The Party Or The Pope: Montana Catholics In The Age Of McCarthyism

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THE PARTY OR THE POPE:
MONTANA CATHOLICS IN THE AGE OF McCARTHYISM

by
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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of History of
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for academic honors with a B.A. Degree in History

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This thesis for honors recognition has been approved for the Department of History at Carroll College.

Dr. Robert Archibald, Director

Fr. Jeremiah Sullivan

Fr. James McCarthy

4-1-87 Date
DEDICATION

To all the people in my life who have given me

inspiration and an abundance of

love and friendship:

Mom and Dad
Dr. Robert Swartout
Dr. Robert Archibald
Fr. Jeremiah Sullivan
Fr. James McCarthy
Fr. Gene Peoples
Mr. Dennis Wiedmann
Jeff and Shirley Baker
Theresa Lapke
Anne Moylan
Chris Racicot
Rex Renk
Bitsey Draur
May Schwartz
Sheila Kohlar
Rick Ritter
Mike Walsh
Greg Smith
Kathy Sova
... and the rest of the St. Al's Gang

The time in my life in relation to the world
is insignificant;

The time spent with you in relation to my life
is not insignificant.

-Javan-
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Karen
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Introduction

During the Truman and Eisenhower years, America became a veritable battleground for a war waged on Communism. Many insecure Americans, fearful of events occurring abroad, began to see "Red" conspiracies at home. These over-zealous American "patriots" became suspicious that many of their fellow countrymen had succumbed to the "evils of Communism." Not everyone surrendered to this hysterical national mood, however, the pressure in American society of ideological conformity had seldom been stronger than it was in the 1950s.¹ Out of the "Great Fear" came a conspiratorial view of history that implicated many people who played key roles in American foreign and domestic policy formation. The "Red Scare" was not new to Americans: in 1919, American patriots warned that a Bolshevik plot was under way to overthrow the United States. Authorities began to apprehend hundreds of suspicious-looking people. Newspapers across the country printed pictures of what a Bolshevik supposedly looked like (he was bearded, wore glasses, and was very sinister looking) so that Americans could expell these conspirators from their communities. Finally, the madness subsided, but not before many people had suffered.²

By 1950, the second Red scare was well under way. Thousands of Americans believed that Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his "New Dealers" had initiated a plan to allow the Communists to infiltrate the United States from within. The New Deal itself seemed to smack of Communism to many
who believed in the conspiracy. The events of the post World War II era resuscitated the issue of Communism as cries of "traitor," "dupe," and "Communists" echoed across the nation. President Harry S. Truman, despite his tough-guy stance toward the Russians, became a focal point for accusations coming from the American Right. He had been Roosevelt's vice-president; therefore, his Fair Deal domestic program fell under attack. One man, seeing opportunity in the fears of the American people, took full advantage of the frenzied national mood—the junior senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy.

McCarthy had been a relatively obscure senator prior to his Wheeling, West Virginia speech. Addressing the Ohio County Women's Republican Club, on 9 February 1950, McCarthy claimed to have the names of 205 Communists supposedly working for the State Department. According to the senator, American power had declined tremendously. He claimed that one thing was responsible for this decline: the "traitorous actions of the Roosevelt and Truman Administrations and the State Department." This simple, yet deceptive, explanation set the tone for McCarthy's charges and much of what went by the name "McCarthyism."

During the four years following his Wheeling speech, McCarthy dominated much of the attention of the nation. One political analyst said of him, "... no man was closer than he to the center of American consciousness or more central to the world's consciousness of America." Historians have described McCarthy primarily as a "demagogue," "rabble rouser," and a "witch-hunter" who used deplorable tactics. The methods
used by the senator--from the misuse of statistics concerning the number of alleged security "risks" in the State Department, to the manner in which he literally harassed his witnesses--all seemed entirely legitimate to his followers. People were fearful to voice unpopular opinions as McCarthyism signified a climate of all-embracing conformity.

By an instinct born of the whole climate in which he was raised, McCarthy attacked precisely in the manner most likely to capture the attention of groups in America who were most troubled about foreign policy. Support for the senator tended to follow closely along political, religious, and occupational lines; backing came more from Catholics than Jews, more from Baptists and Lutherans than from Congregationalists and Episcopalians, and more from blue-collar workers than from white-collar professionals.6

Catholics are believed to be the most ardent supporters of anti-Communism and McCarthyism. American Catholics had long been questioned about their loyalty to the United States as many people had misgivings about Catholic allegiance to the Pope in Rome. The Catholic Church had always been opposed to the institution of Communism because of its atheistic teachings. Father Donald F. Crosby concluded,

Long before the Cold War years, Catholics stood in the vanguard of those dedicated to eradication of Communism. In the McCarthy era, this impulse reached its zenith, for true Americanism and true Catholicism both found a common base in the drive against the Communists, and what was more verifiably anti-Communist than McCarthyism.7
Crosby touched on an important concept of Catholicism in the United States. American Catholics had discovered in anti-Communism a means of identifying themselves with the greater American society. David O'Brien stated, "In fighting the red peril the Catholic could dedicate himself to action which was both Catholic and American. Few would disagree that he was proving his worth as an American and demonstrating the compatibility of faith and patriotism." Anti-Communism within the Catholic community found reinforcement in the secular anti-Communism of American political culture. Catholic leaders successfully combined these elements into a concoction that excited the emotions of Catholics for years to come.

In Montana, the Republican Party employed McCarthy-like tactics in an attempt either to unseat or to discredit Democratic candidates. Evidence of these methods is easily discernable in the 1952 and 1954 senatorial elections. For the most part, these tactics did not affect Montana voters in a positive manner. Catholics in the state seemed to share the same reaction. Although just as anti-Communist as their fellow Catholics across the nation, the Catholic community in Montana, as a whole, still supported the party they had always traditionally supported--the Democratic Party. Despite the war McCarthy waged the Truman Administration, the State Department, and liberals everywhere, Montana Catholics valued partisanship over the prevailing cloud of anti-Communist hysteria.
Chapter One
THE COLD WAR ABROAD

"We are going to win the war," President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared after Pearl Harbor, "and we are going to win the peace that follows." The allied forces won the Second World War, but the peace that followed proved to be, in some senses, a hollow one. Out of the devastation left by the Second World War arose a "cold war" between Russia and the West that threatened the very survival of humankind. The very beginnings of the Cold War (or what Winston Churchill called the "Balance of Terror") can be traced to the early days of the WWII and involved control over Eastern Europe. The West, for its part, wished to establish capitalistic regimes in Eastern Europe, states that might look to the Soviet Union for leadership but still allow Western investment. This idea proved to be an impossibility; the massive Red Army overran Eastern Europe as Josef Stalin vowed to maintain Soviet supremacy in the area. Stalin did not necessarily want to export world Communism, but he did wish to ensure Russian security from the West--to make certain that no Western army could ever sweep through Poland and invade Russian ever again.

Once the Red Army had taken position in Eastern Europe, Roosevelt did the only thing he could do in the situation; he recognized Soviet hegemony in the region, but pressed Stalin to hold free elections in the Soviet-controlled countries. Stalin, realizing the crucial importance of keeping the wartime alliance in tact, promised that free elections would be held. Unfortunately, the Russian leader failed to keep his promise and
instead set up Russian puppet-states all through Eastern Europe. Obviously the West felt betrayed. America and many of its allies began to perceive the Soviet Union as a direct threat to the free peoples of the world. With the final defeat of Adolf Hitler, Americans found in Stalin a new nemesis upon which to focus their mistrust and insecurities. In the American mind, the Soviet leader increasingly became a sinister and insane dictator who seemed bent on spreading Communism throughout the world. A profound fear settled over Washington D.C.; and coupled with the anti-Communist rhetoric emanating from the Truman Administration, the fear spread throughout the nation spreading the fires of what came to be known as "McCarthyism."

Truman adopted a get-tough policy toward the Russian government known as the "Containment" policy. (The main emphasis of Containment was to keep Communism confined to the areas where it presently existed and to prevent it from spreading into new areas.) This policy would come to be the foundation for U.S. foreign policy for years to come. As post-war diplomacy between the Soviet Union and the United States continued to deteriorate, the Containment policy was implemented time and time again. The first test came in Berlin beginning in June of 1948. Russia, in an attempt to test the Truman Administrations determination to uphold Containment, established a total blockade on Berlin. The Allies responded by initiating a round-the-clock airlift into Berlin. Finally, the Russians relented and lifted the blockade; however, the Berlin Airlift caught the imagination of the world and made the Soviets seem more sinister than ever.
The tests for Containment continued all through the late 1940s. On 22 September 1949, President Truman announced that the Soviets had exploded an atomic bomb. The Russians now had the same war-making capabilities as America. The urge to do something, anything, was irrepressible. To make matters worse, the Civil War in China had reached crisis proportions. Chinese Communist leader, Mao Tse-tung, and his forces had the American-backed Chiang Kai-Shek fleeing from the Chinese mainland. By October of 1949, Mao finalized Chiang's defeat and declared the People's Republic of China. Millions of Americans mistakingly believed that more aid from the United States would have saved Chiang's efforts. The prevailing attitude indicated that a great nation had been "lost" at the hands of certain individuals in Washington D.C.

This same attitude also underscored one of the essential assumptions of foreign policy during the Cold War. Americans implicitly assumed that with good policies and enough good will, the U.S. could control events anywhere in the world. If things did go wrong, as the did in Eastern Europe and China, the causes originated in mistakes made by individuals not from a fault in the "mission." The roots of this assumption lie deep within the American mind. The belief that the United States is somehow different from and better than other countries played a key role in this prevalent mindset. Add this belief with an American monopoly on nuclear energy, American productivity, and the superior American military position at the conclusion of WWII and the result is a tremendous feeling of power and prestige. If one takes all of the into account: America's power, American
goodwill, and the assumed eagerness of people worldwide to follow in America's footsteps, how could it be that China and Eastern Europe "fell?"

Millions of disillusioned Americans became frustrated by this question. To reiterate an earlier point, the junior senator from Wisconsin had the answer—America had been betrayed. McCarthy's simplistic answer disentangled the complex issue of foreign affairs and put everything into a perspective of black and white.

On 3 February 1950, the British government announced the confession of Dr. Klaus Fuchs, a high-level atomic scientist. Fuch's confession stated that from 1943 until 1947, while working on government research in the United States and Great Britain, he had handed over vitally important scientific secrets of the Western powers to the Soviet Union. This incident, combined with the conviction of Alger Hiss, struck another blow to American confidence. Senator Homer Capehart of Indiana stood up in the U.S. Senate and stormed, "How much more are we going to have to take? Fuchs and Acheson and Hiss and hydrogen bombs threatening outside and New Dealism eating away at the vitals of the nation. In the name of Heaven, is this the best America can do?"4 Frustration settled over the nation.5
Chapter Two
THE COLD WAR ON THE HOMEFRONT

"In normal times," contends Herbert Block, "[McCarthy's charges] might have been greeted by some such old-fashioned American expression as 'put up or shut up'." However, these were not normal times. The early 1950s has been proven to be one of the most confusing, illogical and fearful eras in American history. How did such an atmosphere develop? The anti-Communist protest of the late 1940s and early 1950s was more than a simplistic response to external events. Major doubts within the American society itself helped to create an atmosphere conducive to McCarthyism.

Post-war Americans tended to be quite pleased with themselves. The United States entered the war late, and for all practical purposes, America made the difference between victory and defeat for the Allies; with resourcefulness and determination, the U.S. defeated the enemy mostly with its industrial might. By the end of the war, America's economic machine was producing at an unprecedented rate. Since Americans have traditionally seen periods of economic prosperity as good times, times were indeed good in the early 1950s.

Their position after the war gave Americans a new confidence. The United States proved to be the most powerful nation on the face of the earth--it had the "bomb." The prevailing mood among Americans deemed the devastating weapon as a peaceful "deterrent." However, the Alger Hiss episode shattered the confidence. The arrogance of the American people gave way to a widespread doubt about their ability to remain on top of the
world. The controversy associated with the Hiss verdict as to whether or not he was guilty only added to an atmosphere of confusion and suspicion. In reality, the Hiss case should have been a minor one. Yet the incident seemed to substantiate a growing suspicion that the rights of free peoples were threatened by the Communist menace.

During the 1950s, the American psyche received many more blows. Lately Thomas detected an era which "was not a time of national confidence; things had gone wrong, and Americans were trying to understand why." The Hiss case and the Korean War made the anti-Communist crusade a struggle on two fronts. But while the latter was fought thousands of miles away, the former presented itself in the lives of every American from New York City and Helena, Montana. Speaking at the Colonial Club in Montana's capital city, a wary citizen declared "as soon as somebody belongs to the Communist party he is against the government. Why give him a chance to destroy it?" In Washington D.C., Life magazine reported in October 1950 that "the Capitol had become a veritable cave of winds where thundering charges hurtled back and forth and cries of 'liar' shrialed through marble rooms . . ." Time reported that Senator McCarthy was sitting in his office "wearing an air of conspiratorial secrecy. He tapped a pencil on his desk and kept the tap water running to foil, said he, any hidden microphones." Truth was definitely becoming stranger than fiction.

Government officials were not the only victims of anti-Communist attacks. Everyone felt the pressure, including artists. While some, such as
Ernest Hemingway and Norman Mailer, openly opposed McCarthy. Hollywood's record of defiance tended to border on spineless. In 1947, the House UnAmerican Activities Committee (HUAC) investigations focused on the filmmaking industry, and the "Hollywood Ten" incident resulted. Refusing to testify at all before the committee, the ten faced jail sentences for contempt of Congress. After this episode, the screen capital actually aided the McCarthy cause, helping him to strengthen his hold on America. Morality had a profound affect on people's emotions, and anti-Communist films portrayed not merely a struggle between opposing ideologies, but took on a moral complexion, becoming an endeavor pitting good against evil. Those who doubted Hollywood's analysis of the true nature of the battle needed only listen to the politicians; as President Harry S. Truman decreed at Gonzaga University, Soviet Communism was "a modern tyranny led by a small group who have abandoned their faith in God." 

When the artists, the press, or the political officials were not compounding the hysteria, some of our other citizen groups, acting in the name of patriotism, were doing the job for them. On May Day in 1950, a group of masked American legionaires in a small Wisconsin town staged a mock Communist take-over of the community. Another cloak-and-dagger affair occurred in Norwalk, Connecticut and aroused considerable concern. The Norwalk chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars undertook some spy-hunting as part of a membership drive. Anyone exhibiting "Communist-like" behavior was placed on a list; if deemed conclusive, the
list was passed along to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Despite the
dignant cries of outraged citizens who demanded an end to the "witch
hunts," Senator McCarthy calmly labeled the program "excellent."11

The 1950s was an era when loyalty boards took on a whole new
meaning. The purpose of these vigilante committees proved to be as much a
face-saving action as to detect potential Communists among the ranks of
the employees. Senator Arthur Watkins of Utah recalls that government
agencies "removed numbers of employees for no reason except the
possibility that their presence on the payroll could attract an
investigation."12 Even industries not covered by loyalty boards were "kept
clean" thanks to various private blacklists which were traded among
employers. Through all of this chaos, McCarthy's influence and popularity
grew.

The extreme levels of hysteria as reported above all seem excessive in
light of any real threat facing America in the early 1950s. Yet America's
fears cannot be said to be totally unfounded. One could think rationally and
still perceive Stalin as a madman, determined to crush America's way of
life. And largely due to the radicalism erupting out of the Great
Depression, many Americans actually had been involved in Communist
activities in some degree or another. There did seem to be a threat of
sorts, yet it is questionable whether or not the threat justified the
hysteria. The result of this hysteria, however, was that those who
supported McCarthy tended to attribute any negative occurrence to the
Communist problem. Conversely, those who opposed the senator blamed
most every problem on McCarthyism. The widely noted epitome of such overreaction to McCarthyism was a newsworthy prompted by Rabbi Lewis Newman. The rabbi, noting the increase in the number of raids made by male college students on the women's dorms, insisted that "McCarthyism" was the culprit for such foolishness. Opinions were being repressed, he felt, and the result was a growing need to vent one's bottled-up emotions. The rabbi obviously failed to realize that such activities had taken place on college campuses long before McCarthyism had become a reality. The story, however, received wide news coverage and as long as the ramifications of McCarthyism were debated, the issue of Communism remained foremost in the national mind.

Major magazines led to the growing preoccupation with the Communist menace by creating separate sections in their columns for nothing but Communist-related news. By doing this, the press magnified the issue. If anyone could have enlightened the cowering American public, it most certainly could have been the academia. This is not to say the country's educated did nothing to diminish the tides of McCarthyism. Yet they clearly did not do enough—an indictment that must be shared with the press. Among the ranks of the educational elite, the predominate mood "was one of spiritless acquiescence to authority. . . . " One liberal educator admitted that he limited his political activity to voting. This underscores a very harmful consequence of the hysteria—that is, those who had the most to give often remained quite timid.

The previous cases have constituted some definite reasons why
McCarthyism was able to develop. Yet there is one more factor that needs to be examined. This factor can be described as "traditional American paranoia." Within the consciousness of the American people lie many contradicting myths and values about themselves and the society in which they live. Nativism had always been strong in American culture, yet this is in direct conflict with the "melting pot" theory. Americans had an undeniable belief in progress as a way to the future, but many Americans felt the need to hold onto the nostalgic view of the past and traditional values. Every American, from the time of his or her birth, is taught that America is the "land of opportunity;" many people did achieve the "American dream," but many more did not. The society did not look kindly on non-WASPs (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). As the non-WASP population grew, many of the WASPs became uncomfortable and began to search for scapegoats.

The war had united Americans in one effort. After the war's conclusion, many Americans saw this unification falling apart. Out of this seemingly chaotic situation, certain themes seem to have developed. During the 1920s, Americans were addicted to spending and living the so-called "good life." The onset of the Great Depression and the war sidetracked the spending; but the post WWII years brought goods and the money to purchase them back to the American people. With the reappearance of consumerism, the traditional ethic of work and save was once again denied.

The role of government had changed a great deal from the days during
the war. The New Deal and the war itself had tremendously increased the role that government played in the average citizen's life. As a result, anti-government sentiment settled over the country as many Americans sought to rid themselves of this perceived menace. The uncertainty came with the new-found American power left many Americans feeling disturbed. They began to question the direction in which the country seemed to be heading. All these developments created a strange and new environment for the people of the United States.

As Americans attempted to adjust to their new atmosphere, social trends arose epitomizing this attempt. Evangelists, such as Billy Graham, became popular at this time. Graham stressed the importance of traditional values and morality in a changing world. The late 1940s and early 1950s saw Graham's revival meetings focusing on the perceived Communist threat. Popular literature also began to change. Mickey Spillane's "Mike Hammer" novels became number-one best-sellers. Mike Hammer displayed all the traits of the classic rugged individualist. He always fought for the "right" cause and his rather cavalier approach (often taking law into his own hands) to a crisis appealed to many. In contrast to Graham's sermons, Spillane's novels often contained explicit sex and violence. The new hero silverscreen became the white-hatted cowboy. He was a symbol of purity and made it easy to distinguish between "good"--the cowboy on the white horse--and "evil"--the outlaw often dressed in black. Billy Graham, Mike Hammer and the virtuous cowboy all demonstrated characteristics welcomed by an American public who often shunned real
problems in the search for simplicity.\textsuperscript{19}

The extensive portrayal of the hysterical mood in America was generated for three reasons. First of all, it hopefully gives the reader an idea of the atmosphere of confusion and fear from which McCarthy emerged. Secondly, it promotes the theme that McCarthy's rise to prominence can be greatly attributed to the accidental factor of timing. In other words, if McCarthy had made his Wheeling speech four years earlier, or later, his legacy most definitely would have been far less influential. But the American society of the early 1950s allowed a meshing of a man, an issue, and a situation--the result being McCarthyism. Finally, it is important to point out the opposing factors at war within the American psyche and as we will see, Montanans would not be immune to these factors.
Chapter Three
THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

In November 1941, on the eve of America's entrance into the Second World War, the American Catholic bishops condemned Communism and Nazism as "subversive forces, both in control of powerful governments, both bent on world dominance. . .Neither system understands or permits freedom in its true Christian sense."¹ Throughout the war, the National Catholic Welfare Conference, an agency of the American Catholic bishops, maintained a steady flow of anti-Communist and anti-Russian propaganda.

The anti-Communist impulse existed in Catholics long before World War II. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the brutal persecution of Russian Christians that followed intensified Catholic hostility toward world Communism. Catholic clergy and laity were outraged by this outright attack on the Church. As the church in Russia began to crumble, Pope Pius XI condemned the Communists for waging an "atheistic" war on the church. He launched a world-wide campaign of prayer for Catholics in Russia. Prayers for the "conversion" of Russia soon became a mainstay in the American Catholic community.² The church's leaders took deep offense at the Roosevelt Administration's recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933.

To many Catholics, it seemed that Roosevelt had bestowed his blessing on Marxism and ignored the profound distress of the church's leaders over the persecution of the Russian church. Commonweal, the most liberal of all Catholic publications, opposed the president's action arguing that it was a useless mission to recognize a government that obviously opposed international law and morality.³
The Spanish Civil War brought the fears of American Catholics to a climax. Much as Catholics found it difficult to fathom Roosevelt's Russian policy, they found the Spanish Civil War even harder to contemplate. It appeared to many that the Loyalist, or leftist, side was directing a hostile attack on the Spanish Catholic Church. In 1937, Generalissimo Francisco Franco initiated a revolt of the army against the leftist government, and thus began the most bloody civil war of the century. Franco, a devout Catholic, declared his revolution a moral Christian crusade against the forces of barbarism and atheistic Communism. Not surprisingly, the Spanish Catholic bishops lined up solidly behind Franco, ignoring the heavy-handed tactics he often used against his political enemies. In the eyes of conservative American Catholics, the support that many American Liberals gave to the Loyalists simply reinforced the belief that Liberalism and Communism were one in the same.4

As World War II drew to a close, Catholic leaders across the world became apprehensive about the fate of Catholics in Eastern Europe. The rise of Communist regimes in Europe and China, and the persecution of the church that followed, heightened a fear shared by many American Catholics about the Church's fate in those areas. Church leaders were especially critical of results of the wartime conferences at Teheran and Yalta. Father James Gillis of the Catholic World called upon Americans to "remember that since the beginning of our alliance with Stalin, or at the latest since our 'compromise' with him at Yalta, the crimes of Russia are on our soul."5 The most vivid symbol of the church's struggle was Poland. Throughout
1945, Polish American Catholics arrived at their cathedrals en masse to protest Soviet occupation of their homeland. Prominent Catholic clergymen from all over the world urged the Truman Administration to push for withdrawal from the country. The Knights of Columbus, a Catholic paternal organization, repeatedly condemned the "conspiracy of silence" surrounding Poland.6

With Catholics becoming increasingly bitter over the fate of Eastern Europe, they needed only a martyr in which to solidify their feelings. The arrest and imprisonment of Archbishop Aloysius Stepinac of Yugoslavia provided them with the one they needed. In September 1946, Marshal Tito's government tried the archbishop on exaggerated charges of collaborating with the Germans and Italians during the war; in October 1946, Stepinac received a sentence of sixteen years in prison. American Catholics, shocked by the archbishop's fate, immediately sprang to action demanding his release.7

According to Donald F. Crosby, "The greatest of all Catholic martyrs to Communism was Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty. His tortured and emaciated body came to symbolize the suffering of Catholics behind the iron curtain."8 The cardinal had vehemently opposed the attempts of the Hungarian regime to reduce the size and power of the church in Hungary. It became obvious to the authorities that Mindszenty would not be intimidated into silence. On 26 December 1948, he was tried on grounds of treason, subversion, and spying.9 Mindszenty's fate appalled American Catholics. The legacy of the cardinal's crisis not only renewed Catholic
anti-Communism, but it also created a more radical type of anti-Communism. Extreme right-wing Catholics formed "mindzenty Circles" and "Freedom Foundations" dedicated to the eradication of Communism.

By the beginning of the 1950s, the worst part of the Communist atrocities aimed at the church ended. For the most part, the political power of the Eastern European church had been stifled; however, the American Catholic press continued to print even small incidents as if they constituted major crises. This activity induced an even greater hatred in Catholics toward the Communist movement could very well have helped create an atmosphere conducive to McCarthyism among Catholics.

The Catholic tie to McCarthy goes back to the late 1940s. The story that perhaps best epitomizes this tie is the senator's dinner with Father Edmund A. Walsh of Georgetown University. McCarthy had read Walsh's potent anti-Communist volume Total Power, and he was very eager to meet the author. On 7 January 1950, the get-together was arranged by Charles H. Kraus, a professor of political science at Georgetown University, and William A. Roberts, a prominent Washington attorney. During dinner at the Colony Restaurant, McCarthy soon brought the conversation around to what was uppermost in his mind. The senator explained his campaign dilemma; he would be facing a re-election battle in two years and he had neither national publicity nor an issue with which to stir his Wisconsin constituency. Ideas were thrown out as the four men tried to think of a rousing issue. Finally, Walsh spoke at length. He emphasized the world
power of Communism and the danger that it would infiltrate any
democratic government.\textsuperscript{11} Walsh declared that vigilance against
Communism was of such importance that it would most certainly be an
issue in a year or two. The senator's face brightened as he cut in on Father
Walsh, "The Government is full of Communists. The thing to do is to
hammer at them."\textsuperscript{12} The next few weeks flew by as McCarthy went to work
on his new campaign issue. Three weeks after Alger Hiss was convicted,
ten days after President Truman ordered work on the H-bomb, six days
after the British announced Fuchs' confession, McCarthy traveled to West
Virginia to deliver his Wheeling speech. The tie with Catholics had been
officially made and they would come to constitute a large part of his
following.

Many Catholic groups actively participated in the McCarthy movement.
The Catholic War Veterans (CWV) and the Knights of Columbus were the
most committed groups. In 1947, the Knights sponsored a series of six
radio broadcasts entitled "Safeguards for America." These programs
claimed to give Americans the "truth" about Communists in the United
States. The \textit{Daily Worker}, a Socialist publication, called the series the
"biggest and most vicious scare hoax in the history of radio." A spokesman
for the Knights replied confidently that it was obvious that they were
"hitting the Commies where it hurts."\textsuperscript{13} The CWV matched the Knights in
vigilance. In July 1948, they announced the formation of an Officer
Candidate School designed to train two men from each state in the
workings of subversive groups as well as in the methods of combating
them.\textsuperscript{14}
Catholic anti-Communism was not restricted to extreme right-wing zealots. Liberal Catholics also sought to expunge Communism from American life, though they differed sharply from conservatives over the means to this end. The Commonweal stood second to none in their defiant opposition to Communism. Yet unlike many of the conservatives who thought that foreign aid represented a waste of money, the liberals at the Commonweal supported the Marshall Plan and President Truman's programs of aid to countries like Greece and Turkey because they believed that with the elimination of the poverty and suffering that spawned Communism, the Communists would have nowhere to go. Thus, they advocated social programs over Red hunts.\textsuperscript{15} Liberal Catholics were especially active in the drive to purge Communists from the American labor movement. By 1945, the church's leaders had organized nearly one hundred "labor schools," which annually trained more than seven thousand Catholic trade unionists. These schools rapidly became focal points in the fight against Communism. Although most of these schools were operated by the Jesuits or by local diocesan authorities, their spirit and purpose was best typified by the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU). The ACTU helped train anti-Communist labor leaders, sponsored conferences or anti-Communist strategies and tactics, provided legal aid to those seeking to expel Communists from leadership positions in the unions, and published two widely circulated newspapers.\textsuperscript{16} A symbol of the church's war against Communists can be seen in the colorful character of the "waterfront priest." This tough-talking and hard-fisted clergyman worked with the men
in the plants and on the docks, gaining their friendship and respect and often inducing them to repel Communists from their ranks. In the popular Marlon Brando movie, On the Waterfront (1954), the Hollywood actor Karl Malden skillfully portrayed one such waterfront priest.

Not all Catholics supported McCarthy. Many simply chose to sit back and watch in a relatively passive manner. They might have been more predisposed to McCarthyism than the rest of the population, but these Catholics remained silent, neutral, or indifferent. Historians such as David Bell and Richard Hofstadler concluded that McCarthy appealed to those Catholics who seemed anxious about their socio-economic status. These middle-class Catholic laborers felt threatened by upper-class WASPs—such as the vaguely defined Eastern “establishment”—and by lower classes who helped to push their way up the socio-economic ladder.

Seymour Martin Lipset found that Irish (as well as Italian) Catholics were among the most pro-McCarthy groups. This point is well worth examining in detail, for the Irish constituted the politically dominant force in the American church and make up one of its largest bodies as well. Kevin Phillips commented that the “typical Irish plumbing contractor and his work crew shared hearty amusement over McCarthy’s yanking of the English moustache of Secretary of State Dean Acheson.” It may be also added that McCarthy was an Irish Catholic. This may explain some of his popularity among his fellow Irish Catholic Americans.

Although many Catholics threw their support behind the senator, only a small minority within this group took up McCarthy’s cause in a vocal or
active way. The remaining Catholic McCarthyites gave him passive or silent support until their loyalty faded after the Army-McCarthy Hearings. Other Catholics, such as the majority of the Montana Catholic community, simply watched the antics of McCarthy and his followers and were appalled by their audacity.
Chapter Four
THE MONTANA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

In many ways, the Montana Catholic community resembled the greater American Catholic population. Montana Catholics reflected an ethnic make-up of primarily Irish, Italian and German. Deer Lodge and Silver Bow counties had especially large concentrations of Irish. These Catholics were mostly blue-collar workers drawn to the area by the mining industry. Montana Catholics professed a hatred for Communism much like that of their fellow Catholics across the nation. The Register: Western Montana Edition, aided by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, printed news items pertaining to the "Red peril," both at home and abroad. For the most part, these news releases, like those of other diocesan newspapers, focused primarily on the persecutions of the church in Eastern Europe and China. They told of Catholic priests and missionaries who had been imprisoned in these countries for their missionary activity. The articles, presented in a stark and shocking manner, told of other atrocities committed against the church by Communist regimes. Although rare, some news stories concerning a perceived threat of domestic Communism did appear on the pages of the Register.

Like most Catholics in America, Montana Catholics felt pressure to somehow prove their "Americanism" and loyalty to the non-Catholic population. On 8 April 1953, the most Reverend Bishop Joseph Michael Gilmore of the Diocese of Helena delivered a speech entitled "Our Country" in which he related this desire:
When a Bishop [sic.], priest or Catholic layman steps on a public platform to speak of patriotism and of devotion to our country and its flag, he is conscious of a question in the minds of many of his fellow citizens: "How can a Catholic be a loyal American?"\(^1\)

The bishop went on to quote the words of the past Archbishop of St. Paul, John Ireland:

\[ \ldots \] between my religious faith and my civil and political faith, between my creed and my country, it has been said, there is discord and contradiction . . . that I must subtract something from my allegiance to one. When I bend my full energy in the service of the other. Those who so speak misunderstand my creed and my country.\(^2\)

Gilmore and Ireland both touched on a myth that had bothered American Catholics for years. Gilmore dispelled the doubt:

No other institution commands patriotism in the same manner or in the same degree as does the Catholic Church. Love of country is for the Catholic not a matter of choice nor of personal whim but a religious duty.\(^3\)

Catholic groups in Montana participated in a wide array of anti-Communist activities. The Montana council of the Knights of Columbus sponsored an information program aimed at educating people in the "evils" of atheistic Communism. At a Miles City rally, Edward Provost, district deputy of the Knights, told the gathering that "there is a great need for a
militant organization of Catholic men to help meet the Communist challenge in our continent."  

In Butte at a retreat breakfast, Robert E. Grange spoke of the "placid attitude taken by many, even Catholics toward Communism," and he urged his listeners to "take an active part in politics to stop the Red influence in this country."  

Cut Bank Knights discussed plans for "combatting" Communism and purchased a film showing some of the work done by the Christophers (another anti-Communist group) and their manner of fighting the "menace of Communism."  

Helena Knights were urged to form "shock troops" of "well-informed, enlightened and unified laity" to hold the line on Communism.  

Many parishes throughout the state participated in prayers for the "conversion of Russia," and on 28 December 1952, Bishop Gilmore made a plea to Catholics of the Diocese of Helena to join other American Catholics in a unified prayer for the persecuted priests, missionaries and laity of the world.  

Reports telling of further atrocities against the Church continued to flow in and the Register immediately printed them. Montana Catholics grew increasingly bitter over these Communist "crimes."  

Carroll College, a Catholic diocesan college in Helena, Montana, became a refuge for many young people fleeing Eastern Europe and China after World War II. These foreign students often spoke out against Communism. Fred Listz, a Carroll sophomore from Hungary, was one such student. He spoke to the Kiwanis Club in Great Falls on 5 March 1950. He described the fate of his country under Soviet rule. The Russians took over key state positions, established concentration camps and state farms, and
"succeeded in transforming Hungary into an obedient servant to the USSR, "claimed Listz. Another student, Mark Raczyński from Poland, spoke to the Republican Women's Club and the assembled Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Montana. Raczyński painted a vivid picture of Communist ruthlessness, cruelty, and barbarism. Listz and Raczyński were among five students—all natives of Soviet occupied countries—who gave reports on the conditions in their countries at the opening of the "Crusade for Freedom" on 18 September 1950. Another speaker, Reverend Joseph Mavsar of Yugoslavia, related how Tito's "bandits" executed ten members of his family because his father would not support the Communist Party. All the speakers seemed enthusiastic about the plans to strengthen Radio Free Europe with funds from the "Crusade." Carroll College students and faculty participated in other projects as well; many of them organized committees and collected food and clothing to be sent to war-devastated European countries in an effort to aid missionaries abroad.

Although Carroll students tended to be primarily preoccupied with events occurring abroad, many pondered the "Communists in government" issue as well. On 2 February 1953, the Carroll College Debate Club presented a discussion panel to one-hundred members of the American Legion and Auxiliary. The topic discussed was: "Resolved--That Subversive Communist Activities at Home Are More Dangerous to America Than Russian Military Aggression Abroad." According to Mr. Patrick E. Lee, "lively side remarks and heated debates kept the large audience at close attention."

The above mentioned activities of Montana Catholics proved that they were just as concerned about the Communist issue as their fellow
Catholics in America. Although these activities demonstrated an anti-Communist impulse on the part of Montana Catholics, the community did not resort to the negative tactics of McCarthyism. Montana Catholics shared a common concern for people in Soviet occupied areas, and to some extent, Catholics in the state also tended to be concerned about the threat of domestic Communism; however, anti-Communist hysteria within the Montana Catholic community never matched that of other Catholic dominated areas of the country.
Chapter Five

THE 1952 AND 1954 SENATORIAL ELECTIONS IN MONTANA

In the 1952 and 1954 senatorial elections, the Montana Republican Party resorted to McCarthy-like tactics. The Republicans aimed their attack at Representative Mike Mansfield who, in 1952, challenged the Republican incumbent Zales Ecton, for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Mike Mansfield had been elected to the House of Representatives in 1942. He initially served on the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, but in 1945, he relinquished that position to become a member of the House Committee on Foreign Relations. While a representative, Mansfield carried out a special assignment to China for President Roosevelt and a special assignment to a meeting of the United Nations for President Truman.1

Mansfield's political philosophy focused on liberal ideals. In the domestic arena, he supported Truman's Fair Deal programs. In the field of foreign affairs, he has been described as a "liberal internationalist."2 Mansfield campaigned primarily on his record. In an advertisement printed in the Register, a call went out for people to "judge him by his record and service then vote for Mike Mansfield. . . . the Can-Do Candidate with the Can-Did Record."3 In contrast, Ecton's political philosophy was conservative. He opposed most of the foreign policy coming out of the Truman Administration. Nationally, he opposed government interference in the affairs of private citizens and business. He has been described as an extreme "right-winger" domestically and a consistent "isolationist" internationally.4 Ecton readily latched onto the Communist-in-government
issue, and with the help of the State Republican Party and Republicans from outside the state, he launched an anti-Communist campaign strategy. The following statement represents Ecton's theme:

The present spendthrift, corrupt administration has bloated . . . from a nation that wisely refused recognition to Communist dictatorships to one that not only granted recognition, but gave federal jobs to scores of Communists who stole our defense secrets, including the atomic bomb, and turned them over to Russia.

The advertisement continued with the invitation to "join the fight against Communism and corruption by voting Republican."  

Throughout the campaign, Ecton continually attempted to associate Mansfield with what the Republicans referred to as a "softness" on Communism. In McCarthy-like fashion, an appeal based on the Communist issue was made to Montana voters through emotionalism, patriotism, and Christianity. Ecton attacked Mansfield's reports on China and drew parallels between Mansfield's views and those of known "left-wingers" and Communists on the China policy. Although Ecton never called Mansfield a Communist and even stated that Mansfield " . . . would not knowingly help the Communist cause. . . .", he attempted to created the belief among voters that it had been Mansfield's fault that China had been "lost" to the Communists. It then became easy to associate the Korean War with Mansfield's alleged softness.

On 14 October 1950, Ecton received some outside assistance. Senator
Joseph McCarthy, under the sponsorship of the Missoula County Republican Central Committee, addressed a crowd in Missoula, Montana. Although McCarthy clearly emphasized the fact that he was not actually accusing Mansfield of being a Communist, he declared, "... a person who conducts himself so as to win the favor of the Communist party organ must either be stupid or a dupe." McCarthy was referring to the mention of Mansfield's name in the *Daily Worker*—a Communist publication.

Another speaker came to Montana to aid the efforts of the Grand Old Party—Harvey Matusow. Although not as well-known as the junior senator from Wisconsin, this self-proclaimed ex-Communist caused tremendous repercussions in the state. Matusow joined the Communist Party in 1946; however, in February 1950, he became an undercover informer for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. During the Korean War, he was hired as an investigator for the Ohio Un-American Activities Commission. In 1952, he offered his services to the McCarthy cause in Wisconsin. Matusow proved successful in Wisconsin and went on to campaign in Utah, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. He broke his tie with McCarthy during the Army-McCarthy Hearings. The ex-Communist had misgivings about his own activities during the 1952 campaigns. He claimed to have lied and to have told half-truths. As a result, he wrote a book entitled *False Witness*. Matusow later admitted that he was in Montana at McCarthy's request primarily to help defeat Mansfield. He claimed McCarthy had told him, "... you might as well have an admitted Communist in the Senate, it's the same difference." Although Matusow did not
campaign directly for the Republican party, it soon became obvious to many why he came to Montana.

Even though the charges of "Communist" disturbed the representative, Mansfield did not retaliate in a direct manner. Rather, he continued to campaign on his record as a congressman and on issues of real importance to Montanans. Throughout the campaign, he defended his record on Communism and on the actions he had taken to fight it.¹² For example, he claimed that he had voted for Senator McCarran's Subversive Activities Control Bill and was on record as a supporter of the movement to outlaw the Communist Party in America.¹³ In a statement given to the United Press and the Associated Press on 1 December 1953, Mansfield stated, "The times call for unity of action on the part of all Americans--regardless of party--and the cooperation of free men everywhere to withstand the menace of Communism confronting us today."¹⁴

The majority of Montanans resented outsiders coming into the state and slandering the reputation of one of the most respected men in Montana history. The Republican Party conducted an irresponsible campaign that resulted in hurting their cause. Mansfield emerged the victor. In a close election, the newly elected senator carried twenty counties and polled 133,109 votes to Ecton's thirty-six counties and 127,360 votes.¹⁵ Mansfield and the Democrats received a strong mandate from the heavily Catholic populated counties of the state. They were able to carry off this feat even in the midst of the Eisenhower landslide. In Deer Lodge and Silver Bow counties the Democrats swept all local and national offices
with the exception of a Republican state senator from Silver Bow County. These counties, especially Silver Bow, had large concentrations of Irish Catholic laborers; however, they did not rally behind McCarthy as did the greater American Irish Community. It is obvious that Montana Catholics were little impressed with the tactics of McCarthyites during the 1952 elections. 16

In 1954, the Republican Party once again used under-handed tactics against another Democratic candidate. The major race in the state was between the Democratic incumbent, James E. Murray, and the challenger, Wesley A. D'Ewart. In 1934, Murray was elected to the U.S. Senate to fill the vacancy created by the appointment of Senator Thomas J. Walsh to the position of U.S. Attorney General. Murray served continuously as a Montana senator from 1934 until his retirement in 1961. During that period, Murray served as a member of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee and the Interior and Insular Affairs and served as chairman of the Indian Affairs Subcommittee. 19 As a conservative, D'Ewart advocated a united government in all policy areas. He often found himself in conflict with New and Fair Deal programs. He called for the maintenance of constitutional limits on federal power, encouraged local and individual responsibility, and opposed deficit spending and enlargement of the federal bureaucracy. 20

The campaign between Murray and D'Ewart proved to be hard and bitterly fought. Initially each candidate indicated that he would campaign on issues based on their records and the records of their respective party. However, as the campaign progressed, the issues were traded for
accusations and personal attacks. Neither candidate treated the other as a gentleman. However, the Republican Party resorted to tactics that made obsolete any ethics politics may claim to have. The Republican Party, in an attempt to implicate Murray in a Communist plot, distributed a pamphlet entitled "Senator Murray and the Red Web Over Congress." The publication smacked of character assassination and appealed to the emotions of patriotism:

Here is the story of the Red Web Over Congress and the activities of the aging millionaire Senator Murray of Montana. Montana citizens, remote from Eastern centers of left-wing activity, have largely been unaware of the facts presented in this booklet. Few know of the reputation he has acquired in the 20 years since he left Montana. Every American interested in the preservation of American liberties will find a message in these pages.21

The effect that this statement may have had on the casual but patriotic voter is obvious. Unfortunately for the Republicans, the booklet appalled more than attracted Montana voters. Murray retaliated by condemning the campaign against him and the senator defeated D'Ewart by a slim 1,728 votes. Some historians claim that the attack aimed at Murray was so ludicrous that the sensible voter would have most certainly recognized character assassination immediately. However, Murray's slim margin of victory says much for the support the Republican Party enjoyed. Once again, Silver Bow and Deer Lodge counties showed strong support for the Democrats. Catholics still supported their traditional party even though
the Communists-in-Government issue played a major role in the campaign. Many reasons exist for why Catholics were indifferent to the McCarthy issue. William d. Miller claimed that the "Red Web" hurt D'Ewart rather than helped him and that it is conceivable that he might have won the election if he had not resorted to the tactics of McCarthyism.22 Richard B. Roeder and Michael P. Malone conclude that despite the broadening changes in Montana's political make-up, the "political schizophrenia" that had appeared during the 1920s continued into the 1950s. Malone and Roeder continue that "Montanans still seemed to prefer liberals in Washington and conservatives in Helena."23 The existing influences in Montana politics had a far greater effect on Catholics in the state than their ties to the McCarthy issue.

Another factor that cannot be ignored is the obvious tie between Montana Catholics and the labor movement. Labor groups had traditionally been associated with the Left and the attack by McCarthyites on organized labor may have easily alienated Catholic unionists in the state. Yet, one must remember that the greater American Catholic community organized "labor schools," and the ACTU did much to expel suspected Communists from the ranks of their unions. Montanan Laborers did little to participate in these activities. There is another element that could have played a major role in the Catholic perception of the McCarthy issue. The Register failed to print anything negative about Democratic candidates during the McCarthy era. Representative Mike Mansfield received a letter from the editor of the Register, Reverend Patrick Casey, in which Casey lamented,
"The enclosed letter will show you, Michael, what great and glorious things I am suffering on behalf of the party of the good Thomas Jefferson—the old Democratic Party as we have it today." The letter Casey referred to was written by Ernest Immel, Executive Secretary of the Republican State Central Committee. Immel stated that "several months ago I had occasion to write to you because of comments . . . regarding the apparent fact that you were permitting the columns of the western Montana editions of the Register to be used to promote . . . certain officeholders who happen to be Catholic." By looking at editions of the Register between the years of 1948 and 1956, Immel had grounds for his accusations. Some negative articles about officeholders appeared in the Register; however, none of the individuals portrayed in this negative light were Catholics. This obvious "oversight" on the part of Casey likely affected many Catholics who looked to the Register for political guidance.
Conclusion

Postwar America proved to be marked by tremendous economic growth and discovery; at the same time, American society was racked with self-doubt and anxiety. Not only was the nation forced into a leadership role almost overnight, but Americans came to the realization that even amidst an economic boom, the war had created problems unparalleled in history. Previous levels of warfare, economic plight, and ideological intolerance seemed negligible as Americans plunged toward new limits. Keeping their new-found leadership role would become more difficult than ever. As anxiety spread more rapidly, so did the number of things to be concerned about. Unfortunately, instead of helping to minimize these worries, our political leaders expended their energies trying to outflank their opponents. From the House Un-American Activities Committee to the climactic day of the Army-McCarthy Hearings, political opportunism was substituted for true leadership. The general public, given its insecurities, proved to be in no position to lead itself.

Joseph R. McCarthy entered politics at a most advantageous time. He might have sensed a lack of national confidence; he most definitely sensed his charismatic appeal. William Gladstone once accused Benjamin Disraeli of being "inebriated by his own verbosity," and this indictment fits McCarthy also. On 2 December 1954, to the surprise of no one, the U.S. Senate voted to censure McCarthy for conduct "unbecoming to a U.S. Senator." During the censure proceedings, the Democrats, led by Lyndon Johnson, felt that the junior senator could count on the support of one or
two Southern conservatives and the neutrality of several Northern Catholics. Mike Mansfield was not immune to the Catholic issue. As one insider noted, "Mike Mansfield is worried about the Catholic angle. He is glad that he and at least two other Catholics in the Senate will vote for censure. But he is very conscious of those nuns scattered throughout the gallery." Yet McCarthy is not remembered for his censure; he is remembered for the era that bears his name. McCarthy did not create McCarthyism—he simply helped to develop it. Much of the Senator's success can be attributed to the fact that he knew how to manipulate an already existing climate in America.

The post World War II era created serious fears in the American people; however, the anti-Communist protest of the 1940s and 1950s proved to be more than a simple response to external events. Traditionally, America had been a country with many contradicting values and myths. These contradictions caused an almost chaotic climate in American society. Questions about the future of the United States and its people plagued those who tended to be most distressed about their environment.

In an age of ambiguity, McCarthy provided simple answers to complex problems. The senator made it easy to distinguish between "good" and "evil." Americans, who often shun real problems in the search for simplicity, welcomed many of the characteristics that McCarthy exemplified. This, in part, can explain his tremendous popularity.

Joseph R. McCarthy died on 2 May 1957. On 8 May, the joint Houses of Congress held a memorial service for the deceased senator. McCarthy was
eulogized by many of his colleagues such as Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona and Senator Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota. Montana Senator Mike Mansfield also offered his condolences. In addressing Congress, Mansfield said,

Joe McCarthy has left us. Some of us were in disagreement with him on occasion, but all of us recognized him as a Senator from Wisconsin. It will not be long when, in the course of events, all of us now in this Chamber will join our former colleague. We are deeply sorry for his family. We know, of course, that in his way he did the best he possibly could to keep the affairs of this country on an even keel. We can only express the hope that at this time, as he goes to meet his Maker, his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, will rest in peace.²

In a rare example of true statesmanship, Mike Mansfield was able to put the events of the 1952 election behind him.

On 6 May 1957, funeral services for McCarthy were held in the senator's home parish of St. Mary's Church in Appleton, Wisconsin. It seemed fitting that the two staunchest pro-McCarthy organizations--the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic War Veterans--stood by the senator until the end; they formed an impressive honor guard around the casket and acted as ushers during the funeral mass.³ The funeral passed without incident; but soon after, lamentations followed--largely led by Catholics.

The senator's admirers did not die with him. The diminishing, but still existing, band of McCarthites organized an annual "pilgrimage" to the
senator's grave. Typical of the graveside prayers was Reverend Lawerence Brey's meditation:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for giving us this great warrior, who so truly gave his life in fighting the powers of darkness. Be merciful to his soul, and at the same time forgive those who through shortsightedness or ignorance joined his enemies in thwarting his efforts. FINALLY O LORD, in this hour of grave national peril give us more brave men like "Joe" to carry on his work. . . . O Mary, Virgin Mother of God . . . save America from Marxian communism, free those nations who have succumbed to the Red Beast . . . support our young men in service, especially those who are this very moment risking their lives in battle to hold back the tide of the ravaging Red monster. Amen. 4

The Red Scare seemed far from being over.

With the advent of the Communist-hunt era, Catholics had a chance to eliminate all doubt about their allegiance to America. The searing argument over their patriotism made many Catholics seethe with anger. The reason for this resentment lies deep within American Catholicism--within the long list of a foreign-born people who fought for centuries to shed their immigrant status, but who could never seem fully "Americanized." They always appeared to be a separate people and resisted becoming a part of the "Great American Melting Pot." For hundreds of years, critics accused Catholics of owing allegiance to a foreign power (the Pope), of speaking in strange tongues, and of practicing exotic rituals. 5 However, by the 1950s, it seemed that Catholics were finally becoming a part of the American social fabric.
The political phenomenon of McCarthyism was exemplified in the 1952 and 1954 senatorial elections in Montana. Nationally, the Republican Party adopted McCarthyism as its basic campaign strategy because they believed it presented a politically expedient opportunity to gain and hold national office. In Montana, the state Republican Party followed suit. It may be argued that attacks and charges leveled against the Democratic senatorial candidates were based strictly on the issues and on the record. Richard Nixon argued this point in 1952:

We can anticipate charges of smear, hatcheting and name-calling as we delve into the administration's sorry record. So let's get one thing straight right now. If the record itself smears, let it smear. If the dry rot of corruption and Communism, which has eaten deep into our body politic during our last seven years, can be chopped out only with a hatchet--then let's call for a hatchet.\(^6\)

If one wishes to argue in this manner, then one must justify, in terms of fairplay, the following tactics: the use of the *Daily Worker* to misrepresent a person's position regarding Communism, the use of emotionally-charged letters accusing a person of responsibility for the deaths of Americans in Korea, and the reason why the booklet "Senator Murray and the Red Web Over Congress" was published and distributed. The sole purpose of these tactics was to seek victory in a political contest by assassinating the character of one's opponents.

Although both the 1952 and 1954 senatorial campaigns revealed the use of McCarthyism, there were differences between the two races. The
1952 campaign was not as vicious as the 1954 campaign. The State Republican Party initiated McCarthy-like tactics in 1952 and developed them into full-fledged McCarthyism by 1954. One can determine a certain relationship between the use of McCarthyism and the issues of China and the Korean War in 1952, but its use in 1954 represented an attempt, in most respects, at character assassination. William D. Miller believes that McCarthyism in Montana was "strictly a campaign phenomenon." This is true to some extent, but Miller fails to recognize the anti-Communist activities of groups such as the Catholics. The activities of the Montana Knights of Columbus and other similar groups had little to do with political campaigns.

The Catholic communities of Montana participated in a wide array of anti-Communist activities. Although Montana Republicans resorted to unethical methods, Catholics in the state confined their actions mainly to issues concerning the church. It is important to mention that some Catholics supported McCarthy and his political following; but for the most part, these numbers were negligible in the state. What is most interesting about the Montana Catholic community is the fact that despite their inclination toward anti-Communism as represented by the articles in the Register and the activities of groups such as the Knights of Columbus, they did not fall into the substantial ranks of other American Catholics who rallied behind the senator. The majority of Montana Catholics chose to value traditional ties to their communities and the Democratic Party over their supposed anti-Communist beliefs. It is perhaps a credit to Montana's
Catholic population that they resisted the appealing characteristics of McCarthyism, even though many of their church leaders and fellow Catholics around the nation surrendered.
Epilogue

As Charles Dickens once wrote, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times." It was a time for economic prosperity, it was a time for intellectual supression. It was a time when some sought public orthodoxy and were met by irrational bursts of unorthodox behavior as Americans donned coonskin caps, spun thirty-million Hula-Hoops, and crammed record numbers of people into phone booths and Volkswagens.¹

McCarthy should stand as a lesson of what zealous anxiety can do to American society; unfortunately, not all Americans agree that the senator's actions and tactics were completely negative. From the perspective of the 1980s, this fact may seem surprising; however, one must be careful not to practice "presentism"—judging people and their actions by the standards of our day. Many people became politically socialized during the McCarthy era, and those opinions have stuck with them. One thing did strike me in my study of McCarthyism. There seems to be a definite pattern of disinformation among the American people. This is disconcerting considering the impact McCarthy had on this nation. Parallel this with the misconceptions surrounding the Watergate Affair and the recent Iran Scandal in the Reagan Administration, and one can conclude that an uninformed or misinformed public is a tremendous boon to the McCarthys of the world.

The Independent Record gave Joseph McCarthy's death fron page treatment. It is ironic that the same fron page reported that two state
employees lost their jobs for unfurling a flag bearing the hammer and sickle insignia during a Helena parade. Much has changed in America since the silencing of the senator, but have attitudes changed? One can argue no. Consider the 1976 Presidential primaries. Ronald Reagan captured an impressive vote total and the imaginations of many by doing little more than attack President Gerald Ford for being "soft on Communism." Four years later, his get-tough anti-Communist rhetoric carried Reagan into the White House.

As the jury still remains out on the McCarthy deliberation, one must decide where the responsibility for the Red Scare lies. Can we blame our politicians? Can we blame external events? Perhaps the fault lies with the American people themselves. It was the American public who allowed certain individuals to deny constitutional rights to their fellow citizens. It was the American people, not Communists, who let innocent Americans suffer indignation and ruin at the hands of uncontrolled zealots.

Remembering the words of Edward R. Murrow, as he pleaded with a lethargic nation to confront McCarthy, strikes a responsive chord: "... the fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves."

The Montana experience with McCarthyism exemplified both sides of the road. Many Montanans found the tactics of the senator to be appalling. They took these attitudes to the polls and the outcome proved to be positive from the standpoint of fairplay. Yet there were substantial signs of zealous anti-Communist activity within the state. In talking with individuals about my thesis topic, I received comments such as: "They don't
make men like Joe McCarthy anymore," and "[Douglas] McArthur and McCarthy were signs of a time when America was in control of her own destiny."4 Obviously some Americans, even Montanans, still hold a sympathetic view of the senator.

Until Americans, as a nation, can come to some sort of concensus about what their role in the world community should be, there will be no agreement on the judgment of the McCarthy era. Personally, I feel that there will never be a consensus--not as long as freedom of speech and opinion reigns in our society. Let us hope that this fundamental freedom never disappears from our democratic experience.
ENDNOTES

Introduction


8 Ibid., p. 8.
Chapter One

1 Goldman, "Years of Shock," p. 311.


3 Dean Acheson was Secretary of State under President Franklin D. Roosevelt and President Harry S. Truman. He was linked to the so-called "Communist Take-Over" plot associated with the Roosevelt Administration.

4 Goldman, p. 311.


Chapter Two


2 After the first inconclusive trial, Alger Hiss was eventually found guilty of perjury after a second trial.


6 Time, 3 April 1950, p. 17.

7 The Hollywood Ten were: Dulton Trumbo, John Howard Lawson, Ring Lardner Jr., Albert Maltz, Herbert Biberman, Alvah Bessie, Sammuel Ornitz, Edward Dmytryk, Adrian Scott, and Lester Cole.


9 Ibid., p. 258.

10 Thomas, When Even Angels Wept, p. 167.

11 Ibid., p. 402.

12 Watkins, Enough Rope, p. 199.


15 Dr. Robert Swartout, lecture given 11 April 1985 at Carroll College, Helena, Montana.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.
Chapter Three


2 Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p. 5.


6 Catholic Almanac, pp. 722, 735 and 772.

7 Irons, "America's Cold War Crusade," p. 318.

8 Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p. 11.


10 Goldman, "Years of Shock," p. 312.

11 Ibid.
12 Ibid. p. 313.

13 National Catholic Almanac, p. 788.

14 Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p. 18.

15 By examining issues of the Commonweal from September 1948 to July 1953, one can conclude this statement to be true.


17 Rogin, The Intellectuals and McCarthy, pp. 238-239.

18 Crosby, God, Church and Flag, p. 236.


Chapter Four


2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.


5 Ibid., 15 November 1953, p. 1.
6 Ibid., 20 April 1952, p. 3.

7 Ibid., 2 March 1952, p. 1.

8 Ibid., 28 December 1952, p. 1.

9 *Prospector* (Carroll College, Helena), 30 March 1950, p. 3.

10 Ibid., 2 February 1951, p. 2.

11 Michael Mansfield Papers. Series XXI, Container 37. Mike and Maureen Mansfield Library, University of Montana, Missoula, Montana. General Dwight D. Eisenhower kicked off the "Crusade For Freedom" on 2 September 1950. The "Crusade" was a fund-raising drive sponsored by the National Committee for a Free Europe. The drive was designed to enlist the support of Americans to help halt the growth of Communism in the US and abroad.


13 Ibid., 5 March 1953, p. 1.

Chapter Five


5 Political Advertisement, Register. 2 November 1952, section: 2:4.


9 Associated Press Dispatch, Great Falls Tribune. 15 October 1952, p. 18.

10 Much of the following bibliographical information on Harvey Matusow can be found in: Harvey Matusow, False Witness (New York: Cameron and Kahn, 1955).

11 Ibid., pp. 150-166.


Conclusion

1Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, p. 484.


3Crosby, *God, Church and Flag*, p. 221.

4Ibid., p. 225.

5Ibid., p. 244.


7Miller, "Montana and the Spector of McCarthyism," p. 75.
Epilogue


4 I had opportunity to talk with several Montana Catholics at the 1986 State Knights of Columbus Convention held in Malta, Montana in April. Those commenting requested that they not be identified directly in this thesis.
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