

we AAA lawyers in the group had recently concluded a marketing agreement for cling peaches, we jokingly referred to our comrades as "the cling peaches." In any case, we were hardly in a position to commit espionage or any other crime against the country, had we had a mind to do so. We had no access to military or defense information. In those days there was no such thing as classified information. And had there been classification legislation in effect, the information we dealt with would not have been so categorized. We were simply providing political analyses of New Deal policy, based on our positions as insiders in various government agencies. Our purpose was not to help foreign governments but to help our own, to defeat those who wanted to obstruct the progressive tendencies within the administration, and strengthen those New Dealers who would respond to the growing popular movements for real relief.

On reflection, I would say it is conceivable that the commentary and analyses we provided to the national Party leadership may have reached the Soviets—there were regular exchanges of information with all the fraternal parties through the Communist International—but I can't imagine they would have been interested in what we had to say; nor, had they been interested, that it could have been of any use. The fact of the matter is that although the so-called Ware Group would be the subject of countless investigations and reinvestigations by grand juries, congressional committees, and the FBI for several years beginning in 1947, there would never be a single indictment for espionage against any of its members. In later years, I've asked myself whether the whole project of the Party to recruit employees of agencies in the Roosevelt administration, and then to organize them into groups like ours, was a useful effort when you compare the minimal value of the information we provided with the impetus it gave to anticommunist repression. It probably wasn't worth it, although, for myself, I haven't a single regret regarding my own participation. Of course hindsight has its limitations, and no one in 1934 could foretell what would unfold in 1948. (I don't want to leave the impression that our group, and others like it, were the primary aspect of Party activity in Washington. Actually, the bulk of the Party membership in the city was in the various unions of government workers.)

For Americans, as a nation, theory has never been a strong suit. We are a practical people, used to getting things done. Claims to the contrary notwithstanding, the same could be said for the Communist party. This was a strength, but also a weakness. The failure to articulate a theory of, say, the state and the New Deal, in part accounts for