

[Senator Joe McCarthy: Audio Excerpts, 1950-1954](#)

Excerpt Title: Skunk hunting analogy, 1953

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TRANSCRIPT OF EXCERPT

Senator McCarthy speaking:

Some of my good friend -- good sincere people too -- have said to me, "McCarthy, during the time you've been waging this attempt to uncover treason in government," so many of them said, "we like what you're trying to do," -- I'm not going to read all this [Audience laughter] -- "we like what you are trying to do, but, oh, we don't like your methods." I've heard that over and over and over like a broken phonograph record.

And you know, when any of my friends say that I always say, "Well, the water is good. C'mon in, if you want to dig any out, if you've got some delicate method of doing it. If you can fight communists with a lace handkerchief, it's okay with me."

And I often think of the days I spent back on the farm as a small boy. I had three brothers. My mother used to raise chickens to help pay the grocery bills and get her Christmas money. And one of the jobs I had with my three brothers was to go down into the swamps and dig out the skunks that used to come up and kill her baby chickens. You know, you learn early in life, -- [Audience laughter and applause] -- you learn early in life that you don't go skunk hunting with striped trousers, a silk handkerchief, and a top hat. You just can't do it. And you also learn that the more successful your skunk hunting expedition, the less welcome you may be sitting next to your neighbors in church the following Sunday. [Audience laughter]

And I may say that we're engaged now in, as you well know, in digging out a much smellier breed of animal than I dug out back on the farm. And I may say, I don't much give a tinker's



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damn what anyone says about methods. I don't much care about the advice to stop. This job must continue my good friends – it will continue – as far as I'm concerned, as long as I am in the United States Senate, regardless of whether we hurt Democrats or Republican or anyone else.
[Audience applause]