MONTANA AND THE SPECTER OF McCARTHYISM, 1952-1954

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I

INTRODUCTION

From February, 1950, until December, 1954, the United States and, to a certain extent, the world were stalked by what appears in retrospect to have been a specter; but it was very real. During that time American politics were confused and distorted largely through the power and influence of Senator Joseph Raymond McCarthy, Republican junior senator from Wisconsin, and the phenomenon that rapidly became known as "McCarthyism." McCarthy achieved national and international notoriety on the basis of a single issue, Communists-in-government; and McCarthyism referred to the tactics he employed to supposedly clean the Communists out of the national government.

Montana was not immune to the effects of McCarthy and McCarthyism. In fact, Montana serves as an excellent example of the use of McCarthyism and exemplifies quite accurately the McCarthyism phenomenon in a national context. Mike Mansfield, who was a United States representative from 1943 until his election to the Senate in 1952, stated: "It appeared to me that Senator McCarthy had a great effect upon the reactions of the people of Montana as well as the nation as a whole."[1] In the senatorial campaign of 1952 Mansfield was the victim of an attack of McCarthyism.

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[1]Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat-Montana, Letter to the author, April 21, 1969.

Concerted McCarthyism was used by and on behalf of Republican senatorial candidates in Montana in the elections of 1952 and 1954. In neither case was it successful as the Democratic candidates emerged victorious. Little evidence has been found to indicate that McCarthyism was used in any other political campaign in the state in 1952 or 1954.[2] Neither was McCarthyism found to be a potent political force in Montana at any other time from 1950 through 1954. The only other apparent effect of McCarthyism on Montana occurred in 1953 when the Montana State Legislature established an interim Committee to investigate subversive and un-American activities, but this incident serves to demonstrate the inability of McCarthyism to be extensively developed in the state. This topic will be discussed more fully later. With that exception, this paper is limited to discussing and explaining the intricacies of how McCarthyism was used in the 1952 and 1954 senatorial campaigns in Montana.

This study of McCarthyism in Montana involved the use of Montana newspapers which represented both Democratic and Republican leanings, and an attempt was made to achieve an accurate and adequate geographic distribution. Both daily and weekly publications were examined thoroughly for a period of one month preceeding each election. It was found that little campaign

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[2]Interview with Dr. Thomas Payne, Professor of Political Science, University of Montana, Missoula, June 10, 1969. Payne, who has been observing and analyzing Montana politics since 1952, could recall no other uses of McCarthyism.

activity occurred prior to the final month. Most news stories in the press were products of the Associated Press or United Press wire services and were similar in all papers. As a result, the Great Falls /Montana/ Tribune and the Billings /Montana/ Gazette are the papers most often cited. Pertinent articles from The New York Times were also utilized. Interviews were obtained with some, though by no means all, of the available persons involved in the 1952 and 1954 senatorial elections. Other sources include professional journals and papers, pamphlets, letters, and pertinent articles and books.

II

SETTING AND DEFINITION OF McCARTHYISM IN A NATIONAL CONTEXT

On February 9, 1950, McCarthy charged in an address delivered to the Republican Women's Club of Wheeling, West Virginia, that there were 205 Communists in the United States State Department. The immediate impact of this shocking statement on the nation was tremendous; and although McCarthy had little, if any, evidence to support such a statement, he was suddenly rocketed into the national and world spotlight. During the next four years he continued to develop and stress the theme, or gimmick, of Communists-in-government. McCarthy had been a relatively obscure senator prior to the Wheeling speech, but from that time until his censure (or condemnation) on December 2, 1954, by the United States Senate for conduct unbecoming a Senator which tended to cast the Senate into disrepute, he dominated much of the attention of this nation and the world. One political analyist 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;"[1] another said, "Rarely has one man in this country cast so long or so dark a shadow."[2]

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[1]Richard H. Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), p. 4.

[2]Michael Paul Rogin, The Intellectuals and McCarthy: The Radical Specter (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T. Press, 1967), p. 2.

McCarthy's power was such that during those few years his influence was instrumental in the defeat at the polls of some congressmen and in the resignations of government employees; also "Directly or indirectly he shattered countless lives and seemed to inflict a mood of fear and suspicion on American life as a whole."[3] Two Presidents, Harry S Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower, had to consider the effects of their plans and actions upon McCarthy. In fact, there were times when neither president could act because of him. His influence on American foreign policy was such that world history and American diplomacy might well be different today had he never been involved.[4]

To explain why McCarthy was able to rise so suddenly and rapidly to the place of power and influence he achieved, the period in which he was active and the tactics he used must be considered. The years of the early 1950's were a time when Americans were justifiably fearful of communism and communists. Chiang Kai-shek's China had been lost to the communists; the Russians had successfully exploded an atomic bomb; Alger Hiss had been convicted of perjury following testimony alleging his involvement in communist espionage; and the Korean War erupted only a few months after McCarthy's Wheeling speech. Basically, McCarthy appealed emotionally to American patriotism and fears of communism. The attitude he attempted to develop was that

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[3]Ibid., p. 1.

[4]Rovere, op. cit., p. 5.

those who approved of and agreed with him were patriotic Americans, while those who opposed or disagreed with him were communists. He seemed to care little for documented facts, but he gave the impression that he had them by flaunting papers which he had just drawn from his briefcase. He was a master of the half-truth and multiple lie. His common speaking tactic was to voice so many un-truths that one found it impossible to remember them all or to check the validity of each. Eleanor Roosevelt wrote, "'McCarthy's methods, to me, look like Hitler's.'"[5] McCarthy exploited popular fears of communism as Hitler had with the difference that, whereas Hitler thought of communism as a revolutionary menace to the state, McCarthy described it as a conspiracy.[6] To many, the tactics used by McCarthy appeared to parallel those of the communists. Historians have primarily described him as a demagogue and a witch hunter who used indisputably deplorable tactics. Those tactics, however, were used at a time when they were sufficiently accepted to aid his rise to power.

Emotions regarding McCarthy were seldom mixed. He was either loved or hated; he was never ignored. The Army-McCarthy hearings conducted in early 1954, which led to the end of McCarthy's reign were followed by millions of Americans on television and in the press. People who supported McCarthy inter-

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[5]Ibid., p. 18.

[6]Ibid., p. 19.

preted his search for communists-in-government as a noble crusade. He made enemies, primarily because of the tactics he used, as evidenced by his censure. Upon his death in May, 1957, he was eulogized by Senator Styles Bridges who said, "McCarthy literally gave his life to preserve freedom for all Americans. History will record him as one of our outstanding American Patriots."[7] On May 4, 1957, the Montana Standard, Butte, said of him, "As of today the Wisconsin Senator is either a hero or a heel. There was no middle ground."[8] He was further described as "...a brutal demagogue to some, a godlike savior to others. To no one was he unimportant."[9] Leslie Fiedler related the hyperbole of the only man who had never heard of McCarthy. That man had just been released after serving more than fifty years in prison.[10]

McCarthy's impact was such that his name became part of the vernacular in the form of "McCarthyism." This word has been variously defined. In a sociological or psychological sense it has been related to Populism and agrarian radicalism. McCarthy defined it as "'...Americanism that is ready to stand

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[7]Editorial in the Daily Missoulian [Missoula, Montana], May 7, 1957.

[8]Editorial in the Montana Standard [Butte], May 4, 1957.

[9]Charles E. Potter, Days of Shame (New York: Coward-McCann, Incl, 1965), p. 7.

[10]Leslie A. Fiedler, "McCarthy and the Intellectuals," An End to Innocence: Essays on Culture and Politics (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), p. 360.

up and fight Communism.'"[11] On another occasion he defined it as "'...Americanism with its sleeves rolled,...'"[12] More generally, and in a political sense, McCarthyism carried a connotation that related to the suppression of communism by the use of tactics similar to those used by McCarthy himself. "McCarthyism after 1950 came to mean 'character assassination.'"[13] To liberals, "'McCarthyism' was a synonym for smear attacks on liberals, its roots were in traditional right-wing politics, and its principal targets were innocent individuals and liberal political goals."[14] The word was originally coined by the cartoonist Herbert Block (Herblock) in the Washington Post about a month after McCarthy's Wheeling speech. The Herblock cartoon depicted a barrel of mud resting on other barrels of mud with the inscription, "McCarthyism." There is no question that Herblock meant defamation of character, or what is more popularly known as "mudslinging." There can be no quarrel with the use of the communist issue in the political campaigns of the early 1950's because it was a viable issue, but McCarthyism as used and understood in this paper refers to the attempt to gain political advantage by appealing to the emotions and patriotism

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[11]Jack Anderson and Ronald W. May, McCarthy: The Man, the Senator, the Ism (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1952), p. 360.

[12]Rovere, op. cit., p. 8.

[13]Anderson and May, op. cit., p. 351.

[14]Rogin, loc. cit.

of the people, their fears of communism, and assassination of an opponent's character through association with communism, socialism, or left-wingism.

The followers of McCarthy and the users of McCarthyism were predominantly Republicans. The GOP had been out of power in the national government since 1932, and it desperately needed and wanted any opportunity to regain power. In the early 1950's, Republicans "...cooly decided that there was no longer any respectable way of unhorsing the Democrats and that only McCarthy's wild amd conscienceless politics could do the job."[15] A similar explanation for Republican adherence to McCarthyism was that "Leaders of the GOP saw in McCarthy a way back to national power after twenty years in the political wilderness." Furthermore, moderate Republicans were fearful of dissociating themselves with McCarthy, as such action would appear as an attack on him and would result in splitting the party.[16]

In sum, then, Republicans across the nation adopted McCarthyism in an attempt to regain national office and avoid party disunity. Commencing earnestly in the campaigns of 1952, they capitalized on popular concern over the Cold War by insinuating that the Democratic party and individual Democrats were soft on communism. At times it was additionally stated or implied that the Democratic party was actually infiltrated by communists.

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[15]Rovere, op. cit., p. 21.

[16]Rogin, op. cit., p. 216.

Although some Republicans may have believed the charges they raised, in the main, McCarthyism was ultimately less concerned with the reality of its accusations than with the political results obtainable from its successful application. This national attitude of the Republican party is clearly demonstrable in the case of Montana.

III

THE SENATORIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1952

Not considering the presidential race between Republican Dwight Eisenhower and Democrat Adlai Stevenson, the major 1952 political battle in Montana was waged between Senator Zales N. Ecton and Representative Mike Mansfield in Ecton's first bid for re-election. The outcome of this election was considered very important by both national political parties, as control of the Senate depended on a very few seats. The balance in the Senate was forty-nine to forty-seven in favor of the Democrats, and both parties agreed that the numerical advantage in the next Senate depended upon the results in fifteen key contests. The Montana contest was one of those key contests; and, although 1952 was a "Republican year," by mid-October the Democrats were optimistic, and the Republicans were confessing concern over the Montana senatorial race.[1]

Mansfield was very popular in the First or Western Congressional District of the state. He had built a reputation as a liberal and as a presidential trouble shooter. Ecton was a conservative whose popularity is difficult to assess, since he had been a candidate for national office only once. However, a measure might be obtained by considering an article which appeared in the October, 1952, issue of Red Book listing Ecton

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[1]News item in The New York Times, October 19, 1952.

as one of the twenty-four "worst congressmen."[2] Of greater significance was Ecton's close friendship with McCarthy. This friendship and the fact that Mansfield and McCarthy have been described as "bitter antagonists"[3] naturally stood to generate a campaign of sure interest and intensity.

Born in 1898, Zales Nelson Ecton, a farmer and rancher, served as a Republican from Gallatin County to the Montana House of Representatives from 1933 through 1935 and as a state senator from 1937 through 1945. He also served as chairman of the State Republican Central Committee from 1940 through 1944. Ecton was elected to the United States Senate in 1946 and served one full term from January 3, 1947, to January 3, 1953. Ecton had the distinction of being the only Republican to have ever been popularly elected to the United States Senate from Montana. While in the Senate, Ecton served on the Appropriations and Interior and Insular Affairs Committees.[4]

Zales Ecton's political philosophy was conservative, opposing most of the foreign policy of the Truman administration. Nationally, he opposed government interference in private affairs. He has been aptly described as a "right-winger domes-

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[2]Editorial in the Cut Bank [Montana] Pioneer Press, October 9, 1952.

[3]Richard H. Rovere, Senator Joe McCarthy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), p. 249.

[4]Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 845; and News item in The New York Times, November 2, 1952.

tically and a consistent isolationist internationally."[5]

Michael Joseph Mansfield was born in New York City on March 16, 1903, and in 1906 moved to Great Falls, Montana, with his parents. He enlisted in the United States Navy during World War I at the age of 14, and subsequently served in the Army and Marine Corps and returned to Butte, Montana, where he worked as a miner and mining engineer from 1922 until 1930. Mansfield earned a master's degree in history at Montana State University, Missoula, in 1933 and was employed as a Professor of Latin American and Far Eastern history from 1933 until 1943.

Mansfield's political career began with his election in 1942 as a Democrat to the United States House of Representatives from Montana's First Congressional District, a position he held from January 3, 1943 until January 3, 1953. Mansfield 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 Affairs. 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 in Paris for President Truman.[6]

In striking contrast to Ecton's posture, Mike Mansfield's

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[5]Jules A. Karlin, "The 1952 Elections in Montana," The Western Political Quarterly, Vol. VI., No. 1 (Salt Lake City: Institute of Government, March, 1953), pp. 115-116.

[6]Biographical Directory, op. cit., p. 1261; and Congressional Directory, 91st Congress, 1st Session (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 68.

political philosophy was basically liberal. Domestically, he was consistently a supporter of the Fair-Deal. In the field of foreign affairs--his primary interest--he has been described as a "liberal internationalist."[7]

Both candidates conducted thorough campaigns that included stops in practically all of the fifty-six counties of the state. The Republicans especially hit the campaign trail hard in what was described as an "...expensive, energetic, and occasionally vicious campaign."[8] The national issues of Korea, corruption and communism were prevalent along with the slogan, "It's time for a change." Ecton received little strongly organized or active interest group support other than from the Republican party. Cattlemen and businessmen constituted his primary support, but these groups were politically unorganized.[9] On the other hand, Mansfield received the strong support of organized labor, the Farmers Union and a hard core of New Dealers.[10]

The issues of the senatorial campaign were probably not

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[7]News item in The New York Times, October 19, 1952; and Karlin, loc. cit.

[8]Karlin, op. cit. p. 113.

[9]Interviews with Dr. Thomas Payne, Professor of Political Science, University of Montana, Missoula, June 10, 1969; James H. Morrow, Senator Ecton's 1952 campaign manager, June 2, 1969; and Wesley A. D'Ewart, U.S. Representative 1945-1955, Republican-Montana, June 4, 1969.

[10]Karlin, op. cit. p. 116.

as decisive in the election as was the basic difference between the philosophies of Mansfield and Ecton. Primarily, Mansfield campaigned on his record as a liberal internationalist, the accomplishments of the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, and as "The Can-do Candidate with the Can-did Record."[11] He accused Ecton of being a "do-nothing" office holder, and proclaimed himself as the one who could take care of his constituents' interests. Ecton campaigned as an opponent of the Democratic administration, increased government spending, and Communism. However, it was generally believed by both parties that the determining factor in this election would be the size of the anti-Truman administration vote.[12]

Each candidate's campaign was aided by speakers from outside the state. Usually the foreign speakers addressed their remarks to the presidential campaign, but praise and endorsement or condemnation of either Mansfield or Ecton were included. Democratic speakers included the presidential and vice presidential candidates Adlai Stevenson and John J. Sparkman, Senators Paul Douglas of Illinois, Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, Lister Hill of Alabama, Warren Magnuson of Washington, and Representative Oren Harris of Arkansas, in addition to Montana's own senior senator, James Murray. President Truman also made a

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[11]Political advertisement in the Lewistown /Montana/ Daily News, October 19, 1952.

[12]News item in The New York Times, November 2, 1952; and News item in the Great Falls /Montana/ Tribune, October 21, 1952.

fifteen-stop tour of the northern portion of the state ostensibly to dedicate Hungry Horse Dam and to attend ground breaking ceremonies at the Tiber Dam site. Truman, like the other Democratic speakers, praised Mansfield's work in the House of Representatives and requested that he be elected to the Senate. Non-political personalities visiting the state and speaking on behalf of Mansfield's candidacy were Brigadier General John C. McQueen, national director of the Marine Corps Reserve, and James G. Patton, National Farmers Union president.

This impressive Democratic entourage was matched in kind by Republicans in support of Ecton's candidacy and the national ticket. Individual speakers included presidential and vice presidential candidates Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon, Senators Robert A. Taft of Ohio, Everett Dirksen of Illinois, Francis Case of South Dakota, and Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin. Senators Homer Ferguson of Michigan, Bourke Hickenlooper of Iowa, and Francis Case toured the state as a group at the time of Truman's visit. These three senators became known as the Republican "Truth Squad." As Joe McElwain, state Republican chairman, put it, the purpose of the Truth Squad was "...to dispel some of the fog left in the wake of the Truman Train."[13]

Communism was an issue both domestically and in terms of foreign policy in 1952, and, as such, was acceptable campaign material, but in Montana the issue degenerated into a use of

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[13]Associated Press dispatch, Billings [Montana] Gazette, October 2, 1952.

McCarthyism. Throughout the campaign Ecton continually attempted to associate Mansfield with what the Republicans referred to as "Trumanism" and softness toward communism. According to Ecton's campaign manager, James H. Morrow, Ecton sincerely believed Mansfield was soft on communism but treated it as an issue rather than a personal attack against Mansfield.[14] However, the conduct of the campaign revealed very definitely an attempt to assassinate Mansfield's character by associating him with socialism and softness toward communism which went beyond the issue. In McCarthy-fashion an appeal based on the communist issue was made to Montana voters through emotionalism, patriotism, and Christianity. A review of Ecton's campaign statements and statements made by those who supported him will reveal this.

Although Ecton never called Mansfield a communist and even said Mansfield "...would not knowingly help the Communist cause....",[15] he attempted to create the belief among voters that it was Mansfield's fault China had been lost to the Communists. It was an easy step from that to association of the Korean War with Mansfield's alleged softness on communism. Throughout the campaign, Ecton tried to associate Mansfield with socialism, attacked Mansfield's anti-Chiang Kai-shek China report and speeches in 1944-45, and drew parallels be-

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[14]Morrow, loc. cit.

[15]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 18, 1952.

tween Mansfield's views and those views of known left-wingers and communists on the United States China policy.[16]

A common campaign strategy employed by Ecton was to charge Mansfield with partial responsibility for the "Truman-Acheson" China policy. This responsibility also included the persecution of Christianity. In Harlowton Ecton declared:

> The China experts, including a Montana congressman [Mansfield] sent by the State Department to put pressure on Chiang Kai-shek to take Communists into his national government, were either misled into believing that these Communists were merely peace-loving agrarian reformers or they were deliberately ignoring the historic fact that Communism and government founded on Christian principles cannot be reconciled.[17]

In mid-October McCarthyism in the form of its perpetrator entered the Montana senatorial campaign. Senator McCarthy's attack on Mansfield was sufficient to remove any doubts about the use of McCarthyism in this campaign. On October 14, McCarthy, under the sponsorship of the Missoula County Republican Central Committee, addressed a crowd that jammed the Loyola auditorium in Missoula to the point that the Republican County Chairman, H. H. Koessler, invited people to take seats on the platform. Even then there were people in the street who could only listen to McCarthy's address through a loud-speaker sys-

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[16]Karlin, loc. cit.

[17]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 4, 1952.

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McCarthy praised Senator Ecton, saying his "...only crime is that he is first and last for America." He quoted from what he claimed to be photostatic copies of 1946 and 1947 issues of the Communist publication Daily Worker which praised Mansfield. As examples he said the Daily Worker commended Mansfield on the so-called anti-Chiang Kai-shek report which he had made to President Roosevelt, and McCarthy referred to a March, 1947, edition of the paper which had Mansfield "lauding the U.S.S.R." Although McCarthy clearly emphasized he was not accusing Mansfield of being or having been a communist, he declared, "...a person who conducts himself so as to win the favor of the Communist party organ must be either stupid or a dupe."[19]

A speaker not nearly so well known as McCarthy, but nevertheless one who was to cause terrific repercussions in Montana was Harvey M. Matusow. Matusow represented a supposedly non-political, but nevertheless deliberate, attempt to implicate Mansfield, the Democratic party, and groups supporting Mansfield and the Democratic party with communism.[20] Matusow was born and raised in New York City until he enlisted in the armed forces

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[18]News item in the Daily Missoulian /Missoula, Montana/, October 15, 1952.

[19]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 15, 1952.

[20]Much of the following biographical information on Matusow was drawn from: Harvey Matusow, False Witness (New York: Cameron & Kahn, Publishers, 1955).

in 1943. Following his discharge in 1946, he returned to New York City where he found he needed but lacked recognition. He soon found his sense of belonging in 1946 when he joined the Communist party, remaining until his expulsion in 1951. However, in February, 1950, he contacted, and subsequently became an undercover informer for the F.B.I.

With the outbreak of the Korean War, Matusow re-enlisted in the Air Force. At this point his career changed. Because he revealed the subversive organizations with which he had been affiliated, he was released from the service, was hired as an investigator for the Ohio Un-American Activities Commission, and testified before Congressional committees. Through training he developed into an excellent professional witness on the subject of communist youth activities in America. His testimony was instrumental in securing convictions of a number of persons allegedly advocating or belonging to groups that advocated violent overthrow of the United States government.

In 1952, he offered his services to Joseph R. McCarthy as a campaigner. He was quite successful in Wisconsin and went on to campaign in Utah, Washington, Idaho, and Montana where he attempted to associate Democratic candidates with communism. He broke with McCarthy in 1954 during the Army-McCarthy hearings and supposedly began to feel guilty about having lied, or having told only half-truths, during his testimonies and the campaigns in which he participated. As a result he wrote a book entitled, <u>False Witness</u>.

Because he was a self-admitted liar, it is difficult to determine whether Matusow's book is really a reliable source. There are those who believe not. In February, 1955, Representative Walter of Pennsylvania stated: "I am thoroughly convinced that this man [Matusow] has always been a Communist planted by the Communist conspiracy for the purpose of appearing before congressional committees in order to make an attempt to discredit them, thus damaging our democratic institutions."[21] The Christian Science Monitor editorially commented that what Matusow says now cannot be relied on any more than what he said earlier and now declares to be false.[22] Senator McClellan of Arkansas believed the whole business was a communist conspiracy and those who bought the book would be contributing to the communist conspiracy in the United States.[23]

It was difficult to prosecute Matusow for perjury because it had to be proved when he was actually lying and when he was not. However, Senator Eastland of Mississippi reported to the Senate on March 16, 1955, that Matusow had been convicted and sentenced to three years in prison by Judge Thomason of the United States district court in El Paso, Texas. Matusow had been found guilty of attempting to obstruct justice in the case of

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[21] Congressional Record, U.S. House of Representatives, 84th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1113.

[22] Congressional Record, U.S. Senate, 84th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1830.

[23] Ibid., p. 2518.

Clinton E. Jencks.[24] Finally, in March, 1956, the United States Senate passed Resolution 131 that concluded, "...to the end that the said Harvey M. Matusow may be proceeded against in the manner and form provided by law."[25]

Although the publishers of False Witness attempted to establish the validity of the book, there remains considerable doubt. Nevertheless, the book will be used as a source here, but only when the material cited can be substantiated, with the exception of the biographical sketch of Matusow already presented.

Matusow did not campaign directly for Republican candidates in Montana, as he always declined to discuss state and local personalities by name, but he was obviously in Montana for the purpose of defeating Mansfield and aiding Ecton. In his book he reported that he and Don Surine, McCarthy's staff investigator, contacted Senators Arthur Watkins of Utah and Ecton and told them McCarthy wanted Matusow to campaign for them. Moreover, Matusow said he was in Montana at McCarthy's request primarily to help defeat Mansfield. If Mansfield were elected, McCarthy told Matusow, "...you might as well have an admitted Communist in the Senate, it's the same difference."[26]

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[24]Ibid., p. 3030.

[25]Congressional Record, U.S. Senate, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 5822.

[26]Matusow, op. cit. pp. 150-156.

Matusow arrived in Bozeman, Montana, and was met by Morrow, who Matusow said, "...was happy to see me." Morrow explained the arrangements that had been made which included the extablishment of a Republican-front sponsoring organization called the "Montana Citizens for Americanism." This front organization was created and headed by V. O. (Vic) Overcash of Cut Bank, who had a reputation of militant anti-communism. Matusow opened his speaking tour in Great Falls on October 14, and subsequently spoke in Cut Bank, Fort Benton, Roundup, Livingston, Red Lodge, Lewistown, Billings, and Bozeman. He was paid $1000 for his efforts by the Republicans in Montana, plus $213.04 traveling expenses which were paid by the offices of Senators Watkins and Ecton.[27]

Morrow asserted that the first he knew of the existence of Matusow was when the McCarthyite telephoned him and asked to come to Montana to campaign on behalf of Ecton. Although Morrow did not see much use for Matusow, he called Overcash who did know of him and who approved the idea. As a result, when Matusow called back, he was told to come ahead. Morrow also reported that the money for Matusow came from individual contributions and funds out of Ecton's campaign chest; however, Ecton personally had no connection with either the funds or Matusow.[28]

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[27] Ibid., pp. 162-166.

[28] Morrow, loc. cit.

On October 14, the Great Falls Tribune carried a paid advertisement announcing Matusow's appearance. The five column, sixteen inch display announced that Harvey Matusow, Communist spy for the F.B.I., wouldspeak in the Great Falls High School Auditorium. He was sponsored and locally endorsed by the American Legion, Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the Speakers Bureau. The advertisement was indicative of McCarthyism. The emotional and patriotic appeal were overwhelming.

> Here he is! in Great Falls ... with the shocking truth ... a sensational expose of Communist Activity in the U.S.
>
> And now the story can be told ... former top secret stories on Communist activities in the United States are now brought to light ... dramatic, shocking, exposing ... the incidents as they happened ... as they happen today. This talk is a must for everyone who holds dearly the welfare of his country.[29]

In his talk Matusow condemned many organizations, but not his sponsors, as being communist or "Red" infiltrated, including CBS, the State Department, Boy Scouts, YMCA, USO, United Nations, Voice of America, and Farmers Union. He implicated Great Falls teachers as dues paying Communists. When questioned, he did not believe the Catholic or Mormon churches were infiltrated, but he did say Montana had "...more Communists per capita than any other state."[30] He also claimed to have said, "You have a

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[29]Advertisement in the Great Falls Tribune, October 14, 1952.

[30]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 15, 1952.

Congressman here, I don't know if he's running for office this year..." He was referring to Mansfield, and he went on to attack him in good McCarthy fashion with references to the Daily Worker. He also accused the Democratic Party leadership in Montana and the Farmers Union as being Communist infiltrated.[31]

The Montana Farmers Union was conventioning in Great Falls, and the group took exception to Matusow's statement implicating them with communism. The Farmers Union, stating, "...it is a matter of record that the Farmers Union faces squarely to such challenges....", purchased radio time in twelve Montana cities on October 17, and challenged Matusow to appear before them and prove his charges. If he declined, the Farmers Union suggested, "...it will be further assumed the irresponsible statements he is making in Montana are as merely a political attack on many respected and responsible citizens of the state."[32]

Matusow immediately complied by flying to Great Falls the following day, but he never spoke. The Farmers Union had stipulated that he be prepared to either put up $25,000 as a libel bond if his statements could not be proved or have a sponsor. Matusow was unable to procure $25,000, nor was anyone willing to sponsor him, including Vic Overcash who had been traveling on the tour with him. L. E. Carlson of the Farmers

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[31]Matusow, op. cit., pp. 168-169.

[32]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 18, 1952.

Union replied to charges that Matusow was not allowed to speak by saying, "Whoever is behind Harvey M. Matusow did not see fit to accept the conditions of the Farmers Union invitation and that is the reason he was not allowed to speak before the convention."[33]

As Matusow's appearances had been advertised as nationally supported by the National Americanism Committee of the American Legion, patriotic credibility was given to his statements. However, Herb Kibler, adjutant for the American Legion in Montana denied his organization was sponsoring the appearances of Matusow in Montana.[34] Overcash also explained that no such organization existed in the American Legion and the American Legion had nothing to do with sponsoring Matusow. He said Matusow was sponsored in Montana by Montana Citizens for Americanism, and admitted he was head of that group.[35]

There exists considerable doubt whether Matusow's appearances in Montana either aided Ecton or hurt Mansfield. However, Matusow described himself as being "delighted" that he "...would have a tangible effect on the election of a United States Senator." He also stated: "Throughout the campaign I used

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[33]Letter to the editor in the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, October 30, 1952.

[34]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 22, 1952.

[35]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 22, 1952.

the McCarthy tactics of foul play and hitting below the belt. My charges against the Democrats and the Farmers'(sic) Union were literally and morally unjustified."[36]

As before indicated, Ecton did not believe Mansfield would knowingly aid the Communists; but, imitating McCarthy, he said, "...this man who now wants to be a U.S. Senator was at least a dupe."[37] The inference was that Mansfield was duped into believing the Chinese Communists were not really Communists; and, therefore, he unknowingly advocated Communist-appeasing policies. According to Ecton, Mansfield was a "...captive candidate of the Truman-Acheson gang who was duped by people in the State Department."[38] Ecton continuously called on Mansfield to repent, admit he had been duped, and admit he had been wrong in referring to the Chinese Communists as agrarian reformers. An admission such as Ecton desired would probably have meant political suicide, and, of course, Mansfield would not oblige.

Apparently, Ecton believed he had successfully and sufficiently associated Mansfield with the "Truman-Acheson gang" and the State Department, and the viciousness of his attacks increased. Continuing to use McCarthyism, Ecton referred to

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[36]Matusow, op. cit., p. 170.

[37]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 18, 1952.

[38]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 22, 1952.

the praise Mansfield had received from Truman as the result of his defense of American foreign policy against Andrei Vishinsky, Russian Foreign Minister, at a Paris meeting of the United Nations. "Mansfield," Ecton said, "should have been talking back to them [Russians] in 1944, but instead he was doing what he could to open the door to the Communists for the conquest of China."[39] Mansfield was also admonished to "...start telling how he helped build up the Chinese Communists."[40]

Employing the Korean War issue, which he called "Harry Truman's police action," Ecton accused the administration of neglect in failing to win the war and bring the boys home. After implying that a high school diploma was a certificate of graduation into the army, Ecton stated: "Unless the State Department Communist appeasers are thrown out and such Acheson stooges as my opponent are eliminated from Congress, this situation may continue for years."[41] In an obvious emotional appeal for votes coupled with condemnation of the United States involvement in Korea, Ecton predicted that the army "...will be putting a tag on every American boy's cradle ... unless there is a halt to such policies....", policies he indicated Mansfield

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[39]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 23, 1952.

[40]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 28, 1952.

[41]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 27, 1952.

supported.[42] Continuing on this theme, Ecton expressed an inability to understand how mothers and fathers with draftable sons could "...vote for a continuation of the Communist-appeasing policies which have brought this condition about,"[43] and a newspaper advertisement paid for by the Ecton for Senator Club announced a radio speech in the following manner: "TRUE STORY ABOUT A Montana Soldier and Father Held in a Chinese Communist Prison Camp in Korea--A POWERFUL REASON TO ELECT ECTON."[44] A political advertisement paid for by Fred A. Thomas, who purportedly was a father whose son was killed in Korea, appeared in the form of an open letter to Mansfield. Although the advertisement cannot be attributed to Ecton or the Republican party, it contained material sounding very much like what Ecton was using. The letter concluded:

> Now is the time [Mr. Mansfield] for you to tell mothers and fathers of Montana G.I.'s the truth to these questions. You, Mr. Mansfield, should tell us why you permitted the use of your name in a signed article in the New Masses, official communist magazine in this country. Why [Mr. Mansfield] have you been especially complimented by news articles and an editorial in the

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[42]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 29, 1952.

[43]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 26, 1952.

[44]Political advertisement in the Miles City [Montana] Daily Star, October 28, 1952.

Daily Worker?[45]

The appeal to Christianity was used by Ecton, as he could relate it to both China and the United States. He condemned "Communist-coddling" policies, which Mansfield allegedly promoted, as aiding communist efforts to drive Christianity out of China.[46] Furthermore, in Ecton's estimate, American policy in China had resulted in the persecution of Christianity exceeding in cruelty that of the Roman experors.[47] Domestically, Ecton accused the administration and its supporters of "plotting" to exchange "a government based on the Ten Commandments" for socialism by referring to government taxation and spending as violating the Commandment "[T]hou shalt not steal."[48]

Ecton's campaign was belatedly aided by Richard Nixon. Nixon's original tour in Montana was intended to include stops in Missoula, Helena, Great Falls, Butte, and Billings; but because of the "fund" incident, he canceled all the engagements except that at Missoula.[49] The night before he arrived in

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[45]Political advertisement in the Lewistown Daily News, October 31, 1952.

[46]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 24, 1952.

[47]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 18, 1952.

[48]Ibid.

[49]The "fund" here referred to dealt with accusing Nixon of maintaining an illegal fund in excess of $18,000 to which contributions had been made by California business men. As a re-

Missoula he had presented his defense of the fund over nation-wide television from Los Angeles, California, and he subsequently received a telegram from Eisenhower calling him to Wheeling, West Virginia.[50] However, late in the campaign he was able to return to Great Falls where he attacked the Truman administration and said Stevenson would continue the same policy because, "He holds a Ph. D. degree from Acheson's school of the three C's--Cowardly Communist Containment." Also in the speech he associated Mansfield with the Truman administration and called for the election of Ecton.[51]

Although Mansfield was emotionally aroused,[52] he did not retaliate directly against the charges of "Commie-Coddling"

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sult, many, including high Republican party officials, were calling for his resignation as the Republican vice-presidential candidate. However, Nixon chose to defend his financial arrangements by exposing both his private and political income and expense records over a nation-wide television program. He requested that the viewers submit letters and telegrams to the Republican national headquarters, indicating whether he should be kept on the ticket or dropped. The final decision would then rest with Eisenhower. The resulting correspondence was heavy and favorable toward Nixon's remaining on the ticket, and Eisenhower agreed to do so. Because of Nixon's procedure in handling the fund incident, the result was an asset rather than a liability to the Republican party.

[50]Richard M. Nixon, Six Crises (New York: Pyramid Books, 1968), pp. 77-138.

[51]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, November 2, 1952.

[52]Interview with Leif Erickson, presently state chairman of the Montana Democratic Central Committee, June 20, 1969. Erickson said the only time he ever saw Mansfield emotionally aroused because of attacks by a political opponent was in the 1952 campaign.

leveled against him. Rather, he continued to campaign on his record as a congressman and issues of economic interest to the people of Montana. Throughout the campaign he expressed his position regarding the menace of communism and the action he had taken to combat it, and late in the campaign he attacked Ecton directly, accusing him of "six years of do-nothing stewardship in high office." In support of this statement Mansfield circulated an indictment of Ecton's record as a senator.[53]

Mansfield believed the United States had to be strong to be secure, and he expressed his opinion that the development of Montana's resources would help combat communism. He labeled communism, "...the most insidious menace in the world....",[54] and explained what he, as a congressman, had done to combat it, both here and abroad. Mansfield declared he had voted to increase the armed strength of the United States and its allies, introduced legislation to outlaw the Communist party in the United States, voted for the Mundt-Nixon bill, requiring the registration of Communists, and the McCarran Act, designed to keep out subversives, and referred to his victory over Andrei Vishinsky at Paris. While Mansfield was thus explaining his record on communism, he repeatedly admonished Ecton to do the

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[53]Karlin, op. cit., p. 116.

[54]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 12, 1952.

same.[55]

It was not apparent whether Ecton ever did personally reveal his record of anti-communism. In a speech at Lewistown, which had been billed as a defense of the charges against his own record, Ecton continued to attack Mansfield as he had throughout the campaign. He exhibited photostatic copies of the Daily Worker which editorially commended Mansfield's stand on China policy.[56] An attempt at clarifying Ecton's record was made in political advertisements paid for by the Ecton for Senator Club. However, the advertisements were prefaced in the following way:

> The Ecton for Senator Club understands that Ectons (sic) opponent has been sort of daring Ecton to give him his record in the Senate, and is reported as having told the good people of this state that Ectons (sic) record was a zero. Of course, it should not be at all surprising that he does not know what Ecton or anyone else has been doing in Washington. Perhaps it is because he has been spending too much time with his cronies, Lattimore, Jessup etc., hob-nobbing with his buddies, the Chinese Communists--no, let's see, he calls them just "good agrarian reformers."[57]

Other than challenging Ecton to bare his record, Mansfield

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[55]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 21, 1952; and Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 22, 1952.

[56]News item in the Lewistown Daily News, October 19, 1952.

[57]Political advertisement in the Lewistown Daily News, November 2, 1952.

referred to no one personally. In fact, regarding McCarthy, he stated: "I made no speeches or comments relative to McCarthy."[58] State Democratic chairman Hjalmer B. Landoe assumed the major task of retaliating against the Republican use of McCarthyism. Early in the campaign he stated in an obvious reference to Ecton, "...Montanans will not be stampeded by the demagoguery of an isolationist Republican senator...."[59] Following McCarthy's appearance at Missoula, Landoe commented that it was "heartening" to know Mansfield was not a communist; however, he was certain the people of Montana resented "...an out-of-state smear artist--a master of the big lie and of loose talk--coming into our state and saying that one of the most conscientious and competent public servants in the history of our state is 'either stupid or a dupe.'"[60] "Loose talk and innuendo ... has reached serious proportions....", he stated a few days later, as he asked both parties to conduct their campaigns more objectively, although he maintained the Democratic party was, always had been, and would continue to campaign objectively on the record.[61]

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[58]Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat-Montana, letter to the author, April 21, 1969.

[59]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 10, 1952.

[60]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 16, 1952.

[61]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 19, 1952.

The speaking tour of Harvey M. Matusow was also cause for verbal fire from Landoe, who called the use of Matusow a desperation effort on the part of the Republicans and the Ecton for Senator Club to confuse the issues and the public. He referred to the episode as a "...new low in Republican campaign strategy," and as a "...distorted and insidious means of stirring anti-American flames indirectly aimed at the Democrats of Montana."[62]

Editorially, the Hungry Horse News commented, "One almost expects to find a Communist under every bush. Having been seen on the same block with a Communist back in 1945 is now considered a crime."[63] The Great Falls Tribune editorialized concerning an indictment by Adlai Stevenson of those who used smear tactics during the campaign stating:

> This indictment may rightly and pertinently be applied not only in the case which the Democratic standard-bearer documented and proved but it holds for tactics of similar pattern which are being employed in Montana and throughout the country.
>
> The Communist menace from within as well as from without is real and subversion is real. There are differences of opinion as to how it should be fought. But there can hardly be any difference of opinion that it should not be fought by trying to smirch the reputation of good and patriotic

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[62]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 21, 1952.

[63]Editorial in the Hungry Horse News /Columbia Falls, Montana/, October 19, 1952.

citizens and honest Americans.[64]

What the Tribune described in the last sentence quoted above is McCarthyism; and, as it pointed out, Communism was an issue in 1952. But the method used in employing that issue in a political campaign was the difference between a clean and honest campaign and a campaign of character assassination. It must be concluded that Mansfield conducted a responsible campaign based on the issues and his record, while Ecton and the Republicans conducted an irresponsible campaign by not repudiating those speakers in his behalf who attempted to assassinate, in the minds of the voters, the character of Mansfield and by using those tactics themselves.

Although the Republicans were generally victorious in Montana and the nation in 1952, they failed to carry Senator Ecton with them. In a close election Mansfield carried twenty counties and polled 133,109 votes to Ecton's thirty-six counties and 127,360 votes. Mansfield was called the "miracle worker of 1952," and in view of the general trend in 1952 he apparently was.[65] Of interest is the fact that Mansfield ran approximately eleven percentage points ahead of the Democratic presidential ticket of Stevenson and Sparkman in Montana. In Missoula County, where Senator McCarthy campaigned for Ecton, Mansfield

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[64]Editorial in the Great Falls Tribune, October 25, 1952.

[65]Payne, loc. cit.

carried the county while leading the Democratic presidential ticket by approximately fifteen percentage points, indicating McCarthy was of little help to Ecton.[66] Although it is difficult to determine what the vote totals would have been had McCarthy not participated in this specific campaign, there is statistical evidence to indicate that the 1952 senatorial campaigns in which McCarthy participated resulted in alienating five voters for every two gained.[67]

It can be concluded with certainty that the appearance of McCarthy in Montana and the obvious use of McCarthyism throughout the campaign were not sufficient to re-elect Ecton.

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[66] Election statistics drawn from: Ellis L. Waldron, Montana Politics Since 1864 (Missoula: Montana State University, 1958).

[67] Louis H. Bean, Influences in the 1954 Mid-Term Elections (Washington: Public Affairs Institute, 1954).

IV

THE SENATORIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1954

As was the situation in 1952, so it was in 1954. Once again the major contest in the state was for a senatorial seat. This time the seat was held by James E. Murray, a Democrat running for re-election who was described by The New York Times as the "dean of Senate New-Fair Dealers."[1] The challenger was Wesley A. D'Ewart, incumbent Representative and popular vote getter in Montana's Second or Eastern Congressional District.

James Edward Murray was born in Canada in 1876, but he immigrated to the United States in 1897 and became a naturalized United States citizen in 1900. In 1901 Murray moved to Butte, Montana, where he established a law practice and served as Silver Bow County Attorney from 1906 to 1908. He continued his lucrative law practice and served as chairman of the Public Works Administration Advisory Board in Montana during the early period of the New Deal.

Murray was elected as a Democrat to the United States Senate in 1934 to fill the vacancy created by the appointment of Senator Thomas J. Walsh by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the position of United States Attorney General. Murray served continuously as a Montana Senator from November 7, 1934, until his retirement on January 3, 1961. During that period

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[1]News item in The New York Times, October 25, 1954.

of almost three decades, Murray was a member of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee and the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, of which he became chairman when the Democrats regained the majority in 1955.[2]

Senator Murray's political philosophy was exceptionally liberal. He fully supported the New Deal programs of President Roosevelt and the Fair Deal programs of President Truman. He was referred to as "...one of the Senate's most ardent New-Fair Dealers."[3]

Born in 1889, Wesley Abner D'Ewart moved to Wilsall, Montant in 1910, where he was employed as a forest ranger for about five years. He subsequently purchased and developed a ranching operation near that community. D'Ewart was instrumental in establishing a Rural Electrification Administration project near Wilsall, was a director and president of the Farmers' Exchange of Wilsall, and a member of the State College Advisory Committee.

D'Ewart was elected as a Republican from Park County to the Montana House of Representatives in 1937 and 1939, after which he was elected to the State Senate, serving from 1941 through 1945. The vacancy created by the death of Representative James F. O'Connor from Montana's Second Congressional Dis-

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[2]Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 1375; and News item in the Great Falls /Montana/ Tribune, March 24, 1961.

[3]Thomas Payne, "The 1954 Elections in Montana," The Western Political Quarterly, Vol. VII., No. 4 (Salt Lake City: Institute of Government, December, 1954), p. 611.

trict was filled in 1945 by the election of D'Ewart in a special election. D'Ewart served in the United States House of Representatives from June 5, 1945, until January 3, 1955. While in Congress, D'Ewart was a member of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and served as chairman of the Indian Affairs Subcommittee.

Wesley D'Ewart's political philosophy was essentially conservative. He was often in conclict with New and Fair Deal programs. He advocated the maintenance of constitutional limits on federal power, encouraged local and individual responsibility, and opposed deficit spending and enlargement of the federal bureaucracy.[4]

The Republicans had gained control of the Senate in 1953 as a result of the Republican sweep led by Eisenhower nationally in 1952. However, the Republican hold on the Senate was precarious, and in view of the traditional gain by the party out of power during mid-term elections, they were understandably concerned. For the purpose of gaining seats to offset those they would lose, the Republican Party requested D'Ewart to oppose Murray. The selection of D'Ewart was logical, as he was well known and had proved his vote getting ability by carrying every county in the Eastern District against Willard Fraser of

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[4]Biographical Directory, op. cit., p. 804; Wesley A. D'Ewart Papers, University of Montana, Missoula; and Interview with Wesley A. D'Ewart, United States Representative, Republican-Montana, 1945-1955, June 4, 1969.

Billings in 1952. D'Ewart, who could probably have easily been re-elected as a Representative, agreed to oppose Murray in the interest of party loyalty and teamwork.[5]

The campaign between Murray and D'Ewart was hard and, at times, bitterly fought in Montana. It was later to have disastrous reprecussions on D'Ewart's career in government service. The acrimony of the campaign was due to a number of factors, but by far the most important was the subjection of Murray "...to a scathing attack as a dupe of Communism,..."[6] As each party believed the welfare of its entire slate of candidates depended upon the outcome of the senatorial race, remarkable intra-party harmony and cooperation prevailed.[7]

Initially, each candidate indicated he would campaign on issues based on his record and the record of his party. At the time he filed his nominating petition, Murray pledged his support for one hundred per cent parity on agricultural products, expanded rural electric programs, increased development of Montana resources, tax relief for individuals and business, relief from discriminatory freight rates, and expanded Social Security. In terms of foreign policy he was to campaign on a

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[5]D'Ewart interview, loc. cit.

[6]M. R. Merrill, Introduction to: "The 1954 Elections in the Eleven Western States," The Western Political Quarterly, Vol. VII., No. 4 (Salt Lake City: Institute of Government, December, 1954), p. 590.

[7]Payne, loc. cit.

platform that included international cooperation and control of atomic and hydrogen weapons with gradual disarmament, while calling for American non-involvement in foreign wars and a strong national defense program.[8] Throughout the campaign Murray attacked the record of the Eisenhower administration and stressed his own Senate seniority which would make him chairman of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee if he and a Democratic senate should be elected.

D'Ewart's statement accompanying his nominating petition indicated that he would cooperate with and support President Eisenhower's program which included "peace, progress, and prosperity." Domestically, he pledged support for agriculture, labor, and industry; equitable tax reductions; elimination of subversives from government; and opposition to programs which expanded federal authority over individuals and local government. His foreign policy platform was based on liberty and peace for the United States and an "invincible" defense force.[9] In addition D'Ewart campaigned on the plea that Eisenhower needed a Republican congress to continue his programs, and attacked the record of the New and Fair Deals, with which he associated Murray.

Aside from political party assistance, support for Murray

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[8]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, May 6, 1954.

[9]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, June 9, 1954.

came from the Farmers Union, organized labor, and sportsmen's groups. D'Ewart was supported by livestock raisers, unorganized business, and conservative groups around the state.

As the campaign progressed, the issues both candidates said they would stand on faded and were replaced by accusations and personal attacks that were at times vicious and, in retrospect, comical. Although the "Red issue" had been simmering in the earlier stages of the campaign in Montana and the nation, it did not become obviously important until mid-October. From then until the election on November 2, the association of Murray with communism and Murray's defense and retaliation became paramount. The New York Times said on October 25, "The whole 'Red issue' was hardly mentioned three weeks ago.", but '...about ten days ago in Montana the Republican tactic against ... Senator James E. Murray was altered overnight."[10] By October 24, D'Ewart believed the basic issue in the campaign was "Socialism vs. Free Enterprise."[11]

Seeming to anticipate what was to occur, State Democratic Party chairman, Jack Toole, in mid-September had called on his Republican counterpart, William MacKay, and candidates of both parties to "adhere to a code of fair play in campaigning." He seemed to remember the senatorial campaign of 1952 as he issued

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[10]News item in The New York Times, October 25, 1954.

[11]Associated Press dispatch, Miles City /Montana/ Daily Star, October 24, 1954.

the following statement: "Personal assaults and slanderous attacks on candidates which have characterized former campaigns in Montana not only violate common decency but, by undermining public confidence in our elected officials, furnish the communistic element with flavor to gain converts."[12]

Both parties and both senatorial candidates adhered to Toole's plea, campaigning on the issues and the records until October. Then the Republicans charged Murray with using Richard Callaghan, chief clerk of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee, as his "personal chauffeur." The charge insinuated that Callaghan was not paid $11,800 a year of the taxpayers' money to aid Murray in his campaign. Callaghan replied to the charge that he was on vacation and doing what he could to aid the re-election of Murray. However, MacKay accused him of being in Montana more than a month.[13] MacKay also asserted that Murray was spending between $100,000 and $125,000 on his campaign in an attempt "...to buy the Montana election, in part with funds from left-wing organizations outside the state," which Murray had supported as a senator.[14] D'Ewart, in a speech at Harlem, charged Murray with maintaining "...a huge campaign slush fund," derived partly from "...left wing or-

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[12]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, September 22, 1954.

[13]United Press dispatch, Lewistown /Montana/ Daily News, October 6, 1954.

[14]United Press dispatch, Lewistown Daily News, October 8, 1954.

ganizations outside Montana."[15]

The progression of inferences associating Murray and communism began with calling Murray a left-wing Democrat or, interchangeably, a New Deal Democrat, and ended just short of accusing him of being an outright Communist. In a speech delivered on October 8, over a Great Falls radio station, D'Ewart associated Murray with the New Deal and then accused the "Truman New Deal" of "...graft, corruption and the coddling of Communists...."[16] This was indicative of a revival of the McCarthyism used by the Republicans in 1952, and it was not unusual to find the same thing being done across the nation.

Murray did not attempt to associate D'Ewart with communism, but he did attack him personally. In a campaign speech at Butte, Murray accused D'Ewart "...of playing both sides against the middle and consciously trying to mislead our people or, as seems more likely, his mind has grown confused and wandering and he's just too old at 65 for the job he seeks."[17] This comment on D'Ewart's age reflected one of the more interesting verbal exchanges between the two candidates.

Although D'Ewart never personally attacked Murray on his

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[15]Associated Press dispatch, Billings /Montana/ Gazette, October 8, 1954.

[16]Transcript of a radio speech delivered over KFBB, Great Falls, Montana, October 8, 1954. Wesley A. D'Ewart Papers, University of Montana, Missoula.

[17]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 14, 1954.

age, which was purportedly seventy-eight, other than during this incident, his Republican supporters often did. As a result, when D'Ewart stated at Butte that all Republican senatorial candidates in the nation were sixty-five years of age or under, Murray took exception and issued a challenge to D'Ewart. Murray stated: "I'm so decrepit I would welcome D'Ewart to come on this platform and we'd see who is the old man. I'm willing to run a foot race any day of the week and I will give $2,000 to any charity you have if he wants to put on the gloves with me." D'Ewart, saying he did not want to endanger the life of a "78-year-old man," did not accept the challenge, and he regretted that his opponent had entered into personalities.[18]

Another issue that incited verbal exchanges dealt with the hearings being conducted in Washington by the Watkins committee on the censure of Senator McCarthy. Upon being asked how he intended to vote on the censure motion, Murray replied he would vote his conscience and did not think anyone should comment on the issue without studying the report and listening to the debates.[19] Although D'Ewart declined to say how he would vote if the responsibility were his, he demanded that Montanans had the right to know how Murray would vote.[20] MacKay had publicly

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[18]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 14, 1954.

[19]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, September 28, 1954.

[20]United Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 14, 1954.

asked why Murray would not indicate his vote and was answered editorially by The Western News. The editorial said an indication of Murray's vote would prejudice the case against McCarthy.[21] Near the end of the campaign Murray was charged with being guilty of "blatant hypocrisy" by D'Ewart who was able at the same time to associate Murray once again with the left wing. D'Ewart stated: "In view of Sen. Murray's well known opposition to the Internal Securities Act of 1950 and his association with extreme left wing in the New Deal, Montana people have been quite properly interested in the senator's attitude toward Sen. Joseph McCarthy."[22]

Again Montana was visited by out-of-state speakers. Speaking on behalf of Murray's candidacy were Senator Albert Gore, Tennessee Democrat; Senator Wayne Morse, Oregon Independent; Senator Lyndon Johnson, Texas Democrat; Representative Mike Kirwan, Ohio Democrat; and Charles A. Brannan, President Truman's Secretary of Agriculture. Speaking on behalf of D'Ewart's candidacy were President Eisenhower; Vice President Richard Nixon; Senator Everett Dirksen, Illinois Republican; Senator Frederick Payne, Maine Republican; Senator Frank Carlson, Kansas Republican; Joseph Martin, Massachusetts Republican and Speaker of the House; Ezra Benson, Secretary of

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[21]Editorial in The Western News [Hamilton, Montana], October 21, 1954.

[22]Associated Press dispatch, Miles City Daily Star, October 31, 1954.

Agriculture; and Ross Rizley, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture. A few of the fore mentioned speakers require further mention.

Eisenhower's stop at Missoula was billed as a dedication of a new Forest Service Aerial Fire Depot, but he was introduced by D'Ewart and did speak kindly of him. After Benson spoke in Great Falls, he was attacked by Murray as not knowing anything about agricultural conditions in Montana. Brannan, who was at that time the chief counsel for the Farmers Union in Washington, was accused by D'Ewart of campaigning on Farmers Union funds rather than on Democratic party funds. The candidates had a verbal exchange concerning Senator Johnson's visit. D'Ewart expressed surprise when he learned Johnson was coming to speak for Murray because as he put it, "Sen. Johnson of Texas has been opposed to almost everything Sen. James E. Murray stands for." He also referred to the "good conservative" Democrats of Texas who would not approve of Johnson's speaking for left wingers like Murray.[23] Murray replied to D'Ewart's surprise by stressing the unity of the Democratic party and saying, "Apparently anything surprises Wes D'Ewart except the failure of his party to get together on a program for the good of the people."[24]

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[23]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 6, 1954.

[24]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 9, 1954.

Prior to mid-October the Montana senatorial campaign had definitely been conducted on a low level in many respects. Neither candidate treated the other in a gentlemanly way. What appears to have been merely petty bickering revealed itself in verbal exchanges. D'Ewart had appealed to the voters' fears of communism, but the use of McCarthyism was mild compared with what was to come. Senator Lyndon Johnson, in mid-October, predicted that the Republicans in Washington, Wyoming, and Montana were prepared to launch a smear campaign in a "last-ditch" effort to win senatorial campaigns in those states. He advised President Eisenhower to dissociate himself "...before he finds himself plunged by his fellow Republicans into one of the worst smear campaigns in history."[25] Johnson was a few days late with his prediction, because in Montana the campaign had already begun.

On October 17, The New York Times contained an article headed: "RED ISSUE RAISED TO FIGHT MURRAY." The Times contended that it was a "frankly desperate" but "determined eleventh-hour campaign" on the part of the Republicans who saw no other way of defeating Murray. The Republicans were already circulating thousands of copies of an article entitled "A Tribute to Lenin" which Murray had written for a January, 1945, issue of "Soviet Russia Today." Republican party officials

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[25]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 18, 1954.

in the state privately deplored the use of such a tactic but viewed it as a necessity.[26] Other than through his own statements, D'Ewart officially had no connection with the McCarthyism in the form of printed material used in the smear campaign conducted against Murray. The campaign was conducted either by the Republican Central Committee or by subsidiary organizations supporting D'Ewart.[27] However, it appears that D'Ewart condoned the use of these materials in view of the fact that he did not repudiate them nor those who were responsible for them.

The use of McCarthyism was not unique to Montana in 1954. At about the same time Nixon was speaking in Montana, Adlai Stevenson was accusing Nixon of practicing "McCarthyism in a white collar." According to Stevenson, Nixon was "...back at the old reliable again--Communists in government."[28] The National Democratic party chairman, Stephen A. Mitchell, accused Nixon and the Republicans of conducting a last minute smear and gutter campaign because they knew there was no other way they could win enough seats in the next congress to retain control. Mitchell said Nixon "...is leading the chant of hate and suspicion..." and Leonard Hall, National Republican party

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[26]News item in The New York Times, October 17, 1954.

[27]Payne, loc. cit.; and News item in The New York Times, October 25, 1954.

[28]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 23, 1954.

chairman, had ordered "...an echoing chorus around the country." Some of the targets of the smear campaign as named by Mitchell included Averell Harriman of New York, Senator Joseph O'Mahoney of Wyoming, John Carroll of Colorado, and Senator Murray of Montana.[29]

Vice President Nixon's speeches in Montana were typical of the national use of McCarthyism. Although he was detained in Montana by an early snow storm, Nixon fulfilled all his scheduled engagements at Billings, Butte, and Bozeman. Nixon attacked the covering up and protection given the Communists and fellow travelers during the Truman Administration and charged that the Communists were infiltrating the Democratic party and controlling its policies.[30] The account of Nixon's Butte speech clearly demonstrated McCarthyism.

> He [Nixon] claimed he possesses a copy of a "secret memorandum" sent to California leaders of the Communist party which directed them to achieve unity behind single candidates in the Democratic primaries--if possible, agreed upon in advance."
>
> The vice president added "there is no question but that millions of loyal Democrats throughout the United States bitterly resent and will oppose this effort on the part of the Communists to infiltrate the Democratic party and to make its policies the policies of the Democratic party."

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 24, 1954; and News item in The New York Times, October 24, 1954.

> "The previous administration unfortunately adopted policies which were soft, vacillating, and inconsistent in dealing with the Communist threat."[31]

Following Nixon's tour of Montana, the Hungry Horse News editorialized that "Possibly the Communists are keeping Mr. Nixon informed."[32]

Whatever ethics politics may have were seriously violated with the production and distribution of "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress." This scurrilous attack against Murray can be described in no other way than as a deliberate attempt to deceive the voters by slurring the character of Senator Murray through irresponsible associations with Communists and Communist-front organizations. Although D'Ewart had no official connection with the publication of the booklet, he had knowledge of it. D'Ewart reported in an interview that the motivation for the production of the booklet was based on the defeat of Senator Claude Pepper of Florida in 1950 through the use of a similar publication. D'Ewart equated the political philosophy of Murray and Pepper by saying, "They both looked out the same window." Also, according to D'Ewart, the booklet was in the preparation process for a period of six months by a professional journalist who was paid one hundred dollars per

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[31]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 23, 1954.

[32]Editorial in the Hungry Horse News /Columbia Falls, Montana/, October 29, 1954.

week for his efforts, D'Ewart emphasized the accuracy of the booklet, saying it had been very carefully checked for erroneous or libelous statements, although he admitted it had the appearance of a smear.[33] The National Republican party in some respect must share some of the responsibility for the booklet along with D'Ewart and the Republican affiliated organization that published it, for the booklet was prepared by Frank Kluckhohn who later served as D'Ewart's writer and public relations man in the 1954 campaign on loan from the Republican National Senatorial Campaign Committee.[34]

The cover of the "Red Web" is an excellent indication of the distortions found inside. The title is in white letters in a black border across the top, and in a red border across the bottom is the statement: "The Story of Communist Infiltration of your U.S. Congress from official records and Communist documents." In the center is a large picture of the capitol dome with a red spider web superimposed on it. A red spider with a human head and a sinister look is located inside the web. On the web is the statement: Read the facts."[35]

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[33]D'Ewart interview, loc. cit.

[34]George Louis Bousiliman, "The 1954 Campaign of Senator James E. Murray," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Montana, Missoula, 1964), p. 24; and Interview with Dr. Thomas Payne, Professor of Political Science, University of Montana, Missoula, June 10, 1969.

[35]"Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress," (Compiled and Published by the Montana for D'Ewart Committee, 1954), front cover.

The emotional appeal to patriotism is found early.

> 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 been largely unaware of the facts presented in this booklet. Few know 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.[36]

Murray was accused of being the chairman or ranking Democrat member on committees which employed six of nine staff members who when questioned concerning Communist party affiliations replied with the Fifth Amendment. Also, several of the nine were members of Communist or Communist-front organizations with which Murray had been identified. One must question why it was implied Murray was responsible for hiring the questionable staff members, and when and in what way was Murray identified with the Communist or Communist-front organizations? However, the effect these statements may have had on the casual but patriotic and Communist fearing voter is obvious.

Murray was also accused of having a "long and close association" with Senator Claude Pepper. Both served on the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, but their relationship purportedly extended beyond Congress to the sponsorship of activities promoted by Communist-front organizations.

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[36] Ibid., p. 3.

Murray supported Pepper for re-election in 1950 when Pepper was defeated by the Florida voters in repudiation of his "policies and associations." Through official files of the House Committee on Un-American Activities Murray was identified through membership, sponsorship, or association with thirteen Communist or Communist-front organizations. Murray's "Tribute to Lenin," which was written at a time when the United States and Russia were allied against Germany, was also cited as damning evidence.[37]

The examples presented here are indicative of the many charges contained in the "Red Web." The booklet concludes:

> In this manner and for these reasons, the Communist Party from coast to coast has looked with favor on Senator James E. Murray. And this is only part of the record.
>
> You have read the record. You have seen the evidence. Determine for yourself whether Senator James E. Murray has represented YOU in these matters.[38]

Everything contained in the booklet was probably factual; at least it was thoroughly documented; but the facts were very adroitly manipulated in such a way as to turn the "Red Web" into an attempt at character assassination.

The cost of the "Red Web" must have been exceptional. The expense of preparing and writing the booklet has already been in-

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[37] Ibid., pp. 11 and 13.

[38] Ibid., p. 24.

dicated. Although D'Ewart reported he was not overly pleased with the cover design, the artist fee was $500.[39] Fifty thousand copies of the booklet were supposedly distributed, and it has been estimated at thirty-five cents per copy to have cost $17,500. Who financed the booklet is questionable, but it has been suggested that the money came partly from oil interests and partly from fund collecting efforts of Dan Whetstone, editor of the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, and Vic Overcash.[40]

How effective was the "Red Web?" As a factor in the election it was probably of slight significance, but the effect, if any, was negative. In addition to being available at Republican County headquarters throughout the state the booklet was especially distributed in Cascade, Glacier, and Roosevelt Counties. Why these counties were selected is not clear.[41] All three counties were located in the Eastern Congressional District and economically represented either ranching or oil interests. Murray carried all three of these counties against D'Ewart in 1954, but D'Ewart had carried them in his 1952 congressional contest. However, D'Ewart in his earlier contests of 1946, 1948, and 1950, had never carried Cascade County, and although he carried Glacier and Roosevelt Counties two out

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[39]D'Ewart interview, loc. cit.

[40]Bousiliman, op. cit., p. 25.

[41]Ibid., p. 33.

of the three times, he did so only by very close margins.[42] If the 1952 election is discounted, D'Ewart's 1954 vote in these counties was not significantly different from what he previously received. Such statistics suggest that the booklet had little significance in assisting D'Ewart, and perhaps it may have worked negatively in Murray's favor.

Although the heavy barrage leveled by the Republicans against Murray as a Commie-coddler did not appear until mid-October, a premature indication of what was to come appeared in a full page political advertisement paid for by the Roosevelt County Republican Central Committee in the October 8 issue of The Poplar Standard. Citing information compiled by the Pro-American Research Foundation of which Vic Overcash was president, the advertisement listed twenty-four items associating Murray with communism and was headed, "RED RECORD AND COMMUNIST FRONT ASSOCIATIONS OF SENATOR JAMES E. MURRAY."[43] D'Ewart later claimed to know nothing of the appearance of this advertisement.

Murray's retaliation to the smear attack appeared almost simultaneously with the attack itself. In large newspaper advertisements which contained autographed pictures of Presi-

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[42]Information concerning election results drawn from: Ellis L. Waldron, Montana Politics Since 1864 (Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1958).

[43]Political advertisement in The Poplar /Montana/ Standard, October 8, 1954.

dents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower, Murray was described as "great, distinguished, and effective." President Eisenhower had written under his picture: "For Senator James E. Murray with best wishes to a distinguished American. Dwight D. Eisenhower."[44] As Eisenhower's picture was four times larger than the others, the obvious implication was how could anyone so described be anything other than a true American? However, the use of this advertisement had repercussions that involved Eisenhower himself.

The Republicans immediately charged Murray with attempting to campaign as an Eisenhower endorsed candidate, to which Murray replied: "We did not use the presidential picture to imply a campaign endorsement and D'Ewart knows it." The use of the pictures was to "...answer efforts by D'Ewart to smear me as a pro-Communist."[45] Murray continued to use the picture advertisement with a modification at the top which said, "COMMUNIST? SMEAR! SMEAR! SMEAR! What are the Little-men Raving About?"[46]

Nixon criticized Murray's use of Eisenhower's picture by stating that Murray had the strongest record of opposition

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[44]Political advertisement in the Great Falls Tribune, October 13, 1954.

[45]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 23, 1954.

[46]Political advertisement in the Miles City Daily Star, October 29, 1954.

to the president of any member of the Senate.[47] To counteract the picture campaign, D'Ewart secured a letter from President Eisenhower, which was subsequently used in newspaper advertisements. The letter said:

> My attention has been called to the advertisement of your opponent in the Butte, Montana Standard of October 13, 1954. In this advertisement appears my photograph, which was sent to him on a purely personal basis, at his request.
>
> I am astonished that such a picture would be used by any Senator with an implication of my endorsement of his candidacy, when his voting record clearly indicates a political philosophy fundamentally different than (sic) mine.
>
> I wish you [D'Ewart] every success in your campaign and am looking forward to welcoming you back in Washington as the junior Senator from Montana.[48]

Even the presidents of the Young Democrats of Montana, Joe Reber, and the Montana Young Republicans, John Marchi, conducted a verbal exchange over the use of the pictures. Marchi accused Murray of attempting to cover up his left wing record, and Reber retorted that Montanans were proud Eisenhower would refer to Murray as a "distinguished American."[49] Reber was probably the closer to being correct, as the advertisement

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[47]News item in The New York Times, October 24, 1954.

[48]Political advertisement in the Billings Gazette, October 26, 1954.

[49]Associated Press dispatches in the Great Falls Tribune, October 19 and 21, 1954.

was interpreted not as an endorsement but as a compliment to Murray's character.

At no time during the last three weeks of the campaign was there any let-up in the attack, counter-attack, and retaliation. Democrats cried "smear," and Republicans replied "smear" to the alleged smear. State Democratic chairman Jack Toole, strongly accused "certain" Republican candidates of resorting "...to a campaign of vilification, slander, character assassination and personal abuse...."[50] Following this charge, he fired off a telegram to Leonard Hall, National Republican party chairman, charging the State Republican Committee and aids of D'Ewart with violation of the fair campaign practices code, and demanding repudiation of the tactics from the national level and an apology from the state level.[51] Toole also sent a telegram to President Eisenhower calling for public repudiation of the campaign by "character assassination."[52]

State Republican chairman William MacKay, admonished Toole that it was his responsibility to keep Democratic candidates from distorting and smearing D'Ewart's record.[53] MacKay replied

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[50]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 16, 1954.

[51]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 23, 1954.

[52]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 26, 1954.

[53]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 18, 1954.

to Toole's telegram to the President by accusing the Democrats of planning a last minute smear campaign, and assuring the President "...that we are doing nothing but exposing the true facts about the record of Sen. James E. Murray and his associates. Apparently the facts are so shocking to Sen. Murray's own chairman that he thinks they are a smear."[54]

D'Ewart personally continued to add to the alleged association of Murray with communism, accusing him of spending tax dollars at a Swiss resort where the "...International Labor Organization meets every year...."[55] In what appears to have been the script for a radio speech delivered over a Great Falls station on October 20, entitled "20 years of Murray," D'Ewart referred to his opponent as "...a living relic of all that characterized the new deal days of spending, taxes, war and (communist infiltration) corruption." The words contained in parentheses were not typed into the script but were penciled in.[56] One need not go on with all the statements made by D'Ewart as they are remarkably similar; however, they can be generally summed up in a statement made at Deer Lodge: "I know he /Murray/ can't adequately explain his association with 13 officially

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[54]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 28, 1954.

[55]Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 13, 1954.

[56]Paper entitled: "20 years of Murray," Wesley A. D'Ewart papers, University of Montana, Missoula.

- designated Communist fronts, his writing a tribute to Lenin and why he voted as late as 1950 against the major legislation designed to halt Red infiltration--the U.S. national security act."[57]

Republicans were reluctant to use the name of Senator McCarthy. This is understandable because McCarthy's appeal had suffered considerably as a result of the highly publicized Army-McCarthy hearings earlier in 1954. Finally, however, it was decided to use McCarthy but only at long range and without official party endorsement. As a result, a letter from McCarthy calling for the election of D'Ewart was received by Frank Whetstone who released it to the press. The letter said in part: "I do want you to know personally that I feel it would be a great victory for real Americans and for anti-Communists if Wes D'Ewart is elected."[58]

Murray continued to retaliate by condemning the campaign against him as "vicious" and of using "smear tactics." He recalled his 1948 campaign against Republican Tom Davis as a "gentleman's campaign." He also pointed out that he had always conducted his campaigns on the highest plane.[59] However, Murray's retaliation was handled primarily by fellow Democrats,

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[57] News item in the Lewistown Daily News, October 29, 1954.

[58] Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954.

[59] Associated Press dispatch, Billings Gazette, October 16, 1954.

including the state chairman already mentioned. Leo C. Graybill, Democratic national committeeman termed the campaign a ..."diabolic approach to Americanism and a reflection on the American way of life."[60] Michael Straus, former United States Commissioner of Reclamation, spoke in Great Falls and referred to the "...high-priced Halloween literature...." circulated by the Republicans, "...full of spooks, goblins and spiders,..."[61]

Another form of retaliation used by Murray was the securing and publishing in newspapers of telegrams and letters from distinguished and respected congressmen and senators. These were received from Senator Lyndon Johnson of Texas, Representative John McCormack of Massachusetts, Senators Earl Clements of Kentucky and John Sparkman of Alabama, and Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota. Humphrey's communication was addressed directly to D'Ewart and is typical of the others.

> Shocked to learn from press that your agents are trying to depict Montana's great and patriotic Sen. Jim Murray as pro-Communist. Since I know Senator Murray never stoops to answer smears, I want to tell you and the people of Montana that Senator Murray co-sponsored my bill to outlaw the Communist Party as part of an international conspiracy.
>
> While others talked about it, Jim Murray

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[60]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 20, 1954.

[61]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954. (emphasis mine)

> did something about the Communist menace. That bill became law this year and for the first time Communism is outlawed in America. Moreover, for 20 years Jim Murray led the fight for all the legislation which wiped out misery, hunger and unemployment on which Communism once used to thrive here in our country.
>
> You know that Jim Murray is a devoted pro-American and anti-Communist. You know that President Eisenhower regards him as a distinguished American. In the interest of simple honesty and decency, I ask you to repudiate the slanders on one of our greatest senators, which apparently are being issued in your behalf.[62]

It may well be that political campaigns are seldom conducted on a high plane. This one certainly was not, and both candidates and both parties must assume some of the responsibility. However, the major factor in the campaign became the alleged association of Murray with Communists and Communist-front organizations. This was McCarthyism. For this irresponsible action the national and local levels of the Republican party, those who aided D'Ewart, and D'Ewart himself, must shoulder the responsibility. Senator Murray reflected upon this following his victory of November 2:

> I am sure that President Eisenhower, Vice President Nixon, Senator McCarthy and Representative D'Ewart who so viciously pursued their campaign of misrepresentation and falsehood and reckless use of money will have much to disturb their consciences in the future.
>
> I deeply resent their effort to make the pub-

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[62]News item in the Great Falls Tribune, October 27, 1954.

> lic believe that I am a "Red, a fellow-traveler, soft towards Communism," or that I have been anything other than a loyal American...[63]

Murray defeated D'Ewart by a bare 1728 votes out of a total of 227,454 votes cast. It is ironic, but there is a strong possibility D'Ewart would have defeated Murray had the Red issue never been raised. In order to conduct the type of campaign that was conducted, D'Ewart discarded the organization he had used previously because it was not adapted to the use of McCarthy tactics. In its place was a campaign organization headed by Frank Kluckhohn who had written the "Red Web."[64] Although Kluckhohn was supposedly a good writer, D'Ewart believed he did not receive the proper press coverage which he would have had with his former writer. In fact, D'Ewart believed he would have won if he had had a good writer.[65] Although it was charged by the Democrats that D'Ewart had no record on which to run and that he therefore adopted the Red issue, it may have been a more successful campaign had he continued to run on his record as a congressman and the record of the Republican party under Eisenhower. It is conceivable that he might have won without McCarthyism.[66]

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[63]News item in the Glendive [Montana] Daily Ranger, November 3, 1954.

[64]Payne interview, loc. cit.

[65]D'Ewart interview, loc. cit.

[66]Both Payne and Bousiliman agree that D'Ewart would have

The specter of McCarthyism that was raised in the senatorial campaign of 1954 returned to haunt D'Ewart in 1956. President Eisenhower nominated D'Ewart for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Public Land Management, a position which he filled until July, 1956, when the Senate adjourned without having confirmed the nomination. Senator Murray, who had campaigned on the issue of his seniority, was chairman of the Senate Committee which held hearings relative to the nomination of D'Ewart. On July 11, 1956, the committee opened its hearings on the nomination, and Murray made a brief but vindictive statement concerning the conduct of the campaign. Murray said all other senatorial campaigns in Montana had been conducted on a high plane with the exception of the senatorial campaign of 1952. Following his statement, Murray relinquished the chair to Senator Anderson of New Mexico because of his personal involvement with the nominee. Following a statement by D'Ewart concerning his background and qualifications for the position, the committee began questioning him concerning his knowledge and involvement in the smear campaign of 1954. Leading the questioning in this regard were Democratic Senators Anderson of New

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been more successful, quite likely winning, had he not sacrificed his former campaign organization for an untried one which was disposed to using McCarthyism. What the result would have been had D'Ewart's former organization remained and used McCarthyism is impossible to determine; but in view of the probability that the "Red Web" had a negative effect, one is strongly tempted to conclude that the combination of D'Ewart's former organization with abstention from McCarthyism would have been more successful.

Mexico and O'Mahoney of Wyoming. Although D'Ewart attempted to dissociate himself with the McCarthyism aspects of the campaign and maintained ignorance of certain things that occurred, he was forced into admitting that he knew what was being done on his behalf in the campaign and that he did nothing to stop or repudiate such tactics. D'Ewart claimed he would not advocate the use of such a campaign, but he was accused of being willing to accept the benefits of a campaign based on McCarthyism. Through the questioning, D'Ewart was effectively forced into a position of either admitting his responsibility or appearing to be incompetent of handling the position to which he had been nominated. The committee concluded its hearings on D'Ewart's nomination on July 13; but because the Senate adjourned later in the month without hearing the committee report, D'Ewart was not confirmed. He subsequently served the Eisenhower administration in other areas which did not require Senate confirmation.[67]

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[67]United States Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Nomination of Wesley A. D'Ewart to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Hearings before Committee, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, July 11 and 13, 1956 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1956), pp. 1-11. For a partial reproduction of the hearing emphasizing the use of McCarthyism in the campaign of 1954, see Appendix I.

V

COMMUNISTS IN MONTANA?

The use of McCarthyism was wide spread in 1952 and 1954, but in Montana McCarthyism represented little more than a political expedient or gimmick. McCarthyism was a campaign phenomenon in Montana, used solely for the purpose of aiding the election of Republican senatorial candidates. Because the effect of McCarthyism was strongly felt only during campaigns, it could have had no other purpose. An account of a deliberate, but abortive, attempt to imitate McCarthy in Montana at a time other than during a political campaign will serve to demonstrate this.

The Montana State Legislature in 1953 enacted House Bill No. 231 entitled: "An act relating to the creation of the Interim Committee to Investigate Subversive and un-American activities in the State of Montana."[1] This committee was very similar to the Senate Investigating subcommittee headed by Senator McCarthy in Washington. The bill was passed overwhelmingly by both houses of the Montana Legislature and was signed into law on March 4, 1953, by Governor J. Hugo Aronson. Politically, it was probably inadvisable to oppose a measure of this nature. The committee that was established was popularly known as the

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[1] House Journal, Thirty-third Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1953), p. 98-I.

"Little McCarthy Committee." The members of the committee were Senator A. Ronald McDonnell, Republican of Sweetgrass County; Senator R. C. Harken, Democrat of Rosebud County; Representative Charles Cerovski, Democrat of Fergus County; and, Representative E. V. (Sonny) Omholt, Republican of Teton County.[2] Omholt was made chairman of the committee, and by his own admission the committee never amounted to much.[3]

The committee was supposed to investigate subversive and un-American activities in the state of Montana, and it had the necessary powers to accomplish its purpose. It could hold hearings, issue subpoenas, etc. In addition, an appropriation of $5000 was authorized.[4] Walter L. Sales, who was a representative to the state legislature from Gallatin County in 1953, recalled that the committee made no report and spent none of the $5000.[5]

Charles Cerovski asserted in reflection that in 1953 the House of Representatives in Montana consisted largely of ultra-conservative Republicans. He reported that the motivating force behind the formation of the committee was the existence of the

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[2]Ibid., pp. 573 and 592.

[3]Interview with E.V. (Sonny) Omholt, Montana State Auditor and former legislator, April 17, 1969.

[4]Laws, Resolutions and Memorials of the State of Montana, Passed by the Thirty-third Legislative Assembly (Helena: State Publishing Co., 1953), pp. 356-8.

[5]Interview with Walter L. Sales, Former state legislator, April 29, 1969.

national investigating committee headed by McCarthy, and the Montana committee was patterned after McCarthy's committee. The purpose of the Montana committee was to hold hearings throughout Montana and to have "...left wing Communists dragged before us simply to expose them." According to Cerovski, all the members appointed to the committee were reluctant to serve "...except for Sonny Omholt." The only meeting of the committee was called at Butte by Omholt for the purpose of interviewing the F.B.I. The F.B.I. suggested there that the committee was of minimal value because there were no communists in Montana, adding that if there were, the F.B.I. would know their location. The committee then returned to its hotel in Butte and voted three to one to disband, and no further action was taken. None of the members submitted expenses to the state for the trip to Butte. Reimbursement would have been impossible at any rate because the Montana Supreme Court declared Interim Legislative Committees unconstitutional in 1953.[6]

Apparently, from the timing of the establishment of the committee, the primary influence was McCarthyism, and a reaction to McCarthyism was represented. However, because the committee did practically nothing, the seriousness of intentions to uncover subversives must be questioned. Had Montanans been

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[6]Charles Cerovski, Former state legislator, Letter to the author, June 13, 1969. In addition, a letter received by the author from A. Ronald McDonnell, former state legislator and member of the committee, July 7, 1969, substantially supports the recollections of Cerovski.

highly concerned over the fear or threat of communists-in-government, the committee would probably have been forced to act. However, this incident was significant as it demonstrated the lack of a concerted use of McCarthyism at any time except during political campaigns.

VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The political phenomenon of McCarthyism as it existed in a national contest was typified by the use of McCarthyism in the Montana senatorial campaigns of 1952 and 1954. Nationally, the Republican party adopted McCarthyism as its basic campaign strategy and used it extensively in 1952 and 1954 because they believed it presented a politically expedient opportunity to gain and hold national office. In addition, many moderate Republicans feared that to counteract the apparent power and influence of Senator McCarthy would create disunity within the party. Both national parties were very conscious of the importance of the Montana senatorial campaigns, and as a political expedient McCarthyism was adopted and practiced by the Republican senatorial candidates and Republican supporting organizations in Montana.

The tactic of McCarthyism was designed to capitalize on popular concern and fear of Communists and Communism by associating the Democratic party and individual Democrats with Communism. In both 1952 and 1954 the Republican senatorial candidates and their supporters in Montana accused their Democratic opponents of being Commie-coddlers, dupes of the Communists, and soft on communism. Democrats were accused of associating with and identifying with known Communists and Communist organizations. They were accused of allowing Communists

to infiltrate the government and of following policies which led to the loss of China to communism, and the outbreak of the Korean War was directly attributed to the absence of a vigorous anti-communist policy.

It may be argued that the attacks and charges leveled against the Democratic senatorial candidates were based strictly on the issues and on the record. It may be argued as Nixon argued 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.[1]

If this be the way one wishes to argue, he must explain such tactics as 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, the reason the same tactics used in 1952 were repeated in 1954, only more viciously, following two years of Republican control, and the reason the booklet "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress" was published and distributed if not for the sole purpose of seeking victory

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[1]Associated Press dispatch, Great Falls Tribune, September 3, 1952.

in a political election by assassinating the character of an opponent. Communism was assuredly a viable issue, especially in the campaign of 1952. However, in Montana, as across the nation, Republicans degenerated the issue into a campaign of character assassination directed at their Democratic opponents. When this occurred, McCarthyism as a rather unsavory means to an end was apparent.

Democrats often charged the Republicans with raising the Red issue because there was no other way the Republicans could win. This charge may not have been entirely true, but it is obvious that the Republicans who used McCarthyism believed it to be the surest and most dependable conveyance to victory.

Although there were a few scattered references or charges relative to the use of McCarthyism in campaigns other than the senatorial campaigns of 1952 and 1954, they were of little significance, and probably represented a carry-over effect from the senatorial campaigns. The evidence has indicated that to a large extent McCarthyism was imported into Montana from the national level because of the importance of the senatorial campaigns. The abortive attempt by the 1953 Montana State Legislature to imitate McCarthy is further indication that McCarthyism was viable only as a political weapon.

Although both senatorial campaigns considered here revealed a use of McCarthyism, there were differences. The 1952 campaign was not as vicious in its use of McCarthyism as was the 1954 campaign. The use of McCarthyism appeared to develop and

increase in intensity throughout the 1952 campaign as it became increasingly apparent that Ecton's chances of victory were waning. The use of McCarthyism in 1954 appeared suddenly and in overwhelming proportions, and it was planned well in advance of the campaign. One can locate 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 in most respects only an attempt at character assassination.

In sum, McCarthyism as it was used in Montana bore a definite relationship to McCarthyism as it was practiced nationally. It represented a politically expedient, but unethical, means to achieve the goal of public office. In Montana McCarthyism was strictly a campaign phenomenon.

APPENDIX I

The following is a partial reproduction of the hearings conducted by the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs concerning the nomination of Wesley A. D'Ewart to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior:

Senator Anderson. Mr. D'Ewart, you heard the statement by the chairman of the committee with reference to the type of campaign in Montana. He indicated that you might have something to say about it, and I wondered if you did have something to say about it.

Mr. D'Ewart. I would say, Mr. Chairman, that I was not the one that made the remarks to which I believe the Senator refers. I think that if he will examine the speeches I made, the radio broadcasts, he will find that they were not the kind of material to which he referred in that remark.

Senator Anderson. You do recognize that the campaign in its close was based almost entirely on the claims that Senator Murray was a Communist sympathizer?

Mr. D'Ewart. Not on my part.

Senator Anderson. When did you see this "Senator Murray and the Red Web over Congress"? In October, September, or earlier?

Mr. D'Ewart. I think it was in October. It was late in the year.

Senator Anderson. What did you do when you saw that?

Mr. D'Ewart. I did nothing, sir.

Senator O'Mahoney. Did you, yourself, believe in any of these things that were said about Senator Murray, that they were true?

Mr. D'Ewart. I have not examined them as to the truth, sir.

Senator O'Mahoney. The implication was that Senator Murray was associated with the Communists. Do you wish the committee to understand that you now think he might have been?

Mr. D'Ewart. Absolutely not.

Senator O'Mahoney. [question relative to disavowing the publication]

Mr. D'Ewart. And I also disavow any connection with this publication.

Senator O'Mahoney. But you took the benefits of it, sir. You did not disavow it while it was being circulated, and you knew it was being circulted.

Mr. D'Ewart. You are correct.

Senator Anderson. In Roosevelt County, Mont., on October 7, 1954, there is a full-page ad here: "Red record in Communist-front associations of Senator James E. Murray." Now, this was not put out by some fly-by-night organization . This was inserted and paid for by the Roosevelt County Republican Central Committee on October 7, approximately 1 month before the election.

When this was called to your attention, did you do anything about it?

Mr. D'Ewart. I don't remember seeing that ad. I have no knowledge of it.

Senator Anderson. Mr. D'Ewart, you are asking to be confirmed to a position of great responsibility, where you are the head of an enormous department, and many things ought to come to your attention. If a full-page ad cannot come to your attention, or something of this nature cannot come to your attention, what would, in a political campaign?

Mr. D'Ewart. I don't know. My own organization activities would come to my attention.

Senator Anderson. Did you at any time prior to election day express to the public or to Senator Murray, your opponent, your regret that your organization or the Republican organizations referred to his "Red record," so-called, in advertisements?

Mr. D'Ewart. Not publicly that I remember. I think I ignored the thing entirely.

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