Talking Sense to the American People: The Appeal of Adlai Stevenson in the McCarthy Era.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The paradox of the political career of Adlai Stevenson has always been obvious to historians who have studied Stevenson or US politics in the 1950s. He rose rapidly to prominence following his election as governor of Illinois in 1948 and was nominated twice in succession, in 1952 and 1956, as the Democratic Party's candidate for President. Even after two decisive defeats in those years, he received surprisingly strong support at the 1960 Democratic convention to again become the Democratic candidate. It is unusual for US politicians to maintain a solid political base after losing a presidential race and those leaders who did have often have been major figures of their era. Losing presidential candidates generally fade into obscurity, especially if they are defeated as soundly as Adlai Stevenson was in 1952 and 1956. Stevenson has generally been considered an also ran by historians, however the fact that Stevenson managed to hold on to his support in the Democratic Party through this period is notable and warrants further study.

The imperative to study Stevenson's career is also heightened by the paradox of the nature of the support he received. Stevenson's base of support within the Democratic Party was its liberal and academic elements. This is despite the fact that on the key issues that were supposed to define post-war liberalism, Stevenson's positions were much closer to those of the conservative wing of the party. On civil rights, Stevenson was correctly accused of 'gradualism', his support of labour unions was offset by anxieties about 'big labour' and his fiscal conservatism tempered any proposals to increase the social services of the welfare state. On one sole issue was Stevenson truly in line with the liberalism of his time and that was McCarthyism.[1]

My aim in this thesis is to answer the question of why Stevenson retained such support through this period. I believe this can be answered by looking at his response to the issue of McCarthyism. The contention of this thesis will be that the rise of McCarthyism in the United States shifted politics, rearranging priorities in a way that both created opportunities for Adlai Stevenson's rise to prominence and esteem amongst the liberals and intellectuals of the Democratic Party and shaped the opposition that he experienced. This thesis will argue that Stevenson, a moderate Democrat, was able to win the devotion of liberal circles not by his policy views, but by creating a political persona that met the specific needs of the period. It will do this by examining the liberal media support for Stevenson throughout the period and how it was expressed. Stevenson was an eloquent and witty speaker who was able to express his opposition to McCarthyism through a positive and patriotic vision of a United States that was committed to preserving civil liberties.

1. Jean H. Baker, *The Stevensons: A Biography of an American Family* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996), 62-100. Baker uses the term 'gradualism' to describe what many contemporary and later critics have seen as Stevenson's unwillingness to embrace strong action by the federal government to implement civil rights reforms.

During this period liberalism treasured these values above the priorities that traditionally thought to guide it, such as the expansion of the welfare state or the pursuit of civil rights. The thesis will argue that McCarthyism also shaped the opposition to Stevenson. His pre-gubernatoral career, which involved work for the Agricultural Adjustment Authority (AAA), the State Department and United Nations (UN), took on a major significance in a way it would not have at another period. His deposition regarding the reputation of Alger Hiss, which was a minor intervention into a contentious issue, was used as a major criticism of him as Governor and in his campaign for the presidency.

Stevenson was a transitional figure in the history of both the Democratic Party and US liberalism. In1948 the Democratic Party fractured, with the left and the South running candidates against Truman. Although the rift had superficially healed by the time Stevenson was nominated, tensions still remained. Stevenson was an acceptable candidate to the conservatives and Southerners, who were mollified by his cautious approach to civil rights and his unease with labour unionism. The admiration that liberals felt towards him because of his stand against McCarthyism helped glue the Democratic Party together during the 1950s. To view his era of leadership as a retreat from Fair Deal liberalism, as some have argued, is I argue not correct.[2] Stevenson bridged a gap between the liberalism of the Fair Deal and the liberalism of the New Frontier and he used the language and ideas developed during the McCarthy period as that bridge.

The historical literature on Stevenson is mostly biographical and often dated. The first generation of Stevenson's biographers admired and often worked for him. Of these John Bartlow Martin's two volume biography, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois* and *Adlai Stevenson and the World* is the most detailed. While it managed to be critical of Stevenson at points and provided important insights about his life and career, it was still clearly the work of an admirer and did not achieve full analytic distance.[3] There have been two notable modern biographies of Stevenson: Jeff Broadwater's *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics: The Odyssey of a Cold War Liberal* and Jean H. Baker's *The Stevensons: A Biography of an American Family.*[4] Both of these works have advanced the historical research on Stevenson. Both leave historical questions to be answered.

Baker's biography was written as a biography of the Stevenson family with Adlai at the centre. Baker believed that the Stevenson family's focus on their history and lineage meant that ideals about public service were passed down between those members who entered public life and that this explained Stevenson's oddly old-fashioned notion regarding disinterested public service.[5]

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2. Kevin Boyle, "The Pull of Consensus." In *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism, 1945–1968*, 83-106. (Ithca; London, Cornell University Press, 1995). www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt1rv6214.9.

3. John Bartlow Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois: The life of Adlai E. Stevenson* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1976); John Bartlow Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World: The life of Adlai E. Stevenson* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1977); Ray E. Boomhower, 'All the Way with Adlai: John Bartlow Martin and the 1952 Adlai Stevenson Campaign', *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Vol. 111, No. 3 Fall 2018, 67-102.

4. Baker, *The Stevensons: A Biography of an American Family;* Jeff Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics: The Odyssey of a Cold War Liberal* (Twayne Publishers: New York, 1994).

5. Baker, *The Stevensons: A Biography of an American Family.*

Left unanswered is why Stevenson found such a political following for these ideas and why he was able to sustain it over such a long period.

Broadwater's biography attempted to explain Stevenson's support but his conclusion seems tenuous. Broadwater argued that Stevenson's perseverance and his urbane wit and personality explained his success, but did not explain why that would be so attractive to the public at this period in history.[6] These works also did not focus on McCarthyism. While all of them discuss Stevenson's relationship with anti-communism in detail they are general biographies that did not analyse it in a systematic way.

The most informative treatment of Stevenson's relationship with McCarthyism was Kenneth O'Reilly's article 'Adlai E Stevenson, McCarthyism, and the FBI'. It acknowledged Stevenson's genuine abhorrence for McCarthy and his methods, but argued that Stevenson's support for FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI strengthened the Red Scare by supplying support to its leading force. The article focused on this specific argument and did not attempt to analyse Stevenson's position on McCarthyism more broadly or its role in his overall political career.[7] An article by Arnold Beichman that compared and contrasted the leadership styles of Joseph McCarthy and Adlai Stevenson focused only on Stevenson's career as ambassador to the UN in the 1960s and did not discuss his leadership on the issue during the 1950s.[8] A 1959 article that evaluated the leadership of Stevenson and Eisenhower in the McCarthy era echoed the sentiment of many of Stevenson admirers and did not achieve enough critical distance from him.[9]

Another major subsection of Stevenson scholarship is works studying the 1952 election. As Stevenson lost the 1952 election, and those who have written about it have increasingly focused on why voters chose Eisenhower over Stevenson.[10] Their judgements of Stevenson have often been negative, focused on the inaccessibility of his oratory and his dismissive attitudes towards newer campaign tactics such as television advertising. These attitudes are contrasted with the Eisenhower's campaign, which adopted a simpler and more streamlined campaign message that resounded with voters across the country. This body of literature does not clearly analyse what made Stevenson an attractive candidate to many of his supporters. The historical literature on McCarthyism has not discussed Stevenson in great detail. Mostly Stevenson appears in these works when discussing his Hiss deposition and his support for Hoover and the FBI. Generally Stevenson is not seen as a major figure in these works. This thesis will analyse his role during the

6. Broadwater*, Adlai Stevenson and American Politics.*
7. Kenneth O'Reilly, 'Adlai E. Stevenson, McCarthyism, and the FBI', Illinois Historical Journal, Vol. 81, No. 1 (Spring, 1988), 45-60. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40192197.
8. Arnold Beichman, 'The Politics of Personal Self-Destruction: Stevenson and McCarthy as Anti-Leaders', Policy Review, (Feb/Mar 2006), 63-74.
9. Stuart Gerry Brown,'Eisenhower and Stevenson in the McCarthy Era: A Study in Leadership', *Ethics*, Vol. 69, No. 4 (Jul., 1959), 233-254. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2379420
10. James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); John Robert Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952,* (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2017).

McCarthy period and his engagement with anti-communism and thus contribute to the understanding of the period.

It will also explore an area that has been too long neglected in the histories of the period: liberalism. Liberalism during this period was long seen as ineffectual in confronting McCarthyism. This criticism has come both from scholars on the left and on the right of the political divide. After the collapse of the Soviet Union many of the old arguments regarding the period were resolved and new ones emerged. It is now clear that there were cases of Soviet espionage and many of the major figures who were accused of being Communists and agents for the Soviet Union were guilty of passing information to the Soviet Union. Added to this, the historical literature detailing the crimes of the Stalinist era Soviet Union has grown in size and in popular consciousness, and disgust with the regime and those who supported it has become more widespread.

These two factors led to a resurgence in conservative histories that have sought to rehabilitate the instigators and leaders of the Red Scare. Most notable among these is Arthur Herman's *Joseph McCarthy: Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America's Most Hated Senator* which attempted to rehabilitate McCarthy from charges that he was simply a reckless attention seeker, who never uncovered a communist and damaged countless innocent people's reputations.[11] Instead Herman argued that McCarthy, though a flamboyant populist, was seriously committed to the issue of exposing communism in government and was unfairly smeared.

Similarly Irwin Gellman's *The Contender: Richard Nixon, the Congress Years, 1946-1952* argued that Richard Nixon's early years as a congressman and a senator have been systematically misrepresented.[12] Instead of the unscrupulous campaigner who smeared his Democratic opponent with misleading charges of being soft on communism, Gellman painted Nixon as an idealistic though practical politician who faced weak candidates who were far to the left of their constituents. Nixon's attacks were well within the bounds of acceptable behaviour in the rough and tumble world of politics and Nixon's opponents had taken stands on issues relating to Communism that needed to be answered. In these work liberals are presented as ignoring the genuine menace presented by communism and as having smeared conservative politicians who were addressing a legitimate national security issue. Stevenson is depicted briefly in these works usually as a naive defender of Hiss, a depiction that is at best misleading.[13]

Liberalism fared no better at the hands of left-wing historians. The most prominent among these historians is Ellen Schrecker, and her overview of the period *Many Are The Crimes: McCarthyism in America.* Although the work is now over twenty years old, it is still informs recent

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11. Arthur Herman, *Joseph McCarthy: Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America's Most Hated Senator*, (New York, The Free Press), 2000; another work that attempted to redeem McCarthy in the eyes of history is M. Stanton Evans, *Blacklisted by History: The Untold Story of Senator Joe McCarthy and his Fight Against America's Enemies,* (New York: Crown Forum, 2007).
12. Irwin F. Gellman, *The Contender: Richard Nixon the Congress Years 1946-1952*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
13. Herman *Joseph McCarthy*, 87-88; Gellman,T*he Contender,* 413-414.

overviews. An example of this is Jonathan Michaels' *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare*, which cites Schrecker's study frequently.[14] Schrecker's history is mostly focused on the members of the U.S. Communist Party and the loose alliance of anti-communist figures who she believes drove and shaped the Red Scare.[15] In this work liberalism was briefly mentioned either as surrendering its principles and embracing McCarthyism, or as cowed into silence by the repressive power of anti-communism rhetoric. Stevenson was only briefly mentioned in the context of his support for Hoover and the FBI.

Many of the recent historical works that have broken new ground have expanded upon Schrecker's work to explore the period through the lens of gender history and sexuality, long neglected by historians of the period. David K. Johnson's *The Lavender Scare: The Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* shone a light on the purge of suspected homosexual and bi-sexual government employees during the period. As many as six hundred federal government employees were fired during this period. Johnson argued that this purge continued longer and encountered much less opposition than the punitive measures towards left-wing federal employees and has largely been ignored by historians of the period.[16] Landon Storrs' *The Second Red Scare and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left* argued that many of the targets of loyalty investigations were left-wing feminist women and that conservative fears about greater female participation in the federal government dismayed and frightened them and boosted support for anti-communist measures.[17] While these studies are valuable, still more work needs to be done to understand the dilemma that mainstream liberalism found itself in during this period.

In the field of biography there has been increased interest in liberalism during this period. During the 1960s and 1970s the liberal leaders of the post war period became increasing reviled. However within the past few years figures such as Hubert Humphrey, Herbert Lehman and others have been reevaluated in attempts to understand the unique circumstances that post-war anti-communism imposed upon liberalism.[18] Because of the cold war, liberals had to clearly distinguish themselves from leftists. Of the liberal leaders of the period, Stevenson has notably not received revaluation.

Nicholas Wisseman's article 'Falsely Accused: Cold War Liberalism Reassessed' has attempted to present a more nuanced picture of liberalism by examining the career of University of Illinois' President George D. Stoddard, who had previously been written off as an example of an academic administrator who bowed to the pressure of the McCarthy era and abandoned the

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14. Jonathan Michaels, *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare,* (New York: Routledge, 2017).
15. Ellen Schrecker*, Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston*:* Little, Brown and Company, 1998)
16. David, K.Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004).
17. Landon R.Y. Storrs, *The Second Red Scare: and the Unmaking of the New Deal Left*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2013).
18. Arnold A. Offn, *Hubert Humphrey: The Conscience of the Country,* (Yale University Press, 2018); Duane Tananbaum, *Herbert H. Lehman: A Political Biography,* (New York: SUNY Press, 2016).

responsibilities of his position to ensure that academics and students had freedom of discussion and academic freedom. Wisseman argued that in fact Stoddard did not surrender to McCarthyism but pursued his own path. He enforced a policy that prevented Communists from teaching but also fought McCarthyite politicians such as Paul Broyles from encroaching on what he believed to be academic freedom and vocally denounced them. Wisseman argued that anti-communist liberalism of this period was distinct from McCarthyism and should be considered on its own merit.[19] This work, while of value, is focused on the academic arena and leaves room for a similar exploration of the political realm.

Studies of individual anti-communist leaders have also highlighted the differences between liberal and conservative anticommunism. The difference between liberal and conservative anti-communist can best be understood by a difference in methods. Both liberal and conservative anti-communists sough to remove Communists from the political life of the US, however liberals wanted to make sure that this was done in a way that would ensure that those who were accused were given due process. They were deeply suspicious of the public hearing by organisation such as the House Un-American Committee (HUAC), which they believed was partisan and irresponsible in the way it approached the issue. Conservatives meanwhile distrusted the internal process the Truman administration had for investigating employees whose loyalty was suspect, as they believed that either by incompetence or by design it had let many Communists remain in government employment. They wanted publicly held hearings that would investigate Communists and fellow travellers in all walk of life and more stringent internal standards for investigations.

A recent biography of major anti-communist senator Pat McCarran has portrayed the stark political choices that faced liberalism during the period. There was evidence that communists in government were involved in espionage, so there was an unquestionable need for investigations into the issue of communism. However figures such as McCarran genuinely believed that the Democratic party had been infiltrated by communists who were trying to destroy the United States. These two factors defined anti-communist liberalism during the period. Liberals could not simply dismiss anti-communism as a hoax nor could they support the measures that conservative anti-communists proposed as they threatened civil liberties and were targeted at destroying many of the reforms of the New Deal and Fair Deal era.[20]

To research this topic I will use a number of secondary sources, but the thesis is based on primary source research. The primary sources are mainly Stevenson's speeches and letters, as well contemporary media coverage. These sources shed the most light on the topic for a number of reasons. Stevenson primarily won his reputation with his supporters because of his oratory. His supporters believed that the erudition, wit, intelligence and honesty of his speech qualified him to

19. Nicholas Wisseman, 'Falsely Accused: Cold War Liberalism Reassessed', *The Historian* Vol 66, No. 2 (Summer 2004), 320-334.
20. Michael J. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy: Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt* (Hanover: Steerforth Press, 2004).

be president. More than any concrete political actions or event, Stevenson's speeches are the key to understanding his influence and longevity. Stevenson himself devoted a great amount of energy to crafting these speeches. In fact one of the common complaints about his campaign was that he devoted far too much time to the speeches and not enough to wooing voters and building relationships with national leaders.[21] Additionally, although Stevenson employed a team of speech writers, he would still extensively edit and polish his speeches to a degree unusual for a politician.[22] Therefore these speeches are the best way to understand Stevenson's appeal and his political philosophy. Stevenson was also a notable letter writer in an age when most politicians were primarily communicating through the telephone. His letters also have an unusual intimacy and honesty and because of this they will be often quoted.

Newspapers and periodicals are the other main primary source for this thesis because of the contemporary commentary they provide. As television was still in its infancy, the print media contributed the most widespread and detailed analysis of the political landscape at the time. Through the editorial and letter pages of the newspapers we can see how the paper commented on the events and also how their readers responded to events. I will focus on a number of key publications in analysing Stevenson's career.

The *Chicago Tribune* will be essential as it was one of the foremost conservative newspapers in the country. In particular the isolationist *Tribune* exemplified the Midwestern conservatism from which McCarthy and his allies grew. Since it was based in the state of Illinois (Stevenson's home state), it followed him throughout his career and gives a sense of how perceptions of him shifted. The thesis will also use a number of other papers from Illinois in the first chapter to understand how Stevenson's career as governor was covered during this period. The *Daily Pantagraph* of Bloomington will be of particular interest as it was a moderate Republican paper that also had a strong familial connection to Stevenson. In the second and third chapters, covering the period when Stevenson had become a national figure, a greater variety of sources will be used. For conservative papers, while still using the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times* will be used to add an additional conservative perspective. For a liberal perspective the *New Republic* will be used, as it was the most prominent liberal publication at the time. Two of the most prestigious journalistic publications of the period, the *New York Time*s and *Life*, will also be used because of their influence in shaping public opinion.

I have set myself three tasks in this thesis. The first is to outline Stevenson's views on how to address the issue of domestic communist subversion and on the conservative politicians particularly Joseph McCarthy and Richard Nixon who warned of communist infiltration of the United States and their tactics. The second is to understand how Stevenson's position on this issue and the way he articulated it both endeared him to his supporters and made them believe that he could

21. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois:* 761-2.
22. Ibid., 635.

win the presidency for the Democratic Party. The third is to understand how Stevenson's position on McCarthyism was characterised by conservatives and how they used these characterisations to oppose him.

The term McCarthyism needs definition and discussion. In this thesis, the term McCarthyism will refer to postwar conservative politicians' claims that the Truman administration and Democratic politicians were ignoring or even protecting communists and communist sympathisers in government; and the conservatives' attempts to use the issue for partisan political purposes, not the broader effort to remove communists from US political and economic life. [23] This definition not only cover the peak of Joseph McCarthy's career (1950-1954) but also the rise of anti-communist political rhetoric in the postwar period (1946-1954). The benefit of this limited definition is that it conveys more accurately the perceptions of contemporaries who may have agreed that communists and their fellow travellers should be removed from public life, but still bemoaned the efforts of conservative politicians who, as they saw it, spread false claims and attacked loyal US citizens. This term also excludes the efforts by governmental agencies and other non-state actors to remove communism from US life, often without the publicity and sensation that McCarthy and his contemporaries attracted. While this is an important part of the period, this thesis will focus on Adlai Stevenson who was a governor and presidential candidate, it falls outside its purview. Joseph McCarthy only emerged into public consciousness in 1950. By that stage the tactics that were associated with his name were already well established and familiar to the US. This thesis will use McCarthyism to describe the whole of the period (1945-1954) for reasons of clarity and consistency.

This thesis will be split into three chapters. The first will briefly discuss Stevenson's early career and background and his views on communism, both domestically and in foreign policy. It will then focus on his time as Governor of the state of Illinois. In particular it will discuss his decision to supply a deposition on behalf of Alger Hiss, his veto of the controversial anti-communist Broyles Bill and the investigation of communist infiltration in the University of Chicago. The arguments he developed during this period against the hysteria of anti-communism and the actions he took laid the foundation for the arguments against McCarthyism that would characterise his presidential campaign. His stand on these issues would endear him to liberals and make his nomination for president possible and shape the way conservative opposition to him would develop.

The second chapter will focus on the Presidential campaign of 1952. It will explore how Stevenson discussed McCarthyism in his campaign, defended himself against attacks by McCarthyite politicians and how themes related to McCarthyism, such as freedom of speech and thought, were discussed in his campaign more generally. It will also examine why the 1952 campaign excited so many liberals and academics and how the atmosphere created by

23. Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America*. Schrecker's monograph focuses more on the institutional side of McCarthy that has been downplayed in moss histories.

McCarthyism played its part in elevating the campaign in the minds of Stevenson's supporters. The chapter will also discuss how conservatives, in particular Nixon and McCarthy, used Stevenson's perceived weakness on the issue of communism to attack Stevenson's campaign and how the attacks affected the result of the election.

The third chapter will focus on the period between the close of the 1952 election campaign and the fall of Joseph McCarthy in 1954. It will assess Stevenson's role in McCarthy's censure and show how during this period he was able to refine his critique of McCarthy and incorporate it even more firmly into his political message. It was also look at how his post-election activities affected the 1954 Democratic mid-term win.

Chapter One

Adlai Stevenson (1900-1965) was born in Bloomington, Illinois, into a comfortably wealthy family. His maternal and paternal ancestors were prominent locally (and in the case of his grandfather, nationally). On his father's side, his most famous ancestor was undoubtedly his namesake Adlai Stevenson, a local congressman who had attained the role of Postmaster General in the first administration of Grover Cleveland and rose to be vice president in Cleveland's second administration.[24] The maternal wing of his family boasted figures not nationally famous but who had even greater local prestige and popularity than his grandfather. His maternal great grandfather, Jessie Fell, had been a key figure in establishing the town of Bloomington, an early promoter of the town and an early booster of Abraham Lincoln.[25] His maternal grandfather was William O. Davis, who founded and ran the most prominent local paper in Bloomington, the Bloomington *Daily Pantagraph*.[26] This paper remained within the family during Stevenson's lifetime, although it was controlled by his cousins and was often not as supportive of his political career as he would have liked.[27]

Stevenson's family background has often been emphasised by his biographers. Jean H. Baker notes that both branches of his family tree valued public service and civic engagement as duties of a responsible citizen.[28] This could be undertaken by pursuing a political career, as his paternal grandfather had done and his father had attempted, or by pursuing projects for civic improvement and education, as his maternal great grandfather and grandfather had done. Stevenson from a young age was instilled with an idealised vision of public service and democratic politics that was to become a defining characteristic of his political and personal life. His maternal and paternal ancestry also represented values that could come into conflict. Stevenson's paternal grandfather was a Democratic loyalist who viewed politics through the lens of party loyalty with pragmatism as a guiding principle, while his maternal ancestors placed greater emphasis on civic virtues and public service. These values, even when contradictory, were equally important in his career.

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24. Baker, *The Stevensons*, 62-100; Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 11-17. Martin devotes considerable space and attention in his biography to Stevenson's family history in explaining his character and career, Baker's monograph, though it is a primarily focused on the figure on Adlai Stevenson is subtitled as a biography of the Stevenson family, by this Baker argues that the common character and principles of the family was the greatest factor in shaping Adlai's career.

25. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 7-9, 20-24, 27.

26. Ibid., 17-20, 35-40.

27. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 7-9, 20-24, 27, 17-20,35-40, 18, 100.

28. Baker, *The Stevensons.* Ix-xii; Jonathan A. Cowden, 'Self-Effacing and Self-Defeating Leadership: Adlai E. Stevenson' in *Political Psychology*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (December 1999,) 845-874. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3792197 Baker argued that this ideology the driving force in Stevenson's career and sees family trait shared by multiple generations of the family. This thesis is outlined in the introduction to the work. Cowden article argued that Stevenson's family background helped form his political philosophy and his interest in public service.

On a practical level, the Stevenson name was notable enough to grant him the name recognition that a politician needs to sell himself to voters. Stevenson on numerous occasions evoked his ancestors for political purposes. The best example was the climax of his gubernatorial campaign. Stevenson's campaign staged an 1890s-themed torchlight parade through Bloomington that was designed to remind the audience of his famous grandfather and his deep political roots in the community.[29]

Stevenson's heritage also shaped his career during the McCarthy era, in a way that previous biographers have not noted. Stevenson's family was divided between Republicans and Democrats – the maternal side Republican and the paternal side Democrat. Personally this gave Stevenson a perspective that made him uncomfortable with the bitter partisanship of McCarthyism. He could appreciate the history of both parties and it pained him to see the Democratic Party depicted as an institution devoted to the subversion of the nation and its history. Stevenson's personal connection to US history also bolstered his defence against charges of being an alien or 'Un-American' candidate, making him a safer candidate politically for voters worried about such issues and allowing him to credibly position his resistance to McCarthyism as deriving from a long and proud US tradition. He evoked revered figures from US history to justify his opposition to the measures proposed by anti-communists, quoting figures such as Lincoln to show that his opposition to McCarthy and his supporters was proudly rooted in the history of the United States.[30]

Stevenson was trained as a lawyer and briefly took up a post in the AAA during the early days of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, before returning to private life.[31] He re-entered public life as president of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. In 1940 he became chairman of the Chicago branch of the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies (known more popularly as the White Committee after its founder William Allen White).[32] This committee was designed to promote greater support for the allies at a time when isolationist sentiment predominated within the US.[33] When the United States entered the Second World War, he again took a government post as Special Assistant to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox also from Illinois, a post he remained in until Knox died in 1944.[34] Stevenson and Knox, a Republican, developed a close working relationship during this period which proved Stevenson could work with Republicans. During this period he conducted fact finding missions to the South Pacific as well as Italy.[35] In 1945 Stevenson joined the

29. Ibid., 13-16.
30. Adlai Stevenson 'Governor Stevenson speech at ceremonies on the occasion of the eighty-eighth anniversary of Lincoln Gettysburg Address' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, 468-471, Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973. This is but one example of Stevenson linking his critique of McCarthyism to a great US figure.
31. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 103-105.
32. Ibid., 125-127.
33. Ibid., 125-127.
34. Ibid., 221.
35. Ibid., 213-220. Stevenson visit to Italy is significant in Stevenson's biography for two reasons. Firstly, Stevenson cites his visit to Italy as the inspiration for him running for elected office. Secondly, Joseph McCarthy would attack Stevenson

State department and was deeply involved in preparations for the emerging UN.[36] His first role was to assist in managing press relations during the San Francisco conference on the United Nation which opened in April 1945 and was charged with drafting the charter for the organisation. When the UN Preparatory Commission convened in September in London, Stevenson was given the rank of minister and named as a deputy delegate. The US Ambassador to the United Nations, Edward R. Stettinius, became ill during the session and Stevenson was forced to act as the head of the US delegation until the end of the Preparatory Commission.[37]

This period of his career is important in establishing Stevenson's overriding interest in foreign policy, which would be his primary focus through his political career and coloured the way that he viewed and criticised McCarthyism. It also established him as an internationalist and a strong proponent of collective security and co-operation. This made unacceptable to isolationists who would often, but not exclusively, be counted among the passionate and committed supporters of McCarthy and his tactics. This period of Stevenson's career provided fertile ground for many of the anti-communist charges against him by linking him to institutions that were highly suspect in the eyes of conservative anti-communists. The AAA had long been rumoured to have been infiltrated by communists, a rumour that had seemed to be confirmed when the case of Alger Hiss came to light.[38] For many, Stevenson's work for the State Department and United Nations seemed only to confirm that he possessed subversive leanings. The State Department was the primary target of McCarthy himself and of many other anti-communists.[39] It was believed that secret Communists in the State Department had allowed the Soviet Union to establish its hold on Eastern Europe by encouraging Roosevelt to accept the Yalta agreement.[40] It was also believed that Communists within the State Department had 'lost' China by weakening and obstructing US support for the government of Chiang Kai Shek and that this had allowed Mao Zedong's communist forces to seize China and bring it into the Soviet orbit.[41] These claims overlooked the fact that Stalin and Mao were rivals within the communist world.[42]

The United Nations was even more suspect in the eyes of anti-communists. They were hostile to the stated purpose of United Nations of promoting dialogue and co-operation between

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as weak on communism claiming that he had recommended bringing communists into the Italian government in the post war government.

36. Ibid., 240.

37. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics*, 65-66.

38. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy* 150-161. Ybarra paints an evocative picture of the AAA in the early days of the Roosevelt administration.

39. Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes,*370-373. Schrecker's work stresses the importance of McCarthyism on the state department and the damage done by the accusations made during the period.

40. Joyce Mao, 'The Specter of Yalta: Asia Firsters and the Development of Conservative Internationalism', *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations,* Vol. 19, No. 2 (2012), 132-156, https://www.jstor.org/stable/23613338; Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes,*156. The presence of Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White at the conference and the later revelation that both had provided information to the Soviet Union, made this a key event for those who believed that the Soviet Union had covertly weaken the foreign policy of the United States.

41. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy,* 440-441. Ybarra extensively discusses the so called 'China Lobby' and the careers of the men they accused of having 'lost' China.

42. Michael M. Sheng, 'Response: Mao and Stalin: Adversaries or Comrades?' in *The China Quarterly*, No. 129 (March, 1992,) 180-183, https://www.jstor.org/stable/654603.

nations (including the Soviet Union).[43] This was because they opposed any co-operation with communist countries and worried that the United Nations would erode the sovereignty of the United States and its ability to act freely.[44] In 1948, the Illinois Democratic Party boss Jack Arvey decided that Stevenson would make a strong candidate for the party in the gubernatorial race and persuaded him to run. Arvey chose Stevenson because of his appeal to good government groups, his 'clean skin' and political pedigree.[45] Arvey believed that this would be a political asset in this election year, as the current Governor Dwight Green was under a cloud because of a number of corruption scandals.[46] Stevenson won overwhelmingly in the traditionally Republican state as only the third Democratic governor of Illinois. He won by the largest plurality of any Illinois governor to that date. It was clear from the result that Stevenson had run far ahead of Truman in Illinois and had wooed independent and Republican voters that Truman had not.[47] Shortly after his win, his wife Ellen divorced him. Relations between Ellen and Adlai were acrimonious, with Ellen often threatening to publicly denounce him. However because of journalistic reticence about reporting information relating to a politician's private life, the public was unaware of this tension. Stevenson was therefore the first divorced candidate for president in the United States.[48]

After this result, talk began to circulate about Stevenson as a possible presidential candidate for 1952 if Truman decided not to run.[49] When Truman announced that he would not seek another term, he invited Stevenson to Washington to try to induce him to accept his endorsement as the Democratic Party's candidate for 1952. Stevenson demurred, without definitively ruling out accepting the party's nomination.[50] Stevenson was evasive for two reasons: firstly by this stage in his presidency Truman was deeply unpopular and the Democratic Party had held the presidency for twenty years.[51] Many felt the prospects of a Democrat being elected were remote, especially if he was promoted as Truman's handpicked successor.[52] Secondly, although Stevenson had the ambition to run for president, at this point he was committed to running for a second term as governor and continuing his program.[53] Truman became frustrated at what he

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43. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy,* 4-5; Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes,* xii-xiii. By examining postwar red scare through the career of McCarran, Ybarra clearly shows the link between pre-war isolationism and anti-communism. The same observation is made in Schrecker's work.
44. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy*, 376-377.
45. Baker, *The Stevensons,* 4.
46. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 265.
47. Baker, *The Stevensons,* 16-17; Martin; *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 34, 407-408.
48. Baker, *The Stevensons,* 16-17.
49. Robert J. Donovan, *Tumultuous Years: The Presidency of Harry S Truman 1949-1953* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1982), 394-398.
50. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 513-517.
51. Donovan, *Tumultuous Years,* 394-39. Though Truman's reputation would be rehabilitated in the decades after he left office, he was deeply unpopular by the end of his term and felt to be a liability to the Democrats by the press and some in the party, due to the to the continuing conflict in Korea and sustained attacks on him and his administration by Republicans.
52. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 523, Stevenson continually insisted that he only aspired to be the Governor of Illinois but failed to would not rule out accepting the nomination if it was presented to him. Stevenson felt it a civic duty to accept his party's nomination if requested.
53. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics,* 106.

perceived as Stevenson's indecisiveness and pursued other prospects.[54] However committed Stevenson boosters continued to agitate for his nomination.[55]

The 1952 Democratic convention was held in Chicago and Stevenson delivered the opening address. This speech ignited Stevenson's prospect as a candidate and, with Truman's support, he was nominated by the convention.[56] In the election Stevenson faced off against Dwight Eisenhower and went down to an overwhelming defeat. Stevenson received only 89 Electoral College votes and 44.4 percent of the popular vote to Eisenhower's 442 Electoral College votes and 55.1 percent of the popular vote.[57]

Despite this loss Stevenson retained preeminence within the liberal wing of the Democratic and many wanted him to run as the Democratic candidate in 1956.[58] He maintained his public profile by travelling extensively overseas, making high profile speeches on issues such as McCarthyism and campaigning for a number of candidates in the 1954 Congressional midterm elections.[59] He was nominated again for President in 1956 after a bruising primary against Estes Kefauver, who became his running mate in the campaign.[60] After another decisive loss to Eisenhower in this election, he maintained a low profile and announced that he would not be a candidate in 1960.[61] During the 1960 Democratic convention, his die hard supporters staged a brief effort to get Stevenson nominated; although it failed, it was enough to panic the Kennedy campaign.[62] After campaigning for Kennedy, Stevenson was given the post of Ambassador to the United Nations, a post he felt beneath his abilities. However he remained in this post until his death in 1965.[63]

The length and prominence of Stevenson's career after his loss in 1952 testifies to his popularity among Democrats. Most candidates who have lost presidential elections are not granted a second chance and many of those that were have not been so fondly remembered by party faithful.[64] Stevenson's anti-communism was the leading reason for his continued relevance and it is worth analysing in depth.

Stevenson's first public position on the issue of domestic communism was stated during a radio debate held on April 27th 1947 with Governor Kim Singer of Michigan. The topic was 'Should

54. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 523.
55. Ibid., 513-151. Martin attributes much of Stevenson's success throughout his political career to the devotion and commitment of his supporters and sees the determination of Stevenson's supporter to win him the nomination as a key factor in him becoming a candidate.
56. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics*, 114-115.
57. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 760-761.
58. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World,* 6.
59. Baker, *The Stevensons,* 337-340; Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World,* 95-154.
60. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics,* 154-160; *Adlai Stevenson and the World,* 277-283. Kefauver ran to Stevenson left on many issues such as civil rights and was a contender for the 1952 and 1956 Democratic nomination.
61. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics*, 188-189.
62. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 35-39. Schlesinger captures the speed and excitement of the Stevenson push and the speed with which it fizzled out.
63. Baker, *The Stevensons*, 40.
64. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics:* xiii-xv. Broadwater compares Stevenson to William Jennings Bryan, Henry Clay and Thomas S Dewey in his ability to continue to lead his party after losing a presidential election.

the Communist Party be banned in America'. Stevenson took the negative and argued against a ban. Banning the Communist Party in the US was one of the more controversial measures proposed during this period. This was an obvious measure to propose, communism was treated in the US not as a lawful political movement but as a criminal conspiracy propagated by a foreign power. However the idea of banning any political party offended the civil liberties sensibilities of many and was opposed by figures from across the political spectrum. Thomas Dewey, the Republican nominee for president in 1944 and 1948 rejected the idea.[65] Even Richard Nixon had initially been reluctant before embracing a measure that would effectively have banned the party.[66] Prominent Republicans expressed doubts about the effectiveness of banning the party. But arguing against banning of the Communist Party carried risks for a Democrat considering running for public office, as it could be claimed that it promoted the 'pro-communist' side of the argument. It also shows the consistency of Stevenson's ideas and the manner in which he expressed them. It is also worth acknowledging that making the argument that the United States had to balance its commitment to protecting civil liberties with defeating Communism was a more difficult argument to make and would only grow more so as the Cold War intensified.

Stevenson, by voluntarily taking the unpopular side of such an issue in a debate in which he was not forced to participate, showed that he was willing to stand up for his principles. Stevenson's argument for opposing the ban had three components: First that it would drive the Communist Party underground and that it would be better for it to be visible and its leaders and workings open to public view. Stevenson made a variety of other points linked to this argument. The first is the observation that others, including Richard Nixon, had acknowledged, which is that under the tsarist government the Bolshevik Party had been outlawed and in that case illegality had offered no bar to power.[67] Stevenson also observed that the real danger of communism was represented by the elements of the movement that were not officially part of the party, those working 'in secrecy to promote disorder, rebellion and violence'.

His second argument was that banning the Communist Party was an admission that democracy was weaker than communism. To Stevenson this woefully underestimated the superiority of democracy. He believed that the US should not fear to face communism in an open electoral contest. He argued that the Communist Party was not popular for its Marxist-Leninist doctrines but because it appealed to the discontented and that continuing to reform the US would deprive it of any support. The third argument that Stevenson put forward was that the very act of outlawing a political party would do irrevocable damage to the liberty of the United States. To

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65. Richard Norton Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey and His Times* (New York, Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1982), 493. During his nomination campaign Dewey would argues against the ban by remarking, 'It is an attempt to beat down ideas with a club'.

66. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962* (New York, Simon & Schuster) 1987, 149-52; Gellman, *The Contender: Richard Nixon the Congress Years 1946-1952,* 159-166. Nixon would co-sponsor a bill entitled the Subversive Activities Control Bill in 1948 which would have effectively outlawed the party but the bill failed to pass.

67. Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician 1913-1962,* 149-52.

Stevenson, freedom of speech, expression and ideas were hallmarks of the history of the United States and should not be compromised by the fight against communism. This foreshadowed his later arguments against anti-communist measures as well as the same oratorical style. He would set out the stakes as nothing less than the contest between democracy and communism, 'The whole world is the battleground in this great twentieth century struggle for men's allegiance between those who believe the individual exists for the state and those who believe the state exists for the individual.'

Stevenson also argued against the ban for deeply pragmatic reasons. The mixing of these strands created a tension in his argument. It created the impression that it was not enough to oppose the ban because it was inherently wrong but also because it would not work. Stevenson declared the ultimate test of such legislation, 'it seems to me, is whether it will increase the security of our democratic society or not.'

Then, 'But even more important than these common sense reasons for opposing this legislation are some fundamental principles. This is the land of the free...Our greatest strength is that we can discuss openly anything within the law.'[68] This dynamic was present in almost all of Stevenson's speeches in which he opposed anti-communist measures throughout his career. It is a feature of his character that was referenced earlier in the thesis. Stevenson believed strongly in good government and civic values, but was at heart a realist politician who would always emphasise that his politics was guided by a strong sense of pragmatism.

Anti-communism did not play a prominent role in Stevenson's 1948 gubernatorial campaign. He focused his campaign on the scandal around Green's administration and only discussed communism in passing, as he saw it solely as a federal issue, generally in relation to international relations.[69] Stevenson himself was not particularly a victim of red baiting. The *Chicago Tribune*, due to its deeply held isolationist beliefs, attacked his record with the United Nations.[70] Dwight Green (the incumbent Republican governor) cannot be said to have used anti-communism as a major issue against Stevenson, although there were some anti-communist overtones to his speeches. In a speech on March 10, 1948 Green characterised Stevenson as a man, 'Apparently on leave from the striped pants brigade of the Roosevelt-Truman State Department while he carries the New Deal torch in Illinois.'[71] The evocative phrase 'striped pants' in the context of

68. Adlai Stevenson 'Should the Communist Party Be Banned in America?' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume II Washington to Springfield 1941-1948,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973), 393-395.

69. Adlai Stevenson 'Jackson Day Dinner Speech' February 23 1948, in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume II Washington to Springfield 1941-1948*, edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), 393-395. Stevenson mention the threat of communism briefly in his address in Bloomington at the opening of his campaign, saying Illinois should 'its rightful position among the states' and 'assume a measure of leadership in the struggle against totalitarians' however this was a rhetorical flourish.

70. 'Aid Europe is Stevenson Campaign Cry', *Chicago Tribune*, January 7 1948, 6. The *Chicago Tribune* ran the headline 'Aid Europe is Stevenson Campaign Cry' after one of the Stevenson's speeches even though he ran almost entirely on state issues.

71. Thomas Warror, 'Green Rips into Stevenson and Paul Douglas', *Chicago Tribune*, March 11 1948, 28; John W. Roberts,'Cold War Observer: Governor Adlai Stevenson on American Foreign Relations' in *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society,* Vol. 76, No. 1 (Spring,1983),50-51.https://www.jstor.org/stable/40191705. Roberts' article discusses

discussing the US diplomatic service was a staple of McCarthyite vocabulary.[72] Later Green painted a dire picture of the international situation 'as the Red giant of Communism moves relentlessly forward in Europe' and echoed the familiar anti-communist charge that this advance was 'made possible by the secret compromises of Roosevelt and Truman.' This did not develop into an attack on Stevenson for being weak on communism, but rather was used to criticise Stevenson for hypocrisy for attacking Green for the state budget while supporting the Marshall Plan, which Green claimed would cost Illinoisans more in taxes than the state budget.[73]
While some of Green's utterances echo McCarthyite rhetoric, he never fully embraced a McCarthyite political strategy. His attacks on Stevenson focused on the extravagance of the New Deal and isolationist objections to the United Nations. In fact Green's attack on Stevenson's 'striped pants' backfired when a photo was unearthed of Green wearing striped pants himself. Stevenson was able to dismiss the charge with the quip: 'The only pair of striped pants I ever expect to own is the pair I'll jerk off Mr Green next November.'[74]

Stevenson was forced to confront the issue of domestic communism when he became Governor in 1949. The key Illinois anti-communist figure during Stevenson's tenure in office was Paul Broyles, a conservative Republican state senator who often acted as a spokesman for the American Legion.[75] Broyles made headlines with a number of measures to prosecute and investigate domestic communism. Collectively these bills were referred to as the Broyles Bills and were a constant feature of Illinois' political landscape from the late 1940s to the mid 1950's. During this period they acquired the derisive nickname of 'Little McCarthy' bills from liberal opponents.[76] Stevenson first clashed with Broyles when the legislature authorised an investigation of the University of Chicago and Roosevelt College in Chicago. This investigation was authorised on March 29th and the legislature appropriated $2500 towards it.[77] The investigation was prompted by demonstrations at these institutions against anti-communist investigations. [78]

When the bill came to Stevenson, he refused to sign it and allowed it to become law without his signature. He issued a message on April 12 explaining why he chose not to sign the bill, 'I doubt the legality of this investigation.' To Stevenson since 'subversive' meant attempting to overthrow the state and this was a crime in Illinois, Stevenson believed that this was an investigation for the courts and not the legislature. He was also concerned by the reasoning for the

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Green campaign strategy to use Stevenson's work on the united Nations and the State Department against him.
72. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy: Reexamining the Life and Legacy of America's Most Hated Senator,* 186. As an example, McCarthy privately referred to Secretary Acheson as 'that striped pants asshole'.
73. Warror, 'Green Rips into Stevenson and Paul Douglas', 28.
74. Adlai Stevenson 'Speech at the Jackson day Luncheon' March 20 1948, in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume II Washington to Springfield 1941-1948,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973), 481-486.
75. 'Legion Group Backs Illinois Red Curb Bill', *Chicago Tribune*, April 1, 1951, 32.
76. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 47, 386-387.
77. Adlai Stevenson 'Governor Stevenson message in response to House Bill no. 418' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973), 69-70.
78. 'U. of C. Red Probe O.K. Due Today',*Chicago Tribune*, Match 9 1949, 10.

bill, which argued an investigation was needed because of student protests against the passage of 'anti-subversive' legislation. Stevenson quoted the bill's assertion that 'it appears that these students are being indoctrinated with communistic and subversive theories.' Stevenson argued that protests (which he characterised as citizens exercising 'their rights') from approximately 100 students out of a combined student body of 15,000 was not proof of widespread communist indoctrination. Although Stevenson had grave doubts about the legality and necessity of the legislation, he did not want to veto the bill because he wanted to give both institutions the chance to answer the charges for themselves. He stated, 'I do not want to stand in the way of a fair and responsible investigation.' However he then warned, 'Suppression and intimidation are not among the weapons we ought to use in the current warfare of ideas, lest we abandon the very things we seek to preserve. Academic freedom, freedom to think and to speak, are the best antidote to communism and tyranny.'[79]

This message clearly aligned Stevenson with those in the US who were suspicious of the anti-communist investigation and the effect that this type of politics would have on freedom of expression. While aligning himself with the liberals who opposed conservative efforts to investigate the university system, he did not veto the bill. This was a canny political manoeuvre, since Stevenson could not be accused of hindering the investigation to protect subversives and if the investigation managed to turn up very little subversive activity the argument in his message would be borne out.

If the message showed his steadfast suspicion of McCarthyite investigative techniques and the rhetorical opposition he continually voiced to them, it also showed his cautiousness in trying to act on this opposition. The message indicated that Stevenson believed that this investigation was an attempt by elements in the Illinois state legislature to intimidate and silence voices who were exercising their legal right to protest against the actions of their state government. He believed that the legislature lacked the legal authority to conduct such an investigation. Yet he did not veto the bill or attempt to protect the students and staff of these institutions who might suffer unjustly from such an investigation. It should not be thought that Stevenson was especially opposed to vetoing bills passed by the legislature. Not only would he later veto another of the infamous 'Broyles bills', but less than a month after letting this bill pass he vetoed a bill that would have fined cat owners who let their cats wander off their property.[80] This veto would in fact draw more attention and comment from the press than the message about the university investigation.[81] While much of this speaks negatively of Stevenson's commitment to individual rights, it is worth noting that the bill

79. Stevenson 'Governor Stevenson message in response to House Bill no. 418', 69-70.
80. Stevenson 'Cat Bill Veto Message', in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973),72-74.
81. *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973 79), 72-74. The 'light touch and delicious humour' of the message was praised by his friend Clay Judson.

passed with an overwhelming margin.[82] It did take some courage to issue even this message. Still Stevenson's message should be read as a politically hedged bet that established his political sympathies with the liberals opposing reckless anti-communism, but avoided a direct political confrontation.

Neither the announcement of the investigation nor Stevenson's message about it excited much media interest. Stories about the investigation appeared in the newspapers the next day. However they were small and perfunctory, stating only the barest facts. Articles in different papers were remarkably similar, indicating that they had been printed almost verbatim from press briefings. Similarly Stevenson's message did not attract a lot of media comment. In the editorial page of the *Decatur Herald* on April 13th 1949, the paper supported Stevenson's message on the investigation saying: 'this newspaper doubted the necessity for such legislation when the bills were introduced in the legislature and warned against any hysterical approach to the communist issue.' The editorial hinted that the paper might have liked to see the bill vetoed, 'Governor Stevenson "trusts" that the investigation commission will do its work… "trust" is an optimistic word. We can go along with the governor far enough to "hope".[83] There was criticism made about the message by a Republican lower house member William Horsley. He characterised Stevenson's message as 'a slap' and attacked Stevenson's message for contributing 'to the misunderstanding that this is nothing more than a witch hunt and that the legislature is trying to control thoughts'.
Anti-communism again took centre stage in Illinois state politics when the Broyles-Young bill passed the Illinois legislature on June 13, 1951. The bill, sponsored by Paul Broyles a Republican state senator, and Robert J Young, a Democratic state senator, was the culmination of Broyles anti-communist investigation. The bill received support from sections of both major parties, which could be seen in the fact that it was being sponsored by both Broyles and Young. It passed the house by a margin of 87 to 42. The main provision of the bill was to expand the powers of schools to dismiss teachers and other public employees for belonging to an organisation that teaches and advocates the overthrow of the Constitution of the United States. It required public employees to take a loyalty oath and appointed a special prosecutor to gather evidence of subversive activity to present to a Grand Jury.[84] Stevenson vetoed this bill and issued a celebrated veto message explaining his reasons. This message was Stevenson's most famous statement against anti-communism during his Governorship and deserves to be analysed in full.

It began by affirming the threat that domestic communism posed to the United States. As he stated, '[The Communist Party] is a danger to our republic, as real as it is sinister, is clear to all who have the slightest understanding of our democracy'.[85] Having established his anti-communist

82. 'Approve Funds for Chicago College Probe', *Decatur Herald Editorials*, editorial, March 30 1949, 15.
83. 'Anti-Communist Legislation' in *Decatur Herald Editorials*, editorial, April 13 1949, 6.
84. 'Bozeman Authors Anti-Subversive Measures in House' in *Dispatch Moline, Illinois*, April 12 1949, 1, 22.
85. Adlai Stevenson, 'Broyles Bill Veto Message' in T*he papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973, 413-418.

credentials, he then criticised the bill, while also defending the record of the state of Illinois and the United States in prosecuting communism. He cited the recent prosecutions of Communist leaders under the Smith Act. He then pointed out that under Illinois law it was already illegal to advocate the overthrow of the federal or state government 'by violence or other unlawful means' or to become a member of any organisation that is guilty of this, and that this law has been in place since 1919. Therefore the Broyles/Young law was unnecessary since there were already statutes in place under which they could prosecute Communists. Stevenson began his veto by stating that he believed that communism was a threat that needed to be removed from the public life of the United States, showing it was not the objective of the bill with which he disagreed but the method that it employed. He then praised the FBI,' It is, of course, no secret that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has identified and has under observation virtually every member of the Communist Party.'[86]

The objections that Stevenson raised to the bill at the start of message were legalistic in nature, focusing on the enforcement provisions of bill. The bill was designed so that the Attorney General of Illinois could appoint an Assistant Attorney General to assemble and distribute information to the State's Attorney of each county. The State's Attorney would then relay information to the Grand Jury; even information that was 'inconclusive or inconsequential' as Stevenson pointed out. Stevenson saw in these provisions an undermining of the discretion which allowed prosecutors to determine the value and worth of the evidence they presented to Grand Juries. In Stevenson's view this discretion was 'one of the important responsibilities of State's Attorneys and one of the great protections of the citizen'. In this Stevenson saw 'grave peril to the reputations of innocent people in this perpetuation of rumour and hearsay.'

His second objection was to the inversion of the burden of proof. He argued that government agencies would now have to establish that there were no 'reasonable grounds' for believing that any of their employees were committed 'by act of teaching' to the overthrow of the United States government or belonged to any organisations that had this objective.[87] Stevenson argued that now any individual who was suspected of being a subversive or a suspected member of a subversive organisation would have to establish their own innocence, and he saw this as dangerously undermining one of the key principles of US law: that an individual has a presumption of innocence when facing charges against them. Stevenson then raised several smaller issues with the bill. He believed that having each state government agency establish its own procedures and processes to implement the bill would lead to inconsistent and unfair treatment between the different agencies. He also stated that fear of facing accusations and the smear of subversion would undermine the independence and integrity of the public service, 'Public services requires

86. Stevenson, 'Broyles Bill Veto Message', 413-418; O'Reilly, 'Adlai E. Stevenson, McCarthyism, and the FBI', 45-60. O'Reilly details the relationship between the FBI and Stevenson. While Stevenson was supportive of the FBI throughout his career, however FBI director J. Edgar Hoover was not impressed by Stevenson and undermined him throughout his career.

87. Stevenson, 'Broyles Bill Veto Message', 413-418.

independent and courageous action on matters which affect countless private interests. We cannot afford to make public employees vulnerable to malicious charges of disloyalty.' This bill would also result in lowering hiring standards in the public service because employers would want to make safe choices to avoid controversial hires. Stevenson then broadened his attack to criticise a mainstay of anti-communist legislation, the loyalty oath.[88] His argument was that loyalty oaths were a poor method of rooting out subversives, observing, 'Does anyone seriously think that a real traitor will hesitate to sign a loyalty oath? Of course not.'[89] In this second section Stevenson tried to establish himself as a cool and detached political leader reacting calmly in the midst of hysteria to point out the far-reaching consequences of a bill that in his view had been hastily written for political purposes.

The last section of the veto message was an attempt to broaden the criticism of the bill. Stevenson objected to the general purpose of this bill and attempted to link his veto to broader principles of freedom and democracy. He described the bill as mimicking the methods of dictatorship, arguing, 'The whole notion of loyalty inquisitions is a natural characteristic of the police state, not of democracy … the dictator must always assume the disloyalty, not of the few but of the many, and guard against it by continual inquisition and 'liquidation" of the unreliable.' He contrasted this to democracies, whose legitimacy rests on the 'consent of its members'. The bill posed, he argued, real danger to US democracy,'To question even by implication, the loyalty and devotion of a large group of citizens is to create an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust which is neither justified, healthy nor consistent with our traditions.' While Stevenson acknowledged that genuine subversives needed to prosecuted, he argued that governments on the state level were not the most effective instruments of doing so, citing the dangerous precedents in US history of the Alien and Sedition Acts passed during the Adams administration. Stevenson believed the most effective method of opposing communism was simply trusting to the superiority of democratic institutions.'We must fight falsehood and evil ideas with truth and better ideas. We have them in plenty.'

In finishing his message, Stevenson anticipated the controversy that the veto would bring. He referenced the Hiss deposition and the controversy that it had created, 'I know full well that this veto will be distorted and misunderstood, even as telling the truth of what I knew about the reputation of Alger Hiss was distorted and misunderstood.' He sought to put himself above this by proclaiming 'I respect the motives and patriotism of the proponents of this bill.'[90] Examining the construction of this message, we see the hallmarks of Stevenson's position on domestic communism and the attempts to prosecute it. He would always go out of his way to stress that he did want to remove communists and fellow travellers from American public life and that this position

88. Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes,* 154. Loyalty oaths were one of the more popular anti-communist measure, Ellen Schrecker cites the example that anyone who had to apply for a permit to fish in New York City reservoirs had to sign a loyalty oath.
89. Adlai Stevenson, 'Broyles Bill Veto Message', 413-418.
90. Ibid., 417.

included prosecuting members of the Communist Party. While he agreed with the aims of anti-communist politicians, he worried about the methods that such politicians used and feared that they would damage the lives of innocent people and restrict democratic freedoms. He always expressed this criticism through two separate methods: the first was the cool, analytic and legalistic approach that pointed out the weakness in legislation like the Broyles Bill, the second was an appeal to lofty ideals of freedom of speech, thought and democracy expressed in patriotic sentiment. Stevenson correctly predicted that his veto would inspire controversy. To see how conservatives understood his veto we again can look at the *Chicago Tribune*. On the 30th June 1951 an editorial was published titled 'The Broyles Bill Veto'. It almost completely ignored the veto message that Stevenson issued. It started by setting out the threat posed by domestic communism, 'It defined as subversive and foreign subversive those that carry out various purposes of the Communists, all of which, of course, are directed towards the overthrow of constitutional government in this country.'

Stevenson in his veto message agreed with this characterisation of communism, but this editorial does not mention or acknowledge the start of the veto message. The editorial then moved to the end of Stevenson's veto message, where he acknowledged that he believed that his veto would be misunderstood and linked to the deposition that was given on behalf of Alger Hiss. This editorial claimed that there was 'no ground for misunderstanding in either instance'. It went on to depict Stevenson as blind to the threat of communism because of his background in New Deal politics. In the editorial writer's view, 'Hiss's associates in Washington closed their minds to the menace of communism'. In this view Stevenson's veto showed the same closed mindedness, despite 'evidence of communist penetration of government'. Stevenson vetoed a bill that was directed against communists and combating their influence in the public life of the United States. This showed a 'tenderness' towards communism that the writer of this editorial believed was a habit.[91]

In the same issue a letter writer signed with the pseudonym 'Skeptical' challenged Stevenson's contention that the state of Illinois had strong existing legislation to prosecute communists. In the letter 'A Challenge to Gov. Stevenson', the writer brought up the issue of a meeting to be held by The American Peace Crusade called the 'American People's Peace Congress' at the Chicago Coliseum June 29 to July 1, 1952. This gathering, the letter claimed, was designed to promote the USSR view of international relations and had been denounced by both the House Un-American Activities Committee and Secretary of State Dean Acheson. HUAC had referred to the gathering as 'a project intended to promote treason against the United States'. Acheson exhorted: 'It is the duty of every American to reject and expose the false motives of this group.' Despite these warnings, the manager of the Coliseum was apparently afraid to cancel the lease on this group out of fear of being taken to court. This letter writer pointed to this as a clear

91. 'The Broyles Bill Veto', *Chicago Tribune*, editorial, June 30st, 1951, 10.

problem with existing laws in Illinois that would protect their right to gather legally. The letter ended by musing, 'A good many people will be waiting to see if these 1919 laws are adequate or whether we should have had the Broyles-Young bill, after all.'[92]

When the bill was resubmitted to the legislature after Stevenson's veto, it failed to override his veto and the bill did not pass into law.[93] In this way Stevenson took concrete steps to stem some of what he believed to be the excesses of the anti-communist movement and his veto lessened the power of anti-communists to investigate and prosecute alleged communists. This clash was not the end of the so called 'Broyles Bill' debate. Once Stevenson had been replaced by a Republican Governor, William Stratton, the Broyles bill was resubmitted in 1953. Interestingly, Stratton vetoed it as had Stevenson, thus reaffirming Stevenson's judgement in vetoing the bill.[94] There were more positive reactions to the veto within the media. In a letter published in the *Pantagraph* on Sunday July 1st 1951 by a Melbourne Sharples, Stevenson was praised for his veto.[95] It is worth commenting on the *Pantagraph*. Although Stevenson had a family connection to this paper, it traditionally supported the Republican Party and the relations between Stevenson and his cousins who ran the paper were often strained.[96] The *Pantagraph* was a more moderate paper than the *Chicago Tribune*. The *Pantagraph* was more suspicious of McCarthyism and could be supportive of Stevenson's attempts to curtail anti-communist excesses. The letter began by pointing out that the stated goal of the Broyles-Young Bill had already been achieved. In Governor Horner's 1933-1940 administration a law was passed that banned the Communist Party from appearing on any election ballots and also any other political party Communists 'might affiliate with directly or indirectly'. [97] The letter also objected to the provisions against teachers. It argued that school boards and authorities should be trusted to determine if a teacher was teaching un-American or subversive doctrines. Mr Sharples also objected to questioning of the loyalty of Illinois' teachers: 'To question the Americanism of our teachers by passing such regulation is an insult to the teachers of Illinois.' The letter then savages the bill as, 'An attempt to place a limit on free speech, curb a free press and establish guilt by association all in violation of our constitutional rights.' The bill was then explicitly compared to measures banning communism enacted during Hitler's Germany. The letter ended with the warning, 'That is the trouble with all such laws as the Broyles-Young bill, one extreme measure forces another calling for other laws to regulate other groups until we are all in chains'[98]

The letter revealed the commonality between Stevenson's arguments and those of many other critics of McCarthyism, but also his differences. While both agreed that the bill could

92. Sceptical, 'Challenge to Gov Stevenson', letter to the editor. *Chicago Tribune*, June 30st, 1951, 10.
93. 'Senate Upholds Anti-Red Vet', *Alton Evening Telegraph,* June 28th 1951, 32.
94. 'Two Governors Veto Broyles', *Decatur Herald*, July 2, 1953.
95. Melbourne Sharples, 'Says Governor Right to Veto Bill', letter to the editor, *The Pantagraph,* July 1st,1951, 4.
96. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 75-76.
97. Sharples, 'Says Governor Right to Veto Bill', 4.
98. Sharples, 'Says Governor Right to Veto Bill', 4.

endanger civil liberties, Stevenson always tried to maintain a positive tone by extolling the proud history of the United States' protection of civil liberties. Stevenson also never compared the anti-communists to Fascists, which could divide and anger voters, instead arguing that the measures were merely misguided. The *Pantagraph* editorial page also supported Stevenson's veto. The editorial mirrored Stevenson's veto message. It started by affirming the paper's opposition to communism and supported Stevenson on each of the points that were raised in the veto message: that Illinois had existing laws to deal with communist infiltration, that the bill dangerously shifted the burden of proof onto the individual to prove their innocence. It also criticised the bill for being a 'duplicate and expensive program of combating subversives at best'.[99] The reaction in the *Pantagraph* showed that, at this stage of Stevenson's career, his argument against anti-communist measures could cross party lines.

Stevenson's actual legislative program while governor was less contentious and revealed him as a moderate Democrat. He was nervous about unfunded spending causing inflation and so was hesitant to expand many social welfare programs.[100] He did make some contributions to the field of civil rights by instituting a Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) in Illinois. Most of his political energy was spent on good government programs, such as revising Illinois' antiquated constitution. These reforms, while worthy, did not excite a great deal of political interest.[101]

The case of Alger Hiss was one of the key events of the McCarthy period. In August 1948, Whittaker Chambers appeared before HUAC and testified that he had once been a member of the Communist Party and so had Hiss. Later he expanded his charges to claim that Hiss had supplied classified documents to him to pass to agents of the Soviet Union. Hiss testified in front of HUAC to deny the allegations. Richard Nixon made his first major public appearance during the case as a member of the HUAC. The case followed many twists and turns but eventually a decision was made to charge Hiss. Since the statute of limitation had run out on any charges relating to supplying classified documents, Hiss was charged with perjury for his testimony. The first trial ended in a hung jury and in the second trial he was convicted.[102]

In one of the most controversial acts of his career, Stevenson supplied a deposition at the request of Alger Hiss' defence team during Hiss' first perjury trial in 1949. Originally Hiss had asked Stevenson to testify in person, but Stevenson had refused, citing the importance of his responsibilities as Illinois governor. Hiss's legal team then obtained a court order for the deposition to be taken. It should be noted that Stevenson did not ask to be a character witness, but was

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99. 'Broyles Bill Veto Took Courage', *The Pantagraph,* editorial July 29st,1951, 4.
100. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics,* 99.
101. Roberts,'Cold War Observer: Governor Adlai Stevenson on American Foreign Relations' 54-55. Roberts points out that the issue of the cold war was present in Stevenson's argument for an FEPC. Stevenson argued that an FEPC would help bolster the US' image in the fight against communism.
102. Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective*, (Oxford University Press: New York, 1990) 17-23.

impelled to give testimony by a court order. However he could probably have avoided giving testimony if he had tried. [103] Stevenson's actual deposition was not particularly important or extensive. His deposition began by providing background for the relationship between the two men. Stevenson recounted that they worked together in the AAA during 1933-1934, although they were working on 'different commodities'. They again worked in the State Department together and had contact when Stevenson was working as an alternate delegate for the UN. There is nothing in the deposition to imply that they worked closely together, nor has it ever been suggested that they did. Stevenson best summed up their relationship when describing their contact during the setting up of the UN: 'Our paths did not cross in a business way but we met occasionally at official social functions.' The Hiss defence team only asked Stevenson what Hiss's reputation was in regard to three things: 'integrity, loyalty and veracity', in response to which Stevenson stated that his reputation was 'good.' When cross examined, Stevenson denied ever being inside Hiss's house. Stevenson also denied ever having heard allegations that Hiss was a member of the Communist Party or a communist sympathiser or had heard of Hiss giving unauthorised access to classified material.

This deposition was probably of little value to either Hiss's defence or the prosecution, since Stevenson did not offer himself as a character witness on Hiss's behalf nor did he suggest that there were suspicions about Hiss that were common knowledge. Stevenson's only casual acquaintance with Hiss meant that his testimony offered little insight into the issues at stake in the case. Stevenson offered no view about Hiss's innocence or guilt during his career, nor did he dispute the investigation or trial and there is no reason to suppose that he doubted the case against Hiss.[104] The only defence he offered for the deposition was in regard to larger questions about the necessity of all citizens, and especially government officials and lawyers, being ready to give honest testimony in court regardless of political considerations or outside pressures. Compared to other figures at the time, Stevenson's role in the case was minor. Secretary of State Dean Acheson supported Hiss during his trial and even after his conviction. Acheson also had a closer personal relationship to Hiss than Stevenson. Alger's brother Donald had worked as his assistant and although Alger and Acheson were not close, Acheson described him as his friend. The Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter appeared as a voluntary character witness. Eisenhower's future Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, had worked closely with Hiss at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, of which Hiss was president. Dulles was a chairman of the board of trustees and initially wanted to support Hiss, before being convinced of his guilt and ousting him as President.[105]

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103. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 405-407.

104. Adlai Stevenson 'Adlai Stevenson testimony in Alger Hiss' trial' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), 100-104.

105. Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 281-298. Beisner's strong analysis of Acheson's action during the Hiss case focuses on the damage done to Acheson's reputation

Stevenson's decision to supply this deposition was controversial with his followers. Some, including his staff, thought it was a poor decision. The most cogent criticism of his decision is supplied by Carl McGowan. While he acknowledged that Stevenson did receive praise from liberals, he thought that Hiss was wrong to ask and Stevenson was wrong to supply it, since he barely knew Hiss and the deposition only asked about the status of his reputation. As McGowan stated, 'What he was really asking for was the use of Stevenson's name to impress the jury … Stevenson should have been shrewd enough to see that.'[106]

Even though McGowan was critical of Stevenson's political judgement in this instance he still believes that this willingness to give the deposition revealed Stevenson's fundamental integrity, 'It came at a time when it was hard *not* to stand up. Stevenson's succumbing is a tribute to his decent instincts – not his analytic ability'[107]

An example of the positive attention that Stevenson received for his Hiss deposition can be seen in Arthur Krock's column in the *New York Times* on January 25th 1952.[108] The column was written as a profile of Stevenson, who Krock saw as a potential nominee for the Democratic Party if Truman did not seek the nomination again. Krock started by listing his strengths, then moved on to two of his potential weaknesses. The first was the deposition that he gave on behalf of Hiss, the second was the fact that he was divorced. With his divorce Krock gave a brief overview, noting that neither Stevenson nor his wife had remarried.

With the deposition he offered not just a rundown of the deposition and the relationship between Stevenson and Hiss, but a defence of Stevenson. Krock stated that Stevenson knew nothing of the allegations that Adolf A. Berle Jr. had brought to Dean Acheson, nor had participated in his defence fund. To Krock, Stevenson's deposition was evidence of his principles and commitment to the legal system, 'As a citizen he felt it would be cowardice not to do so on the possibility that the accused might be guilty as well as block due process where a man's liberty was at stake. For him there was no choice between telling truth and bearing false witness.'[109] This defence impressed Stevenson so much that he wrote to Krock on January 29th thanking him personally for his piece, saying that 'I am most grateful for something in print on my side'. [110]

McGowan and Krock demonstrated how supporters of Stevenson viewed the deposition. Although they might have disagreed about the political logic of giving this type of testimony, to them the fact that Stevenson was willing to give it showed the characteristics that they admired about him: his willingness to abide by the traditions and precedents of law and civic behaviour during a period when many felt that these values were being eroded by a pervasive sense of hysteria and crisis

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by his enduring support for Hiss.

106. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 497.

107. Ibid., 407.

108. Arthur Krock, 'In the Nation Governor Stevenson Comes to Town and-', *New York Times,* editorial, January 25 1952, 20.

109. Ibid.

110. Adlai Stevenson 'Letter to Arthur Krock January 29 1952' in T*he papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), 510.

showed the integrity, courage and probity that underlay so much of the support that he received. The incident imbued Stevenson with an aura of personal decency and honour which explains much of his support among liberals who may have favoured more liberal candidates and have been put off his relative economic and legislative conservatism.

For conservatives however, it was a different story. In 'The Party of Acheson, Stevenson, and Hiss' published as an editorial on May 1st 1951, the *Tribune* linked Stevenson, Acheson and Hiss by association. The editorial started with a quote from Senator Taft, who argued that the nation must choose between Secretary Acheson and General MacArthur. Taft reasoned that Acheson and his state department were 'soft on communism' and that the department would negotiate to give China a seat on the UN in exchange for peace in Korea. The editorial used Stevenson's deposition to link him to Acheson, who was a defender of Hiss; it drew no distinction between Stevenson's deposition and Acheson's outright defence. The editorial then contrasted this 'defence' of Hiss with Stevenson's support for Truman's firing of MacArthur. Also mentioned along with his support of Hiss was Stevenson's part in the creation of the United Nations charter in San Francisco, on which occasion, according to the *Tribune*, 'Russia's three votes to America's one was approved'. The editorial ended with the ominous note,

> It is very curious that New Dealers who cannot bring themselves to give up Hiss profess to have no faith in an American of Gen. MacArthur's unchallengeable patriotism. If they persist in this attitude, it is altogether likely that the New Deal will come to be regarded as the party of Acheson, Stevenson, and Hiss.

This editorial is worth singling out as it concisely and efficiently draws out what, for the right, made Adlai Stevenson and the Democratic Party so untrustworthy in dealing with communism.[111] First it draws a direct parallel between the treatment of Alger Hiss and Douglas MacArthur. For those on the right the fact that many could cling to Hiss' innocence and protect him was unforgivable. This unwillingness to denounce Hiss acquired a sinister air when one considered that MacArthur had been fired (at least in the eyes of his supporters) for being too aggressive in waging the Korean War. In the eyes of his opponents Stevenson had testified on behalf of Hiss and had done nothing to help a patriotic general like MacArthur. Stevenson's background with the UN also associated him with the most distrusted elements in the Democratic Party. Many conservatives believed that in negotiations with the Soviet Union, the United States had come away with poor results.

Once Hiss's collaborations with the Soviet Union had been revealed, many had come to believe that he had been instrumental in getting Roosevelt to agree to the terms at Yalta.[112] Communist infiltration within the diplomatic structure of the United States and the compromise of the United States national security was one of the core tenets of McCarthyism.[113] Stevenson's involvement with the UN put him in this section of the Democratic Party. This is why, in this editorial, his

111. 'The Party of Acheson, Stevenson, and Hiss', in *Chicago Tribune*, editorial, May 1st 1951, 156.
112. Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes*, 163-4.
113. Ibid.,163-4.

participation in the creation of the UN is quoted in the same breath as his deposition in favour of Hiss.

These themes can be seen even more strikingly in the follow up editorial 'We're Glad You Brought It Up, Governor' on August 18th, 1951. This editorial was written in response to a speech that Stevenson gave at the Illinois state fair in which he defended himself on the issue of his deposition of Alger Hiss. In this editorial we see more of the conservative worldview of the Democratic Party and Adlai Stevenson's place within it. The editorial completely misstated and misinterpreted Stevenson's deposition on Hiss. Stevenson is depicted as being completely fooled by Hiss and goes further and actually accuses Stevenson of lying on behalf of Hiss. In this editorial Stevenson is said to have thought that Hiss 'was a fine, decent, loyal public servant'. The article then accused Stevenson of being 'so simple that he couldn't spot a Communist under his own nose'. Stevenson was characterised as acting as a 'character witness' for Hiss, which is a dubious claim.

The relationship between Hiss and Stevenson was in no way close. They were only colleagues in the broadest sense of the word and had no personal relationship. The deposition that Stevenson gave was scrupulously limited in its extent. The editorial then further presupposed that: 'Maybe the lie he told in Alger's behalf was a little white lie thru which the telltale crimson soaked and became visible.' This was a clear distortion. Stevenson's deposition contained no lies about Hiss or his reputation, but it showed the dichotomy in thinking during this period, when in terms of domestic communism there were those who worked to expose communist infiltration in the United States government and those, like Stevenson, who showed 'such color blindness towards communism that he can't see Red.' In this thinking any defence of Hiss showed that they were: 'so deeply dyed with the Red coloration permeating the Washington of Roosevelt and Truman that he and all the rest of the New Dealers saw nothing dangerous or wrong in trusted officials betraying their own country to play the Kremlin's game.' To this editorial Stevenson's deposition was part of a concerted effort by the Democratic Party to cover up widespread communist infiltration of the Government.

In the editorial, Stevenson's stance on foreign policy brought him the most criticism. The editorial only mentioned that Hiss and Stevenson worked at the State Department together, but not that they had also worked at the AAA together. This could have been an oversight, but it is equally likely that the reason the State Department is mentioned is because the article wanted to establish the supposed similarities between Stevenson's and Hiss's foreign policy positions. In the editorial his work on the White Committee is characterised as: 'Laboring manfully with Roosevelt and the rest of the crowd to put this country into war as an ally of Soviet Russia, against the declared opposition.' [114]

114. 'We're Glad You Brought It Up, Governor', *Chicago Tribune*, editorial, August 18 1951, 6.

In fact most agitation to involve the United States further in the Second World War was on behalf of Britain and Western Europe. The Soviet Union only entered the war after it was invaded during 1941.[115] In fact the period from 1939 to 1941 saw the American Communist Party siding with the isolationists in arguing that the United States should remain neutral in the conflict.[116] It was at this stage that many interventionist liberals became highly critical of the Communist Party when it abandoned the United Front once the Soviet Union had signed the Molotov-Rippentrop treaty.[117] What this criticism showed was that the persistent bitterness about the interventionist/isolationist conflict lingered and moved into and shaped the McCarthy period. The editorial showed this thinking clearly when it argued:

> And where is this peril supposed to originate? Why, with the Russia that Hiss served – served with Roosevelt and Stevenson and all the rest who fought a war to build Russia into the colossal menace they now call it. Stevenson and his political pal are caught in a cycle of their own devising … The fingers of guilt they seek to point are deflected towards themselves.[118]

It is true that the consequence of the Second World War and the defeat of Nazi Germany was the emergence of the Soviet Union as the major power on the European stage. In the conspiratorial mindset, this was the intention of figures such as Hiss who led men like Stevenson and Roosevelt (unknowingly or perhaps knowingly) to this policy for the sake of Soviet power.

The editorial also tried to flip the idea of fear back on to the liberals. One of the clichés always used during the period was to characterise McCarthyism as spreading fear and hysteria. This was the charge that Stevenson had made many times and had mentioned during his speech at the state fair. The editorial objected to the conservatives being tarred as the fear mongers, ‘And while we’re on the subject of fear, who are the fear makers today? Are they not Truman and the whole outfit, with the Stevensons who trail along with them?’

In the editorials, it was the liberal Democrats who were the guilty party when it came to fear-mongering. The articles argued that it was the Democrats who used fear and perils to justify both their foreign policy and social welfare programs. Or as the editorial put it: ‘They spread the words of panic incessantly so that they can tax a frightened people out of their very shoes and so that a crowd of spoilsmen and highbinders can spend their way to glory and cling to office.’[119] In this we can see that conservative anti-communists saw Stevenson as hypocritical and disingenuous when he accused them of preying on fear and panic and that it was he who was the fear monger.

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115. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy*, 270; Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes*, 15.
116. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy,* 236-237; Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes,* 16
117. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy*, 236-237; Schrecker, M*any are the Crimes,* 17. Ybarra and Schrecker explain much of liberalism dislike and distrust for domestic communism on the party’s hairpin turns ideological turns during the war.
118. ‘We’re Glad You Brought It Up, Governor’, 6.
119. Ibid.

After this broadside, Adlai Stevenson wrote a letter to the *Chicago Tribune*, which was published on 31st of August 1951. This letter was an attempt to correct the *Tribune* on factual errors in this editorial. Stevenson took umbrage at the *Tribune* stating that he had lied in the deposition about Hiss. Stevenson charged that the editorial, 'says I told a lie with respect to the reputation of Hiss. This is a serious charge and what is more it is a lie. I have always assumed that the *Tribune* does not lie deliberately.' He went on to clarify his relationship with Hiss, stating that he only met Hiss occasionally and only after the period that was the focus of his trial. Stevenson described the deposition, 'the question asked me was not even my opinion of him, but his reputation based on what others had said.'[120] Stevenson then went on the offensive against the *Tribune*, firing back that by attacking him, it was urging citizens to lie or be fearful of giving honest testimony. Reading this rebuttal, it is worth questioning why Stevenson bothered to write to the *Tribune*. It is true that there were factual errors in these editorials, although Stevenson did not correct all of these. More importantly, by reading through these editorials one can see that it was not the deposition or its contents that were the sole issue. Stevenson would have been better doing one of two things: either ignoring the editorials, or writing a more complete defence that addressed the underlying issues in the editorial.

Stevenson's years as governor established his reputation as a moderate Democrat who distinguished himself via his willingness to speak out on the issue of civil liberties against the increasingly draconian measures proposed to combat domestic subversion. This he did on both a political and a personal level. It both generated the most enthusiastic praise about him and the most pointed criticism, which anticipated the role McCarthy would play in his later career. His record otherwise left little that would suggest he would be one of the key figures to guide liberalism in the 1950's.

120. Adlai Stevenson 'To the 'Voice of the People' the *Chicago Tribune* in T*he papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* edited by Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston Little, Brown and Company 1973), 445-446.

Chapter Two

By 1952 the Democratic Party had held the presidency for twenty years and was widely expected to lose the election. Franklin D. Roosevelt had taken the presidency in 1932 and won three consecutive reelection bids. In 1945 the Republicans seemed on the brink of reclaiming the White House, but Truman was able to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat and secure re-election in 1948. However Truman's popularity began to sour in his second term. The rise of Joseph McCarthy, the Korean war and a series of corruption scandals had damaged the Democrats and had made victory in 1952 unlikely.[121] The Democrats election prospect further dimmed when Eisenhower was nominated by the Republicans. Eisenhower was the most popular man in the United States and before he revealed that he was a Republican he had been courted by Democrats as a candidate to replace Harry Truman in 1948, and in 1952 Truman had offered to help him win the 1952 Democratic Party nomination.[122]

These factors lower expectations regarding Stevenson's campaign both then and now. Contemporary admirers of Stevenson generally did not measure his success and influence based only on the results of the election, believing that a Republican win was a foregone conclusion. They celebrated what they saw as the high-minded tenor of his campaign and his willingness to discuss campaign issues with complexity and nuance. The sense of inevitability has also affected historical literature on the election. Compared to the 1948 election, few historians have studied the 1952 election. Those who do usually focus on Eisenhower, as he won the election. When these historians focus on Stevenson they attempt to explain why he lost the election, usually echoing Stewart Alsop's characterisation of him as an 'egghead' whose high minded rhetoric alienated the average voter and failed to break Eisenhower's popularity. They are puzzled by liberals' enthusiasm for a figure whom they see as moderate and even rather conservative.[123] They explain liberal support as a snobbish preference for Stevenson's erudite and complex speech over Eisenhower's slicker and simpler messaging.[124] This focus has limited the analysis of Stevenson's candidacy itself and the election. It has also overlooked the role that McCarthyism played in the 1952 campaign. Stevenson's appeal to liberals becomes clearer once we contextualise him in the period. His moderation, self deprecating wit and high-mindedness were refreshing to liberals anxious about the highly partisan and demagogic atmosphere of the period. The conservative reactions to Stevenson are also highly coloured by the era. Stevenson's record as governor showed that he was not a spendthrift New Dealer, but the Republicans and conservative press

121. Michael Bowen, T*he Roots of Modern Conservatism Dewey, Taft, and the Battle for the Soul of the Republican Party,* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 68-70, 75-77.
122. Robert Donovan*, Tumultuous Years: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman 1949-1953*, 394-395.
123. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952*, 4-66; Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States 1945-1974*, 252-255.
124. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952*, 145-146.

were able to use his internationalism, his career in the diplomatic service and in particular his deposition in the Hiss trial to cast doubt on his character and judgement in a way that characterised the McCarthy era.

A fact often forgotten about the 1952 election was that Truman could still have run for re-election. The twenty-second amendment that limited a presidential candidate from serving for more than two terms had been ratified during Truman's term, but he was exempt from it.[125] He had decided not to run for re-election early in his second term but was heavily involved in choosing his successor. Truman met Stevenson in 1949 and encouraged him to run, promising to help him secure the nomination.[126] Stevenson attracted Truman due to his strong win in 1948 when he had outperformed Truman in the state of Illinois and had lured many Republican voters to cross party lines. Stevenson refused Truman's overtures and stated that he was only interested in a second term as governor. He would maintain this public stance until the convention, and over time Truman became frustrated with what he believed to be Stevenson's indecisiveness and turned his attentions to other prospects. However Truman's other prospects were not practical choices. He first promoted the candidacy of Fred Vinson, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, who was an unlikely choice due to his age, ill health and liberal legal decisions regarding civil rights.[127] When this prospect became untenable, he focused on promoting the candidacy of Alben Barkley, who despite being Truman's vice president and desperately wanting the nomination, was never a practical choice. He was even more elderly then Vinson and was losing his sight.[128] Because Truman was the most powerful figure in the party, his wishes could not simply be ignored, but he was also not strong enough to foist two such unsuitable choice on the party. This left the Democratic nomination process without a clear favourite. Stevenson was not out of the contest, despite his pronouncements that he did not wanted to be nominated, as Stevenson promoters still drummed up support for their candidate claiming that he would accept the nomination if the party drafted him.[129] Eleanor Roosevelt was an important supporter for Stevenson, she was a prominent figure in liberal circles and carried considerable influence behind the scenes in the Democratic Party.[130]

Besides Stevenson, the other candidates for the nomination were Richard Russell, an influential Southern Senate leader and conservative, and Averell Harriman, a diplomat who had served as ambassador to the Soviet Union and Great Britain. He would become the governor of New York in 1954 and represented the establishment liberal wing of the party.[131] There was also

125. Paul B. Davis, 'The Results and Implications of the Enactment of the Twenty-Second Amendment', *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 3, The Essence of Leadership (Summer, 1979), 289, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2754748.
126. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 520-528.
127. Donovan, *Tumultuous Years: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman 1949-1953*, 394-397.
128. Ibid., 88.
129. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 577-78.
130. Henry, Richard, Eleanor Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).This dual biography discusses their relationship
131. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952,* 78-79.

the liberal populist Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee. Of these Russell and Kefauver were the most unlikely candidates. Russell was a powerful Senate leader who was well respected by his colleagues, however his voting record against any form of civil rights legislation made him unacceptable to northern Democrats.[132] Kefauver had risen to prominence through televised hearings focusing on organised crime. He was a liberal populist who had based his campaign on building a popular base of support. In this era local political leaders were more influential in the nomination process than grass-root organisations and Kefauver had alienated many of these leaders when his televised hearings exposed organised crime connections to the Democratic Party.[133] This also angered Truman, who put a premium on party loyalty. In addition Stevenson's liberal civil rights positions made him unacceptable to the South. Harriman was therefore his most formidable rival. He had a strong political base in New York and the backing of powerful political leaders such as Herbert Lehman, the former Governor and current senator from New York. He also had stronger liberal credentials than Stevenson, with a much stronger position on civil rights. He was also a stronger supporter of organised labour than Stevenson. Truman was receptive to supporting him as the nominee.

In the lead up to the convention Stevenson had been publicly disclaiming any interest in the nomination, saying he was only a candidate for governor and not for the presidency. He did admit to close friends that, although he was not seeking the presidency, he was excited at the prospect.[134] Stevenson was ambivalent. He did not want to be nominated but believed he could not ethically issue what the press dubbed a 'Sherman Statement' that would definitively rule him out as a candidate.[135] He believed that politicians should accept the honour of a presidential nomination if their party presented it to them. So when the 1952 Democratic convention opened in Chicago on Monday July 21, 1952, Stevenson was still counted among the most likely candidates for nomination but was far from the champion of liberalism.[136]

A profile that appeared in *The New Republic* in July 21st, 1952 shows how Stevenson was being presented to liberals on the eve of the convention. It highlights how much the appeal of Stevenson relied on an image of integrity and principle. This flattering piece presented Stevenson as an eloquent and experienced reformer. The article provided both a potted biography of Stevenson's pre-gubernatorial career and his term as Illinois governor. When discussing his record as governor, the article highlighted how he found a way to work with the legislature. The profile

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132. Ibid.,69-71.
133. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952, 78-79;* Richard E. McFadyen, 'Estes Kefauver and the Tradition of Southern Progressivism', *Tennessee Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 37, No. 4 (Winter 1978), 430-443. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42625911.
134. Adlai Stevenson, 'Letter to Alicia Patterson' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume III Governor of Illinois 1949-1953,* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1973), 575. In this letter he admits that 'theres [sic] a touch of destiny about the draft business.
135. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 561- 577. Martin reprints in full the statement that Stevenson made of April 16 1952. This statement while avowing interest in the presidency, was felt by many to still leave open the prospect of a draft. Martin discusses various reactions to the statement in this section.
136. 'Possible nominees for the Presidency', *New York Times*, July 21,1952, 12.

also specifically mentioned his veto of the Broyles Bills as an example of his courage, along with a bill called the Larson Bill, which he also vetoed. The article stated that,'Stevenson was under tremendous pressure to allow the bills to become law without his signature.'

Summing up Stevenson's appeal as the nominee, the article described his key characteristics as 'integrity and courage'.[137] These traits would form a key part of his campaign and he would demonstrate them to his liberal followers in his response to McCarthyism.

If Stevenson was a leading candidate before the convention, it was his opening address that claimed him the nomination. Since the Democratic National Convention was held in Chicago in that year, it was natural that Stevenson would give the opening address. The speech was delivered on July 21 1952. Since it was a welcoming address, there was no discussion of specific policies. Instead it provided a partisan summary of the history of the Democratic Party and a statement of the purpose of the party going forward after twenty years holding the White House. The issues of McCarthyism and communism both formed part of this mission statement and were referred to explicitly and implicitly. The opening of the speech formed a tribute to the state of Illinois.

Stevenson invoked both of these themes in the statement, 'Here, on the prairies of Illinois and the Middle West, we can see a long way in all directions … Here there are no barriers, no defences, to ideas and aspirations. We want none; we want no shackles on the mind or the spirit, no rigid patterns of thought, no iron conformity' This line could be read in two ways: on one hand it could be read as a typical Cold War era affirmation of US superiority against Soviet totalitarianism. It could also be read as a rebuke to the repressive ideology of domestic anti-communist politicians, depending on the listener's perspective.

The speech did contain several explicit mentions of the Cold War and saw the mission of the Democratic Party as being to defeat the Soviet Union. When it recounted the achievements of the Democratic administrations of Roosevelt and Truman, Stevenson ended the list with the statement 'twenty years that close this very month in grim contest with the communist conspiracy on every continent.' Later in the speech Stevenson, stated that one of the greatest threats imperilling the United States was 'the new imperialism of Soviet Russia.' He also took aim at the Republican Party and its embrace of McCarthyism. In the most critical passage, he argued, 'intemperate criticism is not a policy for the nation; denunciation is not a program for our salvation. Words calculated to catch everyone may catch no one.'

Then Stevenson moved into one of his main themes, which was that victory in the contest against the Soviet Union could only come by preserving the freedoms of thought and speech that are inherent in a democracy, 'self-criticism is the secret weapon of democracy, and candour and confession are good for the political soul.' The speech ended with what would be a constant refrain throughout Stevenson's campaign and would define his historical reputation. He called for sensible and considered leadership in the United States,'what America needs and the world wants is not

137. Richard A. Meyer, 'Adlai Stevenson-on the edge,'*The New Republic* July 21st 1952, 8-10.

bombast, abuse and double talk, but a sober message of firm faith and confidence.'[138] This 'sober message' was contrasted to 'mass hysteria', which was clearly a reference to McCarthyism. The welcoming address succeeded in appealing to a broad audience within the Democratic Party. It was an attempt to drum up enthusiasm for the party and for himself as a possible candidate from the disparate elements of the Democratic coalition. This need to unify the party was a pressing concern after it had split in the 1948 presidential election.[139] Stevenson's speech therefore attempted to avoid any sources of disagreement and instead focused on the narrative of the triumphant Democratic Party dragging the US out the Depression and bringing victory in the Second World War. Stevenson's denunciation of McCarthyism would endear him to liberals and the left and the issue was not as divisive as Civil Rights.

While anti-McCarthyism would obviously appeal to liberals, Stevenson presented the issue in a manner that would not alienate the conservative Democratic wing. Constant references were also made to the danger that international communism represented to the United States. The attacks he made on McCarthyism are clear but not specific enough to alienate, and the framing of his opposition to McCarthyism was conservative in tone. Stevenson emphasised that the reason for his distrust of this type of anti-communism was its radicalism and its populism. The end of the speech reinforced this message, 'let us make our decisions openly, fairly, not by the processes of synthetic excitement or mass hysteria, but as these solemn times demand, by earnest thought and prayerful deliberation.'[140]

Newspaper coverage of this speech highlighted its importance to Stevenson's nomination. *The New York Times* article on July 22, 1952 was entitled 'Stevenson speech sends him to fore'. As suggested by the title, this article argued that Stevenson's welcoming speech had boosted his prospects of being nominated. The article did admit that Stevenson was already one of the most 'prominent' candidates before this speech. Despite this, the article argued that Stevenson's speech boosted his chances of becoming the nominee. According to the article, Stevenson and his team were playing down expectations about this speech, saying that it would be purposely dull to dampen enthusiasm for his nomination. Instead this speech seemed calculated to about bring his nomination. To the *Time*s this article seemed 'more like a keynote speech or even a nominating speech or even an acceptance speech.'[141] Even the hostile *Los Angles Times* agreed that the speech was a triumph for Stevenson. This conservative paper, which was hostile to the Democrats and hoped for a Republican victory in November, admitted that Stevenson's speech gave them the

138. Adlai Stevenson 'Welcoming Address to Democratic National Convention' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 11-14.

139. *Bowen, Michael, The Roots of Modern Conservatism,* 69-70.When Truman had run for president in 1948, two other candidates representing different sections of the Democratic coalition had run as third-party candidates. Henry Wallace represented the left wing of the party that was dismayed by Truman's hard-line policy to the Soviet Union and Strom Thurmond who represented Southern Democrats who had walked out over the pro-Civil Rights plank of the Democratic Party's platform.

140. Adlai Stevenson 'Welcoming Address to Democratic National Convention' 14.

141. James Reston, 'Stevenson's Speech Sends him to the Fore,' *New York Times*, July 22,1952, 1-2.

'first feeble tingle of electricity' saying it 'was a crisp, clever speech.' Although the paper praised the speech, it was lukewarm toward Stevenson. It claimed that he 'is not a strong personality' and had only succeeded because the 'opposition is weak and divided.'[142]

Another important element of the convention was the Democratic Party platform, specifically the plank of the platform relating to civil rights. In 1948 the Democrats had inserted what was for the time a strong platform on civil rights. The 1948 platform called upon the Congress to support Truman's civil rights program so as to guarantee four civil rights objectives: '(1) the right of full and equal political participation; (2) the right to equal opportunity of employment; (3) the right of security of person; (4) and the right of equal treatment in the service and defense of our nation.'[143] This resulted in delegates from Alabama and Mississippi leaving the convention and Strom Thurmond being nominated for president by renegade Southern Democrats who were dubbed 'Dixiecrats'. Thurmond managed to carry Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina in the election of 1948 and in the 1952 convention the Democrats were anxious to avoid the same outcome.[144] There were calls from liberals at the outset of the convention to have a civil rights plank which called for compulsory Fair Employment Practices Commission to eliminate discriminatory practices in hiring, as well as a change to Rule 22 of the Senate which allowed the Senate to close off debate with a vote that received the support of two thirds of the Senate. The Fair Employment Practices Commission had originally been created in 1941 in order to quell a planned march on Washington by African Americans protesting segregation in the military and discriminatory hiring practices. It had been created by executive order and denied Congressional funding once the war had ended. The 1948 Democratic Party platform sought to establish a permanent body to replace it.[145] Rule 22 had allowed the South to filibuster all civil rights legislation to prevent it coming to a vote.[146] However when the plank was drafted, both of these provisions were watered down. It did not call for strong new legislation, instead stating: 'we also favor legislation to perfect existing Federal civil rights statutes and to strengthen the administrative machinery for the protection of civil rights.'[147]

It also was much vaguer in its calls for reform to Congressional procedure, not proposing any specific changes in Senate procedure but simply calling for the 83rd Congress to improve Congressional procedures so that majority rule prevailed and decisions could be made after

142. Holmes Alexander, 'Stevenson's Speech Sparks Convention,' *Los Angles Times*, 22 July 1952, 2.
143. '1948 Democratic Party Platform', UC Santa Barbara Presidency Project, Accessed 27 December 2019, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1948-democratic-party-platform.
144. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States 1945-1974*, 155-156, 161.
145. Anthony S. Chen, 'The Party of Lincoln and the Politics of State Fair Employment Practices Legislation in the North, 1945–1964', *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 112, No. 6 (May 2007), 1713-1774, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/512709; Robert J. Donovan, *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S Truman, 1945-1948,* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1977), 32-33; David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War 1929-1945*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 766-767.
146. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952,* 112.
147. '1952 Democratic Party Platform', UC Santa Barbara Presidency Project, Accessed 27 December 2019, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/1952-democratic-party-platform.

reasonable debate without being blocked by a minority in either House.'[148] The individual most responsible for this is plank was John Sparkman, Senator from Alabama, who was nominated as Stevenson's running mate as reward for his work in drafting a plank that could satisfy both factions in the party. This platform managed to avoid the walkout that occurred in the 1948 convention, but also marked a retreat in the area of civil rights, an area that was important to liberals.

Once Stevenson began his campaign he became more confident and bold in his campaign strategy, and he was willing to openly criticise domestic anti-communists and their methods to drive Communists from public life. Stevenson's supporters were impressed, but he began to receive more criticism as the campaign went on. His next major speech that discussed the issue of McCarthyism and domestic anti-communism was his address to the American Legion at Madison Square Garden August 27, 1952, entitled 'The Nature of Patriotism'. In this speech, Stevenson criticised the use of patriotism to justify oppression of different racial and ethnic groups and the repression of unpopular and critical opinions.[149] This was a risky speech to deliver to this audience.

The American Legion, as we have seen in discussion of the Broyles Bills, was a key supporter of these bills. Ellen Schrecker has seen the Legion as one of the key organisational structures through which anti-communist measures could be implemented on a local and state level, due to the Legion structure, which had local branches all across the country.[150] Stevenson and his aides were well aware that he was not likely to deliver a speech that the Legion would like and that this was in fact the speech's intention. In a letter to Archibald MacLeish, who was drafting the speech with him, Stevenson delivered the lament, 'I get so sick of the everlasting appeals to the cupidity and prejudice of every group which characterize our political campaigns … I should like to try, at least to appeal to their sense of obligation as well as their avarice.' In the postcript to the letter he also included a copy of his Broyles Bill veto, which he referred to as 'the Legion's anti-subversive bills in the Illinois Legislature.'[151]

The speech delivery suited the purpose outlined in his letter. It started in Stevenson's usual self-effacing style. Stevenson acknowledged his limited military experience. He described his experience as 'a worm's eye view of the service.'[152] He then attempted to generate as much goodwill as possible before reminding the Legion of its obligations. He praised the Legion for its efforts to promote military preparedness after the First World War, when such a cause had become unpopular. He also pointed to areas where he agreed with the Legion – that more needed to be done to bolster national defences to protect against the possibility of Soviet air attacks and the shared patriotism and optimism about the US's place in the world. He gushed to his audience, 'I

148. Ibid.
149. Adlai Stevenson 'The Nature of Patriotism' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 49-54.
150. Alec Campbell, 'The Sociopolitical Origins of the American Legion', *Theory and Society, 39* (1), 17-18; Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes*, 61-64.
151. Adlai Stevenson, 'To Archibald MacLeish August 11 1952' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 39.
152. Stevenson, 'The Nature of Patriotism'. 49-54.

am not sure that, historically, there has been another powerful nation that has been as trusted as the United States is trusted today … the proudest nations on earth have not only accepted American leadership in the common defence effort, but also welcomed our troops and bases on their territory.' Stevenson then moved on to the obligation section of his discussion of patriotism. He juxtaposed two different types of patriotism. After having asked what is meant by patriotism, Stevenson ventured a definition that emphasised duty and obligation. He described 'a patriotism that puts country ahead of self.' This patriotism was characterised by its calm and collected nature, Stevenson used words such as 'tranquil, serenity and steady'. Stevenson hinted at its opposite when he described patriotism as 'Not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion'.

Stevenson's next section discussed his desire to resist the pressure of 'special interest' groups. He informed the legionnaires that he intended to resist and oppose any effort 'in conflict with the public interest' or 'excessive'. To sum up this section, Stevenson argued: 'We are Americans first and veterans second'. The speech then moved on to a critique of what Stevenson believed to be the intolerant nature of some forms of patriotism. He started out with a perfunctory rebuke to those who would use patriotism to attack different racial, religious or ethnic groups. He moved on to a lengthier rebuke of those who 'for political or personal reasons attack the patriotism of faithful public servants.' Stevenson started by citing 'a shocking example' of the attacks that were made on General George Marshall. He restated many of his previous arguments about the best way to combat domestic anti-communism, while acknowledging that communism was 'abhorrent' and that it should be banished from the public sphere. Yet he also believed that the need to remove genuine subversives could not be allowed to jeopardise free expression and freedom of thought. He even repeated one of the most famous quotes from his veto of the Broyles bills, 'We must take care not to burn down the barn to kill the rats'.

The speech was notable in that it specifically singled out the criticism of teachers for comment. As discussed in the section on the Broyles Bill, the education system was a particular target for the American Legion, so Stevenson knew he was addressing a particularly hot button issue for them: 'There is no justification for indiscriminate attacks on our schools, and the sincere, devoted, and by no means overpaid teachers who labor in them.' He did allow that communist teachers should be fired, but said that this was not a job for those he dubbed 'self-appointed thought police or ill-informed censors'. He warned that this would allow the Soviet Union and Communists to 'defame' the United States and also that it would 'stifle the initiative of teachers and depreciate the prestige of the teaching profession'.

Stevenson's speech ended in the usual fashion with an uplifting poetical touch on a hopeful note about patriotism: 'Patriotism with us is not the hatred of Russia; it is the love of this Republic and of the ideal of liberty of man and mind in which it was born, and to which this Republic is dedicated.' This 'wholesome' patriotism would allow the United States to pursue a policy of peace.

He concluded with another compliment to the American Legion: 'Legionnaires are united by memories of war. Therefore, no group is more devoted to peace.'[153]

The speech was not ground-breaking in terms of ideas. It would have been familiar to anyone who had followed Stevenson's gubernatorial career – indeed part of the point of the speech was to show the consistency of his ideas. However two things did set this speech apart: it was the first time that Stevenson had used these arguments on the national stage; it also showed that he would not change his rhetoric to suit his audience and that he would deliver his policies to a potentially hostile crowd. The crowd's reaction was positive, according to press accounts published in the *Daily Pantagraph* and the *Chicago Tribune*.[154] Both papers noted that Stevenson addressed a smaller crowd than Eisenhower's, but that Stevenson was interrupted on more occasions for applause.

The speech evoked negative response in the Legion as well. One example of a negative reaction could be seen in an article published in *the Chicago Tribune* in August 28th, 1952. In an article entitled 'Ex-Head of Legion Charges Stevenson Slurs Veterans', George N. Craig, a Republican candidate for governor of Indiana, who was also a national commander for the Legion, criticised the speech. While Craig's objections covered familiar territory, such as attacking Stevenson's deposition on Hiss and defending Senator McCarthy, he also objected to Stevenson treating the Legion as just another interest group. Craig argued that the primary purpose of the Legion was to assist injured veterans and the families of those who had died in war. Craig was insulted that Stevenson would simply label such an organisation as a special interest group. Alluding to Stevenson's comment about having 'a worm's eye view' of military service, Craig replied: 'It would appear that his eyesight, at least as far as American veterans are concerned, has not improved in 34 years.'Craig also disputed accounts that the speech was well received: 'In view of the anti-veteran nature of the Stevenson speech, it was no accident that the Legion delegates on the floor of the convention sat largely silent'. He claimed that the applause for the speech came from 'American for Democratic Action and Tammany Hall in the upper gallery'.[155]

The reaction of the conservative press to Stevenson's speech can been seen in the *Los Angeles Times* on August 28th, 1952. An editorial entitled 'Stevenson Gets Out on a Limb' takes issue with Stevenson's defence of General Marshall and his characterisation of the attacks on him. This editorial claimed: 'Gen. Marshall's patriotism is not in question. But the fact that he is a patriot does not excuse him for making grave errors of judgement; and the fact that there were such errors appear undeniable.' In particular the editorial referred to Marshall's time as a special envoy in China from 1945 to 1947. It blamed the fall of Chiang Kai Shek's nationalist government on Marshall's proposal to create a coalition government in China that included the Communist Party.

153. Stevenson 'The Nature of Patriotism'. 49-54.
154. 'Adlai Praises Gen. Marshall; Hits at G.O.P,' *Chicago Tribune,* August 28th 1952, 1; 'Stevenson Derides Platform of GOP,' *The Pantagraph,* August 28st,1952, 1.
155. 'Ex-Head of Legion Charges Stevenson Slurs Veterans,' *Chicago Tribune,* August 28th 1952, 2.

The editorial inverted Stevenson's charge of misusing patriotism by arguing that Stevenson used Marshall's military record to protect him from legitimate criticism: 'Gov. Stevenson attempts to wrap this sorry record up in the American Flag and declare it is not be criticized because the author of it was a patriot.' The editorial moved on to argue that Stevenson had previously admitted that US foreign policy was 'a mess' and that by defending Marshall he was endorsing the decisions made at Potsdam and Yalta.[156] Of all of the article's assertions, this was probably the most questionable, as Stevenson always pointed to foreign policy as a key achievement of the Roosevelt and Truman presidencies. The editorial does show that, far from seeing Stevenson as a courageous defender of constitutional liberties, he could be seen as a cynical politician who would denounce political uses of patriotism based on whether it suited his political purposes.

Another conservative response to this speech appeared in an editorial in the *Chicago Tribune* on August 29, 1952, which took issue with what it described as Stevenson's conflation of racial, ethnic and religious discrimination with anti-communism. It quoted the section of the speech that condemned patriotism as an excuse for prejudice and then went on to say that such a charge could not be made against Joseph McCarthy who had 'never been accused of racial or religious prejudice'. The editorial stated that it was a common mistake to believe that Communists were a persecuted group in society like some racial and religious minorities and argued that this was Stevenson's true belief despite his paying 'lip service' to the concept that Communism was 'abhorrent'. The editorial then moved on to Stevenson's defence of freedom of speech, arguing that this concept of freedom could not be applied to communism: 'If they [Communists] question the thoughts imposed upon them by their party, they cease to be Communists. When they deviate from party dogma, they can redeem themselves only by the most abject confessions of error. They are never men of free minds, but Stalin's robot traitors to America.' The editorial then argued that Stevenson's attack on McCarthy was motivated by vindictiveness because McCarthy uncovered Communists in the State Department and exposed the folly of the administration, particularly its policy in China.[157]

If Stevenson was becoming more bold in his denunciation of McCarthyism, his approach to civil rights was noticeably more conservative than Truman's in the 1948 campaign. As with the Democratic Party's 1948 platform, liberals and African Americans could find little within the 1952 campaign to excite them when it came to civil rights. While Stevenson as Governor of Illinois had been supportive of civil rights, as demonstrated by his support for setting up a Fair Employment Practices Commission within Illinois, his presidential campaign was noticeably more cautious when it came to issues of Civil Rights.[158] Stevenson selected as his running mate John Sparkman, who was committed to resisting Civil Rights legislation and had watered down the Civil Rights plank of

156. 'Stevenson Gets Out on a Limb', editorial, *Los Angeles Times*, 28th August 1952, 32.
157. 'Stevenson, McCarthy and the Communists,' *Chicago Tribune,* August 29th 1952, 14.
158. Chen, 'The Party of Lincoln and the Politics of State Fair Employment Practices Legislation in the North'; Martin, Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, 403-404.

the Democratic Party platform.[159] Stevenson sent deliberately mixed signals when speaking about the issue of civil rights.

The clearest example of this can be found in a speech he delivered in Richmond, Virginia, dubbed 'The New South', in which he praised elements of the Confederate constitution as well its 'political genius'. At the end of the speech, addressing the issue of 'minority rights', he expressed his support for civil rights by simply stating: 'In the broad field of minority rights, the Democratic Party has stated its position in its platform, a position to which I adhere.'
With considerably more passion, he denounced what he considered anti-Southern prejudice: 'I reject as equally contemptible the reckless assertions that the South is a prison in which half the people are prisoners and the other half are wardens. I view with scorn those who hurl charges that the South—or any group of Americans – is wedded to wrong and incapable of right.'[160] These pronouncements are striking to modern readers and have in large part contributed to the decline of Stevenson's reputation in the post civil rights era.

Another issue that showed the limits of Stevenson's liberalism was organised labour. Ever since the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935, labour unions had been one of the strongest pillars of the Democratic coalition.[161] There had been significant disputes between the labour movement and the president during Truman's term – during the coal miners and railways strike he had signed executive orders to seize and operate these industries, fearing the damage to the country. Despite this, Truman had been a steadfast support of labour politically and had vetoed the Taft-Hartley Bill which had restricted labour unions. He vetoed the bill knowing that the Congress would override his veto and make the bill law and therefore lose political face.[162]

While the 1952 Democratic platform still announced its intention to repeal the Taft-Hartley bill,[163] Stevenson's rhetoric towards labour unions was as ambiguous as his language on civil rights. During a speech in Evansville, Stevenson departed from a prepared speech designed to reassure labour about his political views and instead made a statement that seemed anti-labour. Instead of declaring, 'We don't want Senator Taft to write our labour laws', Stevenson substituted, 'We don't want—no labor bosses are ever going to boss me, and I think that goons and violence and property damage is as wrong and as intolerable in labor disputes as it is anywhere else.' Stevenson followed this up with: 'I also say that I shall never be bossed by any group of industrialists either'.[164] Stevenson's evident discomfort with labour unions was another issue that made him an odd choice for liberal champion.

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159. Greene, *I Like Ike: The Presidential Election of 1952,* 112-113.
160. Adlai Stevenson 'The New South' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 106-113.
161. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States 1945-1974.* 54-55.
162. Donovan, *Conflict & Crisis*, 211, 301-303.
163. 1952 Democratic Party Platform,' UC Santa Barbara Presidency Project'.
164. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 699-700.

Towards the end of the campaign, pressure began to mount on Stevenson to address the issue of the deposition that he had supplied for Alger Hiss. The Republicans sensed weakness and began pressing the issue and forcing Stevenson onto the defensive in order to justify his decision to supply the deposition. One major contributor to this was Richard Nixon, who delivered a radio address October 14th 1952 to discuss the issue of Stevenson's deposition in the Alger Hiss trial. Nixon presented himself as the dogged hero uncovering the truth of the case. He then moved on to criticism of the previous Democratic administration, arguing that it had attempted to cover up this case. Nixon argued that much of the damage Hiss did could have been avoided if the Democrats had listened to Chambers' warning in 1939 and on later occasions, 'In 1939, '41, '43, '45 and '47 Chambers told the story again to the agencies of this country. And nothing was done, nothing was done.' Even after the accusations against Hiss became public, the Democrats stood by him. This support included Stevenson providing a deposition. Many other prominent Democrats testified and the President declared the case was a 'red herring'. Nixon claimed that, had the administration taken action, it could have prevented many of the worst security leaks. In particular he singled out the spy ring that operated out of the Manhattan Project, which in his view allowed the Soviet Union to develop atomic weapons five years earlier than it otherwise would have. He cited further evidence of Stevenson's lackadaisical attitude by pointing to statements that mocked anti-communist politicians looking for communists in the 'Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife'. Nixon also brought up a quote from Stevenson stating, 'There aren't many American Communists, far fewer than in the days of the great depression and they aren't on the whole very important'. Nixon then compared this attitude with that of J. Edgar Hoover who, while acknowledging the numerical smallness of the Communist Party, argued that this belied the danger it posed.

Based on this evidence Nixon argued that Stevenson was not qualified to be president because, 'he has failed to recognize the threat the threat around him, as many have failed to recognize it around him.' Nixon presented Eisenhower as the antithesis of Stevenson, as the man who led the US war efforts in Europe, whose army command was never infiltrated by Communists and who was not associated with the present administration. Eisenhower was a man who could stand up the ruthlessness of the Soviets. Nixon ended this speech with an affirmation of US greatness and his hopes for the future. He assured listeners: 'Believe me, there isn't any question of the outcome' because 'we are on the right side, the side of freedom, the side of justice, the side of youth against the forces of totalitarianism, of slavery, and atheistic communism.'[165]

The degree to which McCarthyism began to play a major role in the campaign of 1952 can be seen in a speech delivered by Stevenson in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 23.[166] The speech was named 'The Hiss Case' in his published papers. It was much more than an explanation of the

165. Richard Nixon, 'Failure of this administration to deal effectively with Communist threat is the greatest issue of election campaign,' *St-Louis Post Dispatch,* October 14, 29, 35.
166. Adlai Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 164-170.

testimony he supplied in the trial of Alger Hiss, it was a full-throated condemnation of anti-communist demagoguery and a censure of Eisenhower's complicity. The location of the speech suggested that Stevenson wanted to give the impression that he was charging headlong into enemy territory to defend political decency and his own patriotism. Ohio, more than any other state in the union, was associated with conservative Republicanism, particularly isolationism.[167] The state's two senators were a case in point. Robert A. Taft was the most prominent Republican conservative in the country. He had built his career on a longstanding opposition to both the domestic and foreign policies of Roosevelt and Truman, on the grounds that they had betrayed the Constitution by their extension of executive power at the expense of the legislative branch and their extension of the powers of the federal government.[168] He was the favourite candidate of many of the GOP faithful but had been defeated by Eisenhower after the bitterest convention fight in almost twenty years. Even more conservative than Taft was John W. Bricker, who had authored an amendment to the constitution that would have greatly reduced the power of the executive to participate in international agreements. The amendment was seen (rightly) as an attempt to derail the United States' participation in the United Nations. When Eisenhower was elected, he and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, spent considerable time fighting the amendment, such was its conservatism.[169]

In going to Ohio and speaking out on the issue of domestic anti-communism himself, Stevenson hoped to confront and diffuse the issue of his deposition regarding Alger Hiss. He was also hoping to emphasise his own straightforwardness and characterised Eisenhower as hiding away while his cronies hit out at Stevenson. The timing of the speech gave a different impression; Stevenson had started out in the campaign giving rousing accounts of the achievements of the past twenty years of Democratic government. His campaign speech would often contrast the state of the US in 1932, with its condition in 1952.[170] The Democrats, Stevenson claimed, had saved the US from internal revolution and decay as well as destroying fascism abroad and holding the line against communism. The speeches were articulately written, contained witty, but light jabs at the opposition and were delivered with a lightness of touch. The Ohio speech was different. It was defensive, its tone was sombre, and it was also angry. At times he barely restrained himself from an outright attack on Eisenhower's anti-communist credentials and was scathing in his attack upon Richard Nixon. It gave a greater sense of Stevenson and his political philosophy than almost any speech in the campaign. In the politics of the campaign, the speech was obviously a mistake. It was too late in the campaign to address such a fundamental question of fitness. The belated

167. Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2001), 9-11.
168. James T. Patterson, *Mr Republican: A Biography of Robert A. Taft*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972).
169. Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus,* 9-11.
170. Adlai Stevenson 'The New England Tradition' in T*he papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 98-103. Is a good example of this type of speech.

response by Stevenson showed that he had underestimated the potency of questions about Hiss. This was confirmed by an exchange of letters between Robert J. Lynch, an assistant to former United Nations Ambassador Edward R. Stettinius Jr., and Stevenson. Lynch wrote to Stevenson arguing that if the deposition Stevenson gave in the Hiss trial became an issue, he had some suggestions about how to deal with it. Stevenson's reply was complacent. He reassured Lynch that he had only testified as to his knowledge of Hiss's reputation. In a P.S. he stated: 'I rather doubt if the Republicans make much of the Hiss case but their more strident Press [sic] will doubtless do so. After all, Dulles hired him for the Carnegie job after I knew him.'[171]

The Ohio speech started off with the proposition that Eisenhower had ceded control of his campaign to the right wing of the Republican Party. As Stevenson pointed out, Eisenhower, although he had sold himself as a moderate to the Republican convention, had lost much of the support of the progressive wing of the Republican Party, such as Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon and Senator Maggie Smith of Maine. Eisenhower had in turn appealed to the 'reactionary' elements, such as McCarthy, Taft and *Chicago Tribune* publisher Colonel Robert McCormick.[172] Stevenson was always eager to hammer the theme of the divisions that beset the Republican Party. Throughout the campaign he stressed the fact that voting for Eisenhower was in fact voting for an unreconstructed conservative from the party of Hoover.[173] Stevenson never shied away from heaping praise on the progressive members of the Republican Party. Although his grandfather was a Democrat grandee, the area he grew up in (Bloomington) and his mother's family were staunchly Republican. This, combined with his personal aversion for bloody-minded partisanship, made bi-partisanship more personally appealing for him.

There also were political considerations. A reputation for bi-partisanship had always been an asset for Stevenson – he was after all nominated partly because he had won the Governorship of Illinois with large Republican support.[174] It was also an attempt to stress the disunion within the Republican Party. This explained the multiple mentions of Maggie Smith who, as Stevenson noted in his speech, had condemned McCarthy as early as 1950.[175] The disunity of the Republican Party yielded Stevenson's most memorable line: that the Republican Party was 'a political party divided against itself, half McCarthy and half Eisenhower'[176] In this speech he was already experimenting with these ideas. In this speech the line is: 'The voice [Joseph McCarthy] of the wing of the Republican Party that lost the nomination has won the nominee.[177] That Adlai Stevenson chided Eisenhower for leading a divided party was at best highly disingenuous. The Democratic Party had

171. Adlai Stevenson 'To R.J. Lynch August 30 1952' in T*he papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 64-65.
172. Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case', 164.
173. Stevenson,'The New England Tradition', 100.
174. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 347.
175. Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case', 165.
176. Adlai Stevenson, 'Crusades, Communism and Corruptions' in *The papers of Adlai E. Stevenson: Volume IV Let's Talk Sense to the American People* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1974), 329.
177. Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case', 165.

its conservative and liberal wings too and in the last presidential campaign the party's constituents had been split three ways. More problematically for Stevenson, while the nation's most prominent anti-communist politician was McCarthy, its most powerful was anti-communist Democrat Pat McCarran, senior senator from Nevada, who chaired multiple committees that gave him enormous power. In addition to Judiciary he also chaired the Internal Security Subcommittee, a most powerful and most feared federal legislative committee devoted to investigating and combating the communist threat. Though Stevenson had denounced McCarran, he never talked about him as openly as he did about McCarthy and never mentioned them in the same speech. In reality McCarran derived much of his power from the Democratic Party. It was only when they held a majority in the Senate that McCarran was at his full power.[178]

The second theme was that Eisenhower was held captive by the conservative wing of the Republican Party. Stevenson often used this issue ironically, for he knew that one of Eisenhower's great political strengths was his ability to appear distant and undecided personally, while allowing either the media or his Republican partisans to do the attacking. His running mate Richard Nixon was exposed to this treatment when his financial affairs came under question. Eisenhower refused either to issue a statement of support or to drop him from the ticket, instead he waited to see how public opinion would react and how Nixon would respond. Eisenhower accepted Nixon back on to the ticket after the famous 'Checkers speech'.[179] In much the same manner, Eisenhower let many of the most conservative anti-communist politicians brutally assail Stevenson while seeming never either approving or disapproving. Eisenhower was one of the only politicians of the time who could have gotten away with this, because he was never considered a politician. One of the two most famous American generals, along with Douglas MacArthur, to come out of the Second World War, he was lionised as the hero of D-Day and was the most respected figure in postwar America. He had also avoided the political mistakes of MacArthur, who became divisive during the Korean War. Unlike MacArthur, Eisenhower was not imperious or intimidating, instead his demeanour was good natured and grandfatherly.[180]

The speech showed the difficulties that Stevenson encountered in his political predicament. Nixon and McCarthy were much easier targets, being unpopular within Democratic ranks as well as with segments of their own party. If the speech overly focused on McCarthy and Nixon, the critique of Eisenhower would be lost and he would be stuck in a debate about his patriotism with two relatively junior and minor politicians, while Eisenhower could watch from the sidelines. The speech therefore came across as messy, with bitter partisan attacks directed at McCarthy and Nixon as well as pleas to Eisenhower to improve the tone of the campaign. Stevenson started off weakly by unwisely praising Eisenhower: 'I believed with many of you that General Eisenhower's

178. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy.*
179. Rick Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America, (*New York, Scribner, 2008) 36-43. Perlstein's analysis of the 'Checkers Speech' sympathises it's importance to Nixon's career.
180. Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower,* 55-64.

hard won victory at the Chicago Convention was a victory of the constructive and progressive men in the Republican Party over its bitter and reactionary elements.'[181]

This opening confused the very issue he needed to hammer home, that Eisenhower was responsible for the Republican campaign, and that he was by his silence condoning the awful things that Republicans were saying about Stevenson. At times Stevenson could be trenchant. For example, he recounted the now famous story of Eisenhower revising a speech in Wisconsin to omit a favourable mention of George Marshall at the behest of McCarthy and then reinserting it when he continued to campaign. As Stevenson observed: 'If the General would publicly embrace those who slander General Marshall, there is certainly no reason to expect that he would restrain those who would slander me.' Stevenson was also direct when it came to the major address by McCarthy that was scheduled to air just before the end of the campaign, flatly stating: 'You will hear from the Senator from Wisconsin, with the permission and the approval of General Eisenhower.' Stevenson then brought up the declaration of conscience made by Maine Senator Maggie Smith and denounced McCarthy and his tactics: 'The General might have endorsed that Declaration of Conscience. He might have made it a testament of a real Crusade. Instead, by ignorance or choice, he has turned not to the Republican signers of that declaration, but to the Republican Senator who called Senator Smith a thief and a defender of the communists.' Despite these condemnations, Stevenson muddied his message with statements such as:

> I would never have believed that a Presidential contest with Eisenhower would have made this speech necessary, It may well be that the General has been misled by his lack of experience in civil life. This is not a war; it is a political contest in a free democracy and the rules are different. We who believe in our system have always considered it to be the responsibility of candidates to promote wider understanding of the true issues – and not to stir up fear and to spread suspicion.

It was the job of this speech to stress that Eisenhower was knowingly letting Nixon and McCarthy savage Stevenson. But the failure to take a consistent line against Eisenhower meant that the denunciations of the conservative Republicans seemed more dominant. Stevenson in this speech was even more bitter than in the campaign. He started with a general denunciation of the campaign that the Right had been running: 'It is not a campaign by debate. It has become a systematic program of innuendo and accusation aimed at sowing the seeds of doubt and mistrust.' He mentioned McCarthy by title, referring to him to him as 'the junior Senator from Wisconsin'. He cited McCarthy's comments that he would like to be smuggled aboard the Stevenson's campaign train with a baseball bat, and threatened 'I'd teach patriotism to little Ad-lie'.[182] Stevenson failed to grasp the significance of McCarthy, who was not as some claimed a clown who bumbled into national fame. Instead he was a perceptive demagogue who tapped into the anxieties and anger that the New Deal had produced. Stevenson dismissed McCarthy,'as an isolated voice of a single

181. Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case'.

182. Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 255.

individual he would be unimportant'. The consequence of mentioning McCarthy gave the Senator further publicity.

Stevenson was much more critical of Nixon. Various historians and biographers have stated plainly that Stevenson loathed Nixon and it was easy to see this personal animosity coming through in the speech.[183] Nixon was described as a 'brash and patronizing young man who aspires to the Vice Presidency'. In defending his decision to give a deposition in the Hiss case, he reminded Nixon of the commandment: 'Thou shall not bear false witness … in case Senator Nixon has not read them lately'.[184] This was a poor decision by Stevenson, since on the question of Alger Hiss, Nixon was the scrappy underdog who had taken on and defeated the Eastern establishment. In the celebrated story of the Hiss case, Richard Nixon was the one who recognised that there was something amiss behind Hiss's smooth facade.[185] The speech gave Nixon a chance to continue to hammer away at the issue of Hiss.*The New York Times* reported statements from Nixon regarding the speech on the 24th and 26th of October that reiterated the message that Stevenson was unfit for leadership because he was 'color blind' to the issue of communism.[186]

The speech also presented Joseph McCarthy with a right of reply since he had been criticised in the speech. McCarthy was not a politician likely to pass up an opportunity such as this. He replied to Stevenson in a speech, delivered to a packed audience in Chicago on October 27th 1952, which was reprinted in the *Chicago Tribune*. This idea of piecing together the puzzle of Adlai Stevenson formed the central metaphor of the speech, with McCarthy bringing all the disparate pieces of 'evidence' to reveal Stevenson's 'true position' on communism to his audience. McCarthy started the speech by reminding his audience that the United States was in a war that pitted 'atheistic communism' against 'our free civilisation' – the war had been going on since the end of the Second World War and the United States was losing at 'a rate of 100,000,000 a year'. This war had led Joseph McCarthy to expose 'those in high positions who are in charge of our deliberate retreat from victory'. McCarthy made a point to distinguish between the leadership of the Democratic Party and the voters that supported them. He declared, 'Certainly the millions of loyal Americans who have long voted the Democratic ticket are just as loyal – they love America just as much – and they hate communism just as much – and they hate communism just as much as the average Republican. Unfortunately, the millions of loyal Democrats no longer have a party in Washington.'[187]

McCarthy was from Wisconsin, a state that had supported Franklin Roosevelt during the New Deal era, meaning that he was always conscious not to offend voters who considered

183. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics,* 127; Baker, *The Stevensons*, 380-381.
184. Stevenson, 'The Hiss Case'.
185. Perlstein, *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America*, 29-33. Perlstein is not the first to make this argument but does make it persuasively.
186. 'Nixon reiterates Stevenson Charge,' *New York Times*, October 26,1952, 74.
187. Joseph McCarthy 'Fits Together "Jigsaw Puzzle' of Candidates"', C*hicago Tribune,* October 28th 1952,1-4.

themselves Democrats.[188] This also drew attention to the fact that, although much of the anger that provided fuel for anti-communist politics came from debates that occurred during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, many of the most famous anti-communist politicians came from areas that had supported Roosevelt. This includes Richard Nixon in California and Pat McCarran in Nevada.[189]

The first 'piece' of McCarthy's puzzle was Stevenson's advisers. In the speech McCarthy singled out a number of Stevenson advisers for criticism. The most revealing criticism was of Arthur Schlesinger. McCarthy focused on a review by Schlesinger of Whitaker Chambers' memoir *Witness*. Chambers had become deeply religious after his break with communism. In his review of the memoir, Schlesinger was critical of Chambers' claims that religious faith was necessary to overcome communism. McCarthy quoted Schlesinger: 'The whole record of history, indeed, gives proof that a belief in God has created human vanity as overweening and human arrogance as intolerable as the vanity and arrogance of the Communists.'[190]

McCarthy pointed to supposed parallels between Schlesinger and communism by pointing out that a key tenet of communism was its hostility towards religious faith, despite the fact that in the quote Schlesinger had characterised communism as vain and arrogant. In addition this quote was designed to stoke conservative fears of liberalism's increasing secularism. By criticising Stevenson's advisers, he suggested that Stevenson was more radical than his public statements suggested and that Stevenson belonged to an environment that was soft on communism and shared values on issues such as religion that put him outside the mainstream of US life. McCarthy then moved on to discuss Stevenson's wartime record.

He criticised Stevenson for promoting a coalition government in Italy that would involve members of the Communist Party. He also cited testimony of Admiral Stanton, who argued that Stevenson had blocked him from removing suspected Communists as radio operators on US ships during the war. McCarthy quoted Stanton directly saying that Stevenson had stated 'that we should not be too hard on the Communists'. McCarthy then moved to criticising Stevenson for his internationalism, citing his membership of an organisation called the 'Worlds Citizens Association'. McCarthy cited a plank from this association's platform that read 'national states must be subordinate to world civilization; their jurisdiction must be limited by world law, and any local legislation contrary to world law must be null and void.' McCarthy saw this as attempt to create a body that could veto United States laws. He went so far as to characterise Stevenson as a 'Presidential candidate who proposed to fly the flag of a super-world government above the Stars and Stripes.' McCarthy implied that Stevenson was concealing his involvement with this organisation. McCarthy stated that Stevenson was associated with the organisation up until 1948, despite Stevenson's claim that he was only associated with it until 1941.

188. Herman, J*oseph McCarthy.* 24-25.
189. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy,* 218-222*;* Gellman, *The Contender Richard Nixon,* 26.
190. McCarthy 'Fits Together 'Jigsaw Puzzle' of Candidates,' 1-4.

While McCarthy disclaimed any intention of suggesting that Stevenson was a 'Communist or pro-Communist', he continued with the ambiguous line 'but I must believe that something was wrong somewhere'.[191] McCarthy then objected to many of the claims that Stevenson had made about McCarthy himself. McCarthy took exception to particular claims by Stevenson concerning his record of detecting communists. Stevenson stated that McCarthy had never convicted a single Communist, which McCarthy agreed to be technically correct, but in his view its 'implications' were 'viciously untrue'. McCarthy defended his record, saying that of the eighty-one people he named to the Tydings committee, thirteen had been removed from their positions. Proving his continued relevance, he boasted that two more of the accused had been removed since Stevenson had made his speech. McCarthy also objected to Stevenson's claims that he used evidence and testimony that was decades out of date. McCarthy defended his use of historic evidence 'because infiltration of a government by the enemy is a slow, tedious process'. McCarthy used this section of his speech to turn the charge that he made unfounded accusations back on to Stevenson. McCarthy portrayed himself as the victim of unprincipled mud-slinging rather than the perpetrator.

McCarthy's speech presented a Stevenson similar to many other conservative portraits of the man: too soft on communism to do what was necessary to protect the United States, an arch internationalist who would threaten US sovereignty and security by embracing international institutions that had been subverted as well as controlled by Communists. He was also depicted as a man in thrall to the left wing of the Democratic Party but who was posing as a moderate and centrist figure. McCarthy's portrait differed in presenting Stevenson as a man who had deliberately misled and deceived the public about his true associations with liberals and left-wing organisations. McCarthy's speech was structured in much the same way as an interrogation by an anti-Communist investigative committee, with each of Stevenson's statements subjected to scrutiny and interrogation against the official record. By structuring his speech in this way, McCarthy subtly presented Stevenson in the same light as the accused Communists who appeared before investigatory committees during the late 1940's and 1950's.

As the election progressed, the charges that Stevenson was soft on communism increased and the damage done to his reputation can be seen in mainstream media coverage. An editorial in *Life* magazine on October 27, 1952 was entitled 'Softness towards Communism'. It appeared in the dying days of the election and attempted to link Stevenson to some of the political figures who had been accused of subversion of the US government. This group included Owen Lattimore, John S. Service and Phillip Jessup, who were State Department employees specialising in China and who were accused of undermining Chiang Kai-Shek's government in order to ensure the triumph of Mao's communist forces. Also mentioned was Alger Hiss. The writer of the editorial linked all four figures to Stevenson and to other favourite conservative targets, such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Dean Acheson, through what was dubbed the 'Acheson faction'. The editorial did not claim that the

191. Ibid.,5.

entire Democratic Party was soft on communism, but instead attributed this ‘softness’ to the ‘Acheson faction’. This ‘faction’ had no existence in reality. While Eleanor Roosevelt was a friend of Stevenson and a supporter, Acheson and Stevenson were not even allies and aside from Alger Hiss there was no connection between Stevenson and the other State Department employees named. [192] The faction that this article referred to was a group that had been highly critical of anti-communist efforts. This editorial positioned itself as distinct from what it dubbed as ‘McCarthyism’, yet argued that the cause of this phenomena was liberal policy failures and an inability to properly confront subversives in government. The article argued, ‘It has been responsible for our foreign policy during a time when communism enslaved 600 million people. And since treason was afoot during this calamity, it is natural to wonder whether treason may not explain more of it than we know. That is the real reason for McCarthyism.’

The editorial also critiqued two of Stevenson’s positions relating to communism: his praise of the 1947 loyalty program and his belief that economic development was the best method to combat communism. The editorial argued that the 1947 loyalty program actually weakened the tools available to fire State employees suspected of subversive activities. Before the program came in, the State Department could fire any employee whose loyalty they had ‘reasonable grounds’ to suspect. Once the 1947 loyalty program came in, the reasonable grounds shifted to stipulate that the employee was suspected of being ‘presently disloyal.’ This additional stipulation was later removed and the burden of proof reverted back to the earlier standard. The editorial argued that the failure of the policy could be seen in the fact that, while the 1947 loyalty program was in place, no government employees were dismissed, whereas when the standards were reversed, three employees were dismissed. It also disputed Stevenson’s contention that the FBI was the most effective agency to to uncover subversives, arguing that evidence presented to Truman’s administration by the FBI was ignored and that if the loyalty boards ruled against the FBI, the FBI’s hands were tied. The second critique focused on what it believed to be the shallowness of Stevenson’s understanding of the best way to combat communism. The editorial was scathing towards what it saw as Stevenson’s ‘soft-headed’ view of communism, which stressed that the way to eliminate communism was to promote economic growth. Instead the editorial argued that, ‘We face a worldwide conspiracy of the mind, the will and the gun. It is the armed nemesis of all societies.’

The editorial ended with a call to elect Dwight D Eisenhower because of his ‘deeper understanding’ of communism and his ability to provide more decisive leadership than Stevenson, whom the editorial dubbed ‘Hamlet’. It also argued that, under a Stevenson administration, McCarthyism would become worse. The editorial also assured readers that Eisenhower was ‘absolutely sound’ on civil liberties.[193] The editorial represented a more mainstream strain of

192. Henry, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson.*
193. ‘Softness Towards Communism,’ *Life*, October 27 1952, 32.

McCarthyism than had been seen in the *Chicago Tribune* or the *Los Angeles Times*. Publisher Henry Luce and his wife Clare Booth Luce were Republicans and supporters of Chiang Kai-Shek.[194] *Life* magazine was aimed at a more mainstream market, allowing contributions from both liberal and conservative commentators. Luce himself was an internationalist who was born in China. The magazine presented itself as more moderate than right wing. This could be seen in the way it discussed McCarthyism. When discussing the Loyalty Programs of 1947, it cautioned against seeing the more rigorous standards of proof that were adopted as a conspiracy to protect communists in the State Department: 'One can instead take State's professed concern for the "fairness to the individual" at face value'. It also adopted the same attitude towards the 'loss' of China: 'Similarly it is unnecessary to blame the fall of China on treason. The accurate charge is softness, proved by attitude and results'.[195]

Though the editorial attempted to distance itself from McCarthyism, it employed the same tactics. The success of Mao's forces was attributed wholly to the United States' failures rather than to any weakness of Chiang Kai-Shek's government or Mao's superior strength. It also equated criticism of anti-communist tactics with disloyalty to the United States, as seen in the lumping of Acheson, Stevenson and Roosevelt with Service and Lattimore, who were actually accused of disloyalty, despite presenting no evidence of any association between these individuals. The fact that this editorial appeared in *Life* at this time gives a sense of how much McCarthyism had moved into the mainstream. It also shows how much even moderate Republican opposition was being framed in McCarthyite terms.

The increasing importance of the issue of McCarthyism and anti-communism could be seen in the liberal press as well. An article in the *New Republic* on October 6, 1952 entitled 'Reason and the Revolt against Reason' showed that the issue had moved increasingly into the centre of the campaign. It discussed the dilemma that Stevenson faced on the issue of McCarthyism, beginning by praising Stevenson for keeping his campaign 'on the high road of intelligence and reason'. It went on to lament the current state of politics in the United States, arguing that 'a revolt against reason' was underway. The evidence of this was the election of Joseph McCarthy and the people who wrote in to support Nixon in the aftermath of his 'Checkers' speech: 'The two million citizens who by their telegrams and letters identified themselves with Nixon's sham emotionalism and mawkish sentimentality.' The article pessimistically argued that while reason provided more than enough evidence to debunk the claims made by these figures, the supporters of such men were driven by factors more powerful than reason, 'Deeper than facts are their frustrations, their resentments … their adherence to myths; their need for scapegoats; their unreasoning fears.'

194. William R. Childs,'Henry Luce and twentieth-century consumer culture', Paper presented at the 2011 Wilmington: Business History Conference.http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/2011/childs.pdf; James L. Baughman, 'Henry R. Luce and the Business of Journalism' Papers Presented at the BHC Annual Meeting Business History Conference 2011. Business and Economic History On-line: Wilmington Vol. 9,:1-8. Wilmington: Business History Conference. (2011).http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/2011/baughman.pdf; Patterson, *Grand Expectations, 1945-1974,* 171-172. The phrase "the American Century" was originally coined by Henry Luce

195. 'Softness Towards Communism', 32.

The article declared that Stevenson could only meet these arguments by appealing to the 'fundamental truths' of the republic and not simply to the reason of the electorate. It also warned Stevenson that he should not go on the defensive or even worse try to compete with the anti-communist measures proposed by the Republicans, as it would simply lead the Republicans to propose increasingly harsh measures to combat domestic communism. The only way that McCarthyism could be combated was by 'a devotion to constitutional liberty as affirmative and uncompromising as McCarthy's rejection of constitutional liberty'. The article saw it as Stevenson's duty to deliver a 'call for a renaissance of freedom' through his campaign. The author went on to document the multiple measures that he believed violated the basic liberties the United States was supposed to guarantee, specifically mentioning the McCarrran Act and the Smith Act. It also criticised President Truman, stating that while he had spoken out against McCarthyism, he had also 'instituted and encouraged in loyalty oaths and investigations the most prolonged mockery of individual right ever indulged in by the federal government.' The only candidate who was able and prepared to check this political trend, which the article believed was a threat to democracy itself, was Adlai Stevenson. The article argued that Eisenhower had proven himself 'utterly incapable of realizing or understanding the issue, let only suggesting a rational solution.' Stevenson, whose 'inherent genius become more evident each passing day', was what the United States needed because he could provide 'an eloquent restatement of the spiritual and moral goals that should guide us in the dark years ahead'

This article demonstrated a number of key features of liberal support for Stevenson. The first was that, as the campaign progressed, the issue of McCarthyism began to eclipse other issues and became the dominant lens through which the campaign was perceived. As the article stated, 'it is that threat to democracy that poses the overriding domestic issue of the day.'[196] Liberals who were worried about McCarthyism became increasingly impressed, not only by Stevenson's willingness to denounce anti-communist excesses, but also by his offering of an alternate version of patriotism in order to counteract the more aggressive strain of conservative anti-communists. The article also affirmed Stevenson's patrician political persona. For all the article's concerns about democracy it was, like Stevenson, highly suspicious of populist politics.

Eisenhower conclusively won the 1952 election. He won 442 electoral college votes to Stevenson's 89. The popular vote was slightly closer, but still showed an overwhelming victory for Eisenhower, who scored 55.1% to Stevenson's 44.4%; no candidate had won such a large proportion of the popular vote since Roosevelt's 1936 election.[197] This victory vindicated the predictions that Eisenhower would soundly defeat Stevenson and some wondered if this spelled the end of the New Deal coalition that Roosevelt had created. The size of his loss and its predictability probably assisted Stevenson. The expectation for his victory were low so that

196.'Reason and the Revolt Against Reason' in *The New Republic*, October 6 1952, 5-6.
197. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 760.

supporters did not focus on the flaws in the campaign, viewing defeat as inevitable and instead celebrating what they believed to be its intelligence and nobility.

The impact of the issue of anti-communism on Stevenson's campaign was mixed. On balance the issue hurt Stevenson with the voters in general. Conservative attacks on Stevenson damaged him, and forced him on to the defensive, making him defend his reputation against slights and insinuations rather than focusing on issues that would assist his campaign. Equally the issue of McCarthyism gave Stevenson's campaign a focus and moral intensity that it did not otherwise possess. Stevenson's campaign was, according to many historians, a retreat from the ideals of liberalism that characterised the New Deal and the Fair Deal era of the Democratic Party. Stevenson did not propose any expansive new government programs, he was ambivalent about organised labour and more conservative about civil rights than Truman. However this campaign would keep him at the forefront of the Democratic Party thanks to the work of his liberal supporters.

Chapter Three

Although Stevenson lost the Presidential race of 1952, he remained a powerful national, and even international, figure in the period between 1952 and his nomination in 1956. In this period many liberals and journalists assumed that Stevenson would be the Democratic nominee for 1956 and his word carried significant weight.[198] This fact has not received the attention that it deserves historically. The vast majority of losing presidential candidates fade into obscurity and even those who have maintained a public profile are generally not considered leaders of their party after the loss. Stevenson lost decisively yet remained a serious contender for the 1956 nomination from the moment he lost. As Jeff Broadwater has pointed out, the only comparable figures to Stevenson in this respect are Henry Clay, William Jennings Bryan and Thomas Dewey.[199]

Both Clay and Bryan dominated their parties because they were seen as standard bearers for certain ideological causes. Clay was the proponent of what was dubbed the American System, an antebellum political program that stressed using federal funds to improve infrastructure and economic activity.[200] Bryan was the leader of the silverite movement that sought to ease the economic plight of farmers in the late nineteenth century by an inflationary economic program.[201] Thomas Dewey is a closer point of comparison as he was a contemporary of Stevenson who was also nominated twice nominated by his party. The difference lies in the respective positions of the political parties. Dewey's prominence was during a period when the Republican Party had lost three consecutive elections and desperately needed to rebuild.[202] During Stevenson's era the Democratic Party was still the dominant party in the United States and had proven itself remarkably successful in winning elections. Stevenson's supports instead needs to be understood as a genuine expression of support for the campaign that he ran.

The argument in this chapter is that Stevenson's actions in this period, while not instrumental in destroying McCarthy's public career, did manage to maintain Stevenson's political popularity. Stevenson cemented his leadership of the Democratic Party by impressing its liberal wing and staking out a position on McCarthy that distinguished him sharply from the more conservative Democratic congress. Stevenson also used his opposition to McCarthyism to create a version of liberalism that would continue to be his calling card throughout the 1950s. Despite this, Stevenson did not succeed in his objective to put Eisenhower on the defensive and Eisenhower was able to successfully distance himself from McCarthy with minimal damage to his own reputation.

198. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World*, 4-6.
199. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics*, xii.
200. Ibid.
201. Ybarra, *Washington Gone Crazy*, 28.
202. Smith, *Thomas E. Dewey*, 33-35.

During this period the political environment in the United States was changing. Since the Republican Party was now in the political ascendancy, the impetus that drove the party to embrace the issue of communist subversion in government had disappeared. Once the Republicans controlled the Government it became a political liability to claim that it was infested with Communists. With Eisenhower as president, McCarthy and his allies were weakened as the more moderate faction of the party began to grow in power. Eisenhower, now the leader of this faction, would not publicly break with McCarthy, but he was determined to keep him on a tighter leash. This does not mean that anti-communist sentiment ended in the United States. In fact Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles attempted to defuse charges of being soft on communism by removing large numbers of staff they considered security risks.[203] 'Security risk' was a category that included not only individuals who were suspect politically, but also individuals whom they believed to be potential targets of blackmail, such as gay and lesbian staff and employees.[204] This was a defensive move to placate conservative anti-communist and isolationist politicians who had long argued that subversive elements were undermining the foreign policy of the United States and needed to be removed. It also did much to legitimise the anti-communist charges that the Roosevelt and Truman administration were protecting Communists in government.

While Eisenhower and McCarthy were campaigning against the Democratic establishment in 1952, their differences could be papered over, and McCarthy was a useful attack dog for the General since McCarthy helped rally many of Robert A.Taft's supporters who were disaffected by the ugly conflict at the 1952 convention.[205] Once the Eisenhower administration assumed power however, it became clear that McCarthy would continue his attacks on the US government despite the fact that it was hurting the administration. The damage McCarthy was doing to the administration became apparent during his travels through Europe, where he began removing left-wing material from U.S funded libraries.[206] The response from Europeans to this campaign was hostile and tested the relationship between the United States and its western European Allies.[207] After returning to the United States, McCarthy began hearings into subversion within the United States Army. The Army-McCarthy hearings marked the point where his downfall began.[208] The hearings were televised and the American public was exposed, many of them for the first time, to McCarthy's demagogic and bullying style.[209] For many Americans, the armed forces were an

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203. Michaels, *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare*, 216-217.
204. K. A. Cuordileone, '"Politics in an Age of Anxiety": Cold War Political Culture and the Crisis in American Masculinity, 1949-1960', The Journal of American History Vol. 87, No. 2 (Sep., 2000), 532-537.
205. Bowen, T*he Roots of Modern Conservatism Dewey, Taft, and the Battle for the Soul of the Republican Party,* 154-159.
206. David, A. Nichols, *Ike and McCarthy: Dwight Eisenhower's Secret Campaign Against Joseph McCarthy*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2019), 31.
207. Ibid., 32.
208. Ibid, 266-270.
209. Andrea Friedman, 'The Smearing of Joe McCarthy: The Lavender Scare, Gossip, and Cold War Politics', *American Quarterly* 57(4, 2005), 1115-117.

institution that was held to be above politics and McCarthy's attacks on their personnel rankled. The hearings became even more unpopular after it was alleged that the investigation was retaliation for the Army's refusal to grant David Shine a dispensation to join McCarthy's investigative staff.[210] All these factors meant that McCarthy was quickly losing popularity and support from the country and the Republican Party, and many realised that the end of the erratic Wisconsin senator might be looming.[211] This sense of the impending fratricidal struggle within the Republican Party gave Stevenson's words weight. It also revealed their dishonesty. The Republican Party was not 'half Eisenhower and half McCarthy' as Stevenson claimed. As the end of McCarthy' career proved, the Senator was never a major factional leader in the Republican Party and most of his support within the Senate dissipated fairly quickly.

After Stevenson had left the governorship of Illinois in 1953, he departed on a world tour, ostensibly to educate himself about world affairs, but also with the added benefit of enhancing his stature as a statesman, removing him from post-election intra-party struggles and allowing his liberal base a chance to miss him after the wall-to-wall coverage he had received during the campaign. It was during his trip that Stevenson stated that he was confronted by the fact that McCarthy was damaging the reputation of the United States abroad.[212] Whether or not this was simply an opportunity for Stevenson to renew his attack on McCarthy or he was genuinely worried about the damage to the nation's image at a critical juncture in international relations (Stalin had died in 1953) is not clear. When Stevenson returned to the US he adopted a much harder line against McCarthy and as McCarthy began to slip in power in 1954 he pounced.

One of the major post-election speeches in which Stevenson attacked McCarthy was made on March 7, 1954 at a fundraising dinner in Miami, Florida. Called *Crusades, Communism and Corruption*, the title was an inversion of Eisenhower's campaign themes of 'Korea, Communism and Corruption'. He discussed McCarthyism in the first half of the speech and then went on to debate the merits of Eisenhower's 'New Look' defence policy. The theme that united these two issues was the insistence that the normally partisan relationship between the two parties had been subverted by the Republican Party. The consequences of this were twofold. As Stevenson argued:

> When one party says that the other is the party of traitors who have deliberately conspired to betray America, to fill our government services with Communists and spies, to send our young men to unnecessary death in Korea, they violate not only the limits of partisanship, they offend not only the credulity of the people, but they stain the vision of America and democracy for us and the world we seek to lead.

There was another consequence to this rhetoric: 'The infection of bitterness and hatred spreads all too quickly in these anxious days from one area of our life to another. And those who live by the sword of slander also may perish by it, for now it is also being used against distinguished

210. Ronald J. Oakley, *God's Country: America in the* Fifties (New York: Dembner Books, 1986) 79-180.
211. Thomas, C. Reeves, *The Life and Times of Joe McCarthy: A Biography* (London: Blond & Briggs, 1982) 509-561.
212. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World*, 71-72.

Republicans.' Throughout the speech, Stevenson stressed that he was not only interested in the security of the Democratic Party but also in the integrity of the Republican party: 'Perhaps you will say that I am making not a Democratic but a Republican Speech that I am counselling unity and courage in the Republican Party and administration you bet I am! For as Democrats we don't believe in political extermination of Republicans, nor do we believe in political fratricide, in the extermination of one another.'[213]

This was Stevenson playing on his greatest strengths, which were his acknowledged good nature, moderation and common sense. No other Democratic politician could have pulled off such an audacious feat as claiming to be a defender of the Republican Party. But in the aftermath of the open falling out between the Eisenhower administration and McCarthy over McCarthy's decision to hold hearings into the US Army, there was a genuine sense that Republicans were facing a serious chance of fracture over the issue of domestic anti-communism. Stevenson continued on this theme by evoking the Republican Party's patron saint, Abraham Lincoln.

The use of Lincoln indicates another of Stevenson's strengths. Of all the postwar presidential candidates, Adlai Stevenson had one of the most prestigious political backgrounds. On his mother's side he counted Jessie Fell as an ancestor. This remarkable man had been one of the most powerful figures in Illinois Republican antebellum politics and an early supporter and friend of Abraham Lincoln. Stevenson was very proud of this connection and in stressing it he was repudiating the McCarthyite charges that he was somehow un-American.[214] There were two references to Lincoln in the speech. The first was Stevenson's scolding of the Republican Party for making ugly partisan comments during a ceremony celebrating the birthday of Abraham Lincoln. The second was Stevenson's famous denunciation of the Republican Party which was couched in the same rhetorical image as Lincoln's famous 'house divided' speech: 'A political party divided against itself half McCarthy and half Eisenhower, cannot produce national unity – cannot govern with confidence and purpose. And it demonstrates that, so long as it attempts to share power *with* its enemies, it will inexorably lose power *to* its enemies.'[215]

The rhetorical device was not new with this speech. As we have seen he had been trying out the half Eisenhower/ half McCarthy line since the 1952 campaign. What made the line so much more successful this time were two factors: first using the 'house divided' speech was an extremely clever rhetorical device. It was the most famous and potent symbol of the duality between liberty and tyranny in American rhetoric. It also expressed the strand of absolute morality that is ever present in American political discourse. Lincoln used the phrase in order to argue that, no matter how many compromise measures were passed, America would have to decide between free labour and slavery. In a similar vein Stevenson suggested that either the Republican Party must

213. Adlai Stevenson, 'Crusades, Communism and Corruption,' March 7, 1954 in *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson Volume 4: Let's Talk Sense to the American People"* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1974), 327-333.
214. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois,* 7-9.
215. Stevenson 'Crusades, Communism and Corruption,' 329.

repudiate McCarthy and his supporters, or the party would splinter and damage America's political institutions. Stevenson was not simply suggesting that McCarthy and Eisenhower were sharing power in the Republican Party, but that Eisenhower was in fact the weaker party who was powerless before McCarthy's rampage through the federal government:

> The President has said he disapproves of all these goings on – this slander and deceit, this bitterness and ugliness, these attempts to subordinate a nation's common purposes to a divided party's political ambitions. He has said so repeatedly in statements to the press – but the nation's ideals continue to be soiled by the mud of political expediency. This internal crisis makes it all the more urgent that the Democratic Party remain strong, responsible, and attentive to the nation's business.

With this statement Stevenson was trying to position Eisenhower in a lose-lose situation. If he did nothing, it would confirm to the nation that Stevenson was right and that McCarthy was riding roughshod over Eisenhower and the administration was powerless to stop him. If on the other hand Eisenhower did move against McCarthy, it would look as though Stevenson had forced the administration's hand and that he was the President's main opponent. He was also trying to create the impression that he was the actual leader of the Democratic Party and that he was setting the agenda in attacking McCarthy and Eisenhower.

The speech is also notable for featuring Stevenson's most strident denunciations of what the post-war red scare had done to the institutions of the United States:

> Our State Department has been abused and demoralized. The American voice abroad has been enfeebled. Our educational system has been attacked; our press threatened; our servants of God impugned; a former President maligned; the executive departments invaded; our foreign policy confused; the President himself patronized; and the integrity, loyalty, and morale of the United States Army assailed.[216]

This angry rebuke to the Republican Party ignored the fact that the Democratic Party had itself been as deeply complicit as the Republicans in the red scare. It also showed the continued power of anti-communism on the Democratic politicians. When taking the Eisenhower administration to task for its treatment of the State Department, Stevenson included a disclaimer: 'Everyone hopes the administration will find and remove all the real subversives and keep them out of our government. For a single disloyal or dangerous employee is one too many, and I do hold that the past should be closed.'

Although there is no doubt that Stevenson believed such sentiments, it was still a sign of how powerful the fear of domestic communism was that he felt the need to include the same assurances that he had been making since the late 1940s about his patriotism and his loathing of communism. The second part of the address was a critique of Eisenhower's 'New Look' defence policy. 'The New Look' was to develop the nation's nuclear power and to rely on the United States'

216. Stevenson 'Crusades, Communism and Corruption,' 329.

ability to mobilise its nuclear arms around the world in order to protect the United States. As John Foster Dulles argued, American national security would be protected because any threat to US security would be met by 'massive retaliation'. This approach was undertaken for two reasons. The first was that, although the US had developed the first nuclear weapons, from the late 1940s to the early 1950s it had not developed a sufficiently powerful nuclear arsenal. Eisenhower made it a priority that the US build up and develop its capacity to deliver their most powerful weapon. The second reason was domestic. Eisenhower was a fiscal conservative of the old school who had a deep fear of budget deficits and was distrustful of the Keynesian economics then in vogue. Therefore the 'New Look' was also a way to cut down the size of the armed forces and aid reduction of government spending.[217]

Stevenson's critique of Eisenhower's policy largely anticipated the substance of the arguments that Kennedy would make in attacking the 'New Look',[218] although Kennedy's attacks were more forceful and less cerebral and ponderous than Stevenson's. In order to connect this section of the speech to the attacks on McCarthy, Stevenson began by partisanship in foreign policy. Stevenson claimed that Eisenhower had abandoned the bipartisan tradition that had characterised the Truman presidency. Stevenson pointed out that both Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles (Eisenhower's Secretary of State) had at various points advised Truman. It should be noted that Eisenhower did work with members of the Democratic establishment when draftinng the 'New Look'.[219] This link was an attempt to justify his own intervention in the discussion of the US and to make himself the Democratic leader on foreign policy. Though This had been made easier by the fact that the congressional wing of the party seemed uninterested in challenging Eisenhower in this area. Stevenson's objection to the policy was fairly simple – nuclear weapons did not provide the US with the foreign policy options it needed in facing 'international communism.' He pointed out that such a strategy had failed in the past: 'It [atomic deterrence] didn't deter attack, and brought us to the brink of disaster in Korea where atom bombs were useless, and we were saved by heroic exertion to re-create conventional ground forces.'[220]

He also pointed out that not all threats to US security were a result of overt aggression, citing the situations in Greece and Turkey as well as the Berlin blockade. This allowed him to use his critique to hammer the President from the right and the left. For liberals he played up the horror of nuclear war: 'Are we leaving ourselves the grim choice of inaction or a thermonuclear holocaust?' He then attacked from the right, arguing: 'Using weapons short of war, and relying upon our reluctance to embark on global war, the Communist imperialism will attempt to absorb

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217. The policy was based on a document 'Basic National Security Policy' which was given the numerical designation NSC 162/2. William I.Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower: America and the World in the 1950s*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2019) 100-101, 107-109; Patterson, *Grand Expectations,* 287-291.

218. Schlesinger perceptively notes the continuity in his memoirs of the John F. Kennedy administration, Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days.*

219 Hitchcock, *The Age Of Eisenhower, 108.*

220. Stevenson, 'Crusades, Communism and Corruption,' 332.

country after country, to close the ring around us, and to decide the issue between tyranny and freedom long before a final outburst of atomic fury.'

This speech has been much praised by those who admired and worked for Stevenson, as well as some of his more sympathetic biographers. John Bartlow Martin argued that Adlai Stevenson's greatest hour of national leadership was the period after he lost the 1952 election and his greatest achievement was keeping the liberal flame burning through the 'conservative' 1950s by providing a thoughtful and substantive opposition to the Eisenhower administration. Martin also claimed that the positions Stevenson took and the policies he developed laid the blueprint for the New Frontier and Great Society programs. The 'Crusade, Communism and Corruption' speech was presented as a key moment of display of Stevenson's integrity and courage in opposition. One of his closest advisers, Carl McGowan, singled out this speech as one of the bravest political actions of the post-1952 period. McGowan argued: 'But those were the days from which came his leadership on McCarthy, on restraint in the Far East, on nuclear test ban. He aroused the interest of a lot of people in politics and public life who had not had either one before. He kept the light alive for a lot of people during a pretty shabby period in American History – the 1950s.'[221]

Bartlow himself subscribed to this view. In Bartlow's opinion, the speech electrified the political institutions of the United States, provoked a large-scale public debate on Joseph McCarthy and forced Eisenhower's hand when it came to McCarthy. As Bartlow states: 'It is not too much to say that Stevensons' Miami Beach speech set in train the events that prepared that [McCarthy's] downfall.'[222] Even historians who are considerably less sympathetic to Stevenson, such as biographer Jeff Broadwater, have praised Stevenson for this speech, seeing it as one of the highlights of his career. Broadwater describes it as a moment when Stevenson actually lived up to his reputation as a thoughtful politician of integrity and intellect who was willing to take unpopular positions on politically dangerous issues. Although Broadwater acknowledged that McCarthy was already becoming a political liability, he credits Stevenson with pushing both the Republicans and Democrats to censure McCarthy. He cites Nixon's speech which admitted that 'men who have in the past done effective work exposing Communists in the country have, by reckless talk and questionable means, made themselves the issue rather than the cause they believe in so deeply' as proof that Stevenson had put the Eisenhower administration on the defensive.[223] Broadwater also argued that the speech impacted Democrats too. While the caucus initially ignored his speech, Broadwater believes that Stevenson helped push the Senate leadership towards censuring McCarthy at the end of the year.

The media reception of this speech was mixed to say the least. The conservative *Wall Street Journal* ignored Stevenson's attack on McCarthy to concentrate on his critique of 'the New Look'. The piece entitled 'How to becloud Issues' defended the administration's policy against

221. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World*, 20.
222. Ibid, 109.
223. Broadwater, *Adlai Stevenson and American Politics,* 141-142.

Stevenson's attack by claiming Stevenson had knowingly distorted Eisenhower's policy. The piece argued that Dulles and Eisenhower's policy was a wise move since it did not limit the United States to nuclear war and by upping the stakes communist aggression might be checked. In no part of the piece did the author mention Stevenson's attacks on what he saw as the corrosive partisanship of the era or his arguments about the value of bi-partisan cooperation. Instead he presented Stevenson as a partisan who unfairly characterised the president and his Secretary of State as 'Wild-eyed Administration ready to drop A-bombs at the drop of a hat'.[224] This can be interpreted as a victory of sorts for Adlai Stevenson, since by ignoring his attacks on McCarthy, *The Wall Street Journal* may have decided that it was unwise to defend McCarthy at this juncture and to distance themselves from him.

McCarthy also took note of the speech. Despite being ill, he delivered a rebuttal to Stevenson's speech on March 20th. Speaking in front of four hundred guests at the Centennial Dinner of the Milwaukee County Young Republican Organisation, McCarthy declared that he would 'indict' the Democratic Party for 'treason or gross stupidity' and challenged Adlai Stevenson to 'act as attorney for the defense' of the party. Evidence of McCarthy's decline can be gleaned from coverage of the speech. McCarthy's physical state was described as 'unshaven'; he was dressed in a sweatshirt without shirt or tie and his voice was described as 'husky'. As McCarthy's political influenced waned, his drinking (always heavy) increased and his health suffered as a result. The article also revealed the decline of his political influence. McCarthy demanded free airtime from both CBS and NBC to reply to Stevenson. They declined his request and instead gave the airtime to Nixon for an official reply. McCarthy's speech was only carried by smaller broadcasters, such as WGN, in Chicago (the *Chicago Tribune's* radio and TV station).

The speech itself also reveals the decline of McCarthy. Never a subtle orator, much of McCarthy's power had come from his outrageous and sensational claims about communist infiltration of the government and the nation. This speech, in contrast, was a list of twenty inelegantly delivered charges that contained no new claims to interest the press. The 'indictments' were a combination of well-worn attacks on the administration of Roosevelt and Truman, a repetition of attacks made against Stevenson and vague assertions that Democrats protected Communists. McCarthy repeated that Stevenson had helped bring Communists into the Italian government during the Second World War. In terms of charges against the Roosevelt and Truman administration, these were the standard fare, for example, Yalta, Alger Hiss, the loss of China and the Korean War. The charges of communist collusion included vague assertions such as that a 'secret directive' was 'authorised granting commissions in the United States Army to members of the Communist Conspiracy' and that an order was issued 'to destroy the files on military personnel

224. 'How to Becloud Issues,' *The Wall Street Journal,* March 9 1954.

where the files showed that he was a Communist'.[225] This rambling mishmash of ideas shows the decline of McCarthy's oratory and his ability to put pressure on the Democrats.
Stevenson did not feel the need to reply to McCarthy's charges directly. When he publicly spoke next, he only talked about McCarthyism in abstract terms. McCarthy's speech also unintentionally boosted Stevenson. By making Stevenson the defence attorney for the Democratic Party, he acknowledged his status within the party. Despite being beset by critics both within his party and outside it, McCarthy singled out Stevenson as the target of his ire.

The New York Times coverage of the speech was more extensive than the *Journal*'s. The *Times* covered not just the speech but the reactions to it from Eisenhower, the Democratic leadership in Congress and former President Truman. The article dealing with Stevenson's speech announced: 'Stevenson says President yields to; McCarthyism'.[226] It focused on Stevenson's warnings about the fratricidal struggle that had descended on the Republican Party. The article cited Stevenson's disgust with the attacks on Earl Warren and his claims that he did not want to see a Republican fratricide. It also covered in detail the section of the speech dedicated to the 'New Look'. These were the aspects of the speech that Stevenson wanted emphasised, although the article also focused on the internal disunity that characterised the Democratic Party. It saw the speech as an affirmation of the strategy espoused by Democratic National Committee Chairman Steven Mitchell: 'It is time to make President Eisenhower our target and charge him with full responsibility for the actions of all Republicans.' Mitchell was appointed by Stevenson during his 1952 campaign and was unpopular with conservative and Southern Democrats like Richard B. Russell. This conflict was shown by the article. Russell, when asked about Mitchell's statement, replied: 'Well that is his opinion and he's entitled to it'.

An article published on March 10, three days after the article on the speech, was entitled 'Senators Caucus, Ignore Stevenson'. It reported that Stevenson had almost no influence within the Democratic caucus. According to the article when the caucus met it did not even discuss Stevenson's speech or the issue of McCarthyism. Instead it focused on agriculture and consumer protection and a contested election in New Mexico. [227] In the article the Democratic Party was depicted as being divided between Stevenson on one hand and Lyndon Johnson and Richard B. Russell on the other.

This division was real enough and shows the political dilemma that Stevenson faced. This division had historical roots. Since 1937, relations between the Democratic presidents FDR and Harry Truman and the Congress had become increasingly difficult. This was partly due to the fact that the Democratic presidents' ideological base was in the urban northeast while, due to the seniority system, the Congress was dominated by Southern Democrats.[228] When the Democratic

225. 'McCarthy Says 20 Counts "Indict' Democratic Party',' *New York Times*, March 7 1954, 6.
226. John Popham, 'Stevenson Says President Yield To McCarthyism', *New York Times,* March 7 1954, 1.
227. William S. White, 'Senators Caucus, Ignores Stevenson', *New York Times,* March 10 1954, 15.
228. Robert Caro, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson*: Master of the Senate (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 78-108.

presidents pursued agendas such as unionism and civil rights, the Southern congressional leaders became less reliable and would vote against Democratic presidents. FDR had at the start of his first term created an extraordinary legislative record with the help of Southern Democrats, but when his plan to enlarge the Supreme Court failed he attempted to use his massive popularity to defeat conservative Democrats in primaries. These attempts backfired and rather than removing the recalcitrant legislators he only alienated them.[229] Additionally conflicts between Northern Democrats and Southern Democrats over race relations began to arise. The 1938 mid-term elections saw the Republicans begin to re-emerge as a force in Congress and between the Southern Democrats and the new Republicans legislation that was seen as too radical could be blocked. This was especially an issue if the legislation was seen as threatening the system of segregation. This meant that the coalition between north eastern liberal Democrats and Southern Democrats that had animated the early New Deal was starting to fray.[230] During the Truman administration tensions became more intense with an increasing focus on civil rights and union activity becoming more controversial.

This conflict helps explain Stevenson's political position in 1954. The increasing unreliably of the Congress where Southern Democrats left Stevenson alone as the major figure who was acceptable to everyone in the Democratic Party.[231] This partly explains the continued prominence of Stevenson throughout the 1950s and also points to his dilemma. If he strayed too far from the Congressional Democrats, he threatened to rupture the party; if he deferred too much to the Congressional Democrats, he would lose his lustre with the liberal base. Stevenson was always anxious to enlist the support of these conservative Democrats, particularly Richard B. Russell of Georgia; Russell was however less than enthusiastic about Stevenson. On Christmas 1953, Stevenson sent Russell a Christmas card and received what might have been a form letter in response.[232]

The New York Times also covered Eisenhower's response to the speech by printing a transcript of his March 11 press conference. Eisenhower characterised Stevenson's claim that the Republican Party was half Eisenhower and half McCarthy as nonsense. Eisenhower was clearly moving away from McCarthy. He tentatively endorsed Senator Ralph E. Flanders' claims that McCarthy had become 'a one man party' and had done 'his best to shatter' the Republican Party. Eisenhower also approved of the decision of the Republican Party to give their time for a rebuttal of Stevenson to Richard Nixon rather than McCarthy. Eisenhower did this in his typical and much mocked fashion.[233] For instance he qualified his support for Flanders by acknowledging that he did

229. Susan Dunn, *Roosevelt's Purge: How FDR Fought to Change the Democratic Party*, (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2010)

230.Ira Katznelson, *Fear Itself: The New Deal and the Origins of Our Time, (*New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2013), 156-192.

231. Kent M. Beck, 'What was Liberalism in the 1950s?', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 102, No. 2 (Summer, 1987), 233-258

232. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson and the World*, 16.

233. Hitchcock*, The Age of Eisenhower.*

not see all of the speech on television, but approved of what he saw. He also supported the Republican National Committee's (RNC) decision on the rebuttal but made it clear that he was not in the meeting where the decision was made. His statement of support for Flanders was the typical mixture of confused syntax and vague ideas. As he put it:

> And when Senator Flanders points up the danger of us engaging in internecine warfare, and magnifying certain items of procedure and right, and all such questions, to the point that we are endangering programs of action, that all the leadership is agreed upon, and we are trying to put across, then he is doing a service to when he calls the great danger to that kind of thing that is happening [234]

This was often how Eisenhower spoke at his press conference and many historians have believed that there was a clear political motive behind this. If the press was unable to parse clear quotes because of garbled syntax they could not pull quotes that could be used against him. Anecdotal evidence confirmed this, during a later crisis Eisenhower supposedly reassured his press secretary James Hagerty, who had warned the President not to answer questions at his press conference, by joking, 'Don't worry Jim if that question comes up I'll just confuse them.'[235]

The most recent study of Eisenhower's strategy to deal with McCarthy argued that in addition to the behind-the-scenes manoeuvring, Eisenhower was guided by two principles in discussing McCarthy.[236] The first was never to openly denounce McCarthy. The justification that Eisenhower used for this decision was that by denouncing McCarthy he was playing into his hand, that what the senator craved most was to be the centre of attention and by denying him the media coverage he was weakening him. Historians who have supported Eisenhower's decision have pointed to the relationship with media as McCarthy's source of power and have also cited how Truman's denouncements of McCarthy only seemed to strengthen the senator.[237] There were however more a self interested reason why Eisenhower would be hesitant to denounce McCarthy. McCarthy was still popular with many conservatives who had supported the election of Eisenhower and openly breaking with him carried serious political risks. The parallels to Truman are also misleading. When Truman denounced McCarthy it was often written off as partisan wrangling, since they belonged to opposing parties. Eisenhower would not have this problem as he was ostensibly the leader of the Republican Party. It was true that McCarthy had risen partly as a result of his cultivation of the media, but another factor that had aided his rise was the support he had received from the Republican Party.

Eisenhower's second method was to deliver speeches defending civil liberties. During the period when McCarthy was travelling in Europe, Eisenhower spoke out against the practice of

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234. Dwight D. Eisenhower, 'Transcript of Presidential Press Conference, With Comment on the McCarthy,' *New York Times,* March 11 1954, 1.
235. Patterson, *Grand Expectations,* 301.
236. Nichols, *Ike and McCarthy: Dwight Eisenhower's Secret Campaign Against Joseph McCarthy*, 29. 39-41.
237. Ibid., xii.

banning books in a commencement address to Dartmouth College on June 14. He declared: 'Don't join the book burners. Don't think you are going to conceal faults by concealing evidence that they ever existed. Don't be afraid to go in to your library and read every book, as long as that document does not offend our own ideas of decency. That should be the only censorship.'[238] Eisenhower's tactics seemed to borrow from Stevenson's campaign but was a pale imitation. Stevenson had a much stronger grasp of his oratory and Eisenhower's refusal to denounce McCarthy weakened his position. While this study suggested that this statement was 'transparently anti-McCarthy' it is more complex. Defenders of McCarthy both then and now have argued against charges of censorship as McCarthy was not banning books *per se* he was simply removing them from US taxpayer funded libraries. These defenders have argued that readers could seek these books if they wished, but not in US funded institutions.[239] McCarthy denied that this speech applied to him, replying,'He [Eisenhower] couldn't very well have been referring to me, I have burned no book'[240]

Stevenson's speeches during this period were also evolving past their 1952 election period phase. They were becoming more philosophical, more pointed in their criticism and less defensive. As a consequence he had space to use his critique to espouse his vision of the US's future. A key example was the speech that Stevenson gave at Princeton at a senior class banquet on March 22; Princeton was his Alma Mater.[241] This speech was not a partisan jab at the Republicans so much as a discussion of the responsibilities that Ivy League students had to the world in the Cold War era. In this way the speech is comparable to the commencement addresses that US politicians deliver today. It began by discussing the differences in the world that Stevenson confronted when he graduated in 1922, as opposed to the world in which a Princeton graduate would find themselves in 1954. Stevenson recalled that in 1922 America was filled with a false optimism about the success of Woodrow Wilson's efforts 'to make the world safe for Democracy'; now, he conceded, the world looked less bright for those young people graduating in 1954. Still he remained confident that the youth of today were more than a match for the challenge:

> But I don't need to tell you, a generation that was born and nurtured in the depth of depression and came to consciousness in war and to maturity in the confusion of world revolution … Things didn't turn out as we had thought they would in 1922 … Nor do I need to enumerate for you in sepulchral tones the problems that you face. You know them only too well. Perhaps you can solve them.

As is standard in these speeches, Stevenson exhorts his audience to contribute their talents towards government service, referring more to the public service than elective public office, 'Our government is so large and complicated that few understand it well and others barely understand it at all. Yet we must try to understand it and make it function better.'

238. Ibid., 40.
239. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy*, 228.
240. Nichols, *Ike and McCarthy,* 40.
241. Martin, *Adlai Stevenson of Illinois*, 52.

Through this statement we can see that Stevenson believed that public servants (the gears in the government machine) were essential to his vision of good government. As Jeff Broadwater argued, Stevenson had a strong Progressive faith in the value of a disinterested professionally trained public service. In pleading with his audience to avoid cynical dismissals of government as wasteful and corrupt, he came to the crux of his strong opposition to McCarthyism – the damage it was doing to the lives of public servants and to the desirability of public service as a career:

> In years gone by we required only of our career servants, upon whom the successful operation of this huge mechanism of government depends, that they serve at a financial sacrifice and that they serve with little glory or public recognition. Increasingly, it appears, we also require them to run the risk of being branded as "subversive," "undesirable," as "security risks." It becomes increasingly hard to attract good men to government and no wonder. Thoughtful men do not enjoy living in an atmosphere of constant guerilla warfare and suspicion. [242]

The other speech Stevenson made was a great deal more upbeat than his Princeton address. It was delivered in New York at the Columbia University Bicentennial Conference on June 5, 1954, and was a rousing tribute to the greatness of the United States. Stevenson used this speech to answer the hostile criticism that the United States had engendered at the start of the Cold War: 'Voices say that at best we are as Rome … And there are voices that seem to say we are Carthage … Other voices cry havoc, fear that America is not equal to the task; that communism is the way to the future – is irresistible, just as Fascism was for them not so long ago.'

Stevenson dispels these notions by citing the achievement of the US in recovering from the Depression: material progress, greater fiscal equality and an enlightened foreign policy that eschewed imperialism in favour of self determination: 'I say it is a grand and glorious story. On the basis of the record we have outperformed any rival proposals of communism or of fascism; and America has nobly accepted her responsibility and proudly met her time for greatness in a troubled age.' He then drew a link between the leftists of Europe who were criticising America, and the McCarthyites who were trying to root out 'anti-American' elements:

> Why then all this abuse and criticism? Why then have we of late grown so afraid of ourselves? Why have we of late acted as though the whole of this nation is a security risk? Why do you suppose we have given in to the bleating of those who insist that it is dangerous for a man to have an idea?

In answer, he cited his belief that America faced 'a moral and human crisis' comparable to that faced by the Western world and fifth and sixth century when christianity and feudalism were spreading across Europe. He felt that because of materialism and self doubt, America was in danger of losing sight of its 'mission' in the world:

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242. Adlai Stevenson, 'The Educated Citizen', March 22 1954, in *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson Volume 4: Let's Talk Sense to the American People'* Walter Johnson and Carol Evans (Boston: Little Brown and Company 1974), 337-345.

> Since man cannot live on bread alone, is not the underlying crisis whether he is going to be inspired and motivated again by the ideas of humanistic traditions of Western culture, or whether he falls for the new pagan religion, the worship of the state and a leader, as millions of believers in the Fascist and Soviet systems have already done? That we are not invulnerable, that there is a moral and a human vacuum within us, is, I think, demonstrated by many symptoms of which McCarthyism – which has succeeded in frightening so many – is only one.[243]

In this way McCarthyism not only threatened the individual in American society, but threatened to debase and devalue the skilled pool of talent within the US government and impede the growth of the bureaucracies. It also frightened people and created hostility towards government and apathy towards politics. These were both dangerous factors in the Cold War which, in the opinion of Stevenson, needed a citizenry engaged and attuned to the needs of the US and the 'free world' as well as a government staffed by talented and competent experts.

McCarthy's fall from power was confirmed when he was censured by his Senate colleagues on 2nd December 1954. While not removed from the Senate, his power was shattered and he remained a pathetic and marginalised figure until his death in 1957.[244] Of those who brought down McCarthy, Eisenhower was the most important. Eisenhower was not held captive by an unstoppable rampaging Senator McCarthy; in fact, behind the scenes, he was working with senior Republicans to destroy McCarthy. The president was clearly the much more powerful figure within the relationship and when Eisenhower invoked executive privilege, McCarthy's days were numbered.[245] By clearly indicating that he would not co-operate with McCarthy, he forced the Republican Party to choose between McCarthy and himself, a contest McCarthy was sure to lose. Not allowing McCarthy to respond to Stevenson's speech and sending Nixon in his place also showed his command of the party. As Rick Perlstein has pointed out, Nixon was the nation's most famous red hunter apart from McCarthy. His role in replying to Stevenson was an attempt to convince the Republican right to stand by the President and abandon the junior Senator from Wisconsin.[246] Within the Democratic Party, the most influential figure in the downfall of McCarthy would be Lyndon Johnson not Adlai Stevenson. Johnson organised the censure of McCarthy, convincing many of his wavering Senate colleagues that they should vote for censure.[247] However at this stage of his career he was no liberal and both he and Eisenhower worked behind the scenes to discredit and destroy McCarthy.

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243. Adlai Stevenson, 'Address at the Columbia University Bicentennial Conference' June 5 1954, in *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson Volume 4: Let's Talk Sense to the American People,* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston, Little Brown and Company 1974), 369-376.
244. Michaels, *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare,* 177.
245. Modern historians agree that it was Eisenhower who was the most significant figure in ending McCarthy's prominence; Michaels, *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions and Politics Behind the 1950s Red Scare,175;* Herman*, Joseph McCarthy,* 268-270*;* Nichols*, Ike and McCarthy: Dwight Eisenhower's Secret Campaign Against Joseph McCarthy;* Patterson*, Grand Expectations: The United States 1945-1974,* 266-270.
246. Perlstein, *Nixonland*, 44.
247. Herman, *Joseph McCarthy*, 279-281.

So while Stevenson was not a major influence in the behind-the-scenes machinations that brought down McCarthy, he did cement the loyalties of his liberal followers by speaking out strongly against McCarthy when many other liberals and Democrats were silent. Stevenson was not alone in denouncing McCarthy – others such as Truman spoke publicly against the politics that McCarthy represented. However he was more successful than many of his opponents in folding his critiques of McCarthyism into a broader liberal program for the US. Unlike Truman, Stevenson managed to elevate his critique of McCarthy so that it transcended the appearance of partisan bickering. Instead he was able to challenge McCarthy's use of patriotism, and create an alternative Cold War ethos and patriotism that stressed free speech, free thought, civic and governmental involvement and decency. He managed to define and shape his public image and program through the issue even after McCarthy's fall.

Although Adlai Stevenson reaped much praise for his stand on McCarthy, he may have drawn a disproportionate amount of criticism as well. McCarthy was still extremely popular throughout the United States. John Kennedy knew enough not to cross McCarthy since he was popular with many Irish-Americans who were solidly Democratic voters.[248] Eisenhower and Johnson, by moving behind the scenes, were able avoid the conservative backlash and seemingly remain above the fray, while Stevenson may have angered many working-class Democrats who supported McCarthy, further entrenching his reputation as the candidate for the liberal intellectuals. After McCarthy's fall we see how the political persona and rhetoric that Stevenson used in critiquing McCarthy shaped his post-McCarthy role in US politics. In a speech entitled 'The Challenge to Political Maturity' delivered to the Democratic National Committee in New Orleans on December 4th, 1954, we see Stevenson shifting his rhetoric from a critique of anti-communist extremism to a demand for a bipartisan foreign policy and an appeal to expand the welfare state. Although McCarthy had been censured at this point and the issue of domestic anticommunism had begun to wane, Stevenson used the identity that he created for himself and his vision for the Democratic Party in the McCarthy era to outline his platform for the future. The speech opened with Stevenson drawing a line under the McCarthy era and the bitterness of the midterms: 'Now that the dust of the campaign has begun to settle, following the recent elections … above all, to recover that sense of unity as Americans which underlies the discord the conflict between us as Republicans and Democrats'.

Stevenson reminded the audience of the excesses of McCarthyism: 'Cruel, unjust, and foolish things were said, patriots were slandered, evil motives imputed, parties traduced and defamed. And by the most exalted of our adversaries too.' Despite this, Stevenson pleaded for the Democrats to take the high road and break the cycle of bitterness and rise above these provocations: 'To remember this, to resist the provocation of retaliation in kind, to match evil with good, falsehood with honesty, is never easy and the results are not always reassuring.' This

248. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days* 12.

opening was designed to reinforce Stevenson's vision for the Democratic party. The Democratic party, having taken the House and the Senate from the Republicans in the midterm election, faced a dilemma about how to proceed. There was debate within the Democratic party about how strongly to oppose the Eisenhower administration. On this issue Stevenson allied himself with the moderate wing of the party. He urged working with the Eisenhower administration and avoiding obstructionism. In this he was aligning himself with figures such as Lyndon Johnson, then the Senator minority leader (Johnson was minority leader from 1953-55 – then majority leader 1955-61).

The focus of Stevenson's speech was to urge the party to create a genuinely bi-partisan foreign policy that would focus on containing the Soviet Union, combating the growth of communism by promoting economic growth in the developing world and strengthening US alliances in Western Europe. This speech was designed more for the liberal elements within the party than the moderates or conservatives. In it Stevenson portrayed the creation of a genuinely bipartisan foreign policy as an antidote to the bitterness and demagoguery of the McCarthy era: 'We all know that decisions have been made in foreign affairs in the late years less to produce results abroad than to produce applause at home. We all know that great damage had been done to our national interest abroad for the sake of showing the domestic audience what big, tough boys we were.' Instead Stevenson proposed a genuinely bi-partisan policy that would not require either party to sacrifice their principles, but instead would require both parties to work honestly together: 'Bipartisanship, or whatever we choose to call it, in foreign policy cannot mean an artificial or coerced unity. It cannot mean a device for restricting legitimate discussion or suppressing honest criticism of the conduct of foreign affairs.' This justification of the congressional Democrats pursuing a conciliatory foreign policy continued throughout the speech and was interlaced with his positions on McCarthyism: 'If we do not stand unequivocally at home for civil freedom, we cannot hope to stand as champions of liberty before the world.'

Stevenson praised the censure of Joseph McCarthy as not only an action that would restore 'its dignity and the simplest principles of conduct' but help boost the United States in its struggle with the Soviet Union by helping reaffirm the United States' relationship with western Europe. The speech ended with a plea for unity: 'Let us cleanse our mind of the recriminations of our past. Let us abandon the illusion of a quick and final solutions.'[249] This speech showed how Stevenson's stance on McCarthyism shaped his career even after McCarthyism had faded as a central political issue. In it we see how Stevenson transitioned the arguments he had made on the issue of McCarthyism to support policies that were not immediately related. By reminding his audience of the rancorous partisanship that characterised the end of Truman's presidency, he was able to sell the policy of consensus as an antidote to the turmoil of the McCarthy era.

249. Adlai Stevenson, 'The Challenge to Political Maturity' in *The Papers of Adlai E. Stevenson Volume 4: Let's Talk Sense to the American People,* ed. Walter Johnson and Carol Evans, (Boston, Little Brown and Company, 1974*),* 432-440.

Unlike most candidates who lose presidential campaigns, Stevenson was able to retain his political control of the party. This is because he was able to articulate a political philosophy that would inform liberalism for the rest of the 1950s and early 1960s. His Princeton address articulated the vision of government participation and volunteerism that would animate much of the Kennedy's New Frontier programs and his New Orleans speech provided the intellectual foundation for a bi-partisan approach to foreign policy. Both of these addresses directly reference McCarthyism, but move beyond it to justify ideas that would define liberalism after McCarthyism had faded. Biographers of Stevenson have written of his large impact on 1950s liberalism, but have not seen how much his philosophy and his justification for it were shaped by his opposition to McCarthyism. Similarly historians who have written on McCarthyism have largely seen the tenets of 1950s liberalism, such as a commitment to a bi-partisan consensus on foreign policy, as being driven by fear of the repressive elements of anti-communism and have overlooked how much the desire for a broad-based foreign policy was rooted in the wish to avoid the wild charges and conspiracy theories that McCarthyism espoused and to create a stable and sensible foreign policy.

Conclusion

Adlai Stevenson's political career was bound up with the issue of McCarthyism. While every politician of this era was required to confront the issue of McCarthyism, Stevenson more than any other liberal politician of the era was able to able to integrate the issue into his political persona. It is hard to imagine Stevenson being a liberal icon in the 1930s and early 1940s, when his ambivalence about organised labour and his dedication to balanced budgets would have put him out of step with liberal thought of the period. Similarly in the 1960s, Stevenson's hesitant approach to civil rights would not have engendered the loyalty that he experienced during the late 1940s and early 1950s. For many the brutal partisanship, fear mongering and demagoguery that defined McCarthyism changed how they perceived politics This period and its atmosphere gave Stevenson's brand of personal decency, moderation and respect for civil liberties a relevance and immediacy that would not have been so appealing to the Democratic party at another time. Stevenson managed to adapt his rhetoric to offer a reassuring mix of patriotism and advocacy for civil liberties that managed to attract considerable liberal support, while his moderate positions on civil rights and labour did not alienate more conservative Democrats.

McCarthyism also shaped the opposition to Stevenson. Stevenson's background in the State Department, his work in founding the UN and his internationalism, all formed part of the opposition campaign against him. That these elements became such a major source of suspicion and distrust also shows the degree to which the era of McCarthyism shaped his career. Stevenson's pre-presidential candidate career would not have seemed as ominous in an earlier or later era of US history. Additionally the minor deposition that Stevenson supplied about Alger Hiss played an out-sized role in the opposition to him and also shows how important McCarthyism was to his career.

Stevenson's early career, while providing the background for many of the criticisms of him, did not involve much engagement with the issue of domestic communism. When he ran for Governor, elements of McCarthyism crept into the campaign against him but were not a major issue. It was only when Stevenson became Governor that he had to confront the issue of domestic communism. Paul Broyle's investigation of the University of Chicago and the legislation that he sponsored provoked Stevenson to express his position on domestic communism. It was the veto of the so-called 'Broyles Bill' that established Stevenson as a leading opponent of the conservative anti-communists and increased his profile with the liberals in the Democratic Party. It also gave ammunition to his conservative opponents that Stevenson was not serious about confronting the

menace posed by domestic communists. Stevenson's deposition regarding Alger Hiss's reputation had even more lasting implications for him. Although he garnered praise for his courage with liberals, he also opened himself up to the charge of being soft on communism in one of the most important cases of communist espionage in US history.

Stevenson's election campaign signalled his emergence onto the national stage. Because of his decisive gubernatorial victory, many began to consider him a presidential candidate. However his reluctance to accept Truman's endorsement gave the initiative to other candidates. Stevenson managed to secure the nomination by delivering impressive speeches that combined patriotism and his opposition to McCarthyism with a defence of the Democratic party's maligned record. In the campaign he established his integrity to liberal supporters by expressing his opposition to anti-communist excesses in front of the American Legion. Conservatives criticised his failure to confront domestic anti-communism. In particular his deposition in favour of Alger Hiss was singled out by opponents as evidence of his credulity or something even more sinister. Stevenson attempted to defend himself against these charges by personally pleading for decency and honesty in the campaign. This only further aggravated his critics and endeared him to liberals.

After his defeat he maintained a high profile within the Democratic party. He embarked on an overseas tour that he claimed demonstrated to him the damage that McCarthyism was causing to the international reputation of the United States. Within the United States, McCarthy himself was rapidly losing power, criticism of him had began to increase and he had managed to alienate himself from the Eisenhower administration. In this period Stevenson's criticism of McCarthyism became more direct, he also folded his criticism of McCarthyism into a more positive vision of US liberalism. Examining Stevenson's career through the prism of McCarthyism shows elements of his career that have been undervalued both by his biographers and historians of the period. McCarthyism not only offered opportunities to conservative politicians to make their career. Adlai Stevenson's political longevity was attributable to the re-prioritisation of liberalism that occurred during the late 1940s and early 1950s. Stevenson did not alter his principles to fit the period but rather the times created a political environment that was conducive to a politician such as Stevenson who, although conservative if measured against earlier and later periods of liberalism, created a niche for himself. Stevenson's opposition to McCarthy allowed him to shape mid-century liberalism and made him one of the most significant US political figures of the 1950s.

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