## Loyalties: A Son's Memoir

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A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist's recounting of the tense and intimidating McCarthy era and his own leftist family's persecution in the name of patriotism describes family life under forty years of FBI surveillance

From the coauthor of All the President's Men and The Final Days comes this pained, loving, intensely felt account of his parents' ordeal, and his own emotional upheaval, during President Harry Truman's loyalty purges. Both of Bernstein's parents had Communist Party affiliations in the 1940s. His father, Al, a Senate-appointed investigative attorney on Capitol Hill, later a union leader in San Francisco, attended a few Party meetings; his mother, Sylvia, participated in the party's campaigns on behalf of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg and to desegregate swimming pools. When Truman's loyalty boards began passing judgment, in 1947, on government employees' fitness to serve, Al Bernstein was defense counsel in some 500 such cases. His own union career derailed, he opened a laundry. In 1954, his wife was called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee. The FBI was a constant presence in their son's boyhood and adolescence. This taut memoir mingles pride, angry confrontation with the author's parents and coming to terms with the past. We also get unbuttoned glimpses of the author as fourth-grade "patriotic nut," Bar Mitzvah boy screaming at his "atheistic" mom and dad, brash fraternity leader in Maryland's suburbs, budding journalist. BOMC and QPBC alternates.

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