



Kenneth Haycraft (top row, center), surrounded by his brothers and parents, 1936

William Millikan

THE RED- BAITING OF KENNETH C. HAYCRAFT

A Minnesota All American

THE EXTREME ECONOMIC CONDITIONS of the Great Depression created fertile ground for the growth of communism in Minneapolis, as in other cities across the United States. In January 1930, a congressional committee reported that Minnesota had become “a center of activity in the spread of communism.” The Communist party, adopting its Popular Front strategy in the mid-1930s, gained influence in both the Farmer-Labor party and the state Congress of Industrial Organizations. In Minneapolis, the Socialist Workers party emerged during the 1934 truckers’ strike to lead a successful and radical union movement. By 1938 various forms of radicalism were thriving in factories and in political activities across the state.¹

The powerful, conservative business interests of Minneapolis rightly perceived such activity as a direct threat to their financial and industrial empire, built on the wealth of flour mills and banks. As early as 1903, businessmen had joined forces in the Minneapolis Citizen’s Alliance (CA) in an effort to suppress union

¹ *Minneapolis Journal*, Jan. 22, 1930, clipping, Citizen’s Alliance of Minneapolis Records, Minnesota Historical Society (MHS), St. Paul; Millard L. Gieske, *Minnesota Farmer Laborism: The Third-Party Alternative* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979); John E. Haynes, “Researching Minnesota History in Moscow,” *Minnesota History* 54 (Spring 1994): 2–15.

William Millikan, author of numerous articles on business and labor in Minnesota, is working on a full-length study of the Minneapolis Citizen’s Alliance.

activity and other challenges to their dominance. Minneapolis became a battleground between the entrenched powers of industry and insurgent radical groups.²

The mainstream press, which was closely allied with the Citizen's Alliance, repeatedly attacked Minneapolis's tradition of radicalism. By the late 1930s the CA's message was focused on the allegiance of many leaders in the city's union movement to the Socialist Workers party. Armed with extensive intelligence gathered by its own investigators, the CA continually reminded the public that the Communist menace threatened one and all. Gradually, these accusations took hold of Minnesota's political dialogue. By 1938 even the Farmer-Labor party was split by shrill denunciations of Communist conspiracy. "The most dangerous, sinister, and un-Christian force threatening democratic government throughout the world" had become one of Minnesota's most important political issues.³

During the 1938 general-election campaign, Governor Elmer A. Benson was labeled the front man of an invidious Jewish Communist conspiracy to destroy Minnesota. When accused of red-baiting, Republican propagandist Ray P. Chase blandly replied in print, "Why is Red-Baiting vile[?] Nobody knows. It's one of Life's mysteries." Although Minnesotans might argue about the positive or negative social impact of the state's heritage of radicalism and red-baiting, there can be no question that red-baiting wreaked injustice on innocent men and women. The persecution of Kenneth C. Haycraft, a Minnesota All American football star, is an undeniable example.⁴

Kenneth Clair Haycraft was born in 1907 in a logging camp 30 miles north of Bemidji where his father, Isaac G., worked. Times were tough for the lumberjacks of northern Minnesota and would remain so for the Haycraft family for the next 20 years. De-



*Visiting the store at Solway, near Bemidji, 1915:
(from left, top): Sylvester, Isaac, Charlie, and Daisy;
(bottom) Glenn and Kenneth Haycraft*

spite a string of failed attempts at farming and small businesses that bounced his growing family from Bemidji to Winnie, Texas, and then across northern Minnesota, Isaac Haycraft reportedly remained a patriotic Republican and a religious man, proud of his family's role in the American Revolution and the success of his brother, Julius E., a Minnesota state senator and district-court judge. For young Kenneth, however, the

² William Millikan, "Maintaining Law and Order: The Minneapolis Citizen's Alliance in the 1920s," *Minnesota History* 51 (Summer 1989): 219–33 and "Defenders of Business: The Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association vs. Labor During World War I," *Minnesota History* 50 (Spring 1986): 2–17; Lois Quam and Peter J. Rachleff, "Keeping Minneapolis an Open-Shop Town: The Citizen's Alliance in the 1930s," *Minnesota History* 50 (Fall 1986): 105–17.

³ The Citizen's Alliance records contain extensive clipping files and intelligence reports on radical groups; an excellent example is the CA pamphlet, "The Real Menace to Industrial Peace in Minneapolis," 1935, copy in Robley D. Cramer and Family Papers, MHS. On Communist accusations in the 1938 Farmer-Labor primary, see Gieske, *Minnesota Farmer Laborism*, 216–22; Steven J. Keillor, *Hjalmar Petersen of Minnesota: The Politics of Provincial Independence* (St. Paul: MHS Press, 1987), 143–69; Paul E. Rick, "Communism within the Farmer Labor Party Exposed," pamphlet published by Petersen for Governor State Volunteer Committee, Arthur LeSueur Papers, MHS.

⁴ Rick, "Communism . . . Exposed"; Ray P. Chase, *Are They Communists or Catspaws? A Red Baiting Article* (Anoka, Minn.: R. P. Chase, 1938), copy in Ray P. Chase Papers, MHS; Keillor, *Hjalmar Petersen*, 163–64.

family's financial straits meant working in his father's general store beginning at age 13.⁵

Haycraft's high-school years were as transient as his childhood. For his freshman year, Kenneth and his older brother Sylvester J. (Jolly), went to Washington, D.C., to live with their oldest brother, Everett, a lawyer with the Federal Trade Commission. The next spring, however, the brothers had to leave Washington to help their father develop an 80-acre farm 10 miles west of Hibbing, clearing land and building a house and barn. Because of the farm's isolation, Kenneth boarded with a family in Grand Rapids to continue his high-school education. Then, in the spring of 1923 the Haycrafts left their Hibbing land to live on a cousin's farm near Erskine, and Kenneth entered his third high school in three years. He worked on the Erskine farm during the summer of 1923 and then returned to Washington to stay with his grandmother. When she died that winter, the determined young Minnesotan moved in with his brother across town, took on a part-time job, and managed to graduate the next spring.⁶

Although Kenneth wanted to follow his brother's career path in government and law, it was clear that his family would not be able to assist him financially in attaining his lofty goals. That summer he worked on several threshing crews south of Madelia, near where his grandfather had homesteaded in 1865, and saved \$54, enough for fall-quarter tuition and one month's rent for a room with his brother Jolly in Dinkytown. In September 1924 he enrolled in the prelegal course of the College of Science, Literature, and Arts at the University of Minnesota, working as a bus boy in downtown Minneapolis for 60 cents a day plus his only meal. By spring quarter, however, his money had run out, and Kenneth took out a loan for tuition. A new job at the Campus Club supplied him three meals a day without pay.

Although the two brothers managed to struggle through their first year of college, graduation remained a distant goal.⁷

Fate intervened for Kenneth that summer when the University of Minnesota hired Clarence W. Spears, a doctor and All American guard from Dartmouth College, as its new football coach. "Doc" Spears urged university students to try out for the team; if they did not know how to play, he would teach them. Although Haycraft had never played varsity football in high school, he heard that athletes were given well-paid jobs. Desperate to stay in school, he joined the "scrubs" despite the objections of his parents. Thirty years later Spears would remember Haycraft as "a green, awkward farm boy who had never played football." At 162 pounds, he was also more than 60 pounds lighter than the team's other tackles. As the season progressed, Haycraft spent his time learning opponents' plays for use in scrimmages against the varsity.⁸

Haycraft's position on the football team was decided in Fall 1926 when he finished fourth in the squad race. As the team's fastest lineman, he was quickly shifted to end, where he soon attracted notice. After a loss to Notre Dame, *St. Paul Dispatch* columnist Dick Cullum announced: "If any new star was set to blazing in Saturday's game it was Kenneth Haycraft. . . . He was the only man on the Minnesota squad who succeeded in smashing the Notre Dame attack behind the line, and he did it more than once." Isaac Haycraft, watching his first football game, cheered wildly and quietly dropped his opposition to his son's sports career.⁹

By the last game of the 1927 season, the Gophers were undefeated. Haycraft, battling a case of jaundice, had established himself as one of the best ends in the Midwest. To capture the Big Ten title, Haycraft and his teammates would have to win on the road against the University of

⁵ Haycraft biographical sketch, 1937[?], p. 1, Haycraft file, Minneapolis History Collection, Minneapolis Public Library; affidavits of Glenn Goodwin Haycraft, May 2, 1955, and Frank Jennings, Feb. 15, 1955, both in Security Investigation File (SIF) of Col. Kenneth Haycraft, U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center, St. Louis. With the aid of Senator Paul D. Wellstone, the author obtained copies of the complete file of Haycraft's loyalty and security investigations. Believed lost, these records were eventually found in Missouri by the special actions division of the Veterans Services Directorate. On J. Haycraft, see W. F. Toensing, comp., *Minnesota Congressmen, Legislators, and Other Elected State Officials* (St. Paul: MHS, 1971), 51. Julius Haycraft was president of the MHS in 1944; *Minnesota History* 25 (Dec. 1944): 378.

⁶ "The Past of a Man With a Future: Kenneth C. Haycraft," campaign pamphlet, 1937, Oscar F. Hawkins and Family Papers, MHS; biographical sketch, 1; Kenneth Haycraft with Marion Haycraft, "Kenneth Haycraft's Football History," manuscript, 1985, p. 2-5, copy in author's possession.

⁷ "Past of a Man With a Future"; affidavits of Sylvester J. Haycraft, Jan. 3, 1955, and Lawrence Erskine, Jan. 27, 1955, both SIF; I. G. Haycraft, *Thirty Years on a Farm in Southern Minnesota* (Madelia, Minn.: Watonwan Co. Historical Society, n.d.), copy in Haycraft family possession; Haycrafts, "Football History," 5.

⁸ Haycrafts, "Football History," 4-6; affidavit of C. W. Spears, Jan. 11, 1955, SIF.

⁹ Haycrafts, "Football History," 8-9; *St. Paul Dispatch*, Oct. 11, 1926, p. 15.



Kenneth Haycraft in 1926, his first year on the Gopher team

Michigan, a team that they had beaten only twice in 18 games. Despite the dominance of Minnesota's line, Michigan led 7 to 0 at the half. In the second half, Michigan's offense, buried for losses again and again by Minnesota ends Bob Tanner and Haycraft, came to a grinding halt. The Michigan jinx struck again after Minnesota scored a third-quarter touchdown. On the point after touchdown the snap from center fell short, leaving Minnesota trailing by one point as the fourth quarter started.¹⁰

mark. National football pundits noticed Minnesota's starting left end, selecting him to be first-team end on the 11-man All American teams of the *New York Sun*, the International News Service, Walter Eckersall, and the prestigious Grantland Rice. By honoring Minnesota with its sixth All American, the national sports press had also made Haycraft one of the state's most famous citizens.¹²

Even a legend, however, had to eat and pay the rent and tuition for law school, which

The Gophers opened the last quarter of the season with a drive deep into Michigan territory. With a first down on the eighty-yard line, Minnesota ran three consecutive plays into the line for little gain. From fourth and goal on the six-yard line, Shorty Almquist shot a pass toward Haycraft's outstretched arms. With one lunge and grab of the pigskin, Kenneth Haycraft became a Minnesota football legend. For only the third time in 35 years, the Little Brown Jug would reside in Minnesota.¹¹

Although the 1928 Minnesota football team outscored its opponents 182 to 36, the season was marred by two upset, one-point losses to Northwestern and Iowa. Haycraft, however, still underweight and battling jaundice, had a brilliant year. Playing next to the injured Bronko Nagurski, Haycraft read plays quickly, raced in to destroy the opponents' interference, and was a deadly tackler. On offense, relentless blocking and spectacular goal-line catches became his trademark.

¹⁰ Haycrafts, "Football History," 11, 13; *Minnesota Goal Post*, football program, Nov. 13, 1927, p. 10; *Minneapolis Tribune*, Nov. 20, 1927, p. 1, 4.

¹¹ *Minneapolis Journal*, Nov. 20, 1927, p. 1, and sport sec., p. 2; *St. Paul Dispatch*, Nov. 20, 1927, sec. 3, p. 3.

¹² Haycrafts, "Football History," 14; *Minneapolis Tribune*, Oct. 21, 1928, p. 4, Dec. 2, 1928, p. 15; *Minnesota Daily* (Minneapolis), Dec. 15, 1928, p. 4.

Haycraft had entered in the fall of 1927. Sandwiched between morning classes, football practices, and evening study, Haycraft continued to work part time. Ironically, he secured a much better-paying job in the proof department at Northwestern National Bank of Minneapolis. Five years later, as a state investigator, Haycraft would probe the bank's expansion that had occurred during his college employment.¹³

In 1929 Haycraft married Alberta Smith, the sister of one of his school friends. That fall, he joined a new National Football League team, the Minneapolis Red Jackets, at his college position of left end. Outmanned by powerful veteran teams like the Green Bay Packers, the Red Jackets were both a financial and competitive failure. Although the team folded in its second season, the \$125 Haycraft earned per game helped him complete his final year of law school. By the fall of 1930 he was both a lawyer and a famous football player, attributes that would soon make him a prime prospect for the state's political arena.¹⁴

For the first two years of the Great Depression, Haycraft struggled to support his wife and young daughter as a lawyer in the firm of his father-in-law, Stelle S. Smith. He supplemented his income playing semiprofessional football and, at the urging of his legal associates, joined the Minnesota National Guard. Although he contemplated the stability that government work might provide, Minnesota at the time was controlled by the Farmer-Labor party led by Governor Floyd B. Olson. Haycraft, perhaps influenced by his conservative, Republican family, had voted for Herbert Hoover in 1928 and later, under the direction of his father-in-law, had joined the Young Republican League.¹⁵

By 1932, as the depression deepened its grip on Minnesota, Haycraft's law practice was floun-

dering. Searching for a solution to the dire economic problems surrounding him, he attended a speech of Governor Olson's. The charismatic politician called for employment programs so that "every able-bodied person who wants to work can find a job," unemployment insurance, and a statewide old-age pension so that no one would go hungry. To pay for his programs, Olson would combine a state income tax with stricter tax collections to make sure the wealthy paid their fair share. Impressed, Haycraft approached the governor after the speech and was quickly recruited to play an important role in the 1932 campaign.¹⁶

To aid his reelection bid, Olson was organizing a Young Voters Liberal League to bring independent, Republican, and Democratic voters into the Farmer-Labor camp. Haycraft, with his All American fame and his legal training, was the perfect man to lead this group. As president of the newly formed league, he campaigned on the radio throughout the fall of 1932. Olson, recognizing his appointee's potential, told Haycraft to come to the capitol after the election to talk about his future.¹⁷

Fresh from a decisive electoral victory over Republican Earle Brown, an ex-intelligence operative for the Citizen's Alliance, Olson opened up a full-scale attack on the banking empires behind the CA. In 1929 Northwestern National Bank had launched Northwest Bancorporation, or Banco, a holding company that would control 127 banks two years later. Built on the region's natural resources, particularly wheat, the industrial capitalism of the area was gradually shifting to a financial capitalism dominated by Banco and its rival, First Bank Stock Corporation. The emergence of these two giants also brought about a shift of power within the Minneapolis business community and the CA.¹⁸

Olson, who had been a bitter enemy of the Citizen's Alliance since 1923, instructed the

¹³ S. Haycraft affidavit; Haycrafts, "Football History," 12; "Past of a Man With a Future."

¹⁴ *Minneapolis Journal*, Oct. 6, 1929, sports sec., 6; David S. Neft et al., *Pro Football: The Early Years* (Ridgefield, Conn.: Sports Products, Inc., 1978), 72–78; affidavits of Samuel S. Smith, Jan. 3, 1955, and S. Haycraft, both SIF; Kenneth Haycraft to Dear Ted (grandson), Feb. 10, 1989, copy in author's possession; "Past of a Man With a Future."

¹⁵ Affidavits of Sidney S. Feinberg, Dec. 18, 1954, Edwin W. Elmer, Dec. 18, 1954, and S. Haycraft—all SIF; "Past of a Man With a Future"; Haycraft to Ted, Feb. 10, 1989; Kenneth Haycraft to the author, Aug. 4, 1992.

¹⁶ Haycraft to author, Aug. 4, 1992; Olson's speech, Oct. 3, 1932, in John S. McGrath and James J. Delmont, *Floyd Björnsterne Olson, Minnesota's Most Liberal Governor* (n.p.: McGrath and Delmont, 1937), 199.

¹⁷ Affidavit of Stanley B. Newhall, Dec. 15, 1954, SIF; Haycraft to author, Aug. 4, 1992.

¹⁸ George H. Mayer, *The Political Career of Floyd B. Olson* (1951; reprint, St. Paul: MHS Press, 1987), 116; Harold Chucker, *Banco at Fifty: A History of Northwest Bancorporation 1929–1979* (Minneapolis: The Company, 1979[?]), 8–12; Charles S. Popple, *Development of Two Bank Groups in the Central Northwest* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1944), 124; Charles B. Kuhlmann, "The Influence of the Minneapolis Flour Mills Upon the Economic Development of Minnesota and the Northwest," *Minnesota History* 6 (June 1925): 149. On Brown's close association with the CA, see Millikan, "Maintaining Law and Order," 228.

Minnesota Commerce Department to investigate the stock sales of Banco and First Bank Stock Corporation. On January 1, 1933, the governor appointed Haycraft chief investigator of the securities division of the commerce department and assigned him to the case. Over the course of the investigation, Haycraft interviewed banking executives regarding Banco's methods of buying up Minnesota banks and spoke to individuals about their Northwest Bancorporation stock purchases. He examined records of the corporation's banking activities and the manipulation of the recently created Minneapolis-St. Paul stock exchange. The securities division also interrogated Northwest Bancorporation President E. W. Decker, who had played an important role in the Citizen's Alliance's long success. The investigation concluded that Banco had fraudulently misrepresented its earnings and the value of its stocks and had manipulated prices in order to sell its stock issues at inflated values. Years later, Haycraft recalled that Banco was "selling blue sky."¹⁹

Acting on Haycraft's information, Olson asked the Hennepin County attorney for indictments against Banco executives. Olson, who had been county attorney a decade earlier, should have been aware that the Citizen's Alliance dominated the county's grand juries. When the panel refused to return an indictment, Olson took the evidence to the U.S. district attorney for prosecution. In September 1934, J. Cameron Thomson, Banco vice-president and general manager, went on trial in Moorhead, where a stock buyer had charged the corporation with fraud.²⁰

The trial was a publicity disaster for Banco, as Minnesota newspapers reveled in the prosecution's description of the corporation's scheme to "obtain complete domination and control of the financial resources of the state of Minnesota and of the northwest." The defense, perhaps realizing that the jury was confused by the complicated financial testimony, rested its case without calling a witness. The jury agreed with the defense's contention that the prosecution had failed to prove its case. The second case, against Decker, was dropped after he resigned his position. The charges against the other 18 defendants were



Haycraft, pausing from his security-commission investigations to pose for a St. Paul newspaper photographer, January 1934

¹⁹ "Past of a Man With a Future"; investigative reports and transcripts of hearings, Northwest Bancorporation/First Bank Stock Corp. case file, Commerce Dept., Securities Div. Records, Minnesota State Archives, MHS, hereafter Commerce Records; Kenneth Haycraft, interview with Richard M. Vallery, North Branford, Conn., June 1, 1981, transcript, 8, copy in author's possession. On Decker's ties to the CA, see, for example, the CA's Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, Apr. 3, 1919; minutes of annual meetings, 1915–1917; and Audit, 1929, p. 10—all CA Records; Millikan, "Defenders of Business," 6n, 8n.

²⁰ Chucker, *Banco at Fifty*, 30; Olson to Paul Skahen, June 30, 1934, Commerce Records; Mayer, *Floyd B. Olson*, 26; Millikan, "Maintaining Law and Order," 229.

dropped in 1936, and Banco escaped with its empire unscathed. Haycraft's first battle with the CA, however, would not be his last.²¹

While Banco and the Citizen's Alliance waited for the Moorhead trial during the summer of 1934, a far more serious threat exploded in the streets of Minneapolis. A small group of Trotskyite Communists had organized Minneapolis truckers into a radical, fighting force that demanded union recognition and challenged the Alliance's domination of industry. Relying on pickets roving the city in automobiles, the Teamsters Union had temporarily paralyzed business. With Minneapolis on the verge of civil war, Governor Olson declared martial law and sent in the Minnesota National Guard. The Citizen's Alliance declared over local radio stations that it would never negotiate with Communists.²²

Within days, it was clear that the National Guard, whose personnel had been closely associated with the Citizen's Alliance since World War I, was issuing enough moving permits to employers' trucks to break the strike. When the teamsters gave the governor 48 hours to stop issuing permits before the picketing would resume in defiance of military authorities, Olson ordered the National Guard to raid the union's strike headquarters and arrest its leaders. To the governor's surprise, the union then began picketing all truck movements despite skirmishes with the National Guard. Faced with the unacceptable choice of using military force to crush the union, thus assuring the CA of victory, or of releasing all the union leaders, Olson swallowed his pride and released them. The stage was set for Kenneth Haycraft's second confrontation with the Citizen's Alliance.²³

Lt. Haycraft, in his dual role as state investigator and National Guard officer, had been assigned to troop headquarters to perform military intelligence duties during the strike. Olson suspected that the CA was leading the employers' battle with the teamsters and was also sabotaging settlement

of the strike from within the union movement. He detailed the team from the Banco investigation to uncover any Citizen's Alliance-union connection. To begin, Haycraft and Robert F. Stebbing, chief accountant at the state securities commission, examined the records of the Paine-Webber Company, following a money trail from union leader Walter Frank to the CA. The final proof undoubtedly rested in the files of the Citizen's Alliance, so Olson ordered the National Guard to raid CA headquarters. (A raid might also reestablish Olson's credibility in Minneapolis' working-class neighborhoods.)²⁴

The governor called in Special Assistant Attorney General William E. G. Watson, who was working on the Banco case, to supervise the raid. Watson requested a trustworthy officer to lead it. Both men realized that the Guard's officer corps was closely associated with the CA; someone would warn the employer group of any impending action. Olson and Watson agreed that Haycraft was the only man for the job. When Haycraft received his assignment, Olson warned, "You'll be the white-haired boy for all of our people, but I want you to know that you'll be anathema to the Citizen's Alliance people for a long time." Forty-seven years later, Haycraft remarked softly, "He was so right."²⁵

On August 3, 1934, Haycraft and a squad of 10 men were detailed to Governor Olson for special duty. Their mission was to search the CA offices to secure "information and evidence as to the identity and activities of paid agents, and those employing them, all of whom are seeking to incite violence in the city of Minneapolis, for the purpose of impeding the settlement of the present strike." That afternoon, Haycraft's squad, still ignorant of its assignment, hid in a room at Olson's strike headquarters while Haycraft and Watson synchronized their watches with the governor's. At precisely 2:00 P.M., Watson watched Haycraft and his squad enter the Builders Exchange building on Second Avenue South. Guards were immediately assigned to each door and telephone. Watson

²¹ Untitled, undated prologue to questions for J. Cameron Thomson, 2, Commerce Records; Chucker, *Banco at Fifty*, 30–33. Material in the Commerce Records indicates an organized effort to influence the jury; see, for example, Robert Greenberg to Paul Skahen, May 14, 1935.

²² On the 1934 strikes, see Charles R. Walker, *American City: A Rank-and-File History* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1937), 88–128; Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Rebellion* (New York: Monad Press, 1972), 47–57; Floyd B. Olson, Proclamation, and Ellard A. Walsh, Proclamation, both July 26, 1934, Adjutant General Records, Minnesota State Archives.

²³ Walker, *American City*, 93–128.

²⁴ Affidavits of Maj. Gen. J. E. Nelson, Dec. 22, 1954, Robert F. Stebbing, Dec. 20, 1954, and Maj. Gen. Ellard A. Walsh, Jan. 10, 1955—all SIF; "Statement by Governor Floyd B. Olson," undated, Charles R. Walker Papers, MHS; Walker, *American City*, 212; Mayer, *Floyd B. Olson*, 217.

²⁵ Affidavit of William E. G. Watson, Dec. 15, 1954, SIF; Haycraft interview, 2.



Builders Exchange building (left, facing Second Avenue) and its neighbor, the imposing Minneapolis Athletic Club, about 1920

supervised a search of the desks and file cabinets while the CA's female employees watched. As the search progressed, Watson intercepted a phone call from a Lt. Col. Collins who wished to warn CA Secretary Jack Schroeder that a raid was imminent. Watson immediately notified Olson that the mission's security had been breached. Olson ordered the squad to evacuate the building

immediately and remove all seized materials to Watson's offices. Olson was later to learn that Schroeder had been warned before the raid, and four suitcases of files and papers had been taken down the freight elevator.²⁶

Although Watson and Haycraft failed to secure a list of CA agents in the labor movement, they did find evidence to corroborate the governor's accusations "that the Citizen's Alliance clique dominates and controls the actions of the Employers' Advisory Committee; [and] that it maintains a considerable number of stool pigeons in various labor unions." The documents also revealed the Citizen's Alliance's efforts to discredit President Franklin D. Roosevelt and undermine federal labor policies, its financial support of efforts to defeat unemployment-insurance legislation, its close relationship with the Minneapolis Police Department, and its suspicious interest in Hennepin County grand jury members hearing state charges against Banco. Olson vehemently attacked the CA, revealing its activities to the public. Although embarrassing, these revelations had little effect on the course of the strike. After a summer of labor strife, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation threatened to call in more than \$23 million in loans to Northwest Bancorporation if the CA did not settle. Under pressure, the employers agreed to hold federally supervised elections to determine who would represent workers in each shop.²⁷

New Deal legislation and the growth of union activity in Minneapolis after the teamsters' victory led to a period of intense industrial strife across the state. While the Citizen's Alliance campaigned vigorously against the Communists who "foment strife and discord among our working people in furtherance of their revolutionary activities," Haycraft, now a close friend and confidant of Olson, was despatched to arbitrate labor disputes in St. Paul and Fargo-Moorhead. New Deal and state legislation also created a Minnesota Old Age Assistance Program beginning March 1, 1936. Convinced of Haycraft's dedication to both the law and social justice, Olson appointed him program director.²⁸

The problem facing Haycraft was immense.

²⁶ "Statement by Olson"; Commander-in-Chief, National Guard of Minnesota, to Lt. Haycraft & squad, Aug. 3, 1934, Walker Papers; Watson affidavit; Haycraft interview, 2–3; Haycraft to the author, June 4, 1992.

²⁷ Mayer, *Floyd B. Olson*, 217; "Statement by Olson"; "Citizen's Alliance Activities as Disclosed from Evidence Gathered in National Guard Raid," undated typescript, Floyd B. Olson Papers, MHS; Thomas E. Blantz, "Father Haas and the Minneapolis Truckers' Strike of 1934," *Minnesota History* 42 (Spring 1970): 13–14.

²⁸ Quam and Rachleff, "Citizen's Alliance in the 1930s," 109; CA, "Real Menace to Industrial Peace," 15; Smith affidavit; Haycraft interview, 18, 21; State Board of Control, *Biennial Report of Public Assistance*, 1938, p. 23; "Past of a Man With a Future."

One-third of Minnesotans over the age of 65—some 63,700 citizens—were eligible for assistance. Until federal Social Security began paying monthly benefits in 1942, only this assistance program stood between many of the state's elderly and destitution. Some counties tried to avoid fairly administering the regulations. Haycraft felt that Minnesota “cannot ignore the needs of those who have given service to the state and nation through long useful lives and are entitled to receive as their just due a measure of security and peace in their last years.” He quickly acquired a widespread reputation as a sensitive and efficient administrator. When Governor Harold E. Stassen's administration took office in 1939, it announced that all of Haycraft's policies would remain in effect.²⁹

Haycraft's efforts to establish a financial safety net under the state's poor and aged were interrupted in February 1937 when the Farmer-Labor Association's Minneapolis convention became

deadlocked in an attempt to nominate a candidate for mayor. The incumbent, Farmer-Laborite Thomas E. Latimer, had alienated most of Minneapolis's union movement in the fall of 1935 when he escorted strikebreakers through picket lines at the Flour City Ornamental Iron plant. The deaths of two union protesters, shot by city policemen, helped create a movement to oust Latimer from the Farmer-Labor party. With more than half of the 1937 convention violently opposed to the mayor and little hope of a successful nomination, the convention adjourned. Latimer's supporters, led by teamster Miles Dunne, a Trotskyite, then abandoned the regular party process and held their own convention.³⁰

The local Farmer-Labor Association had been infiltrated to a small degree by both Stalinists and Trotskyites, factions of the Communist party that were bitter enemies. When Dunne joined with conservative American Federation of Labor union

²⁹ Haycraft interview, 13; Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1938, p. 21, 22, 26; *Minnesota Leader* (St. Paul), Apr. 17, 1937, p. 5; affidavits of George L. Heleniak, Dec. 28, 1954, Kenneth J. Holmquist, Dec. 17, 1954, Joseph Kostick, Dec. 14, 1954, and John W. Poor, Dec. 17, 1954—all SIF.

³⁰ Gieske, *Minnesota Farmer Laborism*, 245–47; CA, *Industrial News Service Bulletin* #4, Sept. 16, 1935, Chase Papers; Paul R. Gransalke to Thomas Latimer, Sept. 12, 1935, Governors' Records (Olson), Minnesota State Archives; *Northwest Organizer* (Minneapolis), Sept. 11, 1935, p. 1, 2, Sept. 18, 1935, p. 7; *Minneapolis Labor Review*, Sept. 16, 1935, p. 1; Kostick affidavit and those of Guy W. Alexander, Dec. 17, 1954, Albert Burger, Dec. 12, 1954, and Thomas O. Kachelmacher, Dec. 28, 1954—all SIF.



Crowd at an anti-Latimer rally, September 1935, protesting the mayor's relief plan as well as his “scabby employer-employee board”

leaders and some party officials to form a rump convention, the Stalinist faction stayed behind. Dunne then accused the leaders of the regular convention of being Communist stooges. With the Latimer forces publicly red-baiting their own party, Farmer-Labor leaders realized that they had to find a candidate who was clearly not a Communist, who believed firmly in Farmer-Labor principles, and who, because he belonged to neither faction, might bring the party back together.³¹

Governor Elmer Benson, who had tried unsuccessfully to mediate the dispute, asked Kenneth Haycraft to run. Although Haycraft had not been at the convention, he was aware of the accusations and demanded proof that the regular convention was not dominated by Communists. Convinced by party officials that the great majority of the anti-Communist unions and clubs were in the regular convention, Haycraft, who had no political experience, agreed to run. The other candidates, realizing the need to nominate a “clean” candidate, withdrew.³²

Despite entreaties for party unity, Latimer’s allies at the rump convention simply ignored Haycraft’s nomination, set up their own Farmer-Labor headquarters, and proclaimed Latimer the party’s candidate for mayor. The Latimer forces quickly spread the issue of communism into the ward clubs, effectively paralyzing the party’s election apparatus. The Trotskyite teamsters’ officials added the charge of strikebreaker during the 1934 truckers’ strike to the false accusations against Haycraft.³³

Realizing that his candidacy was doomed without labor support, Haycraft attacked “Latimer’s ‘Service’ to Labor,” particularly his approval of strikebreaking at Flour City Ornamental Iron Works, Strutwear Knitting Mills, and the Archer-

Daniels plant, and his use of tear gas and clubs against protesting unemployed workers. If elected, Haycraft would “prevent the importation of scabs, thugs, and strikebreakers,” “defend the workers in their fundamental right to strike and picket,” and “prevent the use of the National Guard to break strikes.” Haycraft attacked the Citizen’s Alliance as the “real enemy of organized labor in Minneapolis which attempts to maintain open shop in the city.” He accused the alliance of planting spies inside the union movement and using its employment bureau to supply strikebreakers. He promised to end the cozy relationship between the Citizen’s Alliance and city hall.³⁴

Haycraft’s campaign for the labor vote received an unintended boost when the Teamsters Union bolted from the Latimer camp and ran Vincent R. Dunne for mayor. Although Dunne only received 893 votes in the primary on May 10, it was enough to provide Haycraft with a slim, 276-vote victory. He would now face ex-mayor George E. Leach in the general election.³⁵

Haycraft opened his campaign saying, “The struggle between the economic overlords and the workers is the fundamental issue in the Minneapolis city campaign.” Leach, who publicly welcomed the CA’s support, made an easy target. While Leach felt that unemployment insurance was “a scheme plotted in Moscow,” Haycraft supported social programs for higher relief payments, better schools, a living wage, and proper housing. The Haycraft campaign charged Leach, who had been mayor of Minneapolis from 1921 to 1929, with personally leading trucks through picket lines at the Northwestern Bank building in 1929 and of helping break the affiliation of the Minneapolis police union with the AFL. One pamphlet stated, “The Issue is Clear! Who is Going to Run Minneapolis? Haycraft and the People? Or Leach and

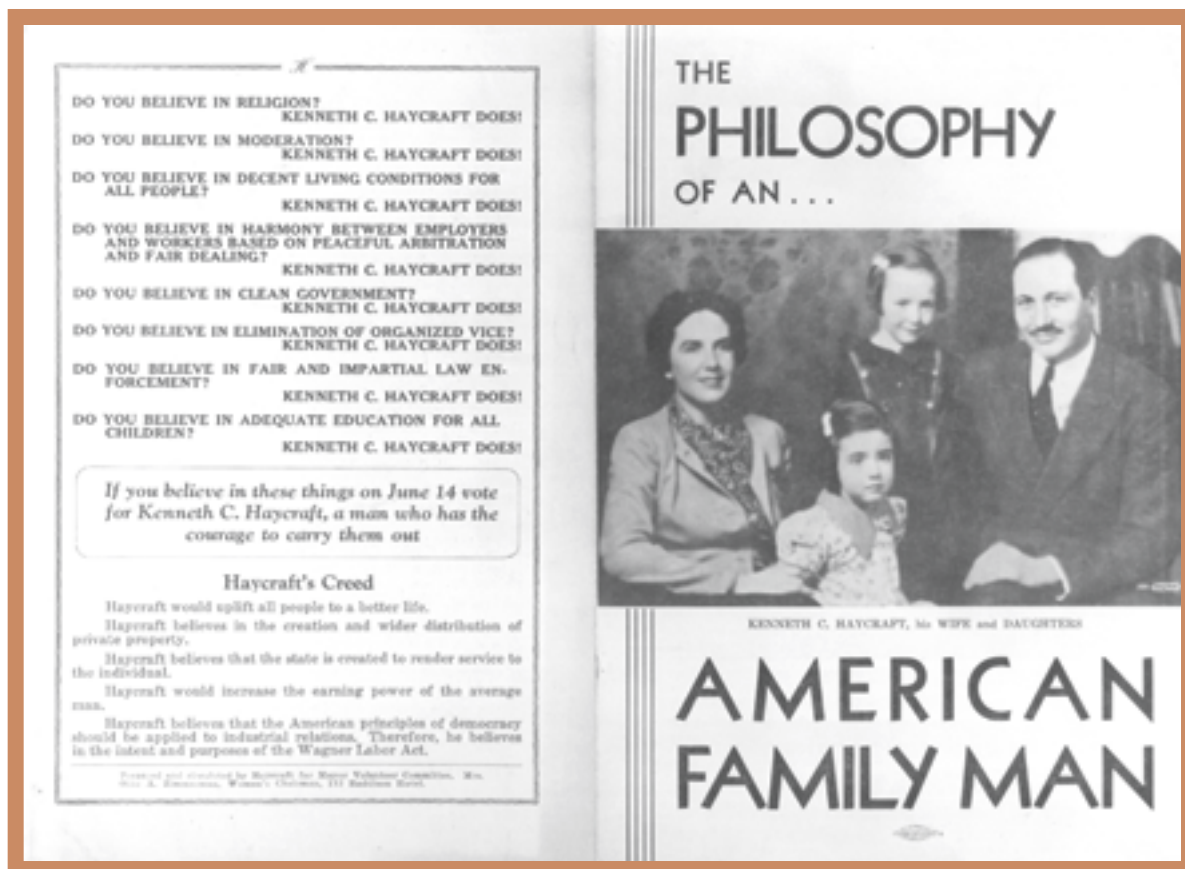
³¹ Gieske, *Minnesota Farmer Laborism*, 245–47; John E. Haynes, *Dubious Alliance: The Making of Minnesota’s DFL Party* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 24–28; Hubert H. Humphrey to Robert T. Stevens, Feb. 10, 1955, SIF; Harry Levin, “Divided Front in Minnesota,” *The Nation*, Oct. 2, 1937, p. 346–48; *Minnesota Leader*, Mar. 20, 1937, p. 2; *Northwest Organizer*, Mar. 18, 1937, p. 1–2; Alexander, Burger, and Kostick affidavits. *Dubious Alliance*, 24, contends that the Hennepin County Farmer-Labor Association was controlled by “Popular Front adherents,” meaning Stalinists. The affidavits of people present at the regular convention contradict this contention, testifying to only a small Communist presence. Haycraft was an anti-Communist candidate, as both his and the Stalinists’ subsequent actions show.

³² Haycraft interview, 6; Alexander, Burger affidavits; Haycraft to author, June 4, 1992.

³³ Executive Committee of Hennepin Co. Central Committee of the Farmer-Labor Assn. of Minnesota vs. Thomas Latimer, summons in Hennepin Co. District Court, Apr. 26, 1937, p. 5, and Education Committee, Hennepin Co. Farmer-Labor Assn., “Report to the Central Committee,” June 30, 1937, p. 1, both Susie W. Stageberg Papers, MHS; *Minnesota Leader*, Mar. 20, 1937, p. 2; Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Politics* (New York: Monad Press, 1975), 96. Dobbs accused Haycraft of being the arresting officer at the raid on union headquarters in 1934, but Haycraft was not involved; Haycraft to the author, Mar. 23, 1993. Newspaper accounts that named the officers do not mention Haycraft.

³⁴ “Latimer’s ‘Service’ to Labor” and “Make Minneapolis Safe for Union Men,” campaign flyers, 1937, Hawkins Papers; *Minnesota Leader*, May 1, 1937, p. 5.

³⁵ Levin, “Divided Front,” 347.



Covers from a campaign pamphlet produced for the general election, 1937

the Citizen's Alliance?" Leach, whose first mayoral victory had been financed by the CA, did not bother to contradict these charges. As the election approached, Haycraft felt that the "division of forces which we had in the primary campaign has been well healed." The Latimer people were working in the campaign, and the Teamsters Union had endorsed him. Ten days before the election, polls taken by Haycraft's campaign predicted a decisive victory.³⁶

To Haycraft's dismay, the issue of communism returned in the final days before the election. Aware that any affiliation with communism would destroy his candidacy, Haycraft had publicly repudiated the support of the Trotskyites of the rump convention and the Stalinists that had backed his nomination. One of his press releases stated, "The principles of the Farmer-Labor Party are opposed

to Communistic principles. . . . As for myself, I am an American, a church member and a Farmer-Laborite. I am not now and never have been a Communist. I am not associated with nor influenced by . . . Communism."³⁷

What public confidence Haycraft's denials had restored was destroyed on June 6 when a special election paper, the *Sunday Worker*, was distributed across the city, particularly in the two largest conservative wards. The *Sunday Worker* blasted Leach and the CA and praised Haycraft for his deeply held radicalism, particularly his supposed antiwar stance. The source of this paper is unclear. The Leach campaign informed local newspapers two days before publication that it was forthcoming from the Communist party. The Haycraft campaign attempted unsuccessfully to determine who published it, at first suggesting

³⁶ *Minnesota Leader*, May 22, 1937, p. 5, June 5, 1937, p. 1; "Shall We End Progress?" campaign flyer, 1937, Violet Johnson and Albert N. Sollie Papers, MHS; "Which? Forward with Haycraft or Backward to Leach?" and "Women! Mothers! Housewives!", campaign flyers, 1937, Hawkins Papers; *Minneapolis Journal*, June 13, 1937, p. 4; "The Personal History of George E. Leach," typescript, 30, George E. Leach Papers, MHS; Haycraft to Robert Greenberg, May 25, 1937, Henry G. Teigan Papers, MHS; *Northwest Organizer*, June 10, 1937, p. 1; Burger affidavit.

³⁷ Affidavit of K. J. Flakne, Dec. 9, 1954, and Kachelmacher affidavit, both SIF.

that it was Leach's forces and later that it was the Communists, hoping to destroy Haycraft's candidacy because he had repudiated their support.³⁸

Meanwhile, W. J. McLaughran, the Leach campaign's labor chairman, also made every effort to brand Haycraft a Communist. McLaughren's attacks deepened the erosion in Haycraft's support. Ironically, Clarence Hathaway, the editor of the bona fide Communist newspaper, the *Daily Worker*, stated that Haycraft was not in sympathy with his party, derisively suggesting that the candidate would carry out only "a very limited reform within the structure of the capitalist system." Desperately attempting to disavow all Communist support, Haycraft went on WGN radio 24 hours before the election, but it was too late. On election day Leach took only six of the city's 13 wards, but the turnout in the two wards blanketed by the *Sunday Worker* helped provide the margin of victory. It was clear to Haycraft and his campaign managers that the mysterious newspaper had effectively elected George Leach mayor of Minneapolis. Red-baiting had ended Kenneth Haycraft's brief political career.³⁹

While the Haycraft campaign fought its losing battle, several members of his team were helping organize a local chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, a new threat to the Citizen's Alliance. The CA, in conjunction with the Minnesota Employers' Association at the state legislature and the National Association of Manufacturers in Washington, D.C., had long maintained a powerful interest in labor and social legislation. The National Lawyers Guild was, in the words of its first president, Chief Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court John P. Devaney, "irrevocably committed to the promotion of social legislation intended for the better protection and preservation of human rights from those who would destroy those rights . . . under the guise of seeking the protection of property." At its first convention in February 1937, the guild passed resolutions in favor of abolishing child labor, expanding social securi-



ty, extending New Deal relief programs, repealing all legislation restricting freedom of speech and opinion, restricting the activities of the National Guard, allowing the right to strike, picket, and boycott, and forbidding company unions and labor spies. These were all policies that threatened to weaken the Citizen's Alliance in its struggle against unions. Kenneth Haycraft, like many of his fellow Farmer-Labor lawyers, joined the guild in its first year. More than a decade later, his membership would serve as another thread in a web that threatened to entrap him.⁴⁰

After his defeat, Haycraft, disillusioned by the political process, worked behind the scenes to eliminate the Communist influence in the Farmer-Labor party. His conflict with the Citizen's Alliance, however, was far from over. In December 1937, for the third time in as many years, a labor dispute was brewing at the J. R. Clark Company's wooden-box factory in north Minneapolis. John Clark, a close friend of Mayor Leach and a major in the Minnesota National Guard, had been a member of the CA for more than two decades. When Clark refused to negotiate, Furniture

³⁸ *Sunday Worker*, June 6, 1937, copy in MHS under the title *People vs. Citizen's Alliance; Minneapolis Journal*, June 8, 1937, p. 15, June 12, 1937, p. 10; affidavits of J. S. Qualey, Jan. 14, 1955, and Adolf E. Hoitomt, Dec. 16, 1954, both SIF.

³⁹ *Minneapolis Journal*, June 9, 1937, p. 1, June 12, 1937, p. 10, June 15, 1937, p. 1; James R. Bennett Jr. to Ernest Lundeen, June 19, 1937, Hjalmar Petersen Papers, MHS; Haycraft interview, 16; Education Committee, "Report," 2; Hoitomt, Qualey, Burger, Kachelmacher, Alexander, and Flakne affidavits.

⁴⁰ National Lawyers Guild: Minutes, May 10, 1937; *Constitution*, Feb. 22, 1937; *Resolutions Adopted at the First Annual Convention*, Feb. 20–22, 1937, p. 5, 7, 9–12; list of Minnesota members, 1938; and John P. Devaney, "Why the Guild?" *National Lawyer's Guild News-Letter* (Washington, D.C.), June 1937, p. 1—all George B. Leonard Papers, MHS; Millikan, "Maintaining Law and Order," 219–33; Department of the Army, Report of Proceedings of Board of General Officers, Oct. 27, 1954, p. 3, SIF.

Workers Local 1859 voted unanimously to strike. Two days later, negotiations briefly resumed with CA field agent Lloyd M. MacAloon representing the company. On the same day that Clark boasted that Leach would provide police to operate the plant, Sgt. Lucien Houle of the 151st Field Artillery of the Minnesota National Guard scoured the city, recruiting unemployed guardsmen to break the Clark strike.⁴¹

The next day, union representatives called on Governor Benson and asked him to investigate. The governor wrote Adj. Gen. Ellard A. Walsh, requesting immediate action and recommending, should the charges substantiated, a “trial and court martial of all guilty on charges unbecoming officers with a view to their immediate expulsion from the Guard.” Benson, aware of Haycraft’s earlier work as a “tough and impartial” investigator and of his position as a National Guard officer, also directed the adjutant general to appoint Haycraft to investigate the union’s charges.⁴²

Although Haycraft’s inspection of the Clark plant revealed no National Guard equipment, his interviews of guard personnel and subsequent testimony before a board of inquiry revealed a startling misuse of military authority. The board of inquiry established that Capt. George W. Sylvester (who was the assistant superintendent at the Clark plant) and Sgt. Houle had, with the approval of Maj. Clark, used National Guard records and facilities to hire 30 men from the Minneapolis garrison to work at and police the Clark plant. According to testimony, it was common practice for superior officers to employ guardsmen. In fact, Sylvester had worked with the CA’s MacAloon to break an earlier strike at the Northwest Casket Company with the cost paid out of a secret National Guard fund. Despite Clark’s and Sylvester’s efforts to conceal their activities, the board of inquiry found that the two officers had engaged in “conduct to the prejudice of good order and of a nature to bring discredit to

the National Guard.” On March 10 Governor Benson directed the adjutant general to court martial both men. Under pressure, Clark gave in to the initial union demands for a wage raise and seniority rights and also recognized the union as the only bargaining agent for the employees. More important, the investigation had revealed and destroyed an important weapon in the CA’s battle against the city’s labor unions.⁴³

Haycraft’s role in investigating and prosecuting his fellow officers created deep animosity within the National Guard. The officers of the 151st Field Artillery resented Haycraft’s affiliation with the Farmer-Labor party and his active participation in the Olson and Benson administrations’ actions against Minneapolis employers. Haycraft had embarrassed the 151st and damaged the reputations of several popular officers. He had also helped destroy a lucrative system of employment. The close-knit military community decided to wreak vengeance on the traitor in its ranks. Haycraft’s reputation would be destroyed.⁴⁴

The first accusation appeared on Haycraft’s efficiency report for 1938. His battalion commander, Maj. John F. Robohm Jr., stated that the officer was “of doubtful value to the service because of the lack of confidence in him by the majority of the other officers of this regiment, due to their belief that he has close associations with communistic elements in this city.” Haycraft, in an attempt to save his military career, emphatically denied the charge. The report, which normally would have been forwarded to the War Department, was invalidated by Joseph E. Nelson, the state’s assistant adjutant general. Stating that the hearsay accusations reported by Robohm violated “a basic principle of freedom of individual political thought and action which every American citizen inherently possesses,” Nelson returned the report to the 151st for modification.⁴⁵

The search for revenge was complicated in the spring of 1939 when Haycraft moved to

⁴¹ Kostick affidavit; *Northwest Organizer*, Dec. 2, Dec. 23, 1937, both p. 2, Feb. 10, Feb. 17, 1938, both p. 1; *Minneapolis Labor Review*, June 30, 1916, Feb. 18, Feb. 25, 1938—all p. 1; Elmer A. Benson to Ellard A. Walsh, Feb. 15, 1938, Elmer A. Benson Papers, MHS.

⁴² Benson to Walsh, Feb. 15, 1938; affidavit of Elmer A. Benson, Dec. 27, 1954, SIF.

⁴³ Haycraft to Gov. Benson, memorandum, Feb. 19, 1938; Adjutant General’s Office, Findings and Opinion of Court of Inquiry, Mar. 9, 1938; Statement of Robert Peterson, Feb. 18, 1938; Memo on Northwest Casket Co. strike, unsigned, undated; “Guard List Kept Secret by Officers,” undated newspaper clipping; and E. A. Walsh to Elmer A. Benson, Mar. 14, 1938—all Governors’ Records (Benson), State Archives. See also, Benson affidavit; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Feb. 24, 1938, p. 3; *Minneapolis Labor Review*, Mar. 4, 1938, p. 1; J. R. Clark to Furniture Workers Union Local 1859, Feb. 11, 1938, Lloyd M. MacAloon and Associates Records, MHS.

⁴⁴ Haycraft interview, 12; Nelson affidavit.

⁴⁵ John F. Robohm Jr., Indorsement on Efficiency Report (memorandum), Jan. 9, 1939; Haycraft, 2nd Indorsement to Robohm memorandum, Jan. 30, 1939; J. E. Nelson, 4th Indorsement to Robohm memorandum, Feb. 13, 1939—all SIF.

Chicago to work for the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. There, he joined the Illinois National Guard. When his unit was called up for active duty in federal service in November 1940, he again became a target. CA agent MacAloon, who had lost a valuable weapon in his antiunion arsenal thanks to Haycraft, had extensive and regular contacts with U. S. Army Military Intelligence. Information from MacAloon helped the army establish detailed files on suspected Minneapolis subversives. Although by 1940 these files included most of Minneapolis's Farmer-Labor and union leaders, Haycraft's name was glaringly absent. When Haycraft entered the U. S. Army, however, MacAloon's military-intelligence contact in the Minnesota National Guard, Michael J. Mulcahy, launched another round of accusations. Now the information would flow through MacAloon's pipeline directly to military-intelligence officers in Omaha and on to the War Department in Washington, D.C.⁴⁶

The informants were all inside the Minnesota National Guard: MacAloon's colleague, Lt. Col. Mulcahy; George Sylvester of the Clark company; John H. Derrick, who had represented Sylvester and Clark at their board of inquiry; and two other officers. Their accusations were outrageous but damning, if believed. In 1941 they accused Haycraft of being a Communist party member from 1924 to 1930 at the University of Minnesota; of forming the Young Voters Liberal League, which, they said, favored the abolition of the U. S. Army and was affiliated with the Communist-inspired Farmer-Labor party; of dereliction of duty during the 1934 strike, when he supposedly failed to arrest strikers; of trying to induce perjured testimony at the 1938 Clark company board of inquiry in an attempt to oust conservative National Guard officers; and of being married until 1938 to a "known CP member." By 1943 his accusers had added charges of being nominated at the 1937 convention by a closed Communist caucus; of having agreed before the election to cooperate with the Communists; and of having been supported

by a Communist newspaper. Yet the army took no actions on these serious charges, concluding after a 1941 investigation that "there was nothing . . . to show the slightest inclination toward disloyalty to the Army or the U. S. Government" by this "outstanding officer" deemed to be "of unquestionable loyalty." Although his Minneapolis enemies were temporarily thwarted, they had planted dangerous seeds in Haycraft's military files.⁴⁷

While accusations of his Communist sympathies festered in military-intelligence files for the duration of World War II, Haycraft, totally unaware of their existence, joined the 104th Infantry for its final push across Europe late in 1944. The unit's brilliant night attacks on its drive to the Roer River quickly established the truth of its motto, "Nothing in Hell can stop the Timberwolf Division." Haycraft received a Bronze Star for his "courage, superb leadership, and devotion to duty as commanding officer of special troops."⁴⁸

After the war Haycraft left the army, returning to live with his family in Minnetonka and accepting a lucrative job as regional counsel for the War Assets Administration. For eight months he was beyond the reach of MacAloon, Mulcahy, and Sylvester. When the U. S. Army telegraphed to offer him a regular commission, however, he accepted and once again unknowingly placed his reputation in jeopardy.⁴⁹

For three years, Haycraft lived in Japan and served with distinction in the Far East Command, being promoted to lieutenant colonel by 1949. Granted top-secret security clearance in 1947, he served as a top-secret control officer for two years. Meanwhile, his enemies continued their stream of accusations against him. Flowing into military intelligence files were charges that Haycraft had been a member of the National Lawyers Guild in 1938–39 and a member of the Socialist Workers party. (In 1950 the House Un-American Activities Committee would charge the guild with being the "foremost legal bulwark of the Communist Party."

⁴⁶ Army, Report of Proceedings, Oct. 27, 1954, p. 3. On military-intelligence work and the MacAloon—Mulcahy connection, see Lloyd MacAloon, "General Drivers, Helpers and Inside Workers Union Local #544," July 31, 1940, U.S. Army Military Intelligence Files, microfilm copy, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis; John G. Adams to Harold E. Stassen, Mar. 10, 1954, SIF. Reports show one to four meetings per month between MacAloon and military-intelligence officials from St. Paul and Seventh Corps headquarters in Omaha; MacAloon Records.

⁴⁷ Adams to Stassen, Mar. 10, 1954, SIF; Army, Report of Proceedings, 3–4. Haycraft was divorced in 1938, retaining custody of his two daughters. He married Marion Miller in 1939.

⁴⁸ U.S. Army, Bronze Star Medal—Citation, Mar. 23, 1945, and Headquarters 104th Infantry Div., "To All Timberwolves," Apr. 23, 1945, both in scrapbook in Haycraft family possession. Motto is from photo of a large sign in front of headquarters, Haycraft scrapbook.

⁴⁹ Unidentified newspaper clipping, Jan. 13, 1946, Haycraft file, Minneapolis Public Library; Kenneth and Marion Haycraft, "Echoes of the Past: Our World War Two Story," typescript, 26, copy in author's possession.

Haycraft admitted belonging to the guild during 1937–38 but denied any Communist affiliation.) His raid on the Citizen's Alliance in 1934 was also called a subversive act, because it aided the allegedly communist Teamsters Union. Governor Olson's prediction that the raid would create bitter enemies had come true. Haycraft's accusers even suggested that his position on the All America football team was due to Communist-inspired Farmer-Labor political influence. When the army's investigations section reviewed the postwar allegations in 1949, it concluded that the evidence was "not sufficient to initiate revocation proceedings" under the Disloyal and Subversive Military Personnel policy.⁵⁰

Haycraft's reprieve, however, was to be short lived. In 1950 Russia announced its A bomb, North Korea invaded South Korea, China became a communist nation, and Senator Joseph R. McCarthy claimed knowledge of Communists in the U. S. State Department. The hunt for Communists quickly became a national fervor. By the fall of 1953 McCarthy had turned his attention to the army, where Secretary Robert T. Stevens desperately tried to cooperate. If the army would clean its own house, perhaps it could appease the senator from Wisconsin.⁵¹

In the fall of 1953, the army reopened its investigation into Haycraft's loyalty. His security clearance had been lowered to secret the previous year when his bulky file of accusations was reexamined. Investigators interviewed 33 military associates of Haycraft from his tour in the Far East and his three years at Fort Knox, all of whom declared him a fine officer, "honest, trustworthy, discreet, loyal, an ardent supporter of U.S. policy." His commanding officer recommended that Haycraft's top-secret classification be reinstated. All the allegations involved incidents at least 15 years old, and Haycraft had served his country with "patriotism and honor" for all those years. Despite this overwhelmingly favorable testimony, the army recommended on January 11, 1954, that the 46-year-old Haycraft be terminated from service.⁵²

The investigation was reviewed by the assis-



Lt. Col. Haycraft receiving the Bronze Star from Maj. Gen. Terry Allen, 1945

tant chief of staff of army security, who outlined the charges against Haycraft. These were basically a rehash of the accusations of Mulcahy and Sylvester 13 years earlier. Before informing Haycraft of the charges, the security department emphasized that "under no circumstances should Haycraft, or anyone representing him, be allowed access to the inclosures except for the Summary of Information."⁵³

In early March 1954, Haycraft's file reached the desk of Army Counsel John G. Adams. Adams, who was soon to become the star witness in the McCarthy army hearings, had little love for the senator or his vicious red-baiting. Adams had grown up in South Dakota, and Haycraft, the All American football player, had been one of his high-school heroes. Suspecting that the 4,000-page dossier was a mass of assumptions with very little evidence, Adams assigned one of his assistants to search the file for the original accusations and, if possible, to verify them. When all had been analyzed, Haycraft's supposed Communist

⁵⁰ U.S. Army, Haycraft personnel record; Ward H. Maris to Lt. Col. Haycraft, Commendation, Nov. 2, 1949; E. K. Wright to Lt. Col. Haycraft, June 17, 1950; Army, Report of Proceedings, 5, 6; John G. Adams, Memorandum: Interview of Former Minnesota Governor Harold Stassen re: Lt. Col. Kenneth C. Haycraft, Mar. 10, 1954; and Certificate: Lt. Col. Haycraft before Proceedings of Board of General Officers, Apr. 7, 1955, p. 3—all SIF; Haycraft to John G. Adams, Apr. 29, 1979, copy in author's possession; U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee, *Report on the National Lawyers Guild*, 81st Cong., 2d sess, Sept. 21, 1950, H. Rept. 3123, serial 11384.

⁵¹ John G. Adams, *Without Precedent: The Story of the Death of McCarthyism* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983), 22–46.

⁵² Adams, *Without Precedent*, 50–56; Army, Report of Proceedings, 5–7.

⁵³ W. A. Perry to Chief, Personnel Actions Branch, Feb. 24, 1954, SIF.

affiliation during the 1937 election was the only charge remaining.⁵⁴

In an attempt to verify the charge, Adams contacted Assistant Attorney General Warren Burger, a St. Paul native and Republican, who would make an impartial witness. Burger “had no reason to feel that Haycraft’s support of the Farmer-Labor party had anything to do with Communist affiliations” but suggested that former Governor Stassen might be better informed. Stassen ridiculed most of the accusations, pointing out that more than half of the adult population of Minnesota had voted Farmer-Labor. Were they all Communists? The Communist party might have endorsed Haycraft’s candidacy, but it had also supported President Roosevelt. Did that make Roosevelt a Communist? Stassen then explained the political bitterness that existed in Minneapolis during the 1930s between business and labor and suggested that as a motive for the accusations against Haycraft.⁵⁵

Although Adams was convinced of Haycraft’s innocence, there was heavy pressure from the Department of Defense to terminate Haycraft and several other officers. With the McCarthy hearings less than six weeks off, the army could not afford any suggestion of being soft on communism. During June 1954 Lt. Col. Haycraft was relieved of command and ordered to show cause for his retention in the army. The seeds of revenge planted by Mulcahy and Sylvester decades earlier had finally borne fruit.⁵⁶

On October 25 an army board of inquiry met at the Pentagon to consider Haycraft’s case. The complete set of charges initially recommended was reinstated, and Haycraft finally received a summary of information detailing the history of the investigation against him. Although all the supporting documents and the

names of his accusers were withheld, the accused could finally begin to defend himself. His brother Everett, chief trial examiner of the Federal Trade Commission, acted as his attorney. Together, they demanded the right to face Haycraft’s accusers and began gathering evidence to refute the charges. From December 1954 to February 1955, fifty-three individuals who had had close contacts with Haycraft, primarily from 1924 to 1938, submitted detailed affidavits. The witnesses included former University of Minnesota football coach Spears and teammates Herbert Joesting and George MacKinnon; Haycraft’s Minneapolis minister, Frank Jennings; his brothers Sylvester and Glenn; his ex-wife, Alberta Jacoby, and her brother; Farmer-Labor leaders Elmer Benson, Congressman Roy Weir, Guy Alexander, and K. J. Flakne; Haycraft’s Minnesota National Guard superiors, including Adj. Gen. Nelson; and, finally, his recent army commanders. In 150 pages, Haycraft’s witnesses thoroughly destroyed every charge manufactured against him. But would the board of inquiry accept this testimony in the midst of the political hysteria of the Cold War, when loyalty was always suspect?⁵⁷

Aware of the politically sensitive position of the U. S. Army in the McCarthy era, Haycraft

Haycraft in uniform at a 1957 football reunion, surrounded by old friends who testified for him: (from top, left) All Americans Herb Joesting, George Gibson, Haycraft, Harold Hansen, and Bronko Nagurski; (bottom) Johnny McGovern and Clarence (Doc) Spears



⁵⁴ John G. Adams, Memorandum for Asst. Sec. Milton, Mar. 5, 1954, SIF; Adams, *Without Precedent*, 95–96, 161–233; Adams to Haycraft, Mar. 22, 1979, copy in author’s possession.

⁵⁵ John G. Adams, Memorandum: Telephone conversation with Asst. Attorney General Burger re: Lt. Col. Kenneth C. Haycraft, Mar. 10, 1954, and Adams, Memorandum: Interview with . . . Stassen,” Mar. 10, 1954—both SIF.

⁵⁶ Adams to Haycraft, Mar. 22, 1979; Adams, Memorandum for Asst. Sec. Milton, Mar. 5, 1954, and Gerald G. Eply, Subject: Haycraft, Kenneth C., June 15, 1954, both SIF; Haycraft to author, June 4, 1992.

⁵⁷ Army, Report of Proceedings, 1–8; Adjutant General to President, Board of Inquiry, Jan. 7, 1955, SIF; Haycraft to author, Aug. 4, 1992.

appealed to the one Minnesotan who had both the political power and the anti-Communist record to counterbalance the fears of the board: Hubert H. Humphrey. The Minnesota senator proudly claimed to have “led a successful effort to clean the Communists and left wingers out of the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party.” Humphrey had no doubt that the Communist party was “a threat to the safety and even the very existence of this country.” With the 1954 elections approaching, he offered an amendment to the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950 that would outlaw the Communist party because, as a “conspiracy, directed by a hostile foreign power with the objective of destroying our government, it has no right to existence under our Constitution.”⁵⁸

In early December 1954 Haycraft wrote Humphrey, requesting a meeting to explain the charges relating to “my running for Mayor in 1937 on the Farmer-Labor party ticket which (it is alleged) was a Communist Front Party.” On February 10, 1955, Humphrey wrote Secretary of the Army Stevens, informing him that “to call the Farmer-Labor Party a Communist front is to reveal a sense of political immaturity and misunderstanding that is unworthy of responsible officials.” He continued, “To the best of my knowledge, Col. Haycraft was not and is not in any way a sympathizer of the Communist Party, nor under its control or domination,” adding that he had been fighting the Communist party all of his adult life and “would be the last man on earth to come to the defense of anyone who I had reason to believe was a Communist sympathizer or member of the Communist Party.” The senator also made his case personally to one of Stevens’s top assistants: “To call anybody associated with the Farmer-Labor Party a security risk or a loyalty risk for that reason alone is an insult to more than 600,000 persons.” Humphrey’s determined interest in the case finally overcame the board’s fear of retribution for reinstating Haycraft. On May 27,



Hubert H. Humphrey about 1946, when he was mayor of Minneapolis

1955, the army advised Lt. Col. Haycraft that it had decided to “terminate the elimination proceedings and to close the case favorably.”⁵⁹

With the cloud of disloyalty finally lifted from his reputation, Haycraft was promoted to colonel and served out the final six years of his army career as a professor of military science in the ROTC program at the University of Alaska. On retiring in 1961, he received a commendation medal for accomplishments that were “worthy of emulation and reflect credit upon himself, and the United States Army.”⁶⁰ The loyalty of a boy from Bemidji who grew up to be a Minnesota All American had finally been accepted. Haycraft’s years of political commitment to the victims of the depression in Minnesota would no longer brand him a Communist. In the end, the red-baiting of Kenneth Haycraft failed.

⁵⁸ Humphrey to Stevens, Feb. 10, 1955, SIF; Humphrey to Leo Marx, Oct. 9, 1954, and 83rd Cong., 2d sess., S. 3706, Calendar No. 1720, copies in Hubert H. Humphrey Papers, MHS.

⁵⁹ Haycraft to Humphrey, Dec. 8, 1954, Humphrey Papers, General Correspondence files; Humphrey to Stevens, Feb. 10, 1955, and Humphrey to Haycraft, Feb. 9, 1955, both SIF; Adams to Haycraft, Aug. 10, 1979, and Haycraft to Adams, Apr. 29, 1979, copies in author’s possession; John A. Klein to Lt. Col. Haycraft, May 27, 1955, SIF.

⁶⁰ Haycraft army personnel record and Citation For Army Commendation Medal, undated typescript, both SIF. Kenneth and Marion Haycraft live in Hawaii and still occasionally visit friends and Gophers teammates in the Twin Cities. The Haycrafts generously sent family files and memorabilia to the author to aid his research.

The pictures on p. 170, 172, 185, and 186 are courtesy the Haycraft family; p. 174 is from the University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis. All others are in the MHS collections.



Copyright of **Minnesota History** is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, or email articles, however, for individual use.

To request permission for educational or commercial use, [contact us](#).