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McCarthyism in Utah

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MC CARTHYISM IN UTAH

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of History

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

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Master of Arts

by

Richard Swanson

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MC CARTHYISM IN UTAH

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Department of History

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ABSTRACT

The exaggerated anti-Communist crusade of Senator Joseph McCarthy allegedly gained the support of a majority of Americans during the early 1950's. It is historically important and interesting to question that supposition by considering the character of McCarthy's following in each state. This study shows that in Utah sympathy for the second Red Scare abounded and evidences of McCarthyism were readily apparent.

Three indicators illustrate Utah's support for the Wisconsin senator. The defeat of Elbert Thomas in 1950 dramatically epitomizes the successful use of incriminating allegations effectively employed by McCarthy. The election, or re-election, of McCarthy supporters and the defeat of at least one critic (Reva Beck Bosone) indicates voter sentiment. Finally, the apparent advocacy of numerous civic leaders for the senator's accomplishments and methods provided Utahns with ecclesiastical and social justification for his questionable exploits.

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This thesis, by Richard Swanson, is accepted in its present form by the Department of History of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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CHAPTER I

TOWARD ANTI-RED HYSTERIA

In the early months of 1950, Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin embarked on what may be recorded as a most energetic attempt to rid the United States of persons linked, even remotely, with Communist sympathies or associations. Capitalizing on a prevalent mood of disgust with foreign policy failures, the junior senator offered the oversimplified explanation that Communists had infiltrated high-level State and Defense Department positions. McCarthy viewed the foreign failures as a deterioration of the country's place as guardian of democracy and the leader of nations immediately following World War II. He claimed that appeasement of the Russians at the Potsdam and Yalta conferences, the detonation of an atomic bomb in the Soviet Union, the fall of mainland China to Mao Tse-tung, and the advent of a new war, a "police action," in Korea all confirmed his beliefs in a disarrayed and misled government. These explanations were particularly appealing to political enemies of Truman, or conservatives bent on wrecking liberal political power, and to the less educated seeking a simple explanation for post war anxieties and failures.
After four years of witch hunt activities, McCarthy's role in American politics was indeed significant. He had chaired the powerful Senate Investigative Committee, served as a decisive factor in numerous state elections, and influenced the actions or apathy of many elected officials. Most important, he was recognized by many Americans as having done much to clear the nation of "pinko sympathizers" and "fifth amendment Communists." Numerous books and a myriad of articles on McCarthyism, and mention of his exploits in virtually every college American History text attest to the significance of his influence.

Of course, McCarthy and the methods of incrimination and "guilt by association" which came to bear his name did not receive uniform national acceptance. Catholic laborers and farmers, for example, more readily condoned McCarthyism than did Protestant businessmen or college graduates. A myriad of personal circumstances or conditions contributed to a person's acceptance or rejection of the senator's questionable tactics: party affiliation, economic status, profession, religion, or cognizance of world affairs, to mention but a few. McCarthy remarkably captured the "mood" of America and successfully exploited the growing fear of communism which characterized the nation after the Second World War.

Utahns shared with the nation a deep concern for the "lost" countries of Eastern Europe and Asia and the disclosure of seemingly endless

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1 Discussion of the political, social, religious and economic backgrounds of McCarthy's supporters and critics is made in Chapter II.
spy networks in America. Most of the state's residents were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon Church) and many looked to the church's leaders for guidance in political, as well as spiritual, matters. This study will consider the question of Utah's acceptance of McCarthyism and how Utahns tackled the often conflicting needs for security and freedom which confronted them in the McCarthy issue.

It has been twenty-five years since McCarthy polarized American opinion, and attempting to determine his influence after so long is a formidable task. The use of questionnaires which if administered during or immediately after an event are of tremendous value, becomes of minimal worth after a few years, during which a respondent's opinions are susceptible to re-evaluation and change. Letters by constituents to politicians or by readers to newspapers represent only the sentiment of an individual, possibly much to the neglect of a contradicting "silent majority." Editorials, it may be argued, indicate the feelings of one man or, at best the sentiments of a small opinionated group, who may or may not mirror the beliefs of their community. Nevertheless, certain indicators do exist.

As the issue of Communists-in-government became more popular, the tendency of anti-Red politicians to arbitrarily link opponents with leftist ideals or socialist goals became increasingly evident. These charges might have been totally unfounded, thus warranting their being labeled anti-
Communist "political dynamiting," but evidence of their use in Utah politics serves as a first indicator of McCarthy's influence in the state.

By virtue of their influence in helping to shape public opinion, the attitudes of Latter-day Saint Church authorities provide further indication of McCarthy's popularity in Utah. How these men felt about the controversial senator from Wisconsin, and perhaps more important, what policies they initiated in response to his witch hunt activities provide an idea of that popularity among Mormons. Perhaps the most accurate evaluation of McCarthyism in Utah, however, stems from a study of the view endorsed by the state's politicians. They, more than anyone else, attempted to discern and propagate the opinions of their constituents, if for no other reason than that of political expediency.

Because McCarthy's rise resulted primarily from fear of an expanding communism, the events which fostered the pre-1950 insecurity need to be given considerable attention. They, particularly, serve as a valuable introduction to the phenomenon of McCarthyism. In the years immediately after World War II, the United States, because of its war victory, wealth, and active participation in summit conferences in Europe, accepted responsibility for the containment of international communism. In contrast to the isolationism which characterized public sentiment following the First World War, the internationalism of the Wilsonian era became

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2 This term was effectively coined by Profession Frank H. Jonas in "The Art of Political Dynamiting," The Western Political Quarterly X (1957), 374.
Increasingly evident and was greeted by widespread public approval. As a result of this growing interest in maintaining worldwide peace, the United States played a commanding role in the establishment of the United Nations, and has since become an active member of numerous other defense alliances.

Accompanying this increased participation in the peacekeeping process was a dramatic shift in the attitude of the nation toward the Soviet Union. Athan Theoharls, in his account of the postwar hysteria, indicated that prior to 1945, "majority opinion supported Roosevelt's efforts to promote mutual trust and understanding with the Soviet Union." Harry Truman initially tried to emulate his predecessor's trust in the Communists but, by 1947, a number of events had transpired which generated mutual distrust and eventual Cold War politics. In response to recent moves by the Russians, first into Iran and later into Greece and Turkey, for example, President Truman, on March 12, 1947, declared to Congress: "I believe that it must be the foreign policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside

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4 Other alliances included: NATO, CENTO, ANZUS, and SEATO. More recently, however, disappointments in Vietnam have caused Americans to rethink their peacekeeping responsibilities throughout the world.

pressures. This timely warning, later called the "Truman Doctrine," formed one basis for the president's dealings with the Soviet Union.

Within a year, relations between the United States and Russia had virtually deteriorated in Europe. The Soviet Union, hoping to reap political harvest from the economic decadence of much of the war-torn continent, made aggressive moves to instigate riots and cause political unrest. In an effort to counterbalance this growing Communist threat, President Truman instigated the European Recovery Program which, over a period of three years, provided over $12 billions in economic aid to that part of the world. Called the "Marshall Plan," this program proved an amazingly successful combatant to communism. Still another confrontation wedged wider the gap in Soviet-U.S. relations. Fearing the increased threat of a unified Germany, made evident by the joining of British, French and American sectors of Western Germany, in June, 1948, the Soviet Union began to blockade the city of Berlin from essential goods. Again, the president reacted, this time in the form of an enormous airlift of some 2.5 tons of fuel, food and raw materials to the distressed city. These incidents illustrate the growing hostility which accompanied post-war international relations and the distrust and eventual fear which American began to have for the Russians. That attitude peaked with the fall of China and the Soviet Union's detonation of the atomic bomb in 1949, preparing the way for McCarthyism a year later.

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6 U.S. Congress, House, President Truman to representatives of the 80th Cong., 1st sess., March 12, 1947, Congressional Record, XCIII, 1951.
The importance of the Nationalist defeat on mainland China as a contributor to the anti-Red hysteria of the early 1950's should not be underestimated. China had been recognized as the United States' chief Asian ally following the Second World War and since then Americans had extended huge amounts of military and non-military aid to the Chiang government. The Nationalists, however, were plagued with awesome problems: political corruption, widespread poverty, inflation, and disorganization. Paramount among Chiang's difficulties was the threat of a group of well-disciplined Communists under the astute leadership of Mao Tse-tung. When, in late 1945, civil war broke out between the two factions, President Truman sent Secretary of State George C. Marshall to China in a futile attempt to mediate some form of agreeable coalition. Despite Marshall's efforts, however, the civil war raged on.

By 1947, though continuing to sustain an advantage in manpower and supplies, the Nationalists were beginning to collapse under the assault of the better-trained Communists. In response, Truman sent yet another emissary, General Albert Wedemeyer, to the Asian county; but upon his return and report of the deteriorating situation, American leaders concluded that "nothing less than full-scale American military participation would turn the tide in favor of the Nationalists." Intervention, thought
Truman, was not only foolish but contrary to the expressed popular will of Americans.⁷

Eventually, of course, Mao's forces drove the Nationalists to the island of Formosa. As if to confirm Asian fears that the United States did not feel obligated to protect them from Soviet advances, Secretary of State Dean Acheson declared that if such an attack did occur, "the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations."⁸

This refusal of government leaders to take an authoritative stand against the spread of communism promoted speculation that they might lack a total commitment to the containment of communism if, indeed, they were not actually involved in the Soviet spy plot themselves. It took but a few well-publicized and superficially documented examples of internal subversion to confirm these impressions to a great many Americans.

Politically, the pre-McCarthy era was characterized by increased criticism of New Deal policies which culminated in 1946 with Republican control of both houses of Congress and the election of Eisenhower to the presidency in 1952. President Truman inherited postwar problems which he felt quite inadequately prepared to solve: inflation, disarmament, Soviet


relations with respect to Europe and Asia, and labor unrest, among others. Even economic prosperity, which should enhance an incumbent's popularity, seemed to challenge the Democratic Party. People were generally satisfied with things as they were and, accordingly, became noticeably more conservative in their political thought. They reacted against encroachments by the federal government on their personal lives, drastically increased taxes, and the burdens of yet another foreign war. Such fears seemed only further warranted by the apparent tendency of the economy toward inflation.

Postwar prosperity resulted from the remarkable ability of the United States to meet the enormously increased demand for consumer goods. Returning servicemen were anxious to enjoy the luxuries they were so long denied. Foreign countries throughout the world looked to this nation for commodities with which to rebuild their war-torn societies. Such programs as the Marshall Plan freely spent American energy and wealth for those countries. In its fight against communism, the United States allocated massive defense budgets, not only for itself, but also for the defense of its allies. Americans were spending as they had never done before and economists were becoming more concerned by the uncontrollable economy; especially following the virtual disbandment of the wartime Office of Price Administration. By July 1, 1946, with the discontinuance of price controls,

sharp inflation set in; for the Democrats, it could not have come at a more inopportune time. Republicans were aggressively, and successfully, regaining control of Congress. 10

In addition to these challenges to the Democratic Party, public opinion polls seemed to convince leaders of the president's party that Harry Truman could not win in the coming 1948 national election. Yet, despite efforts to draft General Eisenhower (whose party affiliations were as yet undecided) or Justice William O. Douglas, Truman's insistence on running assured him the nomination. Almost immediately, two splinter groups broke from the Democratic Party. In the South, delegates opposed to the party's progressive civil rights platform organized the State's Rights Democratic Party with Strom Thurman as its presidential candidate. Among the more liberal of the Democrats, a left wing emerged in opposition to Truman's rather tough stand against the Communists. Neither of these groups commanded a great following, but their presence indicated substantial displeasure among Democrats with the president. The Republicans, assured by polls of an easy victory, nominated Thomas E. Dewey of New York on the third ballot.

President Truman's surprising victory over Dewey was interpreted by the nation's chief executive as proof that Americans approved of his promise for continued domestic reform. In his inaugural address of

January 20, 1949, Truman announced what he called his "Fair Deal," which included, among other things, an increase in the minimum wage, extension of the Social Security System, and expansion of the Reclamation Bureau's activities. The president's re-election, however, probably meant much more than simply support for a continuation of New Deal policies under "Fair Deal" headings. Ironically, he won primarily because of his progressive civil rights, labor and anti-Communist stands.  

Before 1950, the discussion of Soviet agents in U.S. Government positions greatly enhanced the increasingly popular belief that communism was successfully conquering the world. As early as 1938, Martin Dies, a Democratic Congressman from Texas, had charged that the government was literally saturated with Communists and "fellow travelers." Though Dies' accusations appear less than substantiated (he might be considered McCarthy's predecessor), in February, 1943, President Roosevelt established an "interdepartmental commission" with the purpose of screening suspected and alleged government subversives. Later, this agency

11 The two splinter groups which opposed Truman's civil rights programs and his stand against communism served only to dramatize the president's enthusiastic support for what appear to have been popular platforms. As a result, these dissaters helped to re-elect the president. With respect to labor, Truman received support by demanding the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act.


13 Ibid., p. 356.
prepared a list of questionable organizations, membership which might indicate Communist sympathies. Their methods, though, appeared anything but judicial in character. The changed conditions of the postwar period, culminating in heightened Cold War hostilities, wrought a denial of basic rights for suspected employees, while some government agencies lumbered through indiscrete public hearings to the detriment of the accused.\(^\text{14}\)

Nevertheless, it appeared that Truman was satisfied with the operations and competencies of the inherited security-insurance departments. He is quoted on one occasion as having said: "The security agencies of the government are well able to deal quietly and effectively with any Communists who sneak into the Government without invoking Gestapo methods."\(^\text{15}\) That image of the nation's security programs suffered a noticeable setback, however, following the revelation of three sensational spy cases.

The first of these disclosures occurred in June, 1945, when FBI agents raided the New York offices for a scholarly magazine of Far Eastern Affairs, \textit{Amerasia}, and found literally hundreds of "top secret" government documents.\(^\text{16}\) The subsequent arrest of a long-time Foreign Service Officer, 

\(^{14}\)Ibid. \\
John Stewart Service, shocked much of the country into a realization of the roots of Soviet espionage. In 1946, a second case dominated the headlines of the nation's newspapers when the Canadian Royal Commission reported the disclosure of an immensely complex spy ring that had been involved in sending atomic secrets to Moscow. Within months, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover had notified the president of an equally sensational discovery in the United States. Two ex-Communists and confessed spies, Elizabeth Bentley and Whitaker Chambers, revealed to agents that Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Harry Dexter White, among others, was directly associated with persons known to be Soviet spies. Indeed, there was no evidence that White had actually done any spying; yet, as late as 1953, the White case served critics of the Truman administration as an example of the president's "soft on communism" policy. Perhaps more important, however, as Cabell Phillips has suggested, "President Truman could no longer be certain that his instincts for tolerance would serve the national interests." Each case, in turn, confirmed a growing suspicion that Communists had infiltrated the government.

The success with which the Communists-in-government theme was used for political advantage is illustratec by the Republican victory in the Congressional elections of 1946. Considerable weight was placed on their

17 Link & Coben, The Democratic Heritage, p. 554.
19 Ibid., p. 360.
promise to clean Communists and fellow travelers out of the government.

Truman responded to a growing awareness of the potential harm the Communist subversive issue might have for his party by establishing the Loyalty Review Board (L.R.B.) later that year. It was the purpose of this agency to investigate the security clearance of all federal employees or applicants.

The L.R.B. had been in operation for some four years, however, when Seth B. Richardson disclosed before a Senate Committee in 1950 that

Not one single case or evidence directing toward a case of espionage has been disclosed in the record. Not one single syllable of evidence has been found by the FBI indicating that a particular case involves a question of espionage.\(^2^0\)

Though the Loyalty Review Board failed in its attempts to find subversives, it nevertheless incorporated many of the sensational methods previously used by Martin Dies and which would later be successfully exploited by Senator Joseph McCarthy. Such denial of legitimate investigative methods was a prime criticism directed at the L.R.B. by many liberals.\(^2^1\)

Unfortunately, the trail of sensationalism, admittedly spotted by an occasional valid revelation, did not stop with the creation of the L.R.B. In 1947, the attorney general issued another long list of subversive organizations, similar to that compiled by Roosevelt's interdepartmental commission. States passed loyalty oath requirements for many of its

\(^2^0\) Ibid., p. 364. Phillips does not document his references to facilitate original research.

\(^2^1\) Ibid., p. 363.
employees, especially those in education. In June, 1948, indictments were handed down against twelve leaders of the Communist Party of America, including Earl Browder's successor, William Z. Foster, and others in the party's hierarchy. The trial and eventual conviction of these men under the Smith Act of 1940 received considerable national attention through the various news media.

Undoubtedly the most sensational of the pre-McCarthy spy cases, however, came when Whitaker Chambers reiterated charges he had made some two years before against a State Department official, Alger Hiss, whom Chambers accused of espionage. Hiss had grown to prominence in the State Department, having traveled with the president to Yalta (though he did not actively participate in the conference) and as an aide to Secretary Edward Stettinius at the first United Nations conference in San Francisco. At the time of Chambers' accusations, he was head of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

In a number of widely publicized charges and countercharges, which spanned a six month period, it was concluded by the publicized investigations that Hiss was actually involved in Soviet espionage; but because of the expiration of the statute of limitations, he was tried and convicted simply of perjury. At this time of heightening fears, though, the Hiss trial had a polarizing effect; to many he was an American traitor, but to others his guilt remained unproven.
In the elections of 1950 and 1952, the Communists-in-government issue increasingly permeated President Truman's strained relations with Republican congressmen. The administration was a natural target for the Red-hunting wave which preceded McCarthyism. In many states, legislatures took the initiative, and discretely implied disappointment with the president's ineffectiveness, by establishing their own Un-American Activities Committees and promoting the use of loyalty oaths and security checks. In New York, a book entitled Red Channels gave what was promoted as a list of alleged Communist connections of some 150 writers, actors, and others in the entertainment industry.\(^2^2\)

In March, 1949, another government official, Judith Coplon, was charged with delivering secret documents to a Soviet agent. Her trial and conviction were well publicized and attracted a great deal of national attention. When a British scientist, Dr. Klaus Fruchs, was convicted of turning over details on the manufacture of atomic bombs to the Russians, American disdain reached an understandable peak. Monopolization of the atomic bomb had given Americans an attitude of confidence and responsibility in world affairs. When it was learned that the Russians had so quickly acquired access to that same awesome power, the United States public pointed to espionage for an easy explanation. Incriminated in Dr. Fruchs' undercover activities were four Americans: Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, who were executed for their commanding role, and Harry Gold and Martin Sobell,

\(^2^2\) Ibid., p. 373.
both of whom received heavy prison sentences. It is little wonder that Americans were quick to believe that the very core of the Executive Department was infested with Communists.

The events and conditions cited above, foreign policy failures and Cold War relations, growing displeasure with the Truman administration, the fall of mainland China, and the revelation of numerous spy networks incensed the American people. They demanded an immediate answer and one man, Joseph McCarthy, provided them with a plausible explanation. His rise and career, explanations for his success, and the question of loyalty versus freedom need careful consideration if an understanding of McCarthyism in Utah is to be attained.
CHAPTER II

MC CARTHY'S RISE: PRECIS AND EXPLANATIONS

The anxieties which characterized much of the postward period culminated in the national hysteria of the early 1950's and the exploitation of the Communists-in-government issue by Senator Joseph McCarthy. On February 9, 1950, before a crowd of Republican women, gathered in Wheeling, West Virginia, McCarthy disclosed:

While I cannot take the time to name all of the men in the State Department who have been named as members of the Communist Party and members of a spy ring, I have here in my hand a list of 205 that were known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping the policy of the State Department. ¹

The senator's declaration did not evidently immediately attract the nation's attention. Within a few days, however, McCarthy had repeated his accusations before audiences and eager newsmen in Salt Lake City and Reno; his five year witch hunt had begun. Before he was censured by the Senate, in December, 1954, McCarthy had ruined, through accusations built upon

¹ One of the numerous accounts of McCarthy's accusation, this one was recorded by the Wheeling Intelligencer, February 10, 1950, front page.
guilt by association, the reputations of many honest and loyal government officials.²

Who was this rising champion of the extreme right wing? What support did Americans give him and his tactless investigations? How do historians explain his rise to power and, briefly, how do we define the basic issues of security and freedom which underline the McCarthy phenomenon? Because this study will consider the influence of McCarthyism in Utah, it is necessary to first understand the answers to these questions and then to consider the character of Utah's history and politics.

During the early 1950's, McCarthyism came to symbolize much more than simply the indiscriminate employment of the Communist issue in political elections. The acquiescence on the part of most Americans, and the eventual acceptance by many of the nation's leaders, of McCarthy and his methods resulted from the country's widespread feelings of impotence in dealing with Soviet advances, and a rebelliousness on the part of Republican conservatives fearful of the continuation of New Dealism under President Truman. These attitudes engulfed American society and allowed many Americans, who otherwise might have voiced disdain for McCarthyism, to permit the continuance of the Wisconsin senator's brazen crusade.

As a result, it is not enough in this study to consider simply the campaign use of questionable insinuations. Political and civic leaders who

²Among those whose lives were unjustly affected were Owen Lattimore and Millard Tydings, discussion about whom will be made later.
were in a position to criticize McCarthy's activities, yet who allowed their enthusiasm for anti-communism, or their hatred of Democratic rule, to detour such criticism, were as responsible for the Wisconsin senator's inflated influence as were those who openly condoned his questionable methods. This study will consider McCarthyism, then, as a broad attitude, incorporating not just the actual use of tactless investigations, but also the tremendous anxiety surrounding anti-communism and its use for political expediency which came to justify in the eyes of many Americans McCarthy's sordid venture.

Joseph Raymond McCarthy was born on November 14, 1908, to industrious and devout Catholic farmers in northeastern Wisconsin. His childhood, marked only by attendance at the nearby elementary school, church worship, and occasional work on the family farm, was uneventful. He is remembered as being shy and insecure, though very energetic and pressed with a desire for independence. After graduating from the eighth grade, McCarthy worked on the farm and earned the right to rent an acre of land on which to raise chickens. The young man cultivated this meager enterprise and was rewarded with moderate success. On a trip to Chicago, where McCarthy did much of his selling, however, his truck overturned, killing many of his chickens. Shortly thereafter, McCarthy caught influenza and was required to rely on the services of two inexperienced schoolboys, under whose direction the McCarthy farm suffered irreparable harm.
Fortunately, McCarthy was invited to manage a grocery store in the nearby town of Manawa and the eighteen year old reluctantly accepted.

A noticeable transition, however, had taken place in the young man's demeanor. He had grown from a withdrawn, though diligent, working boy to a dynamic, enthusiastic, and somewhat boisterous man. His social magnetism paid off financially for the store and it soon became the center for local "spit-and-argue" clubs. But McCarthy was not intent with being simply the local grocer; his restlessness dictated a change of employment and more education.

In the summer of 1929, Joseph McCarthy enrolled in the little Wolf High School and, with the obliging help of a sympathetic principal and faculty, completed the four year program in one year. He proudly served as an object of esteem and example at the school's graduation ceremonies and would later boast of his ability to "make himself an expert on any subject in twenty-four hours." This unusual self-confidence served later to convince masses of skeptics of his seriousness and, at the same time, to confirm antagonists of his threat to civil liberties.

The next year, McCarthy enrolled as an engineering student at Marquette University but soon found his cram course in high school
mathematics insufficient preparation for the rigors of the engineering program. As a suitable alternative to quitting school, and one which made effective use of his growing ability to debate, McCarthy registered in the Marquette law program later that year. He had an amazing determination to master deficiencies which, as in the case of public speaking, he frequently overcame. The academic challenges of law school undoubtedly tested McCarthy's endurance but, with considerable effort, he graduated from Marquette in 1935 and was admitted to the Wisconsin bar.

For a short time the young lawyer tried to establish a practice in the small town of Waupaca, but business was terrible. After just nine months, McCarthy accepted an offer to join a respected law firm headed by one Mike G. Eberlein. The resultant relationship proved mutually beneficial, at least temporarily. But practice was not McCarthy's desire. He had tasted the fruits of politicking in college, where he ran unsuccessfully for the debate club president, and when an invitation was presented him to be president of the district's Young Democratic Clubs, he gratefully accepted. Thus securely backed by a limited, though active, political organization, the comparatively young and inexperienced McCarthy announced his candidacy for district attorney on the Democratic ticket. Though he polled a disappointing 577 primary votes, compared with over three thousand for the Progressive Party's candidate, rather than resigning himself to defeat, he remained in the race. His campaign was demanding and exasperating, and so effective were its results that when the final election
was held, though McCarthy lost to the Progressives, he managed to multiply his primary support over five times!

McCarthy returned to the security of the Eberlein law firm and for three years remained its relatively obscure employee. In 1938, however, the junior partner publicly humiliated his employer by announcing his candidacy for the tenth district judgeship, a position it was widely known Mike Eberlein sought. But rather than risk further embarrassment in a contest for the nomination with his own partner, Eberlein reluctantly withdrew from the race. Once again, politics became Joseph McCarthy's prime interest. As with much that he did, he entered the campaign with renewed determination and enthusiasm, "zipping from town to town and from farm to farm speechmaking, backslapping, milking cows, changing babies, jollifying farmwives, and having heart-to-heart talks with the menfolk."\(^4\) He kept records of everyone he met; who their neighbors were; what businesses they were in; and what problems they had. His greatest asset was his youth and vitality; an advantage McCarthy put to continuous use. He made repeated reference, at times falsely and apologetically, to the age of the incumbent, Judge Edgar V. Werner, for example.\(^5\) The results were

\(^4\) Anderson and May, *McCarthy: The Man, the Senator, the "Ism"*, p. 38.

\(^5\) Thomas, *When Even Angels Wept*, p. 16, indicates that McCarthy played havoc with Judge Werner's age by publicizing his "date of birth as 1866, making him seventy-three years old, although in fact Werner had been born in 1873 and was sixty-six years old."
understandably surprising, though: Judge Werner lost to McCarthy by over four thousand votes and McCarthy’s political career was officially launched.

Judge McCarthy immediately gained a reputation on the bench as one who sacrificed judicial niceties for speed. As Anderson and May so aptly indicated,

He built up his reputation exactly as he had in the past—quantitatively instead of qualitatively. He tried five cases for every one his colleagues tried; divorce trials were sometimes knocked off in five minutes; manslaughter trials took a little longer. Justice took off her robes and put on a track suit.6

One case, in particular, illustrated McCarthy’s flagrant disregard for judicial procedure. Quaker Dairy, a milk producer, was charged with an attempt to squeeze farmer’s profits in violation of the state’s price undercutting laws. Judge McCarthy initially issued an injunction against the company, but just three days later revoked that order and took an increasingly pro-dairy stand against his constituent farmers. He refused to hear the case on grounds that the law which had allegedly been violated would be off the books in six months anyway and "that enforcement of such a law would work 'undue' hardship on the company."7 An outraged lawyer for the Agriculture Department, Gilbert Lapley, requested the state’s Supreme Court to order McCarthy to hear the case and render a judgement. When an investigation appeared imminent, valuable transcripts of the case

6 Anderson and May, McCarthy: The Man, the Senator, the "Ism", p. 45.

7 Ibid., p. 48.
disappeared; undoubtedly, some said, destroyed under the judge's own orders. The Wisconsin Supreme Court responded with a scathing denunciation of McCarthy's handling of the whole affair and without first verbally chastizing Lapley for causing so much "trouble".

McCarthy was habitually ambitious, rarely content with having achieved a particular status. Anderson and May report that on one occasion McCarthy was asked,

'Joe, you've got something most lawyers work a lifetime for and never get. You can stay judge all your life. If you play your cards right, maybe you can even be Governor some day.'

'No, thanks,' McCarthy said, 'I'm not interested in the small jobs.'

As a politician, he was always in search for ways to draw public attention and capture the imagination of the voters. When his chief rival, Milwaukee mayor Carl Zeldler, joined the Navy in obvious support of the increasingly popular war effort, McCarthy realized that service to the country would be indispensable to future political success. With little reserve, Judge McCarthy waived his judicial deferrment and was duly commissioned a Marine lieutenant on August 4, 1942.

His sufficient, though highly publicized and sometimes exaggerated, service provided the image of selflessness required of aspiring politicians. Reports of McCarthy's "secret" and "dangerous" missions circulated freely among his much-impressed constituents. One such event

\footnote{Ibid., p. 52.}
portrayed McCarthy as having sustained a very serious leg injury, for which he was erroneously given the "purple heart" and personally commended by Admiral Nimitz. In reality, the leg was simply broken while engaged in initiation ceremonies as McCarthy's ship made its first crossing of the equator.  

Early in the 1944 Captain McCarthy determined that the unofficial and "behind-the-scenes" popularization of him, which was being so effectively promulgated in Wisconsin, warranted his seeking a higher political office. Ignoring Wisconsin statutes which forbade judges from campaigning for office and a military ruling which restricted servicemen from public speaking on political matters, McCarthy announced his candidacy for the United States seat held by Republican Alexander Wiley. McCarthy's decision to switch to the G.O.P. is not well understood, though it undoubtedly came in view of increased popularity of the Republicans in Wisconsin. In any case, McCarthy again entered the political arena with tremendous enthusiasm, campaigning from his Marine base (where it was rumored he had established a "McCarthy for Senator" headquarters) and while on leave in his home state. He extolled his remarkable rise to the judgeship and his promotions in the Marines, while continuing to broadcast his relative youth and considerable determination. He was introduced, while at home, as "tallgunner Joe" (though he only occasionally accompanied pilots and rarely

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Thomas, When Even Angels Wept, pp. 25-27.
fired any weapons) and never missed an opportunity to recall his part in the war effort.

There was, of course, the problem of Wisconsin Secretary of State Zimmerman's resurrection of McCarthy's obvious infraction of the Wisconsin law prohibiting judges from campaigning. But this, the candidate and the state Supreme Court chose to virtually ignore. McCarthy also got around what he called military censorship by prefacing each political opinion with "If I were a citizen ..." But aside from these mere complications, McCarthy also faced opposition in the form of his very popular opponent, Alexander Wiley. The latter was a known vote getter and in both the primaries and general elections, it was correctly projected by political watchdogs that he would win. Though McCarthy lost the election, in doing so he quickly established himself as a senate hopeful by capturing almost a hundred thousand votes, an impressive 34 per cent. As if to confirm political speculation, he resigned his commission in October, 1944, and again donned the robes of his judgeship.

McCarthy's return to the bench in that year served little but to precipitate his yearnings for a seat in the United States Senate. But successful nomination required not only the acquisition of a more dynamic statewide party organization but, perhaps more important, the defeat in 1946 of powerful Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., for the Republican nomination. With his brother, Philip (who served as Wisconsin's governor for three terms), the younger Robert inherited his father's very influential name and
political backing and, in 1934, had successfully led that constituency in a break with the Republican Party. The newly formed Progressive Party dominated that state's political life, though not without some problems. During the depression, for example, LaFollette's supporters were split over criticism or commendation of New Deal policies. By 1946, the brothers formally disbanded the Progressive Party and made efforts to lead their followers back into the G.O.P. This not only failed, but served only to further diminish LaFollette strength in Wisconsin. Nevertheless, despite the apparent disarray of LaFollette politics in the state, it was almost insidious to suggest that anyone other than he should capture the Republican nomination. It was upon this erroneous assumption that McCarthy thrived and eventually triumphed.

Any hope for the nomination of someone other than LaFollette fell to a group of elite conservatives who formed the Republican Voluntary Committee. Their purpose was to bypass an ordinance prohibiting any political party from publicly endorsing a candidate before primary elections were held, and declare the party's (committee's) choice as the man to challenge LaFollette for the nomination. McCarthy actively sought the committee's endorsement but was virtually ignored. A conversation between the young aspirant and the Voluntary Committee's Chief, Thomas J. Coleman, is illustrative of the committee's indifference and McCarthy's indignance.

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'Joe,' he finally said, 'you're a nice guy and I like you. But you have no background in the Republican Party. You just don't fit into the senatorial picture for next year. If you keep on working the way you have been and gain some support, you may have a chance some time in the future.'

Looking Coleman in the eye, McCarthy retorted with cheerful cockiness:

'Tom, you're a nice guy and I like you. But I've got news for you. When the committee's convention is over next spring, Joe McCarthy will be the Republican-endorsed candidate for the United States Senate.'

Needless to say, McCarthy's overconfidence was hardly justified. The party did not lack its share of senate hopefuls, namely the wealthy and popular son of a former Wisconsin governor, Walter Kohler, and the state's present governor, Julius Heil. Neither of these men, however, had the sheer audacity of Joseph McCarthy. On one occasion, in an effort to eliminate the governor from consideration, McCarthy prompted some friends to attend a pre-Republican Voluntary Committee convention party, hosted by Heil, and to indicate, subtly and erroneously, that the committee had already disclosed its endorsement of McCarthy. Though utterly false, the news caused Governor Heil to spend the night worrying and, at the next day's activities, angrily withdraw his name from those seeking nomination.

In a similar manner, McCarthy backed Kohler into a corner by threatening to publicize the latter's recent divorce. Eventually, the Coleman committee realized that McCarthy was set on running with or without its endorsement and also acknowledged that failure to support him could only cause a major

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11 Thomas, When Even Angels Wept, p. 32.
split in the conservative faction of the party. Not without reluctance, then, the Voluntary Committee threw its weight behind McCarthy, "and made him the conservative's only hope for defeating LaFollette" in the 1946 election.  

The ensuing primary campaign for the Republican nomination was excessively competitive and apparently each candidate felt obliged to personally incriminate his opponent. McCarthy was his usual self, skipping from county to county and meeting everyone with an ear for campaign rhetoric. He made constant reference to his now familiar exploits as a judge and a soldier, emphasizing again his youth and vitality. Mr. LaFollette, reassured by polls of another massive victory, stayed in Washington and virtually ignored McCarthy's indictments of the senator's alleged war profits (from ownership of a Milwaukee radio station). The incumbent was effectively accused of forgetting his constituents in his enthusiasm for the notoriety of Washington. When LaFollette did return to the state, just two weeks before the primary election, it was too late; to many Wisconsin voters, the oft repeated McCarthy accusations appeared plausible and even likely. As Lately Thomas has indicated, though, the outcome of the primary election was a result more of LaFollette's inability to capture the labor vote than in his later return to the state or McCarthy's unusual energy. In the end, McCarthy won by a mere five thousand votes.

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13 Ibid.
When after a much needed twenty-four hour sleep, McCarthy was awakened by a newsman addressing him as "senator," the victor responded, "Not yet; we've got a tough fight ahead." His reference to the general election, perhaps better than accurately evaluating his chances of winning, illustrate McCarthy's unusual demand for a concerted effort. The changed political scene throughout the state, and in much of the nation, which had resulted in a reassertion of Republican control, provided much about which McCarthy should have been pleased and confident. He nevertheless entered the general election campaign against Democrat Howard McMurray with the same aggressiveness and energy which characterized his previous contests. Authors of McCarthy biographies have considered his receiving financial support from Colonel Robert McCormick's American Action, Inc. (an extreme rightist group patterned after the old America First Committee) and his use of the Communist issue against McMurray. The results of the campaign, however, were probably best explained as a mirror of similar Republican congressional victories throughout the country in 1946. McCarthy captured twice the votes of Howard McMurray and became a United States Senator.

If Joseph McCarthy entered Washington with great expectations, he certainly did not impress his colleagues as one who would sit back and patiently wait for important committee assignments. In contrast, he

14 Thomas, When Even Angels Wept, p. 40.

15 See the Congressional Quarterly, April 30, 1954, pp. 525-36.
almost immediately allied himself with senators from sugar-producing states in an attempt to defeat a controversial bill allowing extension of wartime sugar controls. It was while participating in debates over this legislation that the nation's leaders got their first glimpse of McCarthy's tactless examining. He openly disregarded truth and attempted to manipulate evidence to "prove" his case. He was aggressive, refusing to yield the floor to unfriendly witnesses or turning on interrogators with incriminating accusations or personal charges. As Robert Griffith so conclusively put it: "In a matter of minutes he turned a staid and dignified Senate debate into an angry brawl. He tended to reduce all issues to personal terms and to attack men rather than issues." In the end, McCarthy succeeded only in shortening the approved extension of controls by five months and, perhaps more important, causing a bit of sensation.

In the summer of 1947, members of the Senate and House Banking and Currency Committees, including McCarthy as one of its members, established a joint committee to consider the elimination of a postwar housing shortage. Senator Charles Tobey, by right of seniority, assumed chairmanship of the investigations until McCarthy, who opposed Tobey's solutions, decried Tobey's use of four "proxies" and successfully demanded the appointment of a less objectionable chairman. Accordingly,

16 Griffith, The Politics of Fear, pp. 16-17.

17 Endorsements by absentee Congressmen.
Ralph Gamble was chosen as the committee's new head with Joseph McCarthy as his vice-chairman.

Following six months of touring the country, the Gamble committee concluded that further use of federal funds in the field of housing would be quite unnecessary. In their absence, however, Senator Tobey had regained control of the committee and had subsequently submitted his own recommendations, a contradiction of the Gamble and McCarthy proposals. Entailing much that Tobey's committee sought, the proposed Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill was ultimately bottled up in the House over that body's objection to the public housing provision and McCarthy eventually won his battle to have that section of the bill eliminated. Later, the shrewd politician was paid $10,000 for publication of an article, prepared while he was investigating solutions to the housing problem, and designed to "explain the ins and outs of buying a home, methods of financing, pitfalls to avoid, and other practical details." McCarthy had learned that power is drawn to those who are courageous enough to take it and that many congressmen rested their futures on the slippery pedestal of prestige.

In the Congressional elections of 1948, the Democrats regained control of the Senate and McCarthy, who had relied heavily on the popularity of his party to sustain him in office, became concerned about his less than mediocre record in the Senate and his possibilities for re-election in 1952. He understood too well that support often stems from mere public exposure.

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18 Thomas, _When Even Angels Wept_, p. 68.
and concluded that what he needed was an issue with "political sex appeal," something which would attract public attention and hold it. He found that issue in a Senate investigation of the renowned "Malmedy Massacre" when, during the Second World War, hundreds of American troops and prisoners had been mercilessly slaughtered by German soldiers. Some seventy men were subsequently tried and convicted of participation in the affair, but a question arose concerning the use of force to extract confessions from those convicted. Eventually, the issue was assigned to the Senate Armed Services Committee, under Senator Raymond Baldwin, for investigation.

McCarthy, by virtue of his membership on the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Department, had also wanted to conduct hearings and so was allowed to sit in on testimony bearing. His interests, in party, may have centered around making sure the Germans were given an adequate defense. But McCarthy soon flagrantly abused his privilege by demanding the right to cross-examine witnesses and challenge every piece of evidence. Finally, in a fit of publicity-oriented anger, he stormed out of the hearings and publicly denounced the whole affair and the Baldwin committee on the Senate floor, events for which he was amply rewarded in prized headlines.

McCarthy had found an effective method, but the Malmedy incident was a passing issue; he needed to prickle the very sinews of American society. In early January, 1950, the distraught senator confessed to some intimate friends that he desperately needed an issue. After some suggestions were
offered and rejected, Father Edmund Walsh, dean of the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, asked about communism as an issue. McCarthy jumped at the suggestion, indicating that the government was full of Reds and that all he had to do was beat them out as exposed traitors. Within a short month, he was standing before the West Virginia audience, equipped with a new and powerful theme: Communists-in-government.

McCarthy's Wheeling, West Virginia, speech was the first in a myriad of unfounded and inflammatory charges leveled at many government agencies which ultimately climaxed in the well publicized Army-McCarthy hearings in the spring of 1954. Shortly after he returned to Washington in February, 1950, in answer to demands that he make a more accurate and complete account of internal subversion, McCarthy repeated his declaration that the State Department was thoroughly infested with some eighty-one (later fifty-seven) known "card carrying Communists."19 The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, justifiably defensive of McCarthy's accusations, quickly formed an aggressive subcommittee under the chairmanship of conservative Senator Millard E. Tydings of Maryland. The ensuing investigation, which the reigning Democrats hoped would clear them of any negligence in rooting out subversives, was plagued with confusion and the usual McCarthy rhetoric.

19 The number of alleged State Department Communists was never clearly defined as 205, 81 or 57. For consideration of the discrepancies in accounts, see Griffith, Politics of Fear, pp. 52-58.
The senator met every challenge to his insinuations with a seemingly endless array of countercharges and accusations; eventually specifying such respected people as a New York lawyer, Dorothy Kenyon; U. S. Ambassador at Large, Philip C. Jessup; and, of course, Far Eastern scholar, Owen Latimore, as inclined toward communism. Republican leaders were cautious of a possible boomerang effect to McCarthy's sudden witch hunt activities and only Robert A. Taft, G. O. P. Senate Leader, offered him any encouragement or endorsement. Regardless of the initial lack of party support, the growing publicity which McCarthy was attracting nevertheless gave him good cause for rejoicing: it placed him in the voting public's eye.

On March 21, before a closed session of the Tydings committee, McCarthy charged that Owen Latimore was the top Russian espionage agent in the country and that he was "willing to stand or fall on this one." Though McCarthy never did produce evidence to support this remarkable contention (relying heavily, instead, on the questionable testimony of an ex-Communist, Louis Budenz), his accusations nevertheless struck a sensitive nerve in the administration's foreign policy: failures in the Far East. Republican leaders, cognizant of the issue's growing magnitude and importance, became increasingly supportive of, or indifferent to, the rising senator. Notably, few spoke out against him, allowing McCarthy to continue in his questionable exploits.

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Eventually wandering through a quagmired repeat of the famous Amerasia case, and numerous other charges, the Tydings committee concluded that McCarthy's accusations were totally unfounded. But the junior senator from Wisconsin, despite his inability to convince the subcommittee, had become an indispensable Republican commodity by raising enough smoke in the State Department to convince many Americans that there was a raging fire.

One event in particular, the defeat of Millard Tydings in Maryland, perhaps best illustrated McCarthy's growing influence. The November, 1950, election was predicted to be a Tydings landslide until McCarthy gave enthusiastic support to the Incumbent's opponent, John Marshall Butler. As a result of McCarthy's campaigning efforts to slander Tydings, Butler handily won the election. Having rid the Senate and Committee on Expenditures in the Executive of a ranking member, McCarthy assumed leadership of the latter committee and replaced Senator Margaret Chase Smith (who had issued a "Declaration of Conscience" critical of McCarthy) with freshman Republican Richard M. Mixon, a budding McCarthyite. Soon, few Democrats, even the most conservative, felt secure under the senator's newly found power.

21 Senator William Benton later called for the removal of Butler in view of McCarthy's questionable support. A committee, agreeing that his campaign tactics were not becoming that of a senator, nevertheless ruled that Butler be retained in office. Benton himself was defeated in November, 1952, as a result primarily of criticism by McCarthy.
One vital aspect of McCarthy's denunciation of the administration was his criticism of Truman's China policy and, as a result, it was inevitable that he attack the author of that policy, former Secretary of State George Marshall. In a remarkably slanderous speech, given before the Senate in December, 1950, McCarthy asked of Marshall:

'. . . in whose interest did he exercise his genius? Why . . . was Marshall so determined to follow Stalin and oppose Churchill? Why did the War Department, meaning Marshall, leave us at the mercy of the Russians in Berlin? Who constitutes the highest circles of this conspiracy? What is the object of this conspiracy?'

Though simply a rehash of previously used material, McCarthy's insinuations were well publicized and served to further polarize public opinion of him. Within a short time, he was engaged in yet another venture; an attempt to block confirmation of Philip Jessup as a delegate to the United Nations and of Charles E. Bohen as the U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union. Though McCarthy failed to substantially inhibit the confirmation of these men, he enjoyed greater public exposure as a result.

The end of McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade began with a climatic declaration that Soviet espionage agents had infiltrated the Army's supersecret research laboratory at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. He had been appointed chairman of the Senate Investigative Committee in February of 1953 and had subsequently conducted numerous probes into alleged State

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Department espionage. The findings, however, were less than conclusive and hardly sensational, so McCarthy sought another means of propagating his crusade. The announcement that Communists had somehow infested the Monmouth base came as a particular shock because it was there that advanced development of radar was taking place and, of course, retention of such a vital defense project was held in the highest regard. Secretary of the Army, Robert T. Stevens, answered McCarthy's charge with an invitation to the senator to tour the base and determine for himself the possibilities for spying. The tour gave an impression of grateful cooperation between a member of Congress and a presidential appointee, a relationship soon to be strained beyond salvage.

By January, 1954, the nation's attentions had shifted from the Monmouth base, which seemed to have fizzled in apparent solutions and agreements, to yet another Army-McCarthy controversy. The service had mistakenly commissioned and promoted an officer, Irving Peress, without first carefully checking the man's political tendencies. When it was found that he had declined to answer questions about alleged leftist sympathies, the Army sought quietly to dismiss him. Upon hearing of the affair, however, Senator McCarthy demanded that Peress be court-martialed and, when the Army ignored him, sought the indictment of the officer's superiors. He subsequently defamed Brigadier General Ralph W. Zwicker as "not fit to wear that uniform" and charged that the general did not have the
"brains of a five-year-old." Despite the growing inevitability of an open conflict between McCarthy and the administration, pressure was mounting from embarrassed Republicans (notably vice-president Richard Nixon) for a reconciliation.

When, on February 24, Secretary Stevens met with McCarthy and agreed to virtually all of the senator's demands, a charge was leveled at Stevens to the effect that he had abandoned service personnel to the humiliation of investigative committees. As a result of the uproar, numerous conferences were held and more charges and countercharges were exchanged between representatives of McCarthy and the Army. On March 11, Stevens charged that the senator and his counsel, Roy Cohn, had sought deferential treatment from the Army for an ex-McCarthy aide, David Schine. McCarthy rebutted with a charge that the Army had tried to blackmail him into stopping the investigations at Monmouth by holding Schine "hostage" in the service. The stage was set for the most publicized and dramatic confrontation between the government's branches to that time: the famed Army-McCarthy hearings.

The televised feud lasted nearly two months and undoubtedly attracted a great deal of public attention, either in the newspapers or on television. In a poll, conducted in April of 1954, in answer to the question

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of whether "you have read or heard anything about the congressional investigations of the quarrel between Senator McCarthy and Army Secretary Stevens" over seventy-five percent responded "yes."\(^24\) McCarthy had been required to relinquish his chairmanship of the Senate Investigative Committee but, by virtue of his part in the hearings, soon came to dominate the whole spectacle. He became increasingly obstinate, boisterous, and obstructive, with television cameras vividly capturing his every demeanor. Especially frightful were his attacks on Senator Stuart Symington who, on occasion, seemed to have abandoned many of the rules himself. But perhaps most illustrative of McCarthy's aggressiveness was his assault on a young lawyer, Frederick G. Fisher, a member of Army counsel Joseph Welch's law firm. McCarthy charged Fisher with association in an "organization which was named, oh, years and years ago, as the legal bulwark of the Communist Party."\(^25\) Welch responded with a courageous defense of his employee and, what resulted in, a scathing denunciation of McCarthy and his tactics:

"Until this moment I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness . . . . If it were in my power to forgive


you for your reckless cruelty, I [would] do so. I like to think I am a gentleman, but your forgiveness will have to come from some one other than me.  

To many Americans, viewing the hearing on television, the Army-McCarthy hearings, and especially the heated exchanges, provided them their first glimpse of the Wisconsin senator at work; and most were disgusted with his tactless manner.

As a result of an inability to arrive at definitive conclusions, and despite Democratic moves to have them continued, the hearings came to a close on June 8, 1954. In way of summation, the subcommittee concluded that there was little doubt Schine received differential treatment from the Army, though whether at the instigation or promptings of McCarthy was not stated. Equally evident from the investigations was that the Army diligently sought to have the probe into operations at Monmouth base halted, but again, whether Schine was used by the Army to exert pressure on McCarthy is uncertain.

The effect of the hearings on McCarthy and his influence, however, was more easily defined. Even before the confrontation had ended, increased Congressional courage had prompted Senator Ralph Flanders to submit a resolution (Senate Resolution 301) calling for McCarthy's censure. In addition, members of McCarthy's own investigative committee called for, and successfully attained, rules leveled at restraining the Wisconsin senator.

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26 Ibid., pp. 2428-30.

27 Ibid., see beginning p. 2707.
Though very few of McCarthy's hard-core supporters turned against him, a good percentage of moderates who had been, at best, tolerant or complacent of his methods became increasingly critical of him. The Flanders resolution was aggressively put through the Senate clearing house and then dropped into the hands of a Senate Select Committee, chaired by Utah's Arthur V. Watkins, for censure consideration.

The six men on the committee disallowed the very props with which McCarthy had so effectively dominated dramatic investigations in the past; no audiences, no antagonists, no infractions of Senate rules and no mere insinuations. The task of assimilating vital material and establishing concrete evidence to warrant censure was a potential political bombshell for the six men, but they soberly conducted the investigation and concluded that McCarthy be censured on two counts: a refusal to appear before the subcommittee on Privileges and Elections in 1952 (an investigation of the Butler victory over Tydings); and his verbal abuse of General Zwicker. In the final Senate vote, McCarthy was condemned on the first charge and, though he was acquitted of abusing Zwicker, he was further condemned for his treatment of the Watkins select committee. McCarthy wrote the proceedings off as a "circus," but in reality, his political star had fallen; he "lived on for two and a half years after the censure vote, but he lived as only the pale ghost of his former self."28 Joseph McCarthy died of cirrhosis of the liver on May 2, 1957.

The exploits and methods of incrimination which highlighted McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade from January, 1950, through December, 1954, served only to satisfy his fondest desires for national notoriety. Fortunately, George Gallup conducted numerous public opinion polls to determine both the nature and extent of the senator's following. The first, administered in July of 1951, indicated that of the one third of those who were interviewed who had an opinion of McCarthy, sixty percent thought unfavorably of him.  

Early in 1953, another poll was conducted which showed approximately the same conclusion: that half of the forty-three percent having an opinion disapproved of the man and his methods. By August, 1953, the proportion of opinionated persons rose significantly to just over seventy percent, with still over half expressing disapproval.

By the end of that year, however, a full four-fifths of those interviewed expressed an opinion, for or against McCarthy, and, despite an increased awareness of his methods, well over fifty percent favored his exploits. Through 1954, as the senator began to lash out at both the administration and the Army, and executive and legislative leaders gained courage in the onslaught against McCarthy, his popularity dipped steadily.


30 Ibid., p. 1135.

from forty-six percent in February to thirty-five percent in October.  

Yet, even following his condemnation, McCarthy was immensely popular and remained an object of high esteem for conservatives throughout the country, as evidenced by another poll which listed him as the fourth most admired man in the nation.

Numerous studies have been written to determine the nature of McCarthy's support among so many Americans. Perhaps the most conclusive is Michael Rogin's analysis of the Gallup polls entitled, "McCarthyism as Mass Politics." In it, Rogin contended that "... perhaps the single most important characteristic of supporters of McCarthy in the national opinion polls was their party affiliation; Democrats opposed McCarthy, and Republicans supported him." Not only was the controversial senator protected by moderate Republicans who feared, most of all, a split in the G.O.P., but the bases of McCarthy's support also came from midwest Republicans who, decades earlier, had indeed split from the G.O.P. in opposition to the nation's involvement in World War II and whose frustrations came to a head in the tense international situation of the 1940's.

Popular support of McCarthy also varied considerably according to one's occupational, religious, social or educational status. He was

32 For a brief table summarizing McCarthy's support, see Griffith, The Politics of Fear, p. 263.


consistently favored, for example, by unskilled workers, farmers and small businessmen, and generally hated by professionals. Catholics supported him more than Protestants, while Jews universally disapproved of him. Though a majority of his backing came from Republicans, McCarthy did get considerable and substantial support from certain traditional Democratic ethnic groups, like the Irish and the Germans. In addition, the more education a person had, the greater his likelihood of being critical of McCarthy and McCarthyism. 35

Historical explanations of the phenomenon are as numerous as are the origins of McCarthy's support. Though writers do not concur on the reasons for his rise, most concede that America was, in a sense, prepared for his witch hunt exploits by the national insecurity and eventual fear which pervaded the country. Some historians attribute this anxiety to a specific event: the disclosure of Soviet espionage agents in the government; the dismissal of MacArthur at the height of Cold War intensification; or the fall of mainland China to the Communists, for example. 36

35 Ibid., see the whole chapter, pp. 216-260.

These events, though of obvious importance in helping to stimulate and sustain postwar hysteria, provide but a partial answer. Some authors offer the political and economic conditions of the period as explanations for citizenry acceptance of McCarthyism.

Politically, the nation experienced tremendous frustration stemming from its "lost peace" in Korea, which found "an outlet and justification in McCarthy's accusations."\(^{37}\) Or, as Victor Ferkiss so aptly and plainly indicated:

The doctrines of McCarthyism accounted for America's seeming impotence in world affairs, made victory theoretically cheap and easy, and served as a form of revenge for the anti-interventionists against those who led the nation into World War II and now were groups supposedly most vulnerable to Communist subversion.\(^{38}\)

Other authors concur with Ferkiss' belief that McCarthy's ascent had much to do with his association with those whom Graebner calls the "new isolationists" who believed that Communist advances in China and Eastern Europe resulted from "the incompetencies and even betrayal by successive (U.S.) administrations."\(^{39}\) McCarthy, of course, had cultivated early support from German constituents sympathetic to his defense of the

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Malmedy troops. "He was making the first move," observes one writer, "to define himself as isolationism's contemporary spokesman and apologist." 40

Postwar America was characterized by what one scholar called a "greatly enhanced level of national political responsibility: which forced the nation to undergo numerous societal changes and an inevitable re-evaluation of values." 41 Of course, such massive redefining of American thought, particularly that relating to international relations, served to alienate those segments of society most resistant to change. In refusing to face the demands of postwar America, these conservatives sought refuge in the hysteria of Joseph McCarthy. For them, McCarthy helped, however crudely, to mitigate growing differences with those seeking immediate and effective adjustments to the postwar period. 42

Murray Levin, however, offers yet another possible explanation for the rise of Joseph McCarthy by indicating that the American political identity of the early 1950's was not only insecure, as a result of the tense international situation, but also immature and inexperienced in the face of that sophisticated situation. The hysteria, then, was simply another


41 Talcott Parsons, "'McCarthyism' and American Social Tension: A Sociologist's View," Yale Review 44 (December, 1954), 226.

manifestation of "an infantile fit" resulting from an immature, and totally unprepared, society attempting to solve massive postwar problems. 43

The adjustments of postwar society to newly found responsibilities in foreign relations, which some Americans sought to ignore, and which many simply failed to accept, caused deepset anxiety in most people. They turned to McCarthy for "quick yes-no answers to the troubles that confronted the nation; thus they created a market for the hate-peddlers, the myth-mongers, and the fear-spreaders."

Other conditions are cited by writers to explain the apparent nationwide paranoia which precipitated the rise of Senator McCarthy. The Korean War, aside from confirming the populace's belief that the United States foreign policy was failing to contain communism, prompted a need among many to feel as if they were honestly doing their part to stop international communism. For some, McCarthyism provided "a comforting and guilt-dissipating escape," for, unlike the soldiers in Korea, the people at home needed some assurance that they too were doing their part in the struggle to halt communism. 45 A natural outgrowth of this false security was a tendency to believe that the government simply was not doing all that was conceivably possible to bring the war to a quick and honorable end.

43 Ibid., pp. 251-52.
44 Anderson and May, McCarthy: The Man, The Senator, The "Ism", p. 381
To many other Americans, the war was a vital moral struggle between two contradicting ideologies, a thought accurately conveyed to willing listeners by Joseph McCarthy when he said: "The great difference between our Western Christian world and the atheistic Communist world is not political, it is moral."\(^{46}\) By virtue of their theology, and McCarthy's insistence in the evils of anti-Christ communism, his supporters justified their enthusiastic methods of witch hunting and exposing of subversives.

The tremendous adjustments which the United States made following the Second World War brought a prosperity never before realized. But, as Daniel Bell perceptively observed, "contrary to the somewhat simple notion that prosperity dissolves all social problems, the American experience demonstrates that prosperity brings in its wake new anxieties, new strains, new urgencies."\(^{47}\) Perhaps the fear accompanying McCarthyism came as a result of too much leisure, too much free time to spend in newly acquired luxuries, and just enough time to ponder the acute, if not somewhat exaggerated, dangers of world communism.

One final explanation is given for the fear which characterized the early 1950's and undoubtedly served to stimulate the surge of McCarthyism: status resentment. Fred Cook, for example, considered McCarthy's support as a result of "ultra-conservative big business interests in

\(^{46}\) Parmet, Eisenhower and the American Crusade, p. 127.

rebellion against the twentieth century, in rebellion against the threats of any further tampering with their baronial privileges." Again, the influence of postwar adjustments in the economy, as well as politics, played a role in setting the stage for McCarthy demagoguery. Rather than place McCarthy's support in the hands of established "barons", the editors of *Monthly Review* concluded that his backing came from the nouveaux riches. These recently endowed persons engendered hatred for the aristocracy of America which refused to accept them and subsequently found "a natural outlet in political support for a movement which is simultaneously reactionary, brutal, vulgar--and shows signs of succeeding." McCarthyism frightfully fit their demands and provided ample social and political expression of their discontent.

Each of the preceding explanations, in some way, encouraged a national fear or insecurity successfully exploited by the McCarthyites. There are, however, numerous conditions not associated with this paranoia which may also help to explain the rise of Joseph McCarthy. One obvious necessity in any man's drive for success is consistent motive. McCarthy was known for his incessant desire for publicity and enhanced political power. "Obscurity did not suit the black-browed Wisconsin senator," indicated Booth Mooney. "He wanted to be known. He restlessly sought

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for an issue which would bring him the popularity he longed for. He found the issue in his Wheeling speech..."50 What is equally obvious, as an impetus to McCarthy's rise, is that without ample opportunity, the senator's motive and drive might have been bottled within himself. Other writers, then, look to the weaknesses of the Senate as an opening through which McCarthy's expressions were eventually vented.

Athan Theoharis, in a fine definition of McCarthy's place among his fellow senators, attributed his popularity to "a resurgence of conservatism in the postwar Congress" and, as Griffith agreeingly pointed out, the subsequent "quiet, cautious, and yet continuous support the senator received from his own party."51 Fault within the senate itself may be directed toward "its tendency to be restrained and casual in character" and the resultant inability, or indecision, of its members to take the initiative in constraining the over-enthusiastic junior senator.52

There were many people in Congress, to be sure, who had the means to stop Joseph McCarthy very soon after his Wheeling speech. But nearly all those who tried were not secure enough in their positions to withstand the bandwagon effect of the Communist-in-government issue and were


subsequently injured or ruined politically. A politician's support and career are dependent on constituent backing, and when that appears in jeopardy, he must naturally seek to appease and please. McCarthy recognized in his fellow senators a desire to not offend the popular trend and he exploited that dependence on conformity.

Other scholars have also sought to explain the rise of McCarthyism in American society. One writer, for example, blamed the House Committee on Un-American Activities for encouraging "the irresponsible wave of Red-hunting and of loyalty impugning" by stressing "only the sordid side of the story." Still others, including Richard Hofstadter, found McCarthyism "largely the creation of astute and voluminous publicity on the radio and in the press." A vast array of explanations have been given and may, in any number of combinations, accurately explain the rise of McCarthyism in America.

Perhaps one underlying question summarizes the confrontation which characterized postwar America, and which each American faced in the issue of McCarthyism: when may an individual’s freedoms be sacrificed in an effort to insure national security? McCarthy recognized that the wall between the assurance of security and the denial of freedoms which that security was entrusted to protect and defend was vague and easily violated.

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As a result, he successfully justified his enthusiastic attacks with explanations of national security and probable Soviet infiltration. He neglected the basic individual rights of citizens by voicing unsubstantiated, but highly publicized and tremendously harmful, accusations under the cloak of senatorial immunity. Alleged offenders had no recourse but to face McCarthy, who not only was equipped with a myriad of staff investigators and sufficient funds, but who had perfected the art of giving the impression (rarely true) that his opponents were Communists. In effect, the country was virtually immersed in a fear of Soviet world domination and espionage, then asked by McCarthy to choose: liberty or loyalty.

To a few Americans, the question prompted simply a firm reiteration of a belief in the constitutionally guaranteed rights of freedom. With the historian, Henry Steele Commanger, they proposed that one must encourage and preserve "freedom in all its manifestations, not as an abstract right but as an imperative necessity." Liberty is not something, they asserted, that can be enjoyed as a result of the assurance of prosperity or security, but that which must be nurtured before the expectation of these privileges. Other writers were critical of apparent evidences of infringements on civil liberties in the exercise of national security. Robert Cushman, for example, criticized the "guilt exposure" nature of the

government's security programs, indicating that regardless of the person's innocence, his alleged associations made him forever suspect.  

Few authors denied the need for maintaining security precautions and even Cushman admitted that Cold War politics justified the instigation of "restraints on liberty which would otherwise be indefensible." But the point at which that very maintenance jeopardized the freedoms it was bound to insure remained invariably obscure.  

The stout defenders of McCarthy, William F. Buckley and L. Brent Bozell, took a different stand on the question of infringements of civil liberties. To them, and probably to McCarthy, the question was one of security, not freedom. "McCarthy is there," they proposed, "to insist that we cannot afford to act on any but the hypothesis that favors our national security." In a country wrought with fear of internal subversion and the possibilities of world domination and sovietization, imagined or real, McCarthy's justifications seemed plausible, and in the country's best interests. What this study will attempt to show is that Utah joined the nation in a gross overemphasis on its "security conscience" in the famed McCarthy era.


57 Ibid., p. 166.

CHAPTER III

UTAH: CITADEL OF MORMONISM

As the numerous explanations for McCarthy's rise indicate, his prominence depended, in part, on the country's mid-century social and political nature. In this study of the senator's influence in Utah, brief consideration should be given to that state's history and character, the influence of the Mormon Church on Utah's politics, and the exposure of the state's residents to McCarthy's activities. Utah is the product of a rich Mormon heritage. Latter-day Saint officials not only played a prominent role in the state's initial development, but continued to exert considerably pressur in Utah politics and helped to foster the establishment of a pronounced anti-Communist attitude among its citizens.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded by Joseph Smith, whom followers revere as a modern day prophet, in Fayette, New York, in 1830. Though the new religion's early growth was comparatively rapid, it was also characterized by almost continual persecution having religious, economic and social overtones. On occasion, members of the church were forced to abandon their cities and seek refuge under the most trying circumstances. By 1844, after having settled in Kirtland, Ohio,
northwestern Missouri and central Illinois, and the death of Joseph Smith, it became apparent to most Latter-day Saints that peace for them lay in a new and unsettled province of the West. To their new leader, Brigham Young, fell the awesome responsibility of colonizing the people in their retreat to a new home. And it was only after a strenuous journey across much of the continent, and for many European immigrants across the Atlantic Ocean as well, that members of the young church could look upon their new and permanent home in Utah's Great Basin.

During the first decades of settlement new immigrants widened the Mormon settlement to encompass a large geographical area, and eventually many of the Mormon settlements were organized into the Utah territory and later the State of Utah. Brigham Young presided over the Mormons and propagated Mormon anticipation for the establishment of a "Kingdom of God" in Utah. Latter-day Saints believed that as a result of their isolation from non-Mormon civil authority, the opportunity was ripe in Utah to prepare for the eventual control of both spiritual and temporal affairs by the Mormon Church government.¹ This adoption of civil jurisdiction by the church originated in the pre-Utah period, and was overseen by a body of

¹The most adequate study of the "Kingdom of God" concept is found in Klaus J. Hansen, Quest for Empire (Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, 1967).
ranking church leaders, the "Council of Fifty." These men, with President Young presiding, greatly influenced all major duties within the Utah colony and, "in obedience to ecclesiastical authority men established new settlements, set up sawmills, opened general stores, operated ferries, and transported immigrants." To facilitate the operation of the church's role in administering civil authority and to help insure adequate defense of the numerous and widely scattered settlements from unfriendly Indians, a formal "State of Deseret" was established by the council in March of 1849.

For a time the Mormons desired autonomy from the United States; however, events of the 1840's and 1850's prompted them to seek a place within the U.S. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the war with Mexico, the country was ceded all territory north of the Gila River, including the Salt Lake Valley. When members of the church petitioned Congress for statehood, though, a coalition of northern advocates of popular sovereignty and southern congressmen blocked admission and Utah was relegated to territorial status under the famous Compromise of 1850. With Brigham Young as its first governor, the territory was

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3 Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, pp. 29-30.

considerably dominated by the Latter-day Saint Church as incorporated in the State of Deseret and, consequently, until the 1870's, its leaders continued to promote the "Kingdom of God" belief in Utah's politics.

The problems of administering both denominational and civic duties resulted in conflict between the Mormon Church and the federal government and in a long delay in Utah territory's admittance as a state. Disagreement, climaxing in the "Utah War," stemmed particularly from differences of opinion concerning the church's land and Indian policies. The acquisition of land for personal development, for example, was determined through the ecclesiastical order of the church and was intended to discourage speculative investment, much to the dislike of enterprising non-Mormons. Equally antagonizing, the church's conciliatory Indian affairs led some gentiles to propose that Latter-day Saints actively sought to monopolize Indian trade. The real polarizing issue, especially following its publicizing in the national elections of 1856, was the Mormon practice of polygamy. Members of the church resented federal authorities' attempts to stifle the practice and rebelled against any prohibitions to the eventual establishment of their "Kingdom of God" in Utah. On the other hand, non-Mormons in the area expressed equally pronounced disapproval of the church's dominant role in nearly every aspect of the territory's life.

Though Utah experienced sufficient development in population, manufacturing, construction and agriculture to warrant statehood, Mormons soon recognized that it would be withheld until Utahns abandoned the practice of plural marriage.

That major obstacle to statehood was virtually dissolved in 1890 when the church's president, Wilford Woodruff, issued a proclamation indicating that plural marriages would no longer be legitimately conducted by the church. Utah was finally granted statehood in 1896; but no sooner had this been won when another problem faced the church. In April of 1896, General Authorities of the church issued the so-called "Political Manifesto of the Church" cautioning its leaders against accepting any responsibility, political or vocational, "that would distract or remove them from the religious duties resting upon them, without first consulting and obtaining the approval of their associates and those who preside over them." This requisite for aspiring politicians was evidently ignored by at least one church official, B. H. Roberts, who was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives without the formal approval of the church and who was, interestingly enough, denied his seat because he was a polygamist. In contrast, another Mormon leader, Apostle Reed Smoot, accepted the obligation of notifying authorities of his political desires and was granted "permission" by the church to run for office. Significantly, the edict

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suggested a Mormon tendency to subject Latter-day Saint officials to the approval of their co-religionists; if not for political expediency at least for spiritual propriety.

The new century brought tremendous changes to the state of Utah, most of which simply mirrored equally progressive events characterizing the rest of the nation. Daniel C. Jackling, for example, developed a new process of open-pit mining which revolutionized that industry's production in Utah. Citizens contributed actively to the war effort by buying war bonds and quickly filling selective service quotas. Because of too much dependence on mining and due to its comparatively low profit from manufacturing, Utah suffered terribly from the agricultural depressions of the 1920's and, of course, the general depression of the 1930's. As a result, during those decades, many of the state's residents moved to California, Idaho, Nevada and other states.

Despite the Utah state government's minimal assistance to citizens during the first years of the 1930's depression, President Roosevelt's New Deal program had become an integral part of the state's life by mid-decade and had significantly bolstered criticism of what some felt an unnecessary encroachment on private lives. The Mormon Church responded to the depression by organizing its wards and stakes into centers for the providing and distribution of substantial assistance. Later, in 1936, the church formalized this organization into the Welfare Plan, which is still in operation today, and publicized its desire that each member seek financial
self-sufficiency. This pronouncement had the unintentional effect of stifling much of Utah's support for "welfare statism" as interpreted in Roosevelt's program and formed an important basis for Utah's firm opposition of "creeping socialism" during the 1950's.

As a government center for material production, storage and distribution, Utah accepted a tremendously important responsibility during the Second World War. Utah was the site of prisoner of war camps and Japanese relocation centers. By virtue of its location, the state enjoyed wartime prosperity: a new steel plant was constructed in Orem; personal incomes soared; and military bases (especially in Ogden) assumed a new dimension of responsibility. And since the war, both Utah and the Mormon Church have shown unprecedented progress in population, wealth, and education.

Throughout Utah's history the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had a great influence upon the state's social and political character. Politically, the church declared in 1907 that it

... holds to the doctrine of the separation of church and state; the non-interference of church authority in political matters; and the absolute freedom and independence of the individual in the performance of his political duties.  

7 S. George Ellsworth, Utah's Heritage (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1972), p. 443. Significantly there is as yet not adequate treatment of Utah's 20th century history.

8 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, "Address to the World," Conference Reports (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April, 1907), p. 14. Proceedings from the church's conferences, at which Mormon doctrine is expounded, are published semi-annually by the church in Salt Lake City.
What Utah's past indicated, though, was a virtual reliance by many Utahns on the recommendations of church authorities for the political direction of the saints. By virtue of the Latter-day Saint commitment to obey authority, leaders were in a key position to advise church members in political, as well as spiritual, matters.

As indicated, because of their early influence in the settlement and governing of the territory, and because most Utahns claimed membership in the church, Latter-day Saint officials dominated Utah's territorial political activity. Similar influence was also evident toward the end of the nineteenth, and well into the twentieth centuries. Statehood for the anxious territory required not only that Mormons abandon the practice of polygamy (a requisite fulfilled only with the issuance of President Woodruff's manifesto), but that they also represent a more equitable balance of Republicans and Democrats. During the territorial period, most Mormons were aligned with a local political organization called the People's Party, in difference to the apparent neglect of the two major parties during the years of persecution. Congressional leaders required that the People's Party be dissolved and that its adherents join one of the two national parties. In response to this demand, church leaders simply dictated their bishops to divide whole congregations in half or, as Dr. Frank Jonas amusingly observed, "an organizer might visit a small town and go from door to door assigning party
membership." In view of the church's emphasis on obedience as an arch-
stone of church practice, it is little wonder that few members criticized
such action as particularly audacious or brazen.

Evidence of Mormon Church influence in Utah politics was most
apparent in the church's consistent efforts of support or condemnation for
political candidates. Thomas Kearns, for example, was elected to the
United States Senate in 1901 with the obliging help of Mormon president
Lorenzo Snow. When similar support was denied Kearns by Snow's
successor, Joseph F. Smith, Senator Kearns understandably feared the
possibility of defeat in the 1905 election. Latter-day Saint endorsement,
in turn, went to a high church official, Reed Smoot, who enjoyed unprece-
dented support from the Mormon authorities while Utah's senator. On one
occasion, President Smith was asked by his personal secretary, Charles
W. Nibley, about whether or not he thought Smoot should run for re-election
due to the controversy over Mormon participation in the practice of plural
marriage. According to Nibley, the Latter-day Saint president responded
with a clear declaration of divinely inspired support:

'If I have ever had the inspiration of the spirit of the Lord given
to me forcefully and clearly it has been on this one point concerning

9 Frank H. Jonas, "Utah: The Different State," in Politics in the
American West, ed. by Frank H. Jonas (Salt Lake City: University of Utah

10 Ibid., p. 330.
Reed Smoot, and that is, instead of his being retired, he should be continued in the United States Senate. The finality of Smith's declaration not only left no doubt in his secretary's mind about the president's political opinion, but was evidently shared by his successor to the presidency, Heber J. Grant. It is, then, little wonder that one biographer of Smoot wrote: "God, the Church, the Republican Party, and Reed Smoot were all on the same side."

The support of Senator Smoot by church authorities continued long after his surprising defeat in 1932 by University of Utah professor Elbert Thomas, and even had repercussions through the 1950's. When Smoot was again defeated in 1936, following yet another open Latter-day Saint endorsement, some church leaders publicly supported the comparatively unpopular presidential candidate Alf Landon. The overwhelming victory of Franklin D. Roosevelt, particularly in Utah, embarrassed the state's Republicans and served to indicate lessening church influence in Utah's politics.

Nevertheless, many Latter-day Saint officials continued to openly support numerous unsuccessful Republican hopefuls. Their endorsement of the G.O.P. reflected not only the Mormon hierarchy's disdain for the


12 The impression that Grant also endorsed Smoot was clearly made by Neal R. Pierce, The Mountain States of America (New York: W.W. Norton &Company, Inc., 1972), p. 199.


"welfarism" of Roosevelt's New Deal but also indicated a general conservative attitude among most of the church's leaders. Mormon authorities apparently never forgave Elbert Thomas for unseating Smoot and, in 1938, gave Brigham Young University president Franklin S. Harris permission to run against Senator Thomas. During the campaign, Dr. Harris sent a "letter to the Mormon bishops" implying Mormon support for his anti-New Deal stance. Despite the implication, essentially true, that a majority of Latter-day Saint leaders backed Harris, Thomas won re-election.  

The 1950 senatorial campaign pitted Senator Thomas against Wallace F. Bennett who, incidentally, "had extensive family and business ties with the L.D.S. General Authorities." Assumedly in revenge for the incumbent's victory over Smoot and Harris, Mormon leaders again took an active part in the campaign, basically letting it "be known that Thomas was not in 'harmony with the Brethren.'" Evidence for this contention will be considered in a later chapter, but it is significant to note that this time Thomas was soundly defeated.

Numerous other instances may be cited which indicate Mormon Church influence in Utah's politics. A classic example was a tacit and unofficial "warning" given speaker of the State House of Representatives and

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Mormon Bishop, Walter K. Granger. In his various church and government positions, Granger sympathized with depression-hit farmers and sought state approval for federal grants-in-aid. He was met with strong Latter-day Saint opposition. In the course of Granger's endeavors, he was approached by two Mormon apostles, who were unnamed, the first of whom "threatened him with the loss of his position in the church if he did not comply with its request that he not support his own legislation." The second high official simply indicated to Granger that Mormon leaders did not concur with his beliefs in federal aid. 18

In addition to these incidents, the church-owned and widely circulated Deseret News newspaper occasionally published derogatory comments about politicians on its editorial pages. Many Utahns equated the Deseret News with pronouncements of church doctrine and position, and as a result accepted its expressions of opinion as binding upon members of the church. The newspaper, for example, waged an incessant campaign against liberal Democratic governor Herbert B. Maw which resulted in his 1948 defeat. 19 Two years later, the Deseret News was accused to giving Senator Thomas "shaby news treatment" in conjunction with general authorities' attempts to discredit him. 20 To many Latter-day Saints, then, the Deseret News

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18 Ibid., p. 333. Unfortunately, Jonas neither names the two officials nor documents this particular event for substantiation.

19 Pierce, The Mountain States of America, p. 201.

editorials were a widely circulated source of Mormon leaders' opinions and, inevitably, the literal "will of the Lord" to his chosen people.

Leaders of the Mormon Church, who for the most part represented its interests, did not limit their involvement in the state's politics to criticism or endorsement of political candidates but also sought to influence legislative considerations. They recognized, of course, that their opinions influenced the decisions of many members of the church, especially if voiced from the pulpit during stake conferences or ward meetings. In effect, these officials constituted a huge and highly effective lobbyist group, particularly when moral issues were in question. Early in 1950, for example, authorities voiced their opposition to commercial ventures which operated on Sunday by endorsing a bill prohibiting such openings. Later, in 1954, officials tried to have a reapportionment plan implemented that would have given greater representation to the predominantly Mormon rural areas of the state. Neither of these measures was signed into law but, interestingly enough, "church political pressure was so blatantly exerted in the reapportionment fight that the Internal Revenue Service felt obliged to warn it that its tax-exempt status might be in jeopardy." More recently, the church was instrumental in having a "liquor-by-the-drink" proposition defeated.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, though, rarely officially supported any political issue or candidate for, in a strict sense, its leaders did maintain the image of separation of church and state.

21 Pierce, The Mountain States of America, p. 201.
proclaimed in the 1907 "Address to the World." However, the situation in Utah was particularly unique, a fact undeniably recognized by Mormon authorities. Many of the state's residents looked to these leaders as inspired men, whose opinions and decisions reflected divine inspiration.

When officials spoke on an issue, whether or not that opinion was shared by the rest of the authorities, or even a majority, their words received special attention and notice. Often they were incorrectly interpreted as speaking for the church, which only helped to further exaggerate the significance of their opinions. In any case, it is apparent that many Utah Mormons were particularly cognizant of their leaders' views and sought to emulate them in every respect. Some members of the church also undoubtedly sought to use the views of certain church leaders to justify their own political-economic views. This they would most certainly do by seeking their opinions and endorsing their cause, whether sanctioned or shared by the church or not.

McCarthyism was a political and moral issue of such national interest and significance that it attracted the attention and involvement of the Latter-day Saint Church. Whether or not, by virtue of its influence on the state's politics and populace, the Mormon Church was in a position to lessen or aggravate the effect of McCarthyism in Utah will be the topic of discussion in a later chapter. But, because in 1955 close to seventy percent of the state's population claimed membership in the Latter-day Saint Church, it is apparent that Mormon authorities were in a position to advise, influence
and, in many cases, direct, a majority of Utahns. It is necessary, then, to briefly consider the positions taken by church leaders on the issue of communism.

Few church positions were so widely publicized immediately prior to the advent of McCarthyism as that condemning the ideologies and practices of the Communist Party. Mormon leaders and other prominent Latter-day Saints desired the growth of world communism and warned of "creeping socialism" and "welfare statism". Utahns were virtually immersed in pronounced declarations calling for a firm stand against the sovietization of the world. Mormon leaders joined with the nation's leaders and spokesmen in propagating fear of Communist domination, a fear successfully capitalized upon by Senator Joseph McCarthy.

One of the first editorials specifying the church's stand on communism was published in August, 1936, and declared, "to support Communism is treasonable to our free institutions, and that no patriotic American citizen may become either a Communist or supporter of Communism." The manifesto further indicated that communism must not be compared to the church's United Order (an ideal Mormon society in which all worldly goods are directed and owned by the church) and that communism's erosion of the "normal relationship" of a family is

22 Jonas, "Utah: The Different State," p. 343. Mormons claim a higher proportion of a state's population in Utah than any other denomination in any other state.
objectionable and contrary to the teachings of the church. In a final pertinent exhortation, authorities called

... upon all Church members completely to eschew Communism. The safety of our divinely inspired Constitutional government and the welfare of our Church imperatively demands that Communism shall have no place in America.\(^{23}\)

That this official editorial was issued over the signatures of the church's First Presidency, published by a Latter-day Saint magazine and circulated to most members of the church, indicated its relevance to church leaders.

Mormons were not only embued with the same national anxiety for the Communist threat as was the rest of the country but, because of the warnings originating from a variety of church beliefs, they adopted an especially enthusiastic condemnation of communism. Unlike most Americans, whose fear of the Soviet Union originated from their distrust of communism and the heightened intensity of the Cold War, Mormons found denunciation of communism in their scriptures and in what most Mormons claim are the divinely inspired teachings of their leaders. Engrained in most Latter-day Saint children, for example, was a belief that the United States Constitution was established by God, "and should be maintained for the rights and protection of all flesh, according to just and holy principles."\(^{24}\) Communist threats to that maintenance undoubtedly heightened

\(^{23}\) Signed by the First Presidency of the church and published in The Improvement Era 39 (August, 1936), 488.

\(^{24}\) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The Doctrine and Covenants (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1952), sect. 101, verse 77.
Latter-day Saint consciousness of a possible Soviet conspiracy. Embodied in modern scripture was a belief, especially prevalent during the 1950's, that only governments guaranteeing "free exercise of conscience" will exist in peace. Finally lay members were aware of Book of Mormon revelations decrying the rise of "secret combinations" amazingly similar to the exposed hard-core structure of modern communism. With the disclosure of each alleged Communist conspiracy or Soviet spy ring, members of the church grew increasingly aware of their responsibility to eradicate that malignancy.

The church's position, as a result, was continually reiterated by church leaders and, especially during the 1950's, two prominent Latter-day Saint officials, David O. McKay, a member of the church First Presidency and later president of the church, and J. Reuben Clark, became particularly vigorous in their opposition to the Communist conspiracy. As early as 1939, President McKay expounded on Communist tactics by quoting at length from William F. Russell's "How To Tell a Communist, and How to Beat Him." Among other things, Russell was quoted by McKay in a general conference of the church as writing:

Just as we fought to make the world 'safe for democracy,' so they are fighting to make the world safe for Communism. They

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25 Ibid., sect. 134, verse 2.

are fighting this fight today. Every country must become Com-
munistic, according to their idea. So they have sent out
missionaries . . . . They have won converts. 27

A decade later, McKay was equally concerned over socialist trends in Great
Britain. Like many Americans, Mormons generally believed that socialism
inevitably led to communism. They associated the elimination of private
enterprise, in any degree, with the literal ownership of all property by a
classless and stateless society. In the misdirected extremism of the early
1950's, it was not uncommon to decry the advancement of socialist trends as
evidence of the victories of communism. For example, in April, 1950,
before an assembly of church members, Elder McKay pronounced that
England "is on the verge of a totalitarian state as dictatorial as that which
the feudal barons and the people wrested from King John." 28

In his denunciations of communism, McKay made occasional
reference to its anti-Christ nature, a characteristic of Marxism especially
abhorrent to the strongly religious Mormons. In 1948, he briefly reviewed
the Latter-day Saint doctrine of the divine right of individual free agency
and proposed that each member must choose between "dictatorship with
the atheistic teachings of communism, and the doctrine of the restored
gospel of Jesus Christ." 29 An almost identical thought was expressed three

27 The Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S., Conference Reports,
October, 1939, p. 104.

28 Ibid., April, 1950, p. 35.

29 Ibid., April, 1948, p. 70. Mormonism claims to be a restora-
tion of the Savior's original Christian Church from Palestine.
years later when, as president of the church, McKay compared communism with facism, both of which he labeled as "antagonistic to freedom and to other Christian principles—even denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the existence of God." That denial, and the desire to put in its place confidence in the state, are basic truths essential to the promulgation of communism, said David O. McKay. In reality, the state's only purpose is to serve, not suppress, its citizens, and man will always endeavor to combat despotic and dictatorial forms of government.

As president of the Mormon Church, David O. McKay remained steadfast in his opposition to communism. Perhaps the best summary of his attitude toward communism was offered at a General Conference of the church in October, 1959. Though given two years after McCarthy's death, it was a fitting tribute to the times and the issue:

The conflict between communism and freedom is the problem of our times. It overshadows all other problems. This conflict mirrors our age, its toils, its tensions, its troubles, and its tasks. On the outcome of this conflict depends the future of mankind.

Among his admirers, President McKay will be remembered for his sober and relentless fight against communism.

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30 Ibid., October, 1951, p. 11.
31 Deseret News, Church Section, April 30, 1952, p. 2.
32 Ibid., October 17, 1959, p. 3. President McKay is quoting from W. Cleon Skousen, The Naked Communist (Salt Lake City: The Ensign Publishing Company, 1960), page following the title page. Evidently the statement was originally attributed to AFL-CIO president George Meany.
President McKay was not alone among Mormon leaders to address himself to the dangers of communism. His counselor, and former United States Ambassador to Mexico, J. Reuben Clark, Jr., was an equally aggressive combatant of Communist doctrine. In numerous addresses, particularly throughout Utah, he repeated the church's admonition to repudiate Marxism. Clark recognized that the primary threat to the freedom Americans enjoy comes not from the armies of other nations but from within our own vulnerable government agencies and the ever present possibility of internal subversion. He mirrored the belief that "secret combinations," including communism, instigate strikes and violence in the United States to ferment confusion and dissatisfaction with the existing society. Out of this chaos, President Clark envisioned an opportunity for the sovietization of America, to the destruction of "everything we hold dear and sacred in government, in family life, and in religion." The uprooting of basic American beliefs in personal freedoms by the Communists is the only threat that confronts the country, believed Clark.


34 "Inroads Upon the Constitution by Roman Law," address given over KSL Radio, Salt Lake City, Utah. See also J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "Some Elements of Postwar American Life," an address delivered at the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Utah Wool Growers Association, Salt Lake City, January 24, 1945. Copies of both these addresses may be found in the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
In his positions of government and church prominence, President Clark not only defined the threat of communism but sought also to encourage members of the church to play an equally vehement part in the containment of Communist influence. In one powerful statement, he declared:

It is the duty of every citizen to do his utmost to see that this perversion of our free institutions and the destruction of our national welfare, with its blessings to our citizenry--blessings unequalled least of all in sovietized Russia--shall not come to pass.\(^{35}\)

In another address, delivered in November, 1952, President Clark reviewed the evolution of Roman and English law, which was culminated in the writing of the United States Constitution, and proposed that by appreciating the freedoms we enjoy, Americans might not "sell our heritage of liberty" for communism.\(^ {36}\)

The positions of David O. McKay and J. Reuben Clark, Jr., as members of the church's reigning hierarchy, were given sober consideration by most Latter-day Saints. Many believed these men to be divinely inspired and sent to proclaim the menace of communism. As if their warnings were not enough, however, still other church authorities and writers denounced the rise of Marxism. Church Apostle Joseph F. Merrill, for example, read


\(^{36}\) J. Reuben Clark, Jr., "Let Us Not Sell Our Children Into Slavery," an address delivered before the Utah State Farm Bureau Federation, Salt Lake City, November 21, 1952. Pamphlet found in the J. Reuben Clark Papers, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.
the complete 1936 Deseret News editorial exhorting members to "eschew communism" in a general conference a full decade later. He reiterated the Latter-day Saint contention that Communist doctrine is "wholly foreign to the spirit of true Americanism." Merrill concluded his conference talk with a reminder to members of the church that Marxism denies the existence of God and, as evidenced in Soviet Russia, is often "cruel and inhuman." Dr. G. Homer Durham, a regular contributor to the church's The Improvement Era (now titled The Ensign) and a leading educator in Arizona and Utah, also frequently wrote on the evils of communism. There was little doubt in the minds of some Latter-day Saints that Communist doctrine so contradicted Mormon theology as to potentially threaten the church's existence.

There can be little doubt that Utah shared with the nation as extraordinary exposure to the McCarthy issue. Aside from the understandable attention the issue attracted over television and radio, especially during the Army-McCarthy hearings, weekly news magazines also kept many Utahns informed about the controversial senator. Between 1950 and 1955, for example, Time Magazine made over eighty-five references to Senator McCarthy, a great many of which could conceivably have been read by some 7,500 residents of the state who, during a typical week, purchased the

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37 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Conference Reports, October 5, 1946, pp. 71-73.

38 Improvement Era 51 (February, 1948), 67 and 94. See also Ibid., 51 (October, 1948), 611, and Ibid., 52 (August, 1949), 483 & 510.
Similar magazines, Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report, provided additional coverage to thousands of Utahns. Understandably, many readers chose to ignore a great deal that was written about McCarthy, especially when such articles were placed in inconspicuous parts, or toward the end of an issue; but to still others, the information within these weeklies provided rich insights into McCarthyism.

Unquestionably, though, the prime sources for the state's information about McCarthy were its four major newspapers: The Salt Lake Tribune, the Deseret News, the Ogden Standard Examiner, and the Provo Daily Herald. These dailies not only maintained high circulations, reaching over one quarter of the state's resident population, but were so situated as to represent Utah's "political power base," the Wasatch Front. Between the years 1950 and 1955, especially during the periods of particularly heated controversy, each of these papers kept the state populace objectively informed on the exploits of Joseph McCarthy, accumulating over one thousand front page references to the Wisconsin senator! Utahns were, in effect, as immersed in the topic of McCarthyism during this period as they were in an ardent distrust of Communists.


As with their counterparts in other states, Utah’s major newspapers were slow to detect the significance of McCarthy’s Wheeling speech and failed to recognize that by accusing the State Department of housing Communists, McCarthy was embarking on a highly controversial crusade against alleged Communists. Only the Standard Examiner covered the government’s denial of his accusations and provided any kind of background to the appointment of the Tydings Committee. Nevertheless, by the last week in March, 1950, each newspaper had in turn publicized McCarthy’s incrimination of Philip Jessup, Dorothy Kenyon, John Stewart Service, and a myriad of accused homosexuals employed by the State Department. Testimony before the Tydings committee concerning the highly controversial Owen Lattimore case was covered on the front pages of these newspapers every day during April; and through the months of May and June, McCarthy’s accusations and the State Department’s defenses were given notable consideration and attention. There can be little doubt that, though Utahns may not have understood the significance of the Wisconsin senator’s charges, they came to realize, by his exposure in their daily newspapers, who McCarthy was and the issue of McCarthyism.

References to Joseph McCarthy in Utah’s newspapers, of course, paralleled those times during which the senator’s exploits were attracting

41 Ogden Standard-Examiner, February 10th through the 25th, 1950, front page.

42 For example, see the Provo Daily Herald’s front page everyday in April, 1950, except the 4th, 12th or the 14th.
greatest national attention. For example, there is virtually nothing said about him during 1951, except in August when his participation in the defeat of Maryland's Millard Tydings was under condemnation. Similarly, the papers remain silent through 1952, until excitement over the coming senatorial primaries in Wisconsin again engendered interest in McCarthy. His decided victory in that election was publicized by the papers as evidence of his popular acceptance. In November, McCarthy became an issue of controversy as Republicans split over his worth to the Eisenhower campaign. Utahns were particularly interested in a reconciliation between General Eisenhower and an important McCarthy supporter, a favorite of the Beehive State, Ohio's Robert Taft. Most Utahns favored Taft for the Republican presidential nomination.

The McCarthy issue, however, might have remained simply a periodic aberration in American politics for most Utahns had not the senator become engaged in a tumultuous confrontation with the Eisenhower administration and the Army. Beginning in September, 1953, when McCarthy accused certain Monmouth base scientists of taking secret radar plans home to study, the Army-McCarthy antagonism expanded to enthrall and disgust most Americans, including Utahns. Their newspapers virtually subordinated all other news to the question of McCarthyism; and Utahns

43 Ogden Standard-Examiner, September 9th through 12th, 1952, front page.

44 Salt Lake Tribune, September 25, 1952, front page. Utahns were assured by Ike that "the G.O.P. has room for McCarthy."
could not have helped but read, and formulate opinions, about the contro-
versial topic. It is, for example, significant to note that references to
Joseph McCarthy were made in at least one of the four major newspapers
everyday in 1954. McCarthyism had pervaded American politics through
four years and the Army-McCarthy hearings provided citizens an oppor-
tunity to judge for themselves the pros and cons of the pervasive issue.
The exchanges and arguments were the climax of the McCarthy anti-
Communist crusade.

For Utahns, interest in the future of Senator McCarthy exceeded
that accorded many other national matters. Partial reason for this is that
the state's own Arthur V. Watkins was serving as head of a Senate Select
Committee to consider the censuring of McCarthy. Every Utah newspaper,
of course, covered the Watkins' investigations and the state's residents
shared an unusual mutual interest in the proceedings. Numerous letters
sent to Senator Watkins from within the state indicate a polarizing effect
among Utahns, many of whom were torn between loyalty to Watkins (or at
least an affinity with him) and the dictates of anti-communism inherent in
McCarthyism and to which they were devoted.

45 Salt Lake Tribune, August 7, 1954, front page.

46 Letters to Arthur V. Watkins, both from within the state and
from outside Utah, are housed in the Special Collections section of the
Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, and
attest to the controversial nature of his Select Committee's responsibility.
These introductory pages have been provided to acquaint the reader with the nature of postwar American anxiety about communism, to introduce the character and crusade of Joseph McCarthy, and to consider the history and politics of Utah. Each is an important requisite to an understanding of McCarthyism in the Beehive State. As indicated in the first paragraphs of Chapter II, the greatest support for McCarthy's activities came not from the few who openly condemned his use of questionable methods but from a majority of Americans who were so caught up in a fear of world communism and domination that they permitted the Wisconsin senator's usurpation of national security above the interests of personal liberty. The remainder of this study will consider the question of McCarthy's influence in Utah by citing evidences of both the incorporation of McCarthyite tactics in the state's elections and the popularity of the anti-Communist issue among Utahns, as indicated by the expressed views of the state's political and religious leaders.
CHAPTER IV

THE INFLUENCE OF JOSEPH MCCARTHY IN UTAH

McCarthyism, as noted, was a highly controversial and much publicized political issue. It touched virtually every segment of the American people and, as a result, was limited in its appeal only by their capacity to fear Communist subversion and domination. Utahns shared with the rest of the nation a deep hatred of communism, in no way mellowed by the declarations of Mormon Church leaders. They were familiar with Joseph McCarthy and his Communists-in-government explanation for foreign policy failures. In this chapter, the question of Utah's acceptance or rejection of the Wisconsin senator will be determined by examining evidences of McCarthyism in the state's politics, the opinions of Utah's politicians, and the stand taken by the L.D.S. Church, as a dominant force in the state, on the McCarthy issue.

Utah presented a unique challenge to the appeal of McCarthyism. The prominence of the Wisconsin senator among his peers and his notoriety with the public in general depended on his ability to serve as spokesman for anti-Communist forces throughout the country. In Utah, however, that service was already being enthusiastically, though less audaciously,
performed by some leaders of the Mormon Church. These authorities were in a position to instill in members of the church dislike for communism without predisposing them to join the McCarthy bandwagon. Utahns were, in a sense, offered two options: rejection of McCarthyism in favor of sober counsel from church leaders; or acceptance, in some degree, of both the Mormon Church authorities and McCarthy as vital proponents of the anti-Soviet crusade. Before considering evidences of the acceptance of McCarthyism in Utah, mention should be made of the anti-McCarthy attitude of newspaper editorialists in the state.

Without exception, Utah's major newspapers condemned McCarthyism. During 1950, the first year of McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade, numerous editorials decried his use of questionable sources and methods. The Provo Daily Herald, for example, found "little to be commended in the publicity methods" of Senator McCarthy. In May, the Daily Herald publicized another criticism of Joseph McCarthy, characterizing him as "extremely skillful at dodging questions, at throwing out his own queries at an impressive rate and at making bold new charges to keep the situation turbulent." In defense of alleged conspirator Dorothy Kenyon, the Deseret News denounced the senator's use of "moldy lists and ancient files," in which the names of innumerable Russian spies were supposedly hidden.

2 Ibid., May 3, 1950, front page.
3 Deseret News, March 16, 1950, p. 2-B.
But McCarthy's devious methods were not the only traits of his witch hunt activities about which Utah's newspapers were suspect and critical. They also published accounts of the detrimental effects of his crusade on the nation. The Salt Lake Tribune proposed that congressional leaders become cognizant of "the damage being done to American faith and to the prestige of congress" and suggested that appropriate action be taken to reprimand the outspoken and irregular senator. Also, in one of the first of its many criticisms of McCarthy, the Tribune voiced concern for the loss of "valuable congressional time" and the interference with the State Department labors. The Daily Herald predicted that the sensationalism of Senator McCarthy would not last even until the November elections, at which time, so the editorial urged, he should be summarily defeated.

Most of the major newspapers demanded that McCarthy either substantiate his charges with conclusive evidence or remain silent. "If the senator cannot do that," said the Deseret News, "he should fold up his papers, apologize to the Senate, to the State Department, and to the country at large, and go home and hide his head." The Deseret News clearly recognized that McCarthy's inability to prove his accusations indicated that his crusade was motivated, not from true evidence of a

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4 Salt Lake Tribune, March 31, 1950, p. 10.
5 Ibid., March 16, 1950, p. 8.
7 Deseret News, March 26, 1950, p. 2-B.
Communist conspiracy, but for political expediency. One significant editorial observed that McCarthy's lack of concrete proof presented the senator with an embarrassing contradiction:

McCarthy said he'd resign from the Senate if the day ever came when he'd hide behind congressional immunity and not say in public what he said in the Senate. He said further that his whole case would stand or fall on what he said about (State Department official Owen) Lattimore. But he never repeated the 'Soviet agent' charge in public. And he has not resigned from the Senate. He has not put up; but he has not shut up either. He should do both and let Senator Lodge and his like carry the ball from now on.

It is unmistakenly apparent that within the first year of McCarthy's controversial Wheeling speech, Utah's four major newspapers were publicizing a clearly defined position against the senator and were critical of his methods of incrimination. Until 1954, when the nation's attention was turned to the Army-McCarthy hearings, however, little more was said to suggest an editorial opinion of the senator. The Deseret News, without mentioning McCarthy's name, criticized his investigative committee's reliance on name-calling to defame uncooperative witnesses and, quoting Cornell University's Dr. Robert Cushman, called upon citizens to "watch out for . . . 'frantic and undisciplined patriotism' that tends to extinguish our vital liberties in a rush of competitive zeal to exhibit loyalty." Later in November of 1953, that same newspaper commended McCarthy's televised rebuttal of a speech given by former president Harry Truman. "In

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8 Ibid., July 19, 1950, p. 2-B.
9 Ibid., January 23, 1951, p. 2-B.
contrast to some of his earlier speeches," it said of McCarthy's latest appearance, "this was no wild, impassioned diatribe. His charges and figures were documented and he laid them on the line in an orderly, convincing array."\(^{10}\)

To many of the state's editorialists, the televised Army-McCarthy controversy offered Utah's residents an opportunity to personally judge the results of the senator's witch hunt activities. In question was not so much whether his goal of clearing Communists from government agencies was commendable, but whether disclosing subversives warranted "undeniable damage . . . to the nation's dignity and cohesion."\(^{11}\) The day of McCarthy's reckoning was admittedly long overdue, and many Utahns were impressed with increased administration and congressional criticism of the Wisconsin senator. The Provo Daily Herald, for instance, publicized vice-president Richard Nixon's impliciative answer to McCarthy's attack of Dwight Eisenhower:

> When you go out to shoot rats, you have to shoot straight, because when you shoot wildly it not only means that the rat may get away more easily . . . but you might hit someone who's trying to shoot rats, too.\(^{12}\)

Somewhat less descriptive, but equally impressive, was Eisenhower's belief that Americans who fought communism without regard for a "sense of justice

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\(^{10}\) Ibid., November 26, 1953, p. 18-A.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., February 27, 1954, p. 8-A.

\(^{12}\) Provo Daily Herald, March 18, 1954, p. 4-A.
and fair play" were defeating the purposes for which they fought. This trend toward condemning, rather than commending, Senator McCarthy was manifest in the similarly aggressive, but more specific denunciations by Utah's newspapers.

The hearings provided an abundant source of anti-McCarthy sentiment among Utah's editorialists. Branded by at least one newspaper as "clearly a sordid episode in U.S. governmental history," the televised exchanges gave the country "its first long, hard look at Senator McCarthy in action." Particularly obnoxious to many Utahs were the questionable methods of incrimination so effectively used by the Wisconsin senator in previous committee hearings. Editorialists writing in Utah's newspapers quickly recognized and promoted a growing popular disdain, not for McCarthy's desire to rid the government of Communists, but for the means with which he hoped to accomplish that goal. The Deseret News condemned McCarthy's undeniable damage to the senate and called upon the nation to "demand less controversy, fewer headlines and a great deal more action in the vital job of guarding our security." Each of the major

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newspapers, in turn, expressed hope that "a new mood of responsibility" would characterize the activities of McCarthy's investigative committee.17

Leading newspapers, of course, also regularly published the opinions of syndicated columnists. For our purposes, it is sufficient to recognize that the contributions of such anti-McCarthyites as Rosco Drummond, Doris Fleeson, Drew Pearson, Stewart Alsop, David Lawrence and Holmes Alexander found liberal coverage in Utah's major newspapers. Interestingly enough, the only pro-McCarthy columns published were those written by George Sokolsky after which, at least on one occasion, was interjected an "Editor's Note" specifying that Sokolsky's opinions were not necessarily shared by the newspaper.18

Utah's major newspapers were not alone in voicing opinion about Senator McCarthy. Many of the smaller, but locally influential, papers expressed equally vehement feelings against the Wisconsin senator. As early as March 17, 1950, the Mt. Pleasant Pyramid had published an anti-McCarthy editorial remarkably precise in its evaluation:

We can't believe that the kind of loose charges which Senator McCarthy has sprayed out shotgun-style are the ones that will get rid of the bad security risks. . . . It's too bad Senator McCarthy couldn't have marshalled his facts and figures a little more carefully and then stuck to them. By doing just the opposite


18 Deseret News, June 23, 1954, p. 18-A.
he has looked and sounded hysterical. He was weakened his own case and has done a disservice to the cause of anti-Communism.  

Later that month, the Washington County News publicized its belief that McCarthy's charges of Communists in the State Department were made purely for political effect. Dean Acheson was quoted in one editorial as likening McCarthy "to a man pushing every fire alarm box in the city in the hopes one will turn up a fire." After praising Margaret Chase Smith's issuance of her "Declaration of Conscience," the Washington County News flatly declared: "It is high time that we all stopped being tools and victims of totalitarian techniques."  

Ironically, McCarthyism still had four and a half years in which to mature and later the Washington County News became a rich source for the publication of anti-McCarthy cartoons, about which more will be said.

It is significant to note that, along with numerous of Utah's newspapers, the Mt. Pleasant Pyramid kept its readers informed on the activities in Washington by publishing a series of articles by Senator Arthur Watkins entitled "Report to the People." In one such article, the Utahn affirmed the non-political nature of his subcommittee considering an investigation of the Internal Security Act. With obvious reference to McCarthy, Watkins ventured: "It is my personal opinion that the people of the country

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21 Ibid., June 22, 1950, p. 2.
are sick and tired of publicity investigations designed wholly for political expediency." As evidenced by the increased popularity of McCarthy after 1951, Senator Watkins evidently underestimated the mood of the people and the tenure of McCarthyism.

By January, 1954, anti-McCarthy sentiments had been expressed in other small newspapers. Contemplating McCarthy's challenge to the Eisenhower administration, a guest editorialist for the Brigham Bulletin said:

If the winner of this battle is to become the Republican party's presidential candidate in 1956, I hope that Eisenhower is the winner. As a Democrat, I believe McCarthy would be an easy candidate to beat, but as an American citizen I'd hate to think that anybody as irresponsible as the Senator has proven himself to be might become the head of this great nation of ours.

As with major newspapers throughout the state, the Brigham Bulletin shared a hope that the censure of McCarthy in December, 1954, might result in the adoption of a new set of rules for procedure, which would make it difficult for any senator or congressman to abuse a committee witness, or abuse the power and prestige of the Senate or House. Most of Utah's newspapers were as relieved with the demise of McCarthyism as they were disgusted with its prominence.

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22 Mt. Pleasant Pyramid, March 2, 1951, p. 4.


24 Ibid., December 31, 1954, p. 2.
Perhaps more entertaining than editorials, a significant number of anti-McCarthy cartoons were published in Utah's newspapers. The capacity of these simply drawn caricatures to swiftly and accurately convey sentiments supposedly shared by the public and the newspapers warrants brief consideration of them in this chapter. Notably, only syndicated, anti-McCarthy cartoons were published.

The Wisconsin senator was a natural object of the opinionated cartoonist. McCarthy was continually involved in controversial, contradictory and embarrassing situations. When the Tydings committee found little evidence to indicate the alleged Soviet ties of Owen Lattimore, McCarthy critics resurrected the senator's promise to "stand or fall" on the results of the highly publicized case. A popular cartoon, viewed by many in the Salt Lake Tribune, vividly portrayed his predicament to Utahns and undoubtedly mirrored the wishes of many of the state's residents:
When McCarthy's insinuations began to be believed by the nation's populace, and Democratic denials failed to keep pace with McCarthy's attack, a serious problem confronted the Truman administration. In a pointed Deseret News cartoon, a diligent Democratic fireman was depicted as standing next to an active volcano spurting "McCarthy's charges," with the caption: "'Oh, For the Life of a Fireman!'" But for many Republicans, the certainty of Communist infiltration justified the volcanic dynamism.

25 Salt Lake Tribune, April 16, 1950, p. 10-A.

26 Deseret News, June 11, 1950, p. 2-B.
of Senator McCarthy and some Utahns looked satirically upon liberals who would stifle the enthusiasm of his crusade:

The controversy over Senator McCarthy reached climatic proportions in January of 1954. Throughout that year, innumerable cartoons expressed the anti-McCarthy sentiments of their creators. For the nation,

the issue of Communists-in-government was perceived as simply another burden for an already overworked legislature:

Utahns became more cognizant of criticism of McCarthy during 1954. Evi­dences of his usurpation of power were manifested in his challenges to the Eisenhower administration and in the questionable activities of his investigative committee. To at least one cartoonist, McCarthy was little more than an irresponsible anti-Communist. 29


The Army-McCarthy hearings were the object of many cartoons, most of which criticized the time and energy spent at the expense of more pressing and important issues. The following cartoon seemed to summarize the hearings in one conclusive thought:

Needle in a Haystack?

Others satirized the impression left with many before the hearings that McCarthy was an indispensable man in the fight against the Communist conspiracy. The question of censure significantly captured the imagination of many cartoonists. To one, whose drawings reproduced below was

seen in numerous Utah papers, McCarthy's ouster was simply a badly needed step in the direction of improved senate prestige:

"The Climb Back"

Finally, perhaps, as a result of Arthur Watkins' part in the censorship of Senator McCarthy, many Utahns who had expressed disapproval with his methods recognized in the Select Committee's report a fatal blow to the

Salt Lake Tribune, September 16, 1954, p. 16.
Wisconsin senator's witch hunt activities, as descriptively illustrated in the cartoon below:

These editorials and cartoons are representatives of the opinions expressed in Utah's newspapers; they indicate the totality of anti-McCarthy sentiment in the Beehive State. Why it is that not one reference in support of the Wisconsin senator could be found is difficult to discern. Perhaps McCarthy's questionable tactics appeared readily abhorrent to the informed and secure editorialist, intent on influencing, not emulating, public opinion.

33 Deseret News, November 8, 1954, p. 18-A.
Possibly Utah's newspapermen took immediate offense at McCarthy's denial of objectivity, open forum and controlled debate. In any case, the editorialist was the exception and, as will be shown in the remainder of this chapter, Utahns accepted McCarthy and permitted his methods of incrimination and fear.

During the years of Joseph McCarthy's prominence, 1950 to 1954, the use of slanderous insinuations to give the impression that a politician was pro-Communist was widespread and effective in Utah. For Republicans, the political situation at the beginning of the decade was desperate. They had not had a party member in the governor's mansion for twenty-four years, nor had they held both senatorial seats for some thirty years. G. O. P. leaders earnestly sought to end the reign of Democratic control and, as a result, election campaigns held during the McCarthy era were "probably the most bitter in Utah history and probably the lowest experience in Utah history." 34 The first victim of this deluge of McCarthyism was the state's senior senator, Democrat Elbert Thomas.

Senator Thomas was particularly vulnerable to charges of being sympathetic to communism. In 1944, he wrote a book entitled The Four Fears, portions of which were publicized by his critics during the 1950 senatorial campaign. In the book, Thomas blamed deterrents to peaceful

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coexistence between the United States and the Soviet Union on anti-Russia forces in America attempting "to make us believe that the Russians have deep-laid plans to rule the world, to change all governments by force, to absorb all Europe." He decried postwar tendencies to suspect Russia of every kind of atrocity and called upon Americans to defend, not condemn, the Soviet Union.

Senator Thomas was also significantly criticized for his expressed indifference toward Russia's disbandment of a state religion. Concerning the possibility that the Soviet Union might reverse its position, Thomas admitted that it had been modified but added, "there is no use to pretend that she will restore it, on anybody's say so, as an instrument of the state. And whether she does or not is none of our business." Such sentiment for the spiritually neglected peoples of Communist controlled countries could not be shared by the ecclesiastically endowed Utahns. Notably, Thomas' book was offered as a bonus to anyone subscribing to the pro-Communist magazine New Masses and the senator became an occasional speaker on behalf of movements attempting to cement U.S.-Soviet relations. In the hysteria of 1950, his opinions were resurrected and used to substantiate Republican allegations of pro-Communist sympathies.


36 Ibid.

37 For example, on November 29, 1944, Thomas spoke at a dinner held in honor of Andrei Gromyko and praised the Soviets for having "shown
Elbert Thomas was not a Communist; indeed, his critics never specifically questioned his loyalty to the United States. Rather, they publicized enough implicative insinuations and accusations in the 1950 senatorial campaign to provoke widespread suspicion of Thomas' political leanings and to cause his defeat at the polls. The impression that Senator Thomas was pro-Communist originated from a variety of sources, consideration of which indicates the extent of this early and significant example of McCarthyism in Utah.

One group most vehement in its opposition to the re-election of Thomas was the American Medical Association. On April 25, 1949, Senator Thomas introduced a bill to the 81st Congress which, if enacted, would have allowed the government to levy a compulsory tax in support of a mandatory, and federally controlled, health insurance program. Understandably, the AMA was distraught with the suggestion and called upon Utah's doctors to actively fight for the defeat of the state's senior senator. The response was overwhelming. A group of doctors formed the Utah Healing Arts...
Committee in Salt Lake City and began processing letters, buying newspaper advertisements, and organizing lectures and rallies. Every possible attempt was made to associate Senator Thomas with forced medical insurance, the resultant "deterioration in the quality of medical care," and communism. Evidently, according to Garfield, even the Mormon Tabernacle Choir publicized the evils of Thomas' "socialized medicine" bill by consenting to sing at one of the committee's rallies. 40

Despite the AMA's aggressive campaign, had it not been for what some consider the virtual political abandonment of Thomas by Mormon Church authorities just prior to the 1950 election, the attempt to pin the label of Communist sympathizer on the Utah senator might have proven quite unsuccessful. However, on two occasions, once shortly before the campaign primaries and once just prior to the final elections, an organization branded as a "quasi-official organ of the Latter-day Saint Church" and called the Salt Lake County L.D.S. Law Observance and Enforcement Committee (LOEC), published a list of candidates considered likely to "uphold the standards of the Church in regards to pending legislation on Liquor by the Drink, Horse Racing, etc." 41 Senator Thomas' name was noticeably missing from the

list, which was mistakenly (so church leaders insist) distributed among lay members. To some Mormons, of course, the LOEC's endorsements meant little more than the expressions of opinion by a selected group of Latter-day Saints. But to others, the absence of support for Senator Thomas implied that he had somehow jeopardized his standing with the church's reigning hierarchy. It was left to many to assume that he had actually been abandoned by church authorities, possibly because of his alleged Communist sympathies.

Sects and denominations of varying types, of course, have every right to participate in political elections by endorsing candidates whose ideals appear in moral harmony with the dictates of the organization. There was, significantly, no clear evidence that Thomas had violated that harmony with the Mormon Church; in fact, he was an active participant in good standing with the church. Furthermore, the actions of the LOEC transcended the privilege accorded organizations to become politically active by allowing copies of its list to be purposefully circulated outside the committee's accepted jurisdiction (Salt Lake County), by interjecting "some conditioners of the mind such as socialism and communism" which had little or nothing to do with the LOEC's activities, but which were included to attract political interest in the list, and by including in the pamphlet the names of candidates for national, as well as Salt Lake County, offices. 42 In any case, the LOEC

42 Ibid., p. 96.
and the Mormon Church were legitimately held responsible for the deletion of Thomas' name. To some writers, including Frank Jonas, the committee's endorsement of Wallace Bennett, chief contender for Thomas' seat, indicated a direct attack against Elbert Thomas, an attack strikingly similar to that practiced with efficiency by Joseph McCarthy:

Finally, the plan of this committee, and therefore of Mormon Church officials, was intended deliberately to assist the State Republican Party organization in its strategy to unseat Senator Thomas and Congresswoman Bosone regardless of the nature of any device or tactic. In short, the actions of the Church in the 1950 elections were purely political, and the manner in which the committee acquired and assembled and then used its information would suggest strongly that these actions fell within the framework of political dynamiting.  

The LOEC circular simply suggested to Mormons the truthfulness of the Republican allegations that Senator Thomas was identified with communism by refusing to print Thomas' name along with that of Wallace Bennett.

Mormon President George Albert Smith denied that the committee's endorsements were anything more than simply an expression of opinion by church members associated with the group. He denied having ever known of the letter until its distribution and said that "the church had nothing to do with it in any way, shape or form and that 'no one has put it out with any authority.'" Nevertheless, by virtue of its close association with the hierarchy of the L.D.S. Church, the LOEC's endorsements implied that

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43 Ibid.

44 Deseret News, November 3, 1950, p. 1. Notably, the Salt Lake Tribune published the retraction the day before, indicating a reluctance on the part of the church-owned Deseret News to deny L.D.S. involvement.
similar opinions were held by Mormon officials. The committee, for example, was composed of a representative from each of Salt Lake County's twenty-six L. D. S. stakes and reported its activities to Apostle Spencer W. Kimball (now president of the church). Speaking of the committee, Dr. Jonas observed, "although it had no official sanction it had, without question, the full approval of the 'brethren.'"\footnote{Jonas, "The Mormon Church and Political Dynamiting," p. 98.}

Numerous state, and at least one church, officials concurred with Professor Jonas' conclusions and questioned the church's allegations that it had nothing to do with the writing or distribution of the letter. Ira Huggins, a former Democratic office holder, was quoted by Jonas as having said that

'the defeat of Senator Thomas in this county . . . may be chargeable to several factors. In my opinion, of first importance was the attitude of the Church against him. The letter from the L. D. S. Law Observance and Enforcement Committee was circulated in this county (Weber; Ogden city is the county seat). Whether they (the Church's local officials) received instructions or not I do not know, but from contacts a large majority of Church officials here were rabidly opposed to him.'\footnote{Ira Huggins, letter to Frank H. Jonas, dated December 18, 1950, and found in Ibid., p. 105.}

Evidently, instructions were given to at least some Mormon leaders. One of the stake presidents, J. Angus Christensen, admitted that "we were instructed that the thinking of Elbert D. Thomas was not in conformity with
the teachings of our faith."  Such recognition by the church indicates a partial acceptance of alleged charges against the senior senator and, without proof, provides an illustrative example of the anti-Communist hysteria, totally erroneous and founded on pure implication, in Utah politics.

It is, however, not inconsistent that the Deseret News, a church owned and controlled newspaper, should publicize anti-McCarthy sentiment in its editorials while leaders of the church, and possibly the church itself as a reflection of its authorities, should demonstrate such a willingness to accept the mood of his anti-Soviet crusade, as in the case of its criticism of Senator Thomas. The Deseret News staff, characteristically cautious of antagonizing proponents of individual liberties, undoubtedly felt obliged to defend on paper the principles of individual freedom under attack by McCarthy. The church's leaders, though also concerned with liberties, were more responsive to political and social pressures which caused Americans to tolerate, and eventually support, Joseph McCarthy. In theory it was abhorred, in practice it was tolerated. More than Deseret News editorialists, church leaders were reacting to a highly tumultuous period in United States history.

Perhaps the most effective use of political dynamiting against Senator Elbert Thomas came in the form of a four-page newspaper entitled

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the United States Senate News. This slanderous document was prepared in Minneapolis by a professional propagandist, Walter Quigley, and circulated to a large number of Utah's residents. In effect, the pamphlet attempted to confirm a growing impression that Thomas was a Communist by using similar insinuations and allegations so effectively employed by Senator McCarthy. It publicized Thomas' association with questionable organizations in such a manner as to imply that that relationship was fostered for the promulgation of communism in the United States. Referring to the May 23, 1946 welcoming for three Russian war correspondents, the Senate News publicized:

These good-will ambassadors whom Senator Thomas said he loved like brothers are the serpents who today are responsible for the vile Communist propaganda which has maligned and undermined the good will of the American people throughout the world. They are notorious publicists who whipped the people and the government of North Korea into a frenzy that brought war and death to American troops.

Other references alluded to Thomas' contributions to the New Masses or the Daily Worker; significantly, nothing was included from the man himself, from which the reader could objectively judge the man and his ideals.

The dominant characteristic of the Senate News was the numerous cartoons depicting Senator Thomas in various positions of subservience to


the Soviet Union. The most prominent, reproduced below, was located on the front page and provided the reader with a startling introduction to the pamphlet's theme: Thomas' implied association with the Reds. As can be seen on page 110, even Thomas' book, The Four Fears, was the object of the cartoonist's sarcasm. Seven smaller, yet similarly illustrative and opinionated, cartoons appeared on page three of the newspaper.

The Senate News, a vigorous campaign by Utah's doctors and the very effective publication of Salt Lake County's Law Observance and Enforcement Committee's endorsement of Thomas' opponent all helped to instill a suspicion of Senator Elbert Thomas. But there were other factors contributing to such an impression. Utah's politicians were outspoken in their denunciation of the state's senior senator. Contenders for the U.S. senatorial nomination, State Senator Rue L. Clegg and Wallace F. Bennett, sought to publicize the question of Thomas' loyalty. Speaking of Thomas, Clegg was quoted by the Deseret News as condemning him for being "far too palsy-walsy with far too many pinks and fellow travelers." Senator Clegg also produced photostatic copies of the Communist New Masses magazine which allegedly showed Thomas as having contributed to an article entitled "World Citizen." 51

52 Jonas, "Murder of a Reputation," p. 84.
Wallace Bennett was equally critical of Thomas' association with pro-Communists, concluding that he "has been so soft and so wrong about Russia as to prove himself totally unfit to help make our policies in crucial times." He was quick to associate Senator Thomas, a firm New Dealist, with Democratic foreign policy failures and predicted that "Senator Thomas' fuzzy philosophical preachment and crazy attitude toward Communism will return to haunt him in the days to come." As if to purposely confirm his

53 Ibid., October 3, 1950, p. 8-A.

prophecy, just four months later Bennett defeated Elbert Thomas in the senatorial election.

Even Arthur V. Watkins, later chairman of the senate committee considering McCarthy’s censure, spoke out against his colleague:

'Will Senator Thomas or any Democrat for that matter deny the following—That he (Senator Thomas) wrote a book, *The Four Fears*, the philosophy of which was so well thought of that the Communist New Masses offered it as a subscription incentive, and that he wrote as guest editor and contributed other articles to this same *New Masses* more than two years after the publication had been cited as a Communist publication by his own Democratic Attorney General Francis Biddle?'

Utahns were so immersed in the proposition, never proven and only conjectured, that Senator Thomas was sympathetic to communism that they converged on election booths and voted businessman Wallace Bennett their new United States Senator.

The defeat of Elbert Thomas in the 1950 senatorial campaign was an illustrative early example of McCarthyism at work in the nation. The campaign tactics attracted national attention and, with the famed Millard Tydings defeat in Maryland that same year, came to symbolize the powerful significance of the anti-Communist hysteria. Utah’s Mormons did not

55 Salt Lake Tribune, October 24, 1950, p. 5.

56 Files, "A Quantic Analysis of Paid Political Propaganda," p. 6, indicates that "there was a turnout of voters approximately 75 percent of the total registered to vote." 54.2 percent to 45.8 percent.

57 The use of incriminating accusations in the 1950 Utah election campaign was given notable consideration by Newsweek, November 6, 1950, p. 23.
reject McCarthyism; they embraced its insinuations and allegations with destructive fervor. And the defeat of Senator Thomas was only the first of many evidences of McCarthyism in Utah.

The off-election years in Utah did not provide the enthusiastic atmosphere characteristic of McCarthyism and in 1951 mention of the subject by Utah's politicians was confined to a scathing denunciation by Democrat Congresswoman Reva Beck Bosone. Representative Bosone had been the noticeable recipient of the same Law Observance and Enforcement Committee rejection as had Senator Thomas and narrowly missed experiencing a similar fate in the 1950 election. On August 4, 1951, before a crowd assembled at a Jackson Democratic League outing, she characterized McCarthyism as "that ranting and chanting ritual which has made pledges, platforms and principles things of no import in political science." She continued her speech by labeling the anti-Red hysteria as a "passport to victory for the G. O. P. in 1952" based on a new interpretation of C. C. C. to mean "Coalition, Connivance and Confusion." The Deseret News printed her message on its front page, thus assuring its widespread circulation in Utah.

Jonas indicated that had the election been held two weeks later, Bosone might very well have also been defeated. Frank H. Jonas, "The 1950 Elections in Utah," Western Political Quarterly 4 (1951), 89.

Speech given on August 4, 1951, copies of which are found among the Reva Beck Bosone Papers, Special Collections Division, Marriot Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The 1952 elections in Utah evidenced more the acceptance of pro-McCarthy sentiment among politicians than the actual use of the Communist issue against political opponents. Perhaps it is more than coincidental that Congresswoman Bosone was defeated in one of the most surprising Republican victories of that year after having criticized McCarthy, but there was no attempt to label her a Communist and even the victor, William A. Dawson, held little regard for the Wisconsin senator. More important, however, was that Utahns did elect, or retained in office, officials who either remained conspicuously silent on the controversial issue of McCarthyism, and later spoke in its defense, or who expressed early support and praise for Joseph McCarthy.

The state's senior senator, Arthur Watkins, and its governor, J. Bracken Lee, were both re-elected in the 1952 election. Watkins, of course, had illustrated his willingness to employ tactics at least partially resembling those of McCarthy when he publicly belittled Elbert Thomas' publication *Four Fears*. Later, Senator Watkins signed a statement criticizing the Truman administration and attacking the 1960 Gillette...
committee investigation of Senator McCarthy. Significantly, this pro-
McCarthy pronouncement was not co-signed by the Republican party
leadership as a whole, but represented, at least to one author, an example
of support for the Wisconsin senator among some moderate Republicans,
including Watkins. Apparently, such support did not jeopardize Watkins' re-election in 1952.

Also in that year, Republican J. Bracken Lee was elected to his second consecutive four year term as governor of Utah. During the years of McCarthy's prominence, Lee demonstrated unquestionable support for the Wisconsin senator. In September, 1953, for example, he made a nationwide broadcast calling upon listeners to substantiate charges that McCarthy had acted imprudently in his efforts to rid the country of Communists.

"They say he's destroying the character and reputation of people," the Utah governor declared. "I want someone in America to write me a letter and tell me whose reputation he has hurt." Lee recognized that McCarthy's tactics were not without "some rough edges" but said that anyone damaged


64 Salt Lake Tribune, September 2, 1953, p. 15.
by unproven accusations need only blame themselves for having consorted
with Communist suspects.

During 1954, as McCarthy's actions became subjected to increased
criticism, Governor Lee became more enthusiastic in his defense of the
controversial senator. In an address to the Utah Society of the Daughters
of the American Revolution, on March 28th, he took issue with McCarthy
critics:

'I can't agree that Sen. McCarthy is a headline seeker,' said
Gov. Lee. 'I know what he's up against. I've had a little of it
myself. . . .'
'God bless him as far as I'm concerned,' he said. 'I think
we are making a terrible mistake if we don't follow the goal of
Sen. McCarthy.'65

In the midst of the senate's consideration of McCarthy's censure, Lee spoke
at a Madison Square Garden rally and defined a possible effect of the antici-
pated reprimand. "The Senate has an unquestionable right to censure one
of its members as it chooses," he said. "But by censuring a member for
speaking his mind, a precedent could be set that would effectively deter
other senators from speaking their mind."66 Rather than debating the
political future of Senator McCarthy, Lee suggested that the senate duly
recognize the fight McCarthy had conducted against Communist infiltration.67

Governor Lee was considered by McCarthyites as one of their most ardent

66 Deseret News, November 30, 1954, p. 4-A.
67 Ibid.
supporters and, as will be shown in the next chapter, sought successfully to use him in 1958 to ouster Senator Arthur Watkins.

Also elected by Utahns in 1952 was Congressman Douglas Stringham, a frequent McCarthy supporter. In September, 1953, before an audience of Rotarians, Stringfellow admitted to being lukewarm to the exploits of Senator McCarthy, but continued by reassuring his listeners that "now I am one of the senator's strongest supporters."\(^68\) Congressman Byron G. Rogers of Colorado, after having debated Stringfellow in February, 1954, commented that the Utahn's oratory was adopted from McCarthy and that, like many politicians of the time, Stringfellow was caught in the enthusiasm of the anti-Communist crusade.\(^69\) On at least two occasions, Stringfellow used his weekly column, "Day By Day With Doug," to quote unnamed commentators with whom he shared similar views concerning the Wisconsin senator. At the height of the McCarthy-Army hearings, for example, Stringfellow quoted one writer as saying, "I'm cheering for Senator McCarthy because personally I hate communism more than I love a few oversensitive generals."\(^70\) A week later, and in a similar manner, Stringfellow quoted another commentator as aptly mirroring his opinion when he said, McCarthy,

\(^{68}\) Ogden Standard-Examiner, September 23, 1953, p. 1.


\(^{70}\) Syndicated through numerous Utah newspapers. See Roosevelt Standard, March 4, 1954, p. 2.
like a shotgun discharged inside an iron kettle, may make too much noise, sometimes. But it takes a shotgun to blast skunks; the country needs such a man as other men play the part of skunks." Notably, Stringfellow's support among most Utahns did not suffer because of his enthusiasm for McCarthy.

By April, 1954, Stringfellow's adoration mellowed when McCarthy's support began to wane and senatorial criticism increased. He admitted that the controversial senator had embarrassed him politically, but vowed continued enthusiasm for McCarthy as long as he fought subversives. Speaking of the Wisconsin senator, Stringfellow told a Chicago audience: "Most people seem to regard him either as a saint who can do no wrong or as one who can do no good." He praised McCarthy's ability to arouse public attention to the menace of communism, but deplored what he called McCarthy's tendency to "exploit himself" in his investigations. Congressman Stringfellow never allowed his support of McCarthy to interfere with his personal friendship with Arthur Watkins. Nevertheless, when confronted with news leaks insinuating, truthfully, that Stringfellow's highly publicized World War II exploits were false, the congressman "asserted that the charges against him were 'politically inspired' and the work of

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Ironically, Watkins played a major role in extracting a public, televised confession from the embarrassed, and politically ruined, representative. Significantly, it was his deceit, not Stringfellow's embrace of McCarthyism, that resulted in his removal from office.

The political philosophies of both J. Bracken Lee and Douglas Stringfellow were shared by at least two top Latter-day Saint officials. J. Reuben Clark, Jr., counselor in the First Presidency of the church, for example, held views on government similar to those of Governor Lee. Professor Jonas, in defining the breadth of their resemblance, wrote that they saw eye to eye in their unqualified opposition to United States foreign policy, the United Nations, foreign aid, federal aid to the states, particularly to education, the federal bureaucracy in Washington, and the New Deal. They shared the same view to the effect that administration policies in Washington were stripping the country of its sovereignty and leading it down the path to Communism. These two men were intellectually and personally compatible.

Though it cannot conclusively be shown that Clark was a die-hard McCarthyite, as was Lee, it is apparent that his disdain for increased federal participation in local and state affairs placed the high Mormon leader within the political camp from which the Wisconsin senator drew his most enthusiastic support. That he remained silent, in the face of McCarthyism,

73 Jonas, The Story of a Political Hoax, p. 60, indicated (without documentation) that this response came in reply to an inquiry by Deseret News editor DeMar Tuescher.


75 Unfortunately, the J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Papers, housed in the Americana Collection of the Harold B. Lee Library at Brigham Young University, are being kept closed until the publication of a Clark biography.
when he was in a position of influence and esteem among Utahns, is evidence of his quasi-support of the anti-Communist fanaticism. That he maintained and exerted a controlling influence in Mormon politics is illustrated by his effective role in assuring his friend Bracken Lee the gubernatorial nomination later, in 1952.\[76\]

An impressive, if nonetheless embarrassing, endorsement was offered to Douglas Stringfellow by Agriculture Secretary and Mormon apostle Ezra Taft Benson. The leading church-official, government-servant had exerted Latter-day Saints in a general conference of the church to see that "men of character ... are elected to office." The following day, during a rally for the aspiring representative, Secretary Benson spoke of Douglas Stringfellow:

"In this district," he said, "of course, you will vote for Douglas R. Stringfellow. Doug has shown the same courage, the same determination, the same devotion to God and country as a member of Congress, as he did on the battlefields and in the rehabilitation centers of this nation ... It is a question of what is good for America, and it would be unfortunate if, at mid-term you should fail to return to the President a working majority in Congress."\[77\]

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\[76\] Jonas in "J. Bracken Lee and the Mormon Church," p. 123, indicates that Clark, along with Leonard Love and Harold B. Lee, "dominated" Republican politics during the 1952 election in Utah. These were the observations of an unnamed "Mormon Church office-holder who was an astute observer and an ardent political worker for Lee and whose expert opinion can be highly credited." Church control of local politics, claims the observer, resumed in 1952 when it "officially" began to take an interest in convention politics and its leaders encouraged members to attend district political meetings. At these meetings, says Jonas, it would have been impossible for participants to ignore the inherent authority of attending leaders, whether local or church-wide.

\[77\] Salt Lake Tribune, October 5, 1954, p. 12.
Benson, of course, could justify such unequivocal endorsement by simply reminding listeners that as a member of Eisenhower's cabinet he had every right and obligation to express the administration's best wishes to the Republican hopeful. To many Mormons, and especially to Benson's critics, the Secretary's enthusiasm was interpreted as another example of Mormon influence in Utah's politics and as an attempt to provide the impression of divine endorsement for Douglas Stringfellow. That both J. Reuben Clark and Ezra Taft Benson so ardently supported outspoken McCarthyites, indicates, perhaps, the character of church leaders' attitudes toward the Wisconsin senator. At least these leaders might have more carefully defined the extent of their endorsements of Stringfellow and Lee, had they desired to exclude from it support for Joseph McCarthy.

Expressions of McCarthy's support in Utah were evidenced not only in the sentiments of local politicians elected or re-elected in 1952, but emerged also from the state's choice for Republican presidential nomination: Robert A. Taft. The Ohio senator was a frequent critic of the Truman administration's defense of alleged State Department Communists and came to justify the questionable activities of his colleague from Wisconsin. After specifying, on one occasion, that McCarthy did not necessarily dictate

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78 Notably, Benson did speak out against those whom he said would "destroy our basic freedoms under the guise of anti-Communism." Provo Daily Herald, June 22, 1954, p. 1. Years later, though, Benson himself was accused of incorporating the same incriminating methods as McCarthy. Discussion of that possibility, providing an appropriate epilogue to the study of McCarthyism in Utah, will be made in the next chapter.
party policies, Taft expressed his opinion that the enthusiastic investigator should nevertheless "keep talking and if one case doesn't work out, he should proceed with another one." Aroused by an intense and inherited hatred of communism, Senator Taft attempted to negate the illegality of McCarthy's witch hunt by stressing the need to rid the country of Communist sympathizers. America could never serve "as an example of capitalist virtue," interpreted one Taft biographer, unless its citizens made a constructive effort to clear the government of suspects. Taft recognized McCarthy as a political asset and at least some political observers envisioned the possibility of a Taft-McCarthy ticket in the 1952 presidential contest. Evidently, the Wisconsin Senator wanted nothing to do with the presidency, but the fact that some considered the possibility indicated the compatibility of the Republican party, and Taft in particular, with McCarthyism in that presidential election year.

The affinity of Senators Taft and McCarthy was undeniable to Utahns, most of whom, as Republicans, expressed early hope that Robert Taft would be the G.O.P. choice for president. As early as August, 1951, Utah was designated as one of but a few clearly discernible Taft states.

79 Speech by Robert A. Taft, March 23, 1950, found in the Robert A. Taft collection, Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress.


81 Columnist Sokolsky informed Utahns of Taft's preference for McCarthy as his "chief lieutenant" in Deseret News, March 3, 1951, p. 2-B.
According to two other studies, taken just before the Republican National Convention, there was virtual agreement that Utah's fourteen man delegation would go to Taft on the first ballot. Significantly, George Hanson, a Utahn and avowed Taft supporter, was appointed chairman of the National Committee group designated to rule the eligibility of certain contested delegates. That Utah offered unwavering support to Senator Taft is as undeniable as is the senator's public approval of McCarthy.

Utah's endorsement of Robert Taft, however, was not necessarily an expression of support for every stand espoused by the Ohio senator. It might be concluded by some, in fact, that the state's Republicans thought so much of the presidential hopeful that they lent him unwavering support despite his enthusiasm for Joseph McCarthy. At least two evidences appear to contradict such an assumption. First, the mere prominence of the Communists-in-government issue in Utah, as well as national, politics, as shown, made discussion of it during the early 1950's a highly volatile and much publicized subject. Surely Robert Taft's known friendship for Joseph McCarthy could not have been overlooked by a people well versed by Mormon leaders and contemporary expressions in a hatred of Communists, especially at the height of anti-Red hysteria. Second, by attributing Utahn support for Taft wholly to a cause other than his endorsement of McCarthy is to ignore

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the fact that when Dwight Eisenhower accepted Taft's pro-McCarthy stand, Utah's Republicans abruptly shifted support from the senator to the general. Endorsement of a candidate does not always mean acceptance of his every dictate; but in the case of Utah's support for Robert Taft, it is clear evidence of the state's approval of his pro-McCarthy stand.

Though the anxiety of McCarthyism undoubtedly persisted through the two years of the senator's prominence following the 1952 elections, evidences of the issue surfacing to public attention were virtually non-existent. In 1953, suspicion of State Supreme Court Justice James Wolfe prompted the Utah House of Representatives to affirm that Wolfe "is not a communist-sympathizer and that he has never been a communist-sympathizer." Such bold and definitive declaration, besides stating the House's whole-hearted support for Justice Wolfe, leaves the impression that the issue of Communists-in-government commanded at least some attention among Utahns. In November, 1954, Wallace Bennett filed censure charges against McCarthy, not so much in disgust for the Wisconsin senator, but in defense of Arthur Watkins, whom McCarthy branded as a "hand-maiden to


That charge, of course, was one of two for which McCarthy was eventually censured.

On numerous occasions, especially from 1950 through 1952, the incorporation of McCarthyite tactics, the expression of pro-McCarthy sentiment, and the general acceptance of the Communists-in-government hysteria permeated Utah's politics. The Mormon Church was not immune to the lure of McCarthyism; some of its leaders were linked directly with implicatory accusations leveled for political expediency at Elbert Thomas, while others entertained and publicized their endorsements of staunch McCarthyites in the state.

Significantly, this writer could find no expression of anti-McCarthy sentiment among Mormon leaders. Undoubtedly, some did not approve of his activities, but they did not stand up and counsel their co-religionists. Especially among the lay members was a need for sober direction in the face of McCarthy's fanaticism. Yet their authorities remained silent. Is it not plausible that those who looked to these men for guidance, as well as we who look back upon their silence, interpret it at least as permission for the continuance of McCarthyism in the state, if not actual approval of McCarthy's tactics? But the demise of McCarthy's political career in December of 1954 did not mean the end to the use of incriminating insinuations among Utah's political and religious leaders, nor did it seem to stifle

the enthusiasm of the state's McCarthyites. The following chapter will briefly isolate incidents of post-1954 McCarthyism in Utah.
CHAPTER V
POST-1954 MCCARTHYISM IN UTAH

For most Americans, McCarthyism became a passing issue with the censorship of its chief proponent in December, 1954; but for Utahns, it continued well into the 1960's. Not only did the phenomenon play a conclusive role in the defeat of politicians, but ardent McCarthyites in the state extended their influence beyond Utah's borders. J. Bracken Lee and Ezra Taft Benson, the activities of whom form the basis for this chapter, came to symbolize a renewed determination by McCarthy's supporters that the Wisconsin senator might not be forced into political obscurity.

Throughout his two terms as governor of Utah, 1949 to 1957, and especially in 1955, J. Bracken Lee alienated many Republican leaders by drastically cutting state expenditures (he was characterized by one biographer as "the taxpayer's champion"\(^1\)), publically criticizing Eisenhower's foreign aid program, and voicing disdain at the censorship of Joseph McCarthy.\(^2\) When, in 1956, Lee made it known that he desired an


\(^2\)Lee's criticism of the Eisenhower administration caused a deep-set division between the governor and certain Mormon leaders, especially after Ezra Taft Benson's appointment as Secretary of Agriculture. See Frank H. Jonas, "J. Bracken Lee and the Mormon Church," pp. 124-25.
unprecedented third term, an aggressive campaign was launched against him by those whom he said had abandoned the G.O.P.'s heritage of conservatism by rallying behind Senator Watkins' condemnation of Senator McCarthy.

One of Lee's staunchest advocates, the popular radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr., publicly criticized the Republican party's humiliation of Governor Lee during the campaign of 1956 and clearly implied that Watkins had assumed leadership of the anti-Lee move in a blatant attempt to take over the governor's place as top Republican in the state of Utah. The effort, continued Lewis, was financed by huge donations "pouring into the state against Bracken Lee from the anti-McCarthy elements of the Eastern faction of the Republican party." The ensuing campaign pitted Lee who, having been denied the Republican nomination, ran on the Independent ticket, against the G.O.P.'s choice, George D. Clyde, and Democrat L. C. Romney. It was surprisingly void of specific political dynamiting but left the impression with many Utahns that Lee had abandoned the Republican party in a struggle with Watkins over Joseph McCarthy. As a result, Clyde reaped political harvest from the contention and Governor Lee temporarily retired from political activity.

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3 Speech given over KSL radio by Fulton Lewis, Jr., on October 4, 1956, and published in Russell, J. Bracken Lee: The Taxpayer's Champion, p. 141.

Perhaps no single event better illustrates the significant influence of post-1954 McCarthyism in Utah than does the 1958 senatorial campaign. Democrat Frank Moss was the unintentional beneficiary of a growing feud between contenders J. Bracken Lee and Arthur Watkins resulting from Lee's concerted effort to drive Utah's senior senator from office at any cost. Joseph McCarthy's death in May of 1957 symbolized the end of an era for most people; but to many of his supporters, including Lee, it meant the need to vindicate the Wisconsin senator's tarnished name in a renewed enthusiasm for his cause. To defeat Arthur Watkins would provide an appropriate, and cherished, eulogy.

Understandably, Senator Watkins expressed only superficial surprise at hearing of Lee's decision to seek the contested U.S. senatorial seat. In his published account of the McCarthy era, Enough Rope, Watkins discussed in detailed and explicit terms the motive behind Lee's candidacy.

I fully expected Dawson to be my opponent and strongly believed that Lee would support him, but now it seems that this combination had changed its plans so that Lee would become in effect the candidate of the followers of the late Senator McCarthy. As their candidate, he would have the strong financial support of wealthy Republican and Democratic backers of McCarthy which would make him a formidable opponent in Utah.

As I had been warned that my activities as Chairman of the Censure Committee would destroy me politically, I was not surprised that the die-hard McCarthy supporter (of whom Lee had been one of the most active) would seize this, their first, opportunity to vent their spleen against me.

The pro-McCarthy groups were intent upon punishing me and this could be accomplished most drastically through my defeat which would end my Senatorial career. Governor Lee who had endeared himself with the McCarthyites (his telephone message of encouragement to the "10,000,000 Americans" group has been
discussed in Chapter 14) and as president of a "Pro-America" group made up of wealthy Texas and California conservatives) was almost the perfect challenger for my Senate seat.\(^5\)

Watkins' statements were of tremendous import in confirming the influence of Joseph McCarthy in Utah. They affirm the closeness of Governor Lee to the McCarthyite movement by identifying his motives for seeking the senatorial seat as purely revenge. Watkins recognized the affinity at least some Utahns must have had for McCarthy and the strong "financial support of wealthy Republican and Democratic backers of McCarthy" which would be at Lee's command for the campaign. Finally, the statements indicated Watkins' fear for the challenge of Lee, once he entered the race, because the Utah governor had "endeared himself with the McCarthyites." Few other Utahns could have known of the influence of Joseph McCarthy in Utah as did Arthur Watkins; his political career hung in the balance.

Though Frank Moss was the Democrat's candidate, Republican Watkins undoubtedly believed Bracken Lee was to be his major opponent.

On two related occasions, Watkins complained to both Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson and Vice-president Nixon about the threat from Lee's pro-McCarthy faction in Utah. Notably, Johnson reassured Watkins that he had nothing to worry about; that his re-election in Utah was a foregone assumption. Naively, Watkins acquiesced, only later to find that he had been misled by what he claimed was a coalition between Johnson and Lee to

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insure the senator’s defeat. In a bitter recollection of the election, Watkins defined the pro-McCarthy sentiment:

In addition, I believe, I can be reasonably objective in my analysis of my defeat in my bid for re-election to the Senate following the censure proceedings, in which the bitterness of the pro-McCarthy faction was a direct factor. . . . We know of a certainty is [sic] that there was still a hardcore of McCarthyites who were marshalled by J. Bracken Lee. The arithmetic also shows that even with the intensive telephone campaign which was put in effort for Moss, I would never have been defeated except for the bitter, McCarthyite, anti-Watkins votes which went to Lee.

In our consideration of the 1958 senatorial campaign it is not so important that Lee managed to split the Republican vote against Watkins as it is that he entered the race in revenge against what Watkins had done to Joseph McCarthy and that the Utah governor represented McCarthyites in a strong showing during that campaign. The retiring senator knew full well that Lee’s strength lay in his support for McCarthyism and revenge for Watkins’ part in the censorship.

The explanation given by Watkins for his defeat was also apparently shared by a good number of Lee’s supporters who openly admitted their desire to have Watkins removed from office and who used the McCarthy


7Watkins, Enough Rope, pp. xi and 178.
issue as a stepping stone to that end.\textsuperscript{8} Even the authors of \textit{The Almanac of American Politics} recognized that "Lee, an ultra-conservative, may have entered the 1958 election more interested in defeating Republican Arthur Watkins than in winning himself. Watkins was chairman of the committee which recommended censure of Sen. Joe McCarthy.\textsuperscript{9}"

The significance of Lee's participation in the 1958 senatorial campaign lies not in his inability to win the election. Rather, the election was a superb example of the lingering influence of McCarthyism in Utah. The Salt Lake \textit{Tribune} reported that winner Frank Moss polled 113,001 votes, Watkins garnered 102,090 votes, while Lee accumulated 76,814 votes.\textsuperscript{10} Notably, Moss almost certainly would not have won the election had it not been for Lee's effective split of the Republican party. Lee's candidacy, especially his substantial support from many former McCarthyites, were the deciding factors. In effect, Lee was willing to risk defeat, and probably foresaw it, at the hands of Frank Moss in his determination to oust Senator Watkins. Such devotion indicates clearly the governor's vehement and lingering opposition to McCarthy's censure, and that he was successful indicates the effectiveness of the post-1954 McCarthy issue in the Beehive State.

\textsuperscript{8}Numerous letters, housed in the J. Bracken Lee Papers (Special Collections Division, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah) attest to this general belief.


\textsuperscript{10}Salt Lake \textit{Tribune}, November 6, 1958, p. 8.
The Mormon Church evidently played a relatively insignificant part in the 1958 senatorial campaign. Perhaps, as Frank Jonas has suggested, its leaders had noted "a positive correlation between Mormonism and Republicanism in Utah" which negated any need for a separate Latter-day Saint position. In any case, one high church official, Thorpe B. Isaacson, took the opportunity to write J. Bracken Lee just prior to election day and praise his campaigning efforts. Speaking specifically of Lee's anti-Communist zeal, Isaacson, wrote:

I am sure that not alone the people of Utah but the people of the nation will always feel indebted to you for your message and for your crusade, because we are going down the road to Socialism or even Communism fast unless something can come forth to prevent it.

You have put forth a great campaign. You have worked very hard, and the people in a day yet to come will listen to you and realize what you have tried to do for them.  

Admittedly, Isaacson's opinions did not necessarily represent those of the Mormon Church. It is, however, undeniable that persons in any positions of responsibility are walking a very thin line between private and public opinion. And even when an expression is made in virtual confidentiality, with obvious reference only to personal opinion, it is too often received by lay members as a direction shared by others in similar positions or by the organization itself. Thus, partakers of Isaacson's personal opinion may

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12 Letter from Thorpe B. Isaacson to J. Bracken Lee, November 4, 1958, found in J. Bracken Lee Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.
have supposed that he spoke as a representative of the Latter-day Church and that its general authorities endorsed his high esteem for the McCarthyite, J. Bracken Lee.

Neither Lee's political career nor his tendency to become entangled in controversy over the Communist issue ceased with his failures to capture the senatorial seat. Shortly after being elected mayor of Salt Lake City in 1959, a position he held until 1971, J. Bracken Lee became enveloped in a heated and much publicized argument with Chief of Police Cleon Skousen over a proposed cut in clothing allowances for plainclothes officers. In a letter to John Birch Society head Robert Welch, Mayor Lee denounced the supposed anti-Communist activities of Skousen:

While it is true that he has written a book called The Naked Communist, and, in doing so he has conveyed to many people that he is anti-Communist, I personally have evidence to prove that this man is a liar and did organize and operate the Salt Lake City Police Department in exactly the same manner that the Communists operate their government. I have no evidence to prove that the man is connected with the Communist Party, but if I have ever seen an individual who operates as a cell leader, this man fits every description.\(^\text{13}\)

Such antagonism illustrates the heart-filled extremism of two prominent Utah McCarthyites. J. Bracken Lee, former governor of Utah and mayor of Salt Lake City, dominated much of the state's political life and brought into it an ardent enthusiasm for the practices of McCarthyism shared by many of Utah's residents.

\(^{13}\) J. Bracken Lee, personal letter to Robert Welch, September 22, 1960, found in J. Bracken Lee papers, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.
As indicated, Mormon Church leader Ezra Taft Benson’s open endorsement of Congressman Douglas Stringfellow in 1954 illustrated the former secretary’s willingness to overlook the politician’s sympathies for Joseph McCarthy. Toward the end of the decade, Benson became increasingly vocal in his disdain for communism and, especially after serving in Eisenhower’s cabinet, became a very popular and much publicized speaker. He emerged as a prolific author, condemning at every opportunity the alleged Communist conspiracy as the greatest single threat to the internal security of the United States. Such a well known and avowed conservative was, of course, a natural attraction for the myriad of organizations which claimed to have inherited McCarthy’s popular following. The one which solicited, and received, his ardent endorsement (though not membership) was the John Birch Society. Benson’s association with this organization of hard core anti-Communists later caused him considerable embarrassment and came to represent a most important aspect of the post-1954 influence of McCarthyism in Utah.

14 One need only browse through the Ezra Taft Benson Papers in the Special Collections section of the Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, to appreciate his many speeches against communism.

In numerous ways, the John Birch Society was the successor to McCarthyism, though notably lacking the open, and often apologetic admission to the use of untrue and incriminating accusations. The society was organized by a retired businessman, Robert Welch, in 1958 with the expressed purpose of publicizing the threat of a Communist conspiracy.

As Mr. Welch explained in the "Introduction" to the society’s Blue Book:

Our immediate and most urgent anxiety, of course, is the threat of the Communist conspiracy. And well it should be. For both internationally, and within the United States, the Communists are much further advanced and more deeply entrenched than is realized by even most of the serious students of the danger among the anti-Communists. 16

The John Birch Society’s emphasis on the urgency of exposing alleged Communists so closely paralleled that of Senator McCarthy as to render the Wisconsin senator an idol among Birchers. 17 At least one author indicated that Welch actively supported McCarthy, especially after his censorship, and often spoke to "friends of Senator Joseph McCarthy" groups in an effort to solicit backing for the J.B.S. 18 In their study of right-wing extremism in America, Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab concluded that the society "combined two preservatist traditions: the economic class

16 The Blue Book of the John Birch Society (Belmont, Mass.: Western Islands, 1961), p. xiv. This publication outlines the objectives and purposes of the J.B.S.

17 Birchers considered McCarthy’s America’s Retreat from Victory as one of a dozen books to be used as primers on the Communist conspiracy and exposing alleged Communists in the government.

conservatism of the Liberty League (a 1930's conglomeration of wealthy Republicans) and the symbolic 'Anti-Communism' of McCarthyism."

In effect, the J.B.S. rose from the ashes of McCarthy's infamous popularization of the Communists-in-government issue.

Ezra Taft Benson's semi-formal association with the John Birch Society began in early 1963 when his son, Reed, was appointed the organization's Utah co-ordinator. Primarily as a result of his own conservatism, the senior Benson expressed little surprise at his son's decision to accept the appointment and, in fact, declared: "The (John Birch Society) is, I am convinced, the most effective non-church organization in our fight against creeping socialism and godless communism. I admire Reed's courage and applaud his decision." So well publicized was Ezra Taft Benson's elation for his son that a member of the Mormon Church's presiding First Presidency, Democrat Hugh B. Brown, felt compelled to remind Latter-day Saints that Elder Benson did not speak for the entire church. Specifying

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20 Nevertheless, as early as September, 1961, Benson's association with the J.B.S. was the object of considerable criticism. See Lyman Smart's personal letter to Deseret News editor Preston Robinson, September 11, 1961, in the Special Collections Library of the Harold B. Lee Library Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

the J.B.S., Brown declared: "We are opposed to them and their methods."^{22} Little wonder it is that in one of his syndicated columns Drew Pearson alluded to the apparent split between Latter-day Saint leaders and the former Secretary of Agriculture.^{23}

Nevertheless, Apostle Benson continued to praise the efforts of the John Birch Society by voicing public support for Robert Welch which was undoubtedly often interpreted by lay members of the church as church approval of the J.B.S. leader. Speaking in Seattle on May 1, 1963, Benson praised Welch as "a dedicated patriot and fine, Christian gentleman."^{24} Then, as if to single out the deficiencies of the Mormon Church in combating communism, Benson reiterated his high esteem for the J.B.S. by repeating: "I don't know of any group in this country that is doing a more effective job against Communism. Some of the finest Americans I know are affiliated with the John Birch Society. I wish more people would join in."^{25}

Apparently, Benson's endorsements of the J.B.S. won him friends among the society's most influential members. Though the John Birch Society itself did not publicly endorse political candidates, for example, a high

^{22} Los Angeles Times, March 5, 1963, p. 2.

^{23} Detroit Free Press, n.d., n. p. A copy of this particular article may be found among references to Drew Pearson in the Special Collections section, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

^{24} The Seattle Times, May 1, 1963, p. 15.

^{25} Ibid.
Birch official, John H. Rousselot, expressed his personal desire that either Barry Goldwater or Ezra Taft Benson be chosen as the Republican presidential nominee. Undoubtedly, his hopes were shared by a great many society members.

Probably the most sensational of Benson's extollments of Robert Welch and the John Birch Society came at a $50-a-plate testimonial dinner for the society's founder on September 23, 1963. Welch had recently made public a society publication, The Politician, in which he blatantly accused former Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and ex-President Dwight D. Eisenhower of being "sympathetic to ultimate Communist aims, knowingly receiving and abiding by Communist orders, and consciously serving the Communist conspiracy." At a news conference just prior to the dinner, Benson was questioned about Welch's accusations and responded by indicating that when, in 1957, he had attempted to warn Secretary Dulles that Fidel Castro was a Communist, State Department officials told him simply not to worry about it. Asked whether he thought Eisenhower was a dupe of the Communists, Benson avoided a direct answer but declared that the president "supported me in matters of agriculture.... In other areas we had differences." In his keynote address before some two thousand

26 The Fresno Bee, June 6, 1963, p. 1-D.

27 Robert Welch, The Politician (Belmont, Mass.: Robert Welch Publication, 1963), p. 278. The charges were remarkably similar to those leveled by McCarthy, and were equally unsubstantiated.

Welch admirers that night, Benson reiterated his semi-official support of the J.B.S. by calling the leading Bircher "one of the greatest patriots in American history." In a more explicit, but undocumented, account of Benson's opinion concerning whether Eisenhower was a Communist-sympathizer, Neal Pierce quotes the former cabinet official as saying that President Eisenhower had "bad advisors around him" and "that on the Communist conspiracy he was something of a dupe also." To many Latter-day Saints, at least, Benson's remarks furthered their conviction that the Communists-in-government issue was increasing in importance and that McCarthyism was as vital as ever to the maintenance of international peace and national security.

To many other Mormons, however, Ezra Taft Benson's association with the John Birch Society was the source of mounting criticism. Particularly following Benson's remarks in praise of Robert Welch and the impression left with the public that Eisenhower was soft on communism, some Latter-day Saints voiced objection to Benson's assumed prerogative. Most vehement in his opposition to the former secretary was Congressman Ralph Harding, Mormon Democrat from Idaho, who addressed his disdain to the 88th Congress of the U.S. House of Representatives. Harding did not specifically disapprove of Benson's association with the J.B.S. but thought

29 Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, September 24, 1963, p. 18-A.
that as a result of the continual reference to Benson's church position, "the impression is given to the American people that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints approves of the activities of the extreme right and the John Birch Society in particular. This is not so." Harding suggested that Apostle Benson become more concerned with preaching "the gospel of the Saviour" than with expounding his political opinions.

The outspoken congressman was equally critical of Benson's praise of Robert Welch and had read into the Congressional Record that portion of The Politician critical of Dulles and Eisenhower. Harding was "nauseated" to read that Benson abstained from defending the former president, especially after Eisenhower had, for eight years, defended his choice of Benson as Secretary of Agriculture. "It is difficult to comprehend," said Harding, "how Ezra Taft Benson could now refuse to defend that courageous President against a charge that he was 'a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy.'" Finally, Harding voiced disapproval of Reed Benson's apparent disregard for a Mormon Church circular condemning the use of Latter-day Saint facilities for political meetings and rallies.

In October, 1963, Apostle Benson accepted a position as president of the church's European Mission in what appeared to some observers as a

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32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.
deliberate attempt by the Latter-day Saint hierarchy to "exile" the controversial figure from the 1964 national elections. Those who had hoped that Mr. Benson's overseas post would keep him from being the object of considerable attention and discussion, however, were mistaken. Soon after his appearance before congress, Representative Harding received numerous letters praising his courageous stand and, by implication, further substantiating impressions that Apostle Benson's assignment in Europe was directed by church leaders in an effort to ward off possible embarrassment in the 1964 election. Among those who took time to personally compliment him were ex-President Eisenhower, Robert R. McKay, son of the Mormon president, and Joseph Fielding Smith, senior member of the church's Council of Twelve Apostles and next in line for the church's highest position. Much to Representative Harding's embarrassment, copies of these three letters were mistakenly circulated to the press and eventually published in Idaho newspapers, where they tended to greatly augment the Benson-Harding controversy.  

The effect of Harding's criticism on Ezra Taft Benson and his public disdain of the John Birch Society was not fully recognized until the


35 For an example of the controversy's magnitude, see the Idaho Sunday Journal, February 23, 1964, pp. 1 & 4.
Idaho congressman sought re-election in 1964. During the campaign strong J.B.S. opposition, allegedly spearheaded by Reed Benson and "several carloads of John Birch Society members coming from the Salt Lake City-Bountiful area," emerged to have a significant effect on Harding's support. According to the incumbent, in a letter written to Professor Frank H. Jonas shortly after his defeat,

'Ithe John Birch Society made me their prime target in the 1964 election. . . . Reed Benson, a John Birch Society coordinator, not only made several trips to Idaho, but spent the last three days prior to the election directing the John Birch Society efforts against me in Boise.'

Benson flatly denied having influenced the election results one way or another in any way. Congressman Harding felt compelled during the campaign to enunciate his particular charges against the J.B.S. On one occasion, for example, the representative openly defended his criticism of Apostle Benson, amid growing concern from members of the church in Idaho who had second thoughts about Harding's veracity. "The great issue of this campaign," announced Harding, "is extremism. The men in

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Congress are devoted and faithful. It is the John Birch Society and other extremists who are undermining our faith in our freedom." 40

Undoubtedly, the Birch Society controversy cost Ralph Harding the 1964 election. The predominantly Mormon areas of southern Idaho in which he sought re-election were steeply indoctrinated in a hatred of communism characteristic of Latter-day Saints in Utah. Criticism of Apostle Benson's involvement in the J.B.S. simply was not tolerated by people fearful of the alleged Communist conspiracy. But whether or not Reed Benson, or other Utahns, played an active role in Harding's defeat remained undocumented. In his study of the 1964 congressional election, Dean Hansen aptly concluded that the impression left with members of the Mormon Church that Harding was not in harmony with the leaders of the church for having criticized Elder Benson was but one of numerous important issues that contributed to his defeat. 41

The controversy surrounding Ralph Harding's defeat would suggest that Ezra Taft Benson become less vocal in his expression for the cause of anti-communism, if only for the purpose of maintaining a moderate, and less critical, stand on a highly publicized issue. Shortly after the 1964 elections, Congressman Ken W. Dyal, a member of the church from California, wrote Joseph Fielding Smith and asked if Benson's recent

40 Personal letter from Reed Benson to Dean Hansen, May 27, 1967, found in Hansen, "An Analysis of the 1964 Campaign," p. 221.
41 Ibid., p. 191.
endorsement of the J.B.S. meant a change in the church's position discouraging members from joining secret organizations. "I am informed," wrote Dyal, "the approval for membership in the John Birch Society was because it is anti-Communist. So am I. But since the Ku Klux Klan, Minutemen, etc. are also anti-Communist, are we permitted to join them?" Unfortunately, there was no available reply to this rather facetious inquiry. It nevertheless was asked in a sense of confusion resulting from publication of Benson's enthusiasm for the J.B.S. To many Latter-day Saints, Elder Benson's involvement either confirmed speculation in the seriousness of a Communist conspiracy or else he alienated those who were critical of that involvement.

In conclusion, then, evidences of McCarthyism in Utah during the post-1954 period were mirrored in the activities of J. Bracken Lee and Ezra Taft Benson. Lee rarely missed an opportunity to espouse the cause of anti-communism and looked with valued esteem upon the merits of Joseph McCarthy. That devotion cost Lee the Republican party's 1956 gubernatorial nomination, but later earned for him the satisfaction of being instrumental in the defeat of Arthur Watkins and the partial veneration of the McCarthy name. As mayor of Salt Lake City, Bracken Lee did not capture national attention but he did manage to become repeatedly embroiled in controversy tinged with McCarthyism. Ezra Taft Benson was a more cautious

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42 Letter from Ken W. Dyal to Joseph Fielding Smith, April 13, 1965, found in J. Bracken Lee Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.
McCarthyite. Under the auspices of the John Birch Society, he permitted the resurgence of McCarthyite extremism, if not in the actual politics of the state, at least in the conservatism of its people and its church.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

References to the incorporation of McCarthyite tactics in Utah's elections and to its endorsement by selected prominent residents of the state indicate the enthusiasm of many Utahns for McCarthy's peculiar crusade. Such support was primarily the product of a sincere anxiety for the apparent, and well publicized, threat of an expanding communism and the equally alarming disclosure of possible subversives in the government. This study of McCarthyism in Utah dealt specifically with recognizing the character of these two rather traumatic events and their possible effect on Mormon society.

In a speech before the American Historical Society's annual convention on December 29, 1957, William L. Langer encouraged historians to become concerned with the "question of whether whole communities, like individuals, can be profoundly affected by some shattering experience."

As if directing himself to Utah, Langer continued:

If it is indeed true that every society or culture has a "unique psychological fabric," deriving at least in part from past common experiences and attitudes, it seems reasonable to suppose that any great crisis, such as famine, pestilence, natural
disaster, or war, would leave its mark on the group, the intensity and duration of the impact depending, of course, on the nature and magnitude of the crisis.¹

It has been shown that the hysteria of the postwar period, combined with McCarthy's characteristic audacity, affected Utah's common heritage by permitting, at least for awhile, the abandonment of political courtesy and candor. This concluding chapter will summarize the character of America's postwar anxiety for communism, the peculiar nature of McCarthy's crusade, the common heritage of Utah, and the apparent effect of the anti-Communist hysteria on that heritage, as indicated by the acceptance of McCarthyism in Utah.

Responsibility for the rise of Joseph McCarthy and national support for his questionable tactics of investigation lies primarily with heightened United States-Soviet tensions. Disappointment with the apparent failures of so-called peace conferences at Yalta and Potsdam, coupled with a realization that the United States had inherited the uncherished position of world peacekeeper, forced upon Americans a determination to contain communism and minimize its international effect. At nearly every attempt, however, it succumbed to Russian successes. Events such as the fall of China and engagement in an unexplainable half-war in Korea were startling examples of the magnitude of Soviet aggressiveness. Even hardline approaches, the "Truman Doctrine" and the "Marshall Plan," seemed

only to augment American cognizance of the serious Russian threat to the
free world.

Belief in a truly threatening Communist conspiracy was also pro-
mulgated at home by Republicans hoping to diminish the hand of New Deal
federalism in American politics. Democrats who had at one time suggested
a mellowing of U.S.-Soviet tensions were being accused of abandoning time-
honored principles of freedom for international tranquility. The disclosure
of numerous, sensational, and well publicized, spy networks helped to
convince Americans that the Democratic party had failed to insure the
country's internal security at a time when its maintenance appeared so
especially necessary. Most important, the nation was disturbed with its
new found wealth and responsibility, and its apparent inability to cope
effectively with the problem of an ever expanding communism.

In 1950 Joseph McCarthy recognized the inherent political power of
the vast audience of Americans keenly receptive to charges of internal
subversion and governmental irresponsibility. Having learned to champion
any cause for political expediency, McCarthy was all too well qualified and
willing to play upon their anti-Communist extremism and answered their
fears with oft-repeated distortions, insinuations and half-truths. His
character was a frightening combination of tremendous energy, personal
appeal, deceit, and forceful determination. His rise in politics was imme-
diate and, for a short time, what Langer would call the "shattering
experience" of McCarthyism enveloped American politics and had a
discernible impact on the "unique psychological fabric" of Utah.

The Beehive State's rich and dominant Mormon heritage provided
most of its residents with a past common experience, from which a consider-
able number drew their moral and ethical standards. The hardships of
having to endure almost continual persecution during the church's first
decade and a half, and eventually having to abandon cities and trek across
much of the continent, instilled in members of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints a characteristic conservatism and individualism.
Church doctrine and attitude prescribed that Mormons be aware of their
presiding authorities' guidance in temporal, as well as spiritual affairs
and that obedience to "the will of the Lord," as interpreted by these men,
garnish the member's every cause and action. It is little wonder that the
church enjoyed a unique solidarity of belief and unanimity of devotion.

Communism's threat to the security of America, and Mormonism,
was an object of considerable concern among Utahns. Motivated by both
the early, repetitious exhortations of Latter-day Saint leaders against the
espousal of any form of Communist doctrine and anticipation for the estab-
ishment of a "Kingdom of God" on the earth, residents of the state were
particularly contemptuous of communism's growing influence. Members of
the church became especially cognizant of the pronouncements of church
leaders against socialism, fascism and other forms of federalism. They
were undoubtedly aware of the increasing international tensions and shared
with the nation an alarm for the disclosure of Communist spies within the government. Utahns were caught up in the anti-Communist hysteria characteristic of the rest of the nation and, with the country, could not ignore Joseph McCarthy's purge of real or imagined subversives in government.

That Utah not only recognized, but actually accepted or employed, McCarthyism as a frightening response to the threat of communism is determined in this study by consideration of three factors. First, it is apparent that the successful incorporation of McCarthite tactics in the state elections would indicate a willingness of the electorate to be discriminately affected by purely alleged charges of treason against a candidate. One illustrative example of this occurred at the very outset of McCarthy's witch hunt activities when Democrat Elbert Thomas sought re-election to the U.S. Senate. Over a period of just months, the commendable reputation of this veteran senator was viciously smeared through the activities of the L.D.S. Law Observance and Enforcement Committee, the American Medical Association, and in the publication of the United States Senate News. Just as important, each had the destructive effect of convincing enough Utahns that indeed Thomas was pro-Communist, or at least subject to suspect by virtue of the allegations, to assure his opponent, Wallace Bennett, an easy win.

If the influence of McCarthyism in Utah was judged solely on the use of incriminating allegations during political elections, the Thomas defeat would serve as the only indication of the effect of McCarthy's crusade
in Utah. In this study, however, McCarthyism was considered as an attitude of extremism which permitted, or had the potential to permit, the abandonment of respectability, honesty and integrity in politics. It was the presence of this attitude which served to confirm the remarkable influence of the anti-Communist crusade; that it existed was evidenced by the remaining two indicators.

An indicator which illustrated the wide adoption of the attitude of McCarthyism in Utah was the electorate support granted three of the state's most avowed McCarthyites. The Communist issue attracted the attention of a significant number of Utahns and compelled aspiring politicians to recognize and endorse what they interpreted to be the most popular stands. It is notable that among Utah's prominent politicians, only Reva Beck Bosone voiced early opposition to McCarthy's crusade, and she suffered a surprising defeat in the midst of the anti-Communist hysteria. In contrast, three of Utah's most outspoken McCarthy advocates were endowed with considerable popular support.

J. Bracken Lee, one dominant figure in Utah's politics during the McCarthy era, was particularly vocal in his support of the controversial senator. He defended McCarthy's over-zealous activities and demonstrated

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2 In a paper presented at Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, on November 13, 1974, entitled "McCarthyism in the Mountains, 1950-1954," F. Ross Peterson considered the influence of McCarthy as evidenced solely by the incorporation of McCarthyite tactics in Utah's political elections during that period, particularly the senatorial campaigns. He concluded that "McCarthyism was a major reason that... Thomas returned to private life."
disgust with the Wisconsin senator's censorship by successfully splitting the Republican party against Committee Chairman Arthur Watkins in the 1958 senatorial campaign. Representative Douglas Stringfellow, considered by political observers to be one of Utah's most promising young politicians, was a converted McCarthy supporter who evidently felt that association with anti-Communist extremists would not jeopardize his popularity. Only his later admission to falsifying war exploits caused the G.O.P. to drop him from the upcoming campaign, and even his replacement, Henry Dixon, garnered enough votes from sympathetic followers of the defunct congressman to assure a Republican victory. Finally, Utah's support for Senator Robert Taft, a known McCarthyite, for president is further indication of the state's high regard for the Wisconsin senator.

Admittedly, support for McCarthy sympathizers throughout Utah does not necessarily prove that a majority of Utahns approved of the senator's questionable tactics. It does indicate, however, that public figures were unafraid to voice endorsement of Senator McCarthy, as they considered approval of anti-Communist extremism a political asset, while his critics remained conspicuously silent. It is unlikely, especially considering the public attention given to the Communist issue, that McCarthy's supporters would deliberately jeopardize their political careers by voicing their approval of his activities had they not interpreted Utah voters as sharing similar sympathies.
A third possible indication of McCarthy's support in Utah, and the "attitude" of extremism enveloping the nation which permitted his sordid venture, are the endorsements of his activities by prominent leaders of the Mormon Church, particularly J. Reuben Clark, Jr. and Ezra Taft Benson. Unlike politicians, who attempted to mirror public sentiment, these men were in positions to vastly influence, and even determine, opinions among members of the Latter-day Saint Church. Clark, a member of the church's First Presidency during all of the McCarthy era, shared remarkably similar political beliefs with Governor Lee, especially concerning the Communist conspiracy. He was unusually prolific in his expressions and undoubtedly impressed Mormons with the same enthusiasm for communism's threat to the world as that which characterized McCarthyism. Benson literally inherited much of McCarthy's support by aligning himself, however cautiously, with the John Birch Society and by using his prominent church position, and past government reputation, to propagate its cause. As with Utah's politicians, it is interesting to note that, aside from editorial criticism, no leading Utahn expressed anti-McCarthy sentiments in an attempt to deter public opinion. Lay members, and other residents of the state who attempted to decide the morality of McCarthy's crusade, were propositioned by a one-sided, pro-McCarthy, expression of personal opinion guised in ecclesiastical and social prominence and responsibility.

The difficulty of accurately determining the influence of Joseph McCarthy in Utah is readily apparent. Nothing short of an elaborate array
of public opinion polls, taken at innumerable times during the early 1950's, could possibly mirror the true sentiment of a majority of Utahns. If the indicators cited above served as an approximate evidence of his support, however, they also imply certain possible characteristics of Utah's society.

The first is that though Mormons shared an unmistakably unique heritage, they were nonetheless subject to the same political trends and enthusiasms as the rest of the nation. This realization is somehow disappointing. Members of the church thrive on their admonition to be different, to be "in the world, but not of the world." Leaders of the church, especially those to whom Latter-day Saints looked for guidance in dealing with Communists, were ideally in a position to assume the leadership of Utah's anti-Communist crusade. That residents turned to McCarthyism indicates that either the church leaders desired not to take a demonstrative initiative in the Communist question or that members felt more responsive to the Wisconsin senator's methods in dealing with the Communist threat than to the leaders. In effect, Mormons may have temporarily allowed their hatred of communism and the wave of extremism engulfing the country to override established practices of political decency and associated the views of a man "of the world," Joseph McCarthy, with what they considered divinely inspired teachings on anti-communism of their church leaders.

A second possible implication of Utah's apparent acceptance of McCarthyism is that Mormons were not sincerely or securely converted to their ecclesiastical convictions, but that such were the product of social
pressures seriously challenged by the anxieties of the early 1950's. T. W. Adorno, in The Authoritarian Personality, proposed that all tendencies toward "antidemocratic receptivity," such as that of the McCarthy era, were rooted in widespread societal insecurity. In Utah, he would suggest, Mormons temporarily combined the traditional anti-Communist guidance of Latter-day Saints authorities with the extremism of McCarthy because of the Mormons' need to conform to their leader's views. In effect, such devotion was subject, in times of stress, to critical scrutiny and possible abandonment because the sincerity of the conviction was dependent upon societal well-being.

What may truly be implied from Utah's adoption of McCarthyism is that by becoming an integral part of American society during the twentieth century, Utahns also accepted the anxieties, as well as the benefits, of assimilated statehood. In the end, it would have been more remarkable had this study concluded that McCarthy had no effect upon Utah; that the Beehive State had remained so far removed from the rest of the nation so as to permit a distinguishable rejection of his powerful influence. To know that Utah shares in the concerns of the country is perhaps more comforting than to hope that Mormons could remain "in the world," but not subject to its numerous crusades, beneficial or detrimental.

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