since mid-1941, called Hoffman and his secretary, Helen Boyer, to appear before it. He testified four times and his secretary six times, although neither was ever indicted. (The New York Post, while not

giving names, insisted that the indictments did not tell all, believing that there was evidence that showed that the conspiracy reached into Congress.)³

Hoffman, maintaining that he was the victim of unfair criticism, said that his speech had been distributed without his knowledge or consent by third persons in their own envelopes, along with improper material of their own. Not everyone was convinced by his protestation that he was the target of unjustified abuse. Blair Moody, a correspondent for the Detroit News, who was later described by Hoffman as a worshipper at the New Deal footstool, said that for years Hoffman had been "one of the most accomplished, persistent, reckless and irresponsible smear artists in Congress." He had "no kick at getting smeared. In that league, he is merely being handed a mild dose of his own medicine."⁴

Hoffman criticized Moody's handling of the story about his appearances before the grand jury, saying that those who did not know him would conclude that he was being investigated and had possible ties to pro-Hitler groups. Those who knew him would just have another reason to lose confidence in the accuracy of the press.⁵

Because of the growing criticism of him, he raised several questions of personal privilege. His first, on 13 April 1942, concerned an article from the Detroit News of 10 April regarding the use of his speeches as part of a subversive campaign, and an article from the 10 April issue of PM which claimed that he had called Roosevelt a Judas. He insisted that his speeches were not

subversive and denied calling the President a Judas. He said if he wanted to attack Roosevelt, he would do it directly, rather than by implication.⁶ While he did not specifically call Roosevelt a Judas, he did say that anyone seeking a UN was a Judas. Since Roosevelt desired such an organization, it seemed to many that Hoffman's attack on the President, coming so shortly after Pearl Harbor, made a mockery of his pledge of unity.

His defense was interspersed with "sharp exchanges" with Clifton A. Woodrum (D, Virginia) and McCormack, as well as with "high praise of his record and denunciation of Roosevelt's" by Robert F. Rich (R, Pennsylvania) and Leland M. Ford (R, California). He agreed to permit the district attorney, or anyone else who desired, to inspect his files and disavowed any connection with anyone "who to my knowledge is circulating any pro-Nazi material." He sought to play down any role he might have had in distributing the speech by claiming that anyone could buy the Congressional Record, have the speech privately printed, and distribute it on his own. Woodrum noted, however, that this was not the case since Hoffman's speech had been printed by the Government Printing Office which would not have done it without his permission.⁷

Hoffman took the offensive by claiming that William P. Maloney, the special attorney in charge of the sedition investigation, was using the charges against him as ammunition for the 1942 election. His assertion that Maloney had boasted that if he had three months, he could defeat every isolationist Republican in the House, was challenged by McCormack who unsuccessfully pressed

Hoffman to reveal the source of the statement. Maloney labeled Hoffman's charge an "unmitigated lie. Nothing I've ever said could be interpreted that way by any reasonable person--and mind you, I said reasonable." Claiming that the move against him was part of a smear campaign against Republicans, Hoffman pledged to continue his efforts "against these New Dealers and Communists and they can smear and be damned to them."⁸

Hoffman professed to wonder why, if his remarks were treasonous, no one had objected before?⁹ His Judas speech was not treasonous, but rather fairly standard Hoffman rhetoric. It was more the use American fascists made of it that was the source of his problem.

His defense did not satisfy all of his critics. The Detroit News did not accept his explanation of his association with George Hill, secretary to Hamilton Fish (R, New York), who, by Hoffman's own admission, had used his frank to mail material for George Sylvester Viereck, a German propagandist. (Hill later went to prison for perjury concerning his role in Viereck's use of franked mail.) The Washington Post, terming it "an hour of invective" by the "scowling isolationist," agreed with the News that he had failed to answer all of the questions. While the objectivity of the Post is questionable since one of its reporters, Dillard Stokes, had strongly assisted in the grand jury investigation, it is true that he did not respond to all of the charges. One accusation he did not acknowledge was that he had given reprints to Charles B. Hudson, who was later tried for sedition. Hoffman later commented that he did not know how Hudson obtained them.¹⁰

His explanation did not stop further criticism from being leveled against him. The New Republic accused him of authorizing William Kullgren, who was later tried on charges of sedition, to use his frank. He denied knowing Kullgren or permitting him to use his frank, insisting that if Kullgren used a franked envelope, he must have stolen it.¹¹

To counter the charge of misusing his frank, he agreed to put in the Congressional Record the names of those to whom he sent more than one hundred copies of his speech, along with the number sent. Actually, while he did identify a few recipients of his speech, he did not list all of the names, claiming that he had already informed Maloney of the number of copies sent out unfranked, to whom, and by whose request. He noted that if Maloney had been as concerned with the facts as he was with publicity, this information could have been obtained privately and at no inconvenience to anyone. Such a procedure, however, would not have furnished "political ammunition to his war-worn fighting friend," the columnist and radio commentator, Walter Winchell, "who specializes in poison gas."¹²

That there was a problem with Maloney's handling of the affair is clear from Francis Biddle's assessment of him. Biddle, the Attorney-General, believing Maloney ambitious and unsuited for the job of special prosecutor, removed him from the case.¹³

Hoffman disputed the right of the grand jury to question a member of Congress regarding speeches made on the floor, saying that, because of the intimidation or coercion associated with such questioning, the right of freedom of speech and press was lost.

The Washington Post dismissed his claim as a new and sweeping theory of congressional immunity.¹⁴ Since the grand jury seemed more concerned with the distribution of the speech than with its content, his assertion that the grand jury was threatening basic civil liberties seems unconvincing.

His Judas speech, which caused some unfairly to question his loyalty, was not his only problem. His prewar isolationism also contributed to his troubles. When, three days after Pearl Harbor, Emmanuel Celler (D, New York) blamed the isolationists for having hindered the nation's defense effort, Hoffman, called by one paper, "probably the most vocal isolationist" in the House prior to 7 December, declared that he was proud of his opposition to the war. In March 1942 after Patrick, saying that Hoffman had shed "less light on more subjects than any man on the floor since I have been here," assailed him for voting against almost every defense measure, he replied that he refused to remain silent when people questioned his loyalty by attacking his pre-war policies. With the nation at war he believed it was best to forget such matters. When he stated, as he frequently did, that he had not opposed any defense measure, Patrick rightly noted that this was not true. Hoffman said that he was referring only to the time since Pearl Harbor, a period of just over three months.¹⁵ Actually during World War II he voted for nearly every defense bill.

Various publications, including Time, Life, the Chicago Sun, the Daily Worker, the New Republic. and the New Masses, were accused by Hoffman of smearing those who opposed the war before 7 December

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1941. Proud to be an isolationist, he gave a rather unusual definition of what he perceived that to be. It was someone who believed in the United States and its form of government, believed in its citizens, thought the war could be won through united effort, believed in religion and religious freedom, believed in the motto, "In God we trust," and was willing to sacrifice everything for the nation.¹⁶

His loyalty was also questioned because of his association with various American right-wingers. Although the relationship was apparent in the late 1930s, it did not generate the controversy then that it did during World War II. He was accused of having some of his speeches sponsored by the propagandist Merwin K. Hart, chairman of the Congress of American Private Enterprise and of being sponsored on speaking tours by the right-wing activist, Joseph P. Kamp, who besides being the head of the Constitutional Educational League, was also editor and publisher of The Awakener. One author, John Roy Carlson, claimed, without offering any proof, that reports "have long been rife that the 'research' for many of Hoffman's speeches and even some of the speeches themselves" were done by Kamp. Hoffman denied that Kamp had done research for him or that he had written any of his speeches, saying that he knew of no one who would want to admit to having written any of his speeches. (He did praise some of the literature published by Kamp, and even distributed some of it at his own expense.)¹⁷

Some of the material he inserted in the Congressional Record, and the use to which it was put, also raised some doubts about his patriotism. Some of this material included a letter from Kamp protesting the unfair treatment he thought his League had received from the Civil Liberties Committee; a description and the location of a bomb shelter for Roosevelt and his staff, information that subsequently appeared in several pro-Nazi publications; remarks by Gerald L. K. Smith; material from Catherine Curtis of the Women Investors in America; quotes from a letter that was printed in Social Justice; and the article, "We Burned Our Fingers Once--Will History Repeat?" The article, believed by some to have been written by Viereck, supposedly had been given to Prescott Dennett, who represented Flanders Hall publishing company, a fascist concern funded by Viereck. Dennett in turn gave it to George Hill, who got Hoffman to put it into the Record. In his introduction to the article, Hoffman indicated that it was taken from the New York Enquirer. (William Griffin, the publisher, was later indicted for sedition.) Hill mailed 30,000 copies of the article under Hoffman's frank, apparently with the authorization of Hoffman's secretary. Hoffman accepted responsibility for permitting his frank to be used to issue reprints to Fish upon payment of the regular charge. The question of the actual source of the article is complicated by Hoffman's later statement that he, not Viereck, had written it.¹⁸ Certainly his involvement with the article, whatever the true nature of its authorship, only increased the suspicion of some that he was somehow in league with fascists.

Doubts about his loyalty continued throughout the war. The trial of various American fascists for sedition (the number varied from time to time) dragged on from 1942 to 1944. Hoffman's criticism of the government's handling of the case, while generally valid, did not help erase the question of any possible ties he might have had with fascist organizations.

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His pledge of unity did not cause him to curtail his attacks on the New Deal. Convinced that the people wanted the government to rid itself of every activity not essential to the war effort, he assailed various agencies. In doing so he had the support of the Benton Harbor News-Palladium which believed that 99 out of every 100 Americans agreed with him. While concurring with Hoffman on the need to prevent waste, the editor wrote that Hoffman was sometimes "supercritical" and that he was "naturally and inherently insurgent." The editor accurately predicted that if the Republicans were in power, he would be "just as caustic."¹⁹

His advice regarding New Deal agencies was: "Win the war first--look after social reform later." In keeping with this ultra-conservative philosophy, he said that the Civilian Conservation Corps, which he conceded had done some good work, was a luxury the nation could not afford. He also called on his colleagues to oppose the authorization of \$5 million to keep young people in school through the auspices of the National Youth Administration.²⁰ His sincerity concerning social reform is questionable. Like other

ultra-conservatives, he undoubtedly relished the opportunity the war offered to dismantle parts of the New Deal.

While some of his criticisms of the New Deal may have been justified, not all were. His attack on a committee of the Office of Civil Defense, directed by Eleanor Roosevelt, showed how petty he, and others, could be. Two of her appointees, Mayris Chaney, a modern dancer, and Melvyn Douglas, a film actor, were vilified by the Republican press, while in Congress "dangerous ranters of the type of the incredible Clare Hoffman of Michigan had a field day." Hoffman launched a Bundles for Eleanor campaign, a takeoff on the Bundles for Britain movement, to help put "unfortunate idle rich people" in civilian jobs. Because of the furor, Mrs. Roosevelt and the two appointees resigned.²¹

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The election of 1942 threatened to be one of his most difficult. His prewar votes on defense matters, his attacks on Roosevelt, his Judas speech, coupled with the widely held suspicion that he had ties to fascists, assured that his defeat would be the goal of many different groups and individuals.

He claimed as early as April that he was targeted to be purged by the administration. In May he rebuked the New Republic for seeking the defeat of ninety members of Congress, of whom he was one of the major ones, calling the magazine's "scurrilous, lying attack" a modified form of "the domestic political procedure of Joe Stalin and Adolf Hitler." The New Republic admitted that

some pre-Pearl Harbor obstructionists could be forgiven since they later supported a ruthless war against the Axis, but those like Hoffman had not changed regardless of what they claimed. He belonged to that "small band of obstructionists" who were "delaying, slandering their government, playing the Nazi game." The editors said that he was part of a group "which deserves to be classified as almost conscious fascists," declaring his voting record to be "almost 100-percent bad."²²

His defeat was also called for by the Nation which described him as a "crabbed small-town Republican lawyer with a dour face and a vigilante spirit." Hoffman's voting record "makes Hamilton Fish look like an interventionist by comparison, and Eugene Cox like a New Dealer." He had also "earned the ugly distinction of being the most vituperative man in the House. 'Get some more men like Hoffman into Congress'" one of his colleagues reportedly said, "'and our democratic process will simply break down.'" He was characterized as a member of the "extreme Tory wing from his first day in Congress." The authors, accusing him of using personal abuse as a political weapon, said his "vulgar and venomous" criticisms of Roosevelt were typical of his attacks on New Dealers. They claimed that virtually every paper banned from the mails for sedition had published his speeches, while his office was labeled a "rallying point" for visiting fascists.²³

His opposition was not limited to just the Democrats, his own state party made an effort to deny him the nomination. According to an article in the Detroit News, the leaders considered his

war record, "his labor-baiting, the bitterness of his anti-Administration attitude, the use made of his speeches by subversive organizations, and have put him down as a distinct party liability." The district party leaders, while conceding his strength in the rural areas, believed he could be beaten since his record of victories was thought to be partly the result of his not having faced any significant opposition since 1934. The financing for a primary opponent was not a problem since labor was "prepared to make an issue of his candidacy." It was also believed that several party members outside the district "would consider it a privilege to contribute to Hoffman's political retirement." The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, as well as state and national leaders of the CIO, listed him as one of the members of Congress whose defeat they sought.²⁴

Since a GOP nomination was tantamount to election, his defeat had to come in the primary. T.R.B., writing in the New Republic, was disappointed that the poet and historian, Carl Sandburg, a resident of the district, refused to run, although urged to do so by a CIO local, since it all but assured a Hoffman victory. Hoffman was one of the main Republicans whose defeat T.R.B. was hoping for. While there was some difficulty in finding an opponent, when J. T. Hammond, a member of the state legislature, finally agreed to oppose Hoffman, Republicans "who put the nation's welfare above petty partisanship cheered."²⁵

Hammond questioned Hoffman's loyalty, accusing him of voting against fortifying Guam and of failing to aid England. The former

was a canard hurled at him, both in the 1942 and 1944 elections. He denied the charge, noting correctly, that the money requested would not have helped in the island's defense. (Joe Martin, the GOP House leader, opposed the bill because it was unclear whether it was to fortify the island or just a case of pork barreling. Carl A. Vinson, a Georgia Democrat who served as chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, shared Hoffman's assessment of the bill.) As to his not supporting England, he said that he had voted to extend all aid short of war, a less than accurate statement. He in turn charged the administration with "murder" in sending Americans into battle ill-equipped, claiming the shortage of equipment resulted from sending too much to England. Some, like the Detroit Times, were not persuaded by his affirmations of loyalty. When the paper charged him with disloyalty, he sued for libel and the paper, after investigating, retracted its accusation.²⁶

Hoffman also responded to a twelve page pamphlet which was circulated from house to house. One of the charges he denied was that he had ordered 145,000 copies of his Judas speech and that 105,000 of them had been mailed out in franked envelopes by Charles B. Hudson. (He later said that he printed 165,000 copies and that he had requests for over 300,000. He also claimed that some Methodist churches had paid for his speech.)²⁷

There was a difference of opinion as to his primary chances. The Nation, noting that labor, as well as Republicans tired of being represented by him, were backing Hammond, believed that he might be defeated. The magazine incorrectly assumed that the loss

of some of his fascist supporters had weakened him: Social Justice, which had called him a "good American," was no longer published; Elizabeth Dilling, who had asked her followers to thank God for his "integrity and courage," was involved in the sedition proceedings; and William Dudley Pelley of the Silver Shirts, who had praised him as a "fighting patriot," was in jail. If Hoffman's opponents alerted the voters to his record, the Nation thought he could be beaten.²⁸ The assumption that he won because of such backing indicated a lack of understanding of his constituents.

The Detroit News thought that Hoffman would win. One correspondent thought that what might prove decisive against him was not his strong isolationism, since the voters seemed unconcerned with his prewar voting record, but that he talked too much, a point even his supporters conceded. "As a sounder-offer . . . he is a near runner-up to a nervous guinea hen." Hoffman admitted that he found a chance to make some remark nearly every day. While the paper, PM, said that it was his garrulousness that accounted for his poor reputation, it also noted that his "glibness makes the figments of his imagination seem so real to his constituents that even union men vote for him."²⁹

His constituents seemed unconcerned about his anti-Roosevelt remarks or the use that subversives made of his speeches. The attacks made on him by people outside of his district, which he adroitly capitalized on by painting them as part of an administration effort to purge him, seemed to be a matter of local pride. One paper probably expressed the attitude of many voters when it

boasted that no other candidate from Michigan, and only a "selected few" nationwide, had received the attention that Hoffman had.³⁰

While the opinion about the vigor of Hammond's campaign varied (the Detroit Free Press thought it spirited, while the Detroit News disagreed), there was no doubt about the magnitude of Hoffman's win. He received nearly 19,800 votes to Hammond's 5,900, despite the efforts of Walter Winchell, William P. Maloney, Carl Sandburg, "the New Deal poet, and other expert smear-purge artists, purveyors of falsehood and dirt." (Hoffman threatened to bring a libel suit against Sandburg when the campaign ended. There is no evidence that he did so.)³¹

The local press praised his victory. The Paw Paw Courier-Northern said the nationally known congressman, who had been the object of "bitter" attack, had conducted a "clean campaign." Another paper, noting how the opposition had "hammered him hard, attacking his patriotism and challenging his usefulness in Congress, called it "a heart-warming event," and said he deserved to win because of his courageous, brave, honest, patriotic congressional fights. The Grand Rapids Press, using his victory as evidence, thought that the national primary results indicated that people were not interested in pushing social-economic issues during war-time, and that the issue of 100 percent support for Roosevelt's prewar policies "seems to have pretty well fizzled out." (Nearly all of the prominent isolationists won their primaries.)³²

His victory did not go unnoticed nationally. The Chicago Tribune, observing that he had been "the outstanding target among

six Michigan Republicans in Congress marked for the purge by eastern groups," and that the attack on him had been especially "violent and vicious," was pleased. Not everyone was as elated as the Tribune. The New Republic said the Michigan primaries "doomed" the people to two more years of "misrepresentation" by three GOP isolationists, one of them being Hoffman.³³

In the campaign for the general election, Hoffman focused on labor and his support for the war. Attempting to prove that he was not anathema to the CIO, he printed two letters from CIO locals thanking him for his stand in the Currier Lumber Co. fight. He also utilized pictures of union violence, noting how he had sought to prevent such incidents. He claimed that he had voted for every "essential" war measure since Pearl Harbor, a statement that was basically true for all of World War II. (It was after Pearl Harbor that, according to PM, he put up a map of the Pacific theater, a large portrait of General Douglas MacArthur, and a Four Freedoms poster on the walls of his office. It was also about this time that he hung several pictures of labor violence in his office. These latter pictures remained there for several years.)³⁴

The Nation and the New Republic both continued to urge his defeat. The Nation criticized Michigan's mainly Republican House delegation as "one of the most viciously reactionary groups that ever sat in Congress. We hope especially for the defeat of Hoffman and [George A.] Dondero, though the disappearance of the whole bloc would be a blessing to the country." The New Republic encouraged its readers to vote for Dean Morley, a widely known and popular

former State Representative (who was described by one paper as the "handpicked" choice of the Democratic Governor, Murray D. Van Wagoner), while Time noted that the New Dealers "earnestly desired" Hoffman's retirement.³⁵

The 1942 elections, which saw the GOP gain its biggest victory since 1928, almost winning control of the House, proved a "severe setback" to labor and liberals. Prewar isolationism was not an issue, as all but 5 of the 115 members of Congress with isolationist voting records won re-election. The outcome puzzled the Nation. The evidence that the people wanted to support the war actively was challenged by the re-election of such "pernicious isolationists" as Senator Charles W. Brooks (R, Illinois) and Representatives Fish, Hoffman, and Stephen A. Day (R, Illinois). Hoffman, judged by Richard Polenberg to be one of the most conservative and isolationist members of Congress, won easily, beating Morley 42,700 to 19,100.³⁶

Hoffman, worried about the expected large labor vote, concentrated on Berrien county. His nearly 2-1 margin in the county indicated that he must have won considerable labor support. (He seems to have done well elsewhere among the unionized workers. Leaders of the CIO local in Allegan estimated that about half of the membership voted for Hoffman.) In the smaller towns he won by 4-1 and 5-1 margins. He was "inspired" by the voting across Michigan which he claimed showed the opposition to New Deal bungling, and predicted that unless changes were made in the direction of the federal government, there would be a revolution similar to the

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French Revolution. He attributed his own victory not to his being liked, but rather because he voted the people's convictions.³⁷

The Chicago Tribune, a paper widely circulated in his district, wrote an editorial on the importance of his victory, declaring that he had "consistently spoken for the people of the country." No one "in either House or either party was as uncompromising in his opposition" to the New Deal, nor was any member "more thoroughly vilified by the bleeding hearts and the fellow travelers." With his re-election his reputation in the House "has been greatly enhanced and no doubt will continue to grow."³⁸

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Shortly after Congress resumed, he raised a question of personal privilege concerning the pamphlet that had appeared in his district prior to the primary. Insisting that he had no interest in defending himself, he claimed that there existed a nationwide effort to destroy Congress by defeating those who had antagonized certain subversive groups. He questioned whether people like Winchell, Maloney, and Stokes had not intimidated members in the exercise of free speech, which if true, meant that they had violated a federal law against two or more people intimidating officeholders to keep them from doing their job. While professing no desire to infringe on the freedom of speech or press, he said the issue was whether organizations or individuals could wage war against Congress to destroy its independence.³⁹

He received some support for his idea that there was a conspiracy against members of Congress. Frank B. Keefe (R, Wisconsin), noting that identical campaign literature had appeared in different districts with only a change in pictures and names, concurred in the need for an investigation. Joshua L. Johns (R, Wisconsin), who had been defeated, urged an inquiry, as did Jesse P. Wolcott (R, Michigan).⁴⁰ No action was taken.

His request for an investigation, while supported by some, was rejected by others who attacked him for his remarks. James P. McGranery (D, Pennsylvania) questioned why Hoffman criticized Maloney on the eve of the trial of the accused seditionists and wondered if he sought to prejudice the jurors. He accused Hoffman of putting Viereck's propaganda in the Congressional Record and mailing out 30,000 copies of it under his frank. Noting that Hoffman seemed to think highly of some of the sedition conspirators such as William Griffin, McGranery said the kindest statement he could make was that Hoffman had been fooled. McGranery was being unfair. Just because Hoffman may have shared some ideas with Griffin is not to say that he held him in high regard. Elmer J. Holland (D, Pennsylvania) noted that after the "terrible disclosures" at the Hill-Viereck trial about the use of the frank to disseminate Nazi propaganda, only one member, Hoffman, abused that privilege. Holland wondered what goal Hoffman was seeking. He also wanted him to explain his "unusual interest" in the sedition trial since he was not a defendant, unfairly implying some relationship between Hoffman and, at least, some of those indicted. John M. Houston

(D, Kansas), who was also concerned about Hoffman's statements regarding the impending trial, thought he made it seem that those indicted were simply victims of persecution by Maloney, Stokes, and others. He could understand Hoffman's "rage" about the trial since some of the defendants had used his speeches, but he thought it should be directed against them and not the prosecution.⁴¹

Hoffman, who was not present when his three colleagues made their remarks, was unable to reply until 11 January 1943. In response to McGranery he denied that the article "We Burned Our Fingers Once" was written by a Nazi agent, or that it was put in the Record at the request of one, saying that he had written it himself. He claimed that the only copies of it sent out in franked envelopes that did not go to his district went to members of the Purple Heart, which he termed a patriotic organization. (Whether he knew it or not, it was more than simply a patriotic group. The head of the Washington chapter was George Hill who reportedly used the organization in his right-wing activities.) He refused to apologize for putting an editorial from Griffin in the Record. Replying to Holland he denied ever misusing his franking privilege. He admitted to having given several thousand copies in franked envelopes to a representative of the Dames of the Loyal Legion, characterized by Hoffman as a patriotic group. (The president was questioned by the grand jury investigating sedition, and was reported to be friends with at least two of the defendants.) Copies also went to Charles B. Hudson, Gerald B. Winrod, and David Baxter, all defendants in the sedition trial, but not in franked envelopes.

To Houston he noted that he was not complaining about the indictment of anyone, nor any investigation, nor had he defended anyone who had been indicted. His complaint of 8 December 1942 dealt with the smear campaign against certain members of Congress. Actually Hoffman was only one of several members of Congress critical of the way the trial was being conducted.⁴²

Hoffman was attacked by various publications and individuals throughout the war years. In March 1943 he raised a question of personal privilege concerning an editorial in the 11 December 1942 issue of PM which said that Hoffman cooperated with the Nazi propaganda ring before Pearl Harbor. In April he raised another question of personal privilege against a column in which Winchell called him one of "Hitler's American Stooges." In June his question of personal privilege was based on an article by the United Auto Workers which said: "The Hoffmans, the Dieses, the Rickenbackers [Colonel Edward 'Eddie' Rickenbacker], and the forces of betrayal for whom they speak, have conspired against and viciously attacked the millions of men and women who are today providing the weapons needed by the armed forces of democracy."⁴³

While he raised five questions of personal privilege in 1944, he was mainly concerned with the book Under Cover by John Roy Carlson which accused Hoffman of associating with various fascists. Hoffman castigated the book, as well as a similar one by Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn entitled Sabotage!, for their guilt by association tactics. He said that Carlson had written to him under two different names hoping, unsuccessfully, to entrap

him, and had called on him at his office pretending to be someone else and then lied about the visit in his book. Hoffman, claiming to have read Under Cover three times, said the book was "filled with false charges." He warned Carlson that if he went to Hoffman's district and sold a copy of his book, he would face a libel suit. His dislike of Carlson was so intense that when Herman P. Eberharter (D, Pennsylvania) made favorable remarks about the author, Hoffman introduced a resolution to expunge the remarks from the Record. He also interrupted Arthur G. Klein (D, New York) in the middle of his speech in defense of Carlson on the point of no quorum and moved to adjourn.⁴⁴

Hoffman again raised several questions of personal privilege in 1945. One of them concerned a statement in the Flint Weekly Review made by representatives of the UAW that he would cover up for a gang of conspirators against the United States. Another dealt with remarks by George Seldes in an issue of his publication, In Fact, calling Hoffman a fascist and a seditionist. Seldes also cited a book by Henry Hoke which claimed that both John E. Rankin (D, Mississippi) and Hoffman had demanded that the Army stop teaching the soldiers about the enemy. Later Seldes claimed that some Army members were transferred or dismissed because of them and that word was out to lessen any criticism of fascism. It seems unlikely that Hoffman had sufficient influence to intimidate the United States Army regarding statements about fascism, let alone to be able to have personnel transferred or dismissed. However, actions of Hoffman's, such as praising the pamphlet by Kamp, "Join the

C.I.O. and Build a Soviet America," which he said he had circulated in his district at his own expense, were not likely to reduce the charges against him of pro-fascist sympathies.⁴⁵

Not everyone doubted his loyalty. McCormack said that no one was justified in challenging his patriotism. Knutson said that during his twenty-eight years in the House he knew of no one "more patriotic, more loyal to his constituents and country," calling him a "100-percent American."⁴⁶ The evidence for any other assessment is lacking. That he may not have shown the most astute judgment in choosing the people with whom he associated is true, but it is also apparent that he was to a great extent merely the victim of guilt by association. He agreed with the fascists on various points, mainly on the need to avoid war and the threat of Communism, but he was not as extreme in some of his views as many of the fascists were, nor did he share the rabid anti-Semitism that characterized some. It seems that the connection between the fascists and Hoffman was simply that they used each other as a means to disseminate some of their ideas.

His major nemesis in the media was Walter Winchell, a man who "would break a rotten egg just to smell it." Hoffman was irate over Winchell's asking his radio audience: "How about the voters going after those other saboteurs who landed in Congress?" (He made this remark after the arrest of some German saboteurs.) He also had written that the reason some members of Congress wanted the saboteurs shot was that they feared they would talk, intimating, as Hoffman noted, that some members were linked to the saboteurs.

Hoffman, who had long criticized Winchell for doing broadcasts in his naval uniform, frequently exhorted the Navy to take some action against Winchell for violating the standards of behavior of a naval officer.⁴⁷

The depth of Hoffman's opposition to Winchell can be seen in one of his more vitriolic efforts (he excelled at being very witty or very caustic) when he remarked that Winchell's "imagination is exceeded only by his disregard for the truth and his insane desire to injure. His warped brain is constantly taxed to find new individuals to slander. His . . . broadcasts bring to mind a moronic child who gains pleasure by impaling flies on pin points or torturing small animals. Apparently, he derives a sadistic pleasure when he thinks he has injured someone by his malicious half-truths or complete falsehoods."⁴⁸

The feud between them greatly intensified during 1943-44, particularly over charges by Winchell that Hoffman had attempted to suppress the book Under Cover in Army camps. Hoffman denied the accusation, saying that he had simply asked for information about the number of copies the Army had purchased. Hoffman later said that he did not blame the Army for buying the book, but rather some "nitwit who wanted to stir up trouble." That he disapproved of the Army distributing material like Under Cover can be seen in a subcommittee report he wrote later recommending that the Army quit circulating non-military material of a controversial political nature.⁴⁹

While Winchell replied to one of Hoffman's attacks by saying that it was "the same old stuff. Hoffman must have lost his gag writer," he was not always able to dismiss him so casually. In 1944 Hoffman filed a \$250,000 libel suit against the columnist, although the case was later dropped.⁵⁰

The enmity between the two men was so intense that several members of the House became tired of hearing about it. Sabath, Eberharter, Samuel Dickstein (D, New York), Homer A. Ramey (R, Ohio), and Warren Magnuson (D, Washington) all thought that the House was devoting too much attention to Winchell. Magnuson said that if Winchell claimed there were saboteurs in Congress, "that is just about as preposterous as some of the things I have heard the gentleman from Michigan say." Noting the "concerted attack" on Winchell, mainly by Hoffman, PM said it had "reached incredible depths of infamy." Hoffman argued that when Winchell said that "Many of Hitler's American pals have been arrested, but too many have been renominated," he undermined the people's confidence in their leaders. At one time Hoffman's criticisms of Winchell caused a brouhaha in the House which saw members shout at one another and demonstrations erupt in the galleries, while acting chairman McCormack pounded his gavel "furiously."⁵¹

The whole Hoffman-Winchell episode illustrated a characteristic about Hoffman--his tendency to exaggerate minor issues into monumental concerns. His colleagues rightfully believed that too much time was spent on Winchell, although some in the House, such as Dies and Rankin, were also strong critics of the columnist.

Some of Winchell's statements about Congress were absurd and Hoffman would have been well advised to treat them as most did by simply ignoring them. Bringing them up in the House only drew attention to them. But to Hoffman, who saw no justification for striking against the defense effort and who was distressed at the thought of wasting money, the fight with Winchell was important. A wrong was a wrong and had to be corrected. If Winchell continued to make defamatory remarks about Congress, it was Hoffman's duty to defend himself and his colleagues.

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Although there was a significant decline in the number of strikes in 1942, labor remained a key concern of his. One issue of concern was whether the forty hour week aided or hindered the war effort. Hoffman agreed with the New York Times that the forty hour week should be abolished. His solution, opposed by the unions, was to allow certain individuals to work up to fifty-five hours per week with no overtime pay as long as they did not work over a set number of hours in a six month period. This would have permitted busy and slack periods without necessitating higher wages at one time and possible layoffs at another, a suggestion that would certainly have benefitted the canneries in his district. The forty hour week issue was finally settled when Roosevelt, through a 1943 Executive Order, established the forty-eight hour week with overtime pay for all hours beyond forty.⁵²

Another labor-related matter concerned the Supreme Court ruling of 2 March 1942 which said that the Anti-Racketeering Act of 1934 did not apply to labor unions. The decision supported the right of unions to levy tributes on every truckload of food or merchandise going into New York City. Since this was a practice in other sections of the country as well, Hoffman introduced an amendment to make the law applicable to interstate commerce.⁵³ While he was unsuccessful, the idea was later incorporated in the Hobbs Anti-Racketeering Act.

Although the time lost due to wartime strikes was small--proportionately it was less than in Great Britain during the same period--Hoffman criticized various labor leaders such as Lewis, Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (CIO) and a strong supporter of the President, and Walter Reuther, while continuing to excoriate Roosevelt. Some of his labor statements were so vehement that the Detroit News noted that when he did make a good point, such as the unfairness in paying a fee to get a job on military construction projects, the same concern had to be expressed by a "fair minded" congressman like Albert Engel (R, Michigan) before the House paid attention.⁵⁴ Since many colleagues seemed to assume that he simply voiced the prejudices of a small town conservative Republican, a more moderate approach would probably have been more successful. In his eagerness to do what he perceived to be right, he alienated many whose support was necessary.

The most serious labor dispute in 1943, accounting for two-thirds of the number of man-days idle, involved the coal miners.

Hoffman submitted a bill to avert the coal strike by providing that if workers struck a war related activity, they had ten days to get a job in some war industry. Failing that, the local military commander would find them a job for the same pay as a private in the Army. As noted earlier, he seemed indifferent to the need to maintain the workers' morale, choosing to win their support through intimidation. Although his solution was extreme, he was not the only one angered by the strike. Roosevelt was so upset that he not only considered drafting the strikers, but also arresting the union leaders.⁵⁵

Congress, mirroring the public's opposition to the coal strikes, passed the Smith-Connally Act. Hoffman urged its passage, saying that, since labor had failed to keep its no-strike pledge, Congress had no alternative. Like so many others in Congress, he failed to appreciate that the vast majority of workers had lived up to their pledge. The number of man-days idle for the entire war was equal to only one-ninth of 1 percent of the available working time.⁵⁶

Roosevelt vetoed the bill, saying that it was counter to labor's no-strike promise and was more likely to cause than prevent strikes, since it provided for the method by which a strike vote could be taken. The act, in effect, he said, freed labor from its pledge. (Experience showed that the law could be used to the advantage of unions by allowing them to bring pressure on employers.) Roosevelt also opposed the thirty-day cooling-off period and the need for strike votes, both of which Hoffman had advocated earlier.

There was more support in the House to override the veto than there had been for the original passage of the bill.⁵⁷

Despite the efforts of Hoffman and others to pass labor legislation, the Smith-Connally Act was the only significant labor measure of the war. Hoffman continued to seek to repeal or amend the Wagner Act, and happily inserted a letter from John P. Frey, president of the metal trades department of the AFL, into the Congressional Record calling for a suspension of the act during the war because it hindered the war effort, an argument Hoffman had long made. Among his newer concerns was the weakening of the role of unions in politics by making union political contributions illegal, an idea later embodied in the Taft-Hartley Act. (He also sought the same restrictions on trade associations and chambers of commerce, saying that he wanted to keep politics as free from such pressures as possible.) He opposed the CIO's Political Action Committee practice of assessing workers \$1 each because it was unfair to make a Republican worker help finance the Democratic party campaign. He admitted that theoretically people did not have to contribute, but in reality he said the pressure to do so was difficult to resist.⁵⁸

During 1944 the number of strikes reached the highest level in history, although few were long or threatened war production as they had in 1943. It was, however, of no consequence to Hoffman that they were of short duration, since the making of a single gun or shell was too important to be held up by any strike or dispute, another example of his pushing his ideas to the extreme.⁵⁹

One labor dispute that angered him involved the Montgomery Ward Co. which had rejected the War Labor Board's maintenance of membership formula. After Sewall L. Avery, the head of Ward's, challenged the authority of the WLB in April 1944, the employees walked out. When Avery refused to comply with the government's request that he accept the Board's ruling, the Attorney-General, Francis Biddle, citing the Smith-Connally Act, ordered soldiers to remove Avery from his office building. The military was used although neither the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, nor the Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall, approved of the way the case was handled. The picture of Avery being carried in the arms of two soldiers was front page news all across the country, with the incident itself becoming the rallying point for those disturbed by the amount of federal regulation. Not believing that Ward's was essential to the war effort, many concluded that the government was willing to coerce the individual entrepreneur at any level.⁶⁰

Hoffman saw it as an attempt to buy support from the CIO, which was involved in the dispute. He said: "Never before in the history of our country has so arbitrary, so unjustifiable a use of Executive power been exercised to deprive a citizen of his legal rights." He proffered an amendment to the Smith-Connally Act to prevent a repetition of the Ward's case by prohibiting the government from seizing a plant unless more than half of its production was directly concerned with the war.⁶¹ That Roosevelt overstepped himself in the Ward's case seems clear, but Hoffman's measure with

its inflexibility was probably not the answer. A more judicious application of the Smith-Connally Act would have been preferable.

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Viewing the slandering of the farmers as the "present indoor sport of the administration," Hoffman warned that he would not stand idly by while people libeled them. He accused Roosevelt of selling the farmers "down the river in return for the political support of organized labor." Saying that the government had done enough to hurt them, he opposed the reciprocal trade agreements which increased competition for the American farmers. If the writers of the Constitution could have foreseen the harm government would inflict on the farmers, he said they would have provided a one year term for the president with the possibility of recall.⁶²

But while defending the farmers, he did not blindly vote in favor of every agrarian program. He opposed relief for distressed farmers because it obligated him to vote for other non-defense relief measures. What he wanted was for the government to leave the farmers alone, allow them to purchase the machinery they needed, and not to let the Army draft all the healthy young men. "I am sick and tired of having the farmers made the goat."⁶³

His major complaints regarding agriculture concerned the shortage of labor, parity, and the Office of Price Administration. Angered by the proposal of General Lewis B. Hershey, the head of Selective Service, to solve the labor shortage on the farms by drafting all able-bodied young men who left the rural area for a

higher paying city job, Hoffman wondered why this did not apply to factory workers. He claimed that this proved Roosevelt's pro-labor bias. Since draft exemptions were given to people in industry, he believed the same should be done in agriculture. To Hoffman the farmers were not seeking unfair treatment by asking for exemptions, they were simply wanting equitable treatment with labor.⁶⁴

He insisted that since other prices and wages had risen even more, 110 percent of parity was not unfair nor would it cause inflation. He pledged to vote against a concept he had long espoused, price stabilization, if an amendment requiring that the cost of farm labor be figured into the parity equation was not adopted. Actually the war years saw most farmers making significant gains in income, acreage, and ownership, with the prices of farm produce remaining at or above parity.⁶⁵

Much of his irritation about the government's farm policies was directed at the OPA, an agency he said he had had more complaints about than any other except for the NLRB and the WLB. Life supported his contention that OPA was unpopular in his district by noting that the farmers and the fruit growers around Benton Harbor were "furious" at the agency. He said Congress would either have to vote subsidies to the farmers, which his constituents did not want but which they would be forced to accept if conditions remained unchanged, or, what he favored, Congress would have to clean up the OPA and the government planners. He blamed the agency for the serious situation in the canneries in his district because

it kept wages so low that there was a labor shortage which, coupled with a ceiling price that did not equal the cost of production, meant that the nation faced a food crisis unless the bureaucrats let the civilians run the system. He would have agreed with the assessment of Newsweek that agriculture "has been the runt pig in the litter of war production when it came to men, machinery, and material."⁶⁶

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Hoffman's isolationism never wavered during the war. When, in 1943, a few pacifists organized the Peace Now Movement, his views were considered compatible enough that he was sought as a supporter. The majority of pacifists, however, refused to associate with an organization which, as A. J. Muste, probably the nation's leading pacifist, noted, was supported by the "ultranationalist and near fascist elements."⁶⁷

In August 1943 he delivered an address on behalf of Gerald L. K. Smith's Committee of One Million, criticizing the attempt to create a United States of the World, saying that that was a goal shared by Hitler and Stalin. When J. William Fulbright (D, Arkansas) submitted a resolution in June 1943 calling for the establishment of a United Nations, opposition was minimal. Hoffman, however, "shouted (he never spoke in a normal voice in an argument)," his opposition to it, saying that it meant the repeal of the Declaration of Independence and a change in the policies that had guided the nation since its creation. The United States would play

Santa Claus by furnishing the rest of the world money for the world government. If this was the best way to prevent war, he thought it might be worth the loss of independence, but history showed that this was not the case. Instead he opted for the plan of Colonel Robert McCormick, publisher of the Chicago Tribune, which called for other nations to become states in the United States, a less than subtle way of maintaining the status quo. If Fulbright's plan was accepted, Hoffman predicted that Americans would be policing foreign lands while foreigners kept order in the United States, not a very "pretty picture." Despite the "furious attack" against it by a small band of isolationists, the Fulbright resolution passed the House 360-29. Of the negative votes, 24 came from the Midwest and all but 3 of the 29 were Republicans. (That his hostility to the UN did not wane can be seen by an event that occurred nearly twenty years later. In 1962 when it was suggested that the UN flag be flown over American schools, Hoffman cried that it would be an "insult to Betsy Ross.")⁶⁸

While keeping his promise not to criticize the conduct of the war, he expressed concern about its objectives. In August 1943 he called for an end to the war, noting that it was senseless to continue fighting until the enemy was decimated: "War pursued to the bitter end is a bitter tragedy, and the sooner we can stop it the better." He said the people had a right to know what they were being asked to fight for. What would follow the defeat of the Axis? How far around the world would the American flag go? What about helping India against England? How would the public

know when the war was over if they did not know what the objectives were? He envisioned Stalin taking over part of Eastern Europe and wondered if the administration would go to war because of it. These were certainly valid questions and Roosevelt was not providing the answers. Indeed Roosevelt and Hull were apprehensive that congressional discussion of war aims might pose a threat to Allied unity. There was also the fear that too many specifics could alienate various ethnic and religious groups.⁶⁹

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After being unopposed in the 1944 primary, certainly a welcome change after his last primary, he faced Bernard T. Foley, a Benton Harbor high school teacher, in the general election. Hoffman was aided by colleagues like Everett McKinley Dirksen (R, Illinois) who campaigned for him, and Knutson, who, in a House speech, praised him as a "most valuable" member whose defeat "would be a distinct loss" to his district, his state, and the nation. "It would be a national misfortune were he to be retired from Congress." The nation would benefit if there were more Hoffmans in Congress: "May his tribe increase."⁷⁰

During the campaign Hoffman again had to contend with the CIO-PAC which he claimed distributed six different pieces of propaganda including, on the Friday before the election, a four-and-a-half page mimeographed release delivered door to door during the night. This release later served as the basis for a question of personal privilege since it accused him of working with Hitler and

his agents to defeat Roosevelt's defense efforts. He said the Communist controlled PAC sought his defeat because they were unable to buy his vote. There was also a charge in the Chicago Sun that Hoffman was associated with Homer Maertz, who was described as a pro-Nazi leader of the Deutsch-Amerikanischer Einheitsfront, although the two men denied any affiliation with each other.⁷¹

Vice-President Henry A. Wallace and Life differed in their estimates of Hoffman's re-election chances. Wallace predicted he would lose, whereas Life, although hoping for his defeat, expected the "eccentric and reactionary" Hoffman, whom they put in the "same aberrant category" as Senator Gerald P. Nye (R, North Dakota), Fish, and Knutson, to win. Not only did he win, but he did so by his largest margin yet, garnering 68,233 votes to Foley's 37,754. His victory was impressive not only because of the size of his win, but also because he was one of the few isolationists of either party to be re-elected. He accomplished this in an election that one paper labeled one of the "bitterest and dirtiest" campaigns in the district's history. His name had been linked with Nazi sympathizers, he had been called a "defeatist," "isolationist," "labor baiter," "hater," and a "slippery question dodger." The Benton Harbor News-Palladium, calling this his toughest fight, noted that the anti-Hoffman effort was a "bitter and insistent one right up to the hour of the opening of the polls." For eight weeks the PAC had "poured it on with vengeance and intensity." But as the paper observed, the PAC was fighting a candidate with a strong string of victories, in a predominantly Republican,

strongly conservative, basically agrarian district whose farmers and fruit growers did not like radical labor organizations. As before, he ran best in the rural areas, although even in Benton Harbor where the CIO was the strongest, he defeated Foley 3,100 to 2,900.⁷²

His win was probably also related to his concern for his constituents. One writer noted he was always "eager to go to bat for them" against the federal government. When he was in the district, he met freely with the voters, advertising where he would be available. Criticized for spending too much time dealing with problems of individual constituents and not enough on the major issues, he said that it was on their welfare that the welfare of the nation and ultimately the world rested.⁷³

While he savored his victory, he was made aware of a concern among some of his supporters that he become more selective in the company that he kept. The Benton Harbor News-Palladium surely spoke for others when it said that he had "hinted that he was going to discourage the nit-wits and the political racketeers that seem in past years to have gravitated to his company and office. We hope so."⁷⁴

An issue in the national election was the method by which those in the military would vote. There was clearly a problem in having 9 million people all over the world voting in accordance with the laws of forty-eight states. Since the assumption was that they would vote Democratic, the administration favored making voting as easy as possible. Fearing this, the Republicans teamed

with some Southern Democrats who hesitated to let the federal government weaken state control over elections lest this mean the enfranchisement of blacks.⁷⁵

Hoffman, who backed the plan giving states control, attacked the administration's plan to send the ballots back to the United States under the supervision of federal officials, saying that he would not trust them across a duck pond let alone 3-6,000 miles of ocean. He was later accused of trying to deny the vote to soldiers because he feared they would oppose him for having failed to support defense measures. He denied the charge.⁷⁶ Considering the policies he had supported and those he had fought over the years, it seems unlikely that he was motivated by fear of the soldier's vote. It would be more accurate to credit his stand to his opposition to the growth of the federal government, a trend he resisted throughout his career. Elections were in the purview of the states, any attempt to reduce the role of the states upset him, especially since the administration's plan involved voting only for national officials.

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A prominent issue during his sixth term was the question of national service legislation. Roosevelt, supported by Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal, Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, Chief of Staff Marshall, and Secretary of War Stimson, who had sought such an act for four years, came out in favor of it in January 1945. The idea was initially popular in Congress, but,

with victory in Europe increasingly evident, the Senate defeated the House bill.⁷⁷

Hoffman, along with organized labor, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chamber of Commerce, as well as magazines such as the Nation and the New Republic, opposed such legislation. While he declared that a national service act would create a system similar to that of Hitler and destroy the freedom for which the nation was fighting, one wonders, if he really was concerned about maintaining the worker's freedom, how he justified his work-or-be-drafted bill.⁷⁸

The labor situation in agriculture was certainly an issue of importance to him. For two years the administration had followed the Tydings amendment which provided, under certain conditions, for the deferment of farm workers. In January 1945, however, General Lewis Hershey was authorized to stop deferring men between eighteen and twenty-five who did agricultural work. Hershey told Hoffman that "We want the men, and we are going to take them," adding that the Tydings amendment "does not make any difference." Hoffman bitingly wondered if Roosevelt favored violating the Tydings amendment because farm boys were healthier than others or because their fathers tended to vote Republican.⁷⁹

He was one of 250 members of Congress who met with Hershey to seek a change in the new policy. When no change was forthcoming, he introduced a bill which required the commander to discharge any men who could prove that they were inducted in violation of

the Tydings amendment. Instead of his bill, Congress passed a measure calling on the administration to adhere to the Tydings amendment. Although vetoed by President Harry S. Truman, Hoffman insisted that the amendment stood regardless of the President's action.

Admitting that farm workers were not meant to be favored above others, he said the selective service was just what the name said--selective. Various groups were exempt and one was, and ought to be, essential farm workers. Actually, farmers were a prime source of draftable men under the age of twenty-six. In early 1945 there were three farmers deferred for every one industrial laborer. Draft deferments for farmers, though necessary, encouraged inefficient farming while placing an unfair burden on industry. As T.R.B. wrote, the farmers, thanks to the Tydings amendment, did better than anyone to assure themselves an adequate labor supply.⁸⁰

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When Truman became President after Roosevelt's death, Hoffman was initially pleased. While even the most zealous Republicans pledged their support to the new President, his praise seems to have been more than just a gesture of unity. In a newsletter to his constituents he called Truman "an honest, sincere, and average American citizen," who, if left alone, would make a good President. He also said that the new President had the faith of the people, since many believed he was another Calvin Coolidge. Stating that Truman had never shown any indication of being a New Dealer, Hoffman said the President had exhibited an admirable concern for

the separation of powers. He pledged his support to Truman in his efforts to return government to the people. His pro-Truman stance proved disconcerting to some of his supporters.⁸¹ With the coming problems at home and abroad, it did not take long for his opinion of the new President to change significantly.

Footnotes Chapter 4

¹Roland Young, Congressional Politics in the Second World War (Columbia University Press, 1956), p. 11; CR, 77:1 (16 December 1941) p. 9856; CR, 77:1 (12 December 1941) p. 9746; CR, 77:1 (10 December 1941) pp. 9346, 9630; CR, 77:1 (11 December 1941) Appendix, p. 5582.

²CR, 77:2 (27 January 1942) pp. 744-45; CR, 77:2 (13 April 1942) Appendix, p. 1385; CR, 77:2 (30 January 1942) pp. 886-87. Streit's first book was For Union Now (The Union Press, 1939).

³Detroit News, 10 and 13 April 1942; CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) p. 9403. Twenty years later the Benton Harbor News-Palladium called it "an epic in patriotism," 31 December 1962 in HBF.

⁴CF, 77:2 (16 April 1942) Appendix, p. 1452; CR, 78:1 (26 November 1943) p. 10047; Detroit News, 19 April 1942.

⁵Hoffman to Blair Moody, 24 April 1942, Blair Moody Papers, Box 2 in BHL.

⁶CR, 77:2 (13 April 1942) pp. 3449, 3455; Detroit News, 11 April 1942.

⁷Detroit News, 14 April 1942; CR, 77:2 (13 April 1942) pp. 3449-56. His statement about whether the reprints went out in franked envelopes (p. 3452) was not consistent with a later statement, see CR, 77:2 (20 April 1942) p. 3562.

⁸Detroit News, 14 April 1942; Hoffman to Frank Donald McKay, 29 May 1942, Frank Donald McKay Papers, Box 1 in BHL.

⁹CR, 77:2 (13 April 1942) pp. 3452-54.

¹⁰Detroit News, 14 April 1942; CR, 77:2 (22 January 1942) pp. 545-46; Washington Post, 14 April 1942; CR, 77:2 (20 April 1942) p. 3561.

¹¹"The Obstructionists," New Republic 106 (18 May 1942):706; CR, 77:2 (19 May 1942) Appendix, pp. 1832-33; CR, 77:2 (28 May 1942) p. 4725.

¹²CR, 77:2 (28 May 1942) p. 4728. That he was not the only one who was alleged to have misused his frank see Newsweek, 20 October 1942, pp. 21-22.

¹³Francis Biddle, In Brief Authority (Doubleday, 1962), pp. 238-40.

¹⁴CR, 77:2 (28 May 1942) p. 4728; Washington Post, 29 May 1942.

¹⁵CR, 77:1 (10 December 1941) p. 9646; Detroit Free Press, 4 April 1942; CR, 77:2 (11 March 1942) p. 2279; CR, 77:2 (16 March 1942) pp. 2526-27; CR, 77:2 (17 March 1942) p. 2615. One bill he opposed called for the inclusion of women in the military, see CR, 77:2 (12 March 1942) pp. 2592-93.

¹⁶CR, 77:2 (21 July 1942) Appendix, p. 2882.

¹⁷John Roy Carlson, Under Cover: My Four Years in the Nazi Underworld of America, pp. 459-60, 471; CR, 78:2 (25 April 1944) p. 3697; CR, 79:1 (22 February 1945) pp. 1368-69.

¹⁸CR, 75:3 (29 March 1938) Appendix, p. 1230; "Voices of Defeat," Life 14 (13 April 1942):92; CR, 77:1 (6 January 1941) Appendix, pp. 28-30; CR, 77:1 (30 January 1941) Appendix, pp. 350-52; CR, 76:3 (14 September 1940) Appendix, p. 5722; CR, 77:1 (4 August 1941) Appendix, pp. 3745-46; CR, 76:3 (2 July 1940) Appendix, p. 4241; CR, 77:1 (19 May 1941) Appendix, p. 2354; O. John Rogge, The Official German Report: Nazi Penetration 1924-1942, Pan-Arabism 1939-Today (Thomas Yoseloff, 1961), p. 164; Carlson, Under Cover, p. 484; Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, Sabotage! The Secret War Against America (Harper and Brothers, 1942), pp. 189-90; CR, 77:2 (22 January 1942) pp. 345-46; CR, 78:1 (11 January 1943) p. 105. Various speeches of his were reprinted by individuals accused of being pro-fascist. For example the Women Investors in America, Inc., headed by Catherine Curtis, published one of his speeches under the title, "The March of Democracy," and the Defender Publishers, headed by Gerald B. Winrod, distributed "How to Win the War and Save the Republic." Copies in HBF. See E. A. Piller, Time Bomb (Arco, 1945), p. 160 for a list of right-wing publications that he claimed printed Hoffman's speeches.

¹⁹CR, 77:2 (19 March 1942) p. 2737; CR, 77:2 (13 April 1942) Appendix, p. 1379.

²⁰CR, 77:2 (5 June 1942) pp. 4931, 4963.

²¹John Morton Blum, V Was For Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp. 224-25; Marquis W. Childs, I Write From Washington (Harper & Brothers, 1942), p. 263; Joseph P. Lash, Eleanor and Franklin, p. 838.

²²CR, 77:2 (6 April 1942) Appendix, p. 1325; CR, 77:2 (19 May 1942) Appendix, p. 1829; "The Verdict," New Republic 106 (18 May 1942):698; "Lend-Lease Appropriations," New Republic 106 (18 May 1942):690; "The Obstructionists," New Republic 106 (18 May 1942):706.

²³Will Chason and Esther Jack, "Keep Them Out! VI Clare E. Hoffman of Michigan," Nation 155 (15 August 1942):131-33. He was one of the people listed in the book by Rex Stout, ed., with an Introduction by Frank Sullivan, The Illustrious Dunderheads (Alfred E. Knopf, 1942), pp. 71-76.

²⁴Detroit News, 4 and 17 June 1942, and 11 July 1942.

²⁵T.R.B., "Washington Notes," New Republic 106 (1 June 1942):763; Torrey, "Clare Hoffman," PM, p. 4; T.R.B., "Washington Notes," New Republic 106 (18 May 1942):668; Detroit News, 11 and 15 July 1942.

²⁶Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 12 September 1942 in HS; Joe Martin, Fifty Years, p. 93; CR, 76:1 (21 February 1939) p. 1711; Detroit News, 7 September 1942. See the Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 14 September 1942 for a campaign ad which reprinted the retraction of the Detroit Times, in HS. For a discussion about fortifying Guam, see Earl S. Pomeroy, Pacific Outpost: American Strategy in Guam and Micronesia (Stanford University Press, 1951), chapter 5. Pomeroy agreed that the administration's requests regarding Guam were ambiguous and not presented in a way likely to gain congressional support.

²⁷CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) pp. 9396-97; CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8337.

²⁸Chason and Jack, "Keep Them Out!" p. 133.

²⁹Detroit News, 7 September 1942; Torrey, pp. 2, 4.

³⁰Detroit News, 7 September 1942; South Haven Tribune, 12 September 1942 in HS.

³¹Detroit Free Press, 16 September 1942; Detroit News, 7 September 1942; Michigan Manual, 1943-44, p. 248; CR, 77:2 (30 September 1942) p. 7660.

³²Paw Paw Courier Northern, 18 September 1942; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 17 September 1942 [name and date found on clipping]; Grand Rapids Press, 18 September 1942; Robert A. Divine, Second Chance: The Triumph of Internationalism in America During World War II (Atheneum, 1967), p. 71. All newspapers are in HS.

³³Chicago Tribune, 16 and 17 September 1942 in HS; Helen Fuller, "Voting for Victory," New Republic 107 (28 September 1942): 380. The remaining two Representatives were Bartel J. Jonkman and Paul W. Schafer.

³⁴Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 2 [date found on clipping] and 8 November 1942 in HS; campaign ads in HS; Torrey, p. 2; CR, 82:2 (20 March 1952) p. 2653.

³⁵"Battle of November 3," Nation 155 (31 October 1942):432; "These Are the Choices," New Republic 107 (5 October 1942):442; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 8 November 1942 in HS; unidentified and undated clipping in HS; Time, 16 November 1942, p. 44.

³⁶Joel Seidman, American Labor, p. 200; Time, 16 November 1942, p. 43; Divine, Second Chance, pp. 73-74; Robert Bendiner, "Dunderhead Election," Nation 155 (14 November 1942):497; Richard Polenber, War and Society, pp. 187-88; Michigan Manual, 1943-44, p. 269.

³⁷Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 4 November 1942 in HS; Torrey, p. 4; Sturgis Daily Journal, 4 November 1942 in HS; CR, 77:2 (12 November 1942) pp. 8804-07.

³⁸CR, 78:1 (19 January 1943) Appendix, p. 221.

³⁹CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) pp. 9396-402.

⁴⁰CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) pp. 9400, 9404.

⁴¹CR, 77:2 (10 December 1942) pp. 9457, 9462; CR, 77:2 (14 December 1942) pp. 9534-35.

⁴²CR, 78:1 (11 January 1943) pp. 104-07; Henry R. Hoke, Black Mail (Reader's Book Service, 1944), chapter 6; Washington Post, 18 April 1942; Neil M. Johnson, George Sylvester Viereck: German-American Propagandist (University of Illinois Press, 1972), p. 244.

⁴³CR, 78:1 (2 March 1943) pp. 1490-96; CR, 78:1 (9 April 1943) pp. 3195-200; CR, 78:1 (3 June 1943) pp. 5294-98.

⁴⁴CR, 78:2 (13 March 1944) p. 2538; CR, 78:2 (19 May 1944) p. 4773; CR, 78:2 (25 April 1944) p. 3697; CR, 78:2 (25 April 1944) p. 3706. See CR, 78:2 (26 April 1944) p. 3708 for Klein's comment about Hoffman's action.

⁴⁵CR, 79:1 (23 March 1945) p. 2665; CR, 79:1 (30 April 1945) p. 3995; George Seldes, One Thousand Americans (Bonl & Gaer, 1947), pp. 196-98; CR, 79:1 (22 February 1945) pp. 1368-69. The book by Hoke was It's a Secret (Reynal & Hitchcock, 1946). Seldes was a leading critic of Hoffman. For some of his comments see "Treason to Strike?" In Fact 4 (10 November 1941):1; "Exposed in 'In Fact,'" In Fact 4 (2 March 1942):3; "Suppressed News: Convention Names US Fascists," In Fact 7 (19 July 1943):2; "Two Fascist Members 'Nailed to the Floor' of Congress," In Fact 11 (14 May 1945):1-2; Facts and Fascism (In Fact, 1943), p. 160.

⁴⁶CR, 78:2 (25 April 1944) p. 3969; CR, 78:2 (21 September 1944) Appendix, p. 4251.

⁴⁷CR, 78:1 (21 December 1943) p. 10985; CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) p. 9403; CR, 77:2 (2 March 1942) p. 1843; CR, 78:1 (2 February 1943) p. 532. Hoffman said that Carl Vinson (D) wanted Winchell out of the Navy and that he agreed to raise the issue for the Georgian, see Detroit Free Press, 30 January 1956 in Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL.

⁴⁸CR, 78:1 (14 December 1943) Appendix, pp. 5462-63.

⁴⁹CR, 78:2 (27 March 1944) pp. 3129-31; CR, 83:2 (4 March 1954) p. 2697; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigation of Publication Sponsored by the Department of the Army Entitled "Army Talks," H. Rept. 2463, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, p. 4.

⁵⁰New York Times, 14 March 1944; Washington Post, 11 April 1944; CR, 86:2 (17 February 1960) p. 2803.

⁵¹CR, 78:2 (27 March 1944) pp. 3128, 3132; CR, 78:2 (29 March 1944) pp. 3274, 3278; CR, 78:2 (30 March 1944) p. 3350; CR, 78:2 (22 March 1944) p. 2908; New York Times, 28 March 1944.

⁵²New York Times, 16 February 1942; CR, 77:2 (4 March 1942) p. 1940; Young, pp. 60-61.

⁵³CR, 77:2 (6 March 1942) p. 2003.

⁵⁴Henry Pelling, American Labor (University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 178; CR, 77:1 (2 January 1942) p. 10138; CR, 77:2 (10 March 1942) p. 2189; CR, 77:2 (12 November 1942) p. 8805; CR, 77:2 (19 February 1942) p. 1497; Detroit News, 19 April 1942.

⁵⁵Seidman, p. 133; CR, 78:1 (19 March 1943) p. 2241; Polenberg, War and Society, p. 164.

⁵⁶Pelling, p. 178; CR, 78:1 (27 May 1943) Appendix, p. 2620; Seidman, p. 134.

⁵⁷Foster Rhea Dulles, Labor in America, pp. 343-44; Seidman, pp. 189-90; Young, p. 65.

⁵⁸Seidman, p. 191; CR, 78:1 (13 April 1943) p. 3337; CR, 78:2 (10 February 1944) p. 1566; CR, 78:1 (7 May 1943) Appendix, p. 2261; CR, 78:1 (14 April 1943) p. 3371; CR, 78:2 (21 February 1944) pp. 1937-38.

⁵⁹Seidman, p. 134; CR, 78:2 (8 December 1944) pp. 9077-78.

⁶⁰Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, On Active Service in Peace and War (Harper & Brothers, 1947), p. 491; Forrest C. Pogue, George C. Marshall: Organizer of Victory, 1943-1945 (The Viking Press, 1973), p. 360; Polenberg, War and Society, pp. 170-74.

⁶¹CR, 78:2 (27 April 1944) p. 3742; New York Times, 2 May 1944.

⁶²CR, 77:2 (15 January 1942) pp. 410-11; CR, 78:1 (17 September 1943) p. 7634; CR, 78:1 (12 May 1943) p. 4312; CR, 78:2 (6 September 1944) p. 7572.

⁶³CR, 77:2 (29 January 1942) pp. 854-55.

⁶⁴CR, 77:2 (2 October 1942) p. 7745.

⁶⁵CR, 77:2 (23 September 1942) pp. 7362-64 and Appendix, p. 3426; Polenberg, War and Society, p. 242; Blum, Victory, p. 141.

⁶⁶CR, 78:2 (9 June 1944) p. 5657; "'Republicans in Congress,'" Life 17 (30 October 1944):24; CR, 78:1 (12 October 1943) p. 8276; CR, 78:1 (15 June 1943) Appendix, pp. 3001-02; Newsweek, 18 January 1943, p. 46.

⁶⁷Lawrence S. Wittner, Rebels Against War, pp. 57-58.

⁶⁸Detroit Free Press, 3 August 1943; Young, pp. 192-93; Tristram Coffin, Senator Fulbright: Portrait of a Public Philosopher (E. P. Dutton, 1966), p. 63; CR, 78:1 (20 September 1943) pp. 7649-50; CR, 78:1 (21 September 1943) Appendix, p. 3982; Detroit News, 18 March 1962.

⁶⁹Walter Johnson, The Battle Against Isolation (University of Chicago Press, 1944), p. 238; CR, 78:2 (15 March 1944) p. 2622;

CR, 78:2 (21 March 1944) Appendix, p. 1469; George C. Herring, Jr., Aid to Russia 1941-1946: Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Origins of the Cold War (Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 123, 187-88; James MacGregor Burns, Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom, pp. 359, 468; Richard W. Steele, "American Popular Opinion and the War Against Germany: The Issue of Negotiated Peace, 1942," Journal of American History 65 (December 1968):719.

⁷⁰CR, 79:1 (14 December 1945) p. 12067; CR, 78:2 (21 September 1944) Appendix, p. 4251.

⁷¹CR, 79:1 (4 January 1945) p. 48; CR, 79:1 (22 January 1945) p. 417; campaign ad in HS; John Roy Carlson, The Plotters (E. P. Dutton, 1946), pp. 132-33. Carlson reprinted a letter purportedly written by Maertz noting what he had done to help in Hoffman's re-election. Carlson claimed that the letter was written on stationery from the hotel where both Maertz and Hoffman were registered.

⁷²New York Times, 4 November 1944; "The 1944 Elections Draw Near," Life 17 (30 October 1944):20; "'Republicans in Congress,'" Life 17 (30 October 1944):24; Michigan Manual, 1945-46, p. 282; Divine, Second Chance, p. 241; unidentified and undated clipping in HS; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 8 November 1944 in HS. Although the PAC earned a reputation of success in this election (see Richard H. Rovere, "Labor's Political Machine: The CIO Goes After the Votes," Harper's Magazine 190 [June 1945]:593), Alan Clive argued that it was undeserved, see State of War: Michigan in World War II (University of Michigan Press, 1979), pp. 83-84.

⁷³Torrey, p. 4; CR, 78:2 (6 December 1944) p. 8943.

⁷⁴CR, 78:2 (19 December 1944) p. 9786.

⁷⁵Polenberg, War and Society, pp. 195-97.

⁷⁶CR, 78:1 (18 October 1943) pp. 10911-12; CR, 79:1 (22 January 1945) pp. 418-19.

⁷⁷Pogue, 494; Elting E. Morison, Turmoil and Tradition: A Study of the Life and Times of Henry L. Stimson (Houghton Mifflin, 1960), p. 500; Young, pp. 78, 81-82.

⁷⁸Stimson and Bundy, pp. 485-86; "National Service Again," Nation 160 (13 January 1945):31-32; "Manpower," New Republic 112 (29 January 1945):135-36; CR, 79:1 (22 January 1945) p. 422; CR, 79:1 (1 February 1945) p. 731.

⁷⁹Young, p. 73; CR, 79:1 (25 January 1945) Appendix, p. 283; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Amending the Reorganization Act of 1949 (Emergency

Reorganization of the Executive Branch), Hearing before a subcommittee of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. 82d Cong., 1st sess., 1951, p. 22.

⁸⁰CR, 79:1 (25 January 1945) Appendix, p. 283; CR, 79:1 (2 February 1945) pp. 760-64; Young, p. 75; CR, 79:1 (4 May 1945) Appendix, p. 2098; Polenbergl, War and Society, pp. 22, 182; T.R.B., "Washington Notes," New Republic 109 (13 September 1943):363.

⁸¹George H. Mayer, The Republican Party: 1854-1964 (Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 466; CR, 80:2 (26 July 1948) p. 9382; CR, 79:1 (17 April 1945) Appendix, pp. 1841-42; Robert J. Donovan, Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1945-1948 (W. W. Norton, 1977), p. 26. Although Truman claimed he was a New Dealer from the start (see Harry S. Truman, Year of Decision, vol. 1 of 2 vols., Memoirs [Doubleday, 1955], p. 149), Hoffman's estimate of Truman as not being a New Dealer was shared by others, see Donovan, p. 26, and Alonzo L. Hamby, Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism (Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 50-51.

CHAPTER 5

"Gadzooks, That Man Is a Warrior!"

(1945-48)

While not as controversial a time for Hoffman as the war years, the immediate postwar years were probably his most satisfying ones in Congress. The Republican party became the majority party, thereby enabling him to assume the chairmanship of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments while retaining his membership on the Education and Labor Committee, both key assignments. Because of his new status, he was able to play a central role in some of the principal decisions of the 80th Congress, such as the Taft-Hartley Act and especially the National Security Act. Among his several bills, most of which dealt with labor, was one which had far reaching implications concerning the basic relationship between Congress and the Executive branch.

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With the end of the war came the usual problems of converting to a peacetime economy, as well as fear of what the postwar years would bring. President Truman tried to chart the way in September 1945 when he delivered one of his most significant statements about domestic policy, his Twenty-one Points speech. Among its many provisions was the call for a full employment bill, a

measure that had been part of the 1944 Democratic platform. Such a bill was introduced in January 1945, which did not please all the liberals, although some agreed with Collier's that they would accept any full employment bill.¹

It was not until February 1946 that the bill came to a vote in the House. Hoffman, who insisted that he was not against the principle of it, opposed it because of his concern about the false impression it created, rightly claiming that the bill did not guarantee full employment. He called it superfluous, insisting that there were ample public work projects to meet the unemployment problem without establishing a new agency, although considering his ultra-conservative voting record on such projects, it is questionable how many of them he would have supported. He also warned that the bill would lead to regimentation and to competition with private enterprise.²

Certainly a major complaint of his was that the industrial workers in large unions, rather than farmers or business groups would benefit the most from it. Conceding that the bill did not mention the necessity of being a member of a union in order to get a job, he asserted that that was how it would operate. He saw it as a way to aid Sidney Hillman and the PAC, and said he would vote for it only if it gave equality of job opportunity to union and non-union workers alike.³ Here again one sees his attempt to realize his long sought goal of putting into federal law the principle that union membership was not a requirement for getting a job.

He said that the best way to obtain full employment was to extricate the government from the economy. Admitting that this meant periods of boom and depression, he considered this preferable to government meddling. Along with John Gibson (D, Georgia), he unsuccessfully led a small group in the House against any version of full employment legislation. Even the weaker bill that came from the joint conference, of which he was a member, was unacceptable to him.⁴

During the first year after the war, the nation witnessed its worst period of labor conflicts. With the no-strike pledge ending with the war, despite Truman's attempt to get labor to continue the policy, both labor and management engaged in a test of strength. With prices rising more rapidly than wages, labor leaders were in a difficult position. Members who had chafed at the wartime restrictions looked to their leaders to win some victories. There was also the unhappy memories of the post-World War I experience which dismayed the union leaders. Further complicating the situation was the unreceptive attitude of the public to labor's requests. Labor, by not making any appreciable effort to improve its image, helped foster the belief that it was acting irresponsibly. Not surprisingly the public, blaming labor for higher prices and inflation, favored revising the nation's labor policy.⁵

One of Truman's first steps to deal with the labor problem was to call for the creation of fact-finding boards in certain types of labor disputes. While not an extreme request, it marked the first time since 1935 that an administration had endorsed a basic

change in the collective bargaining process. Hoffman offered three major reasons for opposing the boards: too much power was granted to them; no outsider should tell someone how to run his business; and, with Congress seeking to reduce the number of its committees, it made no sense to create more by establishing fact-finding boards.⁶

Truman's appeal failed in the House as the members chose instead to give priority consideration to an anti-labor bill offered by Francis Case (R, South Dakota). Case's measure, in part, called for workers, in certain instances, to lose their Wagner Act rights if they violated the bill. Despite admitting that this was essentially the same measure he had introduced in 1939 and had been fighting for ever since, Hoffman opposed the Case bill. His lack of support confounded some of his colleagues. Howard W. Smith, in referring to one of the several amendments Hoffman made to the bill, remarked that he had anticipated attacks on it but not from Hoffman who had been "wailing in the wilderness for the correction of these abuses."⁷

Hoffman objected to the power given to the courts to issue injunctions, since judges varied so greatly in the granting of them. A more preferable and effective way to rectify the labor situation was to modify the Wagner Act which bestowed on labor its "special privileges."⁸

Despite being vexed at the way in which the Republican leadership had handled the bill, saying that they had "assumed a characteristic New Deal attitude and damned all who did not swallow

their patent remedy," he had originally decided to support the bill. But after he delayed the vote until the members were able to read it in its entirety, he came to regard it as hastily written and too punitive towards labor. Willing to deprive unions of the protection of the Wagner Act for short periods, he noted that the Case bill did not stipulate a time limit. To him the penalty imposed on unions in violation of the bill was "unjust" and "unreasonable." He was also against it because it failed to deal with strikes in public utilities which one of his own bills did. When the bill emerged from conference, he regarded it as less than perfect, but, satisfied that it was the best bill possible, he voted for it.⁹ The bill was later vetoed by Truman.

Another bill, resembling one he had fought for since 1942, was the Hobbs Anti-Racketeering Act. Having had the experience of paying a fifty dollar membership fee so that the driver of his truck could take food into Detroit, he endorsed the measure. The Hobbs Act, making it a crime to delay or interfere with interstate commerce by extortion, was the first labor law signed by Truman. Later, as head of a subcommittee investigating the effectiveness of the act, Hoffman determined that the amount of racketeering had increased since the passage of the Hobbs bill. Accusing the Justice Department of being "grossly negligent" in its handling of the law, he said the Department needed to either enforce the law or inform Congress if the law was inadequate so that new legislation could be written.¹⁰

Another of Hoffman's ideas that was taken up by someone else, this time by Truman, concerned the drafting of strikers. In May 1946 the President, responding to a railroad strike, asked for emergency legislation to permit the drafting of strikers, a proposal similar to one Hoffman had made during World War II. Flattered that Truman had adopted his plan even though he had "misapplied" and "misused" it, he stated that the request went both too far and not far enough. Drafting workers in peacetime was too Draconian, while the application of the law only to industries seized by the President made it of minimal value.¹¹

As was his practice Hoffman introduced several labor bills with his customary amount of success. His primary goal remained, as it had since the late 1930s, the modification of the Wagner Act, which he perceived to be the root of the labor problem. He more than kept his promise to do his "utmost" to see that "neither branch of Congress forgets the issue, nor without warning, ignores it." During the years from 1937 to April 1947 there were 161 major labor measures introduced in the House relating to the Wagner Act. He was responsible for 34 of them, far more than anyone else. The next largest number introduced was 9 by Smith of Virginia.¹²

One of the flaws in his Wagner Act legislation was that he imposed restraints on labor while not putting pressure on industry to alter its policies. If a problem arose, his assumption seemed to be that it was labor's fault. In trying to redress the balance of power between labor and industry which he claimed the Wagner Act had upset, he tipped the balance in favor of business. His

lack of success led him to acknowledge what others had already discerned, that, because of his anti-labor reputation, any good bill he did write would probably have to be introduced by someone else to gain it a fair hearing.¹³ This realization was probably reinforced by the passage of the Case and Hobbs bills, measures he had advocated unsuccessfully for years. Such was the price paid for the vigorous and partisan way he expressed his views. He did not, however, alter his methods, continuing to carry on his crusade against labor abuses as zealously and as caustically as ever.

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Two of Truman's measures that Hoffman opposed were the continuation of the OPA and housing for veterans. Rather than extend the OPA, he introduced a bill to abolish the agency entirely. Having served on the Smith Committee which heard complaints against the agency, he became convinced that the nation would benefit by its early demise. He claimed that the OPA caused shortages which led to higher prices and advocated the removal of government from business as the cure for inflation. In April 1946 the House endorsed a modified OPA, although what the Nation termed the "extreme right-wing fringe" voted to end it.¹⁴

To meet a serious housing shortage, Truman urged a housing program for veterans which, after undergoing "considerable abuse" in Congress, was passed in May 1946. Hoffman was opposed to having bureaucrats plan housing for people, equating it to the way farmers treated their animals when they built them shelter. His solution

to the problem was to see that the veterans found jobs so that they could build the house they wanted where they wanted, and to keep government agencies, like the OPA, from interfering in the economy so that private interests could build the needed housing. He tried unsuccessfully to get the bill to state that no one would be discriminated against because of membership or non-membership in a union, predicting "bloodshed" when veterans tried to work without paying tribute to a union.¹⁵

He agreed, despite his stand on the housing measure, to do what he could to assist the veterans. He would get on the veterans' bandwagon "even if I have to crawl in over the tail gate [sic]," a remark cited later as proof that he was unprincipled. This was unfair, since his statement was made more in sarcasm than sincerity and was not to be taken as a blueprint for his future actions. Although accused of being hostile to veterans' legislation, Hoffman, who had a son who served nearly three years in the military, argued that this was not the case, pointing out that he had voted for the World War I bonus, the GI bill, and had introduced the first bill to maintain union security for those in service.¹⁶

A difference of opinion arose during the war over the status of returning veterans regarding their former jobs. In 1944 General Hershey explained the policy as he interpreted the law, which the American Legion endorsed, but which the unions, supported by the War Labor Board, rejected. Union leaders, concerned about granting seniority on the basis of length of military duty, since

it raised questions about who would be hired and fired, feared that companies would utilize the opportunity to lay off pro-union workers while hiring anti-union veterans. Despite some trepidation that veterans, having heard stories of wartime strikes, would return with anti-union views, many labor leaders decided to give various concessions such as dropping the initiation and reinstatement fees and counting time in the military as part of their seniority, views that Hoffman had urged.¹⁷ Although his bill could be viewed as either pro-veteran or anti-union in its intent, it seems fair to conclude that he saw it as more the former but that any weakening of unions resulting from it would not have been unwelcome.

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Although 1946 was not as controversial a year for him as some others, he still had his longstanding opponents like the CIO and Walter Winchell criticizing him, but as usual he remained unaffected by it. That he was unchanged can be seen by the guest column he wrote for Drew Pearson's "Washington Merry-Go-Round." (Pearson offered members of Congress whom he had criticized the opportunity to write a column.) Rather than utilizing the chance to present his ideas to the nation, Hoffman chose to flail Pearson. Berating the columnist for not using his influence constructively, he said in many districts "the effluvium (colloquially known as a stink) which accompanies so many of Mr. Pearson's emanations renders them less harmful than in the past."¹⁸

As expected of one who generated the controversy that he did, he received praise as well as criticism. Noah Mason (R, Illinois), who said it was "encouraging and refreshing" to know someone like Hoffman who was "fearless, positive, and outspoken," a man "to ride the river with," put an editorial from the St. Joseph Herald Press into the Congressional Record. The editorial called Hoffman "a sort of blithe spirit loose in a world where caution and discretion are regarded as the better part of valor when it comes to statecraft and politics." The editor was "just intrigued by his apparently insatiable fondness for a fight. Gadzooks, that man is a warrior!"¹⁹ Friend or foe would find it hard to quarrel with these assessments.

He once remarked that it was no fun being in the minority party and even worse being in the minority of that party, but he had to be true to himself and vote his convictions.²⁰ His vehemence in defense of his beliefs may have rendered him less effective, but no one should have questioned where he stood on an issue.

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While the election of 1946, which gave the Republicans control of Congress, was a "crushing defeat for organized labor," especially in the House where the strong labor supporters were "almost destroyed," to Hoffman the election was fairly routine. He said he was "proud" to again be named by the PAC as a candidate whose defeat would benefit labor, since it enabled his constituents to decide if they wanted a Communist controlled group running the

country or if they preferred the free enterprise system. He vowed to support every "legitimate" labor bill, a promise allowing him considerable latitude to oppose much of the labor legislation offered.²¹

The New Republic warned what a GOP victory meant regarding leadership of various congressional committees, noting that several would be controlled by reactionaries like Hoffman, who, on forty-six key issues had voted against progress thirty-nine times. But what troubled the New Republic did not disturb the voters of the 4th district. Easily disposing of his primary opponent Dr. W. C. Ellet, a former Mayor of Benton Harbor, who sought to use the PAC and the veterans' vote against him, the "stormy petrel from Allegan" went on to win the general election by his largest margin yet, defeating Harvey Hope Jarvis, his 1940 opponent, by over 37,000 votes.²²

The prediction of the New Republic proved accurate, at least as far as Hoffman was concerned. He gained the chairmanship of a committee with broad investigatory power, the Expenditures in the Executive Departments Committee. He assumed the chairmanship at a fortuitous time since Congress had earlier decided that, beginning in 1947, the number of committees in the House would be reduced from forty-eight to nineteen, thereby adding to the importance of those that remained. It was this restructuring of committees that, according to the New York Times, gave the Expenditures Committee "a new stature as the probable vehicle for most of the investigations to be undertaken by the Republican Congress." It had also

been agreed, with some exceptions, that no Representative could serve on more than one standing committee.²³ Hoffman, probably on the basis of his well-known reputation as one of labor's harshest critics, was one of the exceptions, being both the chairman of one committee and a member of the prestigious Education and Labor Committee (formerly two separate committees).

The Expenditures Committee was involved in several prominent actions. Not only did it conduct numerous investigations into racketeering and various governmental activities, it also handled the very important National Security Act dealing with the unification of the armed services.

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One of Truman's largest undertakings during his first term, an effort that began in 1945 and ended two years later, concerned the unification of the military, one of the 80th Congress' most important pieces of legislation. The Senate bill went to the Armed Services Committee, but the House version was sent to the Expenditures Committee. Apparently it went to Hoffman's committee because it was believed that the House Armed Services Committee was hostile to the merger. This was Hoffman's explanation for receiving such a key bill. Another possibility was that since he had exhibited little interest in either military or foreign affairs, and since he was on the committee that was considering major labor legislation, a subject of extreme concern to him, he might yield leadership on the unification bill to a subcommittee

headed by someone else. Such a suggestion seems to have been made to him. (One writer, Richard Tregaskis, thought the most likely chairman would have been the Republican James W. Wadsworth of New York, who was regarded as pro-Army, the branch of the military most in favor of unification.) Demetrios Caraley, author of a study of the bill, observed that in light of the provisions Hoffman was able to include, the Republican leaders might have been wiser to have chosen the Armed Services Committee. Clearly the bill had a more difficult time in the House than it did in the Senate.²⁴

Hoffman introduced the bill on 28 February 1947 having previously vowed to do what he could to hold early hearings on it. While professing "no special ideas" regarding a merger, he favored conducting as extensive hearings as necessary.²⁵

Shortly after the beginning of the hearings in April, he announced that he wanted some papers, Series 1478 JCS regarding the Marine Corps, which he had been unable to obtain. The indication was that the Navy Department was attempting to stall him just as it had successfully done to the Senate committee. Hoffman, not one to be denied, declared that until he had the papers he was unable to decide what action to take on the bill. They were delivered to his committee a few days later. The papers were important to him because, like many others, he desired to retain the Marine Corps and the papers revealed hostility towards the Corps on the part of the other services.²⁶

During his questioning of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Hoffman made good use of the papers. Eisenhower had insisted that

he did not understand why people thought that he was antagonistic towards the Marines. After pressing Eisenhower, Hoffman got him to admit that his statements in the JCS papers were responsible for creating the impression that the Army was averse to the Corps.²⁷

After the hearings were resumed, having been suspended from 15 May to 10 June, several high ranking naval officers began testifying. Like others, Hoffman had been concerned that the Army and Navy had applied pressure on officers opposed to unification to prevent them from appearing. After the Navy Department stated that anyone desiring to testify could do so, so many naval and Marine witnesses showed up that twenty-six were unable to participate before the end of the hearings. The officers expressed considerable opposition to the measure. Hoffman favored continuing the hearings, but, because of a previous vote (22-3 with Hoffman in the minority), the committee had decided to conclude the inquiry on 1 July in order to be able to take action on the bill during the present session.²⁸

On 16 July he brought the committee bill before the House along with the committee's five-and-a-half-page report followed by his nine pages of comments. Three days later the House began consideration of the measure with Hoffman being the last speaker. While not opposed to the bill, since he knew some bill was inevitable and this seemed the best measure obtainable, he did point out some of the dangers in it. Long convinced that Roosevelt had sought to create a dictatorship, he now saw a similar threat from

the military, which he claimed constituted a greater danger to the nation than any posed by a foreign country. While the bill made the military subordinate to civilian boards, permitting it simply to formulate plans, Hoffman's experience had taught him that the planning agency also made the policy. He also predicted that, although the measure did not establish a National General Staff, the military would utilize the bill to gain their "nefarious objective." Another shortcoming was that instead of promoting economy, certainly one of his major goals, he forecast an increase in expenditures since another department, the Air Force, was created and the Secretary of Defense post was established to oversee the three military branches.²⁹

He was not alone in his concern about the dangers inherent in unification. The Christian Science Monitor believed that the bill allowed the military to gain a large role in the economy, a caveat Hoffman also voiced. The paper preferred Hoffman's bill on unification (H.R. 3979 introduced in June) to the House version, because he limited the possibility of too much power in the hands of the military, although it did think he weakened the Secretary of Defense too much. (His bill would have created a Defense Department with separate branches while protecting the Marines and naval aviation.)³⁰

He was both criticized and complimented on his handling of the bill. To his critics he replied that he had done his best to expedite the hearings, blaming Truman for forcing their suspension for three weeks while the committee considered reorgan-

ization plans, although whether Hoffman did it for this reason, or to put pressure on the Navy to allow opponents of the bill to testify, is debatable. It is true, however, that he had persistently urged the Navy to let officers critical of the bill appear. Fellow committee members McCormack, Melvin C. Snyder (R, West Virginia), and Ralph E. Church (R, Illinois), praised his conduct of the hearings, although it is clear that he would have continued them had not Wadsworth pushed to terminate them.³¹

Though forced to work within certain limits, since his committee contained a sizable majority in favor of a bill, he was able to function with "great effectiveness." Caraley noted his considerable accomplishments: he persuaded the Navy to yield papers that the Senate was denied; he delayed the hearings until he was able to get critics of the bill to testify; he chose the subcommittee to draft the bill and became a member of it; he gained more protection for the Navy and Marines than they had in the Senate bill; as floor manager he was probably responsible for the acceptance of an amendment further protecting the two services; and, lastly, as a member of the conference committee he was reported to have insisted on a statutory protection of the two groups and was able, with assistance from Senator Harry Byrd (D, Virginia), to get the Senate to alter its position "taken after long and serious consideration."³² While he did not get the bill he favored, he must have enjoyed some satisfaction at directing and shaping such a major measure, especially after so many years as a member of the minority.

Hoffman's determined stand in behalf of the Navy was not due to any past associations but most likely resulted from the general belief that the greater the autonomy of the Navy, the more control Congress would exercise in the new Defense Department.³³ He certainly had no desire to bestow more power on the Executive branch than was absolutely necessary.

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The reorganization of the Executive branch was in the purview of his committee. Although in favor of having the President submit proposals, he opposed a plan becoming law unless it was vetoed by both houses within sixty days. Restructuring the government without the consent of both houses was, to him, an unconstitutional act. If bills needed the support of both chambers, then so should plans to reorganize government. That his opinions had not changed since the 1930s was shown in 1945 when Truman, who decided to emphasize the reorganization of the government, sought legislation similar to that Roosevelt had received in 1939. Hoffman represented the last significant threat to the request by offering an amendment requiring a concurrent resolution of approval of both houses before the passage of any plan. The Speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn (D, Texas), who rarely participated in House debate and then generally only on crucial matters, spoke against it. The amendment was rejected.³⁴

As chairman, Hoffman handled four reorganization plans and opposed all of them. Plan one concerned minor matters and created

little controversy, although he introduced a resolution against it. Plan two, calling for the retention of the U.S. Employment Service in the Labor Department, was far more controversial. He opposed the proposal, partly because of his views regarding the unconstitutionality of the entire reorganization process (a reason true for every plan he was against), and partly because he believed it would result in waste and inefficiency. His contention that the Employment Service belonged in the Federal Security Agency was a strong argument against the proposal, one shared by others including Roosevelt, Truman's Secretary of Labor, and the head of the FSA. The Expenditures Committee rejected the plan as did the House and Senate. The third plan was a modified version of the defeated 1946 housing plan. With the consent of the ranking minority member of his committee, Carter Manasco (Alabama), Hoffman brought the proposal to the House for a vote before a nearly empty chamber late one afternoon. The plan, which lost in the House, was passed by the Senate and thus, under the procedure Hoffman opposed, took effect.³⁵

In 1948 Truman submitted his fourth plan, another attempt to reshape the Labor Department. The hearings and subsequent debates were "stormy," particularly since it was an election year. After his committee rejected the plan, Hoffman brought the matter before the House. He opposed giving the Labor Department billions of dollars in unemployment funds, contending that, since the fund involved more than just labor (business and the public ultimately paid for it), the money should remain in a neutral agency. He also

avored waiting until the Hoover Commission, which his committee had called for in 1947, headed by former President Herbert Hoover, issued its report on government reorganization after the 1948 election, a view shared by many. McCormack described Hoffman's argument as the "weakest" he had ever made. The House, after a brief discussion, turned the plan down, as did the Senate.³⁶

Hoffman must have relished his role in helping to defeat three of the four reorganization plans in the House. That the plans were submitted by a Democratic President made his opposition easier, but does not explain it. He just as staunchly opposed reorganization proposals from the Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower. It seems that it was the method of congressional approval that best accounts for his antipathy.³⁷ He often expounded his belief in the principles of the Constitution and fought any action he deemed contrary to those principles from Democrat or Republican alike.

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Of the various investigations his committee undertook, two of the more important should be noted. One involved the parole of four members of the Al Capone gang while the other concerned the Civil Service Commission.

The four gangsters had been sentenced to ten years in prison for conspiracy to extort \$1 million from the movie industry. A subcommittee headed by Hoffman was unsuccessful in obtaining records from Attorney-General Tom Clark regarding the paroles.

Hoffman, who described the paroles as "most unusual," was suspicious of a possible tie between organized crime and the administration, especially in light of Truman's association with the Pendergast machine in Kansas City. The facts surrounding the paroles increased his suspicions: some of the parole board members were Clark's appointees; the trial judge and prosecuting attorney both opposed the paroles; a second indictment against them was dropped and income tax liens against them were sharply reduced. Further, the paroles were handled by Paul Dillon, a friend of Truman's and his Senate campaign manager in 1934, and the indictment was quashed through the action of Maury Hughes, a friend of Clark's.³⁸

The report of the investigation criticized the paroles and urged that they be revoked. However, the result of the inquiry came to naught since it was ruled that the paroles could not be rescinded. Other than increasing his distrust of the administration, the episode had some indirect impact. During the hearings Hoffman became embroiled in a dispute with the Justice Department over his right to see parole records. In a "stormy session" Daniel M. Lyons of the U.S. Parole Board said he would read from the records but he would not give them to the committee.³⁹ Hoffman's inability to procure records he deemed vital was repeated in other investigations leading to his introduction of a controversial bill that threatened the power of the Executive branch.

The problem with the Civil Service Commission arose when he discovered that the agency maintained a large file on individuals

to prevent the employment of disloyal persons. While not against the CSC investigating all federal employees and every applicant for a federal job, he was incensed that files were kept on members of Congress and their spouses, since no member of Congress was seeking a job over which the CSC had any jurisdiction. Since the compilation of the file was made with federal funds, Hoffman considered it within his purview to conduct an investigation of the matter. Upon learning that the information contained unevaluated tips and rumors, including labeling one member of Congress (unidentified) as a Nazi, Hoffman called it a "smear file." He acknowledged that he was in the file and said the list looked like one from the New Republic between 1939 and 1942.⁴⁰

At a subcommittee hearing chaired by Hoffman, representatives of the Commission claimed that they were unaware of such a file and promised to destroy the material in question. Not trusting the CSC, he proposed the use of his staff investigators to assist in the work. The Commission refused his offer. (Later the CSC agreed that members of the Committee could inspect its files.)⁴¹

Dissatisfied by the CSC's response, he wrote to Truman asking him to instruct the Commission to open part of its confidential files to his committee. Truman refused claiming that it was "in the public interest" to keep the files closed.⁴²

That the issue riled Hoffman is clear, but it seems unjust to assume that the depth of his concern was related simply to his being in the files. The victim of enough false charges himself, he resented seeing others suffering a similar fate. He had also

incessantly admonished the House to protect itself against any challenge to its integrity which he perceived this to be. Considering his apprehension about the possibility of a dictatorship, the existence of the CSC files must have been taken by him as further indication of the erosion of democracy, certainly sufficient basis for his concern. It seems that he was sincere when he remarked that he sought the destruction of the files to protect Americans and to prevent the misuse of federal power.⁴³

This episode heightened his already growing friction with the press, as well as his desire to force the Executive branch to be more cooperative towards congressional committees. When an editorial entitled "Disloyal Congressmen," critical of Hoffman's position in the CSC affair, appeared in the Washington Star he brought the writer of it before his subcommittee to investigate the charge, contending, as he had in the past, that if the integrity of Congress was questioned, it was the duty of Congress to investigate the matter. Denying any desire to limit the freedom of the press, he insisted that he favored making such freedom more secure by holding hearings which gave reporters access to information they would otherwise be denied, an argument that the press found hard to accept.⁴⁴

The Nation lambasted him, noting that he declared that whenever a writer accused his committee of improper action, he would do his best to bring that person before his committee, or, in the words of the Nation, before his "private bar of justice," to verify

the charge. The magazine knew of no law condoning this and questioned whether he did either since, according to the Nation, he admitted that "if that's wrong, well, it will have to be wrong."⁴⁵

His most controversial and significant bill of the 80th Congress was a direct result of the problems surrounding Dr. Edward U. Condon, the head of the National Bureau of Standards, and an indirect result of his other troubles in obtaining information from the Executive branch. He had previously sought to strengthen the powers of the Expenditures Committee in both houses by his resolution requiring all Executive agencies, excluding the Departments of State and Defense, to supply any information the two committees requested. The major impetus to his campaign, however, came after the Commerce Department twice refused the request of the House Committee on Un-American Activities for Condon's loyalty file. While not accusing Condon of being a Communist, the committee did conclude that he was "one of the weakest links in our atomic security." Despite the overwhelming vote in the House, 300-29, asking for the data, Truman chose to keep the files confidential, saying that only he could approve congressional requests for such information.⁴⁶

Dissatisfied with Truman's reply, Hoffman drew up a bill to force the President to disclose the information. His bill transcended the Condon case and attempted to resolve the question of the authority of Congress to obtain records from the Executive branch. What was not immediately apparent was that he had

inserted a "sleeper" into the bill calling for a penalty to anyone who divulged data classified as confidential by a majority of the committee receiving it.⁴⁷

An editorial in the New York Times noted that Hoffman, who had been "feuding with newspapermen for many years," had introduced a bill with "dangerous implications for our domestic liberties," because it would destroy the governmental balance of power. The American Society of Newspaper editors opposed the bill and urged Hoffman to delete the section regarding the punishment for reporters, which he agreed to do, saying that he merely intended to gain access to information and not to punish the press. He asserted that his bill increased the chances of information becoming available, since under the existing policy the press had no opportunity to obtain it.⁴⁸

He denied that he was infringing on the Executive branch, saying he sought information only from the offices Congress had created, not those established by the Constitution, thereby exempting the President from its provisions. If his bill was not enacted, he warned that the creatures of Congress would be superior to their creator.⁴⁹

Although presented as a non-partisan measure, the bill showed a partisan split during the "vigorous" House debate. Charles A. Halleck (R, Indiana) declared that it was time for Congress "to say in no uncertain terms that we're going to have the information we are entitled to have." The House voted 219-142 along

party lines in favor of the bill, after deleting the clause pertaining to penalties for reporters. Truman declared that the issue had been settled in the courts, but the proponents of the measure argued that the Supreme Court had not rendered a decision. Truman never had to confront the problem since the bill died in the Senate. It should be noted that, despite the controversy it engendered, the bill was in harmony with the reasoning of Edward S. Corwin, a distinguished authority on the Constitution.⁵⁰

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With the number of strikes at a high level, T.R.B., writing in the New Republic, observed that if new restrictions were imposed on labor by Congress, labor would be partly to blame. Considering labor's intransigence to every suggestion limiting union rights (fearing that any change would lead to even more changes), the election results of 1946, and the anti-union legislation being passed on the state level, there was little likelihood that Congress would fail to pass some act restraining unions.⁵¹ The resulting legislation, the Taft-Hartley Act, drafted by the Education and Labor Committee of which Hoffman was a member, ranks as one of the most famous domestic measures of the 80th Congress.

As noted earlier, Hoffman persisted in his ten year campaign to modify the "misinterpreted" and "maladministered" Wagner Act which had "outlived its usefulness." He introduced several bills seeking to outlaw the closed shop, jurisdictional disputes, secondary boycotts, and non-peaceful picketing; give the federal courts the power to decide labor controversies; prohibit strikes

affecting the public welfare until after a six month cooling-off period; limit industry-wide collective bargaining; and, replace the NLRB with a new three member national mediation board.⁵²

Since the Republican leaders had opted to have each house concentrate on one major bill, a strategy Hoffman fought, most of the over one hundred labor bills introduced in the first session of the 80th Congress failed to reach the floor. Although dissatisfied with the House hearings on the Taft-Hartley bill, which he regarded as merely going over old ground, he concluded that if it was necessary "to once more drag across the stage the bloody dead body of American freedom," then so be it. However repetitious they may have been, some of the hearings became heated, with Hoffman often being one of the participants. He favored holding the hearings and drafting legislation simultaneously since the problem had been investigated for years, a process apparently followed, at least in part.⁵³

After two days of "neither brilliant nor penetrating" debate, the House bill came to a vote on 17 April 1947. He generally approved of the measure which he labeled "the workingman's Bill of Rights," noting correctly that many of its provisions had been introduced by him eight years before. Despite his general endorsement of the bill, he led the move in the House to strengthen it.⁵⁴

One of his goals was to abolish the union shop, which he judged similar to the closed shop, an idea his opponents predicted would result in the destruction of the labor movement. His

amendment, which the GOP floor leader Halleck moved quickly to head off, was defeated, causing Hoffman to shout: "Let's go on record for 1948!"⁵⁵

He was appointed a conferee to reach a compromise between the House version, which was regarded as the stronger proposal, and the Senate bill. As the spokesman for the view that the resulting bill was too pro-labor, he claimed that the original House measure, which he judged "almost adequate," lost out to the weaker Senate bill. He criticized the way the conference was conducted and sought to have the compromise measure thrown out on the basis that it contained material not present in either of the original bills.⁵⁶

Although convinced that the proposal inadequately protected the public, he considered it the best legislation obtainable and noted, with great satisfaction, that it showed that the Wagner Act could be amended. He said he had "had so many things rammed down my throat during the last 13 years that I may not choke to death if I have to swallow this one." He was later appointed to a joint congressional committee to ascertain how well the law functioned in order to decide what changes, if any, were necessary. (The choice of the House members was based on seniority on the Education and Labor Committee rather than any particular opinion of the Taft-Hartley Act.)⁵⁷

Another labor issue, the portal-to-portal claims which labor began pushing strongly in 1946, led to his introduction in January 1947 of a bill disallowing all such claims, as well as

nullifying any claim of pay for travel and make-ready time in industry. Although Time doubted the constitutionality of a statute having retroactive effect, he insisted it was legal. An editorial in the New York Times, after noting that several bills had been submitted to deal with this situation, praised his bill as appearing to be "the most forthright legislative approach to the problem." Not denying any vested right, it merely clarified the intentions of Congress regarding an earlier law.⁵⁸ His bill did not pass.

As a member of the Education and Labor Committee Hoffman was authorized to investigate various strikes. One of his investigations dealt with violent strikes in seven Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio cities, including two cities, St. Joseph and Dowagiac, in his district. His motive was to see if the right to work was being protected, whether state laws were being enforced, and to learn how the Taft-Hartley Act was functioning. The hearings occasionally became acrimonious as he criticized the state police for failing to maintain law and order.⁵⁹

It must have seemed to him like the 1937 sit-down strikes all over again. He noted how the unions had brought in "goon squads" to intimidate the workers and scolded one labor leader saying that "We are going to have an era of law enforcement you never dreamed of." Denying that his purpose was to discredit the state police, he said he merely hoped that by studying what happened they could improve their performance in the future. If the police did their job properly, labor violence would end. He praised the handling of the St. Joseph strike where the local authorities enforced the

laws, saying that such action "may be the opening gun of a new Lexington and Concord," freeing the worker from coercion by either the employer or the union. If the enforcement of the laws did not end the violence and coercion, then he thought it might be necessary to grant the federal government the power to maintain order. He was critical of the policy of importing large numbers of union sympathizers and recommended that a definition of mass picketing and some provision to prohibit it be added to the Taft-Hartley Act. If a legal solution was not forthcoming, he predicted that the people, at least in the smaller communities, would resist with arms, a warning reminiscent of his call for a march on Monroe, Michigan, to end the 1937 steel strike.⁶⁰

During this series of investigations Hoffman, who already had had a confrontation with the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, took it upon himself to sit in on the FMCS hearings concerning the labor dispute at the Joy Manufacturing Co. in Michigan City, Indiana. His appearance led the union representatives to refuse to participate because Hoffman, "whose attitude toward organized labor is anti-labor," was present. Hoffman denied the charge and insisted that he should be allowed to take part in the hearings. The union refused to meet if he was in attendance, thereby delaying a settlement for nearly two months until Hoffman withdrew his demand to be present at the next meeting.⁶¹

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An issue that became important in 1948 concerned the role of the federal government in protecting civil rights. In February Truman called upon Congress to create a Fair Employment Practices Commission, abolish the poll tax, and pass an anti-lynching law. Hoffman urged the defeat of all three, a response consistent with his earlier ultra-conservative stand on these matters. He also urged the Southern Democrats to choose a presidential ticket acceptable to the GOP in return for the rejection of civil rights legislation. This suggestion was attacked by the Democratic National Chairman as a "dishonest and contemptible bid for votes." Commenting on the hostile reaction he received, Hoffman said he must have hit a raw nerve.⁶²

He based his opposition on his belief that the anti-poll tax and anti-lynching bills infringed on state powers and that the FEPC violated the employer's rights, besides which it was unnecessary since he claimed racial discrimination was not that common. He prescribed education, not laws, to cure social ills. He also wanted the principle of discrimination carried out completely, meaning that there should be a statement prohibiting discrimination based on membership or non-membership in a union. He accused Truman of pushing for these items for political reasons since they stood no chance of passage, a not totally unfair assessment of the President's motives. Even some House members reaped political gain from the civil rights issue by supporting it,

knowing that the Senate would reject it. Newsweek called it a "ritual, like professional wrestling."⁶³

Saying that God had created the various races for His reasons and that Congress should not seek to amalgamate different peoples, he argued that when races were mixed, it generally resulted in the raising of the colored races and the decline of the white race, which would not only destroy the nation, but "the human race as it exists today." When Leo Isacson (American Labor, New York) asked if this was not by implication the Nazi idea of white supremacy, Hoffman said no, but when pressed for a definite statement as to whether one race was superior, Hoffman was evasive. He finally said it was up to the individual to ascertain which race had reached the most desirable end.⁶⁴

While professing no opposition to equal opportunity for all races, creeds, colors, and nationalities, he was against what he perceived as the next step, the call for social equality. Claiming to favor the chance for equality of social intercourse, he thought the law should not force such equality on those who did not chose it. His reasoning was not always very sound, such as his statement that social equality could lead to a person being told whom to marry, another example of his tendency occasionally to carry his argument to absurdity.⁶⁵

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Despite his general lack of concern about foreign affairs, he was not entirely indifferent to foreign problems. He hewed to

the ultra-conservative position and opposed what Clinton Rossiter termed the New Internationalism. Refusing to follow the majority of the Republicans who, after their impressive win in 1946, generally did not use foreign affairs against the Democrats, Hoffman remained a recalcitrant isolationist who vowed to keep the nation out of the game "played by the internationalists, the one-worlders, [and] by the United Nations." He said he "gloried in the charge that the interest of my country is ever first in my mind, ever the guide for my actions."⁶⁶ World War II only intensified his determination to avoid entanglements which had led the country into war twice in the last thirty years.

He was steadfast in his belief that the nation could not support 200 million foreigners and fight to establish the American system of government all over the world without destroying itself. Instead of involving itself in foreign problems, the government needed to concentrate on solving its domestic troubles if the nation were to survive. He was also bothered by the inconsistency of Americans who wanted to choose their own way of life telling others what their way of life should be.⁶⁷

Denying that the nation's future was at stake, he contended that if the United States could easily be attacked, then it could easily fight back. He declared that Truman's request for aid for Greece and Turkey was a "fraud," calling it simply the foreign policy part of the President's campaign for re-election. He also opposed the Marshall Plan, saying that what was needed instead was

a "thoroughgoing operation which will kill every foreign-minded louse in the Federal Government."⁶⁸

A major objection of his to the whole concept of foreign aid was that no one had calculated the ultimate cost. The nation recklessly plunged ahead trusting that somehow the program could be paid for without undermining the economy. He challenged this assumption.⁶⁹

While criticizing large foreign aid programs because their success was illusory while they wreaked great harm at home (he said these programs would turn Americans into slaves to support those who refused to support themselves), he insisted that he did not countenance allowing others to starve or go without clothing or shelter. His solution was to utilize agencies like the Red Cross and religious organizations, thereby minimizing the chance of corruption and lessening the danger of damage to the nation.⁷⁰

As for the threat of Communism abroad he rather simplistically said: "A large dose of communism will be its own cure," a strange statement for one so concerned about Communists in the United States. He complained that while spending billions to fight Communism overseas, the administration not only tolerated Communists in government, it, like its predecessor, encouraged them. Distressed by what he judged to be Communist infiltration of government, he said he had "every reason to believe" that the State Department was "shot through and through" with Communists, although it was not the only department so plagued; everywhere in the Executive branch one could find "the Communist trail, the Communist

taint." Since he entered Congress he noted that "In season and out, on the floor of Congress and elsewhere," he had "consistently, vigorously, and without cessation" fought Communism. His ardent support and unstinting praise for the House Un-American Activities Committee showed his deep concern.⁷¹

Along with a more aggressive foreign policy came a public call for increased defense spending and a peacetime draft. While not an advocate of defense spending, he viewed it as preferable to giving billions in foreign aid, and for that reason he pledged his support for such bills, a promise he basically kept. He had, however, earlier notified his colleagues of his intention to prevent waste.⁷²

While accepting the necessity for defense spending, he favored the immediate end of the draft in early September 1945. He did approve of military training in high schools, colleges, and the National Guard, but he did not want young men put under the control of the military. Suspicious of the military's intentions, a distrust fed by the unification issue, he warned that the services would make "machines out of our youth." He also expressed concern about forcing men into racially mixed regiments, prompting Vito Marcantonio (American Labor, New York) to denounce Hoffman's remarks as an insult to the various races that comprised the nation.⁷³

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Whether in the minority or the majority, he was never at a loss for critics. The Washington Star wrote an editorial saying

that when one thought of Hoffman, one thought of "confusion, verbosity, a futile fretfulness, the seniority rule and the sometimes curious manifestations of popular government." The paper expressed sorrow for the people of Michigan's 4th district for being represented by him. Hoffman replied that his constituents were not dumb. If they replaced him, they would have to pay him a pension. By keeping him they saved at least \$3,000 a year. He was also still being accused of being pro-fascist more than two years after the war.⁷⁴

With considerable justification McCormack, who as a leader of the Democrats and a member of the Expenditures Committee was well acquainted with Hoffman, called him "one of the outstanding, although probably one of the most annoying leaders of the Republican Party--annoying to his own party." Les Arends (Illinois), the Republican Whip, noted that whenever Hoffman differed with the party, he always insisted that the party was wrong. As Arends said: "Once he made up his mind, that was it!"⁷⁵

There were, as always, those who spoke favorably of him. McCormack was just as willing to bestow praise upon Hoffman when he thought him deserving as to find fault with him. Noting that he frequently disagreed with Hoffman, McCormack commended him for his courage in presenting his views however unpopular they were, labeling him "one man who is intellectually honest." Carl Albert (D, Oklahoma) agreed, noting that he seemed unconcerned about the effect of his actions either on his standing in the House or on

his chances for re-election. Walter H. Judd (R, Minnesota), George Bender (R, Ohio), and Chet Holifield (D, California) all praised him for the manner in which he chaired his committee, although five years later Bender and Holifield joined in a revolt of the committee against Hoffman.⁷⁶

Knutson applauded him for his "many sterling and outstanding attributes," and put an editorial from the Benton Harbor News-Palladium into the Congressional Record which noted that it was impossible to accuse him of talking one way and voting another. The editorial characterized him as "a showman with a bundle of firecrackers thrown in, just to add a dash of pepper to the ensemble."⁷⁷

Certainly there was the flavor of the showman about him. Even his clothes were the topic of numerous articles and comments. His trademark seemed to be his pocketless coats, or, according to some, his pocketless suits. Innumerable explanations were offered for his unique apparel with even Hoffman giving different reasons at different times. While appearing to enjoy the attention on some occasions, at other times he complained that it seemed that every article about him referred to his clothes. One article said that he had pockets in his coats but none in his pants. He explained: "Pants pockets are kind of like the New Deal--a catch-all for all sorts of junk." An article in PM said that he used to force his hands into his pockets so strongly when speaking "that the wear and tear on his clothes became terrific." Unable to be quiet, he had to have the pockets removed. (He did gesticulate

when he spoke. One reporter said he used his hands in talking with the skill of a pantomimist or a ballet dancer.) Another story claimed that his coats lacked pockets but that he had hip pockets and a watch pocket in his pants. He joked that he was once accused of having hip pockets so that we could carry a flask in one and a gun in the other. Other theories for his unusual attire were: so that he could not be charged with tucking bribes into his pockets; lacking pockets he was not likely to carry money, and, therefore, could not spend any; because he had once lost a bill he had been carrying in his pocket; and, so that he could not put his hands in his pockets when he spoke, the most likely explanation. (As a young attorney he watched an opponent speak with his hands in his pockets and decided to avoid the habit.) One of his critics, his fellow Republican Hugh Scott (Pennsylvania), in referring to Hoffman's suits, noted that "there are no pockets in a shroud either."⁷⁸

His almost daily speeches (Judd called him a "prima donna" for his one minute speeches), as well as his willingness to speak out when others would not, indicated someone who savored being noticed. When the left-wing seemed to have forgotten him--he said he did not see his name in the Daily Worker anymore--he proposed that his name be added to the "forgotten man" list. "The Communists must be giving me the silent treatment. They just don't give me a chance any more." Albert was probably accurate when he said that while many House members thought Hoffman had a chip on his shoulder, he believed that many of Hoffman's activities commented

on by the press and his colleagues "were more feigned than real."⁷⁹ That his positions were sincerely taken seems true, that he did not want his positions to pass unnoticed seems equally true.

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The election of 1948 was a fairly typical one for him in that he won with little difficulty. His only primary opponent, Chet Shafer, a Three Rivers humorist who entered at the last minute to keep Hoffman from "being buttered into office," was never expected to be a threat and was easily defeated.⁸⁰

Hoffman's campaign ads listed some of his accomplishments as a committee chairman and cited his position on the Education and Labor Committee, as well as his role as one of the overseers of the Taft-Hartley Act. One of his ads exhibited some concern about how his constituents perceived him for it urged the voters to "forget any private peeve you may have" and vote to keep the district's influence in Congress.⁸¹

The local press was nearly unanimous in approving his re-election, with the South Haven Daily Tribune claiming to be the only one not supporting him. Noting how unfortunate it was that the district had been "restricted to a Hoffman diet for 14 long years," the paper said: "We can't stomach it any longer."⁸²

The Tribune definitely did not reflect the sentiments of the voters. The 4th district Republicans, who enjoyed the "haven of safety" they had in their "old standby," chose Hoffman over Tom

Surprise, an Allegan sign painter, by nearly 30,000 votes out of the less than 95,000 ballots cast.⁸³

His impressive victory came despite the disastrous results the GOP suffered nationally. Truman, who faced the pleasant prospect of having a Democratic Congress, was thought to be more elated by the change in the House than the Senate, since it was in the lower chamber that, thanks to people like Hoffman, his proposals had met the most vigorous opposition.⁸⁴ Although he no longer headed a committee, neither did he begin the retirement liberals had long hoped for. While not as large a problem to the Democrats in the 81st Congress as he had been in the 80th, he continued to excoriate the administration's policies with undiminished zeal.

Truman may have enjoyed the election results, but they presented Hoffman with a difficult choice regarding committee assignments. As a member of the minority he was entitled to serve on only one committee. His dilemma was that he would be the ranking minority member on both the Education and Labor and the Expenditures in the Executive Departments Committees, each handling matters of great interest to him. It was rumored that the Republican leadership favored his remaining on the Expenditures Committee and fighting labor issues from the House floor.⁸⁵ He had two months to decide.

Footnotes Chapter 5

¹ Arthur F. McClure, The Truman Administration and the Problems of Postwar Labor, 1945-1948 (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969), p. 12; Robert J. Donovan, Conflict and Crisis, p. 112; George Soule, "The Full-Employment Bill," New Republic 110 (6 August 1946):156; "The Full Employment Bill," Collier's 116 (6 October 1945):98.

² McClure, pp. 195-97; CR, 79:1 (6 November 1945) pp. 10456, 10458, 10460-62.

³ CR, 79:1 (6 November 1945) pp. 10460-62; CR, 79:1 (23 November 1945) p. 10940.

⁴ CR, 79:2 (30 January 1946) Appendix, p. 382; McClure, p. 197; Donovan, pp. 123-24.

⁵ McClure, p. 11; Barton J. Bernstein, "The Truman Administration and Its Reconversion Wage Policy," Labor History 5 (Fall 1965):214-16; Bert Cochran, Harry Truman and the Crisis Presidency (Funk & Wagnalls, 1973), p. 201; Alton R. Lee, Truman and Taft-Hartley: A Question of Mandate (University Press of Kentucky, 1966), pp. 9, 18, 29.

⁶ Bernstein, "Truman Administration," p. 230; J. Joseph Huthmacher, Wagner, p. 328; CR, 79:2 (30 January 1946) Appendix, p. 381; CR, 79:2 (1 February 1946) p. 737; CR, 79:2 (6 February 1946) pp. 978-79.

⁷ Newsweek, 11 February 1946, p. 19; Huthmacher, p. 328; CR, 79:2 (5 February 1946) pp. 937, 940.

⁸ CR, 79:2 (5 February 1946) pp. 920, 937; New York Times, 6 February 1946.

⁹ CR, 79:2 (6 February 1946) p. 1002; New York Times, 7 February 1946; CR, 79:2 (7 February 1946) pp. 1070-71; CR, 79:2 (8 February 1946) Appendix, p. 662; CR, 79:2 (27 May 1946) p. 5861; CR, 79:2 (29 May 1946) p. 5935.

¹⁰ CR, 79:1 (11 December 1945) p. 11844; CR, 79:1 (27 November 1945) p. 11060; CR, 79:2 (15 January 1946) p. 29; Lee, p. 44; McClure, p. 137; U.S. Congress, House, Committee on

Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigation of the Effectiveness of the Hobbs Amendment in Suppressing Racketeering, H. Rept. 238, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, pp. 26, 29.

¹¹Lee, pp. 34-36; CR, 79:2 (27 May 1946) p. 5861.

¹²CR, 79:2 (1 February 1946) pp. 738, 740; CR, 79:2 (27 May 1946) Appendix, pp. 3034-35; Harry A. Millis and Emily Clark Brown, Wagner Act to Taft-Hartley, pp. 341-42. See CR, 79:2 (1 February 1946) pp. 740-49 for a comparison of the Wagner Act and his proposal H.R. 5334.

¹³CR, 79:2 (1 February 1946) p. 739.

¹⁴"Endless Delay," New Republic 110 (11 February 1946):206; CR, 79:2 (15 March 1946) p. 2335; CR, 79:2 (10 June 1946) p. 6591; CR, 79:2 (25 June 1946) p. 7519; Tris Coffin, "Murder by Amendment," Nation 159 (27 April 1946):501.

¹⁵Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, vol. 2 of Memoirs (Doubleday, 1956), pp. 512-14; CR, 79:2 (28 February 1946) pp. 1779-80; CR, 79:2 (30 January 1946) Appendix, p. 382; CR, 79:2 (6 March 1946) p. 1992; CR, 79:2 (8 March 1946) pp. 2070-71.

¹⁶CR, 79:2 (14 March 1946) pp. 2279-80; CR, 79:2 (10 May 1946) p. 4851.

¹⁷Charles G. Bolte, The New Veteran (Reynal & Hitchcock, 1945), pp. 157, 160-62; Joel Seidman, American Labor, pp. 230-31. See Davis R. B. Ross, Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans During World War II (Columbia University Press, 1969) pp. 148-57 for a discussion of the problems of seniority rights for veterans.

¹⁸CR, 79:1 (20 December 1945) p. 12456; CR, 79:2 (26 March 1946) pp. 2624-29; Detroit Free Press, 3 September 1945.

¹⁹CR, 79:2 (12 March 1946) Appendix, pp. 1307-08.

²⁰CR, 79:2 (14 March 1946) Appendix, p. 1384.

²¹McClure, p. 163; Newsweek, 18 November 1946, p. 35; New York Times, 10 May 1946; CR, 79:2 (10 May 1946) p. 4850; CR, 79:2 (31 May 1946) Appendix, p. 3080.

²²"If We Lose," New Republic 111 (23 September 1946):367; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 19 June 1946 in HS; Michigan Manual, 1947-48, pp. 219, 279.

²³New York Times, 14 January 1947; "New Labor Committees Weigh Proposals," Congressional Digest 26 (March 1947):77-78. For

a description of the Expenditures Committee's jurisdiction see CR, 80:1 Daily Digest, p. 21.

²⁴Donovan, pp. 138, 265; Demetrios Caraley, The Politics of Military Unification: A Study of Conflict and the Policy Process (Columbia University Press, 1966), pp. 158-59, 170, 209-10, 324 footnote 60; Richard Tregaskis, "The Marine Corps Fights for Its Life," Saturday Evening Post 221 (5 February 1949):104. Holbert N. Carroll, The House of Representatives and Foreign Affairs (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958), pp. 80-81 agreed that it went to Hoffman's committee because of suspected opposition from the Armed Services Committee.

²⁵New York Times, 17 January 1947.

²⁶Caraley, pp. 170-71; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, National Security Act of 1947, Hearings before the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments on H.R. 2319, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1947, pp. 129-30.

²⁷Caraley, pp. 171-72. For Eisenhower's testimony see Hearings on H.R. 2319, pp. 270-327.

²⁸Caraley, pp. 172-75; Hearings on H.R. 2319, pp. 741-42.

²⁹Caraley, pp. 178, 180; CR, 80:1 (19 July 1947) pp. 9432-38.

³⁰Donovan, p. 201; CR, 80:1 (19 July 1947) pp. 9437, 9438-39; CR, 80:1 (28 February 1947) p. 1579. See Caraley, pp. 231-33 for the use Hoffman made of General Merritt A. Edson and Lieutenant Colonel James D. Hittle of the Marines in drafting H.R. 3979 and in his subsequent efforts regarding the unification bill.

³¹CR, 80:1 (3 July 1947) 8260-61; Detroit News, 21 May 1947; Caraley, p. 175; Walter Millis, ed., with E. S. Duffield, The Forrestal Diaries (The Viking Press, 1951), p. 292.

³²Caraley, p. 205.

³³Caraley, pp. 189-93.

³⁴CR, 79:1 (3 October 1945) p. 9347; Alfred D. Sander, "Truman and the National Security Council: 1945-1947," Journal of American History 59 (September 1972):388; William E. Pemberton, Bureaucratic Politics: Executive Reorganization During the Truman Administration (University of Missouri Press, 1979), pp. 32, 40-41.

³⁵Pemberton, pp. 65, 70-73; CR, 80:1 (21 May 1947) p. 5634; CR, 80:1 (10 June 1947) p. 6722.

³⁶Pemberton, pp. 75-78, 81; CR, 80:2 (25 February 1948) p. 1708.

³⁷Caraley, p. 193.

³⁸Jules Abels, The Truman Scandals (Henry Regnery, 1956), pp. 33-34; Detroit News, 27 September 1947; CR, 80:2 (7 August 1948) Appendix, p. 5115. For Clark's testimony before Hoffman's subcommittee, see U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigation as to the Manner in Which the United States Board of Parole is Operating, Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, pp. 594-614.

³⁹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigation as to the Manner in Which the United States Board of Parole is Operating, H. Rept., 2441, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, p. 15; CR, 83:1 (30 March 1953) pp. 2473-74; Detroit News, 7 October 1947.

⁴⁰CR, 80:1 (20 November 1947) p. 10683; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigation of the Civil Service Commission Investigators' Leads File, H. Rept., 1498, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, pp. 1-2; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Investigators' Leads File, Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments. 80th Cong., 1 sess., 1947, pp. 17, 27, 43-45; Detroit News, 7 October 1947.

⁴¹Hearings, Investigators' Leads File, pp. 10, 12, 17, 27, 28; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, Directing All Executive Departments and Agencies of the Federal Government to Make Available Information, H. Rept., 1595, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, p. 3.

⁴²See Hearings, Investigators' Leads File, p. 59 for a copy of both letters.

⁴³CR, 80:2 (8 January 1948) p. 50.

⁴⁴New York Times, 8 October 1947; Washington Post, 8 October 1947; CR, 80:1 (20 November 1947) pp. 10683-85.

⁴⁵"The Shape of Things," 160 (29 November 1947):573.

⁴⁶New York Times, 6 March, 25 April, and 13 May 1948; Detroit News, 8 January 1948; Newsweek, 15 March 1948, p. 25; Athan Theoharis, Seeds of Repression: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of McCarthyism (Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 110.

⁴⁷New York Times, 5 May 1948.

⁴⁸New York Times, 6 and 9 May 1948; CR, 80:2 (12 May 1948) pp. 5704-05.

⁴⁹CR, 80:2 (12 May 1948) pp. 5704-06; New York Times, 13 May 1948.

⁵⁰New York Times, 13 and 14 May 1948; Telford Taylor, Grand Inquest (Simon and Shuster, 1955), pp. 103-05.

⁵¹T.R.B., "Washington Notes," New Republic 111 (11 November 1947):615; Lee, pp. 49-50; McClure, pp. 18-19.

⁵²New York Times, 6 February 1947; Detroit News, 6 February 1947.

⁵³Newsweek, 20 January 1947, pp. 27-28; CR, 80:1 (13 February 1947) pp. 1006-07; Lee, pp. 52, 61; Detroit News, 23 February 1947. For examples of how tumultuous some of the hearings were see the New York Times, 26 and 27 February, and 4 April 1947.

⁵⁴Millis and Brown, p. 374; CR, 80:1 (15 April 1947) pp. 3427-28; New York Times, 17 April 1947.

⁵⁵CR, 80:1 (16 April 1947) pp. 3553-61; New York Times, 17 and 18 April 1947.

⁵⁶Lee, p. 75; Millis and Brown, p. 386; CR, 80:1 (4 June 1947) p. 6388. Seidman, p. 267 and the New York Times, 18 July 1947 agree that the Senate bill won out.

⁵⁷CR, 80:1 (4 June 1947) p. 6388; New York Times, 18 July 1947.

⁵⁸Susan M. Hartmann, Truman and the 80th Congress (University of Missouri Press, 1971), pp. 40-41; New York Times, 2 and 4 January 1947; Time, 13 January 1947, p. 83; CR, 80:1 (6 January 1947) pp. 141-44.

⁵⁹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Investigation of the Facts Surrounding the Labor Disputes and Strikes in Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio, Committee Print, Committee Rept. 6, 80th Congress, 2d sess., 1948, pp. 1-2; Detroit News, 16, 17 and 22 October 1947.

⁶⁰Detroit News, 22 October 1947; Committee on Education and Labor, Committee Report 6, pp. 17, 19-20; CR, 80:2 (15 January 1948) pp. 217-22.

⁶¹Detroit News, 15 October 1947; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Labor-Management Disputes in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Hearings before the special subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor on H. Res. 111. 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1948, pp. 556-57; Business Week (13 December 1947):88-90.

⁶²Donald R. McCoy and Richard T. Ruetten, Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration (University Press of Kansas, 1973), pp. 99-100; CR, 80:2 (26 February 1948) p. 1771; New York Times, 27 February 1948; CR, 80:2 (8 March 1948) p. 2335. For some of his earlier statements on civil rights legislation see CR, 76:3 (9 January 1940) pp. 164-66; CR, 79:1 (4 October 1945) p. 9444; CR, 79:1 (30 April 1945) pp. 3957-63. For an earlier comment against racial mixing see CR, 76:1 (19 June 1939) Appendix, p. 2715.

⁶³CR, 80:2 (8 March 1948) pp. 2335-36; CR, 79:2 (5 February 1946) Appendix, p. 495; Newsweek, 6 February 1950, p. 21. Donovan p. 353; Irwin Ross, The Loneliest Campaign: The Truman Victory of 1948 (The New American Library, 1968), pp. 30-31, 63-64; and Cabell Phillips, The Truman Presidency: The History of a Triumphant Succession (Macmillan, 1966), p. 206, all agree that politics played a part in the decision but that it was not a totally insincere act.

⁶⁴CR, 80:2 (15 June 1948) p. 8394; CR, 80:2 (17 June 1948) p. 8693.

⁶⁵CR, 80:2 (15 June 1948) pp. 8394-95.

⁶⁶Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction (Abelard-Schuman, 1957), pp. 347-48; CR, 80:1 (3 March 1947) p. 1620; CR, 80:1 (5 December 1947) p. 11094.

⁶⁷CR, 80:1 (13 March 1947) p. 2036; CR, 80:1 (5 December 1947) pp. 11094-95.

⁶⁸CR, 79:2 (13 July 1946) p. 8928; CR, 80:1 (9 May 1947) p. 4919; CR, 80:1 (17 June 1947) pp. 7145-46; CR, 80:2 (25 March 1948) p. 3514.

⁶⁹CR, 80:1 (9 May 1947) pp. 4919-20.

⁷⁰CR, 80:1 (5 December 1947) p. 11095. For his willingness to help others see his letter to his friend Judge Webster Sterling (20 August 1951 in HBF) asking the judge to accept his check to pay the court costs and fine of a woman who stole food for her child. Hoffman wanted his act to be done anonymously.

⁷¹CR, 80:1 (5 December 1947) p. 11095; David Caute, The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower (Simon and Shuster, 1978), p. 26; CR, 80:1 (13 March 1947) p. 2035;

CR, 80:1 (13 June 1947) p. 6973; CR, 80:2 (7 August 1948) Appendix, p. 5221. For his support of HUAC see CR, 77:2 (18 February 1942) pp. 1433-34; CR, 77:2 (8 December 1942) p. 9397; CR, 79:1 (4 January 1945) pp. 47-49; CR, 80:1 (18 March 1947) p. 2205.

⁷²CR, 80:2 (25 March 1948) p. 3514; CR, 80:1 (13 February 1947) p. 1005.

⁷³Detroit News, 4 September 1945; CR, 80:2 (25 March 1948) p. 3513; CR, 80:2 (15 June 1948) p. 8392; CR, 80:2 (17 June 1948) p. 8694.

⁷⁴CR, 80:2 (6 January 1948) p. 9; CR, 80:2 (8 January 1948) pp. 44-45; CR, 80:2 (25 March 1948) pp. 3510-16.

⁷⁵CR, 80:1 (25 March 1947) p. 2547; Arends to author, 6 September 1980. Carl Albert agreed that Hoffman was willing to defy GOP leaders, Albert to author, 4 September 1980.

⁷⁶CR, 80:1 (3 July 1947) p. 8261; CR, 80:2 (13 May 1948) p. 5809; Albert to author, 4 September 1980; Judd to author, 6 September 1980; CR, 80:2 (7 August 1948) Appendix, p. 5298; CR, 80:2 (12 May 1948) p. 5734.

⁷⁷CR, 80:1 (26 July 1947) Appendix, p. 3933.

⁷⁸Interview with Helen Boyer, 30 January 1981; CR, 80:1 (26 July 1947) Appendix, p. 3933; Volta Torrey, "Clare Hoffman," PM, p. 2; Detroit News, 26 September 1951 and 14 June 1953; interview with Leon A. Plummer, Olivet, Michigan, 14 January 1979; Donovan, p. 259; CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14369; Scott to author, 16 September 1980.

⁷⁹Judd to author, 6 September 1980; New York Times, 27 December 1946; Newsweek, 30 June 1947, p. 20; Albert to author, 4 September 1980.

⁸⁰Michigan Manual, 1949-50, p. 197; Dowagiac Daily News, 15 September 1948 [name and date listed on clipping] in HS; Niles Star, 15 September 1948 [name and date listed on clipping] in HS.

⁸¹Campaign ads in HS.

⁸²1 November 1948 [date listed on clipping] in HS.

⁸³Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 3 November 1948 [name and date listed on clipping] in HS; Michigan Manual, 1949-50, p. 259.

⁸⁴U.S. News & World Report, 12 November 1948, p. 20.

⁸⁵Detroit News, 23 November 1948.

CHAPTER 6

"Died-in-the-wool Republicans of the Old School"

(1949-52)

For Hoffman, the last years of Truman's presidency was a halcyon interlude sandwiched between two turbulent periods. Lacking any major issue-- the Korean War, while of importance to many, was not a great concern of his--it was not a very controversial time for one as accustomed to conflict as Hoffman. His most disputed action began during the last month of the 81st Congress and ended in the first month of the 82d.

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The first issue facing him arose between his 1948 re-election and the start of the new Congress. Acting as a one-man subcommittee of the Education and Labor Committee, he conducted an investigation of the labor violence at the Shakespeare Co. in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on 1 December, involving an attack against the company's plants and equipment by 200-300 persons. The question of Communist involvement in the dispute prompted both the governor of Michigan and the commissioner of the state police to advocate a grand jury

investigation. Consequently while Hoffman conducted his inquiry a grand jury was doing likewise.¹

His investigation, like so many he conducted, was an animated one, with "frequent clashes" between Hoffman and some of those testifying. Despite threatening to jail union leaders for contempt, he was unable to obtain the information he desired. Three union officials refused to testify, quoting John Lesinski (D, Michigan) who had challenged the legitimacy of the inquiry saying that Hoffman had "no more authority to conduct this investigation than a rabbit." Lesinski, slated to become the next chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, vowed to undertake a "full-fledged" study of his own.²

Hoffman returned to Washington to question the president of the CIO, Philip Murray, about goon squads. Murray, however, refused to appear, arguing that Hoffman lacked the power to sit as a one-man subcommittee and subpoena witnesses. With less than two weeks remaining before Lesinski assumed control of the committee, a reporter asked what Hoffman intended to do regarding the CIO leader. Admitting that there was little he could do, he warned that in the next session, "If I live and get recognition from the chair," he would remind Murray of his interest in the labor leader's stand on goons. As to the legality of one-man subcommittees, he said he had the authority, although he conceded that it was "morally wrong" and "bad government" to leave out the minority party. He justified it in this case saying that there was no Democrat available.³

In his report he traced the roots of the non-enforcement of laws during labor disputes back to the sit-down strikes of 1937. As on other occasions, he returned to the events in Flint which helped forge him into one of the House's leading critics of organized labor. Convinced that Truman was labor's puppet, he asserted that the President's election might have been responsible for the trouble since the leaders may have taken this as the go-ahead for such violent activity.⁴

Although he was forced to terminate his investigation, the matter did not end with the new Congress. In January he raised a question of personal privilege regarding Lesinski's comments about his role in the hearings. Not only had Lesinski challenged his authority, but, according to the Kalamazoo Gazette, he had also referred to Hoffman as "a pimp of Stalin." Hoffman appealed to the House to bring Lesinski before it either to substantiate his accusation or to withdraw it and accept whatever penalty the Speaker imposed. Maintaining that the remarks against him personally were of no consequence, he declared that questioning the legitimacy of his subcommittee constituted a challenge to the entire House.⁵

Lesinski, who admitted to disputing Hoffman's authority, denied calling him a pimp of Stalin, insisting that he had actually called Hitler a pimp of Stalin. In possession of affidavits supporting the newspaper's version of the statement, Hoffman sought an investigation to determine the truth. Eugene E. Cox (D, Georgia) said that, in view of Lesinski's explanation, any investigation would be "a colossal piece of foolishness."⁶

Hoffman said: "My hide is thick. I am not overly sensitive. I do not hesitate to hand it out and I can take it." Yet he later brought a \$50,000 libel suit against Lesinski, accusing the Michigan Democrat of calling him disloyal. The libel suit was ultimately dropped.⁷

Though he contended that he was not sensitive to criticism, there were those who thought that while he was good at giving criticism, he did not like to be on the receiving end of any. Judd thought that Hoffman's crusty manner was actually a cover to hide his sensitiveness. Others, like Democrat Martha Griffiths (Michigan), believed that his caustic manner was an outgrowth of his years fighting opposing lawyers in court.⁸ Whatever the source of his crotchety behavior, it seems fair to say that his hostility to Lesinski sprang from two sources: his determination to preserve the integrity of the House and his understandable response to an attack from a pro-labor Democrat.

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While deciding to remain on the Expenditures Committee rather than the Education and Labor Committee, he retained his extreme interest in labor matters, especially the 1949 steel and coal strikes. He saw dangerous portents in the steel strike, including the destruction of the nation's economy, the loss of Europe to the Communists, and the takeover of the United States by fascists. What differentiated this strike from others was the report of the fact-finding board which proposed industry-wide

noncontributory pensions, described by Hoffman as a startling departure from the concept of self-reliance traditionally practiced by Americans. Acceptance of the board's findings meant the demise of collective bargaining by bringing in the federal government to set wages and to determine working conditions.⁹

After a series of intermittent coal strikes throughout 1949, Truman finally invoked the Taft-Hartley Act in February 1950 in an unsuccessful attempt to bring order to the coal fields. Claiming not to be an alarmist, Hoffman said that he was disturbed about the situation. Referring to Lewis' remark about soldiers mining coal with bayonets, he agreed it could not be done; however, he noted that bayonets could be utilized to stop goons from preventing those who wanted to mine coal from doing so. His answer to the strike was the reintroduction of his bill calling for workers to lose their rights under federal statutes if by striking, they adversely effected the public safety, and a bill prohibiting any union member from participating in a strike, slowdown, or work stoppage that involved interstate commerce. He did not blame the unions alone for the strike, arguing that Congress was partly at fault for having voted so much power to the unions over the years.¹⁰

In March after Lewis successfully circumvented the Taft-Hartley Act, Truman requested power to seize the mines. The next day Hoffman blasted the appeal as unconstitutional, saying that the Taft-Hartley Act had not failed but that, for political reasons, Truman had not properly used it.¹¹ Actually he was being unfair to the President who had few options. Insisting that the miners

return to work would not have served any constructive purpose, since they had already refused such an order.

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Although no longer chairman of the Expenditures Committee, and therefore not in charge of the various reorganization plans, he remained a member of the committee that considered them. Despite his general support of the Hoover Commission, he was the first to oppose the Commission's proposal to grant broad power to the President to reorganize the Executive branch. He continued his opposition to the requirement that both houses had to vote against a plan before it could be defeated, saying that recommendations from the President should be made in "the usual and customary way and put through Congress in the usual and customary way." He also wanted to amend the 1949 Reorganization Act to require that plans had to be introduced during the first sixty or ninety days after Congress convened to assure that there was sufficient time to reflect on them.¹²

While the act was not modified to his complete satisfaction, Congress did make it more palatable by allowing a plan to be vetoed by just one house. However, in order to defeat a proposal, it was necessary that a majority of the authorized membership of each house oppose it, a stipulation that caused the act to be less of an obstacle to reorganization than many had anticipated.¹³

Hoffman was not automatically against all reorganization schemes. Sixteen of the thirty-four plans offered during the 81st

Congress passed with no opposition, although Hoffman did his best to defeat those he disliked. He led the move in the House against Truman's request to modify the departments of Labor, Agriculture and Commerce.¹⁴

One of Truman's reorganization goals was the creation of a Department of Welfare. Hoffman, seeing no significant economic gain and believing it was contrary to the recommendations of the Hoover Commission, a view shared by others in the House, opposed the plan. Commonweal, while agreeing that it was not in keeping with the Commission's conclusions, claimed that it was not an unreasonable suggestion, being within the spirit of the report.¹⁵

Although it was thought that the plan faced a harder time in the Senate, it was the House that defeated the proposal, partly on the basis that it would have resulted in a compulsory health insurance program. Hoffman attacked Oscar R. Ewing, the head of the Federal Security Administration, and the man most likely to become the Secretary of the projected cabinet post, because his appointment would put doctors "under the orders of a master politician." The New York Times criticized Hoffman for overstating his argument about the effect of a politician heading the proposed department. Ewing was an avid supporter of the administration's civil rights program which earned him the enmity of some in Congress, but whether this had any bearing on Hoffman's opposition is unclear. He voiced his objections on Ewing's political ties and his advocacy of what Hoffman saw as socialized medicine.¹⁶

That he was not against reorganizing the government in some fashion was shown by his introduction of eleven bills concerning the restructuring of various departments in the 81st Congress and another nineteen during the 82d Congress. None of the plans, which were drafted by people familiar with the recommendations of the Hoover Commission, made it out of committee. Truman's failure to utilize any of these was proof to Hoffman that the President was simply using Hoover's name for his own ends.¹⁷

That Hoffman worked in the interests of the Hoover Commission was shown by a letter he received from the former President in March 1951 thanking him for sponsoring recommendations of the Commission and categorizing his record on reorganization legislation as an "outstanding contribution to governmental economy." His efforts also elicited praise from the general manager of the Citizen's Committee for the Hoover Report, which had been created in 1949 as a national organization to build support for the recommendations of the Hoover Commission.¹⁸

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Part of the 1946 Reorganization Act dealt with lobbying activities. In 1949 Frank Buchanan (D, Pennsylvania), questioning the effectiveness of the measure, called for an investigation of lobbying. The House appointed him to chair the committee which held public hearings from April until October 1950, during which time Hoffman was an unsparing critic of the Buchanan Committee. He introduced two resolutions against the investigation. One of

them called for a special committee to study the Buchanan Committee. The other sought information about the committee--its sources of income to conduct its "very searching" investigation, and its employees. The House voted \$40,000 to the committee, but he believed money was being supplied from other sources.¹⁹

He was particularly concerned about Louis Little, a labor lawyer who had been involved in many cases for the CIO and who served as counsel for the Buchanan Committee. Hoffman raised questions about Little's acting on behalf of crime figures. When Little left the committee, Hoffman took credit for getting rid of him. With appointments like Little or Lucien Hilmer, an investigator known for his defense of civil liberties, including the right of Communists to be in the government, it was not surprising that Hoffman desired information about the committee and took a jaundiced view of its work.²⁰

In a long speech on lobbying, he identified a major weakness of the inquiry which was the problem of defining what lobbying was, noting that Buchanan had difficulty giving him a precise definition. This was clearly a problem, since many who tried to influence legislation did not consider themselves lobbyists.²¹

A good illustration of his argument regarding an acceptable definition of lobbying concerned the newspapers. If lobbying consisted of any attempt to influence thinking about issues, then he favored broadening the scope of the investigation to include the press, since newspapers continually editorialized for various points of view.²² Despite the validity of his idea, the complexity of

such a study, not to mention the difficulties with the First Amendment, would have made it an extremely involved undertaking.

Another of his objections was related to the investigation of various businesses to ascertain what role they played in influencing legislation. He saw this aspect of the study as proof of the one-sided nature of the whole procedure. Buchanan later modified his request saying he would investigate unions as well as businesses, a policy Hoffman had advocated.²³

Convinced that the committee was investigating the wrong groups, he charged that it was being used as a tool against those who championed constitutional government, such as the Committee for Constitutional Government (CCG) and the Constitutional Education League, both of which were subpoenaed to give a list of their financial supporters. If groups like these which he said preached solid American values were being studied, then, he wondered, what about organizations like the PAC, his old nemesis, which lobbied against members of Congress? Viewing the whole procedure as a biased study undertaken for "crassly political motives," he maintained that its real intent was to silence administration critics in an election year.²⁴

He was not alone in his criticism of the investigation for asking for information on groups which sought to influence public opinion. An editorial in the liberal Nation, while not against the study of lobbying, warned of the danger to freedom of speech and press if groups seeking to sway public opinion were forced to give out information such as the committee requested. Later the

Supreme Court sided with those who argued that the investigation of such organizations was not within the purview of the committee.²⁵

Hoffman was incensed when he discovered that the committee had checked the mail of various members of Congress; in fact it was this action that caused him to introduce his resolution to investigate the committee. When, in defense of the mail check, it was stated that seven carloads of mail had been franked by members of Congress on behalf of the CCG, he replied: "What of it? There's no reason on earth why Congressmen shouldn't send out material--in fact, it is a duty--to lead people toward better government." He said he did not mind the committee's "snooping," if it also examined the mail "of the Democrats, New Dealers, Fair Dealers, and other members with lobbies of their own."²⁶

The Committee for Constitutional Government, one of the major targets of the investigation, being one of the most active groups of its type (it reported the third largest expenditures for lobbying of any group in the nation between 1948-62), admitted to having sent out 8 to 10 million pieces of mail under congressional frank in less than four years. During the first four months of 1950 the member of Congress who was reported to have franked the most mail for the CCG (sending out a total of 265,000 pieces) was Hoffman. (The next biggest total was 100,000.) Although denying any misuse of his frank, he had reason to be concerned about any study of the use of his frank, having been involved in a notable controversy about it during World War II.²⁷

Judging the CCG to be an educational agency, he objected to the committee's efforts to obtain a list of the names and addresses of those purchasing the organization's publications. He argued that, since its material was not disloyal, there was no justification for anyone knowing who paid to distribute it, a view shared by the three Republican members of the committee. He admitted that some of his speeches had been printed by the CCG. He also frequently inserted material by or about the organization into the Congressional Record, as well as statements he had made on the group's behalf.²⁸

An assiduous defender of the CCG, he claimed not to have met the head of the organization, Edward A. Rumely, until the hearings, although he had long known Joseph P. Kamp of the Constitutional Education League. Hoffman responded to the charge that Kamp was anti-Semitic by saying that Kamp denied it, adding that he knew nothing about him that was reprehensible. He praised Kamp, declaring that in the last fifteen years Communism had had "no more factual, vigorous, effective opponent than Joe Kamp," whose statements had rarely, if ever, been successfully challenged.²⁹

Later, after Kamp was cited for contempt for his refusal to divulge the information requested, Hoffman said that the evidence showed that Communists were using the committee and the House to thwart the anti-Communist efforts of organizations like Kamp's. While not worried about jail threats inhibiting Kamp, he feared that others, more easily intimidated, might hesitate to speak out. In January 1952 he introduced two resolutions seeking to rescind

the contempt citation. In 1955 he said if he had \$1 million, Kamp, Rumely, and others like them would get a good part of it.³⁰

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Hoffman was a stalwart foe of the Fair Deal. He fought Truman's attempts to establish a national health insurance program, both because he claimed it was unpopular and because he saw it as a form of socialized medicine, a concept fostered by the American Medical Association. He opposed the housing program, the one major Fair Deal proposal to pass Congress, because he said it "smacks of paternalism, of socialism." He also was against federal aid to education since it violated two of his fundamental convictions. Its cost, which he judged to be immense, contravened his sense of frugality. But what was probably of even greater importance to him was the growth in the amount of control the federal government would exert on the lives of the people. What compounded his concern was his assumption that the government was honeycombed with persons hostile to the American system.³¹

After nearly a decade-and-a-half, he tempered his views on social security, declaring that Democratic policies had made it imperative since it was no longer possible for people to provide for their own old age security. Properly administered the system was a satisfactory one. This new attitude led McCormack to compliment Hoffman for starting to show a "little liberality of spirit." The problem was that he did not perceive the system as properly run, rather it was "wasteful, expensive, and in the end disastrous."

One of his objections was that the government misused the money raised for old age pensions by utilizing it to pay the current government expenses.³²

He remained consistent in his opposition to civil rights legislation. Judging the anti-lynching bill's purpose to be commendable, he condemned it for being too narrow in scope. He favored including a provision dealing with mob violence in labor disputes, claiming that for each case of lynching in the South he could cite two where someone was killed in labor violence.³³

Adamantly opposed to the anti-poll tax bill, he said the "only fair, legal way to do it" was to amend the Constitution, neglecting to mention that the likelihood of such an occurrence was virtually nil considering the thoughts in the South about such a proposal. He urged the defeat of the bill saying it was a state matter, and predicted that this was just the beginning of Truman's civil rights program to punish the South for its "failure to follow the Phil Murray-guided President." (Just as he charged that Roosevelt was dominated by John L. Lewis, he also accused Truman of being the spokesman for Murray.)³⁴

He continued to oppose the creation of a Fair Employment Practices Commission because it was "another step toward dictatorship." He also believed that such an agency would seek to foster social intermingling and intermarriage, a belief shared by others. Claiming that he got along well with the blacks, he favored separate facilities for the races with those provided for blacks at least equal to, if not better than, those given whites (partly to

compensate the blacks for the long suffering they had endured), and also facilities for both races for those who chose to mix.³⁵

He suggested that the motive for a national FEPC might have come from some large eastern states which found that their state agencies cost them industry, since industry preferred to locate where they were free to select their employees. By forcing the FEPC on the nation, industry would have less reason for relocating in other states, another of the many conspiracies he was given to seeing. In lieu of a national FEPC, he submitted a bill to prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry. While his bill, by avoiding the need for a new federal agency, was in keeping with his anti-big government philosophy, one wonders whether his use of the courts to enforce his bill was to hinder the operation of the law or merely was in harmony with his opposition to a growing federal bureaucracy.³⁶

His general assessment of the Fair Deal was that it was worse than the New Deal, although it may have been a matter of perspective that caused the present demons to seem so much larger than past ones. One reason for his negative view of the Fair Deal was his opinion of Truman, "an average man" who had "muffed a big opportunity." Noting that Truman was a one-time member of the corrupt Pendergast machine, Hoffman charged that the President did not appreciate that some members of Congress voted their convictions. Truman's language, which Hoffman thought might have been a remnant of his Pendergast days, disturbed Hoffman. He

believed that Truman should change his language now that he was President and living in the house honored by ". . . God-fearing, God-serving, clean mouthed Presidents."³⁷

He denounced Truman for pitting class against class, preaching discontent, and using federal spending to build a political machine, charges that he had made with equal sincerity against Roosevelt. He said "considerable evidence" existed showing that a "sinister conspiracy lurks in the background," which Truman was not necessarily fostering, but which members of his administration were involved in, hoping to destroy the American system.³⁸

Another major source of his dissatisfaction with Truman was his belief that the President tolerated Communists at home. Voters had shown patience with "this little man in a big job," but they would not continue to believe that infiltration by Communists into the federal government was negligible. Criticizing Truman's dismissals of attempts to find Communists in government as red herrings, he said that Truman's red herrings were starting to stink, "and some of the odor, . . . is sticking to the President's fingers."³⁹

The administration had not only hindered every congressional effort to expose and punish Communists, he said it had actually "coddled, harbored, and encouraged Communists and near-Communists" in key positions. He castigated Truman's administration saying it not only needed "a thoroughgoing house cleaning, but a complete disinfecting job in a tank of sheep dip." Hoffman also charged

that the government was permeated with homosexuals, leading him to introduce a resolution to force the Executive departments to fire homosexuals.⁴⁰

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Voicing the ultra-conservative viewpoint, he was an aggressive critic of the administration's foreign policy. He asserted that the Marshall Plan was a device by which Truman, faced with the results of his taxing and spending policies which were leading the nation toward a depression, hoped to avoid any further disaster at home, a charge it will be recalled that he voiced about Roosevelt's foreign policy. The Christmas after the passage of the plan he put a tree outside his office with a sign that read: "Nothing for the Home Folks. They've Spent It All Abroad." He opposed any further funding for the plan and was against appropriating money for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since they were both more likely to cause rather than to prevent war.⁴¹

The outbreak of the Korean War, which he labeled World War III, led to his call for a reduction in spending for social gains in order to use the money for defense. More significantly he posed the question as to what the nation's goals were in the war.⁴² Considering the course the war took, this was a perfectly valid question and one the administration should have answered.

Although objecting to fighting a war he saw as detrimental to the nation in the long run, since intervening all over the world would do more damage than Russia could ever inflict, he saw no

alternative but to vote the money necessary for the war. Despite his reluctant support, he criticized Truman's conduct of the war. He accused the President of usurping congressional power by waging a war without a declaration by Congress, and said he should be "ousted."⁴³

Being against the war, Hoffman offered a drastic solution to rapidly terminate it: rather than waiting to be attacked, the nation should drop atom bombs on Russia. Admitting that this would be cruel, he said wars always were. The Detroit News criticized him for failing to think through what such a step entailed and suggested, as others had in other contexts, that he was merely seeking publicity.⁴⁴

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Unlike most of his career between 1937-54, this period was not characterized by any major controversy. In other ways, however, these were fairly normal years for him. He continued to be a hard worker who rarely missed a roll call.⁴⁵ Whatever second thoughts he may have had about going to Washington, once there he embraced his duties with great enthusiasm.

As a Representative one of his qualities was his ability to get along with others of varying viewpoints. At the time of Hoffman's retirement, Clarence J. Brown (R, Ohio), a man with whom he had had his differences, noted that after a bruising debate with Hoffman, he could be found explaining his position to his opponent. Les Arends, GOP Whip from Illinois, noted that while he often

differed with Hoffman, there was never any personal animosity involved. Porter Hardy (D, Virginia) enjoyed his friendship and eccentricities. Jerry Voorhis (D, California) and Barrett O'Hara (D, Michigan), despite different political parties and philosophies, liked Hoffman. Although Halleck and McCormack often lost their patience with him, they never ceased to be friends with him. Even a harsh critic like Hugh Scott admitted that Hoffman was an amiable person. Of course there were those like the Pennsylvanian Earl Chudoff (D), a veteran of many battles with Hoffman, who said that Hoffman "didn't like me and my feelings for him were mutual."⁴⁶

Described by Charles R. Jonas (R, North Carolina) as a "gentle and understanding" man, when Hoffman took the floor, "he was a tiger." Brown said that one had to know what one was talking about when debating the Michigan Republican or he would "cut the sand out from under your feet so quickly you will not realize you are sinking into a morass until after it happens." James Grove Fulton (R, Pennsylvania), a former Harvard debate coach, remembering Hoffman, said that he knew of no one in Congress "as alert on his feet and as quick in his repartee" as Hoffman. He observed that "without pockets or notes [he] could make any debating team."⁴⁷

It was not just as a debater that he was renowned, he was also skillful at tying up the House with various parliamentary moves. His frequent quorum calls led Elford Alfred Cederberg (R, Michigan) to say that if he were to nickname Hoffman, it would be "Quorum Call."⁴⁸

As might be expected of a "gadfly" who "delighted in sticking needles in the hides of pompous members and bureaucrats," he was the recipient of some verbal abuse. Wayne Hays (R, Ohio), an acerbic speaker who was a favorite combatant of Hoffman's, once said "without fear of contradiction" that Hoffman had made "more poisonous remarks in the well of the House about more decent people, . . . than any 10 members I have heard since I have been here." Hoffman, as he generally did, ably rebutted the Ohioan by thanking him for his gracious compliment about his having been more critical of the New Deal, Fair Deal, the pinks, and the reds than any ten members Hays knew, but his humility prevented him from accepting it.⁴⁹

One example of unfair criticism was made by Boyd Tackett (D, Arkansas) when he stated that he had never heard Hoffman praise anyone but himself. While he may not have been effusive in his praise of others, Hoffman complimented others when he thought they deserved it. One of the best examples came during the 83d Congress when he spoke about the recently deceased Vito Marcantonio (American Labor, New York). Admitting that Marcantonio was too far to the left for him, he conceded that maybe he was too far to the right. Despite being one of Marcantonio's strongest opponents, he paid tribute to the New Yorker's courage in fighting for his beliefs, a quality Hoffman could appreciate.⁵⁰

Not all of his colleagues were distressed by his sometimes astringent remarks. The Georgian Henderson Lanham (D) said he hoped the people re-elected the Allegan Republican because he was

"the hairshirt of the House" and everyone needed one at times. In a humorous exchange with Hoffman, Andrew Jacobs (D, Indiana) said that Hoffman did an excellent job when he used "the fish scaler on us Democrats. I enjoy art for art's sake."⁵¹

Hoffman delighted in interrupting speakers to ask questions. Theodore L. Irving (D, Missouri) noted that his queries were "always simple, like who killed cock robin, or something of that nature." Brown said that Hoffman sometimes asked questions "that even the good Lord cannot answer." The Texan Wright Patman, calling Hoffman "one of the cleverest" lawyers and members of the House, once described the strategy that sometimes was behind his questions. He said Hoffman often questioned people in order to lead them away from the point they were seeking to make into an area about which they were unfamiliar. Judd credited him with being "the House's past master in diverting attention from the business at hand." James E. Van Zandt (R, Pennsylvania) remarked about Hoffman's ability to confuse speakers both on the floor and in committee causing them to lose their train of thought.⁵²

Ever the champion of frugality, Hoffman urged his colleagues to rescind their votes in favor of a bill granting members an extra \$3,500 per year for help and expenses. His request caused Hays to accuse him of taking his position because he had not had the opportunity to do any labor-baiting and this gave him the publicity he desired. Hoffman continued his economizing campaign by introducing a bill calling for a 5 percent voluntary reduction in congressional salaries and expense accounts, and a bill cutting spending in the

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Executive departments by the same percentage. Since these measures had little chance of passing, it is easy to assume that he was simply grandstanding. Yet he was a devout believer in economy and it seems fair to credit him with more than just headline hunting, particularly in light of his subsequent recommendation to reduce both the staff and the appropriation for his own committee.⁵³

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The election of 1950 was not a difficult one for Hoffman. Just prior to the primary a favorable article appeared in the Allegan Gazette (his son Leo was the editor) noting the stands he had taken and the abuse he had endured because of his convictions. The picture conveyed was that of a dedicated, courageous public servant who, despite the best efforts of his enemies, had been shown to be both honest and loyal, a candidate worthy of trust. The paper also quoted from a letter written by Herbert Hoover to Hoffman in August 1938 saying how much he admired the fight Hoffman was waging: "You are reaching to the very bottom of Constitutional rights." The voters also seemed to approve of their much maligned Representative as he was given a three to one margin over his Republican challenger.⁵⁴

The issues he stressed in both the primary and general election campaigns were inflation, the war, the administration's generally inconsistent foreign policy and the giving away of billions of dollars to foreign nations. As a sign that he was not totally disliked by Democrats, he printed a letter written by

the former Democratic chairman of the Expenditures Committee, Carter Manasco (Alabama) to a voter in the 4th district praising Hoffman's work and assuring the individual that he would not be making a mistake in re-electing him.⁵⁵

In 1949 he replied to the suggestion in some local papers that he was about to retire by saying that his retirement would begin only when the voters made him. If the election of 1950 was any indication, the voters were in no hurry for that time to come as he defeated his Democratic challenger, Forest A. Schoonard, by over 32,000 votes.⁵⁶

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He began the 82d Congress by admonishing his colleagues to be more zealous in attacking the New Deal type policies of the past five or six years. Claiming that he too had been lax, a statement that must have astounded many, he said he had erred in not speaking enough since he had been unable to persuade his fellow members to change their minds. His problem, however, seems to have been not the quantity of his speeches, but the lack of moderation in many of them. He said individuals had their favorite themes and he acknowledged that his were the CIO and Communism. "We all have our little hobbies and we all have to yield to them on occasion."⁵⁷

He certainly lived up to his precept that it was the duty of any elected official to make his views known on any political issue when questioned. In one speech, which was a listing of the tenets of the ultra-conservatives, he discussed what the government

should cease doing and what it should start doing. Some of the items that he opposed were: staying in Korea, aiding the French in Indochina or Britain in her trouble spots around the world, or drafting men to fight wherever the UN was involved. He agreed that being against plans was not sufficient, but "putting out a fire and cleaning up the site is necessary before rebuilding can begin." He then noted those policies that he favored: more economy and efficiency in government, more integrity and loyalty from elected officials, less interference by the federal government in the lives of the people, more power to the states where it rightfully belonged, and a foreign policy in the interest of the United States.⁵⁸

He said his criticism of the administration for its "lack of common honesty, of political morality" made him the victim of "bitter and unjustifiable criticism." One of the reasons he was the target of bitter criticism was because of some of his actions, such as his April 1952 bill to promote confidence in statements made by Truman. Saying that the public needed to have confidence in the President, he thought that the creation of an Office of Advisory Censor to the President to advise the President regarding the accuracy of his remarks would help assure that confidence.⁵⁹ With legislation of this nature, it is easy to understand why some found it hard to take him seriously.

Far more sensible than his call for a presidential censor was his bill concerning wage and price controls. With the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 came the problem of inflation.

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Truman, hesitant to impose controls, finally announced the beginning of wage and price ceilings in January 1951. Hoffman, along with many in Congress, was convinced that Truman had waited too long. Agreeing that some action was necessary, he accused the President of seeking the support of unions by procrastinating until they won higher wages. He persisted in his efforts to gain passage of the plan he had first introduced in 1942 freezing wages and prices, with the enforcement to be done locally.⁶⁰

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With the war on in Korea, Hoffman again stated his World War II thought that while collective bargaining was necessary in peacetime, it "just goes out the window" in time of war. Insisting that there was a moral and legal obligation to support the war effort by not striking, he again advocated depriving those who struck industries essential to the public welfare of the benefits and privileges granted by federal legislation.⁶¹

The major labor dispute during the 82d Congress involved the steel industry. While the contract for the industry expired on 31 December 1951, the strike was postponed until April 1952 to enable the government to work out an arrangement between the two sides. Hoffman disapproved of Truman's efforts, accusing him of trying to buy the votes of labor by his handling of the dispute.⁶²

Failure to reach an agreement led to presidential action. Since the union was willing to settle while the owners were not, Truman wanted to pressure the companies, especially since he

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believed that the demands of the workers were reasonable. While many, including the owners, expected that any action would involve the Taft-Hartley Act, Truman, unwilling to tolerate a nationwide strike in the midst of war, seized the mills instead, touching off a constitutional crisis.⁶³

The reaction to the seizure was largely negative, with even formerly pro-administration papers voicing criticism. Most of the editorials viewed Truman's action as that of a dictator. Despite the furor, the House contented itself with a few speeches before voting to recess for nearly two weeks. Not unexpectedly on an issue of such magnitude, Hoffman spoke against the seizure. Regarding himself as an advocate of the average American, he resented the takeover which he classified as catering to the demands of labor. Despite the tumult over the seizure, Truman was confident that the Supreme Court would rule in his favor. On 2 June 1952, however, the Court decided against the President, a decision most members of Congress approved.⁶⁴

The Court's ruling precipitated a fifty-three day steel strike. Two days after the decision, Hoffman introduced a resolution calling on the President to use the Taft-Hartley Act and other relevant federal laws to end the strike. Shortly thereafter Truman passed the responsibility for action to Congress. Hoffman castigated Truman's action, saying that he had twice taken an oath to enforce the law and yet he "comes publicly before Congress and like a child, asks us to tell him to do his duty. A sorry confession of incompetency, a humiliating admission of cowardice, a shameful

defiance of the law of the land, and because, he says, he thinks there is a better way."⁶⁵

Congress responded to Truman's speech with a non-committal suggestion that he use the Taft-Hartley Act. As a consequence Truman took no action. On 20 June Hoffman blamed the strike on the President's failure to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act. Frustrated by the inability of the two sides to resolve their differences, Truman finally brought them together to reach some accommodation. A solution was quickly reached.⁶⁶

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The Korean War continued to attract Hoffman's attention. Never a jingoist, it was not unexpected that he was critical of the fighting. But what compounded his distaste for this conflict was that American soldiers were fighting, not under their own flag, but under the flag of the United Nations which he scornfully characterized as a "rag," a "spider web on a field of blue." He labeled a congressional resolution calling on the UN to declare the Chinese Communists aggressors in Korea a "tricky, weasel-worded, double-talk proposal," perceiving it as an endorsement of the UN and the Truman-Acheson (Secretary of State Dean Acheson) policies that caused the war. Since he was convinced that the Chinese Communists were aggressors, it was hard to vote against it, but he did not intend to be duped into any "backdoor" approval of either the UN or the administration's policies. Rather than support the UN's

policies, he favored withdrawing from the organization and letting it "go hang."⁶⁷

He wondered why Americans were fighting when there was a large Nationalist Chinese force available on Taiwan. If the war was to contain Communism as Truman claimed, then he questioned the failure to utilize the Nationalist troops. He wantonly accused Acheson and the State Department of showing by their actions that American lives were less important to them than Chinese lives. He clearly did not understand Truman's efforts to keep the war limited, preferring the all-out approach of General Douglas MacArthur.⁶⁸

When Truman removed MacArthur as commander in Korea, Hoffman was incensed. Claiming that the President's charge that the general's policies would involve the nation in World War III was absurd, he insisted that MacArthur merely advocated sound military tactics. Considering the administration's conduct of the war, he said Congress should do what it could to remove Truman from office. Hoffman saw no logic in firing a general who tried to fight Communists while Truman remained "under the thumb" of the "power-mad, British-loving" Acheson.⁶⁹ Hoffman clearly had little respect for Truman, believing that in foreign affairs he was controlled by Acheson, while in domestic affairs he was a puppet of the labor movement.

He hoped that one salutary result of the fighting might be the removal of Acheson. Even before the war Hoffman had pressed Truman to get rid of him. He was critical of Acheson because of the Secretary's refusal to turn against Alger Hiss after his

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conviction for perjury for his statements regarding his association with the self-confessed Communist Whitaker Chambers. (Hoffman wrote: "If you hitch your star to an Acheson, you will find yourself in bed with the Reds.") That Republicans generally shared his dislike of Acheson was shown in December 1950 when the House GOP members voted unanimously in caucus (the Senate vote was twenty to five in favor) that the Secretary had lost the support of the people and should be removed.⁷⁰

Aware that Congress could not force the Secretary to resign, he offered a suggestion of how to get rid of him: since Congress had created the department, Congress could abolish it. If Truman wanted to retain the department, he would have to remove Acheson. The obstacle that he saw to his plan was that Congress lacked the courage to push the issue.⁷¹ Here again one sees how Hoffman, by offering such a drastic course of action, merely made it harder to take him as seriously as some of his more rational proposals warranted.

In March 1952, still advocating the impeachment or the removal of the Secretary, he questioned why more Republicans had failed to vote for the amendment to an appropriation bill offered by Dayton E. Phillips (R, Tennessee) which provided for terminating Acheson's pay. He disagreed with those who claimed that it was illegal, reasoning that if Congress created the post, it was within its prerogative to withhold the money.⁷²

Regarding other foreign issues, he thought that the nation exhibited a lack of confidence, since it constantly sought allies

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who were of little value. He wondered why the nation fought for countries, such as England and France, who sold materials to Russia. To Hoffman this summed up the whole futility of viewing allies as an answer to security. They were expensive, but not very supportive.⁷³

Quite simply he did not believe that if the country failed to police the world, Communism would take over. It was imperative to him that the people realized that it was vain to think they could both support the world and remain strong. What was vital was to concentrate on developing the needs of the United States, which did not entail any obligation to foreign alliances or any worldwide organization. He opposed the surrender of "even an infinitesimal part of our sovereignty."⁷⁴

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The presidential election of 1952 was of considerable concern to Hoffman. Since the GOP had lost the last three times with a liberal, internationalist candidate, he suggested that this time the party select a conservative, isolationist nominee. He thought the Midwest deserved to nominate someone at least once in sixteen years. His recommendations were: General MacArthur, or any of four Senators, Taft, John W. Bricker (R, Ohio), Everett McKinley Dirksen (R, Illinois), or Harry F. Byrd (D, Virginia), although placing Virginia in the Midwest requires stretching geography somewhat.⁷⁵

After Eisenhower won the nomination, Hoffman, who once said that he could not support him because of his internationalism, decided that despite his lack of enthusiasm, he would campaign for him since the Democratic candidate was even worse. The choice of Richard M. Nixon (R, California) as the vice-presidential nominee made the ticket more palatable to Hoffman who had served with Nixon for six years. Hoffman characterized him as a man of "ability, integrity, courage, and determination."⁷⁶

His own campaign was not a difficult one. In the primary the South Bend (Indiana) Tribune praised his "excellent record" and his "national reputation for ability and courage in opposing socialistic policies." An "outstanding member" of the 80th Congress, he showed great concern for his constituents, a point cited often by his admirers, and one stressed by Hoffman himself. (Not only did he care for his constituents' needs, he encouraged others to do likewise.) The paper noted that he had been "praised by supporters of constitutional government" all across the country, and said: "Men of his courage and ability are needed now as never before."⁷⁷

The Benton Harbor News-Palladium also endorsed his re-election because of his experience and the work he had done for both his district and the nation. (Among his efforts on behalf of his constituents were his bill to protect the people who lived along Lake Michigan whose homes were being washed away, and his opposition to the administration's asparagus pricing policy which he considered detrimental to Michigan producers.) The paper emphasized his willingness to take stands regardless of their popularity. Knowing of

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no other Representative who worked harder for his constituents than Hoffman, the paper said he had always claimed to be "nothing more than a 'hired man' for his district. He is right--and he has done a whale of a job." While his convictions may not have been those of many in Congress and the nation, his district appeared satisfied, especially since he seems to have handled his constituents' problems with great diligence.⁷⁸

In a primary speech he responded to the charge that he was opinionated, saying that he believed in certain fundamentals: those found in the Bill of Rights, the Constitution, the Ten Commandments, and the law of supply and demand. To those who said that he was against taking any action, he pointed out that the Ten Commandments all began with "Thou shalt not." Referring to G. Elwood Bonine, a former State Senator and the only threat to Hoffman among the three Republican challengers, he said Bonine was known for his ability to compromise, a trait not high on Hoffman's list of values. He noted: "Well, I hope to God I never compromise principle for expediency."⁷⁹

After easily defeating Bonine, who apparently resigned his senate seat to run because Hoffman had indicated that he would retire in 1952, Hoffman then faced Murle E. Gorton, Berrien county Democratic chairman and chairman of the local steel workers union, in the general election. In his campaign ads Hoffman noted that his re-election, coupled with Republican control of the House, meant that he would be chairman of the Government Operations Committee (the renamed Expenditures in the Executive Departments

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Committee) which would give the district influence that Gorton could not possibly match. The issues he stressed were the need to reduce taxes, balance the budget, get out of Korea, and clean up the federal government.⁸⁰

The Detroit News said that there were not two more opposite candidates in Michigan than Hoffman and Gorton, but the paper had no doubt as to which would win. The people of the rural district, which contained just a "sprinkling" of Democrats, seemed satisfied with their Allegan Representative. Neither man responded to the paper's questions about the issues, with Hoffman replying that he did not answer questionnaires since the questions were too broad and the answers were too brief, resulting in frequent misinterpretations.⁸¹

Calling him a "crusty and invincible champion of things in which he believes," the Detroit Free Press said he had been serving his district's needs for eighteen years and his constituents agreed that "it would be the political upset of the century" if he were defeated. Political experts said that in his district the national and state tickets needed his help more than he needed theirs.⁸²

Actually, while this was not generally true, it was an accurate assessment of this election. Hoffman ran ahead of the two Republican senatorial candidates (one ran in a special election) and all of the statewide nominees, losing only to Eisenhower. Normally, however, Hoffman ran behind the rest of the ticket. He was always outpolled by the GOP presidential nominee and was beaten by the senatorial candidates in eight out of eleven contests. On

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the state level, he ran best against the gubernatorial nominee, winning half of the fourteen races. He trailed three of the remaining state officers ten times and the other three, eleven times. Thus, while he was popular enough to win in the primaries, Hoffman was not the one who drew voters to the Republican ticket. Except for the elections of 1934 and 1952, when he led most of the GOP nominees, and a few scattered individual races, he ran behind the party's candidates even in his own county.

Not only was the district staunchly Republican, the voters were also conservatives who were "ardent followers" of Taft. When the Ohioan lost the nomination, many said that if it were not for Hoffman's name on the ballot, they would not bother to vote. The Free Press said that the editor of the Allegan News summed up the attitude of the district when he declared that "We're just died-in-the-wool Republicans of the old school, and the Hoffman brand of politics suits us to a T."⁸³

While his style of politics may have suited the majority of his constituents, the Democrats viewed him as a liability to the GOP. After Eisenhower gave a blanket endorsement to all Republican candidates, the Democratic national chairman sought to embarrass the Republican nominee by asking if he actually approved the record of some of his party's choices. The first candidate cited was Hoffman, evidence that despite the relatively peaceful interlude in his career, he still retained his national notoriety.⁸⁴

Time may have been correct in characterizing him as a "bitter lone wolf, . . . the most reactionary man in Congress,"

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but if so, his district seemed not to mind, for he won in November by over 44,000 votes, more than doubling Gorton's total, making this the largest margin of victory in his fourteen elections. His own analysis of his victory was that the voters were tired of Korea, Communism and corruption, all the fault of the Democrats. He doubted that Eisenhower helped him, since the people were "so disgusted with the Truman outfit they would have voted for the devil by way of protest."⁸⁵ Actually Hoffman trailed Eisenhower by over 3,500 votes, losing to him in every county.

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With the Republicans winning control of the House, Hoffman became chairman of the Government Operations Committee. Now, not only did he have the opportunity again to head a committee, but for the first time in his long career he had the chance to serve under a Republican president. The question was whether he would cooperate with a Republican administration any better than he had with a Democratic one. This question was not long in being answered, nor was there any prolonged doubt as to how the lone wolf would act now that he had broad investigatory powers.

He was entangled in a controversy a month before the start of the new Congress as a result of a proposal he made to limit the amount of space newspapers gave to candidates. The suggestion, which he admitted would be difficult to regulate, came as part of his testimony before a House committee investigating the campaign law limiting spending. While not objecting to the papers selling

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ads to candidates, he did oppose papers using editorials for the same purpose. If an office seeker was restricted in the amount he could spend, then why not limit the space available in the press? Hale Boggs (D, Louisiana), chairman of the investigating committee, charged that his suggestion violated the First Amendment, a point noted by other committee members. Hoffman, conceding that he had "put his foot in it," argued that limiting one's campaign contributions was a violation of the freedom of speech and that the same principle was involved in his proposal, causing one to question his proclaimed attachment to the Constitution. Failing to clarify the editorial restrictions he envisioned, he maintained a newspaper could still make political endorsements and state its views on issues while remaining within the guidelines.⁸⁶

His suggestion raised an interesting issue, but how one could adhere to such a policy without violating freedom of the press is difficult to see. It is, however, a good illustration of his tendency to enunciate controversial views, and is also a clear indication of why many newspapers were critical of him.

Another potential problem that was developing before the start of the new Congress concerned a possible attempt to punish Taft or his supporters. House Republicans threatened to retaliate against any such move. Despite being a strong Taft man, Hoffman did not make his intentions known, although he did say that the election results had not altered his basic views any. It was noted

that as chairman of the Government Operations Committee he would be strategically placed to harm administration proposals.⁸⁷

Not content to be just a chairman, he also fought for a seat on the Education and Labor Committee, protesting that there was no rule prohibiting him from being chairman of one committee and a member of another. The Detroit News said that some Republicans "feared his penchant for fighting with labor leaders," but that others decided that it was useless to try to curb him because the investigatory powers of his committee allowed him to scrutinize any Executive department he chose. He was appointed to the committee.⁸⁸

The month of December provided some indication to any interested observers of what to expect from Hoffman during the next Congress. The interlude was clearly about to end.

Footnotes Chapter 6

¹U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Investigation of Charges of the Hiring of Strikebreakers, of a Violation of State and Federal Laws and Rioting at the Shakespeare Co., Committee Rept., 14, 80th Cong., 2d sess., 1948, p. 2; Detroit News, 4 December 1948. For a description of the raid see the committee report, pp. 31-32.

²Detroit News, 5 December 1948; New York Times, 13 December 1948.

³Detroit News, 22 December 1948. See Committee Rept., 14, pp. 32-36 for correspondence between Murray and Hoffman.

⁴Detroit News, 2 January 1949.

⁵CR, 81:1 (13 January 1949) pp. 266-74.

⁶CR, 81:1 (13 January 1949) pp. 272-73.

⁷CR, 81:1 (13 January 1949) p. 273; New York Times, 4 December 1949; interview with Helen Boyer, 30 January 1981.

⁸Judd to author, 6 September 1980; Griffiths to author, 2 September 1980.

⁹CR, 81:1 (29 September 1949) pp. 13567-68.

¹⁰Foster Rhea Dulles, Labor in America, pp. 379-80; CR, 81:2 (23 February 1950) pp. 2311-13; New York Times, 16 May 1950.

¹¹Dulles, p. 380; CR, 81:2 (4 March 1950) pp. 2824-26.

¹²New York Times, 25 January 1949; CR, 81:1 (24 January 1949) pp. 525-26.

¹³William E. Pemberton, Bureaucratic Politics, pp. 97, 107.

¹⁴Pemberton, pp. 115-16, 127.

¹⁵CR, 81:2 (10 July 1950) pp. 9852-54; "The Hoover Report and Politics," Commonweal 50 (2 September 1949):500-01

¹⁶Pemberton, pp. 118, 151-52; New York Times, 11 July 1950; CR, 81:2 (10 July 1950) pp. 9853-54. The New York Times also misjudged the fate of the proposal in the House, claiming that Hoffman's resolution could not get 218 votes, see 10 July 1950.

¹⁷CR, 81:1 (16 June 1949) p. 7833; CR, 82:2 (30 January 1952) p. 646.

¹⁸Campaign ads in HS.

¹⁹Karl Schriftgiesser, The Lobbyists: The Art and Business of Influencing Lawmakers (Little, Brown, 1951), pp. 115-17, 127; CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8348; CR, 81:2 (6 June 1950) p. 8174.

²⁰CR, 81:2 (18 September 1950) p. 15064; Alonzo L. Hamby, Beyond the New Deal, p. 324. That liberals hoped to use the investigation to gain legislative victories is noted in Hamby, who also cited reasons for the overall failure of the study, see pp. 322-27.

²¹CR, 81:2 (21 June 1950) pp. 9025-39; George B. Galloway, "The Operation of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946," American Political Science Review 45 (March 1951):66-67.

²²CR, 81:2 (15 June 1950) p. 8692.

²³New York Times, 13 and 16 June 1950.

²⁴CR, 81:2 (12 June 1950) pp. 8473-75; CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8340; "Rightist Under Attack," New Republic 122 (19 June 1950):9; CR, 81:2 (22 June 1950) pp. 9111-12.

²⁵170 (27 June 1950):608-09; Donald C. Blaisdell, American Democracy Under Pressure (Ronald Press, 1957), pp. 87-88.

²⁶CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8348; New York Times, 9 and 16 June 1950.

²⁷Schriftgiesser, p. 168; James Deakin, The Lobbyists (Public Affairs Press, 1966), p. 241; New York Times, 29 June 1950; CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8337.

²⁸CR, 82:1 (3 May 1951) p. 4805; CR, 81:2 (7 June 1950) p. 8261; CR, 81:2 (18 September 1950) p. 15065; Blaisdell, p. 87; CR, 81:2 (8 June 1950) p. 8337; CR, 81:2 (30 March 1950) Appendix, pp. 2396-97. For statements by or about the organization see, CR, 81:2 (20 July 1950) Appendix, pp. 5320-21; CR, 81:2 (21 September 1950) pp. 15447-50; CR, 81:2 (22 May 1951) pp. 5628-31.

²⁹CR, 81:2 (18 September 1950) p. 15064; CR, 81:2 (21 June 1950) p. 9032.

³⁰"Cited for Contempt," New Republic 123 (11 September 1950):9; CR, 82:1 (20 October 1951) pp. 13768, 13772; CR, 82:2 (14 January 1952) p. 163; CR, 82:2 (18 January 1952) p. 282; CR, 84:1 (18 May 1955) p. 6577. Hoffman put a statement from Kamp regarding his refusal to divulge the information to the Buchanan Committee in the Congressional Record, see 81:2 (8 June 1950) pp. 8341-44.

³¹CR, 81:1 (10 January 1949) Appendix, p. 90; Pemberton, p. 117; Richard O. Davies, Housing Reform During the Truman Administration (University of Missouri Press, 1966), p. 102; CR, 81:1 (29 June 1949) Appendix, p. 4151.

³²CR, 81:1 (27 May 1949) p. 6994; CR, 81:1 (5 October 1949) p. 13945.

³³CR, 81:1 (2 February 1949) p. 773.

³⁴CR, 81:1 (2 February 1949) p. 773; CR, 81:1 (25 July 1949) p. 10102; CR, 81:1 (29 September 1949) p. 13556.

³⁵Donald R. McCoy and Richard T. Ruetten, Quest and Response, p. 179; CR, 81:1 (2 February 1949) p. 774.

³⁶CR, 81:1 (2 February 1949) p. 774; CR, 81:1 (20 June 1949) p. 7994.

³⁷CR, 81:1 (29 September 1949) pp. 13554-55; CR, 81:1 (3 March 1949) p. 1840; CR, 81:1 (7 March 1949) p. 1953.

³⁸CR, 81:1 (29 September 1949) pp. 13555, 13569.

³⁹New York Times, 26 September 1950; CR, 81:1 (27 July 1949) p. 10315.

⁴⁰New York Times, 26 September 1950; CR, 81:2 (8 December 1950) p. 16369; CR, 81:2 (19 April 1950) Appendix, p. 2817; CR, 81:2 (30 March 1950) p. 4433.

⁴¹CR, 81:1 (15 March 1949) p. 2537; Detroit News, 18 March 1962; CR, 81:1 (11 April 1949) pp. 4299-300.

⁴²CR, 81:2 (18 September 1940) p. 15054; CR, 81:2 (17 July 1950) p. 10444; CR, 81:2 (29 June 1950) Appendix, p. 4857.

⁴³CR, 81:2 (19 July 1950) pp. 10636-37. For explanations of why Truman did not seek a declaration of war see Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department (W. W.

Norton, 1969), pp. 414-15, compare that to David S. McLellan, Dean Acheson: The State Department Years (Dodd, Mead, 1976), pp. 281-82.

⁴⁴CR, 81:2 (31 July 1950) p. 11432; Detroit News, 3 August 1950.

⁴⁵CR, 81:2 (30 June 1950) p. 9612.

⁴⁶CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) pp. 14367-68; Arends to author, 6 September 1980; Hardy to author, 29 August 1980; Voorhis to author, 10 September 1980; Washington Star, 5 November 1967 [name and date listed on clipping] in HBF; Scott to author, 16 September 1980; Chudoff to author, 11 September 1980. For other comments on his debating ability see CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) pp. 14366-76.

⁴⁷Jonas to author, 2 September 1980; CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14367; CR, 89:1 (9 September 1965) p. 23216.

⁴⁸Albert to author, 4 September 1980; CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14371. For various references to his parliamentary ability, see CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) pp. 14366-76.

⁴⁹Jonas to author, 2 September 1980; Meader to author, 17 September 1980; CR, 81:2 (24 May 1950) pp. 7638-39.

⁵⁰CR, 81:2 (7 December 1950) p. 16299; CR, 83:2 (10 August 1954) p. 13947; Salvatore J. LaGumina, "Vito Marcantonio: A Study in the Functional and Ideological Dynamics of a Labor Politician," Labor History 13 (Summer 1972):399.

⁵¹CR, 81:2 (10 May 1949) p. 5988; CR, 81:2 (20 February 1950) p. 2017.

⁵²Meader to author, 17 September 1980; CR, 81:2 (15 May 1950) p. 7061; CR, 80:1 (27 May 1950) p. 9191; CR, 84:1 (7 March 1955) p. 2442; CR, 86:2 (2 May 1960) p. 9107; Van Zandt to author, 4 September 1980.

⁵³Detroit News, 14 May 1949; CR, 81:1 (16 May 1949) p. 6302; CR, 81:1 (9 June 1949) p. 7523. For his call for a reduction in staff and activities of his own committee, see below pp. 271-72.

⁵⁴8 September 1950 in HS; Michigan Manual, 1951-52, p. 439.

⁵⁵Campaign ads in HS. The Manasco letter can also be found in CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14368.

⁵⁶CR, 81:1 (10 May 1949) p. 5986; Michigan Manual, 1951-52, p. 481.

⁵⁷CR, 82:1 (15 January 1951) p. 295; CR, 82:1 (12 July 1951) p. 8078.

⁵⁸CR, 82:1 (25 February 1952) pp. 1357-59.

⁵⁹CR, 82:1 (7 May 1951) p. 4992; CR, 82:2 (25 April 1952) pp. 4424-25.

⁶⁰Maeva Marcus, Truman and the Steel Seizure Case: The Limits of Presidential Power (Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 4-14; New York Times, 27 January 1951; CR, 82:1 (29 January 1951) p. 760; CR, 82:1 (19 July 1951) p. 8476.

⁶¹CR, 82:1 (20 February 1951) p. 1409; CR, 82:1 (20 October 1951) pp. 13772-73; CR, 82:1 (8 February 1951) p. 1175.

⁶²Marcus, pp. 59-67; CR, 82:2 (14 February 1952) p. 1030.

⁶³Marcus, pp. 74-76, 79, 83; Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 465.

⁶⁴Marcus, pp. 89, 95, 102, 213; CR, 82:2 (9 April 1952) p. 3894.

⁶⁵CR, 82:2 (4 June 1952) pp. 6573-74; Marcus, p. 250; CR, 82:2 (10 June 1952) p. 6945.

⁶⁶Marcus, pp. 251-52; CR, 82:2 (20 June 1952) p. 7761.

⁶⁷CR, 82:1 (12 April 1951) pp. 3757-58; CR, 82:1 (19 January 1951) pp. 460-61; CR, 82:1 (15 January 1951) p. 295.

⁶⁸CR, 81:2 (2 January 1951) p. 17126; CR, 82:1 (20 February 1951) p. 1411.

⁶⁹CR, 82:1 (9 April 1951) pp. 2279-80; CR, 82:1 (25 April 1951) pp. 4369-70.

⁷⁰CR, 82:1 (15 May 1951) Appendix, p. 2819; CR, 81:2 (11 May 1950) p. 6913; CR, 81:2 (22 September 1950) p. 15640; Hoffman to Stella B. Osborn, 19 March 1951, Stella B. Osborn Papers, Box 3 in BHL; McLellan, p. 301.

⁷¹CR, 82:1 (26 July 1951) pp. 8978-79.

⁷²CR, 82:2 (10 March 1952) p. 2058.

⁷³CR, 82:1 (24 May 1951) p. 5840; CR, 82:1 (8 January 1951) p. 104.

⁷⁴CR, 82:2 (9 April 1952) pp. 3894-95; Hoffman to Stella B. Osborn, 7 March 1951, Stella B. Osborn Papers, Box 3 in BHL.

⁷⁵CR, 82:1 (5 October 1951) Appendix, p. 6423.

⁷⁶CR, 82:1 (27 July 1951) Appendix, p. 4734; New York Times, 16 August 1952; CR, 82:2 (5 July 1952) Appendix, p. 4912. For more of his pro-Taft, anti-Eisenhower views see Hoffman to Sherwin A. Hill, 12 April 1952, Owen J. Cleary Papers, Box 4 in BHL; Lansing State Journal, 17 January 1952, Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL.

⁷⁷30 July 1952 [date listed on clipping] in HS; Alvin M. Bentley to Hoffman, 25 July 1962 in HBF.

⁷⁸1 August 1952 [date listed on clipping] in HS; CR, 82:2 (1 July 1952) pp. 8771-72.

⁷⁹St. Joseph Herald Press, 25 July 1952 [name and date listed on clipping] in HS; Detroit News, 17 August 1961.

⁸⁰Michigan Manual, 1953-54, p. 382; campaign ads in HS; CR, 83:1 (30 March 1953) p. 2475.

⁸¹21 October 1952.

⁸²30 September 1952 in HS.

⁸³30 September 1952 in HS.

⁸⁴Detroit News, 8 October 1952.

⁸⁵Time, 17 November 1952, p. 27; Michigan Manual, 1953-54, p. 431; U.S. News & World Report, 14 November 1952, p. 80; Hoffman to Owen J. Cleary, 8 November 1952, Owen J. Cleary Papers, Box 5 in BHL.

⁸⁶Detroit News, 3 December 1952; New York Times, 3 December 1952.

⁸⁷Detroit News, 17 December 1952.

⁸⁸30 December 1952.

CHAPTER 7

The "Most Peaceful Man in Congress"

(1953-54)

The first Eisenhower years were ones of controversy and achievement. Hoffman's main interest was his Government Operations Committee, the chief investigating committee in the House, which had almost unlimited power to review Executive departments and agencies.¹ Although conducting numerous studies in various areas, he was primarily concerned with labor racketeering. Unfortunately for him the discord that he engendered led to a revolt by his committee, greatly restricting his authority to conduct investigations, and thereby preventing him from accomplishing all that he had hoped to. Most of the remaining eighteen months were spent fighting with his committee members and carrying on a feud with one of the subcommittee chairmen.

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While interest in government reorganization had declined during Truman's last years in office, Eisenhower, considering it a matter of importance, sought an extension of the Reorganization Act of 1949. Anticipating some request from the President, which had to go through his committee, Hoffman made it clear, even

before Eisenhower's inauguration, that he had no intention of granting any power to a Republican than he was not willing to give to a Democrat.²

Unfortunately due to a mixup between the White House and Hoffman, the new administration got off to a bad start. Believing that he had the blessings of the administration, he introduced an amendment to the 1949 Reorganization Act to allow a majority of those present in either house to defeat a plan, rather than a majority of the authorized membership. Since this embodied what he had long sought, he must have taken this as a sign that the new government was more concerned with constitutional niceties than the two preceding ones. This satisfying thought was short lived, for he soon learned that the administration preferred the repassage of the original 1949 act. However, before it became clear what the President actually favored, both Government Operations Committees voted against Eisenhower's bill, which was taken as a sign that hereafter Congress, not the President, would be dominant.³

After learning the President's views, he said he expected to follow Eisenhower even if it was necessary "to strain my conscience a little here and there on occasion, if I must, to go along--that is, just strain, not disregard it." That last qualifying clause was a warning not to expect too much from him, a warning that became reality. Willing to back the President on matters of economy and efficiency, he drew the line at supporting what he considered unconstitutional measures.⁴

Eisenhower's reorganization act was one of the measures he did not support, saying that "today's grant of unconstitutional power to a liberty-loving President may be tomorrow's weapon in the hands of a now unknown tyrant." He thought it not only unwise to give such power, but unnecessary, since Eisenhower already possessed sufficient authority to effectuate any needed change simply by making the right decisions and issuing the proper orders.⁵

By the time the matter reached the House floor the situation regarding Eisenhower's wishes had been clarified, but Hoffman did not surrender easily. He introduced a double negative amendment calling for disapproving disapproving resolutions, which threw GOP leaders "into a tizzy" before it was voted down. After his maneuver failed, the House voted 389-5 (with Hoffman in the minority) in favor of Eisenhower's request. Two weeks later Hoffman said that because of his vote, his ears were "still ringing" from the attacks on him from commentators, columnists and editors, including one or two in his own district.⁶

Eisenhower's first reorganization proposal calling for the creation of a Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to replace the Federal Security Agency, resembled the one that Truman had unsuccessfully sought. Even before its introduction Hoffman said it was needed since "the old outfit must be cleaned out pretty near to the bottom. I'd leave the charwomen and janitors."⁷

During discussion about the plan, Republicans were forced to listen to some of the remarks their leaders had made concerning Truman's 1950 proposal. William C. Lantaff (D, Florida) recalled

that Hoffman, who was managing Eisenhower's plan in the House, had signed a minority report critical of Truman's proposal because it was "'an answer to the bureaucrat's prayer.'" He noted that now "we seem to have a different prayer--a Republican prayer."⁸

John Bell Williams (D, Mississippi) created an uproar by reading Republican criticisms of the 1950 plan, tartly observing that "If it was a rotten egg in 1950, three more years of aging won't make it fresh." Hoffman, along with Judd, noted two differences--Oscar Ewing was not slated to head the department, and the voters had approved reorganizing the government to make it more efficient. Hoffman further justified the plan by citing President Hoover's support and noting the safeguard in the proposal requiring a special assistant to the Secretary to be chosen from among people prominent in medicine. The ranking Democrat on the Government Operations Committee, William L. Dawson (Illinois), claimed that this was a brazen attempt to gain the backing of the American Medical Association.⁹ Unable to accept the bill despite his role as floor leader, Hoffman cast an uncharacteristic "present" vote.

Another of Eisenhower's goals was the restructuring of the military. Fearing, as he had since military reorganization was proposed in the mid-1940s, the establishment of a military dictatorship, and convinced that this was just what would happen, Hoffman introduced a resolution accepting the plan but opposing the sections of it giving more power to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In support of his argument he cited a letter he received from Hoover objecting to the increase in the Chief of

Staff's powers, as well as columns written by David Lawrence and Hanson W. Baldwin, the military editor for the New York Times, who voiced concerns similar to Hoffman's.¹⁰

The Government Operations Committee rejected Eisenhower's plan and instead voted for a resolution and a bill approving the proposal minus the disputed sections dealing with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. While no reorganization bill could legally be amended, if either Hoffman's resolution or the bill submitted by Robert L. Condon (D, California) was accepted, it would, after passage by both houses, be sent to the President. Not unexpectedly, House GOP leaders refused to endorse either plan.¹¹

Having charged "somewhat angrily" that the plan would pass because of administration pressure, Hoffman nonetheless was moved to speak against it, saying if he did not, he would have indigestion for a month. Claiming that the testimony before his committee showed overwhelming disapproval of the disputed sections, he wondered how many Republicans would vote for such a proposal if Roosevelt or Truman had advocated it.¹² True to his convictions, Hoffman voted against the plan which, as he had predicted, passed.

If he failed to sway his colleagues, he could take some solace from the praise bestowed on him by Carl Vinson (D, Georgia), the ranking minority member of the Armed Services Committee. A supporter of the proposal, Vinson complimented Hoffman for the thoroughness of his study, saying that it was one of the best he had read in some time.¹³

Although not presented in the form of a reorganization plan, Eisenhower hoped to improve the organization of the government by establishing a twenty-five member Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (fifteen to be chosen by the President and five by each house) to assume the investigatory power of Congress regarding federal-state regulations. Hoffman opposed the proposal, arguing that without the power to investigate, Congress could not legislate wisely. Since this authority was lodged in his committee, it is easy to see his hostility as merely a selfish desire to retain power. There was, however, more to his opposition than just self-interest. The explanation can be found in his zealous determination to preserve the prerogatives of Congress. One of the reasons he ran for Congress was to preserve constitutional government which he thought might be "on the way out." This is why he could term the provision of the bill allowing one person representing the commission to subpoena and investigate personal records an "outrage," yet serve as a one-man subcommittee to study labor violence at the Shakespeare Co. The difference was that he was exercising congressional powers, whereas the bill called for Congress to surrender power to a body dominated by presidential appointees. To Hoffman it constituted another inroad into congressional authority which meant that the nation was one step closer to a dictatorship. Berating his colleagues for delegating away so much power to the Executive branch, he questioned whether any member deserved to get paid.¹⁴ The commission was created in July 1953.

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Eisenhower soon appreciated the accuracy of the U.S. News & World Report's assessment of Hoffman as the "outstanding GOP maverick in the House" who could be counted on to "go his own obstreperous way." In general, as he frequently observed, Hoffman was not inclined to support administration policies. In the 83d Congress, there were only four House Republicans who gave the President less support than Hoffman. He belonged to that group described by the Nation as consisting of a generation of politicians who, having grown up accustomed to opposing the President, were unable to break old habits. To them all questions were reduced to: where and how can money be saved? a thought that was always in the forefront of Hoffman's mind.¹⁵

The Pennsylvanian Hugh Scott, former chairman of the Republican National Committee, expressed concern over the lack of party support for the administration's policies. Distressed by the over forty GOP "backbenchers, whose reflexes were apparently set during their years of fighting Democratic Presidents," Scott wrote an article criticizing them for their opposition to Eisenhower's program. Some were "free-wheeling grandstanders," but mainly they were just "'old fuds.'" Hoffman, ranked as one of the six most recalcitrant Republicans in Congress, was described as "a natural 'ag'in'er.'" Noting that he was proud to be listed, he explained that he had merely sought to keep Eisenhower from following New Deal policies.¹⁶

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As chairman of the Government Operations Committee, he conducted several important investigations. His first two major efforts were unlike his other key ones in that they did not deal with alleged labor racketeering. His first attempt, which caused a "bitter political battle" and upset the leaders of both parties, was to determine if the CIO had used force to take control of the 1950 Wayne county Michigan Democratic convention. Dawson protested that the committee lacked jurisdiction over such matters. McCormack accused Hoffman of conducting a "political smear show," calling it a "disgraceful abuse of personal power." Even House GOP leaders, apparently fearful that the proposed inquiry might lead to other studies, including one into the control exercised over the New York state party by Republican Governor Thomas E. Dewey, moved quickly to stop Hoffman. Noting that the leadership of both parties doubted his authority in the matter, he called off the investigation. Members of both parties "sighed with relief" when he ended his study, causing him to observe: "I guess it must be too hot to handle."¹⁷

The first important inquiry that he conducted dealt with allegations that some of the money for a \$100 million federal housing project in Los Angeles had been used in political campaigns and that Communists were involved in the program. What made the study so controversial was not the handling of the hearings, although they were filled with arguments and disturbances, as much as it was their timing. The four days of "stormy" hearings, which

took place the week before a non-partisan mayoral election, generated the "greatest heat" of the campaign. On 8 May 1953 the city council, which had requested an investigation for a year, asked for hearings "as soon as possible," while the two candidates urged that they be postponed until after the election, as did Chet Holifield (D) whose district included part of Los Angeles. Again leaders of both parties were concerned about Hoffman's intentions. Blaming the Democrats for blocking his Detroit investigation, he accused them of seeking to prevent this one. As to what the Republican leaders wanted, he said scornfully: "You can't figure 'em out these days."¹⁸

Undaunted by the tumult he was causing, he proceeded with his investigation. Denying the mayor's accusation that the hearings were aimed at him, Hoffman insisted that it was a normal inquiry regarding federal activities. He later cited the Los Angeles Times for verification that the hearings were neither politically motivated nor arranged to coincide with the election, although the Los Angeles Daily News disagreed. The Democrats on the committee were so angered by the timing of the study that they refused to participate, leaving Hoffman and two other Republicans (with two more assisting part-time) to conduct the investigation.¹⁹

The study found that federal money was used to finance a campaign against a state constitutional amendment on public housing and that this activity was encouraged by officials of the Public Housing Administration. The report, citing the role of Communists in the Los Angeles Housing Authority, noted that the housing

officials protected them, even violating a federal law to do so, rather than expose them and risk bad publicity for the agency.²⁰

His troubles did not end with the termination of the hearings. He had two problems, one concerned his questioning of the mayor of Los Angeles, and the other had to do with the manner in which the report was issued. He admitted that there was "some little hard language" between the mayor and himself, but he noted that he tried to be fair to the mayor by allowing him to testify despite knowing that he would be accused of mixing in local politics.²¹

While the report was signed by the Republican members, Dawson, faulting Hoffman for releasing it without submitting it to the full committee, refused because the charges in it were open to "vast differences of opinion." Holifield was disturbed by Hoffman's handling of the document, claiming that the Michigan Republican had violated House rules by issuing the report without the approval of the full committee. Hoffman insisted that it had gone to the full committee, but said the "tenderhearted" members had refused to act on it. However controversial the circumstances surrounding the report may have been, he said that two weeks after it was issued, over half the project was dropped.²²

It is difficult to judge whether or not the hearings should have been held when they were. Since the two candidates differed in their opinions of the project, and since it was a matter of some importance, it does not seem that a properly conducted investigation was unwise. However, the hearings were handled in such a

way as to attract more attention than was probably warranted. (His subpoenaing of three attorneys present on behalf of clients led to some emotional exchanges.)²³ Considering that the two candidates, both Republican, and a Democratic congressman all opposed the timing of the study, and realizing that the results could have been just as easily obtained by waiting two or three weeks, it seems that a postponement would have been the wiser course.

The source of the greatest controversy surrounding Hoffman during this period concerned his investigations into alleged labor racketeering, a subject that some believed had the potential of being just as significant as the interstate crime investigation of 1950-51 conducted by Senator Estes A. Kefauver (D, Tennessee). The problem was finding support for such a probe. Hoffman, one of the few willing to speak out about labor union abuses, was handicapped because his "bitterness and extreme viewpoint" caused him to be classified as anti-labor. Yet it was Hoffman who, convinced of the need for such a study, possessed the courage and the determination to undertake the task. (Actually there were two subcommittees, one representing the Education and Labor Committee and the other from the Government Operations Committee, with Hoffman serving as a member of both. Although Hoffman was the driving force behind the investigations and the dominant figure during the hearings, the actual chairman was the Kansas Republican Wint Smith, chairman of the Education and Labor subcommittee.)²⁴

In June 1953 he began his investigation by examining the relationship of the local Teamsters union with the jukebox and

vending machine business in Detroit. The inquiry surprised the Detroit Free Press since the paper regarded the conditions in the business as relatively quiet. While the paper was amazed that hearings were to be held, it was shocked at what was uncovered.²⁵

If some Detroiters doubted the need for an investigation, others, like James R. (Jimmy) Hoffa, a local Teamster official, were unconcerned since Hoffman's labor record made it easy to accuse any inquiry he conducted of being an anti-labor smear. Yet Hoffa, one of the main figures of the investigation, soon realized that his insouciant attitude was unjustified. Hoffman proved to be the "first serious threat" to Hoffa's "free-wheeling power quest."²⁶

The highlight of the hearings was a ninety minute "lively circus" which saw a "bitter and often loud" exchange between Hoffman and Hoffa. At one point Hoffa "exploded," accusing Hoffman of trying to smear the Teamsters. He said he would not vote for the congressman, preferring someone "up to date." He threatened to go to the 4th district during the next election and work against Hoffman, who was not disturbed by the warning. When the hearings ended, Hoffa was "growling with rage." Because of his refusal to answer several questions, the subcommittees both recommended that he be cited for contempt of Congress. When new hearings were held in November, Hoffa proved more cooperative and the recommendation was withdrawn.²⁷

The subcommittee stated that it had found violations of several federal laws including the provision of the Taft-Hartley

Act concerning secondary boycotts. The inquiry, which Hoffman said had only "skimmed the surface," had also uncovered a protection racket for both workers and business owners. As a result of the hearings at least twelve individuals were indicted.²⁸

An editorial in the Detroit Free Press, a paper not given to commending Hoffman, applauded his efforts, saying that if only one-tenth of what came out was true, the city was "in the firm grip of vicious gangsters." For years people had thought that the city was relatively free of big-time crime, but Hoffman had shown that this was not true.²⁹

Hoffman also participated in a study of labor violence in Kansas City from 29 June to 3 July, serving, as he had in Detroit, as a member of both subcommittees. As a result of the investigation, which was praised in the local newspapers, he charged that the Teamsters union was responsible for the violence that stopped the construction of all essential defense plants at a time when thousands were unemployed. The union was also blamed for making the key airfield for defense of the Midwest unusable. The hearings led to a grand jury inquiry.³⁰

On 15 July 1953 before the conclusion of either the Detroit or Kansas City investigation, he was confronted by a committee rebellion which not only jeopardized his control of his committee, but, in his opinion, constituted a threat to every committee leader in the House. Although a "seething feud" had been building for some time between Hoffman and various members of his committee, the catalyst for the revolt was his directive instructing his

subcommittee heads to reduce the size of their staffs and activities. The members, believing that he had abused his authority to appoint special subcommittees to conduct "quickie" investigations, voted 23-1 (Hoffman) to terminate all special subcommittees on 25 July unless they received the committee's specific approval. He responded to the vote by accusing the members of being more interested in aiding their own careers than in achieving results.³¹

Declaring that the resolution "kills off everything," he claimed that he could no longer direct hearings as he had at Detroit, Kansas City, or Los Angeles, a charge his opponents noted was untrue. He defended his use of special subcommittees by arguing that they were involved in investigating racketeering and the violations of statutes, whereas the regular subcommittees dealt with administration policies, a view rejected by most of the committee members.³²

He noted that for the last six years the chairman of his committee had the authority to create special subcommittees which usually consisted of three members, a policy he had followed in the interest of economy. Insisting that, whatever the intention, the result of the resolution was to stop a "comparatively successful" attack on gangsters and racketeers, he warned his colleagues that if the revolt succeeded, then other committee heads faced a similar threat.³³

In what was termed "a rare outburst," the members of his committee voiced their criticisms of him from the House floor. Admitting that Hoffman had the power to appoint special

subcommittees, Holifield said he had abused it. Having served with his chairman for seven years, he held no bitterness towards him, but he was reluctantly compelled to speak out against Hoffman's unwise behavior. McCormack agreed that conditions were such that the members had no choice but to do what they were doing. As an illustration of Hoffman's misuse of power, McCormack noted that Dawson had received a letter from Hoffman on Friday asking for hearings the following Monday or Tuesday. (Hoffman did have a tendency to establish special subcommittees on short notice.) Lantaff, regretting that the matter had become public, blamed Hoffman for having aired the dispute.³⁴

Republicans were just as censorious as the Democrats. Judd said it was unfair of Hoffman to declare that all special subcommittees had been abolished since they were simply going to be reviewed to determine which, if any, were worth retaining. Clarence J. Brown (R, Ohio), saying that the committee had tried to be "patient and courteous" to their chairman, although "it had been rather difficult at times," described the situation as "intolerable." He thought Hoffman's behavior was related to his age and suggested that perhaps his health was bad, remarks that upset Hoffman as much as any. George Bender (R, Ohio) said that although he had been "loyal and devoted" to his chairman, he was forced to tolerate "considerable 'malarkey'" trying to cooperate with him.³⁵ Little did Bender realize that his present differences marked the beginning of a feud that lasted for years.

Hoffman, who had left the House before the criticisms, sought to correct the impression that he had fled the chamber to avoid hearing his colleagues, saying that he had no inkling of the coming "mass attack." He thought the remarks basically added up to his being accused of being "just a little old man, who was ill and did not know what he was doing." He was tired of having his critics describe him as "a poor old man teetering on the edge of the grave and seeking credit to buy a tombstone," and said he was willing to match his work load with anyone's, a comparison he probably would have won, for his age had not impeded his performance. (The Detroit News, commenting on his "phenomenal physical activity," noted that he usually conducted his affairs "on a trot." The paper said that the record showed that he handled more legislation than almost any other committee head, once floor managing two bills on the same day.)³⁶

Although his committee was dissatisfied with his conduct, he was not without support. Jeffery P. Hillelson (R, Missouri), a participant in the revolt, after receiving numerous messages from his constituents to back his chairman, called for a meeting in order to vote on continuing Hoffman's special subcommittee. Even those not normally fond of him extended praise. Murray Kempton, writing in the New York Post, commended the results of the Detroit hearings despite his dislike of Hoffman, "the wildest reactionary in the House. But Hoffman aside, the facts are the facts."³⁷

Before the committee was able to vote on the fate of his subcommittee, a second revolt almost broke out when he tried to

use a recording machine during a meeting "that promised fireworks" (it had been called to vote on the future of his investigations). Holifield grabbed the microphone and threw it the length of the table, demanding that it be turned off. Republican Lester Holtzman (New York) said that if it were not turned off, he would walk out. After a resolution against the use of the recorder passed 20-3, the committee continued its meetings, but not until three reporters that Hoffman had invited were ejected. Hoffman, who the Detroit Free Press said seemed "to be trying to win the honors for truculence," decided to record the meeting after one member had complained that the stenographers were not keeping an accurate record, although he told reporters it was to let the members hear "how they sounded all cackling at once."³⁸

Criticism of the possible termination of his investigations led the committee to vote unanimously to allow him to conduct his Detroit and Kansas City hearings, but only for sixty days. Hoffman, although tartly noting that "You can't do much in sixty days," agreed to continue. Charles B. Brownson (R, Indiana), who was "tired of getting beat over the head editorially," sought to correct the impression created by the 23-1 vote that the members were aiding labor racketeers. Brownson said it was to protect the rights of the regular subcommittees.³⁹

Hoffman had gained a victory, but his troubles were not over. He immediately faced a serious challenge when committee members asked the House Administration Committee to ascertain who managed the \$355,000 budget. Hoffman said if he was not in control,

it would "cut my throat." The Detroit News said: "Even his enemies conceded it would--just about at his belt."⁴⁰

Seeking to retain budgetary control, he waged an uncharacteristically quiet battle before the GOP Policy Committee and the Administration Committee, although he was willing to bring the matter before the House if necessary. It was thought that if the House considered the issue, party lines would break since other committee heads feared similar challenges.⁴¹

The Administration Committee approved a resolution giving the subcommittee heads the money they had already been allotted, leaving Hoffman in control of \$100,000, a decision he termed acceptable: "I never have wanted to sign the vouchers and be responsible for money spent by the subcommittees. It's just a big swindle-sheet operation anyway," a statement not likely to endear him to his colleagues. Since he had had special permission during the 80th Congress not to sign pay vouchers, saying he lacked enough knowledge of what was actually done, how efficiently it was done, and myriad other details he needed to know before he committed himself to signing, there seems little reason to doubt that the decision was agreeable to him.⁴²

Yet when the House voted on the resolution (117-6), he opposed it, saying that the measure weakened party discipline and deprived those chairing committees of their control, a view rejected by Halleck, the majority leader, and McCormack, the assistant minority leader, both of whom favored the resolution. Hoffman pledged not to allow the vote to discourage his investigations,

announcing that he intended to continue even if he had "to carry on the whole damn investigation myself."⁴³

Though he seemed inundated with problems, there were those who thought that he enjoyed the turmoil. One paper editorialized that he "thrives on stirring up trouble." Albert wrote that he seemed to enjoy telling how he was going to stir up the House. In the Detroit News Washington correspondent Will Muller noted that Hoffman liked to tell reporters that being the "most peaceful man in Congress," he was puzzled why others fought with him, after which he proceeded to attack someone. Urging members of his committee to remain calm, he would give some member "a political hot-foot," upsetting the Republican leadership. The "chip he brought on his shoulder to Congress 18 years ago has grown into a poison ivy vine." According to Muller the general reaction of his colleagues was: "I think he's a great guy as long as he leaves me alone. I don't want to tangle with him." Few would have accepted his assessment of himself as "a very agreeable, complacent individual."⁴⁴

Since his racketeering investigations had shown that union pension funds provided racketeers with large amounts of money, he sought House approval to extend his hearings until 31 December 1953. The House failed to consider his request. Later, when it was decided to study union welfare funds, the task was given to the Education and Labor Committee.⁴⁵

While denied the power to continue his study, his hearings had convinced both Wint Smith and Hoffman to introduce legislation to regulate union welfare funds. Hoffman's study also played a part in Eisenhower's January 1954 request for a congressional investigation into the mismanagement of such funds by labor officials. Walter Reuther, president of the CIO, pledged his cooperation with the proposed inquiry.⁴⁶ As in other instances, while failing to receive credit for his work, Hoffman was able to prod others to take some action.

Although he was "fed up" with the restrictions placed on him by his committee, he was able, through his membership on Wint Smith's subcommittee, to continue his probe into alleged labor racketeering past the sixty day limit. There were, however, clear restraints imposed by Samuel K. McConnell (R, Pennsylvania), chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, apparently to prevent Hoffman from launching a broad labor study.⁴⁷

Returning to Detroit in November, the Smith subcommittee concentrated on Hoffa's handling of the multi-million dollar Teamster health and welfare insurance plan. While Hoffa and Hoffman frequently clashed, there were some who thought that Smith interceded to protect Hoffa, a charge that Smith later denied. Hoffman, though differing with Smith on aspects of the investigation, was not critical of the chairman's performance. The hearings not only resulted in at least two citations for contempt of Congress (later dropped with no explanation), they also played a role in Hoffa's 1964 conviction for misuse of union pension funds.⁴⁸

One aspect of the hearings that caused controversy was their sudden termination. Smith, who said pressure was being applied to end the study, pointed to the ceiling and said: "The pressure comes from away up there." His claim of intervention from above was shared by one of the subcommittee's investigators as well as by Hoffman. (Five years later in testimony before the McClellan Committee, Hoffman, still uncertain why the hearings were ended, continued to absolve Smith of any blame.)⁴⁹

While not blaming anyone specifically for ending the Detroit hearings, Hoffman did accuse Governor Dewey of thwarting his New York investigation and McConnell of having higher political aspirations which caused the Pennsylvanian to limit his inquiries lest he uncover too much. (He thought McConnell wanted to be either Governor or Secretary of Labor.) Attorney-General Herbert Brownell, Jr., responding to Hoffman's charge that people sought to hinder his investigation, promised to continue the study into allegations of Teamster graft which the subcommittee recommended.⁵⁰

In December there appeared to be some evidence of a conspiracy to end the hearings. A large sealed sack of data pertaining to labor racketeering in Detroit was mailed from Hoffman's Allegan office to his Washington office, but 80 percent of it failed to arrive. Since the loss of the material would hamper future investigations, the Post Office promised an inquiry to ascertain if postal employees had sabotaged his mail as he had intimated. A week later it was learned that the sack had been opened by mistake and its contents mixed with other mail. While Hoffman

publicly agreed that it was all a mistake, according to Clark Mollenhoff, a Pulitzer prize winning reporter, he was not satisfied since the delay was long enough to allow the material to be copied before it was forwarded.⁵¹ There is no evidence that it was more than an accident, but since the incident occurred in Detroit, Hoffman's suspicions are understandable.

By the end of the year he had investigators working in Los Angeles, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, Indianapolis, and elsewhere, and said he wanted to expand his investigations into a full-scale national study of alleged labor racketeering and misuse of union welfare and insurance funds. The editor of the Detroit News praised him for seeking to extend his investigations, saying that if others chose not to do it, then Hoffman should.⁵²

While he began 1954 with high hopes, they were quickly dashed as he encountered a series of setbacks. In January he was dropped from Smith's subcommittee.⁵³ The reason for his removal is not clear, but he certainly had not ingratiated himself with McConnell by his comments about the chairman's reluctance to press the subcommittee's investigations.

That same month Hoffman and Bender began their feud in earnest after Bender's criticism of Hoffman as chairman. The two men disagreed about investigating the jukebox business in Cleveland. Bender, who had voted against the hearings, said he favored them but he thought they came within the jurisdiction of the Education and Labor Committee.⁵⁴

Halleck also questioned whether such studies were not within the purview of the Education and Labor Committee. Hoffman insisted that the 1927 merger that created the Expenditures Committee (the predecessor of his committee) gave him the investigating power. Noting the support he had received from papers normally critical of him, including the Detroit Free Press, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, the Minneapolis Times, and the Des Moines Register, as well as requests from union members and leaders to continue, he declared that he had no intention of quitting.⁵⁵

While he had no intention of terminating his investigations, his committee disagreed, voting 19-1 (Hoffman) to authorize Bender's subcommittee to conduct a nationwide investigation of alleged labor racketeering. Calling this either a repudiation of what he had done, the way in which it had been done, or that his colleagues were simply expressing their dislike of him, Hoffman said that he had been warned that some members were out to get him for trying to cut the expenses of the subcommittees. Other actions of his that he thought caused his troubles were his attempt to limit travel abroad (he had started an inquiry into foreign junkets in December), and his opposition to congressional raises. Though disappointed by the vote, he derived some satisfaction out of the episode since, despite considerable doubt as to whether racketeering investigations were within the scope of his committee, it was decided that they were, just as he had long maintained.⁵⁶

Calling the choice of Bender to head the investigation "incredible," Mollenhoff said he and others were "amazed." Hoffman,

who was "furious," refused to turn over his files until he was convinced that the Ohioan was serious about the inquiry, saying that his selection "looks like a whitewash to me." Bender snapped that according to Hoffman, "there are 19 crooks on the committee and he's the only honest man."⁵⁷

Mollenhoff, in an article in Look on labor racketeering, spoke for many when he described "the sharp tongued" Hoffman as the "most tenacious of the labor-racket investigators," and one of the two "mainsprings" behind the House investigations. His colleagues tried to "hobble" him, but it was impossible to stop the "aggressive" Hoffman.⁵⁸ It would have been difficult to give credibility to a study on labor racketeering if the man most associated with such hearings was not a member. Hoffman was soon appointed to the subcommittee. Not only did he continue his fight, he ultimately won back control of his committee, albeit not without a struggle.

His committee again defied him by voting 18-2 to limit the broadcasting of committee hearings. While Hoffman viewed it as an abridgement of speech, Bender said the action was taken to prevent members like Hoffman from "creating a circus" during the hearings.⁵⁹

The Hoffman-Bender quarrel continued for several months, but the tide was turning in Hoffman's favor. In February the House, "Urged on by the revengeful cries" of Hoffman, who noted that he had conducted hearings resulting in twenty-two indictments for \$30,000, voted 123-84 against giving Bender \$100,000 for his investigation. The vote was actually thought to be due less to

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Hoffman's opposition than to the belief of many that the scope of the investigation infringed on the authority of the Education and Labor Committee.⁶⁰

In April Bender's two day hearing into the Teamster local in Minneapolis revealed a division on the subcommittee. Three Democratic members voted that they lacked jurisdiction in the matter, three members (two Republican and one Democrat) insisted that the study was within their power, while Hoffman, angry at Bender, abstained, thus producing a tie which allowed the inquiry to continue. The hearings contained considerable bickering between members, especially Hoffman and Democrat Frank M. Karsten (Missouri), leading Bender to lament that one had to have "the patience of Job's wife" to chair one of these hearings. The proceedings, which resulted in a federal grand jury investigation, were not as successful as they might have been because of the problems in getting started, part of which involved the delay in voting the necessary funds.⁶¹

In May the battle became bloodier when, after a "stormy" secret session, the subcommittee voted 5-4 (Hoffman sided with four Democrats) to remove the subcommittee's chief counsel and chief investigator. Hoffman characterized the statement of the chief counsel that the House members had been "influenced" by racketeers when they rejected Bender's request for \$100,000, as an "affront to the honor, the integrity and the dignity of the House."⁶² Being one of the leaders in the fight against the appropriation, it is easy to see why he was so hostile.

Although Bender vowed to continue his investigations despite the firing of the two key men, his subcommittee was unable to function well after their loss. To revive the inquiry the nine member subcommittee was replaced by a three member one which included Bender (chairman) and Hoffman. By a vote of 17-11 Hoffman won control of the \$75,000 the subcommittee received from the Administration Committee, although Bender was able to rehire the former chief investigator.⁶³

Hoffman finally won his fight with Bender and his yearlong struggle with the members of his committee when they voted 24-1 to retain Bender as chairman of the subcommittee while granting Hoffman power to direct the inquiry. That the Ohioan remained as chairman pleased some. Paul F. Healy, writing in the Saturday Evening Post, said that Bender was "the very soul of dignity and self-discipline," in contrast to the "barb-tongued" Hoffman.⁶⁴ Yet the new arrangement failed to produce any significant results. If Hoffman had had complete control, it is likely that the subcommittee would have operated with greater diligence.

Bender's second and last major investigation, which concerned the Teamster's involvement with the jukebox business in Cleveland, seems to fit Hoffman's often stated charge that the Ohioan was using the subcommittee to promote his bid for the Senate. The four days of hearings, which Bender said had not "even scratched the surface," were recessed until after the 1954 election when they were briefly resumed. The Ohio inquiry was "a farce" with Bender making no more than "a few passes at the Ohio Teamsters."⁶⁵

Undeterred by his problems regarding the special subcommittees, Hoffman introduced a resolution authorizing him to appoint them when Congress was adjourned or recessed, claiming that he had endeavored to undertake several investigations but that he had been unable to get a quorum of his committee. When his resolution failed to pass, he disavowed responsibility for the lack of future inquiries, insisting that the blame should fall on the House leaders.⁶⁶

As a committee leader, his devotion to certain principles alienated the less committed. The resulting discord and attention proved a mixed blessing. While appearing to enjoy a certain amount of notoriety, he was concerned about labor racketeering and was cognizant that no one else in a position to take action seemed anxious to do so; therefore, being denied the chance to conduct labor racketeering investigations constituted one of the most painful blows he received in his twenty-eight years in Congress. That he was later able to regain control of his committee was an important personal triumph, but it was at best a hollow victory since he was unable to launch the investigations he wanted to.

That Hoffman was not more successful is partly explained by his timing. Just as he fought for bills years before they were incorporated in other pieces of legislation, most notably the Hobbs, Case or Taft-Hartley Acts, he had also pushed for an examination into alleged labor racketeering in 1947-78, a decade before the Senate committee headed by John McClellan began its investigation. (According to Hoffman's secretary, Helen Boyer, his files

were taken by staff members of McClellan's committee to aid them in their study.) Finally able to start his inquiry in earnest during the 83d Congress, he concentrated on the Teamsters union just as the McClellan committee later did. Unfortunately his investigations, while praised locally, failed to garner the publicity that would have enabled him to conduct his hoped for national inquiry. But as Senator John F. Kennedy (D, Massachusetts) wrote, even his truncated study "had come dangerously close to the truth" about Hoffa.⁶⁷ Whether his anti-labor reputation caused people to belittle his findings, or whether the people were just apathetic, is not clear. It does seem, however, that if he had been more circumspect in his handling of matters, he would have enlisted more support for his broad investigation.

Though his years as chairman were contentious, they were not devoid of achievements. While most of his success came from his investigations into alleged labor racketeering, his accomplishments were not confined to labor matters. The Texan Wright Patman, a member of the House Banking and Currency Committee, and a man with whom he had had his differences on several occasions, complimented him for his work in getting the Federal Reserve System to open its books to public inspection, saying that no other chairman or committee had ever done as much to bring this about.⁶⁸

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Hoffman's continued willingness to denounce others showed that, despite his troubles, he remained as quarrelsome as ever. In

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December 1953 after his Detroit and Kansas City hearings had resulted in several indictments, he criticized the Justice Department. Concerned about the prosecution of those indicted, he said that many in the Department had been in under Truman and "they haven't been eager to prosecute anything that has to do with unions." He also accused the Education and Labor Committee of failing to protect union welfare funds from racketeers, noting that his June 1953 Detroit study had revealed that the money was going "into the pockets of racketeers and extortionists." His solution, which he said McConnell refused to consider, was a federal law allowing, or directing, the states to regulate such funds. Another indication that all of his difficulties had not tamed his fighting spirit came during a hearing in Cleveland in September 1954 when Bender was forced to call a two hour recess to let Hoffman and Dawson calm themselves after they had engaged in a shouting match.⁶⁹

Despite the turmoil surrounding him, he retained his sense of humor, as was shown the day after the members of his committee had attacked him on the floor of the House. Hoffman, who had been wearing white suits in the summer, appeared in a dark suit which he called his "funeral suit." He quipped: "If I fall over, it saves the undertaker changing my clothes."⁷⁰

An incident which displayed not only his sense of humor, but also a curious vacillation on his part, concerned a ticket he received for speeding, although he claimed it was for exercising his freedom of speech to the arresting officer. Originally he

invoked his congressional immunity, but later he sought, and received, House approval to go to court. Later, deciding that he was too busy to appear, he won an indefinite delay. Then when he was ready to go, he said a thief stole the summons from his car. He joked that Nebraskan Carl Curtis (R) had offered to represent him, "provided I plead insanity," saying Curtis probably intended to prove it through "guilt by association," with some members of Congress. He was ultimately fined the minimum penalty of ten dollars.⁷¹

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Other than his committee, his main domestic concerns were labor and Communism. His goal regarding labor was to free the workers from those who exploited them, saying that before he died he hoped the Lord would let him "get over to the people just once that I am about the two-fistingest friend of the workingman in Congress."⁷²

Angered when Kaiser Motors paid \$1 million to roving union stewards to prevent interruptions in defense work, he introduced a bill forbidding such payment by the government since they did not perform any service. An editorial in the Detroit News, while commending the purpose of the bill, questioned whether another law was the answer, preferring instead a stipulation in government contracts prohibiting the practice.⁷³ Hoffman, not trusting the government to carry out such a policy, favored the more binding piece of legislation.

One of Eisenhower's labor objectives was the tempering of the Taft-Hartley Act, particularly a narrowing of the definition of secondary boycotts. Although Hoffman claimed to be pro-labor, he accused Eisenhower of conceding too much to the unions. The Detroit News stated that Hoffman voiced publicly what other Republicans only said privately.⁷⁴

While Hoffman was not amenable to the President's request concerning the secondary boycott, Eisenhower did propose some modifications in the Taft-Hartley Act that Hoffman had sought, such as guaranteeing the right of free speech equally to labor and management, allowing workers to vote via secret ballot regarding strikes, and, either requiring the oath that one was not a Communist for both labor and management (Hoffman's position), or repealing it entirely. In general, judging it impossible to strengthen the act, Hoffman chose to leave it alone, fearing that any modification would only weaken it.⁷⁵

His concern about Communism caused him to become an avid supporter of Republican Senator Joseph P. McCarthy (Wisconsin), "an honest, patriotic, public official," who was doing a "worthwhile job." Hoffman, arguing that the ends justified the means, responded to some of the Senator's critics by observing that it was "more than passing strange" that some people worried more about methods than results. He declared that if one fought evil, there was "no need of clothing the iron fist in a velvet glove." His remarks in support of the Wisconsin Senator made a mockery of his earlier

statements endorsing due process and strict constitutionality. Convinced that his constituents wanted to hear McCarthy--he called the district McCarthy territory--he had tried to get the Senator to speak in his district since at least 1952.⁷⁶

When the Senate investigated McCarthy, Hoffman wondered what qualified the Senators to judge their colleagues, insisting that it was a matter to be decided by one's constituents. Of course, Hoffman was familiar with the situation McCarthy was facing since his own committee, in essence, had judged him and found him guilty of misconduct. He warned that if a House committee was ever established to pass judgment on a member, he intended to ask that the conduct of every male Representative (he said women could not be guilty of misconduct) be investigated "from the time he was able to talk until the day before he died."⁷⁷

The case of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who had been convicted of spying for the Soviet Union, coupled with the Attorney-General's recent criticisms of Truman's treatment of Harry Dexter White, a former government official, led Hoffman to issue a statement so extreme that he again made it difficult to appreciate his more thoughtful points and contributions. Since the Rosenbergs were executed for giving information to Russia, he wondered about Truman who had appointed White to a position where he had access to information valuable to Russia after Truman knew, or had reasonable grounds to know, that White was a traitor. Actually, when Truman learned that there was some question as to White's loyalty,

he was ordered kept under constant surveillance. It was also the White case that prompted Truman to direct the Federal Bureau of Investigation to give top priority to the search for subversives. Further, regardless of what Hoffman believed, the evidence against White was not conclusive. Truman hesitated to take any rash action lest he cast doubt on the loyalty of someone who might be totally innocent.⁷⁸ Drawing any parallel between the actions of the Rosenbergs and Truman was faulty at best. Hoffman would have been better served if he had managed to bridle his tendency towards extreme remarks.

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Suspicious about the administration's conduct of the Korean War, he was quite distressed by the unsuccessful American attack of 25 January 1953 known as Operation Smack. While it was later determined that the offensive had been properly conducted, the early news releases caused Hoffman, and others, to believe that it had been waged for the entertainment of some visitors, leading him to introduce a resolution to learn whether the operation was a military necessity or simply a publicity stunt. Time observed: "never one to shun a headline, [Hoffman] sounded off loudly." Being so vehemently opposed to fighting under the auspices of the UN, and sensing a coverup by the military, he was determined to ascertain the truth. Time seemed oblivious to the reaction the attack generated both in the United States and abroad. Several domestic papers, including

the Chicago Tribune, the New York Daily News, and the Baltimore Sun, as well as papers in Paris and Tokyo raised questions about it.⁷⁹

With the ending of the war his interest in foreign affairs declined to a more normal level. Eisenhower's warning to Russia to avoid aggression, along with the removal of troops from Korea, caused him to think that the nation was finally developing a sound foreign policy. Yet despite certain reassuring signs, he urged Senate passage of the amendment offered by John W. Bricker (R, Ohio) limiting the President's right to make Executive agreements, a view favored by the ultra-conservatives. After the abuses of the last two Presidents, plus his doubts about Eisenhower's internationalism, he regarded it as a necessary precaution.⁸⁰

One aspect of Eisenhower's foreign policy that disturbed him concerned Indochina. Opposed to any involvement there by Truman, he was just as determined to resist what he perceived to be a willingness to go to war on the "absurd" theory that the existence of the United States depended on a particular form of government in Indochina or the contiguous countries. He asserted that the only ones favoring such action were those who profited from war, showing that after nearly twenty years, he still accepted the thesis of the Nye Committee.⁸¹

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The 1954 election marked the first time in ten years that he did not have a primary opponent. In his general election

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campaign against Gordon A. Elferdink, who received funds from the UAW, he called on his constituents to vote Republican to continue the good work being done in weeding out the inefficient and corrupt Democratic holdovers in Washington, cited the lower taxes and higher tax exemptions, pointed out that he was one of the few legislators to be endorsed by two Presidents (Eisenhower had done so in October), and noted how the Republicans had ended the Korean War and stayed out of Indochina.⁸²

One of his campaign ads was a reprint of an editorial from the local St. Joseph Herald-Press which aptly described him as looking on modern Republicans "with the same appetite that most of us have for boiled turnips." The editor characterized him as a "lone wolf," rather than an organization man, who was "indisputably at the forefront of his party's affairs." His concern for the needs of his constituents was listed as one of the reasons for the success that earned him the sobriquet of the "Allegan Indestructible."⁸³

While his lack of support for Eisenhower concerned Michigan GOP leaders who feared it would weaken the ticket (he ran ahead of his party's nominees for governor and lieutenant-governor, while trailing the rest of the candidates), the residents of the 4th district did not seem concerned as they returned him to Washington for an eleventh term. While it was another easy win, it was his smallest margin of victory (24,500) since 1942. He explained his re-election by saying that his constituents were for McCarthy, against wasteful spending abroad, and opposed to the inefficiency

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and corruption of the federal government which resulted from the New Deal-Fair Deal administrations.⁸⁴

The joy of his victory was dimmed because the Republicans lost control of the House, making him a member of the minority party, a position he occupied for the remainder of his congressional career. At least he was accustomed to being in the opposition, a role some thought he never ceased playing throughout his twenty-eight years in the House. While the Democrats rejoiced over the capture of Congress, they would have been happier if it were not for the knowledge that the acerbic Michigan Republican was going to be there watching and, above all, criticizing.

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Footnotes Chapter 7

¹New York Times, 25 July 1953.

²Dwight D. Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 1953-1956, vol. 1 of 2 vols., The White House Years (Doubleday, 1963), pp. 133-34; CR, 83:1 (14 January 1953) p. 387.

³CR, 83:1 (3 February 1953) p. 770; Newsweek, 9 February 1953, p. 20; U.S. News & World Report, 6 February 1953, p. 20. CR, 86:1 (27 May 1959) p. 9193 notes the mix-up.

⁴CR, 83:1 (3 February 1953) pp. 778-80.

⁵U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Amending the Reorganization Act of 1949, H. Rept. 6, 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, pp. 22-23. For Hoffman's views see pp. 13-25.

⁶Newsweek, 16 February 1953, p. 27; CR, 83:1 (2 March 1953) p. 1537.

⁷New York Times, 9 and 13 March 1953.

⁸New York Times, 17 March 1953.

⁹New York Times, 19 March 1953; Washington Post, 19 March 1953. For a comparison of the 1949, 1950, and 1953 plans see U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Creating a Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, H. Rept. 166, 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, pp. 3-6.

¹⁰Eisenhower, Mandate, pp. 447-48; New York Times, 29 May 1953; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Reorganization Plan No. 6 of 1953 (Department of Defense), Hearings before the Committee on Government Operations on H. J. Res. 264, 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, pp. 251-61.

¹¹New York Times, 23 and 24 June 1953.

¹²New York Times, 20 June 1953; CR, 83:1 (26 June 1953) pp. 7366-70, 7382-83; CR, 83:1 (27 June 1953) pp. 7489-90.

¹³CR, 83:1 (26 June 1953) pp. 7382-83.

¹⁴CR, 83:1 (4 June 1953) pp. 6094-95, 6104; Hoffman to Gerald R. Ford, 7 June 1952, Paul Gordon Goebel Papers, Box 1 in BHL.

¹⁵U.S. News & World Report, 12 December 1953, pp. 32-33; Gary W. Reichard, The Reaffirmation of Republicanism: Eisenhower and the Eighty-third Congress (University of Tennessee Press, 1975), pp. 205-10; Detroit Free Press, 5 November 1967; "The Do-Little Congress," Nation 177 (8 August 1953):104.

¹⁶Hugh Scott, Come to the Party (Prentice Hall, 1968), pp. 131-32; "Let's Stop Picking on the President!" American Magazine 156 (September 1953):82-84; Detroit News, 27 August 1953; Time, 7 September 1953, p. 21.

¹⁷New York Times, 27 and 28 March 1953; Detroit News, 26, 27 and 28 March 1953; Detroit Free Press, 28 March 1953.

¹⁸Detroit News, 8 May 1953; Newsweek, 8 June 1953, pp. 32-33; CR, 83:1 (20 July 1953) pp. 9242-46. For an example of controversy during the hearings see the New York Times, 21 May 1953.

¹⁹New York Times, 19 May 1953; CR, 83:1 (20 July 1953) pp. 9242-46; Newsweek, 8 June 1953, p. 33.

²⁰U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Investigation of Public Housing Activities in Los Angeles, Preliminary Rept., 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, pp. 5-13.

²¹CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9105-06. For the transcript of the mayor's testimony see U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Investigation of Public Housing Activities in Los Angeles, Hearings before a special subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations. 83d Cong., 1st sess., 1953, pp. 421-31.

²²New York Times, 1 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9095, 9105-06; CR, 83:2 (15 April 1954) p. 5250.

²³New York Times, 21 May 1953. See Hearings, Public Housing, pp. 313-15 for one such exchange.

²⁴Clark R. Mollenhoff, Tentacles of Power: The Story of Jimmy Hoffa (World Publishing, 1965), pp. 13, 44. Hoffman, although convinced that his committee had jurisdiction, wanted the two subcommittees lest there be any question as to which committee had the authority to conduct the investigation.

²⁵Detroit News, 8 June 1953; Detroit Free Press, 9 June 1953.

²⁶Walter Sheridan, The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa (Saturday Review Press, 1972), pp. 21-22, 34.

²⁷Detroit Free Press, 13 June 1953; Detroit News, 13 June 1953; Mollenhoff, Tentacles, pp. 39-40; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Investigation of Welfare Funds and Racketeering, Committee Print, 83d Cong., 2d sess., 1954, pp. 10-11.

²⁸Detroit News, 14 June 1953; CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) p. 9095; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Investigation of Racketeering in the Detroit Area, H. Rept. 1324, 83d Cong., 2d sess., 1954, p. 12.

²⁹13 June 1953.

³⁰New York Times, 3 July 1953; Detroit News, 11 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9095-97; CR, 83:1 (21 July 1953) p. 9439.

³¹Detroit News, 16 July 1953; New York Times, 16 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (29 July 1953) p. 10352. For a copy of the letter see CR, 83:2 (19 August 1954) pp. 15284-85. Later, according to an interviewer, Hoffman said the rebellion was caused by national labor leaders, see George Goodwin, Jr., "Subcommittees: The Miniature Legislatures of Congress," American Political Science Review 56 (September 1962):604.

³²New York Times, 16 July 1953.

³³CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9052, 9093-94. For a description of the various special committees see CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9094-95 and CR, 83:1 (29 July 1953) pp. 10355-59.

³⁴New York Times, 18 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9103-07.

³⁵CR, 83:1 (17 July 1953) pp. 9104-06; New York Times, 18 July 1953.

³⁶CR, 83:1 (20 July 1953) p. 9245; Detroit News, 21 July 1953.

³⁷Detroit News, 21 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (30 July 1953) p. 10534.

³⁸New York Times, 24 July 1953; Detroit News, 24 July 1953; Detroit Free Press, 27 July 1953 [name and date listed on clipping], Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; CR, 83:1 (29 July 1953) p. 10359; Time, 3 August 1953, p. 10.

³⁹New York Times, 25 July 1953.

⁴⁰24 July 1953.

⁴¹Detroit News, 26 July 1953.

⁴²New York Times, 28 July 1953; CR, 83:2 (19 August 1954) p. 15273.

⁴³CR, 83:1 (29 July 1953) p. 10354; New York Times, 30 July 1953; Detroit News, 30 July 1953.

⁴⁴Detroit Free Press, 27 July 1953, Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; Albert to author, 4 September 1980; Detroit News, 26 July 1953; Hearing, Labor-Management Disputes in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, 80th Cong., 1st sess., 1948, p. 550.

⁴⁵CR, 83:1 (1 August 1953) p. 10896; CR, 83:1 (3 August 1953) p. 11148; Business Week, 27 February 1954, p. 142.

⁴⁶Mollenhoff, Tentacles, p. 75; New York Times, 3 October 1954.

⁴⁷Detroit News, 22 September 1953; Mollenhoff, Tentacles, p. 50.

⁴⁸Mollenhoff, Tentacles, pp. 8, 54-55, 64; New York Times, 28 November 1953; Dan E. Moldea, The Hoffa Wars: Teamsters, Rebels, Politicians, and the Mob (Paddington Press, 1978), p. 55.

⁴⁹Mollenhoff, Tentacles, p. 62; Detroit News, 2 December 1953 and 15 August 1958. For explanations of the motives behind the abrupt ending of the investigation see Sheridan, pp. 64-69, and Mollenhoff, Tentacles, pp. 50-51, 64. Compare these to Robert F. Kennedy, The Enemy Within (Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 48.

⁵⁰Detroit News, 30 November and 2 December 1953; Detroit Free Press, 16 September 1953 [name and date listed on clipping], in Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; Investigation of Welfare Funds and Racketeering, Committee Print, 83d Cong., 2d sess., 1954, p. 13.

⁵¹Detroit News, 16 and 24 December 1953; New York Times, 25 December 1953; Mollenhoff, Tentacles, p. 73.

⁵²New York Times, 27 December 1953; Detroit News, 27 and 29 December 1953.

⁵³Detroit News, 7 January 1954.

⁵⁴CR, 83:2 (18 January 1954) pp. 388-95.

⁵⁵CR, 83:2 (18 January 1954) pp. 391-93.

⁵⁶New York Times, 21 January 1954; CR, 83:2 (21 January 1954) pp. 613-14.

⁵⁷Mollenhoff, Tentacles, pp. 77-79.

⁵⁸"How Labor Bosses Get Rich," 18 (9 March 1954):45. The other "mainspring" was Wint Smith.

⁵⁹New York Times, 5 February 1954.

⁶⁰Detroit News, 26 February 1954; Washington Post, 26 February 1954.

⁶¹Mollenhoff, Tentacles, pp. 79-81, 84; U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Investigation of Racketeering in the Minneapolis, Minn., Area, Hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations. 83d Cong., 2d sess., 1954, p. 125. Much of the quarrel between Hoffman and Karstens concerned the broadcasting of the hearings which Hoffman favored and Karstens opposed, see Hearings, pp. 1-3, 59-63, 124-26, 161-63.

⁶²New York Times, 28 May 1954.

⁶³Detroit News, 28 May and 10 June 1954; New York Times, 11 and 15 June 1954.

⁶⁴New York Times, 17 June 1954; "Noisiest Man on Capitol Hill," 227 (7 August 1954):90. Actually Hoffman never lost complete control since he had some power over subcommittees, see Goodwin, "Subcommittees," p. 603.

⁶⁵Detroit News, 10 June 1954; New York Times, 2 October 1954; Sheridan, pp. 84-85; Mollenhoff, Tentacles, p. 89. For the circumstances surrounding the ending of the hearings, see Kennedy, Enemy, pp. 49-51.

⁶⁶CR, 83:2 (18 August 1954) p. 15065; CR, 83:2 (19 August 1954) p. 15277.

⁶⁷Interview with Helen Boyer, 30 January 1981; John F. Kennedy, "Labor Racketeers and Political Pressure," Look 23 (12 May 1959):19.

⁶⁸CR, 83:2 (16 June 1954) p. 8385.

⁶⁹New York Times, 27 December 1953; CR, 83:2 (7 April 1954) p. 4831. For the exchange between Hoffman and Dawson see U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Government Operations, Investigation of Racketeering in the Cleveland, Ohio, Area--Part 1, Hearings before a special subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations. 83d Cong., 2d sess., 1954, pp. 437-38.

⁷⁰Detroit News, 26 July 1953.

⁷¹Detroit News, 16, 18 April and 26 May 1953; New York Times, 12, 14, 19 April and 8 August 1953.

⁷²Detroit News, 14 June 1953.

⁷³Detroit News, 8 and 10 July 1953; CR, 83:1 (7 July 1953) p. 8138.

⁷⁴Eisenhower, Mandate, pp. 274, 355; Detroit News, 12 January 1954.

⁷⁵Eisenhower, Mandate, pp. 355-56; CR, 83:2 (8 April 1954) p. 4917.

⁷⁶CR, 82:2 (30 January 1952) p. 647; CR, 83:2 (4 March 1954) p. 2697; Hoffman to William H. Thompson, 17 March 1954, Wilber Marion Brucker Papers, Box 5 in BHL; CR, 83:2 (21 July 1954) p. 11318; Detroit News, 30 March 1954 and 27 January 1955. Hoffman's support for McCarthy was praised by the Benton Harbor News-Palladium, see CR, 83:2 (4 May 1954) p. 3239. When McCarthy died, Hoffman put editorials, letters, and articles lauding the Senator in the Congressional Record, see 85:1 (9 May 1957) pp. 6716-20.

⁷⁷CR, 83:2 (11 August 1954) pp. 14174-76.

⁷⁸Herbert S. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades (Macmillan, 1972), pp. 333-34; New York Times, 11 November 1953; Alan D. Harper, The Politics of Loyalty: The White House and the Communist Issue, 1946-1952 (Greenwood, 1969), p. 23.

⁷⁹New York Times, 4 February and 18 March 1953; Newsweek, 9 February 1953, p. 37; CR, 83:1 (29 January 1953) p. 666; Time, 9 February 1953, p. 19; U.S. News & World Report, 6 February 1953, p. 22.

⁸⁰CR, 83:2 (16 February 1954) pp. 1868, 1873-74.

⁸¹CR, 83:2 (7 April 1954) pp. 4828-30; CR, 83:2 (8 April 1954) p. 4930.

⁸²Elferdink to Roy Reuther, 25 October 1954, UAW Political Action Department, Roy Reuther Files, Box 57 in WRL; Michigan Manual, 1955-56, p. 390; campaign ads in HS.

⁸³Campaign ads in HS.

⁸⁴Detroit News, 6 December 1953; Michigan Manual, 1955-56, p. 433; U.S. News & World Report, 12 November 1954, pp. 89-90.

CHAPTER 8

"An Old Candlestick Molder and Horse-and-Buggy Fellow" (1955-67)

During Hoffman's last eight years in office, he remained as fixed in his views as ever, but he ceased to be a center of controversy. While retaining his membership on the same committees, he had less impact on either. There were satisfactions, but as with so many in his career, they tended to be of an indirect variety. The McClellan Committee's findings, exposing the racketeering in some unions that he had sought to reveal, resulted in the passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act, which embodied ideas that he had long advocated. That this was not his most rewarding period is clear, but it is also evident that, had he not been forced to retire, he would have continued fighting for his beliefs.

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While the years 1955-56 were devoid of any great success for him, partly because his party was no longer in control of the House and he no longer chaired a committee, he did participate in the "first political battle royal" of the 84th Congress, concerning the grant of nearly 300 acres of land in the Rogue River National Forest in Oregon to the Al Sarena Mining Co. The Democrats,

charging that tests indicated that the land had little mineral value, labeled the whole procedure a timber grab. The Republicans, of whom Hoffman was "one of the most active," claimed that the Democrats were using the episode to "smear" Eisenhower.¹ The dispute was such that a joint subcommittee, chaired by Democratic Representative Earl Chudoff, was created to investigate the matter.

Chudoff's handling of the hearings so incensed Hoffman (as did other hearings Chudoff headed inquiring into the administration's power and timber policies), that he opposed any large increase in the budget of the Government Operations Committee unless Chudoff (a member of the committee) was disciplined. During one five hour session Hoffman went "stalking about the hearing room, shouting: 'What you've said is mostly bunk!'" On another occasion when he was informed that the Secretary of the Interior, David McKay, was going to testify, he retorted: "Yes. After he's been smeared all over the place," marking one of the day's "many flareups."²

His opposition to Chudoff's conduct of the hearings led him to issue a three page statement outlining Republican objections to the hearings, which accused the Democrats of moving from "character assassination to . . . conduct bordering on legislative committee lynching." The Democrats were guilty of "bias and cowardly tactics," of making "inflammatory, prejudiced" remarks, of using "New Deal smear tactics," of abusing the Constitution, of maligning the reputation of a private company, and of forsaking "civil

liberties, basic concepts of justice and ordinary courtesy and decency." He later appended to the list the charge that the Democrats were consistently following "third-degree" methods.³

Hoffman was the only Republican to attend the hearings in the Northwest. While the hearings taxed younger men, "the untiring Hoffman bawled Republican objections at every committee session," and still found time to go fishing. Oregon's Representative Sam Coon (R) credited him with preventing the chairman from using the hearings to smear McKay, despite the efforts to silence Hoffman. Another Oregon congressman, Harris Ellsworth (R), praising him for blunting the political effect of the hearings, cited the handicaps imposed on Hoffman by the chairman. Like Coon, Ellsworth claimed that Hoffman did this at considerable personal sacrifice.⁴

When the Chudoff report, calling for the resignation of McKay, was adopted, Hoffman labeled it "political propaganda."⁵ Considering that the Secretary had already announced his resignation in order to run for the Senate from Oregon, it was understandable why some viewed the report as politically motivated.

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During the years 1955-56 there was no dramatic domestic event on which he concentrated his attention. As expected, among his domestic interests, labor remained a key concern. Spurred on by the AFL-CIO merger, he criticized unions for not restricting themselves to what he called their "legitimate sphere." Advocating "drastic action" to limit unions to such items as wage increases

and better working conditions, lest the nation face the prospect of a labor controlled government passing laws in its own interest, he said the only question was whether labor would gain control before the military.⁶

As always he was disturbed about what he perceived as the loss of independence on the part of union members. Zealously dedicated to maintaining the freedom of the people from a bloated federal bureaucracy, it is easy to understand his genuine desire to protect workers from big unions. He believed big unions and big business were in collusion to gain a monopoly of the labor supply, which was detrimental not only to the workers, but also to small businesses which lacked the resources and efficiency to compete unless they were able to bargain with local unions. Incapable of matching the wages and benefits of big business, many little companies were driven out of existence, certainly a disturbing thought to one who spoke on behalf of the small entrepreneur.⁷

Labor unions were not the only danger to the American way of life. Another was the payment of agricultural subsidies, which, he insisted, farmers, aware that it was too expensive a program to continue, were willing to give up. He believed that, carried to the logical conclusion, such subsidies required paying a fair profit to business, resulting in the demise of the American system. Since the payments had been given for so long that it was difficult to terminate them abruptly, he favored gradually phasing out such payments while the nation returned to the preferable system of supply and demand.⁸

A further way to lessen the farmer's hardship was to adopt the soil bank program, a concept he accepted in 1956 but rejected three years later, insisting that it was "especially reprehensible" to give subsidies to wealthy farmers, labeling the argument that the payments went to the small farmers as "nonsense." Considering that by the middle of the Eisenhower years the Republicans were spending more on farmers than the Democrats ever had, it is easy to understand his dissatisfaction with the administration's farm program.⁹

He was particularly concerned about the problems of Michigan wheat farmers who faced jail because of over production, seeking unsuccessfully to allow any excess production to be fed to livestock. He was personally interested because he wanted to raise two or three acres himself but could not unless he signed up with the Department of Agriculture.¹⁰

The issue of growing wheat became especially important during the 86th Congress when a case involving one of his constituents, Stanley Yankus, brought the matter to the nation's attention. Yankus, who fed his wheat to his poultry, and who received no money from the government, was fined for producing more than his allotted share, causing him to move to Australia to escape such regulations. To Hoffman this was another sign that citizens were losing their freedom; one could not work in industry without joining a union nor use one's property as one saw fit. He noted how Nathan Hale had but one life to give for his country, and said Yankus had "but one farm to give to those who receive subsidies."¹¹

Seeking to aid the farmers with regard to farm workers, he introduced bills to make farm workers exempt from social security payments unless they worked for the same employer a set number of days, thereby also saving the employers the expense of the tax, as well as supporting the use of Mexican labor to harvest crops since Americans demanded too high wages. He also unsuccessfully sought to protect the farmers from the draft by offering what amounted to the Tydings amendment of World War II.¹²

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Unopposed in the 1956 primary, he faced what he and many others regarded as a tough fight against Sam Clark, a political science professor. The prediction was: "if the professor didn't win, he would cut the veteran down to size." Correctly anticipating that Clark would make an issue of his age, Hoffman, who was eighty, had a new campaign picture made which he signed with the date, "so they'll know it isn't my high school graduation picture." He countered the age question by noting that his seniority gave him more importance than a freshman congressman would have.¹³

An appendix operation in mid-September, followed by an attack of pleurisy, meant that he was unable to conduct his usual vigorous campaign. But, always the scrapper, he violated his doctor's instructions and campaigned the last ten days. (Clark was making an issue of Hoffman's age and illness.) In addition to his usual political and economic views, he ran as a supporter of Eisenhower on all major issues, a point Clark disputed.¹⁴

Hoffman, who defeated Clark by over 32,000 votes, said that his victory showed that the voters favored sound government, "not a policy of give-aways," although it was probably also explained by his concern for his constituents. As one columnist noted, his popularity rested more on service than issues. Hoffman once claimed to have read and replied to every letter he received (although he responded to one angry writer by saying that if the man thought he could do a better job he should become a candidate).¹⁵ Unfortunately for Hoffman the Republicans did not fare well nationally, retaining about the same number of House seats as they had in the previous Congress.

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The labor situation was his main concern during 1957-58. To his own long standing interest was added the revelations of the McClellan Committee. (Hoffman said his hearings would have aided the GOP and McClellan's would help the Democrats, "And more power to them!") While generally praising the committee's efforts, he was dissatisfied by the treatment afforded Reuther, the man Hoffman considered the leading villain in the labor movement. He alleged that Reuther was more dangerous than Russia, since Russia was a known enemy whereas the UAW official was "far more adroit and subtle." The labor leader was the "same brutal, lawless, politically greedy, self-seeking, ruthless, Reuther" of the 1930s, who had been working with the Communists since the 1937 sit-down strikes in Flint

to overthrow the government. Properly conducted prosecutions would, he maintained, result in both Reuther and Hoffa going to jail.¹⁶

To illustrate the brutality of the UAW, he displayed various weapons which he claimed were used by the union, including a piece of rope which he said had been used to hang a Ford worker who tried to cross a UAW picket line. He also put a table into the Congressional Record listing various CIO strikes between 1937-46 and the number of deaths (forty-one) from them, and asserted that all but three took place during disputes directed "in large part" by Reuther. Senator Paul Douglas (D, Illinois) noted that none of the deaths was related to a UAW strike. Hoffman unfairly blamed Reuther for deaths simply because they occurred during CIO strikes. He used the legal principle that a master is responsible for the actions of his servants as the basis for his charge against Reuther, but whether the principle applied in this instance is questionable.¹⁷ Further, his choice of a series of strikes to emphasize bloodshed created a distorted picture by overlooking the many peaceful labor disputes that also took place.

The UAW strike at the Kohler Co. of Wisconsin, which lasted from 1954-60 before the NLRB ruled against the company, was the primary labor conflict to Hoffman for the rest of his career. He said the strike proved Reuther's determination to overthrow the government. He even testified before the McClellan Committee regarding conditions at the plant. Reading from some of the papers

he brought with him in a large carton, he accused Reuther of being responsible for the violence. He castigated the union leader's justification of using violence on the grounds that the company was guilty of the same acts as an "absurdity." Hoffman reasoned that since no Kohler officials had traveled to the CIO's Michigan headquarters to engage in violence, Reuther's argument was invalid.¹⁸

The first major piece of legislation coming as a result of the findings of the McClellan Committee was the Senate approved Kennedy-Ives bill which Eisenhower opposed because it did not deal with the entire problem. Hoffman described it as "worse than no bill at all," seeing it as "a coverup for the politicians of both parties." He was dissatisfied not only with its provisions, but also by the way in which the measure was handled in the House, especially Rayburn's delaying of the bill for forty days and then allowing only forty minutes for discussion. Hoffman tried to get the Education and Labor Committee to take action on it, and, by amending it, make it a good bill.¹⁹ The House rejected the measure, and it was not until 1959 that any significant modification of labor legislation was passed.

While Reuther was beginning to eclipse Hoffa as Hoffman's main labor opponent, he had not displaced the Teamster leader completely. Hoffman was particularly upset when, in August 1958, Hoffa established his own, supposedly independent, commission to investigate the Teamsters to determine whether there was any

gangster influence in his union. Hoffman was especially distressed to learn that his old colleague, George Bender, was to head the study. Hoffman commented: "It's just plain silly," charging that Bender had never been serious about investigating labor racketeering. Bender responded by calling Hoffman "an unmitigated liar" who was "senile and just plain nutty." He said that he had sat next to Hoffman for fourteen years, "and why I never got apoplexy I'll never know."²⁰

The evidence supports Hoffman's assessment of the study. Although Bender received \$58,000 for his ten month probe, Senate sources were unable to find any crime figure expelled from the union because of Bender's investigation, leading one writer to describe the Ohioan's performance as "an expensive joke."²¹

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One of the major congressional achievements in 1957 was the passage of a civil rights bill. Hoffman opposed the measure, criticizing it for protecting the right to vote for four specific reasons, rather than simply making it illegal to deny anyone the right to vote. Whether his motive was to protect the black voter, or whether by writing a broad bill he hoped to undermine congressional support, is not clear. He claimed that the bill would violate civil rights since, in certain instances, it denied a person the right to a jury trial. He may have believed this, or he may have seen what Eisenhower saw, that a local jury, possibly prejudiced, would decide contempt of court cases and thereby make the

law of little value. Ultimately a compromise was reached on this issue which Hoffman voted against.²²

He also saw a danger in having a new commission "snooping" into people's lives, since the commission might some day be taken over by a group hostile to American values who would then seek legislation oppressing the majority.²³ He again went to the extreme, since, even if such a group did gain control, any legislation the members sought would have to go through Congress.

His frequent coupling of the need to protect the rights of workers with any call for civil rights is well illustrated by his comparison of the Kohler strike to the issue of segregated schools in Little Rock, Arkansas. He noted that in Little Rock troops were sent to see that the right to an education was preserved, but that no troops were sent to protect the right to work: "Lincoln could get along without a formal education, but he did have to eat." On another occasion while deploring the lynching of a black in the South, he wondered about whites who were killed during labor disputes: "Is it a crime to kill a man when he is colored but just a customary union procedure to beat him to death during a strike?"²⁴

The growing civil rights movement which led to the Freedom Rides did not alter his views any. He condemned the attack against the riders in Montgomery, Alabama, but he questioned their motives for being there. He believed that many went because of the publicity, declaring that if the press stopped printing their names, they might not go. If they were motivated by principle, he

wondered why so many riders were necessary, why both males and females had to go, and why both whites and blacks participated, questions indicating his failure to understand the issue. Believing it unfair to use federal marshals to protect a group that appeared to expect a riot, he hoped that if any similar civil rights activity occurred, those taking part would not be given federal support. Questioning the use of hundreds of federal agents to help fifty people when the government failed to protect the public from labor racketeers and goons, he thought that if the local people and authorities were left alone, they would allow the riders "to make themselves look silly."²⁵

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Although occasionally claiming to be ready to desert the economy block and begin spending, his frugality was too ingrained to be changed. (Holtzman told of how when Hoffman was chairman, he sometimes stood outside the House building counting the cars being used by government officials with the intention of minimizing or eradicating waste.) As he once noted, those who voted for economy were thought of as "reactionary, horse-and-buggy Congressmen" and tightwads, and he himself had been assailed as "heartless" more than once for voting against "progress," but he insisted that, lacking the necessary funds, programs, regardless of their desirability, should not be adopted.²⁶

The idea that he would have supported more programs if the money had been available is misleading. He favored reducing

government expenditures, even offering an amendment to repeal the federal income tax, a source of distress to the ultra-conservatives, reasoning that, by cutting off the main source of federal revenue, government spending would decline.²⁷

His commitment to cutting spending for social programs and balancing the budget led to the creation of an "Economy Party" with his good friend H. R. Gross (R, Iowa) which became known as the third party in the House, a party often far to the right of the GOP's position. The two men prided themselves on finding "legislative 'jokers' and upsetting the well-laid plans of House leaders." Hoffman respected the work Gross did in studying bills and frequently relied on him to have the figures on some measure: "That is why I follow along in your wake." He said the Iowan's appearance was "one of the most refreshing and encouraging things that has happened since I have been here," noting that it gave him "encouragement in my declining years."²⁸

The one area where he disregarded his traditional concern for economy was defense. He tended to vote for defense bills even though he knew that some money was wasted (at one time he estimated it was 40 percent) since he lacked knowledge of what was necessary. Clearly the accusation that he did not change with the times was incorrect. Statements, like that of Hugh Scott, that Hoffman was busy defending the 19th century, while in many ways true, do Hoffman a disservice.²⁹ His support of defense bills constituted a considerable reversal of his pre-World War II position.

Yet despite his general support for defense measures, he saw no reason to vote \$38 billion for defense while spending \$32 billion for bomb shelters, contending that if the nation did not have faith in its defense program, it should develop another. He sarcastically inquired if those favoring the shelters thought the men at Bunker Hill should have dug a cave and hid under the hill.³⁰

It was appropriate that his last speech in the House, entitled "Is the Congress Mentally Ill?--Is That Our Defense?" dealt with spending. Criticizing the expenditure of \$20 million for an aquarium when, he said, the nation faced serious foreign problems, he questioned whether it was an indication of mental disease that money was wasted on useful but unessential projects.³¹

Yet even Hoffman voted for desirable but less than necessary items. He supported a memorial for the USS Arizona which had "long been overdue." He also voted for a Lincoln boyhood memorial, justifying the expense by saying that what was spent in Indiana could not be spent in India, and that Lincoln had stood for the Constitution and the preservation of the union, which made him worth remembering.³²

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Anxious for a thirteenth term, he announced his intention to seek re-election as early as mid-1957, noting that nothing short of an undertaker would stop him. Despite his eagerness to serve another term, he did not participate in the primary because of

congressional business, saying that after twenty-four years the people already knew his views.³³

The efforts of his opponents to make an issue of his age (eighty-two), reputedly led one member of the House to say: "If Hoffman's too old, Marilyn Monroe lacks sex appeal." A correspondent, commenting on how Hoffman, after complaining about his opponents raising the age question, often ended by challenging them to a race, said the "woods are already full of gored victims" who confronted the "champion of Allegan." The writer noted that Hoffman, "one of the most controversial figures in congressional history, is a man dedicated to dying on Capitol Hill with his boots on. He has said so." Certainly the primary election presented little difficulty to the realization of that goal as he easily added to the list of his victims.³⁴

In the general campaign he noted that while he at times differed with Eisenhower, the President had written him thanking him for various contributions. Also as evidence of administration backing, his former colleague on the Education and Labor Committee, Vice-President Nixon, spoke in Kalamazoo on behalf of Hoffman, calling him a "valiant warrior" and "the most efficient cross-examiner of committee witnesses."³⁵

The voters returned him to Washington, although by the smallest margin (20,000) since 1938. Still, with 60 percent of the vote, it was another hearty endorsement, especially considering the poor showing nationally of GOP congressional candidates. He

said he won despite "unprecedented expenditures, false and misleading propaganda and unfair publicity" put out by labor groups.³⁶

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His last full term began with a Republican leadership fight between the minority leader Joe Martin (Hoffman's choice) and, in the words of Gerald R. Ford (R, Michigan), the "gut-fighting" Charles Halleck of Indiana. Hoffman interpreted Halleck's victory to mean the party was becoming more aggressive. Hoping that this new spirit would be channeled towards the Democrats and not each other, he promised to do what he could to make it an "interesting" session for the Democrats, a statement probably upsetting to the leaders of both parties.³⁷

His main concern during the 86th Congress was with the labor situation, a not unexpected development considering the revelations of the McClellan hearings, especially for one who, by the fall of 1959, had introduced 135 labor bills and resolutions of his own. Although claiming that none of his bills had even been considered by the Education and Labor Committee, he continued to introduce labor legislation. One measure grew out of the strikes at missile bases, which, in light of a possible missile gap with regards to Russia, led to his introduction of an amendment denying payment to any group engaging in a strike or slowdown at a defense facility.³⁸

Impatient with his colleagues' lethargic response to labor racketeering, he said the racketeers would have to steal the House

ceiling before any action would be taken. Willing to have Hoffa begin his threatened nationwide strike as soon as possible, since it required some such action to convince Congress just how powerful Hoffa was, he wondered if union contributions to about 180 House members had any bearing on the way the House failed to protect the public welfare.³⁹

The Senate responded to the rising demand for a new labor law by passing the Kennedy-Ervin bill which was bottled up in the House. Though not in favor of it, Hoffman tried unsuccessfully to get the bill reported out so that some action could be taken. He then noted how thirteen of the twenty Democrats on the Education and Labor Committee had received financial help from unions, adding that that did not necessarily affect the way they voted, "But, after all, we are all grateful for help extended in time of need."⁴⁰

The committee, instead of approving the Senate version, reported out a more anti-labor substitute, sponsored by Phil Landrum (D, Georgia) and Robert Griffin (R, Michigan), which was endorsed by Eisenhower, conservative Republicans, and Southern Democrats. The President called for the passage of the Landrum-Griffin bill in a nationwide speech in which he termed blackmail picketing and the secondary boycott (items covered by the bill) a "national disgrace." The House, despite being the most pro-labor House in twenty years, voted for the Landrum-Griffin bill in what Rayburn termed a "raw and bloody" procedure.⁴¹

Hoffman, although backing the bill as the best legislation obtainable, was infuriated by the way it was handled. He objected to the "unfair Hoffa way" it was written, complaining that, despite his seniority on the committee, he was not allowed to see the bill before its completion. (It was events like this that support the assertion of Martha Griffiths, Democratic Representative from Michigan, that the Republican leaders were not very considerate towards him in his later years.) Still, claiming that he had earlier introduced "every good feature" in the bill, he was pleased that the measure incorporated some of his views. But he was "hurt and disgusted" that people were trying to cut his throat politically, and he was piqued that others were taking his legislation and making it seem as though it was brand new.⁴²

Not only did the method of drafting the bill anger him, he was also disturbed by the way the measure was handled on the House floor. Stating that he had never witnessed "a greater exhibition of arbitrariness, of unfairness," than during the discussion on the bill, he warned that he would not "submit to being gagged by either a coalition or the leadership of my party." His stand caused members to put "heat" on him in the corridors, including one who he said called him "the dirtiest, stinkiest Member there is in the House." He specifically resented the treatment he received when he tried to offer two amendments to the bill. Desiring five minutes to discuss each of them, he was granted fifty-four seconds for each, a decision that incensed him and one he referred to several times in the future. Although both amendments were

defeated, the one whose defeat was the most vexing concerned one of his favorite labor reforms: prohibiting strikes in public utilities. Saying that it was identical to a Michigan law that the United States Supreme Court had already upheld, and that it was also approved by George Meany, the president of the AFL-CIO, Hoffman could not understand its defeat.⁴³

As Griffin admitted, there was so much of Hoffman's thinking in the bill (it gave members a greater chance to elect officials and of knowing how union funds were spent, limited the use of secondary boycotts and picketing to force workers into unions, and supplemented the Hobbs Act, thereby helping to prevent racketeering and extortion), that a reporter asked if he was not jealous that his name was not on it. He denied that he was, adding that his reputation of being anti-labor would have branded it a bad bill, probably a valid observation, but such was the price he paid for his many years of impassioned speeches against labor abuses.⁴⁴ He deserved more recognition than he got, but it was not the first time that a bill embodied principles that he had long advocated.

The absence of his name, however, did not mean that his contributions went unnoticed. Not only did some papers cite his earlier efforts, but so did people like Senator Barry Goldwater (R, Arizona), and Drew Pearson. Goldwater said that Hoffman, "long a pioneer in the labor reform movement," deserved "special recognition," not just for what he had done in the past, but for remaining "in the van of crusading legislators." (His praise was not unexpected since he also opposed the Kennedy-Ervin bill--the only

Senator to do so--and favored the Landrum-Griffin bill.) Pearson, certainly no fan of Hoffman's, noted the importance of timing in politics. He pointed out that Hoffman's racketeering investigations had produced facts as sensational as any McClellan had brought out and had involved many of the same witnesses, yet instead of resulting in some major labor law, the hearings were terminated.⁴⁵ It should be noted that, while the timing was important, the amount of respect accorded the two men must also have played a role.

If his anti-labor image helped keep his name off the bill, it did not deter union members from seeking his assistance. His support for more member control over union officials was well enough known to cause various Teamster locals to write him asking if he could get a convention held so that they could elect a union president as guaranteed by the Landrum-Griffin Act.⁴⁶

Although continuing to praise the McClellan Committee in general, he denounced it for its failure to scrutinize Reuther, who, being "an habitual criminal," was worse than Hoffa. His brief statement accusing Reuther of being un-American and a Communist, touched off a "ruckus which got highly funny at times and deadly serious at others," resulting in a half-hour debate with McCormack. Hoffman refused to strike his remarks and admit that the labor leader was actually a good American, although when pressed to define what a Communist was, he was unable to do so.⁴⁷

He was not alone in perceiving the McClellan Committee to be myopic where Reuther was concerned. The Republican members of

the committee had urged a thorough investigation of the UAW leader, and, like Hoffman, had tried to focus attention on the Kohler strike for at least two years. When, under pressure from the Republican members, and with the encouragement of the Democrats who sought to remove any suspicion that they were opposed to such an inquiry, the committee gave permission to a "hell-bent-for-leather" Republican to investigate charges against Reuther, no damaging evidence was found, nor did the committee's questioning of Reuther elicit any information detrimental to him.⁴⁸

Hoffman's concern with Reuther led him to make several observations about Robert Kennedy and his book The Enemy Within, which he said he had read three times. He said that Kennedy's treatment of Reuther in general and the Kohler strike in particular were faulty, attributing this to the quest by his brother John for the presidency, a view shared by the Republican members of the McClellan Committee.⁴⁹

His criticisms of Robert Kennedy should not obscure his admiration for him. He later favored the selection of the President's brother for Attorney-General, based on his "very fine job" of investigating Hoffa. While admitting that the inquiry into Reuther was not complete enough, Hoffman believed that, once in office, the younger Kennedy would view Reuther differently and would take action against him. (It is not surprising that he defended the practice of government officials employing relatives, since he was criticized several times for doing it himself. He made no apologies for his nepotism, saying that if the people did

not trust their Representatives to spend money wisely, then they should elect someone else.)⁵⁰

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His last election proved easy. After dispatching three primary opponents in 1958, he had the luxury of being unopposed in the primary, although one potential opponent was apparently dissuaded from running by a letter from Hoffman saying that if he were unopposed in 1960, he would not seek re-election in 1962.⁵¹

He received support from an expected source, the Chicago Tribune, which wished there were 537 Hoffman's running for Congress, leading to an editorial in the Detroit News, and an unexpected endorsement. The News, despite opposing most of his ideas, was pleased that he was seeking re-election. His views were zealously and honestly held and "they help serve as a brake on excesses by those with whom, generally, we are much more inclined to agree." While praising him for being one of the most active and colorful members of the House, the editor said: "But 537 Hoffmans? No! No! and again No! The country couldn't take it."⁵²

Goldwater, who was gaining a reputation of being the Senate's strongest anti-labor, anti-Reuther member, wrote Hoffman that, since he could not let down "such a good friend," he had rearranged his schedule to appear at a Hoffman rally. Over 5,500 people heard the Senator describe Hoffman as "the sort of man who would fight a bear and give the bear the first bite."⁵³

In November he received the largest vote of his career (90,831) easily defeating Edward P. Burns (54,655) in one of his most lopsided victories. He credited his win to the conservatism of the people, including the union members, and his record of concern for his constituents' problems.⁵⁴

His career ended, as it had begun, under a Democratic president. One difference, however, was that when he entered Congress he was already opposed to Roosevelt, whereas he had long praised John F. Kennedy. As early as 1956 he said that, while he did not expect to be around in 1960, he would support a team of Nixon and Kennedy. Having served with the new President for six years on the Education and Labor Committee, he called him "outstanding, able, [and] sincere," and said a ticket of Nixon-Kennedy, or even Kennedy-Nixon, would be a good one. He repeated sentiments similar to these as late as 1960 which, reportedly, led Kennedy's campaign office to consider offering Hoffman the job of western Michigan campaign manager.⁵⁵ Needless to say, it never came to pass.

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During his last term he fought several battles on behalf of established procedures. One of the administration's first acts was to increase the size of the Rules Committee, traditionally an obstacle to liberal legislation, thereby enabling administration bills to get on the floor more easily. Hoffman objected to such a step, but he noted that since the Democrats had received two rubberstamp members, the responsibility for the Kennedy program

was now theirs. He was not being entirely fair since conservative Republicans could still join with Southern Democrats to block legislation, a possibility that became reality, leading one magazine to call the House, "the dominant branch of Congress." Also, according to Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the tough fight, coupled with the narrow margin of victory, made Kennedy hesitant to push strongly for many of his programs.⁵⁶

Another threat he saw to sound government was the use of discharge petitions to force action on bills bottled up in committee. He refused to sign discharge petitions even for bills of which he approved, because he had believed the result would be the destruction of the procedures the House had established to protect it from "crackpot" bills.⁵⁷ Of course having been a chairman, and being the ranking minority member of a committee, he must have been concerned about any move that weakened the authority of a committee head.

An earlier effort to adhere to proper procedures (Ford described Hoffman's desire to follow the right procedures as "a fetish") occurred in March 1955 when Speaker Rayburn offered an amendment to an unrelated bill calling for funds to construct a new House office building. Hoffman immediately "jumped to his feet and yelled for recognition," only to be told that his objection was premature. After the amendment was read, he again sought to make a point of order, only to be informed that he was too late. Insisting that the chair purposely avoided recognizing him, he said that he could not abide any violation of the rules. Later,

referring to the episode, he said he could get a whistle if that would help him get recognized.⁵⁸

His sincerity was later challenged by the man who was presiding over the House at the time. Clark W. Thompson (D, Texas) claimed that when it was the proper time to object, Hoffman was talking to a colleague and did not raise his point of order until someone had started speaking, at which time it was too late. Describing how Hoffman "roared and stormed" about being denied his rights, Thompson doubted that he meant it, believing instead that Hoffman merely wanted to "sound off, a pastime in which he indulged himself very frequently." He noted that the Michigan Representative was one of the smartest parliamentarians in the House, and therefore he knew he could have appealed the decision had he chosen to do so. His inaction was proof to Thompson that his opposition was feigned.⁵⁹

Not only was he interested in orderly procedures in the House, he was also concerned with seeing justice done. One case involved a House subcommittee's investigation to ascertain whether Eisenhower's assistant Sherman Adams had used his position to win favors for Bernard Goldfine, a textile manufacturer. While Hoffman, in keeping with some other GOP conservatives, was no fan of Adams, he deplored the methods the subcommittee employed to gain information. One tactic included having the chief investigator hide a microphone in Goldfine's hotel room. (When the subcommittee learned of this, they forced the investigator to resign.) Hoffman exhorted the House to clean up its own committee before worrying about

wrongdoing elsewhere. Republican National Chairman Meade Alcorn congratulated Hoffman, saying that he had "rendered a real service to the country and to the party."⁶⁰

Another example of his interest in justice occurred in April 1957 and involved two trucks that passed him at twice the speed limit. Finding them stopped at a weighing station, he tried, unsuccessfully, to get the police to take action. Undaunted he persevered and finally got a magistrate to set a hearing for a week later at which he testified, having driven over fifty miles to do so. The truckers were convicted.⁶¹

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Although he was over eighty years old, he was, as Holtzman noted, an "incredibly resourceful, alert man for his age." Several colleagues marvelled at how perceptive and energetic he was, how as Judd observed, he was able to know so many details of bills and still be on the floor as much as any member with the possible exception of Gross. (He had always been an indefatigable worker. In 1941, when he was not feeling well, he wrote that, rather than take it easy, he would "do a little cussing and work a little harder.")⁶²

A typical day began at four o'clock when he rose to go fishing, probably using night crawlers, which he kept in his office, that he dug from the Capitol lawn, went to his office by 6:30 to read mail and newspapers, was in the chamber by noon, "alert and zestful, ready to rip a phony issue to shreds," and worked in his

office until late in the evening. If he was not fishing or hunting, he enjoyed reading westerns, especially those written by Zane Grey.⁶³

If age had not slowed him, neither had it mellowed him. One Democrat reportedly said: "Isn't he ever going to grow old and slow down? He's been a thorn in our side for 23 years." He noted on one occasion how he had been invited to the White House in 1953 only to learn, after waiting half-an-hour, that it was simply a social gathering. Upon returning to his office, he received a phone call asking if was going to dine with the President. He replied that he was unaware that he had been invited. If he received another invitation, he said he would try to go, but if he could not, he would ask them to "send the lunch up."⁶⁴

Some believed that his eagerness to fight grew stronger every year, including one state GOP leader who said that if Hoffman did not have an opponent, "he would try to hire one." Certainly he remained uninhibited in his attacks on his colleagues. When the House passed the Reserve Forces bill in 1955, he sarcastically observed that the use of the voice vote was obviously not done to hide from constituents, but rather by a "consuming anxiety" to serve the people "anonymously."⁶⁵

While he remained cantankerous (he conceded that he was "not noted for having a pleasant disposition"), his sharpness was often tempered by his ever ready wit. After telling his colleagues to pat themselves on the back for tolerating him for over twenty years, he reminded them that his wife had survived a similar

condition for nearly sixty. As Carl Albert noted, Hoffman smiled most of the time, saving his "sour expressions for formal occasions." Known for being critical, he once admitted that he saw imperfection in everyone, but added that his "ability to detect imperfection is at its peak when I look into the mirror." Another instance of his wit came when Meader wondered if Hoffman, who had diabetes, went to his office to get a shot so he could return to the House and "raise hell." Hoffman said that by being so active in the House he did not need as many shots.⁶⁶

Hoffman ended his career as he started it, as "an old candlestick molder and horse-and-buggy fellow," whose creed was "To thine own self be true." When a colleague jokingly inquired if he always followed his party's leadership, he replied that he followed the leaders if they asked him to take some meaningless action, "but when it comes to a matter of principle I do not listen to them at all."⁶⁷

He once said he did not mind being kicked around, but he reserved the right to "yelp whether I am hurt or not. Just to let you know I am not dumb." Placing his primary allegiance to the nation, his constituents, the principles of the party, and only then to loyalty to any one man, he declared that he would never "kneel down, worship, and kiss the feet of any man." This was especially true of Eisenhower because of the President's support for modern Republicanism. Hoffman lashed out at Eisenhower and "his left-wing, free-spending, international one-world advisers

[who] propose to disinfect, fumigate, purify, renovate, unify and remake the Republican party." Like other GOP conservatives he thought that Eisenhower embraced too many New Deal policies. Hoffman was believed to have voiced the opinion of House GOP conservatives when he remarked: "The conservative wing has been liquidated and is about to be buried."⁶⁸

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That he would have remained in Congress had his health permitted seems evident. While he did say in October 1960 that the party should start looking for his successor, he did not rule out another term. Wanting to be assured that the district would be represented by someone who believed in "conservative, sound, and safe" government, he said that if this was not done, he might have to run again. "How do I know doctors won't invent something by then that will make me physically and mentally 30 again?" By the following August he said he might reconsider retiring. Unfortunately the choice was not his to make. While driving alone to go duck hunting, he suffered a slight stroke. At first his condition was not deemed serious. The doctor who examined him described him as "a tough old fellow and in remarkable shape for his age." (At the time he was the second oldest member of the House and was third in seniority among House Republicans.)⁶⁹

That he was not anxious to terminate his career was shown when, two months after his stroke, he denied that he would resign. The following month, however, it was clear that the end had come.

After suffering another stroke, his son announced his father's retirement at the end of the 87th Congress, denying statements that his father had made any commitment to any of the several aspirants who announced for the vacated seat.⁷⁰

Word of his retirement generated several editorials assessing his role as a congressman. A Grand Rapids Press editorial, entitled "The Splendid Gadfly," conceded that Hoffman "supplied the counterweight needed to maintain a reasonable balance in spending and other governmental activities." Judging him to have been more conservative than his district, the editor credited his large margins of victory partly out of loyalty for one who "had the courage to row against the current." Another from the Chicago Tribune, entitled "A True Conservative," noted that "The nation owes him thanks."⁷¹

The Detroit News regretted his retirement. The paper noted that his district would never get a Representative with "greater integrity" or "courage," nor was it likely to get one with more "vigor." He was "rough in political battles but gentle of soul." His leaving the House meant that Michigan was losing "its most colorful--and warmly human--congressman."⁷²

That he was able to command the respect of many of his adversaries, however much they may have disagreed with him, was shown by a Drew Pearson column. Pearson, who had had his differences with the "crusty, cantankerous" Hoffman, lamented his retirement because he was so "incorruptible, indefatigable and scrupulous

in watching the public purse." He praised Hoffman's courage in fighting for his beliefs, and "in these days of mass legislation that can be rare."⁷³

In July 1962 his friends and supporters added to the tributes by holding a celebration for him at the Allegan fairgrounds where GOP gubernatorial candidate George Romney was the keynote speaker. Among those in attendance were six Michigan House members and his third party mate, Gross of Iowa. The tribute for him was delivered by August E. Johansen (R) who said that while many regarded Hoffman as "an interesting, and even admirable relic," he considered him "a prophet ahead of his times." Messages came from various members of Congress, including Michigan Senator Philip A. Hart (D) who noted that while it was unusual for a Democrat to send a telegram to a Republican rally, Hoffman was "a pretty unusual Republican."⁷⁴

He showed his reluctance to retire, as well as his wit, in his jokes about his quitting the House. When the congressional delegation visited him, he complained about being kept away from Washington, and asked the attorneys present to get him a writ of habeas corpus so that he could return to the House. He also offered \$500 to anyone in his family who would take him to the airport so that he could fly to Washington.⁷⁵

Further kudos came from several colleagues who were not at the rally. One member, noting Hoffman's reluctance to accept compliments, asked that he be given the chance to disavow any of the plaudits he received. Later, at the end of the 87th Congress, the

Government Operations Committee adopted a resolution expressing their gratitude for the "distinguished service" he had rendered. The get well card sent by his colleagues pictured Hoffman saying, as he often did, "Mr. Speaker, I object."⁷⁶

After his retirement, his health did not improve significantly. Yet despite a third stroke in 1963, he continued to follow national affairs by having papers read to him, although his son noted that he had to limit his father's political conversations because "He gets too excited."⁷⁷

In 1964, in response to many requests about his views on the presidential candidates, Hoffman and his family privately printed and mailed out hundreds of copies of a brochure on Goldwater's behalf. The Senator had written to Hoffman earlier saying how he wished Congress had more like Hoffman who were willing to fight for their beliefs.⁷⁸

In 1965 the House paused to commemorate Hoffman's ninetieth birthday. Albert remembered how Hoffman and McCormack had entertained the House "trading humorous jibes as only they could." (During one of their most famous exchanges McCormack said he had a "minimum high regard" for Hoffman, a statement that he often quoted when debating McCormack. Before McCormack, Hoffman liked to debate his friend John Rankin of Mississippi to the delight of the other members.)⁷⁹

The rugged individualist to the end, he continued his hostility to the increasing role of the federal government by refusing

to sign up for medicare benefits. He finally died on 3 November 1967 of pneumonia and heart failure.⁸⁰

Obituaries appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, as well as the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press. The New York Times called him "peppery, [and] strong willed," one who "was identified by the public as an isolationist," and who "never stood in the middle on any subject during his 14 terms in the House. He rarely changed an opinion or a goal, and his frequent public squabbles spread his name from his adopted Michigan as a man who never backed away from a fight." The Chicago Tribune, noting how his "spare frame, hawk face, and sharp unspectacled eye fitted perfectly the curmudgeon's role he essayed," said that some viewed him "as a sheep in wolf's clothing. They pointed out that the barbs he fired in every direction usually were blunted with humor."⁸¹

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In Hoffman's long congressional career, and particularly during the four years he served as chairman, he had the opportunity to achieve some of his goals. Several reasons can be advanced to explain why he was not more successful, but Michigan Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg's apt description of Hoffman helps partly to explain the source of the problem. Vandenberg called Hoffman "a very intense person who never fails to speak or act in superlatives."⁸² One wonders what might have happened had he tempered some of his remarks, had he not possessed such strong convictions,

had he been more willing to go with, rather than against, the current. No bill bore his name, but several embodied thoughts that he had long sought. Regarded as anti-labor and accused of pro-fascist sympathies, his ideas failed to gain the respect that some of them warranted. That he was able to play a constructive role is evident in his handling of the unification of the military, which, along with his work on the Taft-Hartley Act, he regarded as his most important achievements. Unfortunately all too often his constructive side was overlooked.

Yet his lack of success went beyond his personality. Hoffman was out of touch with the 20th century trend toward a larger federal government and an increasingly urbanized society. Nor was he able to accept the new position the nation occupied in the world. His 19th century convictions, while shared by many, were not compatible with the realities of 20th century America.

In judging his career, it is important to remember that he was imbued with the philosophy of individualism that he had learned as a child growing up in rural 19th century America. From the time he was one year old, except for the period when he was at college and his brief stay in Muskegon, he spent his entire life in a rural, small town environment. Leaving his bucolic surroundings only at the age of fifty-nine to go to Washington, it is not surprising that his beliefs did not change, nor even undergo serious questioning. Facing a nation and a world in the midst of great upheaval, he naturally, given his limited

geographical experience and his age, clung to those tenets that had served him so well in the past.

While World War II did alter his thoughts about the need for defense spending, he remained as firmly wedded to his other convictions as before. Neither years of depression nor prosperity brought about any significant modification in his thinking. Devoted to conserving the America of his youth, or at least the America he thought had existed, he resisted change. Favoring harmony in the nation, he was unwilling to accept internal dissent. Concerned more with the long run rather than the short run consequences, he believed that it was preferable to stifle dissent rather than to surrender any of his convictions.

The changes that had occurred in the rest of the world did not shake his faith in isolationism. Unlike many others who were pre-World War II isolationists but who afterward accepted a new view of foreign affairs, Hoffman remained a devout believer in the concept of "fortress America." As a right-wing member of Congress for twenty-eight years, Hoffman provides one with an opportunity to see how an ultra-conservative responded to the various changes taking place in the nation and the world. It is clear that, for Hoffman at least, the events had little impact.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes once said: "I think it is required of a man that he should share the action and passion of his time at peril of being judged not to have lived." Although he was often not in harmony with it, Hoffman certainly shared the

action and passion of his time. He began a new career when he was fifty-nine and only failing health brought it to an end twenty-eight years later. No one would ever be able to judge that he had not lived.

Footnotes Chapter 8

¹New York Times, 11 January 1956; Beth Fadeley, "The Al Sarena Case," American Forests 62 (February 1956):16.

²Detroit News, 6 February 1956; New York Times, 11 and 12 January 1956. See the New York Times, 14 and 15 October 1955 for another case where they disagreed.

³New York Times, 12 and 20 January 1956.

⁴Detroit Free Press, 30 January 1956, Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; CR, 84:2 (9 February 1956) pp. 2457-58; CR, 84:2 (5 March 1956) p. 3930.

⁵Detroit News, 29 March 1956. Elmo Richardson, Dams, Parks and Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era (University Press of Kentucky, 1973) saw the report as the culmination of a three year campaign against McKay, see p. 167.

⁶CR, 84:1 (8 February 1955) p. 1315.

⁷CR, 84:1 (2 August 1955) pp. 13121-22; CR, 84:2 (30 January 1956) pp. 1292-93.

⁸CR, 84:1 (5 May 1955) pp. 5786, 5794; CR, 84:2 (5 March 1956) p. 3966.

⁹CR, 84:2 (5 March 1956) p. 3966; CR, 86:1 (18 May 1959) p. 8333; Walter Johnson, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue: Presidents and the People, 1929-1959 (Little, Brown, 1960), p. 282.

¹⁰CR, 84:2 (2 February 1956) pp. 1911-12; CR, 84:2 (5 March 1956) p. 3966; CR, 84:2 (26 July 1956) p. 14844.

¹¹CR, 86:1 (24 February 1959) p. 2850; CR, 86:1 (2 March 1959) p. 3176. See CR, 86:1 (25 May 1959) p. 9020 for an editorial on the case from the Saturday Evening Post.

¹²CR, 84:1 (15 March 1955) p. 2976; CR, 84:1 (31 March 1955) p. 4164; CR, 86:2 (29 June 1960) p. 14970; CR, 84:1 (8 February 1955) pp. 1326-28.

¹³Michigan Manual, 1957-58, p. 381; Detroit News, 19 August 1956 and 19 August 1958; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 7 November 1956 in HS; campaign ad in HS.

¹⁴Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 7 November 1956 in HS; Grand Rapids Herald, 21 October 1956 [name and date listed on clipping], Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; campaign ads in HS; Detroit News, 17 October 1956. A study by Raymond Moley supported Hoffman's claim, at least for the 84th Cong., 1st sess., see Newsweek, 9 July 1956, p. 108.

¹⁵Michigan Manual, 1957-58, p. 427; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 7 November 1956 in HS; Grand Rapids Herald, 21 October 1956 [name and date listed on clipping], Michigan AFL-CIO Lansing Office Papers, Box 13 in WRL; CR, 86:1 (25 May 1959) pp. 9010-11.

¹⁶Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 10 March 1964 [date listed on clipping] in HBF; CR, 85:1 (19 March 1957) p. 4013; CR, 85:2 (4 June 1958) p. 10198; CR, 85:1 (14 August 1957) pp. 14749, 14796; CR, 85:2 (13 August 1958) p. 17461. He put a biography of Reuther in the Congressional Record along with criticism of Reuther's more recent actions, especially those relating to the Kohler strike, see 85:2 (13 August 1958) pp. 17461-69. Earlier he used twenty-three pages of the Record to discuss the union leader, the Kohler strike, and to list various state labor laws, see 84:1 (2 August 1955) pp. 13005-27.

¹⁷CR, 85:1 (14 August 1957) p. 14796; CR, 85:2 (27 February 1958) p. 3040; CR, 85:2 (18 March 1958) p. 4617; CR, 85:2 (4 June 1958) p. 10199.

¹⁸CR, 85:1 (14 August 1957) p. 14797; New York Times, 15 March 1958; CR, 85:2 (4 June 1958) pp. 10198-99.

¹⁹Elmer L. Puryear, Graham A. Barden: Conservative Carolina Congressman (Campbell University Press, 1979), p. 195; CR, 85:2 (6 August 1958) p. 16469; New York Times, 17 August 1958; CR, 85:2 (18 August 1958) pp. 18267-68. Herbert S. Parmet, Eisenhower, pp. 429-31 noted the opposition of both business and labor interests to the bill. For one view about the reason for the delay see Puryear, p. 193.

²⁰Detroit News, 29 August and 17 September 1958.

²¹Dan E. Moldea, The Hoffa Wars, p. 94; Robert F. Kennedy, Enemy, pp. 49-55. For Bender's relation to the Teamsters see Moldea, p. 93 and Kennedy, pp. 59-60. For an example of one of his investigations see Walter Sheridan, Jimmy Hoffa, p. 102.

²²CR, 85:1 (11 June 1957) pp. 8840-42; Dwight D. Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 1956-1961, vol. 2 of 2 vols., The White House Years (Doubleday, 1965), pp. 156-61. Eisenhower's support for trials without juries was given only belatedly, see Emmet John Hughes, The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years (Atheneum, 1963), pp. 242-43.

²³CR, 85:1 (17 June 1957) pp. 9376-77.

²⁴CR, 85:2 (25 March 1958) p. 5287; CR, 86:1 (27 April 1959) pp. 6832-33.

²⁵CR, 87:1 (1 June 1961) pp. 9352-53.

²⁶Holtzman to author, 19 September 1980; CR, 86:1 (27 April 1959) pp. 6840-41.

²⁷New York Times, 15 February 1957.

²⁸Detroit Free Press, 10 September 1965; Detroit News, 3 August 1961; CR, 86:1 (20 January 1959) p. 943; CR, 87:1 (3 August 1961) p. 14550; CR, 87:1 (22 August 1961) p. 16614.

²⁹CR, 86:2 (6 June 1960) p. 11936; CR, 86:1 (27 April 1959) p. 6840; Scott to author, 16 September 1980.

³⁰CR, 85:1 (20 March 1957) p. 4048.

³¹CR, 87:1 (26 September 1961) pp. 21503-04.

³²CR, 87:1 (31 July 1961) p. 14064; CR, 87:1 (22 August 1961) pp. 16596-97.

³³Detroit News, 24 May 1957; CR, 85:2 (21 July 1958) Appendix, p. 6517.

³⁴CR, 85:2 (14 July 1958) Appendix, p. 6363; Detroit News, 30 July 1958; Michigan Manual, 1959-60, p. 409.

³⁵Campaign ads in HS.

³⁶Michigan Manual, 1959-60, p. 451; U.S. News & World Report, 14 November 1958, p. 103.

³⁷Gerald R. Ford, A Time to Heal: The Autobiography of Gerald R. Ford (Harper & Row and The Reader's Digest Association, 1979), p. 72; CR, 86:1 (19 August 1959) p. 16435; CR, 86:1 (9 January 1959) p. 367.

³⁸CR, 86:1 (4 September 1959) p. 18129; CR, 87:1 (23 February 1961) p. 2591; CR, 86:2 (9 September 1960) p. 12269.

³⁹CR, 86:1 (29 June 1959) p. 12099; CR, 86:1 (20 May 1959) p. 8670; CR, 86:1 (11 February 1959) pp. 2187-89.

⁴⁰CR, 86:1 (30 July 1959) p. 14776; CR, 86:1 (22 July 1959) p. 14025.

⁴¹Richard Bolling, House Out of Order (E. P. Dutton, 1965), pp. 167, 171; U.S. News & World Report, 24 August 1959, pp. 33-34; Eisenhower, Waging Peace, pp. 388-89; Newsweek, 17 August 1959, p. 36. For a discussion of the Landrum Griffin bill see Bolling, chapter 8.

⁴²CR, 86:1 (9 September 1959) p. 18865; CR, 86:1 (13 August 1959) p. 15825; CR, 86:1 (19 August 1959) p. 16436; Griffiths to author, 2 September 1980; CR, 86:1 (4 August 1959) p. 15113.

⁴³CR, 86:1 (13 August 1959) pp. 15851, 15874-75.

⁴⁴CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14373; CR, 86:1 (19 August 1959) p. 16435.

⁴⁵CR, 86:1 (10 September 1959) Appendix, p. 7924; Barry Goldwater, The Conscience of a Conservative (Victor Publishing, 1960), pp. 45-46; Detroit Free Press, 14 August 1959. Goldwater later praised Hoffman for his efforts concerning the Bureau of Land Management's western land policy, see CR, 86:2 (3 June 1960) pp. 11811-13. The newspapers were the Sturgis Daily Journal and the Niles Daily Star, see CR, 86:1 (20 August 1959) pp. 16600-01.

⁴⁶CR, 86:2 (26 April 1960) pp. 8673-76.

⁴⁷CR, 86:1 (29 July 1959) p. 14634; CR, 86:2 (17 February 1960) p. 2803; Detroit Free Press, 18 February 1960; CR, 86:2 (17 February 1960) pp. 2806-08.

⁴⁸Newsweek, 21 September 1959, p. 64; U.S. News & World Report, 29 February 1960, pp. 95-98; Parmet, p. 421; Pierre Salinger, With Kennedy (Doubleday, 1966), p. 48.

⁴⁹CR, 86:2 (29 February 1960) p. 3846; Parmet, pp. 420-21.

⁵⁰Detroit News, 10 December 1960; CR, 85:2 (3 February 1958) p. 1561; CR, 86:1 (19 March 1959) p. 4704.

⁵¹Michigan Manual, 1961-62, p. 406; Detroit News, 17 August 1961.

⁵²Detroit News, 10 March 1960.

⁵³Parmet, p. 421; campaign brochure in HS; Sturgis Daily Journal, 27 June 1964 in HBF.

⁵⁴Michigan Manual, 1961-62, p. 463; U.S. News & World Report, 21 November 1960, p. 147.

⁵⁵CR, 84:2 (26 July 1956) p. 14901; CR, 86:2 (17 February 1960) p. 2801; Detroit News, 6 March 1960.

⁵⁶CR, 87:1 (31 January 1961) pp. 1599-600; U.S. News & World Report, 9 October 1961, p. 62; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. 709. For a discussion of the problems involved in the Rules fight see Bolling chapter 10.

⁵⁷CR, 86:2 (6 June 1960) p. 11927.

⁵⁸CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14367; Alfred Steinberg, Sam Rayburn: A Biography (Hawthorn Books, 1975), p. 186; CR, 84:1 (18 March 1955) pp. 3205-06; CR, 85:1 (22 May 1957) p. 7437.

⁵⁹CR, 84:2 (11 March 1956) pp. 4785-86.

⁶⁰Charles C. Alexander, Holding the Line: The Eisenhower Era, 1952-1961 (Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 243; David A. Frier, Conflict of Interest in the Eisenhower Administration (Iowa State University Press, 1969), p. 194. See CR, 85:2 (14 July 1958) Appendix, p. 6363 for Alcorn's statement.

⁶¹CR, 86:1 (10 August 1959) p. 15343.

⁶²Holtzman to author, 19 September 1980; Judd to author, 6 September 1980; Hoffman to Howard Cyrus Lawrence, 25 June 1941, Howard Cyrus Papers, Box 6 in BHL.

⁶³CR, 85:2 (14 July 1958) Appendix, p. 6363; Detroit News, 18 March 1962; CR, 85:1 (29 March 1957) p. 4814.

⁶⁴CR, 85:2 (14 July 1958) Appendix, p. 6363; CR, 85:1 (20 June 1957) p. 9857.

⁶⁵Detroit News, 30 July 1958; CR, 84:1 (5 July 1955) pp. 9894-95.

⁶⁶CR, 86:2 (25 May 1960) p. 11071; CR, 86:1 (25 February 1959) p. 2923; Albert to author, 4 September 1980; CR, 84:1 (21 July 1955) p. 11180; Meader to author, 17 September 1980.

⁶⁷CR, 87:1 (17 July 1961) p. 12706; CR, 87:1 (17 August 1961) p. 16198; CR, 87:1 (13 August 1961) p. 16282.

⁶⁸CR, 85:1 (28 May 1957) pp. 7908-09; CR, 85:1 (4 February 1957) p. 1495; Johnson, Pennsylvania Avenue, p. 279; New York Times, 23 January 1957. For his definition of modern Republicanism, see U.S. News & World Report, 3 May 1957, p. 133.

⁶⁹Detroit Free Press, 21 October 1960 and 12 November 1961; Detroit News, 18 August, 12 September, 12 November 1961, and 16 March 1962; New York Times, 11 August 1961.

⁷⁰Detroit Free Press, 9 February, 14 and 16 March 1962.

⁷¹CR, 87:2 (15 February 1962) Appendix, pp. 1090-91; CR, 87:2 (26 March 1962) Appendix, p. 2285.

⁷²17 March 1962.

⁷³Detroit Free Press, 20 March 1962.

⁷⁴Detroit Free Press, 22 July 1962. See CR, 87:2 (24 July 1962) p. 14592 for a copy of Johansen's speech.

⁷⁵Meader to author, 17 September 1980; Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 23 July 1962 in HBF.

⁷⁶CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) pp. 14366-76; New York Times, 3 October 1962; Washington Star, 5 November 1967 [name and date listed on clipping] in HBF. For the tribute by Goldwater see Benton Harbor News-Palladium, 23 July 1962 in HBF.

⁷⁷Detroit Free Press, 6 September 1963.

⁷⁸Coldwater Reporter, 26 October 1964 [name listed on clipping] in HBF. A copy of Goldwater's letter of 21 April 1964 and one of the brochures are in HBF.

⁷⁹CR, 89:1 (9 September 1965) p. 23215; CR, 83:1 (30 March 1953) p. 2487; Porter Hardy, Jr., to author, 29 August 1980; CR, 87:2 (20 July 1962) p. 14372. Hoffman quoted McCormack's remark as late as 1961, see CR, 87:1 (22 August 1961) p. 16614.

⁸⁰Detroit News, 4 and 5 November 1967.

⁸¹New York Times, 5 November 1967; Chicago Tribune, 5 November 1967; Washington Post, 5 November 1967; Detroit News, 4 and 5 November 1967; Detroit Free Press, 5 November 1967.

⁸²Vandenberg to Day Edger, 28 March 1945, in Arthur H. Vandenberg Papers, Box 2 in BHL; Detroit News, 5 November 1967; CR, 85:2 (11 June 1958) p. 10880.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Rather than simply listing all of the sources that appear in the footnotes, only that material that proved especially useful is discussed.

Hoffman Papers

A major problem I faced in writing about Hoffman is that I was twice denied access to his papers, which are in the possession of his son Leo. One of the two sources of personal information of his open to use is that found at the Allegan Public Library, Allegan, Michigan. The collection consists of all of his congressional speeches (taken from the Daily Digest) which totals twenty-nine volumes, copies of all of the bills and resolutions that he introduced, scrapbooks of political cartoons taken from the Chicago Tribune, as well as scrapbooks of his elections--articles, brochures, ads, and results. Also valuable is the material belonging to Helen Boyer of Allegan, who served as his secretary throughout his years in the House. The collection consists mainly of newspaper articles, but there are reprints of some speeches and other politically related matter. Unfortunately the file contains only a very few examples of Hoffman's correspondence.

Manuscript Collections

The best source for manuscript material is the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan. Although none of the collections contain much of his correspondence, there are several letters concerning Hoffman. There is even a small folder of Hoffman related material. The most valuable collections are: Wilber Marion Brucker, Owen J. Cleary, Louis H. Fead, Paul Gordon Goebel, Stella Osborn, and Arthur H. Vandenberg. Of less value, but still worthwhile, is the material at the Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, which includes a folder on Hoffman, as well as items scattered in various collections, mainly articles from newspapers and periodicals.

Personal Correspondence

I benefited greatly from the letters I received from sixteen of his colleagues who provided some insight into Hoffman personally. In seeking a balanced interpretation, I sought and received responses from both Republicans and Democrats, as well as from those who shared his political views and those who did not. The former Representatives are: Carl B. Albert, Leslie C. Arends, Earl Chudoff, Martha W. Griffiths, Porter Hardy, Jr., Lester Holtzman, August E. Johansen, Charles R. Jonas, Walter H. Judd, Phil M. Landrum, George Meader, Hugh Scott, Jessie Sumner, James E. Van Zandt, H. Jerry Voorhis, and Stuyvesant Wainwright, III.

Newspapers

Newspapers provided considerable data on Hoffman. The New York Times, which wrote numerous articles about him throughout his career, is indispensable. Not only does it allow one to trace the highlights of his career, but it illustrates the extent to which he was a figure of national attention. The Washington Post, particularly since he had his differences with the paper, is also useful. While both the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press followed his career closely, the News, with its outstate coverage, was especially valuable. Among the local newspapers, the Benton Harbor News-Palladium, which, unlike the others mentioned, was generally pro-Hoffman, was the most important.

Periodicals

Hoffman was frequently covered by the New Republic and, to a lesser extent, the Nation, providing one with a liberal, anti-Hoffman view. George Seldes' publication, In Fact, made several bitter attacks on Hoffman during the World War II period, a good example of the extreme to which his critics went. The most useful news magazine was Newsweek which discussed him more often and more objectively than Time. The main value of U.S. News & World Report was the magazine's biennial questioning of various members of Congress for their opinion of why they were elected, giving him a chance to comment on his victories.

Government Publications

The best single source for researching Hoffman is clearly the Congressional Record. A prolific speaker, he also made use of the Appendix to insert additional material. Also valuable are the various hearings he conducted. Although, because of his loquacity, many of his thoughts were repeated on the floor of the House or to the press, a reading of the hearings gives a good understanding of Hoffman by noting his questions and the sometimes heated exchanges with the witnesses or with his colleagues. The reports of the hearings often reveal him to be in opposition to the findings or show that, while agreeing with the conclusions, he thought it necessary to add his own comments.

For information relating to his election results, the various editions of the Michigan Official Directory and Legislative Manual, which is printed every two years, gives the county votes for both the primary and the general elections.

Books

For a general overview of the New Deal years, William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, is a thoroughly researched, objective study. For foreign policy issues, Robert Dallek's Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945, is an excellent effort to see foreign policy matters as Roosevelt saw them. Richard Polenberg, War and Society, is a well-written topical look at domestic events during World War II. It also has an extensive bibliography.

Robert J. Donovan, a Washington correspondent during the years (1945-48) that his book covers, has written Conflict and Crisis, a very readable, generally pro-Truman account. For the remainder of Truman's administration, one can use Cabell Phillips' sympathetic work, The Truman Presidency. Harry S. Truman's two volumes of Memoirs are indispensable for any study of this period.

Herbert S. Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusades, serves as a useful general look at the Eisenhower years. Dwight D. Eisenhower's The White House Years is an essential source for the 1950s.

For Congress, James T. Patterson, Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal, provides a good understanding of the growth of the anti-Roosevelt coalition during the late 1930s. Unfortunately the book concentrates more on the Senate, where the coalition was clearer, and on the Democrats. Another book dealing with Congress is Roland Young, Congressional Politics in the Second World War. Young shows the important role Congress played and divides the congressional membership according to party loyalty based on each person's voting record. For a study of one of the most famous Congresses, and one in which Hoffman was particularly active, see Susan M. Hartmann, Truman and the 80th Congress, a well-written and objective account. A book written by a member of Congress, Richard Bolling, House Out of Order, provides a good look at the working of Congress on several issues, especially the

Landrum-Griffin bill and the fight to increase the size of the Rules Committee.

For labor related topics there are several valuable studies. Sidney Fine, Sit-down, is a thorough look at the labor disturbance that first brought Hoffman to national attention. Fine notes Hoffman's role as a leading critic of the labor tactic. C. K. McFarland, Roosevelt, Lewis, and the New Deal, 1933-1940, although short, gives good insights into the relationship between the two men. One wishes that the book went beyond the formal break between them and carried through the war years. The Wagner Act is extensively treated in the book by a former official of the National Labor Relations Board, Harry A. Millis, and Emily Clark Brown, From the Wagner Act to Taft-Hartley. Joe Seidman's American Labor from Defense to Reconversion, is a good account of the war years but is less valuable for the reconstruction period. Arthur F. McClure, The Truman Administration and the Problems of Postwar Labor, sees Truman as partly responsible for the Taft-Hartley Act. On the Act itself, the book by R. Alton Lee, Truman and Taft-Hartley, gives a thorough account of the law, noting not only the circumstances surrounding its passage, but also its fate during the rest of Truman's presidency and its significance down to 1956. Maeva Marcus, Truman and the Steel Seizure Case, is a well-researched look at Truman's controversial action.

Hoffman's relationship with various American fascists is most notably covered in John Roy Carlson, Under Cover. The book,

however, makes some sweeping statements and should be used cautiously. A more solid work is by the prosecutor in the 1944 trial of the American fascists, O. John Rogge, The Official German Report.

For a discussion of Jimmy Hoffa, see Clark R. Mollenhoff, Tentacles of Power. Mollenhoff, a Pulitzer prize winning reporter, pushed for the investigation into possible labor racketeering. Another valuable account written by someone who participated in the McClellan investigation is Robert F. Kennedy, The Enemy Within. While dealing mainly with Hoffa after Hoffman's initial inquiry, Kennedy gives background material noting what Hoffman had tried to accomplish, as well as the role played by George Bender in investigating the Teamsters.

Two important books covering the reorganization of the federal government are William E. Pemberton, Bureaucratic Politics, and Demetrios Caraley, The Politics of Military Unification. Pemberton discusses the numerous reorganization efforts by Truman that Hoffman so strongly opposed, noting the key part played by Hoffman. Caraley's book is an in-depth treatment illustrating the major role Hoffman had in unifying the armed services and the maneuvering that went on before a compromise was reached.