

being the force that saved the day, but no one believed him. He had fired one too many blanks.

So it was that the "Fighting Quaker" became the "Quaking Fighter," or even the "Fighting Faker," and once he became a joke, his political career was ruined.

Nonetheless, he would not be forgotten or his message ignored, for he had laid in the fear of any identification with dissent. In the wake of the Red Scare, it remained far more convenient to adopt safe positions; for over a decade, there would be no significant revivals of radical thought. The Red Scare was a marvelous horse to ride, and both parties rode it, or, as Sean Dennis Cashman put it, "like two stagecoaches running side by side in the same direction, splattering mud on each other." No matter that the fears were bogus, the issue was made to seem so overwhelming, the two rival parties became as one.

It is axiomatic that American politicians would cling to any winning formula, that the best vote-getting techniques are often the basest. In our history, the tragedy of the preposterous witch-hunters of 1919 lay in the inspiration they offered to the future. The Red Scare became embedded in the American political system to be hauled out like an old cannon and fired whenever anyone needed to make a big noise. Americans loved or hated its thunder but no one would ever deny its impact. It would remain a dominant factor in foreign policy that brought on numerous international crises, wars great and small. It was the driving force behind the Cold War and the ever-present threat of nuclear holocaust. On the domestic scene, it would repeatedly make a mockery of the Bill of Rights, send dissenters to jail as traitors and cause random firings and loss of careers through blacklisting. It forced the political center into extremely conservative positions. It inhibited young minds from embracing unpopular ideas. It polluted the political atmosphere by sewing dissension and disunity through irresponsible accusations of disloyalty. It made civil rights an issue to fight over rather than to exercise. It eroded truth in journalism and the dissemination of information. It befouled the meaning of patriotism.

In time, the Red Scare became a ritual. We were warned of Reds under every political bed, domestic or foreign. They were the objects of such hate and fear that opportunistic politicians