

A STUDY OF SENATOR JOSEPH R. McCARTHY,
HIS MOTIVES AND METHODS

by

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A THESIS

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A STUDY OF SENATOR JOSEPH R. McCARTHY,
HIS MOTIVES AND METHODS

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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	2
Methods of Investigation	3
II. THE MAN AND THE MOVEMENT	5
Pre-McCarthyism	5
Young McCarthy	5
Lawyer McCarthy	6
Judge McCarthy	7
Captain McCarthy	8
Senator McCarthy	10
McCarthyism in Action	12
Its Birth	12
The Tydings Committee	15
Charges Against Marshall	16
Election Year, 1952	18
McCarthy vs. Army	20
The Dentist	21
The General	24
The Private	26
Television Antics	30

CHAPTER	PAGE
McCarthyism Censured	35
The Flanders Resolution	36
The Select Committee	37
The Findings	38
Charges and Counter-Charges	39
The Handshake Casualty	44
The Decision	45
Reactions	46
McCarthy-Ike Split	48
McCarthy After Censure	49
Minority Member	50
Fadeout	51
The End	52
III. THE METHODS AND THE MOTIVES	54
Youthful Impatience	55
Senatorial Immunity	56
The Powerful Press	59
Recourse to the Lie	64
Quasi-Executive	66
Unethical Procedures	70
Personal Subversion	76
"Disagreement Indicates Subversion"	79
"Guilt by Association"	80
The McCarthy Ego	82

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	85
Summary	85
Conclusions	85
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88
APPENDIX A. Correspondence With Senators and Ex-Senators	93
APPENDIX B. Senate Committees Related to McCarthyism	99
APPENDIX C. Glossary of Individual Names Cited in this Study	101
VITA	104

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

McCarthyism. A new word now supplements the American vocabulary, a word fraught with connotations of suspicion and fear. McCarthyism. A word known only in the past decade, yet a word known now to the educated population of the world. McCarthyism . . . "public accusation of disloyalty, in many instances unsupported by proof or based on slight, doubtful or irrelevant evidence; unfairness in investigative technique."¹

¹Clarence L. Barnhart (Editor-in-chief), The American College Dictionary, p. 754.

During the latter days of the special session of the Senate in which McCarthyism was censured, the New York Times undertook editorially to define McCarthyism:

It is the invasion of personal rights, the irresponsible attacks on individuals and institutions, the disregard of fair democratic procedures, the reckless shattering of mutual trust among the citizens of this country, the terrorization of loyal civil servants--these are all elements of McCarthyism. It is the disruption of orderly governmental processes; it is the destruction of the constitutional relationship between the equal branches of our Government; it is the assault on federal agencies most intimately concerned with the actual "cold war" or a potential "hot" one; it is contempt for the Bill of Rights and for the ordinary rules of public and

political decency. It is the encouragement of fear, the undermining of self-confidence, the pandering to emotionalism; it is the divisive force of accusation, recrimination and suspicion. All of this is McCarthyism; and it can only help our enemies.²

²"Mr. McCarthy As A Symbol," New York Times (Editorial), November 11, 1954, p. 30.

Statement of the Problem

For ten years, three months and twenty-nine days, Joe McCarthy was a United States Senator. During the latter part of that time and in the months since his death, a great deal has been written about the man and about that word coined from his name, McCarthyism. Little attempt has been made, however, to analyze the senator's motivation, as revealed in his various activities. Newspaper editorials can be cited as exceptions to this generalization, but only in the discussion of specific incidents. Richard Rovere, in his article, "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy," did a very excellent analysis of the two and one half years of McCarthy's life after the Senate censure.

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to search among McCarthy's various activities and statements for clues which

might reveal more about the man and his motivation. That McCarthy was an individualist will not likely be disputed. That which set him apart as an individualist is the elusive element herein sought. Two major approaches to the study were used: (1) factual data, matters of record, were studied for the purpose of reporting relevant instances of what McCarthy did and what McCarthy said; and (2) commentary of other writers was studied and compared, consideration being given to the biased approach of the majority. Documentary sources included in particular two major proceedings: (1) the daily transcripts of the Army-McCarthy hearings from April 22 through June 17, 1954; and (2) the daily transcripts of the McCarthy censure debate from November 10 through December 2, 1954. Most commentaries on McCarthy and McCarthyism, it was found, are characterized by their absence of objectivity. Although quotations were excerpted from both extremes for purposes of illustration, an effort was made to identify those sources which appeared to be misleading in fact or in connotation.

Methods of Investigation

An observation of McCarthyism was begun on a purely non-academic basis in 1954. The author, stationed in Washington, D. C., with the military, took advantage of free time to pursue his interest in governmental processes, and observed

from the Senate gallery a portion of the proceedings which ended in the censure of McCarthy. From this personal observation, there grew an interest in those related events which could not be witnessed. A portion of the current research, therefore, is based upon personal observation plus a collection of publications from the offices of Senator McCarthy and other principals in the dispute, and a file of clippings from Washington newspapers. Other methods used in obtaining data for this study included: (1) examination of contemporary American history text books; (2) an analysis of file copies and microfilm copies of newspapers, and file copies of news magazines; and (3) correspondence with senators and ex-senators whose duties brought them in close contact with McCarthy.

CHAPTER II

THE MAN AND THE MOVEMENT

Pre - McCarthyism

Young McCarthy

Joseph Raymond McCarthy was born November 14, 1909, to parents of Irish and Bavarian extraction. He spent his childhood days in much the same way as any typical farm boy. His father, Timothy McCarthy, farmed all his life in Outagamie County, Wisconsin, and it was there that Joe was born and grew up, one of seven children, going to Underhill Country School and helping out on the farm.

By the time he was through grade school, young McCarthy had tired of education, and embarked upon a modest, though moderately successful, series of business ventures, including chicken-marketing and managing a grocery store. Determined to be an engineer, McCarthy returned to high school, and through the cooperative efforts of sympathetic teachers completed the entire course in a single year, graduating with honors with the class of 1930.

In the fall of the same year, McCarthy entered Marquette University in Milwaukee. There, thrown with a group of law students during his first year, he changed his course and decided that law was the career for him. With no outside

financial aid, he supported himself through college by washing dishes, working as a short-order cook, working in a filling station and with a construction gang, and received his law degree in 1935. His professors recalled he was "an adroit student who depended a great deal on an excellent memory."¹

¹"McCarthy's Surge to National Prominence," New York Times, May 3, 1957, p. 14.

His athletic activities were confined to boxing, at which he excelled, and he was head boxing coach during his senior year. Recollections are that he relied more on heavy slugging than on finesse, feinting and footwork.² Perhaps it is significant

²"The Life of McCarthy--From Farm to Fame," U S News & World Report, 36:11, March 12, 1954, p. 67.

that the same tactics were attributed to him in later years, in a different field, against a different type of opponent.

Lawyer McCarthy

As a lawyer, McCarthy first began his practice independently in Waupaca, Wisconsin, but allied himself within the year with an older firm at Shawano. Business was disappointing, however. Convinced that one of the best ways to attract clients was to go into politics, he ran on the

Democratic ticket for county attorney. Both he and his Republican opponent took a sound beating at the hands of the Progressive Party candidate.

McCarthy was not at all discouraged by this initial political defeat. A circuit-court judge was to be elected the following year, and the incumbent candidate, seventy-three years old, was unopposed. Conducting a whirlwind personal campaign, McCarthy visited nearly every farm in the three-county district, helping farmers with their milking and other chores, and shaking every hand he could. Visits were followed by mailed greetings, and on election eve, each farm wife received a postcard urging her to vote. At the age of twenty-nine, McCarthy became the district's new judge.

Judge McCarthy

Justice in Judge McCarthy's court was always informal and often entertaining. Lawyers were called by their first names, numerous cases were hastily settled in chambers, and congested court dockets were quickly cleared up. The slashing of legal red tape and the elimination of delays was explained by McCarthy in the slogan "Justice delayed is justice denied."³ Whether or not his emphasis on speed and efficiency

³"Biography of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy," a mimeographed brochure prepared and distributed by the Wisconsin State Republican Committee, p. 1.

sacrificed any measure of equality of justice is difficult to say, but his brash display of expediency subjected him at this early date to the criticism from the State Supreme Court that he was displaying "an abuse of judicial power."⁴

⁴"The Life of McCarthy--From Farm to Fame," U S News & World Report, 36:11, March 12, 1954, p. 67.

Captain McCarthy

In 1942, with the advent of war, Judge McCarthy took leave from his job to join the Marines. He was commissioned a First Lieutenant, promoted quickly to Captain, and sent to the Solomon Islands as an intelligence officer with a Marine Air Squadron. Not satisfied to stay on the ground, he soon qualified as a gunner and flew seventeen missions as a gunner or an aerial photographer in a dive bombing squadron. He was later appointed to the staff of Commander Aircraft Solomons as intelligence officer and received the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal with four silver stars, the Nimitz Citation, and a letter of commendation from General Harmon, of the United States Army.

McCarthy's proficiency as a photographer, combined with the public's hero-worship of aerial gunners, served him well upon his return home. Advantageously preceded by pictures of "the captain at his guns," McCarthy announced by mail his

candidacy for the Senate seat to be filled in 1944. He was returned to the United States for duty early in that year as the result of a leg injury received in a sporting event. In August, still in the Marine Corps but on leave, he was back in Wisconsin seeking the Republican senatorial nomination. He campaigned in uniform, with a slight limp which he carefully allowed his audiences to assume was battle-inflicted. His prolonged absence from the state was a disadvantage his pictures and limp could not overcome, however, and he lost the election to the incumbent Senator Alexander Wiley. The campaign of 1944 was not without its rewards, since McCarthy received an impressively large number of votes, and kept his name before the public.

Returning home with his discharge in 1945, McCarthy was re-elected without opposition to his circuit-court judgeship. But his sights were still trained on the Senate. Richer in experience by reason of his political defeat, McCarthy soon began detailed preparations to win the Senate seat held by Robert M. LaFollette, Jr. Though advised by veteran politicians that it was "folly to oppose LaFollette," McCarthy resumed his whirlwind campaign tactics that had proved so effective in his earlier race for the judgeship. He took full advantage of the postwar labor and industrial unrest, which he blamed on the New Deal enactments sanctioned by LaFollette. The incumbent senator made a costly error in

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under-rating his opponent. Returning to Wisconsin only two weeks before the primary election, LaFollette was unable to recover his losses, and lost the nomination by some five thousand votes. McCarthy then went on to win the general election without difficulty.

Senator McCarthy

A bachelor senator, as McCarthy soon found, is much in demand as an extra man at most social gatherings in Washington. Eagerly accepting most invitations at first, he soon found the pace too strenuous and became more selective. His early days on Capitol Hill were also filled with uncertainties, although he was diligent in building an admirable attendance record in the Senate.

During his first three years in the Senate, McCarthy made few speeches and many friends. He was an avid listener, and followed closely the lead of the late Senator Robert A. Taft on most domestic questions. Yet he never was strictly a party man on votes. On 164 major issues, as of March, 1954, he voted with the majority of the Republicans on 132, while opposing the majority 32 times.⁵

⁵Ibid.

During the years 1947 through 1949, McCarthy served on

the Joint Congressional Committee on Housing and the Senate Committee on Government Operations. His most notable achievements were his introduction of slum-clearance legislation, which was passed in 1949, and his introduction of twelve Hoover Commission bills for government reorganization.⁶

⁶"Biography of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy," a mimeographed brochure prepared and distributed by the Wisconsin State Republican Committee, pp. 1-2.

In 1952, McCarthy was re-elected to the Senate by a large majority. The other incumbent senator from Wisconsin, Alexander Wiley, had also been returned to Capitol Hill two years earlier. In the election of 1952, Wisconsin also maintained its Republican preference by strongly supporting Dwight D. Eisenhower for president.

In September of 1953, McCarthy thwarted the efforts of those District of Columbia socialites who take such delight in senatorial match-making. He had contended for many months that he was remaining a bachelor because he could not attend to all his political interests and still keep the regular hours he associated with domesticity. All this was put to an end, however, by his marriage to a former administrative assistant, Jean Fraser Kerr.

McCarthyism in Action

The end of his third year in the Senate found McCarthy still comparatively low on the list of newsworthy legislators. For several months he had sensed that people were becoming increasingly perturbed over the issue of Communism, and recent events convinced him that here was an issue he could make his own. The "exposure" of Alger Hiss, employee in the State Department from 1936 to 1947, as a Communist-sympathizer, revealed to McCarthy a possible avenue to public notice. The Communism issue was further opened to political attack by the administration's stand. Truman denounced the Hiss affair as a "red herring," and Secretary of State Dean Acheson emphatically stated, "I will not turn my back on Hiss." Acheson, McCarthy claimed, had "failed to screen his subordinates properly" and had been "far too tender toward Communist interests . . ."⁷

⁷John D. Hicks, The American Nation, p. 737.

Its Birth

In a speech at Wheeling, West Virginia, in commemoration of Lincoln's birthday, February, 1950, McCarthy stated, "I have here in my hand a list of two hundred five . . . a list of names that were made known to the Secretary of State

as being members of the Communist Party, and who nevertheless are still working and shaping the policy in the State Department."⁸ Sly phrasing of his words gained for McCarthy the

⁸As quoted in The Washington Post and Times-Herald, date unknown.

sensational press coverage he desired, yet technically cleared him of an untruth. Although in the original speech there were a large number of "Communists," the number and the exact description were "progressively watered down." An attempt to substantiate his charges before the Tydings Committee involved the calling of many witnesses, but "no evidence whatever that would support anything he said."⁹

⁹Rexford Guy Tugwell, A Chronicle of Jeopardy, p. 234.

Called upon by the Senate to clarify the "numbers game," McCarthy outlined his use of various figures as follows: two hundred five employees of the State Department had been declared "unfit for government service" by the President's board, but were not discharged; eighty-one employees of the State Department, whose loyalty was questionable, were made known by McCarthy to Acheson, and subsequently to the Senate, including fifty-seven who were known to be members of, or loyal

to, the Communist Party. Of these fifty-seven, McCarthy said fifty-four resigned while their cases were pending before a loyalty panel.¹⁰

¹⁰Joseph R. McCarthy, McCarthyism, p. 10.

McCarthy's mood, on returning to Wisconsin from West Virginia, was reported to be "one of amazement and delight at the political diamond mine into which he had stumbled. He was not then a believer in any cause but McCarthy. But gradually he came to believe his own tirades . . ."¹¹

¹¹Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 243.

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., the noted historian, appears to categorize McCarthy's activities more as an effect than a cause. At the height of McCarthyism, Schlesinger wrote, "By 1950, when McCarthy belatedly entered the anti-Communist fight, the internal struggle against Communism as a political and intellectual movement had been won . . ."¹²

¹²Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "Letters to the Editor," Dallas Morning News, June 24, 1953, p. 2.

The Tydings Committee

Speaking before the Senate in February, 1950, McCarthy made similar charges of Communist infiltration into the employment of the Department of State. This speech led to the appointment of a special committee whose purpose it was to investigate the charges made by McCarthy, and for which McCarthy was instructed to supply the leads. The committee was known by the name of its chairman, Senator Millard Tydings, of Maryland.

In his attempt to justify the Wheeling, West Virginia, charges, McCarthy shortly announced that he was prepared to disclose the name of the "top Russian espionage agent in the United States." After much fanfare, the name of Owen Lattimore was "leaked" to the Washington press, carefully timed to find Lattimore in Afghanistan with a United Nations Technical Assistance Mission. After Lattimore's return, the charges were turned over to the Tydings Committee. The parade of witnesses was largely dominated by "reformed" ex-Communists whose previous lies left considerable doubt as to the validity of their present testimony.

McCarthy was anxious to convince the Tydings Committee of the "truth" of his charges. On March 22, 1950, he called a press conference to discuss the Lattimore charges. "I am willing to stand or fall on this one," he declared. "If I am shown to be wrong on this I think the subcommittee would

be justified in not taking my other cases too seriously. If they find I am one hundred per cent right--as they will--it should convince them of the seriousness of the situation."¹³

¹³Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 174.

The political nature of the hearings flared up in the open on numerous occasions. The Republican minority was frequently accused of seeking daily adjournment immediately after a McCarthy speech, without allowing time for defensive rebuttals, so that the newspapers next day would be monopolized by McCarthy, or by his witnesses.

McCarthy countered with an attack upon the committee's Democratic majority, whom he accused of demonstrating their "unwillingness to work cooperatively" with him, and of attempting to "turn their committee activities into an investigation of McCarthy himself."¹⁴

¹⁴Joseph R. McCarthy, McCarthyism, p. 4.

Charges Against Marshall

On June 14, 1951, in an address before the Senate, McCarthy made a blistering attack on George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army during World War II and

later Secretary of State. In his condemnation of Marshall, McCarthy said: "I ask in all gravity whether a man so steeped in falsehood, who has had recourse to the lie whenever it suited his convenience, is fit to hold so exalted a place."¹⁵

¹⁵As quoted in "McCarthy's Surge to National Prominence," New York Times, May 3, 1957, p. 14.

This speech became something of a campaign issue in 1952 when McCarthy was up for re-election and Eisenhower, a close friend of Marshall, was the Republican nominee for the presidency. In an original draft of a Milwaukee campaign speech, Eisenhower had included a paragraph strongly defending his old chief, General Marshall. This was designed to show that "while the President supported Senator McCarthy for re-election, he did not approve of his methods."¹⁶ The

¹⁶Ibid.

paragraph was read to McCarthy the night before Eisenhower was to speak in Milwaukee. McCarthy made no secret of his displeasure, and warned the General that he was "risking a boeing from a Wisconsin audience" if he read the statement. After conversations with Governor Walter J. Kohler of Wisconsin and others, Eisenhower deleted the paragraph.

Election Year, 1952

Senator McCarthy, although up for re-election himself in 1952, dedicated his vigorous support to many other Republican candidates, including Eisenhower. As a political expediency aimed at the capture of votes of the pro-McCarthy crowd, many candidates were deeming it wise to endorse publicly both the man and his program of investigations. Thus McCarthy was riding a wave of popularity which may have contributed more than is generally conceded to his easy re-election to the Senate. Also this popularity favored McCarthy with the opportunity to make many speeches, in which he was considered a reliable spokesman for the Republican Party.

Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson, in a campaign speech delivered in Georgia in 1952, spoke on the subject "Twenty Years of Progress," which McCarthy quickly paraphrased and threw back at the Democrats under the new label, "Twenty Years of Treason." As long as he was directing his fire thus against the Roosevelt-Truman Administrations, he was warmly encouraged from within the ranks of his party, the late Senator Taft leading the list of those who congratulated him on this oft-repeated speech. But when, after the first year of Republican presidential incumbency and Republican senatorial majority, he included in his investigation attention his own party, and amended his lecture-title to "Twenty-One Years of Treason," he threw a deep scare into

the party's leadership, and lost considerable partisan support for his program.¹⁷

¹⁷ Washington Post and Times-Herald (Editorial), date unknown.

In the organization of the Republican-controlled Eighty-third Congress in January of 1953, Senator McCarthy had gained the powerful post of chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. It assumed powers to investigate at its own discretion, including the invasion of what was generally considered the prerogatives of the executive department.

McCarthy prided himself in being a member now of a majority party. He was no longer compelled to accept the leadership of a Democratic chairman, nor was he now even willing to grant a share of direction to his fellow-partisans. Rather, McCarthy wanted to do the directing. He was the issue, he said, about which the next political campaign would swirl.¹⁸

¹⁸ Rexford Guy Tugwell, A Chronicle of Jeopardy, p. 241.

Almost immediately after the election of 1952, political forecasters predicted that McCarthy was carefully setting the stage for a personal campaign in 1956. This was hotly denied

by the senator,¹⁹ but many refused to take seriously his

¹⁹"He Says He Doesn't Want To Be President," Newsweek, 42:24, December 7, 1953, p. 27.

denial. "The stakes were very high," said one reporter, "and included the control of the Republican Party, . . . the constitutional separation of powers, and the future careers of the men involved."²⁰

²⁰Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 3.

Indeed, the dimensions of McCarthy's powers were expanding rapidly, in breadth as well as in depth. Throughout government, men considered his attitude before they voiced their opinions on great controversies. "One after another, agencies of government . . . yielded to him a share in their control."²¹

²¹Ibid.

McCarthy vs. Army

Through one means or another, McCarthy seemed perpetually determined to keep his name and the activities of his

investigation committee before the public. Early in 1953, the committee began a probe into the security measures observed at the Army Signal Corps Research and Development Laboratories, Fort Monmouth New Jersey. Several months of on-the-spot investigation resulted in charges and counter-charges of such gravity that closed hearings were set by the committee, to convene in January, 1954.

The Dentist

In the course of the early hearings, McCarthy called before his committee in private session, Doctor Irving Peress, an Army dentist. Peress refused to testify whether he was a Communist, had ever been a Communist, or had aided in the distributing of Communist literature and the establishing of Communist cells on military bases. Peress repeatedly took refuge in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, refusing to answer McCarthy's questions on the grounds that his answers "might tend to incriminate me." His own testimony revealed that, as a matter of record, he had repeatedly, since his entry into the Army, refused to answer any questions put to him about his membership or activity in any subversive organization. In spite of this, Peress had gained favorable treatment while in service, such as to invite suspicion regarding these favors.

After having been assigned to active duty with the

rank of Captain in the Army Dental Corps, on January 1, 1953, Peress received orders transferring him to the Far East. After his arrival at the west coast port of embarkation, his orders were mysteriously reversed, and he was assigned to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, only thirty miles from his New York home. Peress had already refused to sign non-Communist oaths on the grounds of possible self-incrimination. In view of this, McCarthy went to some great lengths in an attempt to determine who changed those overseas orders and why. Among the many questions parried by the Fifth Amendment privilege, was: "Did any Communist intervene to have your orders changed so you would not have to leave the country?" McCarthy became quite exasperated at continued refusals to answer, stating at one point, "I want to find out how you stopped at the port of embarkation; who stopped you when he knew you were a Communist; whether another Communist did it for you; and I am going to order you to tell us . . ."²²

²²"Story Of How Reds in U S Army Get Honorable Discharge," U S News & World Report, (36:11), March 12, 1954, p. 74.

The focal point of the Peress investigation came with the revelation that a promotion to the rank of Major had been granted him in spite of his refusal on the application for promotion to disavow allegiance to the Communist Party.

After his initial testimony before the Investigating Committee on January 30, 1954, Major Peress was granted an honorable discharge from the Army on February 2. This further infuriated McCarthy, and led to the calling of additional witnesses to determine who authorized his release under honorable conditions while he was under investigation as a Communist. The calling of John Adams, legal counsel for the Army, led to the testimony that " . . . the Army is not aware of any offenses which have been brought officially to its attention under which [Peress] could be tried." In view of the matters of military record in which Peress had invoked the Fifth Amendment, and the findings of the Investigating Committee which were available to the Army, McCarthy took vigorous exception to Adams' statement in declaring, " . . . the Army is going to give me the names of the individuals responsible for coddling and honorably discharging a known Communist . . . [and] if the Army refuses, I intend to have cited for contempt any man in the military . . . who tries to cover up those responsible for this most shameful, most fantastic situation.²³

²³Ibid., p. 83.

The General

In an attempt to learn more behind the promotion and honorable discharge of Peress, and also his consideration at Camp Kilmer for what was described as "sensitive work," McCarthy called as a witness Brigadier General Ralph Zwicker, Commanding General of Camp Kilmer. Zwicker further complicated the issue and involved himself when he refused to answer McCarthy's queries on the "sensitive work" because of "the executive order which forbids us to discuss matters of that nature." Extensive cross-examination by McCarthy led to statements by him that Zwicker's own testimony impugned "either your honesty or your intelligence," and declaring him to be a "Fifth Amendment General . . . unfit to wear the uniform" of the United States Army.²⁴

²⁴"Text of Report of Senate Committee That Studied Censure Motion Against McCarthy," New York Times, September 28, 1954, p. 24.

General Zwicker protested to General Matthew Ridgway, the Army Chief of Staff. Ridgway had observed the demoralization of those agencies and individuals who had been earlier objects of McCarthy's attacks, and he had personal knowledge of the importance of morale to the military. He knew what would happen to the Army if every malcontent could get back

at his commanding officer merely by forwarding charges and complaints to McCarthy. Ridgway and Secretary of the Army Robert Stevens agreed to prohibit military officers from testifying before McCarthy's committee. After a luncheon meeting with McCarthy, however, Stevens reversed this stand and promised the Army's "full cooperation." McCarthy's violent explosion to the press after the Ridgway-Stevens decision now called for a further statement from him. It revealed his triumphant evaluation of the encounter: "Stevens could not have given in more abjectly if he had got down on his knees." Reports were circulated that Stevens had "sacrificed the Army." Wry humor was expressed in the Pentagon as high-ranking officers greeted each other by waving white handkerchiefs.²⁵

²⁵Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 61.

Here, perhaps, was the seed of dissension between McCarthy and President Eisenhower, and the issue leading to the Zwicker "abuse," for which McCarthy was later to be censured by his Senate colleagues. Eisenhower, in his regular weekly news conference on March 3, 1954, defended Zwicker and praised him as being one whose "courage and devotion has been proven in peace as well as on the battle-fields of war." He further stated, however, his conviction

that "every governmental employee in the executive branch, whether civilian or in the armed forces, is expected to respond cheerfully and completely to the requests of the Congress and its several committees. . . . It is assumed, of course, that they will be accorded . . . respect and courtesy."²⁶

²⁶"Ike vs. McCarthy--Another Round," U S News & World Report, (36:11), March 12, 1954, p. 101.

The Private

Further straining of the delicate relations between the Investigating Committee and the Department of the Army came with the approaching draft call for G. David Schine, an unpaid consultant in McCarthy's office. An intimate friendship between the millionaire playboy and Roy Cohn, the McCarthy subcommittee counsel, resulted in a barrage of demands by Cohn upon the Army, particularly upon Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson and Secretary of the Army, Robert Stevens. The demands, which resulted in no appreciable success but many minor favors, began with an attempted indefinite deferment for Schine, followed by insistence on a direct commission, a request for the elimination of basic training requirements, assignment in the New York City area, special passes and privileges, and relief from fatigue duties. On one occasion when a Cohn request in behalf of Private Schine was denied, Cohn stated that

certain officers were "making things difficult" for Schine, and that Cohn had a "very long memory" and would "never forget their names."²⁷

²⁷"Excerpts From Transcript of 20th Day of Senate Testimony in Army-McCarthy Dispute," New York Times, May 26, 1954, p. 16.

The Army struck back by releasing a report early in March of 1954 which accused Cohn of threatening to "wreck the Army . . . [and] expose the Army in its worst light," and to "drive Stevens from his office."²⁸

²⁸As quoted in "Cohn, Schine, and Fight," Newsweek, (43:12), March 22, 1954, p. 25.

Subsequent investigation, making use of the highly controversial "monitored telephone calls," seemed to refute the charge that McCarthy had intervened in behalf of Schine, although it was brought out that he "condoned" his assistant's unethical procedures. He further seemed to consider it expedient to rid himself of Schine, as shown by his remark to Stephens: " . . . don't put Dave in service and assign him back to my committee. . . . the newspapers would be back on us. He is a good boy, but there is nothing indispensable about him. . . . It is one of the few things I have seen

[Cohn] completely unreasonable about. He thinks Dave should be a general and work from the penthouse of the Waldorf."²⁹

²⁹"Monitored Records of Telephone Calls," New York Times, June 6, 1954, p. 42.

McCarthy seemed to consider his most valuable contention in the Schine incident the charge that the Army had used its power over Schine as a threat to get the committee to call off its search for Communism in the Army. Adams himself had spoken of Schine as "the hostage," and to McCarthy, this was "blackmail." McCarthy said that Adams had constantly striven to get him to drop the Army inquiry and investigate the Navy and Air Force instead. Adams had offered to "dig up plenty of dirt" on the other services for him, the Wisconsin Republican charged.³⁰

³⁰"A Little Band of Fearful Men," St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Editorial), May 27, 1954, p. 2.

Gradually it became evident to Stevens that the Army could never survive the McCarthy investigation if it maintained its defensive position. In dealing with McCarthy, Stevens learned that cooperation led to compromise, and compromise to defeat. On April 15, 1954, the Department of the Army counter-attacked with a Bill of Particulars, charging

that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations "sought by improper means to obtain preferential treatment for one Pvt. G. David Schine, United States Army, formerly chief consultant of this subcommittee . . ."31 The Army's twenty-nine specifi-

³¹"Text of Army Bill of Particulars," New York Times, April 16, 1954, p. 12.

cations particularly singled out alleged misconduct on the part of McCarthy and his chief counsel, Roy M. Cohn.

McCarthy, on vacation in Texas at the time of the Army announcement, denounced the release of the charges at a time when he was not in Washington. Cohn replied by telegram on behalf of the committee, charging the announcement a "one-sided smear" containing "false, misleading and distorted statements, as well as the outright omission of highly relevant events."32

³²Ibid.

McCarthy formally issued a statement of counter-charges on April 10, 1954, in which he alleged that Stevens and his staff "attempted to discredit the McCarthy investigating committee to expose Communist infiltration in the Army . . ."33

³³"Transcript of First Day's Testimony in Senate Investigation of Army-McCarthy Dispute," New York Times, April 23, 1954, p. 12.

Television Antics

Since McCarthy had now become a party of the defense in the dispute to be heard by his own committee, he relinquished the acting chairmanship to Senator Karl E. Mundt, of South Dakota, next ranking Republican member of the committee. The vacancy thus created was temporarily filled by Senator Henry C. Dworshak, Republican of Idaho. This hearing was then opened to the public, not only to those who were able to attend in person, but also to "the ten million Americans who were watching their television sets . . ."³⁴ The live

³⁴Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 4.

televising of such a hearing certainly could not preclude the eruption of politics for publicity sake.

The hearings dragged on for thirty-six days, and progressively involved much more than the original allegations would seem to have indicated. Here was revealed, however, a direct observation of that which had become known as McCarthyism; that force which might never have been revealed to the American people in its full impact through the media of newspaper and radio.

During the course of the televised hearings, McCarthy presented a two and a quarter page "memorandum" purported to

be a warning from the FBI to the Department of the Army about subversion at Fort Monmouth. Only the skepticism of Joseph N. Welch, Army counsel, and his demand that the document be verified as to its authenticity, revealed that it was a re-typed "summary" of a fifteen-page memorandum which was "materially different in form."³⁵ The fact that McCarthy's

³⁵"Excerpts from Transcript of Tenth Day of Senate Hearings in Army-McCarthy Dispute," New York Times, May 6, 1954, p. 22.

"abbreviated form" was a re-typing of a classified document constituted a legal publication, which in itself involved a possible crime. On the witness stand, McCarthy steadfastly refused to disclose the source of this document and other information, and was only saved from a possible contempt of Congress citation by the cleverness of Ray Jenkins, counsel for the subcommittee. Jenkins ruled that McCarthy could protect his sources of information because he was "a law-enforcing officer . . . ferreting out crime."³⁶ McCarthy had taught the

³⁶Ibid.

nation to despise those witnesses who refused to answer questions put to them in an investigation. Now, before millions of Americans, Welch had led McCarthy to behave in the same manner.

In his televised refusals to disclose the sources of his information, McCarthy repeatedly instructed his informers to defy security regulations, assuring them that their loyalty to him would be rewarded by his confidence. "I would like to notify two million federal employees," he once said, leaning into the microphone in a confidential manner, "that it is their duty to give us any information which they have about graft, corruption, Communism, and treason; and that there is no loyalty to a superior officer which can tower above and beyond their loyalty to their country." This was in direct defiance of President Eisenhower's statement that "The primary responsibility for keeping out the disloyal and the dangerous rests squarely upon the executive branch . . . [and] I am determined to meet this responsibility" To this McCarthy replied, "I have instructed a vast number of federal employees that they are duty-bound to give me information even though some little bureaucrat has stamped it 'secret' to defend himself."³⁷ Senator McClellan, a Democratic member of the

³⁷Michael Straight, Trial by Television, pp. 146, 148.

subcommittee, curtly pointed out to McCarthy and to the nation that "The issue is whether a Senate subcommittee is entitled

to gain by theft what it cannot legally obtain by subpoena."³⁸

³⁸Ibid., p. 148.

As the hearings wore on, the strain began to show in the faces of its participants and in their actions. Only McCarthy seemed unwilling to hasten the final adjournment. All through the sessions, he had appeared fresh, relaxed, full of physical strength and stamina. He had gone off each weekend to campaign in Wisconsin. Yet rarely had his eyes closed and his head sunk on his chest in weariness. "He seemed in some obscure way to need the tension that others shunned, to feed on the conflict that exhausted his opponents, to draw nourishment from inflicting punishment and even from being hated and feared."³⁹

³⁹Ibid., p. 239.

Not until the thirtieth day of the Army hearings were the bare tactics of McCarthyism totally exposed and effectively repulsed. Army Counsel, Joseph Welch, smarting under a McCarthy attack upon one of Welch's law firm associates, assailed the Wisconsin senator's "cruelty" and "recklessness." He struck a hard blow at that which the Senate was later to censure:

"Have you no sense of decency, sir? At long last, have you left no sense of decency?"⁴⁰

⁴⁰"Excerpts from 30th Day of Testimony in Senate Hearings on Army-McCarthy Dispute," New York Times, June 10, 1954, p. 14.

Welch's speech was met by loud and sustained applause. Although the chairman had repeatedly warned against any such demonstrations, the gavel now lay motionless as even some of the participants crowded forward to shake Welch's hand. One writer reported that " . . . McCarthy was remorseful on the following day--not because he had hurt [the young lawyer], but because he had hurt himself."⁴¹

⁴¹Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 253.

For a second time, Welch had demonstrated to the American people the malicious character of McCarthyism. A college professor, who asked that he not be named, commented that "The one good thing that came out of [the hearings] was the presentation of a man like Welch to the American public."

On the thirty-fifth day of the televised hearings, it was assumed by the senators that this was the final day. Every man was conscious of the final impression that would be left on the people of the United States, the "great jury," as they

had frequently been called. But it was not until the following day, number thirty-six in the series, that the final gavel sounded. The last hours were utilized, not to resolve the issues at hand, but to lay the groundwork for political exploitation of the hearings in later campaigns.

The argument ended with little proved beyond doubt. The Army had shown in the hearings that improper pressures had been brought to bear upon them by Cohn. In turn, McCarthy and Cohn had shown that Stevens had bargained with the subcommittee in a manner that, for a man of his high office, was highly degrading if not improper. It remained for McClellan, a Democratic member of the committee calmly watching his enemies waste their strength upon each other, to cut through the fog:

. . . the series of events that . . . made these hearings mandatory will be recognized and long remembered as one of the most disgraceful episodes in the history of our government. . . . Simply to say that this series of events is regrettable is a gross understatement. They are deplorable and unpardonable. There is no valid excuse and justification for this situation having occurred . . .⁴²

⁴²Ibid., p. 259.

McCarthyism Censured

The calendar year of 1954 saw public opinion swinging sharply away from McCarthy and McCarthyism. The popular

pressure brought to bear on the Senate as a whole, especially noticeable in this minor election year, along with a concurrence on the part of many of the senators, brought about a constantly growing awareness of the necessity of the Senate's protecting its dignity.

The Flanders Resolution

Senator Ralph Flanders, Vermont Republican, told the Senate on July 20, 1954, that he intended to introduce a resolution to censure the senator from Wisconsin. Ten days later, on July 30, he submitted this brief resolution: "Resolved, that the conduct of the Senator from Wisconsin, Mr. McCarthy, is unbecoming a member of the United States Senate, is contrary to Senatorial tradition, and tends to bring the Senate into disrepute, and such conduct is hereby condemned."⁴³ It

⁴³"Text of Flanders Address," New York Times, July 19, 1954, p. 7.

was immediately pointed out that the resolution lacked, in its original form, a bill of particulars, but this was submitted in amendment form by Senators Flanders, Morse and Fulbright, alleging misconduct on the part of Senator McCarthy in more than forty past occasions. On the night of August 2, the Senate voted to refer the Flanders Resolution, with

amendments, to a select committee of six members--three Republicans and three Democrats. Vice-President Richard Nixon was directed to appoint the committee, on recommendation of the Senate majority and minority leaders.

The Select Committee

For the job of heading the committee that was to sit in judgment on the conduct of McCarthy, the Senate chose one of its gentlest, mildest members--white-haired Arthur V. Watkins, Republican of Utah. Besides Watkins, those on the committee were: Frank Carlson, Republican of Kansas; Francis Case, Republican of South Dakota; Edwin C. Johnson, Democrat of Colorado; John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi; and Samuel J. Ervin, Jr., Democrat of North Carolina.⁴⁴

⁴⁴"Close-Ups of the Six Senators Named to Special Panel to Study the McCarthy Case," New York Times, August 6, 1954, p. 6.

McCarthy gladly indicated his willingness to "suffer for the cause . . ." He spoke, in a pamphlet distributed by his own office, of other senators who were "afraid to pay the high price in smear and abuse which is heaped upon anyone who really starts to draw blood from the Communists . . ." He then turned his criticism upon President Eisenhower, stating that " . . . the President . . . considered any attempt to

expose Communists in the government as a cheap political trick to embarrass his administration."⁴⁵

⁴⁵"The Truth About Senator Joe McCarthy," a brochure circulated by the McCarthy Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Steve J. Miller, Chairman, pp. 6, 9.

The Findings

The Watkins Committee first consolidated and confined the original allegations to thirteen specific charges, of which, after two weeks of hearings, only two were returned to the Senate for consideration under the standing resolution. These were: (1) that McCarthy failed to cooperate with a Senate Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections, which in 1952 was looking into his activities, and that he had abused the Subcommittee's members, and (2) that McCarthy "intemperately abused" Brigadier General Ralph W. Zwicker when he was conducting one of his own investigations.⁴⁶ The committee further criticized

⁴⁶"Text of Report of Senate Committee That Studied Censure Motion Against McCarthy," New York Times, September 28, 1954, p. 20.

McCarthy's actions cited in three of the other charges, but reported these actions not subject to censure by the Senate.

No Watkins report was necessary for each Senator to make up his mind about Mr. McCarthy. But the report, carefully, competently and conservatively drawn, does help to crystallize the case and makes it impossible for the Senate to avoid the issue . . .⁴⁷

⁴⁷"Mr. McCarthy Is An Issue," New York Times (Editorial), September 30, 1954, p. 14.

Charges and Counter-Charges

The Senate reconvened in special session on November 8, 1954, to consider the report of the Watkins Committee. Very shortly after the presentation of the committee findings by its chairman, one of its members, Senator Case, speaking without the concurrence of the balance of the committee, suggested that McCarthy might avoid censure on the first count by apologizing to members of the Subcommittee whom he was alleged to have abused. Case further broke the unanimity of the committee report by submitting a letter the following week stating that, after further study of the facts, he could no longer vote to censure McCarthy on the Zwicker issue.

McCarthy, throughout the hearings, maintained alternating attitudes of unconcern and belligerence. In his bill of exceptions to the Watkins Report, McCarthy made these main points: (1) Never in the history of Congress has a Senator been censured for conduct which took place in a prior session

of Congress; (2) Never in the history of the Senate had anyone been punished for declining an invitation to appear before a committee; and (3) Innumerable precedents for vigorous, hard-hitting cross-examination could be found in the history of the House and the Senate.⁴⁸

⁴⁸"The Controversy in a Nutshell," U S News & World Report, (37:21), November 19, 1954, p. 38.

The New York Times pointed out editorially the fallacies of McCarthy's prepared statement:

The demagoguery of Senator McCarthy has rarely been revealed in clearer terms. . . . seldom has he shown so unmistakably his contempt for the intelligence of the American people as he has in this speech consisting of a mixture of effrontery and . . . martyrdom.⁴⁹

⁴⁹"Mr. McCarthy As A Symbol," New York Times, (Editorial), November 11, 1954, p. 30.

Wrapping himself in the mantle of anti-Communism, McCarthy declared that "from the moment I entered the fight against subversion, back in 1950 . . . the Communists have said that the destruction of me and what I stand for is their number one objective in this country." To this boast the New York Times replied, "McCarthy came late into the anti-Communist picture, and when he did come he came destructively,

doing more harm to the interests of the United States than he has ever done to the Communist conspiracy, either inside or outside the United States."⁵⁰

⁵⁰Ibid.

McCarthy seemed to be constantly prepared with some striking statement when he found himself within the hearing of the ever-alert reporters, as witness the following remarks: On Senator Flanders, who introduced the resolution of censure--"I think they should get a man with a net and take him away to a good quiet place."⁵¹ On the censure

⁵¹"Text of Report of Senate Committee That Studied Censure Motion Against McCarthy," New York Times, September 28, 1954, p. 24.

proceedings--"The most unheard-of thing I ever heard of."⁵²

⁵²Beverly Smith, "The Job No Senator Wanted," The Saturday Evening Post, (227:20), November 13, 1954, p. 107.

In a more serious vein, McCarthy stated in a press conference, "I don't think the American people are at all fooled. They know I am being censured because I dared to do the bold but

'dishonorable' thing of exposing Communists in government."⁵³

⁵³"McCarthy Defense," New York Times, December 2, 1954, p. 20.

Tugwell points out that during the censure, McCarthy turned his attack on all whom he met, even those who were attempting to defend him. "He had got to the point at which demagogues always, sooner or later arrive. It was McCarthy against any and all opposition. . . . Republicans were split . . . into McCarthyites and followers of Eisenhower. The Democrats could sit back and watch."⁵⁴

⁵⁴Rexford Guy Tugwell, A Chronicle of Jeopardy, p. 422.

Further animosity was created by McCarthy's release to the press of a statement which he planned, he said, to make before the Senate the following day.

I would have the American people recognize and contemplate in dread, the fact that the Communist Party--a relatively small group of deadly conspirators--has now extended its tentacles to that most respected of American bodies, the United States Senate; that it has made a committee of the Senate its unwitting handmaiden.⁵⁵

⁵⁵As quoted in "Joe and the Handmaidens," Time, (64:21), November 22, 1954, p. 16.

McCarthy's charge, in a Wisconsin speech, that some of the Watkins Committee members were biased against him, brought from Senator Watkins the tart reply, "The only time it would be possible to get a completely neutral person would be to select one who was deaf, dumb and blind, and was a moron to start with."⁵⁶

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 17.

Efforts on the part of many senators to abandon the Watkins Committee report and merely "slap Joe's wrists" brought an impassioned plea for support from the Utah senator: "They have heard the junior senator from Wisconsin say that I am both stupid and a coward. It must be remembered that the members of the Select Committee were practically drafted for the job, and, so far as I am concerned, it was the most unpleasant task I have ever had to perform in all my public life. I am asking my colleagues: What are you--and you--and you--going to do about it?" Watkins jabbed his finger at G.O.P. senators. Each remained silent in his place--at least each one who was present. Many had by this time retired from the floor of the Senate to seek a milder rebuke for their colleague, a rebuke that might be less damaging politically.⁵⁷

⁵⁷"Elbow Grease," Time, (64:22), November 29, 1954, pp. 12-13.

The Handshake Casualty

A time-consuming delay in the proceedings, brought about by McCarthy's hospitalization for an elbow injured in shaking hands with an enthusiastic Wisconsin constituent, threatened to extend the hearings past the December 24 deadline and bring the entire issue to stalemate. Fearing the possible charges which might be hurled against them were they to continue with McCarthy absent, the Senate declared itself in recess until such time as he should be able to return.

Much speculation as to the seriousness of McCarthy's injury and the length of his forced absence was voiced both on Capitol Hill and in the press. A brash newsman asked a Bethesda doctor if he thought McCarthy had "taken a powder" on the censure proceedings, whereupon the doctor, straight-faced, replied, "I'm sorry, sir, but I don't know what medication the Senator has taken."⁵⁸

⁵⁸As quoted in "Doing Nicely," Time, (64:23), December 6, 1954, p. 26.

On his return to the floor of the Senate, McCarthy, seeing censure inevitable, hastened the moment of decision by a surprise move to limit debate on his censure to two more days.

The Decision

On December 2, after a series of eloquent, bitter, and impassioned concluding arguments, the hour arrived in which a decision must come. Many amendments had been submitted, "watering down" the original charges or replacing them in total, and a lengthy series of eliminating votes appeared inevitable. It was proposed, however, that with the Senate's approval, the original charges be voted on individually, with the amended addition of a new charge alleging mistreatment by McCarthy of the Watkins Committee.

The Senate chose to protect its rights of investigation by dismissing the Zwicker charge, but voted to condemn the senator on two counts: (1) that he had abused the 1951 Elections subcommittee, and (2) that he had attacked the Watkins Committee and its members "in language that reflected on the dignity and integrity of the Senate."⁵⁹ The vote for censure

⁵⁹"McCarthy's Surge to National Prominence," New York Times, May 3, 1957, p. 14.

carried by a majority of more than two to one. The Democrats, to a man, voted for censure, while the Republicans split evenly. A strange performance was witnessed in the last-minute switch by Senator William F. Knowland, Senate majority leader, who had himself made the motion to establish the committee to

consider charges against McCarthy, and who had recommended to Nixon the Republican members of the committee. Giving as his reason the fact that McCarthy's offenses had been committed before his re-election in 1952, he said he could not "find it in my heart" to condemn him. Said a Republican member of the Select Committee: "He ran out on us."⁶⁰

⁶⁰"A Myth Exploded," Time, (64:24), December 13, 1954, p. 13.

Reactions

The reactions of the public ranged from apathy to fanaticism. Arkansas' Democratic Senator William Fulbright made a forceful point about "the character of what has come to be known as McCarthyism." Illustrative of radical extremes reached by some followers of McCarthy are excerpts from letters received by various senators: "A fine dirty red rat you are, . . ." "Red skunk," "You, sir, are not worthy of being a human being," "I would spit on you . . . but you would not be worthy of my saliva," "Would you please do our country a big favor and drop dead?" "McCarthy is an American. What are you?"⁶¹

⁶¹Ibid., p. 14.

Apparently least concerned with the outcome was McCarthy himself. Asked by a newsman if he felt censured, he laughingly replied, "Well, I wouldn't say it was a vote of confidence!" Regarding his future activities, McCarthy said, "I intend to continue roughly as I have in the past." And suiting his actions to his words, he immediately reopened his investigations of alleged Communist activity in defense plants. For the censure had deprived him of none of his rights and privileges. He still was chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and all of his powers as chairman were untouched.⁶²

⁶²"Rough Road Ahead," Newsweek, (44:24), December 13, 1954, p. 24.

More than ever, McCarthy delighted in painting himself as the country's chief "anti-Communist," and all who opposed him and his tactics as "anti-anti-Communists." He stated on numerous occasions that his most vigorous opponents were known Communists. Interviewed on "Meet the Press," a National Broadcasting Company television program, McCarthy further displayed his "martyr-complex" in his statement, "I've been investigated five times now, all of them because of my investigation of Communism."⁶³ With an undertone of fiscal

⁶³"McCarthy Answers questions about Censure Case," U S News & World Report, (37:16), October 15, 1954, pp. 96-97.

criticism, McCarthy further stated, "During the past twelve years, the United States has paid out in foreign aid a total of eighty-three and a half billion dollars of taxpayers' money for the purpose . . . of fighting communism. But, when Senator Joe McCarthy tries to clean out the Communists and pro-Soviets right in our own government, he is immediately subjected to the heaviest barrage of smear and abuse that has been heaped upon any high official in our history."⁶⁴

⁶⁴"The Truth About Senator Joe McCarthy," a brochure circulated by the McCarthy Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Steve J. Miller, Chairman, p. 15.

McCarthy-Ike Split

A week after the vote there came the first word from the White House since the censure had begun. President Eisenhower personally congratulated weary, browbeaten Arthur Watkins for a "very splendid job."

Within the same week, public sentiment had been freshly stirred by Communist China's brazen announcement that she was holding sixteen American fliers for civil crimes, and did not intend to include them in the reciprocal repatriation, agreed to as a part of the Korean cease-fire agreement. President Eisenhower, hoping for a peaceful settlement of the issue through the framework of the United Nations, urged upon the

American people an attitude of patience and tolerance.

Using these two statements by the President as sufficient provocation, McCarthy openly broke with the administration. Through the issuance of a carefully timed press release, McCarthy "apologized" to the American people for having urged the election of General Eisenhower in the 1952 campaign. He declared he had been "mistaken" in believing Eisenhower would fight Communists vigorously at home and abroad.⁶⁵

⁶⁵"The Last Word?" Newsweek, (44:25), December 20, 1954, pp. 18-19.

McCarthy After Censure

The advent of the Eighty-fourth Congress, with its Democratic majority, afforded a measure of relief in methods of investigation. In applauding the House Rules Committee's crackdown on "investigationitis," the Washington Post and Times-Herald accused the previous congress of " . . . snooping and sniffing which . . . spread more confusion than enlightenment." The editorial singled out "a few legislators" who "have made themselves national figures by investigating abuses or supposed abuses . . . closely allied to popular emotions." It continued, "Their success in publicizing themselves, even though they may have failed utterly in enlightening Congress

or the public, . . . has induced many others to seek an easy access to the television screen and the front pages of newspapers across the country. Congress has thus been diverted in a shocking degree from legislating to probing and witch-hunting."⁶⁶

⁶⁶"Investigationitis," Washington Post and Times-Herald (Editorial), date unknown.

Minority Member

As an anti-administration Republican in a Democratic Congress, McCarthy found his grasp on party power constantly growing weaker, particularly as the major election year of 1956 drew nearer. Those Republicans who were active in political campaigning, either for themselves or for the re-election of President Eisenhower, found it most expedient to ignore the mention of McCarthy and McCarthyism. To support the man and his methods publicly had become dangerous political strategy, and to reject him openly was to encourage a division in party loyalty. Thus denied the recognition he had earlier enjoyed, McCarthy reverted almost to the role of a freshman in the Senate. The swing to a Democratic majority in the Eighty-fourth Congress took from him the chairmanship of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and this, followed by the implied rebuke in the 1956 election, prodded

him into comparative silence. As a Washington correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune wrote, "McCarthy speeches are few these days, and draw little notice in the Senate or in the press. His attendance on the floor is spotty . . ."67

67As quoted in "Army-McCarthy Cast In New Roles After Two Years," Houston Post, April 23, 1956, p. 5.

Fadeout

In the few months that remained in his life, McCarthy made only a few spiritless attempts at a comeback. Now and then, he would get the Senate floor to denounce someone or something, but never with much force and never with much of an audience. Richard Rovere reports that " . . . when he rose, senators would drift out of the chamber, and reporters in the gallery would see a chance to catch lunch . . ."68

68Richard Rovere, "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy," Esquire, (50:2), August, 1958, p. 30.

McCarthy was sick a lot of the time, and frequently hospitalized, though usually for obscure if not imaginary ailments. When his elbow was injured during the censure hearings, for example, McCarthy led the press to believe that he had undergone surgery to have some pieces of glass removed.

Hospital doctors said there had been "no surgery at all."⁶⁹

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 32.

It was frequently reported that he was drinking more and holding his alcohol less well.

The End

On April 28, 1957, McCarthy was admitted to Bethesda Naval Hospital. The announcement was such a common report that it scarcely found space in the crowded columns of newspapers once dominated by that name. Mrs. McCarthy said he had gone for the treatment of a "knee injury," but he was put in the neurological section. Four days later, late in the afternoon of May 2, McCarthy died, "just in time for the seven o'clock news," as he would have said of one of his carefully-timed announcements. Later releases by his doctors attributed death to "acute hepatic infection." Rovera says liquor was a contributing factor, if not the direct cause, of death. " . . . he could probably have held onto life by not drinking, and he elected to drink."⁷⁰

⁷⁰Ibid.

Death creates strange reactions. The walls of the Senate chamber echoed for two days the eulogies of the dead senator. Words of praise fell from lips which had never before spoken kindly of the junior senator from Wisconsin. A few bitter enemies murmured words of sympathy for Mrs. McCarthy, then continued to denounce the fallen foe and his "ism." Some spoke plainly of McCarthy as a drunkard, a victim of alcoholism. Others uttered tear-studded words of praise for a noble warrior who died of a broken heart and a broken spirit, forsaken by those colleagues who should have held high his hands in a righteous cause. The majority uttered words of guarded praise, avoiding carefully any extreme position. Vice-President Richard Nixon made public a telegram to Mrs. McCarthy, voicing a non-committal stand shared by many: "Years will pass before the results of his work can be objectively evaluated, but his friends and many of his critics will not question his devotion to what he considered to be the best interests of his country."⁷¹

⁷¹As quoted in "McCarthy is Dead of Liver Ailment," New York Times, May 3, 1957, p. 1.

CHAPTER III

THE METHODS AND THE MOTIVES

The purpose of this portion of the report is to review and evaluate the material presented in the previous chapter. Richard Nixon's statement at the death of McCarthy, "Years will pass before the results of his work can be objectively evaluated," is still largely true. Before the earth had received the body of McCarthy, however, many writers had rushed into print with evaluations both critical and defensive. Eric Severeid, writing within a week of McCarthy's death, said of him, "His brilliance outran his knowledge, and his ambition outran them both."¹ That McCarthy was a

¹Eric Severeid, "Joseph R. McCarthy," The Reporter, (16:10), May 16, 1957, p. 2.

brilliant man cannot be disputed. That his ambitions were compelled by pure motives is the question of this chapter. Two approaches are made to this evaluation of his motivation: (1) comparison and critical examination of the material presented in Chapter Two, and (2) a study of critical writings, particularly the opinions of editorial writers and commentators.

Youthful Impatience

Accounts of McCarthy's youth indicate that each new endeavor was characterized by a consuming impatience. He put aside his education after grade school in favor of getting started in the task of earning a living. Unsatisfied with a "job," he embarked instead upon a series of business endeavors, either in a managerial position or on his own. When he decided to finish high school, McCarthy threw all else aside, and established records for both speed and academic excellence. Such was his determination in college that McCarthy entirely supported himself with the income from menial tasks that would have been "below" many students. Unwilling to take the time for detailed paper work, McCarthy depended largely on memory. Even in sports, he depended more on brute force than on the development of skills that come only with long hours of training. McCarthy's early law practice reveals a continued impatience. A routine law practice failed to satisfy McCarthy's urge to do big things; so he turned to politics.

Political campaigning provided for McCarthy a new and different challenge. After tasting defeat in an initial campaign, the young lawyer displayed in his next political contest a kind of determination worthy of the later description of one of his critics:

. . . extraordinary power in pursuit of his immediate purpose; single-minded concentration on gaining his objective regardless of the cost

to others or to himself; a capacity to return again and again to his original contention and to refuse to yield it or to modify it, no matter how strongly attacked or how completely demolished it might be.²

²Michael Straight, Trial by Television, pp. 240-241.

As a judge, McCarthy's impatience still was a prominent characteristic, as he disposed of cases with a speed alarming to many. As a Marine officer, his desk job proved too boring so he volunteered for flight duty.

Eric Sevareid said of McCarthy that he "could never wait." Sevareid continued:

At the start of his career he leaped from one political party to another for faster results. Always he took the short cuts: As a lawyer and judge, he got in trouble with the organized bar of his state; as a Marine during the war he was restless in his Pacific Ocean intelligence job and flew bombing missions in the rear gunner's seat. The very war was too slow for the pace of his life, and he quit the war before it was ended to run for office. His short cuts were risky, and could have ruined a lesser man.³

³Eric Sevareid, "Joseph R. McCarthy," The Reporter, (16:10), May 16, 1957, p. 2.

Senatorial Immunity

Particularly during the early days of his career, McCarthy was careful to prepare for an unfavorable turn of

circumstances. As he progressed in his public career, he appears also to have progressed in self-assurance, for these carefully prepared "escape-hatches" became less and less evident.

When McCarthy joined the Marines, he did not resign his office as district judge, but continued technically in office until the end of the term. Upon returning and being re-elected to the post, he again remained in office during the senatorial election of 1946. The constitution of the state of Wisconsin forbids an elected official to run for another public office during his term in any current elective office. In defiance of this, Judge McCarthy proceeded to run for the United States Senate--and without resigning his judgeship. "He was taking no chances. If he had not been elected to the United States Senate, he would still have his judgeship."⁴

⁴"Law Unto Himself," Houston Chronicle (Editorial), June 3, 1954, p. 10.

In his "trial case" before the Tydings Committee, the Owen Lattimore hearings, McCarthy prepared the way for possible conflicting testimony among his ex-Communist witnesses. He prefaced the witness of a suspected Communist or an ex-Communist by telling the committee that the Party often allows their agents to shield themselves by verbally attacking the

Communist line. He warned the committee that Communists lie on principle, and " . . . anyone who came forward to contradict [an ex-Communist witness] would be a liar. Only the unsupported word of [McCarthy's witness] could be taken as gospel."⁵ Still, McCarthy's chief ex-Communist witness,

⁵Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 121.

Louis Budenz, refused in a television interview to repeat, under conditions that would have left him subject to charges of libel, the things that he had said under the protection of immunity.

The fact of Congressional immunity was in itself a valuable means of protection for McCarthy. He was quick to defend his excessive use of immunity by stating that "The Communists . . . of today would take away from the people the right to hear all of the facts from their representatives."⁶

⁶"The Truth About Senator Joe McCarthy," a brochure circulated by the McCarthy Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Steve J. Miller, Chairman, p. 7.

Lattimore, by McCarthy's definition, would undisputedly be branded a Communist, if for no other reason than his comment on McCarthy's use of immunity:

The McCarthy kind of politician resorts to Congressional immunity to build up his charges in a way that would be libelous if first made in the press or on the radio. But once the charge has been made under immunity, the quoting of it does not expose the press and radio to libel actions. A charge made under Congressional immunity has sensational news value.⁷

⁷Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 223.

The New York Times, in an editorial critical of McCarthy's use of Congressional immunity, is careful to defend the fact of immunity per se, but more careful to defend the rights of individual citizens when these two rights might come into conflict:

If a Senator under the cloak of Senatorial immunity is permitted to use the committee investigating procedure to make charges against individuals without basis and without knowledge--merely on the basis of guesswork and hope--the privilege of Senatorial immunity is being definitely overworked to the detriment of individual liberty in the United States.⁸

⁸"The Hensel Affair," New York Times (Editorial), June 22, 1954, p. 26.

The Powerful Press

McCarthy learned at an early stage in his career that a large portion of the population accepts as fact that which

they see in the newspapers. His public life is studded with news-ink testimonials to the truth of this statement.

News-copy about a young lawyer serving as a tail-gunner on a Marine reconnaissance plane in the South Pacific made good reading in his home state. This McCarthy sent home in abundance, accompanied by pictures of "the Captain at his guns." On returning to Wisconsin with an injured leg, the result of a sporting accident, McCarthy was careful to conceal the cause of the injury. The press noted his limp; the press knew he had served as a tail gunner in a combat zone; the press heard him speak of flying shrapnel and the damage it could do; if the press surmised his limp was the result of a shrapnel wound, so much the more effective the copy.

McCarthy's genius for publicity was the one ability that gained for him access to and possession of the nation's front page. If, in his Wheeling, West Virginia, speech he had said that there was Communist infiltration in the State Department, or even that there were an indefinite or a small number of Communists working for the State Department, he would have rated only a small story in newspapers of that area. The majority suspected and took for granted that a few subversives had probably gained governmental positions, but the majority was only passively concerned, and was more than willing to allow department heads to oversee their own responsibilities. McCarthy, however, dealt in neither generalities nor small

terms. He acceded to the two basic rules of sensationalism: (1) be spectacular, and (2) be specific. In so doing, he captured the attention of the nation.

Taylor said of McCarthy that he "made himself into a powerful and deeply-feared national figure by the sheer volume and boldness of his accusatory capacities."⁹ Add to

⁹Telford Taylor, Grand Inquest, The Story of Congressional Investigations, p. 275.

volume and boldness the spicy ingredient of expert timing, and the result is maximum news coverage. McCarthy's press conferences were carefully planned to avoid conflict with the breaking of big news stories that would compete with his for top headlines. A typical publicity scheme of McCarthy's invention was the double headline. Reporters summoned to McCarthy's office at ten in the morning would be met by an office assistant who would say that the senator was gathering a final document of proof for a "shattering revelation" to be made at four that afternoon. The afternoon papers would scream, "Nation Awaits McCarthy Charges," and as this edition was being distributed, the reporters would again gather for the "shattering revelation" that would be headlined in the morning papers. Another McCarthy scheme for publicity was the "news leak," most effectively used in the Lattimore charges. After the appointment of the Tydings Committee,

McCarthy stated at a press conference that he was prepared to release to the committee the name of "the top Russian espionage agent in the United States," but he did not identify the person to the press. After the headline value of this limited information had waned, McCarthy privately told a few newsmen that the man was Owen Lattimore--knowing full well that word would get around and eventually be published without having been formally released by his office. Compounding the trickery of this release was the fact that Lattimore was out of the country at the time of McCarthy's charges, and had no chance to reply to the charges until after McCarthy had exploited them to the maximum.

It is journalistically true to state that the accused is at a disadvantage with his accuser when it comes to headlines and newspaper space. Sensational charges, made with the advantageous element of surprise, include all the elements necessary to good headline copy. But disproof is rarely sensational. "An accusation is positive. It asserts that something sinister and exciting exists. Disproof is negative. It merely demonstrates that nothing sinister or exciting exists."¹⁰ If it does not exist, it is less newsworthy and

¹⁰Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 224.

gets a smaller headline and a smaller story, perhaps only one

on an inside page. Since many people are only "headline readers" or "front-page readers," the accusation persists in the public mind.

The televising of the Army-McCarthy hearings provided another convenient outlet for the McCarthy brand of publicity. As a lawyer, McCarthy made a poor showing; as an actor, a much better one. His line of questioning was not designed to obtain information from the witness, but to impart information, the information of his choosing, to the watching American public. Michael Straight observed that frequently when McCarthy finished speaking, he himself "could not remember what question lay concealed in the snarl of his oratory."¹¹ Welch

¹¹Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 78.

sarcastically told McCarthy, " . . . you have I think something of a genius for creating confusion . . . creating a turmoil in the hearts and minds of this country."¹²

¹²Ibid., p. 241.

McCarthy was very conscious of the cameras, and displayed no little jealousy as to their aim. Each morning and again each afternoon, he appeared freshly shaved, and his face caked with a cream-colored make-up. He glanced up frequently

to see that the photographers were recording his actions. Whenever he found the cameras observing someone else, he seemed prepared with some ruse for drawing the attention of the lens back to himself. McCarthy was capable of going into a tantrum before the television cameras and screaming, "Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, a point of order, a point of order!" Sometimes he would stalk out, announcing that he could "bear no more of this farce," and step into a far corner of the room, out of view of the television cameras, to observe calmly the commotion he had caused. Even these "walkouts" were often carefully timed to meet newspaper deadlines.

Recourse to the Lie

Many of McCarthy's accusations were at least partially true. Many more were based on enough facts known to be true that they bore a strong implication of authenticity. However, when it served the purpose of gaining favorable publicity, McCarthy seemed willing to depart entirely from the truth.

McCarthy's sensational charges at Wheeling, West Virginia, included a statement that he held in his hand the names of the two hundred five Communists in the State Department. Actually, he didn't have any names. "All he had was a letter from James Byrnes to Adolph Sabath giving some figures, without a single name, on loyalty investigations . . ."¹³

¹³Richard Rovere, "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy," Esquire, (50:2), August, 1958, p. 33.

Many writers spoke of McCarthy's inclination toward falsehood. Rovere continued to say that Hitler had discovered the "big lie," but McCarthy had invented the "multiple lie,"-- the lie "with so many particulars, so many moving and interchangeable parts, so many tiny gears and fragile connecting rods that reason exhausted itself in the effort to keep it all in focus."¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid., p. 32.

Lattimore said that McCarthy " . . . is a master not only of the big lie but of the middle-sized lie and the little ball-bearing lie that rolls around and around and helps the wheels of the lie machinery to turn over."¹⁵

¹⁵Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 9.

One writer was willing to grant to McCarthy the benefit of any doubt as to his technical truthfulness. He stated that the senator "usually did not lie outright, but distorted the facts to leave an impression that was false."¹⁶

¹⁶Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 245.

It was interesting that neither McCarthy nor the press

supporting him were in the least embarrassed at having their charges proved false. They just went on making charges and compounding previous charges. "The less there was to say, the louder the Senator said it, and the more voluminously it was repeated. Finally the whole country was in an uproar--over nothing."¹⁷

¹⁷Rexford Guy Tugwell, A Chronicle of Jeopardy, p. 234.

Quasi-Executive

It is interesting to note that the objects of McCarthy's major attacks were the functions of the executive branch of government. The issue thus raised is whether Congress or any of its committees has a right to interfere in the actual functioning of an executive department. "If such a right exists, then the constitutional separation of powers is breaking down at this point, . . . but no such right does exist. . . . It is not a personality that is at stake, . . . it is the spirit of the Constitution, . . . a principle in equity."¹⁸

¹⁸"The Real Issue," New York Times (Editorial), February 23, 1954, p. 26.

Straight specifically attacked McCarthy's motives when

he spoke of "the myth that Senator McCarthy's primary concern was to drive Communists out of government." The reporter commented, "This was doubtful."¹⁹ The members of McCarthy's

¹⁹Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 70.

office staff were not equipped to enforce the nation's security--and it was not their task. On rare occasions, thanks to his system of informers, McCarthy was able to expose security procedures that were weak or ill-defined, but almost without exception, these were already known and already under investigation if not correction. McCarthy merely charged in, with the press at his elbow, to take credit for making the risk known. "McCarthy's primary concern was publicity--to take public credit for the measures the executive branch had already taken or was preparing to take."²⁰ Indeed, in the case

²⁰Ibid., p. 71.

of the Army investigations, senatorial encroachment was so extensive and executive surrender so abject that one writer charged in 1954, "Whether President Eisenhower realizes it or not, Senator McCarthy is now sharing with him command of the Army."²¹

²¹Hanson W. Baldwin, "Who Commands Army?" New York Times, February 28, 1954, p. 59.

McCarthy found also a measure of success in "using" those agencies which he could not dominate. In the Lattimore hearings before the Tydings Committee, McCarthy was unsuccessful in obtaining data he said was on file with the FBI, which he claimed would prove his contentions. So he said all the louder that the data was on file with the FBI, and that it was sufficient to prove Lattimore a Communist. Since the files were unobtainable, the press echoed McCarthy's words, and his purpose was accomplished. McCarthy's failure to gain access to FBI files was also turned to his advantage in a new and clever move. He notified J. Edgar Hoover, in the hearing of the press, to have an FBI agent present at the committee hearings so that he could turn over to the FBI documents which he claimed would show beyond any doubt that Lattimore was a Communist Party member and a Russian agent. Since the documents, once in FBI hands, became secret, no one could know what, if anything, they proved, and McCarthy's description of them would be widely accepted.

McCarthy's methods and those of the FBI came into sharp disagreement on the Fort Monmouth investigations. Hoover, by direct observation gained through many years of experience, had learned methods of dealing with subversion which McCarthy, in his part-time activities on an investigating committee, professed to have mastered in a few months. A portion of Hoover's testimony before the House Appropriations Committee

reveals the differences of opinion and methods:

Counter-espionage assignments of the FBI require an objective different from the handling of criminal cases. In a criminal case, the identification and arrest of the wrongdoer are the ultimate objectives. In an espionage case the identification of the wrongdoer is only the first step. What is more important is to ascertain his contacts, his objectives, his sources of information, and his methods of communication. Arrest and public disclosures are steps to be taken only as a matter of last resort. It is better to know who these people are and what they are doing, and to immobilize their efforts, than it is to expose them publicly and then go through the tireless effort of identifying their successors.²²

²²As quoted in Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 71.

The FBI sent its report headed "Espionage--Russian--Fort Monmouth" to the Pentagon in 1951. The Pentagon did not file the report, but forwarded it at once to the responsible security officers. Their response was to institute surveillance. The last thing they wanted was any indication that suspicion had been aroused. Two years of painstaking work had followed. Then, with publicity agents, reporters, and cameramen at his heels, McCarthy and his staff of "experts" descended upon Monmouth, alerting the few subversives under surveillance, smearing those who had already been cleared, appropriating and quoting from secret records, and flinging out releases to the press. "The Army had been investigating

its Monmouth workers for months before Mr. McCarthy came along. Army investigators found no spies and neither has Senator McCarthy, yet the Senator was given sensational headlines . . . on supposed espionage and communism at Monmouth."²³ Little information of significance was dis-

²³"Fort Monmouth Case," New York Times (Editorial), January 14, 1954, p. 28.

covered by McCarthy, but plenty of significant information was given away.

"McCarthy's rush to Monmouth was typical of his interest in publicity rather than national security. His actions may well have gravely impaired the very security he was claiming to protect."²⁴ Yet six months later it was McCarthy who

²⁴Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 72.

claimed credit for protecting the nation at Monmouth--while Secretary Stevens and the Army were condemned before the nation as "Communist-coddlers."

Unethical Procedures

"McCarthy was not a conventional citizen--he was a law unto himself."²⁵ Thus does a reporter who followed McCarthy's

²⁵Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 261.

activities closely evaluate the senator's unorthodox methods.

Though McCarthy could be and was most demanding of a witness who was scheduled to appear before his committee, he refused to show reciprocal cooperation when called on by another committee. Summoned to appear before the subcommittee on privileges and elections, McCarthy consistently refused to honor the request of his colleagues. After considerable delay, however, he sent the subcommittee a letter stating, "The answer to the six insulting questions in your letter of November 21 is 'no'."²⁶ Not only was McCarthy's treatment of his col-

²⁶"Law Unto Himself," Houston Chronicle (Editorial), June 3, 1954, p. 10.

leagues improper; the following questions which they were prepared to ask him might have revealed additional previous impropriety:

(1) Whether any funds collected or received by you and by others on your behalf to conduct certain of your activities, including those relating to "communism," were ever diverted and used for other purposes inuring to your personal advantage.

(2) Whether you, at any time, used your official position as a United States Senator and as a member of the Banking and Currency Committee, the Joint Housing Committee and the Senate Investigations Committee to obtain a \$10,000 fee from the Lustron Corporation, which company was then almost entirely subsidized by agencies under the jurisdiction of the very committees of which you were a member.

(3) Whether your activities on behalf of certain special interest groups, such as housing, sugar and China, were motivated by self-interest.

(4) Whether your activities with respect to your Senatorial campaigns, particularly with respect to the reporting of your financing and your activities relating to the financial transactions with, and subsequent employment of, Ray Kiermas, involved violations of the Federal and State Corrupt Practices Acts.

(5) Whether loan or other transactions which you had with the Appleton State Bank of Appleton, Wisconsin, involved violations of tax and banking laws.

(6) Whether you used close associates and members of your family to secrete receipts, income, commodity and stock speculation and other financial transactions for ulterior motives.²⁷

²⁷"Questions for Mr. McCarthy," New York Times (Editorial), June 10, 1954, p. 26.

The language of these questions--"personal advantage," "self-interest," "ulterior motives"--would seem to suggest that as early as 1951 there was reason for questioning the senator's motivation.

McCarthy proved also to be incapable of accepting the investigative treatment he accorded to others. He called the censure charges against him by Flanders "vicious" and "dishonest." The witnesses who criticized him were "grossly dishonest." The monitoring of his telephone calls, a practice which he had condoned when applied to his suspect, was

"The most dishonest and indecent thing . . . I have heard of in years."²⁸ McCarthy displayed no remorse at having taken

²⁸Michael Straight, Trial by Television, pp. 245-246.

advantage of Lattimore's absence from the country in making grave charges against him. However, when the Army charges were released in Washington while McCarthy was vacationing in Texas, he violently accused Senator Symington of "violating the . . . rules." McCarthy continued to demand that an investigation of the "news leak" take priority over the Army hearings already scheduled.²⁹

²⁹"McCarthy Will Boycott Inquiry Pending Action on News 'Leak'," New York Times, April 16, 1954, p. 12.

The televised hearings provided countless instances of unethical procedures on the part of McCarthy. A reporter who covered the proceedings stated that "McCarthy did not formulate his questions with a view to obtaining information. He formulated them to convey deadly insinuations to untrained minds transfixed before ten million television sets."³⁰ As a

³⁰Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 79.

lawyer, McCarthy knew that counsel conducting cross-examination was prohibited from asking leading questions or injecting testimony into the wording of the questions. Instances can be found in almost every day's transcript of the proceedings, however, to illustrate that McCarthy ignored this basic legal tenet. The first day of testimony included a sharp interchange between McCarthy and Senator McClellan, a member of the subcommittee, following the injection of new information into one of McCarthy's questions:

McClellan: That is testimony!

McCarthy: May I finish my statement!

McClellan: You are giving testimony. I have a right to object at any time.

McCarthy: Don't object in the middle of my question. Let me state my position.

McClellan: I do not want you testifying unless you want to take the witness stand. Then I do not mind your saying it under oath.³¹

³¹"Transcript of First Day's Testimony in Senate Investigation of Army-McCarthy Dispute," New York Times, April 23, 1954, p. 14.

In the absence of instructions from the chairman that he was out of order, McCarthy ignored McClellan and continued his line of leading questions.

This brings up a basic situation in the hearings which was highly irregular, and the more compounded by the failure of McCarthy's colleague, Senator Mundt, to preside over the hearing in an equitable and judicious manner. The charges

against McCarthy and his staff, brought by Stevens for the Army, served to make McCarthy a defendant before his own investigating committee. "This is a little like saying that Mr. McCarthy has now graciously agreed to investigate himself . . ."³² The fact that Senator Mundt temporarily

³²"The Senate Inquiry," New York Times (Editorial), March 17, 1954, p. 30.

acted as chairman of the proceedings did not by any means indicate that he was in control of the situation. "There can be no doubt that [McCarthy] is still master of the McCarthy subcommittee that is investigating McCarthy."³³

³³"The McCarthy Inquiry," New York Times (Editorial), March 24, 1954, p. 26.

McCarthy demanded and received, of Senator Mundt, the privilege of cross-examination. " . . . this is the first time on record that Mr. McCarthy has been willing to grant such a right to any witness before his committee."³⁴

³⁴Ibid.

The introduction of "doctored documents" before a

judge, or even a quasi-judge such as Mundt, should have been treated as a serious offense, but McCarthy was allowed to commit the offense with no more rebuke than was administered by counsel for the Army.

Personal Subversion

McCarthy was most outspoken on the subject of subversion. Yet McCarthy was openly guilty of a flagrant form of subversion--the undermining of the constitutional separation of powers. Repeatedly McCarthy instructed government employees of the executive branch to ignore orders from their superiors or the classification of documents in order to supply him with information that he desired. Even those who defend McCarthyism are not so naive as to claim this demand justified. Rovere called McCarthy "an open seditionist." He went on to describe McCarthyism's "Loyal American Underground . . . that reported directly to McCarthy and his lieutenants and gave him their primary loyalty."³⁵

³⁵ Richard Rovere, "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy," Esquire, (50:2), August, 1958, p. 32.

When McCarthy attempted to justify such a policy by the statement that "there is no loyalty to a superior officer which can tower above and beyond . . . loyalty . . . to country," he was really confusing "loyalty to country" with

"loyalty to Senator McCarthy." The New York Times proclaimed that by such teaching McCarthy was "issuing an invitation to anarchy, an invitation to every disgruntled federal civil servant, every discontented member of the armed forces, every dissatisfied federal employee to come running to him, in violation of the law, to set things straight."³⁶ It should

³⁶"Is McCarthy Above the Law?" New York Times (Editorial), May 29, 1954, p. 22.

not prove necessary to turn government employees into spies and informers to rid our government of subversion and corruption.

Rev. Francis B. Sayre, Jr., dean of the Episcopal National Cathedral, said of McCarthy's usurpation of unwarranted powers:

It comes mighty close to tempting God when anyone operates on the assumption that he is the divinely constituted guardian of other men's consciences, other men's patriotism, or thoughts. Once the church occupied this role--but when it abused the power, as it sometimes did, the modern world would trust it no longer. Yet today this power is in the hands of men far less responsible . . .³⁷

³⁷As quoted in Marguerite Johnston, "Opposition Arises to Congressional Triumvirate's 'Thought Control'," Houston Post, March 6, 1953, p. 6.

That McCarthy's activities were subversive of foreign policy may be viewed from two sources: (1) McCarthy's extension of his accusations to include foreign allied dignitaries, and (2) reactions from abroad. Speaking from the floor of the Senate, and thus with immunity from any possible action for libel or slander, Senator McCarthy called Clement Attlee, of Great Britain, "Comrade Attlee," and accused him of having joined Dean Acheson, the former Secretary of State, in past "compromises with treason."³⁸

³⁸ Rexford Guy Tugwell, A Chronicle of Jeopardy, p. 377.

International relations suffered as a result of McCarthyism. This can be viewed in the increasing difficulty of carrying on diplomatic relations, and in the attitudes of the foreign press. Lattimore reported from abroad that "the McCarthy charges were disrupting the work of our diplomatic service and lowering its prestige."³⁹

³⁹ Owen Lattimore, Ordeal by Slander, p. 12.

The New York Times, quoting from various foreign news editorials shortly after McCarthy's death, noted the following comments from London newspapers:

He built a monstrous myth and made millions believe it, but like a fool he overplayed it and destroyed both the myth and himself. America was the cleaner by his fall, and is cleaner by his death.

.

He used his position to hound men whose only crime was love of freedom of thought.⁴⁰

⁴⁰As quoted in "Editorial Views on McCarthy," New York Times, May 4, 1957, p. 12.

"Disagreement Indicates Subversion"

"In Joe's book, a McCarthy critic was either a Communist or a fool."⁴¹ McCarthy, of course, would not agree

⁴¹"The Passing of McCarthy," Time, (69:19), May 13, 1957, p. 29.

with this criticism in these words, but his activities seem to support the statement. General Zwicker's loyalty to his commander-in-chief brought about a disagreement between himself and McCarthy, and won for him the brand of "Fifth Amendment General." The Watkins Committee, for their very objective evaluation of the charges brought against McCarthy, was branded by him the "unwitting handmaiden of the Communist Party." Those who dared speak against the "champion of the

anti-Communists" were dubbed "anti-anti-Communists," and classed by inference with known Communists, who also spoke against McCarthyism.

The New York Times, in urging censure and reciting charges against McCarthy, said that McCarthy "can and does . . . bully [those] who may turn up as witnesses before his committee."⁴² Edward R. Murrow very effectively repudiated

⁴²"Men McCarthy Can't Ignore," New York Times (Editorial), July 24, 1954, p. 12.

the McCarthy methodology:

. . . We are not descended from fearful men, not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate and to defend causes that were for the moment unpopular. . . . We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty. We must remember always that accusation is not proof and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law.⁴³

⁴³"Television in Review: Murrow vs. McCarthy," New York Times, March 11, 1954, p. 38.

"Guilt by Association"

Here is a term so over-worked by McCarthy that many have come to the point of automatically associating it with his name. Accused in a critical sense of upholding the philosophy, McCarthy formally embraced it by including a

chapter in his book, McCarthyism, under that title. In his writings, he defended the concept as basically sound.⁴⁴

⁴⁴Joe McCarthy, McCarthyism, pp. 29-30.

McCarthy's charges against Owen Lattimore were largely based on the fact that Lattimore had in times past been associated with people who were then or later became Communists. This was not at all unusual, for Lattimore had lived for many years in the Far East, and had for years been a world traveler. McCarthy carried "guilt by association" to unwarranted extremes in his attack on Welch. The Army counsel, McCarthy charged, was associated professionally with a young lawyer who, in his college days, had been associated with a professional guild that was later declared subversive.

Fulton Lewis, Jr., identifies "guilt by association" as an accusatory expedient,

. . . a time-honored, historically accepted concept, . . . strictly a convenience of the moment to the left wing. When it is used against one of their own, they inveigh against it with outraged cries. But they have not the slightest hesitancy in using the same concept against someone they dislike.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Fulton Lewis, Jr., "'Guilt by Association' or Whose Ox Is Gored," (clip-sheet from an unidentified newspaper, date unknown.)

The McCarthy Ego

George Sokolsky said that McCarthy was "a product of the . . . internal conflict . . ." ⁴⁶ He continued to point

⁴⁶George E. Sokolsky, "McCarthy's Genius Lies in Investigation," Dallas Morning News, December 29, 1953, p. 9.

out that McCarthy was not responsible for the nation's internal conflict, nor was he responsible for the solving of the conflict. Rather, McCarthy stumbled upon the scene at the appropriate time, and the existing internal conflict made of McCarthy a national figure.

Much has been presented so far under more definitive headings which could also correctly be included in this topic. A few unclassified matters of significant egotism remain however.

Straight said that McCarthy "saw all issues and conditions in terms of himself." ⁴⁷ Although this reporter applied

⁴⁷Michael Straight, Trial by Television, p. 243.

the statement primarily to the televised proceedings, we may recognize the validity of its application much further back. McCarthy's first view of the issue of Communism was superimposed with a vision of himself as its champion opponent,

and his glaring success at Wheeling, West Virginia, supplied inertia that threatened to be perpetual. The campaign of 1952 made of McCarthy a central figure, to be endorsed or ignored by a majority of those running for office.

The televised hearings provided every opportunity for self-gratification. "If the chairman or anyone else turned away as he spoke, McCarthy was enraged; his every point of order was 'extremely important.' He wanted to be liked by everyone, but he would rather be hated than ignored."⁴⁸ At

⁴⁸Ibid.

the height of his career, McCarthy claimed for his "ism" that it was a "household word describing a way of dealing with treason and the threat of treason."

Even censure appeared to satisfy a McCarthy craving for attention. The proceedings seemed not to be distasteful to him, for they served to keep him in the spotlight of the nation. McCarthy attended few of the sessions dealing with censure. He spent most of his time in the corridors of the Capitol, visiting with colleagues, constituents, sightseers and reporters. When he was in chambers he was more often seen visiting with another senator than listening to the speaker. Although he tried to camouflage his feelings behind light quips to the press, the censure obviously hurt McCarthy.

Rovere said of him, "He had not lost his following. He had not lost his seat, his seniority, his committee assignments. He had lost the power to panic the United States Senate. . . . Far more important, McCarthy had lost his nerve."⁴⁹

⁴⁹Richard Rovere, "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy," Esquire, (50:2), August, 1958, p. 29.

McCarthy's last few years revealed his willingness to see his party split over the issue of McCarthyism. Never did his ego appear abated by the possibility that his divisive tactics were contributing to a growth of Democratic power. Rather, McCarthy sought by any available means to gain personal sympathy. His appearance on a national television interview was dominated by complaints slanted for sympathy. A last bold attempt for political sympathy came with his dramatic and complete break with President Eisenhower. Finally, in the last days of his life, McCarthy sought personal sympathy through the magnification of his physical ills. But it was now too late for sympathy, too late for a come-back. The man who was described by Sokolsky as a product of the conflict, now became a casualty of the conflict.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It was the purpose of this study to describe the man, Joe McCarthy, and the movement that adopted his name, McCarthyism, and from this to examine McCarthy's motivation, as revealed through his actions and words. The task was approached from two primary aspects. A study was first made to establish an accurate account of who McCarthy was and what McCarthy did. An evaluation of this material was then conducted, partially through comparisons and contrasts pointed out by the writer and partially as found in the observations of editorial writers and commentators.

The methods used to obtain data in this study included the examination of contemporary American history text books, pertinent newspapers and news magazines, and correspondence with senators and ex-senators whose duties brought them in close contact with McCarthy. The writer's observation of McCarthyism censured provided a limited background of personal knowledge and interest.

Conclusions

The facts presented in this study indicate that McCarthy was a man of great determination. The deduction

is inescapable, however, that at least a large portion of his ambition stemmed from a desire for personal publicity. This appears to be adequately revealed in the following general conclusions:

1. McCarthy's early life revealed an innate determination for recognition, whatever his field of endeavor. This was revealed in his schooling, his early jobs, his military experiences, and his political activities.

2. The privilege of senatorial immunity was used by McCarthy to unwarranted extremes, accruing more to his personal advantage than to the advantage of the American people, for whose benefit the privilege was intended.

3. McCarthy was willing to use the American press for his own personal advantage. His news releases were invariably sensationalized, and timed to gain maximum attention.

4. Truth served McCarthy only as a matter of expediency. When it better served his purpose, he was capable of concealing the truth in a mass of misleading statements.

5. McCarthy was guilty of a direct attack upon the constitutional separation of powers. He deliberately and defiantly attacked the executive department, assuming prerogatives known by him to be those of the president.

6. McCarthy was personally guilty of subversion. He openly advised government employees to disregard federal security regulations and the orders of their superiors in order to make available information that would strengthen McCarthyism.

7. McCarthy was in many instances guilty of unethical procedures, particularly when his actions could serve the purpose of promoting his own publicity.

8. McCarthy appeared convinced of his own superiorities. In many ways he demonstrated an egotism which dominated his actions and at least partially explained his motivation.

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APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE WITH SENATORS AND EX-SENATORS

In an attempt to determine and evaluate a few samplings of current opinion about the continuing effects of McCarthyism, a brief questionnaire was prepared and mailed to fifteen senators and ex-senators. These were selected because of their close contact with McCarthy as a part of their official duties in Washington. Of the fifteen, only six replied; of these six, three refused to answer the questionnaire or make any comment; and of the three who did return the questionnaire, one refused permission to quote from it.

If all questionnaires had been answered and returned, still the sampling would have been inadequate from which to draw specific conclusions, but general implications may be even more significant as a result of these refusals to comment. Certainly it is recognized that senators are busy, but the percentage of refusals appears too great to be explained totally in this way. Sixty percent failed to reply at all; eighty percent refused to answer the questionnaire; and eighty-seven percent were unwilling for their views to be quoted.

PERSONS TO WHOM QUESTIONNAIRES WERE SENT

- ** Ralph E. Flanders, Republican, Vermont
- * Wayne Morse, Democrat, Oregon
- * J. W. Fulbright, Democrat, Arkansas
- ** Richard M. Nixon, Republican, California
- * Arthur V. Watkins, Republican, Utah
- * Edwin C. Johnson, Democrat, Colorado
- * Frank Carlson, Republican, Kansas
- Francis Case, Republican, South Dakota
- * John C. Stennis, Democrat, Mississippi
- * Samuel J. Ervin, Democrat, North Carolina
- * Herman Welker, Republican, Idaho
- * John W. Bricker, Republican, Ohio
- Barry Goldwater, Republican, Arizona
- ** Lyndon B. Johnson, Democrat, Texas
- *** Price Daniel, Democrat, Texas

* Did not reply to letter of request.

** Refused to comment on subject.

*** Refused to grant permission to quote from comments.

COPY OF LETTER SENT WITH QUESTIONNAIRES

Box 483
Huntsville, Texas
March 3, 1959

Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Senator _____;

I am a graduate student at Sam Houston State Teachers College, Huntsville, Texas. I am currently conducting a research on McCarthy and McCarthyism. It is my purpose to reveal at this later date, insofar as it may be possible to establish reasonable conclusions, the continuing effects of McCarthyism.

Your contact in Congress with the late Senator McCarthy, and your observation of subsequent investigation procedures, combine to make your reactions of inestimable value. May I ask, therefore, the favor of your reply to the questions on the attached sheet, along with any further comment you may deem appropriate. No responses will be credited to their author unless permission is specifically stated in the reply.

It is my desire that this work may add insight to both the value of investigation and the danger of certain investigation procedures. I shall be grateful for that which you may be able to contribute.

Respectfully,

/s/ Frank Deaver
Frank Deaver

Enclosure

Questionnaire: Effects of McCarthyism

Return To: Frank Deaver, Box 483, Huntsville, Texas

"You _____ have my permission to quote from statements on
(DO or DO NOT)
this page and/or attached pages."

Signed _____

- - - - -

1. Do you believe McCarthyism served the purpose of awakening our country to the dangers of subversion?

2. Do you believe the investigation procedures used by McCarthy to have been necessary to the exposure of subversion?

3. Do you feel that McCarthyism materially weakened the position of organized Communism in this country?

4. Do you believe that the censure of McCarthy weakened the powers of Congressional committees?

5. Did the McCarthy censure, in your opinion, materially influence party strength in following Congressional elections?

6. Do you believe that personal ambition provided a significant portion of McCarthy's motivation, in addition to or in place of his avowed purposes?

APPENDIX B

SENATE COMMITTEES RELATED TO MCCARTHYISM

The Tydings Committee:

Millard E. Tydings, Democrat, Maryland, Chairman

Theodore F. Green, Democrat, Rhode Island

Bryan McMahon, Democrat, Connecticut

Bourke Hickenlooper, Republican, Iowa

Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., Republican, Massachusetts

The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations:

Joseph R. McCarthy, Republican, Wisconsin, Chairman

Karl Mundt, Republican, South Dakota, Acting Chairman during Army-McCarthy hearings

Henry Dworshak, Republican, Idaho, temporary member during Mundt's chairmanship

Charles Potter, Republican, Michigan

Everett M. Dirksen, Republican, Illinois

John McClellan, Democrat, Arkansas

Stuart Symington, Democrat, Missouri

Henry M. Jackson, Democrat, Washington

The Watkins Committee:

Arthur V. Watkins, Republican, Utah

Frank Carlson, Republican, Kansas

Francis Case, Republican, South Dakota

Edwin C. Johnson, Democrat, Colorado

John C. Stennis, Democrat, Mississippi

Samuel J. Ervin, Jr., Democrat, North Carolina

APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY OF INDIVIDUAL NAMES
CITED IN THIS STUDY

NAME	PAGE
Acheson, Dean	12, 13, 78
Adams, John	23, 28
Attlee, Clement	78
Budenz, Louis	58
Carlson, Frank	37
Case, Francis	37, 39
Cohn, Roy	26, 27, 28, 29, 35
Dworshak, Henry C.	30
Eisenhower, Dwight D.	11, 17, 18, 25, 32, 37, 48, 49, 84
Ervin, Samuel J., Jr.	37
Flanders, Ralph	36, 72
Fulbright, J. William	36, 46
Hiss, Alger	12
Hoover, J. Edgar	68, 69
Johnson, Edwin C.	37
Jenkins, Ray	31
Kerr, Jean Fraser (see McCarthy, Mrs. Joseph R.)	
Knowland, William F.	45
LaFollette, Robert M., Jr.	9, 10
Lattimore, Owen	15, 58, 62, 68, 73, 78, 81

NAME	PAGE
McCarthy, Mrs. Joseph R. (nee Jean Kerr)	11, 52, 53
McCarthy, Timothy	5
McClellan, John	32, 35, 74
Marshall, George C.	16, 17
Morse, Wayne	36
Mundt, Karl E.	30, 74, 75, 76
Nixon, Richard M.	37, 46, 53
Peress, Irving	21, 22, 23, 24
Ridgway, Matthew	24, 25
Schine, G. David	26, 27, 28, 29
Stennis, John C.	37
Stevens, Robert	25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 35, 70, 75
Stevenson, Adlai	18
Symington, Stuart	73
Taft, Robert A.	10, 18
Truman, Harry S.	12
Tydings, Millard	15
Watkins, Arthur V.	37, 43, 48
Welch, Joseph N.	31, 33, 34, 63, 81
Wiley, Alexander	9, 11
Wilson, Charles	26
Zwicker, Ralph	24, 38, 79

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Purpose

It was the purpose of this study to search among McCarthy's various activities and statements for clues which might combine to reveal more about the man and his motivation. Two major approaches to the study were examined: (1) factual data, matters of record, were studied for the purpose of reporting relevant instances of what McCarthy did and what McCarthy said; and (2) commentary of other writers was studied and compared, consideration being given to the biased approach of the majority.

Methods

The methods used to obtain data in this study included the examination of contemporary American history text books, pertinent newspapers and news magazines, and correspondence with senators and ex-senators whose duties brought them in close contact with McCarthy. The writer's observation of McCarthyism censured provided a limited background of personal knowledge and interest.

Findings

The facts presented in this study indicate that McCarthy was a man of great determination. The deduction is inescapable, however, that at least a large portion of his ambition stemmed from a desire for personal publicity. This appears to be adequately revealed in the following general conclusions:

1. McCarthy's early life revealed an innate determination for recognition, whatever the field of endeavor. This was revealed in his schooling, his early jobs, his military experiences, and his political activities.

2. McCarthy appeared convinced of his own superiorities. In many ways he demonstrated an egotism which dominated his actions and at least partially explained his motivation.

3. The privilege of senatorial immunity was used by McCarthy to unwarranted extremes, accruing more to his personal advantage than to the advantage of the American people, for whose benefit the privilege was intended.

4. McCarthy was willing to use the American press for his own personal advantage. His news releases were invariably sensationalized, and timed to gain maximum attention.

5. Truth served McCarthy only as a matter of expediency. When it better served his purpose, he was capable of concealing the truth in a mass of misleading statements.

6. McCarthy was guilty of a direct attack upon the constitutional separation of powers. He deliberately and defiantly initiated actions known by him to be the prerogatives of the executive department.

7. McCarthy was personally guilty of subversion. He openly advised government employees to disregard federal security regulations and the orders of their superiors in order to make available information that would strengthen McCarthyism.

8. McCarthy was in many instances guilty of unethical procedures, particularly when his actions could serve the purpose of promoting his own publicity.

Approved:

J Supervising Professor *J*