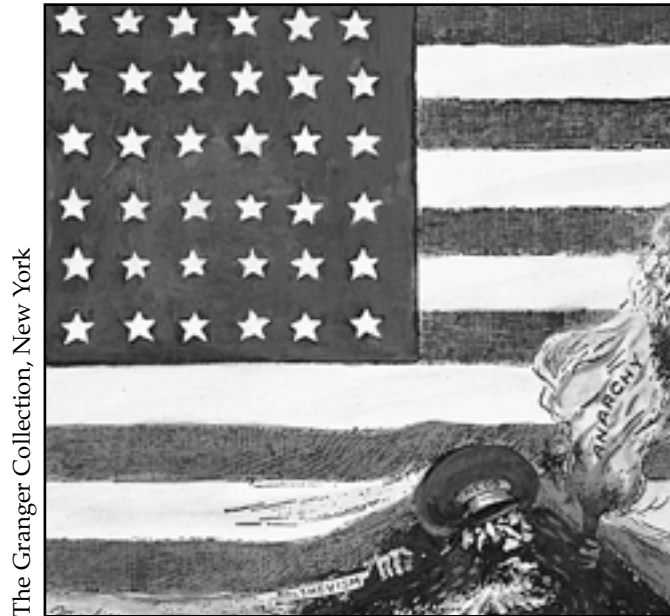




Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## AMERICAN HISTORY POLITICAL CARTOONS

### The Red Scare



The Granger Collection, New York

#### UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL CARTOONS

Study the political cartoon, and then answer the questions that follow.

1. What does “Reds” refer to?

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2. What does the image of the flame “Anarchy” suggest?

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3. Explain what the image of the knife of “Bolshevism” symbolizes.

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#### ACTIVITY

Imagine that you are a journalist writing during the Red Scare and reporting on the Palmer raids. Write five questions you want to ask five different people in order to get a sense of the American public’s reaction to the raids. Then write possible answers to these questions.

## Discussion Guide

At the end of World War I, many Americans became deeply suspicious of foreigners and political radicals who they held responsible for the war. Russia's Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, which called for a worldwide revolution of workers, also fueled fear of radical politics. The establishment of the Communists' Third International in 1919, which called on the proletariat around the world to form communist parties to combat capitalism and imperialism, further added to American fears. The growing popularity of anarchists—who believed that the restraint of one person by another was evil and therefore did not recognize the authority of any government—also contributed to the fear of a revolution in the United States. Labor organizations, the burgeoning women's movement, and left-wing political groups also came under strong attack. Thus, when a series of labor strikes and indiscriminate bombings by a few political radicals began in 1919, the unrelated incidents were all assumed to be the work of Communists and of foreign-born individuals who were engaged in a plot to overthrow the U.S. government.

The press, business leaders, and political officials added to the growing hatred of foreigners and fear of communist insurgency. More than any other person, U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer contributed to the panic of 1919 and 1920, which became known as the Red Scare. Convinced of a Bolshevik conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government, Palmer invoked the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918 as a basis for launching an unprecedented and violent campaign in 1919 against suspected political radicals. On January 2, 1920, government agents in 33 cities rounded up thousands of people, many of whom were jailed without due process. Some of the seized non-U.S. citizens were deported back to their native country.

Although the Red Scare was for all intents and purposes over within a year, a general distrust of foreigners, reform movements, and organized labor remained the prevailing mode in America throughout the 1920s.

## Answers

### UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL CARTOONS

1. Communists, worldwide spread of communism
2. Anarchy will replace liberty; the Statue of Liberty's flame of liberty will be replaced by anarchy.
3. Russia's Bolshevik Revolution of 1917

### Activity

Students' questions and answers should cover how five different Americans might have felt about the Red Scare.