# Key Personality – Joe McCarthy

Joe McCarthy was born in Wisconsin in 1908 and as a young man he took part in World War II. At first McCarthy was a Democrat but then joined the Republican Party. In 1946, he won a seat in the Senate. McCarthy did not have much involvement in Political issues during his first three years in the senate but his national profile rose hugely after he gave a speech on the 9th February 1950. In this speech he announced that he had a list of 205 Communist party members who were employed in the state department. McCarthy went on to say that while in 1944 there were 180 million people under Soviet control this had risen to 900 million by 1950.

*“This is not a period of peace. This is the time of the Cold War. This is the tie when all the world is split into two camps. The reason we find ourselves in a position of importance is not because our only powerful enemy has sent men to invade our shores but rather because of the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this nation.”*

The reason why communism has risen from 180 to 800 million supporters was mainly because of china becoming communist and their huge population. At the time of the speech communism was a growing concern for the US this increased the trust and belief that the American people had in Joe McCarthy. McCarthy was looking for an issue in which he could make a name for himself and anti-communism had been something that suited him. Although McCarthy didn’t start the Red scare he took anti-communism to new levels. McCarthy was a dramatic speaker and used this ability to raise fears that there were many communist sympathisers in the US. The people of America started to distrust even close family members because of the rise of communism and it’s infiltration into the American home.

In February 1950, McCarthy set up the tyding’s committee which was set up to investigate any disloyal American’s that have been employed by the Department of state. As communist hysteria continued Congress passed the “McCarren Act 1950”. This act allowed for the forced registration of all communist organisations. In 1953, McCarthy became chairman of the “Committee on Government Operations Subcommittee on Investigations” As chairman McCarthy attacked respected people, e.g the Supreme court and US army. McCarthy lost supporters after attacked a decorated soldier for being a communist. On the 30th July 1854 he was accused of behaviour unbecoming of a member of the United states senator. His health was damaged after excessive drinking and he died on the 2nd of May 1957.