



“McCarthy Cries Again,” Editorial, *Collier's*, August 2, 1952

Directions: Read the editorial and answer the questions.

...Backed by the prestige of his office, [McCarthy] sent a letter to “practically all *Time* advertisers,” according to his own statement, which, while it did not come right out and ask them to take their business elsewhere, suggested that they were doing their country a disservice by their continued support of the magazine...

Naturally Mr. McCarthy anticipated some criticism. “I realize,” he said, “that bringing these facts to the attention of *Time's* advertisers will cause some of the unthinking to shout that this is endangering ‘freedom of the press.’” But, he added, “To allow a liar to hide behind the cry ‘You are endangering freedom of the press’ is not only ridiculous, it is dangerous.”

To this we can only answer that when a man hides behind the cry “You are a liar” before anyone has accused him of endangering freedom of the press, he must be feeling rather insecure. And when he tries to intimidate a critical publication by seeking to alienate its chief sources of revenue, he is something less than courageous.

Senator McCarthy has set himself up as the final authority on loyalty and Americanism. He insists that his accusations are not to be doubted, and his

judgment is not to be questioned. Yet, a few weeks after he wrote his letter to *Time's* advertisers, he testified in Syracuse, New York that the *Washington Post* and the *New York (Communist) Daily Worker* “parallel each other quite closely in editorials.” And when he was asked whether he would consider the *Christian Science Monitor* a “left-wing smear paper,” he replied, “I can’t answer yes or no.”

Those are the statements of a man who is either woefully unperceptive or wholly irresponsible. And when such a man asks that his wild-swinging attacks be accepted without question, he is, to borrow his own words, not only ridiculous but dangerous.

We are not concerned that, on the basis of this editorial, the senator may now add us to his company of “left-wing smearers,” or that he may also warn our advertisers of the danger of supporting another publication which pollutes the waterholes of information. What does concern us is the real danger of Communist infiltration in government, and the fact that this danger is too serious to be obscured and clouded by Senator McCarthy’s eccentricities, exaggerations and absurdities.

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Compare and contrast the *Collier's* editorial (**Handout H**) with the concluding statement issued by Edward R. Murrow (**Handout I**). Underline or highlight both journalists' assessment of McCarthy to show which statements or passages you think make their points most powerfully.
2. What, according to McCarthy, are the limits of free speech?
3. What, according to *Collier's*, are the limits of free speech?