



Margaret Chase Smith was a Republican Congresswoman then Senator from Maine. She was the first woman to be both a Congresswoman and Senator.

Following Joseph McCarthy's (a fellow Republican) "Wheeling" speech in 1950, in which he claimed to have a list of 200 names... people who worked for the state department and were communists.... Smith presented the "Declaration of Conscience." Smith's speech was endorsed by 6 other Republicans.

Declaration of Conscience Excerpt:

"The Democratic administration has greatly lost the confidence of the American people by its complacency to the threat of communism and the leak of vital secrets to Russia through key officials of the Democratic administration. There are enough proved cases to make this point without diluting our criticism with unproved charges.

Surely these are sufficient reasons to make it clear to the American people that it is time for a change and that a Republican victory is necessary to the security of this country. Surely it is clear that this nation will continue to suffer as long as it is governed by the present ineffective Democratic Administration.

Yet to displace it with a Republican regime embracing a philosophy that lacks political integrity or intellectual honesty would prove equally disastrous to this nation. The nation sorely needs a Republican victory. But I don't want to see the Republican Party ride to political victory on the Four Horsemen of Calumny -- Fear, Ignorance, Bigotry and Smear.

I doubt if the Republican Party could -- simply because I don't believe the American people will uphold any political party that puts political exploitation above national interest".

Chase also stated that the basic principles of "Americanism" were the right to criticize; the right to hold unpopular beliefs; the right to protest; and the right of independent thought. How do these principles clash with McCarthy?



Rankin



Caraway

DYK: The first woman to be elected to the United States Congress (HOR) was Jeanette Rankin, a Republican from Montana elected in 1917. 229 women have served in total as of 2009.

The first woman to be elected to the Senate was Republican Hattie Wyatt Caraway. She had first been appointed to the Senate to fill out the term of her husband in 1931. In 1932, she was elected in a special election. She was re-elected and served until 1944.