

A More Dangerous Watchdog

By Pete Clark

During the 1950's and 1960's, the world seemed to be turning Red as Eastern Europe had been occupied by the Soviet Army by the end of World War II. By 1949 Mao's forces had achieved victory in the Chinese Civil War, and in 1950, North Korea launched a civil war, attempting to unify the Korean Peninsula. In 1947 the House Un-American Activities Committee began an investigation of Hollywood, examining perceived communist influence in the entertainment industry, using questionable means to force information from those who were subpoenaed. The careers of many actors, writers and directors were destroyed due to the Black Listing of suspected communists and their ban from the industry.

Later in the 1950's, Senator Joe McCarthy made allegations, never proven, that more than two hundred communists had infiltrated the State Department. The Red Scare was in full force and federal employees who were gay or lesbian were believed to be susceptible to blackmail by communist agents, as homosexuality was considered to be a perversion and thus presented an immediate security problem. April 27, 1953, President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10450, which banned gays and lesbians from working for the Federal Government and prohibited federal contractors from employing gays and lesbians. The Red Scare cost many people their livelihoods. President Eisenhower also asked US Allies around the world to remove Gays and Lesbians from government positions.

Senator McCarthy's reign of terror ended in 1954 when Edward R Murrow answered charges that McCarthy had made against him. Murrow highlighted McCarthy's stance that anyone who opposed him was either a communist or a fellow traveler and presented truths that had been twisted into lies. The Army-McCarthy Hearings led to McCarthy's censure by the Senate, but an atmosphere of suspicion and fear remained for decades. During the early 1960's a professor, who lectured in advanced American History classes at the University of Wyoming, would tell his students that nothing said in class was to go beyond the classroom door, as a thorough discussion of a subject would require the expression of all points of view. Students involved in Liberal Arts were routinely investigated in search for subversive leanings. Some collectives such as Labor Unions were considered to be almost Un-American and other collectives such as Farmer's Co-Ops were considered to be good American Institutions.

Today Big Brother is still watching, but is benign toward most of the country's population. A possible sign of times to come occurred December 4, 2016. A man read a fake news story about Hillary Clinton and a campaign staffer running child prostitution at a Washington, DC restaurant and decided he had to rescue those children. He entered the restaurant, fired one or more rounds and looked for the tunnel where the children were supposedly held, before police arrested him. Sadly, Executive Order 10450 led to suicides in the LGBT Community but now we are all subject to attack by those vigilantes, who, without thought, wish to protect us.