

Senator McCarthy Speaks Out

Joseph McCarthy



OVERVIEW

In the early 1950s, many Americans were beginning to fear that the United States had caved in to superior Soviet strength abroad. They feared that Communists had found their way into the United States government, universities, the press, and the arts. Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin played on these fears and began a campaign to expose suspected Communists in the government. He gave the following speech before a Senate subcommittee in 1954.

GUIDED READING As you read, consider the following questions:

- To whom does McCarthy refer when he talks about those who are torturing American soldiers?
 - Why does McCarthy criticize the president?
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The exposure of Communists in defense plants handling secret weapons, which may well determine whether the sons of American mothers will live or die, is in my opinion important beyond words. In view of the fact that this may be my temporary swan song as chairman of the Investigating Committee, I think that it is important to comment briefly upon certain facts.

Our committee has been held up now for approximately ten months. The President of the United States has taken it upon himself to congratulate Senators Flanders and Watkins who have been instrumental in holding up our work. There has been considerable talk about an apology to the Senate for my fight against Communism. I feel rather that I should apologize to the American people for what was an unintentional deception upon them.

During the Eisenhower campaign, I spoke from coast to coast, promising the American people that if they would elect the Eisenhower administration that they would be assured of a vigorous forceful fight against Communists in Government. Unfortunately, in this I was mistaken. I find that the President on the one hand congratulates Senators who hold up the work of our committee, and on the other hand urges that we be patient, that we be patient with the Communist hoodlums who as of this moment are torturing and brainwashing American uniformed men in Communist dungeons.

Anyone who knows even the ABC's of the Communist war against free civilization knows that weakness and supineness will not free a single American uniformed man. If any Senator can in the future justify a vote to draft the sons of American mothers, then he must repudiate the shrinking show of weakness, and must tell those mothers that each young man who

wears the American uniform carries the entire power of this nation with him when he goes to a foreign land.

Unfortunately, the President sees fit to congratulate those who hold up the exposure of the Communists in one breath, and in the next breath urges patience, tolerance and niceties to those who are torturing American uniformed men.