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*report on* BLACKLISTING

II • Radio - Television

JOHN COGLEY

THE FUND FOR THE REPUBLIC, INC.



2 vols.

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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 seyde in forme and reverence  
And short and quyke and full of hy sentence*

In defining the "basic issue," Vincent Hartnett is on safe grounds, for there is no question of his clerkly 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 *Counterattack*, 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," Ireene 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 "Irene 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 Irene 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 fronters. 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 impugment 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

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\* 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 Gang, 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 blacklists 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*

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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:\*

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\* 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		
	<i>Radio</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>All</i>
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

1 - 4 times a month

2 - 5 times a week

6 times a week or more

Total

13

14

15

22

64

**\*4. What do you like most about working in (Radio) (TV)? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why?**

ANSWERS:

	<i>All</i> (64)	<i>Top level</i> (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:

	<i>All</i>	<i>Top level</i>
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:	All	Top level
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		Mediocrity, poor quality	29
TV challenge	7	High production costs	7
Radio must lose	6	Sponsors and ad agencies only interested in selling	8
Challenge serious but radio can win	11	Blacklisting	1
Others	2	Others	7
D.K., N.A.	1	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:	All	Top level
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:	All	Top level
Yes	36	13
Yes, with qualifications	16	3
No	2	2
D.K., N.A.	10	2
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

Apart from ability, how did (he) (she) actually get where (he) (she) is now?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
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:	All	Top level
Yes	52	19
No	11	1
D.K., N.A.	1	0
	<u>64</u>	<u>20</u>

REASONS:	All	Top level
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?

ANSWERS:	<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?

ANSWERS:	<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?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
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?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
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?

ANSWERS:	All	Top level
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 about that? No \_\_\_\_\_ How is 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 do you explain that? It depends \_\_\_\_\_ How do you mean? 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

31-45 ..... 41

46 + ..... 13

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

Did not speak freely 10

N.A. 2

Showed open concern

for anonymity 12

What questions were the most difficult to handle? Why?

None 32

Blacklisting questions 10

All 3

Q. 8 3

Q. 26 3

Q. 28 3

Q.'s 4, 5, 11, 13, 14,

30, 36 (each) 1

Not ascertained 7

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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**I**N SEPTEMBER, 1954, the Board of Directors of The Fund for the Republic authorized a study of blacklisting in the motion picture and radio-TV industries. John Cogley, then executive editor of *The Commonweal*, was appointed director of the project. He was asked by the Fund to prepare a full factual report on the situation.

Beginning in January, 1955, a staff of ten reporters and researchers collected facts in Hollywood and New York. They spent the next eight months interviewing persons on both Coasts who had first-hand knowledge of the situation. In all, almost five hundred persons were interviewed. Special care was given to such questions as:

Does blacklisting exist? How did it develop? Who are, or have been, blacklisted? Is "clearance" possible? How does "clearance" operate? Who are the key figures in "clearance" operations? What has been the role of the theatrical unions? What is, or has been, the position of the motion-picture industry on this question? The radio-television industry? The leading advertising agencies? The chief sponsors? Do those who have been blacklisted have recourse in the law? Did the "Hollywood Ten" and the group of self-confessed ex-Communists in Hollywood succeed in using the films to propagate the Communist Party line? What do rank-and-file members of the radio-television industry think of blacklisting and what effect has it had on morale in the industry?

These and many other questions are answered in this two-volume "REPORT ON BLACKLISTING."