

# McCarthyism

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The Cold War and HUAC

# The Cold War at Home

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- With the backdrop of the Cold War, a second **“Red Scare”** gripped the nation
  - Fear of Communist sympathizers, or “subversives”, caused great anxiety
- Congress creates an investigative committee to snuff out Communists in the country
  - **The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) is created**
- By 1947, focus turned to Hollywood
  - HUAC brought writers, actors, and anyone suspected of Communist ties to testify
  - A group of ten witnesses were called to answer questions

# House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)

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- Created in 1938 as an investigative committee in the House of Representatives
  - **This committee was "tasked" to investigate alleged disloyalty and subversive activities and people with supposed Fascist/Communist ties**
  - Committee was dissolved in 1975 and the responsibilities were transferred to the House Judiciary Committee
- **Joseph McCarthy was not a part of the House (he was a Senator) nor was he a part of HUAC but his actions, later called McCarthyism, targeted similar groups**



# The Hollywood Ten

Refusing to answer questions, this group was charged with contempt of Congress

# Blacklist and McCarthyism

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- Those suspected of supporting Communism were put on a list by HUAC
  - **This was titled the “blacklist”**
- Some politicians played off this fear
- **Senator Joseph McCarthy from Wisconsin stoked fear by claiming he compiled a list of “subversives” in the U.S.**
- For several years in the early 1950’s, McCarthy used this “list” to gain a large following of supporters
- **“McCarthyism” became the term for persecution of those suspected of Communism by Senator McCarthy**
  - Eventually, McCarthy was censured by the Senate for his reckless accusations (including the President of the U.S.)

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