2024

Demagoguery and the Depression

David Horowitz
Portland State University, horowid@pdx.edu

Demagoguery and the Depression

David A. Horowitz

"These are not normal times," Democratic presidential candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt confided to Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson in 1932; "the people are jumpy and ready to run after strange gods." [1] Bewildered by the origins and potential solutions to the Great Depression's economic devastation, unprecedented numbers of Americans of the 1930s gravitated to a variety of ideologically framed political factions and movements that defied reason. These movements offered easy diagnoses and emotion-laden responses to the country's dilemma.

Historians usually describe politically oriented personalities who cultivate huge followings with simple-minded panaceas, all-encompassing promises, or insincere remedies as demagogues. The term may also suggest an undemocratic and unprincipled lust for power, including attempts to gain attention by exploiting passion, ignorance, ethnic animosity, religious prejudice, or class envy. Certainly, tangible Depression maladies like unemployment, mal-distribution of wealth, old-age poverty, rampant debt, low commodity prices, and inadequate credit unleashed legitimate feelings of rage, frustration, and betrayal. One must judge whether the era produced honest efforts to resolve such conditions, or whether self-interested individuals sought an emotional bond with a following by over-simplifying and dramatizing complex issues and problems. [2]

Scholars such as David H. Bennett, Alan Brinkley, and Donald R. McCoy have pointed to Huey P. Long, Father Charles E. Coughlin, Dr. Francis E. Townsend, and Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith as foremost examples of Depression demagoguery. Yet other personalities shared similar traits and helped frame the period's political climate. Southern strong men like Georgia Governor Eugene "The Wild Man" Talmadge and senators Theodore "The Man" Bilbo

(Mississippi) and "Cotton Ed" Smith (South Carolina) forged political machines on populist and racist appeals to poor whites. Urban counterparts included mayors James Michael Curley of Boston and Frank Hague of Jersey City, who built powerful patronage networks around non-affluent Euro-Americans. Resentment of wealthy and privileged elites and promises of social justice characterized the political Left as well. Such appeals surfaced among House member Vito Marcantonio, founder of New York's anti-capitalist American Labor Party; John L. Lewis, the charismatic but autocratic founder of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO); and socialist author Upton Sinclair, whose "End Poverty in California" campaign attempted to win the governorship in 1934. [3]

Despite Roosevelt's reluctance to embrace radical solutions, opponents often charged him with undermining democracy through appeals to uninformed opinion. This was no time for demagogues who set class against class, fellow New York Democrat Alfred E. Smith declared in 1932 when Roosevelt's first presidential campaign focused on the "Forgotten Man" at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Years before noninterventionist Charles A. Lindbergh accused the administration of leading the country to war, the aviator dismissed the president as a sly opportunist who craved mass adulation and sought excessive personal power. Such a critique coincided with portraits of Roosevelt advisers as a "brains trust" of radical and foreign-influenced ideologues spreading class hatred and undermining capitalism and established law. [4]

Conservative complaints about New Deal governance could border on demagoguery themselves as well. When the administration introduced legislation in 1934 to regulate Wall Street practices through the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Republican political and business leaders denounced the effort as a "communistic" form of nationalization that would put the financial markets out of business. Manufacturer James H. Rand, Jr. even read a statement

from Indiana educator Dr. William A. Wirt that charged Roosevelt advisers with threatening the constitutional order. Published in full in the *New York Times,* Wirt's manifesto asserted that New Dealers intended to thwart economic recovery so they could convince the public of the need for government operation of industry and commerce. An inner circle in Washington, D.C. allegedly intended to orchestrate a full-scale social revolution, according to Wirt's interpretation of national politics. [5]

Wirt failed to substantiate these sensational charges. Yet as the 1936 election approached, attacks on the administration echoed the educator's sentiments. A meeting of Republican "grass-rooters" condemned "unsound, un-American, and unconstitutional" policies implemented by "demagogic methods and academic theorists." The harshest critics took inspiration from the American Liberty League, a coalition of anti-New Deal Democrats like Al Smith and conservative business interests, including retired industrial magnate Pierre Samuel Du Pont. Even the moderate Republican presidential nominee, Alfred M. Landon, accused the White House of preparing the country for dictatorship, economic regimentation, and the suppression of individual liberties. Roosevelt responded in kind. The forces of "entrenched greed" and "organized money" were "unanimous in their hate for me," he proclaimed. His adversaries had met their match in his first administration, declared the president: they would meet "their master" in his second! [6]

Middle-class insurgents contributed to the feverish quality of Depression polemics. As hundreds of trade-at-home campaigns and anti-chain store organizations emerged after 1929, radio personalities such as Portland, Oregon's "Fightin' Bob" Duncan and Shreveport, Louisiana's William K. Henderson denounced the nation's retail giants as Wall Street creations seeking to mechanize commerce and destroy independent enterprise. A similar critique emerged

in Idaho Republican Senator William E. Borah's campaign against the National Recovery Administration (NRA). By sanctioning price-fixing and monopolistic practices, warned Borah, the NRA encouraged a collusive relationship between the government and large corporations that would intensify the concentration of wealth and ensure the destruction of small business. [7]

Agrarian radicals frequently expressed an equivalent distrust of big government and financial power. Elected to the House of Representatives from East Texas in 1928 as a populist, Democrat Wright Patman campaigned for government ownership of the Federal Reserve. A national bank that issued its own notes, argued Patman, could enhance credit, curtail speculation, stimulate production, and inflate prices. Other panaceas emerged from the Senate through western silver advocates Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, Nevada's Key Pittman, and Oklahoma's Elmer Thomas. Re-monetizing silver, they insisted, would put more dollars in circulation, promote debt relief, and discourage financial concentration by large banks and gold interests. Activists such as National Farmers Union President John A. Simpson and Milo Reno of the Farmers Holiday Association warned that growers could only survive if commodity prices met the costs of production and if an expanded currency relieved constituents of oppressive burdens of debt. [8]

The Northern Great Plains produced a particularly apt environment for far-reaching schemes. Historian Catherine McNicol Stock has shown that beyond its economic devastation, the Depression threatened the region's middle-class producer culture with the intrusion of New Deal agricultural experts, welfare officials, and agents of managerial capitalism. Minnesota Farmer-Labor Governor Floyd Olson responded with a call for state ownership of public utilities, property tax exemption for low-income families, and a state-owned bank. In North Dakota, Republican Governor William "Wild Bill" Langer won the support of the radical Nonpartisan

League by declaring a state moratorium on debts and mortgage foreclosures. Despite federal charges of political corruption, Langer won a third term in 1936 on an independent ticket and instituted unemployment insurance, expanded relief, and a soil and water conservation plan. [9]

North Dakota's congressional representative, Republican and Nonpartisan League veteran William Lemke, led the fight of small farmers on the national stage. Reluctantly supporting the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 for providing subsidies to growers, Lemke nevertheless condemned the bureaucrats of the Roosevelt "brainless trust" for having little experience in agrarian issues. Dismissed by the Roosevelt administration as a demagogue for advocating an inflated currency, the North Dakotan overcame enormous political and constitutional hurdles as a co-sponsor of the Mortgage Refinance Act of 1935, which allowed heavily indebted farmers to pay off foreclosed mortgages at 1 percent interest. [10]

As an opponent of concentrated power in both finance and government, Lemke attracted the attention of Father Charles Coughlin. Born and educated in Ontario, Canada, Coughlin was the Roman Catholic parish priest of Royal Oak, Michigan, a working-class suburb of Detroit. He began delivering Sunday sermons on the radio in 1926. Within four years, he had an estimated national audience of forty million. Addressing the despair of the Depression in a modulated baritone, Coughlin placed full blame on the money power – international bankers who controlled the world's gold, limited the currency supply, and set high interest rates. The result, he contended, was a minute plutocracy -- one-thirty-third of 1 percent of the population – that owned half the total wealth of the United States. [11]

Denouncing the policies of Republican incumbent Herbert Hoover, Coughlin supported Franklin Roosevelt's drive for the presidency in 1932. Roosevelt even echoed the radio priest's rhetoric on a Detroit campaign stop when the candidate assailed the privileged few who had

prospered on the misery and want of the masses. Nevertheless, Coughlin was uncomfortable with Roosevelt's banking and financial advisers, particularly Jews such as James P. Warburg, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Bernard M. Baruch. In 1934, he began to accuse the Treasury of collusion with the "decadent capitalism" of international bankers. At the same time, Coughlin denounced Marxism because of its rejection of religion and domination by internationalists, leading to the charge that Communists had infiltrated the Roosevelt brains trust. [12]

The heart of Father Coughlin's message was that Americans needed to wrest control of the value of their money from "banksters" and remote federal bureaucrats. Like the agrarian radicals, he called for a government-owned central bank that would assume the powers of the Federal Reserve, issue paper currency, and replace nonproductive government bonds with federal notes. Bankers would respond by investing the notes in industry and productive securities instead of paying off government debt. Coughlin outlined this plan in 1934 when he organized the National Union for Social Justice (NUSJ). Offering an alternative to the "regimented poverty of communism" and the "created poverty of capitalism," the NUSJ not only proposed the nationalization of banking, credit, and currency but power, light, oil, natural gas, and other resources as well. Within a year, Coughlin claimed 8.5 million devotees, although membership meant little more than being a part of his radio audience and mailing list. He later admitted that 70 percent of the rank-and-file were "passive" supporters. [13]

The counterpart to Coughlin's monetary program surfaced in Huey Long's proposals for distributing wealth. The son of a prosperous farmer and land developer in Winnfield, Louisiana, a struggling timber and lumber mill center in the northeast corner of the state with a tradition of agrarian and socialist agitation, Long entered the work force as a teenage newspaper typesetter and traveling salesman. Faring poorly in law school, he bluffed his way through a special oral

exam and passed the bar when he was only twenty-one. With no age requirement for a seat on the State Railroad Commission, he won a runoff election for the post four years later by denouncing the rail lines as tools of Wall Street, charging his rival with collusion with special interests, and promising to lower utility rates and increase services. [14]

In 1920, two years after winning his seat, the new commissioner demanded that a special session of the legislature pass a severance tax on oil-company profits and regulate utility pipelines. When the governor compromised on the issue, Long complained that Standard Oil ran the state. After a new state constitution expanded the powers of the agency and transformed it into the Public Service Commission, Long prevailed upon his peers to elect him chair. Portraying himself as the champion of consumers victimized by greedy corporations, he forced the telephone company to mail refund checks to customers when the Commission cut a previously sanctioned rate increase by half. At the age of thirty, Long ran for the governorship with promises to construct a modern highway system with toll-free bridges, provide free school textbooks, permit unlimited hunting and fishing all year, and refrain from raising taxes. [15]

Long took 31 percent of the vote in a three-way race, missing the runoff by 3 percent. In 1928, however, he improved his standing by appealing mainly to the poor and taking on the voice of ordinary voters with the slogan, “Every Man a King But No One Wears a Crown.” Distributing over a million handbills and using radio and sound trucks, the candidate portrayed himself as an outsider fighting the state’s entrenched oligarchy. A future promise got seven times as many votes as a promise kept, he once explained. Offering tangible benefits, moreover, was far more important than explaining how to pay for them. In a one-party state, Long won 44 percent of the Democratic primary in a three-way race, assuring him the governorship. [16]

As promised, Louisiana's new chief executive funded free school textbooks by increasing the severance tax on natural resources. Once a constitutional amendment and popular referendum legalized the process, he financed a highway program with $30 million in bonds, leading to the employment of thirty thousand construction workers. As biographer Glen Jeansonne has explained, Long's power stemmed from a mix of public approval, money, allies, and patronage. The governor estimated that the twenty-five thousand jobs controlled by his administration amounted to 125,000 votes, over 40 percent of the statewide total. Long padded his campaign treasury with a system of voluntary "deducts" that absorbed up to 10 percent of the paychecks of public employees. Meanwhile, contractors paid bribes for the right to construct state buildings and highways and legislators customarily traded votes for lucrative administrative offices. [17]

In response to the governor's opposition to powerful elites and his consolidation of personal power, legislative adversaries unveiled nineteen impeachment charges against him in 1929. Long blamed Standard Oil for the move and accused the corporation of bribing legislators to convict him. The issue was not his actions, he insisted, but special interests arrayed against the people. At the same time, the self-styled "Kingfish" shelved a bill to tax industrial enterprises in return for business lobbying against conviction. In the end, fifteen senators proclaimed their opposition to finding Long guilty, enough to deprive proponents of the necessary two-thirds margin. Each of the group subsequently received a state job, judgeship, or public contract. [18]

Aspiring to a prominent place in national politics, Long ran for a U.S. Senate seat in 1930. To maximize support against the Democratic incumbent, he padded state payrolls and founded his own newspaper, the predecessor of *American Progress,* which tied the election to the rights of labor and white supremacy. The Kingfish sailed to a 57 percent victory in the decisive primary but did not resign the governorship until taking his seat in Washington two

years later. With handpicked successors ensconced in Baton Rouge, Long tightened his grip on state government, generating what New Deal historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. has described as "the nearest approach to a totalitarian state the American republic had ever seen." [19]

Under Long's sway, Louisiana invested heavily in public schools, roads, and hospitals. Meanwhile, his political apparatus received financial backing from wealthy donors, corporate interests, and former adversaries in New Orleans city politics. Corruption through kickbacks, bribery, dummy corporations, and plunder of state resources was legendary. This included highway contracts for the Kingfish's private quarry, which supplied substandard rock at exorbitant rates for improperly drained roads subject to erosion and washouts. Under orders to refuse monies they could not control, moreover, subservient officials rejected half of New Deal highway funding. Between 1928 and 1933, state debt leaped nearly seven fold. Louisiana would have the most expensive per-capita government in the nation by mid-decade. [20]

Beginning in 1934, Long assumed personal control of the two legislative committees that forwarded all measures. Under his direction, new laws courted voters by exempting most homeowners from property taxes, placing a moratorium on small debts, abolishing the poll tax, and lowering fees on auto license plates. Yet the legislature punished Long's enemies with special taxes on refined oil, public utilities, the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, and big-city newspapers. Beyond that, lawmakers permitted the state civil service commission to hire municipal police and firefighters, expropriated the right to employ and fire teachers from public school boards, and transferred regulation of local utilities to the state. Long even took over the city of Baton Rouge when his apparatus assumed the power to name most of its governing board. With state law enforcement, the National Guard, and the judiciary under his personal control, the

Kingfish resorted to pervasive voter fraud, occasional impositions of martial law, and even politically useful kidnappings to convert Louisiana into a veritable police state. [21]

Once in Washington, Long aligned with insurgents from the farm and mountain states to press for nationalizing banks, replacing gold and silver as currency standards, cheapening the value of the dollar, and using progressive taxation to raise revenue and distribute wealth. Claiming to stand for principles Roosevelt had abandoned, he complained that the New Deal was too close to corporate and banking elites. He had come to Washington to "do something to spread the wealth of the land among all the people," Long later wrote. Between 1932 and 1933, he repeatedly took to the floor to denounce mal-distribution of wealth and offer proposals to place taxes on excessive wealth as the only means to guarantee a decent life for citizens. [22]

These efforts culminated in Share Our Wealth (SOW), the national movement Long inaugurated in 1934 under the slogan, "Every Man a King." The plan rested on the premise that the rich became wealthy by taking from the poor and that the only way to escape poverty was to take it back from them. SOW guaranteed every family a five thousand dollar annual income to pay for necessities and a car, radio, and household appliances. It also promised veterans bonuses, a college education for qualified applicants, a job and thirty-hour workweek for all, old-age pensions, and optimal farm prices. Long proposed to pay for all this by taxing away yearly incomes and inheritances over a million dollars and by hefty capital levies on fortunes over the same amount. Free of the burden of dues, members of SOW clubs received copies of Long's Senate speeches, pamphlets, and instructional manuals. Within a year, the movement claimed 7.5 million adherents, most in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and other areas of the South. [23]

Conservatives saw the confiscatory taxation of Share Our Wealth as communist while elements of the Left attacked it for ignoring the real source of power in the ownership and

control of the means of production. Beyond matters of ideology, economists insisted the proposal was unworkable. By emphasizing the bounty instead of the source of its funding, Long had grossly oversimplified the problem of wealth distribution. How would the government divide assets like railroads or factories, and even if possible, who would run them after confiscation? SOW left no incentive for the accumulation of wealth, leaving nothing to tax after the initial takeover. Beyond that, the Kingfish had overstated the value of private assets in the hands of the nation's millionaires, thereby exaggerating how much the plan could distribute. SOW was a "visionary hallucination," complained Senator Alben Barkley, a Kentucky Democrat. [24]

Share Our Wealth's creator privately admitted that the plan was an unworkable scheme mainly designed to attract votes. Convinced he could "out promise Roosevelt," Long began to think of a third party run for the presidency in 1936. One scenario involved a plan to force the contest into the House of Representatives and trade votes for influence. A second held out the prospect of a Republican upset so that the Kingfish could proceed to victory four years later. Even Roosevelt feared that a protest party might siphon off enough ballots to throw the contest to the Republicans in key states – a confidential White House poll showed a Long candidacy taking 11 percent of the popular vote. In September 1935, however, Baton Rouge physician Carl Austin Weiss, enraged over plans to gerrymander the judicial district of his father-in-law, an outspoken machine opponent, shot the Louisiana leader to death at the state capitol. [25]

SOW organizer Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith delivered the eulogy. "His spirit shall never rest," declared Smith, "as long as hungry bodies cry for food, as long as human frames stand naked, as long as homeless wretches haunt this land of plenty." Yet Long's legacy remains hotly disputed. Roosevelt once called him one of the two most dangerous men in America. Likewise, NRA administrator General Hugh Johnson dismissed Long and Coughlin as "political pied

pipers" who presented no realistic alternatives to the New Deal but exploited human misery by turning Americans against each other. Resulting frustration and disillusionment, feared Johnson, would lead to a fascist dictatorship. Contemporary journalists Matthew Josephson and *The Nation's* Raymond Gram Swing also drew parallels between Long and European fascists, a contention repeated a generation later by Reinhard Henry Luthin, who argued that, "as the symbol of American demagoguery," the Kingfish personified the threat of dictatorship [26]

Most treatments present a more nuanced case. Although the Louisiana kingpin exploited suffering and confusion in a raw craving for power and domination, biographer William Ivy Hair has noted, Share Our Wealth was "more a slogan than a system." Long's plan may have been "a wild dream," David Bennett has agreed, but it had no connection to quasi-fascist elements of the Right or other fanatical ideologies. Instead, as Hugh Davis Graham, Donald McCoy, Alan Brinkley, and Glen Jeansonne have pointed out, Long's attacks on concentrated wealth and privilege were within the tradition of the democratic Left and won the endorsement of Midwestern, farmer-labor, and progressive reformers. The Kingfish always played up the association with populism. "I do not have to color what comes into my mind and into my heart," he famously told Senate colleagues in 1935. "I say it unvarnished… I do not talk one way back there in the hills of Louisiana and another way here in the Senate." [27]

Was Louisiana's most important political personality a dictator, a demagogue, or simply a democrat? Southern historian T. Harry Williams asked in a Pulitzer Prize winning biography in 1969. Several profiles note that Long's governorship succeeded in fulfilling many of its promises and challenged local oligarchs with a class revolution that converted the mass of the state's voters into a political power. If Long's corruption and dictatorial behavior promoted cynicism about constitutionalism and acceptance of the principle that the end justified the means,

Louisiana historian Allan P. Sindler has concluded, his methods were little different than those of predecessors or opponents. Political scientist V. O. Key, Jr. has made the point that Long had to go outside the network of dominant economic interests for political funding. Besides, as one contemporary noted, most people looked to government as a means of achieving economic liberty, equality, and security, not as a paragon of the democratic process. [28]

For Williams, Long was a sympathetically tragic figure. "In striving to do good," he suggested, the Kingfish "was led on to grasp for more and more power, until finally he could not always distinguish between the method and the goal, the power and the good." "Maybe a man has to sell his soul to get the power to do good," novelist Robert Penn Warren speculated about a similar character in the Pulitzer Prize winning *All the King's Men* (1946). Such generosity seemed in line with public opinion. Only six years before Warren's novel appeared, one survey demonstrated that 55 percent of Louisianans believed the former governor had been a "good" influence on the state. Glen Jansonne has cautioned that as a political leader, Long was neither entirely sincere nor wholly hypocritical, neither a complete saint nor an absolute sinner. Yet Jeansonne has criticized Williams's complimentary profile as "one-sided," a case of an historian using oral interviews to discover what he wanted to find. "Huey Long was a consummate opportunist who used the label 'reformer' to establish himself as the virtual dictator of Louisiana," the Kingfish's most recent biographer has concluded. [29]

Whatever he may have thought about the former head of Share Our Wealth, Father Coughlin saw the organization's members as an essential component of a new political movement. In 1936, Coughlin announced the creation of the Union Party with William Lemke as its presidential candidate. The coalition included Long followers, monetary radicals, agrarian dissidents, and elderly adherents of Dr. Francis E. Townsend's Old Age Revolving Pension Plan.

As a stimulus to anemic Depression purchasing power and a response to the dependence of the aged, Townsend had proposed a national commercial tax to fund two-hundred dollar-a-month stipends to Americans over the age of sixty as long as recipients spent the entire sum. Organizers promised to preserve the "American Way of Life" without state regimentation. Attracting retired Midwestern and Southern farmers, small business people, clerks, and skilled workers, the Townsend crusade claimed 3.5 million members in seven thousand clubs nation-wide. [29]

Gerald L. K. Smith was Townsend's public voice. Born in rural Wisconsin, Smith took over a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) pulpit in Shreveport before joining forces with Share Our Wealth in 1934. Blond, muscular, and charismatic, he promised listeners a Chevrolet or Ford in every garage, spending money, a new suit, and a "red, white, and blue job for every man." A mass movement, Smith once instructed, should "be superficial for quick appeal, fundamental for permanence, dogmatic for certainty, and practical for workability." Undertaking a national speaking tour for SOW, the firebrand assured Roosevelt opponents that "we're going to get that cripple out of the White House." [30]

With Long out of the picture, Smith attempted to take control of the Share Our Wealth mailing list while charging that the Roosevelt administration had conspired to kill his former boss. Anxious to mend fences with Washington and prevent anyone from milking organizational resources, Long's gubernatorial successor, Richard Leche, had state police banish the pastor from Louisiana in 1936. Smith now joined the Townsend cause. Like Share Our Wealth, the pension plan could not endure sustained scrutiny. As a hyperinflationary concept, it proposed to spend half the nation's gross national product on an elderly minority. Economists warned that the measure would raise retail prices by 75 percent, cut workers' real income by half, and hurt young

jobholders. Socialist Norman Thomas compared the panacea's effectiveness in ending the Depression to taking cough drops to cure tuberculosis. [31]

Undeterred by such calculations, Smith crossed the country with spellbinding speeches that wrapped the Townsend Plan in the Constitution, the Bible, and the Flag. Once Coughlin organized the Union Party, Smith signed on. "I come to you 210 pounds of fighting Louisiana flesh, with the blood memory of Huey Long who died for the poor people of this country still hot in my eyes," he told forty thousand delegates gathered in Cleveland for Coughlin's NUSJ convention. Smith pledged to deliver six million votes for the cause in November. When the movement's leader took the stage, he tore off his clerical collar and attacked the New Deal as "anti-God" and a harbinger of communist revolution before collapsing on the podium. As the campaign reached a climax in October, Coughlin dismissed Roosevelt as a "scab President." [32]

By replacing the radio voice of a friendly parish cleric with angry speeches reminiscent of Mussolini and Hitler, historian Michael Kazin has observed, Coughlin played directly into Roosevelt's hands. Privately admitting he was out to "steal Long's thunder" and that he was "fighting Communism, Huey Longism, Coughlinism, Townsendism," the president frequently expressed sympathy for ordinary people and employed expressions like "the common man" and "economic royalists." Not by coincidence, New Deal landmarks like the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Social Security, the Wagner National Labor Relations Act, the Public Utility Holding Act, and Wealth Tax all came into being a year before the 1936 election. In the end, Roosevelt swept to a landslide victory with a 60-plus percent majority, leaving Landon and the Republicans less than 37 percent. Despite support from the Farmers Holiday Association and Farmer-Labor parties in Minnesota and Wisconsin, Lemke and the Union Party finished with fewer than nine hundred thousand votes, a mere 1.9 percent of the total. [33]

Beyond Roosevelt's political skills, the Election of 1936 seemed to suggest that voters had faith in recovery efforts. Just as New Deal banking reforms and deficit spending removed the urgency from monetary schemes, however, debates over Depression demagoguery persisted. Following the Democratic landslide, the White House became the focal point of a bipartisan coalition opposing assertions of executive power, expansion of the federal bureaucracy, and increased taxation and spending. Senate progressives such as William Borah, Burton Wheeler, and California's Hiram W. Johnson now insisted that New Deal rule threatened American character, democracy, and their constituents' interests. Some even accused Roosevelt of imitating dictators like Mussolini and Hitler. When the president supported a slate of liberals in the 1938 Democratic congressional primaries, opponents charged him with emulating Joseph Stalin's dictatorial "purge" of the Soviet Communist Party. Months later, Texas Democrat Martin Dies prevailed upon the House to form a Special Committee on Un-American Activities, which soon alleged that members of the Communist movement had infiltrated the federal government, the labor movement, and academia. [34]

Wisconsin Governor Philip F. La Follette sought to overcome the nation's political divisions with the creation of the National Progressives of America (NPA) in 1938. The son of legendary Senator Robert M. ("Fighting Bob") La Follette, the governor won a first term in 1930 and signed legislation for a graduated income tax, unemployment compensation, and expanded relief and public works. After losing the Republican primary to party regulars two years later, he returned in triumph in 1934 as the candidate of the Progressive Party, expanded unemployment benefits, initiated mortgage and property tax relief, and implemented banking reform. Four years later, La Follette heralded the NPA as an alternative to New Deal spending, borrowing, production curbs, and welfare expenditures. Criticizing the Roosevelt administration's reliance

on collectivism and class rhetoric, La Follette insisted that the way out was "not by division of wealth but by multiplying it." Economic well-being, he maintained, came from the unrestricted industrial and agricultural production of "real wealth." [35]

The NPA debuted at a nighttime rally of four to five thousand people at the University of Wisconsin's livestock pavilion. As the National Guard stood by, a color guard and drum and bugle corps circled the arena, and a band played patriotic songs. Ascending the banner-draped stage amid flags, cheers, and spotlights, La Follette delivered a hundred-minute address. He explained how the movement's insignia would be a blue X set in a white background surrounded by a red circle. The X symbolized access to the ballot, equality, and the multiplication of wealth while the circle represented unity. The "new economic order" would rest on the use of sound investment and economic reform to create increased demand. Its organizing principles included government controlled banks and monetary policy to spur economic activity, restrictions on executive power, a guaranteed annual income, and nonintervention in European affairs. Through this formula, insisted La Follette, Americans could regain the chance to help themselves. [36]

By attacking relief, New Deal monetary policy, and internationalism, the NPA deeply alienated urban liberals in the Roosevelt coalition. La Follette's description of the party as "a religious cause" and his assertion that personal leadership was more important than specific programs generated further controversy in a period marked by dictatorships in fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. Journalists mocked the movement's emblem as a "circumscribed swastika" or a variation of a Christian cross. Although columnist Dorothy Thompson appreciated that La Follette had learned the psychological appeal of fascism, which made demands on followers instead of distributing benefits as a paternalistic parent, she feared that the mix of economics and mystical nationalism could generate a fanatical totalitarianism. [37]

La Follette's defeat in 1938 by a gubernatorial candidate supported by both major parties put a rapid end to the NPA experiment and its leader's political career. It also presaged the bitter debates over U.S. foreign policy that would mark the years after 1939. La Follette's demise may have resulted from a refusal to communicate in terms of customary definitions of liberalism and conservatism and from a dissenting view of the consumer-based economic order and welfare state. At the same time, his idealistically sounding phrases and slogans appeared to mask an ill-defined program reminiscent of the panaceas of Long, Coughlin, Townsend, and Smith. As historian Geoffrey S. Smith has explained, politics in the 1930s often offered a sounding board for the expression of values, frustrations, and aspirations not always related to specific issues. In some cases, Americans simply looked to explanations of incomprehensible conditions. [38]

The search for hidden causes and desire for attention led Father Coughlin into dark conspiratorial fantasies in the years following the Union Party humiliation. At first, the cleric promised to retire from public life, but he resumed radio broadcasts within two months of the election. Increasingly, his commentaries focused on the alleged connection between international banking, communism, and Jewish interests. In doing so, Coughlin tapped into a longstanding anti-Semitic mindset that pictured Jews as radical subversives, economic exploiters, social parasites, and moral iconoclasts. Myth held that Jews avoided physical labor, valued profit more than life, and destroyed ethical standards in business and the professions. Polling of the period revealed majorities of Americans holding low opinions of Jews, with 45 percent believing Jewish business operators were less honest, 41 percent agreeing that Jews had too much power, and 24 percent convinced that too many Jews held government jobs. As historian Leonard Dinnerstein has noted, Jewish New Deal advisers and officials represented a "new breed in Washington" arousing particular suspicion. [39]

Given such sentiment, it was not surprising that a survey by *Fortune* magazine at mid-decade revealed more than one hundred anti-Semitic organizations across the country. They included the United Brotherhood of America (Black Legion), known for assailing the "Jew Deal." William Dudley Pelley's Silver Shirt Legion proposed to save the nation through native-born Protestant-Christian solidarity. Portraying Jews as sinister non-producers and parasites who acquired profits through guile and deceit, the organization attracted a peak membership of fifteen thousand. In contrast, Gerald Winrod's Defenders of the Christian Faith reached more a hundred thousand readers through the *Revealer* magazine, which asserted that elite Jews like Roosevelt adviser Bernard Baruch were infecting America with communist creeds. Winrod polled over a fifth of the vote in a run for a Senate seat from Kansas in 1938. During the same period, Gerald L. K. Smith, formed the Committee of One Million to combat the alleged threats of the New Deal and Jewish plots against Christianity. [40]

As Geoffrey Smith has argued, anti-Semitism served as Coughlin's means of connecting the twin evils of Bolshevism and high finance. Late in 1938, the cleric's house organ, *Social Justice,* whose weekly circulation remained over two hundred thousand, began to serialize the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* a notorious early twentieth century Russian forgery depicting a Jewish conspiracy to conquer the world. As thirteen million listeners continued to tune in Coughlin's Sunday evening broadcasts, he charged that Jewish bankers and Communists were scheming to bring down America and Western Civilization through control of journalism, motion pictures, theaters, and radio. Accordingly, the alliance between Mussolini's fascist Italy and Hitler's Third Reich could serve western Christendom by destroying Soviet communism. The culmination of such posturing was the Christian Front, designed as a patriotic and religious mass movement to defend against "invaders of our spiritual and national rights." [41]

In reality, the Christian Front resulted in a collection of paramilitary units in East Cities like New York and Boston that mobilized young working-class Catholic men for acts of vandalism and street violence against Jewish shops and individuals. Following the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939, however, the Catholic Church came under pressure to silence the broadcaster who continued to praise Hitler's "New Order" and denounce defenders of democracy. Responding to the prospect of federal treason charges against Coughlin, the Archbishop of Detroit ordered the cleric off the air in late 1941 and following Pearl Harbor, instructed *Social Justice* to cease publication. The former power behind the Union Party returned to his parish post for the rest of his life. [42]

Father Coughlin's demise illustrates the insights of Geoffrey Smith and David Bennett that charismatic leaders often distract supporters from an awareness of the sources of their unhappiness or solutions to them. The result, they contend, is further apathy and alienation. For political figures to acknowledge that complex institutions, not evil individuals, lay at the heart of the challenges they face, Glen Jeansonne has added, would require them to admit there are no easy fixes. Allan Sindler's reminder that irrationality, emotionality, and simplification combine with personal ambition in all democratic appeals is certainly appropriate. [43] At the same time, historians have sought to contextualize Depression political demagoguery as a particular product of its time.

The psychological imperatives of 1930s economic devastation, Michael Kazin has proposed, inspired a renewal of populist traditions through assaults on privileged elites and devotion to the goodness and wisdom of ordinary people. These values particularly resonated for Irish, Slavic, and German Catholics, whose middling position on the American social ladder encouraged a respect for manual labor and animosity to speculative wealth. When Father

Coughlin translated papal encyclicals about labor and poverty into everyday vernacular, Kazin has suggested, his hostility toward high finance and the bureaucratic state "spoke more to his followers' loss of psychological security and the nation's apparent fall from social harmony than to the oppression of American workers." Coughlin's espousal of Christian morality and secular republicanism, accordingly, appealed to listeners' desires for control of the economic environment and preservation of conservative social values. The radio priest spoke to those concerned about the world they were losing to powerful financiers and liberal elites alike. [44]

As the Depression awakened Americans to the dominance of centralized economic entities and remote centers of authority, Alan Brinkley has argued, both lower-middle-class Coughlin and Long followers feared the prospect of powerlessness and dependence. Concerned over the erosion of people's ability to control their own destiny, each of these movements affirmed the ideals of local community. Shunning bureaucratic meddling by the federal government, their solutions involved cooperative, not collectivist, strategies designed to multiply private ownership amid decentralized institutions. Accordingly, Coughlin's monetary reforms would alter the composition of the currency and banking structure while Long's tax codes would address concentrated wealth. [45]

By attacking specific villains, Brinkley has noted, the leaders of the two most popular Depression insurgencies resisted the full implications of the idea that modern human progress rested on continual economic growth and organization – a vast, abstract process not conducive to easy explanations or fixes. Nevertheless, as historian Leo P. Ribuffo has pointed out, the so-called extremism of marginal groups often conveys values and concerns that pervade the cultural and political mainstream. Ribuffo, Brinkley, and Geoffrey Smith all have warned against the

tendency to single out critics of scientific rationalism, liberal reform, and reconstructed capitalism as the only 'backward looking' elements of the American political scene. [46]

Even when conceding the legitimate roots of Depression dissidence, it is important to acknowledge that most Americans rejected the siren calls of demagogues and would-be dictators. "Whenever things go wrong, people turn to an ism, Fascism or Communism …. Why don't they ever think of Americanism?" Lionel Barrymore's non-conformist agonizes in Frank Capra's popular Hollywood film, *You Can't Take It with You* (1938). Apparently, they did. Public opinion polling by the end of the decade found that 52 percent of a national sample identified as conservatives and 46 percent as liberals. An astounding 88 percent viewed themselves as middle class. Capra's *Meet John Doe* (1941) would describe a fascist newspaper publisher's attempt take power through the police and a private army. Yet it fell to a veteran journalist to express the movie's democratic faith. "Yes, Sir, I'm a sucker for this country … I like what we got here!" he exclaims. When the people prevail, the reporter challenges the tycoon to "try and lick that!" [47]

Historians, political scientists, and journalists have left a rich and varied account of Depression demagoguery, certainly one of the most colorful episodes of modern U.S. history. Few questions appear to stand out for further research. Yet one area of inquiry might concern the relationship between dissident movements and women followers. Glen Jeansonne has noted how Huey Long completely ignored female participation in Share Our Wealth with the assumption that wives and daughters merely followed their male relatives. Further examination of correspondence to *American Progress* might prove helpful. As in the case of Share Our Wealth, most information on supporters of Father Coughlin's National Union for Social Justice and Union Party must come through a survey of organizational periodicals as well. [48]

Beyond profiles of movement constituents, questions remain about the viability of Depression solutions. This might entail not merely an extended look at the calculations behind Share Our Wealth and the NUSJ, but a dispassionate view of the economics behind the Communist Party, the farmer-labor movement, silver advocates, Middle West progressives, the American Liberty League, and indeed, the Roosevelt administration itself. In the end, those seeking to make sense of responses to the business cycle must ask whether any political leader stands on firm ground when offering a way out of the economic wilderness. Historian Albert Fried has cited conservative economist Joseph A. Schumpeter's skepticism that Roosevelt and the New Deal were responsible for the nation's recovery. [49] Whatever the case, an informed view of Depression demagoguery needs to contemplate the possibility that all calls for economic rehabilitation involve a share of emotional posturing, finger pointing, unrealistic aspirations, and a potential turn to strange gods.

Notes

1. Glen Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses: Huey P. Long and the Great Depression* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993), 149.

2. Albert Fried, *FDR and His Enemies* (New York: Palgrave, 1999), 45; Reinhard Henry Luthin, *American Demagogues: Twentieth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1954), 3; Robert E. Snyder, "The Concept of the Demagogue: Huey Long and His Literary Critics," *Louisiana Studies* 15 (Spring 1976): 83; Allan P. Sindler, *Huey Long's Louisiana: State Politics, 1920-1952* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956), 110-12; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 123; David H. Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression: American Radicals and the Union Party, 1932-1936* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 4, 295.

3. Snyder, "Concept of the Demagogue," *Louisiana Studies,* 61-62; Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 111, 130-1, 140-3; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 122. See Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression;* Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), and McCoy, *Angry Voices: Left-of-Center Politics in the New Deal Era* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1958).

4. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 36, 99; Clyde P. Weed, *The Nemesis of Reform: The Republican Party During the New Deal* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 69; David A. Horowitz, *America's Political Class under Fire: The Twentieth Century's Great Culture War* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 84.

5. Horowitz, *America's Political Class under Fire,* 49-55.

6. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right: Insurgency and the Establishment* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), 160-61 (quotes); Weed, 109-11; 205-7; David M. Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 278-79, 282 (Roosevelt quotes).

7. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 116-19, 126-33 and "Senator Borah's Crusade to Save Small Business from the New Deal," *Historian* 55 (Summer 1993): 693-708.

8. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 101-5 and *America's Political Class under Fire,* 42-45.

9. Stock, *Main Street in Crisis: The Great Depression and the Old Middle Class on the Northern Plains* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 87-88, 97-102, 107, 134-35; Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 151-52.

10. Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression*, 85-109; Edward C. Blackorby, *Prairie Rebel: The Public Life of William Lemke* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), 198-201.

11. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 39-40; Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion, An American History* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 119.

12. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 43, 57; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 126; Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression,* 51, 78, 228.

13. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 106-9; Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 64; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 187; Jeffrey Kaplan, "Father Charles Coughlin," *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Right* (Walnut Creek, Cal.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 68.

14. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 6-8, 12-14, 19-20, 25-26.

15. Ibid., 28-30, 34.

16. Ibid., 35, 43-44, 56-57.

17. Ibid., 67-68, 63, 65, 73.

18. Ibid., 75-77, 82, 84.

19. Ibid., 86-92, 105; Schlesinger, *The Age of Roosevelt: The Politics of Upheaval* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), 62.

20. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 53, 55, 69, 108, 130-40, 151, 160.

21. Ibid., 88-90, 130-38, 140, 143.

22. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 66, 102; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 105 (quote), 106, 112-13; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 44.

23. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 72, 119; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 114-18.

24. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 73; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 119, 123, 124 (quote).

25. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 125, 163-64, 178-81; Bennett, *The Party of Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 252 (quote); Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 107-8.

26. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 156 (Johnson quote), 177 (Smith quote); Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 76; Swing, *Forerunners of American Fascism* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1969 [1935]), 62-107; Luthin, *American Demagogues,* 267, 271 (quote).

27. Hair, *The Kingfish and His Realm: The Life and Times of Huey P. Long* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 296; Bennett, *Party of Fear,* 252; Graham, "Afterword: The Enigma of Huey Long," in Graham, ed., *Huey Long* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 177; McCoy, *Angry Voice,* 115; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 230-37; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 188-89; Stan Opotowsky, *The Longs of Louisiana* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1960), 256; V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), 157; Sindler, *Huey Long's Louisiana,* 100 (Long quote).

28. T. Harry Williams, *Huey Long* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 9; Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 77; Sindler, *Huey Long's Louisiana,* 112-14; Key, Jr., *Southern Politics,* 163. For differing views among contemporaries and historians, see Harry C. Dethloff, ed., *Huey Long: Southern Demagogue or American Democrat?* (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1967) and Graham, ed., *Huey Long.*

29. Williams, *Huey Long,* x; Warren, *All the King's Men* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982 [1946]), 394; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* xii, 186, 188 and "The Apotheosis of Huey Long," *Biography* 12, no. 4 (Fall 1989): 298 (quote).

30. Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 115, 116-17 (quotes).

31. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 188; Bennett, *Party of Fear,* 250 and *Demagogues in the Depression,* 160.

32. Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith,* 53, 54 (quote), 58; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion,* 124 (first and second Coughlin quotes), 125; Bennett, *Demagogues in the Depression,* 231 (third Coughlin quote).

33. Kazin, *Populist Persuasion,* 112-13, 125; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses* 162, 163 (quotes); Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 140; McCoy, *Angry Voices,* 115.

34. David L. Porter, *Congress and the Waning of the New Deal* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1980, 89-94; Ronald A. Mulder, *The Insurgent Progressives in the United States Senate, 1933-1939* (New York: Garland, 1979), 130, 182, 207-8, 212, 300; Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 77; Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 105, 140-51 and *America's Political Class under Fire,* 71-73, 96.

35. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 152-53, 154 (first quote), 155 (second quote). See John E. Miller, *Governor Philip F. La Follette, the Wisconsin Progressives, and the New Deal, 1930-1939* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982).

36. Horowitz, *Beyond Left and Right,* 155.

37. Ibid., 155 (first quote), 156, 157 (second quote).

38. Geoffrey S. Smith, *To Save a Nation: American Countersubversives, the New Deal, and the Coming of World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), viii; Jeansonne, *Gerald L. K. Smith,* 9.

39. Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), xix, xxvi, 108-9, 127 and *Uneasy at Home: Anti-Semitism and the American Jewish Experience* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 64 (quote); Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 9; Bennett, *Party of Fear,* 265. See Myron I. Scholnick, *The New Deal and Anti-Semitism in America* (New York and London: Garland, 1990).

40. Dinnerstein, *Anti-Semitism in America,* 109; Bennett, *Party of Fear,* 244-46; Kaplan, "Gerald L. K. Smith," *Encyclopedia of White Power,* 286.

41. Smith, *To Save a Nation,* 126-27; Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 149-50, 155-56, 157 (quote). See Donald Warren, *Radio Priest: Charles Coughlin* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).

42. Kaplan, "Coughlin," *Encyclopedia of White Power,* 69; Smith, *To Save a Nation,* 126-28; Kazin, *Populist Persuasion,* 132; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 268.

43. Smith, *To Save a Nation,* 3; Bennett, *Demagogues of the Depression,* 4; Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 189; Sindler, *Huey Long's Louisiana,* 111.

44. Kazin, *Populist Persuasion,* 1-2, 110-11, 113, 114 (quote).

45. Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* ix, 144-45, 150, 154-58, 196, 198.

46. Ibid., 157, 159, 262 and *Liberalism and Its Discontents* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), xii; Ribuffo, *Old Christian Right,* xii, xvii (quote); Smith, *To Save a Nation,* viii-ix.

47. Horowitz, *The People's Voice: A Populist Cultural History of Modern America* (Cornwall-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Sloan Publishing, 2008), 193 (quotes) and *Beyond Left and Right,* 161.

48. Jeansonne, *Messiah of the Masses,* 167, 190-91; Brinkley, *Voices of Protest,* 333-36.

49. Fried, *FDR and His Enemies,* 7.

Selected References

Bennett, David H. *Demagogues in the Depression: American Radicals and the Union Party, 1932-1936.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1969.

_____. *The Party Fear: From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

Blackorby, Edward C. *Prairie Rebel: The Public Life of William Lemke.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963.

Brinkley, Alan. *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and the Great Depression.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982.

Dethloff, Henry C., ed. *Huey Long: Southern Demagogue or American Democrat?* Boston: D. C. Heath, 1967.

Fried, Albert. *FDR and His Enemies.* New York: Palgrave, 1999.

Graham, Hugh Davis. ed. *Huey Long.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

Hair, William Ivy. *The Kingfish and His Realm: The Life and Times of Huey P. Long.* Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1991.

Horowitz, David A. *America's Political Class Under Fire: The Twentieth Century's Great Culture War.* New York and London: Routledge, 2003.

_____. *Beyond Left and Right: Insurgency and the Establishment.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

Jeansonne, Glen. "The Apotheosis of Huey Long," *Biography* 12, no. 4 (Fall 1989): 283-301.

_____. *Gerald L. K. Smith: Minister of Hate.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

_____. *Messiah of the Masses: Huey P. Long and the Great Depression.* New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993.

Kazin, Michael. "Social Justice and Social Paranoia: The Catholic Populism of Father Coughlin," *The Populist Persuasion, An American History.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Key, V. O., Jr. *Southern Politics in State and Nation.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949.

Luthin, Reinhard Henry. *American Demagogues: Twentieth Century.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1954.

Miller, John E. *Governor Philip F. La Follette, the Wisconsin Progressives, and the New Deal, 1930-1939.* Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982.

Opotowsky, Stan. *The Longs of Louisiana.* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1960.

Ribuffo, Leo P. *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983.

Sindler, Allan P. *Huey Long's Louisiana: State Politics, 1920-1952.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956.

Smith, Geoffrey P. *To Save a Nation: American Countersubversives, the New Deal, and the Coming of World War II.* New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Stock, Catherine McNicol. *Main Street in Crisis: The Great Depression and the Old Middle Class on the Northern Plains.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

Williams, T. Harry. *Huey Long.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969

Da A. Horowitz teaches History at Portland State University. He is the author of *Beyond Left and Right: Insurgency and the Establishment* (1997) and *America's Political Class under Fire: The Twentieth Century's Great Culture War* (2003).