

Philip Rubenstein | America's Red Scare, Part 1 Anarchists, Bolsheviks, Nativists, Opportunists

- [Wendy] Okay, it's 12 o'clock. So Phil, I'm going to say very, very, very warm welcome back. We are absolutely thrilled to have you with us. I know we're going to be doing part one of the Red Scare today, this week, and we will do part two next week. Is that correct?

- That's right, yeah.

- [Wendy] Okay, fantastic. So thank you very, very much. We are so happy to have you back with us and I'm now going to hand over to you. Thank you Phil; much, much appreciated.

*Visuals are displayed throughout the presentation.*

- So welcome everyone, whether it's good morning, good afternoon, good evening. And as Wendy says, this is the first of two lectures on America's Red Scare. So I'm Philip Rubenstein, and I'm going to be your guide for these two lectures. When we talk about a "Red Scare," what do we mean? At the simplest level, we mean the promotion of a widespread fear that communism or anarchism or some other radical movement is going to threaten to take over society. And the term, certainly in terms of the US, the term is specifically used by historians to talk about the first Red Scare, which is in and around 1920, 1919, so after the First World War. And the second Red Scare, which starts in the late forties and culminates with McCarthy and ends, really, in the sixties, in the early sixties.

But really, as far as I'm concerned, there's a Red Scare that starts at the beginning of the century, at beginning of the 20th century and sweeps right the way through until the sixties. And to a large extent is still with us. I should just say we've had a slight change of plan. So we realise that there's actually so much in this first part, that rather than just going through at break neck speed, we are just going to split the first Red Scare into two. So actually what we're going to do today is we're going to do up till 1920 and then next week we're going to cover the twenties and then the rise of communism and spies and the House Un-American Committee in the thirties. And we are going to leave the blacklist and the Rosenbergs and Alger Hiss and Joseph MacArthur. We're going to leave all of that until later in the year when it's going to be covered as part of the sweep of the American-Jewish experience when we actually get to the forties and the fifties in Lockdown University.

So we're a bit out of the timeline now. If you watched Laura earlier this week, she was talking about Colonial America. So I suppose all I would say is the prompt for doing this now, is the assault on Capitol Hill last month. And one of the things that was so striking about it, the day after, I mean, like most people, I was just glued to the TV for 48 hours, could barely take my eyes off it. I think one of the things that really struck me is the number of commentators on the American TV news channels who were asking, is this Donald Trump's "Have you no decency" moment? And many of you watching from the States will understand that reference, and perhaps many others, certainly from the UK and elsewhere, won't. But I thought it was a good

place to go back to and a good place to start. So this is a reference to 1954. It's August, 1954 and the McCarthy Witch Hunt is now in its fourth year. And Joseph McCarthy, and his sidekick Roy Cohn, have taken a potshot at just about every aspect of government, every public servant you can think of, in every nook and crevice.

And they get cocky and they decide to go for the Army. And anyone who decides to take on the US Army had better watch out, because the Army hits back. And so, as a consequence, McCarthy's own committee decides that they're going to investigate the charges of communist subversion inside the Army. And so for six weeks, the so-called Army-McCarthy hearings are held. But unlike anything that's happened before, the networks decide they're going to televise this. Now, what does this mean? In the forties, no one's got a TV. In the late forties, there are a handful of sets that are sold across the whole of the US. But then comes the fifties, and there's a very different picture. We're going to have a few numbers. I apologise for those of you who hate numbers, but we're going to have a few numbers in the course of this presentation. And I just want to show you just something inside the red box now. In 1950, there's already 9% of Americans who've got a TV in their homes.

And look what happens over four years. Over half the country has got a TV and the networks decide that they're going to show all of the Army-McCarthy hearings over six weeks. And people are glued to their TV set, in the way that we were glued a month ago. And why? Because this is the first reality TV show that's ever happened in the US. And on day 30 of the trial, of the hearings, day 30 is the moment this clip relates to. And we're going to see three people. We're going to see Joseph McCarthy, who's in front of us now, Joseph R. McCarthy. We're going to see Roy Cohn, and we're also going to see the Army's Council, who is an avuncular, courteous man by the name of Joseph Welch. So there's a lot of Joe's in the story, and you'll see that McCarthy, in desperation names a young man in Welch's law firm who he says is a communist. So we're going to pick it up from there and we're just going to watch for about two minutes.

- And you, Mr. Welch's request, I think we should tell him that he has in his law firm a young man named Fisher, who has been for a number of years, a member of an organisation which is named, oh, years and years ago as the legal bulwark of the Communist Party. And I have hesitated bringing that up, but I have been rather bored with your phoney requests to Mr. Cohn, here.

- Little did I dream you could be so reckless and so cruel as to do an injury to that lad. It is true, he is still with Hale and Dorr. It is true that he will continue to be with Hale and Dorr. It is, I regret to say equally true, that I fear he shall always bear a scar needlessly inflicted by you.

- You'll look at Roy Cohen's face and you'll see him go, "Oh my God, no, please, no." but McCarthy won't stop. He keeps attacking.

- I want to say, Mr. Welch, that it has been labelled long before he became a member as early as 1944.

- [Welch] Senator, may we not drop this? I did too. I think No personal injury, Mr. Cohn.

- [Cohn] No sir.

- And if I did, I beg your pardon. Let us not assassinate this lad further, Senator. You've done enough. Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?

- I love this clip and I must have watched it, in the last week about 10 times over. And it doesn't get, it doesn't get any less enthralling with each watch. I dunno if it's the careful words of Welch, or the fact that Roy Cohn is just sitting there, squirming in his seat; or the fact, just look at McCarthy. He knows he's done something wrong, he doesn't know what. And six months later he's censured by the Senate and three years after that, he dies of alcohol poisoning a lonely man. This is an old story that we're telling, but it's also a modern story. And before we just wind the clock back, I just wanted to just pause and just spend a couple of minutes on Joe Biden's inaugural speech, where he talks to this and he talks about the forces that divide us being deep and real. And he says, "But I also know that they're not new.

Our history has been a constant struggle between the American ideal that we are all created equal, and the harsh, ugly reality that racism, nativism, and fear have torn us apart. The battle is perennial and the victory is never secure." So let's wind back to the turn of the 20th century. And we're at a point in American history where, if the mid to late 19th century, so the 1860s and seventies, have been defined by Civil war and reconstruction, from the 1880s onwards, if there's one thing that's really defining and determining and driving American history, it's the rise of industrial America. And with it, the rise of the great cities, the rise of urbanisation. America has successfully pursued an open door policy welcoming immigrants into the country, into the gigantic melting pot, in the hope that they're all going to become productive workers and make the country richer as a result. And here we have Emma Lazarus's inspiring words from the sonnet, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses."

And in 1880, or from around 1880 onwards, there's a new wave of immigration. Previously, immigrants had largely come from north and western Europe. So the Brits, the Germans, the Scandinavians, and laterally the Irish. But now immigration is very, very different. The predominant immigrants are coming from central Europe, from southern Europe and from eastern Europe. Greeks, Italians, Austro-Hungarians, Russians, et cetera. Over the period of 1880 to 1920, 4 million Italians come in to the US and 2 million Jews come in from Russia alone. And I did mention the numbers, so here's a few more. There's not going to be that many more, but have a look at this. So in 1880, if you look on the left hand column, and you look under the rural column, you can see there's 36 million Americans who live in prairie land, in rural areas. And there's only 14 million who live in the cities.

But then you go down to 1920, and now the cities have just completely taken over and have dominated, and they're growing like Billy-o, whereas the rural areas are growing more slowly

and gradually. And we start to see over this period, really the huge growth of the big cities, particularly on the eastern seaboard in the US. New York, Philly, Boston, Baltimore, and of course Chicago; Although much of that growth was grown through internal migration of black population coming to escape from the repressive south. Now there's a problem. And the problem is the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant community, particularly the establishment. They are not very happy with this new wave of immigration. They don't like the new immigrants. Why? Because unlike us, they're poor and they live in city slumps. Unlike us, they're illiterate. Many of them. A lot of them can't even speak English.

And worst of all, they're not Protestant; they're Eastern Orthodox, they're Jews, and God help us, lots of them are even Catholic. And I just thought I'd put up these quotes just to give you a sense of the kind of things that the WASP establishment is saying in the decade from 1900 to 1910. Here we have highly respected Henry Cabot Lodge, the Senator. "We need to restrict undesirable immigrants who come from races most alien." Henry Adams, "the Jew makes me creep. A furtive Jacob or Isaac, still reeking of the ghetto, snarling a weird Yiddish." Henry James, who describes the lower East side as, "Full of small, strange animals ... snakes or worms." And this one from a Princeton professor, I'm not going to read the whole thing, but he talks about the fact that, "Throughout the 19th century, it was the sturdy stock of Northern Europe that made up the main strain.

A vital working force of the country. But now we get the meaner sort from Hungary and Poland, the lower classes. Men, where there's neither skill or energy, and they're coming out of southern Europe as if it's disburdening itself of the more sordid and hapless elements of that population." This is a young Princeton professor writing in 1902. This man will go on to be president in 1912. This is Woodrow Wilson, one of the great reforming, one of the great progressive presidents. And this is what he thinks. And his views don't change an awful lot over the course of that time. All of these feelings about immigrants are massively exacerbated by the fear that they're all importing radical ideas into the US with them. And if there's one fear that dominates the turn of the century, it's probably the fear of Anarchism.

In 1901, president William McKinley is assassinated and he's not assassinated by a man called John Wilkes Booth, who of course was Lincoln's assassin, whose name at least has a nice Anglo-Saxon ring to it. No, he's assassinated by Leon Czolgosz, who's a native born American, but he's got a Polish sounding name. But from then on, aliens and radicalism, dangerous anarchic, violent radicalism, are forever associated with each other in the US. And the study is now made of the so-called insurrectionary deed that's doing the rounds among the anarchist textbooks. This is the idea that you assassinate prominent people in society, including heads of state, in order to disrupt the structures of authority. As a result of the assassination, Czolgosz is dispatched very quickly; he's caught, tried and executed within six months.

More significantly, the US passes its first anti-immigration legislation in 1903, the Immigration Act, which says that it's now possible to deport a whole stream of undesirables, particularly anarchists. And there's a long list which includes pimps, beggars, and even individuals who

suffer from epilepsy. So they're worried about anarchists. And you can see in this cartoon, they're also worried about the I-W-W. So that's the International Workers of the World, also known as, dubbed by the press, "The Wobblers". Trade unionism is on the march in these years. And it's impossible, however, if you are an unskilled poor worker to join one of the conventional trade unions because they're only open to craft unions. So the I-W-W and others are there for poorer workers, and they are left wing, they're radical; one writer says, "They have more flash than breadth." They're never more than a hundred thousand, but they're colourful and they get themselves known.

And they're particularly unpopular with the establishment, because during the first World War, when there's a huge patriotic fervour, the I-W-W decides to take all of their workers on strike, especially those in ship building industries, in rail, coal mining, in other words, industries which are all necessary for the wartime effort. And into this mess, again, as you can see, as well as the danger from with-in, we now have the danger from with-out; which is: The Bolsheviks. So 1917, of course, is when The Bolshevik Revolution is affected. America and Russia, let's just say, they get off to a very bad start. Wilson, who is now in his fifth year as President, Wilson, is that rare, rare thing in politics. He's a genuine idealist and he has an absolute and iron belief that countries ought to be able to self determine themselves.

And for him, self-determination means the ability as a people to live and create a democratic society. So he's delighted with the downfall of the Czar, and he's delighted with the Kerensky government, but he's horrified about the advent of the Bolsheviks. And he describes Bolshevism in visceral terms. He talks about it as the poison that's got inside the veins of a free people. He intervenes in Russia, military intervention, not once but twice. First of all, when the Kerensky government is in power and is wobbling along, he sends a military detachment to shore them up and that fails. And then after the October revolution, when the whites are fleeing and the remnants of them are fighting against the reds, he sends 5,000 men to assist the whites. And that fails as well. And 200 American soldiers die in the process.

So now we have a danger with-in, which is coming from radicals, and a perception of a danger with-out, and the WASP establishment is deeply, deeply worried and fearful, as is the press. And what happens? What happens when fear of "other" takes over like that? Well, I mean, we've heard so much about that in Lockdown University ever since it started. It's been such an overriding theme of these lectures. Well, what happens is that people do two things: they close ranks and then they lash out. And that's what's about to happen now. All the pieces are now in place and it just needs a spark to set off the fuse. And that's when 1919 happens. And 1919 is not so much a spark, it's more of a meteor shower. So let's have a look at what happened in this year of turmoil. First of all, the economy is performing appallingly.

After the war, unemployment is at 12%. Inflation has got out of control. And of course, we all know from many other examples, that when the economy is doing badly, that's when all of these dark forces start to emerge. Demobilisation is an absolute disaster. 4 million soldiers come back after the war. There are no benefits, there's no money and there's no jobs. And so it's no

surprise that in that summer, there's a spate of strikes all over the us. It's estimated that there were 3,600 strikes in that one year, which the press dubbed: "The Red Summer." And one in five workers, 20% of workers across the whole of the USA are on strike. Particularly in Seattle where there's a general strike and 65,000 workers go on strike. You thought you could rely on the police at least, but no, they go on strike in Boston.

There are race riots all over the country. Chicago is worst hit. Oh, hello? Chicago is worst hit, 38 are killed and 500 injured. When we say race riots, let's be clear what we mean. These are white people who are attacking black people. It's not the other way around. And of course this happens at the same time as we have a revival of the Ku Klux Klan in the South. Meanwhile, the anarchists are busy. There's a spate of mail bombs that they're sending to public figures, some of which go off and some of which don't. But eight are successful. The Spanish flu has killed 600,000 Americans in two years, 1918 to 1919; the US Army comes home humiliated from its failed attempts with the Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, Wilson comes back from Europe, desperate to sell the idea of the League of Nations and Congress stops him. So he barnstorms the country and he has a stroke, which isn't fatal, but it incapacitates him. So it's virtually the end of his presidency, even though he's still in office. Teddy Roosevelt, that great icon of activist president, of the activist presidency dies that year.

And you would've thought, at least, you can rely on the ability of sport. But no, it's the year of the Chicago White Sox throwing the World Series, the so-called "Black Sox scandal." And who allegedly fixes the World Series? It's the Jewish mobster, Arnold Rothstein. So at the end of this year, you might at least think, maybe, you could sit down and get a stiff drink. But you'd be wrong, because the Temperance Movement is on the move, and prohibition is slapped on the nation in January, 1920. So just to give you a sense of the fact that the fear is real, I talked about bombings; I talked about the mail bombs that were sent to public figures. In September of 1920, Wall Street is bombed. The culprits are never discovered, but it's believed it was probably a small anarchist gang. You might recognise those steps. And some 30 people are killed in the bomb and another 150 are injured. Extraordinary photograph. So come-eth the hour, come-eth the opportunist, and the man in question is A. Mitchell Palmer.

He is President Wilson's Attorney General. And he is going to plan and oversee the so-called "Palmer Raids," which are going to take place over November 19 and January, 1920. And we're going to talk about those in a couple of minutes. Mitchell Palmer is raised as a Quaker and he was offered, in 1913, the position of Secretary of War by President Wilson, which he refuses because he's a Quaker. But it doesn't stop him in 1919 as Attorney General from effectively waging a domestic war in the US as we're about to find out. You have to think about Mitchell Palmer as a kind of early prototype for Joseph McCarthy. He has three essential qualities that McCarthy had and that Dies, Martin Dies, who are going to find out about next week, had, who was the initiator of HUAC, the "House Un-American Committee." He's ambitious, he's committed, and he's unscrupulous.

He's ambitious; Palmer has got his eye on the presidency. In a year's time, there's going to be a

presidential election and he sees that by taking up a stance of being anti-communist, anti radical, anti subversive, he's got a shot at the presidency and this is his moment to shine. He's also committed. He really believes this stuff. He believes that communists and aliens are the same thing. He believes that 90% of the communist party are aliens. And so if you get rid of all the aliens, you get rid of the problem. He also is bombed. His house is bombed, he's lucky to escape. His wife is lucky to escape, and his 10-year-old daughter is lucky to escape. So the fear for him was real, but if anything, this makes him even more determined and even more committed. So he's ambitious, committed and unscrupulous. He launches a fierce propaganda war against communism and subversion. And just as Martin Dies is going to do, and just as McCarthy does, he massively exaggerates.

He has numbers of communists, which is way, way out of proportion to anything in reality, he makes all kinds of exaggerated claims and makes all kinds of dark threats about what communists and anarchists are going to do. He jails a group of anarchists. He starves them in prison for days and won't let them shave or wash, takes photos of them, puts photos out onto a poster with a headline: "Men Like These Would Rule You." So he puts the fear of God into people. He has a legal weapon on his side because Wilson, the previous year in 1918, manages to persuade Congress to enact the Sedition Act. And the Sedition Act is there to deport radicals. And it was put in place as an emergency wartime measure, but it's never been repealed. But Mitchell Palmer's true master stroke is that he is in charge of the Bureau of Investigation, the B-I, which later becomes the F-B-I. And he creates a new division, which is known as the "Radical Division." And he finds a brilliant administrator, 24-years-old, by the name of Jay Edgar Hoover. And he appoints him into the role. And Palmer and Hoover become the double act who are going to carry out the raids that are going to follow over the next year. So we are now at the point of peak of Red Scare.

The press is worried, the public is worried, the establishment is worried, and Palmer and Hoover are given free reign. These raids are called the Palmer Raids, but the truth of the matter is that it's Hoover who plans them, who executes them, who supervises them. They start on the night of November the seventh, 1919. Someone in the Radical Division has obviously got a sense of humour, because this the second anniversary of the Bolshevik coup. 1200 people are arrested, interrogated, and many, many more are beaten up. And then the deportations start. So they get them into court, the court hearings are derisory, perfunctory, And in December of that year, only a month later, the first ship, "The Burford," leaves bound for Mother Russia. And who is on the ship? 250 deportees, most of them Russian Jews.

And they include Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, who's her longtime collaborator and friend. I have to say, in preparing this presentation, I looked at an awful lot of photographs of Emma Goldman. I think this is the happiest she ever looks. I mean quite a formidable individual, a serious individual. Berkman is, he's more successful, in the word than in the deed. He planned to bomb Henry Frick in the 1890s. He failed and he was rewarded for his efforts with a 17 year jail sentence. So good on paper, but not so good when it comes to the insurrectionary deed. So they're bound for Russia with 250 others, and of course they arrive in Stalin's Russia, and

they're very quickly disillusioned. They leave and Goldman and Berkman then spend the next twenty, thirty years wandering the Emigre cafes of Western Europe and writing about the evils of Stalin. Of course, she's also fierce anti-Zionist, because she sees Zionism as as yet another form of failed nationalism. So they're on the boat and there were plans for many, many more deportations.

And the raids reached their climax on the 2nd of January. Hoover plans night sweeps and executes night sweeps in 30 cities. So there are federal agents sent to 30 cities in the UK and they round up anyone and everyone, thousands of people in one night. They go into restaurants, they arrest everyone in the restaurant. They go to dances, they arrest everyone. They even have a sniff that there's a group of bakers who are meeting just in order to discuss forming a cooperative. It's enough for them. They arrest all the bakers. In all, over these three months, 10,000 people are arrested, detained, often without charge, mainly without trial. And they're treated appallingly. 500 in New York are crammed into rooms on Ellis Island, of which many die of pneumonia because it's the height of winter.

In Boston, there's 140 prisoners who are put in chains and leg irons, and they're frog marched through the streets and they're locked up in an unheated prison. And a couple of them are so despairing that they jump from the window and commit suicide. And the climate that they create also can't be contained, because all over the country, people are taking the law into their own hands and there's a group of Legionnaires in Washington who decide to make a citizen's arrest on 12 Wobblers; 12 members of the I-W-W. They round them up, one of them, they beat him up, they castrate him, and then they shoot him. The initial reaction to the Palmer raids is by and large positive. The Washington Post is positive, "No time to waste on hair-splitting over the infringement of liberty," They say. The New York Times praises federal agents. But little by little, week by week, more information comes out about the brutality of the raids, their illegality, and the sweep of the innocent. And slowly, slowly, bit by bit, people start to turn. So just before we tell that part of the story, I just wanted to show, this is another P-B-S clip. I just wanted to show this, not so much for the commentary, but just because the footage I think is so extraordinary and it just really gives you a sense of what was going on. And if I can possibly master the technology, I'll just put this on, here we go.

*Video plays.*

- The decades leading up to the bombing on Wall Street had been marked by a great deal of social unrest and anti-capitalist agitation. In 1919, there was a coordinated bombing attack on seven eastern cities. And one of those bombs targeted the Attorney General of the United States, A. Mitchell Palmer. It really stoked fears that this was the beginning of a much broader attack on capitalism in the country. There was a huge clamouring from the public to take more drastic action. The Palmer Raids were a series of raids to arrest and deport individuals suspected of radical activities against the government. These raids were conducted across the country in November of 1919 and January of 1920. They arrested Emma Goldman and a number of communist sympathisers and activists. It was a fairly violent affair. It became clear



that a number of the people arrested didn't even belong to a radical organisation. Some of them were American citizens. They were held under arrest without warrant. There was a real backlash to the civil liberties violations that many perceived these raids constituted.

*Video ends.*

- So the backlash, as she says, does come; but it comes slowly. And certainly at the time of the raids, they are popular. So what is it that happens to turn public opinion against Palmer and against the raids? There were two, I think, great heroes who emerge out of all this in 1919 and 1920. The first one is this man, Louis Post, who I think is the great unsung hero of the era. Due to a quirk in the way that the system operates, the Justice Department has got the jurisdiction to arrest aliens, to arrest communists and subversives, and to try them. But it doesn't have the jurisdiction to deport them. That rests with the Department of Labour because the Department of Labour is in charge of the Immigration Bureau. The Secretary of Labour falls ill just at this moment. And the Deputy Secretary of Labour is a man called Louis Post. Who's Louis Post? He's not your ordinary bureaucrat, that's for sure. He has had a previous career as a journalist, and he was a great progressive crusader before Wilson made all of his reforms and during Wilson's great reforming first term. He crusades against industrial monopolies in the way that Teddy Roosevelt had done, in the way that Wilson had done. He crusades against racial discrimination and in favour of workers' rights and unrestricted immigration.

So he's a great progressive and he's now in government. And he's diligent and determined, and turns out he's a great investigator as well. So before he's going to sign any order, he launches his own investigations. And what does he discover? Most of the raids have been made without proper warrants; he's found that all the prisoners, virtually, have been denied their legal rights. And he rules that anyone, whether they're a citizen or an alien, if they're going to be subjected to a deportation process, they're entitled to their full constitutional rights. Now, I should say, they were deporting citizens and aliens, but it was much easier to deport aliens. So that first ship where Emma Goldman sails, "The Burford," or "The Red Arc" as the press call it, that first ship is mainly aliens. Emma Goldman had been in the US, she'd been living in the US for 43 years, and she has a marriage of convenience in order to be able to get her citizenship. And what does Jay Edgar Hoover do? This is vintage Hoover.

He goes to court and he produces evidence which is dodgy at best, that the rabbi who had officiated at her wedding, didn't have Semikhah; wasn't properly ordained. And therefore that annuls the wedding and that annuls her citizenship. So he manages to get her onto the ship. But meanwhile, back to Louis Post. Louis Post, as I said, he rules that everyone has to be afforded their full constitutional rights. And this infuriates Palmer and it infuriates Hoover. And they absolutely hate and detest him, and they fight him tooth and nail. It doesn't help, by the way. I mean, look at that face. I love this photograph, those horn rim glasses, that thick head of hair, that beard! Doesn't it remind you of Leon Trotsky? I mean, I'm sure it couldn't have helped in terms of the vitriol that Palmer and Hoover pour on this man.

But through him all these prisoners are released. And I should say that Hoover, we've now discovered through papers released, they only managed to deport 500 people. Hoover had been planning to deport six thousand five hundred of those who are in detention. So this was an extraordinary act. My second hero is someone who I suspect will probably be known to many of you who are watching from the States. And that's Felix Frankfurter. So who's Felix Frankfurter? He's born in Vienna to a Jewish family. He moves to the US, or the family moved to the US, when he is only six; so this is in 1894. And he grows up poor. His father sells linen from door to door, and he just manages a meagre living, but an incredibly kind man.

Any extra money he has, reputedly, he spends on fruit baskets for the less fortunate than his family. And Frankfurter, he grows up, he becomes a lawyer. He represents clients, defending them on worker's rights before the Supreme Court. He's a brilliant man, a brilliant lawyer. And of course he is going to go on like Louis Brandeis before him, his friend and mentor, Louis Brandeis, he's going to go on to work for Wilson in a junior role. Then he's going to go on to be one of the key men around FDR, Franklin Roosevelt, and Roosevelt is going to appoint him to the Supreme Court in 1938. He also works tirelessly with Louis Brandeis in the cause of Zionism. So he's an early, he and Brandeis are early American Zionists. Zionism is not a popular cause among the US Jewish establishment at this stage, so they don't make themselves very popular, but they lobby Woodrow Wilson to support the Balfour Declaration. But all of that is for another day because meanwhile we're in 1920.

And Felix Frankfurter gets together with a group of prominent lawyers and legal scholars. He sets up the A-C-L-U in 1920, along with a few others. So that's the American Civil Liberties Union, which is obviously going to be such an important force later, particularly in the sixties. And through the A-C-L-U, they launch an investigation and they issue a report in 1920, which looks at the Palmer Raids and looks at the brutality, the illegality, and produces as an appendix, a whole number of sworn witness statements and photos of bruised and beaten prisoners. And you can see this is their conclusion, which is reported in every paper. "We are concerned solely with bringing to the attention of the American people the utterly illegal acts which have been committed by those charged with the highest duties of enforcing the law - Acts which have caused widespread suffering and unrest, have struck at the foundation of American free institutions, and have brought the name of our country to disrepute."

And so gradually, bit by bit, the furor dies down and people start to turn away from Palmer. So at this stage, there's good news and there's bad news. Let me start with the good news first. The good news is people like Mitchell Palmer tend to display a pattern. They get powerful, they create fear, and they create fear among people around them. No one is willing to cross them. And they get arrogant as a result. And as they get more powerful, there's a moment where they overreach. And for Mitchell Palmer, that moment was May, 1920 because he starts early in the year to predict and propagandise that there's going to be a nationwide communist uprising, which is going to erupt on May Day in 1920.

Through the Justice Department, he issues dire warnings almost daily of the expected uprising.

So as the date approaches, New York police are on 24 hour vigil. In Boston, they station trucks all over the city at strategic locations with machine guns. And in Chicago, they're not taking any chances at all. So before the day even arrives, they pre-arrest 360 radicals just in case. May Day comes and nothing happens, absolutely nothing. And it seems the silence turns out to be an event in itself because this deflates the national hysteria almost overnight. And people stop worrying about "Reds" and they stop worrying about deporting "Reds." It kills Mitchell Palmer's campaign for the presidency and public opinion slowly turns against him. And for the first time people can use humour and they start to laugh at him. And there's a congressman from Alabama who, in the house, makes a speech where he talks about the supposed dangers of Reds and he says, "Some of those involved in hunting for them probably don't know the difference between Bolshevism and Rheumatism."

So the good news is that people like Palmer tend to overreach and they have their day. We've seen it with Palmer, we saw it with McCarthy. And more recently, we've also seen it, we hope with you know who, but we shall see. The bad news, of course, is that once the poison is out there, it starts to seep into the system. It starts to spread; it spreads through the body politic. And as we all know, it's much easier to get it in than to extract it. For those of you who remember "I Claudius," there's a wonderful phrase that Claudius says in one of the episodes where he says, "Let all the poisons that lurk in the mud hatch out." And what we're going to see is that even though Palmer is a spent force, the poisons that he lets out, that were lurking in the mud, they're going to start hatching out over the 1920s and then over the 1930s. As we see the rise of communism in the US, as we see the rise of Soviet spies in the US. But then we see the rise of the fear, the extreme fear, that in the thirties is going to culminate with the creation of the House Un-American Committee.

So we're going to cover all of that next week. And then probably in the summer, or whenever Trudy, Wendy and Judy decide they're going to programme it in, when we do the forties and the fifties, we're going to cover the Rosenbergs and McCarthy and Alger Hiss and the Blacklist and Roy Cohn. And it would be wonderful, when we do that, for those of you who have got any recollections about what it was like to grow up in that era, if any of you are old enough, if any of you ever met Roy Cohn, or knew anyone who met Roy Cohn, any recollections that you have to share with us will be absolutely wonderful. But for now, we're going to leave it and as I said, we're going to do part two next week and if anyone has questions or comments they want to make, very happy to take them. So I'm going to stop sharing. Here we go, right.

- Thanks Phil. That was absolutely brilliant. Thank you very much. There are a couple of questions. I see that in Questions and Answers. Can you access them?

Q&A and Comments:

- I'll have a look, let's have a look. Okay, yeah, I should be able to. So, okay, let me just go through these.

Q: So Joan Lessing, Joan is saying, "Want you to remember that Trump's mentor was Roy Cohn and everything that applies."

A: Absolutely right. Trump and Cohn meet in the early seventies, and Trump, who doesn't normally, he's not normally generous to people, but Trump effectively tells everyone that everything he ever learned about lying, cheating, never giving in, never admitting liability. Everything he learned, he learned from Roy Cohn. And there's a movie, which if you haven't seen it, it's great, called, "Where's My Roy Cohn?" Because it's named after the moment when Trump is in the White House in year two, and he's despairing of all of his staff. And he says, "Where's my Roy Cohn?" So, absolutely Joan, he absolutely was the mentor. And then Joan Nadler, "As McCarthy was investigating the army to weed out the communists, the Democrats today are suggesting that the army should be investigated for white supremacists." Okay, this is interesting.

Thelma Davis, "Will you have an opportunity to explain Q-Anon?" I wasn't going to, I'm going to take this up to the sixties, so that might be someone else who might want to do that. "An advisor to Senator McCarthy was Bobby Kennedy." Well, absolutely. I mean the Kennedy family are something else, aren't they? Bobby Kennedy worked for McCarthy in 1950 at the recommendation of his dad, Joe Kennedy, and much more about Joe Kennedy, of course, later. Bobby always says it was a great mistake, but when he got into it, he knew what he was getting into. But he did leave, to be fair, fairly early. Leonard Vinnick, "Care to comment on Breckenridge Long, whose actions strongly impacted the Jews?" Gosh, I'm going to look up Breckenridge Long. That's intriguing. I wish I knew Leonard, but if it's relevant, I'll have an answer for next week, one or two very nice comments, thank you very much.

Q: Linda Hamson says, "How do internal conflicts of the twenties and suspicion of imported radicalism dovetail with other policies, economic protectionism and isolationism? Are they in fact all part of the same zeitgeist?"

A: They absolutely are. Nativism, the fear of people inside, isolationism, not caring about the ones outside. They are two sides of the same coin. And it's almost always the same people who hold the same views. Not always, but almost always. So I think that's absolutely right.

Marilyn says, "Louis Post's journalistic skills come to the fore." They absolutely do. As I say, he's an extraordinary man. I mean, for me, one of the pleasures of doing today was for those of you who've never heard of Louis Post, just introducing him to you. John T: "Trump also overreached himself so very recently." We can only hope.

Q: Helen asks, "Is there a connection between fear of foreigners?"

A: I've never liked the term "alien" as subversive an anarchist in the raid across the US and the laws a couple of years later, which closed the doors to many poor immigrants coming from poor southern and eastern European countries where they seen as undesirable immigrants." Yes, as

I say, the poison came out over the twenties, as we're going to find out, there's a raft of anti-immigration legislation. It actually starts in 1917 with a literacy test. So if you can't read or write, that impinges on your ability to become an immigrant, and guess who that impacts? Yes, it's the poor from Southern and Eastern and Central Europe. So, okay.

Lots of very nice things. Thank you very much. Okay, I suggest we leave it there for this week, if everyone's okay with that. And we join again, if anyone's got any questions for next week, we'll take them then. And I look forward to seeing you all again this time next week. And thank you Wendy and Judy.

- Brilliant, brilliant. Phil honestly, I'm getting so many texts how outstanding this presentation has been. So we look forward to the Red Scare next, America's Red Scare Part Two next week. Thank you very, very much. Take care. Bye-bye everyone.

- Bye-bye.

- Bye.