

US Public Policy during the McCarthy Era

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá fenoménem známým jako mccarthismus v kontextu studené války a zkoumá jeho dopady na americkou společnost, legislativu a politickou kulturu. Úvodní kapitoly se věnují historickému pozadí, vývoji studené války – v rámci toho jsou analyzovány dopady druhé světové války a poválečné rozdělení Evropy – a vzniku protikomunistických nálad ve Spojených státech amerických. Dále je zde nastíněn vývoj komunistické strany v USA. Hlavní část práce analyzuje samotnou éru mccarthismu v padesátých letech dvacátého století, zaměřuje se na osobnost senátora Josepha McCarthyho, jeho politickou kariéru a vysvětluje jeho strategii zastrašování veřejnosti a americké vlády skrze obviňování z komunismu. Závěr práce popisuje takzvaná armádní slyšení (Army Hearings) a McCarthyho postupný pád z politické přízně a tím i konec mccarthismu jako takového. Práce se dále zabývá změny americké legislativy motivované strachem z komunismu, vliv na svobody jednotlivců, diskriminaci menšin i osudy obviněných. Závěrečná část se věnuje celkovému dopadu mccarthismu na občanská práva, kulturu a zahraniční politiku USA. Cílem práce je nabídnout komplexní pohled na období mccarthismu a jeho dlouhodobé důsledky pro americkou demokracii.

Klíčová slova: mccarthismus, studená válka, druhý rudý poplach, Joseph McCarthy, legislativa, Spojené státy americké

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis examines the phenomenon known as McCarthyism in the context of the Cold War and explores its impact on American society, legislation, and political culture. The introductory chapters provide historical background, outlining the development of the Cold War — including the consequences of World War II and the post-war division of Europe — and the emergence of anti-communist sentiment in the United States. The evolution of the Communist Party in the USA is also briefly discussed. The main part of the thesis analyses the McCarthy era of the 1950s, focusing on the figure of Senator Joseph McCarthy, his political career, and his strategy of intimidating the public and the U.S. government through accusations of communism. The final chapters describe the so-called Army Hearings and McCarthy's gradual fall from political favour, marking the end of McCarthyism as a movement. Furthermore, the thesis examines changes in American legislation motivated by fear of communism, their impact on individual freedoms, the

discrimination of minorities, and the fates of the accused. The concluding section considers the broader effects of McCarthyism on civil rights, culture, and U.S. foreign policy. The aim of the thesis is to provide a comprehensive view of the McCarthy era and its long-term consequences for American democracy.

Keywords: McCarthyism, Cold War, Second Red Scare, Joseph McCarthy, legislation, United States of America

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ÚVOD

The phenomenon of McCarthyism represents one of the most significant and darkest periods in modern American history, during which the fear of communism became a driving force in domestic politics, legislation, and public discourse. In the 1950s, American society, ranging from the factory workers to high government employees, was heavily influenced by a narrative of an internal enemy threatening the very foundations of democracy. At the forefront of this ideological campaign stood Senator Joseph McCarthy, whose name became synonymous with the persecution of alleged communists.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the period of McCarthyism in the context of the Cold War and to evaluate its impact on American society, legal systems, and political culture. The goal is also to point out that USA, traditionally considered to be a country of a freedom, was more than once very close to limiting the civil liberty as other totalitarian countries. This fact also confirms that the American politics is turbulent, and McCarthyism serves as a proof. The thesis first outlines the historical background of the Cold War and the rise of anti-communist sentiment in the United States. Even though the name McCarthy serves as a symbol of anticommunism, it all started long time before the senator was born. It then focuses on the actions and political practices of McCarthy, including key moments of his career such as the Army-McCarthy hearings. The final chapters address legislative consequences, effects on civil liberties, and the overall legacy of McCarthyism in American history.

I TEORETICKÁ ČÁST

1 THE COLD WAR

1.1 McCarthyism and the Cold War

Although the era of McCarthyism is mainly related to the inner American policy, it is the outside policy of USA and the political and military situation in which the world was after the Second World War, in which true roots of McCarthyism were. If the world and mostly Western world was not scared by the expansion of the communism, there would probably never any Red scare, neither the First Red scare after the Communist revolution in Russia or the Second Red scare, also known as the era of the senator Joseph McCarthy. Before we talk about this interesting historical episode, let's first look on the world politics after Second World War and the phenomenon Cold War.

1.2 The old superpower vs the new superpower

The Cold war originates in two processes that happened at the turn of the 19th and 20th century. Russia has always been a powerful nation that influenced the European politics, and United States became as strong as the leading nations of Europe at those times. In fifty years, ranging from the American civil war and the First World War, the US GDP (Gross domestic product) was increased more than seven times. In 1913 its steel production was four times bigger than the production of United Kingdom. Therefore, a new superpower naturally wanted to join the game of global politics where nations tried to gain as much influence as possible. The second reason was the idea of capitalism and its critics. These two opposite views were strengthened after the United States joined the First World War and the revolution took place in Russia in 1917 and Bolsheviks coming to power.¹

After the end of WW1, the president Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen points declared that United States fought for the just world, not simply for national advantage. His nation, as he claimed, was built on ideas and principles and therefore stood above nation-states. While the American government and the Europe were horrified by Lenin's regime, Wilson saw the new Soviet state as a competing form of internationalism to his own plan – the League of Nations.²

The brutality of the Great War caused among many other things a fear. One of the most influential was the fear of the nation being humiliated and left in misery. Radicals claimed

¹ Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 22.

² Westad, *The Cold War*, 30.

that Jews, capitalist, Communists or other groups desired to exploit the ones that suffered from the war and carried the war efforts on their back. This fear gave rise to Fascism, Nazism and antievolutionary thinking the perceived Communism as a threat to liberty.³

The hostility between the capitalist world now represented mainly by United Nations and newly created soviet state was evident from the beginning as Lenin hoped the revolution would soon spread through the whole Europe and then through the whole world. However, all possible revolution were crushed in their beginning, for example the uprising in Berlin was crushed and the Bavarian socialist republic lasted only twenty-seven days before the German army won the battle in the street of Munchen and killed its leaders. The Hungarian soviet republic was also suppressed by the Romanian army supported by units sent from France and Great Britain. Nonetheless, the spite between Communists and victorious powers remained.⁴

1.3 The Second World War

The latter half of 1930's is called the era of appeasement. Hitler, who carefully and with some luck prepared his rise to power, erased two states, Austria and Czechoslovakia from the map and in 1939 started the Second World War. Stalin, knowing that western leaders were more than giving to sacrifice the USSR to Nazi Germany, made a pact with Hitler. But his assumptions were false. In 1941 Nazis attacked the USSR. The only still standing source of resistance, the United Kingdom, and the Stalin's regime became allies regardless of their opposite ideologies.⁵

The alliance of USSR, USA France and Great Britain won the war, but two leading powers of the 19th century lost their empires thanks to this conflict. This outcome made USA the first leading Western power while USSR was left as the "only" major threat. The alliance between the West and the East was created by mutual enemies – Germany, Italy and Japan. However, after these countries and their allies were defeated, the mutual cooperation faded away.⁶

³ Westad, *The Cold War*, 31.

⁴ Westad, *The Cold War*, 34.

⁵ Westad, *The Cold War*, 41.

⁶ Westad, *The Cold War*, 42.

1.4 The strange allies and postwar Europe

The willingness of Western power to help USSR may seem strange. Afterall, it was Stalin, who made a pact with Hitler, captured the half of Poland, three Baltic states and invaded Finland. There was also an intelligence information about USSR sending supplies to Germans. The West saw both Stalin and Hitler as two threats, equally horrible regimes. However, nobody was left doubting that Nazi Germany was in the war with the Western powers, while USSR was not. The foreign leaders knew that Britain would be left alone in the fight against Hitler, if USSR felt. Therefore, they decided to aid Stalin's country.⁷

In September 1941, British and American military leaders and politicians still expected USSR to fall. In fact, the Wehrmacht, the German army has taken more than million prisoners since the beginning of the war on the eastern front. Many civilians of the occupied countries welcomed the German occupants as liberators from the soviet oppression and some, even though not all on their free will, fought side by side with Germans. But the battle of Moscow in 1941-1942 and the siege of Leningrad proved that USSR would not fall.⁸

The Stalin's views on his alliance with USA and United Kingdom did not differ much. In fact, he was sure this alliance would fall right after the expected defeat of the German Reich. For him there was no difference between Germany, Italy and Japan on one hand and USA and UK on the other hand. Stalin wanted the Allies to open second front on West but the fact that this happened not before 1944, only confirmed his negative attitude to West.⁹

As the war was coming to an end, Churchill, as his country was not a leading Western Superpower, returned to criticising Stalin and his regime. On 12 June, the term "Iron curtain" was first mention by him. The relationships between former allies were getting worse as they had dispute about occupation and control of the postwar Europe.¹⁰

The conflict seemed inevitable as leaders of two leading superpowers, USA and USSR saw each other as enemies since the Russian revolution and because of Stalin's prioritizing control over "his" part of Europe over good relationship with his wartime allies.¹¹

⁷ Westad, *The Cold War*, 43.

⁸ Westad, *The Cold War*, 45.

⁹ Westad, *The Cold War*, 46.

¹⁰ Westad, *The Cold War*, 59.

¹¹ Westad, *The Cold War*, 63.

1.5 The Cold war

In 1947 more and more Europeans and US policymakers started noticing similarities between Nazi and soviet expansionism. They viewed USSR influence as not limited to Eastern Europe occupied by the Red army. The new American president Harry S. Truman originally though Soviets to be naturally expansive, but after two years he started questioning his judgment. He was furious about Stalin not keeping his promise of establishing democracies in Eastern Europe.¹²

Because of the falling economies of European countries, Truman introduced Marshall's plan for economic aid to Europe. USSR and countries in its influence sphere were invited into Paris to accept the offer. But Stalin made clear to all socialist governments under Moscow's control that any accepted American help would be seen as anti-Soviet behaviour. He was convinced that this economic help would highly increase American influence in occupied Germany which he considered to be a key to transforming Europe to socialist continent.¹³

By 1948 the Cold war system of states was established. Communist parties were in charge in all countries formerly occupied by the Red Army and their governments were answerable to Moscow. It was clear United States would stay involved in Europe's matters. Truman's government was thinking about the American worlds politics as a restricting Communism and influence of USSR.¹⁴

The war intensified in 1949 as Soviets successfully tested their first atomic bomb. Now both superpowers had a weapon of unimaginable destruction which both intended to drop on their enemy if the war truly broke out. In 1952 Americans testes their first thermonuclear bomb known as hydrogen bomb, 450 times stronger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Soviets followed only nine months later.¹⁵

1.6 The Cold War in Asia

The clashes between West and East shifted from Europe to Asia. As we later discover, events in Asia will play a key role in McCarthy's Road to fame. In China, Korea and Vietnam things looked very good for Communists. During WW2, local Communist parties gained much recognition as they were fighting and encouraging people to stand up against Japanese

¹² Westad, *The Cold War*, 80.

¹³ Westad, *The Cold War*, 85.

¹⁴ Westad, *The Cold War*, 87.

¹⁵ Westad, *The Cold War*, 91.

invaders. It was no doubt that they would try to seize the power and rule the country according to Soviet model. In India and Indonesia nationalist were pushing for the full independence of their countries. They wanted their peoples to be free from their British, French and Dutch colonial masters.¹⁶

The old European powers were weakened after the WW2, but they were not willing to give up their colonies. At least not completely. They were handing the power to local elites with which they thought they could negotiate, and this way maintain some kind of influence. However, they were kind of late. In China, all European privileges were transferred to Chinese hand during the war and India was promised an independence when British were desperate from the Japanese onslaught. The new superpowers, USA and USSR, wanted to increase their own colonial dominion and supported European withdrawal from Asia. The nationalist movements were taking the lead across the Asia. Many of them, and all in key countries, had a socialist orientation, although their contact with USSR were limited.¹⁷

Not all Asia was taken by Communists or nationalists. US troop occupied Japan, landed in China and the south part of the newly divided Korea was also under American control. The rest of the Middle East was occupied by the British.¹⁸

United States were careful when it came to anticolonialism in Asia. Even when it forced European countries to withdraw, like Netherlands from Indonesia, it was because the American administrative worried not doing so would bring more issues in ongoing Cold War. Washington also wanted an access to raw materials and markets in Asia, which would be closed under regimes of Europeans powers. Its attitude in first years after WW2 was oriented more towards expansion of capitalism than establishing independent countries. And it will be this time period which will be criticised by McCarthy.¹⁹

¹⁶ Westad, *The Cold War*, 113.

¹⁷ Westad, *The Cold War*, 113.

¹⁸ Westad, *The Cold War*, 114.

¹⁹ Westad, *The Cold War*, 136.

2 THE ORIGINS OF ANTI-COMMUNIST SENTIMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

2.1 The beginning of the 20th century

Even though the term McCarthyism describes the era of American politics in the 50s, its origins can be traced much earlier, even 80 years back. It has roots in the process of industrialization of the United States during the 19th century. Two new parties appeared. First part were rich owners of businesses, and the second part were workers who were hired for a labour in those businesses.²⁰

Such relationship caused many troubles, for example in the United States between 1880 and 1900 23 000 strikes took place. The newspapers told the public that the culprit were anarchists, Bolshevik agents etc. The reasons why workers went on so many strikes included low pay, long hours, but it their right to form labour unions in order to bargain a better deal was the biggest issue. Nonetheless, very often those strikes were suppressed by the authorities with the help of armed forces.²¹

Businessmen believed that there must have been plotters behind all that. Before the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917 anarchists were to blame and were the biggest fear of businesses owners. The turning point was the Haymarket bombing. This event persuaded many Americans that the major issue were unions of workers which were now linked in the eyes of public with anarchists, socialists and communists. This instigated US first bigger red scare. The Haymarket bombing also served the businessmen as a tactic against workers by accusing them of being “Reds”. On the other hand, anarchists were responsible for many attacks and assassinations. This led the Congress to banning anarchists and similar kinds of people from entering United States.²²

The first world war, which started in 1914, enlarged the distance between so called Americans and Un-Americans. After three years of neutrality, the president Wilson’s government had to change the opinion of public towards supporting the war. Through help of many organizations, events and pamphlets, the government turned the public into viewing

²⁰ Jonathan Michaels, *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 19.

²¹ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 29.

²² Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 30.

anyone who was against the war, as anti-American. And the Socialist party was against the war.²³

2.2 The American reaction to the Russian revolution

The first reaction from America was enthusiastic. Not expressed only by ordinary citizens or leftist, but even the president Woodrow Wilson called the change in Russia wonderful and claimed that this country was always in a way democratic. But things changed drastically when news about the Bolsheviks coming to power arrived. The opinions varied even among socialists themselves. While some, after understanding the true nature of the new regime, continued to support it, others stopped. Not radical socialists, like Morris Hillquit, a co-founder of the Socialist Party, couldn't find any explanation to why, once revolution has succeeded, civil liberties weren't restored. Other revolutions broke out in Europe, for example in Germany (Berlin and Bavaria), Austria or Finland, but without any success. Those events were watched carefully from USA and caused the First red scare. But it must be noted that WWI enabled things that were previously unthinkable. The government reduced working hours, increased salaries and aimed at reducing child labour and creating fair conditions for everyone.²⁴

2.3 The American Communist party

The American Communist party, officially called CPUSA (Communist Party of the United States of America) relates to much more controversies than any other third party in the American politics. Its critics has labelled it as a nest of traitors, loyal to the Communist regime in USSR with the goal to overthrow the US government by ideally violent revolution. Its supporters, on the other hand, has praised it for its interest in racial equality, social justice, rights for workers and equal rights for women.²⁵

The creation of American CP was a reaction of socialists in USA to the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917. They separated themselves into two parts – the left-wing faction, the Communist who wanted to recreate the Russian scenario – and the right-wing which remained inclined towards reforms within the political system. The hatred towards Communist came very early. The year 1919 was a year of Spanish flu, anarchist bombings,

²³ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 30.

²⁴ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 42.

²⁵ Vernon L. Pedersen, James G. Ryan a Katherine A. S. Sibley, eds., *Post-Cold War Revelations and the American Communist Party: Citizens, Revolutionaries, and Spies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 1.

steel strikes and race riots. The US government will blame at least three of those events on the Communists and other left-wing radical groups. The raids in 1920 will drive the party underground and later it will apply for a membership in Communist International (Comintern), created by Moscow to direct the world Communist movement.²⁶

At the beginning of the Party's existence, two important incidents happened. First was the attempt to take over Farmer-Labour Party. Unsuccessful, showed the difficulty American Communists will always have with cooperating with other left-wing parties.²⁷

The second incident started by the Communists was a strike at Loray Mill in Gastonia. It lasted week only, but ended with violence, as two people, one of them being a policeman, died. Nonetheless, the party used the death of the protester Ella May Wiggins as a useful tool for propaganda.²⁸

When the global crisis began in 1929, the Comintern recommended the Communists to shift from working with already established labour unions to starting new, so called red unions. The idea behind this decision was to show where the real political orientation of workers really was. However, those red unions failed to replace the labour unions and never attracted many workers. The Comintern decided to change the tactics. It moved from social-fascist campaign to making common cause with groups that dealt with topics such as antifascist, antiracism and social justice.²⁹

The changed tactics brought a good result. The CP was a sponsor of groups like American League against War, International Labour Defence, Workers International Relief and others. All these groups were designed to attract non-Communists. Communists also achieved many important positions in automotive, electrical, maritime and mining unions thanks to the cooperation with the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The administration of the president Roosevelt stopped being hostile towards the CP and its members participated in New Deals programs and with the cultural movement they finally reached to masses. On the other hand, they often worked with their true political identity concealed and labelled their opponents as red baiters. When the Spanish civil war broke out, many Communists, not only

²⁶ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 3.

²⁷ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 3.

²⁸ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 4.

²⁹ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 4.

from USA, volunteered for the Republican side and the CPUSA declared them as selfless champions of democracy.³⁰

2.4 Post war situation

When the First World War ended in 1918, many people who worked in industries that supplied the war efforts, were laid off. Simultaneously, around 4 million soldiers returned to the United States and were looking for job. This meant available jobs were scarce. Business owners, now free from war restriction imposed by the government, cut the wages of their employees to decrease the operating costs to fight the inflation. They also increased the prices, some of them skyrocketed by many percents. This meant that families had less money and had to pay higher bills, and such situation led to many strikes.³¹

The strike, that led to the First Red scare, happened in 1919 in Seattle. Seattle could be called a union city for its very strong presence of union of workers know as Seattle Central Labor Council. In February, this organization called a strike. Although the strike was more or less peaceful, the city mayor Ole Hanses requested the troops. And he received them. Around 3000 armed men and policemen faced the protesters. The strikers did not achieve any goals, which they did not even agree on, and the strike was suppressed. Hansen was viewed as a national hero and went on a tour where he claimed the country was saved from the revolution.³²

Committees, such as Overman and Lusk committees, were established to investigate any Un-American activities. The Leftists themselves worsen the situation. In April 1919 a package was delivered to the house of a Georgia senator. When a housemaid opened it, she was severely injured by a bomb contained in that package. Without any hesitation, investigation of the mail was launched, and 36 other bombs were discovered in various states, all addressed to political or business leaders, among them were for example Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Senator Overman, millionaire John D. Rockefeller, Seattle Mayor Ole Hanson and the Attorney General of the United States, A. Mitchell Palmer.³³

Although none of the criminals were discovered, many people blamed Bolsheviks for trying to overthrow the US government and establish a socialist regime. The Lusk committee

³⁰ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 5.

³¹ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 44.

³² Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 42.

³³ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 47.

claimed, based on documents they collected, that United States were a target for a Bolshevik revolution. *“The report, as would be common with rightwing anti-communism, lumped together all forms of radicalism, non-violent and violent, stating “that the aims and purposes of the Socialist Party [were] substantially identical with those of the Communists” and that “any statements in the official documents which indicate otherwise [had], of course, been inserted to gull the public.”*³⁴

In 1920 the First Red scare started fading away. Partially because more and more people criticized the actions made by politicians, but the bigger reason was the strikes not being successful. The number of members in the Socialist party decreased and even though more bombings and attacks happened, the hysteria left the American public.³⁵

During Roosevelt's era there was no law that allowed FBI to spy on the Communist party. The surveillance of political radicals was officially stopped by the Attorney General in 1924. In 1934 things changed as Roosevelt became concerned about Nazi sympathizers. Therefore, he ordered, in secret, the FBI to monitor their activities. And just two years later he broadened the command on the Communists as well. J. Edgar Hoover, the director of FBI agreed with president about keeping the operation secret and no information about the request of spying on the Nazis and Communists was recorded.³⁶

Hoover also warned the president about the CP planning to control or already controlling labour unions and press. He claimed that they could very easily paralyze the country by stopping the industries. The FBI director raised a subject that will for next 25 year treated carefully by American countersubversives – the thread of Communists controlling Unions and parts of the government (Schrecker 1998, 89).³⁷

In 1938 the HUAC (House on Un-American Activities) was created. This gave the political opponents of FDR's administration a tool to fight the New Deal. Three years later, in 1941, House of Representatives authorizes Martin Dies to lead a seven-month investigation of un-American activities. The whole purpose of the investigation was to embarrass the government. The anticommunism, as a political topic, showed to be a remarkable effective weapon, because it received huge publicity from the press. Even Dies was surprised when he saw many headlines of articles about his investigation published in newspaper. The

³⁴ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 48.

³⁵ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 63.

³⁶ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 89.

³⁷ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 89.

public's approval of HUAC's work was also very high which meant most of congressmen were afraid to oppose Dies.³⁸

The Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939 made HUAC to shift its attention fully from fascist and nazis in Germany to Communists. The reason was, as we already mentioned, that Communism was good political topic for attracting attention, however the CP the entry of USA to WW2 two years later propelled the party to its greatest success ever. This means that the attention of HUAC to Communist activities was important as Communists were gaining a lot of power when compared to fascists in USA.³⁹

Roosevelt tried to destroy the committee, but he was not successful. To prevent HUAC from gaining more and more power and to avoid another potential source of embarrassment, his administration took steps to ensure public that government was ready to intervene against Communists all the time. But in reality, those steps only made the HUAC more relevant in the eyes of the public.⁴⁰

When United States joined the Second World War, the Communist Party abandoned its goals for collective security and started opposing the war in Europe. This move made the Party unpopular, regardless of the pact Stalin made with Hitler before 1941 when US joined the war. Nonetheless, it was the war that transformed the communism from being a political topic to a national security issue and therefore the FDR's administration finally turned against the CP. For example, Earl Browder was sent to prison because he once had a fake passport. People were not sent to prison just because holding a fake passport, but Browder was a communist and that was the real reason. This was a campaign of selective prosecution against one party, a precedence that will be repeated later during McCarthyism.⁴¹

³⁸ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 91.

³⁹ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 6.

⁴⁰ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 92.

⁴¹ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 96.

3 THE SECOND RED SCARE

3.1 Situation before the Second Red scare

Although the Second Red scare had the same effect on American public as the First Red scare, its roots lie elsewhere. As introduced earlier, the First Red scare was caused mostly by economic reasons. Reasons that led to the Second Red scare can be divided into three categories: US having an atomic bomb, USSR recruiting spies to steal American military secrets and a western response to the spreading of communism.⁴²

The new American president Harry S. Truman, who replaced Franklin Delano Roosevelt after his death in 1945, was informed about the new powerful weapon before the American Army used it against two Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki in spring 1945. The USSR and USA were allies during WW2 but that did not stop the latter from spying on its ally. The soviet intelligence first noticed a attempt of United States to create an atomic bomb in 1941. With some success gathering information about the bomb, Soviet scientists began developing their own bomb. It is interesting that most of the spies approached Soviet intelligence on their own and they did it for political reasons, not for money.⁴³

While there were some attempts to maintain the friendly relationship between the two nations, it was becoming more and more clear that some kind of conflict was inevitable because both countries had different attitudes towards influencing the world. There were famous and important figures that claimed that a clash can't be avoided. A legendary speech made by Winston Churchill on March 5, 1946, about the iron curtain dividing Europe into two pieces serves as an example. But American people and not they only felt – and with good reason – that communism is on a march. Eastern Europe, previously occupied by the Red Army, was now closely tied to the USSR. States such as the People's Republic of Poland, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic or the Peoples Republic of Hungary were so called satellite states, having puppet governments which were answerable to Moscow. The Western Europe countries such as France and Italy had strong communist parties. The United Kingdom was withdrawing from many of its overseas territories and Greece was in the middle of the civil war between royalists and Communists.⁴⁴

⁴² Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 108.

⁴³ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 108.

⁴⁴ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 111

It is important to note that not only American public, but policymakers as well viewed Communism as organized world movement under control of Soviet government. This comprehension had a significant impact on both foreign policy and domestic fear of American citizens. This reality however led to some errors in policy which took toll between Americans themselves.⁴⁵

A key element in the initial phase of the Second Red scare was a list of suspected subversive organizations called *The Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations*. The official purpose of this list was "...to provide helpful information to the loyalty board about suspected federal employees." " 2 michaels 114. On the other hand, there are factors suggesting that it could be also used as a weapon against suspected subversives. This list was published, and it quickly became a tool for loyalty screening not only of federal employees. No clear criteria for being included on the list existed and the accused person had no right for a hearing to clear their name. And not only that person was in danger, being mentioned in association with suspected people or organisation was enough to get you in trouble. And mere accusation caused discreditation, which later became a typical for McCarthy era (Michaels 2017, 114). Another issue was that information was accepted from anyone, that meant anyone who wanted to take revenge against you, could use this list and simply ruin your life.⁴⁶

By the end of 1945 was falling and labour unions, which stayed calmed during the war period and did not call any strike or try to negotiate better wages and working conditions, decided to achieve its goal now when war was over. Around 5 000 strikes took place with many workers from industries like steel, auto, electric and coal involved. This meant higher prices and short supply of some basic foodstuffs. The public, highly influenced by the press, blamed Truman and its government. Newspapers claimed that these strikes represented same pattern of revolution that took place in Russia in 1917 and Chamber of Commerce with series of pamphlets warned about the Communists successfully infiltrating the American workers. The public was also scared by spies. Some attempts of stealing the secret government information were discovered and many Americans believed that no Communist should be employed in their government.⁴⁷

The restriction of civil liberties and the presage of the Second Red scare came before the senator McCarthy and his era. In 1947 the Congress, even against the Truman's president's

⁴⁵ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 111.

⁴⁶ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 115.

⁴⁷ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 118.

veto, put through a Taft-Hartley act. The goal of this act was to restrict the communist influence coming from unions and it achieved restricting activities and power of labour unions. Moreover, if somebody wanted to become an official in unions, they had to take an oath that they are not a communist or member of similar organization and that they don't have any desire to overthrow the US government.⁴⁸

On March 12, 1947, the president Truman introduced "Truman Doctrine" which defined his foreign policy. Couple of days later he ordered *The Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations* to be used for loyalty screening of employees. This meant a clear connection between the inner communist danger and the communist danger coming from outside world.⁴⁹

On the other hand, Truman sent Congress a proposal of Civil Rights Acts that outlawed the Jim Crow laws, protection of the right to vote and new voting right for District of Columbia.⁵⁰

Despite all those issues, the American economy was going up. By 1953 unemployment was very low, the minimum wage was increased, income was rising higher than prices and 8 million veterans used an offer made by the government to study the university as a part of compensation for years spent in the Second world war.⁵¹

3.2 The Red scare

The year 1952 was the year that brought a drastic change. On August 12, Huber Humphrey, a liberal Democrat from Minnesota, presented an amendment to a bill. His proposed amendment meant labelling the Communist party of the United States as "*the agency of a hostile foreign power*". In his own words the party represented a "*an instrumentality of a conspiracy to overthrow the Government of the United States,*" and "*a clear, present, and continuing danger to the security of the United States.*" Humphrey also recommended fines for being a member of the party. Those fines could reach up to 10,000\$, being imprisoned for 5 years or both.⁵²

⁴⁸ Marie-France Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice 1947–1957: McCarthismus* (Praha: Academia, 1999), 23.

⁴⁹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 25.

⁵⁰ Griffith, Robert. *The Politics of Fear: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Senate* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1970), 668.

⁵¹ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 134.

⁵² Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 141.

Humphrey's speech did not leave anybody doubting what his position to the Communist party was:

*"I want Senators to stand up and answer whether they are for the Communist Party or against it. I am tired of reading headlines about being "soft" toward communism. I am tired of reading headlines about being a leftist and about others being leftists. I am tired of people playing the Communist issue as though it were a great overture which has lasted for years. . . . This amendment will make the Communist Party, its membership and its apparatus illegal. It would make membership in the Communist Party subject to criminal penalties. . . . I do not intend to be a half patriot. I will not be lukewarm. The issue is drawn."*⁵³

His speech was supported by other Liberals, for example by Wayne Morse or Mike Mansfield. This was quite unusual for Liberals to take such distinctive stand, that is putting a political party out of the law, which itself is against the liberty of the American people. Nevertheless, they achieved that the number of members of the Communist party has decreased to only 5,000 and it is estimated that around 1,500 of them were FBI agents investigating the Party's plans.⁵⁴

But weakening the Party wasn't Humphrey's only goal. He also thought that his propose would erase the perception of Liberals as being weak on the Communists. Additionally, The White House and FBI director John Edgar Hoover were against making the Communist Party of the United States illegal. Their opposition and possible presidential veto to Humphrey's amendment would, in his opinion, make the Conservatives look as they are the ones being soft on communism. Being seen as weak on communism was hated by both Liberals and Conservatives and played a great role during elections.⁵⁵

Conservatives did, as expected, opposed this bill, but in the end the bill passed, only part with fines wasn't included. Humphrey did not achieve anything, nevertheless he declared that they achieve something that would help later.⁵⁶

3.3 Senator Joseph McCarthy

The Second Red scare needed a trigger to become a topic of public on the national level. Such trigger was a man called Joseph McCarthy. A man who will later appear as a

⁵³ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 141.

⁵⁴ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 142.

⁵⁵ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 142.

⁵⁶ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 145.

demagogue, willing to use anything to get higher in his career. He fabricated his life as he did with his accusations.⁵⁷

When United States joined the Second World War, he volunteered for the Marines. Not because he would feel a need to support his motherland but because he knew being recognized as a veteran could help later in his career. From his records we know that he volunteered about a dozen missions as a tail gunner. This might give a feeling that he was brave, but as a fellow soldier noted, "*It was . . . quite safe—there weren't any Jap planes or anti-aircraft gunners around.*". McCarthy has also suffered an injury that he claimed was from a plane crash. The reporter Robert Fleming noticed that McCarthy has never been awarded Purple Heart and discovered that the wound was caused by a horseplay. When confronted with this fact, McCarthy labelled Mr. Fleming as pro-Communist.⁵⁸

This was not the only time someone from his fellow soldiers questioned his military service. In 1949 the Madison Capital-Times received a letter from Marine Captain Jack Canaan, a pilot who served with McCarthy at Bougainville. In this letter the captain claimed that McCarthy's only combat experience had been two flights in one day. "*He told me that he did it for publicity value*" wrote Canaan. "*In fact, in a hospital in the New Hebrides he personally showed me the Associated Press clipping about firing more rounds than any gunner in one day I believe on the day he fired them, the Japanese planes at Rabaul were all dead.*" Canaan also recommended the newspaper to check McCarthy's "official jacket in Washington." *It would expose the guy for the fraud he is,"* said Canaan.⁵⁹

In 1946 elections McCarthy defeated his republican opponent Robert La Follett and then a liberal Howar McMurray and became a senator for Wisconsin. As a senator McCarthy began his crusade against communist in 1950. On February 9 he gave a speech to Republican Women's club in Wheeling in West Virginia where he claimed that he had a list of spies working right at that moment for US government, 205 people in total. In that speech we can see a pattern that will be repeated during all his future public appearances – saying a certain number, name or fact without evidence or reliable sources.⁶⁰

When pressed for specific, he began changing the numbers and accusations. His response to a reporter was 57 Communist and later 81 as he claimed when asked by the Senate. Maybe

⁵⁷ Toinet, *Hon na čarodejnice*, 28.

⁵⁸ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 147.

⁵⁹ David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 24.

⁶⁰ Toinet, *Hon na čarodejnice*, 29.

those people were not Communists, but “loyalty risk” or people somehow connected to the Communist Party. The State Department requested this list of Communists but has never received it.⁶¹

McCarthy was not among the first politicians to use anticommunism as a weapon, but he was certainly louder, more impulsive than the rest and also knew how to use the press for enlarging his publicity. Newspaper was at those times still leader when it came to information and McCarthy’s loudness and boldness got him on the first pages. It was the press who created the senator McCarthy and helped him to gain a power. Journalists published his words often without asking for proofs, not many wanted to question words of the senator.⁶²

McCarthy had no idea what he was talking about. He had no lists, no evidence, but his speeches contained numbers that seemed too specific and concrete to question their authenticity. In his Wheeling speech we can notice some paragraphs that seem almost like taken from information Richard Nixon brought just a few days earlier. And that happened with all his accusations, because all information about the Communist penetrating the government levels, he presented were similar to discoveries made by his fellow republicans.⁶³

But because his accusations started gaining attention, McCarthy started receiving support. Republicans noticed his speeches were damaging the image of democrats. As the cerebral Robert Taft said: *“If one case doesn’t work out bring up another.”*⁶⁴

Support came from Hoover himself as they were old friends. He gave McCarthy documents of FBI and had ex-FBI agents working for the senator. Richard Berlin, the president of Hearst company introduced him to some “good reporters” and provided services of anti-communist expert J. B. Matthews.⁶⁵

The loss of China to Communist came in very handy for McCarthy. The republican party had criticized Truman’s administration’s East Asian policy for years. While Truman was focused on fighting the Cold war in Europe, many republican right-wingers preferred the Asian battlefield. During World War Two they called for stronger US commitment in the

⁶¹ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 242.

⁶² Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 243.

⁶³ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 243.

⁶⁴ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 243.

⁶⁵ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 244.

Pacific as they saw the State Department's bias for Europe. On the other hand, there wasn't much the US government could do to prevent China falling into the hands of Communists. McCarthy used everything he could. He blamed Hiss and State Department that during the Yalta conference they betrayed China to Stalin, there was *Amerasia* case which the senator revived.⁶⁶

Truman's administrative, instead of ignoring or dismissing those allegations, appointed a special committee under Millard Tydings to investigate. However, McCarthy was prepared. When he needed to expand the list of people he accused from communism, he came up with name Owen Lattimore, the former editor of the IPR's journal and a man who was an expert on East Asian affairs. The problem was, he has never worked for the State Department. Nor was he a communist. Unfortunately for him, Lattimore was a honest liberal and because he knew the real situation on China, was highly sceptical of Chiang Kai-Shek's regime called Kuomintang. FBI tried to investigate his books, tapped his phone but never found anything incriminating. McCarthy, as usual, did not concerned himself with real facts.⁶⁷

The senator blamed Lattimore from espionage but without saying his name, calling him simply the boss of Alger Hiss. Later, when Lattimore's identity was revealed, McCarthy, as was his habit, changed the story, labelling him as the "the main architect of America's China policy. J.B. Matthews contacted Louis Brudenz, a former Daily Worker's editor, who was willing to cooperate. His testimony tied Lattimore to the Communist Party which helped McCarthy a lot. Nevertheless, Tydings denounced his charges as fake. But committee's republicans refused to sign the report which made Tydings's procedure seem as "partisan whitewash of the administration" and in the end the committee had to publish McCarthy's charges.⁶⁸

McCarthy's accusation of Truman's government of being soft on communism force Truman not to candidate in presidential elections in 1952. The new president became general Eisenhower. Many his supporters hoped that he would bring a halt to spreading lies and allegations by McCarthy. Even his fellow republican colleges were afraid that his actions might damage their best political weapon – the topic of anticommunism.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 247.

⁶⁷ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 248.

⁶⁸ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 249.

⁶⁹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodejnice*, 32.

However, Eisenhower's victory did not mean the end of McCarthy and it almost seemed like the president supports him. In fact, he did not. Eisenhower represented the moderate wing of republicans which guardedly stayed in opposition to McCarthy. The president wanted to wait for McCarthy do act first and therefore when in 1952 the senator accused general George Marshall of being supportive to communism, he backed up. Disgusted by this behaviour, Marshalls resigned from his position of US defence minister.⁷⁰

McCarthy now believed that passivity from the White House gave him an opportunity to target even the highest representatives of US government, including president's friend. He even dared to investigate and accuse the American army which will later become the beginning of his downfall.⁷¹

Early in 1950 McCarthy started investigating CIA for the possibility of double agents serving Communists. The new president Eisenhower and the Director Allen Dulles started worrying about McCarthy's operations. Dulles sent agents to break into the senator's office where they installed bugs and plant phony reports that would hopefully discredit McCarthy. The president Eisenhower realised that he had to act more actively against the senator. The White House was not the only source of anti-McCarthy movement. The republican senator Ralph Flanders started a campaign where he mocked him, saying things like "*He emits his war whoops. He goes forth to battle and proudly returns with the scalp of a pink Army dentist.*"⁷²

3.4 McCarthy versus Army

In the beginning, McCarthy was careful. His first targets inside the military were civilians, for example workers for the radar research in Monmouth fortress or defence industry. As usual he accused them from espionage and subversive actions⁷³. Later his attacks intensified. In 1953 McCarthy claimed that he discovered a spy in the Army in the Singal Core Centre in New Jersey. But the Army Intelligence and HUAC (House on Un-American Activities) had investigated the case and found no evidence of spies working in the Army. The only thing McCarthy found, was unrelated case of Irving Peress. Peress was a dentist in the Army known for his leftwing association and for refusing to take a loyalty oath. After a closed hearing with McCarthy, Peress applied for discharge, and he was honourably discharged by

⁷⁰ Toinet, *Hon na čarodejnice*, 33.

⁷¹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodejnice*, 33.

⁷² Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 177.

⁷³ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 34.

the Army⁷⁴. But McCarthy blamed general Zwicker from accepting a Peress promotion to major. This heavily offended the Army and general Matthew Rigway demanded government intervention.⁷⁵

On March 11, 1954, the Army accused McCarthy of trying to achieve extra benefits and privileges for one of his assistants who enlisted the previous year.⁷⁶ The assistant, called G. David Schine, was more of an unpaid voluntary helper. His work, which was rather huge, included investigation about VOA (Voice of America) and USIS and he also wrote reports about those cases. He also interviewed potential witnesses in Monmouth probe.⁷⁷

Schine was at first not eligible for being drafted to the Army due to his health issues. But when he was approaching his 26th birthday, he was drafted. Because his age was close to a upper limit for men to be enlisted McCarthy and especially his friend Roy Cohn believed Schine was drafted only because he worked for McCarthy and understood it as a revenge on the senator. Their opinion was later confirmed by the Army Secretary Robert Stevens: “Of course,” said Stevens, “*the kid [Schine] was taken at the very last minute, before he was ineligible for age. My guess would be that if he hadn’t been working for McCarthy, he probably never would have been drafted....*” The committee, in which Schine worked, had started investigating his new bosses, that means his superior officers.⁷⁸

Cohn was strongly convinced that Schine was a victim of discrimination and suggested Schine should be eligible for commission. This idea was at first supported by general Miles Reber. However, Reber then informed that the commission will not take place as Cohn’s propose was an error. Cohn also found out that Reber had a brother Sam Reber who belonged to the group of people who already clashed with McCarthy and his allies. All this persuaded Cohn that somebody from high places was responsible for Schine being drafted even in his age and with his health issues.⁷⁹

In January, several administrative officials were informed by John Adams about Cohn’s persistent effort to get better treatment for Schine. They ordered Adams to prepare a report

⁷⁴ Michaels, *McCarthyism*, 174.

⁷⁵ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 34.

⁷⁶ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 34.

⁷⁷ M. Stanton Evans, *Blacklisted by History: The Untold Story of Senator Joe McCarthy and His Fight Against America's Enemies* (New York: Crown Forum, 2009), 687.

⁷⁸ Evans, *Blacklisted by History*, 688.

⁷⁹ Evans, *Blacklisted by History*, 689.

on the subject and simultaneously informed the president, who supported Cohn's removal from the Committee.⁸⁰

One month later, on March 9, the Defence Secretary Charles Wilson invited McCarthy to lunch at Pentagon, where he told him about the report. The Army would publish it, unless Cohn resigns himself. The senator's response was short: "The Army could go to hell". Wilson then sent his old friend the senator Potter to request the copy of the report and give it personally to McCarthy. But McCarthy refused to back up. In his own words, Cohn's resignation would be the greatest victory Communists have achieved.⁸¹

Two days later the Adams's report was published. It accused McCarthy and his staff director, Frank Carr, of supporting Cohn in his effort to get a preferential treatment for Schine. The report included almost fifty times recorded pressure over a period of only 8 months. Cohn requested Schine to get a direct commission in the Army, then in the Navy and finally in the Air Force. Nevertheless, Schine began his basic training in New Jersey. Cohn insisted on Schine getting weekend and evening passes to be able to get back in New York to help with the Committee work. Later Schine could leave the military base on Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve etc.⁸²

The report continued with phone calls, the meetings, the threads and the demands. Cohn was shown as an instigator who wanted to "wreck the army" and show it in "the worst possible light". McCarthy was represented as playing two sides at once. In conversations with Adams and Stevens, which were meant to stay private, he addressed Schine as "pest" and "nuisance". However, he supported Cohn's requests to get special treatment for Schine.⁸³

McCarthy was in rage and prepared for counterattack. His action surprised everyone. He accused the Army from blackmailing and bribery in its dealing with the chairman and the subcommittee staff. Accusation coming from McCarthy was not nothing new, but it was the evidence that was shocking. It was a file of eleven memoranda dating from October 2, 1953, to March 11, 1954. Nobody knew this file existed.⁸⁴

The first three memos mentioned alleged attempts by Stevens to stop the Monmouth investigation. According to these memos "*Stevens said he wished we could get onto the Air*

⁸⁰ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 401.

⁸¹ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 401.

⁸² Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 404.

⁸³ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 404.

⁸⁴ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 405.

Force and Navy ... instead of continuing with the Army hearings Adams said he had gotten specific information about an Air Force Base where there were a large number of homosexuals“. The fourth memo was about Schine being used as a hostage by the Army. The ninth included questionable personal aims of Adams. The last tenth memo from Frank Carr supported the claim that Adams was blackmailing Cohn. Both Stevens and Adams denied the truthful nature of those information, but the accusation was uttered and could not be ignored.⁸⁵

3.5 The Army hearings

It was almost six weeks between the release of Adams Chronology and the start of the Army Hearings that started on March 22, 1954. McCarthy spent this time on the road, gathering more and more loyal supporters by “preaching” to them. He used the St. Patrick as a symbol of saviour who has driven out the snakes – in the senator’s speech snakes represented the Communists. East to New York City the audience mostly made of 6 000 policemen went wild as he criticized Pentagon politicians who gave honourable discharges to the Communists and let the American POWs rot in the jail of the Red China. The cardinal Spellman even shook his hands with the Wisconsin senator.⁸⁶

However, this was only a small part of a larger picture. The popularity of McCarthy has suffered a lot since the general Zwicker affair, the Murrow broadcast and Adams’s report on Schine and Cohn, which was closely connected to McCarthy himself. In Wisconsin, the aversion towards the senator was so big that it gave a birth to the new movement, movement that called for McCarthy’s resignation. Launched by a small-town Republican newspaper editor Leroy Gore, it started gaining a lot of strength. Volunteers distributed petitions signed by thousands of voters, poster with words “Joe must go” were placed on cars, billboards or traffic signs.⁸⁷

The reason for such resentfulness of citizens of Wisconsin was, as the farmers who were McCarthy’s biggest supporters claimed, his preoccupation with witch-hunting the Communists and the lack of interest in his own country, which he was supposed to represent in the Senate. When the times were prosperous and the crop was good, there was a little criticism of McCarthy’s techniques and approach to dealing with the Communism. But the

⁸⁵ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 406.

⁸⁶ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 410.

⁸⁷ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 411.

year 1954 was by far the worst year since the Great Depression. In February, even a group of selected farmers travelled to Washington to see their elected deputies.⁸⁸

McCarthy tried to save the day by returning to Wisconsin on every weekend during April and May. He urged dairy prices to be supported at 100 percent. The movement led by Leroy Gore received a backlash, however by May 15, 300 000 voters has signed the petition.⁸⁹

But there were signs that McCarthy was preparing for the final battle. In his conversations with Mundt, his friend who was now in charge of committee which was tasked to determine the McCarthy vs the Army cause, that he intended to either win the fight or die in the attempt. He was exhausted, unable to sleep and relax and drank heavily. He even had to visit the hospital because of his issues with stomach, legs and sinus.⁹⁰

3.6 The hearings begin

The Army contra McCarthy hearings should have, at least in theory, solve two main questions: Did the senator and his subcommittee created an improper pressure on the Army in order to get a preferential treatment for David G. Schine? And did the Army officials used blackmail and bribery to prevent McCarthy and his colleagues from finishing the Monmouth investigation? In reality, the situation was much more complex and problematic. The stakes ranged from the integrity of the Army, moral responsibilities of federal workers, separation of powers to the future of the senator McCarthy. The opponents were not only the McCarthy and his allies and the Army. The cause brought Republicans against Republicans, the President against the Congress and the members of the subcommittee against their chairman – and against themselves.⁹¹

The drama was even bigger, because millions of Americans listened to the radio or watched it on TV. A survey claimed that during week one of broadcasting two thirds of American households with TV were tuned in to the hearings. The New York Times published about a dozen pages of testimony per day, while Times and Newsweek seemed to lose interest in other national affairs.⁹²

The senator claimed the Army was blackmailing him to stop the investigation. The public hearings were held from March to June 1954 and broadcasted (mainly on ABC TV) and the

⁸⁸ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 411.

⁸⁹ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 411.

⁹⁰ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 413.

⁹¹ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 416.

⁹² Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 417.

public could see McCarthy for the first time. He attacked and blamed everyone while refusing to answer questions given to him. He even physically attacked Mr. Fisher, an assistant of a lawyer that represented the Army. The court found no party entirely in the right, but people saw a real McCarthy and his practices and that meant a significant shift in the opinion of public on him.⁹³

It was not only just the Fisher incident that caused bad reputation of McCarthy. It was his endless interruptions, unpredictable outburst of rage, rude personal attacks. His fellow Republicans in Washington were deleting his speaking engagements and lowered his role in the 1954 campaign of the party. According to Gallup Poll, McCarthy's rating dropped from 50 percent of people who found him favourable to 34 percent. This was crucial for the senator as he heavily relied on the support of the mass. His strongest weapon was gone for good.⁹⁴

3.7 End of the era

The negative impact was so evident that even the part of the press that supported McCarthy in the beginning, now turned against him. For example, in July 1954 the New York Telegram published series of articles in which McCarthy was criticised. Less and less people talked about him that even the senator himself was surprised. He remained in his senator function but the ignorance from the public and politicians, both republicans and democrats, heavily made his health worse and formerly almost undefeatable man, Joseph McCarthy dies in Mai, 2, 1957. To this day it is debatable if he acted from his conviction and beliefs or only because he wanted to be a person the public and press speak about. But he was surely a demagogue who managed to manipulate the whole country and caused an era, in which nobody could be sure if the next name that appears on the list will be theirs.⁹⁵

McCarthy made America look ridiculous and even dangerous. He must bear some responsibility for USA losing China and other parts of Asia to Communists. On the other hand, his political ambitions were limited. He never wanted to become a "dictator", he did not threat the US constitutional system, not the USA as a nation, but its many citizens. He never aimed for a higher political position, never tried to establish a political movement or a program that would go beyond confuting and catching Communists.⁹⁶

⁹³ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 34.

⁹⁴ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 465.

⁹⁵ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 38.

⁹⁶ Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 506.

4 LEGISLATION INFLUENCED BY ANTI-COMMUNIST SENTIMENT

Anti-Communist era and Red scare influenced not only lives of American people, but also American laws and legislation. Although, this era was typical for high restriction of civil liberties, the government policy was shaped in way that made many things in the name of fighting Communism legal.

Already during Roosevelt's administration many bills were introduced to allow the government and civil servants to drive out any Communists, being real or only supposed. These bills were designed to be used against high-ranking officials which gives us clear idea that fear of presence of Communist in the government was present even before McCarthy and his terror. However, these bills were not implemented very often because USSR, which was the main communist country, became an ally during WW2. Many "crimes" that will be later the reason why some Americans were sentenced, were "committed" during wartime.⁹⁷

Nonetheless, as soon as the Second Red scare started to spread, such laws were not only dusted off but even extended if needed. The president was against passing these bills, as he and his administration considered them sufficient, however the Congress had different attitude and insisted on implementing them to current legislation.⁹⁸

Alien Registration Act from 1940, *1950 Internal Security Act*, better known as *McCarran Act*, and *Immigration and Nationality Act* made possible for the US authorities to check any foreign people on US soil. Foreigners were looked at as possible revolutionaries and the government wanted to make sure no subversives had any chance to carry out any un-American things. All foreign citizens that belonged to any organisations that proclaimed violent overthrow of US government could be deprived of their citizenship and immediately send to countries of their origin. How absurd this was shows the fact that only 13 persons were really deported during 1945-1956, but more than 10 000 people were investigated from un-American activities in the year 1953. This shows that only an accusation was enough to be considered dangerous and investigated.⁹⁹

And there is even bigger list. List of people who never received a visa, including Carlo Levi, Italian painter and writer, Oscar Niemeyer, Brazilian architect, Hewlett Johnson, Dean of

⁹⁷ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 39.

⁹⁸ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 39.

⁹⁹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 40.

Canterbury and many more people. And it functioned the other way around too, to prevent Americans with “wrong way of thinking” from leaving USA.¹⁰⁰

But not only foreigners living in USA were in danger. The so-called *Smith Act* from 1940, passed even against Roosevelt's veto, was against anyone who “*with intent to cause the overthrow or destruction of any such government, prints, publishes, edits, issues, circulates, sells, distributes, or publicly displays any written or printed matter advocating, advising, or teaching the duty, necessity, desirability, or propriety of overthrowing or destroying any government in the United States by force or violence, or attempts to do so*”. In other words, being a Communist was not a crime. But being a member of Communist Party, which was an illegal organization, was a crime.¹⁰¹

McCarran Act's most important paragraph discussed Communists. It established a special presidential committee called *Subversive Activities Control Board* to decide which organizations were communist-action or communist-front and make those organizations to register themselves at Justice Department. Such labelled organizations had to provide information about their representatives and members and about their financial sources. People belonging to those organizations were prohibited from becoming government officials, working for army-related businesses or getting a passport. If they refused to register themselves, they were given fines, or they could have been sent to jail. All this meant that Communist were punished for both registering themselves or not doing so.¹⁰²

According to the presidential decree number 9835 from 1947 every civil servant, newly hired or already working, had to undergo a loyalty screening. All information, inherent in files of FBI, Civil Service Commission, the Army and HUAC (House on un-American Activities) were verified. If some “negative” information were discovered, a more complex investigation was launched and if the result was negative too, the civil servant was fired. The situation got worse in 1953 when the president Eisenhower introduced a decree number 10450. Now, the official had to prove on his own, that his employment will not put a national safety in danger.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 40.

¹⁰¹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 41.

¹⁰² Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 42.

¹⁰³ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 42.

4.1 Informing as the part of the Red Scare

At the beginning, informing was strictly a legal matter. After all, witnesses were needed to prove somebody guilty of un-American activities. The second perspective was psychological as the goal was to make ex-communists inform on their former colleagues. This was seen as some kind of redemption from their “sins”. At first, the investigators used agents from FBI, IRS (Internal Revenue Service), communists who became anti-Communists and “experts” who often only wanted to enrich themselves. The most accusations came from volunteers. Those people, often former communists, shared one common trait, fondness for lying. Many of them did not hesitate to change their testimony according to the situation. The most famous were for example Whittaker Chambers, Elizabeth Bentley, Louis Budenz or Paul Crouch. These witnesses had a special ability to, as a reporter Elmer Davis noted, “*suddenly remember what they forget a year ago*”. Such was his commentary to Louis Budenz, who in March 15, 1950, confirmed the claim of senator McCarthy that Owen Lattimore was a Communist. However, when Budenz was interrogated by FBI in 1946-1950 he never mentioned Lattimore. In 1949 in interview for Colliers he claimed that Lattimore was not a Communist. Another informer Bella Dodd said that Budenz’s accusation was a joke.¹⁰⁴

Except those “kept informers” the investigating authorities used different kind of informers – people who have been summoned as witnesses before the Congress and could not stand the pressure and reported tens of people. Many of them were writers, directors, playwrights, actors who simply did not get any other contract if they did not testify.¹⁰⁵

4.2 McCarthy and his supporters

People who supported the senator from Wisconsin and people who supported anti-Communism are not one same group. Many of McCarthy’s opponents were not against punishing Communists.¹⁰⁶

Accepting and supporting McCarthy was more important the political orientation – the more republican a person was, the more likely they would support the senator and vice versa. McCarthyism was a product of the American press, and it was the press which brought McCarthy’s fame to an end. During a few years the press will make the senator a welcomed or forced ally. He perfectly understood the power of press and knew when to offer a headline

¹⁰⁴ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 51.

¹⁰⁵ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 52.

¹⁰⁶ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 64.

reporters wanted and needed at given time. Many journalists wanted information from him, even if they did not dig deeply into the matter and they did not make sure that there are any true origins of those information. Moreover, McCarthy was protected by his parliamentary immunity and took advantage of this fact.¹⁰⁷

However, the press realized that McCarthy's accusations were fake. The competition among journalist forced them to publish information as soon as possible. And that meant before verifying the truthfulness of those information.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 74.

¹⁰⁸ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 75.

5 THE COMMUNIST PARTY DURING MCCARTHYISM

In the early 1950s the real American Communists believed that the fascism again represented a danger for United States. The party was now leaning to ultra-left, led by William Z. Foster. It called for the new socialism and world revolution. This statement was caused by the worsening of the US-Soviet relations and repressions in the USA that were evoked by emerging Cold War. The policy launched by the Truman's administration significantly limited the right of workers to unionize and unions leaders were required to sign anti-Communist declarations.¹⁰⁹

The civil rights movement and groups distanced them from Communists right after the war. However, the Red Scare hysteria caused many black people to suffer. For example, Claudia Jones was put in jail for nine months before she was deported to United Kingdom. She pointed to many things that were unfair to African American people. McCarthyism and preceding years of anti-Communist policy created acts and bills that enabled the authorities to "terrorize" its citizens and these laws came in very handy for discriminating the black people. Jones and many other civil rights members belonged to the political left and the government made no difference between them and the Communists, even though the difference was there.¹¹⁰

Not only African American people were persecuted. Although Chiang Kai-shek and his regime lost the Chinese civil war, his Chinese supporters in United States maintained enough power in their Chinese neighbourhoods to discover and report anyone who supported the regime of Mao Ze-dong to the authorities. Chinese Communists, although not necessarily members of the CP, were deported. They could not send any financial support to their families in China as the Treasury Department banned all transactions with China after its intervention in the Korean War. The leading Chinese-language newspaper in USA, the China Daily News was prosecuted as they offered its readers different view on Asian affairs. Any criticism of the American foreign policy that even slightly agreed with the statement of the Communist Party was viewed as dangerous to the national security.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 190.

¹¹⁰ Pedersen, Ryan and Sibley, *Post-Cold War Revelations*, 191.

¹¹¹ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 377.

6 THE IMPACT OF MCCARTHYISM

The anticommunism and connected McCarthyism frightened both liberals and democrats. Fear is usually a “good” excuse for political restrictions. It changes lives – careers, marriages etc - of thousand people and the political culture of United States and this shift is evident even nowadays. Death, more precisely suicides, are common thing that occurs during all dark eras and McCarthyism was not an exception.¹¹²

But it was not only the government and its parts that were responsible for causing so much pain and deaths. Many people, who can be labelled as “superpatriots” very often took law in their own hands. The arsons, shooting and beating occurred commonly. For example, a Paul Robeson concert was disturbed by a stone-throwing mob and though no people were killed, more than one hundred of listeners were beaten up while the state police stood aside and simply watched the violent act. And this happened in 1949, so before McCarthy made his Wheeling speech. Anticommunism was, as mentioned earlier, was always a strong political weapon and McCarthy made a very good use of it for his own publicity.¹¹³

Other very common type of discrimination of people who were in any way accused from communist was firing them from their jobs on the spot. Those people rarely managed to find new jobs. The number of those public cases is estimated to be around twelve thousand, but many people kept it for themselves and therefore the real numbers may be much higher. Furthermore, the people who worked in industries organized and controlled by labour unions were often persecuted as well. This of course did not include many bankers or Wall Street lawyers but many teachers, writers and longshoremen.¹¹⁴

The communist movement tried to help those people. For example, Harry Bridge’s ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) helped blacklisted Marine cooks and stewards to find a work in docks. But most people tried to survive on their own. The Marine cooks and stewards that either did not get nor wanted the help from unions led by Communists opened their own restaurants.¹¹⁵

The emigration was also on option mainly for scientist and screenwriters many of them fleeing to Mexico or Europe. It was worse for political dissidents as they often couldn’t get a passport, and it was not easy to move with the whole family and settle in the new country.

¹¹² Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 361

¹¹³ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 362

¹¹⁴ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 363

¹¹⁵ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 364.

Even though most of the blacklisting ended in mid-sixties, rehabilitation of people on such lists was much longer and very often never occurred at all. For example, it is estimated that only 10 percent of people who worked in the movie industry and were forced to leave the country returned to work. The civil servants fired because of the loyalty test did not have chance to work in the US administration ever again.¹¹⁶

McCarthyism caused a big psychological trauma to many people. It was devastating for them to be suddenly accused by their own government of being disloyal to their nations and state. Even people, who were not fired, suffered from those mental issues.¹¹⁷

When it comes to the American foreign policy, McCarthyism intensified the Cold War by spreading the chasm between the American people and non-western world. Anticommunism meant narrowing down the options of viewing the world. The CP was always, in minds of Americans, connected entirely to USSR, therefore some positive aspects of this party were overlooked. The Communist were interested in the world outside of USA. They knew about things that happened in Spain or Vietnam which their fellow citizens were ignorant to. Many of the causes the CP supported had value on its own, although those cases very often originated in Moscow and would, if successful, help the USSR, which was the enemy of United States.¹¹⁸

In the United States the political exchange of opinions was straitened, both public and private, as people were afraid to “sing a petition, be a member of a group, support organizations with money and to own or even seen with certain books. The self-censure has become a reality. The intellectual zone of educational institutions, especially universities, was paralysed. Almost every teacher stucked to the ordered syllabus because they were scared that some informer would ruin their carriers and lives. Many of them even cancelled lectures that dealt with topics that could have been seen as pro-communistic (Toinet 1999, 153).¹¹⁹

The most intensive pressure from the authorities was in physical sector. The connection with military meant constant controls and investigations and many young scientists were hesitant to join a laboratory that had a contract with the government. In fact, the research and development in USA slowed down by a great margin. In 1957 the Soviet scientists were the

¹¹⁶ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 364.

¹¹⁷ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 365.

¹¹⁸ Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, 374.

¹¹⁹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 153.

first to launch a satellite. The governmental bullying played a significant role in this space race. As a proof can serve a General Groves's statement that if the postwar security norms had been valid during the Second World War, he would have to remove Robert Oppenheimer from his position in the Los Alamos lab which succeeded mainly thanks to Oppenheimer.¹²⁰

The catastrophic consequences were most visible in the government, particularly in the State Department. This most important bureau was flooded with accusations and investigations. No diplomat dared to disagree even slightly with the official policy because of the fear of being called disloyal. The headworkers did not receive a critically evaluated messages but only read those that would bring them no harm and from authors that always checked the attitude of the Congress.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 154.

¹²¹ Toinet, *Hon na čarodějnice*, 154.

ZÁVĚR

The phenomenon of McCarthyism represents one of the most turbulent and alarming periods in the history of American democracy. As this thesis has shown, the fear of communism, which had been developing long before Senator Joseph McCarthy became the senator, led to widespread political, legal, and social consequences during the Cold War era. McCarthy's rise to power, highlighted the vulnerability and incapability of democratic institutions when faced with mass hysteria and manipulation.

The thesis has demonstrated how McCarthyism influenced American legislation and therefore the everyday lives of thousands of citizens. All this led to violations of civil liberties, discrimination against minorities, and lasting damage to the political culture of the United States. The political strategy based on accusations without evidence created an atmosphere of distrust and fear that deeply affected American society for decades.

Despite McCarthy's downfall at the end, the long-term effects of McCarthyism were far-reaching. They reshaped the relationship between citizens and the government, legitimized political persecution under the banner of national security, and left a legacy of caution regarding civil rights and political freedoms. The study of McCarthyism thus serves as a reminder of the fragility of democratic principles and the importance of safeguarding them, especially during periods of crisis and fear and shows that even states traditionally considered to be democratic experience the restriction of the liberty.

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