

A fantasy of what Jerry might have said on WIBG in Philadelphia the night Joe McCarthy died, originally in Chapter 4:

Thursday, May 2, 1957. Senator Joseph McCarthy died in Bethesda Naval Hospital.

Jerry started talking about Joe again on the air that night. He recollected the McCarthy career and all it had wrought. The waves of fear that went through people who'd dabbled in that lefty stuff back in the '30s, when a lot of young fools didn't have any idea what Communism was really about. The people in show business who agreed to name names. The people in show business who wouldn't. The people whose lives were ruined by the heads of movie studios and the Broadway producers who wouldn't hire good writers or good actors because they were afraid of getting bad publicity. Ed Murrow's "See It Now" show attacking Joe. The Army hearings. Eisenhower's repudiation. The Senate's censure at the end of 1954. Joe relegated to the backbenches. Now Tail Gunner Joe was gone.

What had he left in his wake? Jerry wondered. Did he get rid of all the people in government who once were sympathetic to Communism? Probably not. Were there some Americans, then and now, who believed in Communism, who would do the Russians' bidding, who wanted to overthrow the US government and replace it with a dictatorship of the proletariat? Yeah, there probably were.

But Joe had done something pernicious. It was important to look at it, to remember it. The worst about Joe wasn't all the grandstanding, although that was bad enough. The worst thing about those four rotten years was the way he'd gotten Americans to start looking over their shoulders at one another, to start suspecting one another of disloyalty, to start calling one another traitors. How he got them to forget about the First Amendment, to forget about freedom of speech. And how he used that suspicion to build a political career, to make himself famous.

Had Communism destroyed the country? No. Could Joe McCarthy take the credit? Only time would tell. But Joe's words and deeds had damaged Americans' faith in each other. Damaged the confidence Americans had had in their institutions, in the principles that were the foundation of our country. A lot of kids died for those principles in two big ugly wars. Joe tried to destroy our faith in ourselves – first, to pump up his own party at the expense of the other one. Then, because he liked seeing his name in the paper. And **that** was a crime.

This is our fantasy, based on our knowledge of Jerry's style and on Michael Dukakis's reminiscence that Jerry was "whacking the tar" out of McCarthy as early as 1952.