Edward R. Murrow High School Ms. Sarno & Ms. Albu

**#194**

Allen Barge, Principal American History Semester 2

**McCarthyism**

**I. Introduction**

The Cold War had an important impact on the American home front. The Cold War caused **fear of communism** to grow. President Truman, who opposed communism, began to create groups to **investigate the loyalty** of the members of the government. Examples of activities considered proof of disloyalty to the American government include: *spying or working with spies*, *treason or being a traitor to the US*, *supporting revolution or violence against the US*, *giving documents or confidential information to any person*, *helping out the government of any other country against the US*, and/or *being a member of a group which is totalitarian, fascist, communist.*

As a result of the Cold War, the United States army began to rearm and new intelligence agencies came about. This included:

* **The Department of Defense & Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)**: ensure the security of the nation
* **House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC)**: investigate suspected disloyalty to the U.S.

A famous incident of disloyalty to the country during the Cold War were U.S. citizens, **Julius and Ethel Rosenberg**, who were convicted of **espionage** (planning to spy) during a time of war and give information to the USSR about the atomic bomb and were executed.

**II. Opposing Views**

Americans began to have opposing views on how far the U.S. government should go. **Like the 1920’s Red Scare, people feared that they would be considered a communist and spy and that their civil liberties (freedom) were threatened. Americans also argued that people were being accused that they were communists without any hard evidence.**

*“Five years after a world war has been won, men should be expecting a long period of peace, and men’s minds should be free from the worries of war. But this is not a time-period of peace. This is a time of the ‘cold war’ . . . the reason why we find ourselves in a position of weakness is because of the actions of traitors within our own country. This fact is obviously true in the State Department. In my opinion, the State Department is completely infested with communists. I have in my hand 57 cases of people who are suspected members of the Communist party, yet they are still part of our government – in the State Department.”*- **Senator Joseph McCarthy, 1950**

*“The American people are sick and tired of being afraid to speak their minds or they will politically smeared as communists or Fascists by their opponents, freedom of speech has been abused by some.”-* **Senator Chase, 1950**

*“We cannot defend freedom overseas by forgetting freedom at home”*- **Edward R. Murrow**

**Q. How do the views of Senator McCarthy differ than that of Senator Chase and Edward R. Murrow?**

**DIRECTIONS: Go around to different stations. Decide the views Senator McCarthy Edward R. Murrow would have on the information presented.**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **STATION** | **HOW WOULD MCCARTHY RESPOND TO THIS?** | **HOW WOULD MURROW RESPOND TO THIS?** |
| **U.S. PROPAGANDA**  **“America Under Communism”** |  |  |
| **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON UNAMERICAN ACTIVITES**  **(HUAC)** |  |  |
| **JULIUS AND ETHEL ROSENBERG TRIAL AND EXECUTION** |  |  |

**Regents Questions:**

**1. A similarity between the Red Scare of the 1920’s and McCarthyism in the 1950’s was that during each period**

1. thousands of American citizens were expelled from the United States
2. the Communist Party gained many members in the United States
3. many government employees were convicted of giving secrets to the Soviet Union
4. the civil liberties of American citizens were threatened

**2. Which situation resulted from Senator Joseph McCarthy’s search for Communists within the United States during the 1950’s?**

1. Thousands of American citizens who believed in communism were either jailed or deported.
2. The reputations of many people were ruined by false accusations of disloyalty
3. Many high-ranking government officials were exposed as spies of the Soviet Union.
4. Organized groups of Communists began a wave of violent political terrorism.

**3. What was a cause for the investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee in the late 1940s and the investigations of a Senate committee headed by Joseph McCarthy in the early 1950s?**

1. the belief that there were Communist agents in the federal government
2. excessive spending by the United States military
3. the corruption and bribery of members of Congress
4. actions of President Harry Truman that might have led to his impeachment

**4. Since the 1950s, the term McCarthyism has been applied to events that are related to**

1. the basic rights of citizens to own and carry guns
2. the violent activities of international terrorists
3. reckless accusations unsupported by evidence
4. questionable methods used to finance political campaigns