Hon. John Foster Dulles

Dear Senator Dulles:

As you intended, your letter was delivered to me after release to the press on the eve of my departure for up-state. This prevented any immediate extended comment. I do not consider this a matter of great moment because many of the points you raise have either already been dealt with fully by me or will be dealt with in the course of the next few weeks at the proper time and place. However, two matters taken up in your letter seem to me to require prompt reply in order to clarify the record which you have been at such pains to distort.

(1) You repeat the baseless charge that in the past I have accepted Communist support. This charge, which you must know is without a shadow of justification, has been the backbone of your campaign upstate. In Buffalo only the other night, with a show of indignation, you produced the sworn testimony of Mr. Amter, the State Communist Chairman in 1938, to prove your point. But for obvious reasons you found it convenient to suppress a telegram which I sent to Mr. Amter on October 14, 1938, fully reported in the press the next morning. This telegram read as follows:

"Today the Evening Sun carries an article to the effect that the state candidates of the Communist Party had withdrawn in favor of myself and another candidates on the Democratic ticket.

"If this is correct, I wish to advise you that I am unwilling to accept the endorsement or support of the Communist Party or of its members."
"I believe wholeheartedly in the present form of American Constitutional Government and I have no sympathy whatsoever with any other form of government.

"I have on countless occasions publicly expressed my complete opposition to the principles and theories of Communism and of all other forms of dictatorship.

"I want no Communist votes."

And I might note in passing that while you have been trying to make political capital of the fact that you became aware of the Communist menace as early as 1946, this telegram establishes that I was fully aware of it and publicly fighting it as early as 1938.

You then proceed to make the charge that when I accepted the support of the American Labor Party in 1946, it was Communist dominated. I can hardly believe that you are unaware that it was not until well after the 1946 election that Communist influence took over control of the American Labor Party. Until that time Republican and Democratic candidates alike sought and accepted the support of this party which was still controlled by a strong anti-Communist group.

(2) You state that I have accused you of bigotry. Whether you are a bigot in your daily life, I am not in a position to know. That you have played the part of the bigot in this campaign is a matter of indisputable record. To establish this, I have only to repeat word for word what you said a short time ago at Geneseo:
"If you could see the kind of people in New York City making up this bloc that is voting for my opponent, if you could see them with your own eyes, I know that you would be out, every last man and woman of you, on Election Day."

When you were rebuked for this outrageous statement, you offered the explanation that you were only referring to Communists. This of course is pure hypocrisy. For you must know, Mr. Dulles, that you cannot recognize a Communist by his looks.

The real meaning of your words, and the sinister purpose that lay behind them, was immediately and widely understood. As that distinguished American, Robert Sherwood, said on the radio shortly afterwards:

"In this present campaign the Republican Candidate has been saying things he should be ashamed of -- and, since he is very conversant with the Golden Rule of Christianity, I believe that in years to come he will be ashamed of himself."

I can close this letter no more fittingly than by echoing his sentiments.

Yours very sincerely,

/s/ HERBERT H. LEHMAN