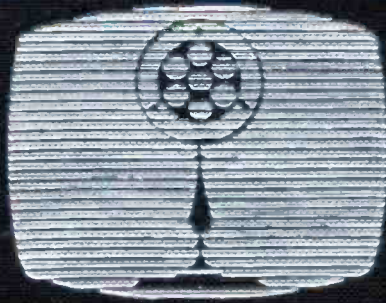


**HISTORY OF  
BROADCASTING:**



**RADIO TO  
TELEVISION**

*report on* BLACKLISTING

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II • Radio - Television

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JOHN COGLEY

THE FUND FOR THE REPUBLIC, INC.

**HISTORY OF  
BROADCASTING:  
RADIO TO  
TELEVISION**

## **HISTORY OF BROADCASTING: Radio to Television**

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# **Blacklisting**

T W O   K E Y   D O C U M E N T S

Report on Blacklisting

**JOHN COGLEY**

The Judges and the Judged

**MERLE MILLER**



ARNO PRESS and THE NEW YORK TIMES

New York • 1971

Reprint Edition 1971 by Arno Press Inc.

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Published by arrangement with Doubleday & Company, Inc.  
Reprinted from a copy in The Newark Public Library

LC# 78-161171  
ISBN 0-405-03579-9

HISTORY OF BROADCASTING: RADIO TO TELEVISION  
ISBN for complete set: 0-405-03555-1  
See last pages of this volume for titles.

Manufactured in the United States of America

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# Acknowledgment

THIS REPORT is based on the findings of a staff of researchers and reporters — Edward Engberg, Harriet Davis, Gwendolyn Boulkind, Saul Blackman, Margaret Bushong and William Pfaff.

The study conducted by Dr. Marie Jahoda of the Research Center for Human Relations, New York University, was wholly independent.

I am indebted to the Fund for the Republic, which sponsored the study, and to all who supplied the material on which the report is based. This latter group includes not only the research staff but some two hundred persons in the radio-television industry who gave freely of their time for lengthy interviews. Special thanks are due to my assistant Michael Harrington, who gave invaluable help in organizing the mass of material collected, and to James Greene, the project secretary.

The conclusions found in these pages are mine alone. They do not necessarily reflect the judgments of any other person.

JOHN COGLEY



# Foreword

MOST AMERICANS ARE CONVINCED that loyalty-security investigations of people working for the government in sensitive positions or seeking key federal jobs are necessary to protect the government from the infiltration of persons who might try to destroy it. But when loyalty tests are applied by private groups to people in private industries – and people are barred from jobs because they are “controversial” – many citizens become alarmed.

The present report (with its companion volume dealing with the motion picture industry) embodies the results of a study initiated by The Fund for the Republic in September, 1954, when many Americans had become disturbed by the revelation of blacklisting practices in the radio, television, and motion picture industries.

At the time this study was launched, such blacklisting was a subject of vigorous public controversy, involving civil liberties issues of a serious kind. It raised questions of freedom of thought and speech, of due process, of the protection of the individual against group pressures and of the community against the disloyalty of the individual. It was a controversy in which all participants commonly spoke in the name of the Constitution and civil liberty, but in violently conflicting terms.

Those who advocated blacklisting practices did so on the ground that Communist and pro-Communist infiltration into the entertainment industries represented a serious peril to the American system of law and governance, and therefore to the freedoms which it enshrines. The peril might be direct, through giving Communists

access to mass media into which they could introduce subversive propaganda, or which they might even sabotage given the proper circumstances. It might be only indirect, permitting Communist sympathizers to enjoy popular esteem, earning incomes which would help support Communist causes, operating their own blacklists against anti-Communists and promoting the interests of an international conspiracy directed toward the destruction of all liberties. In any case, it was contended, the extirpation from the entertainment industries of proven members of the Communist conspiracy and of all who were considered to have lent it their support or had been indifferent to its dangers (and remained impenitent) was essential as a protection to American institutions.

Opponents of blacklisting contended that such a policy could only subvert the rights and liberties it sought to protect. Some held that it violated the Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and thought, since it destroyed an individual's livelihood on the sole ground of his political beliefs. This raised the issue whether a sympathy with Communism could properly be regarded as a "political belief" or must be taken as proof of complicity in a criminal conspiracy, even though no criminal charge could be brought. Beyond that, many who accepted the view that a convinced Communist should be barred from the cameras and microphones were disturbed by the methods being used to achieve this result. It was contended that blacklisting resulted in the ruin of many entirely loyal individuals without formal charges, hearings or other safeguards of due process, often on flimsy or mistaken charges and at the dictates of self-appointed censors or pressure groups.

Several things were apparent in this controversy. The major arguments simply did not meet. The facts around which the arguments raged were largely unknown. In these issues, plainly of critical importance to all those interested in the preservation of civil liberty, the information necessary to arriving at valid conclusions was largely unavailable. It was not even clear whether a

blacklisting system actually existed in the motion picture, radio and TV industries. If it existed, it was not known on what principles it worked, who controlled it, how accurate were the criteria it applied in screening Communists and pro-Communists out of the industries, what were the motives which might have contributed to its growth. Beyond the somewhat rough-and-ready disclosures of the various investigating committees, there was little useful data on the nature and extent of Communist influence in the industries; on the effect, if any, which it had exerted on the output; on the extent to which the Communists themselves had engaged in blacklisting practices, or on numerous other facts essential to formulating any answers for the issues of civil liberties here involved. The subject was being debated, in short, in a vacuum.

The Fund for the Republic was established as an educational undertaking in the field of civil liberties in the United States. It seemed to its Directors that here were problems of immediate concern and that the Fund could render a useful service toward their solution by ascertaining the facts involved. It asked John Cogley, then Executive Editor of *The Commonwealth*, to study and report upon the situation as a whole. This he has done. Mr. Cogley and his associates have interviewed — so far as they found it possible to do so — every important interest concerned. These include executives of the motion picture industry and the radio and TV chains, the advertising agencies, leading advertisers, the theatrical unions, leaders of anti-Communist organizations and others prominent in “listing” or “clearing” individuals, and many producers, directors, actors, writers, reporters, news commentators and agency men.

From the first it was recognized that this was a highly complex question, and Mr. Cogley and his associates have been scrupulous in trying to present all significant points of view. He was given a free hand in the organization of the study and presentation of the facts. While he accepts responsibility for this report as its director

and author, the Board of The Fund for the Republic wishes to state its full confidence in the calm deliberation which he has given to its preparation. We believe he has done a thorough job in a very difficult field.

It was recognized that many in the industries are aware of the difficulties raised by blacklisting and have been wrestling earnestly with them. Mr. Cogley has tried to give a detailed picture of a situation as it exists. He has brought in no indictments, and has offered no recommendations. The Board of the Fund for the Republic offers none, believing that progress in resolving the conflicts of interest, viewpoint, and principle involved must and will come in the first instance from the industries affected. But even this progress must ultimately turn upon public knowledge and understanding of the actual situation and its problems. This report seeks only to supply the data on which such knowledge and understanding may be established.

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,  
THE FUND FOR THE REPUBLIC:  
By Paul G. Hoffman, *Chairman*

# Counterattack and Red Channels

COUNTERATTACK is a weekly, four-page newsletter published by the American Business Consultants in New York. It was founded in 1947 as *Counterattack, the Newsletter of Facts on Communism*.

Subscribers to *Counterattack* (\$24 yearly) are entitled to the Special Reports which the newsletter publishes irregularly. The most famous of these reports was made available to the public at one dollar a copy and bore the name *Red Channels, The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*.

*Red Channels* provided a list of 151 persons in the radio-television industry who, the editors claimed, were linked, either in the past or present, with a variety of "Communist causes." The "links" were cited in each case. They included organizations identified as subversive by the Attorney General, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the California Un-American Activities Committee and other official and private sources. Among the private sources were the authors of *Red Channels* themselves.

At the beginning of the volume there is a disclaimer pointing out that the listed activities or associations may well have been innocent of subversive intent; *Red Channels* is only reporting them. This statement made it virtually impossible for the listed people to obtain legal satisfaction for damages suffered as a result of the listing. The accuracy of some *Red Channels* sources has been successfully challenged, many of those named in its pages have since

been “cleared,” and the volume itself has been superseded by a number of newer listings. But its publication in June, 1950, marked the formal beginning of blacklisting in the radio-tv industry.

The booklet soon became known as “the Bible of Madison Avenue” (center of the radio-tv industry in New York). It was consulted by network executives, advertising agencies, radio-tv packagers and sponsors. Its underlying thesis – that Communists were “infiltrating” the radio-tv field and should be removed – became something of a doctrine in the industry.

The editors of *Counterattack* never held that everyone listed in *Red Channels* was actually an “infiltrator,” nor did they claim that everyone listed in the publication was a Communist. But they did believe that those whose names appeared on the list had some explaining to do and should be called on to prove their anti-communism by word and deed or be kept out of the industry. The industry, by and large, accepted the proposition. *Counterattack’s* standards of what constituted “infiltration,” “communistic associations,” and grounds for suspicion were almost universally adopted up and down Madison Avenue. There have been numberless disagreements within the industry as to whether this or that individual actually was “infiltrating,” had been associated in any meaningful sense with the Communist conspiracy, or was indeed reasonably suspect. But *Red Channels* was remarkably successful in getting the industry to accept *Counterattack’s* standards.

Most significant, the acceptance of *Red Channels* meant that the radio-tv industry officially adopted the political point-of-view espoused by *Counterattack*. Very few in the industry seemed to give their sincere support to *Counterattack’s* political evaluations, yet almost the entire industry, as far as employment practices went, acted on them. The standards of employability were *Counterattack’s*; the measure of patriotism was *Counterattack’s*; “pro-Communist” and “anti-Communist” opinions, acts and associations, in the last analysis, were judged as *Counterattack* judges them.

Since the American Business Consultants is a private organization, *Counterattack's* opinions represent no more than the opinions of its editors. In the past (according to the newsletter itself), the editors have been consulted by Congressional committees because of their special knowledge of communism. But they have often been highly critical of the Government's anti-Communist efforts. The original prospectus announcing *Counterattack* stated flatly that ". . . the efforts of our government to combat Communist activities have failed to eliminate the effectiveness of this 5th column . . ." *Counterattack*, therefore, was designed "to obtain, file and index factual information on Communists, Communist fronts and other subversive organizations."\*

*Counterattack*, however, has not confined its attacks to subversive organizations. A goodly portion of its energies has gone into combatting those ideas, activities and groups which the editors feel "help" the Communists. "Helping the Communists" is rarely intentional; it is often rooted in political naiveté. But on this basis

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\* The three founding editors had some experience in this field. They were ex-FBI men who had collaborated first as researchers for an anti-Communist publication called *Plain Talk* (financed by millionaire Alfred Kohlberg and edited by Isaac Don Levine), then as directors of a Washington, D. C. corporation known as John Quincy Adams Associates. As John Quincy Adams Associates the three ex-FBI men — Ken Bierly, now with Columbia pictures; Ted Kirkpatrick, now with an Illinois business corporation; and John Keenan, still publisher of *Counterattack* — collected and distributed information about communism upon request. Their work was done mainly for clergymen, union leaders and persons frequently approached by charitable and civic organizations who were anxious not to support a hidden Communist cause.

John Quincy Adams Associates dissolved after a year when the organization failed to win a permanent not-for-profit rating. The three partners, then, with the financial support of some well-to-do anti-Communists, set up the American Business Consultants in New York, in April, 1947. The new company had the dual purpose of publishing a newsletter and promoting "scientific research technical investigations." In addition to publishing *Counterattack*, the American Business Consultants went on making special reports, like the John Quincy Adams Associates, but with the difference that ABC charged fees (from \$5 to five-figure sums) while JQAA merely accepted voluntary contributions. Some work was done gratis — "We're like a doctor," one of the Consultants once told a magazine writer. "Doctors always have some charity patients."

*Counterattack* at one time or another has lashed out against practically every major newspaper in the City of New York and castigated departments of the executive branch of the Government, both Houses of the legislative branch, and a whole anagram set of private organizations – NBC, CBS, the YWCA, the ACLU, among others.

During recent years book reviewers have lauded the literary style of writers considered “subversive” by *Counterattack*; national magazines have publicized dubious entertainers; newspapers have announced the meetings of suspect organizations – these and countless other incidents are occasions of “helping the Communists.” *Counterattack* often seems to measure every movement and event in American life by the simple standards of its “help” criterion.

Evil acts of course only became more malicious when the criterion is applied – thus racial discrimination or union racketeering is worthy of censure not only by the tenets of ordinary morality but also because they “help” Communist propagandists. But when the measure is applied to acts good or indifferent in themselves, *Counterattack* sometimes seems compelled to condemn activities that many Americans feel are the normal manifestations of free political debate. A petition to gain clemency for the Rosenbergs or have the Supreme Court decide on the Constitutional issues in the Hollywood Ten Case, a protest against real (or, as *Counterattack* usually says, “imagined”) instances of censorship, a steady concern for civil liberties, a study of blacklisting or of government security measures, a protest against atomic warfare, against the methods of a Senator McCarthy – these and a much wider category of activities are worthy of solemn condemnation if in some way they “help the Communists.” In a 1955 issue of the newsletter, for instance, readers were urged to write to President Eisenhower and ask him for a “public and personal statement on the reports being circulated that he thoroughly enjoyed ‘The Investigator’\* now

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\* “The Investigator” is a phonograph record lampooning Senator McCarthy.



that its Communist authorship and Party-line inspiration is evident.” The President was thus asked to consider whether, when he thought it over, he really enjoyed something which, if he enjoyed at all, he enjoyed months before.

“Proof is available for every statement made in *Counterattack*,” the newsletter declared in an early issue. This claim is not as impressive as it sounds since *Counterattack’s* most startling “exposures” have been reports of reports. It is as if one took journalistic pride in the accuracy with which he copied even wrong numbers from a telephone book. If, for instance, Actor T has been cited as belonging to Organization P, which has been cited by the California Tenney Committee as subversive, *Counterattack* does not take a great chance when it states the fact. It sometimes happens that Actor T actually did *not* belong to Organization P, or it sometimes happens that Organization P was not actually subversive in any meaningful sense despite the Tenney Committee — but *Counterattack* has fulfilled its obligation, it feels, when it reports what the Tenney Committee had to say about Organization P and Actor T.

Of course, the newsletter’s readers, not without reason, often conclude, (a) that Actor T *did* belong to Organization P, (b) that the organization was indeed subversive and (c) that Actor T is likewise subversive — and, so concluding, are misled on one or all three counts. But the burden for undoing the mischief caused by *Counterattack’s* report then falls on Actor T. It is his obligation to prove that he did not belong to the organization, or that the organization was not subversive, or in any case that he was not consciously involved in any of its subversion. Perhaps he can succeed in convincing not only *Counterattack’s* readers but his employers as well that he is a patriot and always has been. But, withal, *Counterattack* remains a model of journalistic accuracy — the newsletter has “proof” for every statement made in its pages!

After nine months of crying out against Communist "infiltration," *Counterattack*, on January 16, 1948, attempted to identify and enumerate the personnel in the threat. This is what it had to say:

What is meant by a Communist? Sometimes *Counterattack* reports that such and such a person is "a Communist Party member" and that another is "a Communist." Is this difference in terminology intentional? Yes.

All Communist Party members are Communists . . . but not ALL Communists are Communist Party members. The Communist Party itself has said that one who supports the Party and cooperates with it is a Communist, even if he isn't a member. It is in this sense that *Counterattack* uses the term.

What does a Communist believe in? Whatever the Party believes in. The word "communism" with a small "c", or Communism with a big "C" has meant different things at different times for centuries. We could use a thousand pages to examine these differences. But the only sensible definition of "Communism" today is this:

Communism means the practices & REAL doctrines of Stalin Russia. Not the doctrines that Stalin sometimes pretends to believe in, but those that he really works at.

And a Communist is anyone who supports the Communist Party on every important question. Some Communist non-members occasionally dissent on slight details. That doesn't matter. They're still Communists . . .

As for actual Party membership, *Counterattack* estimated in its second issue that there were 80,000 dues-paying Communists in the American Party. However, less than two months later, "*Counterattack* investigators" produced an "inside report" that membership was up to 84,000. And, the report continued, "Organizational Secretary Henry Winston privately expects 90,000 by end of year. This means 90,000 enlisted dues-paying members . . . the 'tank corps' of a much bigger army of non-member Communists."

The story of *Counterattack's* concern with those it considers "fronters" stretches over the entire span of the newsletter's history.

Even by the time *Red Channels* appeared (in five instances persons were listed there for only one affiliation), the editors could not, or did not attempt to, distinguish between “dupes” and ideologues, a fact widely criticized at the time.

But some decision must be made as to what organizations are truly “fronts.” The newsletter itself recognized the difficulty. In June, 1947 *Counterattack* asked: “Which organizations are really fronts and which aren’t? How can a jury be expected to distinguish? And if a jury does decide that a certain organization is a front, how can it tell whether the defendant helped it as a Communist or as an ‘innocent’? – Some eminent persons, including Supreme Court justices and conservative multi-millionaires, have innocently sponsored Communist fronts.”

Nevertheless, on December 19, 1947, after the Attorney General’s list had been made public, *Counterattack* named 34 fronts not included by the AG which “ought to have been.” A few months later it gave its readers a list of 192 “fronts,” 119 of which, it pointed out, did not appear on the Attorney General’s list.

The issue was basic, and one must look to the general obscurity of the newsletter in these early days in order to understand why it was not thrashed out then and there.

The issue was whether the American public would accept a private group, however knowledgeable, fair, careful or scrupulous it might be, which compiled its own list of subversive organizations and then put the considerable public pressure at its disposal to force anyone associated with the organization at any time to “explain” his association or suffer the consequences. For the most part, it was not a question of legality but of political prudence.

Another problem came up in deciding who had lent their names to “fronts” of whatever citation. The Communists, it is clear, were not always scrupulous about the use of names. And in its issue for July 16, 1954, *Counterattack* noted their duplicity. Under a head-

ing "Red Front Uses Phony Sponsor List," *Counterattack* mentioned a letter being circulated by the Spanish Refugee Appeal of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee:

. . . On the letterhead, as national sponsors, were 100 prominent names. The obvious ones stood out: Howard Fast, Dalton Trumbo and Alvah Bessie of Hollywood's "unfriendly nine" and Paul Robeson. Then there were some shockers — names whose appearance on a front's letterhead in this day and age were unbelievable. They were: Pierre Monteux, the distinguished conductor; Yehudi Menuhin, the violinist; Hazel Scott and her husband, Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.; the composer, Leonard Bernstein; and Bartley C. Crum. *Counterattack* wrote to each of them, as well as to others whose names seemed out of place on a Communist appeal because of their actions of recent years. From these persons named, and from several others, prompt replies were received. In each case the person either denied ever having given authority for the use of their name — and said they would demand withdrawal — or produced good evidence that they had demanded that the Appeal drop their names as far back as 1948. (It is only fair, the editors feel, to omit the names of persons who did not reply or whose address was unknown.)

But *Counterattack* was not ready to discount the Communists' own lists entirely. "Anyone of responsibility," it declared in connection with the "phony" sponsor list, "whose name still might be improperly attached to such a pro-Communist group has a definite responsibility of seeing that his name is removed."

A similar case had come up in the pages of *Counterattack* in January, 1954. The editors took out after singer Harry Belafonte, described as a "Communist fronter," and listed, among four transgressions: "Belafonte entertained for the Distributive Workers Union in 1950." The union at that time, according to *Counterattack*, was a "100% follower of the Party line." Belafonte was also cited for entertaining at a "Freedom Rally" with Paul Robeson.

In its February 4 issue, the newsletter announced that "Belafonte has since approached *Counterattack* to clarify his stand." Belafonte denied he had entertained for the union but admitted

other transgressions. What was *Counterattack's* proof that Belafonte had "entertained for" this union? As it pointed out in its pages, "the union's paper of March 12, 1950, stated that he had entertained at one of its affairs the previous Sunday." For some reason, Belafonte had not been living up to his responsibility to protest this use of his name.

In the case of the "Freedom Rally" he made a good try. "Belafonte," the newsletter said about this charge, "says he did not give Robeson permission to use his name for, and that he did not appear at, the 'Freedom' rally' . . . and that he sent a release to various New York City newspapers pointing out these facts at the time. This is verified by the fact that Belafonte has given *Counterattack* a copy of a newspaper containing mention of his release." On the other two counts against Belafonte the newsletter had been right. But it offered no apology for its own "misuse" of the singer's name. It said: "*Counterattack* has always held that persons associated with Communist fronts cannot be 'cleared' by anyone but themselves. At the same time *Counterattack* has always been willing to help such persons in their efforts to clarify their positions and take an anti-CP stand." The newsletter mentioned that in 1952 Belafonte had written a private letter to a producer in Hollywood, stating he would exercise "extreme care in his future associations." "As far as *Counterattack* can determine, Belafonte has not supported any fronts since that time."

Apparently, Belafonte's mistake was that he had not been "cleared" by the editors of *Counterattack*.

When *Counterattack* first appeared, in 1947, the nation was not yet united on the kind of militant anti-communism that marked the next few years. American diplomats attended the Moscow Conference in March, in an attempt to stem the mounting animosity between East and West. Yet, in the same month, President Truman, in a speech before a joint session of Congress on the need

for aid to Greece and Turkey, warned that "totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples by direct or indirect aggression undermine the foundation of international peace and hence the security of the United States."

One of the warmest public debates that year was whether or not to outlaw the American Communist Party, which had been established in 1919. The American Legion and Daughters of the American Revolution heartily supported the measure. They were opposed by J. Edgar Hoover, the American Civil Liberties Union and other groups. The National Commander of the Catholic War Veterans suggested all Communist Party members be deported (presumably to Russia). In October, 1947, news of the re-establishment of the Cominform in Eastern Europe reached the United States and was largely accepted as proof that the Comintern, a group dedicated to violent world upheaval and supposedly dissolved by Stalin himself in 1943, had been revived.

The Communist Party was a murky image in most minds; but its very presence in American political life made the problem of dealing with communism at home and abroad considerably more difficult and complex.

The inauguration of a newsletter designed to present "facts on communism" seemed a step in the right direction. *Counterattack*, however, concerned itself less with communism than with Communists and especially those of name or prestige who "helped the Communists," a variety of "dupes," "stooges," "innocents" and "appeasers." It was evident, too, that the newsletter was to use words like "Communist" and "front" in special ways to be found neither in the public dictionaries nor the public mind. Favored words in these early issues of the newsletter were those that identified the opposing camps — "anti-Communists" (i.e., in agreement with *Counterattack*) and "fifth-columnists." These two camps were engaged in an ideological (and in some sense, economic) civil war — a war linked with democracy's world-wide struggle against

communism. "Action on the labor front," an early issue claimed, "must go hand in hand with action against public officials, actors, writers and so on who cunningly sell the Moscow line." The newsletter early in its history espoused the denaturalization of Communists, as the Nazis had been denaturalized, and called for the disbarment of lawyers in the National Lawyers Guild.

In its 31 issues for 1947 (it missed twice during that first year of publication) little space was devoted to the entertainment field and the slight interest in show folk continued through 1948. Most of *Counterattack's* attention was given to communism in the trade unions. The most important event in the entertainment world, of course, was the House Un-American Activities Committee investigation of Hollywood. *Counterattack* heartily endorsed J. Parnell Thomas and urged its readers to do likewise. On October 31, it explained: "*Movie Stars, Writers, Directors Have a Divine Right to be Quislings*. This is the implicit meaning of terrific propaganda drive by Hollywood celebrities and movie producers against Thomas Committee . . . A cat may look at a king but Congress may not take a square look at the doings of Hollywood royalty." It went on to cite the Committee for the First Amendment as a "front," and advised its readers to write their Congressmen in support of the House probe.

In September, 1947, *Counterattack* stated its policy:

Most important thing of all is to base your whole policy on a firmly moral foundation. Space should not be rented to the Communist Party or to any Communist front. Supplies should not be sold to them. They should not be allowed to participate in meetings or to have time on the air or to advertise in the press. No concession should ever be made to them for any business reason.

Communist actors, announcers, directors, writers, producers, etc., whether in radio, theatre, or movies, should all be barred to the extent permissible by law and union contracts. There should be no avoidable dealings with any union official who has shown by his acts that he is secretly a Communist Party member or fellow-traveler.

The newsletter admitted that

Sometimes it won't be easy to follow this rule. But we may as well recognize that anything we gain now by personal or business appeasement will eventually plague us, as international appeasement has already done.

In October it swung even harder:

The way to treat Communists is to ostracize them. How would you act towards men who had been convicted of treason? Would you befriend them, invite them [sic], listen to them? Or would you treat them as outcasts?

Total ostracism . . . that's the only effective way. It's the only way to freeze the Communists out. It's the only DEED that will prove you believe what you say about them. And so it's the most convincing propaganda.

The newsletter opposed the employment of "fronters" and "Communists" (members and "non-members") because money paid to them by American business would find its way to support propaganda and espionage activities. Occasionally an instance of direct propaganda was detected and "exposed" in the pages of *Counterattack*. From time to time the editors discussed the Party's use of "historical parallels," especially in plays and movies, and scrutinized the words of writers it considered subversive.

On August 8, 1947, the following item appeared in the newsletter:

Arthur Miller has disclosed that the Army has acquired the right to produce his play "All My Sons" in Germany. So American soldiers there and many Germans will see a play . . . based on the theme that U. S. manufacturers produced defective airplanes and other equipment during the war, clamly endangering the lives of their own sons . . . Miller twisted the facts in a central situation in his play. He wrote a scene in which a manufacturer releases some defective airplane cylinders to the Army by simply telephoning to his factory and giving instructions. But in reality no manufacturer had the power to release military equipment. That was up to Army inspectors in the plant, who generally were pretty rigorous in their tests. But this point has apparently been



overlooked by some Army authorities in Germany. Who is responsible for choosing . . . Miller's play. Some innocent in the Army? Or some Communist?

A few weeks later, the newsletter reported that "National Commander Max H. Sorenson of Catholic War Veterans protested to War Department which thereupon revoked its plan to produce the play in occupied zones. . . ." The editors went on to ask: "Are you speaking out publicly against Communist plans after they are exposed in *Counterattack*? Max Sorenson's public protest in this case brought quick results. It should serve as an example to many subscribers."\*

The history of the next seven years showed that it served as a very good example.

*Counterattack* turned its attention more and more to the entertainment world. Many of the names later listed in *Red Channels* began to get frequent mention in the newsletter. There were demands that such people be ostracized by sincere and conscientious anti-Communists. When they appeared on radio or television, *Counterattack* supporters were urged to protest.

Roughly one month before *Red Channels* came out, the newsletter notified its readership that "certain groups in the Association of Actors and Artistes of America, Radio and Television Directors Guild, and Radio Writers Guild have gotten together to form an organization to fight what they claim is a 'blacklist' of radio and tv performers who are considered 'liberal or leftist.'" *Counterattack* noted that the immediate cause of this step was the firing of director Betty Todd, who pleaded the Fifth Amendment before an investigating body. "What," *Counterattack* asked, "to do?" . . . "You have written to CBS before to criticize the appearance of

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\* At \$24 a year *Counterattack* could not expect a mass circulation. It did depend though on having influential subscribers capable of alerting and mobilizing a much larger group.

performers with pro-Communist records on its programs. Now write to Wm. S. Paley, Chairman of the Board of CBS, at 485 Madison Avenue, New York City. Congratulate him for the action CBS has taken in this case, and tell him to stick to his position in spite of any pressure exerted to reverse it. Let him know that you back him up completely."

Shortly afterwards it was June, 1950.

The period from June 20 to June 30, 1950, was a kind of anti-Communists' Ten Days That Shook the World. In the pages of the seismographic tabloids in New York, the political rumbles were picked up in rapid succession. On Tuesday, June 20, columnist Drew Pearson struck out in the *Mirror* at Representative Wood, then Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, for not following through on Parnell Thomas' investigation of Hollywood. On Wednesday, June 21, Ed Sullivan in the *Daily News* predicted: "A bombshell will be dropped into the offices of radio-tv networks, advertising agencies and sponsors this week, with the publication of *Red Channels*." On Thursday, *Red Channels* was published. The next day, June 23, the *Mirror* reported:

#### RED INFILTRATION OF TV, RADIO BARED

Details of Red infiltration in the radio and television broadcast fields, together with names of well-known personalities allegedly linked with Communist causes are contained in the book "Red Channels," published yesterday.

The book was compiled by the editors of "Counterattack," a weekly anti-Communist newsletter, with the help of former FBI agents, including Theodore Kirkpatrick, specialist in Communist cases.

Methods used by the Communists to ensnare radio and television artists are presented in the book, which describes a "blacklist" system whereby they attempt to freeze anti-Red persons out of the industry. Those who support the Communists, the book says, are boosted with better jobs.

On Sunday, two days later, the first reports of the Korean conflict began trickling across the pages of the nation's newspapers.

Five days later, when Walter Winchell's Girl Friday's report appeared in the *Mirror*, she spoke of a shakeup in radio-tv and cited as the cause of it not *Red Channels* but that other explosion — the Korean War. "Dear Mr. W.," Girl Friday wrote, "The Korean crisis sent network officials into action to rid programs of 'persons who might embarrass them.'"

The editors of *Counterattack*, throughout the summer, kept their readers informed of *Red Channels*' impact. The day after *Red Channels* was published, *Counterattack* warned:

IN AN EMERGENCY (at any given time)  
IT WOULD REQUIRE ONLY THREE PERSONS (subversives)  
    *one engineer* in master control at a radio network  
    *one director* in a radio studio  
    *one VOICE* before a microphone  
TO REACH 90 MILLION AMERICAN PEOPLE  
WITH A MESSAGE\*

Two weeks later it was able to report: "Nationwide Reception of *Red Channels* Is Overwhelmingly Favorable. Since publication of *Counterattack's* report, two weeks ago, on Communist influence in the radio and television industry, favorable notices and praise for *Red Channels* have appeared in broadcasting industry publications and in daily newspapers from New York to Los Angeles. Ed Sullivan, master of ceremonies of the popular tv show 'Toast of the Town,' praised *Red Channels* highly in his nationally syndicated column, 'Little Old New York.' One of the things stressed by Sullivan was the importance and power of *Counterattack* in the radio and television industry."

The newsletter, however, added that "*Counterattack*, in itself, has no power or importance. Any influence *Counterattack* has exerted for good in the broadcasting industry has come from the loyal

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\* Val Peterson, Administrator of Federal Civil Defense, stated in June, 1955, that "in actual civil defense emergencies, use would be made, as required, of the various forms of existing communications which are governed by appropriate Federal Communications Commission regulations."

freedom-loving Americans who are subscribers and who *act* on the information given in the newsletter.”

One of the first *Red Channels* listees to come forward with an “explanation” was actor Roger De Koven, who had one citation (the Waldorf Peace Conference). In the July 7 edition of *Counterattack* his case was covered.

After a consultation which impressed *Counterattack* with his sincerity, De Koven signed a statement embodying the following clauses: “1. He has absolutely no sympathy for the Communist movement, domestic or foreign and is opposed to totalitarians of all kinds. 2. He believes that the present government of Russia under Stalin, is an absolute dictatorship and completely undemocratic. 3. At the time he agreed to sponsor the Waldorf Conference he did not know that it was a Communist front affair. If he had known its true nature he would not have sponsored it. His stand on this matter applies to all Communist fronts, present or future. 4. When he agreed to read the speech of Dr. Juan Marinello of Cuba and message of writer Thomas Mann at the Conference, he did not know that Marinello was Chairman of Communist Party of Cuba or that Mann had an extensive record of Communist front activity.\*

*Red Channels* listees continued to be named each week in the newsletter, to show that they were still active in the entertainment field. The immediate cry went up that the booklet was intended as a blacklist. But *Counterattack* was ready for the charge. On July 28 it dealt with the problem:

But the whole “blacklist” question is a sham. “Blacklisting,” the firing of a person (or refusal to hire him) for union activity, is forbidden by federal and state laws. A union local resolution *cannot* add strength to these laws. They are already completely effective.

Groups interested in this campaign are really concerned about what they call “political” blacklisting. But broadcasting companies don’t

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\* De Koven was cited solely for his participation in the Waldorf Peace Conference: “translated message received from Thomas Mann; also translated speech of Dr. Juan Marinello of Cuba.”

blacklist Republicans, Democrats, Socialists or any other loyal Americans.

They *do* have an obligation, as a matter of public trust, to refuse to hire those who give aid and comfort to Stalin by helping his U.S. arm, the Communist Party, or its numerous front organizations.

Just what individuals listed in *Red Channels* had to do to get off the hook was discussed in September, 1950. In a zig-zag of affirmation and denial, *Counterattack* tried to clear up the matter:

What the New York *Times* Said and Didn't Say. Last week *Counterattack* reported that the New York *Herald Tribune* had stated in an editorial that Ted Kirkpatrick, managing editor of *Counterattack*, had been "quoted as announcing that none whom he suspects will be absolved until they have come to him with positive proof of their innocence" and that later "the New York *Times* reported this falsehood as a fact."

Actually the *Times* didn't say quite that. It said that Kirkpatrick "said he believed persons accused of pro-Communist sympathies had to offer affirmative proof of their innocence." Many readers inferred that this meant that such proof had to be offered to him, though the *Times* didn't say so. Naturally, such a doctrine is repellent to Americanism and to justice. Nobody who is merely *accused* of anything has to offer affirmative proof of innocence to *anybody*.

A few more listees came forward in October with statements of denial and/or recantation. The newsletter noted their statements in its pages.

Meanwhile, *Counterattack* subscribers and the groups they alerted were bombarding the networks with letters and receiving replies from one network (CBS) assuring them that "through our control of programs on the air, we believe we have made Communist infiltration impossible." Whereupon the newsletter armed its subscribers with the names of nine persons who had recently appeared on CBS. All were *Red Channels* listees. It seemed clear that CBS and *Counterattack* were talking about two different things when they spoke of "infiltration."

About this time, *Red Channels* was fast becoming a source in itself. The booklet of course has long been replaced, but since one of its authors\* has stated that the "basic issue" of such compilations is in their "accuracy," and has carried this conviction over into AWARE, Inc., a more recent effort "to combat the Communist conspiracy in entertainment-communications," a look at *Red Channels* may still be of some value.

"The most remarkable thing about the whole furor over AWARE," Vincent Hartnett wrote the Editor of *The New York Times*, "is that none of AWARE's critics seem inclined to discuss the basic issue: Was AWARE's Publication No. 12 accurate or was it not?" Publication No. 12 is a compilation similar to *Red Channels*. The compilations are lists of the leftist activities of various show people, and the burden of the argument seems to be that those listed are either "dupes" or genuine subversives. On the basis of such lists, people are decreed "unemployable." Hartnett would have it that the "basic issue" is whether these publications faithfully and honestly report what is in their source documents. The defining of the "basic issue," then, seems to represent in its small way the Triumph of the Clerk. Indeed the impression left by a study of Hartnett's work leads one to believe that he has modeled himself after Chaucer's Clerk of Oxenford:

*Noght o word spak he moore than was neede  
And that was seyd in forme and reverence  
And short and quyk and full of hy sentence*

In defining the "basic issue," Vincent Hartnett is on safe grounds, for there is no question of his clerky talents — *Red Channels* is a model of transcription. Its compiler faithfully copied down the citations in the original sources. His slight errors are wholly forgivable, considering the tedium of the task he set himself to. So if

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\* Vincent Hartnett, though never an editor of *Counterattack*, wrote the introduction to the book and speaks of it as "my *Red Channels*."

Hartnett has correctly stated the "basic issue," he and AWARE, Inc. and all the others have won the argument hands down.

But *has* he?

It should be remembered that nearly all the official documents cited by the professional anti-Communist are tabulations of names made by the Communists themselves. No hearings have been held to determine whether or not the use of these names was authorized. In some cases they were not authorized. But, that aside, has Vincent Hartnett defined the "basic issue"? Are those whose minds float toward ethical abstracts, who wish to discuss issues of "innuendo," "due process," "civil liberties," or "slander" out of touch with current reality? That is a quarrel which has separated pro and anti-blacklisting factions in labor unions, newspaper offices, theatre companies and living rooms ever since *Red Channels* appeared.

Page 9 of *Red Channels*, which sets forth the authors' purposes, seems to be the most unread section of the book. Three purposes are listed:

One, to show how the Communists have been able to carry out their plan of infiltration of the radio and television industry.

Two, to indicate the extent to which many prominent actors and artists have been inveigled to lend their names, according to these public records, to organizations espousing Communist causes. This, regardless of whether they actually believe in, sympathize with, or even recognize the cause advanced.

Three, to discourage actors and artists from naively lending their names to Communist organizations or causes in the future.

One or two points, raised by the first of these purposes, still seem worthy of discussion. The first purpose begs two questions: Did the Communists have a "plan of infiltration"? The word "infiltration" is vague at best — it might mean "gaining influence" or "executive control" or it might mean "technical control." Only the first of these would fit the instances cited in *Red Channels*. Granted, however,

that there was such a plan, the second question is whether these subversive elements were able to carry it out.

Certainly, in the beginning, the networks, and possibly the ad agencies and sponsors, did not understand what *Counterattack* meant by "infiltration." When complaints came in about this or that one working, industry spokesmen answered that they had full control over everything heard on the air.

The second purpose indicates that the compilers are not separating the "guilty" from the "innocent." They are simply listing everyone at the scene of the crime — and leave it to each to establish his innocence. "According to these public records," the compilers assert. And since the citations are generally accurate, and since Vincent Hartnett says their accuracy is the "basic issue," then . . . But what happens when the source document is wrong?

Pianist Hazel Scott, who was listed in *Red Channels* and is the wife of a Congressman, was given the opportunity (because of her husband's status) to testify, under oath, about her *Red Channels* listings. She had nine listings:

- National Citizens Political Action Committee
- Citizens Non-Partisan Committee to Elect Benjamin J. Davis
- Progressive Citizens of America (Citizens Committee of the Upper West Side)
- Musician's Congress Committee
- Artists' Front to Win the War
- American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born
- American Peace Mobilization
- Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee
- Civil Rights Congress

After stating that she had never been notified her name was to appear in this unfavorable context, Miss Scott ran down the list:

One of these listings was for an appearance, by direction of my employer, which was perfectly proper at the time. Another was ostensibly a series of benefits for orphaned children. As soon as I found out otherwise I discontinued my activity. Still another involved the use of



my name three years after I played a benefit for a group which thereafter merged with one that developed a bad name. A fourth advertised that I was a guest of honor at a dinner I never went to or even heard of. Three others I refused to join. The remaining two I never heard of. The "guest of honor" and three other listings in *Red Channels* were supported by reference to the House Committee's own "Appendix IX." Did the Committee decide that if "Appendix IX" could be so wrong about one person the document should be re-examined? No. Did it apologize, in this one instance? Again, no. The members were more interested in whether or not *Red Channels* was accurate in its citation of the document. If it was, why was Miss Scott complaining? Miss Scott, not too irrelevantly, pointed out that it was of little consequence that *Red Channels* was accurate if "Appendix IX" was not. But the Committee said it was just advancing a courtesy to her and was not interested in "Appendix IX."

## The First Cases

IN RADIO AND TELEVISION, blacklisting began in a blaze of publicity and became an institution in secrecy.

From 1949 until '51 a series of front-page cases spotlighted the hiring policies of the networks, sponsors and agencies in New York. In the William Sweets, Jean Muir, Irene Wicker and Elmer Rice cases, the public was involved in a national debate on the question. Each new development was reported in the theatrical trade press and the nation's newspapers. Editorials were written, meetings were held, organized groups took sides. But by the end of 1951, it was clear to the industry's leaders that a public debate about political screening would arouse a controversy almost as distasteful as any centered on the alleged pro-Communist sympathies of producers, directors and actors.

There was no conspiratorial decision on the part of radio-tv management — there was simply a Gentlemen's Agreement to keep silence. The industry decided that the public debate must come to an end. It accepted blacklisting as a burden of its day-to-day existence but, for good reasons, decided that this fact must be kept secret. Blacklisting was institutionalized behind closed doors.

When General Foods fired the television actress Jean Muir from her role in "The Aldrich Family," protests came in from two competing groups. One set of critics threatened to boycott General Foods if Jean Muir appeared as Henry Aldrich's mother; another threatened a boycott if the actress were fired. Either way, the company stood to lose customers. More than that, General Foods ran

the risk of having its name associated with a bitter political controversy. If, to satisfy its right-wing critics, it decided that Jean Muir could not work, liberal pressure groups would denounce it for violating American tradition. If it attempted to stand by that tradition and retain the actress, it faced the danger of being charged with indifference to national security.

The resolution — for General Foods and ultimately for the entire industry of networks, advertising agencies, sponsors and packagers — was to placate the right-wing group and silence the liberals. The strategic key was secrecy. If there were a discreet check into the background of employees *before* they were hired, then the local groups of the American Legion, the Catholic War Veterans, or the readers of *Counterattack* would have no cause to write letters or phone in their protests. And since there would be no firings, because controversial persons were not hired in the first place, the liberal groups would be frustrated.

The inevitable result of such a solution was the *institutionalizing* of blacklisting. Some advertising agencies, like Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn, appointed executives to serve as “security officers.” At the Columbia Broadcasting System a vice president was appointed to implement the network’s policy. At the National Broadcasting Company and a number of advertising agencies, legal departments were entrusted with this duty. One of the larger packagers under fire set up a “white list.” A new profession was developed. Independent “consultants,” like the publishers of *Counterattack* and Vincent Hartnett (the keeper of *File 13*, a kind of expanded *Red Channels*), made a business out of servicing sponsors and agencies who did not have a full-time executive on the job.

Political discrimination had existed in the radio industry before 1949. The Communists themselves exerted considerable influence over certain shows. On these programs, Party members and their sympathizers found work easy to come by; their enemies were often

out in the cold. Various sponsors intervened from time to time to bar certain persons on political grounds. A well-known radio producer remembers being told not to use Mrs. Roosevelt, or anyone like her, on a quiz panel long before blacklisting was institutionalized. Yet this kind of discrimination was informal and personal. It was accepted as one of the normal hazards in a highly competitive industry. Systematic political screening did not begin until some time in late 1950 or early '51, though its origins date back to '49.

In the spring of that year, William Sweets, a well-known radio director employed by the Phillips H. Lord packaging firm in New York, was told that the sponsors of the two shows he worked on had raised questions about his political associations. Sweets later said publicly that he was forced to resign. A group called the Voice of Freedom Committee took an interest in his case and loudly protested the forced resignation. (Later, attendance at Voice of Freedom rallies for Sweets was noted on various dossiers as evidence of pro-Communist sympathy.) All this was widely publicized.

Then, in the fall of 1950, a series of *Red Channels* cases became public. Jean Muir was dropped from the Aldrich show; Irene Wicker, the Singing Lady, had her television program cancelled; Gypsy Rose Lee\* and Hazel Scott were under attack. Around the same time, CBS, the Young and Rubicam agency and General Foods (sponsor in the Jean Muir case) began to discuss the diffi-

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\* Miss Lee was attacked by Edward Clamage, a prominent Chicago Legionnaire. She had been cited in *Red Channels* for collaborating with four groups labelled Red. When the charge was made, she drew up a list of about 300 of her benefit appearances which *Red Channels* failed to mention. "Entertainers are always being asked to help causes, and they all sound innocuous," she stated. "Should we wire our Congressmen to investigate before we do a benefit performance? I'm not a Red and never have been."

Robert E. Kintner, president of the American Broadcasting Company, refused to act on Clamage's complaint, stating that he would not accept *Red Channels* as gospel. He demanded that Clamage provide "proof that Gypsy is a Communist." Clamage could only refer to *Red Channels*, and the case ended there.

culties surrounding the employment of Philip Loeb, who played Jake on "The Goldbergs." These cases attracted headlines.

In 1951 the McCarran Internal Security Subcommittee held hearings on the "Subversive Infiltration of Radio, Television and the Entertainment Industry." Two radio writers invoked the Fifth Amendment at this hearing. A number of friendly witnesses told of Communist efforts to blacklist anti-Communists in the industry. When the Committee released an edited version of the hearings (immediately before a Radio Writers Guild election in the fall of 1952), the story hit the front pages.

By 1952, a writer, actor, director or producer listed in *Red Channels*, cited in *Counterattack* or otherwise charged with Communist sympathies found it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to get work without first being cleared. By this time political screening was almost universally practiced on Madison Avenue. An elaborate blacklisting machinery had been set up. But in the cases which arose before 1952 the elements were all present.

In the late Forties an executive at the Phillips H. Lord office in New York received a job-application from a young Navy veteran named Vincent Hartnett. Hartnett was hired by the radio packaging firm.

One of the men with whom Hartnett worked at the Lord office was Bill Sweets, who had many friends in the radio field and was generally regarded as a top director. Sweets was in charge of "Gangbusters" and "Counterspy." His blacklisting troubles began one day when he was informed by a Lord executive that Clarence Francis, president of General Foods, and Walter Mack, of Pepsi-Cola — sponsors of the Sweets shows — had received letters charging that the programs were being directed by a Communist who hired other Communists and discriminated against anti-Communists. For three weeks the Lord office dealt with these sponsors and their agencies (Young & Rubicam for General Foods; Biow for

Pepsi-Cola) in an effort to solve the problem. But eventually the packaging firm executives decided that they had to choose between Sweets and the sponsors. The company felt it could not afford to lose two such big accounts. Sweets was asked to turn in his resignation.

The director was permitted to remain at his job until the season was completed, but his right to name his own casting lists was limited immediately. There were rumors in the office at the time that Hartnett was exercising an influence over the choice of actors for the shows, but they have never been substantiated. In any event, during the same period Hartnett began to write as a specialist on Communist infiltration into the radio-tv industry. It was widely known that an anonymous article on that subject which appeared in *The Sign*, a Catholic monthly published in New Jersey, was written by him. And in 1950, Hartnett collaborated with the editors of *Counterattack on Red Channels*.

During the summer of 1949, Sweets was out of New York. The Radio Directors Guild tried to negotiate his case with the Lord office but failed. Earlier, Sweets had resigned his post as National President of that Guild when he was called upon to sign a non-Communist affidavit.\* In announcing Sweets' resignation, Nicky Burnett, executive secretary of the Radio Directors, had described him as a "fighter against communism." (Sweets remained a member of the Guild in good standing after he left the presidency.)

That same summer Sweets was approached by the Voice of Freedom Committee and asked to appear at a rally in New York. The Committee, which had been organized to support liberal com-

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\* Sweets later stated: "The only unions whose officers are required to sign the affidavit are those which desire the service of the National Labor Relations Board. The Union of which I was international president, the Radio and Television Directors Guild, has had no need up to the present time of the Labor Relations Board's services, and therefore has not filed non-Communist affidavits with the Board . . . My reason for not signing such an affidavit was and is that once people start asking for affidavits, they sometimes don't know when to stop."

mentators and harass “reactionaries,” used more or less the same techniques the pro-blacklisting groups later relied on. When a “liberal” commentator was dropped, or a “reactionary” newscaster appeared on the air, the Voice of Freedom screamed and its followers directed their protests to stations or networks.

The VOF meeting for Sweets was held at the Hotel Abbey in New York, August 11, 1949. *Variety* reported that about 200 writers, directors and actors attended the meeting. (Later, when they were trying to clear themselves, many had to “explain” why they attended.) In his speech at the meeting, Sweets charged that the industry was developing a blacklisting policy. He charged that the American Legion maintained a “list” of actors and actresses in Hollywood (quoting columnist Jimmy Fidler as his authority). “As I see it,” he told his supporters, “a blacklist is a device, perfectly legal in most instances — whereby the principle of ‘exclusivity’ may be exercised. It is a list of people who are to be excluded, and it is the list that is usually kept secret. Kept secret because in a democracy to *appear* to be exclusive isn’t the thing to do.” He concluded: “Nor is it loyalty to the United States that is really questioned in the case of persons whose names are on blacklists today. It is rather their loyalty to ideas of free action — loyalty I am convinced in my case — to the ideas of the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Association of Advertising Agencies . . . I do not intend, at the request of some sponsors, to give up my sponsorship of meetings such as this — of May Day parades, or of world peace.”

Later that fall the Voice of Freedom Committee held another protest meeting at Town Hall and circulated a leaflet which reproduced newspaper stories about blacklisting, statements from various theatrical unions and guilds, and carried a message from Sweets. (This rally was also cited in *Red Channels* as a Communist undertaking.)

In Sweets’ speech at the first rally he made no charges against

Hartnett by name. Whatever connection is made between the Sweets firing and Hartnett's own activity at the time is largely a deduction drawn from the "talent consultant's" later operations. Nevertheless, it is clear that Hartnett's association with the Lord company, and his experience in the Sweets case, contributed to the thesis he expanded on in *The Sign, Red Channels, American Mercury* and the *American Legion Magazine*.

The case of William Sweets foreshadowed what was to come. The central point was the proposition that Communists were using their influence in the industry to hire their friends and discriminate against their enemies. This allegation persisted throughout the development of blacklisting and continued long after most of the people charged with Communist sympathies could no longer find work. As late as the summer of 1955, Godfrey P. Schmidt, president of AWARE, Inc., repeated the charge in a dispute with John Crosby, radio-tv writer for the New York *Herald Tribune*.

But more important than the actual personalities involved in the Sweets affair was the reaction within the industry itself. Significant companies were concerned: General Foods, Pepsi-Cola, Young & Rubicam, Biow and Phillips H. Lord, Inc. Their behavior was the first indication of how relatively easy it would be for outside pressure groups to gain significant control over hiring and firing.

The sponsors were reacting to a few letters. There was no evidence of an organized boycott; only a handful of listeners were protesting. But the officials decided to act on the complaints and called in the advertising agencies to assist them. Within three weeks it was generally agreed that Sweets should be asked to resign. On the part of the packager, the decision was clearly based on commercial considerations — a fear of losing two major accounts — and not on any dissatisfaction with the director himself or with the way he was casting his shows.

The radio-tv industry, of course, is singularly susceptible to pressure. Hollywood certainly goes out of its way to avoid offending



any significant section of the public. But the film industry has been willing to deal with controversial subjects (racial prejudice, for example) as long as the prospect of a heightened interest in some quarters promises to compensate for moviegoers who might be lost. The radio-tv industry, though, is devoted to advertising. Sponsors seek "100% acceptability" for their products. Any group, however small, which is alienated because of the content of a radio or television show, or because of a performer on the show, must be placated.

The Sweets affair differed from most of the blacklisting cases which came later in so far as it was allowed to become public. In 1949 it seemed to be an isolated incident. *Red Channels* – and the Korean War – were yet to come. The full development of blacklisting would take two or three years. Still it now seems clear that the ultimate outcome was inevitable from the beginning. For if the industry would surrender to pressure in 1949, then as the Cold War intensified (and the pressures intensified), it was only a matter of time until systematic political screening would become an institution.

During the first year of *Red Channels'* existence, blacklisting developed in contradictory fashion. At one point General Foods, the sponsor involved in both the Sweets and Jean Muir cases, announced that it would no longer fire performers simply because they were "controversial." But by the middle of 1951, that brave statement seemed in retrospect to have been merely a momentary challenge to an overwhelming trend. Throughout 1950 various pressure groups and powerful individuals combined their efforts in a campaign to make *Red Channels* a near absolute criterion for hiring in the radio-tv industry. By and large the campaign succeeded.

"The Aldrich Family" was a television program sponsored by General Foods. In August, 1950, Young & Rubicam, General Foods' advertising agency for the Jell-O show, announced that Jean

Muir, a former movie actress, had been assigned the role of Mother Aldrich. Miss Muir was to make her first appearance on August 27. Shortly after the announcement that she would join the show, an editor of *Cóunterattack*, Theodore Kirkpatrick, called several persons and asked them to organize a protest. Jean Muir was listed in *Red Channels*. As a result of the protests, Miss Muir was dropped from the show, paid the full amount called for by her contract, and another former movie actress, Nancy Carroll, took her place.

The people who made the phone calls resulting in the Muir firing were typical of the individuals and pressure groups that are still the backbone of blacklisting. For the most part they are vocal supporters of the far right wing of American politics. Several of them later emerged as vociferous partisans of Senator McCarthy. Though few in number, they represented the threat of a *potential* boycott and a controversy that could only be anathema to any corporation intent on pleasing everybody.

Among those Kirkpatrick called was Mrs. Hester McCullough of Greenwich, Connecticut, wife of a *Time* editor. Mrs. McCullough had recently been involved in a legal suit with Paul Draper, the dancer, and the harmonica player Larry Adler. She had accused these two entertainers of pro-Communist sympathy.

Rabbi Benjamin Schultz, of the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York, called to protest Miss Muir's appearance and claimed he was speaking for two million Americans. Neither in the Muir case nor in those that came up later did the industry attempt to check on whether those who acted as organization spokesmen had received authorization from their memberships. There is little doubt, though, that in most cases they would have been given general support. But how many people were aroused was hardly relevant, for to sponsors even a small group represents a potential threat.

In 1952 Merle Miller reported in *The Judges and the Judged* that General Foods hired Dr. George Gallup's research organization

to make a survey of the actual impact of the Muir case. This was during a violent controversy debated in newspapers throughout the United States. Miller quoted an official spokesman for General Foods:

Less than 40% [of the cross section] had ever heard of the Muir affair. And of those that had, less than three percent could relate the name of General Foods or the product involved, Jell-O, with the name of Muir. They tied up the name of Muir hazily with General Mills, even the Bell Telephone Company. To check up further, we telephoned several General Foods sales offices in other cities like Chicago. We asked "How has the Muir publicity affected our sales?" The answer invariably was, "Muir? Who's Muir?"

The General Foods sales offices did not know the name Jean Muir but the name was to become symbolic in the radio-tv industry. Her firing was the first directly attributable to *Red Channels*.

Today Miss Muir, though cleared, no longer appears on television. "A performer who has even been unfairly charged with communism — as Jean Muir was — is like a bruised apple," a tv executive explained not long ago. "You understand don't you? — the brown spot remains." Miss Muir — who was celebrating her twentieth year in show business on the very day she was fired — has turned her energies to social work.

The Muir affair reveals something about the pressures which beset the industry. The case of Irene Wicker is interesting for what it tells about *Red Channels* and the attitudes of those professionally involved in agitating for political screening. Miss Wicker signed a contract to do a television show for the Kellogg Company in February, 1949. The contract was renewed a year later. Then in June, 1950 her name was listed in *Red Channels* and in August the contract was cancelled.

When *Red Channels* came out, John Crosby, the radio-tv columnist, telephoned Miss Wicker to tell her she was among those listed.

Later, Crosby wrote a column entitled "Any of You Children Been Subverted Recently?" He wrote:

Somebody put her name down on the Committee [for the re-election of Benjamin J. Davis] and she has been smeared like so many people are smeared nowadays . . . In 1945 — her most suspicious activity — Miss Wicker loaned her house for a benefit for Spanish refugee children. Miss Wicker was under the misapprehension that children were essentially non-political animals . . .

After she discovered she had been "listed," Irene Wicker decided to visit the *Counterattack* office and talk with Theodore Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick discussed the *Daily Worker* story which numbered her among those who signed a nominating petition for Benjamin Davis, Communist candidate for the New York City Council in 1945. Miss Wicker told the *Counterattack* editor she had not been in New York City at the time the petition was circulated early in 1945, had never even heard of Benjamin Davis and certainly could not recall ever having signed a petition for his nomination. Kirkpatrick answered that he had reprinted the facts as they appeared in the *Daily Worker*.

He shifted the conversation then to a discussion of what Miss Wicker had done to express her opposition of communism. She cited several patriotic activities — she conducted an "I'm glad I am an American because. . . ." contest for children, she recorded a series based on American history entitled "Sing a Song of History," etc. But Kirkpatrick was not impressed. Then the actress mentioned that she had allowed her only son to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force before he was 18. The boy, who was shot down in Europe, joined up in 1940, during the Hitler-Stalin pact, a time when American Communists were engaged in their "Yanks Are Not Coming" campaign. But even that was not enough. Miss Wicker left the *Counterattack* office without convincing Kirkpatrick.

Later she obtained a court order so her lawyer could examine

all 30,000 names on the nominating petitions for Benjamin Davis. Her name was not among those listed.

In October, *Counterattack* reported:

Irene Wicker . . . has made the following statement to *Counterattack*: "I emphatically declare I am not, never have been and never could be a Communist or Communist sympathizer in any sense of these terms. The fundamental doctrine of Communism is abhorrent to me. It is in direct opposition to the American principles I have always upheld and advocated." The statement in *Red Channels* that the *Daily Worker* of September 15, 1945 reported her as a sponsor of the Artists, Writers and Professional Division of the Committee for the Re-election of Benjamin J. Davis is true, Miss Wicker says. She states, however, that she was not aware of this fact until publication of *Red Channels*. She absolutely denies the *Daily Worker* report that she was a sponsor of this committee. She also denies categorically that she ever supported Davis for re-election, that she gave his campaign committee permission to use her name or that she knew her name had been used by the committee. Miss Wicker recently wrote a letter to the *Daily Worker* demanding a retraction of its report that she sponsored the Davis committee. She received a reply from David Freedman of the law firm of Unger, Freedman and Fleischer, attorneys for the *Daily Worker*, which states that the *Worker* story was based on a news release from the Davis committee which did not contain the signatures of the sponsors listed. Freedman said that the *Daily Worker* "regrets very much if that publication contained any error of fact."

*Counterattack's* action in printing Miss Wicker's statement, and those of other *Red Channels* listees, was picked up by the New York press. Part of the newsletter's release, as quoted in the *New York Post* for October 27, 1950, said: "*Counterattack* wishes to repeat that *Red Channels* did not call Miss Wicker, or any other person mentioned in the report, a Communist or a Communist sympathizer." The *Daily News* radio and television column for the 27th, written by Ben Gross, was headed "Irene Wicker Cleared." Gross concluded his piece: "Last night, reports circulated in broadcasting circles that both Miss Muir and Miss Wicker would soon return to

the air." And the next day, the New York *Mirror* commented "Ireene Wicker . . . will be back on the air any day now. She has been cleared of charges that she was a sponsor of a committee . . ."

But years were to pass before Ireene Wicker actually returned to the air. She never regained the professional standing she had before *Red Channels* was published.

When her agent tried to sell the Singing Lady show during 1951 and '52 he heard: "What about *Red Channels*? We wouldn't touch her with a ten foot pole." Her only work during this period was a radio series on a small station in North Adams, Massachusetts. (There were no protests.) Miss Wicker was permitted to make guest appearances. She was once interviewed on the Tex and Jinx show, but after a second program with them had been scheduled, NBC called to tell her it was cancelled. Finally in 1953 she was given an ABC show which went on the air Sundays at 11:30 in the morning. This program continued through 1954 under the sponsorship of Little Lady Toiletries. During the entire run of the program only one protesting letter was received. The program was finally dropped but *Red Channels* was not connected with the decision to give it up. Since then Miss Wicker has not had a regular show.

Miss Wicker's post-*Red Channels* experience illustrates a problem faced by many performers who are blacklisted and later cleared. At the time of her trouble, the Singing Lady was riding a wave of popularity built up over a period of years. Then, just as television was beginning to boom and it was very important that she stay in the public eye, she was fired. Though she has long since been cleared, it is impossible for her to regain the years lost. The *Red Channels* experience has obviously had a permanent effect on her career.

On September 26, 1950, General Foods announced it was "temporarily" suspending the policy which led to the dismissal of Jean Muir. In making this statement the company also said that its

action had been prompted by the questions raised about Philip Loeb's employment on "The Goldbergs" show. Four letters had been received protesting Loeb's appearance. According to the press release, three were addressed to CBS, one to General Foods.

It seemed then that General Foods was resisting the growth of blacklisting and had decided that some kind of solution could be worked out. But at best, this was a surface impression. For in the statement accompanying the General Foods announcement there was a clear implication that the problem was anything but solved. General Foods said:

Discussions are now taking place in the industry to find a constructive solution to the broad problems growing out of such disloyalty charges. In view of this development and in consideration of any who are associated with our radio and television programs, General Foods will temporarily suspend application of the company's long standing policy covering use of controversial material and personalities. We will encourage and cooperate with any constructive effort towards a lasting solution which will be fair and equitable to all parties concerned.

Loeb remained on "The Goldbergs" from the fall of 1950 until spring, '51. During that period, meeting after meeting was held between General Foods, CBS, Young and Rubicam, Gertrude Berg, the star and owner of the show, and others concerned with his problem. No "lasting solution" resulted from these "constructive efforts." Far from indicating that some candid method of dealing with blacklisting was in the offing, the General Foods' statement actually precluded the complete triumph of political screening.

Loeb once told about a meeting held during the period when he was on the air but still under fire. It took place in a room at the General Foods office. Clarence Francis, president of General Foods, and Frank Stanton, president of CBS, were there. Loeb arrived with Mrs. Berg. Francis asked him when he was going to clear himself and remove the cloud that hung over him. Loeb said he felt "doomed" when the suggestion was made. He had thought

it was going to be possible to solve his problem without passing through humiliating "clearance" procedures.

It all began in the summer of 1950. Mrs. Berg had been in Hollywood making a film. When she returned to New York she was told about *Red Channels*; Loeb was among those listed. CBS was expecting trouble and General Foods had already expressed concern. Nothing was definite, no decisions had been made, but some action would have to be taken. (If General Foods' policy statement in late September was accurate, only four protests had been received at this time; yet these four were enough to precipitate a crisis on the top level of the industry.)

Those close to Mrs. Berg at the time say she was shocked. She thought it "un-American" that anyone should demand Loeb be fired on the basis of unproved charges. General Foods had not threatened to cancel the show and Frank Stanton of CBS was sympathetic. During this period Mrs. Berg vigorously defended Loeb. Blacklisting was still a dirty word and the industry had not yet learned to live with it. Loeb rejected a suggestion that he make a speech over the Voice of America. He felt that this would involve compromising his position; by going through even this much of a "clearance" procedure, he thought he would be giving support to those who made the charges against him in the first place. (He later denied under oath that he was a Communist.) Eventually, Loeb did agree to make some public statements on communism, but they were not widely reported and did little to help.

The Goldbergs show, with Loeb playing Jake, ran for 39 weeks. During that time there were numerous meetings. Every 13th week the situation was completely reviewed and a new attempt to find a solution made — but all failed. No outside agency had yet moved in to take over the industry's responsibility for its own hiring policies. There were suggestions that an impartial board be set up to "judge" people like Loeb, but nothing came of them. Within the talent unions there was agitation for some kind of action, but the unions



were already so rent by factional struggles over the blacklist issue that, again, nothing was done.

When the Goldbergs show ended its regular season in the spring of 1951 it was dropped by General Foods and moved over to NBC. And when it returned to the air, Phil Loeb was no longer playing Jake. This, then, was the final solution of the problem. In the New York *Journal-American* for August 25, 1951, radio-television columnist Jack O'Brian announced what everyone knew: the real reason "The Goldbergs" had lost its sponsor on CBS was Loeb's presence on the program. O'Brian noted that Phil Loeb was gone "after a long and luxurious hiatus in [CBS's] pink-tinged boudoir."

Loeb reached a contract settlement with Mrs. Berg in January, 1952. But as the late George Heller, an official of the television artists union, said at the time: "And so a settlement was made, a financial settlement but not a settlement of the issue." "The issue," Loeb stated in a memo to the national board of the Television Authority, "is my blacklisting. I did not come to my union for a financial settlement . . . I came for truth and justice. I am still seeking truth and justice . . . I am deprived of work because of a cowardly, furtive smear campaign. The issue has not been settled . . . I claim that although innocent I have been ousted from my work and hounded from my profession by a dirty, undercover job."

After he was dropped from "The Goldbergs," Loeb worked in the theater. He appeared in "Time Out for Ginger" on Broadway, and went on tour with the show. In Chicago, Edward Clamage\* of the American Legion campaigned against Loeb's appearance and attempted to organize a boycott. But the incident did not develop into a public controversy, and the play ran for ten months.

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\* Clamage, long a member of various American Legion anti-subversive committees, is the leading spokesman for his point of view in the Chicago area. During recent years Clamage has organized campaigns against various theatrical people. Of late, however, most of these campaigns have failed. "He overplayed his hand," one Chicago newspaperman said of him. "Nobody pays much attention to Ed any more."

Yet Loeb never regained confidence in himself. He was bowed down by family problems. He felt that he had been victimized by those who set themselves up as guardians of the Republic. He grew increasingly depressed and embittered. Finally, in September, 1955, he went off to a hotel room and took an overdose of sleeping pills — and in a few of the news stories about his suicide, there was some mention of his blacklisting difficulties.

On November 13, 1951, Elmer Rice announced his resignation from a group of playwrights who were doing shows for the "Celanese Theater." "I now find," Rice wrote, "that the names of actors selected by you [Stellar Enterprises, the packaging corporation] are submitted for approval to the Ellington advertising agency, whose client, the Celanese Corporation of America, is the commercial sponsor of this program. The agency, it appears, then submits these names to its attorney, Walter Socolow, for 'clearance' from the point of view of what is euphemistically called 'public relations.' What this means in effect is that Mr. Socolow conducts an inquiry into the alleged political opinions and activities of the actors and bases his acceptance or rejection upon his judgment of the propriety of their political beliefs." Rice went on to claim that his resignation was motivated by the fact that several actors had been turned down, on political grounds, for the leading role in his play "Counsellor at Law."

Rice concluded: "The air does not belong to the Ellington agency nor to the Celanese Corporation nor to the networks. . . . It is about time that this shocking situation be made clear to the American people."

In the controversy that followed, specific facts in Rice's charges were vehemently denied. Yet no one questioned his basic description of the blacklisting process. In replying to Rice, Jesse T. Ellington, president of the advertising agency, made an almost classic statement of the industry's position. He held that he and his agency

had made every attempt to heed the playwright's demands in casting — "We've tried to lean over backwards to live up to the best traditions of the theatre and to avoid any of that political thing in casting . . . But when you get somebody who may cause a lot of bad publicity for your program, you do have to be a little careful. It's an ordinary business safeguard."

This was to be the industry's rationale as political screening developed into an institution: first a reference to the traditions of the theater (and, often enough, to those of America), then a word about "business safeguards." In almost every instance the safeguards were the overriding considerations; the "political thing" became all-important in casting.

Later that same year, in December, 1951, Elmer Rice expanded on his comments in a letter written after the death of the well known actress Mady Christians (whose last months were made miserable by her inclusion in *Red Channels*). Rice wrote: "It's shocking. It's gone beyond *Red Channels*. Everybody has a private list. Anybody's career can be destroyed. Crass commercial cowardice has become more important than standing up for the principles of liberty. I'm hoping that various actors unions will start taking definite stands."

The Authors League of America decided to look into the blacklisting situation after Rice spoke out. A committee made up of Ruth Goetz, Laura Hobson and Rice himself was appointed to investigate the situation — but "only with respect to authors listed in *Red Channels*." The committee sent out a questionnaire to the 51 writers who were listed; about 30 answered. Three main lines of questioning were pursued. Has *Red Channels* had an adverse effect upon your employment? Does blacklisting exist? Are you willing to testify before the Federal Communications Commission?

Almost all who answered were acutely aware of blacklisting; some said they had not been personally affected. At a meeting of the Authors League held after the investigation, novelist John

Hersey summed up the results by saying that the League had positive proof of blacklisting. But the most significant answer was this: the majority of writers who stated they knew for sure that blacklisting was rife also declined to testify before the Federal Communications Commission. They gave as their reason the fact that they could not afford that kind of publicity.

This, too, was an indication of what lay ahead. Because political screening has been carried on behind the scenes, its opponents are often afraid to participate in any public opposition. The dangers of reprisal are too great.

It was impossible for those interested in supporting blacklisting to let Rice's charges go unanswered. *Counterattack* replied almost immediately. The newsletter began by quoting Rice's statement that blacklisting "is an ugly blot upon American life and an ugly threat to American liberty. . . . why I'd be willing to use Paul Robeson if there was a place for him in the show." In dealing with Rice's charges, *Counterattack* made no effort to deny that a system of political screening had been set up. Instead, the newsletter followed a technique it had developed earlier — it questioned the playwright's motives and tied him in with communism.

The *Counterattack* editors wrote:

Now let's look at Rice's record and see how well qualified he is to judge what should or should not be done about Communists and frontiers. Here are some of the fronts Rice was member of, or whose functions he backed, in the late Thirties and early Forties. [11 organizations were cited]. In more recent years, Rice has backed fronts like . . . [four more] . . . a few years ago he backed resolution to exclude Communists from board of American Civil Liberties Union. But now he still can't see anything wrong with hiring Paul Robeson or any other Communist for a radio or tv show and paying such persons big money which they would use to support Stalin's cause while Communists slaughter American prisoners of war in Korea. The Communist line press has gone all out in support of Rice. He is a hero, a martyr, a defender of its phony brand of "freedom."

*Counterattack's* response was as typical as that of the advertising agency. It could serve as a basic rationale for all groups and individuals who supported political screening. First, the fact that such screening was carried out was not denied, although an argument was centered around the use of the word "blacklist." Secondly, the opponents of the system were checked for past political affiliations. Thirdly, there was a statement about the use to which money paid alleged Communist entertainers would be put. Finally, there was an attempt to point out that opposition to blacklisting "helped the Communists."

*Counterattack* continued this last line of argument in an issue a few weeks later. Speaking of Mady Christian's death, the newsletter wrote: "Playwright Elmer Rice, who is now a hero of CP because he would use known Communists on radio and tv, paved the way for a propaganda treatment of her death in a letter to *The New York Times* 'Drama Mailbag.'"

In February, 1952, Rice was reconciled with the Celanese Theater. The Ellington agency stated it agreed with him about opposing the blacklisting trend, that it had not used lists in the past, and had no intention of using them in the future. Rice felt he had scored a victory and *Counterattack* glumly agreed with him.

In the February 29 issue of the newsletter, there was an article beginning "What Do You Think of These Celanese Stars?" Two allegedly pro-Communist performers were listed. *Counterattack* concluded:

What do the directors of the Celanese Corporation of America think of this and what do they intend to do about it? Are they willing partners to Rice's statement that he would feature and thus give their stockholders' money to an identified Communist? This is a matter of personal responsibility that they cannot evade. They should take a public stand on it.

In the long run, the Rice incident had no lasting impact. But it did point up the existence of blacklisting. Whether or not Rice's

charges were accurate in every detail, they provided a good picture of how blacklisting was actually used in the casting of radio and tv shows. And the reply of the Ellington agency – “but when you get somebody who may cause a lot of bad publicity for your program you have to be careful” – amounts to an admission of the basic charges Elmer Rice made.

By 1952, blacklisting was generally accepted in the industry. The frantic days of the Sweets case, the headlines of the Muir affair, the editorials written about Irene Wicker were a thing of the past. The industry’s solution to the problem was firmly institutionalized: don’t hire controversial performers and you won’t have to fire them.

Worst of all, the operation was carried out, for the most part, by people who were personally and privately opposed to it.

One of the most controversial questions in radio-tv has centered around the blacklisting of anti-Communists. When Merle Miller’s *The Judges and the Judged* appeared in 1952, under the sponsorship of the American Civil Liberties Union, the report was attacked in the pages of *The New Leader* by Merlyn S. Pitzele, then an ACLU director. Pitzele charged, among other things, that Miller had ignored sources of information on the subject of blacklisting of anti-Communists (in particular, that he had not consulted with Morton Wishengrad, a knowledgeable radio writer), and that he had treated the whole question in a brief, off-hand way which distorted the relationship between the two kinds of blacklisting.

Miller’s conclusion had been that “there would seem to be very little doubt that the Communist Party has been as active in radio and television as in the rest of the entertainment field. There can be no argument about the fact that, in the past at least, many small-l liberals have cooperated with the Party, possibly even to the extent of discriminating against the Party’s enemies when it came to jobs. It is certain that in some circles it has been as costly to have been a premature anti-Communist as it was in others to have been pre-

maturely anti-fascist." Further, Miller had stated that ". . . not a single instance of such proof [of the blacklisting of anti-Communists] was uncovered."

A special committee of the ACLU Board reported that Miller had unintentionally failed to follow up certain sources of information, and that the "author should have been less dogmatic" in asserting that there was no single instance of proof of the blacklisting of anti-Communists. This report was later adopted by the full Board of Directors of the Civil Liberties Union.

In 1951, the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee heard testimony on the infiltration of Communists into the radio industry. It is important to note that the only testimony released to the public fell into two categories: first, that of witnesses generally associated with the far right wing in the industry; second, that of "unfriendly" witnesses who invoked the Fifth Amendment. The testimony of others who answered all questions but were identified with the liberal or "left-wing" faction in the union was not made public. In addition, one witness later stated in a letter to the Committee that he had been promised his evidence would not be made public and had been "led" in the course of questioning to use certain phrases which gave a false impression of the meaning he intended to give.

During the course of these hearings, Ruth Adams Knight, a leader of the "right-wing" faction in the Radio Writers Guild, testified on the blacklisting of anti-Communists. Because of her long association with the right wing within the writers union, and because hers is one of the few public statements on the subject, Miss Knight's remarks are worth study.

MISS KNIGHT: I think evidence will be submitted to you that there are important shows, both in radio and television, where it is quite impossible for anyone who is not a left-winger to obtain a hearing and to work and to write . . .

SENATOR WATKINS: You must have in mind something, and can you make a general reference to it without going into too much detail . . .

MISS KNIGHT: I can back it up with many illustrations, but I would have to say what I am reporting to you is a general impression of the industry and there is no way of my being able to come here and say to you that a certain director refused to buy shows from certain people who were right-wing because they were right-wing, and he can say he didn't buy them because they weren't good scripts, and there is no possible proof.

SENATOR WATKINS: That is the thing we are up against, you see . . . But we must have something more than just a lot of conclusions . . .

MISS KNIGHT: What I can say to you is this, that in the industry, it is generally conceded that there are certain shows on which only extreme left-wing writers can work.

SENATOR WATKINS: Can you name those shows?

Miss Knight went on to name several shows, and even one network, which she alleged had at one time or another discriminated against anti-Communists. In this part of her testimony, however, she indicated that she was talking about the employability of members of "We, the Undersigned," the right-wing caucus in the Writers Guild.

Miss Knight's testimony is quoted mainly to establish the difficulty which any investigator encounters in trying to find "concrete instances" of the blacklisting of anti-Communists. In general, it is true that "there is no way of . . . being able to . . . say . . . that a certain director refused to buy shows from certain people who were right-wing because they were right-wing, and he can say he didn't buy them because they weren't good scripts, and there is no possible proof."

This analysis was recently corroborated by Paul Milton, a radio writer and board member of AWARE, Inc. Milton pointed out that there is no *Red Channels* in the case of blacklisting of anti-Communists, i.e., no fixed point of reference which can be used as a dividing line when considering the patterns of employment for anti-Communists. The writer referred to by Merlyn Pitzele, Morton Wishengrad, has made the same point.



At the very outset then, it must be understood that it is practically impossible to find specific, incontrovertible evidence of the blacklisting of anti-Communists. This point is agreed upon by both liberal and right-wing anti-Communists. The non-employment of an anti-Communist may be due to factors other than his anti-communism. For example, one actor often cited as the victim of a Communist blacklist is also alleged to have become difficult to work with precisely because of his political activities. Another performer who is frequently cited as a victim was widely criticized for encouraging racial stereotypes. There were protests against this performer's appearances by a number of anti-bias groups. (Some of these groups of course may have had communistic ties.)

There is no way to ascertain which factors were, or are, responsible for the "unemployability" of these two performers. In the case of alleged Communists and Communist sympathizers, however, there are definite lists, definite dates, etc. to provide a point of reference. It would seem, then, that the charges made against Merle Miller were somewhat unjust. The discrimination against anti-Communists was of such an informal nature that it is practically impossible to cite specific instances which would not be challenged by someone.

It can be established beyond question, though, that there was never any network-wide or agency-wide blacklisting of anti-Communists, even during the period when Communists were presumably at the height of their power. Take, as an example, the television appearances of Vinton Hayworth in 1949-50. Hayworth is generally accepted as a leading "anti-Communist" in the special sense in which that word is used by *Counterattack*, AWARE, Inc., etc. (The source of this information is the *Ross Reports*, a listing of talent employed in television from 1949 to the present.)

On January 21, 1950, Hayworth appeared on "Hollywood Screen Test," an ABC show. Interestingly enough, this same program subsequently employed Selena Royle (on February 4, 1950) and

Mady Christians (February 11, 1950), both of whom are listed in *Red Channels*. On March 20, 1950, Hayworth appeared on "Lights Out," an NBC show, and on March 27, on "Silver Theatre," a CBS show. In the *Ross Reports'* listings of employment from September, 1949 to April, 1950 (*Ross Reports*, May 7, 1950), Hayworth is one of the actors with the most frequent listings. In addition to the shows reported above, he appeared in "Lights Out" (twice), the "Kraft Theatre," the "Philco Theatre," the "Silver Theatre," "The Clock," the "Chevrolet Tele-Theatre," all between the fall of 1949 and the summer of 1950.

When dealing with this period, it is interesting to note how political lines cross and re-cross on various shows. Thus, Hayworth, Mady Christians and Selena Royle were used by the same producer. Conrad Nagel, a veteran anti-Communist, appeared on "The Silver Theatre," but so did Marsha Hunt (who was named in *Red Channels* and was later blacklisted).

It has been said that the Communists let certain anti-Communists work as a "fig-leaf" to hide their activities. But it seems unlikely that this explains Hayworth's pattern. Hayworth has long been one of the most articulate spokesmen for a right-wing anti-Communist point of view in the industry. The fact that he was constantly hired at a time when the Communists were riding high would seem to establish beyond question that no industry-wide, network-wide, or agency-wide blacklisting of anti-Communists was then in existence.

To continue with Hayworth. It may well be true that he has lost some employment in recent years. But in a sense this is a case of the engineer's being hoist on his own petard. Hayworth's activities within AWARE, Inc. have now made him a "controversial personality." More than one anti-Communist producer has said that he would not hire him because of this fact. They feel that Hayworth's presence within a cast would cause trouble, be divisive, etc.

It seems possible to conclude, therefore, that the "blacklisting of anti-Communists" did not proceed on any organized and institu-

tional basis. There was no *Red Channels*, no industry-wide decisions, no open agitation for screening, no silent acceptance. It was largely a back-scratching operation. This is in no way to imply that there has been no discrimination against right-wing anti-Communists.

In discovering individual patterns of the refusal to hire anti-Communists, or at least anti-Communists of the right-wing persuasion, one is confronted with an extremely complicated, if not contradictory, situation. In her testimony, for example, Ruth Adams Knight charged that "Studio One" would have "a possible one person from a group like 'We the Undersigned' and almost everyone else on the other side."

A check of the writers used on "Studio One" in the months immediately before Ruth Adams Knight testified (April 28, 1951) is revealing. There was, indeed, one writer, Irve Tunick, who was a member of "We the Undersigned." In February, the show used Lois Jacoby, a writer who was later to follow Tunick out of Television Authority when a West Coast functionary of that organization invoked the Fifth Amendment. The remaining writers (from January 1 to March 26) are not well known as supporters of any left-wing faction. Indeed, the writer (and producer) whose work was most consistently used on the show, Worthington Miner, had a reputation for staying out of union disputes, industry politics, etc. On January 16, 1950, "Studio One" used Butterfly McQueen, an actress often cited as the victim of an anti-Communist blacklist.

Thus, one of Ruth Adams Knight's specific cases would seem to be questionable.

On the other hand, there are shows where the employment record indicates a constant use of people associated with the left wing. In 1950-51, "Danger" used performers like Lee Grant, Morris Carnovsky, Alan Manson, Lou Polan, John Randolph, Elliot Sullivan and others who have been accused of being antagonistic to the right wing, as well as writer Peter Lyon. Other shows during

the same period used such people with suspicious frequency, e.g., "Suspense," "Comedy Theater." It is also true that the casting lists of a show like "Danger" rarely reveal the names of persons who have been members of the right-wing anti-Communist groups.

A study of casting lists, therefore, bears out the oft-repeated charge that anti-Communists had difficulties in certain quarters. The important thing distinguishing the left-wing blacklisting operation from the industry-wide steps taken later, is that the former was sporadic, informal and unorganized.

## Blacklisting: An Institution

ONCE BLACKLISTING WAS INSTITUTIONALIZED, it expanded. This was an almost inevitable development. A highly placed executive at one of the largest Madison Avenue agencies – a man charged with screening the agency's employees – said not long ago that as soon as the principle was established that performers and writers should be checked for past political associations, the doors were thrown wide open. Blacklisting soon went far beyond the names in *Red Channels*. For if that book was accepted as a reliable source, there was no reason why *Counterattack* itself, the American Legion's *Firing Line*, the "listing" publications of Syracuse Post #41 of the Legion, and every other list, should not win acceptance.

This was made all the more complicated by the structure of the radio-tv industry. In Hollywood, most hiring is concentrated in five or six big studios. But in radio-tv, advertising agencies, networks, program packagers and sponsors all have a voice in deciding who is to be used. The result is a multiplicity of lists and procedures, different policies on different networks, the creation of a secret and labyrinthine world of political screening. Thus it has often happened that a television personality might be acceptable to agency and network, but not to this or that sponsor. Such a one, in the jargon that has grown up in the industry, is "greylisted." The "grey-listed" of course are blacklisted, but not completely – for every program on every network. Few persons are thoroughly blacklisted in this sense.

All this began with *Red Channels*. When that book appeared in 1950, columnist Ed Sullivan wrote:

With television going into its third big year, come this Fall, the entire industry is becoming increasingly aware of the necessity to plug all Commie propaganda loopholes. Network and station heads, with a tremendous financial stake, want no part of Commies or pinkos. Sponsors, sensitive in the extreme to blacklisting, want no part of Commies or their sympathizers. Advertising agencies, held responsible by sponsors for correct exercise of discretion in programming, want no controversy of any kind. For that reason, "Red Channels" listing of performers who, innocently or maliciously, are affiliated with Commie-front organizations will be a reference book in preparing any program.

Sullivan was wrong in predicting that the use of *Red Channels* would be general by the fall of 1950, but his over-all analysis was quite correct, especially in the motives he assigned to the industry, and his date for the complete triumph of political screening was only a year off. By the fall of 1951, almost every word in the column had come true.

In May, 1954, Charles E. Martin, a radio-television producer and director, appeared before Judge Irving Saypol's court as a witness for the plaintiff in a suit brought by actor Joe Julian, a *Red Channels* listee, against the American Business Consultants, publishers of the book.

Martin testified under oath about political screening in the industry. At the very outset, he was asked by Arthur Garfield Hays, Julian's lawyer: "Did you ever refuse to give Joe Julian a job as an actor on any of your shows for the sole reason that his name appeared in *Red Channels*?" Martin answered, "I did refuse to give Mr. Julian employment on our shows because his name was in *Red Channels*."

Later, Judge Saypol asked Martin: ". . . do you know that he [Julian] is sympathetic to the cause of communism?" The producer answered, "Not at all, not that I know of." Saypol continued: "Well now, this *Red Channels* which seems to be the basis for your label-

ing him, says . . . that 'In screening personnel every safeguard must be taken to protect innocents and genuine liberals from being unjustly labeled.' Now is it your testimony that on the basis of his inclusion in the way in which it has been listed that you have undertaken to label him as a Red, meaning Communist?"

Martin's answer went to the heart of the problem. "Well, I certainly do not mean to imply that I am accusing Mr. Julian of being a Communist. But I maintain that everybody in the book has a label attached to him, and that we — our clients — we are not interested in using the people who are in the book."

Judge Saypol continued to probe. Why didn't Martin follow the warning in *Red Channels* that "every safeguard must be taken to protect innocents and genuine liberals from being unjustly labeled"? This was particularly relevant because witnesses had already established that Julian had appeared in various anti-Communist shows. Martin attempted to explain that he was acting under orders, but this part of his testimony was ruled inadmissible on the grounds that it involved hearsay. Nevertheless, his statements made it quite clear that he had adopted a policy of not using, or of exercising care in using, anyone named in *Red Channels*. Later, this was to apply to anyone "listed" in a variety of publications.

In his subsequent testimony, Martin reinforced this general impression. He told the court that "he [Julian] is in *Red Channels*; he has a Red label." Judge Saypol asked, "Nothing else is responsible for that label, as far as you are concerned, except the fact of his inclusion in this publication?" and Martin told the judge that he was right.

Finally, the nub of the difficulty was reached in a colloquy between one of the American Business Consultants' lawyers and Martin. "In other words, then, you do not agree with the statement in *Red Channels*, do you, that 'In screening personnel great care should be taken that an injustice be not done to innocents and genuine liberals'?" Martin answered, "I certainly do agree with the state-

ment in the book, but how can we apply this, this theory? It's impracticable. Because, I am not a court of law. We therefore take the policy of quarantining a ship; it's preventive medicine. We quarantine everybody in the book. We cannot take any chances."

Martin then extended his answer to "radio actors and actresses and television actors and actresses who have been and who are known to have been associated with Communist fronts." Here, the policy of quarantine was extended beyond the bounds of *Red Channels* and applied to anyone who had been cited as having a list of associations with alleged Communist fronts.

Martin was accurately describing the policy of the entire industry.

This same point of view was stated by another industry spokesman, an attorney for one of the large packagers, in a letter written to a talent union official. First the lawyer differentiated between the meanings of the word "blacklist," maintaining that the term properly applied to a conspiracy in restraint of employment and that his client's practice simply amounted to an exercise of volition in hiring. But in the next paragraph he admitted that his client, because of the pressure of sponsors and advertising agencies, would not hire any "controversial" person. Then he made an unusually frank statement about the criteria employed by the industry.

He began by stating that ideology was not involved in hiring or firing. Guilt or innocence of the charges against an actor was simply not relevant. The only question was whether or not the person would be acceptable to the community. The determination of guilt or innocence, he maintained, would require a long trial in a court of law. The program packager could only concern himself with trying to anticipate public reaction. Therefore, the packager was not interested in discovering whether or not a man was actually a member of the organizations listed after his name, or whether participation in those organizations indicated he was a Communist or sympathetic to communism. It was enough that the charges had been made.



This candid statement of policy cannot be attributed to the whole industry. Many of the sponsors involved *were* concerned with establishing innocence or guilt. Their refusal to use a performer was sincerely based on repugnance to communism or Communists. But whatever the theoretical explanation, the lawyer's letter accurately described the operating practice of the industry. The employment criteria which developed out of *Red Channels* and similar listings were based on anticipating public reaction. And this is what hung heavy on the consciences of people in the industry. Opposed as they were to blacklisting, they were now required to use it against individuals they knew to be innocent of Communist sympathies.

The disclaimer in *Red Channels* calling for "safeguards" was fairly meaningless. When political screening becomes secret, excesses are built into the system; they are not merely the result of a faulty exercise of judgment on the part of those engaged in screening.

If screening (or blacklisting) had been confined to the names in *Red Channels*, it would have created a problem of considerable though manageable proportions. But the accusations kept coming and the lists lengthened as time went on. New charges were made during 1950, '51 and '52. Dozens of performers not mentioned in *Red Channels* found that they were "in trouble." By 1952 most of the groups favoring blacklisting found that they had named just about everyone vulnerable to attack. Still the attacks never let up. As late as the spring of 1955 the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency was harassed because of certain performers it had used on its dramatic shows during the winter tv season.

The groups who make these continuing charges are almost always aligned with the extreme right wing of American politics. Their techniques are essentially the same as those employed in *Red Channels* — people are "listed," with the organizations they allegedly joined, and some "citation" is given to show that these organizations

are, or at least were, tied in with communism. The "citations" are often the findings of a legislative committee. But sometimes the authority cited is the same as that making the accusation — thus *Red Channels* cited *Counterattack* and *Counterattack* cites *Red Channels*. Again, American Legion "lists" cite *Counterattack* as an authority; *Counterattack's Red Channels* returns the compliment by citing Legion publications.

A fairly typical example of the accusations these groups make can be found in a letter of the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets. This group works closely with Syracuse Post #41 of the American Legion and with Laurence A. Johnson, a Syracuse supermarket owner who has been extremely active in promoting political screening in the industry. The threat made in the letter actually received its force from Johnson's control of several supermarkets in Syracuse. The letter was addressed to Leonard A. Block of the Block Drug Company, makers of Amm-i-dent.

DEAR SIR:

Is the [actor's name] who appeared on your "Danger" program last night the Communist Fronter [actor's name] who appeared on the Civil Rights Congress Show? See the attached photostat of the Communist Paper, *Daily Worker* . . . For your information Civil Rights Congress was cited as subversive and Communist by Attorney General Tom Clark, letters to Loyalty Review Board, released December 4, 1947, and September 21, 1948, according to Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications, 82nd Congress, May 14, 1951.

Is the [actress' name] who also appeared on the same show the same [actress' name] who was mentioned in . . . *Counterattack*? We quote from *Counterattack*:

"Communists Have Created A 'Living Memorial' For J. Edward Bromberg. About 1500 people were jammed in a hall in the Hotel Diplomat (N.Y. City) on night of Dec. 23. A thousand people were turned away for lack of space . . . Other speakers at this obviously Communist-inspired tribute to J. Edward Bromberg were:

[Actress' name] who is starred in current Paramount film [film's name] . . . Miss [actress' name] has front record and last year was

featured in the Broadway flop . . . This was a Communist propaganda play written by [writer's name], an identified CP member. In spite of efforts of CP and its supporters to make a hit of this play, it failed miserably."

If you plan to continue the use of Communist Front talent wouldn't it be a good idea if you were to send a representative from the Block Drug Company or Cecil & Presberey, Advertising Agency, since both companies are aware the Communist Fronters are allowed in Amm-i-dent advertising. Perhaps we could work out a questionnaire to be given to the people who buy from our cosmetic displays. A questionnaire could be drafted reading, for instance, as follows:

Do You Want Any Part of Your Purchase Price of Amm-i-dent to be Used to Hire Communist Fronters?

YES

NO

Indicate your choice by X in the appropriate box.

We are sending this letter to you by registered mail because our earlier correspondence to you on May 28th evidently went astray since no answer has been forthcoming.

Very truly yours,  
VETERANS ACTION COMMITTEE  
OF  
SYRACUSE SUPER MARKETS

Pressure similar to this came from a number of sources and had the effect of extending blacklisting. In 1951, the National Americanism Commission Sub-Committee on Subversive Activities of the American Legion published a *Summary of Trends and Developments Exposing the Communist Conspiracy*. The conclusion of the document clearly referred to the situation in radio and television:

Communism cannot be defeated by a lot of words and "pussy-footing." It must be hit hard and often wherever and whenever it exists. Feelings cannot be spared. If, in the course of battle, anyone is unjustly hurt by unknowingly lending their name and financial aid to an organization or cause that is subversive, it is very simple to withdraw that support and to repudiate the organization.

As blacklisting developed, however, this "repudiation" was to become quite complicated.

In an industry as sensitive to public opinion as radio-tv, it was inevitable that charges of disloyalty would be effective, especially when they were coupled with the threat of boycott. In the November, 1952, issue of *Facts About Blacklist*, a newsletter published by a group of blacklisted writers, a letter from an Assistant Vice-President of the Borden milk company was quoted in full. It was written to Laurence A. Johnson, the Syracuse supermarket owner:

DEAR LARRY:

I want to tell you again how grateful I am for the time and help you gave me on Tuesday. It is no exaggeration to say that my eyes have been opened as a result of your cooperation. The same goes for Francis Neuser and his group [Veterans Action Committee]. He mentioned the fact that they are unpopular, but I know he isn't right. No one could meet them without being impressed by the honesty and zeal with which they are pursuing this fine course, and with their obvious determination to be fair.

Sincerely yours,  
/s/ STUART PEABODY  
Asst. Vice Pres.

Within a relatively short time, Johnson, and others engaged in the same cause, had a number of such letters to testify to their success. Johnson was particularly effective. He used the technique of wiring or phoning executives and members of the board of directors of companies which sponsored programs on which "controversial" talent had been used. (In many cases of course these people were "controversial" because Johnson and his friends, with their accusations, made them so.) As a result, the pressure came from the top down and hit the agencies and packagers with considerable force. Only a few companies were willing to risk a questionnaire like the one suggested by the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets.

Although many sponsors are sincerely motivated by opposition to communism, the day-to-day working principle of political screening is based on anticipating public reaction. The controlling ques-

tion in "clearance," then, as far as the industry is concerned, is not the establishing of innocence so much as the furnishing of proof that the person involved has made his peace with the pressure groups which threaten to stir up protests.

The case of one radio-tv writer shows the effects the system has had. When *Red Channels* appeared in 1950, his name was among those listed. Almost immediately he was informed by an agency which had been buying his scripts that it was changing its policy, would use only a limited number of writers in the future and no longer needed his services. He continued to get some assignments in radio and television after this, but more and more he found it necessary to go outside the industry for work.

When the McCarran Committee report came out, his name appeared again and he was dropped from the one show he was writing for at that time. After this he did some work for radio — but he could no longer use his own name. All regular commercial assignments stopped and he was confined to staff work and anonymous writing. However, even his income from the anonymous shows was affected by publication of the McCarran report. By 1954, his earnings from the ghost writing amounted to \$2,000, a tremendous drop from his pre-*Red Channels* income.

This writer's case is typical of the experience of those who did not attempt to "clear" themselves. They were dismissed from certain shows almost immediately after *Red Channels* appeared. But some work was available throughout 1950 and even into '51. By that time, however, the screening machinery had begun to work efficiently and the only employment open to them was writing under a pen name or without credit. By 1954 even this was dangerous. There were people inside the industry who favored political screening and watched the comings and goings of blacklisted writers. It became difficult to keep "listed" persons on the payroll, even though their work was never credited on the air.

An actor's story follows similar lines. Before *Red Channels*, he

had been blasted in *Counterattack*. His employers had showed some concern but had not barred him from working. Even after *Red Channels*, the actor managed to stay employed for over a year. Then he could find no work. No one claimed it was because of his *Red Channels* listing, though the actor was well aware that was it. The policy of firing someone on grounds other than the political accusations made against him became routine once blacklisting was accepted as a regular operation. The industry is always concerned over the possibility of law suits based on the charge of conspiracy; therefore the "listings" in *Red Channels*, *Counterattack* or the newsletters of the American Legion are never given as a reason for the firing. And in conversations, industry representatives are ever careful to indicate that they do not confer with each other about their policy with regard to specific people. The fact remains however that the "other reasons" for not hiring always develop immediately after a political attack; if the person attacked succeeds in "clearing" himself with the right people, the "other reasons" usually disappear.

Blacklisting has always been uneven. The industry is united on following a screening policy but standards vary. This is evident in the fact that the actor just mentioned worked on shows which went out over the very network that let him go. But in his case the situation did not persist for long. In 1952 he was considered for a part but before the show went on the air was told he would not be needed. After that he found work on another network. Then *Counterattack* hit him again and he was out of work once more. After 1953 he could find no work and has been excluded from the industry ever since.

The actor's experience suggests another aspect of blacklisting. Different networks have different policies. So have sponsors and agencies. As a result, an actor might be *persona non grata* in one place and welcome in another.

The unevenness has led to mistakes. In 1950, in one of the earliest, pre-*Red Channels* cases, Ed Sullivan had the dancer Paul Draper on his show. Draper was already a controversial figure as a result of the highly publicized law suit which he and Larry Adler brought against Mrs. McCullough. The day after Draper appeared in Sullivan's show, the *New York Journal-American* ran a banner head: "Paul Draper in TV Show Draws Floods of Protests." The next day, the newspaper reported that the New York State Commanders of the Catholic War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the New York State Adjutant of the American Legion, and the Queens County Commander of the Catholic War Veterans had protested. Shortly afterwards, Sullivan made a public apology.

A fairly prominent movie and stage actor was listed in *Red Channels*. At the time, he was out of the country and did not learn the fact until he returned. He was charged among other things with having been a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Communist military organization which fought for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. The source for the charge was a listing in "Appendix IX." Later, this actor was to prove that "Appendix IX" was wrong. He accounted for all his movements throughout the entire period of the Spanish Civil War and proved conclusively that he could not have served with the Brigade.

It took four years before he could establish this fact to the satisfaction of the radio and television industry. After the listing in 1950, he was able to work on television. But by 1951, his work on television was cut off. At this time he received many calls asking if he were available, but inevitably someone would phone back to tell him it had been decided he was not "right" for the part. After a while, he realized he had been blacklisted. At the urging of his friends, he decided to try to "clear" himself. In the long process of his "clearance," he met with some of the important figures in the field.

In 1952, while the actor was trying to "clear" himself, the American Legion announced it was going to picket a play in which he was appearing. He protested, citing his proof that he had never been a member of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. But this had no immediate effect. Some time after this, the actor received a letter of introduction to a leading Legion official. Influential people also wrote to the Legion indicating their belief that the actor was not a Communist and never had been. Eventually, he succeeded in convincing the Legion he was innocent of the charges made against him.

In late 1952, the actor was put in touch with George Sokolsky. The actor is convinced that Sokolsky's role in this case, and in others, was based on honest concern. The columnist was convinced the charges would not stand up. As a result of their conversation, Sokolsky wrote a letter stating he felt the evidence against the actor was weak. In this letter, the columnist repeated that *he*, Sokolsky, could not "clear" anyone, people had to clear themselves.

The actor also met with Jack Wren, "security officer" at the Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn advertising agency. It was Wren who advised an affidavit accounting for all his movements during the period of the Spanish Civil War. This step was necessary, for the actor had to be "defensible" should protests come in as a result of the original *Red Channels* listing. Once convinced the actor had been wronged, Wren helped him get back to work, writing letters for him, interceding in his behalf, and in general attempting to establish his "employability." But Wren felt it was necessary to lay a careful groundwork of refutation before the actor could actually be used on any program.

In 1953, the actor got in touch with the House Committee on Un-American Activities in order to clear up the original inaccurate listing in "Appendix IX." His letter was acknowledged by Representative Harold Velde, then chairman of the Committee, with a note assuring him the statement would be filed in the records of



the Committee. But he did not succeed in getting any definite statement from Velde or the Committee pointing out that the listing had been in error. Throughout the "clearance" procedure, this fact was to remain a block to his being reemployed.

By the end of 1953, the actor found he was still "unemployable," even though various highly placed people in radio, television and Hollywood had absolved him of any sympathy for the Communist Party. At this time, he was able to convince Roy Brewer, the Hollywood labor leader and key figure in the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, of the soundness of his case. Brewer wrote a letter indicating he was satisfied the performer was not pro-Communist. The actor used the letter in an attempt to get movie work but was told that the part he sought had already been filled. (The reason given was probably true; a letter from Brewer at that time was enough to clear performers in Hollywood.)

Finally, early in 1954, the actor was assigned to a television show. Almost immediately, he was under attack from Syracuse. The actor wrote a letter to the head of the Legion group in Syracuse, telling him of the inaccuracy of the "Appendix IX" citation and mentioning a highly placed Legionnaire who was convinced he was innocent of pro-Communist sympathies. The letter went unanswered. But when the actor began to appear regularly on various television shows there were no further protests.

By 1955, the actor had almost regained the professional status he held prior to *Red Channels*. The charges against him had been rebutted. Powerful "anti-Communists" had written letters for him. He had proved he was "defensible." As a result, he resumed normal employment. Now that it is all over, he is grateful to Sokolsky, Wren and Brewer for the help they gave him.

The actor's experience illustrates the "clearance" mechanism which developed after blacklisting became institutionalized. To begin with, it shows that the rhetorical claim that a performer must "clear himself" is something less than a description of the reality.

Although he must "clear himself," it is also necessary for him to convince various key people that his "clearance" is legitimate. By and large, the persons this actor encountered are the ones who deal with clearances: George Sokolsky, Jack Wren of BBD&O, the top security officers at CBS, various American Legion figures. If this group is convinced of a man's sincerity or, in the case of the executives, "defensibility," he can work.

But the process can be quite lengthy — four years in the case of this particular actor. The actor believes that had he been a more important star, his "clearance" would not have taken so long. A public-relations staff might have been engaged to make him "defensible." As it was, the procedure was a long and arduous one and his career was gravely affected.

It is equally important to realize that, from this actor's point of view, the various "clearance" men, like Sokolsky and Wren, were actually trying to help him. He was not asked for money. Once these men were convinced he had been unjustly "listed," they went to some trouble to put him back to work. For many, though, the politics of those with whom a blacklisted must deal remain a stumbling block. The informal "clearance" board is largely right-wing in its political orientation. If a performer has a strong prejudice against associating with Hearst columnists or American Legion officials, or rejects their definition of "effective anti-communism," he will find it difficult if not impossible to "clear himself."

In 1951, the program directors at CBS became aware of the problem. Actors they had previously used with great success would be turned down even when they were obviously suitable for the part. Soon an internal communications system was developed to head off embarrassing incidents. Before this, actors would sometimes be called, or even sign a contract, then it would be found they could not be used because of some "listing" or past political association. By 1952, the CBS procedure was regularized.

Producers submitted the names of writers they wanted to use. These were then submitted to the story department. Copies of the memo also went to the executives charged at that time with carrying out the network's screening policy — William Dozier (who is generally credited with having initiated this procedure), Vice-President Daniel O'Shea, or his assistant Alfred Berry. The final word came from O'Shea or Berry. Written rejections of proposed writers were never made. The producers would receive a phone call and be told, "Sorry, we can't clear." When a producer asked why a certain person had been rejected, he was told that it was none of his business.

In one case, a director was signed for a show and actually used. Subsequently, there were protests from Laurence Johnson in Syracuse. Johnson had been told by Harvey Matusow that the director was a Communist. Matusow claimed he had seen him at Party meetings. Meetings were arranged between the sponsor, some prominent "anti-Communists," including Sokolsky and Victor Riesel of the Hearst papers, Matusow and the director in question. As soon as he met the director face to face, Matusow admitted he had named the wrong man. Nevertheless, it was impossible to obtain a clear-cut retraction from those who published the charge.

A show became "tough" after a number of "mistakes" were made and protests mounted. Political screening was more careful then, and even those who could work on other shows for the same network could not be used. "Danger" fell into this category, so did "Justice." In the case of "Danger," a threat from the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse had been enough to convince everyone that special precautions were necessary.

However, even when blacklisting is functioning well, a few people still manage to work under assumed names. This is generally only possible for writers, or for actors working on radio, since a television appearance can easily be noted by someone in the audience. Still, one blacklisted actress managed to work on television

as the hands in a soap commercial until she was recognized entering the studio. But her case was an exception. Most blackmarket work is done by writers.

In the early days of blacklisting, it was possible for a writer to submit scripts under an assumed name. After a while, the system was tightened up. It is now necessary for a writer to have a "front" in order to continue working. The "front" must be a person who can convincingly carry off the role of a writer. He attends all conferences on the script which he is supposed to have written. He has to be coached on how to react to suggestions, how to take notes on the changes which the producer or director requests, etc. If the "front" has some acting experience, so much the better.

Once the "front" is successful, a whole series of problems arises. He receives public credit for shows written by another man. His family and friends assume he is making a great deal of money. His employer may question him about working on company time. When the next deal comes up, the "front" often demands that his cut of the check be raised to a point commensurate with his status as a big-name television writer. Ego problems develop. The "front" begins to act like a first-rate writing talent and resents the actual writer.

In one case — now an industry legend — a "front" became so successful he was hired as a script editor for some television shows. Once in this position, he refused to use the work of the blacklisted writers who had made his reputation, on the grounds that it would endanger his position.

Another "front" received an offer to go to Hollywood to write movies. A third became infuriated when his father called him and said: "I saw your show last night. I'm glad to see that you're finally becoming a writer after all these years of trying." As a result of the emotional crisis engendered by this phone call, the "front" broke off relations with the blacklisted writer.

Throughout the radio-tv industry, the fact that someone is "in trouble" (the industry's euphemism for being blacklisted) has often meant that high-priced talent could be bought at cut-rate prices. The larger talent agencies refuse to handle blacklisted writers who work through "fronts," but the smaller companies saw an opportunity to make a killing and have gone along. When this happens, a part of the check for the show goes to the agency and if the packager is aware of the arrangement, he too may demand a kickback.

In one case, a "front" got so interested in improving his position he accepted almost any terms from producers. Instead of demanding reasonable working conditions (for example with regard to deadlines) he began to agree to all offers. The pressure on the blacklisted writer he was "fronting" for became so great that the writer eventually had to break off the relationship. In still another case, a producer offered to get a better "front" for a writer. The man he suggested had been in the business long enough to build up a personal reputation and his scripts were worth more. And finally, there was a case in which the "front" himself became blacklisted after he had achieved a certain ersatz prominence.

Because of all the problems involved in blackmarketing, "fronts" do not last long. Perhaps the greatest single difficulty in the relationship is the ego problem. "Fronts" are often frustrated and unsuccessful writers themselves and the experience of receiving credit for brilliantly written shows creates problems for them. In a few cases, men have "fronted" on principle, as a means of opposing blacklisting. But these instances are relatively rare.

All these factors combine to make the blackmarket business an insignificant part of radio and television production. It is a method open only to the best of the blacklisted talent and is hazardous even for them.

In one case, a blacklisted director was able to work. He would go to the studio early in the morning with the regular director, check

all the camera angles, suggest changes in the script and the way in which an actor should handle his lines. The whole operation was finished by eight o'clock. It finally broke down when someone inside the industry became suspicious of the director who received credit and accused him of working with a blacklisted person. After this, collaboration between a blacklisted director and a regular director became more or less impossible.

At times, radio-tv "security" standards seem to be relaxed somewhat. People who have been "unemployable" find work without going through the formality of a "clearance." But then, some pressure group starts a protest and the hiring offices resume their caution. Often, a step-by-step procedure is worked out to bring an actor back to "full employability." First there is an appearance on a show sponsored by an institutional advertiser which does not require criteria as strict as those used by consumer-goods sponsors. If this appearance goes unnoticed, the actor may then attempt to find a spot on a more difficult show, citing his experience with the institutional advertiser to prove he is no longer "in trouble." If all goes well there, the word gets around that he can be generally used.

In the winter of 1955, there were persistent rumors that things were letting up. Several actors and actresses who had not been used for some time suddenly found work. But any anticipation that blacklisting was coming to an end were premature. In April, 1955, the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets started to campaign against the Kraft Foods Company. The campaign began with a letter addressed "To All Food Retailers, Wholesalers and Patriotic Organizations," charging that the Kraft television show had used two Communist fronters, and that this was part of a continuing policy of the company.

The Syracuse attack included the same kind of threat that had been addressed to the Block Drug Company:

We invite you to follow the suggestion of John K. Dungey and join the American Legion in making such a test and take a poll of the customers as they buy Kraft products. For instance, a questionnaire could be drafted reading, "Do you want any part of your money spent for Kraft products, to help subsidize anyone who had directly or indirectly contributed in any way toward helping the Communist Conspiracy in the United States? Indicate in the appropriate box YES or NO."

As long as such pressure continues, there will probably be no letup in blacklisting. The industry set its fundamental policy after the Muir, Wicker and Loeb cases. It has, in effect, agreed to accept a basic limitation upon its right to hire. While this policy is accepted and the pressure continues, there is little chance that blacklisting can be brought to an end.

The fact was reinforced when the House Committee on Un-American Activities visited New York in August, 1955. The Committee conducted an investigation of Communist influence in the theatre. The impact of the hearings, though far less effective than any of the Hollywood probes, buttressed the idea that the entertainment industry is heavily infiltrated by Communists.

This was the final outcome of the policy that had been adopted by the radio-tv industry in the turbulent early days of blacklisting. Blacklisting was institutionalized and the institution received powerful support within and without the industry. Every major network had executives appointed to implement its screening policies. The most important agencies assigned top-level executives to see that no mistakes were made. There were professional consultants who for a fee supplied dossiers on prospective performers and writers. And all this machinery was working smoothly and largely behind closed doors. Arrangements were verbal; very little was written down. Great care was taken to avoid the charge of conspiracy. The industry, rejecting the word "blacklist," retreated to high semantic grounds whenever the question came up. But no one denied that certain persons could not work until they were "cleared" — and

that was what most people meant when they spoke of blacklisting.

Most of the executives at the networks, agencies and packagers were deeply disturbed by the institution even while they were creating it. Joseph H. Ream, a former CBS executive and predecessor of Daniel O'Shea as "security officer" for that network, was a typical example.

In 1950, CBS instituted a loyalty oath for all its employees. This took place at the point of transition from public to secret blacklisting. The Council of the Authors League of America took a dim view of the network's new policy and wrote a letter of protest to Ream. Their exchange raised most of the relevant questions with regard to political screening.

The Authors League Council wrote:

Our opinion is that the only valid defense of American democracy will consist of a re-affirmation and a strengthening of its ideals and its established processes. If the kind of personal liberties which are defined in the first ten amendments of the Constitution are ever lost, the democracy we wish to defend will have been lost. We recognize that in times of stress in the past certain personal liberties have been curtailed. We feel that in the present crisis, the issue of individual civil liberties has become one of the central issues at conflict, and that no sacrifice in those liberties should be permitted without the most careful scrutiny.

The letter then went on to consider the CBS loyalty oath and, by implication, the entire system of political screening. The Council wrote of the oath:

It establishes the principle that a writer's employment may depend upon his politics. The Authors League has always taken the view that a writer's employment should depend upon his writings. We fully understand that under wartime conditions precautions have to be taken, especially in the field of communications, against subversion and sabotage, and that the move by CBS has been taken in the name of such precautions. Nevertheless, we deplore the principle that the hiring or firing of a writer should be decided by his politics, without recourse to the proper channels for security against subversion already established and now being extended by the United States Government. Your



technique goes outside and beyond those channels and arrogates to one corporation a type of function which has traditionally belonged to the Federal Government. Unless and until this power is delegated to corporations in a legal and orderly manner, it seems to us improper for a single corporation haphazardly to take it.

Ream answered for CBS: "In the first place, employment will not depend on an individual's politics. We are not concerned with that, but with loyalty." This distinction was basic to the industry's case. It was founded on the notion that communism was totally a conspiracy and not "political" at all. From this, it deduced the right to handle Communists in certain ways which would not be allowable if only political beliefs were at issue.

To the charge that the political screening system was a private court without competence or mandate, Ream replied:

The answer lies in how intelligently and how fairly this program is administered, and this obviously cannot be proved or disproved in advance. Our record over the years in the field of controversial public issues involving public opinion should provide substantial assurance to you that fairness will be our touchstone.

The same point came up in another form. The Authors League had stated:

The CBS questionnaire is more likely to condemn the loyal unjustly than to discover the disloyal. In days of hysteria like these, the mere hint that a man has ever had communistic connections may damage his earning power indefinitely. No safeguards against this happening to those who are loyal have been announced by CBS. A fundamental safeguard, it seems to us, would be a guarantee not to deprive a writer of his job on any ground except incompetence, without a hearing.

Ream had replied:

Next, we necessarily have to evaluate the reported subversive connections. I have indicated to our staff group that I am available to discuss with any employee any questions which he may have. Also, in cases where I may have questions, I intend to seek discussion with the employee concerned.

Here again, the main point of defense was the promise that the system would be engineered in a fair spirit and with honest ground rules. But this failed to take into account a tremendously important factor: the significance of the growth of the political screening system was a shift in responsibility. The networks, agencies and sponsors no longer trusted themselves to hire and fire. They turned over their authority to outsiders. They grumbled against these outsiders, they complained about them, they resented them, but they never failed to try to placate them.

Clearly political screening became something it was never intended to be by those who began it.

# Newsmen and Commentators

THE FIRST RADIO NEWS ANALYSTS were foreign correspondents who experimented with telling what Hitler's rallies looked like and reporting on what was being thought and said in Europe. As war loomed, their attempts to put the headlines in a political context won a tremendous response. News commentary as we know it today came into existence in September, 1938, at the time of the Czechoslovakian crisis. The man who more than any other was responsible for inventing it was H. V. Kaltenborn. Americans listened to Kaltenborn, to Edward R. Murrow and William L. Shirer, and these men became known by voice and mannerism as no reporters of the printed press had ever been known. They became public personalities.\*

The Columbia Broadcasting System has long led in the field of news commentary. This was due originally to the secondary position of that network. Before the war, CBS was overshadowed by NBC, the original radio network, and looked to fields left largely unexplored. Among these was news broadcasting. The chairman of the CBS board, William S. Paley, was interested in news broadcasting, and one of the network vice-presidents, Edward Klauber, was a former editor of *The New York Times*. They set up a news department which had policies comparable — but still not identical

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\* Of all radio-tv personalities, newsmen and commentators are in the best position to "propagandize." Comparatively few of these men have been burdened with the kind of charges found in *Red Channels*. But because of the special nature of their work, it was thought best to deal with them separately.

— with those of the best newspapers. News was to be edited and presented by the network itself; sponsors could buy news programs but the broadcaster was to be a member of the CBS staff. Paley had the idea of following the news with an analysis of the news, which, like an editorial, would be clearly set off from the reports of what was happening. The analyses were also the product of the network staff and had specified limits.

According to a 1939 policy statement written by Klauber:

. . . What news analysts are entitled to do and should do is to elucidate and illuminate the news out of common knowledge, or special knowledge possessed by them or made available to them by this organization through its news sources. They should point out the facts on both sides, show contradictions with the known record, and so on. They should bear in mind that in a democracy it is important that people not only should know but should understand, and it is the analyst's function to help the listener to understand, to weigh, and to judge, but not to do the judging for him.

The network's distinguished news chief, the late Paul White, felt strongly about the distinction between the non-partisan analyst and the omniscient commentator. White was largely responsible for the character of the CBS operation.

The CBS policy was later taken up by NBC. The American Broadcasting Company and the Mutual Broadcasting System have worked along different lines. Their commentators are either frankly partisan or hold to fairly well-defined viewpoints. ABC and MBS commentators can speak as they please. These networks try to see to it that the various major points of view are represented in their corps of commentators. Thus on these two networks men of such disparate outlook as Fulton Lewis and John W. Vandercook, or George Sokolsky and Elmer Davis, can be heard. There is a problem here in that few Americans are sufficiently interested — or durable — to listen to the balanced total of a network's commentators; most tend to listen to the partisans who reinforce their

own convictions. But commentators of all major persuasions are there for those who wish to hear them.

This method of handling the problem of partisanship supposedly imposes on the networks responsibility to carry a balance of commentators even if some are unsponsored. It does not obligate them to keep individuals on the air. And it does not solve the problem arising when a local station decides that it will carry only broadcasters of one persuasion. (Most of the commentators on Mutual and ABC are without national sponsorship. Local stations sell them to local sponsors, if they can, and insert their own commercial messages.)

The CBS-NBC system of non-partisan analysts working as part of a network staff does prevent this kind of local partiality. The emphasis is substantially the same whether a local station carries only one, or the full schedule, of network analyses.

The Communications Act of 1934 expressly states that "Nothing in this Act shall be understood or construed to give the Commission the power of censorship over the radio communications or signals transmitted by any radio station . . ." However, in 1941, the Federal Communications Commission had before it the case of a broadcaster who had supported candidates for public office and advocated public causes, and the Commission, in its famous Mayflower decision, ruled that "a truly free radio cannot be used to advocate the causes of the licensee . . . it cannot be devoted to the support of principles he happens to regard most favorably. In brief, the broadcaster cannot be an advocate."

In 1949 the Commission reviewed its policy on editorial opinion and stated that while the "individual licensees of radio stations have the responsibility for determining the specific program material to be broadcast over their stations," nevertheless "the basic policy of the Congress [is] that radio be maintained as a medium of free speech for the general public as a whole rather than as an outlet for the purely personal or private interests of the licensee. This requires

that licensees devote a reasonable percentage of their broadcasting time to the discussion of public issues of interest in the community served by their stations and that such programs be designed so that the public has a reasonable opportunity to hear different opposing positions . . . Such presentation may include the identified expression of the licensee's personal viewpoint as part of the more general presentation of views or comments on the various issues . . ."

The parallel which industry spokesmen draw between the freedom accorded newspapers and that which they believe broadcasting should have is marked by one particular flaw: in the present condition of broadcasting, almost all individual stations have abdicated to the four national networks any responsibility they might have to initiate the discussion of international affairs. And this is true to a lesser degree in the discussion of national politics. To say that stations should have a newspaper's freedom to editorialize on these issues means — as things now stand — that the four networks should editorialize.

The first great controversies about broadcast opinion took place in the Thirties. There was the Father Coughlin affair: what had begun as religious broadcasts changed into highly controversial social and political speeches. Mutual requested the right to review the Coughlin speeches before broadcast and Father Coughlin refused, withdrew from Mutual and spoke over an *ad hoc* network. The priest was ultimately silenced by his ecclesiastical superiors.

The Orson Welles Martian episode had nothing directly to do with opinion but vividly demonstrated to both the industry and the public the power of the broadcast word and so had a bearing on subsequent discussion of the responsible use of the air. There were arguments about whether Walter Winchell and Boake Carter — popular, uninhibited and opinionated broadcasters — were worthy of the public influence their network spots gave them. Gilbert Seldes wrote in *The Big Audience*:

Among the ifs of history, one might consider seriously what would have happened to Winchell and to America if he had been a reactionary and an isolationist from 1939 to Pearl Harbor — if Pearl Harbor had come. It is imaginable that a clamor against lend-lease and for appeasing Japan might have brought a strong isolationist candidate into the field instead of Wendell Willkie. It is conceivable that a radio broadcaster with millions of believers, attracted to him originally because he was entertaining, might have thrown the balance toward such a candidate. In the summer of 1941 a single vote in Congress prevented the disbanding of American military training; in the fall of that year one popular voice added to those already on the other side might have turned the trick.

When war came, the American public was temporarily united on the great political issues. The focus of attention was on the war itself. Radio was performing brilliantly as a medium for straight news. Its speed and immediacy made it unquestionably the most important news medium for the public at large. The nation switched on the radio to hear its fate.

In 1943 a skirmish over an issue of freedom of opinion cast shadows of what was to come. Cecil Brown, the newsman who had broadcast the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, resigned from CBS and charged he was being prevented from speaking his mind. CBS said that Brown had violated the restrictions it placed on the broadcasting of analysts' private opinions. At issue was a broadcast Brown had made in which he said, in effect, that the American people had lost interest in the war. Paul White, Brown's chief at CBS, criticized the broadcast as "out and out editorializing," and thus contrary to the network's policies. CBS came under the fire of the Association of Radio News Analysts, which charged it with gagging its analysts. John W. Vandercook, speaking for the Association, asked if the CBS policy did not put the judgment of public issues into the hands of "five of its executives who control the news policies of the corporation." The network replied that what it was trying to do was keep *all* judgments

out of its analyses. White said that, ideally, "in the case of controversial issues, the audience should be left with no impression as to which side the analyst himself actually favors."

Gilbert Seldes, who worked at CBS at the time and was involved in the controversy, says that the intention was rather to keep prejudice out of the analyses. White felt very strongly about the impartiality principle; perhaps more strongly than the network chiefs. In any event, after White left CBS the emphasis on "neutrality" changed somewhat.

With the end of the war came an inevitable drop in the popularity of news and commentary. And with the peace also came a splintering in the unity of American public opinion. The Soviet Union had been highly praised during the war, American national policy had been one of collaboration with Russia, there was a considerable sympathy for the Russian people. All that changed quickly. In the final months of the war there was also a vigorous national debate over the future of Germany. The Morgenthau Plan, to take all heavy industry out of Germany and make of the Reich a state with an agricultural economy, was widely supported, as were proposals for the revision of Germany's borders beyond what had been set in the Versailles treaty. Then there was the question of Eastern Europe, supposedly liberated by the Red Army, actually being attached by the Soviet Union.

An early postwar instance of a commentator's running afoul of public controversy was centered on the German issue. In the last months of the war, Dorothy Thompson was conducting a radio news commentary for Mutual. In the spring of 1945 she wanted to go to Europe and arranged an amicable cancellation of her radio contract. The storm over the German issue broke soon after. Miss Thompson had already opposed the Morgenthau Plan, the revision of Germany's 1919 frontiers, the dismemberment of Germany and, later, other provisions in the Potsdam Agreement. She was severely criticized in the liberal press and her column was dropped by several



papers (by the *New York Post* after a front-page editorial denunciation of her views). In addition to the attacks in the press, she suffered considerable word-of-mouth character assassination and impugning of her motives. After she returned to the United States she was not asked to resume her broadcasts, and while she suspected that her controversial stand on the German question was a factor, she also felt that the public probably had enough of crisis over the air and that news comment would suffer a drop in popularity. She did not attempt to get another program and has not broadcast regularly since that time.\*

Another postwar controversy involved commentator Upton Close. Close was ultra-conservative in his views and had been a forthright isolationist. After the war he made a celebrated attack on Bishop Bernard J. Sheil. The Bishop had aroused the antagonism of many right-wingers, in and out of the Catholic Church, because of his public statements on social and political questions. Close's attack on the prelate drew an equally celebrated and dramatic reply from the Bishop himself, on time provided by the network. Open pressure from unions and left-wing and liberal organizations, "approaching a boycott" according to Gilbert Seldes, brought about Close's removal from Mutual. He turned to transcription but was unsuccessful and left the air. He now publishes a "nationalist" newsletter in Florida.

William L. Shirer, author of *Berlin Diary*, had been one of the first and most famous of radio news commentators. During and after the war he did a series of news commentaries from New York and Europe for CBS. In the spring of 1947 he resigned from the network after a dispute. Shirer felt that the situation which brought about his resignation was due in large part to the network's and

\* After Miss Thompson's column was dropped by the *Post*, a liberal radio commentator who was having somewhat similar difficulties with his network over other issues offered to join in a protest that her exclusion from the *Post* was a suppression of free opinion. She replied that she wanted no protest; that the *Post* had no Constitutional obligation to renew her contract and print her column.

especially the sponsor's displeasure with his political liberalism. The network and sponsor denied this. At the time a CBS directive forbade the expression of personal opinion by its commentators, but Shirer says it was not rigidly enforced. A few months later he began a series of broadcasts over Mutual.

In 1954 Shirer published a novel which was taken by many to be an autobiographical account of the affair and lent itself to the interpretation that the network had dropped him because of the Communist issue. Shirer says that the novel was not an autobiographical account of his case and regrets it was so interpreted. His argument with CBS, he says, had nothing to do with blacklists or charges of pro-communism.

Another commentator who left the air for some time after the war was John W. Vandercook. He resigned from NBC after a dispute with the network (not his sponsor), in which, he feels, the fact that he was a New Deal Democrat, while his superior in the news organization was a conservative, was a factor but not the only factor. There was no question of blacklisting.

Still another was Raymond Swing. Swing says that his leaving the air (ABC) at this time was a consequence of ill health and had nothing whatever to do with political issues.

Johannes Steel was a left-wing commentator who had broadcast over Mutual during the war not as a member of the network's news staff but as an independent commentator on time purchased specifically for him. After the war he temporarily went off the air and in early 1947 a dinner was held for him, organized by Dorothy Parker, from which grew the organization called The Voice of Freedom Committee.

The Voice of Freedom Committee characterized as "censorship" the fact that Shirer, Robert St. John, Vandercook, Steel and others had left the air. The group organized a system of "monitors" who listened to specific programs and commentators and each week wrote to the program in criticism or praise. "In emergency cases,"

one of its pamphlets said, "whole divisions of monitors are alerted and called into militant action by VOF and the offending station may be swamped with indignant letters, phone calls and telegrams." It claimed to have 3,000 such monitors. In cities outside New York its members would go to stations in delegations to protest "reactionary propaganda."

In May of 1947 William Shirer, who had left CBS but had not begun broadcasting for Mutual, was asked to appear at a VOF meeting in New York to discuss the reason for his departure from CBS. He was told that Edward R. Murrow, representing CBS, and a Federal Communications Commissioner would appear to discuss the issues of the controversy. Murrow did not show up. The FCC commissioner, Clifford J. Durr, did appear. Shirer says that after attending this and one more Voice of Freedom affair, he came to feel that he was being exploited. The Committee's political sympathies were certainly not his own. Thereafter he avoided the group.

When John W. Vandercook left NBC the Voice of Freedom Committee approached him in an effort to enlist him in their campaign. The commentator took an instant dislike to the political complexion of the Committee. "I had to beat them off with sticks," he said in recalling the incident. Vandercook told the group that he did not wish to pose as a martyr. "One of the divine rights of democracy is NBC's right to fire me," he said.

The Voice of Freedom Committee made its special target Fulton Lewis, Jr., the Mutual network's scrappy right-wing commentator. Lewis replied with a bitter attack on the Committee. The Committee without success tried to get equal time on Mutual to answer him. The Committee claimed that it was successful in getting one sponsor to drop Lewis. (Lewis says he has lost several sponsors as a result of liberal and left-wing pressure groups.)

Lewis was not the only target of the Voice of Freedom. At the beginning of the Korean war the group attacked Eric Sevareid, Richard Harkness, Lowell Thomas, Gabriel Heatter, John Cameron

Swayze, Douglas Edwards, Richard Hottelet, CBS's correspondent in Germany (the Committee compared him with Goebbels), Edward R. Murrow (whose remarks on the Korean war, according to the Committee, were "a mouldy dish of red-baiting rhetoric"), and a generous number of other commentators and reporters, both conservative and liberal. The Committee's position on the Korean affair was founded on the belief that North Korea had been attacked by South Korea. After 1950, the Voice of Freedom Committee faded away.

Of the ten radio newsmen listed in *Red Channels*, only Robert St. John, William L. Shirer, and Howard K. Smith were network commentators of national reputation.\* Alexander Kendrick was identified in the book as a writer and foreign correspondent and subsequently has become well known as a London correspondent for the Columbia Broadcasting System. The other radio news commentators listed by *Red Channels* were Arthur Gaeth, William S. Gailmor, Roderick B. Holmgren, Lisa Sergio, Johannes Steel and J. Raymond Walsh.

Robert St. John has retired from broadcasting. He now lives in Europe.

After leaving CBS in 1947, William Shirer broadcast for Mutual. When *Red Channels* was published in 1950 he was in Europe gathering material for a book. He recently stated: "Since *Red Channels* was published I have never been regularly employed by a major network. It was not a matter of low ratings, etc." One summer he broadcast for the short-lived Liberty Broadcasting System, a baseball network which unsuccessfully tried to break into general programming. On a few occasions he has appeared on NBC's "Today" as a guest commentator.

Shirer feels he has been the victim of blacklisting. He regards

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\* Winston Burdett, CBS newsman who testified in the summer of 1955 that he had once served briefly as a Soviet agent, was not listed.

his three citations in *Red Channels* — which did not accuse him of being a Communist or directly of being a fellow-traveler — as arbitrary and misleading. Any implication they made of sympathy for communism was directly contradictory to the views he had expressed in his books and in hundreds of broadcasts. Shirer feels that, his own case aside, the executives of the major networks have abdicated their responsibilities in this matter to persons outside the industry. “I think,” he told a reporter not long ago, “that if the major networks had taken a firm stand in the beginning, excluding Communists and fascists from their staffs, but making a fair determination of individual cases, this thing would never have gotten off the ground. The network executives themselves are chiefly responsible.” In recent years Shirer has devoted himself to freelance writing and lecturing.

Howard K. Smith, chief of the European news staff of the Columbia Broadcasting System, says of his listing in *Red Channels*: “I am happy to say that I have suffered very little or not at all. I have never seen the listing or what it said. It produced no effect on my relations with CBS, nor had any public reaction that I have heard of. I know that many people have suffered due to such attacks. But somehow I was not scathed.”

Alexander Kendrick made a similar statement:

As I recall, the citations in themselves were accurate. They were, of course, made without any reference to any other activities or writing. I suppose I am one of the fortunate few who suffered no adverse effects as a result. The listing did not affect my relationship with CBS in any way. Indeed, after the listing, I became a staff correspondent although previously, when the black book came out, I had been only a local correspondent in Vienna. Whether there were any letters to the network, I do not know. I suppose there must have been, and if so, CBS must have ignored them. The point is, of course, that CBS News is under the control and supervision of CBS and that sponsorship pressure does not operate as it does in the entertainment phase of radio and television. So far as I know, CBS News resisted successfully any such

pressure. The only CBS comment made to me about *Red Channels* was from Edward R. Murrow, who said: "If you're in trouble, we're all in trouble."

Arthur Gaeth could not be located for comment on his experience with *Red Channels*. He formerly broadcast over ABC for the United Electrical Workers union.

William S. Gailmor, Roderick B. Holmgren and Lisa Sergio have all been retired from broadcasting. Holmgren recently described his case this way:

For the two years following the end of the war, I was "labor's own commentator," sponsored by the Chicago Federation of Labor on the federation's station, WCFL. I tried to be scrupulously careful to adhere to policies on every issue about which I commented. I was fired in September, 1947 — three years before publication of *Red Channels*. When I pressed for the reason, I was told it was because I had "followed a CIO line." Some time before that, I learned, quite by accident, that the manager of the station was visited repeatedly by an agent or agents for the FBI, who talked with him specifically about me. It goes without saying that I never learned any details of these meetings.

In December of 1947, I went to work for the Chicago Typographical Union, writing radio scripts for a series of nightly broadcasts in connection with the strike against five Chicago dailies. Though the Typos asked me to write, produce and emcee the broadcasts, the WCFL manager refused to let me set foot inside the studios. I continued doing these scripts about four months, and quit voluntarily to go to work for the Progressive Party in the spring of 1948.

Some time during 1949 or early 1950, I did a series of news commentaries for a new FM station in Chicago, WMOR. The broadcasts were unsponsored, with the understanding that the station sales staff would attempt to obtain a sponsor, using the live program itself as "sample." I did two broadcasts about the Peoria Street race riots, in which I identified names of several of those who started the violence. A . . . restaurant chain owner who held some stock in the station, pressured the young veterans who were operating the station to suggest that I leave the air. I did, remaining friends with the struggling young station directors.

In effect, the loss of my job as commentator for WCFL ended my

radio career, since I was unable to secure another permanent job in that field. It was for this reason that I turned, in 1949, to the labor movement where I have been working in black-and-white editorial jobs since.

I suppose the word "progressive" would best characterize my political position. The listing in *Red Channels* is accurate. I was publicity chairman for the National Labor Conference for Peace. I *did* teach classes in journalism at the ill-fated Abraham Lincoln School. I've never been quite clear as to what the two citations proved.

The *Red Channels* listing, Holmgren feels, merely made it "official" that the door was closed.

Holmgren is now an Associate Editor of the official organ of the International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, which is often cited as a Communist-dominated union.

Johannes Steel had broadcast for what is now station WMGM in New York City after he left the Mutual network. *Counterattack* criticized his broadcasts, and there was pressure on him from various anti-Communist groups, Catholic groups in particular. Steel believes that "the worst pressure group is the Roman Catholic Church." At the end of 1948 or early in 1949 (he does not recall exactly), he was dismissed by the station. He believes that his dismissal was a consequence of Catholic pressure on the owners of the station but adds that all concerned would deny this. When *Red Channels* was published, Steel had the distinction, such as it was, of 34 Communist-front citations, more than any other radio commentator. At the time the listings appeared he was already off the air. In 1950-51 he returned to broadcasting on New York's WLIB on time he purchased himself. But he is again off the air and has, he feels, been "driven off." He now characterizes his own political position as "an Eisenhower Republican, formerly a Roosevelt Democrat."

J. Raymond Walsh is a former director of Research and Education for the CIO. In 1945 he went into radio. From that year until 1950 he broadcast for WMCA in New York. His sponsor was a

retail chain store. There was increasing pressure on the sponsor during those five years, principally because of Mr. Walsh's views on foreign policy and the China question. His broadcast sharply criticizing Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri, brought on considerable protest. When *Red Channels* was published, he says, the consumer pressure against his sponsor, "especially from Catholic groups," was so great that they had to drop him, and as he was unsponsored he went off the air. "There is no question but that *Red Channels* played a very important role in my case," Walsh says. He characterizes his politics as independent, pro-labor and pro-New Deal. "I am more radical than many liberals but not from any specifically Marxian position." He is now with a private investment concern in New York.

Raymond Swing was not listed in *Red Channels*. But shortly after its publication he was invited to debate the question of Communist influence in radio with Theodore Kirkpatrick, of *Counterattack*, before the Radio Executives Club. Swing argued that the Communist problem was a genuine one in radio but that the danger was not only that commentators and entertainers were Communists but that technical personnel and the executives themselves might be Party members. He also argued that the responsibility for dealing with the problem belonged with the networks themselves and ought not to be turned over to an outside group which worked for profit.

Shortly after the debate, Swing was attacked in an issue of *Counterattack*. To the best of his knowledge, this had no effect on his career. He subsequently left the Liberty network to spend two years as chief political commentator for the Voice of America and now works on Edward R. Murrow's staff at CBS.

In March, 1954, *Counterattack* devoted an entire issue to Murrow, charging him with receiving an inordinate amount of praise from the Communist press and criticizing his broadcasts on Big Four talks, the Harry Dexter White case, Lieutenant Milo Radulovich, and Senator McCarthy. The newsletter stated that Murrow



slanted his reporting and was guilty of "unsoundness on vital issues concerning communism." The criticism of Murrow has often been echoed in the *American Mercury*, the *Brooklyn Tablet* and other right-wing publications. Murrow obviously has not been substantially harmed by the attacks and has remarked of unfriendly mail and pressure campaigns, "I never worry about that stuff."

*Red Channels* and the other listings obviously cannot be blamed for all the vicissitudes in the careers of the reputable commentators. The *Red Channels* controversy took place at a time when television was making its first inroads into the economic structure of radio. The industry was in transition. News departments, stepchildren of the industry, are easily affected by economic problems. In the case of one well-known commentator, even observers sympathetic to his politics suggest that it was not politics that lost him his job — it was dullness.

One evaluation of the total effect which the "lists" have had on the field of radio opinion itself is a consideration of what is on the air today. ABC and NBC are surely no more conservative in their news commentaries than they were before *Red Channels* was published. NBC's broadcasts of news comment tend generally to be non-partisan analyses. ABC continues to have a balance of representative points of view. The Mutual network's Washington news chief has been quoted as saying that he is a "conservative working for a conservative network."

This would seem to be an accurate description of the network's general point of view in news comment. But Mutual's example does not prove any industry trend. CBS can certainly be characterized as more liberal in its news analyses than it was five or six years ago. It no longer strives for the kind of broadcast where, as Paul White urged, "the listener is left with no impression as to which side the analyst himself actually favors." There are judgments made in CBS analyses, and the tone is "internationalist" or "liberal" in so far as

such categorization is valid. But there are no crusades and opposing arguments are honestly reported.

Yet there have been consequences from the events in which the "lists" played a part which are more subtle. And this is perhaps the major significance they have had. Edward P. Morgan, former CBS news chief, now an ABC commentator in Washington, said recently: "The lists, as well as the whole climate of opinion of the past few years, put into the minds of even the best men something which was not there before — a care about the words they used, an instinct to cover themselves on controversial issues." He added: "Commentators are hard to sell anyway. With a few notable exceptions, no commentator can be sold to a sponsor unless his opinions coincide with business opinion — or at least don't clash with it."

Lawrence Spivak, one of the originators of NBC's "Meet the Press," argues that by and large sponsors do not use commentators to articulate a political position. "Advertisers are primarily interested in programs that attract an audience who will buy their products or services, or bring them good will. There may be exceptions to this, possibly on a local level, but even there not many advertisers will spend money just to sell their political ideas."

It is this problem of the general trend in opinion which has had an inhibiting effect on commentators. The "lists" are simply one aspect of a total situation which might be characterized as an increased tendency among Americans to condemn rather than argue. It is inevitable of course that passionate controversy will involve undercurrents of rumor and vituperation. But in recent years the undercurrents seem to have quickened.

Eric Sevareid, chief of the CBS Washington news staff, and some of his colleagues did a few paid broadcasts for the Voice of America in 1950. Sevareid personally made one short broadcast at the request of the Voice, which was trying to comply with the Smith-Mundt Act requiring the services of "private enterprise." He and his colleagues were then attacked in several anti-Communist "fact

sheets" as "paid propagandists" for the "pro-Communist" Acheson State Department. Severeid said recently: "This sort of thing, the organized pressure and the vituperative letters and calls one sometimes gets, produce a feeling of depression or distress in a man. Any fairly sensitive person cannot help but react."

Severeid contends that a commentator ought in fairness to be judged by his approach to events. "Some try to be fair, to be objective — in the sense of avoiding partisanship, not in the sense of being neutral. Some are tendentious." This, he feels, is the difference. "Involved too is the special problem of the writer, an essentially private problem which does not submit to formulae and which rarely is understood, even by network executives, certainly not by those who are organizing pressure campaigns to score points for one side or the other."

Martin Agronsky of ABC is a "cooperatively" sponsored liberal commentator who has been the target of heavy pressure in recent years. "Even though I have experienced some heavy going at times, I have been commercial. The network has backed me up. That's all I ask." Agronsky says, however, that the problem in dealing with the various pressures which affect commentators is simply that responsible people in the networks and stations frequently fail to find out whether allegations against commentators are true or not. A station manager may panic at an organized letter campaign. Agronsky feels the networks must choose their commentators carefully, assuring themselves they have a responsible staff, and then back them to the hilt.

Drew Pearson had some specific troubles. Senator McCarthy made an attack against him on the Senate floor which caused the commentator to lose his sponsor. Pearson feels that the McCarthy attack also frightened off some prospective television sponsors. He sued McCarthy for libel and has attempted to draw the Senator into repeating the charges outside the Senate.

Elmer Davis of ABC says: "I don't doubt that plenty of people

have tried to get ABC to put me off the air, but apparently all their letters go into the waste basket . . . These things naturally never had any effect on what I say."

Chet Huntley, a West Coast television news analyst now broadcasting from New York, became the object of attack in Los Angeles for his forthright support of UNESCO, his criticism of Senator McCarthy and various other right-wing causes. Huntley's sponsor, a coffee firm, was threatened with a boycott. But liberal groups rallied to Huntley's support, and the coffee company stood right behind him. Their sales actually increased during the controversy when Huntley's supporters urged their friends to buy the product. The protesting group was not large enough to offset the effect on sales.

A different type of controversy arose in 1954. Judge Dorothy Kenyon, a prominent liberal, accepted an invitation to appear on a panel discussion show with Godfrey P. Schmidt, entitled "Answers for Americans," Mr. Schmidt is president of AWARE, Inc. Two days later Judge Kenyon called the program office to inform the director that she had discovered "Answers for Americans" to be a Facts Forum show. She explained that she was a member of Americans for Democratic Action and that the "national policy" of that organization "bars" its members from appearing on any Facts Forum programs.

The case was referred by Facts Forum to the American Civil Liberties Union as a "shocking case of blacklisting." But, after an investigation, the ACLU found that "Miss Kenyon's action consisted only of a decision by a person invited to be a participant not to take part in a program after discovering that it was sponsored by an organization opposed by her organization, the ADA."

## “Clearance”

EVER SINCE BLACKLISTING in radio-tv began, “clearance” has been possible. Dozens of persons who were at one time “unemployable” have been put back to work, often after months and even years of anguish-ridden idleness. Performers listed in *Red Channels* and denounced furiously in *Counterattack*, the American Legion’s *Firing Line*, the *Brooklyn Tablet*, the *American Mercury* and similar publications have been found acceptable again. They have been “cleared.”

“Clearance” is never a lonely operation. The artist who “clears” himself must do so to the satisfaction of those responsible for blacklisting him in the first place. He must “clear” himself in such a way as to assure potential employers that they are not going to run into difficulty if they hire him. Sponsors must feel certain that those who originally demanded he be blacklisted now consider him “cleared.”

A New York public-relations expert who has guided more than a dozen once-blacklisted performers to the “right people,” explained his role this way:

“If a man is clean and finds his way to me the first thing I do is examine his record. I look particularly to see if it includes charges that he is a member of the Communist Party. I want to find out if he is ‘clearable.’ Once I am convinced that he is not a Communist, or if he has been a Communist, has had a change of heart, I ask him whether he has talked to the FBI. If he hasn’t, I tell him the first thing he must do is go to the FBI and tell them everything

he knows. 'I tell him to say to them, 'I am a patriotic citizen and I want you to ask me any questions you have in mind.'

"Then I find out where he is being blacklisted — where it is he can't get work, who in the industry is keeping him from working, and who outside the industry has made him controversial. If, for instance, I find it is the American Legion, I call one of the top Legion officials and tell him this man has come to me for help and says he is innocent. The official may say to me, "Why this guy has 47 listings and I know people who say they don't believe him.' But I say, 'I'm going to have him make a statement.' Then, when the Legion guy gets the statement and has read it, I call and ask him for a note saying he is satisfied by the statement. He will usually say, 'I won't put anything in writing but if anyone is interested have him call me.'

"Somewhere along the line I may find George Sokolsky is involved. I go to him and tell him that the Legion official thinks this boy is all right. If I can convince Sokolsky then I go to Victor Riesel, Fred Woltman [New York *World-Telegram and Sun* staff writer] or whoever else is involved. When I've gotten four 'affidavits' from key people like these, I go to Jack Wren at BBD&O and to the 'security officer' at CBS.

"I wait a few days, then I telephone Wren. He may say to me, 'You're crazy. I know 15 things this guy hasn't explained.' I ask him, 'What are they?' and he says, 'He didn't come clean.' So I send for the guy. He comes in here and he moans and wails and beats his head against the wall. 'I have searched my memory,' he will say. 'I have questioned my wife and my agent. There's not a thing they can remember.'

"I call Wren back and he says, 'When your boy is ready to come clean I'll talk to him.' In that case we've reached a dead end. My boy has been cleared but he can't get a job. I know cases where victims have sat around eight to ten months after 'clearance' before they got work."

A second possibility, the "clearance" guide pointed out, is that Wren will say, "I think you are right about this boy, but what do you want from me? I can't hire him." In that case, the public-relations man said, the victim has to find a friend who is casting a television show and is willing to put him on the air to test his "clearance." "If the attempt backfires and protests come in, the guy is through."

"Last of all," the guide said, "there is the possibility that Wren will pick up the phone and call a casting director or producer and say, 'Why don't you give Bill a part in the show?'" Once the black-listed performer appears on a CBS television program, it is notice to the industry and to all the producers that he can be used.

The public-relations expert concluded: "A guy who is in trouble, even if he has a good case for himself, will stay dead unless he finds someone like me who can lead him through the jungle of people who have to be satisfied. He has to persuade these people one by one. Usually he finds his way to a lawyer and that comes a cropper, or he finds a public-relations man or press agent who doesn't have the confidence of the 'clearance men,' and he's only wasting his time."

Without access to the chief "clearance men" (who are often the same persons who make the damning indictment), the blacklisted artist can get nowhere. These particular men are all-important. They have the power to wound and the power to heal the wound. They can hold off right-wing criticism, which in turn cuts off pressure on sponsors or networks when a "controversial" artist is put back to work. If the performer is well known he may need not only their passive sufferance but active support to re-establish himself with that section of the public given to telephoning networks and writing protest letters to sponsors. So it is fairly meaningless to say that no one can clear a blacklisted artist but the artist himself.

What are the qualifications for a "clearance man"? His own anti-Communist credentials should be recognized by the groups which

stimulate blacklisting. He must be acceptable not only to other "clearance men" but to the networks' and advertising agencies' "security officers." His word must mean something to persons like Laurence A. Johnson, the powerful Syracuse grocer, who hold the economic weapon which seemingly sends terror into the hearts of network and agency executives. His "clearance" must stick with right-wing editors, columnists and public speakers. It is especially important that they stick with various Hearst columnists, the editors of *Counterattack*, and the officers in charge of the American Legion's anti-subversive committees. In some cases the "clearance men" have sold their services as public-relations consultants and speech writers to the artists going through "clearance." In other cases "clearance" activities are based on disinterested service.

A blacklisted artist who wants to clear himself might see any one of a fairly select group of men whose connections and influence confer upon them the powers of absolution. Some are more influential than others, but all have "clearance" notches in their belt.

The most professional of all is Vincent Hartnett — professional not in the sense that his word carries the most weight (actually the leading "security officers" on Madison Avenue take a sniffy attitude toward Hartnett) but that he makes a full-time occupation out of what for others is merely a sideline.

Hartnett describes himself as a "talent consultant." This does not mean that he passes on a singer's voice, a musician's ability or a chorus girl's legs; it means that agencies and sponsors check with him on the political backgrounds of people being considered for a job. His fees are modest — \$5 for a first report on an artist, \$2 for additional checking. Where thoroughgoing investigation seems called for, the price may go as high as \$20.

In an interview with Jack Gould, radio-tv editor for *The New York Times*, Hartnett "emphasized that he did not accept money from artists personally who might wish to avail themselves of his



advice in countering pro-Communist allegations.” The interview was reported in the *Times*, June 20, 1955. Two years earlier, when a well-known actress wanted to do just that, Hartnett wrote back to her attorney that further research would be necessary in order to insure a complete report, and to authenticate information. The fee for such a complete report would be two hundred dollars. This would include a thorough analysis of Miss X’s left-wing connections in the theatre, as well as listed affiliations with activities cited as Communist-front. It would also include photographic copies of key exhibits. If the actress really wished to correct her past mistakes, it would be necessary for her to review her entire record – whether obtained from Hartnett or from whatever source she wished. Hartnett said there were a few other experts in this field, in addition to himself, who would be able to make such an analysis, but he imagined their fees would be the same as his, and in some cases a bit higher. . . .

Hartnett was a pioneer. He wrote articles about “Red infiltration” of radio-tv and the theatre for the Catholic magazine, *The Sign*, before *Red Channels* appeared. He has written on the same subject for the *American Mercury* and the *American Legion Magazine*. He takes credit for *Red Channels* (which he once described as “no more than a primer on the subject, containing not a tenth of the material in my files”). He is currently engaged in writing a bigger and better *Red Channels* to be called *File 13, Volume 2*. The book, like *File 13 (Volume 1)* which he circulated a few years ago, is intended for a special clientele and, so the rumors go on Madison Avenue, will sell for several hundred dollars.

Hartnett may be the most widely criticized man in the radio-tv industry, because he is frankly in the business of exposing people with “front records” and then, later, of “clearing” them – or as the *Times* writer delicately put it, “advising them on how to counter pro-Communist allegations.” But some of Hartnett’s sharpest critics are the well-paid “security officers” on Madison Avenue. Certainly

Hartnett has not grown rich on his profits, and he is a hard-working, thoroughgoing researcher. He seems to have hundreds of facts in his head and dozens of documents at his fingertips.

Hartnett has been aptly described as a “walking filing case.” Mention a performer’s name and he will snap back with something like this – “Oh, yes, he endorsed People’s Radio Foundation, cited in the *American Legion Summary* in November, 1949; signed a letter put out by the American Committee for Indonesian Independence – you can find that in a 1946 issue of the *Indonesian Review*; sent a greeting to Mother Bloor on her 75th birthday – a Birthday Souvenir Book was published; and, yes, he signed the Open Letter for Closer Cooperation with the Soviet Union, reported in Eugene Lyon’s *The Red Decade*, page 249.”

Hartnett believes fiercely in what he is doing. Even in ordinary conversation he sounds like a *Counterattack* editorial. He hammers away at the “Communist conspiracy” (never simply “communism” or the “Communist Party”), the “CP transmission belt,” the Party’s “coffers” (never its bank account), etc. He distinguishes sharply between “liberals” and “anti-Communists.” Questions about the civil-liberties aspect of blacklisting he dismisses as so much anti-anti-communism.

In April, 1951, Hartnett was called as the first witness to appear before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee investigating “Subversive Infiltration of Radio, Television and the Entertainment Industry.” He declared that between 1936 and ’50 “the Actors Equity Association appeared to be dominated by the pro-Communist faction.” But the situation at the time he was testifying, he said, was considerably improved. “However, it is still critical.” Hartnett proceeded then to cite the voluminous Communist records of two radio writers. One he described as a “triple-threat man of the Communist Party”; the other, a one-time president of the Radio Writers Guild, he described as “the next important pro-Communist writer.”

Hartnett received no public credit for his part in preparing *Red*

*Channels*, but he let it be known the idea was his and after the book appeared he became a recognized authority on communism in the radio-tv industry. He lectured frequently before veterans and Catholic parish groups and was formally honored by the Catholic War Veterans a few years ago. His fame has spread outside New York. When a Hollywood actress tried to find out how she could be cleared for radio-tv, Roy Brewer himself referred her to Hartnett.

Some of the general dislike for Hartnett in radio-tv circles can be traced to the inquisitorial tone of his letters. He was criticized openly during an AFTRA (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) meeting on this score. In the spring of 1955, Leslie Barrett, a television actor, spoke in favor of the AFTRA resolution to condemn AWARE, Inc. "There is disagreement," Barrett said, "but few will speak out. Why? Because 'I've got a little list,' as the saying goes, and if your name is listed, you do not work. Needless to say the situation is deplorable. One is afraid to look at anyone, to speak to anyone, to protest on the floor. . . . You come in silently, you leave silently."

Barrett — a shy man not in the habit of addressing union meetings — was enthusiastically applauded by the radio-tv performers for breaking the silence. Before he sat down, he read a letter he had received from Hartnett a few weeks earlier. After receiving the letter, the actor said, he experienced nothing but "grief and anxiety . . . I can neither hold my food nor sleep."

The letter from Hartnett went this way:

In preparing a book on the Left Theater I came across certain information regarding you. A photograph of the 1952 New York May Day Parade shows you marching to the right of [Barrett deleted the name]. It is always possible that people who have in good faith supported certain causes come to realize that their support was misplaced. Therefore, I am writing you to ascertain if there has been any change in your position. You are, of course, under no obligation to reply to this letter. As a matter of fact, I am under no obligation to write to you. However, my aim is to be scrupulously fair and to establish the facts.

If I do not hear from you, I must conclude that your marching in the 1952 May Day Parade is still an accurate index of your position and sympathies . . .

Barrett's lawyer wrote to Hartnett and stated that the actor had never marched in a May Day Parade in his life and had no Communist leanings or sympathies whatsoever. Hartnett answered by writing directly to Barrett:

To my surprise, I received today a letter . . . from Mr. Klein, a lawyer . . . I say I was surprised because I wrote my . . . letter to you, not to Mr. Klein or any other member of your family . . . I have no way of establishing that Mr. Klein is authorized to speak for you . . . Parenthetically, is Mr. Klein the same Mr. Klein who in 1939 resided at . . . . ., Brooklyn, New York and who is listed as having signed the CP nominating petitions, New York State and/or New York City, 1939-40? Enclosed is a photograph of a group of marchers on the New York May Day Parade. The gentleman at left center, underneath red arrow marking, certainly looks to me like you. It is possible, I am mistaken. There may be some other actor, unknown to me, in New York, who closely resembles you . . .

Barrett's lawyer was *not* the Klein who signed the nominating petition. Barrett was *not* the actor (if indeed it was an actor) who was photographed at the May Day Parade. Hartnett was finally satisfied on both these counts and wrote Barrett saying he hoped the actor "incurred no expense by the *unnecessary* move of calling in a lawyer. This only muddied the waters."

Other actors during the same winter received letters from Hartnett demanding that they "explain" past political associations under penalty of being "listed" in his book on the Left Theater. In some cases the demands were backed up by a threat that if they did not satisfy Hartnett that they had "changed their positions," he would publish the "facts" — and this, he hinted strongly, would certainly have an effect on their popularity and/or employability.

An actor who had appeared in a play put on at a rally honoring several Soviet visitors during the very early postwar period received

one of these letters from Hartnett. Hartnett stated that if he did not hear from the actor he could only presume he was still high in the councils of the Communist Party. The actor, a man who never took any interest in politics, was stunned. The half-forgotten performance Hartnett resurrected seemed entirely innocent at the time. The Soviet visitors honored at the meeting were on a tour of the United States sponsored by the State Department. The actor merely repeated a role he played in a radio drama during the war, and he did so at the request of a radio producer.

This performer, who sought the advice of a lawyer, also incurred some "unnecessary" expenses. The price he paid in anxiety about his future was something else again.

Hartnett's position on blacklisting is clear: he is for it. Like many others, he balks at the word but accepts the fact. Not long ago he stated his belief that "no provable Communist Party member or provable collaborator of the Communist Party should work on radio or television."

Several questions arise here: the question of Communist Party membership is clear enough, but what is a "collaborator"? The "proof" consists in the kind of citations found in *Red Channels*, but "collaborator" remains a word open to several meanings. Is signing a Communist-sponsored petition "collaboration"? It could be clearly so, if that was the intention of the signer. But the whole problem of a front is that it *is* a front and not the real thing; by its very definition, non-Communists are drawn in. In the very beginning *Red Channels* made no distinctions between willing collaborators and "dupes" unwittingly brought into the Communist orbit. It could make no such distinction without the ability to read the human heart. The confusion is cleared up, according to Hartnett, when the "dupe," ready to admit his "mistake," lends himself to anti-Communist activity.

But Hartnett remains the judge of what is and is not "anti-Com-

munist." For instance, when a reporter asked him whether he would accept participation in Americans for Democratic Action as an example of anti-communism, he answered candidly no, he would not. The ADA, he said, may be anti-Communist vis-a-vis world communism but it is "soft on communism" at home; it is part and parcel of the "world-wide collectivistic, socialistic movement." By the same token, an erstwhile "dupe" trying to gain his credentials as an anti-Communist could not afford to support the AFTRA resolution to condemn AWARE, Inc., however much he may have believed that such groups as AWARE hinder rather than help the fight against Communism.

The point of course is not whether Hartnett's political opinions are wrong or right. The point is that some of those who do not honestly go along with them either have to conform or risk unemployment.

The following is a statement Vincent Hartnett offered to the author of this report:

It is initially noted that "blacklisting" in its traditional trade-union sense refers to denial of employment because of union activities. In this correct sense, there is no known "blacklisting" of talent in radio-tv. By application, "blacklisting" has been recently used to convey denial of employment because of subversive activities. It has also been used to connote denial of employment by Communists or pro-Communists to individuals who have actively opposed communism.

No real understanding of this question is possible unless one first understands that since the 1930s there has been a "cold war" in show business between the Communists and their allies on the one hand, and active anti-Communists on the other hand. Communist literature is replete with descriptions of Communist efforts to penetrate the theatre (in its broad sense) and use "art as a weapon in the class struggle." The conflict with the Communist forces in the theatre was first joined in an important manner in Actors Equity Association. The conflict spread to radio in an important manner in 1943. The Communists stepped up their efforts in radio in 1946, following receipt of a directive

from the Soviet Union. (See my article, "They've Moved In on TV," *American Legion Magazine*, January 1953, pp. 26 ff.)

As a basic tactic, the Communist forces sought wherever possible to give available jobs to party members or collaborators with the Communists. Patronage has been of the essence of Communist successes in the theatre. Those who had jobs to give did not need to be Party members; they could be "sympathizers."

That such patronage was used seems a conclusion warranted from an examination of the casting on certain TV shows. The old "T-Men in Action" series (from its inception until late-1952) habitually featured known Communists and individuals with significant Communist-front records. So did the old "Big Story" series, which was also formerly on radio. (*Cf. op. cit.*, p. 26.)

Complementary-wise, these series in the period noted featured few, if any, active anti-Communists. It is not stated that the series deliberately "blacklisted" active anti-Communists: by hiring a relatively very high incidence of Communists and Communist-fronters, they achieved the same effect.

In recent years, other TV series which have manifested a high incidence of Communists and Communist-fronters, and a low incidence of active anti-Communists, comparatively speaking, are "Danger," "Philco TV Playhouse," and "Omnibus" (a project of the Ford Foundation).

There was probably nothing illegal in the effective "blacklisting" of active anti-Communists on such series as the old "T-Men." By the same token, there is nothing illegal in efforts to favor anti-Communists on radio-TV. Such efforts have been dictated by the necessity of resisting Communist efforts to penetrate radio-TV and use those media for Party purposes. The war against Communist subversion is not just five thousand miles away. It is more immediately right here in New York.

# The Syracuse Crusade

LAURENCE A. JOHNSON IS A BUSINESSMAN of some prominence around his home town of Syracuse, New York. He owns and operates four self-service grocery stores and is active in civic affairs. His shrewd, colorful merchandising has won the admiration of other store owners all over the United States. But to the "security officers" on Madison Avenue, Johnson is a good deal more than a successful grocer. He is at once a nuisance and an asset, for he keeps a watchful eye on their hiring practices and, in doing so, bears out their common contention that blacklisting, however regrettable, is economically necessary. "If we don't screen out controversial people," as one executive put it, "we will be hurting the sales of the product we are trying to sell. Therefore, not to screen would be unbusinesslike and violate the trust of stockholders."

This "economic" argument was stated in its clearest form by Paul M. Hahn, president of The American Tobacco Company, makers of Lucky Strikes. Hahn wrote not long ago:

The company which I represent is a publicly owned commercial corporation, engaged in the manufacture and marketing of trade-mark consumer goods, which are offered for sale to the general public. It is owned by some 85,000 shareholders. Its management is put into office by the shareholders . . . for the purpose of safeguarding and increasing the value of their investments, of earning profits which can be paid to the 85,000 owners in the form of dividends. To perform the responsibility which has been entrusted to it, this management must strive to maintain and improve the Company's business, which means maintaining and increasing the sales of its products to the purchasing public.



When a company such as ours uses its corporate funds to sponsor a program on television or radio, it does so with but one purpose — to reach the largest possible number of the public as its audience, and to present its products to that audience in the most favorable light . . . since it is the function of an artist employed on such a program to please rather than to displease, and since the successful promotion of consumer products depends in large measure on the impression left by sponsored entertainment, it follows that we would be wasting shareholders' funds were we to employ artists or other persons who, under company auspices, are likely to offend the public . . . We would disapprove of employing an artist whose conduct in any respect, "political" or otherwise, has made him or is likely to make him distasteful to the public.

Laurence A. Johnson, who takes action when a "controversial" person does appear on radio-tv, uses economic threats to get his way. In addition, much of his effort has gone into making obscure and unknown performers "controversial." The Syracuse grocer, therefore, not only lends credence to the "economic" argument for blacklisting; generally speaking, he *is* the argument.

This is not to say that were there no Johnson there would be no blacklisting. Far from it. Without him though the industry spokesmen would be hard put to illustrate their dollars-and-cents case. But everyone can see that when the grocer in Syracuse objects to how his suppliers use their advertising money, he does something about it. He visits, phones, telegraphs or writes networks, advertising-agency executives and sponsors themselves. He does not say he will remove the products of the offending sponsor from the shelves of his Syracuse stores, but he does threaten to hang a sign over their product, pointing out that these manufacturers employ "subversives." That is usually enough to get action. Moreover, Johnson encourages other store owners to join in the crusade and urges shoppers to write letters threatening to withdraw patronage if sponsors do not heed his judgment about radio-tv talent.

For all their influence, Johnson and his Syracuse supporters do

not command a wide popular following. For example, they campaigned against Edward R. Murrow in one of their publications (*Spotlight*) and urged readers to send protests to Murrow's sponsor, the Aluminum Company of America. But Alcoa, according to Arthur P. Hall, vice-president, did not receive a single protesting letter as a result of the *Spotlight* story.

Johnson is well known in the supermarket trade, and on many matters his word counts for something. From the beginning, then, a number of large corporations employing radio-tv talent cooperated willingly, almost eagerly, with his crusade. From time to time the grocer has released portions of his correspondence with business executives who had only good words for his efforts to police the air waves. For instance, a vice-president of Kraft Foods Company wrote him on September 8, 1952: "It is indeed heartening to know that you are continuing your crusade . . . I sincerely hope you keep up the good work." On another occasion the President of the General Ice Cream Corporation wrote: "I think it is wonderful that you have taken this interest in ferreting Communists out of our entertainment industry. I wish there were more people like you."

Armed with letters like these, Johnson became a power on Madison Avenue. Few if any of the advertising executives have faith in his judgments. But with their most important clients in the grocer's corner, even fewer are prepared to ignore him. As the legal head of one agency put it: "He gets the sponsors worried. He puts the heat on them. Then they put the heat on us. How much of that can you stand?"

Johnson's crusade began in 1951. His influence grew rapidly. And as he became more of a power, his demands increased accordingly. In time, even some of the corporation executives who once praised his efforts had all they could take. In a letter to a district manager, one corporation executive with responsibility for an important television program, outlined some of the difficulties he had in dealing with Johnson. The executive wrote:

Briefly, Mr. Johnson for several years has been taking it upon himself to put various pressures on food manufacturers, and others using television, to force them to refrain from engaging certain individuals accused by Mr. Johnson and his group in Syracuse of being identified with the Communist movement. I believe it is obvious to you, as well as to [our] customers that [our] company would not knowingly hire a Communist, a subversive, or an objectionable character of any sort . . . The only difference of opinion between Mr. Johnson and us is that we are not willing to accept his accusations or statements as sufficient reason for putting any individual on a blacklist . . . The facts of the matter are that Mr. Johnson is desirous of our hiring certain individuals whom he names, to tell us how to run our business — individuals who, like himself, are fighting communism and Communist talent in the theatrical world. He also has asked us from time to time to hire certain talent, people active in this same crusade, but, unfortunately, people with questionable talent, most of whom we cannot use. On the other hand, he overlooks entirely the fact that we have used some of his people on many occasions. It is apparent that Johnson is not interested in our desire to work with him and cooperate — he and his group want to dictate our policies . . .

Up and down Madison Avenue there are steady complaints about Johnson's interference. But the industry has never tested the grocer's power in any meaningful way. On the few occasions when he has been challenged he appears to have come off second best. Still, the chances of his power's being fully tested are not good. For in Johnson, the Madison Avenue fraternity sees a germ of reality worth a thousand opinion polls. The man from Syracuse saves the industry from looking like a punch-drunk boxer who takes a swipe at the air here and there, then staggers back from imagined blows. With Johnson in the ring, the industry spokesmen do not have to feel foolish when someone asks just how real the "economic" threat is. That argument is based on pleasing "the public"; for purposes of defending blacklisting, Johnson *is* the public. He can always be cited if one asks what the industry is afraid of. In going straight to the sponsor, Johnson hits the exact nerve center. No sponsor wants his prod-

uct associated with "controversy." "All Johnson did," said one network executive, "was to turn around a can of coffee and discover that there, lo and behold, were Mr. Chase and Mr. Sanborn."

When Johnson began his personal crusade he already had a number of factors in his favor. His was a typical medium-sized business in a typical medium-sized market. Yet he was close enough to New York, and the home offices of his suppliers, their advertising agencies, and the radio-television networks, to make his presence felt. (Industry and sponsor executives and performers asking "clearance" who have spent time and money on personal visits to Johnson might be grateful that he was not rooted in the deep South or far Northwest.) What is more, he was eminently respectable.

The Syracuse grocer's adventures on Madison Avenue began when his son-in-law John Buchanan was re-called to serve with the Marines in Korea. It was Johnson's daughter, Eleanor Buchanan, who started the operation early in 1951. Her father helped mightily, providing contacts, mimeographing equipment, money for mailings, etc. Later he took the lead personally and made his famous sorties into the big time of Hollywood and New York alone.

On June 12, 1951, Mrs. Buchanan sent a letter to American Legion Post #41 in Syracuse. The letter indicated there had been a meeting between Johnson, his daughter, an official of Post #41, and other Legion members. In it, Mrs. Buchanan said she was compiling material from *Red Channels*, *Counterattack* and newspaper clippings: "Dad and I were pleased that you agree manufacturers can be persuaded to remove Communist sympathizers from their advertising programs on radio and television. As you gentlemen pointed out in our meeting last Friday, the task is too great for me alone. I am grateful for your aid. . . ."

About the same time, Mrs. Buchanan sent a letter to Syracuse housewives. It was addressed to "The Lady of the House" and carried with it several pages of material quoted from *Red Channels* and *Counterattack* and a copy of a *Daily Worker* story on a Madi-

son Square Garden rally against the Parnell Thomas Committee. Then, on July 24, 1951, in a talk before the Syracuse Kiwanis club, Mrs. Buchanan explained her position this way:

“My husband, a veteran of World War II, never received a penny for being a member of the Inactive Reserves. When he was recalled to service last October, it meant leaving the small town on the Hudson where we’d been so happy. The company in which he’d been found to be a valuable asset, my small but interesting teaching position at Vassar College, all our plans for the future. And I know that Jack detested military life. He’s very unmilitary about hanging up his clothes. But so many of our friends were reservists, I just took it for granted. Only now, faced with the prospect of being apart from one another, I asked him one day why on earth he’d ever signed up in the Reserves. He answered quietly and simply in one word. ‘Patriotism.’ ”

A few sentences later, Mrs. Buchanan quoted from a letter from her husband in Korea: “I have not been sick, which is a blessing in this land of loose bowels and bodies. The flies go from the dead Gook twenty feet away, to the fish heads he left behind, to my C rations, so I’m glad my stomach is strong.”

“Well,” concluded Mrs. Buchanan, “my stomach isn’t that strong. It sickens me to know of those banquets engineered by Red sympathizers on radio and television to raise funds for their henchmen, and those do-nothing patriotic citizens who discuss the wrongs of the world over a dinner table while my quiet, unassuming Jack ate his lunch, surrounded by dead Chinese.”

Mrs. Buchanan fired a crusade that reached out far beyond Syracuse. She not only pleaded with the Kiwanis, the American Legion, the Rotarians, the Advertising Club members, and housewives in Syracuse to follow her lead, she sent protest letters with “documentation” to sponsors, including Philco, Kraft Foods, Borden and Stopette, as well as to NBC and CBS. She issued a bulletin listing a number of actors who, she said, should be given preferen-

tial treatment in casting offices. (Among the performers named on this "white list" was Charlie McCarthy, Edgar Bergen's dummy.)

In September, 1951, Syracuse Post #41 of the American Legion set up an Un-American Activities Committee and two months later began circulating a newsletter which later became *Spotlight*. *Spotlight* relies heavily on *Counterattack*, the *Firing Line* and other "listing" publications for its "documentation." It supports Senator McCarthy, runs articles by Vincent Hartnett, backs the Bricker Amendment and crusades steadily against "Communists, Left Wingers and One Worlders." In short, it merely adds another voice to the right-wing chorus that thunders into the executive suites on Madison Avenue.

Another Syracuse group was organized as the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets. It, too, issued publications backing up Johnson's demands. This group is headed by Francis W. Neuser, a Johnson employee.

The Syracuse groups, while insisting that each is independent of the other, act in concert. One large sponsor told about a typical Johnson campaign. "At one o'clock I got a telegram signed by Larry Johnson. At two o'clock a telegram arrived signed by the Syracuse American Legion post. At three o'clock there was a wire from the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets."

Johnson's campaign has been taken more seriously on Madison Avenue than in Syracuse itself. More inches of newsprint have been spent on him in New York City than in his own home town. Even when Harvey Matusow testified that, at Johnson's behest, a Madison Avenue agency paid him \$150 for a phony "blacklist," the *Syracuse Post-Standard* put the story on page six and in its headline merely referred to Johnson as a "local man."

Johnson, of course, was one of the "sophisticated anti-Communists" taken in by Matusow. At one time he relied heavily on the young "ex-Communist" for inside information. Matusow was anx-

ious to be hired as a "talent consultant" (in Vincent Hartnett's phrase) to help screen radio-tv performers, and Johnson urged more than one sponsor to take advantage of his services.

After Matusow confessed he had been a "false witness," Johnson minimized the earlier friendship. But at least one corporation executive was ungracious enough to remind the grocer that, by his own standards, he himself was now tainted by a past "association."

At the time Johnson was relying on Matusow for information to use against radio-tv performers, Matusow was employed by *Counterattack*. The grocer had no reason to believe that the young man was anything other than what he said he was, a sincere, knowledgeable anti-Communist. Certainly Johnson was not alone in putting his trust in Matusow. But the agencies which accepted Matusow as an "expert" did so mainly to please the grocer and convince him that they were sincerely cooperating with his crusade.

In Syracuse, few were surprised that Harvey Matusow had fooled Johnson. In his home town the crusader is regarded as a sincere patriot but a man frequently carried away by his own zeal. "He is a perfect front man for the sharpies in New York," one Syracuse leader said. Few of Johnson's fellow townsmen can understand why he is taken so seriously on Madison Avenue.

The first newsletter issued by the Un-American Activities Committee of Syracuse American Legion Post #41 reported that it was organized originally when a phonograph record made by The Weavers, then a popular quartet, was brought to the attention of John Dungey, vice-commander of the Post. The Post passed a resolution which in substance asked that all radio and television stations, music stores and juke box distributors withdraw records made by these entertainers. (Pete Seeger of the Weavers was listed in *Red Channels*.)

Soon after that, representatives of the Syracuse University radio and television centers and the six local stations met to discuss Johnson's anti-Red drive. They unanimously decided not to give in to

the growing pressure. In the future, they agreed, they would not listen to protests from Johnson which were not "adequately documented." ("By that," a participant at the meeting reported, "we did not mean *Counterattack*.") They stated bluntly that they intended to decide for themselves what was and was not "adequate" evidence. After this decision was announced, local protests about records played on the air came to an end. One Syracuse station executive, recalling the incident, said recently: "I don't know what's the matter with those people in New York. Maybe they're so big they have to be stupid."

Stupid is not quite the word for it. Rather, Laurence A. Johnson represents something Madison Avenue might reasonably be expected to fear, and which to them, therefore, makes blacklisting, if not worthwhile, then at least economically justifiable. For the leaders of the radio-tv industry are anything but eager to test the strength of Johnson's crusade. Neither, of course, are those who see in the crusade a convenient instrument for manufacturing protests. *Spotlight* lately has carried as a regular feature a column stemming from the activities of AWARE, Inc. And on occasion, the "confessions" of radio-tv personalities in process of "clearance" have appeared in the newsletter's pages. This kind of thing makes Johnson look even more threatening. As he appears more fearsome, there is more reason to fear him.

Here is the way one prominent producer and packager put it:

The hub as I know it is Johnson. There is a list in every agency and even one in this office. But the master plan is held in Syracuse because nowhere else is there so much activity.

These blacklisters are crackpots. This is the McCarthy group and they get into this thing because it makes them feel good. It gives them a chance to push people around, also to be wined and dined with big business men they would otherwise never even meet. And they can always bring the pressures to bear by reaching old widows on the board of directors of stock companies. Big corporations scare easily. They're afraid of publicity. One complaint is enough, you know. Even



program directors who haven't yet been attacked by Johnson are afraid they might be. As far as the protest letters go, I've never seen even one that wasn't inspired by these people.

But producers scare easily too. This one, after speaking so bitterly, said softly: "Publicly of course I have to take an on-the-fence position. I can't make any statements."

## “Take Their Word”

FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION POSTS which care to use it, the semi-monthly *Firing Line*, published by the Legion's Commission on Americanism, is a prime source of information. Its circulation, estimated at about 4,000, is limited mainly to department and post commanders of the Legion. But anyone can subscribe. As one Madison Avenue “security officer” put it not long ago, *Firing Line* is “one of the usual sources” to which networks and ad agencies turn for guidance.

The Legion's newsletter is older than *Counterattack*. Before becoming the *Firing Line* it bore the less dramatic but perhaps more accurate head: *Summary of Trends and Developments Exposing the Communist Conspiracy*. Today it follows fairly close the standard form employed by *Counterattack*, *Red Channels* and Vincent Hartnett's *File 13*. (J. B. Matthews provided the blacklisting movement with most of its root information with his “Appendix IX,” but credit must surely go to Hartnett for showing how to put that information into tidy form, something like a job resumé.) The *Firing Line's* sub-billing — “Facts for Fighting Communism” — is only a verb's toss from *Counterattack's* “Facts to Combat Communism,” and it often happens that they are referring to the same facts. The *Firing Line* is published out of the Legion's national headquarters in Indianapolis, but its policies are set in Washington by Lee Pennington, assistant director of the Americanism Commission, and James F. O'Neil, director of Legion publications.

The blacklisted television performer who wants to be cleared

soon learns that here are two men he would be wise to cultivate. As long as *Firing Line* remains "one of the usual sources," this will be so.

Pennington had been with the FBI for 25 years when he took the Legion post. Until 1940 he was a Bureau specialist in loose accounting practices; then he became the FBI's liaison man with the Legion. A week after leaving the FBI in 1953, he took over the assignment as director of the Commission.

When Pennington speaks about "Americanism" he conjures up a comfortable Norman Rockwell calendar image. The thornier philosophic problems of democratic government (and this seems true of many other guardians of "Americanism") seem not to bother him. Pennington is proud of the Legion's Americanism Commission. "We do a lot of *positive* things, too," he is at pains to point out. The Commission, for instance, supports high-school essay contests, target-rifle tournaments and traffic-safety programs.

Pennington's "sources" for the *Firing Line* are familiar documents: his shelves are stocked with the written records of the Tenney (California), Broyles (Illinois) and Fish (New York) Committee hearings on subversive activities. The voluminous record of the House Committee's various hearings occupy the place of honor. To this basic library must be added the Communists' own record. Not long ago Pennington assigned one of his staff the monotonous task of indexing every copy of the *Daily Worker* published since 1940. Pennington says he is not permitted to look at FBI files. As an evaluator of who is and is not open to suspicion, he makes every effort not to let personal feelings influence his judgments. "I was 25 years with the FBI; you had to restrain yourself. It's hard to break an old dog of his habits."

One of the interesting aspects of the blacklisting picture is that everyone in the business of "listing" thinks the other fellow occasionally gets carried away. Pennington is no exception. *His* restraining influence is placed on the editorial staff of the *Firing Line*

in Indianapolis. "In order to evaluate," Pennington says, "we have to get all the facts, we have to be very careful. Unless there is a general pattern of continued affiliations with the Party, we won't use it." But — "Usually, when someone is called to testify there is a long record." And where there is a question of a letterhead? "Mostly, I'll take the letterhead. If the man was not sympathetic or did not have a long string of affiliations, he would not have been asked to join in the first place."

The official litany is everywhere the same. "We don't clear anyone; it is not up to us to be the judges. We only get the information out to alert people." Moreover, Pennington "cordially dislikes" vigilantism. "We tell people to report their information to the nearest office of the FBI and make no attempt at evaluating it themselves. They may have run across something valuable to a security case." The American Legion posts are autonomous of course; if they decide to picket, that's their business. But the national office discourages public demonstrations. "I had a movie executive call me up," Pennington told a reporter who was interested in his views, "and the guy wanted me to come to New York to clear somebody. I told him, 'I don't clear anybody; have him clear himself.'"

But the fact remains that Pennington, as keeper of the *Firing Line* file, would have to know if the man actually had "cleared himself" — and to whose satisfaction. The reporter reeled off the familiar names, beginning with George Sokolsky. "They are all pretty level-headed fellows," Pennington said. "I would take their word for it."

It may safely be said that he does rely on their word as much as they rely on his — "clearances" seldom begin with Lee Pennington but somewhere along the line he has to come into the picture. Still Pennington prides himself on making his own judgments and insists firmly that he doesn't "clear" anyone. It is largely a question of semantics.

James Francis O'Neil, director of Legion publications, has had a

long and distinguished career in the American Legion. He was an outstanding National Commander and over a period of many years served in various capacities with the Americanism Commission. O'Neil, who has been in the forefront of many of the Legion's "positive" activities, has testified before various Congressional hearings as a Legion spokesman and been granted many honors.

The director of Legion publications — whose political views rarely if ever vary from the public positions taken by the Legion — came into the picture early. He passed on the letters which the Hollywood producers sent to Legion headquarters in the early '50's. On this assignment O'Neil worked with his friend George Sokolsky. In the opinion of those who have followed the operation closely, O'Neil does Sokolsky's bidding where "clearance" is concerned. Like Pennington, he is inclined to take Sokolsky's word for it.

Like Sokolsky, O'Neil prefers that his role in "screening" movie, radio and television talent remain his own business. When a reporter asked him about it, he answered: "I have seen a number of people socially, but I see no reason why this should be anybody's concern but mine." Sokolsky used almost the same words in answer to the same enquiry. Like Sokolsky too, O'Neil said he would not "mention individuals." Sokolsky felt that if he were to speak for the record he would only be hurting people whose ordeal was behind them.

O'Neil was willing to discuss the Legion's public and official record. As far as he could recall, there was not much more to the record than the formal condemnation of Charlie Chaplin and the convention resolution which led up to J. B. Matthews' article on Hollywood in the *American Legion Magazine*. He underscored Pennington's point that since the posts and departments of the Legion are autonomous, only the National Commander can speak for the Legion as a whole.

O'Neil believes that nine out of every ten Americans are alert to the menace of communism but only a small number understand

the intricacies of the conspiracy. This wisdom, he feels, falls to "men who have devoted their lives to the fight."

It follows then that these men — Sokolsky and O'Neil among them — are the proper judges of whether in fact an accused performer has actually "cleared himself."

## Security on Madison Avenue

IN 1954 THE TOP 100 NATIONAL ADVERTISERS in the United States spent some \$848 million total in all media. Of this, 42 per cent (\$359 million) went to buy radio and television time. In most instances these purchases were made or influenced by one of the leading New York advertising agencies. The top four agencies (Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn; Young & Rubicam; J. Walter Thompson; McCann-Erickson) own or had surveillance over the radio-television shows offering the lion's share of the most desirable job opportunities.

The agency which looms largest in the minds and conversation of radio-tv people in respect to blacklisting is BBD&O, particularly in the person of one of its public-relations officials — Jack Wren, the top “security officer” on Madison Avenue.

The reason for Wren's prominence is not easily apparent. To be sure, BBD&O controls a number of choice jobs, but so do several other leading agencies. Moreover, Young & Rubicam, through the highly publicized Jean Muir and Phil Loeb cases, has been more widely identified with blacklisting. Yet to the performer who wants to be cleared for work, Wren's name buzzes through the industry grapevine. He and BBD&O are mentioned more frequently than any other individual or agency. The reason why is good matter for speculation.

Jack Benny once portrayed a kind of Dick Tracy character whose name or face others could not remember, even after they had just spoken to him. Jack Wren is not quite that anonymous,

but he gives the impression he would like to be. For compared to the popular image of the advertising-public relations man, Wren is an anomaly. For one thing, he shares none of the affectations commonly associated with the trade. His office is a small, plainly furnished room tucked off in a corner. He has one phone and more often than not answers it himself; yet he is prominently listed on the ground floor directory of BBD&O executives.

Wren can well afford to represent himself to BBD&O clients as the man running the tightest screening shop in the industry. Performers and others who have talked to him in this connection agree that he keeps on hand perhaps the most extensive and detailed stock of information in the business. They also seem to think that in his zeal to perform his duties, he has become involved personally in the politics of blacklisting.

There is some evidence to bear them out. Wren's private reputation extends far in the field, farther perhaps than even BBD&O's. Lawyers who have had occasion to attempt "clearance" of clients consider Wren a power to conjure with. When the Hollywood-Broadway actor Leif Erickson sought "clearance" not long ago, at least one of the accounts he wrote of past political mistakes crossed Wren's desk. Wren helped comedian Henry Morgan out of a jam in 1952. Morgan was having trouble getting work because of his *Red Channels* listing and gave a speech before a television artists union meeting which helped exonerate him. Wren wrote the speech. He also arranged for the *World-Telegram and Sun's* Fred Woltman to write a feature story on the speech commending Morgan for his courage.

Yet publicly Wren remains something of an enigma. He is an expert at teaching others how to swim in the treacherous currents of publicity but studiously avoids getting his own feet wet. One of the rare occasions when his name cropped up in news accounts came in February, 1955. He found himself dunked in the flow of the day's news then by an irresponsible young man named Harvey



Matusow. The occasion was Matusow's appearance in New York's Federal District Court. As an ex-Communist and paid government witness, Matusow had been instrumental in getting 13 Communist Party leaders convicted for Smith Act violations. Having undergone another change of heart, he wanted now, on a hearing over petition for retrial, to retract his earlier testimony.

In the course of the hearing, Matusow swore he had once sold a "list" to Lennen & Mitchell (now Lennen & Newell). Later that same year, Matusow testified, he helped Wren set up a similar "list," in this case not for money but presumably as a public service.

Lennen & Mitchell came up from this dousing, sputtering denials that it had ever used the list Matusow drew up. Wren was not heard from for some days. Finally, for the benefit of the trade weeklies, he pooh-poohed the testimony. But that of course ended the matter only momentarily. Other preparations had to be made.

Wren appears to be one of the school of public-relations men who approach their work in much the same way a mathematician might tackle a problem in vector analysis. He begins by trying to resolve as best as he can a number of pressures impinging on his client, on the agency and on himself. To find some norm of action he seeks out the balance of forces which will achieve the least amount of friction in any given instance.

Normally, Wren achieves this balance by dealing not only with the pillars of blacklisting but with others whose criticisms can mean trouble. Those who might be in a position to certify Wren's intentions to minority groups or "liberals," and who themselves are above suspicion (e.g. the Anti-Defamation League, or American Civil Liberties Union, or Martin Gang, the West Coast lawyer), can get a hearing for any person they think has been wronged. But clearly Matusow's testimony threw the balance out of kilter. It might have to be defended with the previously non-articulate or unknowing.

Hence Wren did what he might have instructed any client to do.

For one thing, he got together a batch of letters certifying his fairness in judging blacklist cases. For example, he solicited an actor, a *Red Channels* listee, for a letter attesting that he had helped the performer exonerate himself. The actor was then barred from CBS-owned shows, but BBD&O had used him on General Electric Theater. This, and other testimonial letters Wren collected, could be used as defense against critical charges inspired by the Matusow testimony. In addition to the people he has helped, Wren can also send interested critics around to one or another of his acquaintances in the civil-liberties field.

It is an axiom of the times, as *Fortune's* William H. Whyte, Jr. put it, that if you "control communications, you control." Jack Wren evidently has put in a good deal of time trying to prove the axiom out. He (and that means BBD&O) has more information to weigh and balance in making judgments on casting lists than any other Madison Avenue "security officer."

Is Wren the secret ingredient that makes BBD&O so prominent? Partly. The agency itself however has never been notably shy about tackling problems in "consent engineering." Where most other agencies, consistent with the "non-controversy" standard, have steered clear of politics, BBD&O has jumped right in. It is particularly well known for its role in "merchandising" the Eisenhower campaign in 1952.

Similarly, rather than sit loose and be buffeted around, BBD&O has taken the blacklisting problem for what it is, i.e., a problem in public relations, and has treated it accordingly. For unlike most other agencies, BBD&O, through Wren, taps the lines of communications and takes part in "clearance" procedures. Wren, in short, will see "listed" performers and hear them out. Few other agencies will.

Typical of more general practice is the Big Agency (let us call it), and its leading authority, a legal vice-president, whom we will

call Harry Law. By virtue of the size of his agency and his own preoccupation with the problem, Law is equipped to give the opinion of a general practitioner who has diagnosed a disease but, unlike Wren, does not quite know what to do about it.

The Big Agency will not own up to keeping a "list." If called on, though, it can check a casting list inside a half hour. Whatever it checks against, Law says, is the product of newspaper clips and "other sources." Law is concerned only with over-all policy, not with operating details; he says he has never read through a copy of *Counterattack*. Moreover, "We don't use outside investigators."

Harry Law's thesis is simple. Clients have to be "good citizens" as well as businessmen. Some feel it worthwhile to consider the validity of accusations but at the same time keep in mind their responsibility not to use actual Communists on their programs. For its part, the agency, as the "legal agent" of the client, has to be concerned with "current acceptability." "Acceptability," Law says, has to be determined by ear, by intuition based on what the client thinks best and what the Big Agency thinks is best for the client and for itself. "We would not," Harry Law says, "use Paul Robeson, of course. By trying to avoid using the Paul Robesons we are helping the fellow who may unjustly be accused."

But as Harry Law asks: "How do you establish 'clearance' for someone unjustly accused?" Law does not care to get his hands dirty in "clearance" procedures; the Big Agency will not tell the controversial performer why he is not being used nor recite the charges against him. Nor will it see the performer under any auspices or circumstances.

"I'm a little suspicious of some of these operations," Law says, "they're as close to blackmail as any operation I know that isn't." Yet, once a performer is accused, he is dangerously "controversial" and the agency has to think twice before using him.

Here in Mr. Law, then, is an unresolved problem. Wren, on the other hand, has taken blacklisting about as far toward the end of

the line as he can go. By seeing "listed" performers, by trying actively to "engineer consent" rather than to accept public opinion, so to speak, Wren has created a unique niche for himself — and this goes a long way toward explaining why he is considered a power on Madison Avenue.

On the surface, it would appear that any procedure, even Wren's, would be better than no procedure at all. BBD&O is a powerful agency. It can afford to take criticism; in fact, it has to. It has more clients, more publics and, in general, more interests to balance. Moreover, BBD&O can put performers on shows sponsored by a couple of institutional clients which, compared to, say, one of its tobacco or food company clients are not offended by small critical slights.

Unfortunately for the performer though, it doesn't work out that way. Wren cannot judge how valid the accusations against a performer are; that is immaterial anyway. For Wren's efficiency, understandably, is not meant to promote justice, except as it makes good public relations.

Hence, it may be supposed, Wren's "clearances" — so far as the word has any meaning — are few. For Wren does not control communications, he merely has himself a better listening post. The "wrongly accused" in his context are the same as they are in the Big Agency's, i.e. the person who is "defensible." Standards vary from personality to personality, from client to client. They depend on the times, the current intensity of public feeling over the Communist issue, etc.

The statutes for the little courthouse on Madison Avenue are the words and deeds of several state and federal legislatures, the Attorney General's department, and some supplementary laws that show up from time to time on the baby blue stationery of AWARE, Inc. The bills of particulars come in various shapes and sizes: under the logotype of *Counterattack* or *Firing Line*, magazines like the *American Mercury*, the neatly mimeographed pages of Vincent

Hartnett's *File 13*, the AWARE, Inc. bulletins and its nondescript *Who's Where*.

Pleaders to the bar are few. For the most part they comprise representatives of institutional pleaders like the Anti-Defamation League and American Civil Liberties Union. Without auspices like these, or those of Martin Garg, the performer has not much chance of being heard anywhere.

Wren is not a judge in any usual sense. He knows that once the defendant is accused, the accusation itself becomes an additional factor in judging his competence as a performer — which on television means a salesman. The defendant (or "victim" as he is known in these circles) may lose jobs or, if he chooses to do his penance with enough enthusiasm, may actually get more work than he ever had before. By and large, though, if he appears before the tribunal, he can expect not much more than "gradual re-employment." He may never be entirely successful, but the difference in being "blacklisted," "greylisted," "bluelisted" or "whitelisted" is considerable.\*

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\* These are not to be taken as literal lists. Those who are totally "unemployable" (comparatively few) are, in this context, "blacklisted." Those who can work for one sponsor but not others, on radio but not television, at one network but not another, are "greylisted." "Bluelisting" derives its name from the color of AWARE, Inc.'s stationery. The "whitelisted" are of course eminently "employable." Within the industry and in the press all degrees of "unemployability" are generally described as "blacklisting."

## “Clearance” at CBS

THE AUGUST 1, 1955 EDITION of *The New York Times* carried the news that Daniel T. O’Shea, a vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, had been named president of RKO Radio Pictures, Inc. The *Times* reporter covering O’Shea’s career at CBS was hard put to describe his exact job at the network. Mr. O’Shea, the *Times* said, “served as a corporate vice-president and general executive in a consultative and advisory capacity to all [CBS] divisions.” To speak more plainly, Mr. O’Shea had served as chief “security officer” at the network between 1950 and ’55. In the five years he was with CBS, O’Shea and another, lesser official, a former FBI agent named Alfred Berry, became to the radio-tv industry what Jack Wren is to advertising agencies.

Ironically, the role O’Shea and Berry played, at least in part, was an unforeseen byproduct of the very policies which have enabled CBS to keep up with, and in some respects overtake, its chief rival, the National Broadcasting Company. As *Fortune* magazine once told it, when in 1945 William S. Paley, chairman and principal owner of CBS, returned from military service, he formulated his strategy for a forthcoming battle with NBC.

“He had made two major decisions. The first was to concentrate on ‘creative programming’ . . . Instead of being merely a pipeline for the programs of others, CBS would become a programming organization, originating and putting on its own shows . . . Decision No. 2 was to seize leadership in radio by getting control of the talent.”

The self-programming policy carried over into television. So did the talent policy, only not in the form of Paley's celebrated postwar radio talent raids. "While NBC drew on the great resources of RCA to gain its position in broadcasting, CBS, having less resources and having spent heavily to gain its position in radio, was forced to counter in TV with the strategy of low-cost programming. It worked hard to build a 'creative organization' that would substitute cleverness and imagination for dollars. The most notable example of CBS adroitness in this respect is 'I Love Lucy,' the hit that cost only \$38,000 to produce."

The policy worked. But, when the need to apply the "controversy" standard in hiring arose, it also caused a major headache. First, in packaging more shows of its own, CBS has to take more responsibility for "clearing" material and talent. As the dispenser as well as creator of radio-tv shows, the network is more vulnerable to direct public criticism than an advertising agency.

Second, CBS, in foraging for all the "creative imagination" it could lay its hands on, neglected, or could not afford to inquire into, personal politics. Hence, as one executive put it: "We unknowingly hired a lot of questionable people."

When *Red Channels* appeared, CBS met the blacklisting problem by seeking to gain a solid reputation for patriotism with those who were counted as "anti-Communist experts," while at the same time it maintained its public reputation for "creative imagination" via the network's news division. The network set up a department to administer internal security but exempted its news division from the stern "security" provisions operating in other departments.

The security problem was at first given to Joseph Ream, a CBS executive, and Berry. Ream instituted a loyalty oath for all who were employed by CBS to sign under pain of losing their jobs. The oath remains the only one of its kind ever used in the industry. It required that the employee certify he had not belonged to any of the organizations listed as subversive by the Attorney General, or

if he had, that he provide a convincing "explanation" his membership was not meaningful. The oath was kept sealed and confidential in CBS files.

The loyalty oath program however proved to be not quite enough. There may even be some dispute as to whether it ever amounted to more than a dubious public-relations gimmick. The first case in which it was questioned involved a producer-director named Danny Dare. Dare was among those named by Martin Berkeley, Hollywood screenwriter, as Communists or one-time Communists, before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Like Berkeley himself, Dare denied the charge. He went to Washington, testified that he had not been a Communist and was kept on the employment rolls of CBS. Later, he asked for another hearing, stating that his first testimony was not truthful. At this second hearing, Dare told the Committee that after the people Berkeley named were listed in the newspapers "I became panicky . . . realizing that if I said 'Yes, that is true,' I would immediately lose my job . . ."

Similarly, Allan Sloane, a CBS writer who had signed the loyalty oath, later testified that he had been for a short time a member of the Communist Party but withheld this fact from the network. Neither of these experiences sat well with network officials.

When Ream, an executive of long standing in the industry, retired to Florida, his place was taken by Daniel T. O'Shea. A graduate of Holy Cross College and Harvard Law School, O'Shea had served as chief counsel for RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., had been vice-president of the Selznick International Pictures Company, and was leading executive at Vanguard Films in Hollywood before joining CBS in 1950.

Under O'Shea, CBS developed a vigorous screening policy. Like BBD&O, the network seized on the realities of the moment and made the best of them. O'Shea and his assistant, Berry, even more



than Jack Wren, made themselves available to anyone who wanted to see them. Ordinarily, they did not seek out the blacklisted, but any writer, director or actor who believed he was "not available" for CBS shows and felt he had a case could go to them and get a hearing. This policy has been the object of widespread criticism in radio-tv circles. "Clearance" at CBS was from the beginning overt and frank; hence O'Shea was an easy and obvious target for those in the industry who despised blacklisting. CBS and blacklisting have become almost synonymous. Sooner or later everyone hears that CBS is the place to go to "get rid of a problem." But it is not quite that easy.

Like Wren, O'Shea and Berry saw to it that they had adequate information on hand and kept up their contacts with the "anti-Communist experts." Berry took care of day-to-day details. O'Shea set the over-all policy for the network and concerned himself only with difficult or especially prominent cases, like that of Lucille Ball.\*

Like Wren, O'Shea and Berry were most concerned over whether or not they had a full accounting on which to base their judgment. The purpose of the interviews was, first, to elicit as much information as possible from the artist "in trouble," and, second, to determine *how* full an accounting the artist was giving of his own past activities. The "security officers" checked what they knew about the artist against what he volunteered to tell them about himself. That way they could judge whether he was holding back. If he was, his sincerity was open to question. If the artist did not make a clean

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\* In 1953 Miss Ball, the top television star of the nation, suddenly became highly controversial when newspapers all over the country carried stories that in the mid-Thirties, Communist meetings had been held at her home, that she had signed CP nominating petitions and had been listed as a member of the Communist Party's Central Committee of California. Miss Ball appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee, told them of an eccentric grandfather and satisfied the Committee that, as her husband put it, "There's nothing red about Lucy but her hair and even that's not real." The public too was satisfied and the "I Love Lucy" show continued to appear on CBS.

breast of all the information they already had, he was dismissed with "It's been nice talking to you."

If he did come up with everything known and then some, indicating sincerity, O'Shea or Berry took on the case. The first thing that had to be decided was whether he was "defensible." He was "defensible" if there was enough positive "anti-communism" in his record to overshadow the charges made against him. In that case he would be "cleared." But even if there weren't enough to make him "defensible," the artist, after he finished the interview, would have some idea of where he stood and what he could do about getting out of "trouble." Here is where a good anti-Communist sponsor took over. The artist not yet "defensible" needed advice on what kind of "anti-Communist" acts would count with the people who counted.

The standards set for CBS "clearance" procedures are necessarily hard to fix. They depend largely on how the networks' "security officers" read the intentions and opinions of the accusers, be it the American Legion or AWARE, Inc. There are fluctuations from show to show, from client to client, and from one day's international news to the next. "Omnibus," which does most of its own casting, is exempt except where, in the word of one executive, something "outlandish" is planned. So are most public-service programs.

Yet CBS can't have it both ways. An example was provided when Winston Burdett, a CBS newscaster, appeared before the Senate Internal Subcommittee in the summer of 1955. Burdett testified that in the late Thirties he had belonged to the Brooklyn *Eagle* unit of the Communist Party, had gone to Finland on the Party's money and the *Eagle's* credentials, to do espionage work there. Burdett went on to name a number of his associates in the Party, some of whom were working newspapermen.

Then, with astoundingly precise timing, news broadcasts and newspapers announced that Senator Eastland, the Committee's

chairman, had written a letter to CBS asking that the network keep Burdett. The letter, which was addressed to O'Shea, plus a CBS policy statement, followed hard upon Burdett's testimony. On the face of it, both appeared to have been well-timed and well-coordinated with Burdett's appearance in Washington. The coincidence was striking enough to arouse public speculation as to how much rehearsing preceded the performance.

Still, not everyone was satisfied. The night the story broke, news commentator Quincy Howe on another network announced that Burdett had made his information available in a private hearing four years earlier. Howe saw no reason why Burdett's story should have been made public at such a late date. It was a lucky thing, he said, that Burdett could work on sustaining shows since no sponsor would hire him. But over on a third network, Fulton Lewis, Jr. only fifteen minutes earlier said the testimony had raised a lot of questions, one of which was why Senator Eastland felt obliged to write CBS on Burdett's behalf. Was there any reason to believe, Lewis asked, that CBS might have considered firing Burdett for his patriotic act in testifying?

Yet, CBS keeps trying to eat its own cake. Edward R. Murrow, who is considered beyond the pale in the anti-Communist power centers, goes on his way. Murrow's McCarthy broadcast caused a great deal of criticism (some of it merely professional). O'Shea is reliably reported to have disputed Murrow's use of J. Robert Oppenheimer on the celebrated "See It Now" program which kept the "radical-right" pot boiling for months. These instances alone would have been enough to upset most conscientious public-relations men. But CBS — villain to those who reject blacklisting — can always point to its Ed Murrow when the criticism gets too hot. When criticisms of Murrow start to mount, the network can point with pride to the tight shop its "security officers" run.

It is no secret that Murrow is something less than enthusiastic about his network's "screening" policies. By the same token,

O'Shea was utterly convinced that there is at least some intrinsic worth in what the network's "security officers" do. Some distraught radio-tv people left O'Shea's office feeling less vindictive towards him than they were before they went in. One went so far as to characterize him as being "emotional" about the problem. All seemed to agree that O'Shea was, if nothing else, candid. He believed in blacklisting (though undoubtedly the word offended him), and he tried to practice it as judiciously as possible.

More likely than not, the performer "cleared" at CBS had sought help. His agent may have told him he was "in trouble" or he may have found out directly through a friend in the network that he had to be cleared before CBS would hire him. In any event, his chances for "clearance" were enhanced considerably if he came under auspices of an acceptable "clearance man." If he could come bearing credentials, or implicit agreement, from AWARE, Inc., *Counter-attack*, the American Legion, or George Sokolsky, so much the better.

The best way for the accused to go about getting "clearance" was, and still is, first to find someone who knows his way around. In the process the "victim" will almost certainly have to render an explanation of his past activities, often in the form of an affidavit. He should also divulge whatever information he has, whether or not he believes it useful, to the FBI. Depending on his record and auspices, he may have to certify his earnestness by other acts. Support of an AWARE-endorsed position in his union, plus, say, signing a petition against admission of Red China to the U.N., might turn the trick. The important thing is to "clear" himself as much as possible before seeing the network's "security officers."

## Aware, Inc.

IN THE SPRING OF 1955 the NBC network, wanting to clear a prominent performer for a top dramatic show, asked the actor to get two letters of endorsement, one from an officer of the Anti-Defamation League, the other from Godfrey P. Schmidt, President of AWARE, Inc. The network's request was recognition of the growing importance of AWARE, Inc., "an organization to combat the Communist conspiracy in entertainment-communications."

At one time the letter from the Anti-Defamation League official might have turned the trick, but in this case it took two endorsements. And of the two (as the actor found out), AWARE'S was harder to get. For it is AWARE'S position that a performer wanting to clear himself should not only prove he is not a Communist, or Communist sympathizer, but give ample evidence that he is "actively" anti-Communist — or, in AWARE'S own words, that he does not support "dangerous neutralism."

"No one can be neutral before the Communist challenge and peril," AWARE stated in one of its publications. "Its threat to our civilization demands that people stand up and be counted." Many radio-tv people feel strongly about AWARE because it is their general impression that those who wish to establish anti-Communist credentials must "stand up and be counted" on AWARE'S side on any given trade-union issue. Certainly one who opposes blacklisting, for instance, would not be considered truly "anti-Communist" by AWARE. But it was largely because the organization supports blacklisting that members of the American Federation of Television

and Radio Artists voted almost 2 to 1 in the summer of 1955 to "condemn" it — 982 in favor of the condemnation, 514 opposed.

In the *New York Times* for July 11, 1955, Jack Gould, radio-tv columnist, summed up the meaning of AFTRA's vote condemning AWARE, Inc.:

The vote represented the first time that the union's administrative forces, which embrace a number of AWARE members, went down to defeat in a mail referendum. The majority against AWARE would not have been possible without the votes of many conservative federation members who in the past have opposed the union's so-called left-wing faction. Prior to the referendum, an official of both AWARE and the federation had estimated that the vote against AWARE would total only perhaps three or four hundred.

Both the size and source of the anti-AWARE vote give a hollow ring to the insistence of the AWARE supporters that the vote puts the union in the embarrassing position of not being against Communists. Quite the contrary, it was just such thinking — accept our way of being anti-Communist or run the risk of being branded pro-Communist — that undoubtedly accounted in large measure for the condemnation of AWARE.

A few weeks before the referendum was taken, Godfrey P. Schmidt had been quoted in the *Times*. "With the best of good will we're going to make mistakes," Schmidt said of AWARE, "But we cannot let fear of making mistakes freeze us into timid inactivity." In Gould's opinion, Schmidt's admission that to catch some Communists might mean the victimizing of innocent performers, was "the best possible argument for not leaving the anti-Communist problem in amateur hands" and helped swing the AFTRA vote away from AWARE. Gould was convinced that Vincent Hartnett's presence on AWARE's board of directors also aroused resistance to the organization among radio-tv performers.

"Who promoted Peress?" This is how one of the speakers at a meeting welcoming the House Committee on Un-American Activities to New York in the summer of 1955, began his talk. The meet-

ing, sponsored by The Alliance, a coalition of right-wing patriotic societies, was endorsed by leading figures in AWARE, Inc., including the organization's President. The tie-in between the pro-blacklisting faction in the radio-tv industry and the "radical right" is hardly a secret. AWARE, Inc. is no exception.

In February, 1955, AWARE sponsored a forum for young people. Among the speakers were the Chairman of the Conservative Society, Yale Law School, a member of the Harvard Conservative League, and a Queens College representative of the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists. At the meeting one speaker urged a revival of the America First movement. Other speakers endorsed the Bricker Amendment. Robert Amoury of the New York University Law School expressed dissatisfaction with President Eisenhower's administration. Voters who "saw in Eisenhower a Lochinvar" were disenchanted, Amoury said. "They identified him with the Taft, McCarthy, MacArthur, McCarran concept of government, a concept which places country above party or personality." But what has happened to their hopes? "They have turned into the ashes of despair."

The AWARE meeting, in short, was frankly partisan and frankly right-wing. It is understandable that a large percentage of the AFTRA membership is loath to accept AWARE's standards for "sincere and active anti-communism." To many anti-Communists in the industry, AWARE is barely differentiated from other right-wing political groups (even though from time to time it speaks as if its patriotic interests transcend partisan issues) and they want no part of it. "If they want to support McCarthy and his crowd, that's their business," said one actor, "but why should my patriotism be questioned because I disagree with them?"

What does distinguish AWARE from other right-wing organizations is the relentlessness with which it carries its "conspiracy" thesis to practical conclusions, and its success in being accepted on Madison Avenue as representing *the* "anti-Communists."

Godfrey P. Schmidt, the guiding spirit of AWARE, first came to public attention when he served as legal counsel for Cardinal Spellman during the famous cemetery strike of 1949. Schmidt, a Fordham law professor, is well known in Catholic circles and has gained something of a reputation as a Thomist logician. For a time he told children's stories on radio. This work qualified him for membership in AFTRA. Schmidt has often appeared on New York television panels, at times as a supporter of Senator McCarthy, always as a right-wing conservative battling with "liberal" spokesmen.

AWARE, under Schmidt's leadership, has generalized its own experience in the radio-tv industry into a program for all of American life. The basic principle of the program is the extension of loyalty and security screening to *all* employment. In an AWARE Bulletin entitled "Recommendations for Stockholder and Management Action to Establish Anti-Subversive Policies in Corporations" this basic statement is made: "Governmental security regulations covering so-called 'defense facilities' (plants or parts of plants executing defense contracts), are limited and do not protect the rest of industry from subversive penetration." The Bulletin goes on to outline a method for bringing all corporate employment under loyalty screening. A sample stockholders' resolution is given:

. . . The Directors of the Corporation . . . are directed to refrain . . . from employing and . . . continuing in employment, any person who is found to have been a member at any time of the Communist Party or of any group, organization or combination of persons cited as subversive by the Attorney General of the United States, the Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives or the Subversive Activities Control Board, unless such person shall have repudiated such membership under oath; or any person who has refused to answer questions about his or her purported subversive associations or activities, before any court, legislative committee or other properly constituted governmental authority.

A prominent member of AWARE's board of directors carried this point to its logical conclusion in an interview. Should a Commu-



nist, he was asked, be allowed to wrap packages in a supermarket? No. It was then pointed out that J. Edgar Hoover had estimated Communist Party membership at 25,000, with ten fellow travelers for every Party member — a total of 275,000 people who would, on the face of it, be denied all employment. And this number of course would increase when past associations were taken into consideration. The AWARE board member was asked: "What are you going to do with these people — starve them into submission?" This, he agreed, posed a problem — but nevertheless, the principle must be maintained.

In practice, AWARE, though it urges universal political screening, has confined its efforts to the radio and television field. With blacklisting firmly established on Madison Avenue, AWARE's main function has been to uphold it and call for its extension. In the case of the entertainment industry, the size of the salaries involved is added to AWARE's general arguments for denying employment to "subversives."

AWARE has not published any public "lists," but its bulletins have cited the past political associations of radio-tv workers, *à la Red Channels*. These bulletins are treated with the utmost seriousness by some of the "security officers" on Madison Avenue. But "exposure" is not among AWARE's chief purposes. The organization, rather, has functioned as a pressure group within the industry. As individuals, however, certain prominent AWARE members have been deeply involved in the blacklisting machinery. The organization's prestige is an element in establishing their credentials as anti-Communist "experts." For instance, the actor NBC was trying to clear, did get a letter from Godfrey Schmidt and was given a lead on a dramatic show. When it was announced that he would appear a week later there were immediate protests. To the embarrassment of the network, Schmidt said he did not intend his letter, written in Christian charity, to serve as "clearance" and pointed out he wrote it as an individual, not as president of AWARE,

Inc. But the interesting fact was the enormous prestige which Schmidt could bring to bear "as an individual." Armed with his letter, the network felt safe in lifting its ban against the actor.

In its support of political screening, AWARE operates according to this logic: Communism is a conspiracy; therefore Communists and all those who collaborate with them, knowingly or not, are conspirators. A "pattern" of Communistic associations is a pattern of conspiracy. So *not* to support political screening *is* to support political conspiracy. Those who oppose blacklisting, whether they know it or not, are supporters of the Communist conspiracy.

AWARE states frequently that as an organization it does not blacklist. This is true. The organization has about the same relationship to institutionalized blacklisting as a front group has to the Communist Party: it lends position, prestige and power to the practice.

But AWARE goes further than that. AWARE has formalized "clearance." It has published a guide on the subject called *The Road Back* (subtitled *Self-clearance*). *The Road Back* asks: "How many Communists — and those who helped them or permitted themselves to be put in the light of helping communism — manifest a change of heart and mind, perform deeds indicative of this change and thus clear themselves of suspicion and return to normal employability?" It goes on then to discuss how the truly repentant can be recognized.

The first problem of "rehabilitation" is "who shall judge these transitions?" AWARE feels that the judgment should not "rest in any official investigating committee or in some private group." The principle of "individual responsibility for individual acts" is to be determined by "that part of public opinion concerned." In the rest of the pamphlet, however, it is made clear that AWARE regards itself as a tremendously important, if not decisive, "part of the public opinion concerned" in the case of the radio-tv industry.

What this means in practice is that a person wishing to be cleared must work through "anti-Communists" of AWARE's persuasion. *The Road Back* notes: "A subject's fellow citizens are not apt to be impressed if he insists that anti-communism based on the American constitutional system is a greater menace than communism." This would seem to be a euphemism warning those going through "self-clearance" against associating with "liberal" anti-Communists or taking a forthright anti-AWARE position in public.

However, AWARE does not leave the "clearance" problem up in the air. To its credit, it is frank, forthright and specific about how a man "in trouble" can be reinstated. *The Road Back* lists 12 "suggested steps" in the process of "rehabilitation":

1. Questions to ask oneself: Do I love my country? Do I believe my country in danger? Can I do anything to relieve that danger? Will I tell the full, relevant and unflattering truth?
2. Recognition that, whatever the subject's intentions at the time, his name, efforts, money or other support gave aid and comfort to the Communist conspiracy.
3. Full and frank disclosure, in written form, of all connections past and present with subversive elements, organizations, causes and individuals. Attach pertinent literature, correspondence, record of financial contributions, programs, newspaper clippings or other documentary material. Identify those who drew the subject into unfortunate situations and actions; identify those the subject in turn involved. (This disclosure may be used publicly or privately, as circumstances indicate.)
4. Voluntary and cooperative interview with the Federal Bureau of Investigation on the basis of the foregoing full and frank disclosure. The content of such interviews remains inviolate with the FBI.
5. A written offer to cooperate, as a witness or source of information with:
  - a. The Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives, Room 225A, Old House Office Building, Washington 25, D.C.

- b. Subcommittee on Internal Security of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D.C.
  - c. Subversive Activities Control Board, Washington, D.C.
  - d. Any other committee in Senate or House properly interested in some or all of the information the subject may have.
  - e. Any other security agency of the federal government, as may be appropriate.
  - f. Any state legislative committee or executive office investigating subversive activities.
  - g. Any local authorities (police departments, grand juries, county and federal-district prosecutors and agencies) interested in local subversive activities.
6. In the subject's union(s), he should make his new position on communism clearly known by statements in meetings, letters or statements in union publications, etc. Whatever else he may do, he should not support the Communist or crypto-Communist element on any issue, no matter how attractive or insignificant it may then appear. Other union issues may then be freely debated without subversive interference.
  7. The subject should make public his new position on communism by all other means available: statements in trade publications, "Letters to the Editor," personal correspondence to all who might be interested: such as anti-Communist journalists and organizations, employers, friends and fellow professionals.
  8. Outside the field of entertainment-communications many opportunities for establishing a new position are available: political, social and civic clubs, parent-teacher organizations, library and school committees, religious and cultural groups. They may be urged to increase the number of anti-Communist speakers, books, lectures, candidates, etc.
  9. Support anti-Communist persons, groups and organizations.
  10. The subject should keep himself informed by subscribing to recommended anti-Communist magazines, reading anti-Communist books, government reports and other literature.
  11. The subject should support anti-Communist legislation having responsible endorsement.

12. If the subject's new convictions draw him to, or back to, religion, so much the better; he achieves the best of all reasons for opposing communism. He can become actively anti-Communist in his church or other religious organizations. In church groups, as everywhere, he can combat neutralism and anti-anti-communism.

As *The Road Back* indicates, AWARE, in theory and practice, is motivated by the idea that there are only two sides – the “pro-Communist” side and the pro-AWARE side. According to this view, the nearly 1,000 AFTRA members who voted to condemn AWARE are at best “dupes” of the Communist Party. George Sokolsky, an AWARE fellow-traveler, described the AFTRA condemnation as just one more incident in a “struggle between Communists and anti-Communists” for control of the union – and that is also how AWARE saw it.

What this drastic either/or means psychologically to the actor or writer who has to go through “self-clearance” – naming the names of those who drew him into “situations,” for instance – can only be imagined. Yet for many, unwillingness to submit to the procedure means unemployment. Actors “in trouble” have had to accept as real the phantom world of AWARE, Inc. – a world conceived of as polarized between two extremes; on the one hand a tightly knit group of conspirators; on the other a group of right-wing anti-Communists who look on their own politics as the only valid form of anti-communism. Because of this drastic either/or, all who have not joined the “anti-Communist” side remain, in one way or another, suspect to AWARE.

This is the criticism of AWARE which has made it such a highly controversial organization in the radio-tv field. It is a criticism which has never been answered convincingly, though few organizations have as able a spokesman as AWARE has in its president, Godfrey P. Schmidt. In the following statement, submitted to the author of this report, Mr. Schmidt expresses AWARE's view on the blacklisting problem.

In *The Legislative Way of Life*, T. V. Smith makes three assertions which differ profoundly from the principles applied by AWARE, Inc. in its fight against Communist penetration of the entertainment-communication field. Smith declares that: (1) "we must assume that all major interests in a given society are equally legitimate"; (2) "we must assume that representatives of the legitimate interests are equally honest"; and (3) that "we must assume . . . that ideals (justice for example) cannot be invoked to settle issues that involve quarrels as to what the ideals are or as to who owns them."

In AWARE we begin with a more realistic principle, which has been established by history, by philosophy and theology: that communism, in theory and practice, is an unmitigated evil and those who spread or aid it are to that extent hurting all of us, including themselves. If a person does not appreciate this truth, he will scarcely be in sympathy with AWARE, Inc.; nor with constitutional government, nor with the ideals of patriotism, justice and civic amity which have made the United States of America a great nation.

So uniform is the conviction that communism, in theory and practice, affronts essential societal decencies and degrades the human person that practically everybody except fools and rogues condemn it and criticize those who aid it.

Now recognition of the grave evil inherent in communism calls for action to obliterate or to limit the Communist peril. It will not do simply to criticize communism by use of generalities. Patriotism, justice and respect or friendship for fellow citizens all impose a duty to act. Everyone who gives help and comfort to communism, whether in theory or practice, is contributing to the Communist world conspiracy and, to that extent, knowingly or unknowingly, betraying the country. Charity forbids that we hate anyone or that we be actuated by malice with respect to the fools or rogues who thus try to give aid or comfort to communism in one way or another. But we must try, in season and out of season, to save them from themselves and to save this country and the rest of the world from the catastrophe of the world Communist conspiracy. The first requirement in this connection is that we recognize and know our enemy and those who do his bidding. Because he characteristically hides in cowardly fashion behind pretenses and duplicity, he must be unmasked. The person who has joined a string of fronts should not be solaced by trade-union sympathy when this fact is revealed. Instead, he should now repudiate the fronts.

Now there are two kinds of people, generally speaking, who are obviously aiding and giving comfort to the Communist world movement: (a) those who are consciously in sympathy with communism or with some of its major objectives, principles or methods; and (b) those who, through flightiness or mere stupidity, have joined either the Communist Party or some of its "transmission belts."

There is no question here of exposing or humiliating a person who years ago, in a moment of ineptitude or immaturity, has joined a Communist front organization or even the Communist Party — but who quickly thereafter came to his senses and who, in the intervening years, has never applied or lived up to the infamous Communist premises. What we are concerned with are those persons who have long, unreputed records of significant affiliation with Communist front organizations or with the Communist Party.

AWARE will not be deflected from the fight against the Communist conspiracy by anguished cries of "blacklisting" from the very people who, as adults, have joined the Communist Party or have, without protest, permitted their names to be associated with Communist front organizations over a period of years. It is a pitiful spectacle that persons who have joined such organizations time and again, who have never repudiated communism in any of its forms or fronts, should now become tender about being recognized in those affiliations and should bleat "blacklisting!" against us who identify their affiliations (as if such a "blacklisting" were some nefarious activity).

The word "blacklisting" requires definition and distinction. It means three *different* things, as used in current controversy:

- (1) It means the *unfair labor practice* committed by some employers when they discriminate unjustly against anyone because of *union affiliation* or other concerted activity in employment. This conduct is condemned by federal and state legislation and by good morals. AWARE, Inc. also condemns it and has never indulged in it.
- (2) It means *defaming someone* by *untruthful or erroneous statement*; or maliciously destroying someone's good name by unfounded or unwarranted defamation. The injury in this case is to someone's standing in his profession or to his reputation. Such defamation is in violation of ancient standards of law (libel and slander). It is also a violation of sound morals and religion. Along with all right-minded persons, AWARE, Inc.

condemns such conduct and has never indulged in it. Every time AWARE, Inc., by one of its bulletins has identified a person as a member of the Communist Party or as a member of some Communist front organization, it has told the complete truth and it has in its possession ample documentation or other evidence to demonstrate this. Not one of the persons thus identified by AWARE has filed suit to challenge AWARE's accuracy.

- (3) Some persons have found it to their advantage to transfer the name "blacklisting" from its traditional meaning in senses (1) and (2), above, so that it will cover a third meaning: to tell the truth about people *when, in the interest of one's union, one's profession and one's country, the truth needs to be told*. This is not "blacklisting" imputing wrong or unjust conduct.

If, in fact, people are giving aid and comfort to communism, by becoming members of the Communist Party or by frequently joining Communist front organizations, the current world situation requires that they be identified as *carriers of a political and moral contagion*, whether they know it or not. They should not be allowed to be "neutral" in this fight. They should stand up and be counted. In this mortal conflict, he "who gathers not with us scatters." Almost nine hundred million people behind Iron Curtains without the slightest vestige of civil liberties is holocaust enough. It is time to fight back. We must protect ourselves and our heritage.

In this respect it must be admitted that an actor's reputation is "precariously perched." *Every man's reputation is, in a sense, precariously perched*. One foul act, one immoral decision can send it to destruction.

Each responsible human being carries his own reputation in his hands, as it were. If he is guilty of obscene or indecent conduct, he cannot validly hope to be immunized from criticism for it simply because he happens to have great talent as an artist. If a man commits murder, he is going to be recognized as a *murderer*. He cannot run to his union because of the damage to his reputation and professional standing which results from his own conduct. Communism is a conspiracy that has to its discredit more murders than have ever characterized any previous tyrants in history. In Red China alone, since October, 1949, more than 15 million persons have been liquidated for political reasons only.



A man who affiliates himself with the Communist movement in one fashion or another, wittingly or unwittingly, by his own act and choice shoulders some of the invidium of communism. He can't blame others. No employer can be compelled to employ persons with significant Communist affiliations. Actors who join Communist fronts have to learn the hard way. They have to learn much about their audiences. In the main, audiences are patriotic. They resent even slight participation in the Communist conspiracy.

*The truth will not be gagged* by a slogan like "blacklisting." From time to time, as the evidence indicates and as the need demands, AWARE will continue to publish the truth about actors who support Communist-front organizations. Maybe these actors are too craven to want the unpleasant truth about themselves known. But, by participating in Communist-front activity, they have helped conspirators in burying a knife in the back of Americans. Their virtuosity as performers is no condonation. They know this themselves. That is why they hysterically condemn "blacklisting," try to make AWARE a scapegoat and appeal to unions to do what no union can do: to hygienize their popularity tainted with Communist infection.

They could so easily wash away the infection.

The strangest part of their performance is that they do the very things that they charge AWARE with doing. They say that AWARE is unjust because *it condemns people*. But *they, too, condemn people*. They condemn AWARE, its directors and members. The fact of condemnation is in itself not significant. The important question is: is the condemnation warranted on the merits? In the current controversy they happen to be wrong. AWARE happens to be right. They do not make any serious effort to show AWARE is wrong in its disclosures. If it were available to them it would be their best weapon against AWARE. No one knows that better than they.

They like to ask by what right AWARE and its members constitute themselves as "self-appointed judges" to criticize in these matters. Politically speaking, the right should be obvious to persons who had some respect for civil rights and free speech. It is indeed the same political right which they presume to exercise when they judge AWARE and its membership. The trouble is, their judgment is wrong on the facts and on the merits.

Perhaps the most laughable of all the criticisms addressed against

AWARE is the one that came from the hysterical performer who began by saying: "Don't any of you bigots classify *me*." He lived in the illusion that he was going down the "middle way" and that he was attacking extremists at both ends. He was, in a word, a "neutralist." Only fools or rogues could be neutral in the fight between the Free World and communism, which has ruthlessly despoiled so many nations and peoples. The man who didn't want others to classify him, himself exercised the right to classify. He called those to whom he was opposed "bigots." He denied to others the same right of classification which he used with uncouth and random judgment.

This is typical of the "liberalism" which presumes to attack AWARE. The old liberalism wanted less government control. The new liberalism wants more government control. The old liberalism yielded to others the very civil liberties it claimed for itself. The new "liberals" want freedom of speech, freedom to classify for themselves, but not for others. The old liberals knew that bad conduct could invoke no immunity from criticism because of good art. Wagner could be called a stinker by the very people who thought he was a genius as a composer. The new liberalism wants talent as an actor to shield a man from the unpopularity that greets character defects and sin.

It is not that AWARE wants an immunity from criticism. AWARE recognizes that those who are criticizing it in the present controversy about "blacklisting" are precisely the people who are laying claim to an immunity from criticism because they help communism. Yet they freely criticize AWARE and its membership. They ask unions to adopt resolutions which are, in effect, gag rules and bills of attainder. Hypocritically, those resolutions are aimed at "blacklisting" in senses (1) and (2) above. Those who have voted for such resolutions have never squarely faced "blacklisting" in sense (3) above. If they had, they would not be so naive as to suppose that "blacklisting" in sense (3) (telling the unpleasant truth that needs to be told) can ever be hindered or halted by a union. Persons in public life, such as actors and politicians, *will always be vulnerable to the truth*. It would be a tragic day for this country if the truth were not available to wound them in conscience and popularity when they hide behind the skirts of the Communist conspiracy.

## The Theatrical Unions

IN THE FALL OF 1952, a partial transcript of testimony given before the Senate Internal Subcommittee was made public. In a brief foreword, signed by the Chairman, Senator McCarran, and Senators Eastland and Watkins, this statement appeared:

In 1943, pursuant to orders from Alexander Trachtenberg, a Communist leader, there began a systematic Communist infiltration of the field of radio. Thereafter, a continuing struggle developed within the Radio Writers Guild between pro-Communist and anti-Communist factions. Although a large majority of the membership of the Radio Writers Guild is anti-Communist, the council of the Guild, which is the governing body, is controlled by the pro-Communist faction which has aligned the Guild in support of Communist organizations and causes.

Similar statements have been made at one time or another about other New York talent unions, in particular Actors Equity Association and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA).

The relationship between union activity and blacklisting in radio-tv is complex. In the charges and countercharges of recent years, both pro- and anti-blacklisting factions in the talent guilds have claimed they were being discriminated against because of positions taken at union meetings. One group maintains it has suffered because of its "militant unionism"; the other insists it has been discriminated against for leading a fight against communism. There is a measure of exaggeration in both charges.

"Militant unionism" *per se* was never a cause of blacklisting. But from union records information could be gathered about a

performer's or writer's politics, and this information provided charges for the dossiers that were assembled when blacklisting began. In many cases, then, blacklisted performers and writers claimed they were "in trouble" because they were good trade-unionists.

The confusion followed from a more fundamental error. The error consisted in sharply dividing theatrical unionists into two extremist camps, "pro-Communist" and "anti-Communist," and simply ignoring the liberals and conservatives (anti-Communist but not right-wing) who make up the center. As a result many pro-Roosevelt partisans were falsely assigned to the "pro-Communist" camp and some who were opposed to communism but had no sympathy for "anti-Communist" extremism were assigned to the far right. In the beginning, it was wholly misleading to polarize the unions this way. But after the neat division had been repeated over and over, the reality began to approximate the lop-sided image. For as the struggles between "pro-" and "anti-Communists" intensified, the broad center of the talent unions gave up going to meetings and the internal strife was actually polarized. To be sure, there were still anti-Communists opposed to blacklisting and some liberals and conservatives supported it, but most people directly involved simply dropped out and left the extremists to fight it out.

Before the union situation can be related to blacklisting, then, it is necessary to get some idea of how the extremists gained such power. The Radio Writers Guild, now defunct, can be taken as a typical example. What is said about the Writers Guild is more or less true too of AFTRA, the actors' union.

Three groups were at work in the Radio Writers Guild throughout its history: a fairly small Communist faction, a fairly small right-wing faction, and a center composed of the bulk of the membership, largely liberal and New Dealish.

There is little concrete evidence of Communist activity in the radio-tv field. Only a few former members of the Party have testi-

fied before Congressional Committees. Much of what has been written about the subject makes no distinctions between liberals and Communists. Still, certain generalizations are possible and one fact is beyond dispute: there was a conscious, organized Communist caucus in the entertainment industry which pushed the Party line in the various talent unions.

The testimony of two witnesses, former members of the Communist faction, is revealing. One of these, an actor named George Hall, appeared at the hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee on August 17, 1955 at the Foley Square Court House in New York City. Hall said he had been a member of the Party for 18 months, had joined a year after the end of World War II and maintained links with the Party after he resigned. He went to the FBI on March 5, 1954, and wrote the Committee in May, asking for a hearing. The picture he later gave of the operation of the Communist faction (the union in this case was Actors Equity Association) does not square with the Communists' reputation for ubiquity and super-efficiency.

Hall testified that during his 18 months in the Party he attended no union caucus meetings. His main activity during his stay in the Party had been to entertain at a few (five "at the outside") fund-raising parties. He had voted as he was told in union elections but otherwise had not participated in any disciplined Communist union activity.

This is not to imply, of course, that Party activity in the industry and talent unions was ineffective. The testimony of Allan E. Sloane, a radio writer, before the House Un-American Activities Committee in January, 1954, indicates that the Communists in the unions were well organized and disciplined. Party members wrote agit-prop scripts (for Party affairs), prepared speeches and carried on a lively schedule of political activity. Still, Sloane's testimony also bears out the belief that the actual Communists in the industry, though dedicated and active, were few at all times.

But difficulties in assessing the Party's role in the talent unions arise when the Communist periphery is taken into account. And it is precisely here that most of the confusion has arisen. A case in point was a rally held at Carnegie Hall on October 16, 1942, under the sponsorship of The Artists' Front to Win the War. The meeting was organized to agitate for a second front. "We call for united support of our President and the military leaders of America, who have urged the advisability of a second front this year." The program distributed at the meeting devoted two pages to quoting outstanding Americans who agreed that a second front should be opened.

The demand for a second front, of course, was one of the major causes of the American Communist Party at that time. But many non-Communists were eager for it, too. The sponsors of the rally included some who undoubtedly are Communists, or at least were then, but also numbered people obviously not Party members, among them the veteran anti-Communist actor Eddie Dowling, who described himself late in 1954 as "the only supporter of Senator McCarthy left on Broadway." The Carnegie Hall meeting was typical. It demonstrated that Communists were often able to assemble a broad non-Communist and Communist grouping for support of their line.

Paul Milton, a radio writer and board member of AWARE, Inc., was asked when he appeared before the McCarran Subcommittee in 1951: "Does the line of this Radio Writers Guild leadership approximate the Communist Party line?" Milton answered: "On key questions, yes, sir. On the Mundt-Nixon bill it followed the line. . . . At the time, for instance, that the soldier vote was under consideration in, I guess it was the House, one of the members, a member of the pro-Communist faction, attempted to induce the guild to communicate with Washington on the question, when the question of soldier's vote, one way or the other, had no connection whatsoever with the Guild."

Another witness who testified against the Radio Writers Guild leadership, Welbourn Kelley, cited denunciations of the American Legion and the (Catholic) *Brooklyn Tablet* at union meetings as examples of the strength of the pro-Communist faction. Clearly, in the cases mentioned by Milton and Kelley, there were many anti-Communists who opposed the Mundt-Nixon bill, the Taft-Hartley bill or who were critical of the American Legion and the *Brooklyn Tablet*.

Unfortunately, these distinctions have often been ignored. "Innocent" liberals who participated in Communist fronts and actual Party members were often lumped together as the "pro-Communist faction" in the debates that raged within the talent unions. Because of this, many who were never Communists but have been black-listed claim they are being punished for yesterday's union "militancy." What did happen is that many pro-union people in the entertainment field frequently found themselves in agreement on union issues with an unidentified Communist faction. And it is the latter fact, not unionism *per se*, which forms the basis of charges against them.

During the early days of the Radio Writers Guild, there was a split on the question of how labor-oriented the organization should be. One group considered the Guild part of the general trade-union movement. Another thought that the Guild should be a professional organization, remote from the struggles of manual workers. Some Communists and many non-Communists were in the group favoring unionism. Among those who sought to make the Guild into a professional association were a number of the people who were later to form AWARE, Inc.

How deep this early disagreement went can be seen from the testimony of Ruth Adams Knight. Miss Knight, a veteran radio writer, recalled an incident in 1943. She had come back to New York after a long absence and was told by a friend that the Guild

was "faced with a desperate situation." Miss Knight went to a meeting to learn what her friend meant.

I went to the meeting and it was not a meeting which I would have recognized — I knew very few of the people there — it might easily have been a meeting of the Steamfitters Union and it had no relation to writers or writers' rights or anything of that sort, and it was entirely a labor meeting and a meeting in which a great deal of violence was expressed. There was a great deal of turbulence . . . I do not think I am exaggerating when I say the mob spirit of the meeting was very evident, and the Author's League, as I say, had always been a dignified body of writers . . .

Thus, the "pro-Communist" and "anti-Communist" split was rooted in a larger disagreement. On the one side were those who resisted the Guild's labor orientation as strongly as Ruth Adams Knight. On the other side, a large group, by no means all Communist, differed with them. Since some of the most articulate and powerful "anti-Communists" of later years came out of the group which opposed the trade-union concept of the Guild, many of the non-Communists who had disagreed with them in the past felt that a purge of "militant unionists" was on, when blacklisting began. A similar situation existed in the American Federation of Radio Artists where the right-wing "anti-Communist" faction first began to form during the Second World War in opposition to the union's endorsing Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In the period when blacklisting developed, this confusion had immediate practical consequences. For one thing, the anti-Communists of extreme right-wing persuasion were in a good position: they had never joined Communist fronts, their records were "clean." For another, they took their own analysis of the split in the industry seriously. The result was an "anti-Communist" ideology largely based on the proposition that there was only one kind of anti-communism, that represented by the right wing. Exceptions were made (Morton Wishengrad, a liberal anti-Communist writer, is



acceptable to AWARE, Inc.), but the prevailing notion was rooted in a simplified division of the union into two absolutely opposed factions.

It was this simplification which got the McCarran Committee into trouble on the very day it released its report on the Radio Writers Guild. One of the central issues before the Guild at that time was a highly publicized resolution submitted by Welbourn Kelley to the Regular Council Meeting, Eastern Region, of the Radio Writers Guild. On July 25, 1950, Kelley had proposed that the Guild offer its services to support America's role in the Korean War. His motion was rejected, and this fact was repeated time and again by those who charged that the Guild was dominated by Communists.

There was a heated discussion about the proposal centered on a motion to table, on grounds that the Radio Writers Guild never took political positions. The motion to table carried by a vote of 4 to 3, with the chair casting the deciding ballot. Interestingly enough, one of the Radio Writers Guild members frequently accused of "pro-communism" by the right wing joined Kelley and a member of the right-wing faction in voting against tabling.

Kelley was angered by the tabling motion. After it carried, he proposed, bitterly, that "the Eastern Region Council of the Radio Writers Guild go on record as opposed to any cooperation with the United States Government if such cooperation places the Guild or its membership in opposition to communism." This, of course, was an attempt to spell out what Kelley regarded as the implicit basis of the motion to table the first resolution. Kelley was ruled out of order by the chair, and a vote was taken on this ruling. The liberal Guild member who had voted with Kelley against the motion to table switched and cast his ballot in favor of upholding the ruling of the chair.

Finally, the following motion was passed, with only Kelley dissenting:

Be it resolved that the Council of the Eastern Region go on record as stating categorically that the Council's vote on tabling the first motion introduced by Webb Kelley did not involve any expression of sentiment on the issue of cooperation or noncooperation with the United States Government.

When the news of this session became public, the Kelley incident was cited as proof that the Guild was dominated by "pro-Communists." Yet there *was* a precedent for the argument that the Guild never took positions on political issues, so non-Communists might honestly have voted against the Kelley resolution on that ground. This, in fact, was true of at least two or three of the Council members who voted against Kelley.

Some years later, in 1955, one of the Guild members who had voted against the Kelley resolution was called before the International Organizations Employees Loyalty Board for a hearing to determine whether or not the Government objected to his working for the United Nations. One of the charges against him was his Guild vote at this meeting. But the Loyalty Board cleared the writer. Another radio writer who voted against Kelley has notarized statements from leaders of AWARE, Inc. attesting that they have no knowledge he is "pro-Communist." It is possible to establish that a majority of those in attendance at the Council meeting were not Communist or even "pro-Communists." The reason for their vote must be sought elsewhere. But it would be ridiculous to assume that only anti-Communists were present at the meeting. Some who voted against the Kelley resolution did so on the basis of their general political attitude, not because of their respect for the traditions of the union. In short, they *were* pro-Communist. But, in a sense, this is what is typical about the Kelley incident. Involved were right-wing anti-Communists, liberal anti-Communists and pro-Communists. As usual, though, these groupings were reduced to "pro-Communist" and "anti-Communist" and the conclusion was drawn that the majority was sympathetic to the Red cause.

In 1952, when the McCarran report was issued, the simplification was reinforced again. But the same day *The New York Times* announced the Committee's findings, it also reported on a letter made public by Welbourn Kelley. Kelley said in his letter that he had been told his testimony would not be released. More than this, he said that he had referred to certain people as "left-wingers" but the Committee instructed him to describe them as "pro-Communist." "I am extremely sorry that I allowed myself to make this mistake," Kelley stated, "I have no doubt all these people will be harmed [by the release of the testimony]. I respectfully ask that the statements made by me which somehow were omitted from the testimony now be made part of the record, namely, that I cannot say of my own knowledge that any member of the Guild is a Communist."

Kelley's letter pointed up the mistake which the Committee — and most analysts — made in dealing with the Guild and with the union situation in radio, television and the theatre in general: a confusion of the "left-wing," i.e. the New Dealer, the Socialist, the non-conformist, the radical, with the "Communist conspirator."

Some liberals tended to make a similar error. They continued in the Cold War era to act on the assumptions of the Popular Front days of World War II. Many of the election slates put forward in the talent unions by the anti-blacklisting group were easy targets for their opponents because there was equivocation on the issue of communism. The majority of those who protested blacklisting were anti-Communists. Yet somehow they believed it necessary to include Communists or well-known fellow-travelers on their slates so as not to violate civil liberties. The result of this was to perpetuate the simplistic division of the union into "pro-Communists" and "anti-Communists." The "center" — anti-Communist and anti-blacklisting — never succeeded in making itself heard. This was true in both the New York Radio Writers Guild and in AFTRA.

One militant member of the anti-blacklisting faction in the Radio Writers Guild recently made this point. He expressed great anger with the Communists, especially with those who without authorization had marched in May Day Parades carrying union signs. But his concern was too late. By the time he realized the role of the Communist Party in the Guild, much of the membership had been more or less alienated from active participation and the polarities of left and right were generally accepted.

In the *New Leader* of December 8, 1952, an article by Harry Gersch and Paul Milton, both partisans of the "anti-Communist" faction in the Radio Writers Guild, described a recent union election. Their caucus, We The Undersigned, had been decisively defeated, and the *New Leader* article was a kind of post-mortem. Toward the end of the piece, they made their essential point:

The problem of the anti-Communist everywhere in this respect is the same: how to reassure the person who may once have been "soft" on communism during the depression or the war, who may once have given two dollars to an organization which was later seized by the Party — how to reassure them that their better course is not to fear their pasts, but to face them honestly and then go on to fight communism.

(The diagnosis, though partisan, is accurate. To it should be added the fact that having given two dollars to a certain organization could mean, in the radio and television industry, that a man might have difficulty finding a job, or at least have some explaining to do.)

Gersch and Milton raised a related point: "Many believe that any attack on Communists and their helpers is an attack on civil liberties." In the 1951 election, We The Undersigned "spoke vaguely of the dangers of communism to America and to unions. No persons were named — except the candidates — and all WTU said was: Don't vote for them. This appeal wasn't enough." But in the next election

. . . a fresh mandate was sought by WTU from those willing to appear publicly as anti-Communists and the 1952 RWG campaign started, this time wide open. We The Undersigned's literature now minced no words. Names of persons who had been named as Communists in sworn testimony (15), the Fifth Amendment group (4), and those with records of activity in front organizations, were published to the membership. Some of the anti-Communists accepted the new tactics with glee; others did so reluctantly and only after much soul searching. The RWG leadership reacted violently. Some honest liberals were scandalized. Result: the worst defeat yet for the anti-Communist group.

"Some honest liberals were scandalized." This was a very real liability in a union whose general tone and attitude were liberal. Furthermore, the election took place during the great debate over Senator McCarthy and among the members of We The Undersigned were many McCarthy-supporters. Here again, a neat dichotomy was put forward, this time as *pro-* versus *anti-McCarthyism*. Some of We The Undersigned's opponents were undeniably either Communists or Party sympathizers; some of its members were undeniably vociferous partisans of Senator McCarthy. But the McCarthy, not the Communist, issue was decisive.

As an aftermath of the campaign by We The Undersigned, one of the writers named in their literature filed a libel suit. It was settled out of court when most of those who had backed the charges against him made statements. A statement signed by one of the authors of the *New Leader* article was typical:

. . . The statements of our opposition to X's election made in the said bulletin were not intended to imply that we had any knowledge of any fact that would lead to the belief that he was a Communist or a member of the Communist Party, or directly or indirectly connected with the Communist Party, or that he was, when the bulletins were issued, or that he is now a member of any Communist front or action group, or a member of any Communist conspiracy and we do not have any such knowledge.

Whatever their intention, the We The Undersigned group had

given many people the impression that they were trying to label this writer as a "pro-Communist." And this, in conjunction with the widespread belief that the far right controlled We The Undersigned, hurt their cause.

Another element, and one recognized by Milton and Gersch, was that We The Undersigned had a "poor group record of union activity in the past two years. Many of them had served as officers, councilmen, committeemen, but not recently. Most gave up in disgust; others who tried again felt so uncomfortable they bowed out . . ." This, of course, goes back to the roots of the "pro-Communist" and "anti-Communist" division: the anti-Communist faction was suspected of anti-unionism because of the role played by some of its members in the early days of the Guild. In those days, the Communists were associated with "militant unionism," and their reputation remained an asset to them later.

All this took place during the period when blacklisting was being institutionalized. The union struggle finally culminated in the dissolution of the Radio Writers Guild and the formation of the Writers Guild of America. Significantly, the first issue raised in the new organization was a referendum on the Communist problem.

The same forces were at work among the radio-tv actors. In late December, 1954, AWARE, Inc. issued a supplement to its membership bulletin, entitled "AWARE Publication Number 12." The bulletin discussed the opposition the AWARE-supported slate had met in the December 9, 1954 AFTRA election.

"Publication Number 12" began with a report on the victory which the AWARE-supported slate had won in the recent AFTRA election. "Happily, AFTRA is one of the few unions in which flatly declared anti-communism and anti-totalitarianism have won many clear victories. The latest took place in the December 9 election of members of AFTRA's N. Y. Local Board."

The first statement, that AFTRA is "one of the few unions" in which anti-communism is dominant, was itself tell-tale. Given the

complete defeat of the Communists in the AFL (where they never had a base) and in the CIO (where their unions were expelled), it could only strengthen the charge that AWARE was anti-union. But it was not this statement which aroused AFTRA members so much as the "listing" of defeated candidates with their past "associations."

After listing the opposition and their records, AWARE concluded: "Thus, out of 26 candidates on the 'independent' slate, at least 13 have what are considered significant *public records* in connection with the Communist-front apparatus." In several cases, the charges hardly substantiated a "significant public record." For one case of a "less significant" record, an actor was accused of having "spent some time after the war at the Hollywood Actors Lab," an actress of having "studied at the Dramatic Workshop." "Publication Number 12" concluded: "In the opinion of qualified observers, the 'independent' slate in AFTRA this year demonstrates the need for a full-fledged official investigation of the entertainment industry in New York."

It would be difficult to create a situation so favorable to AWARE's opposition. The "listing" of names, especially those charged with only one activity, and the calling for a Congressional investigation were bound to meet with the disapproval of the majority of AFTRA's membership. "Publication Number 12" had the effect of uniting AFTRA members, and the unity was built on opposition to AWARE. It was not long before the opposition was organized.

In March, 1955, a petition signed by a long list of AFTRA members called for the condemnation of AWARE, Inc. The performers charged:

Certain AFTRA union officials and members have openly associated themselves with an outside organization (AWARE, Inc.) which prints attacks upon AFTRA members and invites a Congressional investigation of the entire entertainment industry.

In detailing their charges against "Publication Number 12," they

wrote, "Isn't it common knowledge that such listings become black-lists . . . injuring reputations, costing members jobs?"

It is essential in understanding this fight to realize that eleven of the people who signed the petition invoked either the First or Fifth Amendment at the House Un-American Activities Committee hearing at Foley Square in August, 1955. At the same time, it must be realized that the majority of those who opposed AWARE at the membership meeting and in the referendum were not in any sense "pro-Communist" but anti-AWARE.

AWARE implied that it recognized the situation when it defended itself in a letter to AFTRA members in May, 1955. The letter stated:

Some individuals may even have signed the letter [calling for the condemnation of AWARE] in good faith, thinking they were "protecting" certain other AFTRA members who, so the letter made it appear, had been unjustly accused by AWARE of having Communist-front records. *The plain fact* is that members of AFTRA with *notorious* Communist-front records apparently succeeded in getting some unsuspecting AFTRAns to sign the letter with them, so that all of the signers, *guilty and innocent alike*, would be in the same boat. Doesn't this technique sound familiar to you? Doesn't it strike you as a "strange coincidence" that many — too many — members of our profession have suffered in the past through joining Communist fronts at the instigation of the *very same people* who recently roped unsuspecting members into signing that letter?

(This section of AWARE's defense was interesting on two scores. First, it recognized that the opposition was not simply Communist but a combination of pro-Communists and non-Communists. Secondly, it could only be read as a not too veiled threat: Individuals in the past have suffered by joining with these people; you have joined with these people — the "therefore you will suffer" was not stated. Here again, AWARE succeeded in creating even greater hostility toward itself and made it all the easier for Communists to enlist non-Communists in an anti-AWARE coalition.)



AWARE then went on to remark that “the letter deliberately cited only the weakest items in the AWARE Bulletin and, just as deliberately, omitted mention of other items of an extremely *serious* nature. Certain candidates for office in AFTRA had done much more than ‘married a liberal.’ They had married (and never divorced themselves from) . . . notorious Communist-front activities. . . .”

AWARE’s point was valid. Often the defense against charges of communism in the industry is the counter-allegation that only “innocent liberals” are attacked. This is not the case. But, unfortunately for AWARE, this was not the main point at issue. The AFTRA membership had become disturbed over the whole technique of accusations, “listings” and implications of conspiratorial “patterns.”

At the end of May, the anti-AWARE forces within AFTRA were able to increase their support. In a letter addressed to the membership, they added names to their list of petitioners, widened their base within the union, and, because of AWARE’s tactics, were better able to muster their forces. Eventually, the inevitable took place: AWARE was condemned at an AFTRA membership meeting and later by referendum. Up to the last minute, the pro-AWARE forces attempted to pitch the fight on a “Communist” versus “anti-Communist” plane. Columnist Leon Racht, an AWARE-supporter, wrote in the *New York Journal-American* on June 18, 1955: “This department would like to sound the warning that a ‘yes’ vote in the referendum would unsparingly condemn AWARE and would, in effect, poke the Communist camel’s nose under the tent of the AFTRAns.”

Racht’s statement, and almost all the pro-AWARE defenses, missed the point by a mile. What needed explaining was not why the Communists in AFTRA were opposed to AWARE. That could be assumed. The real question was why so many anti-Communists were so bitterly opposed to an anti-Communist group. And here

responsibility has to be placed on AWARE's own door-step. Its tactics, the tone of its anti-communism, its association in the minds of many with anti-unionism: these were the significant causes of the "condemnation," rather than the machinations of a small group of Communists. By placing the debate within AFTRA on an either/or, "pro-Communist" or "anti-Communist" basis, and identifying true anti-communism with AWARE, the organization created a climate in which the Communists could flourish.

As a result of these factional struggles, the unions in the entertainment field were unable to offer any genuine resistance to blacklisting.

One talent union, however, has resisted blacklisting: Actors Equity Association, the organization of actors in the legitimate theatre. By 1955, Equity was the only union in the entertainment field which had a functioning anti-blacklisting committee and took a forthright stand on the whole question.

The Communist problem had existed in Equity for many years but never became the violently divisive question it was in other talent unions. Because of this, it was possible for Equity to negotiate an anti-blacklisting clause in its contract with the League of New York Theatres.

In the late Thirties, Equity was divided on the same question bedeviling other talent unions. One faction regarded Equity as part of the general labor movement. Another faction wanted it to be a professional association. A number of those later identified with the right-wing "anti-Communist" side in union politics held the latter position. And the Communists in Equity were a part of the labor-oriented faction. Nevertheless, the struggle never became as sharp in Equity as elsewhere.

A pre-war incident illustrated the Communist problem in Equity. At a meeting on May 24, 1940, a motion was presented calling for American neutrality: "For America's true and complete neutrality

on the world state today; against America's being dragged into war; against the use of actors to further war sentiment; for a definite and continuous and sincere effort on the part of our government to solve the actor's unemployment problem. . . ." This was, of course, the period of the Hitler-Stalin Pact. The American Communist Party was pushing strongly for isolationism. As soon as the motion was introduced, *Equity Magazine* reported: "There was a storm of emotion aroused, for and against the motion. . . . Mr. Bert Lytell ruled that the motion was out of order, from which ruling there was an immediate appeal. The count of ballots which followed showed that the chair had been sustained by a vote of 88 to 57."

As a result of the argument over this motion, seven members of the Equity Council were accused of being Communists on the floor of the House of Representatives. One of the actors accused issued a statement to the Associated Press denying any connection with, or sympathy for, the Communist Party. Later, the Congressman who made the accusation admitted that this particular actor was probably only an "innocent stooge" and not an actual Party member. Shortly after the attack, the actor was not nominated for re-election to the Equity Council because "it was felt that his re-election would not be for the best interests of the membership of Equity. . . ." (The chairman of the nominating committee which took this position was later blacklisted in the movies on the grounds of pro-communism.)

The storm continued throughout the Equity elections. The New York *World-Telegram* reported that most informed people "discount completely the Red Angle and call the big struggle a revolt against the 'reactionary, old Guard administration' by a sort of New Deal group of actors who want to see Equity climb out of the rut. The consistently anti-Administration group of past years and whatever Communists are in Equity are off in a corner in the role of spectators." After the election, in which the independent ticket scored significant successes, two vice presidents and eight

Council members resigned from their Equity positions as a protest against "subversive elements" in the union. In their statement of resignation, they declared:

For years we have been struggling against an influence in our association which seemed to us subversive of American ideals and institutions. We have seen this element change Equity more and more from a Guild of Professionals, working for the best interests of the theatre as a whole, to a labor union of different objectives."

During this period, Equity itself demanded a Congressional investigation of alleged Communist activity in the theatre. In 1941, Bert Lytell, President of Equity, sent a wire to the acting chairman of the Dies Committee, urging the Committee to investigate Equity as soon as possible. Congressman Lambertson, who had made the original charge against the Equity members, also pressed for a probe. But in August, 1941, a Congressman said: "Just about the nearest I have ever come in my life to confessing a sense of utter futility has been in connection with my unceasing efforts to have the Lambertson charges . . . heard by the Dies Committee."

The incident was more or less closed in 1942 when Equity passed a constitutional amendment which read:

Under the provisions of this section members of certain specified parties, groups and organizations whose activities are deemed inimical to the best interest of the Actors Equity Association and its members; or of parties, groups and organizations which may hereafter be so deemed by the Council, are barred from holding office in or being employed by Equity. The right to membership in Equity of members of these parties, groups or organizations, is not, however, affected.

The amendment indicated that the overwhelming majority of Equity members were opposed to communism. In later years, even stronger motions were passed, including one of outright condemnation of communism.

This dispute in 1940-41 is typical of the struggles that have taken place in the talent unions. On one side, the New Dealish faction fought to make Equity more of a labor union. On the other, the

“conservative” faction demanded a professional association. In later years, the positions actors took in these debates were used against them as accusations in radio-television screening. In all of this, Equity resembled other unions. A significant difference, however, was the conscious, and successful, attempt in Equity to present politically balanced slates.

After *Red Channels* and the Jean Muir and Phil Loeb cases, there was agitation in Equity for some kind of anti-blacklisting machinery. A motion proposed stated that Equity would fight against blacklisting and that the politics of its members was of no concern to the Association. This the Council rejected. Instead, a motion was passed placing Equity on record as opposed to both communism and fascism, and *then* an anti-blacklisting committee was formed. During the same period, there was a proposal to negotiate a collective-bargaining agreement with the League of New York Theatres, which would have referred blacklist cases to union arbitration.

The final agreement did not make blacklisting a matter for union arbitration. Instead, the League of New York Theatres proposed a joint union-management statement of opposition. The willingness of the theatre owners to come out against blacklisting was strongly criticized by *Counterattack*. The fact that blacklisting was not made a matter of union arbitration was, however, disappointing to some members of Equity. *Counterattack* felt that the agreement indicated a “softness toward communism” on the part of management. The anti-blacklisting group in Equity regarded the agreement of joint cooperation as a watering-down of its original proposals.

In actual practice, the Equity-League of New York Theatres agreement has been a moral rather than a practical force. On the one hand, as a statement of principle, it was strong enough to draw *Counterattack's* fire. But it has rarely been invoked, largely because there are so few actual cases in the theatre.

In the early days, both the Radio Writers Guild and AFTRA created committees to handle the blacklisting problem. All three unions in New York banded together in an inter-union liaison. But within a few years, the Radio Writers Guild was out of existence, and the leadership of AFTRA passed into the hands of people more or less sympathetic to political screening. For these and other reasons the inter-union committee collapsed.

AFTRA, the organization of radio and television artists, elected a new "middle of the road" slate of candidates in December, 1955. It is generally felt in the industry that the election represented a defeat for both extremist camps, left *and* right. The December, 1955 election was widely interpreted to mean that the fate of the union at long last was in the hands of reasonable and moderate stewards — the middle-of-the-road group which for too long had been absent from the scene, leaving the extremists of left and right to dominate. In March, 1956 the new directors of the union resolved to formally notify all talent employers — networks, stations, advertising agencies, independent producers, etc. — that the union would take "appropriate action" against an employer who discriminates against an artist on the basis of charges made by AWARE or any similar organization.

# Some Interviews

## EXCERPTS FROM A REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK\*

### *Interview with a radio-television producer*

I know Harry personally. He told me when we met for lunch that had we not been friends he would have declined to see me, on the basis of being "too busy." He feels unable to say anything for the record.

This is the way the system works at Harry's network. He has an assistant named Joe. When a writer, director, musician, performer or guest star is being considered for Harry's program, Joe calls an extension number at the network's headquarters and turns in the name. Later Joe gets a return call from the mysterious person at the other end of the wire, who tells him whether the artist being considered for employment is "available" or "not available." Now it happens from time to time that a "not available" artist has just left Harry's office and Harry knows that he or she *is* available. But the euphemism is generally understood and accepted. It all works very smoothly. As a producer Harry does not actually participate in any checking procedure.

Harry thinks the lists are "screwy" and that the blacklisters are "misguided" and do not understand what they are doing. As far as he personally is concerned, he'd use everybody — he does not

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\* These interviews were granted to a member of the research staff on condition that names would not be used. Names here used are fictitious.

see what harm they could do, even if they wanted to. But he would feel “uncomfortable” about using someone he knew for sure to be a Communist, “for the simple reason that I can’t separate my political views from my creative work.” (I understood this to mean that communism is abhorrent to him and that having a bona fide Communist around would make him uncomfortable.)

“Morale in the industry,” Harry feels, “has been badly affected” – perhaps, he corrected himself, the word “aspiration” would be more accurate than “morale.” The industry is little more now than a way to make money; most of the creative satisfactions have been eliminated. “You do what is safer, not better,” Harry says. “You have to worry how this or that will be taken by the blacklisting crowd.”

In Harry’s view, the saddest aspect is not the comparatively few people who have been deprived of work. The really bad thing has to do with the content and quality of the programs on tv and radio, “the greatest cultural force since the printing press.” The medium’s full potential is not being fulfilled – the industry is hag-ridden by fear.

#### *Interview with a Network Executive*

“Remember we’re in the business of selling time to advertisers. It is not up to us to *disprove* allegations against people who want to work for us. If someone feels he has been unfairly treated he can come in and talk things over – he’ll get a hearing. But some people would rather lick their sores than come in and clear matters up. They say they won’t ‘explain’ themselves to anyone. (He mentioned the husband of a well-known actress.) All right, then, let them pay the price.

“The problem is different at a newspaper like *The New York Times*. If they lose an advertiser, they can get another one. But our network has enormous sums of money tied up with one individual sponsor. We agree to help sell his product. If having this



one or the other on the air hurts his product, we're not living up to our end of the bargain."

Morale in the industry: "It bothers me. I'm not an easily intimidated man, and yet this is the only subject I know of that I do not feel free to discuss. It bothers me."

### *An Actors Agent*

Call him Bart.

"The worst aspect," Bart said, "is that there are so many different lists and you never know who is on which list. You have to find out by trial and error."

I asked him if, when he decides to take an actor as a client, he checks the name against any of the blacklists. "I feel very guilty about it," he said, "but I really have to. I call people informally at the networks and check around. You know, you pick up little scraps of information."

Bart told me about an actor friend of his, call him Bill Stix. Stix had been doing very well on tv until one day he realized offers had stopped coming in. He had never belonged to any organization of any kind and had taken no part in any political activity so he could not understand why he was blacklisted. One day he discovered that another actor who had worked in the Group Theatre — call *him* Ted Stick — was "controversial." After a while he got CBS to agree that it was in fact a case of mistaken identity and went back to work.

Another of Bart's stories concerned a girl who not long ago was one of the busiest ingenues in town. She was appearing in a Broadway show when she was blacklisted for tv. "She wasn't even old enough to vote yet," Bart said. "But there had been a petition floating around backstage, for Willie McGee, and she signed it. She was in rehearsal for a tv show and got pulled off when the *Daily Worker* came out with a story listing the people who had signed the petition. It was a year before she worked on tv again,

though she had about 300 performances to her credit. Finally she broke down in the office of a network executive one day and they decided to help her. She was asked to sign some paper, a loyalty oath or something – and then she was cleared. But she still couldn't work on some 'tough' shows. Maybe for other reasons or maybe because of this, she just quit acting and now works as a secretary."

Bart thought that all the lists and the listers were "equally harmful." He is bothered because the public "does not understand that there really is no very substantial basis for these lists." He said he did not believe in lists of any kind. "The sooner we get away from them, the better."

#### *Interview with a labor consultant*

Bernard is close to the industry, though not a part of it. I asked if he thought blacklisting was necessary. "I've been involved in fighting communism ever since I was a kid," Bernard said. "We were Socialists, and there weren't many of us around. There were times, back in the late Thirties, when guys like me had a hard time getting any breaks in radio. . . . Most of us have changed our ideas radically since those days, so I know that people *do* change. I did myself. Even those who were late in changing ought to be given a chance. . . . But if I were a producer I wouldn't hire Paul Robeson because my show would have to live on its commercial appeal and I could not afford to endanger the sponsor's product. A guy who uses the Fifth Amendment is almost as controversial as a known Communist – and a mass media program cannot be so above the conflicts of the marketplace as all that." Maybe some who use the Fifth Amendment do so for reasons of principle, Bernard said, but that puts them in the twilight zone. "Living by unpopular principles can be expensive and they have to pay, like a conscientious objector."

Bernard recalled the case of a Japanese musician who was work-

ing for one of the big networks at the time of Pearl Harbor. This man had given long evidence of his loyalty to the United States. He had donated his services many times to democratic causes. "People went to bat for him, but it didn't help any. He lost his job when feeling against the Japanese ran high."

I asked about morale in the industry. Bernard said that "black-listing breeds its own contempt." He said it was bad business to turn the authority for hiring and firing over to a group of self-appointed experts outside the industry.

#### *Interview with a television director*

Clayton once had his own troubles. His name was on a widely publicized "list." He was later cleared. He was anxious that his name not be brought up again, so I agreed to keep the interview anonymous.

Clayton confirmed our information that one network does its blacklisting euphemistically by using the "available" tag. He thinks that in practice there is no criterion which can be applied without injuring innocent people. "Personally, though, if I were choosing between two equally talented people and one was a Communist, or I thought he was a Communist, I would use the non-Communist, because I don't like the Communist mentality."

About the "lists" and "listers" who have so much influence, Clayton said: "They all are pretty reprehensible and incredibly inaccurate. I could have sued the guy who 'listed' me but the case would have taken four years to get to court — and then there is the difficulty in establishing proof of libel. Some of these people are very careful in choosing their words. . . ." As a general thing, Clayton believes, the blacklisting operation encourages people to vent their personal resentments — "it's a kind of hate-machine."

Clayton talked about what he called the "predisposed" mentality. You can find evidence of Communist-thinking in almost anything if you are determined to find it, he believes. He gave two illustra-

tions of this: One ad man talking with another over lunch said, "Why do you always use stories about a little man against a big setup — it's Communist-like thinking!" Actually, Clayton argued, the theme dates back at least to the ancient Greeks. The second illustration was from a program presented on "You Are There," a CBS television show which dramatizes historical events. This particular program was concerned with Galileo's recantation. It was all very carefully worked out beforehand in order to keep the facts straight and still not offend anyone; it was checked and approved by local clergymen before it went on the air. Nowhere was it either stated or implied that Galileo was tortured to exact his recantation. Still CBS got a letter from a priest denouncing the "Communist" implication that Galileo had been tortured.

Clayton feels that some sort of arbitration may be the answer to the problems created by blacklisting. However the talent unions have to be discounted since free speech is practically ruled out there — people who denounce blacklisting on the floor at union meetings may be subject to blacklisting for that very reason. But in many cases of clear injustice — mistaken identity, a wife or husband blacklisted because of the partner's associations, etc. — arbitration could be most effective. Now, he said, it can take as long as two years for an actor to clear himself in a case of mistaken identity. He knew of such a case.

Change for the better, he said, has to begin at the topmost level.

*Telephone interview with an advertising agency vice president*

I knew Charlie years ago. He has come up in the world since. After I had explained my reason for calling, the conversation went something like this:

"You happen to have picked an issue on which I personally would not want to comment . . . (silence). . . . You should talk to the vice president in charge of public relations — as a matter of fact you should talk to the President himself."

“Well, Charlie, can I quote you as saying this is a subject on which you do not wish to comment?”

“Definitely not! You’re not taking all this down, are you?”

“I’m just making a note that I’ve spoken to you, and what your view is.”

“I haven’t any views on this. [Charlie’s voice suggested concern.] There may be many reasons why the agency may not wish to participate in this – ah, investigation. These interviews consume an awful lot of time, for one thing. . . . I always advise those who want to get ahead in the ad business not to be throwing their names around in print anywhere.”

#### *Interview with a network program director*

Fred did not indicate any anxiety about the problem. His manner was relaxed and casual. I took it that this was the attitude he was intent on getting across. Fred keeps no “list” himself and does not check writers or actors he wants to use. There is no need – “We’re prudent and careful.” He sees the American Legion’s *Firing Line* regularly but never reads *Counterattack* or any of the other anti-Communist publications which specialize in “listing.” Occasionally, when he is not quite sure of someone, he talks things over with the network’s legal department people.

Fred would not, of course, employ a writer or actor who was generally known as a Communist. “I wouldn’t use Paul Robeson.” I asked how he would know for sure that someone *was* a Communist. He said, “Oh, I *know*.” The attitude of the average sponsor, he said, was best summed up this way: “Why should we have any trouble? There are a lot of other actors around.”

“I’ve used some people who were a little hot, on religious programs, and nothing happened. I don’t believe in using people just *because* they are in trouble. I tell the boys working for me to aim for the best possible show they can get. I tell them that they should not go out of their way to be heroes or make a case out of being

brave. . . . Actually a good number of those who are in trouble aren't particularly talented. There are many mediocre writers and actors among them. But take J. H., she *is* good and we have used her. We've also used some writers who are under attack. We don't follow any kind of rule."

Fred held that the situation had been blown up all out of proportion. "A few have been hurt," he said, "but the sound and fury just isn't warranted by the facts."

The transition from radio to television came at just about the same time as "this situation," he said. People who were successful in radio are not always the best bet for television, a *visual* medium. Consequently, some radio veterans are not working just because they are not tv material. "This," Fred pointed out, "is part of the picture." Another factor is that a few years ago, when the movies were not hiring people because business in Hollywood was bad, the talent market was glutted. Still another thing to remember, he cautioned, is that actors and writers sometimes wear out. "Understand, we have no continuing obligation to hire these people."

Regarding *Red Channels, File 13* and the other "lists": Fred said he did not believe in putting police power in private hands. The Attorney General's list is helpful, though.

He could not recall any instance of the Communist Party's line coloring a script, and quickly dismissed the possibility on the familiar grounds that too many people screen a script before it goes on the air.

Fred said he believed that since this is a free country, anyone has a right to say anything he pleases but no one has a Constitutional right to be popular — if an actor or a writer manages to get himself unpopular, he may not work. It's one of the hazards of his trade.

#### *Interview with a talent agent*

Tom sells scripts, both on a contract and free-lance basis. He has no copies of any of the "lists" in his office. But, he says, "You

never know when you will find out a writer is in trouble. Maybe he'll work one place and not another, or he'll suddenly be cut off from a series he's doing. You never know why, or on whose sayso. One big advertising agency keeps a separate list for each of its clients, another has a 'white list.' The networks differ on how the situation should be handled."

"We had a recent experience," Tom said. "This writer had been doing Studio One scripts and worked on other programs. Suddenly we were told that a script of his couldn't be used on CBS." The script editor told Tom "off the record" that the order came from "upstairs." "I got the idea," Tom said. "My writer was on at least one list. Why? I don't know and I don't think the writer did, either. . . . It's like battling ghosts. Somebody tells you sadly, 'Isn't it a shame,' — and that's all you ever get to know about it."

Tom went on: "If a man were an official security risk, that would be another matter. But I never hear about the FBI or the Attorney General — all I ever hear about is *Red Channels* and this Johnson of Syracuse and the other characters who have made a business out of this thing. As a matter of fact, a friend of mine, an FBI man, tells me that in time of emergency, they could round up all the subversives in double quick time, because they know who they are and where they are. If there are any real subversives around who ought to be on lists, then it should be done openly and efficiently by people with authority, not by quacks and screwballs. The trouble now is that just about everybody is on some list or other. There is no clear definition. Liberals and subversives are put in the same basket. Maybe this thing gets a few people who are really subversive, but it gets a lot of innocent people, too."

Later: "The burden of proof is on the one accused. You have to start 'explaining' something about yourself that you may not even know about or remember. Where will all this end? Before they get through, we'll have children testifying against their parents."

I asked about the possibility of subversive content in radio and television scripts. Tom said: "How can the content be subversive? By the time a script gets on the air it has been passed by all kinds of people, and believe me, if the implications are so subtle that they can't be picked up after all that scrutiny, it's not going to hurt anyone."

About the industry's morale: "Blacklisting has affected every aspect of the industry. You'll see when you talk to people who work in radio-tv. What happens? Writers write under other names, or they split fees with other writers who are still in the clear. . . . What can you write about, with all the suspicion and fear around? What writer wants to stick his neck out and maybe be called a subversive because he hasn't steered clear of social problems?"

About "controversial" performers: "I'll accept only official government sources as authority. Some joined front organizations, and so on, but what did it add up to? Actors just talk off the top of their heads like emotional children. Those citations don't really mean a thing."



# Blacklisting Experiences

*The following is a series of individual experiences with blacklisting. For obvious reasons, identifications have been withheld.*

## A LEADING ACTRESS

IN SEPTEMBER, 1948, Miss *H.*, who was starring in a play in Pittsburgh, spoke at a local rally sponsored by the Westinghouse Workers for Wallace. The Wallace meeting, and Miss *H.*'s appearance, were widely publicized. *Variety* reported that a "steady stream of ticket holders" turned in their paste-boards for refunds after the meeting, yet her play broke box-office records during its run in the steel city.

In 1950, Miss *H.* was starred in a Kraft Theatre tv production. In 1951, she was scheduled to appear on a tv program sponsored by General Mills. Miss *H.* was listed in *Red Channels*, and protests began to come in from Syracuse immediately after it was announced she would star on this program. However, the cast rallied behind her, the show went on the air as scheduled, and there was no immediate boycott of General Mills products.

At the time the storm blew up, Miss *H.* wrote the executive producer of the program: "I understand that some question has been raised as to my loyalty to the United States, and I desire to inform you categorically that I am not now nor have I ever been a member of the Communist Party nor am I now in sympathy with Communist objectives." But despite the statement, Miss *H.* was cut off from television work after that.

She has been able to take part in radio interview programs but in almost every case has received no fees. On one occasion, during a radio interview, Miss *H.* referred to her "unpleasant experiences" but her remarks were edited from the tape when the show went on the air. More recently, she has taken part in a documentary-type radio program on NBC. But she has yet to return to television as a regular performer.

In 1952, the actress appeared in Washington, D. C. in the play "Tovarich." The theatre was picketed by the American Legion, and the picketing (reported in *Variety*) led several theatre managers in other cities to cancel the play. Again, when Miss *H.* appeared in a Theater Guild production, there were protests. The protests did not, however, affect the run of the play or its box-office.

A few years ago it was announced that Miss *H.* was going to be called by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. She was subpoenaed but her testimony was delayed and she never did appear. The Committee offered no explanation. *Variety* referred to the incident as a "current Capitol Hill mystery."

In 1954, she was scheduled to speak at a conference at the University of Indiana. This appearance was cancelled by a wire stating as the reason, "disturbing political publicity" in a newspaper.

In November 1954, Miss *H.* was involved in plans to star on a tv dramatic show. A short time before rehearsals got under way, the producer called and asked her to withdraw voluntarily. His office, the producer explained, had taken some chances on "risky people," and now thought it best to "mark time" for a while. He assured Miss *H.* he would use her as soon as things let up. She agreed to withdraw, but there were no more calls from this producer.

Miss *H.* is generally recognized as one of America's most distinguished actresses. She is still a young woman but is largely cut off from the popular media. Lately she has been taking drama students and employs her talents by coaching lesser actresses.

## A RADIO ACTOR

*K.L.* noticed as early as 1947 that he had not worked on any BBD&O shows for some time. He phoned a friend at that agency and made an appointment to discuss the situation. Over the luncheon table, *K.L.* was told he could not be used because someone had raised the question of his affiliation, in 1942, with the Artists' Front to Win the War. The actor investigated and found he had been on the radio the night that organization's only New York rally was held; he learned too that he had never given the group permission to use his name. As soon as he discovered these facts about himself (until he checked he had not trusted his memory), *K.L.* wrote a letter to the director of the BBD&O radio series. Shortly after, he was signed for a BBD&O show but received no calls from the agency after this one appearance. Six months later he wrote to BBD&O again and succeeded in refuting certain charges on file at the agency. Finally, he was able to work on BBD&O shows regularly.

*K.L.* was not listed in *Red Channels*. But he noticed his employment was falling off during 1950 and part of '51, after *Red Channels* became "the Bible of Madison Avenue." Once again he made an appointment to see a director at a big agency. He was told he could not be used because various charges against him had come up again. As a result of this talk, *K.L.* sent a letter to the agency, stating his opposition to communism. Then an agency executive called him and asked why he felt it necessary to write such a letter. *K.L.* told the executive of the anxiety he felt. The executive was sympathetic. Within half an hour the actor received a call from the agency offering him a job.

In 1952, one of the agency people *K.L.* dealt with, called to suggest he cooperate with a House Committee investigator who was in New York. The actor agreed to see the investigator and spent some time with him, most of it — *K.L.* says — devoted to

straightening out misinformation the investigator had picked up.

At a dinner party in 1953 both *K.L.* and a network television producer were guests. The talk turned to blacklisting, and someone asked the producer if *K.L.* was “employable.” The producer said bluntly that he couldn’t use the actor on his network. This was the first indication *K.L.* had that he was still “in trouble.” Immediately, he wrote to a personal friend high in the network and asked the friend to check on the story. His friend assured *K.L.* there was no cause for worry; the only reason he had not been used on the network was because more actors than assignments were available.

A year passed and *K.L.* still had not worked on the network. He phoned another executive friend, and a conference with some well known “anti-Communists” in the industry was arranged. As a result of the conference, *K.L.* sent “clearance” letters around to the proper people, was granted an interview with a network executive in charge of “clearances.” *K.L.* is now “employable.” But he still feels bitter about the months of uncertainty and unemployment he experienced and says he will probably never feel truly secure again.

#### A RADIO-TV DIRECTOR

*M.P.* came to his network after blacklisting was institutionalized but only gradually realized what was going on. His first experience was with a show that had been blasted in *Counterattack*. At one point, Laurence A. Johnson came to New York to protest against an actor who had been used on this show. Johnson contacted the advertising agency and sponsor; they referred him to the network, which handled hiring for the particular program, but the pressure on the network — and on the network staff — came primarily from the agency and sponsor, not from Johnson directly. The sponsor was particularly disturbed that the Syracuse grocer might campaign against his product. He demanded that the network mollify Johnson.

After considerable negotiations with *Counterattack* and Johnson, the program was finally “cleared.” But as a result of its difficulties, it became a “tough” show in terms of political screening. A high network official took a special interest in the program and laid down strict requirements for every actor who appeared on it. The director could no longer assemble his casts on a simple merit basis but had to take political “screening” into account. Yet pains were taken to keep the full extent of this screening secret. Though the director knew he could not hire the obviously blacklisted – those “listed” in *Red Channels* or *Counterattack* – he did not know that others were being rejected for similar reasons.

At this time the network used the term “not available” in two senses. Sometimes it meant an actor was booked up for a certain date and was actually not available for other work. But it could also mean that he had been screened off the show for political reasons. It was some time before *M.P.* realized the double use of the term. *M.P.* finally understood what was happening when he was told that an actor was “not available” and met the actor shortly thereafter only to find he was desperate for work. After this *M.P.* sought out actors, checked on whether they were available, and then submitted their names on casting lists. Often, the actors whose names he submitted would be crossed off as “not available.” At first the director did not believe that certain people in the industry knew how extensive blacklisting had become, and he took it upon himself to inform them. But he was told politely it was none of his business. If he had any sense he’d stay out of the whole mess, one executive advised him.

Occasionally, *M.P.*, like other directors at the network, put up a fight for a particular performer, arguing that he was necessary for the success of the show. But they fought without success.

All this, *M.P.* remembers, was carried on in a kind of Aesopian language which avoided the use of the word “blacklist.” Discus-

sions were about "availability," or people would say, "Is he clean?" "Is he o.k.?" etc.

Finally, *M.P.* says, the political check became routinized. There were certain offices which received casting lists, certain secretaries who would call and say that such and such a one was "not available." After a while the production staff gave up resisting. They realized it was useless, for the blacklisting policy had been set at the top level of the network.

### AN ACTOR

In 1952, *V.F.* ran on an independent ticket in Equity. As a result of this, he says, his tv employment was largely cut off. Interestingly enough, throughout the period of his blacklisting, roughly during 1952, '53 and part of '54, he was used on one major network show.

When he came into Equity, *V.F.* found the Communist issue had caused bitter factional dissension on the Council. At one point, he actively fought the imputation of "pro-Communist" sympathies which some brought against the "liberal" bloc in the union. He did this on the basis of voting records. He himself often voted "conservatively." At the same time he was being attacked from the right for harboring "pro-Communist" sympathies, the left wing was annoyed by many of the positions he took.

Finally, toward the end of 1954, *V.F.* noticed a change in the atmosphere. He began to get calls for work on shows which had not used him for over two years, though he had taken no steps to clear himself. *V.F.* believes the change was a result of someone's taking an interest in his case without telling him about it. Since, over the years, he had made many anti-Communist statements on the union floor, he feels that even the most cursory of checks would have revealed that there was really no basis for blacklisting him as a "pro-Communist."

After he was cleared, *V.F.* learned that rumors he was a Com-

munist were still being circulated, but apparently these reports did not affect his employment. He is now employable throughout the industry.

### A DIRECTOR

Before *Red Channels*, J.R. had built up a considerable reputation in television. Even after *Red Channels* appeared, he was hired by one of the largest packagers and given important duties (his name was not listed in the book). J.R.'s first task was to prepare a pilot kinescope for a new show. He did this using two actors who had been listed in *Red Channels*. The kinescope was successful, but when the first show of the series came up – it was a repeat of the pilot – he was told he could not use the actors. The packager's office was disturbed about this directive but placed the blame on the advertising agency handling the show.

The show ran for 13 weeks. During this period, the director hired people listed in *Red Channels* and others who were later blacklisted. This was in 1951. The same year, he did another show using two people who had been accused of "pro-Communist" sympathies. At a conference, an agency man gave him a copy of *Red Channels* and told him to be careful about hiring the people "listed" in it. But there was no attempt to fire the performers he had scheduled for the show.

In the fall of 1951, the director returned to work for the same packager. *Red Channels* by this time was being taken more seriously – no one "listed" in it could be hired. Final approval of casting lists had also been switched to the front office in order to insure that no one politically suspect would get on the air. At the very time that this was happening, an agency representative told J.R. that there was no blacklisting on his agency's shows. But when the director announced his intention of using a certain actor, the same agency man told him he could not because of "pressure."

In the winter of 1952, J.R. found that the list of "unemploy-

ables" was expanding. *Red Channels* was no longer the sole source of information. Many people who were not listed in that book were nonetheless "unavailable" for work.

The director even learned that accusations were being made against him. Some of the shows he had directed in the past were charged against him. Laurence Johnson intervened directly. Johnson contacted the sponsor of one of the shows this director was working on. At first the company felt that the director was "defensible" and decided to ignore the charges. But later they changed their position and the director's future became doubtful.

Earlier, *J.R.* had been offered a job at one of the major networks. In view of his uncertain status, he decided to take it. The contract was signed in the spring of 1952. A loyalty oath was sent to *J.R.* and he signed it. But after this, he was called into the office of a network executive who confronted him with a series of charges. The director felt the executive was anticipating trouble. During one of their interviews, the executive pointed to Elia Kazan's ad in *The New York Times* repudiating his past political associations and told *J.R.*: "Well, that's one way."

Shortly after these discussions, the director was fired. For a while, he continued to get phone calls about work, but the deals always fell through.

For some time now, he has been unable to work in the industry under his own name. From time to time, he has helped in the preparation of shows but receives no credit and is personally paid by the producer. In 1951, the director's income from television was \$35,000; in 1952, \$12,000 for television and all other work; in 1953, between \$8,000 and \$9,000.

#### AN AGENT

Miss K., an actors' agent, feels that one of the main problems is the psychological impact blacklisting has on her clients. Fear, she feels, produces uncertainty and inhibits the actor in his work.



Thus, even if she is finally able to place a blacklisted performer, psychological difficulties arise.

There are often rumors about clients. The agency cannot track each of them down, but if they become persistent, the agent has to check to find out if her client is indeed blacklisted. This is done informally, through personal contacts, and the information given is rarely straightforward. Generally, Miss *K.* has nothing but hints and innuendos to go on.

In some cases, a producer will call an agency and ask for a "star," describing the kind of person he wants. When no particular performer is named, the agent can test a client's acceptability by submitting his name.

Miss *K.* has found a tendency on the part of some performers to claim they have been blacklisted when the real reason for their unemployability lies in lack of talent, advanced age, etc. In several cases, she has tried to help performers get a more realistic picture of their situation and has succeeded in convincing them that they are not blacklisted.

The agent is willy-nilly involved in the problem of "clearance," Miss *K.* points out. If a client cannot work, the agent may check around to see what can be done for him. Miss *K.*, for example, helped one actor get an engagement from a veterans group, and this ultimately facilitated his being cleared. She feels that her most important duty is to help her blacklisted clients weather their bad period without letting go of their artistic ambitions.

#### RADIO WRITER

Blacklisting, according to *W.Z.*, a Communist sympathizer, is really an attack on New Deal values. During the period of the New Deal, *W.Z.* says, actors and writers, along with the whole entertainment world, were engaged in creative and "socially conscious" work. Unions grew up. There was an alliance on the part of theatrical people with the "progressive" forces in society. This

continued throughout World War II, when the industry made a considerable contribution to the war effort. *W.Z.* claims that many have been blacklisted as a "punishment" for their activity in this "New Deal movement." He does not specifically mention Communists as being among them.

The motives of the pro-blacklisting faction, *W.Z.* holds, are union-busting, anti-New Dealism and reaction in general. In certain cases, these motives are linked with racism — anti-Semitism, and hostility against the Negro performer — so that the blacklisting movement actually verges on fascism. Many of those who had once been on the side of the "progressive" forces capitulated and went over to Senator McCarthy when the national mood changed, *W.Z.* claims bitterly.

However, *W.Z.* is fairly tolerant of the businessmen who actually run the industry. He feels that they are reacting out of confusion and a desire to retain their jobs and positions. They are not as reprehensible as the artists who have gone through "clearance" and now actively oppose "liberalism" and "democracy." *W.Z.* reserves his utmost scorn for those who have cleared themselves.

Blacklisting, *W.Z.* insists, has crippled artistic inventiveness. The shows produced today do not have the "creative social conscience" they had before political screening got under way. Writers, producers, actors and directors no longer have general artistic discussions, he claims. "Political conformism" has entered every corner of the industry and made meaningful exchange impossible. Suspicion lurks in every office on Madison Avenue.

*W.Z.* is pessimistic. He feels blacklisting will be brought to an end only when there is a massive political shift within the United States, i.e., when there is a general resurgence of the "progressive forces" which, according to him, pervaded the Thirties. Until this happens, *W.Z.* says, he will be blacklisted, though others, against whom the charges are not so extensive, may find their way back to work. *W.Z.* is convinced the threat to his personal values will

disappear only when it is possible for a show to go on the air with a whole group of people listed in *Red Channels*.

*W.Z.* has been totally blacklisted for over four years. He had been a successful and well-paid employee of the industry and took an active part in union affairs. (His views, as might be expected, are a faithful recording of the official Communist Party line on blacklisting.)

### PRODUCER

*N.R.* produced a series written by a man who was eventually listed in *Red Channels*. After *Red Channels* was published, protests came in, among them an angry one from an American Legion group. The sponsor was deeply upset.

For a while, after *Red Channels*, there was chaos in the industry, *N.R.* says. Actors were turned down "almost at random." No reason was given. Some clearances did not come in until the very last minute — in one case a "non-clearance" did not arrive until after the person had been on the air, and this precipitated a crisis. There was a feeling at the time, *N.R.* says, that there was no logic in what was happening. "It was out of Kafka." But after a time, things settled down. Procedures were worked out and blacklisting was run like a well-oiled machine.

The production-office people would submit the casting list to a person at the agency whose identity they did not know. Some-time later, they would receive a phone call and the names would be read back with a "yes" or "no" check. Because of the problems involved in the "no's," the producers took the precaution of sending in many more names than they could use. In this way they hoped to assemble the full casts they needed. In the case of talented people they wanted to use, they would frequently re-submit names to see if things had changed.

NBC, according to *N.R.*, began with the most contradictory screening process. For a time, executives at the network simply

ignored calls dealing with blacklisting. Finally the network organized its "screening" on a more stable basis. The job was given to the legal department. Now when a call comes in from a production staff, a dossier, containing only derogatory information, is sent to the producer. If the charges are fairly foolish, it is possible to use the person, although this can be done only after consultation with an executive. The NBC legal department is willing to discuss its operation and can be convinced to take a chance.

Some pro-blacklisting elements in the industry, *N.R.* believes, have become politicized to such an extent that they constitute a nuisance. They are forever circulating petitions, arguing, even checking on their co-workers. As a result, producers are reluctant to hire them. This, he emphasizes, is not because of their politics *per se* — others who agree with them have no employment problem — but results from the *manner* in which they put forth their politics. Ironically, their militant crusade to screen "controversial" talent out of the industry has made them "controversial" themselves.

#### AN ACTRESS

Miss *B.* is the sister of a leading movie star. Her own career got under way in the late Forties. Before 1950, Miss *B.* was in demand on television. But during this period she was appearing on Broadway in a hit play and did not accept much outside work. She was generally considered a promising young actress.

In the fall of 1950, Miss *B.* began to believe she was blacklisted. She made the Madison Avenue rounds, saw people, talked with her agents, but to no avail. She could find no work. At this time, she received a phone call from a friend who told her she had been blacklisted. She checked with a writer working on a major television show. He also reported she was blacklisted, as did two producer friends. All of them assumed that she was "unemployable" on CBS shows.

Miss *B.*'s attempts to get in touch with various network people were futile. She was told, "He's not in," or her phone calls simply went unanswered. She contacted her agents but they could not suggest anything. Most of her advisers simply told her to wait until the whole thing blew over.

The actress searched her memory to discover what might have led to her being blacklisted. She recalled she had agreed to sponsor the Waldorf Peace Conference. At the time the Conference was held, she was working in her first big Broadway play. She says she was flattered that anybody would want her name and that many of her friends were signing the letter of sponsorship, so she signed. During the same period, she was active in organizing opposition to a quiz show which featured young Broadway actors and actresses and paid them with \$10 and a watch. Miss *B.* felt that the young performers were being exploited, and the talent union officers agreed with her. The protests were so effective, the program went off the air. She wondered if this, too, could have contributed to her being blacklisted as a "troublemaker."

Soon after Miss *B.* learned she was blacklisted, she stopped working in order to have a baby. She did not look for work again until late in 1952 and then found she was still unable to get employment on television. However, in February, 1953, she received a call for a movie part. She signed a contract and sent a letter to the studio which "explained" her sponsorship of the Waldorf Peace Conference and denied she was ever a member of a subversive organization. The studio was evidently satisfied, for she worked in two pictures that year.

When Miss *B.*'s first movie was released, there was considerable publicity. She appeared as a guest on a number of television shows but still failed to get an acting job on tv. In 1954, Miss *B.* went to Hollywood and made another movie. When she returned to New York, she made further attempts to find tv work, but they were fruitless. Finally, she decided to take the bull by the horns. She

made an appointment with Alfred Berry, "security officer" at CBS.

In the conversation with Berry, the word "blacklist" was not used. They spoke of "unavailability." Berry talked to her about the need CBS had to protect itself. When Miss *B.* told him about her letter to the movie studio, he said he would check on it.

At a later meeting, the actress was told that four items were held against her: she had sponsored the Waldorf Peace Conference; she was reported in the *Daily Worker* as having attended an American Labor Party ball; she was a sponsor of a pro-Communist meeting in Mexico City; and she had signed the Willie McGee petition. She asked what she could do to clear herself of these charges. Berry suggested that she see someone from the American Legion.

Berry also suggested that she make some public anti-Communist statements and associate herself with a few anti-Communist "causes." She need not interpret this, he assured her, as meaning far right-wing groups. After this, Miss *B.* went to a prominent attorney. Under his direction, she wrote a letter "explaining" the associations which got her "in trouble."

Miss *B.*'s efforts have had some success. She has appeared on sponsored television shows and her "explanations" have apparently been accepted. However, the most important period in her career was lost. At a point when she might rightfully have expected to land major roles, she was "unemployable" because of the four charges against her.

## AN ACTOR

*F.T.* has played in several important movies. He also has a long background in radio, and worked on television in its early days. In the spring of 1952, *F.T.* finished a picture in Hollywood. Immediately after this, he was replaced in a forthcoming role by someone else. He had a conversation with an executive at the studio who asked him pointblank, "Are you a Communist?" *F.T.* told the executive he wasn't. The executive then told the actor that the

American Legion Post #41 in Syracuse, New York, was "after" him. He mentioned a whole series of charges, and predicted a bleak prospect for future employment unless *F.T.* cleared himself.

Back in New York, *F.T.* found a part in a Broadway play but got no television work. A friend of his who had been "in trouble" and cleared himself offered to put him in touch with George Sokolsky. The actor accepted the offer, but nothing came of it. Later some films he had made prior to getting in trouble were shown on television, and there were more attacks from Syracuse.

During the next few years, *F.T.* could not work on television. Once, he was reading for a part with a CBS director when another director came in. The second director realized the mistake the first was making and told the actor he was "too good for the part." He was not hired. By this time, *F.T.* decided it was necessary to clear himself with CBS. He went, unannounced, to Daniel O'Shea's office, was directed to Alfred Berry, and discussed his problem there.

Berry based the network's case against *F.T.* on charges found in *Counterattack* and the *Firing Line*. He mentioned the actor's work at an off-Broadway theatre, his appearance at the funeral of J. Edward Bromberg,\* his signing the Willie McGee petition, and detailed a charge which the actor denied. When he was finally convinced that *F.T.* was not a Communist, Berry asked him for a "letter." He explained that the network had to have one on file in order to defend *F.T.* if pressure started again.

*F.T.* said he was fearful of some of his off-Broadway connections. Many blacklisted writers, actors and directors have taken to the off-Broadway stage. In some cases, association with people in these productions, or appearance in a play with a political line, has turned up later in a dossier or has been used as a charge in one

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\* Bromberg, a prominent actor in both Hollywood and New York, was listed in *Red Channels*.

of the anti-Communist newsletters. Because of this, *F.T.* now hesitates to take certain jobs.

Even though *F.T.* does not appear on television, he had a major network radio role in 1955. His experience is similar to that of other blacklisted actors who have discovered that they can get a job on a radio show though they are barred from employment at the same network's television studios. However, at the present time, *F.T.*'s income is far below his pre-1952 earnings and he has no immediate prospect of finding work.

### JOURNALIST

One of the top journalists in the radio-television field gave his impressions of the blacklisting problem. This is how he saw it:

To begin with, he said, one must understand the actor. Before the New Deal, actors were notoriously apathetic about politics. When they got "political" in the Thirties, they were naive and believed they could "sound off" with no consequences. *Red Channels*, the journalist remarked, is a book listing the most gregarious people in the industry, the joiners, much more than it is a compilation of actual Communists.

There was, he says, no Communist propaganda on radio and there is none on television. In the course of producing a script, it is checked for conformity to network policy, it goes through script editors, continuity acceptance, etc. Even during the war, there were people in the industry who were conscious of the Communist Party line and watched out for propaganda. Interestingly enough, he points out, many of the shows produced during the war with themes that would now be considered too hot to handle were initiated by the Advertising Council.

The McCarran report on communism in the radio-tv unions, this journalist feels, completely oversimplified a complex situation. The actual Communist membership in the industry was always small; the real battle was between "conservatives" and "liberals."



He considers the Report a "pretty dirty piece of work" which omitted much of the information necessary to an understanding of the problem. He feels that some of those most vociferous in the industry in charging various people with "communism" are lacking in talent and have taken this means to express their frustration.

CBS, he said, got into trouble because of its relatively low-budget operation. Unable to match the tremendous financial resources of NBC, CBS relied on "brains," specifically through an emphasis on documentaries and social themes. When radio-tv blacklisting began, CBS had the greatest number of people "in trouble" – and, as a result, CBS set up the most drastic network security program.

From the point of view of radio-tv columnists, the journalist said, blacklisting has been a frustrating story. Performers frequently come to newspaper columnists with accounts of their experiences, but then, almost to a man, demand anonymity. Because of this, the writer is unable to report their cases, and a situation which everyone in the industry knows about, never gets a public airing.

Finally, this journalist believes that the pressure is lifting somewhat; a few sponsors and network shows have become more courageous, and the whole industry is simply becoming "bored" with blacklisting. Unless a new case comes along to make the argument for blacklisting more plausible, the practice has already reached its peak, he feels.

#### AN ACTOR

*K.Y.* is a top star in all the entertainment media. He learned indirectly that he was "in trouble" at the major networks and leading advertising agencies and determined to do something about it. The "security officer" at CBS provided *K.Y.* with the list of "charges" against him which that network had on file.

The following charges had been filed:

1. He had been on the executive board of the Actors' Lab. (*True.* He was a member "very briefly.")

2. He had performed in a show sponsored by the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions. (*Absolutely false. K.Y. never heard of such a show. He checked the cast list for the show in *Variety*. His name did not appear.*)
3. Identified by a government witness as having attended meetings of the same organization. (*False. K.Y. never attended a meeting of the organization in his life.*)
4. Spoke for continuing 1945 movie strike and defended Herbert Sorrell. Prominent member of the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals was cited as authority. (*Absolutely false. K.Y. was involved in a movement to end the strike.*)
5. Signed full-page ad against the Parnell Thomas investigation of Hollywood. (*Absolutely false. K.Y. checked the ad. His name was not listed.*)
6. Not listed in Appendix IX. Name appears in Myron Fagan's *Red Stars Over Hollywood*. (*K.Y. did not understand the reference.*)
7. Participated in Thought Control Conference held by Hollywood Arts, Sciences and Professions Council in 1947. (*Absolutely false. K.Y. took no part in the Conference and had nothing to do with the organization.*)

*K.Y. kept a diary:*

*Sunday:* Saw network head. He asked me to continue program into next season.

*Monday:* Told I cannot be cleared by advertising agency. Show is in difficulty . . . Dinner with friends. They say they've known about the situation for two or three months but did not want to worry me. Told me some of the charges against me.

*Monday:* (A week later) Show attacked in Hearst paper.

*Wednesday:* Learned the name of the "clearance" man at the advertising agency.

*Thursday:* Network gets nine calls about the show. Five are favorable;

four complaints. Program is described as "pink," "too much political innuendo," and "cleverly concealed Communist propaganda." First time any such comments have come in. Network — and I — both believe they are a direct result of the story in Hearst paper.

*Sunday:* Show cannot get sponsor for next season. Negotiations for two other shows collapse completely.

After K.Y., armed with his rebuttal, started to make the "clearance" rounds, he reported in his diary:

*Monday:* Meeting with "clearance" man at advertising agency. He assures me that the agency does not consider me subversive. He will see what they can do about putting me on one of their "prestige" shows. These shows less susceptible to pressure groups.

*Tuesday:* Meeting with executive at the "other" network. They made a check last summer and are satisfied that there is nothing to the charges against me. Executive suggested meeting with another agency "clearance" man . . . Still *another* agency "clearance" man called to say he had read my statement and checked with the top "clearance" man on Madison Avenue. They too are satisfied now. But one sponsor — who supposedly uses Hartnett's services — is still holding out.

*Wednesday:* Met with an agency "clearance" man for a general discussion of "the problem." No more trouble at that agency, he assures me.

*Thursday:* Got an offer through the agency I visited yesterday. They've really had a change of heart. I was turned down for this very show not more than a month ago.

*Friday:* Yet another agency "clearance" man wants a copy of my statement and answer to the charges. Guess I'm "clear" now.

# Industry Viewpoints

## IN THE MAIL

A DETAILED QUESTIONNAIRE\* was sent to leading networks, sponsors, advertising agencies and actors' agents. Many did not reply. The following statements represent a cross-section of the industry viewpoints elicited by the questions.

We would never knowingly engage a Communist for any of our radio or television programs. Also, we would never knowingly engage anyone who aids either directly or indirectly the Communist cause. We carry out this policy in the employment of literally thousands of people in connection with our radio and television programs . . .

From a statement of policy issued by the  
Procter and Gamble Company

Our company would not, knowingly, lend aid or moral support to persons who subscribe to subversive teachings. Where subversive guilt is clearly established, we would have no hesitancy in refusing to hire the guilty party, but we would be running contrary to one of our country's most ancient and noble traditions — i.e. that a person is innocent until proven guilty, if we, as a private concern, assume to set ourselves up as judge and jury and pass sentence on persons who subsequently might be proven innocent.

From a policy statement issued by the  
Jos. Schlitz Brewing Company, Milwaukee

We buy "Studio One" as a package from CBS through our agency, McCann-Erikson. These two businesses, as well as all of us at West-

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\* See Appendix.

inghouse, have a great stake in our capitalistic society. It is therefore in our own best interests never to engage in any activities that would jeopardize the free enterprise system.

Like any large corporation in America, we are interested in making sure we have no Communists or subversives on our programs. We expect CBS to screen as closely as possible to make certain we do not use anybody who has been proved to be Communistic or a Communist sympathizer.

L. W. Scott, Advertising Manager,  
Consumer Products,  
Westinghouse Electric Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pa.

We would not give employment to anyone who advocates the forceful overthrow of the United States Government or conspires against it. We would not, of course, base our decision on unsupported charges from private sources, but we would heed the findings of authorized Government agencies. Thus, we would not knowingly employ, in any capacity, anyone who has been officially designated as subversive. This applies generally to our employment practices, and it is immaterial whether or not the applicant is in the entertainment field.

C. J. Backstrand, President,  
Armstrong Cork Company, Lancaster, Pa.

Our company takes an active interest in the selection of talent appearing on its radio and television shows, but, of course, depends heavily on its advertising agency to determine the qualifications and public acceptance of such talent. If our agency has no doubt about the talent to be used in a particular show, we usually concur in its recommendation. If there is doubt, we usually make an investigation on our own. If such talent is shown to be affiliated with the Communist Party, or an organization opposed to the Constitution of the United States, we simply do not employ or retain them.

D. W. Stewart, Manager,  
Advertising Division, The Texas Company  
(Texaco Petroleum Products), New York

We would certainly look with disfavor upon the appearance on a Dow program of any person so controversial as to place us in a questionable light by association. Similarly, we would be displeased with any other action on the part of producers, such as the inclusion of

material in poor taste, which would be embarrassing to our company. Naturally also we would not wish to be party to giving aid and comfort to any known Communist, but would recognize that accusation and established evidence are two different things.

Leland I. Doan, President,  
The Dow Chemical Company

We have no policy as such in connection with the employment of artists for radio and tv programs sponsored by us . . . The determination as to the employment of the artist is made on an individual basis . . . any answers to specific questions or general comment would be theoretical. Frankly, we do not care to speculate on such matters.

Anthony DeLorenzo, Director,  
Radio and TV Relations,  
General Motors Corp., Detroit

Not merely in its radio and television advertising, but throughout its organization, Lever Brothers Company strives to secure the services of men and women of ability and good character. It is not merely a question of avoiding undesirable elements, it is much more a matter of choosing as its representatives the finest individuals possible. In this policy, Lever Brothers Company is motivated not only by a decent regard for public opinion, and by a desire to have its name remain unsullied, but even more by conviction that it is in business not only to make a profit but also to contribute its share to the common good.

M. J. Roche, General Manager,  
Promotion and Advertising Service Division,  
Lever Brothers Company, New York City

When a company such as ours uses its corporate funds to sponsor a program on television or radio, it does so with but one purpose, — to reach the largest possible number of the public as its audience, and to present its product to that audience in the most favorable light . . . Since it is the function of an artist employed on such programs to please rather than to displease, and since the successful promotion of consumer goods depends in large measure on the impression left by sponsored entertainment, it follows that we would be wasting shareholders' funds were we to employ artists or other persons who, under company auspices, are likely to offend the public . . . We would dis-

approve of employing an artist whose conduct in any respect, "political" or otherwise, has made him or is likely to make him distasteful to the public. In making decisions pursuant to our policy, the fact that an artist has been listed in unsupported charges by private organs, organizations or individuals does not govern our attitude toward his employment.

Paul M. Hahn, President,  
The American Tobacco Company, New York

While I have never heard it specifically outlined, I believe that anyone employed by us to represent Coca-Cola would, sub-consciously at least, be looked over to determine his fitness for the job. I am sure that the same is true of any other well-managed organization.

Ability would naturally be the first consideration. After that, there would be many other factors, both tangible and intangible, which would determine the final decision. Whether or not the points mentioned would be of importance would probably boil down to a question of degree, and their relative importance in the over-all picture.

In actual practice we buy our shows as a complete package and, consequently, we do not handle all of the many details from the Advertising Department. For example, "Coke Time" with Eddie Fisher is contracted for through MCA by the D'Arcy Advertising Company, our agency, and we have no definite knowledge of all the intimate details which they might consider when making a show for us.

E. G. Fritschel,  
Advertising Department, The Coca-Cola Company

Here are my answers to your questions in chronological order:

1. There have been frank and open admissions to me that certain of my clients are, for political reasons, unemployable.
2. There are established procedures which can be followed to clear up the clients' problem; at least I have established procedures of my own. Employment criteria are fairly stable. There are generally accepted criteria of employment.
3. a. In my opinion "blacklisting" has had a very definite effect on the industry, depriving it in many instances of fine talent. However, if "blacklisting" is used as a standard of protection, then the same "discretion" relating to the employment of "Communists" should be applied to the equally harmful "Fascists".

With regard to political performance which is un-American, we have on the one hand Gerald L. K. Smith, a fascist, and on the other hand Paul Robeson, a Communist.

- b. The method of political screening is a farce.
- 4. Inasmuch as my experience at one time as a propaganda analyst taught me the extent to which a cold war can be carried, I sincerely feel that a criterion other than competence must be applied. This refers particularly to the writer as an artist. Across my desk have come many innocuous-looking manuscripts and/or printed material which have proven to be "loaded."
  - a. Yes. I would disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who was named un-American by a government agency.
  - b. No. I would not disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who was an "unfriendly witness" before a governmental investigating body.
  - c. No. I would not disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who stood upon the Fifth Amendment before such a body.
  - d. No. I would not disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who has been listed in such private organs as *Counter-attack*, *Red Channels*, *Firing Line*.
  - e. No. I would not disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who in the public mind, or at least before a goodly section of the public, is deemed "controversial."
  - f. I would disapprove of the industry's employing an artist who had been proven disloyal by the Department of Justice or by similar government agencies.

Briefly my attitude about the phenomenon to which you refer is: this 'witch-hunting' is far from the democratic concepts of our founding fathers (the phrasing indicates the spirit in which I regard this). No industry, group, or individual — unless duly authorized by the American people — should be permitted to sit in judgment. I have had a great deal of experience in this particular phase of the entertainment industry.

Dorothy Waring, Director,  
Waring Enterprises, New York City

Any frank or open admission of blacklisting with regard to acting talent always stemmed from personal friends. While these admissions are frank they have never been open to the extent that they have ema-



nated from any established channel or formal procedure. When we have been told the facts it has always been in an informal, off-the-record manner so that we could know "what the score was." I have never physically seen any sort of blacklist utilized by any program. The situation has arisen six or seven times in the 2½ years of our operation. While this may appear as a very small percentage there are the factors that these are the only times that we know about and that each time it has happened it has limited the work of the particular artist on a specific program for many months.

To my knowledge there is no accepted or established procedure for removing talent from a "controversial" category. While one program might find an artist objectionable another program will not. The only partial answer I have discovered is in the securing of as much employment in other than sensitive areas for the artist if possible. If this can be accomplished the restricted areas tend to become more lenient. At least at that point a talent buyer can make an effort to utilize the individual.

I feel blacklisting tends to breed undue anxieties and nurtures a great amount of fear and insecurity amongst actors. The usual working condition of an actor in the present market is more of unemployment than employment. This is caused to a great degree by the obvious factor that the number of competent artists far outdistances the number of job opportunities. However, if an actor finds himself unemployed for more than a month he never really knows whether the inactivity is caused by the market condition itself, merely an unfortunate coincidence in not winning succeeding auditions, or blacklisting. Furthermore, in most instances it's extremely difficult if not entirely impossible for the actor to find out the precise cause for non-work. If unemployment persists there is a tendency on the part of many actors to go through a panic phase of being haunted by the suspicion that they have been blacklisted. If that happens to be the cause they rarely discover why they have been put on a blacklist which thereby prohibits them from work.

I have discovered that artists have been placed on lists sometimes for as trivial a reason as a confusion in the spelling of his or her name, or an identical name of another person who was an out and out Communist. This situation hits the actors where it hurts most, economically as well as creatively. It keeps them under a constant threat of being

erroneously and of course secretly accused and judged of being "controversial." Many of them under these circumstances will grasp at any straw to get out of the "controversial" category. Therefore it leaves the door open to unscrupulous operators who will prey on this fear and utilize it to their own ends. I have even heard of attempts for payment from actors in order to get their names cleared. To my knowledge this procedure has never worked and is just short of blackmail. It also presents the possibility of creating a situation whereby one actor will start spying on another actor. Therefore this whole area tends to weaken the morale of actors thereby dissipating the moral fabric of the entire industry.

If to be a Communist means that the particular person in question is committed to advocate the overthrow of the government, I do not believe that individual ought to be associated to any degree with any form of mass communications. However, the crux of the problem and the burning issue in radio and television is not whether to keep Communists on or off the air. I don't believe there is any question that any person who's pledged to the destruction of our country should be kept off the air. The real problem, however, is how to determine who is a Communist. So far there has been no adequate solution to this problem. There is a vast difference between a person who dissents from a popular view and an individual who is disloyal to the public interest. I personally do not believe that any private organization or informal group of people should set themselves up as watchdogs of the community. It is much too easy for the overzealous and the overcautious to become lax with the lawful prerogatives of individuals. Too many of these supposed watchdogs solemnly preach the virtues of our government and soberly practice accusing and condemning without benefit of legal procedure. In my opinion there ought to be, first of all, a legal definition of what constitutes being a Communist. Then I believe that a procedure should be set up whereby the individual in question is confronted with the evidence and his accusers, and is able to defend himself according to the law, keeping in mind that this procedure should be of such a nature that the mere accusation that somebody might be "controversial" will not immediately condemn the individual by the public at large. I further believe that these criteria and procedures should be under federal supervision. It seems to me that what must be eliminated is all of the

private and secret mumbo-jumbo that has been going on which in effect merely satisfies the personal interest and axes of a particular few.

Henry C. Brown,

Henry C. Brown, Inc. Agency, New York

We are definitely not satisfied with the way the situation has been handled to date. We are, all of us, in this organization, acquainted with several performers who are unable to get work because of unfair listings or ill-advised affiliations in the distant past. My personal inclination is always to use these people, if possible. However, there is no denying the fact that if these performers or writers are well enough known to the public, and if they are controversial enough, they do stir up a hornet's nest and it makes it terribly difficult for a packager to use them — regardless of personal opinions.

In the final analysis, I think the responsibility for clearance of this situation must rest with networks and, ultimately, the sponsors. If the sponsors would but be firm and refuse to allow a few smear letters to intimidate them, I believe the end result would be much more satisfactory than the maze of confusion which exists at the present.

Jack Barry,

Barry, Enright & Friendly, Inc., New York City

As an advertising agency, it is our job to increase the sales of our clients' products and services, and to enhance their public acceptance. In the circumstances, it is our policy to refrain from employing anyone who we have reason to believe may embroil any of our clients in controversies of any kind, for any reason, or which will result in alienating any substantial section of the public. While what is controversial may differ from decade to decade, and even from year to year, we believe that our company policy will continue unchanged, namely, to present our clients' products and services in the most favorable light and to do nothing to incur the ill will of any substantial group of people.

Robert F. Carney,

Foote, Cone & Belding, New York City

Your letter asking us some questions about practices in the entertainment industry presents a real problem. As an advertising agency, we act on behalf of clients, and in that relationship there is, as you can appreciate, a confidential element.

At the same time we recognize that there is a problem in the entertainment industry, and we would like to do anything we can to help solve it fairly and equitably. As far as the position of the agency itself is concerned, we have a policy. . . . However, you will understand that we cannot insist that any client follow our policy completely. Consequently, we have varying degrees of agreement with the execution of our policy among our various clients.

Your question refers to "certain political criteria." The word "political," in the dictionary sense, means "of or pertaining to polity, or politics or the conduct of government." Under this definition, we would classify communism as a political belief. However, communism as a political party in the United States has been outlawed by national legislation and characterized as a conspiracy rather than a political party. We believe this was the result of the conspiratorial and unlawful methods of the Communists. And, consequently, we do not consider a belief in the Communist Party or in the Communist dogma as "political" in the usual sense in which this word is used in America.

(a) We would disapprove of hiring an artist named as a Communist by a government agency, or

(b) One who was an "unfriendly witness" before such a body (assuming that this had some identification with communism), or

(c) One who stood on the Fifth Amendment before such a body (assuming again that this was in response to a question about Communist affiliation).

(d) We would not disapprove of hiring an artist merely because he has been listed in such private organs as *Counterattack*, *Red Channels* or *Firing Line*.

(e) As to our attitude with respect to an artist "who in the public mind, or at least before a goodly section of the public, is deemed 'controversial,' " of course it is necessary to define the meaning of the word "controversial." Almost anyone in the public eye can be controversial to some degree. Both we and our clients try to be reasonable in our definition. Since the purpose of sponsoring a radio-television program is to promote good will and increase sales, it is hardly possible to justify a program which provokes antagonism and loses sales.

(f) As to any other category, there have been moral turpitude clauses in artists' contracts since the beginning of radio and television, as well as in other fields, and we, of course, would disapprove of hiring

any artist who has been involved in any situation which offends public decency or public morals, or is offensive to any race, creed or religion.

In exercising our judgment as to such criteria, we naturally consult with the sponsor in any cases where we deem that such consultation is indicated. Otherwise, in those cases where the sponsor leaves this problem to us, we exercise our judgment entirely independently.

(a) As stated above, we have our own criteria which we cannot insist that any sponsor follow. Sponsors, too, have their own criteria which are similar to our in varying degrees. Each case requires careful evaluation in the light of the criteria of the particular sponsor concerned. Some sponsors leave this problem to our judgment, and others take an active interest themselves.

(b) It is impossible to say whether the employment of "controversial" personalities hurts the sale of products. We have no direct evidence either way. We would assume that the continued use of performers who antagonized large segments of the public would affect sales adversely. Of course, the whole basis of good public relations and the promotion of good will among the buying public is involved.

We are not satisfied that, to date, a solution which combats the very real threat of communism and at the same time preserves the traditional American principles of fair play and justice to the individual has been found. Our belief on this score applies not only to the field of entertainment, but also to the problem in all areas.

We think that the use of the criteria mentioned above is based on all three elements which you mention, i.e.,

- (a) economic motives,
- (b) patriotic motives, and
- (c) fear of pressure groups.

This agency also submitted the following statement:

Our policy may be stated as follows:

1. We shall not knowingly use or permit to be used, in connection with any advertising done by us, any material of any kind which in our opinion implies disloyalty to the government of the United States or its institutions, or which — either in intent or in effect — could reasonably be interpreted as subversive.
2. Neither will we knowingly employ, or permit to be employed in connection with any of our advertising activities, any person who is a Communist or who — by virtue of his association or affiliation

- with known Communists or with activities known to be disloyal or subversive — justifies the conclusion that he is disloyal.
3. For the purpose of deciding whether we will hire or retain any individual, we will consider as adequate reason for disqualification — (a) his own admission that he is a member of the Communist Party and/or disloyal to the Government of the United States; (b) a judicial determination of his membership in the Communist Party and/or disloyalty; (c) his refusal to answer, in a judicial proceeding or before any properly constituted governmental investigating body, relevant questions as to his membership in the Communist Party and/or his loyalty.
  4. In any case where an individual employed or about to be employed by us is accused or suspected of disloyalty, we shall make every attempt to determine the actual facts. We will not base an opinion on hearsay evidence or suspicion, but will undertake to determine as fairly as possible whether he is the kind of person whom we want to employ. We recognize clearly that we have no right whatever to pass judgment on the loyalty or disloyalty of any individual; all that we have the right to do is to determine whether, for whatever reason, we do or do not wish to employ the particular individual.
  5. As a corollary of the last statement we may say that it will be our policy not to join with any other person, firm or association in blacklisting any individual; and neither will we abrogate our right and our responsibility to make our own decision as to the hiring or not-hiring of any individual, and in making that decision we will not yield to pressure from any source.

We feel that the protection and preservation of America, its government and its institutions, is not the exclusive concern of any individual, group of individuals, or organization. That is a responsibility of all right-thinking Americans, and we are fully prepared to shoulder our full share of that responsibility.

We will always welcome information that is factual and constructive, and that will aid us in making the right decision whenever a decision is called for. But such information, from whatever source it may come, will not be permitted in any instance to be a substitute for our own independent attempt to learn the truth.

We are sure that we are quite as concerned as anyone else properly is with the dangers of Communist and subversive activities in this

country; and we are equally sure that all right-thinking Americans — no less than we — are concerned with the protection of loyal individuals against unsupported accusations. The preservation of our free American institutions demands, as President Eisenhower has said, complete loyalty on the one hand, and protection against mere suspicion on the other.

We wholeheartedly subscribe to that statement. And it is our hope that by recognizing that there *are* two equally important objectives to be attained — the exposure and elimination of the disloyal and subversive, *and* the protection of the loyal — that we and all others who are dedicated to the protection and preservation of America can all proceed, with a minimum of rancor and name-calling, toward the accomplishment of our common objectives.

Spokesman for a leading advertising agency  
(*Name withheld at agency's request*)

We believe we can give you our position in this statement — we are against communism.

We do not believe we would be acting in the best interests of the United States, our clients and our agency to employ Communists, and we have no intention of doing so.

F. Strother Cary, Jr.,  
Administrative Vice President,  
Leo Burnett Company, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

Let me say first that I have no sympathy with the present-day American Communist. Americans today are, or should be, too well-informed to fall for the Soviet-inspired Communist line. Twenty, twenty-five years ago, this country was in a terrible mess and who could blame the people for feeling that perhaps this system of government did have some flaws after all? Not too much was known about communism then and the hunger and hopelessness of that sad era made a good seed-bed for its missionaries in this country.

So I'm not sympathetic with a Communist today and I do not want him teaching in our schools or in any position of trust. Even more than I dislike Communists, do I dislike the "witch-hunters." . . . I have nothing but contempt for anyone connected with any such activity. . . . I cannot say that I relish the idea of having too many Communists stowed away in positions where they might wield an influence on our

way of thinking, or, I should say, the way of thinking of the more susceptible elements of our society. But I certainly would not draw the line at a man just because he is "controversial." I can imagine that there are a number of independent-minded liberals among our population who are "controversial" without being Communist.

Kay Conran,  
Artist Representative and Agent, New York City

Blacklisting has created an unhealthy Kremlin-like pallor over show-business. A normal desire to shake Red influence in talent unions has been subverted by the other extremists into a witch-hunt. Un-American "shadowlands" have been created, permeating basic institutions.

Political screening has been a failure simply because too many innocents have been caught up in the web without any means of redemption, short of grovelling in the mud before self-appointed "patriots" whose influence is far in excess of their importance. Also, what is pink at one network is "clean" at another. Even shows on the same network vary and conflict. Some advertisers have a formal, though un-official, screening board. These boards will check every show talent list and ban performers who might very well have been cleared by an opposing show. The very un-Americanism of the blanket blacklist causes this confusion among sponsors of good-will but weak backbone. Sustaining shows are more courageous than sponsored shows.

Robert Schultz,  
Robert Schultz Associates, New York City

The radio and television programs in which we have been involved as sponsor have been so-called "packaged" programs where our participation has been only to the extent of establishing story format and production standards. Except in instances where it involved a host or hostess or something of this nature, we have seldom been involved or even consulted in the matter of casting or employment.

We, of course, would not knowingly give employment either directly or indirectly to a Communist or to anyone we considered to be un-American, or for that matter anyone that would be incompatible with good citizenship.

We have made this policy known to those producing our shows and have relied on their judgment. It would seem to us that in considering



the other cases proposed in your letter, one could only reach a fair decision by taking each case individually and carefully weighing all the facts.

John J. Oakson, Advertising Manager,  
Hallmark Cards, Kansas City, Missouri

The public performer, whether in the theatre, concert, opera, radio, television or cinema, must observe an axiom of show business, which is not to engage in contentious non-conformism. He therefore must confine his opinions to the secret ballot. Active participation in politics, particularly politics out of public favor, is incompatible with his profession and may destroy his power to make a living. Judgment of the performer's behavior is on a public relations level. Wherein merit may lie on any question is irrelevant.

In a large agency of this sort, representing over 150 artists and attractions, the above axiom has a direct effect on the company's policy, and it avoids representing, as far as possible, any artists whose political activity might reflect on the company, its other artists, its clients, and so forth.

We have no system of political screening and assume that all of our artists are worthy of representation until they prove otherwise.

F. C. Schang, President,  
Columbia Artists Management, Inc.

In a few cases we have been told, unofficially but frankly, by television producers that certain of our clients are unemployable due to the inclusion of their names in such publications as *Red Channels*, *Counterattack* and other "confidential" lists.

We have been able to discover no method of clearing such clients for performance in radio or television but we have found that these performers are sometimes accepted on shows after having been rejected on other shows. In other words, we feel that employment criteria are not stable.

We do not think that this "blacklisting" has had any profound effect on the producing end of the industry . . . except for the loss of self-respect on the part of the less courageous producers. We think that while some of the more informed and thoughtful segments of the public are contemptuous of the television and radio industry for allowing minority groups to dictate policy, in general the public is hardly aware

of the situation and not seriously interested in the many hardships that have been undergone by performers as a result. . . .

While we would not favor the employment of a performer who was admittedly a card-carrying Communist or one designated as such after an impartial hearing by competent Government Agencies, we would not subscribe to the barring of a performer for any other reason except lack of competence. This does not apply to the employment of really controversial people, whether Fascist or Communist, in such sensitive positions as administrators, executives, producers or writers of television or radio shows.

Walter Prude,  
Hurok Attractions, Inc., New York City

Back in 1950, when Jean Muir was dropped from "The Aldrich Family," the case became one of the most celebrated firings in show-business history. Arthur Godfrey's personnel shakeups may have garnered more newspaper space in the years since, but they have drawn nowhere near the same intensity. Overnight, television critics turned into experts on law, due process and the state of Western civilization.

The Muir affair created some strange journalistic bed-fellows. The *Daily Worker* thought the radio-tv industry should be ashamed of itself; so did *Fortune*. But the *Worker* would have been wise to keep its own counsel. Far from being a case of capitalist exploitation, the affair, if anything, was a clear demonstration of what might be expected of a "dictatorship of the proletariat."

Ultimately, the issue at stake was whether the business corporation is a *political* (as opposed to a simply *economic*) unit of society. Not that the battle was fought on that ground. Whether they said so or not, all the combatants, including General Foods, took for granted that they were dealing with a political problem and never questioned whether in doing so they were trespassing on forbidden grounds.

Thirty years ago, Mary Parker Follett, who is sometimes called the mother of American management, wrote:

Oliver Sheldon says "Management acknowledges as master the public will of the community alone." I do not agree with that. The public will of a particular community may have to be educated to appreciate certain standards. That is exactly what is going to make business management a profession; to realize that it is responsible to something higher than the public will of the community, that its service to the public does not lie wholly in obeying the public.

What does the management of General Foods Corporation have to do with the "public will," except as it applies to its taste for Jell-O as opposed to its taste for, say, Royal Gelatin Desserts? Everything, apparently. By any measure General Foods is big business. In sales it ranks 31 among all U. S. corporations. It employs and therefore, to some extent, influences the lives of more than 20,000 people, and it must keep some 60,000 stockholders happy. It is also as ingratiatingly eager to please as a St. Bernard. In 1954 it bought \$62 million worth of advertising and promotion to tout its several cereal, coffee, gelatin and other food products. Of this total, it entrusted \$34 million to Young & Rubicam, the advertising agency on which it relies most heavily to stimulate a desire for General Foods products, and to create good will for the company.

The reliance is mutual. General Foods' billings in 1954 accounted for nearly a fifth of Y & R's business. When Y & R expanded overseas it was hand in hand with General Foods own expansion. The ad agency, therefore, might well be particularly solicitous about, and sensitive to, the "public good will" its client engenders.

In that phrase, "public good will," lies the crux of the matter. General Foods, as *Fortune* put it, "stood on its position that, as a controversial personality, (Miss Muir) must necessarily hinder rather than promote the sale of Jell-O via the Aldrich Family." Did this mean that people seeing Miss Muir would think that lime Jell-O tastes even less like lime than it does, or that Savarin coffee would *ipso facto* taste coffee-ier than does General Foods'? Clearly not. What was feared was that they would believe that General

Foods was acting, in the current jargon of "business statesmanship," like a "poor citizen," that it was deporting itself badly as a distinctly *political* power.

"The Jean Muir case," *Fortune's* Lewis Galantieri wrote, "has not actually drawn business into the swamp of ideological agitation in which government, science, the movies, and the teaching profession have so long been mired. But it has confronted business with a public-relations issue that still remains to be clarified."

In Hollywood there is no business like show business; up and down Madison Avenue there are plenty of businesses like show business. Unlike Hollywood, television cannot be isolated from American life. It is not a sample culture. TV is everywhere, it is pervasively *of* American culture. It is the American business civilization's image of what a business civilization should be, bought and paid for by hundreds of business organizations.

The Muir case touched a nerve. It was at once the first and the classic instance of blacklisting in radio-tv. Each of the principals was as typical as any commentator could hope for. And they were all caught more or less unprepared. Unlike the scores of variations that have occurred since, the Muir affair spilled out into public where it could be seen and discussed. Official mutterings from all quarters, at first anyway, were unguarded, and surprisingly revealing.

The one thread that ran through practically every comment on the case was a kind of frustration, the pent-up anger of a man who knows he has been wronged somehow but who cannot figure out just how. Was not General Foods free to hire or fire whomever it pleased? Was not Miss Muir paid in full for her contract? The answer is, yes, of course. But it is also a fact that the actress was done out of her career and had no recourse which would not threaten to play havoc with her personal integrity.

Puzzle: find the villain. *Counterattack* and its supporters protest, in effect: "We didn't do anything. All we did was make her

record known." No one can question *Counterattack's* (or AWARE, Inc.'s, or Vincent Hartnett's or the Veterans Action Committee of Syracuse Super Markets') right to publicize the dossiers they keep. Mrs. Hester McCullough told *The New York Times*: "I think General Foods should have been as respectful of Miss Muir's rights as they were of my rights in protesting."

Which of Miss Muir's "rights" should General Foods have respected? Mrs. McCullough's right to protest does not derive from the corporate charter of General Foods; it derives from the Constitution of the United States. What "rights" in that sense did Jean Muir have? The "right" to keep her job on television? The "right" to continue on in her career? The power to do these things rested in the hands of General Foods and the National Broadcasting Company. It was for them to decide whether Miss Muir's "rights" were to have any meaning. In a word, General Foods was asked to do what it patently is incompetent to do — it was asked to dispense legal justice.

This the corporation could not do without involving itself and other corporations associated with it in a kind of parody of the law. The Muir case, at the very beginning of blacklisting, then, showed where the vacuum lay. A certain temperament and turn of mind were required to fill that vacuum and the people who have these qualifications comprise the jerry-built institution called blacklisting which is now part and parcel of life on Madison Avenue.

Here the problem is seen most clearly. If the American businesses which together comprise the radio-tv industry are to assume the burdens of government, they must also assume responsibility for dispensing justice. They cannot have it both ways. They cannot argue on the one hand that economic considerations come before all else, and, on the other, speak glowingly of the contribution "business statesmanship" is making to a business-oriented democratic society.

## Blacklisting and Broadway

THERE IS NO ORGANIZED BLACKLISTING on Broadway. A certain few performers have had difficulty finding work. These are people especially well known for their political associations; they have been so outspoken, so thoroughly "political" in their public life that they are *persona non grata* to large numbers of Americans. The normal criteria of personal choice — including politics — do operate, to some extent, in the legitimate theatre. Some producers may feel so strongly about left-wingers they are loath to hire them; other producers may be similarly prejudiced against right-wingers. But there are no "lists" which have universal force on Broadway. There are no "security officers." There are no "clearance" systems.

The theatre is related to blacklisting indirectly, that is, a Broadway performer's associations may be held against him in radio or television. Participation in certain left-wing theatrical groups may form an item in an actor's radio-tv dossier. But all the traditions of the Broadway theatre militate against political blacklisting, and by and large the theatre has lived according to those traditions.

JOHN KENNEDY (producer): "No one in the New York legitimate theatre is afraid of being picketed. There may have been some fear in the past, but it doesn't enter into decisions now."

FRANCIS HIDDEN (actor's agent): "No one I represent has ever been questioned about his political associations. There is no blacklisting on Broadway."

JAMES REILLY (executive secretary, League of New York Theatres): "There are probably some actors a producer wouldn't want

to use for political reasons, but the matter is individual and personal. There is no organized blacklisting.”

YIP HARBURG (song writer): “There is no blacklisting on Broadway. Still, I couldn’t do ‘Finian’s Rainbow’ again, because of its content. Sometimes a few benefit tickets might get turned in. But there is no real blacklist.”

REBECCA BROWNSTEIN (former attorney for Actors Equity Association): “In some cases there was an attempt at ‘blacklisting’ as it is called. But it was enough to phone the producer or manager. That settled the question.”

ARTHUR MILLER (playwright): “I take a very close, personal part in casting my shows. I have never been told who I can use or not use. I hire solely on the basis of competence. I would use a man who was in complete disagreement with me politically if he were right for the part.”

DOROTHY PARKER (playwright): “I believe that there is no organized or established blacklisting on Broadway.”

In August, 1955, the House Committee on Un-American Activities held hearings on communism in the Broadway theatre. Twenty-three witnesses were called, and 22 of them turned out to be “unfriendly,” invoking the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution. In Hollywood or on Madison Avenue, actors that “unfriendly” could expect not to work again until such time as they “cleared” themselves. But the Broadway performers who refused to cooperate with the Walter Committee simply went back to work. In one case, an actor who had invoked the Fifth Amendment had his contract torn up — and was given a new one at higher pay and for a longer period of time. The actor was not being rewarded for his “unfriendliness,” he was being rewarded for his professional ability. And it is ability that still counts on Broadway.

The experience of the 22 uncooperative witnesses in the New

York Theatre probe illustrates the tremendous difference between the legitimate stage, and the movies and radio-tv. The basic difference between these media lies in the fact that the American legitimate theatre is the only entertainment medium still entrepreneurial in its methods of production.

The production of a play is relatively cheap when compared to the cost of a movie or television show. As a result, the complex financial setup of Hollywood and Madison Avenue does not exist. Individual backers have to be convinced that a show has possibilities, and this is usually done through personal contact between a producer and his "angels." In 1955, Arthur Miller was unable to work in the movies or in radio-television. Yet it was easy to raise the money necessary to put his work on Broadway. For one thing, Miller is a highly successful playwright — his shows have consistently made money — and an investment in a Miller play is an uncommonly safe speculation. For another, the playwright's reputation is strong enough to insure a good box office sale even before his plays open. As a result, Miller has never been faced with any problems arising out of his highly controversial political views. On the contrary, Miller's problem is to decide which of his potential backers to choose.

Theatrical investors, as a general rule, do not care about the political associations of people who are to be hired. People like Margaret Webster, Harold Rome, Dorothy Parker, and Sam Jaffe, all listed in *Red Channels*, have been able to work in the theatre throughout a period of intensive blacklisting in movies and television.

Yet such a situation could not exist were it not for the peculiar nature of the theatre audience in New York. The movie-goer or television viewer is a member of an impersonal mass, part of a vast cross-section, the nearest thing we have to the elusive "common man." His attitudes and prejudices are something of a common denominator. Because of this, Hollywood and Madison Avenue



have to avoid certain themes and often feel called upon to shun the "controversial." The number of people who would actively boycott a movie on the basis of the political past of its writer or star is probably small, but nonetheless large enough to alert the businessmen responsible for a million-dollar picture. In the world of the Broadway theatre, the audience is significantly different.

The New York Theatre relies on two major groups. One is composed of New Yorkers who are regular theatre-goers – and these people would be the last to stay away from a play because they object to the politics of an actor.

The other group comes from all over the United States. It is made up of tourists and travelers. This group is much more like the cross-section of America forming the movie and television audience. In their own home towns they well might object to a play written by someone named in *Red Channels* or accused of "pro-communism" by the American Legion. But in New York they are on holiday and are unlikely to be so discriminating. Broadway theatre tickets are hard to get, there are no grass-roots organizations of tourists, and the decision to buy a ticket takes place in a gala atmosphere. The political is simply not as important as it might be back home.

How important the New York element is in explaining the absence of blacklisting in the theatre can be seen from the experiences plays have had on the road. In the summer of 1955, Uta Hagen was under attack in Chicago. The year before Jean Arthur had been scheduled to appear in Chicago in "Saint Joan," but the run was cancelled due to a combination of American Legion pressure against another member of the cast and Miss Arthur's sickness. In 1951, an incident in Wilmington, Delaware, would probably have resulted in closing a play had it not been for concerted action on the part of Equity and The League of New York Theatres. And in two important cases, considerable pressure was brought to bear in Syracuse, New York.

The first case involved the Metropolitan Opera production of "Die Fledermaus." Jack Gilford, a comedian, had been hired by the Metropolitan to appear in a non-singing part. Gilford received considerable publicity since he was the first comedian to be hired by the tradition-bound opera company. Gilford performed without incident in New York City but when the opera went on the road a protest was unleashed in Syracuse. The source of this action was the Onondaga County Post #41 of the American Legion which works in close cooperation with Laurence Johnson. Gilford had been "listed" in *Red Channels*, and the Legionnaires demanded that the Metropolitan fire him. The opera company stood firm, however, and Gilford was allowed to continue in the part.

The other incident in Syracuse involved a theatre operated by Michael Ellis. When Ellis arrived in Syracuse to set up his productions, the Legion group was protesting the showing of some Chaplin films and quickly turned its attention to the new theatre in town. A protest was made when Ellis announced that Albert Dekker was to appear in one of Ellis' productions. Dekker was withdrawn, but Ellis' venture remained under fire. When it was announced that Sylvia Sydney would appear in one of the plays Ellis scheduled, the pressure started up again. Box office sales fell off sharply, and Ellis was forced to abandon the whole venture.

In general the few actors who have found it difficult to find work on Broadway are people so politically active that their "unemployability" is based on the fact that they are a nuisance to work with. Producers who are quite willing to hire actors "listed" in *Red Channels* or even those who refuse to cooperate with Congressional Committees, draw the line in cases where they feel a performer is primarily a "political person" who also acts, rather than an actor who happens to take an interest in politics. But these cases are relatively few in number. The exclusion of such performers is not based on the existence of any kind of a "list." Paul Robeson is a good example.

One result of blacklisting was the growth of the off-Broadway theatre. Top talent became available at off-Broadway prices. In recent years, it has been possible to see well known performers like Morris Carnovsky, Sono Osato, Jack Gilford and Will Geer in the little theatres. More often than not, their shows have been non-political, although some "social" drama has been produced. There was "Sandhog" by Waldo Salt and Earl Robinson, and "Troublemakers" by George Bellak, but many more presentations of the theatre classics — Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw and Chekhov. In the Communist *Masses and Mainstream*, Nathaniel Buchwald was quite critical of some aspects of this off-Broadway development, particularly of the failure of "social drama" to dominate: "In the off-Broadway movement," Buchwald wrote, "the potentially large progressive audience is yet to do its part."

The off-Broadway movement has been an unforeseen and generally welcome result of the blacklisting phenomenon. Still it raises another problem. Association with suspect actors, producers, directors or writers in off-Broadway productions can hurt the radio-tv chances of performers and writers. Laurence Johnson, for instance, charged a well-known actress with having appeared at an off-Broadway theatre which employed people accused of pro-communism.

It is impossible to estimate the role of the intangibles in the theatre and equally impossible to omit them from a discussion of blacklisting. In Hollywood and in radio-television, artistic life has yet to create its own traditions. "There's no business like show business," the dedication to the individualistic, personal milieu of the stage, has been appropriated by the mass entertainment world. Yet on Madison Avenue it has no real roots. It is like the manager of a professional football team exhorting his players with college yells. But in the legitimate theatre, tradition still remains intact and functional. The agreement between Equity and the League of

New York Theatres, even though it has had little practical value, expresses an attitude, and the attitude is probably more important than any complicated machinery of arbitration.

Typical of this attitude was the remark of John Kennedy, a producer who has been active in Equity for many years. When asked to describe his personal politics, he said that he was a "liberal conservative or a conservative liberal." He made it absolutely clear that he loathed communism, at the same time he took a firm stand against blacklisting in the theatre. Kennedy typifies the "center" in Equity which has controlled the union throughout these stormy years. It is precisely the conservatism of the theatrical world which supports Equity's "liberal" anti-blacklisting stand.

In and of itself, Equity's experience is noteworthy. It also serves to point up the contrast between Broadway and the mass media. For every element which has worked to keep blacklisting out of the Broadway theatre is absent in the mass media; conversely, it is exactly at those points where the movies and television are unlike the theatre that they are most susceptible to blacklisting pressure.

The mass media are big business. Thus, the decision announced at the Waldorf Conference in 1947, which has formed the basis of blacklisting in Hollywood ever since, was not made by the people actually involved in the production of movies. It came, rather, from persons whose primary interest in the films is financial. This is in sharp contrast to the situation in the legitimate theatre, where financial backing is still sought on an individual basis. An investor's enthusiasm for a particular play is still important on Broadway.

The audience for movies and radio-tv is sharply differentiated from legitimate theatre audiences. In the first case, the audience is many removes from the producer. It is vast, impersonal. The legitimate theatre retains a select audience. It does not advertise in the same way as movies and radio-television. It makes its appeals on the basis of the judgment of a small group of critics in New York City.

In Hollywood and on Madison Avenue tradition is not an important force. It is simply impossible to transfer the intimate traditions of the theatre to the impersonal mass media. The movies and radio-tv capitulated to pressure almost as soon as it was applied. The theatre laid down a program to fight the pressure, primarily through the joint action of unions and management.

In a way, it may well have been this element of tradition which worked to bring about a sane union situation in Equity. For the ideological mentality of the extreme right militates against the tradition of the theatre, just as the business structure of the movie industry is alien to that tradition.

The proponents of blacklisting in the entertainment field are usually "conservative" in their economic views, tending in some instances (*vide*: the AWARE, Inc. students' meeting in February, 1955) to Manchester *laissez faire*. Yet it is precisely the element of "bigness," of an un-Manchester economic power acting monolithically, which made blacklisting possible in the movies, radio and television. And it is the legitimate theatre, the most "free enterprise" part of the entertainment world, which has resisted blacklisting and has based its resistance on tradition and conservatism.

The result is that the theatre has a better conscience: it is freer. The characteristic attitude of industry people in Hollywood or on Madison Avenue is compounded of fear and shame. The theatre people are proud that they have not succumbed. They are proud of their tradition and proud that they have lived by it, even during a period of great stress and assault.

## APPENDIX

### Typical letter sent to Networks, Packagers, Advertising Agencies, Sponsors, Talent Agents

Dear Sir: The Fund for the Republic is sponsoring a study of employment practices in the entertainment industry. Rumors and charges of a political "blacklist," the publicity given the Jean Muir case, the publication of *Red Channels* and similar listings of "controversial" personalities in the entertainment field, among other things, prompted the officers of the Fund to initiate a full-scale study of the situation. A staff of journalists and researchers was assembled and has been working for several months.

We are eager to produce as forthright and balanced a report as possible. It is in the interest of doing so that we are writing to you. Your cooperation would add greatly to the significance of the study.

In the radio-television field it seems important that we present accurately the general position major networks [sponsors, advertising agencies, packagers] take with regard to the employment of artists. Such questions as the following seem to be pertinent:

- (1) Does your organization hold that certain political criteria should be met by artists whom you engage, i.e. would you disapprove of hiring an artist
  - (a) named as a Communist by a Government agency?
  - (b) one who was an "unfriendly witness" before a governmental investigating body?
  - (c) one who stood on the Fifth Amendment before such a body?
  - (d) one who has been listed in such private organs as *Counterattack*, *Red Channels*, *Firing Line*?
  - (e) an artist who in the public mind, or at least before a goodly section of the public, is deemed "controversial"?
  - (f) any other category?
- (2) If such criteria are to be met, does your organization [if sponsor] leave the application of them to the advertising agency and the network or do you take an active interest?
- (3) Is it your experience that the employment of "controversial" personalities hurts the sale of products?
- (4) Are you satisfied with the way the question has been handled to date?

Aside from specific answers to these questions we would be very grateful for any other comments on what is surely a difficult and admittedly a delicate situation.

JOHN COGLEY

## Letter from Assistant United States Attorney General

William F. Tompkins:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 11, 1955, to the Attorney General, with respect to the so-called Attorney General's list. The replies to your questions are set forth numerically below.

(What is the standing, in law, of the Attorney General's list?)

1. The so-called Attorney General's list is compiled at the direction of the President as contained in Executive Order 10450 relating to the Federal Employee Security Program. The list is for the guidance of the heads of the Federal executive departments and agencies for use in connection with requests for investigation regarding employment or retention in employment of Federal employees. Its content becomes public information because it is published in the Federal Register.

(In the policy of your office, is membership in an organization on the List considered proof of subversion?)

2. The nature and extent of membership in a designated organization is but one factor to be considered in determining the qualifications of individuals for employment or retention in employment with the Federal Government.

(Is use of the list by private individuals authorized by your office?)

3. The Attorney General's list is issued solely for the purpose of apprising the heads of executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government of the names of organizations, membership in which would warrant requesting a full field investigation in connection with the Federal Employee Security Program. The list necessarily enters the public domain upon its publication but this Department has no authority to permit its adoption for purposes other than that for which it is made.

(Is there any official determination by the Government that certain individuals are Communists? If so, which agencies make such a determination?)

4. No official compilation of Communists is maintained by the Executive Branch of the Government.

Title I of the Internal Security Act of 1950 requires the registration of members of a Communist-action organization under prescribed conditions and imposes certain sanctions upon such members. Upon the failure of the organization to register its membership and upon the failure of the individual to register himself, the Act provides that the Attorney General may petition the Subversive Activities Control Board for an order to compel such registration.

The Board has determined the Communist Party of the United States of America to be a Communist-action organization. However, under the Act no action against individuals can be undertaken until the Party has exhausted its appellate remedies. No voluntary registrations have been made.

(Is the statement of a Congressional Committee that an individual is a Communist considered an official statement of the United States Government?)

5. The statement of a Congressional committee that a citizen is a Communist is not considered as an official statement of the United States Government. It is a statement of a committee of the legislative branch of the Government, and we can express no opinion upon the authority of one committee to speak officially for the Congress. It certainly is not an official statement of the executive branch of the Government.



ANTI-COMMUNISM AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES  
IN RADIO AND TELEVISION

by MARIE JAHODA

*Research Center for Human Relations  
New York University*

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study was conducted at the Research Center for Human Relations whose entire staff contributed at various occasions to its content. Particular thanks are due to Mr. Gerald Hogue who was in charge of the field work for the morale survey and cooperated in the development of the interview schedule. In addition, Drs. Stuart W. Cook, Isidor Chein and Eva Rosenfeld helped in the planning stages and throughout the conduct of the study. Thanks are due all persons who permitted themselves to be interviewed or to discuss the complicated problems of the industry with the author. It is an unfortunate symptom of the climate of the times that they cannot here be identified by name.

The study was done at the initiation of the Fund for the Republic and with a grant from it. Thanks are due to this foundation for its consistent effort, here and in other matters, to bring rational considerations to bear on the controversial issues of our time.

M.J.

December, 1955

*National Security, the Climate of Opinion  
and the Entertainment Industry*

During the last few years the grave problem of internal security has been a central concern for many persons of very diverse views and values. In particular, governmental measures designed to ensure that no subversive elements be retained in government service have given rise to a heated national debate which at times threatened to submerge interest in all other national and international issues confronting the country. Gradually, the exchange of accusations and counter-accusations has begun to subside, and is giving way to a more rational approach to the problem of security. There is by now widespread agreement among unquestionably loyal citizens of the country that ways and means must be found to avoid the excesses of the recent past without endangering national security. A presidential committee has been appointed to review and suggest revisions of governmental security procedures; the stand which courageous individuals of both major political parties have taken on the unintended and undesirable consequences of security procedures has had its impact on the climate of thought in the country.

But the impetus of earlier excesses has not yet been spent. And many fear that a slight reversal in the international situation or the unforeseeable symptoms of the political fever ordinarily produced in a major election campaign may throw us back where we were a little while ago. This, then, is a crucial and perhaps short period in which the climate of thought can be rationally assessed and discussed.

It is of particular importance that the *unanticipated* consequences of governmental security procedures be brought into full light. They are easily overlooked in periods of crisis. There are two such consequences which have especially affected the climate and policies in organizations and industries outside the government.

One stems from what is perhaps the most difficult issue in the governmental security procedures: the vagueness of the criteria for identifying an untrustworthy person in government service *before* that person has done harm to his country. The problem and the consequences of handling it in the current fashion have been described elsewhere in the following terms:\*

\* Ideological Compliance as a Social-Psychological Process, by Marie Jahoda and Stuart W. Cook, in *Totalitarianism*, Carl J. Friedrich, ed., Harvard University Press, 1954.

"Is every Communist a potential spy or saboteur? Is every student of Marx a danger to the security of the country? Is every member of an organization which includes Communists to be distrusted? How should the internal enemy be identified? By oath? By his reading habits? By views which are shared by Communists? By his associations?"

"The answers to these questions are not easy. The Federal Bureau of Investigation collects all information which might possibly be relevant to the appraisal of individual cases. Since government investigators are asking questions about membership in all kinds of organizations, about political views and opinions on various social problems, about interests and reading matter and other items of the kind, the impression has been created that to credit somebody with an active organizational life, with unorthodox or even only outspoken views on public affairs, with extensive reading habits, and so forth, is a disservice to him. The thought naturally arises that if such things are asked about, in the eyes of the government they must be questionable. There is only a brief step from feeling that it is not wise to describe one's friends in this way, to the conclusion that it is not wise to have such activities to one's own credit.

"A variety of self-appointed individuals and groups have taken the next step in the process. Though having no official connection with the machinery through which national security is protected, and perhaps not always motivated by a concern for national security, they publicly call attention to the records of individuals who deviate from their standards of acceptable behavior. What they emphasize is quite similar to the areas checked upon by official investigators; the important difference is that, whereas the official investigations are confidential, the unofficial ones are broadcast as widely as possible. Such publicity makes the pressure to conform, of course, much stronger. One is in constant danger of public exposure as an individual associated with activities about which questions are asked.

"The final increment is supplied by employers. Advertisers, businessmen, school authorities, movie producers, all hesitate to hire or retain employees thus singled out, since this may offend some client, customer, or patron."

Thus, the original idea of protecting the national security by collecting circumstantial evidence in many directions, to be appraised in toto and in conjunction with other data in order to see whether all evidence converges to justifying strong suspicion, has given way to regarding a few items of information, and often only one, as proof of an employee's undesirability in an organization which may have no possible connection with matters affecting national security.

The other consequence of current governmental procedures is that outside the government the motivation behind these procedures has

been obscured and often replaced by new motivations. The governmental measures aimed at protecting national security against a potential internal enemy. Even within the government, many federal employees felt that other motivations were involved in the application of the security procedures.\* Outside the government there seems to have occurred a much more radical change in motivation for what, with little apparent justification, is often still referred to as security procedures. When, for example, tenants in public housing projects are asked to sign a loyalty oath, the security implication is not obvious. Nor is it clear how the security of the nation will be strengthened if books written by suspected authors are removed from library shelves, or teachers against whose teaching there is no complaint, are made unemployed and even unemployable because they claimed the protection of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

The new motivation is rarely made explicit. Judging by the nationwide debate on the subject it appears as if the purposes behind many private so-called security measures cover a wide range: some persons wish to eliminate Communist ideas; others want to eliminate persons proven or suspected of being Communists or fellow-travelers from all walks of life either because they fear that a fair proportion of the income of such people will be given to the Communist Party or because they want to punish such people for their convictions; still others seem to be seeking revenge for their own or other people's earlier gullibility. And some persons suggest that even more naked self-interest — in terms of wishes for personal power or financial gain — plays a role in the motivation of many private organizations and individuals who have set themselves up as judges over other people's beliefs and ideas.

Different persons will, of course, have different judgments on the "goodness" of the motivations in this array. In any case, there is a common denominator to these motives in that they have little, if any, bearing on the security issue even though they have undoubtedly come to the fore because of the nation's concern with problems of internal security. The relevant aspects of the climate of opinion in the country consequently tend to be less concerned with security considerations than with ideological purity; and this concern, reflecting the diversity

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\* Some evidence of the range of suspected motivations is given in "Security Measures and Freedom of Thought," by Marie Jahoda and Stuart W. Cook, *Yale Law Journal*, March, 1952.

of motivations, is confused and confounded by the absence of generally accepted criteria for identifying the impure.

The radio and television industry is particularly sensitive, in every respect, to the country's climate of opinion. This is hardly surprising since the financial structure of the industry is bound up with public favor. Many millions of dollars are spent by sponsors on radio and television in order to impress an audience whose responses to these media cannot be immediately observed. The enormous size of the audience makes it understandable that the industry is much concerned with broad currents of public opinion; the anonymity of the audience makes it understandable that the various devices to gauge the popularity of a program are taken as yardsticks of success. But most policy makers are fully aware that appraisals of public opinion are precarious and that rating devices do not fully penetrate behind the anonymity of the audience. In this situation, any spontaneous communication from members of the audience by mail or telephone assumes considerable importance.

On all levels of the industry, from the actor who gets one or two minor parts a year to top level performers and top level executives of networks, advertising agencies, packaging firms and sponsors, stories abound about the elation occasioned by a handful of favorable mail from the public, and the depression resulting from a similarly small number of critical communications. To be sure, people concerned with entertainment may be occupationally more alert than most to appreciate a good story when it comes along, and this may have resulted in an exaggeration of the importance attached to spontaneous audience response. However, the elaborate process of control and revision through which a prospective program has to pass before it goes on the air gives some measure of the degree to which public favor, or at least absence of public disfavor, is a major prize for which the industry strives.

Stripped to bare essentials, the assumptions underlying the effort not to offend the audience can be presented as follows: It is as if the shopping process of the American housewife proceeded in the following fashion: (1) she watches a television show sponsored, for example, by a toothpaste firm; (2) when she next finds herself in a drugstore ready to buy a toothpaste she consciously or unconsciously recalls to mind not only the name of the product and the promises contained in the commercial, but the entire show, her liking for or boredom with it, and all she knows about individual performers on it; and (3) she then decides,

in the light of such appraisal, whether or not to try the brand. Top executives, confronted with this hypothetical schema and the psychological unlikelihood that shopping actually proceeds in this fashion, answer, as a rule, that there is no definitive evidence that such cases do not occur and, since they can entertain the public without taking risks, the sensible course is to avoid them.

The assumption that an individual housewife regards shopping as a conscious and purposeful political act was deliberately formulated in an extreme fashion in discussions with leaders of the industry so as to test the limits of the industry's concern with political matters. It has been pointed out, however, that the problem confronting the industry is more complicated and their concern more rational than this extreme formulation suggests. For even if it were generally agreed that the individual housewife is innocent of all political considerations in her shopping act, the sponsor's business is dependent not only on individual housewives but, and perhaps more directly, on the middleman, the retailer, managers or buyers who decide to give one brand preference over another. This is a much smaller group of persons; a group undoubtedly much better informed about business policies, and a group which — because of its small size and clearly defined position — can perhaps be much more easily reached and influenced by pressure groups. Not to antagonize these middlemen is an understandable rational desire on the part of the industry.

It would be wrong, however, to assume that these limitations inevitably imposed by the financial structure of the industry are so severe that no other considerations enter into the formulation of policy. Not only are most responsible people concerned with the quality of entertainment, but — as network executives have pointed out — controversies of various kinds are actually presented on the air. Within the last year or two, the nation-wide controversy about the manner in which internal security problems are handled by certain individuals, committees and groups has found its place in radio and television; a few commentators can look back on an even longer record of dealing on the air with this most controversial issue. What controversies are treated by radio and television, and at what time, must of course be decided by general policy decisions. The issue then becomes one of drawing the line, which here — as everywhere else — hardly ever separates black and white but different shades of grey.

Not only with regard to content but also in questions of employment policy, with which this report is mainly concerned, the limitations imposed by the financial structure of the industry require complicated and immensely difficult policy decisions. In this area it is hardly surprising to see the entertainment industry — with its sensitivity to the climate of opinion, its concern for public favor, its wish to avoid provocation of pressure groups, and its existing machinery for barring from the air anything assumed to be detrimental to the business purposes of the industry — becoming enmeshed in a variety of procedures, commonly referred to as “blacklisting”, which reflect the developments initiated by the country’s concern with internal security. It is the purpose of the present study to explore what these practices mean within the industry.

### *Scope and Purpose of this Study*

The exploration of the role of “blacklisting” within the entertainment industry can, of course, take various directions. A number of them are pursued in other sections of the larger inquiry of which this study forms a part. The focus here is on the climate of opinion within radio and television with regard to “blacklisting”; it is a study of certain aspects of morale.

The study proceeded in three major steps. It began with a general period of exploration of the work situation in the industry. This included a study of what is available in the literature, the technical publications of the industry — especially *Variety* — and publications such as *Counterattack*, *Red Channels*, *The Firing Line* (published by the National Americanism Committee of the American Legion), *Aware*, Inc.; also the files available on the subject at the American Civil Liberties Union, including reports on cases of alleged “blacklisting”, and relevant clippings from the daily press on a nation-wide basis over several years, reports of Congressional Committees, etc. During this first orientation period prolonged discussions and interviews were held with 24 experts in the field of radio and television and related research areas. Among them were four psychologists, one psychiatrist, two sociologists, one lawyer, two critics; but mostly top level commentators, actors and writers for the industry, who knew the field not simply as interested observers but from daily experience.

The second step consisted of an interview survey with persons cur-

rently employed in the industry.\* The first half of the interview was concerned with a series of questions about the industry in general, the satisfactions and frustrations it offered to the person interviewed, his current activities and his hopes for the future, his views of human relations in general among personnel in the industry, and the like. Then the interview turned to the problem of "blacklisting", eliciting the person's beliefs about the factual situation, his feelings about it, his approval or disapproval of what he saw as the facts, his knowledge about procedures used in implementing policies designed to exclude alleged Communists, his assumptions about the motivation for such procedures, the adjustment that he himself and others around him had made to the situation, and so on. The final phase of the interview asked the respondent to relate the problems of the industry in general which he had discussed in the first half of the interview to the problem of "blacklisting".

The third step consisted of a small number of interviews with policy makers in networks, advertising agencies and packaging firms. The purpose of these interviews was to acquaint leaders in the industry with the picture obtained from step two, to elicit their comments on this picture and to discuss with them possible ways of improving the situation. The expectation that no industry, let alone one as sensitive to public opinion as the entertainment industry, could remain impervious to public opinion within its own ranks, was by and large confirmed. Some necessary qualifications of this statement will emerge later on.

Altogether, in the three steps of the study about one hundred and twenty interviews were conducted. For the morale survey experienced interviewers, most of whom had some familiarity with radio and television, were specially trained for the task.

For reasons that have to do with the structure of the television and radio industry, statements reporting the statistics of the returns in sample surveys of the views of its employees are subject to special qualifications. Ordinarily, a survey is based on data of a sample selected so as to be representative of the entire population in which one is interested. The prerequisite for drawing such a sample is that a complete list be available or that, at least, the population be definable in some precise way. This prerequisite cannot be satisfied for radio and tele-

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\* A copy of the interview schedule will be found in the Appendix, together with summaries of the answers received to the individual questions.



vision in New York City. Employee lists from networks, even if they could have been obtained, would be of little help. Many persons work for several networks; others are employed not by networks but by advertising agencies or packagers. Still others, particularly writers, work on a free-lance basis, with or without the help of an agent. Figures from the unions, if they could have been obtained, would not have provided a sound base because, while the profession is 100% unionized, many persons maintain membership in the union even though they have not been employed for a year or more, or their employment was restricted to one or two appearances during a year. Thus, it is virtually impossible (unless one wanted to make this in itself a major focus of study) to say how many persons work in the industry in New York City, to say nothing of who they are, and hence, what kind of sample would truly represent the views and values of the industry's personnel.

Nevertheless, particular care was taken in selecting persons to be included in the morale survey (step two of the study), not because we were aiming for precise numerical estimates, but in order to minimize the possibility of bias in selection.\* It should be noted that special pre-

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\* Lists of about 6000 names were available from several sources: *Ross Reports on Television*, *The Radio Annual - Television Yearbook, 1954*, the *Players' Guide, Exchange*. By arbitrary decision, every *n*th name was selected from these lists and the listings of the *Hayes Registry*, *Radio Registry*, and *Radio Artists Telephone* checked as to its suitability for the general sample plan. This plan contained the following specifications: a third of the sample was to be drawn from persons oriented primarily to radio and two-thirds from persons oriented primarily to television. Within each group three types of activities should be represented: talent; producers and directors; and writers, news analysts, and commentators. Within these activity groups persons on various levels of success (top level, medium and low) should be included. If a person selected from the list did not fit the sample plan, the immediately following name which fitted the prescribed requirement was substituted. The level of success was determined in consultation with the organization publishing the *Ross Reports* where a corresponding classification of industry personnel is independently done. The same substitution procedure was followed in 25 cases where selected respondents refused to cooperate, most of them pleading pressure of time, a few lack of interest. It should be noted that almost 30% of the individuals approached declined to be interviewed. This is an additional reason for taking numerical results with caution. To be sure, there was no mention of "black-listing" in the first contact made with the respondent by phone, nor in the letter introducing the interviewer (the text of the letter is given in the appendix), but we do not know whether there might be systematic differences between the kind of people who are and those who are not willing to be interviewed on the subject of satisfactions and dissatisfactions of working in the entertainment industry.

cautions were taken to interview only persons who were currently employed; that means persons who were not "blacklisted." This is important for the interpretation of the data: what they told the interviewers about blacklisting procedures is not based on direct personal experience, but on their beliefs and opinions formed on the basis of what they heard from others. This report is not concerned with factual procedures; it is limited to the psychological field.

The sample for the morale survey consists of 64 respondents. Twenty-three are in radio (though half of them also have some experience with television); 41 are in television, either "live" or "film". Twenty respondents are top level, 23 medium, and 21 low or marginal. In terms of activity, the sample includes 23 talent, 20 producers and directors, and 21 writers, news analysts, or commentators. These three categories of persons will be referred to in the report collectively as *talent*, i.e., as persons whose main job consists of shaping or presenting creatively what goes over the air. This choice of words may not be ideal. The word employee, however, could easily be misunderstood to embrace also managerial, technical and office personnel who are not represented in the survey; furthermore, some persons are included in the survey who are not employees in the sense of receiving regular specified wages. It is a sign of the youth of the industry that it has not yet developed a generally accepted terminology.

### *The Employment Situation of Talent: An Aspect of Morale*

Morale is a complex response to a complex situation in every industry. Morale among talent in radio and television is for a number of reasons even more complex than elsewhere.

Both media, but in particular television with its meteoric rise, are moulders and symbols of our cultural climate. More immediately but also more fleetingly than media which create lasting records do they penetrate into virtually every American home. The size of their audience is unparalleled. As is so often the case, technical and commercial inventiveness are far ahead of our social and psychological knowledge about the manner in which these media influence the quality of living of our people. Do they enrich or impoverish? Do they encourage diversity or are they conducive to conformity? Do they spread ideas and stimulate thought, or do they dull the imagination? Do they accom-

plish some of these things in certain respects or in certain people and their opposites in others?

No one is yet in a position to answer these questions on the basis of rational appraisal. But the questions are in the air. They are asked not only by detached observers but in various forms by every thinking person in the field. Their very existence illustrates the spirit of excitement and pioneering which pervades the entire industry. There can be no doubt that this spirit itself has a significant bearing on the morale of all personnel in radio and television.

It would be presumptuous to deal here with these and other broad aspects of morale. On the other hand, it would be foolish to talk about "blacklisting" as if it could be viewed in isolation from other facets of the industry which exhilarate or depress, gratify or annoy its talent. To provide the proper context we will deal with a limited aspect of morale only: the employment situation as it is experienced by the talent of the industry. No claim can be made that even this much more limited field is comprehensively explored. Rather, we have selected a few aspects which appear to us to form an indispensable background for understanding the views of talent on the primary subject matter of this report.

Undoubtedly the economic situation is of great importance, particularly the labor market. In discussions of this topic, one phrase recurred again and again: in radio and television there are at least ten candidates for every job to be filled. There is no way of knowing how accurate this alleged proportion is. For all we know, it may be five to one or it may be twenty to one or some other ratio. But the accuracy of the estimate is negligible compared to the unanimity of the belief that there is a virtually inexhaustible reservoir of would-be radio and television talent available.

The excess of labor supply over demand is in itself an indication that the entertainment world has not lost its glamour and appeal as it entered, through radio and television, the era of mass production. The attitude toward their work of the persons interviewed is overwhelmingly positive. People on top, medium, and low level; talent, producers and writers — most of them mention sooner or later in the interview the potentially tremendous satisfactions that entertaining holds out for the entertainer. They speak of radio and TV as superior media of expression, of their creative urges, of the thrill in knowing that millions of people see or hear them, of the satisfaction in meeting the challenge

of a new medium, of the variety of work, its spontaneity, and of course of the fact that it gives them a living.

One prominent actor says, for example: "What I like most? Every night is an opening night. I like the spontaneity, precision, and the opportunity to serve." A producer: "It's a challenging business. The huge audience available to you is a great stimulation. It's an incredibly disciplining medium. TV is relentless and consuming — another reason why I like it. And its talents are youngest and freshest. I have met some wonderful people." An actress: "The liveliness of it. There's never a repetition. There is not enough time to rehearse, but it's continuous action. You get a chance to play so many things." A director: "What do you mean what I like best? It's my business, it's my life, I like it all." And a producer: "You get an artistic satisfaction from making people happy. I get thousands of fan letters. And you make a lot of money in this business."

This enthusiastic identification with the world of entertainment is occasionally qualified. To be sure, only two out of all our respondents felt like leaving the entertainment field altogether. But about one-third said they would rather work in the theater or in movies than in radio or television; and 50% of the respondents mention "the money" as one of the things they like best about their jobs. We have no comparable data from other professions to evaluate whether this is a comparatively high or low percentage. On the other hand the interviews indicate the sense in which the financial rewards offered by the industry are of peculiar significance to its talent. To be sure, money is valued for the good things it can buy. But in addition, much more than in most other occupations, it is a major symbol of prestige and achievement, and conveys a sense of professional security far beyond the matter of security from want.

The need for such reassurance is not hard to understand. It requires no special psychological insight to realize that the very attractiveness of radio and television, as demonstrated in the labor market situation, and its rapid development are not conducive to a sense of job-security. Indeed, a fairly large proportion of talent do not know the security which goes with the status of an employee who receives a monthly check for a month's work and can look forward to receiving it regularly. Many of them are free-lance, or hired for short periods. The continuation of a show depends on intangible factors over which the

individual has no control. Sponsors, advertising agencies, and networks constantly develop new ideas and programs which may dispense with the special qualities one person has to offer.

Many who were just able to get their foot into this coveted field by obtaining a minor part know full well that there are hundreds who could perform this small function equally well. And they know that the casting officers know this too. They may firmly believe that they could prove their mettle if given a bigger chance. But for the time being, those lucky enough to find employment in minor parts are without a direct yardstick by which to judge their own achievement, and without a way of forming an estimate of the security of their job. The rate of pay is the only substitute indication they have for assessing themselves as they appear in the eyes of others.

Star performers, though for different reasons, often share this sense of insecurity. They fear that the audience may be surfeited with their type of show and that ratings may go down. Many of them are firmly convinced that there is no way back once a person has passed the peak of his popularity.

In such an inevitably insecure employment situation, it would not be surprising if talent, in an effort to maintain their own self-esteem, attributed the greater success of others to unfair tactics of competition. And a few actually do so. Some of the interviewees tell about young women who "slept their way up" to prominence, about favoritism for relatives, and the like. But an overwhelming percentage of the respondents think that the most successful people in their field reached the top because they deserved it. Of the persons who answered this question, two-thirds assert this notion of deserved success without qualifications. Almost all the others believe that ability and hard work are important factors in success in the field, but they also mention luck, a "good break," and "knowing the right people."

Another factor in the employment situation of talent which bears on morale is the nature of human relations in the industry. The communication between management and talent, the understanding they have of each other, the compatibility of their interests and their degree of mutual confidence are important aspects of morale. There are two apparently contradictory sets of stereotypes which exist simultaneously in the field: the easy going camaraderie of show people versus the cut-throat competitiveness of the entertainment industry; the devotion of a

team to a creative and artistic task versus the mechanical routine of an entertainment machinery which interferes with creativity, dilutes high standards and has no room for the responsibility of the individual for his work. It is most likely that some factual justification can be found for each of these views in the experience of every one in radio and television. Here we are concerned, however, less with what actually exists and more with how existing conditions are reflected and balanced in the minds of the people working in the field. From that point of view the opposed stereotypes are neatly resolved for many in terms of seeing the positive side among their immediate colleagues and the negative side among sponsors, ad agencies, packagers, and — to a lesser extent — network executives.

As to the relations between colleagues, here too opinions are, of course, divided. About one quarter of the people interviewed voiced no opinion or felt that there wasn't much difference between the entertainment industry and other fields, when it came to helping each other. Among the remainder, more than half were convinced that relations were better, while only 13% said they were worse than elsewhere. Statements such as the following were frequently made: "People in show business identify with a fellow artist in trouble. They generally say to themselves: that might happen to me. And so I think they are very prone to helping each other out of difficulties."

But there are, of course, limits to mutual help: "I think they would draw the line when they feared that they themselves might be jeopardized or if they financially could not help."

The emphasis on more than ordinary helpfulness which stops only when competition for the job is involved or outside the circle of one's immediate colleagues is succinctly summarized by a TV producer:

"Everyone in our organization would do everything they could to help everyone else. There is no such thing as a one man TV effort. It's a cooperative effort. Would competitors help me? I doubt it. Would I help competitors? I doubt it. Would a drowning advertising agency or a sponsor screaming out in the night for help evoke my sympathy and assistance? I strenuously doubt it."

In general, relations to managers, sponsors, advertising agencies and policy makers on all levels are often experienced as poor. This emerged spontaneously in answer to the question as to what a person disliked about his job in radio or TV. Many factors are mentioned in response

to this question: the insecurity of the job (20%); the nervous pressure (41%); the blacklist (10%), the lack of standards and talent (42%); and others. But no other factor is mentioned so frequently as the cause of dissatisfaction with the job as network and advertising executives, and sponsors: fully 52% of the respondents take the question as an occasion to describe the frustrating lack of understanding between the creative people in the field and those on the business and administrative end.

Feelings often run high on the subject, as the following excerpts from interviews indicate.

A TV writer and editor, classified in the top level category, whose work has been on the air more than 25 times during the year:

"TV isn't one of the forms — I hate to call it an art — where you're on your own. You are responsible to the sponsor and the network. If the sponsor's wife doesn't like people to die in a play, people can't die. That's radio, that's TV, that's any medium where policies are dictated by people who haven't any idea of it. They don't look at a play, they look at their Trendex, their rating, and this is certainly no yardstick for what is good."

A leading character-actor in radio has this to say:

"What I dislike? The impossible restrictions which have cut down drama to a pallid reflection of what it should be. Everyone is afraid to offend. The fear is foisted by the networks who feel they have to please everyone. There is a fantastic amount of censorship which is labelled something else . . . The ad agencies are so convinced they have their finger on the public pulse . . . there are tremendous amounts of money involved and they won't stick their necks out. The result? The business people have got producers, directors and writers scared and apathetic."

A radio producer, rated as medium-level:

"I dislike the authoritarian attitude that sponsors assume. A sponsor rings up and complains because the hero and heroine do not go into a church at the end of the program; or, why did he have to find out that the beautiful blonde was a spy? There is too much compromise. I feel the 100% saleable show is pretty trashy."

The nature of these comments makes it abundantly clear that they come from artists. It may well be that creative people will feel cramped

in any organization, and that artists resent restrictions more than other people. If that be the case, communication and clarity in the relation between policy makers and talent would be particularly urgent to keep such inevitable resentment within manageable limits. The structure of the industry, however, makes it difficult to achieve such clarity. Responsibility for decisions is apparently always divided, and often lies, or is assumed to lie, outside the networks. Any piece of writing goes, as a rule, through a system of checks and controls so that the original product has often changed considerably when it goes on the air. Sponsor and advertising agency determine, or are assumed to determine, policy at least to the same extent as the network.

One serial writer describes the situation in the following way: "What I dislike most is that so many people pass judgment on what I write. The writer submits a plot and writes a script. A number of people look at it from different viewpoints. The producer, the director, the actors, the network, the sponsor — this is a source of unhappiness for me because instead of getting what you feel you have created, you get a compilation."

And another writer: "Everybody is so damned afraid. And there is a censorship, an actual censorship in effect. It's the ad agencies and the sponsors. It's a vicious thing, all these taboos. The American public is treated as if it had the moral sense of a child. Everything has got to be happy and sunny. The ad agency rules the field. But you can't put it all off on the agency either. Sometimes the sponsor himself puts his veto in directly."

A producer complains: "There are some things that the advertiser or the ad agency requests and at times commands which do not conform with my idea of good entertainment. I dislike all interferences on the part of the network or the sponsor."

One director, perhaps with undue limitation to the entertainment industry, said: "This is the only field where the guy who pays the bill tells the expert what to do."

If one recalls that many of these critics are actually not in the relation of employees to the managers and policy makers of the industry — that they do not have a stable, continuing relationship with a given managerial group — the difficulty in achieving clarification or change will be seen in its proper perspective.

These, then are some of the features in the employment situation of



talent which influence morale. It is against this complex background that the views on "blacklisting" must be appraised.

### *Views on "Blacklisting"*

"Blacklisting" is an ugly term. So ugly, that it is freely used throughout radio and television only by those who condemn wholeheartedly the variety of practices and policies associated with the term. Those who approve of such procedures as well as those who deny their existence object, and as a rule violently, to its use.

According to Webster's Dictionary a blacklist is "a list of individuals regarded as suspect or as deserving of censure or adverse discrimination"; and, specifically, "an employer's list of workers who hold opinions, or engage in activities, contrary to employers' interests, especially a list of workers active in non-recognized union organizations."

The essential aspect of this definition — the existence of an actual list — is denied by all top executives who were consulted, whatever their personal view or their organization's practices with regard to criteria for the employability of a person. There are "sources" which are consulted; there are "mysterious telephone numbers" as one respondent said, which are called; there are "information services" outside the industry which check on past and present political views and associations of radio and television personnel. But there is no list. One executive mentioned the following incident: at a meeting attended by representatives of various organizations in the industry, a union official presented a proposal for improving the situation in the industry. The first part of the proposal contained the request that "everybody tear up his list." The proposal was voted down, in part because it was unrealistic. Everybody present agreed that there was no list to be torn up.

So strong is the aversion to the term that one top executive who spoke with considerable frankness and in much detail about the methods he used to screen employees and job candidates for their views and associations felt compelled to add: "But this is not blacklisting. I define blacklisting as discrimination on the job because of race, creed, color or political belief. Communism or sympathy with communism is not an ordinary political belief. It is a conspiracy. Hence I am not engaged in blacklisting."

The assertion from several sources that no list exists recalls a profound remark by Baudelaire: "The most beautiful ruse of the Devil is to persuade us that he doesn't exist."

As a matter of fact, the actual existence or non-existence of such a list is not of central importance to a study of beliefs about employment practices in the industry as affected by political considerations, nor to an understanding of their psychological effects. It is on these latter questions that the present study is focused. The term "blacklisting" has been used, both in the interview and in this report, as the most concise way of designating the aspect of employment practices with which the study is concerned, without any intention of asserting the actual existence of a written list.

Let us first consider three contrasting views on the situation as presented by three of our respondents.

One actor who works both in radio and in television, appearing about six times a week, though in minor capacities, asserts his political views even before he is asked about "blacklisting" practices. In answer to the question whether he would contribute his services without pay to a benefit show, he says: "If there are any politics involved I'd refuse. I would refuse anything that has red tendencies or so-called liberal tendencies. In other words, I'm not pink, I'm a true blue American."

When asked what would happen to a person in the industry who is not a Communist now but who attended Communist Party meetings for a short time 15 years ago and was now named in a magazine as a Communist sympathizer, he answers: "He would probably lose his job." And he adds: "Anyone can make a mistake; if it is certain he is not a Communist now I don't believe in crucifying him. But you must always be on your guard."

Asked about what that man could do to keep his job, he says: "Declare his position, state his repentance and his allegiance to our way of life and beliefs. That is all he can do and may God help him."

When asked whether he believes that "blacklisting" is now practised in the industry, he says: "No, I think there is a silent avoiding of red sympathizers in every field of entertainment." But "Blacklisting does more good than harm. Because one bad apple could spoil a whole barrel. I don't think people who are red sympathizers have any right to be among loyal and true Americans. They can always be replaced."

This man says he cannot answer many of the other relevant questions for lack of knowledge. But there are some exceptions: He thinks a person usually knows whether he is on a list. "I don't think there is any mystery about it." As one of the reasons for "blacklisting" he states:

"An actor should be a living example of Americanism." And he feels that "red sympathizers and troublesome actors" are most likely to be "blacklisted". As an adjustment to the temper of the times in order to avoid being criticized on political grounds he suggests: "Keep their mouths shut. Do not get into any political discussions while engaged in rehearsals." He thinks the situation with regard to "blacklisting" is not changing; and he believes that the TV industry, more than radio, is in favor of "blacklisting". He does not consider the problem as very important.

By contrast, this is what a TV actor on a top level has to say:

He, too, thinks that a person named now for activities which ended 15 years ago would probably lose his job. But he adds a note of cynicism with regard to differences between individuals in this respect: "If the individual is needed he will be cleared somehow," implying that those concerned with these procedures permit their own interest to determine the fate of a man. He adds: "Networks have a dossier on everybody, and something that they call derogatory information is collected on every one they use, actor or writer. Network lawyers evaluate this information. This leads to a lot of confusion because there are other agencies evaluating such information. Some are more lenient than others. This means some actors can appear on some programs but not on others." And he concludes this description with a remark which was made by several respondents in similar form: "I could be fired for telling you this."

This man says "blacklisting" is currently practiced in the industry and he considers it does more harm than good. "It sets up standards which have little basis in reality. It's used as a weapon against people who opposed the blacklist. This has nothing to do with politics. I think it's un-American. And that goes for the blacklisting of the blacklists too. The whole thing has evil connotations."

"I don't know an advertising agency that doesn't have a list. The networks have a list. We have a list. The program I'm connected with has a white list, a list of people you can use, not that you can't use."

Asked for the reasons that may lead to a person being "blacklisted," he says: "The reasons are many. If you belong to the Communist Party or to any group on the Attorney-General's list. If you sign a petition. I know of one man who was blacklisted because he attended the funeral of an actor who was a Communist. Even groups that aren't on the

Attorney-General's list are enough reason. Or you belong to the wrong faction in the union. The union played a large part in it. They used the threat of blacklisting to stay in power. Some agencies have recently decided that union activities are not derogatory information. Others still consider it derogatory."

On the sources of lists and the mechanics of operation, he says: "It started with *Red Channels*; then came *Counterattack*, Mr. Johnson from Syracuse and Aware, Inc. Johnson alerts people like the American Legion. You know you are on the list because you don't work. Nobody ever tells you officially why. If you pay you can get cleared. There are 300 radio and TV people affected by it." He thinks that nobody should be on such a list.

The respondent sees two motives for a list: (1) ultra-patriotism and (2) economic advantage. He thinks that information on people is sold. He also claims to know of a case where professional jealousy led to a political accusation. He feels some of the listers may think they are doing a good job but he considers them pathological.

A third respondent, a prominent radio M.C., who has been in the field for a long time, has much more to say about his work in general than about "blacklisting," notwithstanding the many pointed questions about it.

"I prefer radio to TV. It is easier. There are no hot lights. Everything you do before the camera is fixed beforehand. The most important thing is not to step beyond the chalk line. But in radio some people get a feeling it is a defeated thing. I don't believe this. Still, the most difficult problem is the competition from TV. But radio will come back. TV faces the problem of pay-as-you-go (subscription) TV. Maybe radio will profit from it. I'd like to go over to the administrative side; it all depends on whom you know. You can come in with the best idea in the world -- unless they know you they wouldn't give you any consideration."

"People don't help each other much, anyhow. It's a jealous situation. People feel: this guy might get ahead of me. Everything is so competitive. You can't afford to go out of your way to help someone. There is a minimum number of jobs and lots of people to fill them."

When it comes to the question of "blacklisting," this man says: "I don't know whether it does more harm or more good. Maybe it's unimportant. There are many without jobs who haven't been blacklisted."

And asked whether a friend who now gets into difficulties because he once had attended Communist Party meetings would ask the respondent's advice, the man answers: "No; people don't help each other in this industry. Well, I could give him sympathy, but not advice."

Asked about adjustments to the temper of the times, he adds: "Watch your step. Call the FBI if in doubt. Don't do things that might bring you in an unfavorable light. It's not wise to get involved in politics." He feels "blacklisting" is not important, since "some of the finest actors are unemployed without being blacklisted."

These three respondents are, of course, different in many ways. The areas of difference on which we wish to focus here are the beliefs that "blacklisting" is currently practised, and attitudes toward "blacklisting."

Many of the respondents regard "blacklisting" as just another possible source of insecurity in employment, to which they often attach no more importance than to others. When they were asked to compare the importance of the "blacklisting" problem with that of other problems they had discussed in the interview, only about one-third of those who expressed an opinion felt that it was very important. The rest regarded it as of minor or no importance.

But whatever the degree of importance they attach to "blacklisting," there are very few among those who discuss it whose views resemble that of the first man quoted. It is the second example which represents the most frequent position among those interviewed. A few simple figures may summarize the views and values of the people we interviewed. It should be kept in mind that these figures are, at best, a crude indication of general trends, for reasons explained earlier in the report: The number of respondents is small (64), and it is impossible to determine to what extent they represent the views of the entire industry. All that can be claimed is that these respondents were chosen without bias or any possible foreknowledge of their views and opinions. (The interested reader will find the responses to all questions in greater detail in Appendix a.)

#### 1. Do you think blacklisting is practiced in TV and radio now?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	10%	23%	19%
Of those who answer:			
Yes	89%	82%	85%
No	11%	18%	15%

2. How do you feel about blacklisting? In general, do you think it does more harm or more good?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	10%	23%	19%
Of those who answer:			
More harm	100%	91%	94%
More good	0%	9%	6%

3. What are some of the things a person might have done which could result in his being blacklisted?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	10%	18%	16%
Of those who answer:			
Suspected of past or present Communist or fellow traveler activities.	33%	44%	41%
Other reasons, but no mention of Communist or fellow traveler activities (e.g.: accidental or personal associations: current non-communist, political activities; union activities; etc.)	67%	56%	59%

4. Are the listers sincere and patriotic?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	5%	39%	28%
Of those who answer:			
Yes, sincere	0%	19%	11%
Sincere but misguided, crazy	37%	22%	28%
Some sincere, others not	16%	26%	22%
Insincere, profiteers, pathological	47%	33%	39%

5. Is professional jealousy involved?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	35%	41%	39%
Of those who answer:			
Jealousy involved	100%	50%	67%
Jealousy not involved	0%	50%	33%

6. What parts of the industry are for the blacklist?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	5%	34%	25%
Of those who answer: *			

\* Total is more than 100% because some respondents mentioned more than one group.

Ad agencies	26%	41%	35%
Sponsors	37%	34%	35%
Networks, employers, management	26%	14%	19%
Individuals (no group)	26%	31%	29%

7. Suppose that someone now in the industry is named as a Communist sympathizer in a magazine. He really isn't now, although fifteen years ago he attended Communist Party meetings for a short time. What do you think will happen about his job?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	10%	9%	9%
Of those who answer:			
He'll probably lose job	55%	53%	54%
He'll probably keep job	28%	20%	22%
Fifty-fifty chance to keep job	17%	27%	24%

8. Just to give some perspective, how important do you feel blacklisting is in relation to other problems in the industry?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	5%	32%	23%
Of those who answer:			
Very important	47%	30%	37%
Minor importance	36%	60%	51%
No importance	17%	10%	12%

9. In regard to blacklisting, would you say that the situation is getting better or getting worse, or staying about the same?

ANSWERS:	<i>Top level</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>All in sample</i>
Not responsive, no answer, no knowledge	10%	34%	27%
Of those who answer:			
Better	95%	80%	85%
Worse	0%	10%	6%
About the same	5%	10%	9%

These figures show that those who express an opinion are convinced that "blacklisting" is being practised; they regard it virtually unanimously as harmful; the majority of the people interviewed think that persons are "blacklisted" for reasons other than membership in the Communist Party or other subversive organizations, or entertaining Communist sympathies; opinions are about equally divided as to whether those who produce lists are motivated by sincere patriotism, but most of those who believe the listers are sincere consider them

misguided; many believe that professional jealousy is involved in "blacklisting"; among the parts of the industry believed to favor the "blacklist" those most frequently mentioned are advertising agencies and sponsors; the majority believe that a casual attendance at Communist Party meetings 15 years ago could now cost an individual his position and livelihood; and the overwhelming majority believe that the situation with regard to "blacklisting" is improving.

With regard to the importance attached to "blacklisting," interpretations must be particularly cautious. While it is true that one third of those who express an opinion when asked about this matter say they regard "blacklisting" as a very important issue, it is also true that only six persons mention "blacklisting" spontaneously when talking about their work in general. At best, these figures set the upper and lower bounds for gauging the importance attached to this matter.

It is not our task to decide whether these beliefs and opinions are justified by reality or not. As beliefs and opinions they have their psychological reality, with its impact on the morale of talent.

#### *Psychological Themes*

Most of the respondents talked at great length, on the average for two and three-quarters hours. No interview lasted for less than one hour; one extended to six hours. Out of this rich material a number of psychological themes emerged which cannot possibly be captured in monosyllabic answers to complicated questions. The identification of these themes and of their relation to some more general aspects of morale (even though as already indicated we cannot take their statistical incidence too seriously), provides some basis for estimating the implications of "blacklisting" for the radio and television industry. Before we can discuss the picture as a whole, however, we need to review these themes individually.

#### *Fear*

Perhaps the most outstanding theme is the recurring evidence of fear in the persons we talked to. Mostly fear of losing one's job. But also fear of getting involved in issues, of committing oneself to an opinion, of having to face questions of right or wrong and of one's own values in a complex world. For about a quarter of the respondents the interview itself created a certain amount of fear, more or less openly admitted. From question 14 onwards, where the interview turns to "blacklisting" and related matters, the written assurance of complete anonymity was



frequently reread by the respondents. Questions were asked from here on about the purpose and sponsorship of the study; small jokes — “perhaps you are an F.B.I. agent?” — were made, revealing a certain amount of tension. The interviewers had been instructed to note any uneasiness in the respondent, and the place where it appeared. Here are some of their comments:

“All the questions on blacklisting were difficult with respondent. It was like pulling words out of her mouth. She would have gone on all day to talk about herself, but when it came to blacklisting she did not like it.”

“Some questions the respondent felt were an attempt to evaluate his integrity and he showed some resentment.”

“I don’t believe he was quite honest in denying any more knowledge about blacklisting.”

“He was initially cautious, then expansive — until the questions became controversial. He then became extremely cautious and often evasive. He made several contradictory statements.”

“His anxiety about the blacklist questions was apparent when he nearly broke off the interview. The letter of introduction calmed him right down to the point where he could continue.”

“Respondent absolutely refused to discuss the subject in more detail. At the end of the interview I told her that others had been more articulate. She said, ‘That’s good — but one gets conditioned’. Throughout the interview I assured her of anonymity. To no avail.”

In other cases where fear was less obvious, its existence could nonetheless be inferred. A good indicator is the frequency of evasive or “don’t know” answers to questions. For questions dealing with the industry in general, apart from “blacklisting,” the average percentage of evasive, unclassifiable or “don’t know” answers was just under 5%. For questions dealing with “blacklisting” this average percentage was 28%. In view of the fact that almost 9 out of 10 of the sample were regular readers of the daily New York press, and virtually all of them readers of the industry’s publications and in view of what others said about the concern of themselves and their colleagues with the issue, this percentage seems unreasonably high if interpreted at face value as lack of knowledge.

The evasion of an answer by claiming lack of knowledge is facilitated, of course, by the fact that the actual procedures and policies

employed are not publicly announced. One executive, in describing the screening procedures he used emphasized that he made it a point never to pass on to anyone the information he had obtained about a person. All he would tell a casting director, for example, was: use or do not use *X*. He, as well as many other respondents, said that political labels were judiciously avoided and that the term used to describe a non-employable person was: *X* is "controversial." The person so designated is, according to the views of many who commented on this point, not informed of the decision made against him. One actor said: "Nobody is told that he is on a list, because under some law — libel, slander or character defamation — that would lay the employer open to a libel suit. They would have to prove that a certain individual was unworthy of a job." Of those who answered the question, "Is a person ever told that he is not hired because he is on a list?", only about 12% think a person is usually told that he is on a list; and even they often say that such information is given unofficially "by the grapevine," "a secretary may let it out," "if he has a friend in a position to know he may tell him."

It is, of course, quite possible that the secrecy surrounding the procedures, decisions, and reasons for decisions is meant to be not only in the interest of the company but also in the interest of the talent. But it is doubtful whether this latter purpose is actually fulfilled. For in the absence of clear information on procedures and criteria for deciding that a person is unemployable, rumor and hearsay take over; two factors most effective in reaching many, but hardly effective in spreading accurate knowledge. The secrecy surrounding the implementation of these employment policies must inevitably increase fear.

#### *Frustration*

Fear has its consequences in the way people behave to each other. It has already been pointed out that the general job insecurity affects relations of people in the industry. The fear engendered by the "black-list" has its special effect. We were told of a man whose political activities in the distant past, (from which he had effectively dissociated himself and about which he had given full information to the F.B.I.), were about to be made public. This man felt the urge to inform a few of his colleagues of the factual situation before his story would hit the headlines. He thought of arranging a private luncheon for this purpose. When he approached a close colleague and friend with this idea, the

friend said he would under no circumstances attend such a meeting, nor did he believe would anybody else who knew what the luncheon was to be about.

This undermining of mutual confidence and support through fear is apparently quite frequent. The interviewees were asked whether they knew of a case of "blacklisting" and of the surrounding circumstances. Most of them (about five out of six) answered the question affirmatively. These persons were then asked how the colleagues and how the employer of the "blacklisted" persons behaved in the situation. Actual help from colleagues was reported by about a quarter of those familiar with such a case; sympathetic attitudes among colleagues without active help was mentioned by many more.

Among colleagues the wish to help coupled with the difficulty of doing so creates frustration. One man in describing a case said: "He was a fine actor, and it was a gross injustice. People cared about him as a person too and would have liked to help. But what can you do?"

The phrase "but what can you do?" is often used. One person said: "Often there is no special occasion to do something. They aren't always fired in a dramatic scene. They just aren't hired. They don't get a day in court. They are simply not employed. What can you do?"

And another: "Fellow artists are weak, and their attitude is unimportant — they are all working people. They would be afraid to help him."

Of course, there are also cases in which effective help has been given. One of our respondents reported that he and some friends had raised the money for a colleague in trouble so that he could hire a lawyer. Now that colleague was working again in the industry. But such incidents seem to be quite rare. As a rule, the difficulties of a colleague create deep frustration among those who want to help but feel impotent and unable to do anything.

Such frustration resulting from a sense of helplessness is intensified by the role the unions are said to play in this situation. According to a number of the respondents, the manner in which anti-communism affects the employment situation in the industry is, and has been for some years, the cause of bitter fights within the unions. The merging of previously separate unions and other organizational matters make the history of these unions very complex. This is not the place to present these complicated matters; nor have we made a study of the

position actually taken by the unions. What should be mentioned here is that some respondents feel particularly frustrated when discussing their unions. One man said: "There is a feeling of futility; I'm not as willing to go out and fight as I once was. I fought in the union. We won office for a couple of years. Then we figured factionalism was gone and put through a resolution to disband sides. Everyone lived up to the bargain except those who took over one committee; they are in complete control. They intimidate and label everyone a Communist who opposes them. Many were thus labelled even though they had been cleared by the F.B.I. For example because they opposed a loyalty pledge." Several others said too that opposition in union meetings on union issues was regarded as a dangerous undertaking. And some reported that attendance at union meetings had rapidly fallen off within recent years. They implied that a major factor had been a sense of frustration related to fear of political repercussions for those active in the unions.

#### *Constriction of Activities and Associations*

Persons in our sample talk of self-imposed restrictions on the range of their ordinary activities in response to "blacklisting." Respondents were asked what adjustments, if any, they felt obliged to make to the temper of the times in order to avoid possible political criticism. In particular, they were asked about discussing their political views around the studio, about being friendly with certain people, joining organizations, and special caution, if any, in the choice of reading matter. There are some persons in the sample who indignantly deny such restrictions, or even the need for them. There are others who describe certain precautions they take; but there are none who feel that these precautions have meaning or benefit anybody.

One actor's sarcastic exaggeration conveys the tone of inner rebellion felt by some, even though he was obviously satirizing the situation: "Isolate yourself, render no opinion on any subject. Keep closely confined counsel, make love to no woman you don't ultimately marry, divorce your wife under no condition, avoid making enemies for any reason, love everyone and be loved by everyone, and above all be neutral about everything. Don't go to public assemblies, avoid banquets, meetings; and, when overheard by anyone else, be speaking exclusively about the subject of mother or romance."

More realistically, another reports: "My wife had a copy of Karl

Marx that she got when she was 16 or 17 years old. One night we were having a producer and his wife over for dinner and we didn't want him to see this book, so she removed it from the shelf."

In an extreme case, a respondent said that a job-seeking actor would not be wise to walk into an advertising agency with a copy of *The Nation* or the *New York Post* under his arm. For the run-of-the-mill precautions, one staff-writer sums it up thus: "With the exception of the fellows who are admitted Communists or of those who took the Fifth Amendment and have nothing further to lose, everyone else tends to pull in his horns."

There are quite a few persons in the sample for whom such constriction is relatively easy. They are willing to comply with what they perceive to be appropriate behavior because they are so dedicated to their profession that they do not care too much about matters outside of it. To them it appears to be an almost meaningless concession to the climate of the times.

It is particularly striking how little exception to such constriction writers take, even when it affects the content of their work. One of them said: "Nowadays, it would certainly be a mistake to let the underdog win in the end. So I don't." Another one mentioned that there was now somewhat more stereotyping of content than there had been. But he felt the change was slight and often hardly perceptible. It was, he said, for example, no longer "approved" to make a banker the villain in a play. "Of course, there often is no particular reason why the villain should be a banker; I give him another profession." This man was asked, in the interview, how he felt about such restrictions. He shrugged his shoulders, and started to recite a long series of other, non-political restrictions, which a writer had to follow in any case for every sponsor. The restricted choice of occupation for the villain of his imagination was of minor concern to him.

#### *Target for Suspicion*

One theme on which respondents elaborated and which helps to make constriction acceptable is the conviction of many that "it can happen to everyone." As one man said: "Anyone can get blacklisted. It's such a haphazard method of picking."

But if one looks closer into the statements of respondents about the universality of the threat, it emerges that what is actually meant is that suspicion, and its consequences for employability, is not limited to Com-

munists and subversive elements, but is directed against a large variety of persons.

In several instances it is said that "idealists" are likely to get into trouble. Sometimes the explanation is added, because they "were swindled into a benefit performance" or "doing something for Loyalist Spain"; but sometimes there is no qualification or explanation, as if the respondent takes it for granted that idealism leads to being accused or suspected of Communist affiliations.

Some respondents have so little respect for those who originate these employment policies that they do not trust them to know what a Communist is. And they claim that their observations confirm the complete absence of responsible and politically sophisticated criteria. One person sees suspicion directed against "the more intellectual groups; the ones that are serious about their work." Another fears for "those who delve more into problems, because they are more inclined to experiment." Or: "Liberals are likely to get into trouble. They tend to find flaws in the existing world and write about them. They are interested in all sorts of things and pay less attention to public taboos."

In line with the notion that people who have social ideals are more likely than others to get into trouble is the following comment: "Those who are outspoken about wanting to improve race relations" (may be in trouble). "If one lives in the Village, it's bad. Sometimes even if you let it be known that you are a Democrat. If you are a member of the A.D.A., it is murder."

Finally, a number of people commented that they personally felt quite safe because they were too unimportant to be discriminated against. "Frankly, I don't think I have big enough a name to get into trouble. Names is all they (the listers) want."

A contrasting view is mentioned by a number of executives who felt that the extent of "blacklisting" was exaggerated because it was easier on one's vanity to attribute failure to get a job to the "blacklist" than to one's lack of talent. Whether or not this is so in some cases we are, of course, unable to say, since no person who believed himself "black-listed" was included in the sample. That other persons, not included in our small sample, use "blacklisting" as an excuse to cover up their own lack of ability, is, of course, possible. It is, however, not very likely that one would call himself "blacklisted" without good evidence since such a rumor alone may destroy further job chances.

## *Cynicism*

Most of our respondents believe that the "blacklisting" procedures, initiated and defended in the name of national security, have no bearing whatsoever on national security. They were all aware of the watertight system of control over content before it goes on the air which excludes possibilities of direct subversion. Some of them pointed out that engineers, who are in the most crucial position to do harm in an emergency, were not affected by these policies. None of them mentioned an argument which is often made elsewhere, namely that outstanding performers might use a good deal of their income to help the cause of communism financially. Most of them, as already indicated, had doubts about the motivation of the listers. When this doubt was voiced in a more charitable spirit, the listers were called misguided or crazy; in a less charitable mood the adjectives were insincere, profiteering, money-greedy, hypocritical, and the like.

Such an evaluation of the motivation behind the "blacklisting" procedures, and of their ineffectiveness, taken together with the sense of frustration with regard to decency in human relations, the constriction of activities without a justifying conviction, and the belief that unfair and unintelligible criteria are used which get people into serious trouble — collectively, these add up to an attitude of cynicism. It is not surprising, therefore, that when the question was raised as to why powerful networks and sponsors complied with the requests made by such doubtful characters, the answer was, as a rule: money.

There are some practices cited by respondents which lend support to this all-embracing cynical explanation. One major employer, for example, allegedly checks on personnel not once and for all, but insists that every new assignment of a person be confirmed only after a new check has been performed. One person in the sample, commenting on the need for repeated clearance, declared he could understand it only in terms of a rumor he had heard: there was an alleged fee of \$7.50 a person had to pay to one of the outside organizations which had set up its own machinery for "clearing" personnel, whenever a question was raised. More open support for the assumption that it is all a question of money derives from several statements, allegedly made to personnel by some networks and advertising agencies, that it is in the financial interest of the sponsor to avoid the use of "controversial" persons.

This is not to assert that the persons we interviewed were blind to the general trend of public opinion. On the contrary, they mentioned again and again that what was happening in the entertainment industry fitted well into the national climate of thought — or “the national hysteria”, according to some — and was possible only because of it. But what they felt was that here it was the catering to a mood rather than the fulfillment of a good purpose, and for reasons of personal profit.

Of the persons who expressed an opinion as to whether anyone should be excluded from work in the industry because of his political beliefs, the great majority felt that no one should be; qualification for the job is the only criterion which they repeatedly stressed. As they perceive those who pay for their services to hold very different views, they keep quiet for the sake of the job in the conviction that there is in this respect little room for fairness in the entertainment industry. They submit to what they believe to be wrong.

#### *A Conflict of Conscience*

Yet the respondents' views of cynicism in management are not verified when one discusses the situation with executives of networks, advertising agencies and packaging firms. In all but one of these interviews the existence of certain procedures to check on the views and political associations of radio and television personnel was discussed; in no case with either enthusiasm or cynicism. The attitudes of these executives is expressed by the following typical comments:

“I have to do it. I hate doing it. Everyone else in the same boat feels that way.”

“I have spent many sleepless nights over it. It's hard to know what to do.”

“I hate it, but let's be realistic. If we admit that public opinion won't stand for using a Communist like Paul Robeson on the air, then we have to have criteria for selection. And since there are no criteria which can be used, we are where we are.”

“I have fought for a few people in spite of opposition. But I had to give in in a number of cases. I have hated myself for doing it.”

“I think it is a terrible, tragic mistake. But I confess to you that if one of these outside organizations would ask me to pay them \$200 a month to protect the interests of this organization, I am afraid I would pay it.”

“Don't call me a security officer. I am just here to protect the inter-



ests of our clients. Controversial people are bad for their business. I don't have to be ashamed of what I am doing. It is just a job to safeguard our clients."

Those who have worked out procedures for screening have given considerable thought to them and have undoubtedly spent thousands of working hours and much money on this, by their own standards, unenviable task. Nonetheless, nobody claimed to have found the right procedure that would avoid possible injustice to individuals.

In the beginning of the interviews with executives, they were first acquainted with the results being reported here and asked if they cared to comment on them. With one exception where the attitude was completely non-committal, the findings were not brushed aside as of no importance to the industry. One or two executives felt it hard to believe that morale with regard to "blacklisting" should be as low as indicated; several said they had expected it to be low. None took it lightly.

All but one of the executives were ready to discuss ways of improving the situation, though some expressed skepticism about the chances of doing so. Explicitly or implicitly it was clear that they regarded the sponsors as having of necessity the final word in these matters even though, as was pointed out on several occasions, it was not the sponsor who carried legal responsibility for what went on the air.

#### *Divided Responsibility and Lack of Communication*

Another theme was frequently introduced both by talent and by the leaders of the industry: the difficulty of establishing a change of policy in an industry in which so many diverse groups have a legitimate say, and where direct communication between policy makers and talent is the exception rather than the rule.

As has been indicated, this difficulty is general and genuine in areas having nothing to do with employment policies. With regard to "blacklisting," it is compounded because other private individuals and organizations have managed to insert themselves into the complicated chain of command in this respect. It is not part of this report to describe in detail the nature or the activities of such outside groups which try to influence the employment policies in the industry. All that can be said here is that many of the respondents are aware of their existence and regard them as a further complication in an already complicated system of shared responsibilities.

One TV writer who felt that "blacklisting" had damaged the entire

industry put his views thus: "In itself it (blacklisting) is an admission on the part of the TV industry that prerogatives that should be retained by them can be usurped by outside sources. And once they have started to give in to these sources, they will have to give in more."

This alleged absence of individual responsibility for policy decisions about "blacklisting" makes it plausible that the impersonal managerial "they" are blamed for everything, to the detriment of morale in the industry.

This is made all the easier because many policy decisions and struggles fought by management in the interest of curtailing outside interference are kept confidential. In the discussion with policy makers a number of incidents were mentioned which clearly show top executives asserting individual responsibility, ignoring outside organizations, defending individual performers and striving to preserve an atmosphere suitable for constructive work. These incidents are known only to those directly involved. They cannot be fully identified in this report. The executives revealed them on the condition that their organizations not be mentioned. There can be little doubt that these incidents actually occurred; their constructive impact on morale in the industry would, of course, have been infinitely greater had they been revealed in full.

One top executive, for example, mentioned a show sponsored by a producer of well-known consumer goods. After the show he received a number of letters threatening boycott of the goods unless a "subversive" actor was removed from the cast. The top executive was convinced that the accusation was false. He communicated with the sponsor, who had received similar mail. Both decided to ignore the threat. Nothing more was heard about it. The business of the sponsor is as flourishing as ever.

Another top executive said that his organization was not very much impressed by mail accusing individual performers of the wrong political connections. He had learned to ignore such correspondence when he realized that the largest number of such letters he ever received in an individual case was 200. On the other hand, when one favorite show altered its time schedule, 8,000 letters of protest came in. Nevertheless the show lost nothing of its popularity on the new schedule.

Several executives said they knew that some of their biggest sponsors were annoyed by the interferences of one Mr. Johnson (the owner of three grocery stores in Syracuse who is said to be engaged in a one-man

campaign to eliminate from employment in the entertainment field persons whose political views he suspects) and ignored his threats of boycott without damage to themselves.

To be sure, there were other indications in the interviews with policy makers which confirm the beliefs and views of talent working in the entertainment field with regard to abdicating responsibility for decisions, or doing under one's own responsibility what outsiders clamored for. But the point to be made here is that the secrecy surrounding all such decisions leads inevitably to the assumption among some proportion of our respondents that concern with decency and fairness for victims of political accusation is foreign to the policy makers.

*In summary*, the psychological themes emerging from that part of the interview which focussed on "blacklisting" are unmistakably, though in a one-sided fashion, related to the general employment situation which confronts the industry's talent. Enthusiasm for their jobs does not influence the views that the persons interviewed take towards "blacklisting". But those features of the general employment situation to which talent objects are closely interwoven with their views on "blacklisting". This is the picture which results, a picture often only intensifying already existing trends: "blacklisting" procedures are met with fear, frustration, a conviction that innocent people are suspected, constriction and cynicism on the part of talent; an unresolved conflict of conscience on the part of management, with a notion that going along with the temper of the times is required if they are to serve the best interest of their clients. The situation is further confused by the fact that responsibility is hard to allocate in a field in which many relatively independent units cooperate. Thus, outside pressure groups have achieved a foothold in the situation. And since communication between policy makers and talent is rare and secrecy surrounds many procedures, even the deliberate efforts of leaders in the industry to protect talent remain unacknowledged. Thus — in spite of executive concern, thoughtfulness, and conflict of conscience — "blacklisting" procedures continue in the industry.

Neither among talent nor among policy leaders is there much conviction that the national interest is served by "blacklisting" procedures. If the industry as a whole nevertheless complies with what they perceive to be the climate of opinion, other motives are involved: the wish to keep a job and the wish to keep a client. These are strong motives.

firmly embedded in the structure of the industry. Even though they are not the only motives operating it would be misleading to disregard them. Unless the industry becomes convinced that jobs and clients can be kept without "blacklisting" procedures, these procedures will continue to plague radio and television.

### *An Examination of the Rationale for "Blacklisting"*

One cannot look at the manner in which anti-communism affects the industry's employment policies without raising the question whether the function served by these policies is of such importance that it warrants their psychological consequences. If these policies are required in the interest of national security or if their existence improved the quality of the materials that go on the air, the question would have to be answered in the affirmative. The situation would then be much the same as it is with the federal security program for government employees: there, too, undesirable consequences exist. But since there is an overwhelming consensus that security checks of federal employees are required in the national interest, an improvement of procedures is called for, rather than the abolition of the program.

The situation is, however, different in the entertainment industry. We have not come across anyone who maintains that our national security is safeguarded by these procedures. And no one argues seriously that the content of radio and television programs has been affected by "blacklisting", for better or for worse. The industry itself seems convinced of two facts: subversive ideas were not propagated over the air before "blacklisting" started; and the accusation that the very best people were eliminated from the air by "blacklisting" is for the most part without foundation.

If the belief nevertheless persists that the industry cannot get along without using some check on the political views and affiliations of the talent it employs, this is due to a chain of assumptions about psychological responses including assumptions about the public at large and about what people refer to as "sponsor psychology".

To speak of "sponsor psychology" already implies an assumption which is, to say the least, questionable. It may make sense to speak about the psychological responses of a group of people who find themselves in the same situation and are exposed to similar policies and practices. Sponsors are not in such a situation. All they have in

common is that they are supporting radio and television financially because they expect — and receive — a return for their advertising dollars. Apart from this, their psychological reactions will differ and be moulded by the very special situations in which each of them finds himself. What is more, since sponsors are not in close touch with each other, their reactions will presumably be quite diverse even to common problems. In the thinking of the industry, however, there seems to be little recognition of individuality in sponsor reactions.

A most significant corollary of this assumption about the sponsors is the belief that they are exclusively motivated by profit considerations. To be sure, they are in business to make a profit. But it is unjustifiable to assume that American industrialists and business men are so thoroughly dominated by the profit motive as to pursue it ruthlessly without permitting any considerations of fairness, due process and general decency to deter them from achieving this one goal. American industry has long since discovered that profit and decency are not mutually exclusive. There is no reason to believe that this lesson learned since the days of the robber barons has been forgotten.

A second assumption concerns one particular group of sponsors, the production goods sponsors rather than the consumption goods sponsors. The latter obviously wish to sell their goods directly through advertising. The production goods manufacturers advertise to the general public for the purposes of obtaining good will. Now the assumption is made that sponsors equate good will with the absence of criticism. It is conceivable that some sponsors actually have this rather narrow notion of good will. But it is hardly conceivable that many do not interpret good will in a more positive way: that good will is generated from a positive appreciation of what a company does to make superior entertainment and education available to the public. In other words, the assumption that all companies evaluate one letter of criticism as more important than one — or even ten, as it is said — letters of praise, is not justified without proof. It is hard to imagine that industrial concerns are actually judging their standing in the community by so inappropriate a yardstick as the expression of dissatisfaction by a minute fraction of the general public.

With regard to the general public, the fundamental assumption is that the public treats shopping as a political act. It has already been pointed out that this is unlikely. But much the same idea, less extremely

formulated, appears to carry weight in the industry. The assumption is made that an 'unquestioned reputation of a sponsor will lead the public to choose his brand rather than that of a producer about whose policies questions have been asked; furthermore, that the public actually does ask questions about employment policy, or is aware of procedures in that area. To the best of our knowledge these assumptions about the public have never been definitely proved either right or wrong. But there is some fragmentary evidence to the effect that they are questionable. In those cases where networks and sponsors have chosen to ignore a threat of boycott, mentioned earlier in this report, no unfavorable public reactions ensued. Moreover, there does not appear to be an unfavorable response to the efforts of the companies that use more lenient standards and employ persons excluded by other companies for political reasons.

### *Suggestions for Change*

Those who draw from the foregoing analysis the conclusion that morale with regard to "blacklisting" in the industry should and could be better than it is will be concerned with the question of how to improve the situation. This question was actually the focus of interest in the discussions with top executives of the industry. On the assumption, questioned only by one of them, that the morale survey identified correctly significant aspects of morale, in spite of the small number of respondents, they were asked to comment on a variety of possible procedures for improvement of the situation. Most of the procedures suggested for discussion were adaptations of plans and ideas which have been talked about in the industry for several years and had therefore had the benefit of critical evaluation by those who would have to implement them. Two factors justified going over such old ground. First, while none of these plans had been adopted, the reasons for their rejection were largely unknown. It was thought that an understanding of why the industry had turned down previous plans might make it possible to develop new ones which avoided objectionable features. Second, there was the possibility that one of the reasons for rejecting these plans previously was not that they were unsound but that policy makers felt there was little reason for doing anything about "blacklisting" in the belief that it had no appreciable consequences for the ordinary running of their organizations. Should the results of our

survey modify this belief where it existed, a reconsideration of old plans in the light of new evidence might occur.

One of these plans had been suggested originally by lawyers outside the industry and also, with modifications, by the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. Its basic idea was the establishment of an advisory council to the industry, composed of leading clergymen of the three major religions, who would deal with individual cases in an individual and confidential way, communicating to the employer only their final judgment as to the general trustworthiness of a person.

The rationale for this plan is as follows: problems which may arise about the employability of a person are largely those of conscience, ethical standards and forgiveness for mistakes made in the past. The most widely respected experts on such problems in our society are religious leaders; their word, it was felt, would command respect and safeguard organizations against accusations of negligence or lack of concern.

While some positive features of this plan were recognized by practically everyone, there was little enthusiasm for it. Negative features were pointed out and its general applicability and effectiveness were doubted. The objection was raised that the plan would inevitably discriminate against a person not identified with one of the three major religions. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the technique of referral to such an advisory council posed serious problems (and these problems were regarded as unsolved also in other related plans suggesting advisory councils of different composition). There are basically two methods of referral: self-referral or referral by the employer. Self-referral raises the question as to the evaluation of persons who do not choose to take this step. To make the plan compulsory for all would certainly defeat its spirit by imposing an infringement of individual freedom. If self-referral occurred only in cases of persons already in trouble, "clearance" by an advisory council would have little value since many employers apparently feel that the damage has already been done by having the individual become "controversial" in the mind of the public.

Referral by the employer, on the other hand, obviously presupposes that the employer has already acquired some knowledge about a person which leads him to doubt his employability. Such acquisition of knowledge is possible only if the employer has his own procedures for

checking on the political beliefs and associations of personnel, or, at least, for dealing with information from sources outside the industry. In other words the council would have to duplicate available machinery. The plan thus loses one of the major advantages it appeared to offer, at first sight, to the employers, namely to make it unnecessary for them to concern themselves with these matters.

Another type of plan had as its basic idea the establishment of a code of ethics for personnel practices with regard to political matters. Such a code might be established either by a group of major sponsors, or by one of the nation-wide organizations in the industry (the American Association of Advertising Agencies or the Association of National Advertisers), or by some other group or combination of groups. The adoption of this code by individual organizations would be on a voluntary basis according to one version, or obligatory on membership organizations according to another.

The rationale for this plan is as follows: one of the aspects most resented by employees in the current situation is the absence of known standards and the secrecy surrounding procedures. Such secrecy, many felt, was conducive to the abuse of fair play and to practices in a few individual organizations which would not bear the light of day. The enunciation of fair principles by responsible sections of the industry might, it was felt, influence for the better the entire atmosphere and combat cynicism and mistrust.

The reception of this proposal was not much better than that accorded to the first plan, even though many executives agreed with its aim and some of the positive features. Objections were numerous, in particular with regard to the involvement of industry-wide representation. Legal counsels of various organizations had given this point considerable thought and had concluded that such agreements might eventually lead to a charge of conspiracy. In addition, some executives expressed strong doubts that consensus on substantive matters could be reached in any of the nation-wide organizations. Past attempts in that direction had demonstrated sharp cleavages which they felt certain could not be reconciled.

On the other hand, at least one or two executives felt that any initiative taken by sponsors and conveyed by them to advertising agencies held some promise.

A third type of plan was based on an approach to the public. The



idea was that a statement by Mr. J. Edgar Hoover on the methods of the F.B.I. with regard to the discovery of subversion might reassure the public. Such a statement, it was suggested, broadcast and televised over all stations might contrast the expert methods of the F.B.I. with the fumbling and often interfering amateur efforts of untrained individuals or groups.

The rationale behind this plan was as follows: as has been pointed out, one justification for the employment procedures whose consequences have been described, is the assumption that public opinion is so deeply aroused about questions of political ideology, that shoppers would turn against a manufacturer who followed different policies.

If this assumption is granted, the public needs reassurance about the protection of internal security, information about the difference between conspiracy and heresy, and education about the positive values of diversity and of controversy in political life.

None of the executives objected to this plan. Its impact on the general public and its effectiveness in allaying the fears in the industry about negative public reaction, however, were doubted. Some executives pointed out that the problem needed to be tackled inside the industry rather than in public statements. Others felt that no single statement, however well publicized and by however important a person, would turn the tide. One executive pointed out that some such statement had actually been made in a more general context by Mr. Hoover, and had not had an appreciable impact on groups responsible for some of the organized mail campaigns used against individuals in radio and television.

The discussions with executives in the industry thus certainly clarified the reasons for the rejection of some approaches to the problem of "blacklisting."

Paradoxically, perhaps, one of the general shortcomings inherent in all the suggestions reviewed above is that they were too concrete. In a sense, they all assumed to varying degrees that a consensus of opinion on employment policies could or should exist in the industry. It does not. And perhaps it should not in a country determined to maintain diversity and to resist regimentation.

What remains to be done? It is impossible at present to suggest a blue-print for action which would have a chance of being accepted. There appears to be no shortcut to change through concerted and im-

mediate action. However, a public debate might be initiated to air the facts as well as the assumptions, views and values of all concerned with the problem, wherever they may stand. In argument and counter-argument the necessary correctives of current procedures may be forthcoming. While such a debate should exclude nobody, it should, for obvious reasons, involve mostly those within the industry. It might best be initiated by those who, by virtue of the structure of the industry, are in the best position to contribute statements as individuals with undivided responsibility, that is by sponsors. The stature of such a debate would be enhanced if it were opened by presidents of the best known industrial concerns in the country. In such an atmosphere, the greatest barrier to change — the assumption that such matters cannot be talked about — would soon fall. And as the minds of many would be stimulated to concern themselves with these questions, faulty thinking and fearful action may gradually disappear.

## APPENDIX A

### Interview Schedule and Numerical Results

NOTE: This appendix contains the interview schedule used for the morale survey. After each question, the numerical results of the survey are presented. These figures should be regarded with the qualifications in mind which have been emphasized in the body of the report.

Where answers add to 64 (number of respondents) only one answer per question was counted. Where totals are not indicated, respondents gave more than one answer to one question.

The letters D.K. and N.A. stand for: "don't know" and "no answer."

Not all the data presented in the following tables have been used in the preceding report. To assist the reader in forming an independent opinion on the material, tables not fully used in the report are marked by an asterisk (\*).

### RESEARCH CENTER FOR HUMAN RELATIONS NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

\*1. First of all, would you tell me how long you have been in

(Radio) \_\_\_\_\_

(TV) \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:

	Predominantly in		
	Radio	TV	All
1 - 2 years	1	6	7
3 - 4 years	—	8	8
5 - 8 years	2	19	21
9 years or more	20	8	28
Total	23	41	64

2. And what do you do in (Radio) (TV)? \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS: Talent	23
Producers and Directors	20
Writers and Commentators	21
Total	64

**\*3. FOR TALENT AND COMMENTATORS:**

About how many times have you been on since this time last year?

FOR WRITERS:

About how many of your scripts have been used since this time last year?

FOR PRODUCERS AND DIRECTORS:

About how many shows have you put on since this time last year?

Average		
Wk.	Mo.	Yr.

ANSWERS: Less than once a month

13

1 - 4 times a month

14

2 - 5 times a week

15

6 times a week or more

22

Total

64

**\*4. What do you like most about working in (Radio) (TV)? \_\_\_\_\_**

Why?

ANSWERS:

	All (64)	Top level (20)
Economic factor ("the money")	33	10
Work is enjoyable, fun, interesting	25	8
Work is easy, working hours easy	10	3
Work is challenging	17	8
Work is worthwhile, contribution to culture	4	2
Camaraderie, nice interesting people	18	5
Entertaining other people	6	2
Fame; thrill of having millions as audience	6	4
Superior medium for expression	18	8
Creativity	25	8
Other reasons	3	0
D.K., N.A.	0	0

**5. What do you dislike most about working in (Radio) (TV)? \_\_\_\_\_**

Why?

(Probe each dislike for adjustment): How do you handle that yourself?

OR Is there anything you can do about that?

ANSWERS:

	All	Top level
Economic factor (job insecurity)	12	4
No sense of personal accomplishment, low standards, technique more important than talent and quality	26	8
Nervous pressure	25	8
Medium controlled by non-creative people; (executives, ad agencies, sponsors versus creativity); desire to please everyone	32	16

Falsity in personal relations; methods of getting job or advancement	6	1
Outside pressure groups	3	2
Blacklisting	6	3
Radio dying from TV competition	8	4
Other reasons	18	5
DK., N.A.	3	0

6. In general, would you rather work in (Radio) (TV) or would you prefer doing something else?

Prefer (Radio) (TV) \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer (job description) \_\_\_\_\_

(industry) \_\_\_\_\_

Why is that?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Like what I am doing	29	9
Would like different job in industry (TV instead of radio, serious instead of comic, etc.)	7	4
Prefer theater or movies	22	5
Like what I am doing but want also theater or movie	2	1
Prefer to leave industry	2	1
Other	1	0
D.K., N.A.	1	0
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*7. What do you consider the most difficult problem facing the (Radio) (TV) industry today?

ANSWERS:

	RADIO	TV	
Economic survival:		Immaturity	5
Management does not meet TV challenge	7	Mediocrity, poor quality	29
Radio must lose	6	High production costs	7
Challenge serious but radio can win	11	Sponsors and ad agencies only interested in selling	8
Others	2	Blacklisting	1
D.K., N.A.	1	Others	7
		Management misjudges public	1
		D.K., N.A.	0

\*8. Who is the most successful (use respondent's job title) \_\_\_\_\_ in (Radio) (TV) today?

Why do you say (he) (she) is the most successful?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Makes most money	19	10

Does most work	12	5
Most able	39	11
Highest prestige with public (highest ratings)	13	4
Highest prestige within industry	8	3
D.K., N.A.	7	1

(Probe): Is this success actually deserved? — Is (he) (she) the best?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Yes	36	13
Yes, with qualifications	16	3
No	2	2
D.K., N.A.	10	2
	<hr/> 64	<hr/> 20

Apart from ability, how did (he) (she) actually get where (he) (she) is now?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Reaffirms ability	12	5
Hard work	26	6
Lack of competition	4	0
Luck; good breaks	8	5
Knowing right people	12	4
Connivance	2	0
Nice person	2	1
Other	2	0
D.K., N.A.	9	3

\*9. Have you ever turned down a job even though you were available?

Yes_____What were your reasons?	No_____Can you think of any reason that would induce you to turn down a job?
---------------------------------	--

(AND)

Can you think of any other reasons that would induce you to turn down a job?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Yes	52	19
No	11	1
D.K., N.A.	1	0
	<hr/> 64	<hr/> 20

REASONS:

Response in terms of unavailability	13	7
Not enough money	23	11
Bad part; low class work	6	3
Would have looked like a comedown	14	5
No professional advantage or satisfaction	33	10

Personality clash	20	9
Didn't want to work (vacation)	10	5
Against my principles (sensational, cheap, etc.)	11	0
Against my principles (political)	5	1
Inconvenient location	5	0
Other	4	1
D.K., N.A.	1	0

\*10. If someone asked you to contribute your services, without pay, to a benefit show, would you accept?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_Are there any conditions under which you wouldn't do it? No\_\_\_\_\_Can you give me your reasons?

It depends \_\_\_\_\_. Under what conditions would you do it?

(AND)

Under what conditions wouldn't you do it?

<b>ANSWERS:</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Yes	38	12
No	1	0
It depends	23	8
Other	1	0
D.K., N.A.	1	0
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

**CONDITIONS OF REFUSAL:**

Time, job interference	13	4
Abuse of contributed services	14	7
Idiosyncratic professional reasons	6	4
Lack of sympathy for cause	25	9
Not for any political cause	3	0
Would make inquiries first about possible political exploitation	15	3
Not if left-wing cause	2	0
Not if possibly communistic, subversive, un-American cause	14	4
Other	1	0
D.K., N.A.	1	0

\*11. Career-wise, where would you like to be in five years?

<b>ANSWERS:</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Where I am now	12	5
Greater income	6	0
Somewhat extended activities	15	5
Considerable extension of activities	10	0
At the top	3	1
Shift from staff position to free-lance	3	2

Shift from free-lance to staff position	1	1
Shift to other activity in industry	5	4
Shift from Radio to TV	2	0
Shift to (also) theater and movies	17	8
Shift to ad agency, author	5	1
D.K., N.A.	2	0

What do you think your chances are of achieving this?

<b>ANSWERS:</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
No chance, poor chance	6	0
Fair chance	18	9
Good chance	14	3
Excellent chance	14	7
D.K., N.A.	12	1
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

What would help you achieve this?

<b>ANSWERS:</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Hard work, study, perseverance	19	3
Ability	11	6
Self-confidence, self-reliance	6	4
Having the right contacts	8	2
Good publicity	4	1
Pleasing my employer	4	1
Financial security to be able to work on it	8	4
Luck, chance, a good break	24	8
D.A., N.A.	9	0

What might hinder you in achieving this?

<b>ANSWERS:</b>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
If I don't work hard enough, no perseverance	6	2
Lack of ability	3	0
Lack of self-confidence	4	2
Lack of right contacts	1	0
Lack of publicity	2	0
Difficulties with employer	5	1
Financial insecurity	10	4
Bad luck, no breaks	13	5
D.K., N.A.	14	3

12. Do people in (Radio) (TV) help each other when they are in difficulties?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_It depends\_\_\_\_\_Where No\_\_\_\_\_Why not?

would they help and where

wouldn't they?

(Probe): Where would they draw the line?



13. In regard to people with whom you work, can you generally tell from the way they act towards you who you could really count on?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_How do you tell – can No\_\_\_\_\_Why is that?  
you tell me about that?

ANSWERS (combined):	All	Top level
Industry personnel particularly helpful	27	10
Industry personnel particularly unhelpful	6	1
Helpful and unhelpful	14	4
No difference to other industries	11	4
D.K., N.A.	6	1
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

14. Now a different question:

Suppose that someone now in (Radio) (TV) is named as a Communist sympathizer in a magazine. He really isn't now, although fifteen years ago he attended Communist Party meetings for a short time.

What do you think will happen about his job – or work?

Would you say:

It will make no difference\_\_\_\_\_to his job.

He will probably keep his job\_\_\_\_\_

He will probably lose his job\_\_\_\_\_

Suppose he had known two months in advance that his name would appear, what could he have done to avoid his job being affected?

(Intensive neutral probing)

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Will keep job	13	5
Will lose job	31	10
50:50 chance; it varies	14	3
D.K., N.A.	6	2
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*15. Suppose a friend of yours was in that situation, would he be likely to come to you for advice?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_Why? No\_\_\_\_\_Why not?

Maybe\_\_\_\_\_. Can you tell me about that?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	28	14
No	13	2
Maybe	19	4
D.K., N.A.	4	0
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

16. Do you think blacklisting is practiced in TV and Radio now?  
 (If respondent asks for a definition of blacklist, say: "That's what we'd like to know. — How would you define it?")

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	44	16
No	8	2
D.K., N.A.	12	2
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

17. How do you feel about blacklisting? In general, do you think it does more harm or more good?

More harm \_\_\_\_\_ More good \_\_\_\_\_ Why do you feel that?  
 Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
More harm	49	18
More good	3	0
D.K., N.A.	12	2
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

- \*18. Can you tell me about any list or lists that you know of?

- \*20. Who puts out (this list) (these lists)?

ANSWERS (combined):	All	Top level
Names:		
Red Channels	41	16
Aware	16	4
Mr. Johnson; a grocer from Syracuse, or other description of Mr. J.	21	10
Special government committees	4	1
File 13; Hartnett	4	1
American Legion, Catholic War Veterans	5	2
Counterattack; Kirkpatrick	11	4
Others	9	5
No names mentioned	12	2
D.K., N.A.	24	0
Institutional identification:		
Ad agencies	25	13
Sponsors	10	4
Networks	13	7
Private organizations, outsiders, "mystery"	9	4
No institution mentioned, D.K., N.A.	27	3

19. What are some of the things a person might have done which could result in his being blacklisted?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Suspected of being a Communist or fellow traveller	14	6
Suspected of having been a Communist or fellow traveller	8	0
Accidental or personal association with somebody or something now suspect	26	10
Current political views and activities, non-Communist	8	5
Union activities, past or present	11	4
Immorality, alcoholism, homosexuality	6	1
Others	12	5
D.K., N.A.	10	2

\*21. Does a person know whether or not he is on a list?

Usually\_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_ How does he know?  
Never\_\_\_\_\_.

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Usually	14	5
Sometimes	28	10
Never	4	1
It varies	1	0
D.K., N.A.	17	4
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

22. Is a person ever told he is not hired because he is on a list?

Usually\_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes\_\_\_\_\_ Never\_\_\_\_\_

Who tells him?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Usually	5	3
Sometimes	22	8
Never	13	5
D.K., N.A.	24	4
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*23. If someone is listed, is it possible to get some jobs in the industry and not others, or is the listed person totally unemployable within the industry?

Can get any jobs\_\_\_\_\_ some jobs\_\_\_\_\_ no jobs\_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Any job	1	0
Some job	35	15
No job	4	1
It varies	2	1
D.K., N.A.	22	3
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*24. How many people in TV and Radio together do you think are handicapped in getting jobs because they are blacklisted?

Number \_\_\_\_\_ or Percent \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
100 or less	2	0
101 - 500	5	3
501 or more	4	1
Very small % or number	10	4
10% or more	2	1
D.K., N.A.	41	11
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

How many persons do you think should be out of TV and Radio?

Number \_\_\_\_\_ or Percent \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Nobody	21	7
Facetious answer: (90%; "the business people," etc.)	5	2
Communists and fellow travellers	5	2
Fewer than there are	1	0
Other	1	0
D.K., N.A.	31	9
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*25. If a person is blacklisted is there any way he can get off the list?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell me No \_\_\_\_\_ How is that?  
about that? Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Can get off list	40	15
Cannot get off list	4	2
D.K., N.A.	20	3
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

ASK OF "YES" RESPONDENTS:

Once off the list, is that permanent?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ How It depends \_\_\_\_\_ How do you mean?  
do you explain that? Don't know \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Permanent	10	2
Not permanent	15	8
D.K. re permanence	15	5
	<u>40</u>	<u>15</u>

\*26. Why the blacklist in the first place? What are the reasons behind it?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Climate of opinion, Communist scare, hysteria	19	6
Actual Communist danger in country	7	1
Industry has too many left-wing elements	1	1
Industry sensitive to criticism	4	1
Fear, lack of courage; sponsor's concern	7	2
Mistaken notion that there are many Communists in industry	4	1
Vigilantes, misguided patriotism	8	5
D.K., N.A.	20	6

(Probe): Is there anyone who benefits? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ Who? No\_\_\_\_\_.

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Nobody	12	7
Those not on list	11	6
Listers (money, power)	22	5
Public, Security	4	2
Other	3	0
D.K., N.A.	18	2

(Probe): Is professional jealousy involved?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell me about that? No\_\_\_\_\_.

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Jealousy involved	26	13
Jealousy not involved	13	0
D.K., N.A.	25	7
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

(Probe): Are the listers sincere and patriotic?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Listers sincere, unqualified	5	0
Sincere but misguided, crazy	13	7
Some sincere, others not	10	3
Not sincere	12	5
Listers sick, pathological	6	4
D.K., N.A.	18	1
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

27. We're not interested in names, but do you know anyone who is or ever was blacklisted?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ (ASK SUB-QUESTIONS) No\_\_\_\_\_ (GO TO QUESTION 28)

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Yes	50	17
No	11	3
N.A.	3	0
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

What was his employer's attitude?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Employer kept him on	7	2
Wanted to keep him on but couldn't	8	2
Fired him without concern	6	0
Person was free-lance	19	8
Person was not working at all at the time	1	0
D.K., N.A.	9	5
	<u>50</u>	<u>17</u>

What attitude did his fellow- (artists) (writers) (etc.) take?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Helped him	7	3
Wanted to help him but couldn't	15	5
Didn't try to help him	4	0
Wanted to avoid him	2	0
D.K., N.A.	22	9
	<u>50</u>	<u>17</u>

Is what happened in this case typical, do you think?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ What is special about it?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Typical	24	8
Not typical	6	2
D.K., N.A.	20	7
	<u>50</u>	<u>17</u>

28. What types of people are most likely to be blacklisted?

(If respondent answers "suspected Communists," ask: What makes them suspect?)

(If respondent answers "liberals, left wingers," etc., ask: Why is that?)

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Communists, fellow travellers, subversives	13	5
Radicals, left-wingers	6	2
Liberals, active liberals	12	5
Socially conscious, active people	8	3
Incautious, emotional people	5	4
People who performed on certain benefit shows	3	1
Outspoken people; dissenters; non-conformists	12	3

Anti-blacklisters	3	1
Minority group members	2	0
Anyone at all; anyone who gets in the way	4	1
People who joined organizations now on list	8	2
Other	14	2
D.K., N.A.	14	4

\*29. Everyone has, of course, to make some adjustments to the temper of the times. Are there any things a person in the industry should or should not do in order to avoid being criticized on political grounds?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ What? (*neutral probes*)

No \_\_\_\_\_ Can you comment on that?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
No need for precautions	2	2
Some precautions	51	14
D.K., N.A.	11	4
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

IF RESPONDENT HAS ANSWERED IN TERMS OF INDUSTRY, ASK:

*What about yourself?* Are there any things you feel you should or should not do in order to avoid being criticized on political grounds?

IF RESPONDENT HAS ANSWERED IN TERMS OF HIMSELF, ASK:

*What about others in the industry?* Are there any things people-in-general in the industry should or should not do in order to avoid being criticized on political grounds?

ANSWERS (for industry):	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
No need for precautions	1	1
Some precautions	44	16
D.K., N.A.	19	3
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

(*Probe*): What about being friendly with certain types of people?

	SELF		INDUSTRY	
ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Be careful	9	2	9	4
No need for care	17	5	2	0
D.K., N.A.	38	13	53	16
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

(*Probe*): What about discussing political matters around the studio?

	SELF		INDUSTRY	
ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Do not discuss	30	5	25	4
Discuss freely	7	4	0	0
D.K., N.A.	27	11	39	16
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

(Probe): What about joining organizations?

ANSWERS:	SELF		INDUSTRY	
	All	Top level	All	Top level
Don't join	18	6	23	9
Join what you like	6	1	0	0
No interest in organizations	17	4	0	0
D.K., N.A.	23	9	41	11
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*30. Have you ever found yourself hesitating to buy a certain book or magazine, or hesitating to leave it around where it can be seen, for fear that it might be frowned upon?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell me about that?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	11	5
No	43	12
D.K., N.A.	10	3
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*31. Do you think people in the industry ever hesitate to buy a certain book or magazine or leave it around where it can be seen, for fear that it might be frowned upon?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell me about that?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	28	10
No	13	3
D.K., N.A.	23	7
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

\*32. IF "TALENT" SKIP THIS QUESTION AND GO TO QUESTION 33

Is there any subject matter or treatment of subject matter that you feel it would be wise to avoid so that your program cannot be criticized for containing an unpopular political slant?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_ How do you decide this?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	16	6
No	14	4
D.K., N.A.	11	2

33. In regard to blacklisting, would you say that the situation is getting better or getting worse, or staying about the same?

Beter\_\_\_\_\_ Worse\_\_\_\_\_ About the same\_\_\_\_\_

What accounts for this?



ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Better	40	17
Worse	3	0
About the same	4	1
D.K., N.A.	17	2
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED *Better* OR *Worse*:

(*Probe*): In your opinion, has there been any particular event that accounts for this?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ When was that? Can you tell me about it?

No \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Yes (McCarthy's decline, Matusow case, Ed Murrow's stand)	25	6
No	17	9
D.K., N.A.	22	5
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

34. What parts of the industry (are for the blacklist) (would be for a blacklist)?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Networks, employers, management	9	5
Ad agencies	17	5
Packagers	1	0
Sponsors	17	7
Union	4	1
Creative people	1	1
Nobody	6	2
Individuals (no group)	14	5
Right wing politicians	4	0
D.K., N.A.	16	1

What parts of the industry are against the blacklist?

ANSWERS:	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
Networks, employers, management	4	3
Ad agencies	2	0
Packagers	0	0
Sponsors	0	0
Union	3	2
Everybody	8	4
Nobody	0	0
Individuals	9	4
Left wing politicians	2	0
Creative people	17	7
Blacklisted people	5	0
D.K., N.A.	18	3

\*35. Is there or was there at one time a blacklist against conservatives and anti-Communists?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ Can you tell me about that? No \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Yes	5	1
Yes, but less official than current list	13	5
No	29	10
D.K., N.A.	17	4
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

36. Just to give me some perspective, how important do you feel blacklisting is in relation to other problems in the industry?

(Probe): And why is that?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
Very important	18	9
Minor importance	25	7
No importance	6	3
D.K., N.A.	15	1
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

How do you think most people in the industry feel about this?

\*37. Now just a few questions about yourself.

Are you married? Married \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been married? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children? Yes - 35 No - 29

May I ask their ages? \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:

Married - 52 Single - 9 N.A., D.K. - 3

And where were you born? 59 in U.S.A.; 5 abroad.

What is the name of the last school you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:

At least some college - 45 Less than college - 14 N.A. - 5

Is (Radio) (TV) the main source of family income?

Yes - 52 No - 8 N.A. - 4

For what network do you do most of your work?

ANSWERS:

ABC - 10 CBS - 25 NBC - 23 Others - 2 Several - 4

Would you mind telling me what newspaper you read most often?

\_\_\_\_\_ How often is that?

ANSWERS:

56 at least 4 times a week a daily paper.

4 less than 4 times a week a daily paper.

4 N.A.

And, finally, did you vote in the last presidential election?

ANSWERS:

Yes - 46      No - 13      N.A. - 5

TO BE FILLED IN BY INTERVIEWER AFTER THE INTERVIEW

Approximate age of respondent \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Men - 50      Women - 14

Age: -30 .....	7	46 + .....	13
31-45 .....	41	N.A. ....	4

Brief description of respondent, including mannerisms, willingness to answer questions, interviewer's estimate of degree of honesty and/or realism in answering questions, and any other material which will help us recreate the interview situation: such as a few words on the respondent's office or living conditions. State where interview took place.

Spoke more or less freely	52	Showed open concern	
Did not speak freely	10	for anonymity	12
N.A.	2		

What questions were the most difficult to handle? Why?

None	32	Q. 28	3
Blacklisting questions	10	Q.'s 4, 5, 11, 13, 14,	
All	3	30, 36 (each)	1
Q. 8	3	Not ascertained	7
Q. 26	3		

Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_

Time: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
(A.M./P.M.) (A.M./P.M.)

Travel time \_\_\_\_\_

Editing time \_\_\_\_\_

Other time \_\_\_\_\_

(explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Total time \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Interview No. \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### Letter of Introduction to Talent

This is to introduce \_\_\_\_\_  
who is assisting me in a study of Television and Radio.

The purpose of this study is to obtain a picture of policies and practices in the entertainment industry, *as they are actually experienced by those who work in it*. The only way to obtain this picture is to interview persons like yourself who are in the midst of it. Altogether we plan to interview about 100 persons.

You may wish to know how we selected you as a participant in the study. In scientific work of this kind it is very important to select people for interviewing without introducing any bias in the choice, such as we might have done had we approached people in TV and radio through personal contacts. This is why we went to a lot of trouble in establishing as complete a list as possible of persons working in TV or radio in New York City. From this list we then picked names at random. Yours happens to be included. I am very glad to know that you expressed your willingness to be interviewed.

I want to add another point: Persons in your profession are, as I know, rightly much concerned with publicity. Scientific studies of this kind are possible only if the individuals who cooperate with it remain *completely anonymous* in any publication of our results. I am sure you will agree that this is a wise principle, if you consider that you or others may wish to speak your mind frankly without having to consider consequences. I hope you will accept my word of honor, if I assure you that I personally guarantee that what you care to say in the interview will remain completely anonymous.

If there is anything else about the study that you may wish to know, please call me on the 'phone or write to me. I shall be happy to answer all your questions.

I think you will enjoy the interview. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

MARIE JAHODA  
*Professor of Psychology*

MJ:dh

## APPENDIX C

### Letter to Top Executives of Networks, Advertising Agencies and Packaging Firms

Dear

During the past several months I have been conducting a study of the attitudes and opinions of persons about their work in radio and TV, the satisfactions and frustrations they experience, and the more general problems which they feel confront the industry. A good portion of the personal interviews which my staff conducted with talent, writers, producers and directors concerned the question of blacklisting. A preliminary exploration of the field had convinced me that this issue had to be appraised in conjunction with other aspects of the industry. We have deliberately not talked to persons who believe they themselves have been blacklisted.

The analysis of the interviews yielded a most fascinating picture. However, I am convinced that this picture is incomplete without the comments of the leaders and policy makers in the field. This is why I am asking for the privilege of an interview with you. I want to discuss with you our findings to date and obtain your comments before submitting a final report to the public.

You may wish to know that the study is being financed by The Fund for the Republic, as a self-contained section of their larger study of the entertainment industry. Let me add that I am talking with top executives in a number of different organizations related to the entertainment industry or in the industry itself.

I believe you will find our research of interest and I look forward to discussing it with you. My secretary will check with your office within the next few days regarding a convenient time.

Sincerely yours,

MARIE JAHODA  
*Professor of Psychology*

MJ:dh

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*THE*  
*JUDGES AND THE JUDGED*

**BOOKS BY**

**MERLE MILLER**

***THE JUDGES AND THE JUDGED***

***THAT WINTER***

***THE SURE THING***

*INTRODUCTION BY*

*ERNEST ANGELL*, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*AND PATRICK MALIN*, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

THE  
JUDGES  
AND THE  
JUDGED BY

*MERLE MILLER*

*FOREWORD BY ROBERT E. SHERWOOD*

*DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, INC., 1952  
GARDEN CITY, N.Y.*

In the preparation of my report for the American Civil Liberties Union, I received the valuable assistance of Alan Reitman, the ACLU's assistant director, both in the collection of information and in the general preparation. Whatever credit the report is given he deserves to share in.

M. M.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 52-5749

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Printed in the United States  
At the Country Life Press, Garden City, N.Y.



*JOHN MILTON*

“Who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?”

*JOHN STUART MILL, ON LIBERTY*

“A state of things in which a large portion of the most active and inquiring intellects find it advisable to keep the general principles and grounds of their convictions within their own breasts, and attempt, in what they address to the public, to fit as much as they can of their own conclusions to premises which they have internally renounced, cannot send forth the open, fearless characters, and logical consistent intellects who once adorned the thinking world. The sort of men who can be looked for under it are either mere conformers to common-place, or time-servers for truth, whose arguments on all great subjects are meant for their hearers, and are not those which have convinced themselves.”

FOREWORD BY

ROBERT E. SHERWOOD

This book tells with accuracy and objectivity a factual story of subversion and sabotage of freedom in the United States of America at a time when the cause of freedom throughout the world is in mortal peril. It is quite clear that whereas the editors and publishers of *Red Channels* and *Counterattack* do not consciously strive for the same objectives as the agents of Communism, their methods and techniques are very similar and so are their standards of morality and their respect for the essential "Blessings of Liberty" guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. As the vigorously anti-Communist *Saturday Review of Literature* has said, "'Red Channels' accepts Red doctrine: to accuse is enough." It would be difficult to imagine any doctrine more profoundly un-American.

We are all too familiar with defamation used as a conventional weapon in political strife, and defamation in the rantings of racial and religious bigots; but defamation conducted as a commercial enterprise belongs in a category of contemptibility all by itself.

After I had read the manuscript of this book—which is the result of an investigation conducted by Merle Miller at the instigation and with the active co-operation of the American Civil Liberties Union—I witnessed an ugly demonstration of the conditions herein described and documented:

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Elmer Rice joined with other distinguished dramatists in a group to present famous plays on television. This project promised television entertainment of a superior quality, and in its first productions this promise was amply fulfilled. Mr. Rice and his colleagues were given, according to their contracts, "as much control over the script, casting and production, as each playwright may wish" and "the plan should so operate as to permit each playwright to have maximum casting and other production participation to the extent that he may desire it."

When it came to the casting of his own play, *Counsellor-at-Law*, Mr. Rice was anxious to participate. For the leading role, he first suggested Paul Muni, who had starred in the play originally, but Mr. Muni was doing film work in Italy and was therefore unavailable. The next suggestion was Gregory Peck, but his motion picture commitments prohibited any television work.

Mr. Rice then suggested the names of six other actors, all of them acknowledged stars of Broadway or Hollywood or both, who have been identified with some of the greatest successes of the past few years. One of them recently won the Motion Picture Academy Award (the "Oscar") for the best performance of the year by a male star. I believe that anyone experienced in casting plays or movies would agree that each of these actors is qualified to play the leading part in *Counsellor-at-Law*.

But Mr. Rice was informed that all six names are listed in *Red Channels*.

Realizing that, contract or no contract, he did not have any more "control" over the casting of his own play than the sponsor and/or advertising agency might care to grant him—and that indeed he could become an accomplice in the perpetration of downright injustice—Mr. Rice resigned from the group, making public his reasons for doing so. He said:

"I have repeatedly denounced the men who sit in the Kremlin for judging artists by political standards. I do not intend to acquiesce when the same procedure is followed by political commissars who sit in the offices of advertising agencies or business corporations."

In recording Elmer Rice's unhappy experience, I have not

mentioned the well-known names of the six actors. This omission is in conformance with the policy established in this book by Mr. Miller, to avoid further extension of the cruel and inhuman publicity to which many decent, non-Communist American artists have already been subjected.

There is one name, however, that Mr. Miller mentions frequently because it has appeared on so many front pages that it has become a symbol of the fight to purge the radio and associated industries of what John Crosby of the New York *Herald Tribune* has correctly called "this appalling moral cowardice." The name is Jean Muir. The shocking story of this respected actress is told in these pages.

The Washington *Post* had this to say about it: "There is no nicer name for what happened in Miss Muir's case than black-mail." Typical of editorial comment in a wide variety of newspapers was the following from the conservative *Berkshire Eagle* (of Pittsfield, Massachusetts): "The whole business of bringing unsupportable charges against people in the public eye of any profession, and demanding that they be jailed, fired, or disgraced, on the undocumented charges of any Tom, Dick or Harry with a McCarthy complex, is thoroughly sinister."

Jack Gould of the New York *Times* has written: "There comes a time in the lives of individuals, corporations and countries when it is not enough merely to find a plausible and practicable reason for not facing up to an issue. The obligations of citizenship go beyond expediency and require vigorous protection and defense of those freedoms upon which, among other things, the continued existence of free enterprise rests."

It is all too doubtful whether Mr. Gould would have been permitted to write those fine words and get them printed in the New York *Times* if the newspaper business enjoyed no more independence than does radio. In this unthinkable event, the advertisers, not the publishers, would determine the policy and would hire and fire the editors, reporters, feature writers, cartoonists, judging each news story or editorial solely on its effectiveness in selling the product.

One of the most embittering elements in this ominous situation

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is the fact that at the top of the radio and television industry are some of the most honorable, enlightened, progressive men in this country. They created and developed these mighty media of communication, and they have made and are still making determined efforts to devote them to the fullest feasible extent to the public service. But they—unlike their counterparts in the newspaper, magazine, book-publishing, motion picture or theatrical businesses—have lost authority over a large part of the essential material that is delivered to the public; they have delegated (i.e., sold) that authority to the sponsors, who in turn may delegate it to the advertising agencies, talent agencies, “packagers.” Thus, between the heads of the radio and television companies and the people whom they serve is a vast area of cynical irresponsibility populated largely by hucksters.

There are implications in this of truly fearful import for the future of this Republic and all that it stands for. Some of these implications have lately been underscored by Raymond Rubicam in an article for the *Saturday Review of Literature*—and it is ironic to note that Young and Rubicam, the important firm which he helped to found and from which he retired some years ago, was the advertising agency involved in the firing of Jean Muir from a steady job on the television show, *The Aldrich Family*. Conceding that some of his former associates may consider his present views “the newly acquired righteousness of a reformed sinner,” Mr. Rubicam does not hesitate to point out that because “only sellers of products of the broadest mass appeal can afford to use radio and television advertising; therefore, for the most part, only audiences of the largest size are of value and interest to the advertiser.” With the result that “radio programming in the United States has been comparable to a school system in which everything stopped at the elementary grades designed for the largest number of students, and which consequently had no colleges, universities, or postgraduate schools to serve the rest of the population.”

Mr. Rubicam fears that we “face an age in which a higher and higher percentage of what our minds take in will be taken in

from radio and television. Their danger is that if misconducted they will make for a population standardized on a narrow base and a low level of preoccupation."

Even more alarming is an article, "It's Still a Business," by Maurice B. Mitchell, written in defense of the radio industry and in opposition to the views expressed by Mr. Rubicam. Mr. Mitchell has a low opinion of people who believe there might be more "helpful educational talks and discussions" on the air; he dismisses such people as "crackpots." He writes: "Sometimes he [the broadcaster] wonders whether there shouldn't be another 'freedom' added to the list of new ones we've discovered lately: freedom from culture."

That statement might be taken to confirm the portrait of Americans as nothing better than greedy barbarians that is being spread abroad by the Communist propagandists.

Our American culture is based not on our natural resources, our mountains and prairies and rivers, our farms, factories and mines: it is based on freedom—and when freedom is abrogated, then we must become tongue-tied, impotent, doomed. One of the most reputable of the radio and television trade papers, *Sponsor*, has conducted a vigorous exposure of *Red Channels* and *Counterattack*, and its editor quotes with "firm agreement" this statement in *Fortune*: "It makes all the difference whether our business world merely pays lip service to the Bill of Rights and to such words as 'freedom' and 'non-discrimination', or actually lives by the principles inherent in them."

It does indeed "make all the difference." An accounting of the assets and the liabilities in radio's achievements in the United States to date would certainly show a tremendous margin on the credit side. We may hope that this credit margin will continue; we may even hope for some improvement. But it is a sure thing that radio and television could become fatally destructive forces, reducing toward the vanishing point the morality and the mentality of the people, if their policies and their programs were to be shaped by men and women who demonstrate "appalling moral

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cowardice" and who yearn for "freedom from culture"—and perhaps, deep in their hearts, freedom from freedom itself.

(NOTE: Since this foreword was written, Elmer Rice has reached amicable agreement with the sponsors, The Celanese Corporation, who deserve honor for creating a precedent by repudiating black-listing.)

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## INTRODUCTION

BY ERNEST ANGELL, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AND PATRICK MALIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN  
CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

The American Civil Liberties Union is concerned about radio-television black-listing, whatever its source or form, because it is a threat to the spirit of the Bill of Rights, whose defense—for everybody—is the Union's sole purpose. The Union believes in freedom of speech and press, freedom of assembly and association—for everybody. It believes in the principles of due process and impartial trial: specification of charges, full and fair hearing, careful consideration and reasoned findings, and opportunity of review—for everybody. It believes in equality before the law—for everybody.

The radio-television industry, a private business organized for profit, has the special characteristic of operating in the field of communication, under licenses granted by the Federal Communications Commission in the public interest, since the relatively few wave lengths and channels belong to the people as a whole. Hence it is imperative that everyone connected with it, and everyone seeking to influence it, should promote scrupulous observance of those three basic constitutional guarantees of American democracy—free speech, due process, and non-discrimination.

Therefore, when radio-television black-listing first received

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widespread attention in late August 1950, with the cancellation of Jean Muir's contract to appear in *The Aldrich Family*, sponsored by the General Foods Corporation, the American Civil Liberties Union made public a letter to the sponsor, reading in part as follows:

"We are dismayed that one of the giants of American industry, grown strong by serving the people in their basic need for food, has let itself be overcome by a few individuals and groups bent on suppressing a person of whom they disapprove. . . . Miss Jean Muir has no constitutional right to appear in 'The Aldrich Family', and her opponents have the right to protest her appearance. But, just as we oppose censorship by public authority, we deplore suppression by private pressure. And we are shocked at your sudden eleventh-hour yielding to such pressure, without according Miss Muir the elementary right of a full hearing.

"We hope you will immediately reconsider, and reverse your decision. Members of our Board of Directors, several of whom have long experience in the fields of entertainment, communications and public relations, are available for prompt consultation, if you should desire it. In addition, we are continuing and intensifying our comprehensive inquiry into the whole question of possible black-listing in the radio industry."

On September 15, 1950, the Union announced the appointment of Merle Miller, well-known correspondent and novelist, and a member of the Union's own Board of Directors, to head its investigation. In this announcement, it was reiterated that the ACLU was opposed to suppressing any protest, but was equally opposed to black-listing or attempted black-listing ("from whatever quarter it emanates") for alleged beliefs or associations.

The full text of Mr. Miller's report is now at length being issued by one of the country's foremost publishers, instead of by the Union itself: a deserved tribute to Mr. Miller, and to the continuing importance of the subject. The problem did not suddenly come into existence in August 1950. It did not disappear with the fading of the Muir case from the headlines. Unpublicized black-listing continues and multiplies—in darkness, and it is in darkness that suppression does its deadliest work.

The American Civil Liberties Union has sponsored Mr. Müller's report because it believes that the American people have more than ordinary business considerations at stake. As the audience of the radio-television industry—its ultimate consumers—the American people have a heavy stake in the industry's offering programs of the greatest possible variety in both education and entertainment, with the best available talent; and, as citizens of a free society, the American people have a still heavier stake in mass-communication channels being kept free. The radio-television industry and those who work in it, the commercial sponsors and their advertising agencies—as responsible units in a free society and, in effect, trustees of a scarce natural resource—can properly be asked to risk some loss in order that this giant private business may render the vital public service it should render.

Dealing with controversial material and employing controversial personalities may on occasion cause some loss of business income, but American industry, which has thrived on taking risks, surely has enough courage to look below the surface of "bad publicity" and to appraise the accuracy, fairness, relevancy, and significance of any allegations. It should estimate a few protesting letters and phone calls for what they are worth, and no more. It should revise upward its estimate of the character of the American people, who can be expected to respond affirmatively to demonstrations of intelligence and bravery. Freedom is everybody's business, all the time. Unless it is so recognized, all our other business will be jeopardized by the decay of the free society which sustains it.

This is Mr. Miller's report. Whenever the ACLU must find supplementary manpower for an especially large task, it chooses a man in whom it has confidence, and then asks only that he submit his own findings. It now presents Mr. Miller's report (which was approved for ACLU sponsorship by the board's Publications Committee, to which the Board of Directors, in accordance with its custom, delegated such authority in advance) as an important contribution to the understanding and solution of the complex problems involved in radio-television black-listing. The main features of the Union's position on those problems are separately

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summarized in the concluding paragraphs of this Introduction, but one matter should be stressed here. Mr. Miller and the ACLU as a whole were united in their determination that his investigation should include the utmost possible checking on every suggestion of black-listing by Communists or other "leftists," and he devoted weeks of time to this effort. Everything which he succeeded in discovering is included in his report. The relatively few pages required to tell that part of the story indicate once again that one of the main dangers of Communist tyranny is the secrecy in which its adherents regularly operate.

It seems to us that the greatest value of Mr. Miller's report is that his generalizations are based on comprehensive and detailed inquiry by an experienced reporter. He was aided by the cooperation of the publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels*, and of many other persons. He and the American Civil Liberties Union deeply regret that nearly all those other persons made it a condition of supplying information that their names not be mentioned in the report (a tragic commentary on the low state of freedom in the radio-television field). However, not only are such sources specifically recorded in the files of the investigation, but also every effort was made independently to verify the accuracy of the information.

We take the following to be its salient points:

There has been a good deal of attempted private black-listing—organized and unorganized—in the radio-television field, by persons holding various views, including Communists and their opponents.

The black-listing attempts of the anti-Communists have, naturally enough, been much more visible and extensive than those of the pro-Communists; and, apparently, much more effective.

This effectiveness—reflecting the fear of business loss from "bad publicity" attached to "controversial personalities"—is much greater than the number of actual protests would seem to warrant.

Contract cancellation, with candid announcement of the real reason, is rare; simple refusal to hire or rehire, with no reason (or the wrong reason) given, is the rule.

The stated purpose of those engaged systematically in making and publishing lists of alleged Communist or Communist-front connections of radio-television personalities, and of those employing the information contained therein, is threefold:

- (a) to promote national security;
- (b) to curtail the incomes of persons who supply funds to Communist or Communist-front organizations; and
- (c) to diminish the prestige accruing to such organizations by way of sympathetic "big names."

Most of those so engaged profess to be sincere, and to regard their private activities as necessary because they believe that the activities of the security agencies of the executive branch of the government do not extend far enough.

There is some confusion in the minds of those so engaged as to whether all persons with the alleged connections should be completely excluded from the radio-television field, or whether their connections should simply be brought into the open; but the former seems to be the real preference.

Those who make and publish the lists have done a woefully inadequate job of establishing the accuracy, fairness, relevancy, and significance of their listings, excusing their inability to distinguish among zealots and dupes and innocents by saying that such distinctions are immaterial for their purpose; and, while formally disclaiming the making of any charges against anybody, they have counted too cheaply the irreparable damage which is done to a person's reputation (even if he is successful in a libel action, necessarily costly and difficult), as well as to the spirit of civil liberties when there is a "trial by publicity," with private prosecutor, jury, judge, and executioner.

The interest of national security in the radio-television field can and should be protected by the decision of governmental security agencies as to when the industry is "sensitive" and who is a security risk.

The use of "loyalty" oaths or "clearance" plans within the industry is both ineffective, because the person intent on subversion will perjure himself without hesitation, and unwise, because the

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conscientious person will be outraged and the ordinary person will be intimidated.

The radio-television industry and those who work in it, the commercial sponsors and their advertising agencies, need nothing more magical to safeguard practically the whole of their economic interest than an individual and corporate determination to hew to the line of honestly offering the best available talent.

The overwhelming majority of Americans who regard a radio-television performer as obnoxious because of his real or alleged Communist or Communist-front (but still legal) connections should do exactly what a Communist would *not* do—act in accordance with democracy and civil liberties, attacking the obnoxious person by argument, but not by haphazard suppression.

We shall now conclude this Introduction by summarizing the main views of the American Civil Liberties Union on the range of problems covered by Mr. Miller. These are the ideas of an organization which defends the civil liberties of everybody, even those whose anti-democratic opinions it abhors and opposes; but which, because that is its function, bars from its governing bodies and staff all who hold such anti-democratic beliefs, whether as Communists, Fascists, Ku Kluxers, or as adherents of other totalitarian doctrines.

(1) Even in a free society, as the ACLU has repeatedly said, the government has the right and duty to keep the nation itself secure; and, for that reason, to eliminate or exclude from positions closely affecting that security—in private as well as public employment, in peace as well as war—persons whose employment would represent substantial risk of subversive action, intentional or unintentional. But the security agencies of the executive branch of the government, as they have consistently urged, are the only proper authorities for the designation of such positions, for the determination of when they should be so designated, and for the decision as to what persons should be eliminated or excluded from them.

(2) In all other positions in a free society, employment should be decided on the basis of qualifications strictly relevant to the particular task involved. There are some non-security positions—

for example, those of the officers of a labor union—for which persons may be disqualified because they owe a disciplined obedience to some organization with contrary interests. But separate things should be kept separate, even when that basic constitutional principle has some consequences which are distasteful—for example, the funds and prestige which a neighborhood druggist's customers may find themselves contributing, by way of his business success, to local organizations in which he believes but they do not. Radio-television actors, writers, et al. should be tested for employment by the single standard of competent performance, as long as their acts and associations are lawful ones. It is useless to ask the pro-Communists in the radio-television field to abide by that principle, because they do not believe in civil liberties for everybody; but the anti-Communists ought to abide by it, because they do profess such a belief. We do not, in civilized and humane America, kill or jail or force on relief even all those persons whom we regard as too untrustworthy to allow in positions closely affecting national security. The only remaining possibility is to let them work in other positions, according to their qualifications. This is hard doctrine in a time of international tension and conflict, but it is indispensable, not only for maintaining a free society, but also for buttressing our national defense by winning the world-wide struggle for the minds of men through demonstrating our sincerity. Nobody can be expected to sponsor *ideas* which he rejects, but the great bulk of the radio-television black-listing problem has to do simply with *performers* in programs whose ideas have already been accepted by the sponsor.

(3) Some members of the public may disapprove the employment of a particular radio-television performer, for one or more of any number of reasons relevant or irrelevant to that single standard of competent performance. Whatever their reasons, they may, within the spirit as well as the letter of the Constitution, express their disapproval to anyone at all, and attempt to dissuade people from looking at or listening to that performer. And, as far as legal right is concerned, they may use such orderly and lawful means as peaceful picketing and the organization of a specific and primary boycott; and, subject to action for libel or slander, they



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may publish derogatory information or circulate it by word of mouth. But when they aim at censorship or suppression which would prevent other people who do not agree with them from looking at or listening to the performer, then they are acting contrary to the spirit of the First Amendment. Its ideal is that we should handle differences of opinion (as distinct from illegal action) by argument, not suppression.

(4) If, despite the above considerations, and the repeated urging of governmental agencies that they be allowed to exercise a monopoly of investigation and judgment in the field of security and loyalty, private persons or groups continue to exercise their freedom to purvey information reflecting on a person's loyalty, or continue to consider it in relation to non-security employment, then the least they owe to the free people of this country is to observe the elementary canons of due process. Disloyalty to his country is one of the most serious charges that can be leveled at a man, and those who make or consider such an attack on a man's livelihood and reputation—whether directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly—should do their work thoroughly for the sake of the nation and scrupulously for the sake of the man himself. This means, at least:

- (a) Doing everything humanly possible to insure absolute accuracy of information—not merely accurate quotation from some source, but an energetic effort to discover whether that source's "facts" are really correct and to arrive correctly at the exact meaning of the facts.
- (b) Doing everything humanly possible to insure completeness of information—not merely unfavorable information, but favorable information also.
- (c) Providing the person concerned with the opportunity of a full and fair hearing so that he may deny or explain (specifically listed) items of unfavorable information and offer items of favorable information.
- (d) Providing a qualified and impartial third party to preside at any such hearing, and to render judgment on all the information obtained. . . . The American Civil Liberties Union does not itself have the facilities to de-

termine, for example, who are Communist zealots, who are dupes, and who are completely innocent persons; but anyone who does systematically bring other people's names into question should, at least, practice the fundamental decency of due process. And, to the extent that such due-process procedures reveal errors in listing and in exclusion from employment, there should be published retraction and the offer of reinstatement or equivalent employment.

(5) Even if one or more of the elements in the radio-television industry—the broadcasting-telecasting companies, their employees, the commercial sponsors, and their advertising agencies—should develop procedures along such due-process lines, it must be recognized that at least some of those who assemble and publish derogatory information about radio-television performers, and some members of the public who employ that information, will not be so careful. They may be somewhat held in line by libel or slander actions, or actions against outside interference with contracts; by Department of Justice action against restraint of trade, or Federal Communications Commission action on the ground that broadcasting and telecasting licensees must not yield to such pressures. The American Civil Liberties Union, on the basis of Mr. Miller's report, is urging the Federal Communications Commission to demand that those licensees—to fulfill the requirement of public interest—refrain from making use of any black list of radio-television performers and from dealing with anyone who uses such a black list. But the probability is that the various elements in the radio-television field will always have to face some challenge from those who do not believe in civil liberties. To meet it, they will need simply to develop in themselves the determination to pay what little cost may be involved to support free speech, due process, and non-discrimination, and to practice open honesty. A pro-Communist who refuses employment to patriotically American actors, but claims to have refused because they are incompetent performers, is clearly seen to be guilty of violating all that we hold sacred. But the anti-Communist who refuses employment to actors because of the bad pub-

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licity arising from their names having been "linked" with a "front" organization, but claims to have refused because they are incompetent performers, is also violating the spirit of American liberties.

Here, as everywhere in a free society, there is a choice between risks. No solution can be perfect for everybody concerned. The best solution is simply the one which promises the greatest balance of benefit over harm for the whole society.

This is a problem which extends far beyond the radio-television field. In a time of international tension and conflict, there is naturally a growingly inclusive and pervasive social atmosphere of fear and intolerance, stifling the good old American habits of speaking one's mind, joining the organizations one believes in, and observing the principles of fair hearing and of holding a man innocent until he is proved guilty. People are constantly tempted to depart from the central principle of American law that a man is accountable only for his *own* illegal actions, not for mere *association* with other people who hold obnoxious *opinions*. They are letting themselves drift into the practice of discriminatory penalization of anybody who may have ideas which are unpopular in any particular time and place—ideas which have nothing to do with those of Communist or Communist-front organizations.

The ever increasing attempts of pressure groups of many sorts to bring about the censorship or suppression of what they disapprove, not only in the radio-television field but in the publication and entertainment fields generally, are dangerously undermining one of the foundation stones of American democracy, the freedom of expression. We call on everyone connected with the radio-television industry, and everyone seeking to influence it, to do free Americans the vital service of bravely reversing the trend.

*THE*  
*JUDGES AND THE JUDGED*

## HOW

### IT ALL STARTED

Rumors of the existence of one or more black lists<sup>1</sup> in radio and television began not long after the end of the Second World War.

For at least three years, perhaps longer, an anonymous list of between eighty and a hundred (no one will say how many) names of so-called "undesirables" has been circulated within the industry. Although this investigator could find no one who knew—or would admit knowing—how or by whom the list had been drawn up, it was in the hands of some network and many advertising agency executives. At one network it was shown to all directors together with a memorandum advising, "For Your Information: Keep these names in mind when casting. . . ."

As will be seen, the American Legion's *summary of trends and developments exposing the Communist conspiracy*, an informational newsletter circulated mainly among Legion officials, has for several years now published occasional lists of the names of persons found to be "unsuitable or inappropriate" for appearances before American Legion posts and, more recently, for appearances on radio and television as well.

In October 1949 the *Sign*, a nationally circulated Catholic mag-

<sup>1</sup>Definition: "Black list, a list of persons who are believed to deserve punishment, blame, suspicion, etc." Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary.

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

azine, printed an anonymous article entitled "Red Fronts in Radio," which listed the names of 51 "radio celebrities who have been cited in public records as having been associated with Communist causes or fronts." The author, identified only as "a well-known figure in the broadcasting industry," also declared, ". . . pro-Reds [have] been using a black list against loyal Americans in radio for the last dozen years."

On July 18, 1949, the New York *World-Telegram* carried a lengthy story, written by Pulitzer prize winner Frederick Woltman, headlined, "Reds Colonizing in TV and Radio." Mr. Woltman quoted a resolution passed by the New York Council of the Radio and Television Directors Guild declaring that "Widespread reports in the radio and television industry point to the existence of a black list of actors and directors based on political belief."

However, Mr. Woltman wrote, a check by the *World-Telegram* failed "to disclose evidence of any such industry black list. On the contrary, black lists have been used for years by individual pro-Communist directors, according to anti-Red sources in the industry."

Since May 1947 there has been the weekly newsletter of *Facts to Combat Communism, Counterattack*, which is published by three former FBI agents and has concentrated increasingly on those in radio and television, often, as will be seen, with instructions to its subscribers on how to protest the appearance of a certain performer or the use of a particular writer. ("Write to the sponsor, not the network or the station.")

In addition to its intermittent inquiry into "possible Communism in Hollywood," with what one committee member has called "occasional emphasis on Red infiltration into the radio and television industries," the House Committee on Un-American Activities has often heard widely publicized testimony concerning, among others, entertainers accused of "subversive," "Communist," or simply "fellow-traveling" activities. So have several of the state committees, particularly the Tenney group in California.

On June 22, 1950, a 213-page booklet called *Red Channels, the*

*Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*, was issued by the publishers of *Counterattack*. *Red Channels* listed the names of 151 writers, actors, singers, dancers, producers, and network executives together with the alleged Communist-dominated organizations and causes to which they were "reported as" belonging—or having once belonged.

*Red Channels* led off with a statement made by J. Edgar Hoover, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, before a congressional committee in 1947. "The [Communist] party has departed from depending on the printed word as its medium of propaganda and has taken to the air," Mr. Hoover stated. "Its members and sympathizers have not only infiltrated the airways, but they are now persistently seeking radio channels."

The impact of *Red Channels* was both immediate and widespread. Its effect was, of course, intensified by the fact that, three days after it was issued, South Korea was invaded by the Communist-controlled North Korean Army, an invasion that was resisted by a United Nations force made up mainly of American soldiers.

The purpose of this report is quite simple. The American Civil Liberties Union wanted to find out the facts—whether *Red Channels*, the names intermittently included in the *Legion summary*, those printed in the *Sign*, and the eighty to a hundred "undesirables," actually do constitute a black list and, equally important, whether there is a left-wing black list. If so, who is affected, those on the political left, the political right, or in between? Finally, what, if anything, can be done?

The investigation got under way on October 5, 1950; the preliminary research was completed in late January 1951, and a first draft was finished in late April. By that time the project had reached such magnitude that the original idea of publishing the findings as a pamphlet sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union was out of the question. After the manuscript was accepted by Doubleday & Co. the author spent an additional two months bringing the findings up to date and completing a final draft. Altogether the writer spent approximately five months on the project. In addition to Mr. Reitman, a paid investigator spent six

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weeks on the project; several other staff members of the ACLU assisted part time on the undertaking, and a group of volunteers dug up clippings and other information already in print.

During the investigation the following were interviewed:

Fourteen advertising executives (in all but one of the half-dozen major agencies, which refused to co-operate).

Eight writers' and actors' agents, from all the important artists' agencies.

At least three executives from each of the major networks—American Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting System, Mutual Broadcasting System, National Broadcasting Company—plus a few representatives of independent stations.

Officials in five of the twenty firms which buy the most radio and television time (as listed by *Broadcasting* magazine).

Officers of all the important entertainment unions and guilds, i.e., (1) American Federation of Radio Artists (AFRA), (2) Authors' Guild, (3) American Guild of Variety Artists, (4) Authors' League of America, (5) the National Association of Broadcast Unions and Guilds (NABUG), (6) Radio Writers' Guild, and (7) Television Authority (TVA).

Government officials, past and present, particularly from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Communications Commission, and the United States Congress.

Officials of the trade organizations, i.e., National Association of Broadcasters, the Association of National Advertisers, and American Association of Advertising Agencies.

In that part of the investigation concerned with the rumored left-wing black list, attempts (not always successful) were made to see anyone who might have information on the subject, i.e., members of the right-wing group in AFRA, officials of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, all those suggested by the publishers of *Counterattack*, and directors who were alleged to have discriminated against anti-Communists.

In this area, too, there were conversations with such veteran anti-Communist newspapermen as Frederick Woltman and Victor Lasky, both then on the staff of the New York *World-Telegram*,



and the editors of the *New Leader*. Lasky has since become a free-lance writer, mainly in Hollywood.

To obtain more general information, there were conversations with radio columnists Jack Gould of the *New York Times*, John Crosby, whose observations are widely syndicated, and a number of other newspaper and magazine writers specializing in radio and television. Telephone calls and letters to Ed Sullivan, the TV master of ceremonies and columnist of the *Daily News* who has written extensively on *Red Channels* and its publishers, were not answered.

There were also twenty-one additional interviews with persons on the periphery of broadcasting, lawyers specializing in the field, Vincent Hartnett, who wrote the introduction to *Red Channels*, and Mrs. John T. McCullough, one of those involved in the dismissal of Miss Jean Muir.

The undersigned and Alan Reitman received the fullest co-operation from the publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels*, who spent several days answering most of the questions put to them. Three of the interviews were recorded in their entirety by a stenotypist, and in addition a series of questions was submitted in writing and, with some exceptions, answered.

As will be explained in detail later, we were less successful with spokesmen for the American Legion, with Rabbi Benjamin Schultz, head of two anti-Communist groups active in the field, and Stephen Chess, Queens commander of the Catholic War Veterans, who was also said to be involved in the Muir incident. Mr. Chess wrote that he was "unavailable."

A series of questions was submitted in a letter sent to all of the 151 persons listed in *Red Channels*. Thirty-two replied by mail, twenty-six in considerable detail. Fifty-one others were interviewed personally, as were five more whose names did not appear in *Red Channels* but who had been named in other lists of "suspect" performers.

Finally, there were hundreds of press reports to be read, scores of editorials, dozens of magazine articles, and several books.

We are dealing here with an industry that depends largely on public opinion. Thus there was always caution. In addition to

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the instances listed above, dozens of letters written by the investigator were never answered; scores of telephone calls were never returned, and, most important, most executives and almost all entertainers agreed to an interview only if guaranteed that their names would not be revealed.

In writing the report, particularly that section dealing with those who feel they have been affected by a *Red Channels* listing, the investigator felt that mentioning any name, no matter how favorable the context, might affect a livelihood, now or in the future. Thus the names of most individuals are omitted in the report. With a few exceptions (public figures like Philip Murray, Trygve Lie, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, etc.) the names of those condemned in *Counterattack* and listed in *Red Channels* are not repeated here.

In my first interview with the publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels*, I said, "I plan [in the report] to be as coldly analytical as a reporter possibly can be, as is humanly possible. I am not interested in drawing any conclusions until I have found out the facts on all sides."

In what follows I have attempted to live up to that pledge.

—Merle Miller

# I . A

## LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

In late August 1950, Young and Rubicam, the advertising agency in charge of the popular television program, *The Aldrich Family*, issued a routine press release announcing that the former screen star, Jean Muir, had been chosen to play the role of Mother Aldrich. Her first appearance was to be on Sunday, August 27.

The press release stated that "Miss Muir's wide experience as a mature actress and the real life mother of three young children has ideally equipped her for the role of Mrs. Aldrich, who guides her family with a loving and understanding hand."

On Friday, August 25, the news of Miss Muir's forthcoming appearance on the television series appeared in the left-wing New York paper, the *Compass*. A similar item was published on the radio pages of the Sunday editions of several other New York papers, but it was the few lines in the *Compass* which led to a series of events the culmination of which was within fifty-six hours to reach the front page of almost every newspaper in America and throughout most of the rest of the world, including the Soviet Union.

The first and perhaps most important happening of that hectic and historic week end occurred on Saturday morning, August 26, shortly after Theodore C. Kirkpatrick, a former FBI man and

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secretary-treasurer of American Business Consultants, arrived at his office at 55 West Forty-second Street in Manhattan.

Although Mr. Kirkpatrick's organization was at the time publicly obscure, within the radio and television industry it was already widely known and greatly feared. He and two colleagues, also former agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, had for three years been issuing a weekly newsletter called *Counterattack*, the exclusive aim of which was "to expose the Communist menace." Three months earlier the former FBI men had released a paper-bound booklet called *Red Channels, the Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*. The publication listed 151 names of persons associated with the industry, along with the so-called "Communist or Communist-front" organizations with which each was "reported as" having been affiliated at one time or another.

Miss Muir's was one of the names in *Red Channels*, together with nine alleged affiliations.

Discussing his part in what has since become known as "The Jean Muir Case," Mr. Kirkpatrick later said, "I was out of town on Friday [August 25] and came into the office Saturday morning. Someone called me here Saturday morning and asked me if I had heard about the story in the *Compass* that Jean Muir was to appear on the Henry Aldrich show and also suggested that I get in touch with as many other people as possible and advise them."

When asked who called, Kirkpatrick stated, "I would rather not give the person's name. . . . It was no one . . . connected with *Counterattack*."

As a result of the call, however, Kirkpatrick immediately got busy on the telephone. "My reaction," he explained, "was certainly one of surprise, and I certainly felt that the fact she [Miss Muir] was to appear would probably have been carried in *Counterattack* that week had we known it, because I felt her record was that serious. As a result, I . . . called two or three people. . . ."

However, he added, "I didn't call General Foods [the sponsor] or the station."

Among those he did telephone was Mrs. Hester (John T.) McCullough.

Later Kirkpatrick said of his call to Mrs. McCullough, "I regretted . . . it . . . because she had been through so doggone much herself that no one should ever have gotten her involved in the Jean Muir controversy."

For more than a year Mrs. McCullough had been involved in a nationally publicized libel suit brought against her by Paul Draper, the dancer, and Larry Adler, the harmonica player. Mrs. McCullough had accused the two entertainers of being "pro-Communist."

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the Draper-Adler case had, according to her own analysis, "exhausted me physically, and every other way, including financially," as soon as she heard from Kirkpatrick, Mrs. McCullough went to work.

"I called a few people," she has said, "maybe twenty or thirty, and asked them to get busy. I knew this was a fight that had to be won."

Among those she telephoned was Stephen Chess, Queens commander of the Catholic War Veterans and a member of a group called the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York (of which both Kirkpatrick and Mrs. McCullough were then also members). She also called "a man on the Americanism Committee of the Connecticut American Legion" and "a couple of women I know on Long Island."

In addition she telephoned the National Broadcasting Company, the network on which The Aldrich Family was to be televised. She has said, "As soon as they [the switchboard at NBC] got my call, I was switched to someone else, an executive, I think, and he knew my name right away."

According to her, the second voice said, "Oh yes, Mrs. McCullough, we've had hundreds of calls on this matter."

Mrs. McCullough did not, she reported later, "ask them to fire the Muir woman. I just asked if they were familiar with her record and said if they weren't they ought to look it up in *Red Channels*. Then I hung up."

After that she phoned an executive of Young and Rubicam. "He lives right here in Greenwich," she has said, "and I asked him the same question—if he knew about Muir's record, I mean. He

## A LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

said he didn't, and then I reeled some of it off. He just listened for a while, and then he said, 'But, Mrs. McCullough, she's just an actress. What harm can she possibly do?'

"I then said to him, 'Yes, I know she's just an actress, but, until all the loyal Americans have been put to work, I don't think people like that should be on radio and television.' That stopped him for a moment.

"He said something about a relative of his having died a few hours ago, and he wanted to go, but I insisted on his listening to me and told him that in times like these personal matters don't count.

"I think he finally understood what I was talking about, but it took a little time."

Another of those who telephoned the National Broadcasting Company that Saturday to protest Miss Muir's appearance was Rabbi Benjamin Schultz, executive director of an organization called the American Jewish League Against Communism and coordinator of the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York.

The rabbi is reported to have told the network, "I am speaking for the more than two million members of my organization," the Joint Committee.

The network also received a few other complaints about Miss Muir, including several from the handful of women on Long Island who had been alerted by Mrs. McCullough.

The total number has never been revealed; however, an NBC official has said, "You might put it that there were more than twenty—and less than thirty, altogether, that is."

Sixteen months later "an official spokesman<sup>1</sup> for General Foods"

<sup>1</sup>Almost all of the "spokesmen" quoted on the subject of "black-listing" are in this report and elsewhere of necessity anonymous. According to *Sponsor*, one of its editors found that "the question of what to do about alleged subversives had become the most hush-hush subject along Madison Avenue. . . . It was as though many high-brass members of the industry had banded together to form a furtive, almost conspiratorial, Gentlemen's Agreement of silence. Normally voluble executives changed into clams. Mention of the epithet, 'Red Channels,' transmuted usually fearless business men from lions into mice. They reacted as though some sinister monster had suddenly cried 'boo' at them."

remembered the protests as being considerably more numerous. According to the October 8, 1951, issue of *Sponsor* magazine, a trade publication circulated mainly within the radio and television industry, the corporation representative said, "Altogether, we got some two hundred telephone calls touching on the Muir case. Our public relations department, especially, was flooded with protests, both at the office and at home, from people opposing our use of Jean Muir.

"It was only afterwards," he went on, "that we learned these persons were fronts for pressure groups. At the time, though, our chief consideration was the fact that they claimed they represented large groups."<sup>2</sup>

After the appearance of the article in *Sponsor*, one of three on the subject of black-listing in radio and television, an unofficial spokesman from General Foods told this reporter, "If I'm even seen talking to you, it means my neck, but my memory is that twenty is closer to it than two hundred."

Whatever the number of protests, they were effective. The Sunday night production of *The Aldrich Family* was canceled, and Miss Muir, after being paid in full for the length of her contract, was permanently dropped from the program. The following week she was replaced by another former film actress, Miss Nancy Carroll, who is not named in *Red Channels*.

Officials of the network and of Young and Rubicam are reluctant to discuss precisely what happened in the troubled hours before the program was postponed, and General Foods has not made any detailed statement about the events of that hectic Sunday afternoon.

However, at the time, the corporation did issue a press release stating that "The use of controversial personalities or the discussion of controversial subjects in our advertising may provide

<sup>2</sup>In answer to the quotations in *Sponsor*, an attorney for American Business Consultants has this to say: "You may be interested to know that General Foods Corporation has informed *Counterattack* that the *Sponsor* article 'did not accurately report the facts it purported to report or the attitude of the company' and that *Sponsor* had 'abused and misrepresented an off-the-record conversation' between the writer of the article and a company employee who, it was clearly understood, was not speaking for the company."

## A LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

unfavorable criticism and even antagonism among sizable groups of customers. Such reaction injures both acceptance of our products and our public relations. General Foods advertising, therefore, avoids the use of material and personalities which in its judgment are controversial."

Much later the spokesman quoted in *Sponsor* added, "The decision to release Miss Muir and pay her off over \$10,000 for her 18 weeks of contractual commitment was not made hastily. It was taken up by the General Foods executive board. Right up to Clarence Francis, chairman of the board. Our decision followed the seeming logic of our already established policy. . . .

"We had two of our own precedents to follow. In the past, when Kate Smith once said on a show that 'all mediums and spiritualists are fakes', we had received many protests from people believing in that form of religion. We told Kate to stop it, and she did. When Jack Benny once got into trouble by not paying duty on goods he brought in through Customs, his utterances became a controversial topic. But he, too, cleared himself."

There is one major difference between the cases of Jack Benny and Kate Smith and that of Jean Muir. Neither Miss Smith nor Mr. Benny had a contract canceled.

An official of Young and Rubicam explained what happened in the Muir case by saying, "The whole thing came during a lazy summer week end. None of the big wheels was around. Otherwise, the show probably would have been taken off because 'the scenery was bad'; or 'the script wasn't right'; or 'the show wasn't ready.' And by the next week, probably, some cast changes would have been made, including Miss M. But there wouldn't have been the publicity. The public would never have known."

However, the public emphatically did know. In addition to front-page headlines, there were hundreds of editorials in the nation's press, the majority of which supported Miss Muir. General Foods also received thousands of letters on the subject. The "spokesman" for the company said, "A tally of the total letters we received shows that 3300 were against the firing of 'untried persons,' and 2065 were against the rehiring of Jean Muir. Pressure groups stimulated letter writers on both sides. But of the



letters written independent of pressure, three to one were against our firing of Jean Muir. It's our estimate now that eighty per cent of the letters complaining of Jean Muir were a result of articles written in two New York City religious publications."

Many of the "independent" letters supporting Miss Muir wanted to know how she had become a "controversial personality."

Was General Foods convinced that she was "subversive"? At one point in a conversation with her and her husband (Henry Jaffe, a New York attorney), Francis said, according to the actress, "I wouldn't be sitting here with you if I thought these charges were true."

Was she dismissed because her name was listed in *Red Channels*, together with nine organizations she was "reported as" having supported? The company's spokesman denied that. It had, he told *Sponsor*, "nothing to do with our subsequent action. In fact, we hadn't even heard of *Red Channels*. We had to send out to get a copy so we could see what the hell the thing was."

In this, General Foods executives were clearly an exception. *Red Channels* was already so well known throughout the industry that Jack Gould of the *New York Times* called it "the bible of Madison Avenue."

"Even then," the spokesman continued, "it was none of our business trying to judge whether or not she had belonged to the eight [sic] organizations listed. . . ."

In this instance, too, Miss Muir differed from both Miss Smith and Mr. Benny. Miss Smith was allowed to "stop it, and she did." Mr. Benny "cleared himself."

Miss Muir tried. She publicly denied any association with four of the groups. Of the other five, she said:

INTERNATIONAL WORKERS ORDER "I know it has something to do with a workers' insurance plan. It's remotely possible that it was one of the groups I spoke before in the Roosevelt campaign."

STAGE FOR ACTION "I might have attended a show they gave, but I certainly cannot believe I was on their board of directors. Nor do I remember the show, if any."

## A LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

CONGRESS OF AMERICAN WOMEN "Yes, I was a member . . . for about six months. I believed then they were for better integrating American women in American life. . . . I quit as soon as I found out they were a front group."

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE "Yes, and I'm very proud to have been a member of the conference. . . . At the same time as I belonged, so did Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, [former] Senator Frank Graham, officials of the YMCA and the NAACP and later Senator Estes Kefauver. The conference was a sincere effort to improve the lot of all people in the South, white and Negro."

MOSCOW ART THEATRE "I'll admit that one, too, gladly. I sent them a cable of congratulations—so did a lot of other theater people—on the fiftieth anniversary two years ago. We all follow the Stanislavsky method of acting; we were paying tribute to that and nothing else."<sup>3</sup>

Did General Foods have independent evidence of Miss Muir's disloyalty? None was ever presented. The actress has said that she considers Communism "a vicious influence in the U.S." She has stated that "Communism is abhorrent to my way of thinking." She played in the first network anti-Communist documentary, "to which I donated my services, as did all the actors."

Morton Wishengrad, who is described by the anti-Communist magazine, the *New Leader*, as a "veteran radio writer who has been fighting Communists and Communism for the better part of two decades," wrote, "More than a year ago, Miss Muir was invited to participate in the production of a radio commentary on civil liberties which I had written.

"Since she had been invited to contribute her services without fee, she properly asked to see a copy of the script. She read it,

<sup>3</sup>Long after Miss Muir was discharged, *Counterattack* continued to list groups to which she had allegedly belonged at one time or another, but Miss Muir did not reply. The General Foods spokesman told *Sponsor*, "When the newspapers began to side against us editorially, I got a telephone call from Mr. Theodore Kirkpatrick. . . . He said, 'I can offer General Foods additional data on the background of Jean Muir. . . .' I didn't even let him try to sell us on having his organization screen all of our show talent. I said, 'Mr. Kirkpatrick, you've already done too *much* for us. Good-bye.' And I hung up on him."

expressed satisfaction with its contents and appeared at a performance which was given in the Yankee Stadium.

"I seem to remember," Wishengrad went on, "that she particularly liked the following statement contained in the script:

"'Nineteen forty-eight—and five months of 1949—not bad months at all. In spite of many things. In spite of the double standard whereby some Negro consumers who hate Jim Crow nevertheless boycott Jewish stores. In spite of some Jewish store owners who detest anti-Semitism but won't hire Negroes or even sell to them. In spite of some Catholics who loathe the Soviet proscription of intellectual freedom but who themselves proscribe what others should say. In spite of some Protestants who are so carried away by anti-Catholicism that they will permit themselves to be used by the Communists. In spite of the double standard and false moral posture, 1948 was still a good year.'

"I hope," Mr. Wishengrad concluded, "readers of the *New Leader* will agree with me that pro-Communists would not be voluntarily associated with the thoughts expressed in the last portion of the narration."

In an interview Miss Muir said, "I think there are three bases for what has happened to me. One is I wanted to find out about the world and do something about it; the second is that I have always believed in equality of opportunity for everybody, regardless of race or creed, particularly Negroes. But, more important, I was so much in favor of the third and fourth terms for Franklin Roosevelt that often I didn't stop to think for whom I was speaking; I never questioned; I just went. . . . The fact is that in the end I chose pretty well. I don't think I chose anti-American movements. It was just on an American level."

However, according to Miss Muir, when she asked Clarence Francis, "Suppose I get cleared, would you give me a job?" the chairman of the executive board of General Foods replied:

"Don't ask me a question like that."

What's more, whether General Foods took action hastily or at its leisure, it did so without giving Miss Muir any chance to speak for herself. In fact, she has said, "We found out I'd been fired quite by accident, and when Henry [her husband] and I

## A LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

called up to find out if it was true, at first they wouldn't even accept our calls. When they did, it was all over but the shouting."

A few months after her discharge the producer of a documentary program sponsored by a welfare group did consider using her on the program, but permission was refused, first by the network, next by the welfare organization.

Miss Muir's personal life has also been seriously affected by what happened on the week end of August 27, 1950. As one example, a few days after she was let go by General Foods one of her sons ran home from school screaming. As he rushed into her arms, he asked a question which that week had been the chief topic of discussion at his school.

"Mummy," he shouted, "is it true you're a Communist?"

Shortly after the furor over Miss Muir had subsided, General Foods announced a change of policy. The corporation declared that it would henceforth not ban material or drop performers from its programs merely because they were "controversial." In a statement to the press the company said that all complaints regarding the loyalty of radio or television performers would have to be backed up by "proof" before it would act.

The seeming change of policy came after a pressure campaign, particularly in the Brooklyn *Tablet*, against Philip Loeb, who played Jake on the Columbia network's television program, *The Goldbergs*, then sponsored by General Foods' Sanka Coffee. Loeb is listed in *Red Channels*, along with seventeen organizations he is "reported as" having supported.

At first the corporation had apparently decided to drop the actor just as it had Miss Muir. Its corporate mind is said to have been changed only after Mrs. Gertrude Berg, who not only writes the show but plays the leading role, told its executives that if Loeb were fired she would withdraw the program from its sponsorship. Not only that, Mrs. Berg is said to have stated, "I will appear on every available platform from coast to coast denouncing General Foods and advising people not to buy its products."

At that point the corporation decided to retain Loeb, and the next day the supposed policy change was announced.

However, a few months later Sanka dropped its sponsorship of The Goldbergs. At one time or another two reasons were given for the action. On May 19, 1951, the *New York Times* reported that "A representative for the sponsor said, 'The Goldbergs' program . . . was being dropped for 'economy reasons' and that less costly shows would be used in the future.'"

On June 1, Jack O'Brian, radio columnist for the *New York Journal-American*, stated, "The Columbia Broadcasting System may deny it, but won't most of the flagrant 'Red Channels' listees find it necessary to earn their crackers and caviar on other networks next fall? Including Phil Loeb of The Goldbergs?"

In October the "official spokesman" for General Foods told the *Sponsor* editor that the company had been "dissatisfied with the show's rating."

Most observers in the industry discounted both explanations, particularly since the same spokesman was reported to have added, "We got 1197 letters protesting against our keeping Loeb and 14 against our letting him go."

In January 1952 the National Broadcasting Company announced that the program would be resumed on its network the following month. However, the part of Jake would not be played by Loeb. Who made that decision? Was it the sponsor?

The first sponsor to sign the program, Morton Edell, president of the Vitamin Corporation of America, denied it. He said, "The program was offered to us by the National Broadcasting Company without Mr. Loeb. . . . At that time I had never heard of the controversy about Mr. Loeb." Moreover, Edell went on, "If he is a Communist I wouldn't want him within a thousand miles of the show, but, if he is not, I wish there were some way to find out. . . . The show certainly would be a lot better with him in it."

Was Mrs. Berg responsible for the actor's dismissal? She said not; she told the *New York Times*, "Philip Loeb has stated categorically that he is not and never has been a Communist. I believe him. There is no dispute between Philip Loeb and myself."

## A LAZY AUGUST WEEK END

Had the network insisted that the program be presented without Loeb? Its officials had no comment, public or private, on the record or off.

Loeb did receive a financial settlement for the remaining two years of his contract with the program; the total sum will probably be around \$40,000.

However, as Loeb pointed out, "I'm still black-listed." No other sponsor offered to hire him for a radio or television spot, and it seems unlikely that he will ever again be asked to appear in a Hollywood film. Mr. Loeb has been an actor for nearly forty years.

In October 1950, at the height of the controversy over Jean Muir, General Foods hired Dr. George Gallup's Opinion Research Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey, to make a nationwide poll of the matter. "The results," the official spokesman declared, "were reassuring. Less than forty per cent had ever heard of the Muir affair. And of those that had, less than three per cent could relate the name of General Foods or the product involved, Jell-O, with the name of Muir. They tied up the name of Muir hazily with General Mills, even the Bell Telephone Company. To check up further, we telephoned several General Foods sales offices in other cities, like Chicago. We asked, 'How has the Muir publicity affected our sales?' The answer invariably was, 'Muir? Who's Muir?' . . ."

Nevertheless, the company's attitude toward the actress remained unchanged.

Shortly after her discharge she told the press that she would not co-operate with any committee that wanted to "make a cause out of me." She was, she added, afraid that the Communists would work their way into any such campaign.

"I don't want the Communists to use me," she concluded. "I want to stay clean. The best way for me to refute these charges is for me to get a job in television, radio, or in some acting capacity. There must be someone with enough courage to hire me."

To date, no one has.

## 2. "YOU'RE EITHER

### TOO YOUNG OR TOO OLD"

The Jean Muir case remained on the front pages of the nation's newspapers for a few days; then, outside the industry, it was generally forgotten. So was *Red Channels*.

Most people felt that, unfortunate as what happened to Miss Muir may have been, her experience was, after all, an isolated one. Others believed that the public indignation aroused had, once and for all, ended the influence of *The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*.

However, quite the opposite is true. *Red Channels* today is just as influential as it was in August 1950, probably more so.<sup>1</sup> Miss Muir differs from numerous other listees in the book only in that the reason for her discharge was publicly admitted, perhaps, as the Young and Rubicam executive put it, because it occurred "during a lazy summer week end." Since that time very few dismissals or program cancellations have been attributed to the existence of the booklet published by American Business Consultants. At present a majority of those listed in that publication

<sup>1</sup>Shortly after Elmer Rice withdrew from the TV Playwrights' Theater, charging that certain actors had been black-listed from the American Broadcasting Company's Celanese Theater, *Variety* reported that "certain television networks and agencies, instead of discontinuing their 'political clearance' of performers used on the major video shows, have virtually redoubled their efforts in that direction."

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are simply not hired in the first place. They are not even considered for most jobs.

An influential and vigorously anti-Communist lawyer, a number of whose clients are in the radio and television field, has said, "Every one of them [the 151 listees] has been affected. A few don't even know it, but they've *all* lost some shows. A majority have lost a great many jobs, and a good-sized minority just aren't working at their professions any more."<sup>2</sup> However, a few, most of them among the less prominent listees, continue to work, sometimes anonymously, often with credit, perhaps because their names are not well known to the general public.

For example, a former network executive has, "for reasons not unconnected with that publication," resigned and turned to another field for his employment. A long-time producer has become a magazine columnist. A once successful script writer is "trying my hand" at magazine fiction; he has yet to make a sale. Another listee has gone to the West Coast as a scenario writer and states, "I'm doing all right with the movies now, until, I suppose, the House Committee [on Un-American Activities] subpoenas me." Several actors and actresses who once depended on their income from radio and television to supplement the always unpredictable amounts earned in the theater have, one reports, "given up sitting by the phone any more." One has become a part-time sales clerk in a Manhattan department store; a second actress decided, "I'd better get married; that's one way of being sure I eat." She did. A third recently opened in a play which "looks as if it'll run forever, or six months anyway; so right now I don't have to worry. But next year?"

The statements that follow are additional examples of the way in which *Red Channels* has affected every segment of the

<sup>2</sup>Many have suffered in more personal ways as well. For instance, late in the summer of 1951 a large life insurance company tried to cancel the lease of a famous theatrical man and wife, both of whom are *Red Channel* listees. The couple was preparing to move into an apartment building owned by the insurance corporation when an executive of the firm called the couple's lawyer to see if the two would agree not to occupy the apartment. When the lawyer asked why, the insurance official said, "Well, they're in that *Red Channels*, and we don't want any trouble."



\$500,000,000-a-year radio and television industry. The people quoted here are not named. In almost every case they consented to an interview only after being guaranteed that their anonymity would be protected. They felt that any repetition of their names would simply be an additional reason for finding them "controversial."

However, here in their own words are some answers to the question, "What do you think has been the effect of *Red Channels*—on you personally or on the industry?"<sup>3</sup>

#### A LEADING ACTORS' AND WRITERS' AGENT:

"You see this list? There are seventeen names on this list, some of the biggest names in the business. Why, I don't even bother suggesting them any more. I know better. I've had too many turndowns. They're in *Red Channels*."

"The other day I got a call from this producer, and he says he wants somebody for the lead in one of his shows. He asks me, 'Who've you got like —— [the name of a prominent Hollywood star named in the booklet]? I say, 'What do you mean, who've I got like ——? I've got the boy himself. Why don't you use him?' And this producer says, 'We just can't do it. I'm sorry, but we just can't, and you know why we can't.' . . . Now how do you like that?"

#### ONE OF THE NATION'S LEADING PLAYWRIGHTS:

"The other day on Madison Avenue I met a radio producer I used to know pretty well, and he said, 'Things are really bad in our business. We just can't seem to get the writers any more. We'd

\*Wherever possible, these statements were checked with those on the hiring end said to be responsible. In most cases, however, the network and advertising agency officials involved proved unavailable when the question of *Red Channels* was raised. For weeks on end telephone calls and letters remained unanswered, and even when the investigator did succeed in seeing a director, a producer, or an account executive, he usually would not admit—with a few off-the-record exceptions—to using the booklet.

However, this series of statements was chosen, out of many others, because, as nearly as the investigator could determine, the person quoted was speaking the truth—or writing it—as he saw it. Three of the statements are from letters.

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like to repeat some of those adaptations you did for us right after the war.' I asked him why they didn't, and he said, 'Are you kidding? You're in *Red Channels*, brother.'

**A TELEVISION PRODUCER:**

"Look at the spot I'm in. All these actors, the old stand-bys. You want to use them; they're the best you can get; the parts are practically written for them, but you can't. . . . Just look at that list. And there's nothing you can do about it."

**A ONCE PROSPEROUS RADIO-TELEVISION WRITER:**

"Of course, they've called me names in *Counterattack*, too, and that's when it started, as long as two years ago. Up to then, I averaged about \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year; now I'm down to \$2500. I get an occasional sustainer for —— [the name of a religious organization], but that's about all, and those only come along every two or three months.

"I sometimes wonder if maybe I've lost my touch.

"For years—God knows how many—I did most of the scripts for —— [a top radio dramatic show], never had a turndown in all that time, except for one outline that I rewrote and sold them later. Then I get named in *Counterattack*, and bang, five outlines in a row are turned down. I haven't sold them a script since. Coincidence? You tell me.

"Or things like this. A friend of mine recommended me for a show, along with two other writers, but he spent most of his time building me up. Result? The other two writers got assignments; I didn't. Maybe it's *Red Channels* and *Counterattack*, maybe it isn't.

"Another thing. Another buddy [was] on the commuting train coming from Princeton, and he asked —— [the assistant of the television department of a leading advertising agency] why he didn't use me for a one-shot. The agency man said to my pal, 'Is —— [the writer's name] in *Red Channels*?' My friend said, 'Yes.' The agency boy said, 'Ain't it awful? That's all.'

"It was, too."

**AN EXECUTIVE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTERS:**

“What’s happened is that before *Red Channels* was published, not one producer in ten thousand would consider whether Mary Jones was a Commie—or whether perhaps somebody would *say* she’s a Commie, which, incidentally, is just as bad. Now if he’s got a choice between her and Suzy Smith, and Mary Jones belonged to a couple of things and Suzy didn’t, he hires Suzy. It’s too bad, but that’s the way it works out.”

**THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ONE OF THE LEADING  
ENTERTAINMENT UNIONS:**

“Don’t be silly. There’ll never be another Jean Muir case. These days they just don’t hire anybody that might get in any trouble.”

**A POET, PLAYWRIGHT, AND RADIO AND TELEVISION WRITER  
WHOSE NAME IS LISTED IN RED CHANNELS AND, SOME TIME  
EARLIER, WAS DENOUNCED IN COUNTERATTACK AS A “PARTY  
LINER”:**

“What happened? Well, for six years I held a job as a radio continuity writer for a musical program, and in all those years I was on the best possible terms with my producer and the advertising agency that handled the show and paid me for my work. There wasn’t ever any problem about my work. I was even praised for my contribution toward the winning of several awards the show got.

“Then these attacks came, and I don’t know how long later, not very much later, I was let go. The reason was pretty vague. They just said it had something to do with getting a new writing approach for the program. Well, I’ve tuned in since, and the writing is right along the same line.

“Naturally, when it happened, I pressed for a reason, but I was just told there wasn’t anything sinister behind it. I’d like to believe that, but I’m sorry. I just can’t.

“Since then I haven’t sold a single script anywhere. Last August [1950] I was being considered for an assignment on the new —— [a weekly one-hour dramatic show on television] as a script writer, but just then the Jean Muir case broke, and I was notified by a third party that I was out.

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"I'll admit the whole thing could be coincidence, but it's awful damn strange."

**A WELL-KNOWN RADIO, TELEVISION, AND BROADWAY ACTRESS:**

"I've always made most of my eating money from radio, and, lately, television; you know the theater.

"Anyway, for the first six months of this year [1950], as usual I did at least two, sometimes three shows a week. I was on a TV show early in July [1950], just after *Red Channels* was published. I understand there were four calls complaining about my listing. I'm not sure about that, but the upshot I am sure of. For the next fourteen weeks, I didn't have a single offer. It does something to you, sitting there waiting for that phone to ring, calling up the service [Radio Registry, an actors' answering service] and asking is there any message, and there never is. Finally, at the end of fourteen weeks, I was called for a TV spot; it was more or less sewn up, and I breathed a sigh of relief. I thought the drought was over. Then they changed their minds; they told me I just wasn't the type for the part. Maybe I wasn't and maybe I was—except for that damn little book.

"Now I've got a job in a show [on Broadway]; I hope those boys stay away from the theater. Otherwise, I'll be on the county one of these days."

**A FULL-TIME RADIO AND TELEVISION ACTOR:**

"My work has fallen off at least fifty per cent since *Red Channels* was published. Oh, I'm working, but the family budget just can't take a cut like that. And things happen. For instance, the *Times* listed me as being cast for a radio show, a regular program; I thought it was set, but I didn't get it, and when I saw the guy who'd cast me, I asked him why. He said that, after the *Times* announcement, there'd been a couple of calls at the studio, maybe half a dozen (he wasn't sure) saying, did they know I was in *Red Channels*. Not only that, one of the people that called said they ought to investigate whoever it was that hired me in the first place. The guy that told me this just said, 'You know how it is.' I said I did.

"And another thing. In one show I'm now on, I went into the agency and asked for a raise. You know what happened? This account executive took a copy of *Red Channels* out of his desk and he said, 'I see you're listed in this. It's a terrible thing, but what can we do? We're just middlemen in this business, and we have to use the damn book.' Need I say I didn't get the raise?"

A POPULAR AND HIGHLY PAID RADIO AND TELEVISION  
ANNOUNCER:

"It's hard to pin down, but from what I might immodestly say was one of the biggest incomes in the business, my take is down at least two thirds, and for the first time in twenty-five years, I don't have a single commercial spot on either radio or TV.

"But, as I say, you can't be sure it's because of *Red Channels*. For instance, I did an MC job on one sponsored show for a couple of weeks, and then, suddenly, I was dropped. Reason? They said it was 'bad performance,' and maybe it was, but that kind of thing had never happened to me before in all these years. I found out there were some letters and maybe some telephone calls to the sponsor mentioning that I was in *Red Channels*. I also found out that the agency told the network, 'Get anybody for the show except —— [the announcer's name].' But try to prove anything in court from that. As I say, it's hard to pin down."

A WELL-KNOWN COMEDIAN:

"For a while there, I thought it [the fact that his name appears in *Red Channels*—M.M.] hadn't affected me. Then this happened. I was signed for a part in —— [a famous Broadway play adapted for TV]. Three days after I was hired the producer called me and said, 'Since we've had to cut the show so drastically, we've eliminated your part altogether. I'm awfully sorry about it, but I wonder if you'd be willing to settle for half?' [The entire fee was to have been \$550.]

"I said, 'Sure'; I said I knew how those things were, and then, two days later, the producer's secretary called and said: 'We've decided to pay you the full amount, the entire \$550.' Well, I was glad about the dough, but that made me suspicious. Things just don't happen that way unless there's something behind it; so one

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day I just casually dropped into the producer's office and, just casually, I asked the secretary, "Why was I cancelled?"

"She said, 'I don't know.'

"I said, and I was bluffing, I said: 'Well, I do. It's *Red Channels*, isn't it?'

"The secretary got white, and she said, 'My God, how did you find out?'

"After that, I didn't need to wait around and see the producer."

**A FORMER NETWORK NEWS COMMENTATOR:**

"*Red Channels* hasn't affected my income from radio and television a particle; the reason is I haven't had any for more than five years now. I've been making my living by writing books and lecturing. The books still get published, but, as time goes on, I get fewer and fewer lecture engagements. A couple of years ago I had more than seventy-five lectures a season, but this year [1950] I was only signed up for six. Two have already been canceled, one in Omaha, Nebraska. The program chairman there was pretty frank about it. He wrote my agent that they just couldn't have me in Omaha because my name is in *Red Channels*. That's about the only effect it's had on me—so far, anyway."

**EXCERPTS FROM TWO LETTERS, BOTH WRITTEN BY WEST COAST STAGE, SCREEN, AND RADIO ACTRESSES:**

A. "Effect [of the *Red Channels* listing]? Well, all I know is that my income has dropped from a nice hefty figure to less than five thousand for the past year."

B. ". . . My agent has informed me that there are two major movie studios that will not hire me, though they think I am a very good actress, and a couple of radio directors who consulted me about parts for summer replacements were prevented from using me at the last moment by either the producers or sponsors of the shows. The fact is that I have not worked for the past six months, though able and willing to do so."

**FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY A MAN WHO WAS UNTIL RECENTLY ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL RADIO-TELEVISION PRODUCERS:**

"Yes—I have been seriously affected.

"Before this book [*Red Channels*] was published, *Counter-*

*attack* . . . devoted several paragraphs to me regarding a job that had been offered me to serve overseas in the —— [a government agency]. *Counterattack* listed the same activities and associations for me as does *Red Channels* and asked, rhetorically, how I could square my working for the —— with my 'former beliefs.' The magazine also added the phrase . . . 'If he gets the job.' I did not get the job.

"The —— people in Washington made their customary explanation for the withdrawal of the offer, to wit, 'certain necessary clearances have not come through.' —— stated that there was no connection between the *Counterattack* piece and the withdrawal of the job offer. I have no way of knowing whether this is true.

"Two attacks upon me were printed in a Brooklyn newspaper, the *Tablet*. One was a reprint of the *Counterattack* paragraphs, under a heading, 'Ben Davis's friend, etc. . . .' It referred to —— [the name of a radio dramatic series] I produced for —— [the network then employing the producer]. Some of the programs dealt with the Reformation. They were the result of competent research. The writer of the *Tablet* letter stated that, after the —— [government agency] incident, it was 'now all clear,' that is, he could now understand why my historical interpretations were 'red motivated.'

"As for the accuracy of the listing, *Red Channels* says that I was a 'sponsor for re-election of Ben Davis' [according to the *Daily Worker*, September 24, 1945]. I looked up a copy of the *Worker* of that date and found my name listed, without authorization, in a report of a formation of a group of artists and writers to 'actively campaign for the re-election of Ben Davis.'

"I was never a sponsor of Mr. Davis. I did not campaign for his re-election. The *New York Times* refreshed my memory of the circumstances. In 1945, the Democratic Party nominated Ben Davis as its regular candidate for city councilman from the Harlem District. Subsequently, under pressure, they withdrew it. A petition was circulated in my office at —— [name of the network] protesting this, and I signed it, because I didn't like the pressure tactics, and because Mr. Davis is a Negro.

"*Red Channels* says that I was a sponsor and speaker at a

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Cultural and Civil Liberties Conference on behalf of the 'Hollywood Ten.' That is correct. I spoke at that meeting. I never knew any of the so-called "Ten." Explaining why to you [the American Civil Liberties Union] is like carrying coals to Newcastle, but for the record, if any explanation is in order, the words of old Justice Holmes are more than adequate. 'If there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other it is the principle of free thought—not free thought for those that agree with us—but freedom for the thought we hate.'

"*Red Channels* states that I signed a letter protesting the treatment of the Hollywood writers by the Thomas Committee. Again, correct, except I suppose the book has reference to an open letter in *Variety*, signed by a small host of people in show business.

"Yes—I have been seriously affected.

"I haven't worked in radio or TV since the *Counterattack* piece. Of course, that may be due to other factors, but I am not without some reputation in the industry, and the coincidence may be more than accidental. People who know me have told me categorically that work that might have been offered me was not offered because of my listing in *Red Channels*.

"My family and I have had to face the usual pain and discomfort in our personal and social life."<sup>4</sup>

A RADIO-TELEVISION WRITER WHO IS ALSO A PLAYWRIGHT AND A HOLLYWOOD SCENARIST:

"I guess you could certainly say the listing hurt me. I first began negotiating for television work just about the time of the Jean Muir episode, but, then, all my negotiations suddenly ended, without explanation.

"I did, finally, get a show, but there was considerable trouble at first about the use of my name, since I was in the little book, I mean. The producer said, 'What do you want to do about it?' And I said, 'To save embarrassment, I'll be anonymous,' and I was, for about three months, though I was occasionally given a verbal plug as the writer during the course of the show. Then,

<sup>4</sup>The writer is now employed by the radio division of the Ford Foundation which, apparently, has not been influenced by *Red Channels*.



all of a sudden the ban ended (why, I don't know) and my name is now up there, just like the rest of them.

"As I say, I do have one show, but I must add that I have a strong feeling I've been hurt with picture work, too. I used to stave off the requests. . . . Now they just don't come along.

"You know, I was pretty scared for a few weeks that I wasn't ever going to be able to make a living again . . . but I guess it's all right now. I guess."

A WELL-KNOWN RADIO ACTOR:

"That's the \$6400 question—how the fact that my name's in the little book has affected my living. Plenty, friend, plenty. Want me to prove it? I can't.

"Just let me say that for three straight years I appeared on a repeat holiday TV show; same time, same station, same cast every year. This year it was almost the same—same station, same time, and almost the same cast. With one exception. I didn't get called. I might add that none of the others in the cast is in *RC*.

"A couple of other times, too. I was set for two TV shows at the same time. This wasn't long after *RC* came out. Suddenly, in the middle of rehearsal, one show was canceled. Reason? Well, the director said weak script—but it went on a couple of weeks later, unchanged, as far as I could tell, and another actor had the part. I was told by a minor executive at —— [name of network] that 'There's a new directive out, boy; we just have to be careful about who we use these days. *Red Channels*, you know.'

"The other show was different. When I went to pick up the script, the producer said he was sorry, real sorry; his heart was bleeding, but he'd decided I just wasn't tall enough for the part. Now that might make a little sense on the surface; the guy they got is taller than I am, but, hell, the producer knew how tall I was when he picked me. I haven't changed size recently.

"Well, there you are. It's a little like that song they used to sing during the war; you know, you're either too young or too old, too short or too tall, too fat or too thin. There's liable to be something wrong with you if you're in *RC*."

**"YOU'RE EITHER TOO YOUNG OR TOO OLD"**

**THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF A NETWORK:**

"Of course, there's no such thing as a black list. There never has been, and there never will be, as long as I'm around anyway. . . . But we're a business that has to please the customers; that's the main thing we have to do, keep people happy, and, to do that, we have to stay out of trouble. . . . I'll tell you the truth now. If I were picking a writer for a documentary, I'd pick the best writer for the job. However, if there were two writers available, both about equal in talent, and one was in the little book and one wasn't, I'd take the one that wasn't. I'd feel the same way when it came to choosing the cast. That's just common sense."

**A FAMOUS RADIO AND TELEVISION PRODUCER,  
NOW NOT WORKING:**

". . . I'd just started a new TV series. Not that I was a beginner in the business; I'd been with the network for seventeen years. Well, for the first show I picked what I thought was a terrific script, but, in the middle of rehearsals, I was told it wouldn't do. I was told the reason we couldn't use the script was that the subject matter—it had to do with race relations—might annoy some people, which makes sense. Except later it dawned on me that the two writers who'd done the script were both listed in *Red Channels*, and I am too, you know.

"Anyway, at the last minute we dug up another script, and God knows it wasn't the best show I've ever done, but it was competent. At least I thought it was.

"However, the day after the show, ——— [the producer's immediate superior] called me in and said, 'Look, we've made a mistake. You can't do this job, and, besides, we're paying you too much.' I tried to explain about the sudden switch in scripts but it didn't do any good. I was through. I said, 'This doesn't have anything to do with *Red Channels*, does it?' And he smiled and said, of course not; don't be silly. Well, maybe. . . . About the money. The man who replaced me is getting the same amount as I was, and until he started the series, he'd only produced two TV shows in his life. . . .

"Perhaps I've lost my touch. I don't know. . . . I just don't

see much of anybody these days. I keep looking at my name in that book, and I keep wondering.”

**A RADIO AND TELEVISION WRITER, FORMER WAR CORRESPONDENT, HOLLYWOOD SCENARIST, AND FREQUENT MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTOR:**

“It’s not as bad as Hollywood—yet. I get occasional jobs here and there, but not as many as before and not as often. At Columbia [the Columbia television network] the word has gone down, and I’m not called at all. I used to do a lot of work for them, too. Oddly enough, from being the most liberal, Columbia has now become the most conservative network. But I have written a few shows under a pseudonym, and a peculiar thing happened about that. A few weeks ago a friend of mine up at the Playwrights’ Company—they’re in charge of the Celanese Theater, you know [a dramatic series which mainly uses adaptations of plays written by members of the Playwrights’ Company], called up and asked if I’d do an adaptation. I said I would, and my friend said she’d let me know. A few days later she called and said she was sorry; they just couldn’t use me, and she guessed I understood why. I said I did and asked how about letting me do the adaptation under my pseudonym. She said she thought that would be fine. When she called the next time, she was full of apologies. She said the other name wouldn’t work either. I said why, and she said, ‘Well, it just doesn’t have enough credits.’

“Life these days is full of little ironies like that.”

**AN ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE IN ONE OF THE HALF-DOZEN LARGEST ADVERTISING AGENCIES:**

“Nobody has to tell me not to use anybody listed in *Red Channels* if I can help it; I just know not to.”

**POSTSCRIPT:**

**FROM THE VETERAN ANTI-COMMUNIST MAGAZINE, THE *New Leader***

“Black listing of any of the thousands of actors and writers who have been sucked into party-line traps at one time or another, banning hillbilly songs, go far toward bringing about the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. If it is argued that such stringencies

**"YOU'RE EITHER TOO YOUNG OR TOO OLD"**

are necessitated by the fight against Communism, don't believe it. If you shot every Communist and fellow-traveler in America today (as Mr. Pegler has proposed), you would still not be one step closer to ending the Stalinist threat which originates in the Kremlin and not in Radio City. Mr. George Kennan, in one of his more lucid moments, has condemned this 'cramp of introspection' which doubles us up in looking for native bogies and prevents us from fighting the real enemy. Our advice to the irate citizens: Stand up straight and look the real foes in the eye. Their guilt and the extent of their threat have been proved beyond doubt. Their names are Stalin, Malenkov, Beria, Vishinsky, Kaganovich. It is they—and not the Jean Muirs—who must be barred from all future employment. It is the wail of their oppressed people—and not hill-billy songs—which must be ended forever.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup>In Syracuse, New York, a list of approved performers has been circulated by a Mrs. John Buchanan, who identifies herself as the wife of a Reservist now fighting in Korea. Mrs. Buchanan's list includes 188 names, beginning with Abbott and Costello and concluding with Robert Young. She calls it "a partial list of actors and actresses who have never been supporters of Communist causes." "The entertainment world is crowded with competitive talent," Mrs. Buchanan adds. "Why not ask your entertainment promoters to support *exclusively* honest stars of the calibre of Ginger Rogers, Robert Montgomery, John Wayne, Lois Wilson, Adolphe Menjou, Robert Taylor?"

# 3 . AFTER THE FBI,

## WHAT?

J. EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
(*Newsweek*, JUNE 9, 1950)

We can successfully defeat the Communist attempt to capture the United States by fighting it with truth and justice, implemented with a few "don'ts":

*Don't label anyone as a Communist unless you have the facts.*

*Don't confuse liberals and progressives with Communists.*

*Don't take the law into your own hands. If Communists violate the law, report such facts to your law enforcement agency.*

*Don't be a party to the violation of the civil rights of anyone.*

*When this is done, you are playing directly into the hands of the Communists.*

Don't let up on the fight against real Fascists, the KKK and other dangerous groups.

Don't let Communists in your organization or labor union outwork, out-vote or out-number you.

Don't be hoodwinked by Communist propaganda that says one thing but means destruction of the American Way of Life. Expose it with the truth.

Don't give aid and comfort to the Communist cause by joining

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front organizations, contributing to their campaign chests or by championing their cause in any way, shape or form.

Don't let Communists infiltrate into our schools, churches and molders of public opinion, the press, radio and screen.

Don't fail to make democracy work with equal opportunity and the fullest enjoyment of every American's right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

[Italics supplied.]

J. EDGAR HOOVER, DIRECTOR, FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
(NEW YORK *Times Magazine*, APRIL 16, 1950)

The FBI files are confidential.

The FBI makes no accusations.

An investigative report of the FBI is like a newspaper reporter's notebook. In the course of covering a story, a well-trained reporter secures much information; some true, other portions rumor, gossip, or hearsay. In writing his story, he uses only the material which is verified.

HUGH CLEGG, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE FBI, SPEAKING FOR J. EDGAR HOOVER (NEW YORK *Herald Tribune* FORUM, OCTOBER 1950)

*Efforts by private individuals and groups to screen, process and evaluate information pertaining to subversive activities, before reporting it to the FBI, are inconsistent with our best interests.*

[Italics supplied.]

ATTORNEY GENERAL J. HOWARD MCGRATH IN A JACKSON DAY ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, ON JANUARY 13, 1951

We have an efficient Federal Bureau of Investigation to prevent sabotage and to keep track of Communist espionage, maneuvering and conspiracies. . . .

But Mr. J. Edgar Hoover and I are determined that there will be no Gestapo witch hunts—that basic civil rights of the individual will be securely protected and defended as guaranteed by the fundamental law of the land. . . .

Those who pose as the saviours of our nation by seeking to abridge beyond reason our tradition of democratic freedom are as

dangerous to American liberties as the Communists themselves. For in destroying that fabric of democracy and reason, they play directly into the hands of the Kremlin's agents.

For a trio whose activities have had such a profound influence on an industry as crucial as radio and television, surprisingly little is known about the three men mainly responsible for *Red Channels* and *Counterattack*.

What is American Business Consultants? How was it started? Why? How successful has it been? What is the background of its publishers? How reliable are they? What is their financial backing? What connection is there between them and Mrs. McCullough, Rabbi Schultz, and that handful of others in organizations like the American Legion who have caused so much industry-wide turmoil in the last two and a half years?

Although, as has been seen, *Red Channels* itself is widely known, very few people in the industry realize how it was put together, the way in which the 151 listees were selected, the manner in which the so-called "Communist and Communist-front" organizations were designated.

Even *Counterattack* itself has been something of a mystery to the men and women whose careers have been so seriously affected by what it had to say.

On May 16, 1947, when the first issue of *Counterattack* was published, not even its publishers suspected its eventual importance. At the time, the three former FBI men were not even particularly interested in radio and television.

Their purpose, they stated in a prepublication brochure explaining why they were adding another to the more than two hundred newsletters already in existence, was "to obtain, file, and index factual information on Communists, Communist fronts, and other subversive organizations." The publishers felt, the brochure explained, that "to date, the efforts of our government to expose and combat Communist activities have failed."

Thus, they argued, a private organization was needed to do the job. American Business Consultants, they stated, was that organization. As for subscribers, the brochure declared, "The . . . fol-

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lowing . . . need our weekly reports to help them suppress the Red Menace—churches and synagogues, veterans posts, boy scouts, newspapers, teachers, law enforcement agencies, and labor unions.” Significantly, neither radio nor television was listed.

However, the brochure concluded, those who could afford it “can render a patriotic and public service by making *Counterattack* available to the foregoing who lack the funds to subscribe.”

As a subtitle, the publishers at first settled on *The Newsletter of Facts on Communism*. However, the following January they became slightly more militant, and the subtitle became *Facts to Combat Communism*.

“There are,” the first issue began, “Communist fronts for Business Men as well as for labor, youth, women, sports fans, lawyers, doctors, and so on endlessly.” *Counterattack* then named a few of what it said were such groups as well as a new “Communist labor group.” “Innocent” William L. Green, president of the AFL, was denounced for endorsing it. Green was, *Counterattack* admitted, a sincere anti-Communist, “but repeatedly he has let himself be duped.”

Of course, the publication added, Philip Murray had also endorsed the organization, “but then that’s to be expected of Murray because the Communists are much stronger in CIO than in AFL.” In the same issue the War Department was given a backhanded compliment because, “Now, very late,” it was “abandoning its tolerance toward Communists. . . .” Finally, as it so often has since, the newsletter declared that “Proof is available for every statement published in *Counterattack*.” The subscription rate was announced as \$24 for 52 copies, each containing about 2000 words, somewhat less than the average magazine article.

Except for a now almost weekly feature, “What Can You Do to Beat the Communists?” or, more often, “What to Do?” *Counterattack* has not changed much since.

From the beginning, the newsletter has praised very few people or organizations. However, when, as sometimes happens, one of its suggested actions is carried out, the weekly is warmly congratulatory.

After a magazine publisher discharged one of his employees



following a vindictive attack by the newsletter, *Counterattack* proudly announced that the publisher had "taken the right attitude." Moreover, it added, "*Counterattack* subscribers can take credit, in this case as in many others, for contributing to a quick corrective action against Communism."

However, in that same issue another large publishing concern got off less easily. "*Counterattack* last year pointed out some serious faults in a forum conducted" by the publishing house, but, "instead of frankly admitting the faults, the company delayed for months . . . and then answered our subscribers by saying that conferences had been held with *Counterattack* and that the forum matter had been explained to the satisfaction of 'everyone.' This seemed to imply that *Counterattack* had agreed that its report . . . was inaccurate. But in fact it was accurate and thoroughly justified. The publishing company in question is surely NOT pro-Communist. . . . But we stand by our report on the matter, and we believe that by printing it we have discouraged a repetition of the faults we pointed out."

The company referred to is the one that publishes the *New York Times*.

At various times in what is, by comparison, a short history, *Counterattack's* targets have been widely varied. Trygve Lie, secretary-general of the United Nations, at one time was dismissed as "Stalin's choice." ("He is a favorite of CP and crypto-Communist press.") As for the UN itself, "Its officials deny it is a shelter or cover for Communists and pro-Communists." But, "Even though some of the charges . . . are exaggerated the facts explain that UN has employed some American citizens despite their glaring records as supporters of Communist fronts and other Communist projects."

At one point a New York State Supreme Court justice was condemned for using the words "witch hunt" in one of his decisions; he had, perhaps inadvertently, *Counterattack* declared, picked up the phrase from the Communists.

In describing those of whom it disapproves, the newsletter uses varying verbal techniques. For instance, a weekly magazine editor was dismissed as a "commiebut"; the long-time moderator of a

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distinguished radio forum, "anti-Communist but in an abstract way"; a famous scientist, "Don't believe reports that — [the scientist's name] has admitted for years he has been a secret member of the Communist Party. — [the scientist's name] hasn't admitted it"; one of the nation's foremost music critics: ". . . a Communist even if he didn't technically join the Party"; and a prominent Protestant bishop who spoke out against the House Committee on Un-American Activities: "Although — [the bishop's name] isn't a Party liner . . . he has joined many fronts and has been pro-Soviet in many ways."

In its first 182 issues more than 360 persons were, with varying degrees of vehemence, denounced in *Counterattack*; those condemned are, with few exceptions, well-known politicians, international statesmen, labor leaders, industrialists, ministers, artists, writers, and entertainers of all kinds, particularly actors.

Among those condemned are some probable and some admitted Communists and certainly many long-time Party liners. On the other hand, many are equally long-time anti-Communists who at one time or another have supported a cause which also happens to be of interest to the Party. The difficulty is in deciding which is which, and *Counterattack's* publishers have at least once admitted that they don't know the difference. According to T. C. Kirkpatrick, one of the publishers, "It is impossible to do that [distinguish between what he calls 'dupers,' meaning consistent Party liners and actual Party members, and the 'duped,' meaning the innocents] and do it accurately."

Moreover, in the last two years the newsletter has been extremely wary of using the word "Communist" to describe anyone. In at least eight different issues in 1947 and early 1948 that was the word used each time Fredric March or his wife, Florence Eldridge, was mentioned in the newsletter. The Marches sued for \$500,000 (see below, "Why Not Sue?"). *Counterattack* settled out of court and printed the Marches' denial. Since then, practically the only time "Communist" is used in front of a person's name is in the case of an actual CP official, e.g., "Communist" John Gates, "Communist" Eugene Dennis. Otherwise, the editor experiments with what are presumably less legally ticklish descriptions.

In addition to individuals, *Counterattack* has (in the first 182 issues) upbraided more than 165 organizations, not including the *Times* and the UN. Among them are a rival weekly newsletter which "unintentionally helps the Communists"; Standard Oil of New Jersey, which invited an allegedly subversive professor to speak at one of its industrial round tables; the Blatz Beer Company, for featuring a famous "fellow-traveling" actress in one of its advertisements (as often happens, *Counterattack* asked its readers to write directly to the brewery and complain); the book review sections of both the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune* (sometimes for damning a book like *Seeds of Treason* of which *Counterattack* approved, again for praising a volume the newsletter disliked); the Yale Law School, for having "reds" on its staff; the Associated Press, for distributing an article "misleading" the public about Communism in Hollywood; the "slick, sophisticated 'New Yorker' Magazine . . . read in all parts of the U.S. . . . and especially in colleges . . . for what the CP calls its 'upper-middle class' type of humor and culture. (*New Yorker's* chief value to the CP is that it thinks the CP is not worth bothering about. It treats Communists lightly. STALIN and William Z. Foster, CP national chairman, wish all U.S. publications would do this.)"

During the last two years *Counterattack* has been increasingly critical of other American magazines as well. On at least two occasions the newsletter has chided *Life*, once for its cover picture of an "azure-eyed" young actress whom *Counterattack* accused of subversive tendencies. The use of her picture, the newsletter informed *Life's* editors, seemed to prove that "It pays to support Communist Fronts. The free publicity may exceed \$1,000,000, when you consider *Life's* circulation of almost five and a half million at twenty cents a copy."<sup>1</sup> And, when the picture weekly told its readers that the actress "has done more TV shows than any other movie star," *Counterattack* dourly warned that, in addition to *Life* needing some editorial advice, "TV really needs a clean-up." When, on another occasion, *Life* gave "favorable publicity"

<sup>1</sup>In spite of the *Life* publicity, after the publication of *Red Channels*, in which the actress was listed, she almost never appeared on television.

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to a stage star who'd recently journeyed to Hollywood, *Counterattack* complained that the actress, while perhaps not very intelligent, had given aid and comfort to the Party, and by publicizing her, the newsletter implied, *Life's* editors had been almost equally guilty.

As for *Fortune*, also published by Henry Luce, *Counterattack* criticized its editorial board for choosing as the cover of an anniversary issue "a proud American eagle" sculptured by an artist the newsletter alleged was subversive, and *Look* magazine was denounced for printing a three-page profile of a young conductor-composer. In all three cases *Counterattack* advised: "Write to the publishers, Messrs. Luce and Cowles." The editor even suggested the text of the letter: "Remind them that there are many artists with PRO-AMERICAN records who would make good feature stories, are attractive enough to adorn the cover of a magazine, or talented enough to create artistic cover designs."

The newsletter did not add, as it had earlier in criticizing the Crowell-Collier Corporation, that its readers should suggest that the publishers "get expert assistance in detecting Communist propaganda and in putting a quick quietus to it." Nor did it say that American Business Consultants offered such services—for a fee.

However, in 1951, shortly after the George Foster Peabody awards for "the most disinterested and meritorious service rendered by radio and television," *Counterattack* turned its stern attention to the ninety-three-year-old *Atlantic*, principally because Edward Weeks, the editor of *Atlantic*, is also chairman of the national advisory board on the Peabody awards.

"Weeks," the newsletter began, "is a popular lecturer for women's organizations and other groups . . . but the *Atlantic Monthly* has followed a strange course under his direction."

To corroborate what was, by comparison, an amazingly circum-spect statement, *Counterattack* declared, "this old, respected publication . . . maintained an objective stand on world events until about 1942. Then it published a series of articles on Stalin Russia and later on Poland that ran on and off until 1945." Except for one sentence in one article, the newsletter did not mention the

contents of any of the pieces. That sentence (and it appeared during the height of Russia's war popularity) declared that the people of the United States "can choose whether to work with the Soviet Union as a partner or whether to surrender to memories and fears."

However, *Counterattack* did not approve of the authors of the articles. One was a woman whose worship of Russia was so profound she went to the USSR to live (now, however, she is an involuntary refugee). Another was a well-known commentator who was a wartime member of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship; he has long since resigned. A third was a columnist of whom *Counterattack* said, "——'s present . . . non-Communism was not always so evident." Moreover, "*since 1945*" (the emphasis is *Counterattack's*), the newsletter went on, two of the same three authors had appeared in the *Atlantic* again; what's more the magazine had published articles by "such persons as . . . Owen Lattimore. . . ."

As for Mr. Weeks and his Peabody associations, "The same odd line" was, *Counterattack* asserted, evident there. For example, in 1947 an award had gone to Studio One. "This program," the newsletter stated, "had many performers with Communist front records on it."

In 1948 an "award for television art" had been given to Actors' Studio. "This," the newsletter stated ominously, "was first TV program on which JEAN MUIR<sup>\*2</sup> appeared."

But worst of all, according to the newsletter, one of the Peabodys had gone to Robert Kintner, president of the American Broadcasting Company, and two associates.

The citation declared, "At a time when radio stations and networks were either firing or refusing to hire writers and actors on the basis of unsupported innuendoes contained in a publication known as 'Red Channels', [they] refused to be stampeded into either action."

*Counterattack* denied that *Red Channels* had contained any "unsupported innuendoes." "The book," it said, "states only facts."

\*At present, each time a *Red Channels* listee is mentioned in *Counterattack*, his or her name is followed by an asterisk.

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Finally, the newsletter advised writing to Dean John E. Drewry of the Henry W. Grady School of Journalism at the University of Georgia, where the Peabody endowment is administered, and to Mr. Weeks himself. "Ask them . . . why such a large number of individuals they have 'honored' by their awards have front records or obviously biased or confused attitudes about Communism."

*Counterattack* did not suggest that its readers give Mr. Weeks any advice about which authors to publish in the *Atlantic*.

At one time or another *Counterattack* has taken a look at book publishers as well. For example, in its issue of November 25, 1948, it warned that "in buying books for Christmas and in deciding what books to recommend for purchase by public libraries, school and college libraries, etc., *be very careful*. The following books are being plugged by the Communists." There followed a list of nine then popular publications, including Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, which at the time was heading the fiction best-seller lists, and two other novels which had been among the year's most critically acclaimed and popular. A little while later *Counterattack* was credited with advising a self-appointed committee in Scarsdale, New York, which proposed to go through all the books in the local school libraries to weed out those found to be "subversive." The citizens of Scarsdale declined the committee's offer.

A year later, in November 1949, when Doubleday & Co. published what *Counterattack* labeled "a proletarian novel," the newsletter ran one of its rare book notices. The editor wrote a lengthy criticism, not of the novel (which he gave no indication of having read), but of the author, who "has long Communist record."

Early in the fall of 1951 *Counterattack* in a special six-page issue took on an entire publishing house, the firm of Little, Brown & Co., which is located on Beacon Street in Boston. The newsletter cited two of the firm's employees, one of whom was a director; it also discussed thirty-one authors, all of whom, it alleged, had had close associations with the Communist Party or with Party-front groups.

Almost simultaneous with the appearance of that issue of *Counterattack*, Louis Budenz, the onetime editor of the *Daily Worker*

who has made a good many appearances before congressional committees, told the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security that he had known the Little, Brown director as a Communist Party member. What's more, Mr. Budenz went on, he had been told that the Communists hoped to make the Boston firm (which celebrated its one hundredth anniversary in 1937) "the international publishers of the Communist front movement."

Mr. Budenz' testimony did not create much of a stir, and, with a single exception, none of the New York newspapers mentioned *Counterattack's* charges. However, Frederick Woltman that week end did a lengthy story in the New York *World-Telegram and Sun* which repeated most of the accusations made in *Counterattack*.

A few days later the Little, Brown director who had been under fire resigned, and the Boston firm, through its four remaining directors, issued a detailed, four-page brochure answering the charges. As for the thirty-one writers, after an examination of the work of each, the Little, Brown statement declared that "the in-print books of the active authors objectionable to *Counterattack* total twenty-two, or 3 per cent of the in-print titles on our list.

"We are glad to report," the publishers concluded, "that *Counterattack* is accurate at least in its statement, 'Little, Brown seems to be doing well.' The position of the company is excellent and we have every confidence that it will continue to improve under the democratic policy of free publishing."

Otherwise, *Counterattack* has left book publishing pretty much alone except for an occasional denunciation, such as the time a number of publishers and editors signed the *amicus curiae* brief for the Hollywood Ten. That week the newsletter devoted considerable space to listing all of the publishers and editors who had signed, but it did not mention that the brief specifically declared that the signers were not expressing "support or sympathy with the political philosophies, whatever they may be," of the West Coast group.

In April 1951, John Gunther was attacked in the newsletter. Mr. Gunther, perhaps the most famous living reporter, was denounced

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because his book, *The Riddle of MacArthur*, was at the time being serialized in a New York newspaper of which *Counterattack* did not approve, the *Compass*.

In addition to its quarrel with the *New York Times* and, more frequently, the *Compass*, *Counterattack* has often found fault with newspapers, individually and collectively. At one time the newsletter condemned what it sweepingly referred to as "US press, with few exceptions (such as Scripps-Howard and Hearst papers)" for what the newsletter metaphorically called waiting "until its own bull was gored."

The phrase referred to the press furor over the imprisonment in Czechoslovakia of Associated Press correspondent William Oatis. "OATIS," *Counterattack* asserted, "is just one more American . . . what about all the other US victims of Communist 'justice'?"

When in the summer of 1951 the Weavers,<sup>3</sup> a popular folk-singing quartette, had its appearance at the Ohio State Fair canceled as the result of protests against the group's alleged political affiliations, at least two Ohio newspapers objected. They were the *Akron Beacon-Journal* and the *Columbus Citizen*, which, ironically, is a Scripps-Howard newspaper. Both were, *Counterattack* said, "overly solicitous about 'rights' and 'justice' in a case concerning individuals with Communist records." As a result, the newsletter advised its readers to remember that "Newspapers sometimes pontificate on Communist questions without knowing all the facts . . . and arrive at wrong conclusions. Don't believe all you read in the press."

In its more austere moments the newsletter has not hesitated to criticize such awesome corporations as U. S. Steel. When, according to instructions, several of *Counterattack's* subscribers wrote U. S. Steel complaining about the use of alleged subversives as writers and actors on its Theatre Guild on the Air, Chairman Irving S. Olds replied, "Such individuals are considered [by the Theatre Guild, not U. S. Steel] on the basis of their ability in their

<sup>3</sup>Now when the Weavers appear in a night club or theater, the management invariably receives at least one copy of an issue of the newsletter in which the quartette has been attacked (there are several), sometimes with the name of the group circled in ink.



respective fields, and in no way on account of ideological, social, or religious beliefs they may hold."

After studying Chairman Olds's letter, *Counterattack* concluded that "U. S. Steel . . . seemingly doesn't care whether its money goes to Communist Party members or fellow travelers."

However, *Counterattack* at one time did have a good word for U. S. Steel and the Theatre Guild on the Air, along with a warning. The occasion was the radio production of Herman Wouk's anti-Communist play, *The Traitor*. The show was, the newsletter said, satisfactory "as a first try."

But it had its faults. First off, Wouk's disloyal scientist was made "sympathetic" by casting Tyrone Power in the part. "Choice of this screen hero and lover to play the traitor was proof that the character was meant to evoke sympathy." As for the way the radio adaptation was written, "The traitor argued that his betrayal of atomic secrets would help peace . . . and there was no rebuttal."

The reason for these mistakes? ". . . subject is complex. . . . It demands a REAL knowledge of Communism.

"If radio or movie people have questions on this subject that need answering in connection with any script, COUNTERATTACK will be glad to help."

Although the newsletter paid little attention to radio and television in its early days, during the last two and a half years its interest in and emphasis on this area have increased to such an extent that, in some issues, other fields have been mentioned only casually.

*Counterattack's* first statement on its attitude toward Communism in the entertainment fields was short and pointed. In the issue of September 19, 1947, it declared that "Communist actors, announcers, directors, writers, producers, etc., whether in radio, theatre, or movies, should all be barred to the extent permissible by law and union contracts." Presumably this statement still stands, though there was considerable deviation in press statements issued by the publishers during and after the hectic days of the Jean Muir incident.

During the last two and a half years the publication has attacked specific programs on all of the major networks, but for

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many months the Columbia Broadcasting System was its most frequent target. "All networks let some Communists and Communist frontiers get on their programs," the newsletter once stated, "but CBS is worst of all. There are people at CBS who want to correct this, but the top officers somehow let things keep on as they are."

Not long after this item appeared CBS hired American Business Consultants, the corporation publishing *Counterattack*, to "investigate" its employees. The results, a high official said, "were completely worthless. It was just the same kind of thing they put in *Red Channels*." However, even after the "investigation" the attacks on CBS continued.

The fact that "Exact degree of infiltration by Communist Party members and other Communists on CBS or any other network is hard to determine" did not prevent *Counterattack* from rating the networks. NBC and Mutual, the newsletter declared, were (as of July 1949) "LEAST satisfactory to the Communists"; the American Broadcasting Company was "at half-way point between most satisfactory and least satisfactory."

Later, however, when, according to instructions from *Counterattack*, some of its subscribers wrote to Joseph H. McConnell, president of NBC, to protest a program, they "were so amazed . . . by the [form letters] they received to their protests that they forwarded them to *Counterattack* for comment. . . ."

Among other things, McConnell had advised the letter writers to report "pertinent information" on Communists to the FBI. "He implies," the newsletter declared, "that they should stop bothering him with their letters of protest."

McConnell added that he was forwarding the critical letters to the FBI, along with his own reply.

"This policy," *Counterattack* declared, "is one of DOING NOTHING. McConnell must know that the F.B.I. . . . can take no action on any matter (even if it wants to). . . . Information such as that contained in the letters to McConnell will only serve to clutter up F.B.I. files."

Unhappily, the newsletter felt, anti-Communists are just not as effective on the air as Party members. When John Gates, editor

of the *Daily Worker*, appeared on Meet the Press, *Counterattack* complained, "Hostile interviewers on this program just don't know the score when they're up against a Communist. They're prepared with a few 'embarrassing' questions . . . but he's better prepared with specious and often lying answers . . . and they can't see flaws in the answers, so they can't follow up."

One of the few cases in which this did not happen, according to *Counterattack*, was when General "Wild Bill" Donovan appeared on Town Meeting of the Air against the Rev. William Melish. The general, who received the help of *Counterattack's* publishers in preparing his speech, was extremely effective, the newsletter declared. The publication complained, however, that the audience—presumably packed with Communists—did not give him the hand he deserved, and the New York press did not properly report what he had said.

Another difficulty in combating the Communists on the air lies, the newsletter feels, with audiences. In an early issue the publication vigorously attacked an alleged "subversive" radio writer but admitted that "—— [the writer's name] is a clever man.

"Not," *Counterattack* added, "that it takes much cleverness to fool the average radio listener."

#### **WHO ARE THE PUBLISHERS OF *COUNTERATTACK*?**

Like all government agencies, the Federal Bureau of Investigation expanded greatly and rapidly just before and during the Second World War. John G. Keenan, Theodore C. Kirkpatrick, and Kenneth M. Bierly were among the thousands of new and temporary appointees.

The trio first met early in 1943, when all three were working in the New York office of the FBI, according to Kirkpatrick, being associated "as much as any three [agents] have a chance of working together, when we worked on the same squad." Some, though by no means all, of their activities were concerned with the Communist movement in the United States.

In one way the trio differed from most of their colleagues in the Bureau in that, while they did not plan to make a lifetime career of working for the FBI, they did have an idea for their postwar

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careers, what they considered, as Kirkpatrick once put it, "a kind of almost holy crusade you might say."

Late in 1945, when Kirkpatrick and Bierly were still agents and Keenan a supervisor, they lunched together frequently, and, again according to Kirkpatrick, the most articulate of the trio, "We used to talk about how little the public, as a whole, knew of some of the details of the Communist movement and some of the facts that were just routine to us, facts being brought in by us and others day to day and actually being buried in the files."

The long-established FBI policy of neither interpreting nor publicizing its findings was, Kirkpatrick says, "a very frustrating sort of thing, particularly to any individual who is impatient."

He and his two colleagues were impatient.

What, they wondered, were the possibilities of setting themselves up in business to do what the FBI could not do—"expose the Red Menace" by a private publication?

The difficulties were many. First, "None of us had any money to speak of. I myself have had to struggle since I was a kid financially." Second, they were without experience in publishing, and, except for their limited experience in the Bureau, none of the three could even remotely be considered a student of Communism or of left-wing movements, here or abroad. At one time more than three years after *Counterattack* was launched, Kirkpatrick, according to an editor of the *New Leader*, telephoned to ask, "What's the name of the Trotskyite party in the United States?"

In fact none of the three had, they insist, had any active political interests whatsoever. "We have," Bierly once declared, "been active in no kind of political organizations or religious organizations or organizations of social significance other than in connection with school and campus organizations and the Society of Former Agents of the FBI."

Kirkpatrick is a member of the National Republican Club, but he has explained that he joined only because "of the lack of quiet eating places in this community [Manhattan]. . . . I have never attended any of the meetings."

Moreover, Bierly was at one time "listed as a sponsor of Mrs. [Hester] McCullough's committee in connection with George

Sokolsky [Hearst columnist] speaking at the Greenwich [Connecticut] High School on her behalf." That particular group was, Bierly adds, "*a typical front committee to call you up on the phone and ask you if you will go on. They got out a little letter-head of the various names of the Greenwich people and that was used, I think, to send out tickets. We didn't have any control over the policies of the organization* [emphasis mine—M. M.]."

At one time, too, Kirkpatrick had belonged to the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Optimist Club, both in Phoenix, Arizona, where he was local branch manager of the Beneficial Industrial Loan Corporation.

Kirkpatrick, known as "Ted" to his associates, received a B.A. degree from Earlham College, a small liberal arts school in his home town of Richmond, Indiana; the year was 1932. In the decade before his acceptance by the FBI, in August 1942, he had worked as a minor executive, first for the Dayton Bond Corporation in Dayton, Ohio, and then for the Beneficial, in Charleston, West Virginia, Queens Village, Long Island, Cleveland, Youngstown, Canton, Cincinnati, and, finally, Phoenix, where he was stationed for four years as local manager. Kirkpatrick, who looks considerably younger, is now forty-one.

Bierly, now thirty-five, is also a Midwesterner and was raised in Peoria, Illinois, where S. Paul Ferrin, another former FBI agent who is also a part-time member of the firm, now practices law. Bierly was admitted to the Illinois bar in 1939, after graduating from the Chicago-Kent College of Law; earlier he had attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and Bradley University in Peoria. Before joining the FBI in 1940, he had two jobs, one as an attorney for the surety department of the Continental Casualty Company of Chicago, the other for the Travelers Insurance Company in Peoria.

The third officer of the firm, John G. Keenan, forty, was born in Brooklyn, graduated from Fordham, received his law degree from St. John's, and, before joining the FBI in 1941, was a member of his father's long-established law firm, Alexander and Keenan, 42 Broadway. Now he is a partner.

From its start in 1947 the firm, incorporated as American Busi-

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ness Consultants, has had only the three officers, Keenan as president; Bierly, vice-president;<sup>4</sup> and Kirkpatrick, secretary and treasurer.

During their discussions before leaving the FBI, the three men often, according to Kirkpatrick, "wondered if it wouldn't be possible for some of us to help a little on the outside [in fighting the Communists], try to get something started, or do a little more to help. None of the three of us had any definite idea that anything would come of our discussions."

For a while nothing did. Keenan returned to his law firm, and, on his resignation from the FBI, Kirkpatrick found a job as assistant to the protection manager at Bloomingdale's department store. His immediate superior was scheduled for retirement, "and it looked like a good opportunity."

However, ". . . I would say I was unhappy there. It seemed to me small, petty. It was concerned with shoplifting when here the Communists were trying to take our country." Bierly remained with the Bureau until early 1946, by which time "We were ready to start something."

The plan emerged from a meeting early in 1946 between the three former agents, Isaac Don Levine, veteran anti-Communist writer and editor; Christopher Emmet, another anti-Communist writer; and, most important, Alfred Kohlberg, the importer who has been one of Chiang Kai-shek's most active backers in the United States and was one of the principal supporters of the charges made against the State Department by Senator Joseph McCarthy, the Wisconsin Republican.

"We were all," Kirkpatrick states, "interested in a publication of some kind that would be devoted to exposing Communism. Since our group [the former agents] had no experience writing whatever or editorial experience, our interest was primarily one of accumulating information and files. As a sort of research setup for a publication."

The trio's file at the time consisted of one book belonging to Kirkpatrick; it was William Z. Foster's *Toward a Soviet America*.

As a result of the meeting, according to Kirkpatrick, Kohlberg

<sup>4</sup>Mr. Bierly has since resigned, see below.

agreed to furnish the money to launch a publication to be called *Plain Talk*, with Levine as editor. In addition the importer "set aside a sum of money for just one year for setting up of files in a research office" and provided space for the files in a building at 240 Madison Avenue.

The exact amount of money supplied could not be learned. However, according to Kirkpatrick, "It was actually two separate transactions. Mr. Kohlberg placed a sum of money in Plain Talk, Inc., but in the research operation we [Keenan, Bierly, Kirkpatrick] were put on his pay roll, and any other expenses there might be, such as for the purchase of files and other supplies, were paid by his office."

In addition, with Kohlberg's assistance, a separate organization was set up, the John Quincy Adams Associates, which Kirkpatrick describes as being "a non-profit organization, primarily for the purpose of trying to get contributions to continue our research and file setup." The hope was that the organization could be tax-exempt, but the U. S. Treasury ruled otherwise, and John Quincy Adams Associates is no more.

At the time the research group consisted of the three former agents (Keenan, then as now, participating only part time), a man (whom Kirkpatrick would not name for the record) who is now an important executive in one of the largest advertising agencies, and a stenographer.

The office at 240 Madison was small and dark and could be reached only by freight elevator.

However, Kirkpatrick states, "It was fine for our purpose because we did not want Commies snooping, and we had no reason for dealing with the public, but at the same time, it would have been difficult to rent to anyone."

The arrangement lasted for about a year, at which time, in the spring of 1947, the three former agents formulated a new and considerably more ambitious plan. According to Kirkpatrick, "we decided to try to continue to maintain the file and [also] start our own publication," a weekly newsletter exclusively devoted to exposing the Red Menace.

As for *Plain Talk*, now defunct, it was a somewhat theoretical

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pocket-sized monthly with a limited circulation. "We felt it was doing an excellent job reaching a certain segment of the population but that . . . there were other segments that needed to be reached, especially people in industry, businessmen and so forth. Wherever there is a Communist on a pay roll, it is with few exceptions a businessman who is paying his salary."

On April 9, 1947, the new firm, American Business Consultants, was incorporated under the laws of the state of New York. The incorporation papers state that its primary purpose is to publish a newsletter, although, in addition, it planned "to promote scientific research and technical investigations."

To finance the new project, "We all bought stock, the three of us with what little money we had or could spare. . . . Then we borrowed some money from John Quincy Adams Associates. . . . We never borrowed more than \$15,000 for *Counterattack*." Thus, since he was the sole backer of the John Quincy Adams Associates, most of the money came from Kohlberg. A reputable outside source familiar with the organization in its early days estimates the importer's contribution at as much as five sixths of the total.

In addition, Kirkpatrick says, "We received a little money from other sources." He would not name the sources.

However, Bierly did deny earlier published rumors that among the backers were a department store executive, a retired Army general, and the well-known wife of a powerful magazine publisher.

"We never had the slightest connection with —— [the publisher's wife] at any time. I don't think she is even a subscriber nor has been a subscriber."

As for the name chosen for the new firm, American Business Consultants, "We just took [it] out of the hat," Kirkpatrick states. "My personal opinion is that it was not a good choice. It would have been better not to have used the name 'Business' since from the very beginning some labor people have concluded that we work only for management."

The new corporation at first moved into what Kirkpatrick describes as "a hole in the wall" on the tenth floor at 55 West



Forty-second Street, the building in which it is still located. At present its offices include seven good-sized rooms.

For more than three years most of the rapidly expanding files remained at 240 Madison, but in March 1950, when American Business Consultants moved upstairs to its present suite, Kirkpatrick explains, "We called Mr. Kohlberg and told him we were going to move out the files and that we would not need space there any longer. . . . It was agreed from the very beginning that the files were ours."

QUESTION: Was there any signed agreement?

KIRKPATRICK: I don't believe there was anything in writing.

Kohlberg, also the major financial backer of the American Jewish League Against Communism (see below, Rabbi Benjamin Schultz), now claims not to remember that the three former FBI agents took any part in *Plain Talk*. Moreover, he has been quoted as saying he doesn't recall giving any money to the John Quincy Adams Associates.

"If I did," he declared in a published statement, "it must have been a small amount. I remember when I give a large sum."

Mr. Kohlberg, a resident of Bronxville, New York, is said to be many times a millionaire.

The files of American Business Consultants expanded rapidly. They soon included bound volumes of the *New York Times*; bound volumes of the *Daily Worker* and scattered copies of other Communist publications; hundreds of letterheads, pamphlets, and throwaways issued by Party-sponsored and allegedly "front" organizations; thousands of newspaper clippings concerned with Communist and "front" activities; books on Communism, domestic and international, the hearings of state committees concerned with un-American activities, and, most important, the complete hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. The latter includes three complete copies of the volumes making up Appendix IX, of which only one thousand were printed and later withdrawn by the House Committee. These particular volumes are not available in the New York Public Library or in the Library of Congress.

During one of the interviews with the officers of American

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Business Consultants the investigator asked, "Do you remember how you got it [Appendix IX]?"

**KIRKPATRICK:** Honestly, I don't. . . . We had a copy . . . very soon after the research office was opened, but, honestly, I don't remember when we got the first one.

**BIERLY:** We have had several copies. Everywhere I have been there has been a copy. The Bureau has a copy. Isaac Levine had a copy. Everybody had a copy, and there was no thought that it was particularly scarce.

Appendix IX, which is one of the two main sources for *Red Channels*, the other being the California Committee on Un-American Activities, is said to list the names of more than 100,000 Americans who, as far back as the early thirties, at one time or another belonged to alleged "front" organizations. According to Kirkpatrick, "As I recall . . . [it] was compiled as a result of photostating all kinds of documents from the New York Public Library: letterheads, notices of meetings, notices of dinners, and all that sort of thing; and then copying those names onto this documentation in Appendix IX."

**QUESTION:** Generally, do you consider it an accurate source?

**KIRKPATRICK:** I suppose there might be some difference of opinion in some very few instances because much of the information . . . does cover the broad, united front.

Its indiscriminate use of names is said to be the main reason the appendix was suppressed by the House Committee.

The appendix was, however, defended by Bierly on the grounds that "as a source available to the public, it represents the broadest and most accurate coverage that there is. In other words, you take away this source of information, and you very substantially eliminate any source John Q. Public can go to to check on the Communist problem."

However, in the spring of 1947, even with Appendix IX included, its files were not by themselves, the officers of American Business Consultants admit, sufficient to get a publication started.

"We did not," Kirkpatrick says, "have any writing experience. At least we hadn't written anything except Bureau reports."

Fortunately, shortly before the newsletter was tentatively

scheduled for publication, the former FBI men noticed a lengthy series of articles on the Communist Menace published in the *Chicago Journal of Commerce*, signed with the name Andrew Avery. The author's actual name was Sam Horn, a free-lance writer who claims twenty-five years of newspaper experience. The articles particularly interested Kirkpatrick because they "were so easy to read, concise and to the point. I felt that it was a style which would be very good for a newsletter."

Horn was found in New York, and, to the delight of both parties, it was found that "Some of his friends had been trying to talk him into getting out a newsletter. . . . He wanted very much to do it, but he did not like handling the business end of a publication. So for our setup it was perfect. We could handle the business end and supply at least some of the research he needed, and he could do the writing. It didn't take long to reach an agreement."

Work got under way immediately, and the first issue of *Counterattack* was dated May 16, 1947; then as now, the newsletter was sold partly through direct-mail solicitation and partly by personal canvassing. For instance, "There is one sales representative who takes a building, starts at the top and goes to the bottom."

As for the subscribers, Kirkpatrick says, "The greater percentage is businessmen . . . a few individual labor people and unions . . . a few educators and clergymen . . . and quite a number of government agencies . . . I have been amazed at how many! Scarcely a week passes that we don't get a government check of one type or another."

Writing the publication has always been a one-man job; for two and a half years, the some two thousand words were turned out every week by Horn; the present editor is Francis J. McNamara, who, like his employers, had, before taking over his first job as a researcher with American Business Consultants, no professional editorial experience.

Horn resigned at the end of 1949, not, according to Kirkpatrick, because of a disagreement, as has been published elsewhere, but "because he wanted to devote more time to free-lance writing."

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McNamara, a St. John's graduate with an M.A. degree from Niagara University, went into the Army from college as a private and emerged as a major in strategic intelligence in the Far East. Before joining ABC, he worked for a time with UNRRA in Tientsin. McNamara, a thin-faced, emphatic man of thirty-five, told one of the editors of *Sponsor*, "I was in the Army all of five years. . . . I am proud to have been decorated by the Chinese government [of Chiang Kai-shek]. . . . Don't forget to say I was inducted into the Army as a private."

Despite McNamara's lack of editorial training, Kirkpatrick feels that his style so closely resembles that of Horn (or Avery) that "Nobody could tell where one left off and the other began."

In its early days American Business Consultants consisted of the trio of officers, Thomas A. Brady, another former FBI agent who is also Keenan's brother-in-law and who is now working for the Keenan and Alexander law firm, helping out with the five libel actions in which ABC is currently involved; S. Paul Ferrin, who "represents us principally from the standpoint of digging up information in the Middle Western area, particularly the Illinois area, although he also has a law practice"; Harry A. Morgan, a former official of the American Communications Association, CIO, now resigned from ABC, and another former member of the FBI, who has also resigned.

As this is written, the staff includes fourteen persons, the majority of whom do stenographic, clerical, and research work.

Although the representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union were not given access to the records of American Business Consultants or any official estimates as to its financial status, past or present, it can be authoritatively stated that from the very beginning the newsletter was a financial success.

The editorial expenses have always been minimal. In addition to McNamara, Kirkpatrick breaks down the staff as follows: "He [McNamara] has a girl who acts as an editorial assistant, clips newspapers, and types copy and work of that sort. Then we have a girl who handles circulation." The salesmen, now two in number, are in addition.

According to a long-time friend and supporter of the organization, "They [ABC] have an annual income, a net income, of about \$70,000 from *Counterattack* alone. I know that for a fact."

Keenan told an editor of *Sponsor*, "Conservatively, you can say we gross (from all of the firm's operations) between \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually." But, he hurriedly added, "That isn't really much. Why, we know plenty of other ex-FBI men who make a lot more dough than we do, working for big corporations."

The exact circulation of *Counterattack* has never been revealed by its publishers. In a radio broadcast in the fall of 1950, Kirkpatrick explained, "I would prefer not to give the exact figures because, as far as we know, the Communists do not have the figures, and we are not anxious to turn those figures over to them. But I will say the circulation is still in four figures."

From a reliable independent source, it was learned that the present paid circulation of the newsletter is slightly less than 4000 copies per issue, at \$24 a year (4000 times \$24 equals \$96,000).

As for ABC's income from its "investigative" services, no figures are available. The fees charged for such work vary greatly. According to Bierly, "The minimum fee is five dollars, where we charge a fee. The maximum fees run into several thousands of dollars."

In the interview with *Sponsor*, Keenan said, "Over twelve sponsors and ad agencies use our 'research' services now, and the rates differ. It all depends on how much 'researching' we do. If we charge \$7.50 a head, say, we would lose out. We might have twenty-four radio and TV performers showing a negative. But one might show a 'positive,' requiring five pages of 'research' on him. That twenty-fifth performer, you see, would take a lot more 'research' work than is warranted at seven bucks, fifty cents a head. You must remember, we've got a staff to pay and a living to make."

However, Bierly has added that the firm's income from subscriptions to the newsletter and special reports like *Red Channels* "is far greater than the income from services rendered. Roughly, I would say three times as much, maybe more, maybe less."

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Another occasional source of income is from lectures, of which Kirkpatrick makes an impressive number, mainly in Manhattan and Queens. Many of the lectures, he says, are delivered without charge, but, "Where I am paid a fee, we have an arrangement here, which is true of all of us, not just myself, that sixty per cent of the fee goes to the company and forty per cent the person retains."

Nevertheless, the three former agents claim to collect salaries of only \$6000 each a year. And, Bierly states, "We are making less now than we would if we had remained in the Bureau."

To date, they say, there have been no dividends declared. However, Bierly adds, "We own the stock, and we would declare a dividend if that situation arises."

Moreover, according to Kirkpatrick, "It is possible, also, that we might raise our salaries. I think we have raised them once since *Counterattack* was started."

## AMERICAN BUSINESS CONSULTANTS AND ORGANIZED LABOR

Although, as noted above, Kirkpatrick blames the word "Business" in the firm's title for the fact that "some labor people have concluded that we work only for management," the officers of ABC have, in radio and television appearances as well as in the interviews with representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union, claimed widespread labor support. Moreover, it is on the record that American Business Consultants has, on occasion, been consulted by various local units of both the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

On the Reporters' Roundup broadcast on September 14, 1950, Kirkpatrick said, "We have done research work for various unions."

During one of the ACLU interviews Bierly added, "The national office of the CIO came to us on two different occasions for work."

Of these claims, Allan Swim, former national publicity director of the CIO and editor of the *C.I.O. News*, who is now a Marshall Plan official in Europe, writes, ". . . During the course of the investigation of C.I.O. unions charged with consistently following

the CP line in reference to C.I.O. policy a hearing committee research assistant was told by somebody that *Counterattack* had some 'valuable information' about one of the unions involved. . . . This assistant made contact with *Counterattack*, with which he was not familiar, looked over the material offered and found it valueless, from our standpoint. . . .

"A C.I.O. attorney who was shown the material said, 'It consisted of clippings and a lot of other stuff that attempted to prove guilt by association. We weren't interested in that kind of material.'"

After the Jean Muir incident the *C.I.O. News* vigorously attacked *Red Channels* and American Business Consultants. Swim adds, "I do not believe that there is any publication in the country which has been more effective than the *C.I.O. News* in the fight against Communism, but we make every effort to avoid punishing the innocent along with the guilty. We do not believe that *Counterattack* has done likewise."

As for the AFL, Kirkpatrick has at least twice in answer to criticisms of *Red Channels* quoted a letter received from William L. Green, AFL president. He mentioned the letter on the Tex and Jinx radio program on NBC, September 6, 1950, and again in attempting to refute a statement by John Crosby, the radio columnist, that "They [the publishers of *Counterattack*] are endorsed by no one of well-established repute."

According to Kirkpatrick, the Green letter declared, ". . . I think you are doing a very instructive work in making available information as to who are members of the Communist Party and who are Party followers, together with their records. I wish you every success."

However, on October 5, 1950, Green wrote an official of an AFL local who had asked about the purported endorsement, "I sent Mr. Alfred Monet, who described himself as the director of *Counterattack* [actually, Monet is a member of a public relations firm at one time retained by ABC-M. M.], a letter commending him upon the fight he is making against Communism. . . . However, in commending Mr. Monet upon his fight against Communism, no endorsement was given to a booklet or book of

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any kind. I know nothing about any book which Mr. Monet or any of his associates has published. . . . Consequently, my endorsement of Mr. Monet's fight against Communism could not be accepted or interpreted as approval or endorsement of any book published by Mr. Monet or Mr. Kirkpatrick."

Although Mr. Green's more recent letter has been made available to American Business Consultants, it has not as of this writing been publicized by Mr. Kirkpatrick or printed in *Counter-attack*.

Two other letters were mentioned by Kirkpatrick in answer to the Crosby charge that ABC lacked reputable support. One, from Dr. Emerson P. Schmidt of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, called the publication "an indispensable source of knowledge and understanding for anyone who wants to keep abreast of Communist policy, strategy, and tactics." The other, from Major General C. A. Willoughby, former head of General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence staff, declared, ". . . Your paper contains many interesting and instructional items pertinent to the general intelligence field, and it is circulated in all our sections."

So far as is known, neither of the latter two letters has been repudiated by its author.

## **AMERICAN BUSINESS CONSULTANTS AS AN "INVESTIGATOR"**

**THEODORE C. KIRKPATRICK**

"We work very much like a doctor. If a company wants information, we charge a fee and have a fixed rate, but if someone comes along who cannot afford a fee, we do not turn him down."

**NATIONAL BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU, INC., AUGUST 10, 1951**

"In addition to publishing the weekly newsletter, the firm [ABC] provides information on subversive activities to newspapers, periodicals, radio, and other public opinion media, and offers to business firms, research services on subversive activities on a fee basis. These services include screening of personnel; investigation of organizations, unions, etc., as to Communist infiltration, if any; and preparation of documentary brochures showing Communist affiliations of organizations and individuals."



JACK TURCOTT OF THE NEW YORK *Daily News*, ON REPORTERS' ROUNDUP, SEPTEMBER 14, 1951

QUESTION: ". . . I understand that you and your associates do on occasion investigate the employees of a given employer to find leftist sympathizers and so on among his employees. Is that correct?"

KIRKPATRICK

ANSWER: Not investigate. *On some occasions an employer has come to us* [emphasis mine—M.M.] and asked us to check our files to see what is in the files regarding certain individuals. Sometimes certain organizations—perhaps an organization will ask a subscriber to *Counterattack* for a contribution and the employer, the subscriber, may want to know whether that organization is a Communist front or not. And he may come to us for a report as to whether it is.

TURCOTT

QUESTION: I see. You don't solicit that sort of business from employers or companies, to report on their employees?

ANSWER: We have, yes.

QUESTION: And you were paid for these things?

ANSWER: Yes.

An account executive in one of the three largest advertising agencies, whose statement cannot, for obvious reasons, be attributed, has this to say:

"This is the way they work their so-called 'investigations.' I'll get a call from Ted Kirkpatrick, and he'll say, 'Don't you people have the XYZ show?' I'll say, 'Yes,' and then he'll say, 'Do you know there's an actor on that show named Jones who's a Communist sympathizer?"

"I'll say, 'I don't know a damn thing about it.' And Kirkpatrick will then say something like, 'You might be interested to know that in 1948 Jones was a member of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee; furthermore, he marched in the May Day Parade last year.'

"I'll say, 'Okay, thanks a lot,' and then I'll do a little checking, and I'll find out there is a guy named Jones who says two lines

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for the XYZ show but that he's hired by the packager, the John Doe people.

"And so there's nothing we could do about Jones, even if we wanted to. . . . I will then call Kirkpatrick and point this out, and, since I'm the kind of guy I am, also point out that we just can't investigate everybody who works on our shows and, furthermore, that we're not a government agency but an advertising agency and that it's the business of the government to take any action against Jones, if any action is necessary. . . . Kirkpatrick will then say something like, 'But we're set up to do that kind of research for you,' and I'll say, 'No, thanks.' I'll say thanks very much but no. Then he'll say, 'Well, if that's the way you feel about it, all right,' and hang up.

"At least twice it's happened that a couple of weeks later the XYZ show and Jones will be called names (you know what) in *Counterattack*, and, a few days later, Kirkpatrick will call me again and say something like he's sorry about what happened in the newsletter but that, of course, he has nothing to do with editing it, and he didn't even know Jones's name was going to appear. And at least once he added, 'It's a funny thing, but some agencies always seem to have this kind of trouble, and some never do.'

"I get mad then, and I say, 'Just what the hell do you mean by that?' And he says, 'Oh, nothing,' and I say, 'If you mean we haven't retained you boys, you're right, and we never will, as long as I'm around anyway, and if the agency ever does, I'll quit.

"'Furthermore,' I'll say, 'if you've got any charges to make against this agency, let's hear them.' Then he'll back down and say, no, he's got nothing specific in mind, and that's the end of it, from my end anyway.

"Except as a result of what is said in *Counterattack*, the sponsor probably gets a dozen or so letters from fanatics attacking Jones and attacking him for hiring Jones and threatening not to buy any more of the product. Result, Jones doesn't do any more walk-ons on the XYZ show, or maybe any place else.

"A couple of times, too, after the blast, Kirkpatrick or one of

his boys has gone directly to the sponsor and tried to sell him either the investigative service or maybe some subscriptions to *Counterattack*. The last time I know about they tried it with — [the name of a large oil firm]. It didn't work there, but I suppose it often does."

THEODORE C. KIRKPATRICK

". . . Under no circumstances have we ever even thought of trying to coerce anyone into using the service."

As can be seen, what American Business Consultants refers to as the firm's "research facilities" ("investigation" is a word its officers assiduously avoid in this connection) have, from the beginning, aroused considerable controversy.

However, the research activities have provided a third of the group's income, "maybe more, maybe less"; what's more, "The fees run up into several thousands of dollars."

American Business Consultants does not have access to the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; it receives no cooperation from that agency; in fact J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, whose unsigned picture is hung in ABC's suite of offices, is known to disapprove of its activities. A spokesman for Lou Nichols, Mr. Hoover's assistant, told *Sponsor* magazine, "We are aware of the activities of the publishers of *Red Channels* and *Counterattack*, but since they are private citizens, we have no legal control over their practices. Individuals who have severed their relations with the FBI in no way possess our indorsement or stamp of approval. Certainly, all the information in the files of the FBI is confidential, available only to those Government officials so authorized to examine it."

In a speech before the American Bar Association in September 1950, J. Howard McGrath, the Attorney General, declared, "We appear to be going through a period of public hysteria, in which many varieties of self-appointed policemen and alleged guardians of Americanism would have us fight subversion by . . . stigmatizing as disloyal all those who disagree with or oppose them. This hysteria appears in vigilante groups, who decree . . . beatings of purported Communist sympathizers; or, who, in more

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polite circles, intimidate radio advertisers into silencing performers who they say have Communist leanings."

Kirkpatrick and Keenan admit that they receive no co-operation from the FBI. Moreover, in at least one instance a salesman for the "research" services so emphatically emphasized the one-time FBI associations of his employers that the New York office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation called in Kirkpatrick for a "conference" on the matter. That salesman, Kirkpatrick says, is no longer with the firm.

Nevertheless, the sales technique used by some of the group's employees still plays up the FBI theme.

"He didn't exactly say Keenan and Kirkpatrick still get a look at the FBI files," one employer who was recently interviewed by an ABC salesman reported, "but he had a moth-eaten letter which pointed up their former association, and his whole approach was the 'fear technique,' implying that the firm might get in a lot of trouble if we didn't have an investigation made of our people or, at the very least, take several subscriptions to *Counterattack*."

In its promotional literature the firm also relies on the former FBI association. "Ex-FBI Agents Expose Communists," the headline on one such folder declares, and it includes a circled statement from a column by Walter Winchell: "*Counterattack* (an anti-Communist newsletter) is edited by former G-men who have names and other data at their fingertips."

Besides the criticism of sales techniques and the repeated emphasis on the FBI theme, some clients using ABC facilities feel that often considerably more is promised than is produced; more important, many observers see a serious conflict (ethically at least) between the two major activities of the firm, the publication of *Counterattack* and the "research" work performed for a fee.

Although this reporter was unable to obtain a list of the firms which, at one time or another, have used such services, ABC employees have in talks to prospective customers mentioned an impressive list of clients. These, the salesmen have said, include such substantial corporations as General Motors, Du Pont, F. W. Woolworth, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., and Bendix Aviation.

For whatever the fee, ABC's clients receive, according to Kirkpatrick, "whatever facts we have in our files; without any interpretation and without any consideration whatsoever as to what would be published in *Counterattack*."

On the other hand, the managing editor of one New York newspaper which hired ABC has this to say: "We were led to believe we'd be getting some 'inside dope' on a certain Commie reverend we were gunning for. What we got was beautifully typed, triple-spaced, I think, on bond paper and bound in blue, but it consisted of a lot of excerpts from stories about the reverend from other publications, a couple of references to him made before the House Un-American Activities Committee, photostats of a dozen or so letterheads of front organizations that used his name, and, I believe, the fact that he'd been called a Commie before the Tenney Committee in California plus some stuff taken from the Congressional Record. There wasn't a thing we didn't already have in our morgue or, for that matter, hadn't already published ourselves, but the whole thing cost us \$500."

As for a possible conflict between the two branches of ABC, one major example dates back to February 1950. At that time Thomas A. Brady visited the Hutchins advertising agency, which handles, among others, the Philco radio account. Brady, according to a Hutchins official, opened his conversation by saying he wanted to protest against the employment of a well-known radio actress on the Philco show. The actress was, Brady declared, "a Commie"; what's more, he said, if she continued to appear on the program, there would undoubtedly be widespread public protests, all of which, he felt, would be detrimental both to the Hutchins agency and to Philco.

The agency official says that Brady added that, as a member of a firm whose whole purpose was fighting the Communists, he realized the difficulty of keeping track of the political activities of performers, writers, directors, and, for that matter, even of network and advertising agency employees. And that was the reason ABC was in business. For a fee, he is said to have declared, American Business Consultants could and would provide the

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agency with a dossier on any "questionable personalities." Thus trouble could be avoided in the future.

The fee, he is reported as adding, would be \$1000, which would include a subscription to *Counterattack*.

The Hutchins agency declined the offer.

Approximately three weeks later *Counterattack* carried an item attacking the Philco program, calling the actress in question a "fellow traveler" and urging its readers to protest her appearance on the show. This particular item was headlined, "Philco Does It Again."

Following the attack in the newsletter, a handful of protests were received by the sponsors mainly from Queens, as was true in the Jean Muir incident.

Nevertheless, the agency still did not accept ABC's proposal.

The officers of American Business Consultants have never denied the substance of the story. Bierly explained that, at the time, "Tom Brady was not otherwise productively occupied, and we had research facilities here that were capable of servicing more people. . . . The overhead was high, and as a business proposition, we felt it would be well to assign Brady to developing new business for the research end of it—which we regarded—and I still do regard—as a very routine business operation."

According to Kirkpatrick, however, there was no connection between Brady's visit to the Hutchins agency and the subsequent attack on the Philco program in the newsletter.

"Sam Horn phoned me as soon as he had seen this particular copy [of George Seldes' now defunct *In Fact*, where the story was originally published] and stated at that time—and I know it was true—that that was the first time he had ever known anyone had been over talking with the Hutchins agency."

Although at least once, in the issue of September 13, 1950, Kirkpatrick is referred to in *Counterattack* as "its managing editor," the secretary-treasurer of American Business Consultants now claims that the complete responsibility for stories appearing in the newsletter rests with the editor. ". . . We very seldom interfere . . . except to go over it from the standpoint of libel, accuracy, and clarity."

QUESTION: Do you have a story conference or a copy conference each week to go over generally the content of the publication, or is the final draft before it is printed given to you by the editor who says, "This is the contents for the week"?

KIRKPATRICK: He presents us the copy.

QUESTION: In other words, you don't discuss in advance what should go in or what shouldn't go in.

KIRKPATRICK: On rare occasions he [the editor] might discuss with us earlier in the week a story he may have in mind, and ask our opinion as to whether we think it might be desirable to use [it] rather than some other story, but that is about the extent of it.

Thus, Kirkpatrick says, there could be no conflict between the two operations. "The thought never occurred to me that there could be any inferences or innuendoes about the reporting on one hand and carrying stories in *Counterattack* on the other. It didn't occur to me actually until the Hutchins thing came up, but fortunately, we have kept the two separate, not with any anticipation in advance, at least on my part, that that issue might ever come up; it is just fortunate that we kept the two separate."

However, in another reference to the rather unusual division of responsibility in the firm, Kirkpatrick was asked, "If after Agency X had been mentioned in *Counterattack* and the president of the agency called up the next week or next month, or within the next few days, and said, 'Will you do an investigation for us?' would the fact that Agency X had been mentioned in the publication deter you or affect your decision in any way?"

KIRKPATRICK: No, but we would say very emphatically that under no circumstances would that work have any affect whatsoever on the editorial policy of *Counterattack*. As a practical matter, we would more quickly criticize someone if we knew that he had the facts than we would criticize someone who, we might feel, didn't have the facts.

QUESTION: When you are working on the one hand with ABC [as a private "research" organization] and with *Counterattack* and *Red Channels* on the other, I just wonder if in your own mind any conflict ever arises.

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**KIRKPATRICK:** Certainly not in mine. I think the situation is rather comparable to that of a newspaper. Take a specific example: approximately two weeks before the Jean Muir incident a representative of the New York *Times* came to me to try to sell us on the idea of advertising *Red Channels* in the *Times*. He was from the advertising department. Subsequently, when Jack Gould's stories and editorials appeared in the *Times*, which were quite uncomplimentary to us, at least critical—under no circumstances did any of us conclude that that had anything whatsoever to do with the fact that we refused to place an ad for *Red Channels* in the newspaper, because we consider the people who run the *Times* entirely honest and persons of the utmost integrity. I think a situation of this type has to be viewed on that basis. In other words, what are our intentions?

On the other hand, Kirkpatrick now feels that, "Since all these developments have occurred, I can look back and see instances, had we been unethical and dishonest, where many things could have been done that would have been tremendously open to criticism."

An editor of *Sponsor* magazine has written, "Whether intentional or not, the organization is in the position of hanging a double-edged sword over the head of broadcast advertisers. It serves at one and the same time as disturber of the peace, prosecuting attorney, judge, jury, and detective agency. That is to say, it publishes allegations in *Red Channels*; then follows them up by urging letter-writers to put pressure on sponsors in *Counter-attack*; later holds hearings on the accused in its private offices; and personally solicits sponsors to hire its detective agency 'research service.'"

Nevertheless, the two branches of the business continue to operate side by side.

Sometimes the research jobs take only a few hours—or even minutes, ". . . just a check to see if the Anti-Defamation League (of course, we don't have to check that) is a Communist front or whether the Peace Information Center is a Communist front." At other times the assignments take several months, such as when the firm "had a request to determine the extent of financial aid



that foundations had given to Communist causes or Communist organizations.”

And, while most of the work is for a fee, “gratuitous information” is also sometimes offered. There was, for example, the occasion when Kirkpatrick talked to an officer of a union in the entertainment field concerning the union’s attorney. “We found in our file a tremendous amount of information on him going back to certainly the early thirties; and in view of the fact that it seemed quite possible that sooner or later we might mention him [the attorney] . . . I got the idea that perhaps we should ask an officer of the union whether they knew about [the attorney’s] background.”

However, the attempt was not a success. The conversation took place not long before the union’s election, and the union official was, Kirkpatrick recalls, “almost hostile. . . . Immediately he started thinking of some ulterior motives. I think probably we [Kirkpatrick and a friend] spent an hour and a half to two hours with him. I could probably have been using that time to much better advantage . . . but that is just the way I felt, that my conscience wouldn’t be clear if we here did run a story—and we subsequently did—if I had any idea that the key officers of the [union] weren’t familiar with it.”

Some time later, without benefit of ABC’s information, the union attorney’s contract was allowed to lapse.

Whether or not because of this perhaps disillusioning experience, Kirkpatrick did not in the case of the 151 persons listed in *Red Channels* feel it necessary to warn them of the forthcoming publication of their names.

## 4 • THE

### BIRTH OF A "BIBLE"

JOHN G. KEENAN, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE INVESTIGATOR

" . . . After the hullabaloo of *Red Channels* and the Korean War following after that and all this hodgepodge and mess, we felt that we had laid an egg that was a bombshell. . . ."

#### *Counterattack*

" . . . The publication of *Red Channels* has already served a very useful purpose."

In the spring of 1950 the three former FBI men who publish *Counterattack* were searching for a crusade. The newsletter, in addition to the usual four single-spaced pages issued weekly, had, on occasion, included a "special report" to its subscribers. There was one in 1948 on the alleged Communist affiliations of leaders in Henry A. Wallace's Progressive ("Commugressive" in *Counterattack*) Party campaign for the presidency; another concerned itself with a detailed and generally favorable analysis of the Mundt-Nixon "Communist-control" bill.

But what next? According to Bierly, it had, early in 1950, "been quite some time since we had any sort of a special report at all. Most of our subscribers had come to expect these occasional things; and we were wondering what perhaps might be desirable or timely."

However, the subject matter had to be very carefully chosen. American Business Consultants had already had one unfortunate experience in working on such a report.

"At one time," Bierly says, "we were interested in getting out a special report on the degree of Communist influence in the American Newspaper Guild. That was about a year or two ago. At that time the most substantial and practically the sole [Communist] influence was in the New York chapter of the guild.

"After we spent considerable effort in our research developing a broad perspective of that, the New York Guild was suddenly won by the right wing, and it knocked that out completely."

Obviously, then, the new "special report" could not be on an organization in which, without the help of ABC, the membership might solve its own political problems.

And so, "after a good deal of soul-searching and thought," the three publishers turned to a subject on which it seemed to them unlikely that there would be much immediate change.

"We had been mentioning [in *Counterattack*] quite frequently various phases of radio and television," Bierly declares. "We found there was quite a good deal of interest in it, and that was the principal reason we felt that it might be a good idea to publish a special report on radio and television.

"Also, it would be fair, I think, to say that we discovered . . . that there was an actual list circulating around the industry . . . which we had absolutely nothing to do with and which seemed to us tremendously unfair if anyone were actually taking it seriously. . . . [This was the mysterious and anonymously prepared list of "undesirables" mentioned in the Introduction.]

"From a combination of these things we felt it might be good to come out with something documented and do it publicly, lay it on the line and sell it over the counter to try *to clear the air* [emphasis mine—M. M.]."

Thus, on June 22, 1950, *Counterattack* issued what was by far its most ambitious project to date, a 213-page booklet subtitled *The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*.

The booklet, the cover of which graphically pictured a grasping red hand reaching for a microphone, contained the names of 151

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of many of the most prominent people in the entertainment industry, most of whom had some connection with radio and television. Many of the listings overlap, but there were 44 writers, 28 musicians, 18 directors, 11 commentators, 3 announcers, and 68 actors. In addition there were a music critic, a lawyer, and an accountant whose connection with the industry is slight.

Together with each name was a list of organizations to which the individual concerned was "reported as" belonging—or having once belonged. Individual lists varied greatly in length. One writer was "reported as" having belonged to 41; an actor had only one listing; many had two, some three, the majority about half a dozen.

So far as time was concerned, the listings also varied greatly. Twenty of the organizations listed had been defunct since the late 1930s; at least one, Artists' Front to Win the War, had existed for only one meeting during the Second World War. One actor's most recent listing was 1938; many had no listing after 1941; a sizable minority, none after 1945.

In the introduction, written by a former television "supervisor" at the Phillips Lord agency, Vincent Hartnett, who now calls himself a "package producer," it was pointed out that not all of those whose names followed were "party members or even deliberate collaborators." That, Hartnett wrote, did not matter. "It is sufficient if they advance Communist objectives with complete unconsciousness."

Moreover, the book made no attempt to differentiate between what Kirkpatrick was later to call "the dupers and the duped." Such a distinction, Kenneth Bierly then believed, couldn't be made anyway. "It was immaterial whether they [the 151] were Communists, entirely immaterial to what we were trying to do. It had no bearing on whether they were Communists. *In the first place, we don't know who is a Communist. In the second place, we couldn't find out if we had asked them who were anti-Communists and who were pro-Communists* [emphasis mine—M. M.]"

And so, conscious and unconscious co-operators, dupers and duped, anti-Communists and pro-Communists, 151 names were listed in *Red Channels*. The booklet was sent, free of charge, to

all of the nearly 4000 subscribers to *Counterattack*, and it was sold on newsstands, mainly in Manhattan, and in some bookstores (others refused to handle it) for one dollar a copy. Keenan has since regretted the price. He has said, "We made a mistake in charging only a dollar. . . . We didn't think there'd be such a hefty demand for it. We should have charged two bucks a copy. Now we're smarter than we were then."

Nevertheless, within a week *Red Channels* had more than lived up to the ebullient prediction made by Ed Sullivan, television master of ceremonies and columnist for the New York *Daily News*, who, twenty-four hours before the booklet was issued, had written, "A bombshell<sup>1</sup> will be dropped into the offices of radio-TV networks, advertising agencies and sponsors, this week, with the publication of *Red Channels*."

The impact of the "bombshell" was considerably enhanced by the beginning of the Korean War, which eventually involved tens of thousands of American soldiers, the radio and television industry, perhaps to a greater degree than any other, became acutely aware of the "Communist problem"—both from a public relations and from a security standpoint.

Thus, although many executives in the industry disliked the methods by which *Red Channels* was produced and both distrusted and feared its effects, the majority of them felt they could not ignore it. As one producer has said, "I've got a copy in my desk drawer, and, when I'm thinking about who to use for a show, I find myself taking a look every once in a while. I'm ashamed of myself, but I just can't seem to help it. I guess it's the times. Nobody ever paid much attention to that Mrs. Dilling book. What was it called?"

In that it concentrated on one industry, *Red Channels* was unique; however, the booklet did have at least one famous predecessor—Elizabeth (Mrs. Albert W.) Dilling's *The Red Network, A Who's Who and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots*.

<sup>1</sup>As will be seen (Chapter 5), more than a year later "the bombshell" also was dropped into the lap of Mr. Sullivan's own television show, *Toast of the Town*.

## THE BIRTH OF A "BIBLE"

Sixteen years earlier, in 1934, Mrs. Dilling's book, which she, like American Business Consultants, had brought out herself, had also created a considerable stir. Within nine months after publication it had gone into four printings. However, Mrs. Dilling, usually a remarkably talkative woman, never divulged the exact number of copies sold—or given away. She did admit that there had been a large free distribution of "this most important book ever issued in this country."

In the more than 350 closely printed pages of *The Red Network*, Mrs. Dilling listed (the technique was very similar to that later used in *Red Channels*) "More than 460 Communist, Anarchist, Socialist, I.W.W. or Radical-Pacifist controlled or infiltrated organizations" plus the names of 1300 persons "who are or have been members of Communist, Anarchist, Socialist, I.W.W. or Pacifist-controlled organizations and who, through these memberships, knowingly or unknowingly, have contributed in some measure to one or more phases of the Red movement in the United States."

Although the present-day House Committee on Un-American Activities and the California Tenney Committee were non-existent at the time, Mrs. Dilling's book was also assembled in approximately the same way as *Red Channels*. She wrote that her information came "principally from the official literature and letterheads of the organizations mentioned . . . from the Report of the Joint Legislative Committee of the State of New York Investigating Seditious Activities (called the Lusk Report) based upon documentary evidence; from U.S. Report 2290 of the Special Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in the United States, headed by the Hon. Hamilton Fish . . . and from other reliable sources (mainly private organizations). . . ."

However, unlike *Red Channels*, Mrs. Dilling's book was international in scope. It listed, among other world figures, not all of whom were alive, J. Ramsay MacDonald, Bertrand Russell, Sigmund Freud, Mahatma Gandhi, and, of course, Karl Marx. Among the Americans named were William C. Bullitt, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Robert M. Hutchins, Senator George W. Norris, and William Allen White. Many readers felt that Mrs. Dilling had

deliberately chosen a suspiciously large number of Jewish names.

Again like *Red Channels*, Mrs. Dilling's book did not call for any special action against the listees. She simply concluded her dedication to the "Professional Patriots" by declaring: "May 'professional patriots' increase and multiply; may they cease to be lonely voices crying in the wilderness; may their members and activities grow strong enough to avert now threatening Socialism or Fascism, and to prescribe for America, Christianity, the American Constitution, and American liberty."

At the time few people took Mrs. Dilling's book very seriously. Certainly there is no record of anyone losing his job because his name was listed—but the year, of course, was 1934, not 1952.

#### A CONSIDERATION OF TIME AND MOTIVE

EDMOND TAYLOR IN *Richer by Asia*

"All things have very different meanings, depending upon the meaning you want to put upon them."

LYLE STUART, FREE-LANCE WRITER ON A RADIO PROGRAM ON RADIO STATION WINS

"Here is the text of a telegram sent to the Council of American-Soviet Friendship [during the war years] . . . Would you consider the sending that telegram a subversive act?"

VINCENT HARTNETT, AUTHOR OF THE INTRODUCTION TO *Red Channels*  
"Of course I would."

STUART: "The man who sent it is Dwight David Eisenhower."  
[The above quotations are paraphrased since a recording of the broadcast was not available at the time this portion of the report was written.]

ALAN BARTH IN *The Loyalty of Free Men*, VIKING PRESS, 1950

"It is a mistake to suppose that any body of men can measure the good faith of a group committed to political purposes in the way that the Federal Trade Commission can, for example, measure the purity of a patent medicine. There are no objective standards for the measurement of motive. Purity of political purpose can be tested only in the competition of the market."

## THE BIRTH OF A "BIBLE"

*Red Channels* ignores history; it pays no attention to time; it does not consider the intellectual history of the liberal movement in the United States; it does not consider the possibility that a man who in the thirties or during and after the recent war (or, for that matter, yesterday afternoon) both joined so-called front organizations and supported the Soviet Union may today be a vehement and outspoken enemy of the Communists, domestic and international.

There is in none of the 213 pages of the "report" any recognition of the fact that, as one listee put it, "I joined those organizations because they *said* they stood for the things I'm for and *seemed* to be fighting the things I'm against."

According to a radio writer cited in *Red Channels* (incidentally one whose income has decreased by a third since the booklet was published), "Those fellows seem to judge, if I can use that word in referring to their methods, what an organization was in the thirties by what it might have become in the forties or today. . . . I joined the outfits they list [two committees protesting Japanese aggression, one concerned with the Spanish War, another an American anti-Nazi organization] because I believed in them. And, under the same circumstances, I'd do it all over again."

However, in *Red Channels* the man who in 1939 signed an "Open Letter for Closer Cooperation with the Soviet Union" or a petition condemning Nazi atrocities is listed side by side with the one who in 1949 signed a petition protesting the "prosecution of Communist Party leaders"—not that the latter is necessarily a Communist or even a Communist sympathizer.

Since its editors paid no attention to the time factor, neither did most of the readers of *Red Channels*, including, unhappily, most network and advertising executives.

Thus the extensive quotations that follow seem to the investigator a necessary part of this report.

The first quotation is from a letter by a renowned screen writer listed in *Red Channels*. At the time this letter was written he had seemingly been unaffected (financially anyway) by his appearance in the "report." He states:

"During the decade 1930-40 when, to my mind, any young man



who was not a sympathetic student of Marxism was not quite alive, I participated in many groups that were both pro-CP and anti-CP. . . . I did (as charged in *Red Channels*) write about a dozen play reviews for the *Daily Worker*, *New Masses*, and *Sunday Worker* but stopped writing for any of them because of an attempt to politicalize my reviews. . . . The decade was summed up by me and for me in my novel [title and publisher and date of publication], which was viciously reviewed in the *New Masses*, *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* as a slanderous attack on the Communist Party. . . .

“For myself, I am proud to have participated in a small way in the American and world experience of the Thirties, the enormous energy released, some of it misdirected, some of it evilly used, some of it pouring itself out in sterility, but all nonetheless an intricate part of our times. One cannot deal with such a thing as *Red Channels* statistically, in terms of accuracy even. This requires a study in depth. If the most articulate of those listed could join together in a defiant affirmation of all that was good and right in our past, such evil as *Red Channels* would be shaken to its roots.

“It thrives on fear and the evocation of a ‘shame’ that was not anything of the kind. Such a joint undertaking could well be dedicated not to the God that failed but to the dream for a better America which most of the so-called fellow travelers of the Thirties devoted themselves to. . . . And with such a defiance the whole truth of that decade as it really was should be set down.”

The excerpts that follow are from a letter to one of his employers by a well-known screen-radio-television writer who, again unlike many of the others in *Red Channels*, is still regularly employed. His letter expresses the feelings of the majority of those interviewed; it was written when he was asked “to explain why I am in *Red Channels*”:

“My first reaction on learning I was listed in the volume was one of anger. I resented both the action taken and the method of taking it—this not alone because I, personally, was affected. My resentment was against the whole idea of any private, non-

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governmental and non-official organization appropriating unto itself the dual role of prosecutor and judge to conduct a kind of trial-without-jury in which no evidence for the defense is asked for or presented. . . .

". . . With respect to my membership in organizations which *Red Channels* has listed as 'subversive' or 'front' groups:

"Why did I join or become associated with such organizations? For a very simple reason. I had served for three and a half years in the Army, contributing my efforts to the winning of a coalition war in which different political systems and philosophies worked side by side to insure a victory. After the war I sincerely believed it was also possible to achieve a coalition peace. If you will, I took the doctrine of 'One World' literally and, while I was well aware that within these organizations there were individuals whose basic political ideas were far left of my own, I thought our prime immediate objectives were generally the same and that a better democratic America could be assured by unity of effort. Within those organizations I stood for the principles of true liberalism as I saw them—finding myself often at odds with both extremes of ideology within the groups. (This is a point which, I believe, is all too often overlooked by those who label these organizations as rubber stamp machines operated from the offices of the *Daily Worker* if not directly from Moscow. The truth is that there were broad differences of opinion—on issues, on candidates, and on a great number of subjects which came under discussion.)

"During the year 1947, as you undoubtedly know, there was a definite split in the ranks of American liberals on the issue of Communism. There were those who held—that no liberal political organization in this country could function with maximum effectiveness which included Communists in its membership because the hard core of Marxist philosophy held even by a small minority was almost certain to affect, eventually, the policy of the entire organization—not necessarily dominating it, as is so frequently charged, but limiting and in some cases weakening it. Others contended that as long as the Communist Party was legal in this country and inasmuch as the organizations were non-partisan

. . . it was contrary to the spirit of real democracy to eliminate any individual on party affiliation grounds. At first I was inclined to go along with the latter view. Along with a great many other liberals whose loyalty is also beyond question I still defended the coalition principle.

“And then—I am not certain of the exact date except that it was during 1947—I changed that opinion. There was increasing evidence in many parts of the world that the coalition principle was *not* working. And, finally, the collapse of the free government of Czechoslovakia (which to my way of thinking had been the last, best testing ground of the coalition principle) was for me the *coup de grâce*. If I had had doubts before, now I knew certainly. And since that time—approximately three years ago—I have belonged to no political organization or group save one, which by its constitution and membership pledge automatically excludes anyone who espouses totalitarianism of any sort, Communist or Fascist.

“At this point, I want to re-emphasize the time element in this whole matter, because I believe it to be one of the basic fallacies of the *Red Channels* listing that there was a failure to re-assess the judgment of individuals in respect to the changing times. To say that a man defended the coalition principle three years ago is certainly vastly different from saying that he defends it now. (Not, I submit, that a man is necessarily subversive if he does defend it now. Personally, I think he is wrong, misguided and unwise, but to be mistaken is not necessarily to be a traitor to one’s country.) . . . The facts are that since 1947 I have not been active in any of the organizations listed.

“There comes the question of whether, as *Red Channels* implies, many liberals like myself who belonged to organizations now accused were ‘misguided dupes.’ The answer, of course, is one of opinion. Actually, in 1946 the declared fundamental objectives of these organizations were basically those domestic and international policies which had been laid down by Franklin Roosevelt, and most of us, I am sure, joined in the belief that we could thus best work together to carry on those principles. I further believe that the reason we later had to leave those or-

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ganizations, as so many of us did in '47 and '48, was because the organizations departed from those original principles and, with the changing international tides of those years, went further to the left than Roosevelt, were he alive, would ever have gone. To put it another way, I don't think we liberals left them; the organizations left us.

"I most certainly do not deny—and have never denied—belonging to organizations in 1946 and 1947 in which there were individuals of very leftist persuasion. Though I was never certain of it at the time it is now evident that some of them were Communists. They were, however, definitely in the minority in such groups and I know of no action taken by any organization while I was a member which was subversive or treasonable in nature.

"And finally, in the overall judgment of this matter, I submit that ultimately a man must be judged by his works. To anyone who shall speak a word of doubt I suggest you refer him to a considerable number of the several hundred scripts which I have turned out in the past fifteen years. . . . The truth is he'll find some 'propaganda' there. . . . For instance, he'll find propaganda for 'Divine Faith' in the several programs I wrote for —; he'll find propaganda for such things as recognizing the dignity of teaching and nursing as professions and of the need to devote new energies to further the work of such organizations as the Community Chest, YMCA, Red Cross, the Sister Kenny Foundation, to name but a few; he'll find a kind of propaganda for many things basically American woven into the fabric of works written primarily for entertainment. The one thing he won't find is anything designed to destroy faith in this nation or its government. There's a very simple reason for that. I don't think this is the best of all possible worlds, but I *do* think it's the best hope of one."

### SOME EXAMPLES OF ANTI-COMMUNIST STATEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF RED CHANNELS LISTEES

GYPSY ROSE LEE

"If a man (or woman) is to be judged by the company he keeps, he should be judged by *all* the company he keeps."

In the introduction to *Red Channels* the publishers promise that "Where an anti-Communist action or condemnation of Communism has been made by an individual mentioned in the following report, and known to the publishers, it has been noted in the text."

The key words in that sentence are, "and known to the publishers."

As will be seen, a great many such activities by listees were not known to the publishers—possibly because they made no real effort to find out.

For example, entirely aside from the accuracy of Gypsy Rose Lee's<sup>2</sup> listing, each item of which she has challenged, there is no mention of the fact that she played a benefit for France at the Waldorf-Astoria during the time of the Non-Aggression Pact and took part in a benefit for Finland when that nation was being attacked by Russia; she participated in four benefits for Bundles for Britain, also during the time of the Non-Aggression Pact. No Communist, Communist sympathizer, or fellow traveler is likely to have been involved in any of these activities, and Miss Lee has a record of many other clear "anti-Communist actions," but none is mentioned in *Red Channels*.

Nevertheless, Miss Lee who, until the appearance of *Red Channels*, made guest appearances on radio or television or both as often as two or three times a week has, as this is written, very

<sup>2</sup>The conservative *Post-Star* of Glens Falls, New York, had this to say about the listing of the versatile dancer-wit-writer: "*Red Channels*' evidence against Miss Lee consists of four items: in 1941, she was reported in a book by Eugene Lyons to have spoken before the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League. There was no report of what she said. Last March [1950], the Communist *Daily Worker* reported her attendance at a dinner of the Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee. Also in March [1950], the *New York Compass*, a leftwing newspaper, listed her as an entertainer at a carnival stage by the Council of Arts, Sciences and Professions. Miss Lee denies attending. The final item, in the *Worker*, said she attended a book auction by the League of American Writers-International Labor Defense in 1942.

"Thus two of the charges are eight and nine years old; two are reported in the *Daily Worker*, whose reputation for truth is on a par with *Pravda*; and all are based on unsubstantiated information. If we have reached the point where our citizens can be indicted out of the hands of the *Daily Worker*, American Communists should have a field day."

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little work in either field. Her program, *What Makes You Tick?*, is, at the moment, no longer being broadcast.

Tom Glazer, a well-known folk singer who is also listed in *Red Channels*, has said that in a personal interview with Kirkpatrick the singer pointed out that, among other anti-Communist activities, none of which is mentioned in the booklet, he had: (a) participated in the successful fight to halt Communist infiltration into the American Veterans Committee; (b) been one of the early members of the liberal, anti-Communist Americans for Democratic Action; (c) appeared at many ADA rallies; (d) in 1948, when every fellow-traveling stalwart was drafted into service for Henry Wallace, had performed extensively through New York for the Democratic State Committee and was on record as a supporter of Harry Truman's candidacy; and (e) had made several contributions to the International Rescue Committee, which aids those who have escaped from Communist-dominated countries.

However, according to Glazer, Kirkpatrick was apparently not much impressed with his record. The former FBI man asked only one question. "Can you," he wanted to know, "tell me about any arguments you've had with Communists?" Glazer couldn't think of any.

A few months later the folk singer submitted a written statement to American Business Consultants, and *Counterattack* then carried an item headed, "Folk Singer Tom Glazer Says He Is Anti-Communist." The paragraph quoted Glazer as stating, "I am unalterably opposed to Communist tyranny or any other kind of tyranny or dictatorship, wherever it exists in any country, organization, industry, or union."

At the moment, however, the number of Mr. Glazer's radio and television appearances, which dropped sharply after the publication of *Red Channels*, has not increased much.

As has been mentioned, in eight issues of *Counterattack*, from October 1947 until March 1948, Fredric March and his actress wife, Florence Eldridge, were called "Communist." It was not until December 1949, after more than a year of legal battling, that *Counterattack* conceded that, among other political activities of

the Marches, they had, during the time of the Non-Aggression Pact (a crucial period so far as determining Communist sympathies is concerned, though many then Communist supporters have long since changed their minds), contributed an ambulance to Finland, another to France, had been, along with Wendell Willkie, among the founders of the strongly interventionist Fight for Freedom, and had given substantial sums to Bundles for Britain, American Friends of France, and British War Relief.

A network news commentator has this to say about his *Red Channels* listing and his own anti-Communist activities:

“As a journalist and professional writer, a news correspondent in Moscow, Paris, Vienna, Athens, etc., I have in the past fifteen years sold dozens of articles to numerous American and Canadian magazines of all political complexions. *Red Channels* lists only *New Masses* and *Soviet Russia Today*. It also fails to mention that my two articles in *New Masses* were non-political, although it does say that the two in *Soviet Russia Today* were book reviews.

“*Red Channels* quotes me as casting aspersions on the conduct of the Polk murder trial in Greece. So I did. I cast similar aspersions on the conduct of the Mindzenty and Vogeler trials in Hungary, and on various political trials held in Sofia, Bucharest, Prague, and Warsaw. Yet no mention is made of this, nor does *Red Channels* provide any other quotations from my broadcasts on the Polk trial.”

In an appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Hazel Scott, pianist and singer, put it this way:

“One of these listings [there are nine] is for an appearance—by direction of my employer—an appearance of which I am not ashamed—another was ostensibly a series of benefits for orphaned children. When I found out otherwise, I discontinued such activity. Still another involved the use of my name three years after I had played a benefit. The group later merged with one that developed a bad name. The fourth listing advertised that I was a guest of honor at a dinner I never went to or heard of. . . . I did not support Henry Wallace, and I voted for Harry Truman. Again this well-known position seems not to have interested the pub-

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lishers of *Red Channels*. . . . Anyone who says I played any part in the Civil Rights Congress [*Red Channels* does] is mistaken or a liar. . . . But the document I am about to present may shed some light on this and other false listings. Here, gentlemen, in their own words, is proof of how such groups operate. . . . My husband [Congressman Adam Clayton Powell], more fortunate than I, did find out about his Civil Rights Congress listing . . . by the simple method of opening his mail one morning and reading a notice of the national board's annual meeting. . . . Immediately, he wrote asking what the notice was for, since he had never agreed to any participation with the Congress. . . . I read from the reply sent by the executive secretary [of the Civil Rights Congress], William L. Patterson: '. . . The names of a number of people were presented . . . as members who had not been consulted. You, it seems, were one of them.'

". . . I should like to note in passing that all my life I was a regular worshiper in the Roman Catholic Church, until my marriage in 1945 to a Protestant Minister. Since that time I have been an active Baptist."

Despite the incompleteness of her *Red Channels* listing, shortly after the appearance of ABC's "special report," Miss Scott's program on DuMont television was abruptly dropped. Officially the DuMont action was said to have nothing to do with *Red Channels*: as one official there told this reporter, "It was just that we felt we could more easily sell the time if somebody else was in that spot."

A few months later when Miss Scott was announced for a guest appearance on a network television program, the plan was suddenly changed, allegedly on the demand of the sponsor. According to an official source, when Miss Scott's appearance and statement for the House Committee were pointed out to the sponsor, he said, "She's still listed in that book [*Red Channels*], and we don't want to get involved in any controversy." On the night Miss Scott was to have appeared, the master of ceremonies of the program informed the audience that she was "ill."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>More recently, however, Miss Scott has been on at least one well-known television show.



The above are only a few of many verifiable examples of clear-cut anti-Communist activity by some of those who have been denounced in *Counterattack* and listed in *Red Channels*.

However, in the booklet itself, of the 151 persons named, only two are credited with such activity—one, Alfred Drake, is listed for “Denial of pro-Communism, New York *World-Telegram*, 2/5/49”; John Garfield is recorded as having stated, “The Marshall Plan is killing Communism in Europe . . . and that’s good. *Sunday Mirror*, 9/25/49.”

When the investigator pointed out the incompleteness of the *Red Channels* listings, Bierly replied, “. . . If we had known about these various things, we would have put them in.”

QUESTION: Did you collect, prior to the publication of *Red Channels* or since, in your research . . . anti-Communist statements of . . . people whom you feel have been anti-Communist?

BIERLY: I would say, yes, but the way we are geared here is on Communist matters, and that is the whole thing. As we are geared to that, *we do not really concentrate on collecting anti-Communist statements as such* [emphasis mine—M. M.].

And in a subsequent interview Bierly said, “We didn’t go out and . . . actively try to find out how many Communist statements they [the *Red Channels* listees] made at cocktail parties, nor how many anti-Communist statements they . . . made at cocktail parties or in business, *or anti-Communist organizations they belonged to, nor did we try to find out whether they were Communist, pro-Communist, Fascist, or what have you. . . .* [emphasis mine—M. M.]”

QUESTION: . . . If you had to do it all over again, would you have tried to give a more rounded picture?

BIERLY: . . . In the light of the experience we have had . . . with the business of *Red Channels* . . . we would be much more alert to developing that type of information . . . to give a more balanced picture.

On the other hand, Keenan said, “Let’s presume for the sake of discussion there were 25 Communists among the 151. Part of their credo is to lie when the occasion demands. So you [if ABC had questioned the 151 listees prior to publishing their names]

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would be printing a bunch of lies. So who could draw a conclusion if they wanted to between those who were telling the truth and those who were lying?"

QUESTION: What about the 125 who may not be Communists?

KEENAN: You couldn't tell the difference.

## THE PURPOSE OF RED CHANNELS

THEODORE C. KIRKPATRICK, IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE RADIO EXECUTIVES CLUB, OCTOBER 19, 1950

"I don't say you shouldn't hire the performers listed in *Red Channels*. I do say that those who continue to support Communist Party causes since June 23, 1950,<sup>4</sup> must take the consequences. Anyone who has continued to support a Communist cause since June 23 is just as much . . . an enemy of our country as if he were in Korea passing ammunition to the Communists."

Since not even the publishers of *Red Channels* can distinguish between the "innocent and guilty" as listed in the booklet, or between Communists and non-Communists, it is not surprising that most of the readers were even more confused. What was the purpose of *Red Channels*? What should be done with the list? Should all 151 be discharged, only part (which part?), or none at all?

There is no place to turn for an answer to any of these questions. As for the officials of American Business Consultants, who might be presumed to know, their statements on the subject have varied considerably.

In the introduction to Part II of *Red Channels*, the "Alphabetical Index of Names," three objectives are stated: "One, to show how the Communists have been able to carry out their plan of infiltration of the radio and television industry. Two, to indicate the extent to which many prominent actors and artists have been inveigled to lend their names to organizations espousing Communist causes. *This, regardless of whether they actually believe in, sympathize with, or even recognize the cause advanced.* Three,

<sup>4</sup>June 23 is one day after *Red Channels* was published and two days before the Korean war began; some listeners felt Mr. Kirkpatrick meant to use the latter date.

to discourage artists and writers from naively lending their names to Communist organizations or causes in the future [emphasis mine—M. M.]”

In the September 13, 1950, issue of *Counterattack* it was said that the publishers “hoped that RED CHANNELS, by awakening the American people would lead to the elimination of Communist influence in the sensitive and strategic radio and TV industry. . . .”

But how? On this vital point Messrs. Bierly, Keenan and Kirkpatrick have been discouragingly vague and contradictory.

During one of the interviews with the investigator, Bierly said, “Do we believe that people who are Communists, known Communists . . . should be kept off the air? Our answer is no, so long as the public knows they are Communists. . . . Do we object to people who have been in fronts being on the air? We have pretty well solidified the idea that our objection is based on the fact that it is a fraud on the public not to be aware . . . that individuals taking certain positions on controversial subjects have had certain connections or certain affiliations in the past that would condition what they have to say. . . . [We feel] that it is a fraud not to have these facts made known. . . . Therefore, a person who has been affiliated with front organizations should be identified as such so that there will be no misunderstanding. . . . That would eliminate ninety-nine per cent of the objections to that person appearing. . . .”

QUESTION: You mean where people are giving their own opinions on a talk show.

BIERLY: That is right.

Conversely, however, in the issue of September 13, 1950, the newsletter flatly stated, “It is COUNTERATTACK’s stand that no sponsor of any radio or TV program should have a totalitarian of any kind on the air. Quite a few people with continuing records of pro-Communist activity are still associated with a considerable number of programs. They should be dropped even if they are good money-makers for the sponsor.”

Perhaps *Counterattack* was referring only to actors, who, in the minds of Bierly and Kirkpatrick, fall into a separate category.

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**BIERLY:** . . . Where a person is taking a dramatic part in which in many cases there is no chance to interject the Communist line or Communist position in any way . . . that person [the performer] is a member of Communist front organizations . . . and his income is being used for Communist front organizations . . . there again we feel it is something that the public should know.

**QUESTION:** Would you think that the entertainer should be taken off the air, in that instance?

**KIRKPATRICK:** Yes, if he has a significant and continuous record of Communist fronts and other causes.

**QUESTION:** Do you think by that criteria . . . that people listed in *Red Channels* are people who would be in that category?

**KIRKPATRICK:** Most of them, yes; some of them, no.

**QUESTION:** Actually, then, doesn't the entertainer who does not give an opinion suffer more than the one who does?

**KIRKPATRICK:** *No, because in most cases those opinion shows don't carry a salary* [emphasis mine—M. M.].

**QUESTION:** How does one choose between the 151 in casting a show or choosing a writer?

**KIRKPATRICK:** *Well, we have never recommended any action on the basis of Red Channels* [my emphasis—M. M.].

However, Bierly admits, ". . . People with whom we have been in contact . . . [have said] that they know of their own personal experience that *Red Channels* resulted in people not being hired who otherwise would have been hired. . . .

**QUESTION:** And you would not condone its [*Red Channels*] being used in that manner?

**BIERLY:** Absolutely not.

**KIRKPATRICK:** You asked—What did we think would be the effect of *Red Channels* when we published it? If I were to answer that question very briefly, I would say I expected the average person who picked it up to say, "Gosh, I had no idea the extent of Communist influence was this great," by seeing all of this information together in one place.

**QUESTION:** And that is all?

**KIRKPATRICK:** . . . If I were to give one basic reaction that I hoped there would be, that would be it. . . .

## WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF RED CHANNELS?

THEODORE C. KIRKPATRICK ON REPORTERS' ROUNDUP, SEPTEMBER 14, 1950

"There is nothing new in the book. It has all been printed or published before. The only thing we did was to bring it together in one place."

## THE INTRODUCTION AND ITS AUTHOR

The introduction to *Red Channels* was written by Vincent W. Hartnett, a former naval intelligence officer and television supervisor who now lists himself as a "package producer." In addition, Hartnett gives frequent lectures, most often on the subject of "The Complete Exposé of Communism in Radio."

Hartnett is not now an employee of American Business Consultants. When asked whether ". . . at this moment he has any official connection with ABC," Keenan said, "He never did have."

When it was mentioned that Hartnett is advertised as "The Author of *Red Channels*," Kirkpatrick added, ". . . He is not an employee and has no other connection with us whatsoever except that he did write the introduction."

And Mr. Bierly continued, ". . . Both past and present [he] . . . has had no affiliation with this organization, either as an employee or otherwise."

QUESTION: . . . But he did write the introduction. How did you happen to choose him for that?

KIRKPATRICK: At the time we were discussing doing this report, in a discussion with Vince on one occasion he mentioned the fact that he had been thinking of the same sort of thing himself . . . and he had already jotted down something that he had in mind. After some discussion it was agreed that instead of both of us going ahead and doing this thing, if we liked what he had written, perhaps we could work it out jointly.

(Hartnett has his own considerable files on "who is and who isn't a Communist," to use his own words. "For years now I've made it my business to keep an eye on those babies and get them when I could.")

QUESTION: He did this on a paid basis . . . or on a volunteer basis?

BIERLY: He did it on the basis of us paying him royalties on the sale

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of the book. [N.B. Despite its considerable impact, *Red Channels* has by no means been a best seller. Of an original printing of "not quite 17,500" there were, in October 1951, "only a few" unsold. However, as stated above, each of the nearly 4000 subscribers to *Counterattack* received a free copy. "We didn't make any money on it," Kirkpatrick has said.]

On October 15, 1950, Hartnett made what has been perhaps his most widely publicized speech. He appeared in Peoria, Illinois, at the All-Peoria Conference to Combat Communism, sponsored by the American Legion. The meeting was one of a series of "anti-subversive seminars" the Legion Americanism group had been sponsoring throughout Illinois.

S. Paul Ferrin, a part-time member of American Business Consultants and also a practicing lawyer in Peoria, had, according to Kirkpatrick, "nothing to do with arranging that [Hartnett's] speaking engagement."

According to the Peoria *Journal Star*, Hartnett told his audience, "You hold the purse strings for most entertainers. Big corporations and radio stations will listen to you. Wire, phone or write your protests."

He was also quoted as saying that, since the publication of *Red Channels*, many of those listed had denied association or knowledge of the groups their names had been associated with. "I have dared them time and time again to sue me, so we could take the matter to court where they will be subject to the laws of perjury, but they refuse." (Since that time five *Red Channels* listees have sued not Hartnett but American Business Consultants. None of the cases has yet come to court.)

Then, the *Journal Star* continues, "Hartnett led off a scathing attack on Red-front tools by reiterating charges against Jean Muir." He "pointed to the sympathies" of fourteen entertainers, five of whom are not listed in *Red Channels*. He named three radio shows "which support Communist sympathizers"; perhaps coincidentally, at the time of writing two of the programs are off the air; the third is only on television.

Moreover, Hartnett is quoted as saying, "*Red Channels* tells only half the story on them; if they get tough, just wait until you

see the second edition." (At the moment American Business Consultants has no plans for a second edition.)

The Peoria paper reported that Hartnett also "blasted Attorney General J. Howard McGrath for his defense in New York City of entertainers like Miss Muir." In the speech to which Hartnett referred, McGrath had not mentioned Miss Muir or any other entertainers. He had simply attacked what he called "Vigilante groups who intimidate radio personalities."

"Surely, Mr. McGrath's files on Miss Muir are as full of proof as mine," Hartnett is quoted as saying.

Finally, the newspaper reported, Hartnett said he had just seen an announcement that the road company of Arthur Miller's Pulitzer prize play, *Death of a Salesman*, was scheduled to appear in Peoria. He called it "a Communist-dominated play," said that Miller is a Communist-fronter, that the Broadway producer, Kermit Bloomgarden (who was not associated with the road company), was also a Party-fronter as was Lee J. Cobb, the original star, and Albert Dekker, who headed the road company production.

"You have your choice of supporting or denying support to any entertainer, playwright or artist," Hartnett is quoted as having told his listeners. "Why should you patronize such a performance?" What's more, he added, a great part of the income from the Peoria appearance of the company would go direct to the Communist Party or to Party fronts.

Miller, Bloomgarden, and Dekker (Cobb was in Hollywood) wired the local newspaper, "Any allegation that any part of the income of the play has gone, is going, or will go to the Communist Party or its affiliates is an outright and preposterous lie. Nor is the producer, author, or star a 'front' for any political theory or organization." The non-political Authors League of America telegraphed the Peoria press that *Death of a Salesman* had, in addition to the Pulitzer prize, won many other national and international awards and asked that Peoria remain a city "which can receive and appreciate a serious work without further prejudice or hindrance."

Nevertheless, the Peoria Junior Chamber of Commerce and the

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Peoria Post No. 2 of the American Legion put pressure on Bernard C. Worley, city manager of the Publix-Great States Theatres, to have the performances canceled. Explaining that the contract had been signed nine months earlier, Worley refused. At that point the local Junior Chamber of Commerce announced a boycott.

According to an Illinois representative of the American Civil Liberties Union, "The play went on as scheduled, but the attendance was extremely small due to the boycott."

In January 1952, Hartnett ran an advertisement in the Brooklyn *Tablet* with the headline, "*Red Channels* Was a Piker." The book for which he wrote the introduction "only scratched the surface of Communist influence in Radio and TV.

"Now hear the full, documented exposé of Communists and Communist frontiers in TV, Radio, the Stage, and your daily Newspaper! A must for every Holy Name Society, K. of C. Council, C. W. V. Post."

What's more, the copy went on, Hartnett is "the nation's top authority on Communism and Communications." Then the advertisement urged readers to "wire, phone or write now to insure early booking." In the New York area, the former naval intelligence officer has said, his fee is "usually around fifty dollars a lecture." Out of town, his rates go up.

In the same issue of the *Tablet*, the official paper of the Catholic diocese of Brooklyn, Hartnett also complained in a letter to the editor that "calendars feature pictures of scantily clad women" on the tobacco and candy counter of his neighborhood drugstore. He had, he wrote, taken his business elsewhere.

More important, however, Hartnett has recently published and circulated his own *Confidential Notebook (File #13)*; the loose-leaf book, bound in black, is mimeographed and sells for five dollars a copy. Each is numbered in ink, but the author-publisher refuses to say how many copies are in circulation.

The technique used in assembling the material is approximately the same as that used in *Red Channels*, and most of the more than a hundred names in Hartnett's book also appear in the earlier



publication, sometimes with more organizations to which those involved allegedly belonged. In addition, however, there are the names of several playwrights, musicians, book and magazine publishers and editors, newspaper columnists, and well-known lawyers not included in *Red Channels*.

In some cases, again as in *Red Channels*, Hartnett uses the *Daily Worker*, a letterhead, or a report of the House Committee on Un-American Activities as the source for his allegations. In others, he credits only "a private source."

As usual, no one either on the networks or with a single exception in the advertising agencies would discuss the *Confidential Notebook (File #13)*. No one would say if or how it is used. No one would discuss its accuracy or authority. No one would admit having seen it.

However, one executive, part of whose job is to approve or disapprove on a political basis performers for his agency's programs, did say, "It hasn't replaced *Red Channels* yet, and I doubt if it will. It's just too irresponsible." For instance, he pointed out that the names of such long-time anti-Communists as Oscar Hammerstein and John Crosby are listed in the Hartnett book.

"Why," said the executive, "we've used Hammerstein in one of our shows."

Nevertheless, he keeps a copy of Hartnett's book in his desk, in the same drawer as *Red Channels*.

Hartnett, whose business office and files are in his East Twentieth Street apartment in New York City, will, he says, "make my files available to a few qualified persons. By qualified I mean not everybody would understand them and be able to weigh the information properly."

However, such a service is not given gratuitously—even to those so qualified. "The price," the onetime intelligence officer went on, "varies, but you might say it's frequently in the neighborhood of five hundred dollars."

Hartnett is at this writing at work on still another publication which he has described to possible subscribers as "an encyclopedia of Communism and Communists in the United States." The new book will, he is quoted as saying, "contain several thousand

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names, some of which will be a complete surprise to everybody, and there will be a lot of textual material, too." He has said that owning the book "is essential to anyone in a position of authority who is a true anti-Communist."

The publisher-author, who has written several magazine articles and short stories under one pseudonym or another, told this investigator that the encyclopedia "isn't quite finished, but it will be on the presses soon." He would not say how much he expected to receive for a copy of the book, but he did add that it would be available only in a limited edition.

However, in a talk to the advertising agency official quoted above he did mention a price for the book.

He said it would sell for five hundred dollars a copy.

In the introduction to *Red Channels*, Hartnett declares, "A few documentary programs produced by one network in particular have faithfully followed the Party line. Several commercially sponsored dramatic series are used as sounding boards, particularly with reference to current issues in which the Party is critically interested: 'academic freedom,' 'civil rights,' 'peace,' 'the H-Bomb, etc.' These and other subjects, perfectly legitimate in themselves, are cleverly exploited in dramatic treatments which point up current Communist goals." At no point in the introduction does Hartnett give specific examples of such programs, and several months later in his interview with *Sponsor* magazine, one of Hartnett's publishers, Mr. Keenan, appeared to disagree. When asked, "Can you name one instance when a piece of subversive literature was ever heard over the air?" the former FBI man, after a pause, replied, "No."

As for the way in which Communists work, Mr. Hartnett wrote that ". . . No cause which seems calculated to arouse support among people in show business is ignored: the overthrow of the Franco dictatorship, the fight against anti-Semitism and Jimcrow [Hartnett's spelling], the outlawing of the H-Bomb, all are used. Around such pretended objectives, the hard core of Party organizers gather a swarm of 'reliables' and well-intentioned 'liberals' to exploit their names and their energies."

What's more, Hartnett writes, "Our so-called 'intellectual' classes—members of the arts, the sciences, and the professions—have furnished the Communist Party USA with the greatest number in these classifications. The reliables, dupes or innocents who, for one reason or another, will support its fronts."

Despite Mr. Kirkpatrick's assurance that "There is nothing new in the book," with the exception of a few scattered quotations from J. Edgar Hoover, Stalin, Louis Budenz, and a few unnamed sources, almost none of Mr. Hartnett's introduction had ever been printed or published before its appearance in *Red Channels*.

Nearly all of it is original with the author.

#### RED CHANNELS, PART II, ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF NAMES

HARRY GOLD, AT THE TRIAL OF ABRAHAM BROTHMAN, NOVEMBER 20, 1950

"I was told by my Soviet superiors never to read *The Daily Worker* or any liberal publication, or to express any liberal thoughts, or give any thought to liberal ideas myself."

The full responsibility for selecting the 151 names listed in *Red Channels* has been accepted by Messrs. Bierly, Keenan, and Kirkpatrick. Moreover, no matter what some of their readers may have concluded, the three former FBI men insist that they did not think they were "putting out a list of honest-to-God Communists in radio and television."

According to Kirkpatrick, ". . . If we felt it could have been done accurately, we probably would have tried it. . . . I don't think it would be possible for any private organization to do it."

QUESTION: Did you feel that you had to give consideration . . . to the importance of keeping what you were doing within the bounds of what are generally considered due process of law or civil liberties?

BIERLY: I do not recall any specific deliberation on civil rights except certainly to stay within the laws of libel, No. 1, and, No. 2, to do it on a factual, unemotional, objective basis rather than editorializing, and that type of thing. . . . That is my personal

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reaction, no specific discussion of civil rights<sup>5</sup> of people who might lose their positions because of something that we might say about them in a publication.

**KIRKPATRICK:** That is essentially my recollection, too.

**QUESTION:** Did you . . . [feel] that there were some people whose names are listed who might be innocents?

**KIRKPATRICK:** Well, innocents. You mean people who may not have completely understood that the thing was a front? . . . The thing we tried to do was look at the significance of the information more than anything else. . . .

**QUESTION:** How about a person who had a very long list . . . would other factors enter into leaving his . . . or her name out?

**BIERLY:** A fact such as personal knowledge? [Yes] . . . I would say in a limited degree in this respect. There are many people who have affiliated themselves with an organization at one time or another in their lives that were either Communist at that time or later on were Communist. . . . One such person, for instance, is Father Cronin [of the National Catholic Welfare Conference] down in Washington, and there are others. . . . Another such . . . would be Eddie Cantor. *It is in a sense like a court taking judicial notice of the fact that we don't know personally Eddie Cantor, but we know what he does stand for. We happen to know Father Cronin personally, and we know what he stands for* [emphasis mine—M. M.; neither Father Cronin nor Eddie Cantor is listed in *Red Channels*].

**QUESTION:** Let's take Eleanor Roosevelt. . . . As far as organizations are concerned, she has [belonged] to many at one time or another. She is also on television and every day on the radio. Why not Eleanor Roosevelt?

**BIERLY:** Eleanor Roosevelt and Paul Robeson, for instance, are two that might have been in *Red Channels*. Robeson is not [either]. The same rule, practically, applies to both.

Her [Mrs. Roosevelt's] activities are a matter of general knowledge. She has very vigorously condemned the Communists, but

<sup>5</sup>According to the October 22, 1951, issue of *Sponsor* magazine, in an interview with one of the trade publication's editors, Mr. Keenan "spoke mockingly of the civil liberties line and all that stuff."

at the same time I think it is pretty generally known that she has acted as a sponsor of many Communist organizations or causes.

Applying the same thing to Paul Robeson . . . he could be classified as just as much of a radio personality as Mrs. Roosevelt could. . . . Here is a fellow who is well known, whose actions are well known and pretty well understood, the subject of a special report and inquiry in Washington before the Un-American Activities Committee and all the press throughout the land.

*Just as a jurist would, I think, take judicial notice of who Mrs. Roosevelt is, I think in a sense he would take judicial notice of who Paul Robeson is, if his name should happen to come up in a trial. We did not feel that any useful purpose would be served by including their names because of that [emphasis mine—M. M.].*

QUESTION: How about the less well-known persons, the ones about whom you didn't know?

BIERLY: In some cases, as you know from *Red Channels*, we have indicated that they have done some specific anti-Communist thing.

QUESTION: Am I wrong in thinking only two, Alfred Drake and John Garfield?

BIERLY: That's right.

Among those of whom the editors did not take "judicial notice" and the listing of whose names apparently did, in the minds of the publishers of *Red Channels*, "serve some useful purpose" are writers, actors, producers, and others in radio and television publicly branded in *The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television* because:

They publicly backed Loyalist Spain more than ten years ago, protested anti-Semitism in Germany, contributed to Russian War Relief, opposed Jim Crow in baseball, lent their names to the campaign against Republican Congressman Frederic Coudert of Manhattan, sponsored or attended a dinner in support of Mead and Lehman in the 1946 elections, signed petitions against the Dies Committee and its successors in the investigation of un-American activities, wrote a book which was selected by or even favorably mentioned by the Book Find Club, asked that no more

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scrap iron or oil be sent to Japan before the Second World War, wrote for, spoke, or entertained at a rally applauded by the *Daily Worker*, the *People's World* (West Coast Communist-sponsored newspaper), or the now defunct *New Masses*, or even wrote or appeared on a radio or television program which happened to be praised in a Communist publication.

One writer is listed because, in addition to writing a skit for a rally on the H-bomb, he refused to create a documentary "exposing Communism in the schools and churches." At the time, the writer reports, he had just returned from Germany, and the news of the Peekskill riots, which had occurred during his absence, shocked him. He wanted to do a documentary on Peekskill instead.

Here again Mr. Kirkpatrick is mistaken about *Red Channels*. The writer's refusal to expose "Communism in the schools and churches" had never been "printed or published before." It was made on what was presumably a private telephone conversation with the program chairman of the organization sponsoring the proposed broadcast.

## WHAT ABOUT CHECKING?

None of the information in *Red Channels* was checked with the persons involved. "As a matter of fact," according to Bierly, "we have felt that in that particular respect we have been more like a magazine than a newspaper. Whereas it is a common practice in the newspaper field to get statements from both sides on any controversial matter, in magazine writing, such as in *Plain Talk*, that is not the custom nor the routine, and it hasn't been with us at *Counterattack*."

This reporter was never a contributor to *Plain Talk* but he has, for some time now, made a major part of his income by writing for magazines; he has never yet been told by a magazine editor to report only one side of any controversial matter.

However, as Kirkpatrick put it in an interview with Ted Poston, a reporter for the *New York Post*:

"We made no effort to talk to any of these people before we published the book. . . . But any of these people can feel free

to come here to me and my associates and convince us that a mistake has been made or give us reasons why they should not be listed *after* they have read *Red Channels* [emphasis Poston's]."

On the other hand, in complaining that the New York *Herald Tribune* had misquoted him in an editorial, Kirkpatrick declared, "It is deplorable that a respectable newspaper such as the *Herald Tribune* based its editorial on an inaccurate interpretation of an article without interviewing *me* on this particular subject [emphasis again Poston's]."

RED CHANNELS, PART III, ALPHABETICAL INDEX  
OF ORGANIZATIONS

LEE MORTIMER, COLUMNIST, *Sunday Mirror*, OCTOBER 15, 1950

"The beauty of these publications [reports of the California Committee on Un-American Activities, popularly known as the Tenney Committee—M. M.] is that the citations may be repeated or republished without fear of civil or criminal action, because they are the official reports of a legislative body, issued under the imprint of the State, and thus are privileged."

Of the 319 citations (labeling organizations and publications "Communist or Communist fronts") on pages 161 through 213 of *Red Channels*, 124 are originally from the reports of the California Committee on Un-American Activities. There is, of course, considerable overlapping; many of the organizations cited have been named by several investigative bodies and by successive Attorney Generals.

Curiously, however, in eight cases the newsletter published by American Business Consultants, *Counterattack*, is the only source given for listing the organization. For instance, the Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy and the Committee of One Thousand are "reported as" front groups. Why? *Counterattack* said they were.<sup>9</sup> Conversely, when *Counterattack* now denounces a person, often the sole reason given for the condemnation is that, as is explained in a footnote, he is "Listed in *Red Channels*." It is as if the *Daily Worker* labeled a group as "Fascist" and used as

<sup>9</sup>The Attorney General has listed the former group as "subversive," but this is not mentioned in *Red Channels*.

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its only proof the fact that the organization had been called "Fascist" in, say, *Mainstream and Masses*. The practice is not common in reputable publications.

In four cases in *Red Channels* no reason at all is given for listing the groups involved.

The complete breakdown of sources is as follows:

In addition to the California Committee's citations, the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities, 66; former Attorney General Clark's list of "subversive organizations," 36; the Massachusetts Committee on Un-American Activities, 21; former Attorney General Biddle's report on "subversive groups" as printed in the Congressional Record (1942), 18; the Thomas Committee (one of the successors to the Dies group), 13; the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Counsel report before the reviewing board of the Philadelphia County Board of Assistance, 9; a special subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, 9; the New York City Council Committee investigating the Municipal Civil Service Commission, 9; *Counterattack*, 8; the Rapp-Coudert Committee Report (1942), 6.

It must not be supposed, however, that the editors of *Red Channels* went in each case to the primary source for the citations involved. In the introduction to Part III the editors note that, "Unless otherwise indicated," the organizations and publications mentioned "are listed in 'Citations by Official Government Agencies of Organizations and Publications Found to be Communist or Communist Fronts' prepared and released by the Committee on Un-American Activities, U. S. House of Representatives, December 18, 1948."

Moreover, with the exception of the eight citations from *Counterattack* itself, all of the material printed on pages 161 through 213 of the report also appears in the Fifth Report of the Un-American Activities Committee in California—1949; in the 124 citations mentioned above, the California group has simply quoted its own earlier reports.

In other words, fifty-two pages of *Red Channels*, almost a fourth of the whole, comes from a report issued in 1949 by the California Committee. In several instances, errors in punctuation



and spelling in the California report are repeated in *Red Channels*. And those four organizations listed in *Red Channels* without documentation to show why they are considered "un-American" are listed only by name in the California report, too. In a few cases *Red Channels* has dropped a sentence or two from the California Committee's documentation, but that may have been for reasons of space.

#### WHAT ABOUT THE TENNEY COMMITTEE?

Since the editors of *Red Channels* have relied so extensively on the reports of the California Committee on Un-American Activities, it seems appropriate to examine the reputation of that group, which is not well known outside the state in which it has operated.

A few of the published comments on its activities follow:

#### SAN FRANCISCO *Chronicle*, A REPUBLICAN NEWSPAPER

A Communist is any  
Who disagrees with Tenney.

After Tenney's resignation from the committee chairmanship the *Chronicle* commented:

"Anyone who was in favor of overthrowing Tenney, as distinguished from overthrowing the government, was likely to be hauled up and smeared by inquisition and innuendo. His methods have done more damage to the cause of intelligently combating Communism than almost any other influence in California."

#### LOS ANGELES *Daily News*

". . . This newspaper's objections to Jack B. Tenney's 'Operation Un-American' is that it knits together signs, symbols and good progressive citizens to form a wholly erroneous public conception—a conception that every organization working for reform or change or betterment is honeycombed with disciples of Karl Marx.

"The effect of producing such an image in the public mind is two fold: (1) It brings disrepute to the forces of progressivism and (2) It frightens many progressive citizens who are not Communists but who don't like to be branded and ostracized and

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thereby discourages them from joining organizations working for the public good."

Of the 1948 Tenney Committee report, the *Daily News* added:

". . . While naming a number of Communists in various parts of the state—characters who are obviously up to no good—State Senator Jack B. Tenney seems to have taken pains to bracket with these known Reds a great number of well-meaning, well-intentioned and certainly non-Communist citizens."

Of the 1949 Tenney Committee report (so heavily relied on by *Red Channels*), John A. Despol, secretary-treasurer of the California-National CIO-PAC, said in a telegram to the then committee chairman:

"As one who has fought the reactionary Communist Party for the last sixteen years, I resent your attempts to publicly link such eminent patriotic citizens as Frank Sinatra, Congressman Helen Gahagan Douglas and others who have fought to correct conditions that Communists feed upon with those persons such as Philip Connelly and his wife, Dorothy Hanley, an admitted Communist Party official, who actually move in the Communist orbit. . . . When you stop mixing anti-Communist liberals with fellow travelers and secret members of the Communist Party we shall be able to successfully expose and isolate the Communist Party from the American political scene. . . ."

Even *Counterattack* has, on at least one occasion, criticized the Tenney Committee. In the issue of March 5, 1948, the newsletter declared:

"DO YOU WANT TO HELP THE COMMUNISTS? There's one sure way of doing so. It is to call people Communists who aren't. If you're a member of an investigating committee, this is a perfect recipe for DISCREDITING your work and making enemies for it instead of friends [emphasis that of *Counterattack*].

"Calif Un-American Activities Committee has done a lot of good, especially in its Hollywood investigation. But lately it got off the beam when it gave the impression that the National Farm Labor Union is Communist-controlled. This is a small A.F.L.

union that has been conducting a long strike at the big DiGeorgio farm, near Bakersfield. . . . This union is strongly ANTI-Communist. It bars Communists, Fascists and Kluxers from membership. It not only says this but DOES it.

"Another organization that has been MISLABELED is National Sharecroppers Fund. . . . Its sec-treas. and main officer, Alfred Baker Lewis, is one of the most tireless anti-Communists in the country. *Tenney plays into Communists' hands when he makes wrong charges* [emphasis here is mine—M. M.]."

In one of the interviews with the American Civil Liberties Union, Kirkpatrick was asked: "Do you consider the Tenney Committee an accurate source generally?"

"Our answer to that," Kirkpatrick replied, "would have to be certainly not one hundred per cent accurate because in *Counter-attack* we criticized the Tenney Committee on at least one or two instances for citing an organization as a front which we knew was not. I personally have spoken to Tenney himself about fighting the ACLU as a front. *But, needless to say, we would not have used the Tenney Committee as a source or as a citation if we ourselves felt that in those particular instances Tenney was in error.*"

Jack Tenney, the long-time head of the California Committee, was first elected to the state legislature in 1936 on the Democratic ticket.<sup>7</sup>

At the time, Tenney, a former professional piano player and song writer ("Mexicali Rose" was his most popular composition), accepted left-wing support and was openly critical of "so-called investigations into un-American Activities." In August 1938, at a meeting of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, he opened his speech by saying, "Fellow subversive elements, I have just heard that Mickey Mouse is conspiring with Shirley Temple to overthrow the government and that there is a witness who has seen the 'red' card of Donald Duck. . . . When the Dies Committee

<sup>7</sup>Most of the information in this section comes from a book, *The Tenney Committee, Legislative Investigation of Subversive Activities in California*, by Edward L. Barrett, Jr., published by the Cornell University Press.

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stoops to calling President Roosevelt a Communist and says that Mrs. Roosevelt is a front for subversive elements, then I think the rest of us should be flattered to be put in that category." However, Tenney's point of view soon changed (some say because of a dispute with left-wingers in his local of the American Federation of Musicians). In early 1941 when the Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities in California (once known as the "Little Dies Committee") was set up, Tenney gladly became its first chairman.

The committee was continued every two years until 1947. That year there was considerable opposition in the lower house, partly because of a report in which the committee had accused two assemblymen of links with Communist fronts. Thus, in 1947 Tenney introduced a resolution to continue the committee only in the upper house, which was done. However, the opposition to the group and its methods increased both in the legislature and in the press throughout the state. The *Fresno Bee*, which at one time had supported the committee, said, "It has shouted wolf so often and so long when no wolves could be seen that people have lost confidence in its warning cries."

In 1949, Tenney and two other members of the committee were allowed to resign. According to the *New York Times*, Tenney then said that the Communist Party had used him as "a target to obscure factual and shocking findings."

"The new committee under new leadership" would, he predicted, "confuse them [the Communists]. They will have to re-aim their smear artillery." In 1949, Tenney also had been a candidate for mayor of the city of Los Angeles; he finished fourth in a field of nine candidates, despite the vehement support of, among others, Ed Gibbons, editor of *Alert*, a West Coast anti-Communist newsletter strikingly similar to *Counterattack*. Gibbons, who often quotes his sister newsletter, in one issue of *Alert* declared that only those who accepted and supported the (Tenney) Committee's methods of fighting Communism were themselves "free from the Communist taint." (N.B. Gibbons is authoritatively reported to have written part of the 1948 committee report and all of the one issued in 1949; both jobs are said to have been

done for substantial fees. However, this allegation could not be verified.)

As for the techniques used by the committee during Tenney's chairmanship, Mr. Barrett has this to say in his book: " 'Friendly' witnesses were led by committee counsel through their stories. Individuals named by such witnesses or their counsel were not permitted to cross-examine the witnesses or otherwise test their credibility and the sources of their information. The committee itself did not supply a substitute for cross-examination by close questioning of the 'friendly' witnesses. Instead of being asked embarrassing questions such witnesses were treated as great patriots and friends of their country and encouraged to 'tell all.' Testimony presented under such circumstances, as every lawyer knows, provides a highly unreliable basis for any rational finding of facts."

In all, the committee published five formal reports totaling 2241 pages. The sources of its information included data from its own investigators, information from the House Un-American Activities Committee and other state and federal investigative groups, its own files, and letterheads, circulars, pamphlets, and left-wing publications such as the *Daily Worker*, *New Masses*, and the West Coast Party-line newspaper, *People's Daily World*.

According to Mr. Barrett, "Private anti-Communist publications, such as *Alert* and *Counterattack* have made extensive use of the material in the reports as have veterans and other patriotic and service organizations. All such private organizations have quoted from the reports in the belief, not yet finally tested, that the legislative immunity from liability extends to those who quote the legislative documents."

#### THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

JUSTICE ROBERT H. JACKSON, AS QUOTED IN *The Loyalty of Free Men*,

BY ALAN BARTH

"If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein."

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As their second most important source of information on organizations and publications that are "Communist or Communist fronts," the editors of *Red Channels* have relied on the reports of the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

By now, almost every literate American is surely familiar with the techniques used by that committee; before the present group, which, by comparison, has been strikingly unhysterical, the committee was never notably judicious in its methods.

There are those who consider the methods justifiable, and even many who formerly were inclined to be critical of the committee now believe that its exposure of certain subversive activities, particularly in the now famous case involving Whittaker Chambers and Alger Hiss, more than make up for occasional excesses.

Others, particularly those concerned with civil liberties, feel that the House Committee has done considerably more harm than good, that its sixty-odd reports and its files (used both by government and by private employers), containing more than a million names of Americans, constitute a serious threat to this country's democracy despite the considerably more judicious methods used by the current committee.

In his book *The Loyalty of Free Men*, Alan Barth, an editorial writer for the *Washington Post*, has this to say:

"The members of this body [the committee], like the men who conducted the medieval inquisition, were chosen as judges to determine the existence of heresy and to extirpate it. They identified loyalty with orthodoxy and perfected techniques for the extra-legal punishment of all who questioned their dogma.

"No committee in the history of the United States Congress has ever been accorded so vague an assignment and so elastic a definition of its domain. Nothing is foreign to it, nothing is deemed beyond its competence. . . .

"A great deal has been said and written about the manner in which the committee . . . conducts its business. Numerous attempts have been made to correct its commonly acknowledged excesses by reforming its procedures. But the real defect lies deeper than this. It is an incurable debt. It is rooted in the purpose

for which the committee was created and in the concept that Congress may properly punish, by publicity, activities which it cannot constitutionally declare criminal."

The officers of American Business Consultants do not agree.

"We," Kirkpatrick says, "have always been friendly with the House Committee on Un-American Activities." What's more, both in *Counterattack* and in *Red Channels* the three former FBI agents have used the House group's reports without question.

#### THE DAILY WORKER

ROBERT LAUTER, RADIO COLUMNIST, *Daily Worker*

"Now here is a sentence I'm inserting in *The Daily Worker*. The editors of *Counterattack* have done inestimable service to the Communist Party and to the cause of Socialism.

"This is, of course rot—but just suppose some unprincipled publishing rival were to extract this sentence from this column and send it to all the NAM subscribers to *Counterattack*."

AT THE RADIO EXECUTIVES CLUB, OCTOBER 19, 1950

QUESTION: Doesn't the *Daily Worker* sometimes use people's names without their permission?

KIRKPATRICK: I have never known this to happen.

JACK TURCOTT OF THE NEW YORK *Daily News*

QUESTION: Mr. Kirkpatrick, I have tried to subscribe to *Counterattack*. I file all its issues. I read it very carefully, and for more than three years I have been reading in *Counterattack* that Communists cannot be trusted, that they are devious, that they are full of intrigue and so forth. And yet you can sit there and tell us that you take things out of the *Daily Worker* and do not check them and print them?

ON THE RADIO PROGRAM, REPORTERS' ROUNDUP, SEPTEMBER 14, 1950

KIRKPATRICK: When names are printed in the *Daily Worker*, it's presumed that those names are checked before they're printed; otherwise, that person has recourse to the *Daily Worker* [emphasis mine—M. M.].

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Ireene Wicker, quoting Kirkpatrick: "He said to me, 'The *Daily Worker* is very accurate. They never make a mistake.'"

*Red Channels*, PAGE 209

"*Daily Worker* 1. The chief journalistic mouthpiece of the Communist Party . . . founded in response to direct instructions from the Communist International in Moscow. . . . The first issue of The *Daily Worker* appeared on January 13, 1924. . . . No other paper or publication of any kind in all American history has ever been loaded with such a volume of subversive, seditious, and treasonable utterances as has this organ of the American Communists.

"(Special Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, March 29, 1944; pp. 59 and 60; also cited in Reports, January 3, 1939, p. 30; January 3, 1940, p. 7; January 8, 1941, p. 14; and June 25, 1942, p. 4.)"

In more than fifty instances in *Red Channels*, the *Daily Worker* is used as a source when a listee is "reported as" having attended a rally, signed a petition, supported a candidate for office, written a book which the Party apparently thought (or was ordered to think) commendable, or having made or produced a broadcast or television program praised in the Communist Party daily.

Although this investigator checked only about half of the citations, he is inclined to think that, in most cases, the person involved was indeed mentioned in the *Worker*.

As for a program or a piece of writing praised by the Party newspaper, there is nothing a writer or performer can do about that—disastrous as such praise may prove to be.

However, five *Red Channels* listees did say that they had not attended the particular meeting mentioned in the *Worker* in two cases, had not signed the petition cited, had not sponsored the cause listed. In each case the reporter checked the issue of the *Daily Worker* mentioned in *Red Channels*. In each the person was named "as reported." None of the five listees would protest the error made, deliberately or otherwise, by the *Worker* either to the Communist publication or, despite his standing and urgent invitation, to Mr. Kirkpatrick. One of the five said, half seriously,



"That would just give some more promotion to the *Worker* and American Business Consultants." Another will probably bring a libel suit against the latter.

Thus, in these five cases at least, the *Worker* was not, as Kirkpatrick insists it invariably is, "meticulously accurate when it records names of people belonging to its 'front' groups." (*Sponsor*, October 22, 1951.)

As for forcing a retraction from the *Worker*, that is difficult if not impossible. One listee tried it; after five telephone calls over a six-week period, the error remained uncorrected. It was only when the performer's attorney threatened legal action that the Communist daily printed a one-line correction.

Besides, many persons named in the Party newspaper at one time or another are not necessarily among its regular readers. Thus they often don't even know they have been so named. Irene Wicker, for example, has said that she was not aware that her name had been listed in the *Worker* as being a sponsor of the Committee for the Re-election of Benjamin J. Davis until the appearance of her name in *Red Channels*; when her attorney failed to uncover her name on the lengthy list of some 30,000 nominating Mr Davis for office, he forced a retraction from the *Daily Worker*. Miss Wicker's name will not be included in any future editions of *Red Channels*, if any. But, so far as "The Singing Lady's" career is concerned, that may not matter. Despite her official "clearance" in *Counterattack*, Miss Wicker, a veteran of more than twenty-five years, is no longer seen on television or heard on the air.

In the case that follows, not involving a *Red Channels* listee, the entertainer involved discovered that his name had been used in the Communist newspaper through an in-law, one of the editors of the anti-Communist weekly, the *New Leader*, in the offices of which the *Worker* is regularly read—and as often attacked.

The entertainer is the jazz orchestra leader and composer, Duke Ellington.

In its issue of May 27, 1950, the *Daily Worker* reported that

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Ellington had signed the Communist-inspired Stockholm "peace petition." The statement was repeated in the *Worker* on August 25 and 27.

What had happened, according to Mr. Ellington, was that while he was in Stockholm, writing music for a forthcoming musical, an anonymous young man came to the hotel in which he was working and asked him to sign something which the orchestra leader later assumed to be the "peace petition." The Duke refused. Nevertheless, after his return to the States, he found, through his informant on the *New Leader*, that his name had been publicized as a signer of the petition. He immediately demanded a retraction.

The following account of the aftermath comes from the *New Leader* of September 30, 1950:

"Just before press time, *The New Leader* sent a staff member to the 'Peace Information Center' on Broadway and West 11th Street, headquarters of the Stockholm movement, and he was able to pick up three different pieces of Communist literature, each bearing the name of Duke Ellington. At the same time, he questioned the woman in charge at the Center.

"'Didn't Mr. Ellington repudiate the use of his name by you?'

"'Yes,' replied the woman. 'Using his name was an error on our part. An error in transmission.'

"'Why hasn't Mr. Ellington's name been removed since the error has been discovered?' our reporter inquired.

"'We will remove it,' the woman said, 'after we use up the literature in print. There are a number of errors there.' She pointed to the stacks of leaflets on a long table, 'but we can't print up new stuff every time we find an error.'"

The *New Leader* concluded that ". . . It had not occurred to the Communist defamers that, having made an error, they were morally obligated to correct it instantaneously. What does it matter if, as a result of continuing to disseminate a lie, thousands will believe that lie? And thousands will continue to associate the name of a great artist with an ignominious cause?"

Later, after Ellington threatened suit, his name was removed from the literature.

## THE PROBLEM OF "CLEARANCE"

AN AGENT, SPEAKING OF ONE OF HIS CLIENTS, AN ACTRESS LISTED IN *Red Channels*

"Sure, they've 'cleared' her all right, but I still can't sell her. At the agencies they say all people will remember is that she's been in some kind of trouble and the trouble had something to do with Communism. That's enough."

In his column heralding the publication of *Red Channels*, Ed Sullivan, columnist for the New York *Daily News*, wrote:

"Kirkpatrick has sat in my living room, on several occasions, and listened attentively to performers eager to secure a certification of loyalty. On some occasions, after interviewing them, he has given them the green light; on other occasions, he has told them: 'Veterans organizations will insist on further proof' [emphasis mine—M. M.]."

Mr. Sullivan, who in addition to being a columnist is master of ceremonies on a weekly television program on the Columbia television network and, more recently, also an officer of Columbia, could not be reached by this investigator. In more than a month Mr. Sullivan did not reply to uncounted telephone calls or to letters asking for an interview to verify the statement concerning Kirkpatrick made in his column.

When asked about the accuracy of the Sullivan statement, Kirkpatrick said: "Well, I feel quite sure it is accurate insofar as his interpretation of the word 'clearing' is concerned. My interpretation of the word 'clear' or 'clearance' is different. On one occasion that I can recall he [Sullivan] told me that he had discussed with this particular entertainer various aspects of quite a sizable Communist-front record going back several years. He said that he had discussed it with the entertainer and his agent, and he said that he was favorably impressed with the man; he seemed to be sincere and claimed that he had broken. He asked me if I would come over one day and sit down and discuss the matter with the three: Ed Sullivan, the entertainer, and his manager. As is our policy always in instances of that type, I agreed to talk to the man. . . . The result, I would say, was not conclusive at all.

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There were no opinions drawn. I was interested in talking to him. I, too, was quite well impressed with him. He seemed sincere. Among other things, he admitted that he had been a Communist Party member up to, I think, three years prior to the time we talked. . . . I wasn't asked by Ed Sullivan, 'May I use this man or may I not?' If I had been asked, I certainly wouldn't have expressed an opinion one way or another. . . . But we had been asked by Ed Sullivan previous to this conversation what was in our files on individuals, and we had always given him factually what we had. If he asked us to interpret the nature of some of the affiliations, we were glad to do so, but we never expressed an opinion.

"In other words, I think undoubtedly he honestly considered it clearance because he had cleared through our files, but I wouldn't consider it clearance in my definition of the word."

QUESTION: Did you mention veterans' organizations, as he said in his column?

KIRKPATRICK: This *one* discussion I referred to in his apartment, I do recall having made some mention of veterans' organizations.

From the time of the Jean Muir incident on, the interpretation of "clearance" has continued to plague the editors of *Red Channels*. There has always been considerable confusion as to the precise meaning of the word.

For instance, on the Tex and Jinx NBC radio program on September 30, 1950, Kirkpatrick was asked by Tex McCrary, "Is there any way in which people listed in *Red Channels* can be cleared through *Counterattack*?"

Kirkpatrick replied, "Yes, positively so."

On the other hand, on September 11, 1950, Kirkpatrick had, in a letter to the editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, written, "I should like to make it very clear that no one including myself has a right to 'absolve' or 'condone' anyone of Communist leanings. . . . I have never said that I have that right. . . ." A *Tribune* editorial had stated that Kirkpatrick had been "quoted as announcing that none whom he suspects will be absolved until they come to him with positive proof of their innocence."

In an article in *Editor and Publisher* that same week, the following appeared: "How does a name get off the list? Mr. Kirkpatrick declared listed persons must prove to his organization that they are not Communists or fellow-travelers. Public denial, he insisted, would have to be accompanied by active work in behalf of 'pro-American organizations.'" (At one time or another Kirkpatrick has—according to this reporter's possibly incomplete records—mentioned three such groups, the American Legion, Americans for Democratic Action, and the American Civil Liberties Union.)

In its issue of September 13, 1950, *Counterattack* declared that, owing to "the failure to check facts and non-objective reporting," the Communist Party had been "helped" by, among other periodicals, "the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, *New York Post*, *Washington Star*, and *Time Magazine*."

Under the heading, "THE TRUTH," the newsletter added, "TED KIRKPATRICK has never made a statement, or hinted that he intended to 'police the airwaves.' He has never said, or implied, that anyone mentioned in RED CHANNELS must come to him for clearance or to be 'absolved' . . . or that he will prescribe what they must do to clear their names."

What's more, "Every paper and periodical in the U.S. which has printed any of these false statements, or implied them, has unjustly damaged the reputation of COUNTERATTACK and has directly aided the Communist Party."

In one of the ACLU interviews Keenan said, "Here we don't clear anybody. We don't claim that we have the right or the privilege to do it. But after the hullabaloo of *Red Channels* and the Korean War following after that and all this hodgepodge and mess we felt that we had laid an egg that was a bombshell and in all fairness to some people who possibly could have been hurt, we decided to do what we thought was the fair thing. That is what we did. There was nothing else we could have done."

Kirkpatrick added in a statement to *Sponsor*, ". . . We've never said the 'facts' in *Red Channels* were correct or incorrect. We've just reported from the public records. Anyway, we've published in *Counterattack* dozens of statements from talent claiming the

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records were wrong. People like Meg Mundy, Irene Wicker, Samson Raphaelson, Tom Glazer, and Josh White. Ethically, we could have refused to print their statements but we bend over backwards to be fair."

Francis McNamara, the editor of *Counterattack*, told a reporter from *Sponsor* magazine, "You should see the big act some of them put on in this very office. It's a panic to hear them! Those acts that we consider obviously fake, without the people showing us proper affidavits, we don't print their statements."

In view of the seemingly contradictory statements made by the officials of American Business Consultants, it is not surprising that considerable confusion exists in the minds of *Red Channels* listees as to just what a person can do if his name happens to be included among the 151. A handful did go to the offices of American Business Consultants to "explain" their positions. In several issues following the Jean Muir incident the newsletter reported on such interviews, together with examples of anti-Communist statements and actions taken by those involved.<sup>8</sup>

In one instance playwright-novelist Irwin Shaw was, without a personal talk, given credit for a "definite anti-Communist action." Shaw in a letter to the drama section of the *New York Times* had announced that he would no longer allow "any groups or persons" to produce his anti-war play, *Bury the Dead*. He stated, "It is to balk these double-tongued gentlemen [the Soviet leaders] with whatever small means at my disposal, that I have withdrawn my play." *Counterattack* added, however, that it was not passing "judgment on IRWIN SHAW any more than it did when it listed him in RED CHANNELS. It is up to the public to judge his case."

Several times, both in public statements and in the newsletter, the editors of *Red Channels* have suggested that performers appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities to clarify their positions. In the middle of the controversy over Jean Muir, Josh White did so. So, as indicated earlier, did Hazel Scott.

However, a short while later such appearances stopped abruptly. Congressman John S. Wood, chairman of the committee,

<sup>8</sup>For an account of the "clearance" of the singer Lena Horne, see page 185.

declared that his group was unable to hear "any and all persons" accused of Communism. Wood said he wanted to make it clear that the "committee's hearing records are closed to any proffered anti-Communist statements from showfolk mentioned in *Red Channels* unless their names had also been mentioned in testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee."

Wood added, "Under existing or proposed statutes, there is no federal body, other than courts of law, for publicly and officially processing formal denials to charges of Communism hurled from any and all quarters."

Moreover, even if such appearances had been possible, many would not, on ethical grounds, have made what one listee disdainfully called "a public confession" before the House Committee. Another large group felt, with justice, as has been proved in the case of (to give only one recent example) Larry Parks, that any additional publicity given their names in connection with accusations of Communism would have a harmful effect. Mr. Parks's testimony that he was once a Communist has been praised by House Committee members; however, the Veterans of Foreign Wars threatened a national boycott of any future pictures he might make, and his contract with Columbia Pictures has been canceled.

Except for that handful of listees who agreed to a personal interview with Kirkpatrick, those listed in *The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television* had no way of "clearing themselves." Many others with whom this reporter talked said they would consider a talk with any one of the three former FBI men both undignified and personally demeaning. Besides, as was the case with the actress mentioned at the beginning of this section, there is no guarantee that the report of such a conversation in *Counterattack* would, as another listee put it, "Make me clean again."

"The damage," he went on, "has already been done. It was done on June 22 of last year [1950] when my name appeared in that book. Now it's there for all time. Besides, I don't want to have anything to do with pygmies playing God."

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### WHY NOT SUE?

In recent months five suits for libel asking total damages of more than \$2,000,000 have been brought against American Business Consultants by Ralph Bell, a radio actor; Pert Kelton, Bell's wife and a radio and television actress herself; Selena Royle, who has appeared on radio, on the stage, and in the movies; Joe Julian, a radio actor, and Allan Sloane, a radio and TV writer.

The outcome of the libel action will not, of course, be known for many months.

When Fredric March and his actress wife, Florence Eldridge, sued *Counterattack* for \$500,000, the case was settled out of court, after almost twenty-one months of legal skirmishing. The total cost to the Marches was more than \$50,000, not including the loss of time and income.

From being one of the highest-paid and hardest-working acting teams in the country, March and his wife, according to the actor, in 1948 (following the repeated denunciations in *Counterattack*) filed a joint return on an income of \$2.58.

In the issue of *Counterattack* dated December 23, 1949, the following statement was printed:

"Fredric March and his wife, Florence Eldridge March, *Condemn Communist Despotism in Stalinist Russia*: Up to a couple of years or so ago, they publicly supported a number of organizations, some of which are now included in the lists of organizations which the United States Attorney General has declared subversive and totalitarian. Because March and his wife were prominent in such groups, *Counterattack* said they were Communists. This charge the Marches vehemently denied. Their position is now clear. They pointed out they supported these organizations from which they resigned from patriotic and humanitarian motives. The same motives that led the Marches to contribute towards an ambulance for Finland during its war with Russia in 1939. The same motives that led Fredric March to volunteer his services to the USO during World War II when he traveled over 35,000 miles to entertain our troops. Their position is best stated in their own sworn testimony and their testimony is quoted—'We are not, have never been and do not intend to



become Communists. We are not members of any Fascist group and we oppose totalitarianism, be it Communism or Fascism. We condemn the Russian regime and its agent, the Communist Party of the United States, as a totalitarian system, and we condemn the totalitarian practices of their leader, Joseph Stalin. We believe deeply in the Constitution of the United States and in our system of government. We believe we can best protect our way of life by endeavoring through legislation to constantly improve our society and to gradually correct existing injustices. We believe in the system of free enterprise, but we also believe that it can best survive if men will search their hearts to determine where freedom ends and license begins. We shall continue in the future as we have in the past to try to preserve our democracy by exposing and attempting to eradicate its weaknesses and by extolling and practicing its virtues. Because we believe that if we live democracy, we need fear no other ideology.’”

The Marches have since made a few television appearances; they played leading roles in Lillian Hellman's *The Autumn Garden* both in New York and on the road, and Mr. March was Willy Loman in the much-praised film version of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

However, for at least six months after the appearance in *Counterattack* of the statement quoted above, the demand for the couple's services could, according to March, "be counted on the fingers of one hand, with a finger or two left over." And, their agent has said, "There are still some people [employers in radio and television] who don't remember exactly what happened, who just remember there were some charges made and some kind of a lawsuit. Why, I could name half a dozen places that are still afraid of using Florence and Freddie."

#### AND WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

Meantime, American Business Consultants continues in its private "advisory" capacity to business, and the newsletter *Counterattack* is published weekly. According to Kirkpatrick, "The rate of renewal [of subscriptions] is very high."

When asked (in a series of questions submitted by the inves-

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tigator in writing), "Are there to be addenda to *Red Channels*?" the answer was, "Not contemplated at the present time."

QUESTION: Is there to be a West Coast *Red Channels* [on the movie industry]?

ANSWER: We don't know.

QUESTION: If so, will the techniques for selecting the names be the same?

ANSWER: If there is one, there probably will be no fundamental change, although we can't predict what unforeseen circumstances may arise to alter our policy.

QUESTION: Is there to be a *Red Channels* of Broadway?

ANSWER: None contemplated at present.

QUESTION: Are there to be *Red Channels* on other industries?

ANSWER: We don't know, but we do know there should be.

QUESTION: Do you consider *Red Channels* a success?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Specifically, what do you think *Red Channels* has accomplished on the credit side?

ANSWER: It has made the public more aware and actors and actresses in the industry more aware that there has been a definite plan by the Communists to infiltrate the industry for their own purpose. Also, there is evidence that *Red Channels* has discouraged many actors and artists from lending their names to Communist fronts and causes.

QUESTION: Do you think there have been any debits so far as *Red Channels* is concerned?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: Would Ted Kirkpatrick still say, as he did before the Radio Executives Club, that not one mistake has been pointed out in *Red Channels* since its publication?

ANSWER: Yes, to our knowledge no one has yet pointed out a *fundamental* error of fact [emphasis mine—M. M.]. As in most publications, some minor typographical errors have been discovered.

As for the future of American Business Consultants, when Kenneth Bierly was asked, "When will you be ready to close up shop?" he replied:

"We have had a little discussion on that point and our feeling

is that probably we are going to be closing up shop when this hot war becomes a livid war.

"The point is that soon it is going to be purely a matter of the government and there would be no reason for a privately constituted organization.

"In other words, the closer we get to war, the closer we get to closing up shop."

Since then, however, Mr. Bierly has changed his mind about a number of things. He and American Business Consultants have parted company in a manner which, Mr. Bierly has said, "You couldn't exactly call friendly." Bierly has moved his office to a West Fortieth Street address and has set up a new organization called "Kenby Associates." Among Mr. Bierly's clients is a rather substantial one, Columbia Pictures.

His job, as he puts it, "is partly to get people out of the trouble that *Red Channels* got them into."

Bierly, who now describes himself as "the most left of the three of us," feels that Keenan "was more the businessman and was certainly the most right-wing of us" and that Kirkpatrick was "kind of in the middle, whichever way the wind was blowing."

As for *Red Channels*, Bierly is at present convinced that "It has been used in many frightening ways that I am against. I don't think I've changed my position. . . . It's just that now I feel it's being used to keep innocent people out of jobs, and it shouldn't be. I'm against that."

When asked whether he felt that *Red Channels* does constitute a black list, Bierly replied, "It has had a bad effect, a very bad effect, and you can quote me on that. You can't possibly make my position too strong in saying that I'm against that kind of thing."

His first job for Columbia Pictures was to "clear up the confusion about Judy Holliday," a *Red Channels* listee who had frequently been denounced in *Counterattack* as well. Shortly after the release of the movie version of *Born Yesterday*, Miss Holliday, who received an Academy Award for her performance, was attacked by several groups, including leaders of the Catholic War Veterans. At one point there was talk of a picket line wher-

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ever *Born Yesterday* was shown. Garson Kanin, the author, is also a *Red Channels* listee.

However, the picket line did not materialize; the protests against both Miss Holliday and the film soon died down.

"You might put it," said Mr. Bierly, "that I had something to do with getting the facts, the true facts, to the right people.

"You can say for me that Miss Holliday is not a Communist and never has been, and neither are a lot of other people in it."

By "it" Mr. Bierly referred to *Red Channels*.

## 5 . AND

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To a large degree, the actions of Ted Kirkpatrick, John Keenan, and, despite his recent change of heart, Kenneth Bierly have resulted in what an executive of the Columbia Broadcasting System has called "An undertaking that eventually may cost the industry fifty, maybe a hundred million dollars and God knows how many ulcers and gray hairs and broken hearts and shattered careers and suicides. Plus a lot of public respect—and good shows. The trouble with people who've never joined anything and therefore are 'safe' for us to use is that they usually aren't very good writers or actors or producers or, hell, human beings.

"But we're relying on mediocrities now, and the three boys on the flying trapeze are responsible. My God, it's straight out of Kafka, isn't it? These three gents have the whole damn industry stymied—three guys, count them."

Nevertheless, from the beginning the trio of former FBI men could always count on the help of at least three others, a housewife, a rabbi without a temple, and an editor. Since they also have played a major part in "stymieing" an entire industry, it seems important also to examine the activities of Mrs. John T. (Hester) McCullough, Rabbi Benjamin Schultz, and an editor named Karl Baarslag.

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### MRS. JOHN T. McCULLOUGH

It is not surprising that when, on August 26, 1950, Theodore C. Kirkpatrick learned that one of the *Red Channels* listees, Jean Muir, had been signed for an important television series, he should have thought first of calling Mrs. John T. (Hester) McCullough of Greenwich, Connecticut. For one thing, he was familiar with her point of view; for another, although a Connecticut resident, she was listed as a fellow member of Rabbi Schultz's Joint Committee Against Communism in New York.

Besides, Mrs. McCullough had just defended herself in a lengthy and widely publicized libel suit involving two other *Red Channels* listees.

In December 1948, a month before Paul Draper, the dancer, and Larry Adler, the harmonica player, were scheduled to appear before the Greenwich Community Concerts Association, Mrs. McCullough had protested to the association, and her comments were printed in the *Greenwich Time*. Both entertainers, she complained, had been described as "pro-Communist," and both then and later she attempted to document her point by listing a number of organizations to which they had belonged or still did belong. Her technique was strikingly similar to that later used in *Red Channels*.

Later, partly as a result of the publicity the McCullough letter received, Draper and Adler found the number of their engagements dropping rapidly (today neither can find any work in the United States), and a few months later they sued for libel, asking \$200,000 in damages.

On May 27, 1950, following a protracted trial, a jury of eight housewives and four men in Hartford, Connecticut, was dismissed after reluctantly reporting its inability to reach a verdict.<sup>1</sup>

When the Muir case came along Mrs. McCullough had not, she has said, "recovered from all that other trouble." She was, she declared, "exhausted, physically, and every other way, including financially." She had, during the trial, received some backing from admirers, "but not enough, not nearly enough."

<sup>1</sup>In October 1951 the libel action was dismissed by the federal court in New Haven since Draper and Adler did not ask for a retrial.

Although she was, as has been seen, extremely effective in the spectacularly successful telephone campaign which resulted in Miss Muir's dismissal, Mrs. McCullough a few days later apparently had a change of heart. She resigned from Rabbi SchuItz's Joint Committee (of which she told reporters she had not really understood she was a member), and she said, "General Foods should have been as respectful of Miss Muir's rights as they were of my rights in protesting."

Now in her mid-thirties, Mrs. McCullough was, until she became involved in the Draper-Adler suit, "just somebody who lives in Greenwich, but I guess you might say I was always on the lookout for Them [Communists]." Her husband is picture editor of *Time* magazine.

At present, however, she said, "in every place except Greenwich I'm appreciated for what I am." Much of the town has not taken kindly to the widespread press coverage given the Draper-Adler suit.

"Why," Mrs. McCullough told the investigator, "last week I went to a meeting on Long Island, and I had to stand up three times to take a bow. They knew who I was all right."

When she and her husband went to Hollywood to gather additional evidence for the Draper-Adler case, "Hedda Hopper took us to lunch at Romanoff's, and a lot of people came up to meet us, movie stars, I mean, important people like that, and all of them knew my name."

During the course of a full morning's interview with Mrs. McCullough, whose husband was also present, she spoke several times of "very, very talented singers and musicians," none of whom she named, "because they might get in trouble if I did," who could not appear on any American concert stage. "In fact, they just can't get jobs at all, even though they'd put some of the ones that are up there now to shame."

"Why?" she was asked.

"Pretty simple. They [the Communists] know these people are against them, and They won't let them perform. It's the same way in Hollywood. Lots of people who won't play along with the Party out there are starving to death, the best people, too.

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"Adolph Menjou, for instance. He hasn't worked since he appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee [in 1947]."<sup>2</sup>

Although, generally, Mrs. McCullough was not hopeful that we will make such progress against Them in the radio-television industry, she did feel that "we're making some headway on the West Coast." For instance, she said, one producer-writer told her that what he called the "McCullough Clause" is going in the contract for everybody working on his picture. She referred to a loyalty oath.

"He said he wished more of them would call it that, the McCullough Clause, I mean, just so everybody'd know who started this whole thing."

As for the Broadway theater, Mrs. McCullough reported that a few weeks earlier she had attended a production in which an old friend was playing.

"After the show, we went backstage to see him, but, do you know, I couldn't use my real name. The rest of the cast was all Communist, and he was afraid; he didn't know what would happen to him if They found out I was a friend of his. We just had to meet in a dark corner there. . . . Of course, most of these Broadway shows are run by the Communists, but can you imagine a thing like that happening in America?"

As she left the investigator at the Greenwich station to catch the train for New York, Mrs. McCullough said, "I haven't been at all active in the fight lately, but there is one man [and she named him] I'm going to get. He's on this quiz show, you know [and she named the program]. He's got a record a mile long, and he may think he's getting away with it, but he's not."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Among Menjou's movies since 1947 are *State of the Union* (1948), *My Dream Is Yours* (1949), *Dancing in the Dark* (1949), *To Please a Lady* (1950), etc. The actor has also been on several successful nationwide lecture tours; he has written a book since 1947, and he will soon be seen in the Stanley Kramer production of *The Sniper*.

<sup>3</sup>The entertainer mentioned by Mrs. McCullough has since been dropped from the program to which she referred; he no longer appears on either radio or television.



## RABBI BENJAMIN SCHULTZ

For more than twelve years Benjamin Schultz was rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in Yonkers. Except for a column he wrote for the *National Jewish Post*, Schultz was not well known outside Yonkers until October 1947 when he sprang into sudden prominence as the result of a series of three articles he wrote for the New York *World-Telegram*. The pieces, called "Communists Invade the Churches," purported to show the extent of Red infiltration into Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious organizations. Among others, the Schultz articles attacked the late Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. Rabbi Wise replied by calling Schultz "a professional and probably profiteering Communist baiter, unworthy to be a member, not to say a rabbi of a Jewish congregation."

Almost immediately, according to Schultz's statements at the time, the board of trustees of Temple Emanu-El asked him to resign; Schultz said the articles were responsible; the trustees denied it, and at first Schultz stayed on. However, when the trustees began boycotting his services, the rabbi stepped down. He has not been assigned to a temple since.

At the time, and significantly considering his own activities later, Rabbi Schultz complained, "My articles on Communist infiltration are based on facts. To condemn them without investigation and WITHOUT HEARING [caps are mine—M. M.] is patently un-American."

A few months later, in March 1948, the American Jewish League Against Communism ("How Can Americans of Jewish Faith Combat the Infiltration of Communism into the American Jewish Community?") was launched, with Schultz as executive director and Alfred Kohlberg as chairman and almost sole financial backer.

Although Rabbi Schultz refused to see the investigator or to answer any of a long list of written questions about the League, a high official of one of the largest and most respected national Jewish organizations has this to say:

"Schultz's claims about the League's membership vary, but, usually, they run into the thousands. Actually, he has only between 300 and 400 members, including a small chapter in Dallas

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[about 35 members] and one in Los Angeles [fewer than 50].

"The total budget is between \$28,000 and \$30,000, of which \$10,000 goes to Schultz as salary.

"The League has no affiliation with other Jewish organizations and is not financed by the organized Jewish community of the country as is the case with the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the twenty-seven local Jewish Relations agencies. [N.B. All of the organizations named are anti-Communist.]

"Further, both the New York Board of Rabbis and the Synagogue Council of America have disassociated themselves from Rabbi Schultz."

Except for an occasional and usually little publicized attack on such scattered targets as former Chancellor Robert M. Hutchins of the University of Chicago and now of the Ford Foundation; Morris Hadley, president of the New York Public Library; Albert Einstein; and a protest against the proposed appearance of Paul Robeson on Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's television program, neither Rabbi Schultz nor the American Jewish League Against Communism received much public attention until the time of the Jean Muir incident.

The Joint Committee Against Communism in New York, which claims it includes representatives of the American Legion, Catholic War Veterans, AMVETS, and "other prominent anti-Communist groups" as well as Theodore C. Kirkpatrick of *Counterattack*, was set up early in 1950; Rabbi Schultz is the co-ordinator.

According to Kirkpatrick, the Joint Committee originated when "A group of representatives of various membership organizations got together . . . to try to do something about the infiltration in education. . . . The organization became quite active and instrumental in having a resolution proposed before the Board of Education which would deny the Teachers Union the right to come before the board representing teachers. That was ultimately successful. At the conclusion of that some of the people who were active in it thought it would be a good idea to make the organi-

zation a permanent one and instead of having it a joint committee of official representatives of other membership organizations, [we decided] that it would be only a group of individuals who desire to work together and meet together on the problem of various aspects of Communism in the city."

**QUESTION:** In each case, these persons [members of the Joint Committee] represented only themselves, not their organizations?

**KIRKPATRICK:** That is right. . . . Just a week or two before the Henry Aldrich show incident . . . it was decided to set up a radio and television subcommittee. . . . The subcommittee had not been organized at the time all the publicity broke.

However, even though, according to Kirkpatrick (later listed as a co-chairman), the radio committee was not yet set up, on August 1, 1950, Rabbi Schultz wrote to the executive producer of one of New York's four network outlets protesting against the guests appearing on a morning woman's program as well as the moderator. "A look at the record," he wrote, "will show that [the moderator] has had many more left-wing guests on her show than the average American would think normal."

He would not, the rabbi stated, "think of suggesting that this woman be removed or that any so-called censorship be exercised at present." Instead, Schultz wanted Alfred Kohlberg to answer one of her guests, even though Mr. Kohlberg had not been mentioned on the program; failing that, the rabbi suggested Senator Joseph McCarthy, who had been mentioned, as a guest.

More important, however, so far as the station executive was concerned, Schultz stated, "I am writing this letter not only in my capacity of National Executive Director of the American Jewish League Against Communism, Inc., but also as Co-Ordinator of the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York, representing more than 2,000,000 citizens of this state [emphasis mine —M. M.]."

When, twenty-five days later, Rabbi Schultz called the National Broadcasting Company, he was less wary of "any so-called censorship."

As indicated earlier, he is reported to have demanded Miss Muir's immediate removal from the Henry Aldrich program, and

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he is said to have added, "I'm speaking for the more than 2,000,000 members of my organization." Moreover, in the *World-Telegram* of August 30, the rabbi announced that he ". . . had the support of 2,000,000 members of various patriotic and anti-Communist organizations."

At that time, too, Schultz added that "a full-scale program has been worked out to 'police' the radio and television networks, producers and entertainers trying to 'sell' Communist ideas." Miss Muir's dismissal, he concluded, was "Only the beginning."

In addition to Kirkpatrick, Schultz said members of his radio committee included Mr. Kohlberg, Mrs. Earl French, former president of the Queens YWCA (who several years ago claimed widespread Communist infiltration in the YW), Mrs. A. E. Bonbrake of Forest Hills; Stephen Chess, Queens commander of the Catholic War Veterans, and Mrs. McCullough.

A few days after the Muir incident Schultz said that members of the Joint Committee, this time "acting as individuals," had complained to officials of Columbia and RCA records against further distribution of the then popular song, "Old Man Atom."

"We learned about this song three or four days ago," he stated, "and we began working on it. I won't say we did it, but we made our sentiments known." Both record companies withdrew the song from circulation.

That same week Isaac Don Levine, one of the organizers of the League and former editor of Mr. Kohlberg's magazine *Plain Talk*, resigned from the Schultz committee. He said he didn't approve of its public relations policy; furthermore, he condemned Miss Muir's dismissal as "panicky" and added that she should have had a fair hearing "before losing her job."

Mrs. McCullough also resigned, claiming that she'd never authorized her name to be used by the committee anyway. "I don't want to be part of a committee that sits in judgment," she added.

In an interview with the ACLU, Kirkpatrick said (even though he had been listed as a co-chairman), "I was never an officer of the committee and never had much to say regarding policy." In addition, the newsletter at one point declared, "There is no con-

nection between COUNTERATTACK and the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York."

More recently Schultz has been in numerous other public controversies, and in January 1952 he demanded a legislative investigation of "the international Communist conspiracy in New York State"; as an example of what he wanted looked into, Schultz presented a "one-case history" naming eighteen members of the Brooklyn College faculty as having been "seriously involved with organizations or activities cited as subversive." Kohlberg, identified as chairman of the subcommittee which drew up the charges, added that ". . . the burden of proof is upon these teachers to prove their fitness to teach." Dr. Harry D. Gideonse, a long-time and vehement anti-Communist who is president of the college, denied the charges and added, "The activities of the Joint Committee have—to put it very mildly—not been characterized by the care and caution which it would be reasonable to expect from folks who expect others to act in a responsible and official capacity."

Schultz also makes many speeches. As a sample of his oratorical technique in a lecture in Lansing, Michigan, before the Wolverine All-American Conference on Subversive Activity, he attacked Mrs. Roosevelt for "corrupting American thinking"; he declared that Americans for Democratic Action, from its inception an avowedly anti-Communist group, is "an organizational extension of that lady's personality," and he concluded that the ADA is really more dangerous than Communism, "because the reforms they seek are exemplified in countries like Norway and Sweden, which are in the greatest danger of going Communist."

#### *THE AMERICAN LEGION*

A LETTER TO THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FROM ALLEN B. WIL-  
LAND, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL AMERICANISM COMMISSION OF THE  
AMERICAN LEGION

". . . I am sorry but do not believe that it would serve any useful purpose for Mr. Baarslag or any other members of our staff to interview Mr. Miller."

## AND A TRIO OF HELPERS

The American Legion has been consistently active in what its 1951 national commander, Erle Cocke, Jr., once called "the crusade to clean up the air waves and the television channels."

Frequently a state, local, or post commander of the Legion will, apparently without prompting, protest the appearance of a certain radio or television performer. For instance, shortly after the Muir incident, Edward Clamage, then chairman of the Illinois Legion's Anti-Subversive Commission, complained in a speech to the state Legion convention about the forthcoming appearance of Gypsy Rose Lee on the American Broadcasting Company radio program, *What Makes You Tick?*

A few hours later Robert Kintner, president of the network, wired Mr. Clamage, "If you have evidence [of Miss Lee's alleged pro-Communism], please wire me." Otherwise, Kintner stated, the show would go on as scheduled, with the intellectual striptease dancer as moderator.

Clamage answered that his information was based solely on the listing of Miss Lee's name in *Red Channels*. As for proof, he said, "The entire matter could easily be clarified and the answer should come from the publishers of *Red Channels*."

Theodore C. Kirkpatrick of *Red Channels* simply stated, "We are not adding any further documentation to the information already published."

And so Miss Lee went on the air, and, according to a network spokesman, there were no further protests from Mr. Clamage—or, so far as this investigator could discover, anyone else.

However, after Kintner received a Peabody award for his action in "resisting organized pressures and . . . [his] reaffirmation of basic American principles," *Counterattack* complained that in the Lee case Kintner had "abnegated his responsibilities and tried to shift them to someone else." The whole thing, including the Peabody award, was, the newsletter concluded, "an excellent example of the code of conduct of certain pseudo-liberals . . . there must be excess proof of any charge of pro-Communism, but any anti-Communist individual or group can be smeared without factual basis."

Most of the American Legion's protests originate not with local officials but with a former radio operator who was once associated with a maritime union. Karl Baarslag is the full-time assistant director of the Legion's Americanism Commission, and, so far as could be discovered (Mr. Baarslag ignored all telegrams, telephone calls, and letters from the investigator), does all the writing for an official Legion newsletter called *summary of trends and developments exposing the Communist conspiracy*.

Like *Counterattack*, which the *summary* often praises and sometimes imitates (or vice versa), the Legion publication covers the whole field of alleged Communist activities, from analyses of official CP publications like the *Daily Worker* to supposed infiltration into labor unions to listings of "front" organizations. In recent years, however, the Baarslag letter (subscription \$3.00 a year) has increasingly concentrated on lists of "lecturers, entertainers, writers, playwrights, educators and others, whose past activities make them unsuitable or inappropriate for Legion sponsorship."

In the May 1949 issue 127 persons were named (many of the same names later appeared in *Red Channels*), including some of the most famous entertainers on both coasts. On May 18 the entire list was released to the wire services, which in turn transmitted the names to individual newspapers. However, a few hours later the press associations ordered the story killed, presumably for fear that libel action might be brought by those listed. Only the left-wing New York *Compass* printed the names. At the time, so far as radio and television were concerned, the list seemed to have no effect.

However, as of now, again like *Counterattack*, the *summary* almost every month includes a section called, "What You Can Do to Combat Communism," also with special emphasis on the entertainment field.

In April 1950 the editor advised his readers, most of them national, state, and local Legion officials, to:

"Organize a letter-writing group of six to ten relatives and friends to make the sentiments of Americans heard on the important issues of the day. Phone, telegraph, or write to radio and

## AND A TRIO OF HELPERS

television sponsors employing entertainers with known front records. There are an estimated two to three fully qualified and thoroughly loyal Americans at present unemployed ready to step into every job vacated by a Stalinist writer, actor, or entertainer. Give Americans a break just for a change by giving pro-Communists the bum's rush off the air."

How to uncover the names? Readers could, the publication advised, obtain them from "this summary, *Counterattack*, *Alert*, *The Sign*, *National Republic*, *New Leader*, and other dependable sources."

As for the method of protest, the *summary* bluntly advised: ". . . In writing or phoning radio sponsors and others MAKE NO CHARGES OR CLAIMS.

"Merely state that you buy their products or services and enjoy their radio or TV shows but that you DISAPPROVE OR OBJECT TO SO-AND-SO ON THEIR PROGRAMS AND DESIRE THAT THEY BE REMOVED. NOTHING ELSE. . . . DON'T LET THE SPONSORS PASS THE BUCK BACK TO YOU BY DEMANDING 'PROOF' OF COMMUNIST FRONTING BY SOME CHARACTER ABOUT WHOM YOU HAVE COMPLAINED. YOU DON'T HAVE TO PROVE ANYTHING. . . . YOU SIMPLY DO NOT LIKE SO-AND-SO ON THEIR PROGRAMS. . . ."

Later the letter added, "Responsible agencies are reported as carefully checking the backgrounds of all people connected in any way with the TV or radio shows. Several others, however, are attempting to bluff their way through or playing dumb by pretending they have 'no way of looking into a man's head to see if he is loyal' or, 'We are not interested in an entertainer's policies as long as he has talent and is in demand.' The answer to that, of course, is a letter to a known official of the sponsor, NOT THE RADIO STATION OR AGENCY, saying in effect that, 'you are not interested in their products or show until so-and-so is canned from the air.'"

The effect of suggestions by the Legion publication is difficult to gauge, unless specific names are mentioned. Significantly, a few weeks after the *summary* presented a dossier on the alleged pro-Communist activities of a detective-story writer whose most famous character was being used in a weekly radio series, the program was dropped. Reason? The agency in charge complained



that the original program "Cost too much"; the sponsor had "No comment."

In any case a new detective, *not* created by the mystery writer of whom the Legion *summary* complained, was soon on the air, same time, same station. (N.B. The star of the original show was listed in *Red Channels*; he was not in the new series either.)

At one point the Legion letter commented that a certain band failed to appear on a radio program "as reported in last month's summary. . . . The sponsor pleaded a 'conflict' in schedules . . . but that ain't the way they explain it in studio circles."

After the firing of Jean Muir, the *summary* devoted a large part of its September 1950 issue to comment on the case:

"The long overdue housecleaning of commies, pinkos, and Stalinist camp followers in the radio entertainment industry seems to be getting underway at last."

The firing of Miss Muir was, however, "of very little importance. If she is to be the last and only one fired off the air, then practically nothing has been achieved. . . . The main point at issue has very cleverly been obscured, completely covered up and kept away from the public eye. That is the culpable negligence of many—not all—radio sponsors, agencies, and networks in policing their own programs and keeping them clean.

"All the yelpings and bleatings of the typewriter pundits and self-appointed plumed and armored 'guardians of American liberties' are NOT GOING TO STOP THE HOUSECLEANING, for the simple reason that economics, as General Foods had the good sense to point out, is going to settle the argument. . . . Blatherskite columnists, editorial pundits and radio smart a\_ecks DO NOT SPEAK FOR ANY ORGANIZED GROUP OF CONSUMERS OR ANY OTHER SIZABLE AMERICAN ORGANIZATION. [The emphasis throughout is Mr. Baar-slag's.] They speak only for themselves and that, as any smart business man realizes, won't even sell a can of beans."

## 6 • THE OTHER SIDE

### OF THE COIN

For years now there have been rumors, printed, whispered, and shouted, of the existence of a Communist or left-wing black list in radio and television. Such allegations have been made in numerous newspaper stories, particularly in the New York *World-Telegram* (before it was combined with the *Sun*) and in some magazines. The most famous was that appearing in the October 1949 issue of the *Sign*.

The latter, said to have been written by a well-known radio actor, listed 51 persons allegedly Party members or Communist-fronters, including actors, directors, and producers. Some of the names later appeared in *Red Channels*.

In addition both *Counterattack* and *Red Channels* have many times stated that its editors have "proof" that such a black list does exist. In the introduction to *Red Channels* it was said that ". . . Those who know radio and TV can recite dozens of anti-Communists who, for mysterious reasons, are *persona non grata* on numerous programs and who are slandered unmercifully in certain 'progressive' circles."

And in its issue of September 13, 1950, most of which was devoted to an account of the Jean Muir incident, the weekly news magazine said, "*Counterattack* has evidence that for years

loyal, anti-Communist Americans have been blacklisted in radio and TV industry. . . .

*"For some strange reason [emphasis throughout is Counter-attack's], the press which became so irate about the falsely reported black list of anyone mentioned in Red Channels has not expressed a word of resentment about the black list of loyal Americans. . . .*

*"Why doesn't the U.S. press initiate a campaign to destroy this, the real black list?"*

In addition, the newsletter that week declared:

*"Lois Wilson played the role of Henry Aldrich's mother (39 performances) last season. She received many favorable notices.*

*"Lois Wilson is very definitely anti-Communist. She has freely expressed her views on this subject.*

*"She is not playing the role this season.*

*"Why haven't the newspapers shown any interest in finding out why LOIS WILSON was not rehired to play the part of Henry Aldrich's mother?"*

In discussing the alleged left-wing black list with representatives of the ACLU, Mr. Bierly was, however, considerably less vehement.

*". . . Where there is evidence of black-listing because a person is right instead of left, it is most difficult to establish an airtight case that it was done. . . . It is a matter of a word over a cocktail to a casting director, or it is done in the nature of a telephone call or at a social gathering, something of that type, which is almost impossible to prove. . . .*

*"We have had many allegations from various people that this exists, and we are not in a position to demonstrably prove the situation right now. . . . One of the most cogent reasons for the statement is that in an AFRA discussion concerning this problem various people stated that there had been black-listing of anti-Communists. . . ."*

As an example of the kind of "allegations" he meant, Mr. Bierly mentioned an actor who "claims that he was specifically canceled [out of a mystery show] because of his open anti-Communist statements. . . ."

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

The actor himself had this to say: "I've a strong feeling that I've lost out all along the line in radio and television because I'm a strong anti-Communist, but I certainly couldn't prove it in a court of law. I wouldn't even want to try. Maybe they're right; maybe I just wasn't good enough."

An executive from the advertising agency in charge of the program said, "I don't know anything about his [the actor's] anti-Communism. I just know he wasn't any damn good—for this show anyway." The executive also mentioned the name of an aggressively anti-Communist member of AFRA who has frequently appeared on the program.

An actress, whose name was given the investigator by Mr. Bierly as another example of someone who had been discriminated against because of her right-wing sentiments, wrote from the West Coast, "While it seems to be generally agreed that a 'black list' [of anti-Communists] has been existent for some time and many others have suspected its use against them, I have never known anyone who produced proof—which is the only material you would be interested in."

As for Lois Wilson, Mr. Kirkpatrick was asked, "Is there any evidence about that, that she wasn't put back on [The Aldrich Family program] because she had been outspokenly anti-Communist?"

"There is no concrete evidence of that, to my knowledge," said Mr. Kirkpatrick.

Miss Wilson, who, like Miss Muir, is a former screen actress, said, "I certainly would not be able to say definitely why I was not rehired for the show. I just do not know, and I just could not say, and I do not have any idea whether politics was involved or not."

An official at Young and Rubicam added, "Politics was not involved in Miss Wilson's discharge. . . . The best way to demonstrate that is to mention that for a long time on The Aldrich Family one of the most outspoken anti-Communists in the business has played a leading role." (At this writing, he still is.)

Mr. Bierly mentioned the names of two other entertainers who, he said, "thought" they had suffered because of their anti-Com-

munist sentiments. In two weeks of trying, neither could be reached.

Thus *Counterattack's* publishers do not, despite the claims of the newsletter, have any "evidence that for years loyal, anti-Communist Americans have been blacklisted in radio and TV industry."

At the office of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, D.C., several names were suggested as victims of "the Red black list." Only one actor could definitely point to what he thought was such an experience. During the Wallace presidential campaign in 1948, he said, he began receiving the *Daily Worker* in the mail at his home; after a while he casually asked the director of the show if the director knew why he was receiving the Communist paper. The director said no.

A few days later, however, the director returned to the actor, apologized, and said that the author of the script had decided he wanted a younger voice for the part. The original actor was replaced by a second who, it is alleged, had marched in the 1947 May Day Parade.

After he lost the job Actor No. 1 stopped receiving the *Daily Worker*. "I think," he says, "that I was being tested for my political attitude, and when I didn't react and didn't offer to make any contributions to the Wallace campaign, I became *persona non grata* to the author."

A former network commentator, whose name was also suggested by officials of the Catholic group, had this to say: "I'm not on the network any more because of my vehement, violent, consistent, discretion-be-damned denunciation of the Red Rats." He did not, however, have any evidence that such was the case. As for those now suffering because of accusations of left-wing activities, he said, "We've [the anti-Communists] been taking it on the chin for years. Let them squeal now."

In a meeting with a quartette of the more active right-wing leaders of the American Federation of Radio Artists the investigator was not given a single specific example of such a black list. One of the four, just now one of the busiest performers in tele-

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

vision, attributed his success in the newer medium to the "fact that they [the Communists] aren't as strong in TV yet." Another, one of the best-known actors in radio, alleged that at least one package producer was "an out-and-out Commie and has a black list a mile long, and I'm on it." When it was pointed out that the actor had been starred in one of the producer's shows, he said, "Well, he [the producer] would have hired me for more shows than that if I weren't such a red-baiter."

Late last summer Lola Montez, who was identified as "a prominent radio-TV actress," was quoted in the *New York Journal-American* as demanding an investigation of what she called "an economic boycott against pro-Americans" in radio and television.

Miss Montez added, the newspaper story said, "One speech against the Communists or any public stand against Russia can cost us jobs on many shows."

The actress had been one of the most outspoken supporters of an anti-Communist constitutional amendment in AFRA (see Chapter 11).

". . . I had plenty of work both in radio and TV until then," Miss Montez went on, "and had turned down shows which I had no time to do.

"A few days after the AFRA meeting, one major TV show in which I was to play the lead was suddenly canceled. No explanation was given although I had been told I was ideal for the part and the job was mine.

"Other roles in both radio and TV were suddenly lost. In three weeks I've been transformed from a busy actress to an unemployed one. And I've been in the industry long enough to know I'm not the only one. My case is typical rather than exceptional.

"I am," she concluded, "only one of many union members [of AFRA] who have suffered economically and professionally because of our opposition to Communism."

At one time, Miss Montez told this investigator, she had fifteen television shows a week, including a daily interview program and "the only woman's sports commentary"; however, both her daily programs were canceled "without explanation and despite very high ratings," and no more jobs were forthcoming.

"I did talk to the producer of one show, and he said I didn't even need to read for the part; he said I was exactly right for it. Then he talked to a friend of mine about my politics, and the next day he called my agent and said he was sorry he couldn't use me.

"And that's the way it's happened all along. I don't like to think people could be small enough not to hire me because of my pro-Americanism, but I'm afraid that's the only conclusion I can reach. I guess I'll have to move to some other country because I can't seem to make a living here any more."

Again, however, Miss Montez added, "I can't be sure, and there certainly isn't any way to prove it."

The actress could not cite any specific examples of fellow performers who had been discriminated against because of their "pro-Americanism."

Franklin Pulaski, a radio and television actor and announcer, who has been described in an editorial in the *Journal-American* as "one of the few people in the broadcasting business with guts enough to fight Reds and pro-Reds in that odd industry," is also one of a handful of performers to testify, voluntarily, before the Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security where, according to the Hearst newspaper, he "named names."

"This was," the editorial continued, "not the first time he was willing to stand up and be counted as anti-Commie."

"Now he is finding the going tough. He has appeared in more than 1,000 radio shows and 250 TV programs and hence can be counted an experienced hand. But the minute the word got around that he didn't like Commies and pinks and wasn't afraid to say so, the jobs got less and less. . . ."

"The disheartening thing, Pulaski says, is that pro-Americans outnumber pro-Reds in the industry 10 to one and could 'clean out the industry in a few weeks' if they got together. What are they afraid of?"

In an interview with this reporter, Mr. Pulaski said he had worked on several New York radio stations, and he had, he is convinced, lost the jobs because "They knew I was fighting the Commies."

For example, during the 1948 presidential campaign, he con-

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tinued, he had complained to the manager of a station on which he was working when an announcer inserted in "what was otherwise a straight news broadcast the so-called 'news' that the Wallace people were holding a rally in Brooklyn. . . . I raised hell over that, and, not much later, they let me go. The manager said, among other things, that I just couldn't get along with people, but I know what the real reason was."

Again, when Pulaski was working for the radio division of the United Nations, he complained that an actor who frequently re-created the speeches of Soviet delegate Andrei Vishinsky "put too much feeling into it; he tried to make it sound convincing. If I'd been doing it, I'd have read the stuff in a dull monotone so the listeners would sense there was something wrong with it." Pulaski also was discharged by the United Nations. "They gave me a lot of reasons, everything but the right one, which is that I'm fighting the Commies tooth and nail." Mr. Pulaski has, he said, lost several other jobs and many engagements for the same reason, but he is admittedly unable "to tie it all down."

"I know why it happens, but I can't prove it."

While he acted as guest master of ceremonies for the Cholly Knickerbocker show on WJZ, the New York outlet of the American Broadcasting Company, last summer, Pulaski tried to use as his guests, among others, Ralph de Toledano, co-author of *Seeds of Treason*, and Benjamin Gitlow, the onetime head of the Communist Party in the United States who has since become vehemently anti-Communist. Both names were turned down by an official of the American Broadcasting Company, according to Pulaski, and he quoted one official as "turning thumbs down on both De Toledano and Gitlow" because they were "anti-Communist . . . and too damn political."

A spokesman for that particular official (he himself was invariably busy when the investigator called to check) said, "We may have said no to De Toledano and Gitlow; I'm not sure, but I do know that De Toledano has appeared on ABC, and, if he and Gitlow were nixed, it was because the Cholly Knickerbocker show is a late evening disc jockey program, and that's not the time of night to get into any violent political discussions of *any* kind. That



time of night you want to listen to a little music and, maybe, a little light chatter—but no politics.”

Mr. Pulaski, who also narrates training films, feels that “It would be a lot easier to give up, to stop fighting the Commies, I mean, but I won’t. My conscience wouldn’t let me.

“But I do know They’re all around . . . and even if we did clean up radio and television, we’d still have to deal with Washington. It goes right up to the top down there, you know.”

One widely respected radio writer who has been a long-time anti-Communist is convinced that he lost out on many assignments because the Communists circulated rumors that he was “hard to get along with,” that he was “unstable,” and, in one instance, that he was “anti-Semitic.” The writer is Jewish.

However, here again he had only his suspicions; he had no proof that the damaging rumors had originated with the Communists.

In the several weeks of the investigation that were concerned with this aspect of the whole problem, not a single instance of such proof was uncovered. Even the soap-opera actor could not be positive why he was replaced.

Of course, if there is a Communist black list, it, like the Party itself, operates in secret.

There would seem to be very little doubt that the Communist Party has been as active in radio and television as in the rest of the entertainment field. There can be no argument about the fact that, in the past at least, many small-*l* liberals have co-operated with the Party, possibly even to the extent of discriminating against the Party’s enemies when it came to jobs. It is certain that in some circles it has been as costly to have been a premature anti-Communist as it was in others to have been prematurely anti-Fascist.

But only the Federal Bureau of Investigation can say whether or not there actually is a Communist black list in radio and in television and, if so, how widespread and effective it has been. The publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels* have done the industry a disservice by referring to “evidence” which they do not now have—and never have had.

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

### THE VOICE OF FREEDOM COMMITTEE

Since March 1947, by far the most vociferous and active left-wing group concerning itself exclusively with radio and television has been the Voice of Freedom Committee, with writer Dorothy Parker as chairman and Stella Holt, onetime head of the Citizens Committee of the Upper West Side (N.Y.C.), as executive secretary.

The political point of view of VOF, as it is known to its supporters, can best be judged by its outlook on the Korean War, as stated in its quarterly publication, *Voice of Freedom*. The war, the publication states, "is between two rival governments." And as for the radio coverage of the fighting, it has been "a barrage of hysteria, distortion, outright mendacity and bloody-shirt waving. . . . From the earliest radio reports . . . on that morning of June 25th, the 'Red Menace' sales-appeal throbbed like a tomtom." Commentators have been forced "to suppress, play down or sneer off the North Korean claim that it was they who had been attacked . . . [or] any mention of the oft-voiced plans of Rhee and his associates to march on North Korea." In addition, another editorial declares, "Secretary Acheson moves from the passive plotting of the cold war to the active Totentanz of 'total diplomacy,' while five-star generals and jingo senators gleefully plan for the new V-E (Vaporize Everybody) Day."

"Those who listen to radio, those who look at television must realize," another VOF bulletin asserts, "the bloody madness that is being purveyed to them, and cry out against it with all their might."

In general, the outlook of the Voice of Freedom Committee and the flamboyant style of its bulletin have not changed much since, in its early days, it campaigned—without success and often without the consent of those involved—to return to the air such "missing commentators" as William L. Shirer, William S. Gailmor, Robert St. John, Johannes Steel, and John W. Vandercook.

At present VOF claims to have "A National Network of Monitors to Democratize the National Networks" numbering 3000.

After Paul Robeson's scheduled appearance on Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's television program was canceled, VOF's monitors

were urged to demand a Negro commentator on each network; in another issue of the bulletin the monitors living in the New York area were asked to listen every Sunday "to Rep. Vito Marcantonio, a people's commentator," and, most recently, the monitors were told to "protest the slanders" against VOF allegedly made by Fulton Lewis, Jr., Mutual network commentator.

"In emergency cases," according to one throwaway published by the committee, "whole divisions of monitors are alerted and called into action by V.O.F. and the offending radio station may be swamped with indignant letters, phone calls, and telegrams."

However, VOF does not, Miss Holt insists, "indulge in black-listing. We simply ask that we be given time to answer attacks and lies and distortions generally." To date, such requests for time have usually either been refused or, more recently, ignored altogether.

Except for an official check, there is, of course, no way of finding out how many so-called "monitors" actually support VOF's frequent calls for action, but, of one recent case in which the organization's bulletin asked its supporters to "demand" time to answer an alleged slander made by the moderator of a morning network program for women, a network official says, "We received exactly fifteen letters from their people and maybe three telephone calls, and we paid no attention whatsoever to any of them. I don't even know if we answered them."

In an interview with Fulton Lewis, Jr., the Mutual network commentator told the investigator, "They've put a pressure on me, and I did a job on them last summer [1950], but if there's ever been any results of their attack, I never heard about it. They claim to have monitors all over the country, but, frankly, I don't believe it."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Lewis is a Hearst newspaper columnist as well as a network commentator. During a two-hour interview with the investigator he spoke not only of the Voice of Freedom but stated his point of view on black-listing generally. Because of Mr. Lewis' unique and influential position in radio, the investigator feels that the highlights of his remarks, quoted below, have a bearing on the investigation.

He said, "In the first place, I am against any listing of names that is used to force people out of jobs. But, even more than that, the whole listing in that book [*Red Channels*] was done without any of the proper kind of in-

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN

vestigation. Why, we do more research for a single broadcast than those boys seem to have done for the whole book. People in that kind of setup have to have a sense of responsibility and be good reporters, and they [American Business Consultants] certainly don't seem to have either quality.

"This thing has gone too far anyway. Sometimes it scares me, it has gone so far. You can't discriminate against people just because in the past they belonged to a few front organizations. Now, you take Paul Douglas, for instance [U.S. senator from Illinois, Democrat]. He belonged to a lot of front organizations at one time, but he resigned. He repudiated them. And he shouldn't be punished because of past history, or people like him. . . .

"They [the publishers of *Red Channels*] don't seem to realize that people could have innocently joined things in the past. In the late thirties, for example, that happened a lot. Then people changed their minds. That is why you have to pay a lot of attention to *when* these things happened.

"Besides, I want to say I was very much against what happened to Jean Muir. It seemed to me that she was fired without any chance to defend herself, and I'm against anything like that, pressure like that. I've had some experience in the matter, from the other side, of course."

## 7 • SOME

### OTHER CONTROVERSIES, MOSTLY PUBLIC

*Red Channels* and *Counterattack*, with the occasional assistance of Mrs. McCullough, Rabbi Schultz, and the American Legion *summary*, are not alone in being able to stir up "controversy" in the field of radio and television. Sometimes such "controversies" seem to spring up almost simultaneously; the sources cannot be traced; at other times several factors and several groups are involved; on occasion the trouble is caused by nothing more than the industry's general fright of Communism—or, more often, the threats of those accusing someone of possessing Communist "sympathies."

The case histories cited in Chapter 2 were, of necessity, anonymous. In the examples that follow, only one or two names have been deleted since in the others the incidents have, for the most part, already been publicized.

Here again is what happens when a handful of zealots are allowed to dictate policy to an entire industry.

In January 1950 (five months before the outcome of his case against Mrs. McCullough was known) Paul Draper appeared on columnist Ed Sullivan's Toast of the Town television program on a portion of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

As a result, according to the network, CBS received 350 tele-

## SOME OTHER CONTROVERSIES

phone calls and "60 or more telegrams" objecting to the dancer's alleged left-wing sympathies.

Draper's name had not been in the news that week; he had frequently been denounced in *Counterattack* but not for his forthcoming appearance on the Sullivan show. (As has been indicated, the liaison between Sullivan and the producers of *Counterattack* is extremely close.) The Legion *summary* had not concurrently attacked the dancer; Mrs. McCullough has said she had nothing to do with what happened. Neither, it would appear, did Westbrook Pegler, who had in the past (and subsequently) devoted a good many vitriolic columns to Draper and his partner, Larry Adler.

Where, then, did the telephone calls and telegrams originate? How?

No one at the Columbia Broadcasting System knew—or would say. Besides, the origin of such complaints never seems to matter much. The results are nearly always the same no matter what the source.

Draper's dance was dropped from the film version of the show which the following week was carried in Los Angeles, Miami, Kansas City, St. Louis, Louisville, Atlanta, and Schenectady.

Sullivan declared, "I am sorry if some people were offended by the appearance of a performer whose political beliefs are a matter of public controversy." And a CBS spokesman was quoted as saying that the network did not wish to offend anybody.

There was no great public outcry at the time. Very few newspapers commented editorially on the event. Since then, however, neither Draper nor Adler has been on radio or television. They have, since the end of their lawsuit against Mrs. McCullough, lived abroad, making occasional appearances in the British Isles and on the Continent. Draper, who recently did make a night club appearance in Canada, wrote from London, "I cannot comment on whether or not the listing of my name in *Red Channels* has affected my income since, for some months now, I have been unable to make a living in the United States."

In October 1950 the following news story appeared in the Los Angeles *Daily News*:

"Radio Station Bans Pastor on Whisper He's Red.

"It was learned today that the Rev. Clayton Russell, pastor of the People's Independent Church and one of the leaders of the Negro religious community, has been barred from speaking over station KOWL.

"Russell has been talking from 10 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. each Sunday morning over the 5000-watt, clear channel Santa Monica station which covers Southern California.

"'I was told my name had been found on a list of persons supposed to be members of some kind of an organization sympathetic to Communists,' said Russell. 'I am not a Communist. I have never been a Communist or sympathetic with Communists in any way. In fact, I have made anti-Communist speeches. I have never uttered a subversive word in my radio talks.'

"James Coyle, assistant to Arthur Groghan, owner of KOWL, verified the report that Russell had been removed and said:

"'The Rev. Clayton Russell was discontinued as a speaker and the reason is that we found on investigation his name is in several lists of persons *supposed* to be friendly with Communism. *We have watched his speeches closely and he has never uttered a word that could be objected to and we do not think he is a Communist*' [emphasis mine—M. M.]."

However, at last report, the Rev. Mr. Russell was still not appearing on Radio Station KOWL in Santa Monica, California.

In December, Station WPIX in New York canceled a series of programs featuring a group of silent movie shorts starring comedian Charlie Chaplin. The movies had been produced in the years 1916 and '17.

At the time Warren Wade, program manager of WPIX, said that a single protest from the commander of the Hudson County, New Jersey, department of the Catholic War Veterans was "the only one I know of." Later, however, other officials of the television station were quoted as saying that there had been additional protests, "twenty to twenty-five of them."

Joseph R. Fehrenback, the official of the Catholic War Veterans involved, said that Chaplin's name was included on a list

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issued by a state Senate committee (it was the Tenney group) as having "followed or appeased some of the Communist Party program over a long period of time."

Mr. Fehrenback added, "It makes no difference if the pictures were made five, ten, twenty, or more years ago. Entertainment for art's sake just does not exist when you talk about Communism. People who talk that way have no basis for fact."

In addition Fehrenback declared that his group had succeeded in "preventing or curtailing" the showing of Chaplin's more recent *City Lights* in several New Jersey theaters.

Ironically, the Chaplin series of twelve silent shorts had already been shown on WPIX the year previous—without protest. They had been given, also without controversy, on various other New York television stations.

At the present writing the interrupted series has not been renewed on WPIX, but some of the Chaplin films have been shown, at least once, on another TV station in Manhattan—again without protest.

William Sweets was a veteran of twenty-five years in radio; he had for six years been director of two programs, *Gangbusters* and *Counterspy*, both packaged by the Phillips Lord agency. *Gangbusters* was sponsored by General Foods, *Counterspy* by Pepsi-Cola.

In June 1949, exactly a year before the appearance of *Red Channels*, Sweets resigned from both programs. Now he runs an antique shop in Manchester, Vermont.

Considerable mystery surrounds Sweets's resignation. He was at the time president of the Radio and Television Directors Guild, and at one point he was quoted as saying that he had been the victim of a black list initiated by *Counterattack*. At another he said he was forced to turn in his resignation because of what he called "sponsor-agency" pressure.

In the August 19, 1949, issue of *Variety*, the trade paper, under the headline "Red Scare Numbing Video," declared:

"Situation, which has already hit video via the firing of director William Sweets for his alleged political beliefs, has staggered



video to such an extent that the problem of clearing talent from fellow-traveler charges has become all-important. According to one network talent chief, clearing property rights on a story or play had been the biggest stickler heretofore in staging dramatic shows. 'Now,' he said, 'we spend our time trying to satisfy our top brass that the actors have never been on the left side of the fence.'

A representative of one of the advertising agencies involved said of Sweets's resignation, "There's absolutely nothing in writing dealing with this case." But, he went on, the "incident" had nothing to do with politics. Sweets's two programs were, he added, suffering from poor direction, and both had low Hooper ratings.

Earlier, as an officer of his union, Sweets had refused, in what was supposed to be an off-the-record meeting of union officials, to sign—for the union's records only—the non-Communist affidavit required under the Taft-Hartley Law. All the other officers of the union did sign, and Sweets's stand soon was widely known in the trade. His resignation followed not long after.

Sweets had several times been condemned in *Counterattack*, and, although he had been out of the industry for more than a year at the time it was published, his name is listed in *Red Channels*.

During the war when, according to a fellow director, "everyone up there was carefully checked for loyalty," Sweets had been on the staff of the National Broadcasting Company. For two summers prior to his resignation he had taken over *This Is Your FBI* when the regular director was on vacation. As the colleague quoted above put it, "This program has the official sanction of the FBI and I am sure that if Sweets were a Communist, the FBI would know about it and would not have allowed him to direct the show."

In any case, whether Sweets's resignation was forced or voluntary, at its twenty-first national convention in Philadelphia in August 1949, the American Legion passed a resolution commending General Foods and Pepsi-Cola "for their patriotic action . . . in removing from their radio and television programs certain persons of known Communist sympathies."

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"Old Man Atom" is what song writers call "a talking blues number." It was written by a Los Angeles newspaperman named Vern Partlow shortly after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"I interviewed atomic scientists and government officials who said that atomic war would be disastrous," Mr. Partlow said. Thus, his lyrics declare that:

. . . If you're scared of an A Bomb  
Here's what you gotta do:  
You gotta gather all the people in the world with you  
Because if you don't get together and do it, well—uh  
The first thing you know we're gonna blow the world  
plumb to—uh— . . .

The song concludes with its "thesis; Peace in the world or the world in pieces."

For a long time not much happened to the song. It was recorded only by a small firm on the West Coast, and it never even came close to the hit class. Then, almost five years after it was written, Martin Block played the recording of "Old Man Atom" on his Make-Believe Ballroom over Station WNEW in New York. The reaction was immediate. Columbia Records bought the rights to the original West Coast recording and brought it out under its own label. RCA-Victor made another recording of the song, and both were successful. "Old Man Atom" was also extremely popular on the radio.

In late August, however, shortly after the Jean Muir incident, a member of the Joint Committee Against Communism in New York heard the song and decided that its message was subversive, that, in fact, the lyrics simply parroted the line of the Stockholm peace petition then being circulated by the Communists.

According to Rabbi Benjamin Schultz (see above), several members of his group agreed that "Old Man Atom" should be banned and told the record companies so.

Almost immediately both Columbia and RCA-Victor, acting with unprecedented unanimity, withdrew the record from circulation. It has not reappeared since. What's more, so far as this

reporter could learn, the song has not been heard on any of the major networks since then either.

After the capitulation of the two record companies, Rabbi Schultz told the press, "We [meaning the Joint Committee] learned about this song three or four days ago, and we began working on it. We have not made any public statement on this because we acted as individuals.

"I won't say we did it, but we made our sentiments known."

Mr. Partlow said, "I thought that [the idea expressed in his lyrics] to be the policy of the United Nations and of our government."

Officials of the two multimillion-dollar record companies said nothing at all, publicly anyway.

In June 1951 the Weavers, the folk-singing quartette whose recording of "Good Night, Irene" became one of the great best sellers, were scheduled to appear on Dave Garroway's informal Sunday night television program then originating in Chicago.

Three days before the program was telecast the National Broadcasting Company said that the singers would not be used after all. The reason, according to a network official who as usual insisted on anonymity, was that there had been "a few complaints" about them. How many? He could not, the spokesman said, be sure. From where? "The usual groups," including Rabbi Schultz's Joint Committee, which had not been heard from in some time.

In most newspapers the fact that the Weavers had been dropped from a television program was not mentioned at all. However, the *New York Journal-American* did have an eight-paragraph story on one of its inside pages. The article was written by Howard Rushmore, a former editor of the *Daily Worker* who specializes in reporting anti-Communist activity.

Mr. Rushmore also attributed his information to an anonymous NBC official. "Basis of the complaint," his story declared, "was the appearance of the 'Weavers' at Communist functions and the frequent listings by Congressional committees of Pete Seeger, founder and director of the song group.

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"Seeger," Rushmore went on, "is listed 13 times in publication *Red Channels*. . . ."

In its issue of June 1, 1951, *Counterattack* had repeated its *Red Channels* charges against the folk singers; oddly, however, the Weavers' appearance was canceled *before* that issue of the newsletter reached its subscribers.

Nevertheless, in the following issue the weekly seemed to be taking credit for what had happened. "WEAVERS APPEARANCE CANCELLED ON TV SHOW," the headline asserted. "Last week COUNTERATTACK gave facts on pro-Communist record of the Weavers' quartet which was then scheduled to appear on the DAVE GARROWAY program . . . a show that is sponsored by Congoleum-Nairn and cast by NBC. COUNTERATTACK subscribers were urged to write letters of protest.

"After COUNTERATTACK went to press, it was announced that the Weavers had been dropped from the program."

Exactly how this miracle of timing was achieved was not explained.

A few weeks later, as noted earlier (Chapter 4), the Weavers' scheduled appearance at the Ohio State Fair was also canceled. According to *Counterattack*, "There are lessons for all anti-Communists in latest incident of 'The Weavers.'"

When Roger E. Sherwood, chairman of the Anti-Communist Committee of the Knights of Columbus in Middletown, Ohio, saw the announcement of the quartette's forthcoming appearance he "decided to ACT. He wrote for and received permission to quote facts COUNTERATTACK had published about [the] Weavers.

"He sent this information to Gov. FRANK LAUSCHE of Ohio, to Columbus Dispatch, to State Deputy of Knights of Columbus, and to local American Legion, which brought it to attention of State Legion convention.

*"The Weavers' appearance at Ohio State Fair was cancelled."*

Among the "lessons" to be learned from the incident was, according to the newsletter, the fact that, "A single person, acting intelligently and determinedly CAN get results . . . even in face of non-factual newspaper opposition.

"You DON'T have to call anyone a CP member, Communist or

fellow-traveler to get results. The FACTS about the Weavers' activities published in COUNTERATTACK spoke for themselves and led to cancellation."

*Variety* added that a spokesman for the Ohio State Fair Board had said, "There wasn't time to conduct an investigation, and rather than support any act about which there was the slightest doubt," it was decided that "it would be better to eliminate it."

In December 1950, two days before the one hundred and fifty-ninth anniversary of the final adoption of the Bill of Rights, the National Broadcasting Company as a public service broadcast a half-hour program commemorating that event. The script, which was called *Friday Is a Big Day*, had been prepared by the American Civil Liberties Union.

The large cast numbered seventeen; stage and screen actor Melvyn Douglas was the narrator. The program was mainly devoted to recent cases in which, the ACLU felt, the Bill of Rights had been violated; the tone of the script was clearly anti-Communist throughout. In one episode, dealing with the loyalty oath at the University of California, a professor is asked by his wife whether or not he has signed the oath. He says no, and his wife asks why.

"Because," says the professor, "this is turning out to be something I associated with Communist Russia."

Another of the dramatic vignettes concerned a librarian at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, who had been dismissed because on the library shelves she had, among other magazines, the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, and the *Negro Digest*.

Another was centered around Dorothy Bailey, who after fourteen years with the United States Employment Service had been discharged; someone had said Miss Bailey was a Communist, a charge she has denied, but, as the script pointed out, Miss Bailey doesn't know who her accusers are. "So she can't answer them, confront them, or prove her innocence." Patrick Murphy Malin, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, briefly and critically discussed the then recently passed McCarran Bill.

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(Senator McCarran later demanded and was given a chance to answer Mr. Malin on the same network.)

At one point during the program narrator Douglas said, "The issue is this—there has been a violation of the Bill of Rights. And at this late date, it shouldn't be necessary to tell even our school children that if we let the law go soft, if cases like these are ignored, you can soon get *this*—"

"Knock on door:

"2nd Man: Open the door!

"3rd Man: What for?

"2nd Man: It's a search.

"3rd Man: A search? Have you got a warrant?

"2nd Man: Warrant? . . . All right, men, give him our warrant.

"There is the sound of a machine gun.

"In almost half of the world," the narrator declared, the sound of knocking "comes much too often, usually around three o'clock in the morning. . . . When people hear it, their hearts stop."

Nevertheless, despite the anti-Communist position of the script, before the program was off the air protests began. The National Broadcasting Company was reluctant to reveal the precise number, but there were said to have been 75 received in New York, and, when the program was repeated on the West Coast, 350 in Los Angeles. In addition there were "some" letters of complaint.

It was reported that a number of the callers said that members of the cast were listed in *Red Channels*. Two of the seventeen were. Others alleged that the script has a "pro-Communist line"; some accused the American Civil Liberties Union of being a "Party front."

A few days later *The Tidings*, official publication of the Southern California diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, in a long critical article dealing with the program and the American Civil Liberties Union, declared, "*Prior to the broadcast of the program in question* [emphasis mine—M. M.] *The Tidings* had solicited from NBC officials in Hollywood an explanation of why NBC considered it a public service to present this program 'in cooperation with the American Civil Liberties Union.'

"Because the program originated in New York, NBC officials

here queried New York and later advised *The Tidings* that NBC officials in New York had 'no comment' on the question."

In addition, in the same issue *The Tidings* printed a lengthy letter sent by one of its readers to the National Broadcasting Company. The reader wrote, "I am only one of the thousands shocked by your permitting the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Lawyers Guild—both cited in Un-American Activity reports as subversive and pro-Communist—the use of your facilities. . . ."

The National Lawyers Guild is in no way associated with the American Civil Liberties Union and had nothing to do with the program, and on October 23, 1939, Martin Dies, then chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, declared, "This committee found last year, in its reports, that there was not any evidence that the American Civil Liberties Union was a Communist organization."

Nevertheless, there was at least one result of the protests, whatever their origin. A member of the cast was scheduled to appear on a commercially sponsored program a few days later. After the ACLU broadcast, however, the sponsor changed his mind. The cast member had not been listed in *Red Channels*, but the sponsor reportedly felt that because the person involved had appeared on a "controversial" program, "There might be some trouble on my show."

Jack Gould of the New York *Times* concluded his report of the protests against the civil liberties program by stating, "The true meaning of civil liberties can perhaps best be illustrated by a heretofore unrevealed story. During the height of the Jean Muir controversy, T. C. Kirkpatrick, publisher of 'Red Channels,' was scheduled to be interviewed on the local NBC station. An NBC official momentarily leaned toward censoring the entire interview but had a belated change of heart. The interview was held at a later date.

"But which organization called Mr. Kirkpatrick to learn if his right of free speech was in any jeopardy and announced its readiness to support him?

"It was the American Civil Liberties Union."

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Late in the summer of 1951 a prominent dramatic critic and novelist was scheduled to appear on a television quiz show. However, at the last moment the plan was changed and the critic was dropped. When he asked why, a representative of the program reminded the critic that he was a member of the Censorship Committee of the Authors League of America.

"What's wrong with that?" the critic wanted to know.

"Well," he was told, "we're afraid it makes you kind of controversial."

The following item, from the New York *Journal-American* of October 21, 1950, although not directly related to either radio or television, seems appropriate, if only because of its peculiarly apt subhead:

Headline: BRITISH STAR DUE AT PLAZA

by Gene Knight

Subhead: Signs of the Times

"On October 7, I announced in this column that a band leader in a midtown restaurant is listed in 'Red Channels' as being associated with more than a dozen organizations labeled as Communist fronts by the U. S. Attorney General. The band leader is no longer there.

"On October 14, I reported that a singing act in a swank East Side spot loves to perform at pinko rallies. The act is no longer there.

"On October 19, I stated that a singer in a downtown night club is listed in 'Red Channels' as being associated with five organizations labeled as Communist fronts by the U. S. Attorney General. The singer is no longer there."

On the other hand, in what *Variety* called "a bit of surprise casting," Henry Morgan, the radio and television comedian who is listed in *Red Channels*, early last fall was hired to act as master of ceremonies at a Constitution Day Americanism rally in Elmira, N. Y.

There was no public outcry at Mr. Morgan's appearance,



possibly because the rally was sponsored by and he was paid by the National Association of Manufacturers.

According to *Variety*, Morgan was hired as part of the NAM's "spot-changing" public relations program directed by Leonard Smith, once a reporter for the now defunct *Philadelphia Record*.

"Morgan's hiring was not accomplished without considerable discussion," *Variety* went on. "Smith said, however, that he knew very well that despite the listing in *Red Channels* the comedian isn't and never was anything resembling a Communist. Once this had been explained to NAM brass, Smith said, there was no problem."

However, the NAM action did not indicate a new trend in radio and television.

"If General Foods had done something like that, it would have meant something," said Frank Reel, executive secretary of the American Federation of Radio Artists. "But the NAM doesn't help a bit. Most of the listees in our union still aren't working much."

Last September, Lena Horne, the popular singer, appeared on Ed Sullivan's *Toast of the Town* program on the Columbia television network.

However, until a few hours before the program began, Miss Horne's status was in considerable doubt. An attempt was made to substitute another singer, Carol Bruce. Miss Bruce is not listed in *Red Channels*; Miss Horne is, along with eleven "reported" left-wing affiliations.

On the Saturday before the Sunday night program Jack O'Brian, the New York *Journal-American's* radio columnist, wrote:

"It was no secret along radio and TV row today that the sponsor and the advertising agency were considerably perturbed about what was believed would be certain public resentment [over Miss Horne's appearance] and anxious to correct the latest display of Sullivan's booking genius. That it might take on the proportions of the Paul Draper controversy . . . was deemed almost a certainty. . . . Amazing, isn't it, that so many of these

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pink teas seem to 'just happen' to the Columbia Broadcasting System?"

Somewhat later Hubbell Robinson, Jr., a vice-president of the network, angrily declared:

"The Columbia Broadcasting System wishes to point out that Miss Lena Horne has appeared recently as NBC's master of ceremonies on the NBC Show of Shows, has appeared on NBC's Colgate Comedy Hour with Eddie Cantor, previously appeared in July on Toast of the Town, and has appeared on many other radio and TV programs without comment from the press. Ed Sullivan's record over the years as a vigorous fighter of Communism, subversives, and all un-American activities is too well known to require further elaboration by CBS."

However, Miss Horne's appearance was still uncertain until the singer, backed by her booking agency, the Music Corporation of America, threatened to sue if she were taken off the program. At one time a six-figure lawsuit is said to have been mentioned.

In addition, as has so rarely happened in such cases, Miss Horne's union stood behind her. The American Guild of Variety Artists threatened to remove the other performers from the program if the singer did not appear.

Shortly thereafter the rehearsal continued with Lena Horne included.

The "certain public resentment" predicted by Mr. O'Brian did not occur. A Columbia official said, "We may have received a few calls; I honestly don't know. If there were any, there weren't enough to bother about."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nevertheless, a few weeks later Miss Horne's manager, Ralph Harris, was quoted in the *Amsterdam News* as saying that the singer had received "a clean bill of health" from the publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels*. According to Harris, Miss Horne met with Ted Kirkpatrick and "settled the matter."

Significantly, however, Harris added that Miss Horne had not promised to change "her opposition to Jim Crow and oppression." The newspaper account added, "No other commitments have been exacted from the star, Harris emphasized, despite the fact that the ex-FBI man usually requires a signed statement, recanting past associations and promising to espouse only anti-Communist statements."

# 8 • A SHORT HISTORY

## OF STATEMENTS AND

### OATHS ON LOYALTY

E. B. WHITE, IN THE NEW YORK *Herald Tribune*, DECEMBER 2, 1947

“The essence of our political theory in this country is that a man’s conscience shall be a private, not a public affair, and that only his deeds and words shall be open to survey, to censure and to punishment. The idea is a decent one, and it works. . . . One needs only to watch totalitarians at work to see that once men gain power over other men’s minds, that power is never used sparingly and wisely, but lavishly and brutally and with unspeakable results. If I must declare today that I am not a Communist, tomorrow I shall have to testify that I am not a Unitarian. And the day after, that I have never belonged to a dahlia club. It is not a crime to believe anything at all in America.”

On June 9, 1950, approximately two weeks before the publication of *Red Channels*, Earle C. Anthony, president and general manager of Station KFI in Los Angeles, announced that each of the two hundred employees of his station, including the janitors, would be required to “disclaim under oath any membership in the Communist Party or subversive groups.”

As a result of this move, Mr. Anthony said, KFI would become the first station in the country “to thus clarify” its anti-Communist position.

“We hope,” he went on, “to have set a creditable example.”

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One hundred and ninety-nine employees of the West Coast National Broadcasting Company affiliate did sign the oath. One refused, Mrs. Charlene Aumack, who for many years had been the station's network traffic manager. Mrs. Aumack said she was neither a Communist nor a Communist sympathizer; in fact, she added, she was a registered Republican.

However, she told the press she considered the affidavit an "infringement on my rights as an American citizen."

Furthermore, she said, "I am not convinced that the use of dictatorial methods is a sane way to combat undesirable ideologies. Dictation is an admission that our democratic system cannot survive by democratic methods."

As a result of her refusal Mrs. Aumack was immediately discharged by KFI. Claude Mills, acting manager of the station, said, "We do this regretfully, but we have no choice.

"Mr. Anthony feels . . . we must clear our skirts of any suspicion."

A few days later James W. Gerrard, president of Station KRNO in San Bernardino, California, disputed KFI's claim to being the "first" station to inaugurate a "loyalty oath program."

That honor, Mr. Gerrard said, belonged to KRNO. His station, he wrote *Broadcasting* magazine, "is not only the first broadcaster but also the first organization of any kind to institute a program of that kind."

Although the oath itself was not much different in form, at KRNO, Gerrard stated, "The management required no one to sign. It was 100 per cent voluntary."

Mr. Gerrard did not say what would happen if an employee did not volunteer. Fortunately the problem never arose. Every employee did take the oath; it was administered by a state Superior Court judge.

Since that time several other radio and television stations have been rumored as about to set up loyalty oaths; none has so far been publicized. There have been persistent allegations that at one of the major networks a "secret" loyalty pledge has for years been required of all employees. This reporter could find no evidence of it.

However, in December 1950, Joseph H. Ream, executive vice-president of the Columbia Broadcasting System, announced that all of his network's twenty-five hundred employees would be required to sign a statement attesting to their loyalty. The statement was not, Mr. Ream emphasized, to be considered an oath; it did not have to be notarized. However, at least one employee was told that CBS would not object if such statements were notarized. Some were.

The network listed only three questions, but they were preceded by a lengthy statement from Mr. Ream. "We are," he wrote, "faced with a new crisis in our national life. The President of the United States has declared a national emergency.

"If we are to fulfill our obligations and responsibilities as radio and television broadcasters in this new crisis, we must do at least two things: first, we must make sure that our broadcasting operations in the public interest are not interrupted by sabotage or violence; second, we must make sure that the full confidence of our listeners and viewers is unimpaired.

"To accomplish the first objective we will institute measures for physical security generally similar to those existing in the last war. To accomplish the second objective we are asking each employee to answer the questions on the form attached, which we will keep confidential, unless at some future time the information is demanded by a governmental security agency. These questions are IDENTICAL [emphasis that of Ream] to those appearing in the Civil Service Commission application for federal employment.

"We are all aware that in the past certain groups have raised questions concerning alleged subversive influences in broadcasting. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE TRUE FACTS—BASED ON THE STATEMENT OF EACH EMPLOYEE—BE ESTABLISHED."

The questions attached were:

"1. Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party, USA, or any Communist organization?

"2. Are you now or have you ever been a member of a Fascist group?

"3. Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of any organization, association, movement, group or combination of per-

## STATEMENTS AND OATHS ON LOYALTY

sons which advocates the overthrow of our constitutional form of government, or of any organization, association, movement, group or combination of persons which has adopted a policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of force or violence to deny other persons their rights under the Constitution of the United States or of seeking to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means?

"If the answer to Question 1, 2 or 3 above is 'yes' state below the names of all such organizations . . . and dates of membership. Give complete details of your activities therein and make any explanation you desire regarding your membership or activities therein."

On the reverse side of the questionnaire was printed a list of organizations which as of October 30, 1950, had been designated by the United States Attorney General as "totalitarian, Fascist, Communist, or subversive."

And at the bottom of the page was "space for details or explanations, if any."

Of the organizations listed, 22, most of them Japanese-American in origin, were labeled "totalitarian"; another 22, including Gerald L. K. Smith's American Nationalist Party and the Nationalist Action League, were said to be Fascist; 137 were called Communist; 9 were accused of having "adopted a policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of force and violence to deny others their rights under the Constitution of the United States," and 12 were said to "seek to alter the form of government of the United States by unconstitutional means."

In a few cases, groups such as the Communist Party or the Young Communist League overlapped, falling under two classifications.

Naturally there was also space for each employee to sign his or her name.

The Columbia Broadcasting System announcement caused great surprise throughout the industry, in some quarters great disappointment. At one time CBS had been generally considered the most liberal of the networks. Now, however, according to Jack Gould of the *New York Times*, it was "by becoming panicky

and frightened . . . adding to the negative hysteria which threatens to divert our attention from the many important tasks that lie ahead if we are to combat Communism successfully."

The Authors League, in a statement signed by its president, lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II, said that the CBS move was "more likely to condemn the loyal unjustly than to discover the disloyal.

"We feel," the League went on, "that in the present crisis the issue of individual civil liberties has become one of the central issues at conflict and that no sacrifice in those liberties should be permitted without the most careful scrutiny."

Most observers pointed to one sentence in Ream's statement, the one declaring, "We are all aware that in the past certain groups have raised questions concerning alleged subversive influences in broadcasting." The principal group was, of course, *Counterattack*, which had often denounced CBS. Only eighteen months earlier the newsletter had accused Columbia of being the one of the four major networks "most satisfactory to the Communists." Moreover, a handful of CBS officials had been listed in *Red Channels*. There were no listees from the executive ranks of any of the other networks.

In some circles the CBS action was interpreted as a direct attempt to answer the accusations of American Business Consultants, despite the fact that the network had once used the firm's "investigative" services and found the results "completely worthless."

Several of the broadcasting and television unions had lengthy debates on the legality of the CBS demand; resolutions attacking loyalty statements were passed.

But at the same time the signed statements started coming in. When a group of the network's distinguished staff of foreign correspondents arrived in New York late in December 1950 for a holiday program in the States, each was presented with the statement. As one of them put it, "They practically met us at the plane with the damn thing. It wasn't exactly the kind of Christmas greeting any of us had in mind, but we signed. What else could we do?"

At the time even Mr. Ream, in his public statements at least,

## STATEMENTS AND OATHS ON LOYALTY

did not seem to know what would happen if an employee withheld his signature. "We will cross that bridge when we come to it," said the executive vice-president.

One CBS official resigned not long after the loyalty statement was circulated. Publicly his leaving the network was not tied up with the oath, but the association was made in not so private gossip throughout the industry. Months later another official was, as he put it, "allowed to resign." He had several times been attacked in the *New York Journal-American* and was, he was told, in danger of being subpoenaed in the threatened investigation of radio and television by the House Committee on Un-American Activities "mostly because of my *Red Channels* listing." In asking him to resign, the former employee says, Ream told him, "The network is bigger than any of us." When it was pointed out that he had signed the loyalty oath, the former employee says that Ream replied, "Oh, that doesn't mean a thing."

However, a few days after the statement was first announced a girl described as a "minor office employee" refused to sign; she was forthwith dismissed. Ream said, "It's the only way to make it work. Otherwise, the whole thing is only an empty gesture."

The girl involved refused to become a martyr. She said she was "sorry anything has come out." She asked that her name not be publicized, and she refused the legal advice volunteered by the Radio Guild of the Distributive, Processing and Office Workers of America, a group accused by the CIO of consistently following the Communist Party line.

Her position, the girl said, was a matter of principle, but she would prefer not to elaborate on that. And so the matter ended.

Ream said that, if anyone else refused to sign, dismissal would almost certainly follow. "Unless there is some compelling reason, and I can't think of any right now, we can't make exceptions," he added.

In February 1951 such an exception occurred. John K. M. McCaffery, then the moderator of, among other programs, CBS's *We Take Your Word*, wrote Ream that as a "professed Catholic" he had never associated with any Communist groups; he had, he went on, a proven record of anti-Communist activities.



Besides, he added, "It is impossible for a Catholic to be a Communist."

But, McCaffery concluded, he would not sign the statement.

Ream, who had also discussed the matter with him personally, wrote the moderator that he need not worry. His letter alone was enough; to ask that he also fill out the statement would be "a sterile insistence upon form rather than substance."

As of this writing, McCaffery is the only one of the network's twenty-five hundred employees known publicly to have been excused, and Ream has said that the case is in no way to be considered a precedent.

When it was pointed out that professed members of the Protestant and Jewish religions are of necessity as anti-Communist as Catholics, a network spokesman said, "Each case will be considered on its individual merit."

As for the time factor—the year or years in which an employee belonged to an organization now called "subversive"—Mr. Ream said, "We will take that into consideration."

So far as is known, the CBS loyalty requirement has as yet not turned up a single admitted Communist, Fascist, or totalitarian of any kind. It is unlikely that it ever will and doubtful that many CBS officials ever expected it to. Its purpose, after all, was primarily "to make sure that the full confidence of our listeners and viewers is unimpaired."

It is impossible to tell whether or not the network has accomplished that objective. However, it would seem doubtful that, to quote from Mr. Ream's introduction to the questionnaire, the "true facts" have been established by the "statement of each employee."

Faced with the necessity of signing such a statement, a Julius Rosenberg would unhesitatingly have attested to his own loyalty. To judge by the testimony in the recent spy trials, Rosenberg's wife and Harry Gold would have answered all three questions in the negative. At the time he was a Communist courier Henry Julian Wadleigh would have done the same thing. Wadleigh has publicly confessed that he passed secret documents to Whittaker

## STATEMENTS AND OATHS ON LOYALTY

Chambers in the late 1930s when he was a State Department employee.

At the time his first loyalty was to the Soviet Union, Wadleigh has stated, he was not a member of the Communist Party. He carefully avoided joining any organizations that might have been considered "suspicious," and he certainly would not have associated himself with those (had there been such at the time) an Attorney General called "subversive."

Wadleigh has said that he did not believe in the violent overthrow of the United States Government; he was not really a convinced Marxist, and to hide his spy activities he forced himself to talk like a conservative.

Thus he could easily have signed the CBS loyalty statement—and with a clear conscience. In discussing his pro-Russian activities at the second trial of Alger Hiss, he said, "I did what I thought was right at the time."

On the other hand, the loyalty statement did cause many troubled consciences on the part of avowed anti-Communists employed by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

"I'm not ashamed of having been a member of the Young Communist League when I was in college," one of them said. "I am ashamed that I used that little space to 'explain' my youthful indiscretions and that I 'confessed' to Joe Ream. He was very understanding, but I felt as if the Inquisition had started all over again, and I was knuckling under."

Another objection to the network's action was that, according to Jack Gould in the *New York Times*, "It raises the disquieting specter of one citizen assuming the authority to investigate and pass judgment on another.

"A corporation executive can use only his own personal standards in judging an employee's loyalty. . . . The idea of thousands of citizens being expected to conform not to a common standard but to varying interpretations of patriotism is a fearsome prospect.

". . . He [Ream] may have to accept the enormous responsibility of reaching a decision which might affect permanently the individual's earning power and reputation. If a specific employee is called up for several hearings on the loyalty question, the ac-

tion can never be kept 'confidential' in the rumor-factory which is broadcasting."

It is true that the three questions asked by the network are "IDENTICAL to those appearing in the Civil Service Commission application for federal employment." However, the federal government has an elaborate system of investigating each of its several million employees; moreover, an accused person is given at least a semblance of a hearing, and he has the right to appeal a decision to an independent agency. CBS has provided for none of these safeguards.

The network has only the word, the unverified and unverifiable word, of its twenty-five hundred employees. Presumably, however, if necessary, it could and would attest that each is a loyal American. Otherwise, the loyalty statement would appear to be an empty gesture.

As for making sure that "our broadcasting operations in the public interest are not interrupted by sabotage or violence," the network has not announced any plans for dealing with that aspect of "security," and certainly the twenty-five hundred loyalty statements won't help.

Ethically, of course, the whole problem of loyalty oaths or statements goes much deeper. On the surface it might seem that no loyal American should object to saying that he is not disloyal.

But Alan Barth, discussing the question of teachers' oaths in his book, *The Loyalty of Free Men*, has this to say:

". . . Why should teachers [or broadcasters—M. M.] be singled out and asked to protest their innocence of an attitude which there is no good reason to suspect them of holding? . . . If we are going to revive the abomination of expurgatory oaths, why stop at one profession [we haven't—M. M.]? Why not extend the device to other offenses? Let us require every legislator to swear that there are no illegal practices at his elevation and that he has never taken a bribe or purchased land knowing of a contemplated public improvement nearby. Let us require every lawyer to swear that he has never solicited clients by ambulance-chasing or otherwise, every doctor that he has never performed an abortion, and every business man that he has never violated the Robinson-Patman

## STATEMENTS AND OATHS ON LOYALTY

Act. Imagine the indignation which these proposals would raise from men who see no harm in teachers' oath laws. Yet these offenses are far more frequent in the respective occupations than disloyalty among teachers. . . ."

Further, there is the very basic question of whether or not any private citizen has the right to investigate another and, equally important, to cut off his livelihood because of his failure to sign a loyalty oath or statement. Such methods have heretofore always been considered morally indefensible in a democratic society where, unless those words have lost all meaning, men must continue to be allowed to think and speak and write as they wish without being required to attest that they are "loyal" to freedom.

The total effect of the CBS demand for a personal statement on loyalty from each of its employees can never be measured. It frightened some, intimidated others, and angered many; it disappointed a large number, and it certainly did not strengthen the loyalty most workers felt for the network itself. Quite the opposite. At least a dozen times this reporter was told, by CBS employees who had signed the oath, that the demand seemed not only an affront to personal dignity but also a clear invasion of privacy. Moreover, one said, "The whole thing made it seem as if the network was doubting me personally."

## 9 . THE HANDBOOK

### AND THE ADVERTISER

CHARLES A. SIEPMANN<sup>1</sup>

“. . . One of radio's most powerful advertisers [the American Tobacco Company] . . . once declared that its policy was 'never to offend a single listener.'”

The position of the advertiser on radio and television is not the same as in relation to a newspaper. In a newspaper he buys space; on radio and television he buys “time.”

He chooses a newspaper partly because of its circulation, partly because of its character, and he has no direct control over the newspaper's editorial policies.

On radio and television, however, according to Mr. Siepmann, “the advertiser [and more particularly the national advertiser in his dealings with the networks] has acquired so dominant a position that more often than not he prescribes—and actually prepares and produces—the programs presented in the time he has bought.”

“It is,” to quote one critic, “much as if the editor of a newspaper had to farm out the writing of the news, page by page, to

<sup>1</sup>For a full discussion of the place of the advertiser in radio and television and of the industry itself, the reader should see Mr. Siepmann's excellent book, *Radio, Television and Society*, published by the Oxford University Press in 1950.

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the corporations whose advertising appeared on those pages.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus, the network cannot afford to annoy a major sponsor, and, naturally, neither can the advertising agency hired to do the actual work of putting the sponsor's program together. Tens of thousands of dollars are involved for a single program. According to *Broadcasting* magazine (October 2, 1950), in the first six months of 1950, Proctor & Gamble, as the largest single radio advertiser, spent \$997,752; General Mills, in second place, \$886,848; General Foods, eighth, \$394,158. On television, the largest advertiser during the same period was Anchor-Hocking Glass, spending \$111,884; R. J. Reynolds, the second largest, \$102,720; and General Mills, tenth, \$44,016.

At one time George Sokolsky, a nationally syndicated columnist, wrote that radio and television advertisers and their agencies should stop hiring artists or writers who had what Sokolsky called “leftist leanings.” The Jean Muir incident followed shortly thereafter.

Did the major sponsors agree with the Sokolsky point of view and the position taken by General Foods in the Muir case?

In its issue of September 29, 1950, the trade magazine, *Tide*, answered that question. “The Tide Leadership Panel,” the magazine declared, “votes heavily in favor of the belief that advertisers and agencies have the right and duty to consider the political ideologies of the people who write and act in the sponsor's show.

“The vote,” the magazine went on, “was overwhelming.

“Almost nine out of ten (88 per cent) said that they believe advertisers and agencies should concern themselves with artists' or writers' ideologies. Only ten per cent disagreed; the rest had no opinion. Further, almost eight out of ten (77 per cent) hold that advertisers and agencies should concern themselves with artists' or writers' past ideologies as well. On this point, 20 per cent disagreed.”

*Tide* also quoted a few of the comments from the leading advertisers and agency men.

<sup>2</sup>Bernard B. Smith, “Television: There Ought to Be a Law,” published in *Harper's* magazine, September 1948.

"It takes only one worm in a barrel of good apples," said one.

"Advertising is an attempt to win public support," added another. "The use of a means to that end which alienates the support of even a considerable portion of the public is unwise. While I disagree violently with the type of protest that tossed Miss Muir off the air, I think I would have acted as General Foods did under the circumstances."

On the other side, a panel member commented, "Freedom of thought is endangered when we start a business inquisition." A second declared, ". . . this is still a democracy, where the individual may believe as he likes with consideration of the rights of others."

A more disturbed third said, "How in hell do they know what they are acting upon? . . . Civilized values transcend the interests of Post Toasties. We destroy the essence of freedom . . . when we encourage heresy hunting, when we make dissent synonymous with treason. . . ."

In conversations with sponsors and advertising men, this reporter found, especially in the agencies, a sizable number who personally disagreed with the majority, who were shocked by what had happened to Jean Muir—but their opinions were privately expressed and were, without exception, "off the record."

"Sure, I hate the whole thing," said one account executive, "but, during my working hours, I turn to the old handbook here."

He opened the drawer of his desk and took out a copy of *Red Channels*.

# 10. THE

## SEARCH FOR AN ANSWER

What is the answer to the problems raised by the publication of *Red Channels* and the fear of Communists and "Communist sympathizers" shared by the entire industry? Is finding a solution the concern of management alone? Many executives seem to think so.

The manager of a large Southern affiliate of the National Broadcasting Company put it this way:

"This is strictly a problem for management. If you think there is going to be trouble with a guy, you simply don't hire him. That's the trouble with this whole General Foods thing. They shouldn't have hired Jean Muir in the first place, or, if they made a mistake and hired her, they should have let her go without giving the real reason. They could have said they'd decided she was too young for the part, too old, too fat, too thin. You know, that's easy.<sup>1</sup>

"The whole thing was unfortunate as far as its public relations effect is concerned.

"Now if you have to drop anybody, you simply say you are making a change in the programming. . . . These things can be handled very simply if management is alert. . . . I have had

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 2: ". . . It's a little like that song they used to sing during the war; you know, you're either too young or too old, too short or too tall, too fat or too thin. There's liable to be something wrong with you if you're in RC."—A radio actor.



complaints about a couple of my people, and if there's any more trouble, it's off with their heads."

It is the "public relations" aspect of the problem which has worried the industry most. According to an executive of the National Association of Broadcasters, "If the radio and television business is foolish enough to allow ten Jean Muir cases to happen, I think it would close us up."

The main effect of the Muir case, he said, was to frighten away a lot of potential advertisers. "Many of them decided they'd be in a lot less hot water if they stuck to the magazines and newspapers. Why stick their necks out by radio and television advertising?"

But is there an answer to the industry's dilemma? If so, what?

The Columbia Broadcasting System's move to require a "loyalty statement" from each of its twenty-five hundred employees is that network's reply. But is it enough? Aside from the questions of ethics and justice and civil liberties involved, many observers feel that, should another "public controversy" arise, the protestants would almost certainly not be satisfied with CBS's assurance that the individuals involved had stated that they are not "subversive." In at least one instance, Joseph H. Ream himself is alleged to have said of the statement that it "doesn't mean a thing."

Shortly after Jean Muir's discharge an all-industry panel was set up, mainly at the behest of the American Federation of Radio Artists. Representatives of the four major networks and of the trade associations got together with Frank Reel, the executive secretary of AFRA, and other union officials to discuss the matter.

After the first two meetings the group issued a statement declaring, "It is especially important that a course be maintained which will assure full security and at the same time preserve individual liberties. . . ."

"Everyone present agreed," said Mr. Reel, "that except where actual national security is at stake, black-listing, whether open or secret and for whatever reason, should be avoided. . . ."

Again, how?

Among the possibilities at one time or another discussed by the group were these:

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1. That the industry set up its own "impartial" screening board.
2. That the industry ask the federal government to declare all of radio and television "sensitive" and thus governmental screening agencies could use the same screening process as applied to government employees.
3. That AFRA act as a "clearinghouse" for voluntary statements filed by those who had been accused, in *Red Channels* and elsewhere, of "disloyalty."

As for the first suggestion, when the news leaked out, there were immediate objections from many union officials and others that such a program would be nothing more than "industry-wide censorship." The Authors League called it "A sorry plan for backdoor censorship."

Whatever the merits of the second suggestion, the leader of at least one government security agency refused even to consider taking over the gigantic job of investigating the loyalty of the more than 100,000 persons employed in radio and television. Although there were some conversations on the matter, no one in either the executive or congressional branches of the government has to date backed the plan.

As for the third idea, on May 4, 1951, the AFRA-Industry Committee announced that it had, finally, adopted a procedure which its members "unanimously" believed would "prevent Communist inroads" into radio and television and, at the same time, "protect radio and television actors from irresponsible charges."

The plan was, the announcement stated, supported by AFRA, the American Association of Advertising Agencies, the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters, the Association of National Advertisers, and the four major networks.

The announcement described the plan as follows:

1. Where an AFRA member is "publicly accused by an identifiable source of disloyalty or adherence to an organization or organizations described as subversive," he may file any sort of statement he likes in reply with AFRA.

2. AFRA will keep such statements in a "locked and confidential file."

3. Any employer or prospective employer of an accused per-

former may request such statement through the AAAA (American Association of Advertising Agencies) president, who will forward the request to AFRA's national executive secretary. If such request cites publication and date of charges made, a copy of any statement on file in reply to them will be released to firm or person making request.

4. If no statement is on file, AFRA will notify performer of the request and permit him to file a statement. "In either event the employer or prospective employer, after first notifying the performer, may release such statement for the sole purpose of refuting any disloyalty charge."

5. It is understood and agreed that by consenting to this procedure, AFRA is not on behalf of itself or any of its members admitting the veracity of any charges which have thus far been made. Nor is AFRA in any way attesting to the validity or veracity of any of the statements which may be filed by its members. If any performer by his own actions outside of union activities has so offended American public opinion that he has made himself harmful to the best interests of an advertiser or broadcaster, that is the individual performer's personal responsibility and it cannot be shifted to his union.

Other unions in addition to AFRA would, the announcement predicted, adopt the same plan, and, meantime, the Industry-AFRA committee would continue to meet "in an attempt to find further solutions to the problem which caused its creation."

Most of the criticisms of the Columbia Broadcasting System's "loyalty statement" would seem to apply equally to the AFRA-Industry plan. Since possible Communist members of AFRA would, if necessary, not hesitate to supply such statements and since the union does not vouch for their "validity or veracity," it is difficult to see how their release, public or private, would impress or silence or satisfy those making the original "irresponsible charges"—or, for that matter, appease those terrified sponsors who wish to avoid all "controversy." Jean Muir issued such a statement; it did not satisfy the publishers of *Counter-attack* nor the officials of General Foods.

On the civil liberties level, the plan offers no protection to

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those who in principle feel—and there are some—that the filing of such a statement, whether voluntary or not, is in reality no more than a kind of loyalty oath; it also offers no protection for those who, also on principle, oppose the idea of considering political affiliations as grounds for employment or non-employment in areas not considered sensitive. According to *Variety*, the group that might refuse to file statements constitutes about ten per cent of AFRA's total membership. Is this ten per cent, not all and perhaps none of whom are Communists, to be sacrificed for a plan that *Variety* believes "would cover about 90% of the cases"?

Several months later, at the 1951 convention of AFRA in Minneapolis, Reel said of the plan, "It is perhaps too early to tell, but in my opinion it has been a failure." According to Reel, only a few such statements had been asked for, and a very small number had been filed by the union's members.

Another AFRA official said, "When a sponsor or an agency asks for a statement, they already know what it will say, and, if they were going to hire the person anyway, they do. If there's any question, they just don't bother asking for a statement. They don't hire."

Last July, in another attempt to deal with the Communist problem, the National Board of AFRA submitted to a referendum vote a constitutional amendment which had been discussed with considerable vehemence for more than a year. About fifty per cent of the union's membership voted, and the amendment was passed by a vote of 5 to 1.

It provided that:

"No person shall remain a member of A.F.R.A., or retain employment in A.F.R.A., who has been proven to have maintained membership in, or to have joined the Communist Party, since December 31, 1945, in state or federal court action;

"Or who has been named as, or identified as, a Communist by the State Department, Justice Department, or by the F.B.I.;

"Or, who after the adoption of this amendment renders aid and assistance by knowingly lending his name or talents to, or by actively promoting the interests of, or by making financial contributions to, any organization listed by the Attorney General's

office, or by any other duly constituted government agency, as subversive.

"The National Board may, in its discretion, require a written statement in affidavit form, from any officer, member, or employee of the association, or any local, to the effect that such officer, member or employee is not, and has not since the adoption of this Section been in violation of any of the provisions of Section 4 (Above) of this article."

As this is written, the precise meaning of the new constitutional amendment is not clear even to most officers of the union. Up to now no member of AFRA has been proven in court, either federal or state, to be a Party member, either before or since December 31, 1945. (Incidentally, no one in the union has satisfactorily explained the magic of that particular date.) Such court cases, and there have been only a handful, have been almost exclusively concerned with espionage, not actual Party membership. The William Remington case is almost the only exception, and Mr. Remington was tried on the grounds of perjury, as was Alger Hiss. The State Department in a few instances has refused passports to those it considers poor security risks, but the department almost never labels an applicant a "Communist"; neither does the Justice Department. As has already been pointed out, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has yet to publicly name anyone a Communist. Unless its policy radically changes, it never will.

Thus it appears unlikely that the first two paragraphs of the AFRA amendment will have much practical effect.

As for someone who "renders aid and assistance" to an organization on the Attorney General's list, several members of the union are known to be contributors to groups like the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, which is on the Attorney General's list. To date, no action has been taken against them. Most officials of the union doubt if it will be. And what is meant by "any other duly constituted government agency"? If the House Committee on Un-American Activities calls a group "subversive" is that sufficient? How about the McCarran senatorial committee on internal security? Again, no one knows; at least no one will say.

One member of the National Board who was a strong supporter

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of the amendment said, "If somebody came to us and showed us his Party card, we'd probably have to do something about it. Notice I said probably. We might not.

"You know how these things are. You've got to get as much anti-Communist stuff on the books as possible, first for its public relations effect, second, everything like this hurts the morale of the lefties.

"Legally, though, it probably won't mean a thing."

And so both management and labor in the radio and television industry are still looking for an answer. At one time one influential group wanted to hire what a network official described as a "man with the widest possible respect who would in case something came up, like Jean Muir's case, for instance, listen to both sides and render a fair verdict."

At least two names were discussed as possibilities for the job, General Dwight D. Eisenhower and J. Edgar Hoover. However, neither was available.

Others felt that the industry itself might be able to declare certain jobs "sensitive" and in some way (no one knew how) screen only the personnel in those positions, thus cutting down on the immensity of an over-all screening of the industry, whether private or governmental.

Immediately, however, this idea ran into what seemed to be insurmountable problems of definition. Just what was a "sensitive" spot in radio and television?

The largest group of names listed in *Red Channels* are those of actors. Was an actor in a radio or television play to be considered "sensitive"? Was there some manner in which by the way he played his role he could either subvert a listener or viewer—or promote the cause of Communism?

Some people thought so. So far as the movie industry is concerned, actor Adolph Menjou does—or did.

In a 1947 appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Menjou was asked, "As an actor, Mr. Menjou, could you tell the committee whether or not an actor in a picture

could portray a scene which would in effect serve as propaganda for communism or any other un-American purpose?"

Menjou replied, "Oh, yes, I believe that under certain circumstances a communistic director, a communistic writer, or a communistic actor, even if he were under orders from the head of a studio not to inject communism or un-Americanism or subversion into pictures, could easily subvert that order, under the proper circumstances, by a look, by an inflection, by a change in the voice. I have never seen it done, but I think it could be done."

"You don't know of any examples?"

"I cannot think of any at the moment, no sir."

To date, neither Mr. Menjou nor anyone else has given any such examples.

But could an actor who was also a trained saboteur be a danger in wartime?

An official of the Federal Communications Commission answered, "Probably."

During the last war, he said, the FCC monitored "all the important programs on the air, listening for sabotage. I imagine an actor on the radio by a certain voice intonation actually could give a message to the enemy—or by a certain facial expression if it was television. But get this straight now. I'm speaking of trained saboteurs (Soviet agents, if our enemy was Russia), and I'm speaking of actual wartime. I am not speaking of someone who joined up with some one of the innumerable fronts the Communists have lured innocents into at one time or another."

In a global war with the Soviet Union, the FCC official went on, "an orchestra leader could probably play certain notes in a piece or choose a certain sequence of pieces and, if he were a spy, give messages to the enemy."

However, he added, not one example of radio being used by spies (commercial radio, that is) was discovered during the last war.

"It's probably true that in a war with Russia the possibility of such a thing happening would be much greater, but at the moment I'd say there is no such danger, none. The danger to our democracy is from the zealots who now want to ban everybody who was ever left of center."

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The chairman of the board of directors of one of the major networks agreed that it is impossible to say that one job in radio or television is more "sensitive" than another.

"During wartime," he said, "anybody who walked into this building carrying a stick of TNT or, God knows, an atomic bomb in his brief case could put us out of business—for a while at least. I don't know how you can break it down and say who's potentially more dangerous than anyone else. An office boy trained as a Soviet agent could do just as much harm as the chief engineer."

True, the board chairman continued, during the last war only persons approved by the management could go near transmitters, most of which were protected by armed guards.

"Some station managers at the time even carried guns," he said, "and in case of another world war, we'd probably do something of the same kind, but I don't think any of us around here has any illusions that this is the complete answer, any more than the listing of some poor actor's name in *Red Channels* is the answer. That last I consider the most careless kind of 'guilt by association.'"

The publishers of *Red Channels* agree that such a division between "sensitive" and "non-sensitive" positions is impossible.

They were asked, "Do you think that everybody in a radio station is a security problem?"

"In my opinion," Kirkpatrick answered, "a person who has anything to do with a radio station, who comes in and goes out, is a security problem."

And Mr. Bierly added, "I think I agree wholeheartedly with that . . . because I don't think you can too easily break down the areas of a delicate operation. . . ."

"You are," he was asked, "referring to radio, now, aren't you?"

"I'm referring," said Mr. Bierly, "to most everything. As far as I can see it, a person can be potentially just as dangerous in a desolate section of the forest as he can in the heart of a big city, or the scrubwoman scrubbing the floors of the Agriculture Department, as much as the engineer in charge of all the bridges in New York."



# 11. THE

## PRICE OF FREEDOM

LEWIS CARROLL, *Through the Looking Glass*

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."<sup>1</sup>

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

"When the going gets tough, we should think things instead of words."

"I can't tell you," said the chairman of the board of directors of one of the major networks, "how many nights I've stayed awake trying to decide what we should do."

"Nobody seems to have any clear ideas."

Meantime, the frantic search for an answer continues, and a large segment of one of this country's largest industries remains panicked, partly by the hysteria of the times, partly by what is, relatively, one of this country's smallest corporations, American Business Consultants, and a handful of its supporters.

In 1950, according to a report of the Federal Communications

<sup>1</sup>At Rutgers University recently many undergraduates refused to sign the militantly anti-Communist Crusade for Freedom scroll. They were suspicious of the words "crusade" and "freedom."

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Commission, radio received \$415,000,000 in revenue; television lost more than \$25,000,000. However, since most television stations are owned by broadcasters, television's losses were absorbed by radio's huge profits.

The capitalization of American Business Consultants was \$15,000.

The radio and television industry employs more than 100,000 people; the staff of American Business Consultants numbers fewer than twenty.

At the end of 1950, forty-five million American homes had AM or FM radio sets; most homes had more than one. There were 95,000,000 sets in use as well as 9,800,000 television sets.

On Saturday and Sunday, August 26 and 27, of 1950, as the result of a telephone call from the secretary-treasurer of American Business Consultants, a relative handful of all the millions with radio and television sets started a "public controversy" the results of which are now known in every nation in the world.

And the problem is no nearer to solution than it was then. It has simply moved off the front pages.

One difficulty is that, in the frightened discussions held within the industry since, the "problem" has never been clearly defined. Is it the problem of possible Communist saboteurs in time of war? The saboteur as well as the spy, to judge by the sorry testimony revealed at the trials of Alger Hiss and of the atomic spies, may not be an actual Communist Party member; he will not carry a Party card (if, in fact, any Party members in the United States still do); he probably will never have attended an open Party meeting. He will not have associated himself with a "front"; his name is almost certainly not listed in *Red Channels*; he has never been denounced in *Counterattack*; and he will not be uncovered as the result of any of the "investigations" or "research projects" of American Business Consultants.

The identity of the trained Soviet spy or saboteur whose assignment is to transmit secret messages over American radio and television or to wreck it may not even now be known to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He will not be useful to the

Soviet Union unless and until a war with the United States occurs; commercial radio and television now possess no "secrets" he can steal. At that time, when and if "the hot war becomes a livid war," as Mr. Bierly put it, when American Business Consultants has, as promised, gone out of existence, the radio and television industry will have a real problem; so will scores of other important industries. That problem will without question be handled by the security agencies of the United States Government. But such is not the problem now.

And meantime, it is difficult to see how the services of the former FBI agents who publish *Counterattack* can be or have ever been of the slightest value in this area.

Is the problem one of finding the number and identity of actual Communist Party members now employed in the industry? If so, the job should not be delegated to American Business Consultants; its officials do not know who is or is not a Communist, and they have no way of finding out; they have said so, repeatedly.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation may know; through the agents strategically placed throughout the Party, the FBI may now be able to identify many actual Communists, in radio and television and everywhere else in the United States. The FBI has not, however, published their names; it almost certainly never will. If, in case of war with Russia, radio and television are found to be "sensitive," the FBI will probably turn over the results of its investigation to the governmental authorities in charge of "screening" personnel.

Meantime, however, until and if the FBI takes over the job of investigating radio and television personnel, there seems to be no sure way of identifying the Communists in the industry. A disciplined Party member would not hesitate to sign a "loyalty statement" whether required by the network which employs him or encouraged by the union of which he is a member.

The House Committee on Un-American Activities in its threatened "investigation" of radio and television may create the equivalent of the famous Hollywood Ten, a list to which several more names have recently been added. The "unfriendly" group in radio

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and television may number two or five or twenty, but even then the fact that an actor or writer or director refuses to answer the question "Are you a member of the Communist Party?" would not be proof that he is.

Ring Lardner, Jr., one of the defiant Hollywood writers, in a letter to the New York *Herald Tribune*, had this to say about his refusal to give a "yes" or "no" answer to the question:

"As the question stands now, if I am a member of the Communist Party I would be exposing myself to the bigotry and inspired hysteria which is forcing not only Communists but all left-of-center political groups into a semi-secret status. More specifically, in view of the Motion Picture Association's blacklist statement, I would be banishing myself permanently from the profession in which I have earned my living since I was twenty-one.

"If I am not a member, I would be exposing other men to the same bigotry and blacklist by contributing to the precedent that all non-Communists must so declare themselves in order to isolate the actual offenders. Further, it would be clear to everyone, including me, that I had purged myself in order to please my past and prospective employers."

What has *Red Channels* contributed to the problem of identifying the real Communists in radio and television? Nothing. Quite the opposite. All of the 151 listees are stained with the same careless red paint. As commentator Raymond Swing put it in a speech to the Radio Executives Club of New York, "A person once named, however innocent he may be, can never quite be rid of the taint, the taint not of his guilt, but of his having been named." An "explanation" in *Counterattack* will not suffice; neither will, if that were still possible, a voluntary appearance before the House Committee on Un-American Activities; neither will, to judge from the experience of Florence and Fredric March, the winning of a libel suit.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>A well-known lawyer in the field of civil liberties has this to say about the libel problem: "In addition to the expense involved, recourse to the courts is a risky proposition. While accusation of Communist Party membership is considered libel by most state courts that have ruled on the matter, it is uncertain whether or not a person can successfully sue for libel if he is

By lumping together the names of some of the most prominent and talented people in radio and television, *Red Channels* has surely done exactly what the Communists would wish it to do. It has, by innuendo at least, given the Party a glamour, prestige, and importance it has never before enjoyed in radio and television. It has created throughout the industry a suspicion and distrust and despair and hysteria which the Communists themselves could not hope to create. The publication and those executives in advertising and among the sponsors and on the networks who have used it have, whatever their intentions, created in one of this country's most crucial industries the kind of terrified dissension on which the Communist Party always has and always will grow.

More important, the publishers of *Red Channels* and those who adhere to it have wrecked, probably forever, the careers of many talented anti-Communist Americans, not to mention the spiritual pain and humiliation suffered by all of the 151.

Since it is impossible now to uncover a Communist without the co-operation of the FBI, is the problem in the radio and television industry one of isolating those persons who, as George Sokolsky stated, have "leftist leanings?" If that is the case, it should surely be agreed that the words "leftist leanings" must be defined—and with precision.

Does a man have "leftist leanings" if, as one *Red Channels* listee did, he attended a "spring ball" for the *New Masses* in March 1938? If, as the same listee did, he was a "member" of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade—in 1939; if he appealed for a boy-

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untruthfully accused of being a member of a Communist front organization. And it is very doubtful whether even an accusation of Communist Party membership would give the individual named a right to sue if the accusation takes the form of merely repeating what was said in a legislative committee report, which is itself privileged.

"A person whose contract is broken as a result of such accusations may be able to sue the person who brought about that breach of contract for damage, if his employer did not pay him in full, but in the Jean Muir case, Miss Muir was paid in full and had no such recourse against those who succeeded in breaking her contract—and there is no recourse where a contract was never made, the situation which occurs most frequently now."

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cott against Japanese aggression—year unknown; if he was listed as an associate editor of a magazine called *New Theatre*—year unknown; if he supported the American League for Peace and Democracy—1938? If he has done nothing “subversive” since?

Is a person leaning leftward if he was a member of the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions when that group was campaigning for the re-election of Franklin D. Roosevelt? Is he possessed of “leftist leanings” if he protested against the House Un-American Activities Committee in Hollywood? If he attended a meeting of the Stop Censorship Committee, which campaigned against the banning of *Nation* magazine in New York City’s schools? If he wrote an article for the Hollywood *Quarterly*? If he made a broadcast criticizing United States foreign policy in Italy? If he “endorsed” Russian War Relief? If he supported Henry Wallace for President? If he marched in a May Day parade?

Does one affiliation suffice? Will a dozen do? Are forty-one necessary? Who can say? Who is to judge?

Or are all of the 151 listees in *Red Channels* to be thought of as having “leftist leanings” and thus be deprived of their livelihoods? The editors of *Red Channels* are now apparently convinced that they should not be.

According to Mr. Kirkpatrick, “If a person just goes to the book and says, ‘The name is there; I will go no further,’ then certainly that is wrong.

“On the other hand,” Kirkpatrick went on, “it is acceptable if an employer opens the book and says, ‘Let’s see what there is,’ and then goes on from there to consider other factors.” The “other factors” have never been defined.

But the basic question goes far beyond whether *Red Channels* should be a “bible” of itself or whether “other factors” should be taken into account as well.

The basic question is whether in a free society employers in radio and television or any other industry not declared “sensitive” do in fact have “the right and duty to consider the political ideologies”—past or present—of those they hire. It is whether a network or an independent station or, for that matter, a factory manu-

facturing M-1 rifles is upholding or traducing the democratic tradition by requiring its employees to sign a "loyalty statement" or "oath." It is whether any non-governmental employer has the right to decide who among his employees is a good American and who is not. It is whether a man's political beliefs are now to determine if he can continue to work at his chosen profession. It is whether a man's political beliefs are no longer to be considered a private matter.

The publishers of *Counterattack* and *Red Channels* have said that entertainers who contribute money to Party-front organizations are, whether they know it or not, indirectly giving financial aid to the Communist Party. True enough. The former FBI agents further argue that entertainers and artists who lend their names to front organizations give those groups a prestige and respectability they would not otherwise enjoy. Granted.

Nevertheless, however displeasing it may be to the general populace, it is still legal for anyone, in or out of the entertainment business, to contribute funds to a Communist-front organization or, for that matter, to the Party itself; it is still legal to lend one's name to groups that have been called "subversive" by the Attorney General of the United States and to those clearly controlled by the Communist Party. Entertainers or artists who do so may expect to be criticized; they should not be surprised—or demand pity—if their popularity suffers. However, to be deprived of their livelihood because of the pressure tactics of a handful of zealots is quite a different matter. As so often happens, in this area those who would do the suppressing are a greater threat to the democratic idea than those who would be suppressed.

According to a statement issued by the American Civil Liberties Union in April 1951, ". . . the problem of 'pressure-group censorship' is full of differences in degree, and . . . it is hard to draw lines which represent the best possible combination of the freedom of expression and the freedom to see what is offered, on the one hand, and the freedom to protest effectively, on the other hand. But . . . intimidation and reprisal have no place in the field of ideas. The ever-increasing attempts of pressure-groups to bring about the censorship or suppression of motion

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pictures, etc., which they disapprove . . . dangerously undermine one of the foundation stones of American democracy, the freedom of expression. . . . The Union . . . urges those responsible for the publication or production, the distribution or circulation or exhibition, of newspapers, periodicals, or books, of radio or television programs, of plays, motion pictures or other theatrical entertainments, to stand firmly against this threat to the freedom of their industries and the freedom of the people as a whole."

What is true of ideas is surely even more emphatically true of human beings.

To be sure, in radio and television there are certain jobs in which a person's political point of view is important. A news commentator, for example. In certain areas, the writer of a documentary.

But no important sponsor is, in these unhappy times, likely to hire a commentator with whose views he violently disagrees; and the "Communist line" cannot be "secretly" injected into a news broadcast.

As for documentaries, the introduction to *Red Channels* bluntly states that a few such programs "produced by one network in particular have faithfully followed the Party Line." No examples are given. However, the statement continues, "Several commercially sponsored dramatic series are used as sounding boards, particularly in reference to current issues in which the Party is critically interested." As mentioned earlier, the issues listed are "academic freedom," "civil rights," "peace," "the H-bomb, etc."

In a documentary on, say, the war in Korea, any attempt on the part of the writer to "point up current Communist goals" (to quote *Red Channels*) could and would certainly be determined long before the program went on the air. The network or advertising agency official in charge would not need outside help to decide that. As for such issues as "academic freedom," "civil rights," "peace," and "the H-Bomb," these are matters of vital concern to most loyal Americans. It would be a tragedy if, because they are also of concern to disloyal Communists, such subjects could no longer be dramatized on the radio or over



television—or if, for example, because the Communists pretend to believe in “civil rights,” a program endorsing them should be considered as “following the Communist line.”

The fact is, of course, that, because of the present fear in the industry of “public controversy,” such subjects are these days considered with decreasing frequency—and most of them not at all.

John Crosby, the widely syndicated radio and television critic, puts it this way:

“Broadcasting has always been more afflicted with taboos than any other medium. Today the timidity has reached an alltime high. Virtually everything from pregnancy to freedom of religion is considered a controversial subject, leaving almost nothing except homicide as a fit topic to enter our homes. You can’t hire a controversial figure either, meaning anyone whose name has appeared in *Red Channels*. No one in broadcasting from the network heads to the elevator operators will defend these taboos; all scrupulously observe them.

“The motto of the industry could easily be: ‘We just don’t want no trouble around here.’ If it continues that way, they won’t have no audience left except children.”

On the day Mr. Crosby’s column appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* a vice-president of one of the major networks said, “Well, he’s right, of course, and it’s too damn bad. A little guts would be nice, but we’d all have to stick our necks out together, and everybody knows that won’t happen—not in my lifetime, anyway.” The vice-president is thirty-seven.

It is not surprising that in the troubled year 1950 a *Red Channels* appeared, a publication which played upon and added to the fears of an always cautious industry. There have been similar “reports” before, and there will be again.

What is surprising is that, without a publicly audible murmur, a large segment of a vital industry surrendered to it. What is surprising is that almost no important leader in the field questioned its ethics, its reliability, its reason for being. Robert Kintner of the American Broadcasting Company did, as was noted earlier, advise an official of the American Legion in Illinois that if the Legionnaire’s charges against Gypsy Rose Lee could not be

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“proved” Miss Lee would continue on the air, and she did. Mr. Kintner did not say what he would have done if Miss Lee had not previously signed an affidavit for her union attesting that she was not a Communist, or if the Illinois veteran could have “proved” that she did belong to all of the organizations with which her name is associated in *Red Channels*. In *Tide*, the influential trade magazine in the advertising field, Reginald Clough in an editorial last year deplored the fact that General Foods had discharged Miss Muir “without a full look at the facts.” He agreed with the *New York Times* that the corporation had submitted to “a ‘trial by character association’—a ticket written in full by the pressure groups involved.” However, Mr. Clough added, “In self-protection, the advertising business has no recourse but to screen its writers and producers, its singers and jugglers, to avoid hiring ‘controversial persons.’”

It is not surprising that what *Fortune* magazine has called “a handful of busybodies” should have, as the result of the appearance of *Red Channels* and through the efforts of one of its publishers, protested against the appearance on television of an actress listed in the publication. There have been similar protests on other grounds many times before, from management groups, from labor unions, from political, religious, and economic organizations of all kinds. These are an inevitable part of the democratic system.

What is surprising is that a huge corporation should have found that in August 1950 some twenty-odd or, for that matter, two hundred-odd people could create a “public controversy.” What is surprising is that, apparently, no official of General Foods questioned how many Americans would be profoundly shocked by its decision—as more than three thousand took the trouble to write the corporation that they were.

What has happened in the months since Miss Muir lost her job is even more shocking. In most cases protests are no longer necessary; “controversy” is avoided before it begins, and whether a person is hired often depends solely on the fact that he is listed in *Red Channels*, or, even when not listed, only that “There might be trouble.”

What kind of trouble? And who would cause it? Usually these questions go unanswered—and, for that matter, unasked.

There is no evidence that the great majority of Americans feel they must be protected from looking at or listening to certain performers or from examining certain ideas.

American Business Consultants was not launched as the result of any perceptible public demand for its services. *Counterattack* is in no sense a major publication. Its circulation remains below 5000, considerably less than that of many of the "little magazines." *Red Channels* was not a best seller; fewer than 17,500 copies have been purchased, most of these within the industry.

The men behind these publications speak only for themselves.

Despite the conflicting claims of its chairman, Rabbi Benjamin Schultz, the Joint Committee Against Communism represents only those whose names are listed on the organization's letterhead; the American Jewish Committee against Communism, also headed by Schultz, is not supported by any important segment of the Jewish community; as another example, the commander of the Hudson County, New Jersey, department of the Catholic War Veterans who protested against the showing of Charlie Chaplin's ancient movie shorts was not advised to do so by the fellow members of his organization; Mrs. John T. McCullough is a committee of one, with the occasional help of a sprinkling of other suburban housewives—thirty at most; and the demands and claims of the American Legion's *summary* have not been approved (nor has approval been asked) by the millions of veterans in that organization. There is no indication that, except for occasional zealots, the vast majority agree with the publication's point of view; certainly very few ever follow through on its emphatic demands for "action."

But suppose these groups and individuals were all that they pretend to be.

Expediency aside, does not the advertising business and do not sponsors and the radio and television industry as a whole have "the right and duty" to concern themselves with the survival of democratic principles?

In a recent issue of *Fortune* magazine Lewis Galantière, described by the editors as a "thoughtful student of U.S. and

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European business mores, politics, and history," warned that "The sure way for American business to be reduced to the abject status of European business is the way of moral default—that is, by making it possible for the planners and governmentals (whether of the Left or of the Right) to pose as the sole defenders of the moral foundations of society."

Freedom is expensive. In wartime it is bought at the cost of lives; in peacetime the price must be paid in terms of coolheaded courage.

It is a price that Americans have a right to expect the leaders of one of its basic industries to pay.

We have a right to demand moral responsibility in radio and television as well as in government.

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