

**RESISTANCE TO McCARTHYISM
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS**

BY

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Introduction

In May of 1953, University of Illinois President George D. Stoddard received a curious letter. As an educator, he was asked to explain, "Why is the United States so hysterically afraid of Communism and Communists?"¹ To this, there was no simple answer. The anti-communist hysteria in America was already well advanced by the late 1940's. A little known Republican Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, used this hysteria to raise himself to national prominence. Joe McCarthy did not create "McCarthyism" but manipulated the popular mood to his political advantage. The anti-communist sentiment was already in place. In the early 1940's, California's Committee on Un-American Activities led the way in attacking the Communist influence in public schools. The Dies Committee, which eventually became known as the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), began its investigations of subversive persons and organizations early in this decade. Under the Truman administration, the Attorney General's list was the first official blacklist of radical groups. The President's Executive Order initiated a loyalty program for federal employees. A series of international events in the late 1940's also helped to ignite American's obsession with domestic security. All in the same general time frame, relations with the Soviets deteriorated, China "fell" to the Communists, and Communist forces invaded South Korea. Worse yet, actual cases of espionage were discovered, including the Rosenberg spy ring, the *Amerasia* affair, and the case of Alger Hiss. The spirit of McCarthyism was alive and well. Only a

few would challenge this hysteria, and fewer yet successfully resisted.

The states conducted their own anti-communist movement separately from the national scene. James Selcraig's recent study, *The Red Scare in the Midwest, 1945-1955: A State and Local Study*, thoroughly addressed this issue. He concluded that "the conservative effort, which simultaneously occurred on national, state, and local levels, set the dominant mood for the era."² This study will examine the degree to which McCarthyism penetrated to state politics in Illinois. The chapters that follow will show how state legislators adopted the anti-communist issue to suit their political purposes. The impact of McCarthyism can be measured by taking a closer look at its relationship to the academy through the University of Illinois.

As recent studies have shown, the universities could not escape the hysteria of anti-communism. Nationwide, intellectuals debated the interpretation of academic freedom. Individuals divided over what criteria should determine the fitness of the Communist teacher. Lines were drawn and categories were set. One group, which may be labeled the Civil Libertarians, vowed to protect academic freedom at all costs and criticized those who cooperated with McCarthyites. Recent studies frequently embrace this absolutist Civil Libertarian assumption.³ Another group, the liberal anti-communists, took a middle position and denied the legitimacy of the absolutist version of academic freedom. This was the stand that the President of the University of Illinois, George Stoddard, assumed. A study of his administration will show how these categories hold up in the reality of public pressures on the university.

As a state-supported institution, the University of Illinois was subject to outside pressures from the McCarthyites. The observations of Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thellens, Jr. that a public university was vulnerable to pressures from state politicians, trustees, and interest groups will be examined.⁴ McCarthyites found ways to use the anti-communist issue to influence the affairs of the University of Illinois. The chapters that follow will show how successful they were.

Two recent studies of McCarthyism and the universities have criticized the academy for cooperating with the Cold War anti-communist. In her study *No Ivory Tower*, Ellen Schrecker concluded, "The academy did not fight McCarthyism. It contributed to it." This behavior, she asserted, was "demoralizing" as one would expect intellectual freedom to flourish in the universities. Lionel Lewis took this criticism even further, declaring, "Academic authorities, particularly campus presidents, were responsible for the Cold War on campus; they brought the Cold War to campus." This study will call into question the Schrecker-Lewis indictment of academic cowardice considering the degree of McCarthyite public pressures upon the University of Illinois. In the two cases that follow, the presidency of George Stoddard and the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations crisis, clear resistance to the movement was strong. How effective were outspoken university officials in fighting the hysteria? The impact of the University's response to McCarthyism will help to determine whether or not combating the movement really did any good.⁵

Notes

1. Richard Gray to George Stoddard, 31 May 1953, papers of George Stoddard 1946-1953, Manuscripts of Addresses, Box 2, University of Illinois Archives.
2. James T. Selcraig, *The Red Scare in the Midwest, 1945-1955: A State and Local Study* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982), 149.
3. Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Lionel Lewis, *Cold War on Campus* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988).
4. Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Theilens, Jr., *The Academic Mind* (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1958), 180-81.
5. Schrecker, 340; Lewis, 5.

Chapter 1

Issues and Answers: The Academy and McCarthyism

By the 1930's, organized left-wing political activity had developed on America's campuses. The universities formulated methods and policies to deal with radicals, particularly targeting the Communist teacher. Faculty dismissals and expulsions occurred, but usually only as a response to an individual's political activities. However, as the fears of Cold War mounted, this began to change. Intellectuals, conservative and liberal alike, began to question and debate whether a Communist Party member should rightfully be excluded from areas such as teaching, not because of their specific activities but on the basis of their political beliefs. The University of Washington was the first academic body to face this issue head on. McCarthyites in many states sought to trap the radical by requiring teacher loyalty oaths. Scholars, particularly in California, protested the atmosphere of suspicion that surrounded their profession. Some states were quite successful in providing the legal authorization to dismiss a Communist teacher. As a moral issue, this legislation was hotly debated.

Colleges and universities were regularly pressured by McCarthyites to purge their faculties of radicals. Administrators often responded by cooperating with the anti-communist forces, and as a result, many innocent victims paid the price. An extraordinary number of scholars were not only dismissed from their teaching positions but also from the academic community for many years afterward because their names appeared on a blacklist. However, before we indict the academy as a whole

for its cowardice, one must consider the administrators who did resist the McCarthyite pressures and what impact they actually had. At the University of Illinois, President George Stoddard was one such administrator who responded in this way. Before examining this University itself, one needs a broader understanding of the issues that emerged within the academy. Finally, this chapter takes a closer look at the political situation in the state of Illinois with respect to the anti-communist issue.

Intellectuals, particularly those in the liberal camp, had argued over emerging McCarthyite issues, especially over the status of the Communist teacher. However, no specific case had yet received national attention that would offer intellectuals a chance to interpret academic freedom. The University of Washington dismissals provided such an opportunity. Prompted by the investigative pressure of the legislative Canwell Committee, the University filed charges against three professors who had refused to testify. While two of the three admitted their radical affiliations to the Faculty Tenure Committee, neither appeared to be a dangerous indoctrinator. The third professor still refused to testify. Even though the Faculty Tenure Committee recommended the retention of all three, the Board of Regents fired them, and placed three other scholars who also were investigated on probation. Throughout the probe, President Raymond Allen was cooperative and concurred with the decision of the Regents. The President of the Board of Regents informed one newspaper that the firings served "notice everywhere throughout the country that the University of Washington is notifying Communists to stay away from the University campus."¹

Nationwide, all interested eyes focused on the events at the University of Washington to examine the first case study on the treatment of the Communist teacher. A formal split emerged among liberals as they took issue with the criteria for determining the fitness of the Communist teacher.

One group, termed the Civil Libertarians, was led by Alan Barth, Alexander Meiklejohn, and Henry Steele Commager. These intellectuals united in their argument that the preservation of civil liberties was the most important consideration in determining the status of the Communist teacher. For these individuals, scholars' political beliefs alone were not reason enough to exclude them from the academic community. The Civil Libertarians concluded that restraining or limiting the scope of academic freedom was a greater danger to American democracy than allowing a few traitors and saboteurs to escape.

Other intellectuals, such as Sidney Hook, Norman Thomas, and Arthur O. Lovejoy, strongly believed that a university was justified in dismissing a scholar for their general beliefs in the absence of action. Citing the conspiratorial nature of the Communist Party, these intellectuals asserted that the exclusion of radicals was essential to the preservation of academic freedom. The Civil Libertarian absolutists denounced this viewpoint as an "updated version of academic freedom" and another example of how well the academy cooperated with the McCarthyites.² A good number of university administrators, including President George Stoddard at the University of Illinois, followed this school of thought, emphasizing the importance of academic freedom while doubting the fitness of the Communist teacher. By examining the

administration of Dr. Stoddard, one can better assess the impact of a liberal anti-communist's resistance to McCarthyism.

As debates over the morality of excluding the Communist teacher continued, state governments attempted to provide legal justification for dismissals. People also argued over the constitutionality of the restrictive legislation. In New York, the Feinberg Act, to the dismay of educators, was made into law in less than a month. This law provided a special official in each school district with the power to investigate teachers' political affiliations. Membership in the Communist Party brought automatic dismissal. In 1952, the constitutionality of the Feinberg law was officially challenged, but the Supreme Court upheld it. Illinois legislators made several attempts to pass restrictive anti-communist legislation but failed, largely because of an intense partisan struggle on the political scene. This issue is examined later in this chapter.

In the late 1940's and early 1950's, the loyalty oath requirement was another hotly-debated issue. Teacher loyalty oaths had been instituted after World War I, but, in time, had faded away. With the resurgence in American conservatism after World War II, the educator was once again singled out. Scholars protested the atmosphere of suspicion that the oath requirement brought to their profession. Usually, the language of loyalty oaths itself was threateningly vague. By and large, university administrators and faculty members did not believe that an oath was an effective way to catch the really dangerous subversives and saboteurs. In 1950 through 1951, the most vigorous protest of the loyalty oath was heard from the University of California. Faculty members

objected to the Board of Regents decision to include the oath requirement within contracts. The scholars particularly disliked the way the the oath targeted the teaching profession. By March 1951, as a result, the University had lost approximately 110 scholars due to dismissals, resignations, and refused offers of appointment.³ In 1952, the constitutionality of the oaths was challenged and defeated in the California Supreme Court. The University of California was ordered to reinstate the non-signers. Professors were allowed to claim their back pay after a March 1956 ruling. Shortly after the 1952 decision, the Board of Regents substituted yet another loyalty oath for the faculty. This time, professors did not object because the language had not singled out the academic community .

Pressured by McCarthyite forces, administrators and faculty responded with strategies that often reflected their view of academic freedom. A case study of the Stoddard administration at the University of Illinois will show what some of these methods were. Their effectiveness in combating the forces of McCarthyism will be examined. First, it is necessary to take a closer look at the setting in Illinois and the atmosphere that President Stoddard had to face.

The Middle Way of Illinois

Each state had their own way of meeting the anti-communist hysteria. Illinois fell between the two extremes of the states that had the most severe restrictions and those that had none at all.⁴ The anti-communist issue appeared often on the political scene, but did not always figure largely in the election results. Colleges and universities

tried to establish their own strategies and ground rules, often by quietly acting against left-wing organizations on campus. Both private and public institutions faced a good deal of pressure from McCarthyites to purge the radicals from the universities. The magnitude of these pressures, particularly in the case at the University of Illinois, often affected the impact of the administration's response. Illinois McCarthyites were initially successful in their advancement of anti-communist legislation. By 1949, this changed as tension between the Democratic Governor Adlai Stevenson and the Republican dominated legislature resulted in a stalemate. The Seditious Activities Investigating Commission, also known as the Broyles Commission, expired only after a short two year existence. In spite of vigorous efforts to resurrect an investigating unit and to push through restrictive legislation, no significant gains were made until 1955. By then, the McCarthyite movement had lost some of its fire.

Throughout the Cold War era, the anti-communist issue was used to exploit an enemy's weaknesses. By the late 1940's, the Republican Party had not been in the White House in the for well over a decade. Almost to the point of desperation, the Republicans sought an issue that they could use to regain their political base. The Party took advantage of the fears of Cold War and the emerging wave of conservatism in America to manipulate the anti-communist issue to their political advantage. The opponent, the Democratic Party, could easily be discredited for being "soft" on communism. Republicans criticized many of the liberal programs, such as the New Deal, as radical. Broader issues of liberal ideology were termed as "radical." Soon, many Democrats discovered that the best defense against McCarthyism was to take a tough stand on communism themselves.

In Illinois, most attacks upon the University of Illinois came from the Republicans. In this study, the term "conservative" will refer to the GOP anti-communist activists on the Illinois political scene.

Typically in Cold War era campaigns, one individual accused his opponent of being "soft" on communism or of having radical connections. Candidates often argued over the best methods to fight Communists, while each claimed to be the better defender of traditional American freedoms. Although most visible in the national and larger state elections, the anti-communist issue penetrated to local politics, especially in bigger cities. However, a candidate's strong McCarthyite rhetoric was often not enough to win the election. In the 1947 Chicago mayoral race, GOP candidate Russell W. Root charged that his opponent, Democrat Martin Kennelly, was supported by the Communist Party. Due to the strong organization of the Democratic Party in Chicago, the radical charges did not figure largely in the results as Kennelly captured 59% of the vote.⁵

In the 1948 Illinois race for U.S. Senate, Democratic candidate Paul H. Douglas successfully dodged charges of radicalism by emphasizing his anti-communist beliefs. His straightforward, effective speaking ability allowed him to best implement his strategies. Only a few months prior to the election, GOP Congressman and former House Un-American Activities Committee member Fred E. Busby publicly described Douglas as a "friend of Communism" whose "record brands him with red paint." Busby named twenty-three radical organizations that Douglas allegedly had been associated with. Douglas responded in a speech given at Urbana, Illinois. Successfully presenting himself as a liberal anti-communist, Douglas pointed out that the "Russian concept of justice" violated his Quaker

beliefs. In November 1948, Douglas was elected by over a quarter of a million votes.⁶

In the 1950 Illinois race for U.S. Senate, GOP Congressman Everett M. Dirksen capitalized on the McCarthyite issue. In his campaign, Dirksen promised a "house cleaning...of sympathizers and party-liners such as this country has never seen before."⁷ Aided by this type of rhetoric, Dirksen triumphed over the incumbent, Democrat Scott W. Lucas. This same strategy was used successfully in the University of Illinois Board of Trustees race as GOP candidate Harold "Red" Grange promised a purge of campus radicals.

Some colleges and universities established ground rules against left-wing organizations by quietly dismissing professors who participated in such political activity. At Bradley University in Peoria, the President discouraged his faculty from becoming too involved with the Progressive Party. When some faculty members met with Illinois Progressive leaders outside city limits, one professor was not given a contract renewal for the following year. At Eastern Illinois State Teachers College, a faculty member who chaired the local Progressive group was ordered to resign from his chairmanship and to cease his political activities. Even though the professor acquiesced, his contract was not renewed for the following year. Both of these cases show how far academic institutions were willing to go to avoid even a remote connection to radicalism.

At the University of Illinois, ground rules for the exclusion of radical organizations from campus were established by a legislative act. Original opposition, however, came from students themselves. In 1947,

the campus chapter of American Youth for Democracy (AYD) was identified by the student newspaper as a Communist front. The *Daily Illini* printed numerous letters and editorials that opposed the AYD's presence on the campus. Protest mounted in May 1947 when the AYD scheduled Communist Party member Molly Lieber to speak at a closed meeting. Dean of Students Fred H. Turner permitted this because of the AYD's "members only" promise. State legislators were outraged when a number of non-members were admitted to the meeting. Rep. Charles Clabaugh (R.-Champaign) reacted immediately by sponsoring what became known as the Clabaugh Act. Successfully banning the AYD chapter at the University of Illinois, the Act read, "No trustee, official instructor, or other employee of the University of Illinois shall extend to any subversive, seditious, and un-American organization, or its representatives, the use of any facilities of the University for the purpose of carrying on, advertising or publicizing the activities of such an organization."⁸

In 1948, the Young Progressives of America (YPA), a left-wing group associated with the campaign of Henry Wallace, was organized on campus. In January 1949, after leaders signed an oath that the group was not a Communist front, President Stoddard supported and encouraged the Committee on Student Affairs to recognize the YPA. Harrassed by students on campus and by policemen in Mattoon, IL while attempting to obtain signatures to place party candidates on the ballot, YPA participation waned. By August 1950, the administration withdrew its recognition policy, stating that the YPA lacked an open membership list and a sufficient number of undergraduate members. In the fall of 1950, the YPA attempted to reorganize but failed, largely because of the University's

insistence on an open membership list. Students feared that left-wing connections would hinder future employment opportunities. Likewise, faculty members were reluctant to sponsor such an organization that could be misconstrued as communistic by the McCarthyites.⁹

Other schools went even a step further to avoid the anti-communist attacks. Southern Illinois University President Chester F. Lay readily cooperated with the McCarthyite movement. Lay told the Broyles Commission in 1949 that "some of us professors and administrators may have to admit that now is the time for indoctrination in the American way of life."¹⁰ Because of Lay's restrictive view of academic freedom, he was not immediately suspect like President Stoddard was to McCarthyites.

McCarthyite pressures on academic institutions came from a number of different sources depending upon whether the school was private or public. The magnitude of these pressures affected the administrator's strategies of responses to the movement. Public universities like Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois were vulnerable to members of General Assembly, who appropriated their budget. When legislators disliked some campus activity or administrative action, they often threatened to reduce or eliminate the institution's funding. One SIU professor noted, "It is quite true that the Administration is forced to walk cautiously because legislators disturbed about opinions and activities at Southern could cut the University off with embarrassingly few pennies."¹¹ However, private institutions were not immune to attacks. Administrators at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago, for example, were vulnerable to their McCarthyite

trustees and donors. This study does not cover private colleges specifically. The chapters that follow examine the impact that public pressures had upon the state-supported institution, the University of Illinois.

In August 1947, McCarthyite legislators in Illinois initiated a seemingly large step in the anti-communist movement. The Broyles Commission, chaired by Republican Senator Paul Broyles of Mount Vernon, was created to investigate persons or organizations "suspected of being directed toward the overthrow of the Government of the United States or the State of Illinois." A subcommittee to examine textbooks was later organized, but there is no record as to whether this body actually functioned. The Broyles Commission announced its intention to target the educator who tended to "glamorize the various -isms, especially communism." The Commission operated with the political purpose of suppressing reformism, viewing the liberal as "a political thinker or actor whose feelings, thought, and actions are in favor of the Kremlin." The Broyles Commission initially operated behind closed doors. After the reports from their investigations and proceedings were released, the Commission became known for its frequent spelling errors and improper grammar usage.¹²

By 1949, the Broyles Commission was ready to introduce its anti-communist legislation in the General Assembly. If approved, the measures would require the dismissal of subversive public school teachers, outlaw communism, and mandate the signing of loyalty oaths for all public officials, including educators. Protest mounted throughout the state. Opponents argued that Illinois' existing laws were sufficient to

combat radicalism. At the University of Illinois, fifty faculty members signed a petition of protest against the Broyles bills. Professors found the wording "to be so vague as to do damage to the very freedoms we hold dear."¹³ Criticism from the University certainly did not sit well with the McCarthyite legislators.

Opposition to the Broyles bills reached its height when approximately 500 unruly protestors marched to the state capital in Springfield. Legislators noted that a number of them were students from the University of Chicago and Roosevelt College. Angered by a disruptive impromptu student sit-in at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Rep. G. William Horsley (R.-Springfield) introduced a bill to investigate the two institutions and pushed it through the General Assembly. Legislators suspected that the student protestors were "being indoctrinated with Communistic and other subversive theories." University of Chicago Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins doubted the charge, pointing out, "Rudeness and redness are not the same thing."¹⁴

McCarthyite legislators watched and waited for Democratic Governor Adlai Stevenson's action on the bill. Stevenson knew that if he vetoed the proposal, Republican legislators would attack him for taking a "soft" stand against communism. Although he doubted the legality of the investigation, Stevenson allowed the bill to become law without his signature. The roots of a partisan struggle between the Republican McCarthyites and the Democratic governor were evident. To each side, the other was suspect. Each sought to expose the other's vulnerabilities to their political advantage.

The Broyles Commission's investigation did not find any evidence

of subversion in the two colleges. The highlight of the proceedings was the testimony of Chancellor Hutchins. His direct, witty responses encouraged others to defy the Commission. He insisted, "I cannot testify concerning subversive activities at the University of Chicago, because there are none." Hutchins made the Broyles Commission's investigation appear unnecessary and ridiculous, which, to a large extent, it was. In one Chicago newspaper editorial, one individual commented that Hutchins had "made a monkey of the cross-examiner." Mockery of this type helped to shorten the life of the Commission. In an attempt to save face, chief investigator J.B. Matthews insisted, "When it comes to distortion of the truth, Hutchins is a perfectionist."¹⁵

The majority report of the Broyles Commission revealed the McCarthyite viewpoint of the investigation. The legislators strongly recommended that schools expel Communist professors and students, as well as those who refused to answer charges or to name names. The McCarthyites warned that refusal to do this would mean the end of that institution's tax exempt status, or in the case of a public university, would mean the dismissal of the Board of Trustees. The University of Illinois Board was not threatened by this because the trustees were elected, not appointed. Two active members of the Commission, one Democrat and one Republican, refused to sign the majority report and wrote their own dissents. Both legislators found no evidence of subversion in either of the colleges investigated.

In the 1949 legislative session, the Senate passed three of the five Broyles bills, but none made it through the House. In that same year, the Broyles Commission was allowed to expire. The Commission made no

recorded effort to verify data that they had obtained from witnesses. They never even attempted to investigate the Illinois Communist Party itself, focusing instead on education and liberalism per se. In its short two year life, the Broyles Commission failed to find any real evidence of subversion or any specific instances of indoctrination.¹⁶

Despite the clear absence of subversion, the McCarthyites pushed on by attempting to pass restrictive legislation. They did not need substantial evidence to make someone the subject of attack. A second set of Broyles bills was introduced in the 1951 legislative session. The bills would outlaw subversion, require a loyalty oath for public employees, and give an Assistant Attorney General the power to investigate the state's radical factor. Throughout the state, groups rallied against the legislation. The Chicago League of Women Voters published a pamphlet entitled, "We Think They Are Mistaken" to help sway public opinion. Newspapers such as the *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* also helped stir up opposition. The bills struggled in both the House and the Senate. Senator Broyles became emotional, declaring, "There are Communists everywhere, even in the Statehouse."¹⁷ Largely because legislators wanted to avoid the taint of assuming a pro-communist position, the bills passed both houses. A few weeks later, Governor Stevenson killed the Broyles bills with his veto. This power of the Governor played a significant role in the partisan struggle because up until the late 1960's, it was virtually unheard of for the legislature to override an executive's veto.

Again in 1953, Senator Broyles introduced the same bills, but added a proposal to resurrect the Broyles Commission. This time, opposition to the legislation was even more intense. The Chicago League of Women

Voters once again published a pamphlet of protest entitled, "We Still Think They Are Mistaken." Groups, especially around the Chicago area, organized to protest the legislation, urging citizens to express their opposition in letters to their legislators. The *Chicago Daily News* reported that Republican Governor William Stratton's mail was running ten to one against the Broyles bills.¹⁸

At the University of Illinois, vocal opposition to the bills certainly did not endear the faculty and administration to the McCarthyite legislators. The University Senate sent a resolution to the Lieutenant Governor, criticizing the Broyles bills as a "threat to the honored tradition of academic freedom" and an example of "modern totalitarianism." President Stoddard approved of the resolution and referred to it as a "well-thought-out document." A group of forty-six faculty members circulated a petition that criticized the Broyles bills as unnecessary and dangerously threatening. One professor asserted, "A vote for the Broyles bills is not a vote against communism, but a vote for conformity and against academic freedom." Senator Everett Peters (R.- St. Joseph) reacted to the University's opposition, calling protestors "refugees from Washington" who had been "promoted unfairly over able men already there."¹⁹

The legislation passed the Senate but stumbled in the House. Defeating the bill for the revival of the Broyles Commission, the House approved of the remaining legislation, the same package that Broyles had proposed in 1951. The 1953 bills were vetoed by Governor Stratton "with regret."²⁰ As a Republican, Stratton, who was elected in 1953, was less suspect than the Democrat Stevenson was and received less criticism for

the veto. Stratton was not a political opponent of the McCarthyite legislators.

Senator Broyles earned a victory at last in 1955, although a minor one. Once again he introduced legislation to outlaw the Communist Party and to require loyalty oaths. The CP outlawry proposal was defeated, but the oath requirement passed both houses. Governor Stratton found the act acceptable, and Senate Bill 58 became law in July 1955. By this time, the McCarthyite movement had begun to lose its fire.

The anti-communist issue in Illinois was manipulated by the Republicans to exploit their enemies' weaknesses. Colleges and universities established ground rules that tried to meet the radicalism issue before the McCarthyites attacked. A hostile partisan struggle characterized the Illinois political scene. As a result, McCarthyites made no significant gains to advance their fight against communism or against their political enemies. A tense political atmosphere prevailed in Illinois and set the stage for the administration of President George Stoddard at the University of Illinois.

Internal Conflict in the Stoddard Reign

The administration of President George Stoddard (1946-1953) was marked by a number of controversies, many of which were linked to the radicalism issue. It is necessary to more closely examine these issues to get a sense of the internal atmosphere on campus. The well-publicized troubles in the Department of Economics in the College of Commerce and Business Administration involved administrative problems and personality conflicts, but developed into something more. Republican backlash against

broader liberal ideology provoked criticism of such things as the New Deal and Keynesian economics. An educator's connection to these items often made him suspicious to the McCarthyites. Because many of the newer faculty members in the College of Commerce had worked in Washington, D.C. in liberal administrations, they were identified as "New Dealers" and "pinks."²¹ The conflict emerged as political when newspapers stressed the differences between the "old guard" and the "new guard."

By 1960, when McCarthyism was no longer a central issue, the University behaved differently with regard to the controversial radical factor. When charges were filed against Edward Yellin, an engineering graduate student, for his refusal to testify in HUAC investigations, the McCarthyite pressure was not as fierce as it had been under the Stoddard administration. This pressure can be seen clearly by examining the College of Commerce controversy.

When the intense, long conflict in the Economics Department surfaced in the Spring of 1950, the radical factor was nowhere in the picture. Economics Professor Ralph Blodgett announced his decision to leave Illinois for a position at the University of Florida because of "unfavorable conditions" within the College of Commerce. A month later, the *Champaign-Urbana News-Gazette* reported that Blodgett's true reasons for leaving the University were because of Dean Howard R. Bowen's "gross maladministration" and the Economics Department's shift from "free enterprise" to "government controls and deficit spending" ideology.²²

From this point on, the University was strongly criticized for importing "flashy brains," "New Dealers," and "pinkish intellectuals."

President Stoddard came under fire for hiring new faculty, such as Howard Bowen, rather than promoting the people who were already on staff. Some faculty members, particularly Economics Professor Don L. Kemmerer, charged that Blodgett's academic freedom had been violated because of the liberal "new guard" within the department. Ironically, a few years earlier, Blodgett himself had been attacked by the *Chicago Tribune* and a GOP legislator for his joint authorship of a "communist" text.²³

Provost Coleman Griffith, acting for President Stoddard who was away in Europe, appointed the Harno Committee to investigate the Blodgett affair. The Committee concluded that the professor had not been "forced out" and the conflict in the Economics Department was the result of a failure in human relations rather than any violation of academic freedom.²⁴ Provost Griffith considered the case officially closed.

However, by this time, a sharp decisive split within the College of Commerce had developed between the "old guard" and the "new guard." In the fall of 1950, the old guard organized a "confidence" poll of the administration of Dean Howard Bowen through the College's Executive Committee. Results seemed to show that the majority of the faculty had "no confidence" in Bowen's administration. However, many ballots had been mailed directly to Stoddard in protest, and a number of faculty members who were qualified to vote never received ballots at all. The stalemate within the Economics Department continued.

Within the camp of the new guard or the pro-Bowen forces, newspapers noted that many faculty members had worked in New Deal administrations. Some of these newer professors were identified as liberal Keynesian economists even if their beliefs did not fall in this area.

McCarthyites identified the new guard and Dean Bowen as radicals. In some newspapers, Bowen was referred to as a "socialist," an advocate of the "welfare state," and a "Washington bureaucrat." Economics Chairman Everett Hagen believed that the old guard had directed a "whispering campaign" to invoke rumor and slander against Dean Bowen. Hagen asserted that certain faculty members had organized a plan to spread malicious lies that the department had brought in outsiders to indoctrinate students. In answer to these charges, President Stoddard told the Board of Trustees that he had found no "suggestion of such infiltration" in any "responsible public reference." He concluded, "The Department of Economics is not 'red'; it is not 'radical'." Stoddard insisted that all faculty members "appeared to be defenders of capitalism." In spite of the President's response, public pressures and attacks continued and threatened the University's reputation. Here, it was apparent how one group used the anti-communist issue to discredit the opponent.²⁵

Stoddard and the Board of Trustees were pressured by Republican members of the legislature to dismiss Howard Bowen. Rep. Charles Clabaugh and Sen. Peters, who both represented the University's district, most vocally demanded Bowen's ouster. Clabaugh warned, "I feel the legislature will not provide the money necessary to run the University as it should be run unless Dean Bowen is replaced at once."²⁶ McCarthyite legislators frequently threatened to cut the University's budget unless they behaved in "proper" ways.

President Stoddard received a great deal of criticism for the way he handled the conflict from both outside and inside the University. The public attacks from newspapers and from state legislators revealed the

tension between conservative Republicans and the more liberal President Stoddard. Rep. Clabaugh admitted that his overall confidence in the President's ability "to administer the affairs of the University" had been greatly reduced by the economics shake-up. Beliefs such as this added to Stoddard's troubles and contributed to his eventual ouster.²⁷

Since Stoddard was in Europe at the outbreak of the conflict, he was criticized for neglecting campus affairs. In October 1950, one individual told the President that the controversy "could have been handled much better by your office, six months ago, than it was handled." Legislators and trustees were angered when Stoddard was quoted in the *News-Gazette* as saying that the clash in the College of Commerce was insignificant in comparison with world problems.²⁸ This type of bad press created even greater tension between the President and those for whom he worked.

Within the University, Stoddard was subject to the criticism from his own faculty. This pressure, for the most part, was not on a large scale. The Executive Committee of the College of Commerce, which was composed mostly of old guard anti-Bowen members, criticized Stoddard's passive role in the conflict. The Committee asserted, "We have spent many hours in seeking resolvment of the issues" while the President had contributed little. Howard Bowen also had a few words for Stoddard. Years later, he expressed his disappointment in the administration's role in helping him to avoid conflict. Early in 1949, Bowen realized that he was "heading for trouble" and turned to Stoddard and Provost Griffith for advice. At this point, Bowen revealed, "They really failed me."²⁹

By far, Stoddard's strongest critic on the faculty was old guard Economics Professor Don Kemmerer. Denouncing the President's support of

Bowen as "prejudiced," Kemmerer declared that it was "high time the public realized" Stoddard's unfairness. He openly criticized not only Stoddard's role in the Commerce controversy but also the man himself. Kemmerer asserted, "He is Master of the art of omitting vital evidence, distorting it, making mistakes and not acknowledging them, and implying things without saying them."³⁰ Kemmerer greatly antagonized the new guard faculty who had faith in the President and his policies.

Tension between the factions intensified as the controversy remained unsolved. Two pro-Bowen professors sent identical letters to department head Hagen requesting "leave without salary." Each professor felt that they could not "continue in a situation where my presence is resented, my working arrangements are considered inequitable, my salary is begrudged, and where I am accused of profiting from favoritism."³¹ President Stoddard needed to calm the hostile environment within the economics department as well as to respond to the outside pressures.

On November 24, 1950, an Advisory Committee made up of College of Commerce alumni and state business leaders recommended the dismissal of Howard Bowen as Dean to the Board of Trustees. Bowen offered his resignation, accepting the decision "in good grace." Almost all of the newer faculty left the University of Illinois within the next year. Nonetheless, today, Bowen is remembered as a scholar whose "intellectual poise and insight" contributed leadership and many improvements to the University.³²

The shake-up in the College of Commerce clearly revealed some of the forces that President Stoddard confronted. A conflict that involved personality differences and administrative mistakes developed into a

full-scale political issue. The President faced great opposition from members of the media. A heavy tension was evident between Republican legislators and the more liberal-minded Stoddard, who had by 1950 clashed over many issues. Critics came from within the faculty as well. Howard Bowen himself was not satisfied with the policies of President Stoddard. Clearly, Stoddard's role in resisting pressures directed toward himself and the University was a difficult one. The impact of this resistance, as evidence will show, was limited.

By 1960, Joe McCarthy was notably absent from the national political scene. The Red Scare had cooled and a new decade had arrived. At the University of Illinois, a slight resurgence in the radicalism issue appeared. Now, however, the administration behaved differently as the McCarthyite pressures that President Stoddard had faced were not as fierce.

Engineering graduate student Edward Yellin was indicted on four counts of contempt of Congress. Summoned by HUAC while a student at Colorado State University, Yellin had refused to testify on the basis of the First Amendment. In June 1959, the Supreme Court declared that such a refusal qualified as contempt of Congress. Charges against Yellin were filed. If he had refused to testify by taking the Fifth Amendment, no contempt citation would have been issued. In 1960, Yellin was found guilty, and the University suspended him.

Because Yellin was appealing the verdict, many felt that the suspension decision was premature as he had not yet had "his full day in court."³³ The administration responded favorably to the mounting protests of the United States National Student Association and of the University of

Illinois Senate. Yellin was reinstated following a recommendation of the Subcommittee on Graduate Student Discipline.

Students and organizations voiced their approval. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) declared that the University of Illinois' decision had "made a genuine contribution not only to the academic community but to our democratic society as a whole." A writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* noted the difference in the University's reaction to issues of radical nature. The writer proclaimed, "Under the rules of the McCarthy period Mr. Yellin might have been dismissed outright. Instead, the University deserves great credit for avoiding inflexible judgment of a scholar who claimed freedom of conscience." In 1963, the Supreme Court overturned Yellin's conviction for contempt of Congress. He completed his Ph.D. work in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Illinois and entered the field of biophysics.³⁴

In the Cold War era, many issues were hotly-debated as the radical came under attack. The exclusion of the Communist from areas of American life was both challenged and defended. McCarthyites vigorously attempted to advance their fight against communism by passing restrictive legislation. In Illinois, the McCarthyites did not need any real evidence of subversion to attack and investigate academic institutions. The tense atmosphere of partisan conflict characterized the mood in the state and evolved as a test of political strength. McCarthyites pressured the President Stoddard most vocally, presenting a formidable obstacle for the administrator. Legislators also attacked the broader ideology of liberalism, charging that New Dealers, Keynesians, and Progressives were dangerous to national security. In a later chapter, it will be shown how

management leaders used the McCarthyite issue against the "radical" pro-labor Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations (ILIR). After examining the administration of President George Stoddard and the controversy in ILIR in the chapters that follow, one can determine whether resisting the McCarthyites really did any good.

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29. Executive Committee of the College of Commerce and Business Administration, "Report," 15 October 1950, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 46; Howard R. Bowen, *Academic Recollections* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1988), 33.

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Chapter 2

Public Pressures and Strategic Resistance

By the late 1940's the atmosphere of McCarthyism was alive and well as politicians formed around the anti-communist issue. Asserting that communists not only could but should be excluded from certain areas of American life, McCarthyites worked to purge the academy of radicals. Given this situation, the university administrator was in a difficult position. Cooperating with the McCarthyites might have reduced the pressures on the university, but only at the expense of many innocent victims. Administrators could resist the attacks and strongly vow to protect civil liberties at all costs, particularly the right of free speech. President Stoddard assumed a middle position. Even though he resisted the McCarthyites, he denied the legitimacy of the absolute version of academic freedom. As it was, resistance proved to be an exercise in futility. As a proponent of reformist ideology, George Stoddard was viewed as a personal and political enemy of McCarthyites in Illinois. Even though the President declared himself an anti-communist, legislators were doubtful because of Stoddard's opposition to the McCarthyite movement. Many factors made Stoddard particularly vulnerable to legislative attacks. Thus, as this chapter will show, Republican McCarthyite conservatives used a range of methods to "get Stoddard" and finally to defeat him altogether.¹

George Stoddard's viewpoint on the fitness of the Communist teacher was like that of the Sidney Hook, Norman Thomas, and Arthur O. Lovejoy. While arguing that a Communist should not be allowed to teach,

Stoddard stressed the importance that academic freedom be preserved within the university. The Civil Libertarian group opposed this school of thought, declaring that beliefs alone were not reason enough to exclude an educator from his profession. Influenced by the fact that a large number of innocent scholars fell victim to McCarthyism, some recent historians have condemned the academy for its cowardice, particularly criticizing the Stoddard ideology. Ellen Schrecker referred to this position as a redefinition of academic freedom "to require the exclusion of the Communist teacher." Lionel Lewis also denounced this viewpoint, asserting that this school of thought helped to establish a "negative climate of opinion" against the scholar. Lewis charged that the university administrator was "more interested in public relations" than preserving and protecting civil liberties.²

George Stoddard was recruited from outside the area for the position of President at the University of Illinois. He was not familiar with the political atmosphere in the state, nor was he well acquainted with members of the legislature or of the Board of Trustees. A change in administration was a natural shake-up for the University. Also, in the post-World War II era, the campus was growing by leaps and bounds and administrative decisions had to be made very quickly at times. Individuals who did not approve of Stoddard as an administrator used the anti-communist issue to discredit him.

Many Republican conservatives in the General Assembly and on the Board of Trustees disliked Stoddard's appointments. Because a large number of the newer faculty members had worked in Washington or had a liberal background, some became suspicious. Particularly when controversy

erupted in the College of Commerce, many new scholars were termed "New Dealers," "socialists," or "bureaucrats." Not only were critics unhappy with Stoddard but also with those who were connected to him. This became evident in the 1950 Board of Trustees elections when a Stoddard supporter was purposely replaced.

Few university administrators opposed the McCarthyite movement or fought against unwarranted attempts to purge radicals from the academy. George Stoddard was one of the select group who did. While recent historians might criticize his position of the status of the Communist teacher, they would have lauded his resistance to the McCarthyites. Stoddard's case indicated the complexity of the issue of academic freedom with respect to the fitness of the Communist educator. Some recent historians have charged that the university administrator readjusted the meaning of academic freedom in order to exclude radicals for professional reasons rather than political ones. This chapter will question this stand by showing how successful Stoddard was in resisting the McCarthyites.

By 1949, a partisan struggle in Illinois characterized the political scene. A great deal of tension existed between Democratic Governor Adlai Stevenson and the conservative GOP legislators. A good working relationship was never established between the two branches. President Stoddard supported Governor Stevenson, and the two had a friendly personal relationship. This alliance caused immediate suspicion among McCarthyite legislators. Stoddard's reformist ideology alone was a vulnerability. Combined with his support of Stevenson, who did not get along well with the Republicans, turned this match up into a power

struggle. In the General Assembly, the anti-communist issue was, for the most part, a method that Republicans used to discredit their political enemies. The term "conservative" will be used to refer to this group.

As a liberal anti-communist, George Stoddard stood firm on the issue of academic freedom, at least as he defended it. McCarthyites were suspicious of what they considered an unorthodox viewpoint. Stoddard emphasized the importance of intellectual freedom within the university, including the "right to think, to speak, to be heard, and to dissent." He declared, "Nobody is to tell us what to think, when to think, or whether to think...In education we think -- or education stops."³

President Stoddard did recognize that even something as vital as academic freedom had its limits. For Stoddard, this freedom was not a "black-or-white concept" but an issue where various balancing factors needed to be considered. He questioned, "How much diversity can we permit? Certainly not enough to condone the criminal, the psychopath, the subversive." He firmly believed that the Communist educator had no place in the academy because "he is not free to evaluate the past or the future with scholarly detachment." After encountering Communist delegates to international conferences, Stoddard noted that their "standards of personal and professional conduct" were "shocking." Toleration therefore, did not extend to the radical. Stoddard concluded, "We are free in all respects save one; we are not free to tolerate the destruction of our freedom." Civil Libertarians would have considered the statement ridiculous given the limitations that the anti-communist movement had placed upon freedom of speech.⁴

Ignoring the reality of the President's anti-communist stand,

Republican legislators were angered over Stoddard's strong opposition to the McCarthyism. He publicly denounced the McCarthyites who threatened intellectual growth by frightening teachers into submission to the orthodox. Stoddard warned that the McCarthyites' mindless search for radicals could lead to a new "Irresponsible and repressive" search for the nonconformist. Governor Stevenson commended President Stoddard's ideology, declaring, "Thank God for people like yourself who are both able and willing to pound these points home on every occasion." Statements such as these certainly did not endear Stoddard to the McCarthyites.⁵

As the legislative pressures increased, Stoddard's criticism of the McCarthyites became more fierce. Legislators attacked this opposition along with his reformist agenda for the University as a "soft" stand against communism. In the continuing power struggle between the President and members of the General Assembly, each side looked for ways to exploit the other's vulnerabilities. Stoddard delivered a most biting speech directed against the McCarthyites entitled, "Paranoids Versus the People." He identified the McCarthyite as a "paranoid," and individual who was "anxious," "insecure," and deceitful. Stoddard insisted that the "paranoid" enjoyed the fear and submission in others and especially "liked to play king." According to Stoddard, the McCarthyite behaved as "if he had been commissioned by God as First Informer, First Inquisitor, and First Executioner." He charged that the "paranoids'" efforts to locate traitors and saboteurs had resulted in few successes; "not enough thus far to start a stampede at a Sunday school picnic."⁶

Stoddard's opposition to the McCarthyite movement was backed by the belief that subversives were most effectively rooted out by the FBI

and other security agencies. Governor Stevenson shared this view, stressing that "the really dangerous subversives and saboteurs will be caught by careful, constant, professional investigation" rather than by the McCarthyite purges. Stoddard, like Stevenson, opposed an issue that some legislators held dear.⁷

The fierceness of President Stoddard's opposition to the McCarthyites may have made him appear more liberal than he actually was. It is important to remember here that Stoddard assumed the middle position or the "vital center."⁸ His role in the Cazden case clearly showed his anti-communism. The professor's quiet dismissal perhaps also demonstrates a lesson about the pressures of the legislators. As long as a university administrator got rid of the trouble-makers, that institution could avoid bad press and major controversy.

Norman Cazden came to the University of Illinois in 1950, and by 1953 was on the verge of receiving tenure. In the spring of that year, Cazden was informed that his contract would not be renewed for the fall term. When he approached President Stoddard to discuss the reason for his dismissal, Cazden was shown a document that identified him as a member of the Cambridge, Massachusetts Communist Party, as well as being connected with thirteen other radical organizations. In no position to defend himself because most of the allegations were true, Cazden departed from the University in June. The report itself was most likely prepared by the FBI, a unit that Stoddard believed should handle the fight against communism.⁹ It would have been interesting to see how the President would have reacted if the same charges had been filed by the state McCarthyites. Details of this incident are unavailable because the

Cazden file remains confidential at the University of Illinois.

A year later, a former University of Michigan colleague identified Cazden as a member of the Communist Party. Cazden was summoned to Washington by HUAC. When questioned about his political affiliations, he took the Fifth Amendment. Cazden was blacklisted like many other educators and did not return to academic life until 1969 at the University of Maine.

McCarthyites preyed on President Stoddard's involvement in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a unit designed to help bring education to other countries. In 1946, Stoddard had been chosen as one of the five United States delegates to the conferences in Europe. McCarthyites criticized UNESCO as a "fifth column" whose purpose was to aid the Soviet regime as well as to teach "world-mindedness to the youth of America." To McCarthyites, Stoddard's reformist connections with this organization were a sure sign of his "softness" on communism. Others felt that the President's involvement in UNESCO too often kept him away from campus affairs. Some trustees and legislators concluded that Stoddard's first concern was for a globalist body rather than for the University of Illinois.¹⁰

As a strong-minded administrator who refused to cooperate with state legislators, George Stoddard's own personality made him more vulnerable because many people simply did not like him. The President was a poor lobbyist for the University and did not have good relations with members of the General Assembly. Most significantly, Stoddard told one newspaper that he was "not displeased" by the fact that he did not get along well with legislators. Although many considered Stoddard to be an

"outstanding educator," they recognized that he was also "impulsive, quick-tempered," and had a "way of alienating folks." One unidentified trustee described Stoddard as a man "who could not keep out of controversial issues" and who "seemed as if he liked nothing better than to get into a big fist fight." Many simply felt that the President "lacked the ability to get along with people" and failed to "pay enough attention to the people for whom he worked."¹¹

The best assessment of why Stoddard's personality added to tension between himself and legislators was by a long time reporter of the *Champaign-Urbana Courier*. Through the hobby of "President-watching," the writer noted that Stoddard "was impatient with slower minds -- and almost all minds were slower." The journalist also observed that Stoddard's "ferocious drive to get all this chit-chat over with and get on with the job was a fascinating thing to see -- or a frightening one -- depending on whether or not you were in the line of fire." Most of the President's opponents had been in this line of fire at one point or another.¹²

One issue on which McCarthyite legislators might have anticipated Stoddard's opposition was the 1949 faculty loyalty requirement by 1949 Illinois Statute. The oath was applicable to public employees without specifically mentioning educators. Stoddard commented, "To the astonishment of the right-wing members of the Board of Trustees, I tended to laugh it off." The President pointed out that he had "taken half dozen similar oaths over the years in relation to my military service."¹³

Although Stoddard did not directly oppose the loyalty oath requirement, he withheld his full support and failed to appease the

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McCarthyites. Traveling along the center line in this way, Stoddard was hit by cars going in both directions. Some legislators resented the President's criticism that it was the "fearful and uninformed" who insisted upon stirring up this atmosphere of suspicion.¹⁴ Civil Libertarians disliked the fact that Stoddard's position did not go far enough in fighting the loyalty oath requirement.

George Stoddard was vulnerable to legislative hostility for a number of reasons. McCarthyites sought ways to discredit the President, attacking him in ways that would eventually lead to his ouster. Stoddard had to overcome great pressures from the outside to have any success in resisting the McCarthyites. In the rest of this chapter, two significant points will be shown. First, the events and attacks demonstrate what areas and methods the McCarthyites used to expose Stoddard's weaknesses. Secondly, the impact of the President's response was indicative of the magnitude of these pressures.

Stoddard Under Fire

With the help of the anti-communist issue, opponents engineered the first step of George Stoddard's ouster in the 1950 Board of Trustees elections. Controversy erupted in the summer of 1950 over the selection of candidates to the Board. The Alumni Association traditionally suggested three individuals to each party before the conventions. Named to the Republican ticket were Wayne Johnston, Howard Megran, and Chester Davis. Local GOP conservatives considered Johnston and Megran acceptable, but balked at Davis. Chester Davis was seen as a Stoddard supporter who had been a member of the committee that hired the

President. As a result, a group of Champaign County Republicans organized an effort to substitute former Illini football great Harold "Red" Grange for the incumbent Chester Davis at the August GOP convention. The opposition to the administration of George Stoddard was alive and well.

Reactions throughout the campus area were mixed. The local Republicans defended the effort, pointing out that Grange's name was well-known throughout the state and would strengthen the party ticket as a whole. However, others within the Party saw no reason for the switch that would defy the tradition of accepting the Alumni Association's suggestion. This split would materialize later at the GOP convention.

Some Republicans took advantage of the upcoming elections to restate their strong position against communist subversion, particularly in connection with the University of Illinois. Although not attending the August 1950 convention himself, Grange declared his commitment to the ouster of "red sympathizers, socialists and wild-eyed radicals" from the University faculty. In Springfield, Chester Davis' critics spotlighted his ties to President George Stoddard. Rep. Ora Dillavou, in a McCarthy-like flurry, charged that there were "at least 50 Reds, pinks, and socialists" on the University faculty. Dillavou further charged that, "Davis hired the man (Stoddard) that's been hiring them." Clearly, the move to exclude Davis from the Board of Trustees was a first step in engineering the ouster of Stoddard.¹⁵

As noted earlier, Republicans divided over the issue of the Grange substitution. In a close vote, 839-798, Grange was chosen to replace Davis on the GOP ticket in November. The split in the party demonstrated that much of the anti-Stoddard sentiment came largely from local

conservative McCarthyite types rather than the Republicans per se. The *Champaign-Urbana Courier* called Grange's victory a "clear triumph for a relatively small group of Champaign County GOP leaders." It was pointed out that Grange was not even a graduate of the University, as he had quit to pursue a career in professional football. The *News-Gazette*, however, accepted Grange as the "people's choice."¹⁶

In November, the Republicans swept statewide elections, including the race for the Board of Trustees. As a state-supported institution, the University of Illinois was subject to many outside pressures because the purse strings were held by state legislators and taxpayers. The University was also one of the few schools whose Board of Trustees was elected and not appointed. Because of this, the trustees were subject to the will of the general electorate. The Grange substitution clearly showed how accessible the Board was to those outside of the University. Board candidates needed to campaign, as Grange did with his McCarthyite rhetoric. As a public official, a trustee had to respond to the electorate's demands and suggestions if they wished to remain in office. These factors added to the University's pressures from the outside.

A few days after the GOP convention, President Stoddard officially responded to Dillavou's charges against the University. Stoddard's liberal anti-communist position worked to his advantage. By accepting Dillavou's anti-communist goals, he was able to point out the legislator's irresponsible lack of evidence. A Civil Libertarian would not have been able to respond in this way to meet the charges of radicalism. Stoddard sent Dillavou eleven sheets of paper on which he asked the legislator to name the "50 Reds, pinks, and socialists" along with his evidence. The

President's message was purposely conciliatory to best alleviate Dillavou's charges against the University. The President wrote, "Since your knowledge apparently goes beyond mine, I am making an appeal to you, as a loyal citizen to give aid." Stoddard pointed out that because of the faculty-required loyalty oath, "to be called 'Red' is serious" and "it also implies perjury." Of the 9317 University employees, he reported, only two or three were currently under surveillance. After this message, Dillavou could not claim that Stoddard was a protector of Communists.¹⁷

In Illinois, anti-communism was largely a partisan issue. GOP McCarthyites attempted to discredit their Democratic opponents by attacks of radicalism. President Stoddard was swept into this conflict. President of the Board of Trustees Kenney Williamson approved of Stoddard's request for the names. Williamson declared that the Board was "becoming tired of being unjustly accused," and if there was "someone who knows something that we don't know, we should be given the information." He admitted that there were probably "some Reds" at the University, but he knew of no cases specifically.¹⁸

Rep. Dillavou failed to produce any names or evidence and advised Stoddard to find his own list. Dillavou suggested the members of the faculty would know "who some of the subversives are." In the attempt to save face, Dillavou erratically attacked the University for indoctrinating "youth with radical political philosophies." President Stoddard consistently followed his middle path conciliatory strategy. He replied that the University was "extraordinarily free" of persons who responded to the "fake lures of Communism." Nonetheless, Stoddard insisted that his administration did not "intend to relax our vigilance."¹⁹

In reaction to the Dillavou charges, President Stoddard ordered a campus investigation. By October, the probe was completed, and Security Officer Joseph Ewers had discovered "no known Communists" on the faculty. Ewers insisted that he had never known "any member of the faculty at Illinois to commit a subversive act." Stoddard reported the results of the investigation to the Board of Trustees. He declared, "We have not been able to find any Communists on the campus; all we have found is a few misguided persons. There is no evidence of subversiveness, of perjury or of the disclosure of secret materials." The President concluded that Dillavou's charge that the University possessed a "substantial group of disloyal persons" was groundless. Stoddard's political stand as a liberal anti-communist offered him an advantage in responding to McCarthyite attacks. He could pursue a middle path by recognizing the goals of anti-communism but by demanding responsible evidence. However, public pressures mounted and the impact of Stoddard's resistance methods was reduced.²⁰

Other than the official responses to President Stoddard, Rep. Dillavou remained silent. The entire incident, one *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter speculated, appeared "to be another 'Get Stoddard' movement rather than a real effort to find red-hued teachers." McCarthyites continually sought ways to exploit the President's vulnerabilities to gain a political advantage.²¹

In spite of Stoddard's attempts to resist and refute charges of radicalism, McCarthyites charged on. The University was referred to as a "hotbed of communism." McCarthyites attacked the faculty's opposition to the 1953 Broyles bills as a "smear campaign." One citizen argued the need

for a "cleansing committee" to purge the University, claiming that the library contained novels written by Communists, movies "made in Russia," and records that contained "a decided proletarian flavor." As public officials, legislators and trustees were concerned about criticism of this sort. President Stoddard worried about the University's reputation as well and tried to resist the charges.²²

McCarthyite legislators continued the attacks on Stoddard personally and upon the University. Rep. Horsley most vocally criticized the President for his failure to get rid of the radicals. He declared, "I don't like the administration of Dr. George D. Stoddard and I don't mind saying so." Horsley pledged, "Before the next session, I intend to do something about it." He suggested that Stoddard's days as President of the University of Illinois were numbered. Horsley also tried to discredit the faculty when he charged that his son had been graded down in "retaliation" to his own support of the 1953 Broyles bills. The charge was groundless, as Horsley's son already had academic difficulties prior to the debates on the Broyles legislation.²³

Stoddard again tried to meet the charges of radicalism by emphasizing, "No members of the faculty are disloyal, subversive, or Communistic." Security officer Ewers pointed out in Stoddard's defense, "In my six years, I have never known him to protect a Communist." However, the President could not quiet the charges of radicalism given the magnitude of outside public pressures. In this case, what people thought was true was more important than what actually was true. Stoddard's resistance had no tremendous impact on McCarthyism in Illinois.²⁴

Resistance Defeated: The Climax of "Black Friday"

The fate of the Stoddard administration was determined on July 24, 1953, a day that the President would remember as "Black Friday." Harold "Red" Grange called a private session of the Board of Trustees with no item on the agenda. In this conference format, the Board was not required to record their proceedings. After midnight, President Stoddard was called into the session, warned by one trustee, "Prepare yourself for a shock!" Stoddard was then informed of the Board's 6-3 vote of "no confidence" in his administration. A few minutes later, Provost Coleman Griffith was ousted as well. Griffith's dismissal, Stoddard mused, was probably due to "guilt by association." Stoddard's opponents had played their trump card.²⁵

The actions and proceedings of the Board of Trustees became the subject of controversy. University regents would normally consider the ouster of an administrator carefully and not without consulting the press, the public, or some academic or civic body. Even four members of the Board had not been informed as to what the nature of the midnight session would be. Coleman Griffith commented, "We learned the next day that quite a number of the janitors on the Urbana-Champaign campus had known" about the proceedings before they were made public.²⁶

Because the Board of Trustees did not offer one clear reason for the Stoddard "no confidence" vote, many speculated over the cause. Most seemed to agree, however, that a political deal was behind the ouster. One professor named Park Livingston, President of the Board of Trustees, as the "chief architect" in the midnight firings, criticizing him as a man "who regards his Presidency of the Board of Trustees as the step in the direction of higher office." One newspaper suggested that Stoddard's

ouster might aid Livingston's bid for the GOP Senate nomination.²⁷

In the attempt to explain why Stoddard was ousted, the *Chicago Tribune* cited fourteen controversies that marked his administration. The article mentioned the conflicts in the College of Commerce, the charges of radicalism on the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations (discussed in the following chapter), and the attacks made by Rep. Dillavou at the 1950 GOP convention. Stoddard believed that Livingston had been the source of the article, but the Board of Trustees President denied this. Stoddard responded to each charge and the article was printed a week later. Even after his ouster he was not immune to pressures and attacks against his character.²⁸

Stoddard's tendency to become involved in controversial issues was one of the factors that led to his defeat. Many individuals believed that the "Kreblozen affair," an issue unrelated to radicalism, had directly led to the President's dismissal. Kreblozen, discovered by Dr. Stevan Durovic, was a drug for the treatment of cancer. Dr. Andrew Ivy, head of the Department of Clinical Science at the University of Illinois-Chicago, believed in the drug and publicly announced a new treatment for malignant tumors. President Stoddard was skeptical and decided that the University in Urbana-Champaign should conduct its own investigation. The Cole Committee concluded that kreblozen had "no curative value in the treatment of cancer," and recommended that the treatment of patients with the drug be halted until it was discovered just what it was. Durovic had refused to reveal its ingredients and continued to collect millions of dollars from desperate cancer patients for injections. Hopeful supporters of kreblozen lobbied against restrictions on the drug, charging that

Stoddard had limited freedom of inquiry. It was not until 1963 that researchers discovered that kreblozen was nothing but mineral oil. Dr. Ivy and Dr. Durovic were indicted for criminal conspiracy and mail fraud, but both were found not guilty.²⁹

By 1953, Stoddard's political ally Adlai Stevenson was no longer in the governor's chair. The change to the Republican administration of William Stratton made Stoddard's dismissal easier to arrange. Politically, Republicans had no use for the President as Stevenson had. In this sense, Stoddard's ouster was the consequence of a partisan struggle in Illinois. One newspaper reported that Governor Stratton "had been one of the masterminds behind the ouster." Stratton was vacationing in Colorado at the time of the midnight firings.³⁰

For many, the Stoddard firing was no great surprise. The *Chicago Sun-Times* reported, "It had been known in Springfield for some time that some legislators don't like Stoddard" because of his political stands and his "general aloofness." In Springfield, Livingston told reporters, "There was not on the Board a person who did not know Stoddard's days were numbered. The whole question was one of procedure, of how to get rid of him." He declared, "The common greeting to a University trustee over here (Springfield) was 'When are you going to get rid of Stoddard?'" Clabaugh's reaction to the ouster seemed to confirm this assessment. Commenting that he was "agreeably surprised" over the Board's actions, the legislator revealed that he had "felt for the last year that it was inevitable."³¹

George Stoddard himself believed that his ouster was a well-planned political maneuver as characterized by the "midnight ride of Paul Revere Livingston." The President declared that the McCarthyite

"technique" was to "attack public universities and funding if the administrators say or do the 'wrong' things." Stoddard's frustration was evident as his resistance to McCarthyism was one factor that led to his ouster. Provost Coleman Griffith also believed that the firings had been prearranged, confirming to two close friends, "Yes, your thought is correct, a wicked political deal lies in the background." Griffith concluded, "The wolves have finally caught up with Dr. Stoddard and me."³²

At the height of criticism, Livingston held his ground. He responded by rudely stating, "The plain truth is that George Stoddard had made himself a pain in the neck to so many people on so many issues for so long a time by his arrogance and duplicity that six of the nine trustees...became fed up and expressed their lack of confidence in him." Livingston, as well as other Board members who had voted against Stoddard, defended their position against the harshest critics.³³

The Illinois Government received its fair share of backlash from Stoddard supporters who particularly criticized the anti-communist movement. Connecting the ouster directly to the "deteriorating political scene," one man wrote, "I do not believe I'm exaggerating when I say that I see this as an act of McCarthyism on a state level." Many believed that state leaders had taken the anti-communist movement too far. In a letter to a state Senator, another man declared, "Our people are growing very, very weary of Legislative, state and national, encroaching on the other departments of government, especially the Executive." One newspaper wrote that Stoddard had been the "victim" of "the anti-liberal spirit" and of "anti-intellectualism."³⁴

Not only Stoddard supporters protested the method of the ouster.

Trustee Wayne Johnston, a conservative Republican, was not known to be a fan of the Stoddard administration. Johnston believed that the proceedings had been unfair, and that Stoddard's dismissal was unwarranted. Voting in favor of the Stoddard administration, Johnston asked the President to change the wording of his resignation from "In view of the vote of the Board of Trustees" to "In view of the vote of the majority of the Board." Johnston also agreed that the meeting had been a "well-planned campaign by Park Livingston" and "Red Grange, his stooge." Johnston's opposition to the ouster suggested that a Republicans split over the McCarthyite issue, a division that had surfaced earlier at the 1950 GOP convention.³⁵

In search of one particular scapegoat, many Stoddard supporters directly criticized Harold "Red" Grange, the trustee who had called the midnight session. One newspaper denounced Grange as a "synthetic alumnus who departed from the University before finishing to reap a fortune from the football reputation that the school he abandoned had permitted him to gain." Others, like Wayne Johnston, identified Grange as a "stooge" of Park Livingston. Stoddard had to agree. He told one reporter, "'Stooge' is your word. My word is that he is a creature of Park Livingston." Grange, like Livingston, held his ground, claiming that he would resign from the Board of Trustees before he changed his vote.³⁶

On campus, Stoddard had a great deal of support. A week after the proceedings, a group made up of faculty, students, and local citizens marched to the President's house. The *News-Gazette* reported that numbers reached 500, but the *Champaign-Urbana Courier* estimated as many as 1500. The marchers sang "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow" and

carried signs and banners, one of the boldest being "We Have 'No Confidence' in the Board of Trustees."³⁷

Twenty-two department heads from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences circulated a petition of protest of Stoddard's ouster. They declared that the actions of the Board had been "contrary to all accepted standards of academic procedure." The faculty members saw the firings as "morally unjust," although "technically legal." The University Senate confirmed that a "strong feeling" existed "among the faculty that the drastic procedure followed was unfair and had resulted in serious danger to the University's reputation." In 1954, these twenty-two department heads were commended by the Academic Freedom Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union for their position in defense of free education. Livingston, however, was not impressed. He warned the protestors, "These pets had better stick to their education or go elsewhere."³⁸

Eleven former trustees, later joined by nine more, issued their own petition of protest to the current Board of Trustees. Stressing that the University belonged to "the people of this state" and not the "faculty or its alumni or of any group of politicians," the former trustees denounced the use of the University for "political ends." The midnight session, they insisted, lacked the "common decency" that a "fair hearing" would require. The method of the ouster was just as controversial as the reasons for the dismissal itself.³⁹

In October 1954, Stoddard was listed along with the twenty-two department heads by the ACLU for "effectively demonstrating their belief in the principles of freedom and equality in education." The Committee

commended Stoddard, who had "persisted even to the point of discharge from his post, in resisting political interference in matters of educational policy and administrative discretion." Stoddard's defeat had been engineered by political conservatives, partly in reaction to the reformist spirit.⁴⁰

In time, protests subsided and Stoddard supporters were forced to abide by the Board's decision. Comptroller Lloyd Morey replaced Stoddard as President of the University of Illinois. In 1955, David D. Henry took over and began his long reign. George Stoddard left Champaign-Urbana and accepted a position as Dean of the School of Education at New York University. He later moved on as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Long Island University. In 1968, Stoddard returned to the University of Illinois campus to lecture and was honored with a Doctor of Laws degree.

George Stoddard was susceptible to a great deal of outside pressure because of the many vulnerabilities of his character. Largely because of his reformist ideology, he was attacked by conservative Republicans who applied the anti-communist issue to partisan politics. Stoddard's middle position as a liberal anti-communist offered him some advantages in responding to McCarthyite attacks. However, this school of thought also gave Stoddard some trouble as he was criticized by both the right-wing McCarthyites and the left-wing Civil Libertarians. The President's resistance to McCarthyism was unsuccessful. The pressures mounted and finally erupted, resulting in the political ouster of Stoddard. Given this, the indictment of academic cowardice by recent historians is questionable. The case study of the administration of Dr. George D. Stoddard has demonstrated that resistance to McCarthyism did not have

much of an impact on the political scene in Illinois.

Notes

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5. George Stoddard, Preface to "Paranoids Versus the People," 1 September 1953, papers of George Stoddard 1946-1953, Manuscripts of Addresses, Box 2; Adlai E. Stevenson to George Stoddard, 31 March 1952, papers of George Stoddard 1946-1953, Manuscripts of Addresses, Box 2.
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13. George Stoddard, *Pursuit of Education* (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1981), 119-20.

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16. *Ibid.*; *News-Gazette*, 12 August 1950.

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20. *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 9 October 1950; George Stoddard, "Report to the Board of Trustees," 12 October 1950, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 47.

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22. *Daily Illini*, 23 April 1953.

23. *Daily Illini*, 28 May 1953; *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 26 June 1953.

24. *Daily Illini*, 2 June 1953; *News-Gazette*, 23 July 1953.

25. Stoddard, "Pursuit," 124, 127-28.

26. Coleman Griffith to Norman Burns, 30 July 1953, papers of Coleman Griffith, general correspondence, Box 2.

27. Richard Robbins, "Letter to the Editor," *New Republic* 10 August 1953, 22; *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 26 July 1953.

28. *Chicago Tribune*, 26 July 1953; *Chicago Tribune*, 3 August 1953.

29. George Stoddard, *Krebiozen: The Great Cancer Mystery* (Boston: Beacon Press, Inc., 1955), 79.

30. *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 26 July 1953.

31. *Chicago Sun-Times*, 27 July 1953; *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 26 July 1953.

32. George Stoddard to Coleman and Louise Griffith, 28 August 1953, papers of Coleman Griffith, general correspondence, Box 8; *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 9 January 1954; Coleman Griffith to Elsie and Harry (____?), 29 July 1953, papers of Coleman Griffith, general correspondence, Box 2; Coleman Griffith to Raymond Allen, 28 July 1953, papers of Coleman Griffith, general correspondence, Box 2.

33. *News-Gazette*, 6 August 1953.

34. George E. Cooley to Wayne Johnston, 28 July 1953, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 6; O.R. Dennis to Martin F. Burt, 6 August 1953, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 6; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 20 November 1953.

35. Stoddard, "Pursuit," 127; Wayne Johnston to nine others, 27 July 1953, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 6.

36. *Chicago Sun-Times*, 29 July 1953; *News-Gazette*, 6 August 1953; James Gorman to Wayne Johnston, 8 August 1953, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 6.

37. *News-Gazette*, 30 July 1953; *Champaign-Urbana Courier*, 30 July 1953.

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39. *Chicago Daily News*, 28 July 1953.

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Chapter 3

McCarthyism and the "Labor College"

The late 1940's was one of the most volatile times in the history of labor-management relations. The transition of the labor force from war to peace time was anything but smooth. Thousands of labor-management disputes broke out. To help improve relations, colleges and universities developed programs to address these crucial issues. The University of Illinois was strongly urged by the Illinois State Federation of Labor (ISFL) to set up a program to offer "expert and detailed knowledge and advice in order that equality and justice be done for the workers in meeting their problems."¹ The College of Commerce had been encouraged to take on labor aspects of industry, but for reasons that are unclear, failed to do so. Plans for a labor college soon had to be adjusted. Management groups were suspicious of the evolving Institute from the start. Combined with the anti-communist movement and the growing unpopularity of labor unions, the new Institute was headed for trouble. Business leaders attacked the Institute as pro-labor, and therefore, radical. Management groups, with the help of McCarthyite legislators, pressured the Institute to include business and industrial programs, and the original conception of a labor college was altered. In this sense, the McCarthyites were effective in spite of the University's resistance.

Even though the University tried from the very beginnings of the Institute to avoid controversy, the faculty found themselves under fire. In resistance to the public pressures and the charges of radicalism, the University behaved in ways not unlike those institutions that yielded to

the McCarthyite forces. Administrators warned faculty members to avoid controversy and reminded them of their special role in the community as an educator. Labor unions played a leading role in the Institute's founding, but only a supporting role during its period of "crisis." By this time, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was facing its own "crisis" as McCarthyites began to focus on the radical factor within the labor unions. When the charges of radicalism against the Institute did fade, it was largely because of a split in the conservative ranks rather than the impact of the University's resistance. This chapter examines the administration's response to the public attacks on the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations (ILIR) with respect to the McCarthyite forces. First, the preconditions must be examined.

The Setting Before the Storm

Labor unions were the logical place where Communists who wanted to cause political unrest might go. The strongest foothold of the Party in the United States was within labor organizations. Given the emerging anti-communist atmosphere, a labor-oriented college would be hard-pressed to avoid trouble.

Three years after the formation of the CIO, the Communists had either "complete or partial control" of 40% of its unions at the local level. By 1939, pro-communists "had taken over" Industrial Union Councils in many states, including in Illinois. During World War II, the Communists cooperated in the wartime economy to a large degree, supporting government policy and denouncing strikes. Clearly, the Communist Party had at least some influence on labor unions by the end of the war.²

For labor, the transition from war to peace was an arduous one. Workers faced lower real wages, rising prices on consumer goods, and growing unemployment. By 1945 and especially 1946, a wave of strikes swept the nation, and hostility between labor and management grew. Labor unions became increasingly unpopular with the public at large. Consumer discontent mounted due to inflated prices and frequent shortages. The anti-communist forces connected these problems to Communist infiltration. Some of the strongest voices in management refused to cooperate with union leaders until the Communist influence was gone. This tension between labor and management was clearly evident in Illinois. As the McCarthyite movement gained momentum, because the Faculty of the ILIR was perceived as sympathetic to labor, they were considered suspect.

Labor organizations had high hopes of establishing the Institute that would reflect their own programs and policy. At the 60th annual convention of the ISFL in 1942, the Milk Drivers Union Local 753 of Chicago sponsored Resolution 96 to encourage the University of Illinois to develop a department "with properly qualified labor economists and analysts to advise and supply information which will assist the workers in their many complex problems." What the group had in mind was a service similar to what the University offered the farmer through the College of Agriculture. After investigating the matter, a subcommittee of the University recommended a budget of \$50,000 to create a new Institute. Disappointed, the ISFL leaders sponsored a bill also to create an Institute, but at the budget of \$400,000. Dean of the College of Law Albert Harno presented the University's objections to the ISFL bill before the

House Education Committee, stressing management's apprehension of the formation of a "labor college." As a result, the ISFL substituted another bill, adjusting the amount to \$150,000. The bill merged into the University's general appropriations proposal and was approved in June 1945. Labor leaders were optimistic, declaring that the founding of the Institute was "one of the finest advances for labor in many years." Through the University's programs, leaders believed that "many apostles for the great labor movement will have been won." Labor groups were confident that their primary role in ILIR would continue. One labor leader declared, "For this great State University of a powerful rich state such as ours to launch such a program is a victory indeed for the efforts of the ISFL."³

Tensions between labor and management ran high at the birth of the Institute. University officials were well aware of the problems that would result by establishing a labor college. As early as 1943, ISFL leaders were told that "under no circumstances could or would the University become a special advocate for any group in the State, whether that group be industry or labor." In 1946, management groups voiced their hostility toward the evolving Institute. After meeting with business leaders of Illinois, University officials were able to establish two statements of policy and program for the new college. Management's cooperation was offered reluctantly, however. One campus leader wrote, "The conference was very unsatisfactory. The group was almost exclusively open-shop, anti-labor. They objected to everything -- the statement of policy, the name, the advisory committee, a Director friendly to labor." Business organizations maintained this hostility towards the ILIR and its eventual director, Phillips Bradley to a point where the

anti-communist issue became involved.⁴

University officials tried to appease both labor and management. By taking the middle position, as was true in the case of President Stoddard, the Institute was hit by cars going in both directions. On the management side, the criticism was much more fierce. In May 1946, the Griffith Committee, who had been appointed to work out details of the program, changed the name of the Institute from the Institute of Labor Relations to the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations.⁵ This was not a major concession, however.

Because of their suspicious attitude, management leaders insisted that the director should not be pro-labor. Although it is not clear what criteria the Griffith Committee used to choose the director, it appears as if they made some effort to search for a neutral individual. Their first choice, a labor economist and arbitrator, was unavailable. Four alternatives were found, one of whom declined to be considered for the position. Why the Committee chose Phillips Bradley is not entirely clear. Some members felt that because the Institute was not yet a working unit, Bradley, whose background was in labor education and political science, would do the best "selling job" for the new Institute. Bradley, as a Quaker, was pacifist on many issues of foreign policy. This fact would be later exploited by McCarthyites even though Bradley was "not radical in any sense."⁶

Even though University officials had some reservations over what the Institute's scope would be, they believed that the problems would be overcome. Provost Coleman Griffith expressed concern that Bradley's "heart" was "a little pro-labor." He warned the new Director that "unless

the Institute did hew to a strictly neutral line, it was going to have trouble." Griffith did not feel that this would become a problem given Bradley's determination to make the Institute a success. The University did not anticipate the fierceness of the McCarthyite pressures from the McCarthyite legislators and management groups.⁷

From the beginning, the University recognized problems that a pro-labor Institute would have. Officials attempted to adjust the program to ensure neutrality and to match the interests of business organizations. In spite of their apprehensive pledge to cooperate, management groups housed a great deal of anti-labor sentiment. Opponents of labor continued to grasp at ways to discredit the Institute and its faculty, and soon they took advantage of the anti-communist issue to help their cause.

Labor Under Attack

The combination of management hostility and the rise of anti-communist movement meant trouble for the Institute. In the early months of 1949, controversy surfaced when management leaders publicly and privately charged that ILIR was a pro-labor organization and a clear source of radicalism. Business leaders pressured University trustees and state legislators to more closely examine the Institute's programs and personnel, particularly those of the Extension program. In the words of one management leader, if Phillips Bradley "isn't Communistic, then he is very close to it." Many opponents of ILIR expressed concern that taxpayers were supporting a subversive organization. Seeking a way to strike at the labor college, management leaders lobbied legislators strongly to reduce or eliminate funding for the Institute. President of the Board of Trustees

Park Livingston was informed that "several of our Representatives and Senators have been asked to check very carefully the University budget recommendations" for ILIR. As a state-supported institution, the University of Illinois found it difficult to escape attacks of this nature.⁸

In May 1949, conservative McCarthyites found another point of attack. Labor Education Professor Herman Erickson, in a speech to a Socialist Study Group, declared that there was greater "incentive to production under socialism than under capitalism."⁹ To many management leaders and state legislators, this served as proof that ILIR was an instrument of subversion. The speech in itself was not a major event, but McCarthyites seized upon it to promote their cause.

In resistance to the mounting charges of radicalism, the University behaved in ways not unlike institutions that capitulated to the McCarthyites behaved. Wayne Johnston, who was then a member of the ILIR Executive Committee, demanded an explanation of Erickson's speech from Director Bradley. Johnston wanted to shield the University as a whole from any negative consequences that the controversy could bring. He made a special trip to Champaign-Urbana to strongly advise the ILIR faculty to avoid such controversy in the future.¹⁰ Civil Libertarians would have criticized this action as a violation of free speech.

Phillips Bradley tried to dissociate Erickson's views from the Institute and from the University as a whole. The Director stressed that the speech was nothing but Erickson's "own personal judgement expressed at an unofficial meeting." Bradley insisted that whatever his beliefs, Erickson was "not only an effective but an objective" instructor. The Director felt strongly about the preservation of academic freedom. Labor

groups who had attended Extension courses taught by Erickson offered their support. One individual speculated, "Either Mr. Erickson was badly misquoted or he kept these ideas under cover in the classes which I attended."¹¹

President George Stoddard's middle position on the academic freedom with respect to the fitness of the Communist teacher showed in his response to Erickson's controversial speech. The President reminded the faculty of their "special position in the community." Stoddard emphasized the importance that a an educator "remember that the public may judge his profession and his institution by his utterances...and should make every effort to indicate that he is not an institutional spokesman."¹²

Civil Libertarians would have praised Stoddard's position in resisting the McCarthyites' demands for Erickson's dismissal. In a personal letter, Sen. Peters wrote, "I heard Williamson (President of the Board of Trustees) tell Stoddard that he had to get rid of Erickson and Stoddard said it would be done."¹³ Whether the President actually said this is unclear. However, Stoddard did not "get rid of" Erickson or Phillips Bradley, who later came under fire. This "failure" to take action against "radicals" was only one element that contributed to the tension between Stoddard and legislative McCarthyites. In the long run, this resistance contributed to the President's dismissal.

Although this is difficult to measure today as the only information available is the memories of the faculty, the Institute's professors reacted rather mildly to Herman Erickson's speech. Erickson had developed a reputation among his colleagues as someone who often would leave an

Impression that was not at all what he intended. Faculty members excused his controversial speech, claiming, "That's just Herman." No apparent resentment or antagonism developed within the Institute. Even though outside pressures mounted, the faculty itself did not divide into factions.¹⁴

McCarthyites were not satisfied. They directed the focus of their attacks on the ILIR to its Director, Phillips Bradley. Leaders in the Rockford Chamber of Commerce ran a check on Bradley's past "radical" affiliations and circulated the telegram to members of the General Assembly. Bradley was said to have had connections to the Society for Cultural Relations with Russia, the Ultra Pacifist World Peaceways, and the mysterious Socialist Slacker Movement. The Director quickly wrote to President Stoddard, explaining the charges that he could, but some were too vague to identify. He even added two items that could have been misconstrued as radical. Bradley's response clearly showed that the items had been either grossly exaggerated or created altogether. However, the seed of suspicion had been planted in the minds of members of the General Assembly.

The telegram on Bradley served as another piece of evidence that McCarthyites in management groups used to discredit the Institute. Management leaders increasingly pressured legislators, trustees, and President Stoddard to take action against the programs and staff of ILIR. One business leader informed a trustee, "I can't help but be shocked at finding we have on the University payroll that we taxpayers are supporting, socialists, New Dealers and Communists."¹⁵ McCarthyite legislators were quite willing to look into the matter.

Either purposefully or not, management attacks occurred near the time when the General Assembly would take action on the University's budget. Management groups lobbied vigorously for the abolition of ILIR. According to former faculty members, although the staff was concerned about the Institute's reputation, they did not feel as though its existence was at stake. Professors felt that ILIR had achieved so many positive things in labor-management relations in the community that the charges would be offset. Eventually, the benefits that the Institute brought to the state of Illinois did help to diminish the anti-communist attacks.¹⁶

By May 1949, because of the vocal McCarthyite attacks, it seemed possible that the Institute's budget would either be reduced or denied entirely. Sen. Peters reported that a budget adjustment was a "good probability." At the Senate appropriations hearing, President Stoddard was asked to evaluate the degree of radicalism at ILIR. He testified that although some faculty were sympathetic to labor, the Institute contained no Communists. The President went on to deny the charges made against Bradley in the telegram and to defend Herman Erickson's effectiveness as an educator. Unappeased, one GOP Senator introduced an amendment to cut the Institute's funding, but it was defeated. By late May, the Senate had passed the University's budget.¹⁷

In June 1949, House action on the budget was upheld pending further investigation into the charges made against the Institute. Concerned over ILIR's reputation, Bradley met with a group of legislators in Springfield to respond to the attacks. When one legislator questioned Erickson's fitness as a Socialist educator, Bradley was quick to point out the differences between socialism and communism. The Committee, however, refused to

acknowledge any distinctions between the two schools of thought. The legislators were satisfied with Bradley's explanation of academic freedom, as he stated that the classroom was not an appropriate place for the educator to argue his personal views. To some extent, this was a concession for Bradley because of his strong belief in the preservation of academic freedom. The Director also conceded that the Institute did have a pro-labor look, but insisted that it was not intentional. Bradley pledged to consult more frequently with management representatives. The legislators were appeased, and Rep. Dillavou and Rep. Lewis (R.- Marshall) agreed to drop their amendments to adjust ILIR's funding.

When the Institute was under heavy fire from management groups and the General Assembly, labor groups refrained from publicly supporting ILIR for reasons that are unclear. President Stoddard was "astonished" over this failure. However, labor's support of the Institute's programs, especially in Extension, was undeniably strong. Stoddard acknowledged this, declaring that the University was "immensely reassured" by this support. The ISFL did not offer a public resolution of support of ILIR until October 1950. In their weekly newsletter, the ISFL, which had led the way in the founding of ILIR, made no reference at all to the attacks upon the Institute.¹⁸

In spite of the General Assembly's approval of the budget, management opposition to the ILIR was still very much alive. Efforts by management groups to abolish the Institute were quite vigorous, particularly in the Peoria and Rockford areas. In July 1949, Bradley agreed to meet with a group of Rockford businessmen, headed by Frank M. White, to discuss some of the Institute's problems. He brought along Herman

Erickson and Associate Professor Earl Wolfe, who directed the ILIR's Management Education Program. Bradley knew that if the charges of pro-labor and radicalism against the Institute were to be alleviated, Wolfe would have to play a key role in explaining the management programs.

The official report of the July 22 meeting gave the impression that opposition to the ILIR was fierce among the Rockford business community. The Committee concluded that Bradley's explanations of his alleged radical affiliations in the circulated telegram were "weak and unsatisfactory." The report also stated that the Institute's failure to equally emphasize labor and management was intentionally engineered to favor the side of labor. This statement implied that the ILIR was a subversive organization. It appeared as though the anti-labor forces would not be satisfied until the Institute was disbanded.¹⁹

The official report was quite deceptive, however. At the conference, a significant split developed between management leaders, resulting in a backlash against the anti-communist ultra-conservatives. As Earl Wolfe explained and answered questions about the Institute's plans for a new Cooperative Management Program, other business leaders, particularly Frank M. White, were impatient and eager to return to the issue of ILIR's radicalism. White's overly enthusiastic determination to find Communists proved to be detrimental to his cause. Much like Joe McCarthy, White pushed the issue until it burned itself out. Businessmen reacted against White's pressure as he tried to gain support to force ILIR from the University.²⁰

This backlash against the McCarthyites greatly influenced the

development of management programs within the ILIR. At the conference lunch break in Rockford, a group of business leaders came together and planned another meeting to discuss the organization of the Institute's extension classes in the Rockford area. A week later, leaders coordinated a series of programs that specifically sought to encourage Rockford participation, almost pressuring industry "to change its slant." The programs specifically aimed to reduce the hostility between labor and management in Illinois. The charges of radicalism against the ILIR dissipated largely as a result of this split in management.²¹

One area where outside public pressure failed to penetrate was within the ILIR faculty itself. Although this is difficult to measure today, former faculty members have reported that to the best of their knowledge, the staff itself did not alter or adjust their methods or curricula in the classroom. Within the department, a few changes did occur as a direct result of the attacks of radicalism. Many efforts were made to show that labor and management faculty members were pulling together instead of dividing. More joint labor-management classes were developed both on and off campus. Management Director Earl Wolfe and Labor Education Professor Herman Erickson were purposely made officemates to emphasize cooperation rather than division. The department leaders hoped that the two would exchange philosophies and "rub off" on each other.²²

The original hopes for a labor-oriented college had been adjusted to include the interests of management. Business conservatives used the McCarthyite issue to attack their opponent, labor. By 1950, labor organizations were disappointed with the changing scope of the Institute. The Milk Wagon Drivers sponsored a resolution to encourage other unions

to become involved with ILIR programs in the attempt to make labor's role primary as they had first hoped. The resolution declared, " Labor has not received the proper recognition when you see what Agriculture and Industry get from our State Universities while millions of its members support it with their taxes."²³

Phillips Bradley submitted his resignation as Director in July 1949 for reasons apparently not directly related to the radicalism issue. He and President Stoddard disagreed over questions of jurisdiction in management classes between the College of Commerce and ILIR. Stoddard insisted that the Institute develop its labor programs as opposed to its business areas. Bradley disagreed, declaring that the management programs were necessary. How the McCarthyite attacks influenced Bradley's thinking is unclear. Within the Institute itself, Bradley also faced the faculty's personal hostility over his divorce.²⁴ He resigned as ILIR Director and moved to the Department of Political Science. A few years later, he left Illinois for a position at Syracuse University. Herman Erickson, who had also been the subject of attack, remained with the Institute until his retirement.

Uncertain of labor and management leaders' reaction to the events at ILIR and to Bradley's resignation in particular, Stoddard told new Director William E. Chalmers to travel and explain that the University still strongly supported the Institute. Chalmers, whose background was in economics, was more flexible on the jurisdiction issue that Bradley had resigned over. He had been a strong candidate for Director in 1946. From July through November of 1949, Chalmers traveled throughout the state and helped to ease tensions and clear up misunderstandings.²⁵ The

Institute's controversial stage subsided, giving way to a period of stability.

As a public university, Illinois was particularly vulnerable to pressures from legislators and interest groups. Labor's strong hopes and plans for a labor-oriented college had to be readjusted. Officials sought to avoid conflict at the Institute's birth, but the University was unable to escape the hostile McCarthyites. By using the anti-communist issue, management leaders forced the ILIR to consider their interests. In resistance to McCarthyism, the University behaved in ways not unlike those institutions that yielded to the anti-communists. The ILIR faculty was warned to keep away from controversial issues. President Stoddard maintained his middle position and reminded the professors of their special role in the community. In his "failure" to dismiss Bradley or Erickson, Stoddard further hurt his own relations with members of the General Assembly, a factor that contributed to his ouster. Phillips Bradley resigned as Director over an issue unrelated to the radicalism crisis. In spite of all of the positive achievements that the Institute had brought to the community in labor-management relations, McCarthyites found something to attack. When charges of subversion finally did fade away, it was largely due to divisions within the conservative anti-communist forces rather than any successful University resistance. The University of Illinois did resist McCarthyism, but management leaders were still able to penetrate to the programs of the Institute the Labor and Industrial Relations with the help of the anti-communist issue.

Notes

1. Milton Derber, *A Brief History of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations* (University of Illinois: n.p., 1987), 1, citing Resolution 96 from the Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the 60th Annual Convention*, October 1946.

2. David M. Oshinsky, "Labor's Cold War: The CIO and the Communists," in *The Specter: Original Essays on the Cold War and the Origins of McCarthyism*, ed. Robert Griffith and Athan Theoharis (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1974), 121.

3. Derber, "Brief History," 3; Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the 63rd Annual Convention*, October 1945, 188; *Ibid.*; Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the 64th Annual Convention*, September 1946, 234.

4. Derber, "Brief History," 5, citing Harno Committee, "Memorandum," 2; *Ibid.*, 1, citing Harno Committee, "Report."

5. *Ibid.*, 8.

6. *Ibid.*, 11, citing Griffith Committee, "Report," 23 May 1946; Milton Derber, interview by the author, 3 February 1989.

7. Coleman Griffith to Wayne Johnston, 26 July 1947, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 3.

8. F.M. White to Park Livingston, 11 March 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28; White to Livingston, 22 April 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28.

9. *Daily Illini*, 7 May 1949.

10. Derber interview.

11. Phillips Bradley to Wayne Johnston, 3 June 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28; L.J. Schmidt to Donald E. Dickason, 9 May 1948, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence,

Box 28.

12. George Stoddard, "Report to the Board of Trustees," 22 June 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 47.

13. Everett R. Peters to W.E.C. Clifford, 6 June 1949, papers of Wayne Johnston, Box 3.

14. Earl Wolfe, interview by author, 7 April 1989.

15. F.M. White to Park Livingston, 25 May 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28.

16. Derber and Wolfe interviews.

17. Peters to Clifford.

18. George Stoddard to R.G. Soderstrom, 29 July 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28; Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the 68th Annual Convention*, October 1950, 207.

19. "Report of the Meeting at Rockford," 22 July 1949, papers of George Stoddard, general correspondence, Box 28.

20. Wolfe interview.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Illinois State Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the 67th Annual Convention*, Resolution 91, September 1949, 247.

24. Wolfe interview.

25. Derber, "Brief History," 17.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

As the anti-communist hysteria swept the nation, the universities could not escape. At the University of Illinois, McCarthyism shaped academic experience. These two case studies show the degree to which the movement was able to penetrate the internal affairs of the academy. Within the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, McCarthyites played a key role in shifting the orientation from a labor college despite the resistance of the administration and faculty. Also, even though President Stoddard vigorously opposed McCarthyite tactics, his resistance was one factor that contributed to his defeat. These two instances show that because the University of Illinois was a public institution, legislators found it easy to latch on to the anti-communist issue to attack political and ideological enemies.

Illinois McCarthyites did not need any substantial evidence of subversion to continue advancing the anti-communist hysteria. On four different occasions, legislators sought to impose restrictive laws upon radicals through the Broyles bills. Republicans especially adopted McCarthyite policies into their politics. The anti-communist issue surfaced in campaigns. As shown earlier, Harold "Red" Grange became "anti-Red" Grange to aid his bid for a seat on the University of Illinois Board of Trustees.

As the two case studies at the University of Illinois show, McCarthyites frequently attacked broader liberal ideologies. Stoddard's reformist agenda for the University made him vulnerable to right-wing

Republican charges. In the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations case, a progressive pro-labor concentration was viewed as subversive. As shown earlier, left-wing organizations were under suspicion as well, and the campus chapter of the American Youth for Democracy was banned by the Clabaugh Act in 1947. Also, in the College of Commerce conflict, educators connected to the New Deal or Keynesian economics were termed "radicals," "pinkish intellectuals," and "bureaucrats."

Evidence from this study supports the observations of Paul Lazarsfeld and Wagner Theilens, Jr. that public universities were particularly susceptible to outside influence from politicians, regents, and interest groups. Illinois legislators, in many instances, warned the University to behave in "proper" ways or else face cuts in funding. This threat was used by McCarthyites most extensively to influence the scope of the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations.

The question of whether radical views disqualified one from a teaching position ignited debates over academic freedom. President Stoddard followed a middle path between the McCarthyites and the absolutist Civil Libertarians. Two recent major studies of McCarthyism and the universities by Ellen Schrecker and Lionel Lewis have criticized this stand, asserting that it was just another way that administrators cooperated with McCarthyism. Although he did not believe in the absolutist version of academic freedom, Stoddard resisted the McCarthyites. His liberal anti-communist position actually provided him with a stronger hand in confronting the attacks. Thus, Schrecker and Lewis do not provide a category for the Stoddard type. These two historians do address the fact that some administrators and faculty members were

ambivalent in their response. However, they do not discuss this systematically. Both strongly assert that absolutist methods of resistance were the best way to stand up to McCarthyism.

It is easy to argue that universities should have most vocally resisted the anti-communist hysteria, but in reality, this was a difficult task. The Schrecker-Lewis indictment of academic cowardice is questionable. Evidence from the two case studies at the University of Illinois shows that in spite of vigorous resistance, the McCarthyites triumphed. Given the University's vulnerability to outside public pressures, this is not surprising. It is difficult to imagine that the absolutist Civil Libertarian stand would have been any more effective given the reality of these public pressures. President George Stoddard was defeated by a combination of personal and political opposition. Also, the original conception of a labor-oriented college had to be readjusted to suit the demands of conservative management groups. In both cases, McCarthyites used the anti-communist issue to suit their purposes. And in both cases, in spite of resistance at the University of Illinois, it worked.

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