

Parallels of Joe McCarthy and Today's Political Climate and McCarthyism

PBS recently aired an interesting two hour documentary on the political career of Senator Joe McCarthy, which has lessons for us today.

James Lyman BSAE, BSEE, MSSM

www.economicandfinancereport.com

PBS, the Public Broadcasting Service, aired a very interesting episode of their American Experience detailing the political career of Senator Joseph McCarthy during his tenure as a U.S. Senator. The Senator has become notorious in history for his hunting of communist in the American academia and government during the early cold war years of the 1950's. A viewer with some knowledge of today's political environment will see parallels of those political happenings some seventy years ago with the happenings we see daily on the news. In particular, the technique Senator McCarthy used to advance his political career, which became known as McCarthyism.



The technique of McCarthyism is the practice of making defamatory accusations of impropriety without proper regard for evidence. For McCarthy, this was accusations of communist influence or sympathies, even of actually being a member of the communist party. As he used this technique, he grew more careless with his accusations, telling more glaring falsehoods in trying to sustain his publicity. He would make one false charge, and before it could be 'fact checked', he was telling another one to distract from the first one. It was something of a 'pyramid or ponzy scheme', and like any financial ponzy scheme, there comes a time when it collapses. This is the first parallel we see with today's news and the American Experience documentary.

The second parallel is the complacency of the news media, the Fourth Estate of our government. For Senator McCarthy, the press was concerned with increased sales of papers and audiences, so they didn't press for evidence . . . or concern for the tragedy of destroyed lives by public innuendo and implications with groundless charges, which the Fourth Estate also failed to investigate independently. McCarthy was a good draw of public attention (sales), and so the media failed at their principle responsibility in the government of America. Joe McCarthy was left to operate unchecked because the newspapers were more interested in increased revenues than reporting accurately.

Today, the press, both print and electronic, has little concern for its sales. Instead, they are more focused in creating a new world of their own, a world more isolated from technology where they are not the outsiders looking in. But this is a dream world, an illusion. Like all other illusions, constant attention must be given to prop up that image and guard against anything that can crack

the facade of a pretend world. This is the heart of the so called 'fake news' we've hear so much about in the news. Much of the news media is absorbed in creating their own new world, but in a high technology world where they lack the necessary intellectual skills to understand and make real changes, their only option is to create an illusion of that new world.

But in their preoccupations, they are failing at the Fourth Estate's principle responsibility- being the major check and balance of a modern government.

Being the counterpoise of corruption!

Without the 'check' of always questioning what they, the press, is told- those elected are able to do as they please without regard for those who elected them. Today, much of the press has a desire to build that dream world they want, a world they are comfortable in and understand. Like so many average Americans, they just don't want to face the realities of the modern technology based world, with them the outsiders looking in. Much of the problems we face today are driven by technology which also drives many of today's political problems, although to the casual observer, the roll of technology isn't readily apparent. Living in an alien environment, people yearn for a world of their own, that they understand and are comfortable in. A dream world they want and desire to build, with most of the Fourth Estate people falling into this growing category of people.

In not having the ability to create the world they want and dream of, they strive to create an illusion with various images . . . and therefore strongly resist anything which counters any of those images. They want a world of limited or invisible technologies, where they have the benefits of technologies without having to face or acknowledge them. This in turn leads to word games, the sparing with others by using words. Something which those in the news media excel at, trying to protect their world illusion, something where they have to be careful what they see or acknowledge. That means the avoidance of technically based problems, which leads to unquestioning support of those in the political scene who are like-minded . . . who are also instrumental in creating the illusion.

Consequently, reporters are careful not to ask critical or unsettling questions, while those perceived as being on the opposite side with the world of technology are closely scrutinized, often leading first into the word games then into a campaign to discredit. But it's not just the reluctance from technology, so many of the media simply don't have the education necessary to ask the right questions in a high technology world. A case of the blind standing in a darken room unable to go anywhere. Without a real education, you don't have any real understanding of the world you live in, and without that understanding, you have no real control of the world you live in. You have to just take what is being dished out to you.

The net result is members of congress are reverting back seventy years ago to those methods of Senator Joseph McCarthy. They too have turned to the emotionalism of McCarthyism in trying to preserve the image of the world they long for. But what they have actually done is avoid addressing the serious problems of obsolete people and technology displacement . . . and therefore the future for the millennials and generation-Zs.

Read and understand more at my website **www.peopleobsolete.com**.