

Guide to
the Microfilm Edition
of the

**FBI File on
Joseph
McCarthy**

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Introduction

Joseph Raymond McCarthy was born outside Appleton, Wisconsin, on December 12, 1908; he died in Bethesda, Maryland, on May 2, 1957. McCarthy's fame came from his role in the Red Scare of the 1950s, with which his name has since become synonymous. The extent of his political reputation prior to the infamous McCarthy hearings came from his 1946 Republican primary upset victory over the incumbent senator, Robert LaFollette, Jr., scion of the LaFollette political dynasty. McCarthy then went on to win the Senate seat.

McCarthy's Senate career was undistinguished until February 1950, when the Republican Party sent him to Wheeling, West Virginia, to deliver the Lincoln Day address to the Ohio County Republican Women's Club, where McCarthy made his first national headline since the upset primary victory. Announcing that the federal government was rife with Communists and spies, he held up a clutch of papers that he claimed listed the names of 205 traitors working in the State Department. The Associated Press picked up the story, which made headlines around the country. When McCarthy reached the next stop on his speaking tour, Salt Lake City, he could not supply the clamoring press with the list, which he claimed was temporarily misplaced. The number of Communists in the State Department also had dropped to fifty-seven. When he returned to the Senate floor, the number was refined again, and the list still remained unavailable. It has never surfaced.

McCarthy's repeated failure to produce the list of names and the continuing inconsistency of the numbers did not hinder the surge of Red hysteria that became a national witch-hunt of unfathomable proportions. The early 1950s were ripe with unsubstantiated accusations regarding Communists, and those who doubted the veracity of McCarthy's statements wilted in the face of being charged with Communist sympathies. Thus, McCarthy was hailed rather than questioned. The undistinguished freshman senator from

Wisconsin became a national star and a feared and powerful politician. Communist infiltration of the government provided him with not only the attention and power that he craved but also—most important—the issue that he needed for reelection.

So successful was McCarthy in connecting himself with the fight against Communists that his name came to represent the Communist hysteria of the early 1950s. Given a Senate committee to investigate his charges, McCarthy and his aids used smears, slanders, rumors, and innuendos to destroy hundreds of people's careers and lives. Opposition to the senator's actions was most often career ruining. McCarthy fed off and fueled the Red Scare; however, just as his fame was his own creation so, too, was his downfall. Filled with his own sense of power, McCarthy turned on the enormously popular U.S. Army.

The Senate hearings on Communist infiltration into the U.S. Army attracted live television coverage, where McCarthy did not appear as the anti-Communist crusader that the public believed him to be but rather as a bully and a slanderer. The public's belief in a Red web of Communist conspiracy that supported McCarthy's reputation and career quickly unraveled. In December 1954 the Senate censured McCarthy. His reputation and political career in shambles, much like some of his many victims, he increased his already heavy drinking and died two years later.

The FBI took a great interest in McCarthy's charges and his committee's investigations. Director Herbert Hoover, a personal friend of the senator's, felt gratified that McCarthy had joined his lifelong battle against the Red menace. Hoover himself played a starring role in the nation's previous outbreak of Communist hysteria, the Red Scare of 1920. The future FBI director led Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer's crackdown on suspected Communists and anarchists that Palmer feared were plotting to overthrow the national government on May 1, 1920. The revolution did not materialize, but the nation was whipped into a frenzy, and 7,000 "suspect persons" were jailed or deported. The publicity and attention that McCarthy's

charges generated rekindled the blaze that Hoover had long tended. His thousands of warnings and requests for additional funding that went unnoticed before now seemed far-sighted as the director became the senior sage of anticommunism. McCarthy's hysteria bolstered Hoover and the bureau's position as the bulwark against the Soviet threat.

Throughout the McCarthy era, charges repeatedly surfaced that Hoover and the FBI were supplying McCarthy with confidential information. Despite these denials, it appears that the senator was secretly receiving information from the FBI at Hoover's behest. Clearly, Hoover personally and publicly supported McCarthy's actions, but the director emphatically denied aiding the senator's committee staff with any of its investigations. It is alleged that Hoover used McCarthy as a proxy, supplying him with information, speech writers, and training in the release of announcements just prior to the national press deadlines in order to avoid embarrassing and unanswerable questions until after the charges were already in print. It is also alleged that Hoover and the FBI debriefed witnesses and staffed McCarthy's office with former G-men. Both men clearly had much to gain from a close relationship. The tide of fear that McCarthy stirred up easily carried him to a second term. Hoover gained both a seemingly credible mouthpiece and a Senate investigating committee guaranteed to see things the bureau's way. McCarthy could generate the headlines that Hoover could not as a result of his years of crying wolf. The atmosphere that McCarthy created allowed the FBI to flourish, gaining the increased funding, power, and prestige desired by Hoover for years. McCarthy provided the catalyst for many of Hoover's dreams to come true.

McCarthy, however, reportedly strained the relationship with his patron by quoting from confidential FBI reports and by bragging publicly about his close personal relationship with Hoover. McCarthy overstepped the bounds when he showed an FBI-produced flowchart detailing the Communist spy ring in the State Department.

Hoover ordered "an immediate end to relations with McCarthy and declared him a "nonperson," thereby effectively severing even casual contact between G-men and McCarthy. Thus, the senator was cut off from one of his staunchest backers in the capital, and perhaps his best source of damaging material just prior to the fateful army hearings.

This file documents McCarthy's witch-hunt, from the initial 1950 allegations of Communist Party members in the State Department to the Senate's condemnation in 1954. It details the FBI's observations and involvement in McCarthy's accusations, and it includes much of the correspondence between Hoover and other senators, especially regarding Hoover's repeated denials that the FBI provided McCarthy with information. This file should be of particular interest to scholars of the twentieth century, especially of the Red Scare of the 1950s.

The documents reproduced here were drawn from the Washington files of the FBI and have been released under the Freedom of Information Act; certain documents or portions of documents have been deleted by the FBI pursuant to provisions of that legislation. The material has been filmed in the exact order and condition in which it was released, and every effort has been made to publish the most legible copies available.

This file is in approximate chronological order, and the FBI did not index documents. The Roll Notes section is not a complete inventory of the file; however, it gives an indication of the types of material or specific documents that may be particularly worthwhile for research.

Paul R. Beezley

Roll Notes

FBI File: 62-96332

SECTION 1

Roll 1, 0001-0178

Jun. 1950–Mar. 1953

Joseph McCarthy Misc.

Proposed McCarthy speech against Secretary of
Defense Marshall

Excerpt from the *Congressional Record*, Senate
(Aug. 1951)

Drew Pearson news article "McCarthy Ouster Move
Detailed" (Aug. 1951)

Internal memoranda signed: J. Edgar Hoover
Investigation of sodomy charge alleged against Sen.
Joseph McCarthy

News article:

Seattle Post Intelligencer (Oct. 1952)

"McCarthy TV Talk Cancelled Over Deletions"

Transcript of McCarthy speech given at the Palmer
House, Chicago (Oct. 1952) critical of presidential
candidate Adlai Stevenson

News article:

Las Vegas Sun (Oct. 1952)

"Where I Stand"

Sen. Joseph McCarthy: Alleged Sex Deviate
Transcript of McCarthy radio address (Nov. 3, 1952)

SECTION 2

Roll 1, 0179-0323

Feb. 1953–

Law Suit: *Joseph R. McCarthy vs. Post-Standard*

Internal Security: Joseph R. McCarthy

News article:

NY Post (Jul. 1953)

"Joe is Doing the Job, Says Texas 'Angel' "

McCarthy and alleged conspiracy to undermine the
Eisenhower administration

News article:

Tribune, Great Falls, MT (Aug. 1953)
"FBI Head Lauds McCarthy as 'Honest,
Controversial' "

Excerpt from Washington newsletter:

I. F. Stone Weekly (Sep. 1953)
"White Washing McCarthy"

Defense of Sen. McCarthy in Parliament by John
Blackmore (Canada)

FBI File: 121-23278

Roll 1, 0326-0509

Enclosure behind file
1942-1950

The real facts about the Tydings Subcommittee Investi-
gation of the State Department

Investigation into the loyalty of employees with the
Office of War information

Data on Communist groups with which Ambassador
Philip Jessup was affiliated

Survey of Departmental Personnel, Security Investiga-
tions (Aug. 1946)

SECTION 1

Roll 1, 0510-0677

Feb.-Mar. 1950

Investigation involving alleged Communists working for
the State Department

News article:

Salt Lake Tribune (Feb. 1950)
"Visiting Solon Cites Red Infiltration"

Reno Evening Gazette (Feb. 1950)

"McCarthy Prepares to List Communists at GOP
Session"

Allegations by Sen. Joseph McCarthy: Communists in
the State Department

Loyalty investigation of government employees

FBI File: 121-23278

SECTION 2

Roll 1, 0681-0855

Mar.-Apr. 1950

Communists in the State Department

Loyalty investigation of government employees

Excerpts from testimony before the Senate Foreign
Relations Subcommittee (Mar. 1950)

News article:

Washington Post (Mar. 1950)

“Undermining Foreign Policy”

“State Dept. to Open Files in Loyalty Quiz”

“Opening the Files”

SECTION 3

Roll 1, 0856-0971

Mar.-Apr. 1950

Loyalty investigation of government employees

The 81 cases furnished by Sen. McCarthy to the Tydings
Subcommittee

SECTION 4

Roll 1, 0973-1144

Apr.-May 1950

Loyalty investigation of government employees

Communist infiltration of the State Department

Newspaper: *The Machinist* (Apr. 6, 1950)

Excerpts from testimony before the Subcommittee of
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

SECTION 5

Roll 1, 1145-END

May-Jun. 1950

Roll 2, 0001-0032

Loyalty investigation of government employees

Charges against the State Department by Sen. McCarthy

Remarks made on Senate Floor by Sen. Joseph
McCarthy (Jun. 6, 1950)

Statements by McCarthy refuted

News article:

The Washington Post (Jun. 1950)

“New Charges by McCarthy Called ‘False’ ”

SECTION 6 **Roll 2, 0033-0096**
Apr.-Jul. 1950
Loyalty investigation of government employees
Survey of Departmental Personnel, Security Investigations

SECTION 7 **Roll 2, 0097-0223**
Jul. 1950
The 81 cases furnished by Sen. McCarthy to the Tydings
Subcommittee
Review of State Department Files in connection with
allegations made by Sen. McCarthy
Loyalty investigation of government employees
Transcripts of speeches delivered by Sen. William E.
Jenner
Transcript of speech delivered by Sen. Joseph McCarthy

SECTION 8 **Roll 2, 0224-0306**
Aug.-Oct. 1950
Communist infiltration of the State Department
Loyalty investigation of government employees
News article:
The Washington News (Jul. 1950)
"McCarthy has New Census of State Dept. Reds"
Pamphlet: "The Truth about the Subcommittee's Investi-
gation of the State Department"
Sen. Millard Tydings refutes radio commentator Fulton
Lewis, Jr. (Oct. 19, 1950)

FBI File: 121-35707 Sub-A **Roll 2, 0309-0548**
1950-1952

Numerous news articles include:
The Washington Post (Jan. 1951)
"McCarthy Reveals Review Board 'Transcript'
Hitting State Dept."
"Service, Appeal Denied by Loyalty Board"
"Loyalty Board Leaks to McCarthy Probed"
Uncredited newspaper article (Feb. 1952)
"Truman Blasts at McCarthy as 'Liar' "

The Washington Post (Mar. 1952)
"Staff Reported Urging Action in 5 Cases Against
McCarthy"
The Daily Worker (Apr. 1952)
"ACLU Asks Govt Hunt Aide Who Gave Data to
McCarthy"
NY Herald Tribune (Oct. 1952)
"U.S. Ousts Woman in McCarthy Leak"
Washington Post (May 1950)
"Truman to Release Files on McCarthy's 81 Cases"
"State Dept. Morale Hurt by McCarthy"
Times Herald (Jun. 1950)
"Fire Acheson for Aiding Reds, McCarthy Urges"

FBI File: 121-23278 Sub-A **Roll 2, 0549-0660**
Mar.-Apr. 1950

Numerous news articles include:

Washington Daily News (Feb. 1950)
"Lucas Demands 'Red' Names"
Washington Star (Mar. 1950)
"Tydings to Head Senate Probe of State Dept."
Washington Post (Mar. 1950)
"Ex-Judge Hurls Lie at McCarthy's 'Red' Charge"
NY Mirror (Mar. 1950)
"Sen. McCarthy Short on Evidence"
Times-Herald (Mar. 1950)
"FBI Files Subpoenaed by Tydings"

FBI File: 9-24556 **Roll 2, 0661-0689**
Mar. 1954

Investigation of death threat against Sen. McCarthy

FBI File: 9-25910 **Roll 2, 0690-0728**
Apr. 1954

Investigation of death threat against Sen. McCarthy

FBI File: 9-43378 **Roll 2, 0729-0738**
Jul. 1953

Investigation of death threat against Sen. McCarthy

FBI File: 9-31071

Roll 2, 0739-0756

Oct. 1956

Investigation of obscene mail received by Sen.
McCarthy

FBI File: 9-27383

Roll 2, 0757-0763

Jan. 1955

Investigation of death threat against Sen. McCarthy and
Rep. Dewey Short

FBI File: 121-41668

SECTION 1

Roll 2, 0764-0983

Jul.-Oct. 1950

Investigation into source of Sen. McCarthy's informa-
tion regarding government employees
Removal of government property; loyalty of government
employees

FBI File: 100-398328

SECTION 1

Roll 2, 0986-1137

Oct. 1952-Mar. 1953

Internal Security

Correspondence received from Sen. McCarthy's
office

Copy of *Committee on Un-American Activities House of
Representatives, Eightieth Congress, Jun. 16, 1947*

SECTION 2

Roll 2, 1138-1265

Jan.-Apr. 1953

Correspondence received from Sen. McCarthy's office
Affidavit of Mrs. Ann Avella seeking the deportation
of her husband, Dr. Michael Avella, as an unde-
sirable alien

News articles:

Attack (Mar. 1952), newspaper from St. Louis, MO
Young Socialist (Winter 1952)

Extortion practices through the illegal use of the federal
taxing powers

Reprint from: *Freedom & Union* (Sep. 1952)

SECTION 3

Roll 2, 1266-1323

Mar. 1953–Jun. 1954

Misc. material received from the office of Sen. McCarthy

News articles:

Washington Post (Nov. 1953)

“McCarthy Set a ‘Heady Mixture’ ”

Washington Post (Jun. 1954)

“Wisc. Professor Assails McCarthy’s ‘Warped
Theories’ ”

FBI File: 65-62092

Roll 2, 1325-1353

Sep. 1953

Alleged disclosure of classified information by Sen.
McCarthy

News articles:

Washington Star (Sep. 1953)

“McCarthy Bared Secrets, Army Charges”

NY Herald (Sep. 1953)

“Army Asserts McCarthy Handed Out Secret Data”

Washington News (Sep. 1953)

“Did McCarthy Break the Law”

FBI File: 94-37708

Roll 2, 1354-END

SECTION 1

Roll 3, 0001-0156

May 1947–Sep. 1953

Information concerning Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy

Transcription of radio broadcast (Apr. 6, 1949), Sen.

Joseph McCarthy with his guest J. Edgar Hoover

Reports of injury suffered by Jean Kerr, secretary to Sen.

Joseph McCarthy, while in Honolulu

Pamphlet: “McCarthy, the Man and the Ism” by Joseph
Morton (c.1953)

Book Review: “McCarthy, the Man, the Senator, the
Ism” by Jack Anderson and Ronald W. May

FBI File: 94-37708

Roll 3, 0157-0330

SECTION 2

Sep. 1953–Feb. 1971

Correspondence regarding comments by J. Edgar Hoover
praising Sen. McCarthy

Contract Carrier Conference Ohio Trucking Association
Service Bulletin (Sep. 1953)

News articles:

NY Herald Tribune (Sep. 1953)

“More McCarthyism”

The Yakima Daily Republic (Sep. 1953)

“The Revaluation”

Information regarding Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy

Eulogies for the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy

Certificate of Death for Sen. Joseph McCarthy

Requests to the FBI for information regarding Sen.
McCarthy

FBI File: 121-23278 Sub-A

Roll 3, 0333-0478

Numerous news articles include:

The Washington Star (no date)

“Truman May Order Loyalty Study to Beat New
McCarthy Blast”

The Washington Post (no date)

“McCarthy May Name 26 Being Investigated”

The Washington Post (Jan. 1951)

“State Department Reply Defies McCarthy Threat to
Name 29”

Excerpts from the *Congressional Record* (Aug. 1951)

Paper unknown (Jan. 1955)

“State Department Clears 80 Accused by McCarthy
in '50”

The Washington Times-Herald (Aug. 1950)

“The Herring is a Little Higher Now: The Report
Nobody Believes”

The Washington Times-Herald (Sep. 1950)

“GOP Senators Will Seek New State Dept. Probe”

“Ferguson Raps Probe Report on McCarthy”

FBI File: 121-23278
Enclosure Behind File
Feb. 1950

Roll 3, 0479-0612

Allegations by Sen. McCarthy

FBI File: 121-23278
Enclosure Behind File

Roll 3, 0615-0816

Excerpt from the *Congressional Record* (Feb. 1950)
Report: Loyalty of Government Employees, Executive
Branch U.S. Government (Apr. 1950)

FBI File: 121-23278
Enclosure Behind File

Roll 3, 0817-0871

Excerpts of testimony before the Subcommittee of the
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (Mar. 1950)

FBI File: 62-96332

SECTION 4
Oct. 1954-

Roll 3, 0872-0995

Information concerning Sen. Joseph McCarthy
Excerpts from the *Daily Worker* (Mar.-Oct. 1954), the
Communist Party newspaper

News article:

The Chicago Tribune (Nov. 1954)

"Prelate Tells of Big Pool to Oust McCarthy"

FBI File: 62-96332

SECTION 4 (*continued*)
Oct. 1954-Apr. 1958

Roll 3, 0872-0995

Uncredited newspaper article:

"McCarthy Slap Near Treason Manion Warns"

Investigation of alleged Mail-Cover on Senator
McCarthy

Alleged Communist infiltration into the National Labor
Relations Board

Allegations concerning the death of Sen. McCarthy

SECTION 3

Roll 3, 0996-1191

Mar. 1954–Feb. 1974

Information concerning Sen. McCarthy

Article: "Will Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy's Methods Save or Destroy America?"

Assassination threat against Sen. McCarthy

News articles:

TIME OUT . . . with Jim Hogan

"Is McCarthy a Communist?"

Rave Magazine (Jun. 1954)

"Secret Lives of Joe McCarthy"

Transcript of a 7-part newspaper series on Sen.

McCarthy as it appeared in the *Las Vegas Sun*, written by Hank Greenspun (Feb. 1954)

Esquire Magazine (Aug 1958) "The Last Days of Joe McCarthy" by Richard H. Rovere

News article:

The Tidings, Los Angeles (Jul. 1959)

"Coffin-Kickers Reopen Joe McCarthy's Grave"

FBI File: 121-23278

Roll 3, 1195-END

SECTION 9

Roll 4, 0001-0079

Nov. 1950–Jan. 1966

Source of Sen. McCarthy's information regarding government employees

Removal of government property; loyalty of government employees

Communist infiltration into the State Department

An address by Conrad E. Snow, Chairman of the Loyalty Security Board: "Communists in Government and the Loyalty Program"

FBI File: 157-35707

SECTION 1

Roll 4, 0080-0227

Jan. 1952–Mar. 1954

Source of information re: McCarthy's remarks about the Loyalty Review Board

News article:

Times-Herald (Jan. 1952)

“Loyalty Board Scores Laxity in State Dept.”

Excerpt from the *Congressional Record* (Jan. 15, 1952)

Excerpt from *U.S. News & World Report* (Feb. 8, 1952)

SECTION 2

Roll 4, 0228-0251

Mar. 1954–Sep. 1960

Misc. information concerning Alfred Kohlberg and
Miriam de Haas

Information concerning Lt. Gov. Philleo Nash (Wisc.)

FBI File: 121-41668

SECTION 2

Roll 4, 0255-0371

Oct. 1950–

Source of Sen. McCarthy’s information regarding gov-
ernment employees

Loyalty of government employees

News article:

The Milwaukee Journal (Nov. 1952)

“Ex-FBI Man Claims Senator Used False Document
on Floor”

FBI File: 121-41668

SECTION 2 (*continued*)

Roll 4, 0255-0371

Oct. 1950–Aug. 1956

News articles:

Milwaukee Sentinel (Nov. 1952)

“No Reds Bared by McCarthy: Ex-FBI Man”

“McCarthy Raps Ex-FBI Aid’s Talks as ‘New Low’ ”

Transcript from radio program, ex-FBI agent Ed Morgan
endorses senate candidate Tom Fairchild in a cam-
paign opposing Sen. Joseph McCarthy

Misc. information concerning Alfred Kohlberg and
Miriam Milliken de Haas

FBI File: 121-41668

73 Bulky Enclosure

Aug. 1950

Source of Sen. McCarthy's Removal of Government
Property

Roll 4, 0372-0385

FBI File: "See" references

Dec. 1953-Aug. 1955

Name checks on 52 congressmen and senators submitted
by G-2

Excerpt from *Human Events* (Apr. 21, 1954): "Good and
Bad Aggressors" by Chesly Manly

Transcript of Fulton Lewis, Jr. radio broadcast (May 2,
1957) reporting on the death of Sen. Joseph
McCarthy

Transcript: Hearings of the Permanent Subcommittee on
Investigations of the Committee on Government
Operations, U.S. Senate (Jun. 1956)

News articles:

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (May 1954)

"Slip-Up in the FBI"

Las Vegas Sun (Jan. 1954)

"Where I Stand" by Hank Greenspun

Transcripts of radio broadcasts featuring George
Sokolsky (Aug., Nov.-Dec. 1954)

News article:

Kansas City Star (Dec. 1953)

"McCarthy may be Overzealous" by Roy Roberts

Derogatory remarks concerning the director (J. Edgar
Hoover)

Roll 4, 0386-END