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1 LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, ROOM 8333, BILTMORE HOTEL

2 SUB-COMMITTEE

3 of the

4 COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

5 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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8 Sub-Committee convened at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 14, 1947

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12 Members present: Hon. J. Parnell Thomas,
13 Chairman presiding

14 Hon. John McDowell

15 Member absent: Hon. John Wood

16 Also present: Robert E. Stripling,
17 Chief Investigator

18 Louis J. Russell, Investigator

1 LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 1947. 10:00 A.M.

2 - - -
3 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Taylor, it is our custom to swear in
4 the witnesses, so if that is agreeable to you we will give
5 you the oath.

6 MR. TAYLOR: Certainly.

7 MR. THOMAS: The Committee will come to order. The
8 record will show that Mr. McDowell and Mr. Thomas are pres-
9 ent.

10 The first witness today will be Mr. Robert Taylor.
11 Mr. Taylor, would you mind standing and taking the oath,
12 please?

13 ROBERT TAYLOR,
14 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

15 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, your witness.

16 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, will you state your full
17 name and present address for the record.

18 MR. TAYLOR: My full name is Robert Taylor. The address
19 is 807 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

20 MR. STRIPLING: When and where were you born, Mr.
21 Taylor?

22 MR. TAYLOR: I was born in Filley, Nebraska, August 5,
23 1911.

24 MR. STRIPLING: What is your occupation?

25 MR. TAYLOR: Actor.

26 MR. STRIPLING: How long have you been an actor.

1 MR. TAYLOR: Since 1934.

2 MR. STRIPLING: How long have you been in Hollywood.

3 MR. TAYLOR: Since 1934.

4 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, this is a Sub-Committee of
5 the Committee on Un-American Activities of the U. S. House
6 of Representatives. It is sitting here in Los Angeles for
7 the purpose of receiving any testimony or information con-
8 cerning the alleged Communist or Fascist activities or in-
9 fluences within the motion picture industry.

10 The Sub-Committee has invited you here today in order
11 that it may have the benefit of any information you might
12 have on this subject. Therefore, if you desire, you can go
13 right ahead and give the Committee a statement, or if you
14 prefer, we will ask you questions.

15 MR. TAYLOR: I would prefer questions, as a matter of
16 fact.

17 MR. STRIPLING: All right, sir.

18 Mr. Taylor, do you consider that the Communists now
19 exercise any influence on the motion picture industry?

20 MR. TAYLOR: I would answer that, sir, by saying that
21 I am at a little bit of a loss to define exactly what we mean
22 by Communists out here because it does seem to be a rather
23 ambiguous term, but I might say that the people whom I would
24 be suspicious of being Communists do, I think, exercise a
25 tremendous influence in the motion picture business.

26 MR. STRIPLING: In what respect, Mr. Taylor?

1 MR. TAYLOR: Insofar as the writers are concerned. I
2 don't point to them particularly, but I have found in many
3 cases in going through scripts submitted to me evidences which
4 I would consider Communist propaganda or the Communist party
5 line chatter, you might say.

6 Also, any category of the Screen Actors' Guild, of which
7 I am on the board of directors, I find that it is sometimes
8 very difficult to conduct orderly meetings, especially group
9 meetings of the Guild, because of a certain small group of
10 members of whom I would be very suspicious of being Communists
11 or of being followers along those lines. Also, in the
12 matter of the labor situation which we have to contend with,
13 naturally a certain group of actors seem to be willing at all
14 times to sponsor moves or strategies on the part of labor
15 which, to my way of thinking, are completely detrimental to
16 the whole motion picture industry.

17 It seems to me, in looking them over, it is the same
18 group time after time. You can almost bet who is going to
19 speak or vote or talk in favor of certain actions.

20 MR. THOMAS: May I interrupt?

21 MR. STRIPLING: Yes, sir.

22 MR. THOMAS: Right at that point, Mr. Taylor; do you
23 mean it is the same group of actors or the same group of
24 writers and actors that have created these disorderly meet-
25 ings and that have taken an active part in labor questions,
26 or do you mean that it is just a group of persons who are

1 not actors and writers that you could pin down every time?

2 You know what I mean?

3 MR. TAYLOR: I am speaking now, sir, in terms of actors
4 only.

5 MR. THOMAS: Yes.

6 MR. TAYLOR: Because that is about the only group with
7 whom I have direct contact in our Guild meetings. You can
8 just bet they are going to be there. I would say eight or
9 ten whom I could certainly be suspicious of who will always
10 get things fouled up somehow or other.

11 MR. THOMAS: How do they go about it?

12 MR. TAYLOR: It is a matter of points of order and mak-
13 ing very circuitous approaches to the same problem. You can
14 almost bet on their leanings, because they always get up and
15 it is always one of those things, "Mr. Chairman, I don't
16 quite understand this", or, "Mr. Chairman, I don't quite
17 understand that." They never seem to quite understand your
18 point, but they always get around to their point ultimately.

19 There are innumerable ways.

20 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, you mentioned the figure
21 eight. Would you care to name the eight you have in mind?

22 MR. TAYLOR: I used eight as a figurative figure. I
23 don't know that I actually could name eight. I would be de-
24 lighted to name the ones -- not in pointing my finger and
25 saying, "They are Communists", because I don't know.

26 MR. THOMAS: That is right.

1 MR. TAYLOR: I merely say that John Garfield, Rose
2 Hobart, Karen Morley, Sterling Hayden, Ann Revere, a chap
3 by the name of Howard De Silva, are some of the ones. I can
4 probably think of more.

5 MR. STRIPLING: You said you were on the board of
6 directors of the Screen Actors' Guild?

7 MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

8 MR. STRIPLING: Do you know when the Screen Actors'
9 Guild was organized?

10 MR. TAYLOR: No, I don't. I have only been a member
11 of the board of directors for a few months.

12 MR. STRIPLING: Do all of the actors in Hollywood be-
13 long to the Screen Actors' Guild?

14 MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

15 MR. STRIPLING: Who is the president of it?

16 MR. TAYLOR: The president at the moment is Ronald
17 Reagan. Robert Montgomery was president and then due to
18 his activities as a producer, director and actor, he more
19 or less had to resign.

20 MR. McDOWELL: They are elected every year?

21 MR. TAYLOR: Not to my understanding. I have only
22 taken an active interest in the thing recently so I don't
23 know what the ramifications of the election are.

24 MR. STRIPLING: You say you have been in Hollywood
25 since 1934?

26 MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

1 MR. STRIPLING: When did you first detect or notice
2 these Communist influences, either within the scripts or
3 within the organizations, which are active in Hollywood, or
4 have you ever come into personal contact with efforts to
5 see to it that Communist propaganda was placed in the films?
6 I am speaking of scenes which were shot which definitely
7 carried the Communist party line. How early, in other words,
8 did you detect this?

9 MR. TAYLOR: Well, I became conscious of this, I should
10 say, about, oh, two years, possibly, before the war. Of
11 course, I have been hollering about Communism for a long
12 time. I probably shouldn't, because I don't know too much
13 about it. I don't know who does. For instance, in 1943 we
14 did a picture in the studio in which I tried desperately
15 to get out of called "Song of Russia". They wanted me to
16 do it. I didn't want to do it because I thought it was
17 definitely Communist propaganda. In other words, it hap-
18 pened to paint Russia in a light in which I personally had
19 never conceived Russia.

20 Much against my wishes, I had to do the picture partly
21 because of studio pressure and partly because the government
22 sent a man out here whom I believe was then associated with
23 the War Production Board. I am not certain. I couldn't re-
24 call his name to save my life. But he was a government
25 representative in charge of motion pictures and he, in turn,
26 insisted that I do the picture.

1 I was then virtually in the Navy. They said that they
2 would see I didn't have to go into the Navy until I finished
3 the picture.

4 MR. THOMAS: Did he say he was familiar with the script?

5 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir, he said he was familiar with the
6 script.

7 MR. THOMAS: But you can't recall his name?

8 MR. TAYLOR: No. It was kind of a French name,
9 Paulette, or something like that. I couldn't say.

10 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, who could give us the name
11 of the individual?

12 MR. TAYLOR: The meeting in which I met him was in Mr.
13 L. B. Mayer's office.

14 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Mayer's office?

15 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir. He was on the War Production
16 Board for a while.

17 MR. STRIPLING: Do you recall who wrote the script for
18 the "Song of Russia"?

19 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir, I don't.

20 MR. STRIPLING: But you were quite aware at the time
21 before you played in the picture that it was, to your mind,
22 Communist propaganda?

23 MR. TAYLOR: To my way of thinking, it certainly was.

24 MR. THOMAS: Could you develop that a little bit and
25 describe to us just why you thought it was Communist propa-
26 ganda?

1 MR. STRIPLING: I think he did that, Mr. Chairman. He
2 said it portrayed Russia in a very favorable light, a light
3 which he had never come to envision Russia and no one else
4 had. I personally saw the picture. There is no doubt about
5 it.

6 MR. THOMAS: I didn't see it.

7 MR. TAYLOR: I was strongly opposed to it. I thought
8 the music potential in the picture was good and would prob-
9 ably be box office because of the music, but not because of
10 me or anything else. I felt the manner that they depicted
11 the Russian family life and Russian cooperative farms and
12 the relationship between an American conductor and a Russian
13 peasant-type girl was completely wrong.

14 MR. STRIPLING: There was a comparison.

15 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, there was a comparison. The guy was
16 naturally upholding the family living in the United States
17 and the girl was comparing it to the Russian family living
18 there. There was supposed to be favorable comparisons
19 throughout.

20 MR. THOMAS: When you told Mr. Mayer and the government
21 man that there were parts of the picture you did not approve
22 of, what was their answer to your protest?

23 MR. TAYLOR: The reaction which was almost universally
24 gotten at the time because I had been squawking around about
25 the lines in stories for a long time was, "Well, my God, we
26 are no more Communists than you are, but we don't see how

1 this can possibly do any damage, and if there is anything
2 Communist in it, we will take it out." Which is rarely
3 done, to my way of thinking.

4 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, I think it would be very
5 helpful to the Sub-Committee if you would give them roughly
6 the mechanics involved in making a picture from the stand-
7 point of an actor. In other words, let us say a story is
8 adopted by the studio and the script is written. Then that
9 is applied to the actor?

10 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir, that is the usual routine.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Would you tell the Committee just the
12 mechanics of it?

13 MR. TAYLOR: I will be glad to. The usual routine so
14 far as the contract player, which I happen to be under
15 permanent contract to one studio, is concerned, they buy
16 stories indiscriminately without regard to the actors'
17 whims, which is as it should be, and they usually develop
18 those stories without regard to the actors.

19 Then they have a lot of people under contract and they
20 say, "This story would more than likely be suitable for
21 Taylor, Montgomery, or Gable", or whoever it might be. The
22 script is then sent to them for their approval. Normally
23 you have no choice in turning them down. I have been there
24 for so many years that they do give a certain amount of
25 latitude. I am given the privilege of objecting to certain
26 phases or certain lines specifically. If they consider my

1 judgment worthwhile, then they will frequently make the
2 changes, and if I don't want to make the picture I don't
3 have to do it. That has been the case in the last year,
4 at least with me.

5 MR. STRIPLING: Your objections, however, were over-
6 ruled?

7 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

8 MR. STRIPLING: They were in the case of "Song of
9 Russia"?

10 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Do you recall any other pictures in
12 which that might be the case?

13 MR. TAYLOR: Not insofar as it might relate to any
14 Communist propaganda. One script was sent to me in the
15 past year, I should say, in which I strongly objected.
16 However, it had not been sent officially from the studio.
17 It had been sent from a producer. When I called attention
18 to the fact I thought it was flagrantly Communistic, he
19 was completely surprised that I had even taken that attitude
20 toward it. I have not done the picture, I might add, and I
21 don't think anyone else has.

22 MR. THOMAS: Do you think they will ever do the picture?

23 MR. TAYLOR: I think so, but it will be changed com-
24 pletely.

25 MR. THOMAS: That brings up the point I would like to
26 ask a question on. Have you noticed any change of sentiment

1 in connection or toward Communism over the past six months,
2 we will say?

3 MR. TAYLOR: I don't know whether the sentiment has
4 changed, but I think it has become more controversial as n
5 issue, which is undoubtedly healthy. Actually I cannot
6 speak for the boys who work around the studios such as
7 electricians or grips who are all good friends of mine, be-
8 cause I have not been working for about a year on a picture,
9 but those boys, I am convinced, don't want any part of it.
10 It is a thing to me that is as much disliked by those people
11 as certainly Fascism, Nazism, or whatever. I think they got
12 sucked into an awful lot of things that they don't have any-
13 thing to do with.

14 MR. THOMAS: We have been on this Committee so many
15 years, at least Mr. Stripling and I have. There was a time
16 when the Committee had tough going. You couldn't hardly pick
17 up a paper without finding some criticism of the Committee.
18 The mail indicated a lot of criticism. Today it is all our
19 way, apparently. The newspaper reports are favorable and
20 the comments you hear on the street are favorable and ninety-
21 nine and nine-tenths of the mail is favorable. Then, people
22 are more conscious of the danger, I think, than they ever
23 were before.

24 Take this particular hearing. We have been holding
25 hearings this week. We have gotten cooperation here that
26 couldn't be excelled. Everybody seems to want to cooperate.

1 We are holding a very different kind of hearing than, say,
2 five years ago, three years ago, or even a year ago.

3 For the record, the Chair wants to state that all of
4 the witnesses who are going to appear today and tomorrow
5 have all been invited and have very graciously accepted our
6 invitation. This is another indication of the desire to
7 cooperate from the very top right down to the bottom, and we
8 appreciate your coming.

9 MR. STRIPLING: Is that all?

10 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, the evidence which the
12 Committee has received here indicates that the principal
13 trouble is with the writers. For example, there has been a
14 lot said here about Dalton Trumbo. Do you happen to know
15 Dalton Trumbo?

16 MR. TAYLOR: I don't know him personally, no.

17 MR. STRIPLING: He has written numerous scripts which
18 very definitely contain Communist propaganda. He is a very
19 highly paid writer. I might say the same thing for Donald
20 Ogden Stewart.

21 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

22 MR. STRIPLING: We asked a representative of M.G.M.
23 why they did not dismiss Mr. Stewart. He said Mr. Mayer's
24 position was, if he fired him, another studio would pick
25 him up at an increase in salary. Do you have any opinion
26 as to the proper way that this question should be approached?

1 It occurs to the Sub-Committee that the quickest way
2 Communism can be eliminated from Hollywood would be through
3 the payroll route. In other words, if these Communist
4 writers were cut off of the payroll by the studios, it would
5 not be a very healthful place for them to live. In other
6 words, they would be taken out.

7 MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

8 MR. STRIPLING: How do you account for the fact that the
9 studios themselves continue to employ these people and pay
10 them large salaries, and while they do write and furnish some
11 excellent scripts, according to the testimony, on the other
12 hand they run a ringer in every now and then.

13 MR. TAYLOR: That is true.

14 MR. STRIPLING: Don't you think a large part of this
15 thing should rest squarely on the shoulders of management?

16 MR. TAYLOR: I most assuredly do. I most certainly do.
17 I feel that the immediate solution in Hollywood pictures is
18 for the studios, the management of various studios, just to
19 get together and adopt a uniform policy whereby they all
20 agree upon their attitudes and what they will do with actors
21 who have been caught doing something they shouldn't be doing.
22 I defy an actor to get a job if Mayer doesn't like him or
23 if Warner doesn't like him. I don't think it is possible.
24 I know many of them who have almost died from it. One
25 specific fellow was Jack Gilbert. He couldn't get a job.
26 The same move if taken seriously enough could apply to

1 writers, directors and producers.

2 MR. THOMAS: That is a good point.

3 MR. TAYLOR: I for one will not work with anybody on a
4 picture with whom I am the slightest bit suspicious of. If
5 they rang in Ann Revere, for instance -- I say that specif-
6 ically -- in the middle of a picture, they would have to
7 take her out or take me out, because I wouldn't work on the
8 same set with her.

9 MR. THOMAS: Tell us a little bit about Miss Revere.
10 Maybe Mr. Stripling or Mr. McDowell know about her, but I
11 am not up on some of these things. Why do you object to
12 Ann Revere?

13 MR. TAYLOR: I object to her purely because I am very
14 strong in my suspicions and because of having sat in on
15 Screen Actors' Guild directors' meetings with her. I don't
16 think she is interested in the business, in the interests
17 of the motion picture business. I happen to think it is a
18 good business. I like it. I am not going to do anything
19 that would hurt it in any way. I don't think she feels the
20 same way at all. I would be very suspicious of her being
21 definitely Communist.

22 MR. THOMAS: Can you recall anything she said?

23 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir.

24 MR. THOMAS: That would definitely prove that?

25 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir, I don't.

26 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Taylor, in the past eight years

1 there have sprung up in Hollywood a number of front organizations,
2 organizations which we designate as fronts, but organizations
3 which have their organization and inspiration in the
4 Communist party. Have you ever been roped in or sucked in
5 on any of these organizations?

6 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir, because I don't join. The only
7 organization which I belong to out here of any political
8 nature is the Motion Picture Alliance. I was invited when I
9 got out of the Navy to join the American Veterans Committee.
10 I had a very voluminous letter from Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.
11 and I wrote him another voluminous letter telling him why I
12 didn't want to belong. That was before I had any opinions
13 on the Committee because I knew nothing about it. I wasn't
14 ready to join a veterans' committee of any nature.

15 Subsequently I think I have been proven smart in not
16 joining. However, I have joined none of the organizations,
17 like the Actors' Lab, or any of those organizations.

18 MR. STRIPLING: It is through these organizations that
19 they are able to recruit a number of people in the motion
20 picture industry. I mention that, Mr. Chairman, because
21 there have been an unusual number which have been set up in
22 Hollywood apparently realizing the very great propaganda
23 value of the motion picture industry, and also because it is
24 a great source of revenue. Some prominent actors have con-
25 tributed very large sums. Donald Ogden Stewart, for example,
26 we checked his income tax return several years ago and

1 found that Donald Ogden Stewart one year had an income of
2 \$92,000.00. In the same year he contributed a rather sub-
3 stantial number of contributions to a number of front organ-
4 izations, \$500.00 to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, and other
5 fronts. That was during the period of the Soviet-Nazi Pact.
6 As an indication of his attitude, he listed among his
7 exemptions 25 cents for a veterans' poppy sponsored by the
8 Veterans of Foreign Wars, 10 cents to the March of Dimes.

9 MR. McDOWELL: You mean he listed that in his income
10 tax report?

11 MR. STRIPLING: And claimed exemption on the 35 cents,
12 just as an indication of his contempt, I should say, of our
13 economy or of the institutions represented by the March of
14 Dimes and the poppy. I could see no other reason for it.

15 Now, as has been previously brought out here, Mr. Stewart
16 has written scripts for a number of propaganda films, and
17 according to the testimony, as well, for some very good films,
18 but he has certainly been a good source of revenue for the
19 Communists.

20 That is all, Mr. Chairman.

21 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead, Mr. Taylor.

22 MR. TAYLOR: I personally feel that not only can the
23 producers take a concerted stand and should take a concerted
24 stand on this, but I believe certain actors feel as I feel
25 and should take a concerted stand on it; those who are in a
26 category which makes it possible for them to do so.

1 In the picture which I am about to start in June, for
2 instance, one of the writers on the script, a chap named
3 Lester Cole, I have been told holds cards in about everything
4 you can hold a card in short of the Communist party, and he
5 may hold a card in that. I am also told he will not admit
6 being a Communist. However, he was suggested as a potential
7 director for this picture because he is a brilliant young
8 guy. I said not if I make no other picture will Mr. Cole
9 direct it. I felt I would betray all of my beliefs if I
10 were to let him direct a picture. So that settled that.

11 Certain actors might not be in a position to do that.
12 I felt I was. I would not work with him for five minutes.
13 My wife in her last picture was in desperate need of a young
14 leading man. Mr. Sterling Hayden was suggested and could
15 have been secured from Paramount to do the part. She said,
16 "Not if I never make another picture will I ever be in it
17 with him. He talks too much about this and that and other
18 things, so why should I give him a job in my picture?"

19 Sam Wanamaker, a chap from New York and on the stage,
20 was suggested for lead man for Barbara in one of her pic-
21 tures. We all hear reports of his being very Red, at least,
22 very Left Wing. That was out. So it can be of constructive
23 good. I don't think they will not get jobs because they will
24 obviously get jobs. Lester Cole is still working at Metro
25 on the same script. I can't stop that because he has been
26 on it for months. Fortunately it is not the type of thing

1 he can inject any of his particular feelings on, but I be-
2 lieve it can do some good.

3 MR. STRIPLING: I certainly think you have the right
4 approach, Mr. Taylor. Others should follow suit.

5 MR. THOMAS: No doubt about it, if all the others follow
6 suit.

7 MR. TAYLOR: I don't think so. As a matter of fact, I
8 think it is the biggest trouble with the industry. Everyone
9 pooh-pooh's the idea there is an alarming situation here.
10 I think myself it is very alarming.

11 MR. McDOWELL: You said awhile ago you like the movie
12 business and it was a great thing. Of course, all Americans
13 agree with you on that, a substantial part of Americans.
14 These Commies want to use it as a tool. On the other hand,
15 in opposition to them there are a substantial group of pretty
16 good people who think it should be used to further the
17 American way of life and carry on the principles of American
18 manhood, and so forth.

19 I met down here the other day with one of the high
20 executives of the industry. Wouldn't it be a good idea if
21 the movie industry was kept as it originally started, as an
22 entertainment, and that you men with talent entertain and do
23 all of the various things that an actor is supposed to do in
24 the pure sense of acting, don't you think it would be better
25 for America and the industry if the industry was confined to
26 that endeavor?

1 MR. TAYLOR: I certainly do. I think if everyone
2 examines scripts from the standpoint of their entertainment
3 value rather than any propaganda value, that might be
4 inherent in them, you would accomplish a twofold purpose:
5 You would eliminate an awful lot of the Communist propaganda
6 that seeps in, and you would also promote a lot of good
7 Americana because the stories that have entertainment 99
8 times out of 100 are good Americana stories.

9 MR. STRIPLING: That is right. Of course, there is
10 great romance in America, and in all of the little towns
11 about which you and the other talented men have entertained
12 us with in pictures.

13 That is all.

14 MR. THOMAS: When you were in the Navy, were you in the
15 Pacific or in the Atlantic?

16 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir. I was in the States all the time.
17 I was a flight instructor. I never was overseas.

18 MR. THOMAS: You have probably given thought to the
19 reaction on the part of the American public to recent pic-
20 tures and recent events. I have in mind what happened in
21 Ohio in connection with Charlie Chaplin's picture. I have in
22 mind what happened in the Western High School in Washington,
23 D. C. the other day in connection with Mrs. Lewis who came
24 over and spoke before the boys and girls and four or five of
25 them walked out.

26 MR. STRIPLING: And Paul Robeson.

1 MR. THOMAS: And then what happened to Paul Robeson in
2 Indiana and Albany, New York. Now, if that thing grows, if
3 that sermon grows, it is going to be dangerous because one
4 of these days we are going to put on a picture and, by gosh,
5 it will be blackballed and that will hurt the industry tre-
6 mendously; it will hurt everyone who has taken a part in
7 that picture.

8 MR. TAYLOR: Yes, sir.

9 MR. THOMAS: Have the actors given any consideration to
10 that, or has it come up at all in the meetings of the Screen
11 Actors' Guild?

12 MR. TAYLOR: Not yet, not that I am aware of, sir, no.
13 It is a definite consideration, however.

14 MR. STRIPLING: What might happen, Mr. Chairman, which
15 is indicated by what you just related to the Committee, you
16 have organizations like the American Legion, and others, who
17 can recruit and ~~organize~~^{organize} their membership, so to speak. Now,
18 take "Song of Russia", for instance. While you were prac-
19 tically forced into playing the part, if the Legion or
20 another group of patriotic people would say, "This picture
21 is Communist propaganda and we are going to the theater, but
22 when it comes we will get up and boo it or walk out," a
23 demonstration of that kind, or picket theaters which show
24 pictures containing Communist propaganda, and so forth; that
25 would be a terrific blow to the whole motion picture industry.
26 If they do not do something to clean these pictures up, they

1 will be jeopardizing themselves and will be subjecting themselves to that possible action. It is not a healthy thing,
2 either.

3 MR. THOMAS: And it is likely to injure everyone who
4 had anything to do with the making of that picture or who
5 had anything to do with the acting in the picture, while
6 these persons were absolutely guiltless, but nevertheless,
7 they will suffer as a result of it.

8 MR. TAYLOR: That is very true, but I am personally of
9 the opinion it might eventually have to come to that, and I
10 for one would welcome a demonstration of that kind. I
11 assure you I won't be in any picture like that, because I
12 am watching for it, but whether anyone else is watching for
13 it, I don't know.

14 MR. THOMAS: You are doing a good job. I wish every
15 actor was doing the same kind of a job. I don't know whether
16 you saw Westbrook Pegler's column today?

17 MR. TAYLOR: No, sir, I didn't.

18 MR. STRIPLING: I saw it.

19 MR. THOMAS: About Charlie Chaplin, it was a scathing
20 denunciation, if I ever saw one.

21 MR. TAYLOR: He deserves it.

22 MR. THOMAS: It is the kind of thing that will grow
23 like a snowball.

24 MR. TAYLOR: The thing that sometimes makes me wonder
25 a little bit, as I said when I first started, it is a little

1 hard for me to determine what persons and people in the par-
2 ticular business to censor too much when there is an awful
3 lot of things going on nationally that a lot of us cannot
4 understand. For instance, I cannot understand Henry Wallace,
5 for one -- I am getting into politics, of course, which I
6 don't know anything about -- but he is running around over
7 the world more or less holding our country up to ridicule,
8 and in a direct or tacit way is sponsoring Russia, and for
9 us to sit here and say, "Well, Joe Blow, getting a small part
10 in a picture, is a Communist so we shouldn't employ him" --
11 now, how can we compare the two situations? I personally
12 don't quite understand it.

13 MR. THOMAS: I agree with you, but two wrongs or five
14 wrongs still do not make one right.

15 MR. TAYLOR: That is true.

16 MR. THOMAS: As far as Henry Wallace goes, the govern-
17 ment could have taken legal action in connection with him
18 if they wanted to. There is a statute on the books which is
19 very well known to persons in key positions in the govern-
20 ment that they could have invoked against Henry Wallace,
21 but they just let him go on and on and sooner or later he
22 is going to go so far that they will have to take some
23 action if he doesn't watch out.

24 MR. McDOWELL: Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Taylor makes a
25 good point in this, the situation he finds himself in his
26 industry and now compares with our business, being politicians

1 and being Communists. It is my observation that a great
2 majority of people who see a picture remember the leading
3 actor. They don't know who wrote it or who composed the
4 music. Some do, but the vast majority will recall probably
5 one, two or three actors in the picture. The whole thing
6 is judged by those actors regardless of their alternative.

7 America gets the idea that Hollywood is one seething
8 mass of crazy goings-on because there have been Chaplins
9 and Fatty Arbuckles and things of that kind. The nation
10 gets the idea that Congress is in that situation because
11 Bilbos and other men like that are in Washington. America
12 forgets many fine and decent are down there, and there are
13 also many fine and decent men in Hollywood, great citizens.
14 There are great actors who are great citizens of America
15 living here.

16 MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

17 MR. McDOWELL: The nation forgets all about that in
18 thinking about the Arbuckles and Chaplins and the rest.

19 MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

20 MR. THOMAS: But it is up to each of us to do a lot to
21 clean up our own mess.

22 MR. TAYLOR: Aye, yes.

23 MR. THOMAS: And it is difficult; there is no doubt
24 about that.

25 MR. TAYLOR: It is. I was just trying to infer a
26 point. It seems to me if the government in its attitude

1 towards people such as Henry Wallace, if they took a definite
2 stand toward those people, it would be different, but people
3 say, "That is the attitude of the government," then it would
4 be easier for people in this industry and other industries
5 to say, "Well, we better do a little house cleaning. It
6 seems to be the thing to do all the way down the line."

7 MR. THOMAS: Of course, this Committee is a committee
8 of exposure. That is where you have been very helpful to
9 us. The mere fact these men come in and take your picture
10 in connection with the Committee just aids us in exposing
11 something and calling to the attention of the government
12 and to the people, and to the industry itself, as far as that
13 is concerned, what is going on.

14 MR. TAYLOR: I understand.

15 MR. THOMAS: We brought out that statute in connection
16 with Henry Wallace I just referred to a few minutes ago,
17 but sometimes we wonder whether we are really getting any-
18 where. But we are. The pendulum is now going in the right
19 direction. We have made a lot of progress over the eight
20 years we have been at this work. We have been exposing one
21 thing right after another. My guess is that of all the
22 major powers in the world there is probably a smaller number
23 of Communists actually dues-paying Communists in the United
24 States than in any other major power in the world, with the
25 possible exception of one.

26 On the other hand, the mere fact we have a small number

1 does not mean we should sit back and do nothing about it,
2 because the more we expose the dangers of it, the more chance
3 there will be none of it here in the United States, and we
4 can continue with our capitalist form of government and the
5 American way of life.

6 MR. TAYLOR: Surely.

7 MR. THOMAS: But you keep up the good work in your
8 field.

9 MR. TAYLOR: I will.

10 MR. THOMAS: And you may get recruits. You probably
11 got more recruits now than you imagine. The other day it
12 was terrific.

13 I have no more questions.

14 / Mr. McDowell?

15 MR. McDOWELL: I have no more. I think Mr. Taylor
16 should be told he has done a good and great patriotic ser-
17 vice. It is good and wholesome to find there are people in
18 Hollywood like that.

19 MR. STRIPLING: The purpose of this Sub-Committee is to
20 put in motion a thorough investigation of the motion picture
21 industry by the full Committee. Your coming here and
22 exhibiting to them that there are very responsible and prom-
23 inent people in the motion picture industry who are deeply
24 concerned about this will aid them greatly in their approach
25 to this matter.

26 In other words, it is not a question of a few crackpots

1 hollering "Communism". It is a real situation; a situation
2 which you were very aware of when you were practically forced
3 into playing in a picture for the government which was sheer
4 Communist propaganda and which will result in a very thor-
5ough exposure of the people in the motion picture industry
6 who have contributed their talents and time to the Communist
7 cause.

8 MR. TAYLOR: That is right.

9 MR. STRIPLING: I want to reiterate, I think your
10 appearance and your views have been very helpful to the
11 Sub-Committee and will in turn be very helpful to Congress
12 in approaching this entire problem.

13 MR. TAYLOR: Well, I just reiterate, if I may add one
14 thing, that the group in the picture business is infinites-
15 imal by comparison to the great majority of people, and I am
16 merely one of the awful lot of people as you just indicated
17 who do not have any liking for the Communist situation at
18 all. The only difficulty is that very, very few of them do
19 anything about it or are the slightest bit vocal except over
20 their own dinners which is something that needs a little
21 bit of prodding.

22 MR. STRIPLING: It takes courage to fight this bunch,
23 and I think you have shown it.

24 MR. THOMAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Taylor.

25 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, sir.

26

1 RICHARD ARLEN,

2 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, your witness.

4 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, will you state your full
5 name and present address?

6 MR. ARLEN: Richard Arlen, 15063 Valley Vista Drive.

7 MR. STRIPLING: When and where were you born, Mr. Arlen?

8 MR. ARLEN: St. Paul, Minnesota.

9 MR. STRIPLING: What was the date?

10 MR. ARLEN: September 1st, 1900.

11 MR. STRIPLING: What is your present occupation?

12 MR. ARLEN: Actor.

13 MR. STRIPLING: How long have you been engaged in that
14 profession?

15 MR. ARLEN: 27 years.

16 MR. STRIPLING: How long have you been in Hollywood?

17 MR. ARLEN: 27 years.

18 MR. STRIPLING: You are an old-timer.

19 MR. ARLEN: I have been around for a while.

20 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, this is a Sub-Committee of
21 the Committee on Un-American Activities of the U. S. House
22 of Representatives. It is sitting here in Los Angeles for
23 the purpose of receiving testimony or information concerning
24 alleged Communist or Fascist activities or influences within
25 the motion picture industry. The Sub-Committee has invited
26 you here today in order that it might have the benefit of

1 any information or views you might have on this subject.

2 Therefore, as a matter of procedure, you can either go
3 right ahead and make a statement or, if you desire, we will
4 ask you questions.

5 MR. ARLEN: Well, of course, I have watched things in
6 Hollywood for a great many years. In the very early days of
7 pictures we had nothing at all that even came near to it.

8 The first indication I had were little groups on sets
9 getting together and talking, and the minute you walked up
10 they would more or less disintegrate and stop. They were
11 not people of very great importance. It was mostly those
12 day workers or people going in and out.

13 Then when the time came about when Spain was having all
14 of its trouble there was a great effort to get us to put up
15 money for ambulances and so forth and so on. A great many
16 people who did put up money for those ambulances to go to
17 Spain were not conscious of the fact that they were contribut-
18 ing to any Communist movement at all. In other words, it
19 was under the guise of being charitable and they were short
20 of ambulances and needed medical supplies and attention.

21 So afterwards, many years later, -- I guess you have
22 heard the report, I am sure you did, of how the newspapers
23 came out saying that so many of the stars' names had been
24 put on the ambulances. In a particular case I happen to
25 know there were names on it of people who were not conscious
26 of it and they were giving for the sake of just the deed

1 itself and not contributing to any party.

2 Then I noticed when we went to the Guild meetings there
3 was an indication of confusion. When you would try to get
4 something moving there were so many blocks of really silly
5 questions. Although you couldn't put your finger quite on
6 it, you knew that some of the constructive things were al-
7 most like a filibuster. People would get up and ask the
8 silliest questions in the world that even a five-year old
9 child would know.

10 Now, we are in a very peculiar position, I guess, as you
11 can understand. We are all conscious of the fact that we
12 have a great many of them. Some of the names have come to
13 light.

14 MR. THOMAS: A great many Communists or Communist
15 sympathizers, do you mean?

16 MR. ARLEN: Well, you might call them parlor pinks. I
17 don't know what they are driving at.

18 MR. STRIPLING: Left Wingers?

19 MR. ARLEN: Yes, called under any guise. I don't think
20 they are out-and-out Communists running around with a sickle
21 and hammer, but they are in sympathy with that phase of
22 things. It is so cleverly covered up that you are left
23 wondering, but you can't put your finger exactly on it.
24 Even to the extent that some of the studio executives, they
25 can't even put their fingers on it. I know very well that
26 most of them, if they ever even had any indication or

1 something that they could put their fingers on would say,
2 "Well, look; this is not our way of life. Now, let's get
3 this out of here and cut this out."

4 But it is so cleverly covered up that they can't put
5 their fingers on it.

6 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, we have had testimony here
7 before the Sub-Committee which indicated that one of the
8 principal media that the Communists use in injecting their
9 propaganda into moving pictures is through the script writers.
10 In other words, they will put a line here or a line there.
11 Some of the lines are very subtle.

12 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

13 MR. STRIPLING: Others are quite open in their propa-
14 ganda. The Sub-Committee just heard the testimony of Mr.
15 Robert Taylor. Mr. Robert Taylor told the Committee in the
16 case of "Song of Russia" in which he played the leading
17 role, that he was fully aware it was Communist propaganda
18 for the films in that it portrayed the Soviet Union in a
19 light that he and his associates and friends had never
20 known the Soviet Union. He therefore objected. He explained
21 how he was forced into playing that role.

22 Now, I saw the "Song of Russia" and it was quite appar-
23 ent to me it was a propaganda vehicle.

24 MR. ARLEN: Yes, I saw it, too.

25 MR. STRIPLING: I have seen other pictures which, to
26 the casual movie-goer, he would not be conscious that any

1 propaganda had been deposited in his mind whatsoever.

2 If you would follow it very carefully you would notice
3 that various comparisons were made. For instance, bankers
4 were always no good so-and-so's.

5 MR. ARLEN: Yes, very much as in the portrayal in the
6 Frederic March picture that is playing now.

7 MR. STRIPLING: "The Best Years of Our Lives".

8 MR. ARLEN: "The Best Years of Our Lives". There are
9 many indications. It is a seed.

10 MR. STRIPLING: What I would like to ask you is, if you
11 ever had any personal encounter with any of the movie studio
12 executives or writers in which you objected to certain
13 groups which you thought were giving out Communist propa-
14 ganda?

15 MR. ARLEN: No. Most of my pictures have been on the
16 opposite side of the fence. In other words, we have made a
17 brand of pictures that were strictly all-American pictures,
18 outdoor and action pictures, and so forth. During the war
19 we made things like "Aerial Gunner", but they were all
20 propaganda for ourselves, I mean for our own country, to try
21 to get the boys interested in joining the aerial gunner
22 ranks because they weren't enlisting too fast. It is not
23 the healthiest life nor the longest.

24 MR. THOMAS: My son was an aerial gunner.

25 MR. ARLEN: It is the roughest training. We went on
26 through it like any fellow who got the training. It was

1 just as tough as tanks.

2 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, while you yourself may not
3 have been subject to that, you are aware, are you not, that
4 certain actors have been. In other words, the prominent
5 writers, people like Dalton Trumbo and Donald Ogden Stewart,
6 have long records of Communist front affiliations. A number
7 of their films contain outright Communist propaganda.

8 Since you have been in Hollywood so many years you are
9 aware that that is one of their techniques, are you not?

10 MR. ARLEN: Yes, I am.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Don't you think the responsibility of
12 removing these Communist writers and technicians from the
13 motion picture industry should lie first with the industry
14 itself?

15 MR. ARLEN: Yes, I do. I think so. In the industry
16 we are made up of many guilds. It would be impossible to
17 work in the studio unless you were a member of some guild
18 like the Screen Actors' Guild or Screen Writers' Guild,
19 or you have to belong to some technical union. Now, if
20 those guilds and the studios themselves were allowed to
21 look into the files and records of these people, if they
22 were known to be members, naturally the minute you know it
23 you could say, "Why, you Commie so-and-so, for God's sake,
24 if you like that form of government why not go to Russia
25 and live there. Nobody is stopping you." But they say,
26 "You don't understand what we mean."

1 MR. THOMAS: What do they mean?

2 MR. ARLEN: Well, they go on and say, "Well, I am not
3 a Communist. I just believe in a liberal form of govern-
4 ment," and that we don't really know what is transpiring in
5 Russia, that they are "contented and happy people." So that
6 if given the proper chance they will work here and say, "I
7 am not a Communist. I am not a Left Winger."

8 But nevertheless they will stand up for the arguments
9 on those particular things.

10 MR. THOMAS: Right along that line, if I may interrupt
11 you.

12 MR. STRIPLING: Yes, sir.

13 MR. THOMAS: You mentioned the meetings of the Screen
14 Actors' Guild, and you specifically stated they are very
15 often an indication of confusion.

16 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

17 MR. THOMAS: Who are some of these people that brought
18 about the confusion?

19 MR. ARLEN: Well, they seem to be spotted, some
20 practically unknown person that really had nothing to do
21 with the problem at hand. If you try to get the thing mov-
22 ing or move for some adoption one would be up here and one
23 up there and one at the other place, and by the time the
24 confusion had quieted down all of the thing had practically
25 gone by the board.

26 MR. THOMAS: How many actors attend those meetings, as

1 a general rule?

2 MR. ARLEN: It is pretty well packed.

3 MR. THOMAS: How many would you say?

4 MR. ARLEN: For instance, when they go for an all-out
5 meeting, I would say at least 35 per cent.

6 MR. THOMAS: Of all the members?

7 MR. ARLEN: That is all that you can possibly get into
8 that hall unless it is held at the American Legion Stadium.

9 MR. THOMAS: How often do they hold regular meetings?

10 MR. ARLEN: Well, they are held about once a month.
11 Special meetings are held from time to time when they are
12 voting on an important issue.

13 MR. THOMAS: What kind of an issue would they vote on,
14 for instance, as an illustration?

15 MR. ARLEN: Like under the new contracts now. There is
16 a new contract whereby they want changes, in other words,
17 limited to three-year contracts and so much minimum for the
18 players, and so on. There are many little changes. However,
19 it is up for ratification because it has to have an arbi-
20 tration on it, so it is perfectly equal, fair and just to
21 both parties.

22 Having been a member, one of the first members of the
23 Screen Actors' Guild, I know they have always tried to be
24 very fair in their undertakings where contracts were con-
25 cerned so that they could see it both ways. So far the
26 Screen Actors' Guild and the producers have gotten along

1 very well.

2 MR. THOMAS: What percentage of the actors belong to
3 the Screen Actors' Guild?

4 MR. ARLEN: Until this new C.S.U. came in, it was 100
5 per cent.

6 MR. STRIPLING: What is the C.S.U., Mr. Arlen?

7 MR. ARLEN: That is the outfit that stepped in and tried
8 to break up the Screen Actors' Guild.

9 MR. STRIPLING: The Conference of Studio Unions?

10 MR. ARLEN: It came under that heading. It was a new
11 group of extras and they succeeded the Screen Actors' Guild.
12 There was a lot of disturbance and they decided they could do
13 better on their own by having their own separate branch.

14 MR. THOMAS: These actors that belong to the C.S.U.,
15 are they a different type of actor?

16 MR. ARLEN: Well, they are more or less the extras and
17 the bit players and the non-speaking actors. Like when we
18 have mob scenes, like you see in villages and people milling
19 around.

20 MR. THOMAS: Suppose the actor did not belong to either
21 the C.S.U. or the Screen Actors' Guild, could he get a part
22 in any picture?

23 MR. ARLEN: No. He could get a part, but before he
24 could play he would have to become a member of the Screen
25 Actors' Guild.

26 MR. THOMAS: The people that bring about this confusion,

1 they are the same people all the time?

2 MR. ARLEN: No. They spot pretty well. It is to keep
3 the thing in a hubbub. At one meeting I went to, some of the
4 pleas were perfectly ridiculous. It was during the strike
5 situation. Here is a sample of a ridiculous question. For
6 instance, one person gets up and says, "Now, in the event
7 I enter such-and-such a studio and I get badly beaten up,
8 do I call the Guild?"

9 Well, I don't know how they could call the Guild if they
10 were lying all over the middle of the street, or even call
11 anybody, for that matter, but that is just enough to keep the
12 thing in the air.

13 MR. THOMAS: Could you name of those people that bring
14 about this confusion?

15 MR. ARLEN: No, I can't offhand, because it is people
16 that we are not familiar with. We are not familiar with
17 them. Various people in the industry have been quoted as
18 Commies, Reds or Pinks, but I mean you are as familiar with
19 the names as I am.

20 MR. THOMAS: Well, give us some names. We want to know
21 whether you have spotted these people in the meetings.

22 MR. STRIPLING: I can name them, Mr. Chairman.

23 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead.

24 MR. STRIPLING: May I predicate that with this?

25 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead.

26 MR. STRIPLING: In these meetings of the Screen Actors'

1 Guild, you brought out that they consider matters which were
2 of concern to the actors, such as their contracts, and so
3 forth?

4 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

5 MR. STRIPLING: Does anyone seek to inject any political
6 issues into these meetings?

7 MR. ARLEN: No.

8 MR. STRIPLING: In other words, such as a resolution
9 on Spain?

10 MR. ARLEN: No, they don't dare to do that at all.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Do you have a publication?

12 MR. ARLEN: Yes, we have a Screen Actors' Guild publi-
13 cation called "The Actor".

14 MR. STRIPLING: Have you ever seen any articles or
15 writings in it of a political nature?

16 MR. ARLEN: No; they keep that pretty open and pretty
17 clean. You see, the Guild itself, the heads of the Guild, --
18 take the case of Montgomery and Murphy and those fellows,
19 they are out-and-out 100 per cent American guys.

20 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, in the case of actors they
21 are not in a position to necessarily to convey the Communist
22 line as much as the writers are because the actor acts the
23 same?

24 MR. ARLEN: That is right.

25 MR. STRIPLING: In other words, he speaks the lines?

26 MR. ARLEN: That is right.

1 MR. STRIPLING: But it is the one who puts the lines in
2 his mouth who is the one that can carry the poison?

3 MR. ARLEN: That is right. It is the writer that is
4 powerful.

5 MR. STRIPLING: The Screen Actors' Guild would not be
6 the same weapon for propaganda as the Screen Writers' Guild,
7 don't you agree to that?

8 MR. ARLEN: That is right.

9 MR. STRIPLING: From the testimony we have had here, it
10 would indicate that the Screen Writers' Guild is the most
11 dangerous force in the motion picture industry from the
12 standpoint of Communism.

13 As to the names, Mr. Chairman; Mr. Taylor mentioned
14 John Garfield as one of those whom he felt was definitely
15 very Left Wing or Communist.

16 MR. ARLEN: Well, that is common knowledge as far as
17 Hollywood is concerned. I mean, those names have appeared
18 at various times in our press and papers. There are no bones
19 made about it.

20 MR. THOMAS: Is he one of those who gets up in these
21 meetings and brings up some confusion?

22 MR. ARLEN: No. He is inconspicuous, if he does attend
23 the meetings. You see, none of those fellows deliberately
24 go and do it themselves. They always have some little stooge
25 or henchman who keeps that thing boiling.

26 MR. McDOWELL: I was going to say, I think Mr. Arlen

1 ought to be told that this confusion which you cannot seem
2 to lay your finger on --

3 MR. ARLEN: That is the way they work --

4 MR. McDOWELL: -- is exactly the way they do in the
5 labor unions, such as the C.I.O. or A.F. of L. or political
6 meetings that they are trying to wreck.

7 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

8 MR. McDOWELL: Have you ever been to a Communist meet-
9 ing?

10 MR. ARLEN: No, I never have. The only real headon
11 thing that I ever had with them was in New York. I was there
12 to do a play. It was while we were at war and some commit-
13 tee called me and kept calling and calling. They said,
14 "Would you please make some transcriptions for the Russian
15 Relief to show that we are great allies?" and so forth and
16 so on. So finally I took it up with three or four people.
17 I said, "What is this?" I didn't feel that during the war
18 Russia was fighting anybody's battles but Russia's. And
19 the thing was so saccharine, showing how glad they were to
20 see us at Murmansk, or what wonderful people we were and
21 what wonderful people the Russians were, that we were
22 brothers under the skin; it was so saccharine it dripped.

23 Finally they called me for a second one and I said,
24 "I don't want to make any more." So when I got down there
25 I was actually the only American --

26 MR. THOMAS: When you got to New York?

1 MR. ARLEN: I was the only American down there at this
2 broadcasting place. Some guy showed up with a sitz here and
3 a worried look and tortoise-shell glasses. He looked like
4 Trotsky to me.

5 MR. THOMAS: What was the name of the committee?

6 MR. ARLEN: I can't remember.

7 MR. STRIPLING: Was it the Russian War Relief?

8 MR. ARLEN: I think it was. It had something to do
9 with them. They were making all of the transcriptions and
10 they went to the radio station and they were played all over
11 the country. This was about a year or a year and a half
12 after the war was on. Even then I felt, "Well, wait a
13 minute. This thing has a lot of propaganda for Russia and
14 it has nothing to do with goodwill or anything else."

15 It mentioned they were "waiting on the docks for you
16 and they wanted to share the wealth with you." My God,
17 your clothes were wet and you had a hard trip through the
18 North Sea on the way to Murmansk. And here is a nice big
19 fur and fleece-lined shoes. My God, when we came in we had
20 vodka and everything under the sun.

21 MR. THOMAS: Are you sure it was not the American
22 Friends for Soviet Russia? Was that the name of the commit-
23 tee?

24 MR. ARLEN: It might be.

25 MR. STRIPLING: American Friends of the Soviet Union,
26 I think it is.

1 MR. THOMAS: American Friends of the Soviet Union.

2 MR. ARLEN: It was at New York City. I don't think
3 they were made at the Coast here at all.

4 MR. THOMAS: I was wondering whether that was the
5 committee that got in touch with you.

6 MR. ARLEN: I am not sure. You see, they were an organ-
7 ization just like the Treasury Department, and we made a
8 lot of records for the Treasury Department, and we would get
9 a minimum of \$15.50 and do a whole hour's show.

10 MR. THOMAS: Where did you do this?

11 MR. ARLEN: In New York City, N.E.C. and C.B.S.

12 MR. THOMAS: What were they like?

13 MR. ARLEN: Well, they were stories of the South Pacific,
14 combat at different places. But the Russian thing was just
15 to show you how grateful they were for everything they got
16 from us and that they were the United States of the Scviet
17 Union, and that they both had the same policy and understand-
18 ing about life and giving freely.

19 MR. McDOWELL: The reason I asked if you ever went to
20 a Communist meeting, Mr. Arlen, was to tell you that I have
21 been to many of them. The contrast between the sort of con-
22 fusion you have in your meetings and a real Communist meet-
23 ing is startling. There is no confusion there. No person
24 gets out of order, or if he does, he is told so promptly.
25 I have never heard anybody dispute about it in the meetings
26 I have gone to. The chairman lays down the order. He will

1 say, "Sit down, you are out of order."

2 There there is absolute iron-clad undemocratic discipline.
3 It is the opposite to what occurs elsewhere.

4 MR. ARLEN: Just the opposite. I went to a meeting
5 with this actor one night. He brought it more to my atten-
6 tion than anyone else. He said, "This is very important.
7 Why don't you show up tonight?"

8 So we went in. He was very aware of the things that
9 were going on because he had attended them before. He was
10 an actor on his way up. In other words, he did not have a
11 name. This is a business where names are very important in
12 order to work. He kept pointing out to me, he says, "Now
13 watch, the minute this thing comes up there will be five
14 guys on the floor. The minute one will sit down the next
15 one will get up before you can get up at all."

16 MR. THOMAS: You are referring to the Screen Actors'
17 Guild meetings?

18 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

19 MR. McDOWELL: The same old stuff.

20 MR. ARLEN: The same old stuff, you see. Their whole
21 theory is complete confusion to keep everything in confusion.

22 MR. THOMAS: Why is that?

23 MR. ARLEN: So that you can't get anything done that is
24 constructive to get anything moving properly. In other
25 words, you h . an amendment to a matter, say that you have
26 to add a clause or ruling, or something was working a

1 hardship on the producer and it was proving to be a hardship;
2 in other words, it cost them a tremendous amount of money.
3 Then it is up to us to bring it before the men and say,
4 "Here is the situation. They have lost so much money and
5 so much time. We have to rectify a thing like that because
6 it is a bad clause in our agreement."

7 Well, you see, rather than get that thing before them
8 and get it to a vote, they will try to keep it confused so
9 you can't vote.

10 MR. McDOWELL: Of course, the reason for that is to
11 discourage men like you and Mr. Taylor?

12 MR. ARLEN: They don't want us to come to the meetings
13 for the reason we get discouraged and say, "Holy mackerel,
14 this is brutal."

15 MR. McDOWELL: They want to tire you of the business
16 until they can run the show?

17 MR. ARLEN: That is right.

18 MR. THOMAS: Have you ever made an attempt to talk them
19 down?

20 MR. ARLEN: You are in such a position. They are up
21 so fast. Their timing is better than ours. That is the
22 answer to the whole thing.

23 MR. STRIPLING: They are organized.

24 MR. ARLEN: We are not organized. We are just members.

25 MR. THOMAS: These confusionist actors you have been
26 talking about, do they get jobs in the studios with ease or

1 do they have trouble getting them?

2 MR. ARLEN: They seem to know. You see in a big organ-
3 ization, -- take your five or six top organizations like
4 Metro, Paramount, Warner, and so forth, the chief executives
5 haven't got their fingers on casting except for the principal
6 players. There is a sub-producer on which they place some
7 authority. Say, for instance, I am head of the studio. I
8 will say, "Mr. Thomas, I want you to handle 'Gone With the
9 Wind'", and know that you are a very reputable producer
10 immediately you will get busy. You will ask, "Now, who is
11 the best man to get to write 'Gone With the Wind'?" That is
12 the most important thing, to get the story. Then when you
13 get the writer you say, "Wait a minute. Who will I get for
14 Butler?"

15 Well, there is Gable. Then the girl is the next impor-
16 tant thing. So they say I have this one and I have that
17 one, and so on. Then they decide, "Let's get a girl that
18 isn't so well-known. It is better for the story book pro-
19 duction." Now, you can see those things all back up and
20 you might have to have more assistance as it spreads out.
21 You might find someone down here who wished he was up here
22 who says, "I will give you my friend, Joe, and this fellow
23 over here."

24 He gets them in and maybe he can get them on permanent-
25 ly without the heads of the studios having any knowledge of
26 the move at all. Of course, when they have their little

1 groups -- and those plants are huge -- it is nothing to see
2 groups of men standing around, and people at lunch, or talking
3 between scenes. It is a different type of business than
4 anything else, and people will start talking to each other.

5 But you are conscious that something is wrong and yet
6 you can't put your finger on it to save your life.

7 MR. THOMAS: The point I am trying to find out is,
8 does the confusionist actor -- or I will put it another way.

9 Is it easier for a confusionist actor to get a job than
10 it is for an actor that is not a confusionist actor?

11 MR. ARLEN: Well, he seems to have a terrific in some-
12 where.

13 MR. THOMAS: He seems to have a terrific in?

14 MR. ARLEN: He seems to have a terrific in because the
15 ones who have been reputed to be in the supporting ranks,
16 fellows that people know quite a bit or maybe with a little
17 billing take them from way down at the bottom, but you will
18 see those names go from picture to picture. They all seem
19 to be working all the time.

20 Of course, that is the effort to contribute to the
21 party.

22 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead, Mr. Stripling.

23 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Arlen, Mr. Taylor told the Commit-
24 tee that his position at the present time is such that any
25 picture which to his mind contains any Communist propaganda
26 or any production which employs a Communist director or

1 writer or actors or actresses he has refused to play the
2 part. Now, if such a procedure or attitude was followed by
3 the top stars in motion pictures, do you think that would
4 succeed in cleaning up to a certain extent this condition,
5 or do you think Mr. Taylor's approach is wrong there?

6 MR. ARLEN: Well, I think when a player is in a posi-
7 tion and truthfully feels that way about it and says, "Wait
8 a minute; this is a very subtle way of putting over propa-
9 ganda", he wouldn't have any trouble at all, because all he
10 would have to do is go up and see Mr. Mayer and find out
11 what was going on and Mr. Mayer would throw it out so fast
12 it would make your head swim. I am reasonably sure that if
13 that happened, he would have the writer up on the carpet.

14 So that is one way of getting it before the executive
15 board of the studio where ordinarily it would not come to
16 their attention.

17 MR. THOMAS: You just mentioned Mr. Mayer.

18 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

19 MR. THOMAS: What about the other companies?

20 MR. ARLEN: Well, the same thing, if you took it up.
21 Say, I had a bad script at Paramount that I thought was
22 conducive to getting this thing moving quietly underground,
23 like a tiny seed that if you plant it, like an acorn, a big
24 oak will grow. If I went to the head of the studio, he
25 would say, "You are absolutely right," and then he would
26 call those writers in on the carpet and say, "What is the

1 intention of this?" If such a thing happened and the actor
2 felt that way and he could prove that, he wouldn't have any
3 trouble with the studio executives.

4 MR. STRIPLING: Well, it certainly would be a healthy
5 condition to bring that about, wouldn't it?

6 MR. ARLEN: It would be very helpful.

7 MR. STRIPLING: If the actors would become very bellig-
8 erent about this; in other words, if they would start raising
9 Cain about these Communist scripts or Communist actors, why,
10 with the studio heads also putting pressure on them it
11 would probably result in cleaning up this situation. The
12 industry can clean its own house to a great extent without
13 having committees of Congress investigate and expose them.

14 MR. ARLEN: I truthfully think that the executives in
15 our industry, as is shown by the very great efforts they
16 put forth in the war effort and the cooperation they gave,
17 I don't think you will find any trouble getting them to
18 fight it, to check and double-check their scripts. You see,
19 it is so subtly put in it is hard to find it. You don't
20 know where you stand with it.

21 I might read a piece of propaganda and never look at
22 it that way. In other words, I would be busy looking at it
23 from my point of view and would say, "Here is what I would
24 like to get out of the thing." It is merely a transposition
25 as naturally as you can possibly do it of a story to the
26 screen, so there may be a few little things in there I might

1 not pick out at all.

2 I did a play in New York, for example, which the critics
3 said was naughty. I read the play. I gave it to various
4 people to read. They saw nothing wrong with it at all. It
5 was just an amusing play. It was on the idea of "Brother
6 Rat". Perhaps you may have seen it when it was put on. When
7 I played in this play in New York, holy mackerel, the critics
8 just tore it apart because of the fact that there were
9 children in the play, and even though they were not on the
10 stage there was only supposition that maybe the children
11 might have done something wrong through the instigation of
12 a blue-nosed professor. But as I say, if you read it and
13 went into the production of it, you would say there was
14 nothing wrong with it. Then all of a sudden everybody
15 says, "Well, it is naughty." I didn't realize it until
16 after I had played the thing for a week it was kind of
17 naughty.

18 MR. STRIPLING: The same thing is true with Communist
19 propaganda.

20 MR. ARLEN: Yes. You can play a thing and never realize
21 you were touched with it at all. But there are certain
22 writers in the Guild, marvelous men, and they will make a
23 statement to the effect, "God, our Guild is loaded with
24 them."

25 MR. THOMAS: You mean the Screen Writers' Guild?

26 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

1 MR. STRIPLING: That is all I have, Mr. Chairman.

2 MR. THOMAS: Mr. McDowell?

3 MR. ARLEN: But they are frightened to death to say
4 anything, just as in the case of the man that went back to
5 Washington -- what was his name? He said he may never work
6 again, so they must be powerful.

7 But they are powerful because they are subtle. You may
8 not know why you don't get a particular picture, or if you
9 are a known guy that is anti-Communist to the nth degree --
10 I make no bones about it.

11 MR. THOMAS: Right on that point, the fact that you are
12 coming here today upon our invitation and the fact you are
13 cooperating with the Committee is now known to everyone. It
14 was in the press this morning. After the meeting there will
15 be some more publicity and it will be well known that you
16 were here.

17 MR. ARLEN: That is right.

18 MR. THOMAS: Do you think that may do you some harm?

19 MR. ARLEN: It may.

20 MR. STRIPLING: On the other hand, it will probably
21 do the industry a lot of good.

22 MR. THOMAS: That is right. I want to say right along
23 that line, Mr. Arlen, that I doubt very much if it will do
24 you any harm now. It may do you a lot of good. It will
25 certainly do the industry a lot of good because the mere
26 fact that this Committee is cooperating with the industry

1 and that the industry is cooperating with us -- we are getting
2 over a thought to the American people, and that is that the
3 industry itself is beginning to make an attempt, or is making
4 an attempt, to clean house of some of these Commies that have
5 been doing the industry harm.

6 Then we will perhaps offset something that has already
7 been set in motion, and that is the thing which Charlie
8 Chaplin's picture is running into. You know what happened
9 out in Ohio where they began to walk out of one of his
10 scenes?

11 MR. ARLEN: Boycotted it.

12 MR. THOMAS: They boycotted the picture. Then in
13 Washington, D.C., at the Western High School the other day
14 when this Mrs. Lewis, a very pro-Russian lecturer, spoke,
15 some of the students there walked out. They had been given
16 the American flag by members of Congress in the last couple
17 of days.

18 Then Paul Robeson was denied a hall out in Indiana.

19 MR. ARLEN: That is right, I remember that.

20 MR. THOMAS: He was denied a hall in Albany, New York.
21 Now, Paul Robeson says he is giving up singing for two years
22 and will devote his time to lecturing.

23 MR. ARLEN: He is educating his son in it.

24 MR. THOMAS: That he believes in it. Now, if they con-
25 tinue on that way it may run into a situation where it would
26 do the moving picture industry a lot of harm, because some

1 day you are likely to put out a picture that is very pro-
2 Communist or one that has lines in it contrary to the
3 American way of life and our American institution. And the
4 first thing you know the American Legion or the Knights of
5 Columbus will take hold and will advocate the boycott of
6 the picture which will ruin it. That is also likely to
7 ruin the name of everyone who takes part in the picture.

8 MR. ARLEN: You are blamed for the company you keep.

9 MR. THOMAS: That is right. So the industry itself
10 now believes that they have a job to do in order to avoid
11 that. I think that is why they are cooperating with us.

12 We got in touch with different persons in the industry
13 and we said we wanted to have witnesses come before the
14 Sub-Committee who would aid the Committee in bring out the
15 things that this Committee has been trying to find out. The
16 industry has very nicely cooperated and have aided us in
17 selecting a list of actors, a list of writers and a list of
18 directors, and as you know, you were one of the names sug-
19 gested to us.

20 So that we are very, very gratified that you came here
21 today, Mr. Arlen. I think the industry itself can follow
22 this through and do more cleaning of its own house than
23 anyone else. - We are only a committee of exposure, you
24 understand?

25 MR. ARLEN: Yes.

26 MR. THOMAS: Every time we expose a bad picture or a

1 Commie writer or a Commie in the industry, we help you and
2 the industry that much.

3 MR. ARLEN: Yes. You see, they can do that much. You
4 asked me if it would do me any harm. Well, I feel I have
5 been a part of this industry for a great many years, from
6 the day of the silent picture, from 1920 on I have been play-
7 ing in pictures. I started at the bottom of the industry
8 at 18 bucks a week. I had no intention when I came here of
9 being an actor. I came out of the Royal Flying Corps as a
10 cadet. We went up to the St. Paul High School to get into
11 the Royal Flying Corps. We were under age. A bunch of us
12 went up to Toronto and then I had to come back to school.
13 But once you get the spirit of adventure you want to go away
14 from home. I was young.

15 I was an oil worker in Texas and decided to come to the
16 oil fields in California. But what looked good from Texas,
17 when I got to California wasn't so green. The only job I
18 could get was answering a job at Joe Elsas's Laboratory as a
19 jack-of-all-trades. I went to the studio and I had an acci-
20 dent with a motorcycle, broke my leg and when it was mended
21 they gave me a job as an extra, and then some producer got
22 interested in me and said, "Can you act?" I said, "I don't
23 know whether I can or can't."

24 MR. THOMAS: Who was that?

25 MR. ARLEN: This was in the old days, a producer named
26 Frothingham asked if I could act and I said, "I don't know."

1 He gave me a chance and I began to build up there some small
2 parts and finally Famous Players signed me and I got wings
3 and I was off from then on.

4 You asked if I thought it would do me any harm. As we
5 are all aware, there is a great infiltration of these people.
6 We are not conscious of the fact when we hire them. I might
7 turn around and hire one and not know it at all. But they
8 are so well organized that some of the players and some of
9 the writers and some of the directors who have them say,
10 "Well, wait a minute, not that guy." You ask why. Well,
11 you don't know. You say, "Well, I don't like him. I don't
12 like him as an actor. I don't think he is any good." He
13 can still put the finger on you and drop you out with saying
14 he is a member of the party.

15 MR. THOMAS: That is correct.

16 MR. ARLEN: Or he may not be a member of the party.

17 MR. THOMAS: The pendulum is swinging the other way.

18 MR. ARLEN: I think everybody in the industry has come
19 a long way from 1920 and we have done pretty well without
20 the Communist party in there. As you go through it, the
21 really substantial part of the fellows in the industry, the
22 workmen and grip property men, and on up the line, you will
23 find some mighty fine people, and you will also find the
24 ne'er-do-wells as in any other business, and the trouble-
25 makers, as you do in a corner of the factory.

26 But we are putting it on the screen for millions and

1 millions of people to see. Visual education is probably
2 the most potential of all, and if it is going to react
3 against your whole country or if you are going to allow them
4 to get that little seed in there and the next time a little
5 bit more and the next time a little bit more, the next thing
6 you know you will have trouble. It is the same thing with
7 plays on the New York stage, until they finally appointed
8 Commissioner Moss, and when these plays began to be obscene
9 they are not allowed to be put on.

10 There is a certain type of person that goes to these
11 plays, or people who will invite you to a play that is off
12 color. Well, that is because they have inhibitions and that
13 is their way of getting rid of them. However, you don't
14 intentionally go to anything that you think is going to rub
15 the wrong way. If I knew how to put my finger on this thing,--
16 as I say, it is subtle, but if you would have the members of
17 your Committee or appoint somebody to go in and watch the
18 actions of these things, I think it will help, but I believe
19 you will find that the heads of the studios -- after all,
20 there isn't one of those fellows who want any part of this
21 thing. It certainly isn't their scheme of life.

22 There are times when the industry makes a great deal
23 of money. Also, there are other times when they find it
24 very tough struggling and finances are hard to get. During
25 the panic of 1931 and 1932, when we had no Communism or
26 anything like that in the industry, it was apparent when

1 they asked us to help the industry and take a 50 per cent
2 cut, -- I don't think there was one out of a thousand that
3 said no. But we know the power of these pictures and we
4 know that it has to be stopped, and these people can't go on.
5

6 I think you found Mr. Taylor feeling the same way, that
7 it could do a great deal of harm. But that is not the
8 point at this particular time. My phone has been ringing
9 from the time -- it usually doesn't ring at 7:30 or 8:00
10 o'clock in the morning. They ask, "What are you being called
in for?"

11 I said, "That is a private investigation. There isn't
12 much I can tell you."

13 MR. THOMAS: Mr. McDowell, do you have any questions?

14 MR. McDOWELL: No questions, Mr. Chairman. But I think
15 Mr. Arlen knows that this Committee is the eyes and ears of
16 the United States Congress. The things you have said here
17 will be laid before the members of Congress, both of the
18 House and the Senate. It is not the purpose of Congress to
19 send a committee out here to attempt to dig into the private
20 affairs of the industry, but we are concerned with everyone
21 in the movie industry who might be used as agents of a
22 foreign power in an effort to destroy our country. That is
23 why we are here.

24 You came down here today to contribute what you could
25 to our Committee, and we think that is a fine patriotic
26 thing, Mr. Arlen.

1 MR. ARLEN: That is my intention to help.

2 MR. McDOWELL: That is very laudable.

3 MR. ARLEN: I think you will find without question that
4 every executive that I have known, and I have known them a
5 great many years -- they haven't changed. They are the same
6 men that started out. I can remember as a kid you used to
7 look up and down the street and duck into a movie because
8 some people thought it wasn't the thing to do to patronize
9 a motion picture. It was about like burlesque.

10 These men have built it up, and when you look at men
11 like Mayer, Zukor and the Warner brothers -- as a matter
12 of fact, Warner Bros. for years had that sign "Better
13 Pictures for Better Americans".

14 MR. THOMAS: Incidentally, Mr. Warner is coming here
15 tomorrow, Jack Warner.

16 MR. ARLEN: He is very rabid on the subject. He does
17 not want it to exist in the studio. None of us want it to
18 exist in the business because it will completely ruin the
19 business and it has come so far.

20 MR. THOMAS: That is why we want to be helpful and that
21 is where we can be helpful to you and to the whole industry.

22 MR. ARLEN: If I thought there was a way of weeding
23 them out, I would be only too glad to do what I could to get
24 rid of them. I don't think they are good for society. I
25 don't think they are good for anything, not even in national
26 politics.

1 MR. THOMAS: That is right.

2 MR. ARLEN: But they will dig up money. They will come
3 around to see you and say, "Dick, here is a nice guy. He is
4 going to represent this district", and so on and so forth.
5 Naturally, if he does not have any campaign funds he cannot
6 go very far and the average fellow has to have people who
7 know him, back him up, otherwise how could you vote for him.
8 That is why we go out and vote and say, "Here is a fellow
9 we want. He is a good fellow to send there."

10 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, do you have any more ques-
11 tions?

12 MR. STRIPLING: No; that is all.

13 MR. THOMAS: Thank you very much, Mr. Arlen.

14 MR. ARLEN: Well, thank you very much.

15 (Witness excused.)

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1 MR. THOMAS: The Committee will come to order.
2 The record will show Mr. McDowell and Mr. Thomas are
3 present.

4 Now, Mrs. Rogers, will you be sworn, please.

5
6 LELA E. ROGERS,
7 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

8
9 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, your witness.

10 MR. STRIPLING: Mrs. Rogers, will you state your
11 full name and present address for the record, please?

12 MRS. ROGERS: Lela E. Rogers, 5930 Franklin Avenue,
13 Hollywood 28.

14 MR. STRIPLING: Where were you born, Mrs. Rogers?

15 MRS. ROGERS: Council Bluffs, Iowa.

16 MR. STRIPLING: What is your occupation?

17 MRS. ROGERS: I am in the motion picture industry
18 and I handle my child's business and also I have been
19 doing some things of my own, such as writing and acting
20 as assistant producer, and for three years I have been
21 assistant to Charles Koerner, president of RKO.

22 MR. STRIPLING: Your child is the well known Ginger
23 Rogers?

24 MRS. ROGERS: That is right.

25 MR. STRIPLING: Mrs. Rogers, how long have you been
26 identified with Hollywood?

1 MRS. ROGERS: I came out here first in 1915, I
2 think.

3 MR. STRIPLING: You are an old-timer.

4 MRS. ROGERS: I was a writer then when the four-
5 reeler was a feature. Then of course I went into the
6 Marine Corps during the last war, leaving the Fox Film
7 Corporation in New York. The company I worked for sent
8 me to New York. While there I enlisted in 1918 in that
9 war in the Women Marines, you know. I worked there until
10 about six or eight months after the war ended in the
11 Publicity Department under Colonel MacLamore when Barnett
12 was Commandant.

13 MR. STRIPLING: Mrs. Rogers, this is a Sub-Committee
14 of the Full Committee on Un-American Activities of the
15 United States House of Representatives. It is sitting
16 here in Los Angeles for the purpose of receiving
17 testimony or information concerning alleged Communist
18 activities and influences within the motion picture
19 industry. The Committee has invited you to appear here
20 today to offer any information or views you might have
21 concerning this situation, how you think it should be
22 dealt with or any positive facts you have about Communist
23 organizations or individuals who are active in the motion
24 picture industry. We would like to know about them. If
25 you desire, you can make a statement, or if you prefer
26 we will ask you questions.

1 MRS. ROGERS: Well, of course I have known for
2 a long time, in fact, I have been working in the anti-
3 Communist movement in the motion picture business for
4 the past ten years because I knew what it was doing and
5 how it was doing it. You couldn't make people believe
6 it and you couldn't make people understand it. I lost
7 my position at RKO as Mr. Koerner's secretary for being
8 called a crackpot.

9 MR. STRIPLING: For being anti-Communist?

10 MRS. ROGERS: Because we were very quickly bringing
11 in nobody but Communists and I made a howl about it to
12 Mr. Koerner himself.

13 MR. THOMAS: When was that, Mrs. Rogers?

14 MRS. ROGERS: I went to work for Charlie in 1943, I
15 think it was April or May. I think it was April.

16 MR. THOMAS: In 1943?

17 MRS. ROGERS: It was 1943, 1944 and 1945, I think.

18 MR. THOMAS: I mean when you lost your position.

19 MRS. ROGERS: About the end of September of 1945.

20 The direct cause for it which would be told to you other-
21 wise was another matter, you understand, but it was
22 because of the lack of cooperation due to the situation
23 at that time at RKO. At the time I had access to every-
24 thing in the way of scripts and I hired some of the
25 writers or suggested the hiring of them. I discovered
26 them and hired them. I sat in the development of scripts.

1 Of course the MPA in which I became a member was being
2 blasted all over. We were called Fascists, anti-Jew
3 and anti-union.

4 MR. THOMAS: What was the MPA?

5 MRS. ROGERS: Motion Picture Alliance. Mr. McGuinness
6 was then president of that when I entered it. I was called
7 in to the body and placed on the board after they found
8 I was playing a lone hand. Well, it seemed my lone hand
9 at the time was doing better than it did after I identi-
10 fied myself with the MPA because the blast was on you.

11 MR. STRIPLING: It was not very popular to be anti-
12 Communist?

13 MRS. ROGERS: No. You had to stand up against it
14 and the finger was on you. You were out in the open.
15 As it was, I had been fighting a little bit by myself
16 and saying, "No, we can't have this scene. This scene
17 isn't right." And I was doing pretty well. But once I
18 was identified then I was always, they had a way to
19 combat me. They would say, "Oh, she is just a crackpot."
20 Don't you see? Of course I don't know how much of this
21 you wish to know.

22 MR. THOMAS: Oh, yes, it is very interesting. You
23 keep right on. Go right ahead. This is very good.

24 MRS. ROGERS: At a meeting one night at the MPA Mr.
25 Selznick had been asked to join. Mr. David O. came in
26 and at that time I was the only woman on the board. He

D.O.
what?

1 was a little surprised to see me there because we had
2 been good friends. So he began to blast the MPA as
3 being anti-Jewish, anti-union, anti-boss and anti-
4 everything. He told us we must disband. He said, "What
5 are you doing here?" He said that to me.

6 I said, "Well, I have to support my country
7 in this hour of its need."

8 He said, "What would Koerner say if he knew
9 you were here?"

10 I said, "Look, David, Charlie is a wonderful
11 American, but he is politically blind just as are all
12 the other heads of studios. They don't know their pic-
13 tures are being infiltrated with Communist propaganda
14 or unrest and anti-American feeling, so we must band
15 together to tell them that, to make it sound more
16 authoritative."

17 He said, "I wouldn't join." Things went on
18 all evening. He got angry. He finally walked out on
19 us. He said, "How can you sit there and say that Charlie
20 Koerner is politically blind?"

21 I said, "It is the kindest thing I can say
22 about him."

23 Of course they couldn't understand all of this
24 and it was an unhappy circumstance to put it up to them
25 because it was all so new, without any groundwork.

26 The next morning I was called into the office.

6 1 Charlie said, "You were at a meeting last night and
2 you said I was politically blind."

3 And I said, "Yes, I did."

4 He said, "Do you think it is nice going around
5 talking about me at meetings like this and then coming
6 to work for me the next morning?"

7 I said, "Charlie, I have got to do that. I
8 don't have to do this. I don't have to work for you,
9 but that I must do." I said, "It is the kindest thing
10 I can say about you because you refuse to see that there
11 is something happening in America today that you could
12 stem partly from your position here and you won't listen.
13 If you would just listen. Will you let me tell you?
14 Will you let the committee come and meet with you?"

15 "I will not."

16 We had just been blasted by the Communists and
17 even the man that Selznick -- the boys know his name who
18 was giving David his guides -- now comes up a picture --
19 oh, so I picked up my cigarette case and my cigarettes
20 and I started to get out.

21 He said, "Sit down. Don't be mad."

22 "Well," I said, "boss, how mad are you?"

23 That is what it always was, "How mad are you?"

24 He said, "Oh, sit down." He said, "I wish you
25 would resign from that organization."

26 I said, "Charlie, I am not. So you make up your

7 1 mind what you want to do about it because my position
8 2 is clear. I will not resign."

9 3 I never heard anything more about that until
10 4 he called me one day and said, "I want you to take this
11 5 book down to your office and read it fast. Give me an
12 6 estimate of it in two hours."

7 7 I said, "Woo, woo," and he hands me this great
8 8 big book which was, "None But The Lonely Heart." Maybe
9 9 you remember the picture.

10 10 So in less than two hours I got to page 80
11 11 and called him up. I said, "No, Charlie, no. It is too
12 12 wide open for Russian Communist feeling."

13 13 He said, "Well, you are a little late. I just
14 14 bought it."

15 15 Well, the matter of buying it had been that
16 16 Cary Grant was under commitment to see if he could get
17 17 a picture and Cary had been told by Columbia that a
18 18 wonderful book had just come out called "None But The
19 19 Lonely Heart."

20 20 He called up and said, he called Charlie and
21 21 said, "I hear there is a great book out called 'None But
22 22 The Lonely Heart' that would be all right for me. I want
23 23 to do it on my next commitment."

24 24 You see, stars have trouble getting commitments
25 25 fulfilled, and the book was in the open market for bidding.
26 26 He said, "Get hold of it if it is for me. I would rather

1 do it for you than over here."

2 So Charlie got it at that time at the moment
3 and did not wait for my answer but bought it. He handed
4 it to the producer, David Hempstead to produce. I was
5 in on the production meeting in which David Hempstead
6 reported that he had hired Clifford Odets, or that he
7 wanted to hire Clifford Odets to do the script. I knew
8 that here was a moment where something had to be settled
9 right now and I had to get in my word right now or in
10 a moment it would be too late because that telephone to
11 New York is very easy to pick up. So here is David
12 Hempstead and here sits myself, and Charlie is behind
13 the desk.

14 I said, "Oh, Charlie, no, not Clifford Odets."
15 I said, "He is a Communist." And Hempstead, who is also
16 politically blind -- a good American, just a producer --
17 said, "Oh, what are we ever going to do with this girl?"

18 I said, "Charlie, I will go back to my office
19 and write you the reviews on the picture right now if
20 Clifford Odets makes it."

21 He said, "I am trying to be patient with you,
22 Lela. Now, forget this stuff."

23 I said, "I am going to my office now and write
24 you some reviews." I turned to Hempstead and said, "Oh,
25 David, please don't get Odets."

26 He said, "You are a little too late. I just

1 talked to him on the phone. He is coming, and Charlie
2 says he is all right. Charlie says it has my O. K."
3 So out comes Mr. Odets.

4 I went back and wrote a review. I don't know
5 what Charlie did with it, but I didn't miss it. I will
6 bet every statement I made, what the picture would look
7 like after it was made and what the reviewers would say
8 were said. It was stale. It was Russian. It was
9 Communistic. It was not a good picture of England. You
10 know it was laid in England and the speeches were horrible,
11 the Communistic speeches. Charlie could not understand
12 it when it was all finished.

13 MR. THOMAS: May I interrupt right there, Mrs. Rogers?
14 Do you have that chart available?

15 MR. STRIPLING: Yes.

16 MR. THOMAS: Do you know if Clifford Odets' name is
17 on the chart?

18 MR. STRIPLING: Yes.

19 MRS. ROGERS: He has a long record.

20 MR. THOMAS: Don't you think it would be a good idea
21 to put in the record at this point something about that?
22 We will suspend at this point. * * * We will start with
23 the record again.

24 Mr. Stripling, will you at this point give us
25 the record of Clifford Odets?

26 MR. STRIPLING: Yes. He is listed as a member of the

10 1 Communist Party.

11 2 MRS. ROGERS: A very dear friend of Mr. Chaplin.

12 3 MR. STRIPLING: A member of the Harry Bridges Defense

13 4 Committee, a member of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee

14 5 Committee; financial contributor to the New Masses;

15 6 mentioned in the Tenney Reports of 1943 and 1945.

16 7 We have an additional record, Mr. Chairman, in

17 8 Washington on Mr. Odets.

18 9 MRS. ROGERS: And his writing.

19 10 MR. STRIPLING: Yes.

20 11 MRS. ROGERS: "Waiting For Leftie" and "Wake and

21 12 Sing."

22 13 MR. THOMAS: Go ahead, Mrs. Rogers, and tell us what

23 14 else happened. It is very interesting and effective.

24 15 MRS. ROGERS: When it becomes my own impression I

25 16 will say so, because some of the things I can't take

26 17 down but I have my intuition. Some of it is conjectural.

27 18 So Mr. Odets arrived. He started on the picture.

28 19 I had said to David Hempstead, "David, you will be sorry

29 20 that you ever hired Odets." So he laughed about it.

30 21 David is the producer who has done three or four success-

31 22 ful Roger pictures. He made "Kitty Foyle," the one that

32 23 she won the Academy on, and so he had been very close to

33 24 us, but he wouldn't let me talk to him about this thing at

34 25 all. But I did grab Cary Grant one day in the commissary.

35 26 I pulled him down beside me in a little booth. I said,

11 1 "Cary, be careful of this script they are going to
12 2 give you. It is packed with Communism and they are
13 3 going to make you say it, and I know you are not a
14 4 Communist."

5 He said, "No, Lela, they aren't going to do
6 anything of the kind."

7 I said, "Watch it, that is all I ask you to
8 do, and I am going to point it out to you when I read
9 it, if I read it, if they let me have it," which they
10 never let me have. It was quite a thing to keep it
11 away from me, but I never got to read the script. I
12 saw it first on the screen.

13 During the course of the making of the picture
14 suddenly Mr. Koerner started to dislike Mr. Hempstead
15 very much and to the great amazement of the entire organi-
16 zation Mr. Hempstead who had made thirty or forty big
17 money making pictures at RKO was out, and Mr. Odets was
18 now producer, writer, and in a couple of weeks it was
19 announced that he would direct, also. The result is
20 what you saw on the screen, exactly what he wanted to
21 make out of it.

22 MR. THOMAS: When did that picture start to appear?

23 MRS. ROGERS: Let's see, now, it must have been
24 about 1945.

25 MR. McDOWELL: How successful was it, Mrs. Rogers?

26 MRS. ROGERS: Not at all.

12

1 MR. McDOWELL: Not at all?

2 MRS. ROGERS: I have never seen the record of it
3 because the final word on it wasn't in, or I mean the
4 final figures on it weren't in before I left. It was
5 running, you see. It hadn't been written off, nor had
6 it been tallied, what we call tallied. At the end of a
7 good run you tally them and then you commence all over in
8 what you call the re-issue.

9 MR. THOMAS: Have we had a description of that pic-
10 ture in the record?

11 MR. STRIPLING: No, we have not, Mr. Chairman.

12 MR. THOMAS: Can you describe the picture, Mrs. Rogers?

13 MRS. ROGERS: The picture is laid in a London junk
14 shop, I guess. It is a story of an underprivileged London
15 wharf rat. Ethel Barrymore played the mother for which
16 she received the Academy award, incidentally, a beautifully
17 done part. It was slow and ponderous. Mr. Grant would
18 move or sit on a bannister and over at the wharf. It
19 is probably one of the poorer territories in London.
20 They would run the camera up to him and he would say,
21 "The common man is going to win." Of course, Odets never
22 says what it is they are going to win. At the end of
23 "Waiting for Leftie" he is holding up his hands saying,
24 "I am going to fight. We have all got to get together
25 and fight," but nobody knows what for. It is that kind
26 of thing. They don't make a statement of what they are

13 1 going to fight for. They are just going to get together
2 2 to fight.

3 3 MR. McDOWELL: Do you recall Hanns Eisler composed
4 4 the music?

5 5 MRS. ROGERS: That is how he came to Hollywood.

6 6 MR. THOMAS: Tell us about that.

7 7 MRS. ROGERS: I know very little. They kept me out
8 8 of the production from the moment Odets knew my colors.

9 9 MR. THOMAS: Have you finished with this picture?

10 10 MRS. ROGERS: Do you want to know more about the pic-
11 11 ture?

12 12 MR. THOMAS: Yes, tell us more about the picture.

13 13 MRS. ROGERS: The picture is hazy in my mind now.
14 14 The story is the story of an underprivileged wharf rat
15 15 and his family and all of the underprivileged people
16 16 in probably the Limehouse district in London. I don't
17 17 think that is the district, but it is something like
18 18 that. It is the type of picture we all know does not
19 19 need to be made and it is not true. And it was the
20 20 dirtiest book I ever read. Llewellyn is the author. It
21 21 had no mention of Communism in it or a fight for a better
22 22 way of life. It just had the struggle that these poor
23 23 people have, and Mr. Odets put into it what he wanted
24 24 to put into it. My objection to it was that it was wide
25 25 for just the kind of men that I knew we had employed with
26 26 us. My little problem, as I pointed out, was to try to

14

1 steer them away from that as much as I could. I tried
2 to prevent them from using their ability that way.

3 MR. THOMAS: Tell us about Hanns Eisler.

4 MRS. ROGERS: Well, he came in as the music man.
5 Mr. Odets, I am sure, brought him to Hollywood. I don't
6 know the inside of that because right away as soon as
7 my objections came out I was put out and told very little
8 about the picture.

9 One day I was called in and asked how would I
10 like to be a producer and I could be in any unit that I
11 wanted to. I saw the handwriting on the wall. I realized
12 Charlie was moving me out of the department where I
13 couldn't get to things. I said, "All right, fine."

14 So he said, "What department would you like to
15 go to?" And in his honesty he said, "I would rather
16 have you with Mr. Gross," who was his pet producer,
17 "more than any one else." But I knew Bob Fellows best
18 and he was producing the kind of picture that was making
19 us money and was upholding the studio, and Mr. Gross was
20 such an unknown quantity; he had just come to us, but
21 Charlie was throwing him everything.

22 So I said I would rather be with Fellows. I
23 knew that Fellows wasn't too popular with them because
24 he has an independent mind and makes his pictures and
25 knows how to make them and they have no Communist pro-
26 paganda in them. I was getting a little weary of the

act? 15 fact and thought if I was going to produce I would
like to get into some situation where at least there
was a ten per cent chance of making good money with
something I made, and I would rather have Bob Fellows
at least than Mr. Gross, and I just chose Mr. Fellows,
but it didn't exactly please Mr. Koerner.

7 My last conversation was about Odets. I said,
8 "Well, before leaving this department I must have one more
9 conversation with you, Charlie. You tell me first that
10 I am a crackpot and we will get that over, but this I
11 must say to you:

12 "Mr. Odets is out after your job."

13 Well, he threw back his head and laughed.

14 "Well, if he is big enough to get it, he deserves
15 it."

16 I said, "That is not the reason he is after it."
17 I said, "Mr. Odets is a Communist and he wants this studio
18 for the Communist Party. He has promised them this studio.
19 I feel it. I haven't any way of knowing it, but I feel
20 it."

21 Charlie of course shook his head: "Oh, you are
22 going crazy, you know."

23 I said, "No, I am not, but you better get a
24 little crazy, my kind of crazy." I said, "He is a member
25 of the Communist Party and if you want I shall be happy
26 to get you his Party name and number and also get people

16 1 who will tell you that he wouldn't have even come here
17 2 except he could do this thing or make a stab at it."

18 3 The next morning he called me and said he
19 4 wanted to see me. That was Mr. Koerner. I met Mr. Odets
20 5 on the street. He would say, "How do you do, Mrs. Rogers?"
21 6 And I would say, "How do you do, Mr. Odets." He called
22 7 me the next morning. He said, "I had Mr. Odets to the
23 8 house last night. I asked him point blank, 'Are you a
24 9 Communist?' He said, 'No.'"

10 10 I said, "Charlie, you have to learn that is
11 11 the first thing they say to you." I said, "If you were
12 12 in the United States to disrupt this Government would you
13 13 tell people you were in the United States to disrupt the
14 14 Government?" I said, "Now I will ask you and you keep
15 15 still while I ask you this. Charlie, do you go to any
16 16 Communist meetings?"

17 17 He said, "Well, of course not."

18 18 Oh, I am just a little ahead of my story.

19 19 He said, "I asked him if he was a Communist and
20 20 he said no. And to prove it he stood up the other night
21 21 before the boys and told them that he thought Communism
22 22 was right for Russia, but no good for the United States."

23 23 And I said, "In a Communist meeting?"

24 24 He said, "Yes, in a Communist meeting he did."

25 25 Now, mind you, this is from a president of a
26 26 studio. Isn't it ridiculous?

1 I said, "Charlie, do you go to Communist
2 meetings?" He said no. I said, "What is Odets doing at
3 a Communist meeting?"

4 He looked rather funny. He said, "Well, I don't
5 know. I guess he just wants both sides of every story.
6 He has an inquisitive mind. He wants to know the world.
7 He probably goes to all of those things."

8 And I said, "Do you go?"

9 He said, "No."

10 I said, "I don't either." But this is the kind
11 of primer training I tried to give this man.

12 Let's see what followed that? Oh, and then I
13 said to him, "What right had Mr. Odets to say what is
14 right for Russia or wrong for Russia?"

15 He said, "Well, we all say things, Lela. That
16 doesn't mean he is disloyal to the United States."

17 "Well," I said, "you have got a big surprise
18 coming to you when this picture comes out." One of my
19 sentences out of my review the day he bought the story was
20 that every review in the country would say it is Russian,
21 it is slow and Communist. They all said that in the
22 reviews and it killed the picture. But nobody knew why
23 it was Communist because our people aren't educated to
24 know. They don't even know what the United States is.
25 That is my point. We have so long forgotten to tell them
26 about it, you know.

18

1 Then of course Mr. Odets climbed up in the
2 company and became its ace producer. Then he made another
3 picture and that was also Red. Then he was out --

4 MR. THOMAS: What was the name of that picture?

5 MRS. ROGERS: I was trying to think of it. It was
6 after I left. It was a laboring man's story in America.
7 I think it was Dorothy McGuire and Bob Young. No, it
8 wasn't Bob Young. I would have to get that. It is easy
9 enough to check on that. I can get you that information.

10 MR. THOMAS: Maybe I have it here, "This Land Is Mine."

11 MRS. ROGERS: "This Land Is Mine," was that made by
12 him?

13 MR. THOMAS: RKC.

14 MRS. ROGERS: Yes. "This Land Is Mine." Then didn't
15 he make another one?

16 MR. THOMAS: Was "This Land Is Mine" the one you were
17 referring to?

18 MRS. ROGERS: Yes, I think so because it was not the
19 original name of the story. They change those names. You
20 always think of it under another name and they change it
21 right up to the release time. But that was after I left.
22 Mr. Odets was there for a while. Then I had a chance to go
23 with Mr. Rathman.

24 MR. THOMAS: May we interrupt at that point? What
25 is Mr. Odets doing now, so far as you know?

26 MRS. ROGERS: Mr. Odets is out at MGM, as I understand.

19

1 He has been doing scripts out there.

2 MR. THOMAS: Who is the head of RKO now?

3 MRS. ROGERS: Dore Schary who got it instead of Mr.
4 Odets.

5 MR. THOMAS: What happened to Mr. Koerner?

6 MRS. ROGERS: Mr. Koerner died. He took leukemia,
7 I think it was, and died very suddenly in about ten days.
8 Mr. Rathman who is president of the board of RKO Moving
9 Picture Corporation, we had a few little talks until he
10 had a little confidence in me, I think, though not too
11 much and he couldn't take sides; but over the last trouble
12 that Charlie and I had when I left the studio, which was
13 a build-up from all of this, I had the circumstances
14 which had nothing to do with the anti-Communist talk, and
15 I had Mr. Rathman told about the circumstances, the true
16 ones, over a bar in Mexico City by a friend, and the moment
17 Mr. Rathman took charge all of those men were out. He
18 just swept the place clean. But there is something wrong
19 with the studio because it has become the camp again.
20 They are all back in the same ways.

21 MR. THOMAS: Can you name some of the ones he let go?

22 MRS. ROGERS: Of course. Odets was out. He let Odets
23 go right away, as near as you can in the picture business,
24 because you have to let them finish what they are on. His
25 pictures financially would have let him go, their financial
26 return, and hard business sense would tell you he was

30

1 not worthy of the job he held. Of course, in that upset--
2 the man who is now married to Olivia deHavilland or to her
3 sister took my position and took unto himself a lot more
4 duties than I did and was practically running the studio
5 while Charlie went away. Charlie went to Russia. He went
6 to Germany and Russia before he died.

7 MR. THOMAS: Why?

8 MRS. ROGERS: RKO had a lot of money impounded in
9 Russia. There was an attempt to get into those countries
10 to make pictures and to use up the money they had im-
11 pounded. Nothing came of it. The explanation given to
12 me later gave me no inside look as to what actually hap-
13 pened, but the hardships he had to undergo in Germany
14 was what killed Charlie, and in Russia. How his eyes
15 were opened, I don't know, but they did seem a little bit
16 because he was kindlier to me. Of course, the night I
17 quit RKO Ginger and I talked it over. I said I was so
18 blocked I couldn't do anything because they even reached
19 through the department Fellows was in to block me. I
20 said, "I think I will leave and I will leave for the
21 reason I have a story up there written called 'The Gibson
22 Girl'." I wouldn't let them buy it unless they got a
23 script on it and were actually going to use it because
24 we don't like to use family pressures to make money. I
25 could have forced them to buy it or Ginger wouldn't make
26 it or she won't make any, something like that, but we have

21 1 nothing like that in our code. I told them unless they
2 2 got the script on it and the day they started grinding
3 3 on the story I would let them pay me for it. Well, it
4 4 seems somebody got in the middle there with some stories
5 5 to Charlie and he was gone, and then when he came back
6 6 he was told that I said, "This is the story you will
7 7 make or no other." He called me in and I said, "Charlie,
8 8 let's have an understanding. I am not going to put up
9 9 with it. You and I have always done business together.
10 10 We understand each other. We have been at RKO fourteen
11 11 years under many, many presidents, and this is the first
12 12 time any trouble came up with the Rogers. I prefer to
13 13 hand in my resignation. You have three more commitments
14 14 with Ginger. Find your stories in the usual way and sub-
15 15 mit them and we will do them."

16 Well, he got very angry and reached for his pad.
17 " When do you want to leave?" -- you know.

18 I said, " Well, I can leave now at this moment
19 if that is the way you feel."

20 He said, " Well, I will expect your office Monday
21 morning." So I walked out.

22 Then that night -- he first called up my business
23 manager and said, " I want to talk to Lela."

24 My manager said, " You won't talk to Lela. You
25 were a very foolish man and you can't talk to her." He
26 said, " Charlie, don't you know when she walked out of that

22 1 door fifteen millions of profit walked out with her
2 if she wants to do it? You have played very foolish with
3 her."

4 Then he called Ginger and said would I talk
5 to her. The upshot was, it was finally decided Ginger
6 would make an arrangement to talk to me, but she wanted
7 to be present. He was leaving for Europe the next day,
8 but he took his evening and came up to our house and he
9 asked me to come back.

10 I said, "No, Charlie, I won't go back because
11 the pressure that is brought on me you don't understand
12 and you don't know how to protect me. You will not be-
13 lieve what I am telling you is going on in the background
14 and therefore I don't want to stay."

15 He said, "Are you taking your story and every-
16 thing and going?"

17 I said, "No. If you still want the story" --
18 it is a nice clean American story about the building of
19 New York in 1900. It is about how people won their way
20 up by their boot straps. It is a darned good American
21 story,--"but, Charlie, you will never make it because
22 the boys under you won't let you. You don't know they
23 are running your studio -- not you." He was ferocious
24 at me.

25 MR. THOMAS: What was the name of that story?

26 MRS. ROGERS: "The Gibson Girl."

23

1 MR. THOMAS: Did they buy it?

2 MRS. ROGERS: No. I still own it. Of course now
3 the pressure began at RKO about Ginger's commitments.
4 Under commitments you have to send a story to her every
5 three months and she must read it and turn it down and
6 in that way you keep the commitment alive. So of course
7 this trouble goes on. They are still keeping this commit-
8 ment alive. In four years they have not been able to
9 find a story for her. So we start our first independent
10 picture, the first one she has ever made and in which
11 she owns fifty per cent of the picture. The men who
12 were producing it, I hadn't too much faith in what they
13 know as producers. It was their first big effort and I
14 knew they could get us very much involved by their lack
15 of knowledge. When you are standing on the outside you
16 cannot control it because they control it, you see. They
17 had made a deal with United Artists release and were going
18 to make it at United Artists. The picture is cast; the
19 money is all up; the banks have approved; and everything
20 is ready to start within ten days. The story has been
21 worked on as satisfactory and everybody is hired.

22 Then they were having a meeting up at the house,
23 this little group: Our business manager, Ginger, myself,
24 the Joaquim Brothers and the director Sam Wood. I think
25 that was all. It was during the film rationing time.
26 Suddenly I said, "Look, United Artists haven't any film."

24 1 They are telling you they can get Mary Pickford's,
2 but they have not substantiated that. I want to see
3 those cans stacked this high with my name on them before
4 I start (indicating)."

5 They said, "We can't do it. We are sending a
6 man to Washington to get film released."

7 I said, "No," and I was withholding -- well, Ginger
8 and I were withholding her signature until everything was
9 in there. Suddenly I looked at Ginger and she looked at
10 me, and I said, "I know what to do. Let's move that over
11 to RKO and see Charlie Koerner tomorrow morning because
12 I know they have film because four big A pictures have
13 gone out of the window."

14 You see how they work. They are good American
15 pictures. They fix it so that they can't be made. I
16 said, "I know Charlie has that film."

17 The Joaquim Brothers said, "Don't make us go
18 over there. Don't make us ask him."

19 I said, "Go over and ask him." So they went
20 over to Charlie and right away he wanted fifty per cent
21 of the picture or nothing and RKO wouldn't make it.

22 They came back and said, "You have humiliated us."

23 I said, "No. In four days he will call. He
24 knows this picture. Just sit still for four days. I will
25 give you a picture of what he will do. He will say the
26 first day, 'The idea of them coming over here with such a

25

1 deal.' And the next day he will say, 'Why didn't they
2 talk to us. Maybe I will take forty or thirty per cent.'
3 The next day at least twenty per cent, and the next day,
4 'Why don't those people call me?" and the fourth day
5 we got the call. And he said for the boys to come over
6 and talk to him. I guess the Joaquims gave him five per
7 cent of their share, but we got all of the film we needed.
8 I knew it was there because every good picture that the
9 man started to make -- once or twice he was ready to put
10 a gun to his head. They can't make a script out of "The
11 Gibson Girl." It is too good and too American. So they
12 work and work. There are \$300,000 worth of charges
13 against it.

14 MR. THOMAS: How do you mean \$300,000 worth of
15 charges?

16 MRS. ROGERS: Of writers and writers' charges.

17 MR. THOMAS: I see what you mean.

18 MRS. ROGERS: They can't get a script. Don't you see
19 how nice it is and how clever? It is a nice old American
20 story and they can't get a script on it. It is a beautiful
21 story.

22 MR. THOMAS: To interrupt you a little bit, Mrs. Rogers.
23 I sort of recall reading that your daughter was going to
24 make a picture, but that you forbade her to make that
25 particular picture. I read something in the papers about
26 it, didn't I?

26 MRS. ROGERS: Oh, the one they are going to make now?

1 MR. THOMAS: What is that?

2 MRS. ROGERS: "Sister Carrie."

3 MR. THOMAS: I don't know. I just read something

4 about it.

5 MR. STRIPLING: I would like to ask this question.

6 We have had testimony here which indicated that the

7 principal vehicle or medium for injecting Communism into

8 motion pictures is script writers.

9

10 MRS. ROGERS: That is right.

11 MR. STRIPLING: Is that true?

12 MRS. ROGERS: Yes.

13 MR. STRIPLING: We have also heard here that a number

14 of film executives tolerate these Communist writers even

15 though they are well aware they are Communists. For in-

16 stance, we had testimony here concerning Mr. Mayer and

17 I believe Donald Ogden Stewart.

18 MRS. ROGERS: Oh, yes.

19 MR. STRIPLING: What do you think the answer is when

20 you have top executives who will continue to employ these

21 people and give them an opportunity to plant their poison,

22 so to speak, in the films? Shouldn't the finger be pointed

23 right at the top just as much as to the Communist writers?

24 MRS. ROGERS: Well, of course I feel so and my theory

25 in our last meeting of the MPA when we were getting up

26 this brochure which probably they have let you see that

27

1 Ann Rand is writing: "Don't put this in your picture
2 because it means so and so" and send it to the producers --
3 my theory is the producers are the ones who should know,
4 but now it is a little late and the time is running out.
5 If producers pay no attention to that and continue to
6 let their lines in their text, then take it first to
7 the exhibitors, thousands and thousands of them all over
8 the United States and put them on their American loyalty,
9 and then if they don't take it, go to the audiences.
10 The League of Decency has not been a failure. Do it that
11 way and have your Republican Women's Clubs or some organiza-
12 tion like that take up the fight over this brochure and
13 fight the theatres and keep people out of them. If we
14 can reach the people then we can talk to the house and
15 say there is Communist propaganda in that film and I want
16 my money back. Then they will stop making them. You know,
17 it has taken a long time to get around to this and we have
18 to educate the people. Anyway, there is no need to go
19 on with the fight unless the people are educated because
20 you have to do it over again. I made a speech before
21 the Advertising Women two weeks ago and they were getting
22 their Oscars at the time. It is one of the first attempts
23 where Oscars have ever been given to them as they do in
24 motion pictures, given to the Advertising Women for their
25 achievements during the year. So they asked me to be
26 their speaker of the night. I knew there were going to be

heads of radio and other people connected with publicity there and that my speech would go around over the country and it might turn out to be a more important thing than it was because it was only the Los Angeles Advertising Women. But in my speech I said, "The motion pictures and the radio make a strict code unto themselves that they cannot finger out or point out or harm any race, creed, color, religion or even the tiniest Balkan kingdom. So you have a picture here that looks like this: The heads of radio and the heads of motion pictures are industrialists, and industrialists to me have given opportunities with their brains, their ingenuity, their forwardness and forward looking vision that have made this country what it is. But here you have the ridiculous picture of industrialists being Communists and Leftists."

Two or three heads of the radio came over and said, "That needs to be said, but how are we going to go about it?"

I said, "You are a man and an American. You know what to do about it."

In the speech I said, "If they want a villain they make him a banker, a lawyer or big industrialist."

MR. THOMAS: Or a congressman.

MRS. ROGERS: Or a congressman or even up to a vice president, and they tear down everything we build up. So I cited this picture and how ridiculous it looked to

29 1 these people. Now, yesterday, from Moscow, comes the
2 statement that all American pictures are pointing up to
3 or making industrialists gods. They are blasting the
4 picture before we make it. They are trying to get the
5 people to say, "They are making industrialists heroes."

6 MR. THOMAS: Why do you say the time is running out?

7 MRS. ROGERS: Because I believe it is. You see,
8 there is a thought revolution here that has been going
9 on for twenty-five years. You see, I was raised with a
10 Socialist father. My father was serious. He really is.
11 I have had to think politically since I was about seven
12 and when I was about twelve or fourteen parted company.
13 It gets pretty lively when we get together politically
14 speaking. He is now eighty-four or eighty-five years
15 old and he still puts up a good argument. So I have
16 been more or less close to this and watched the public
17 mind. We must get to that public mind and correct it.
18 It is very easily done. The man on the street doesn't
19 think about America. He has taken it so long for granted
20 that he has forgotten to be grateful for it.

21 MR. THOMAS: I thought you meant the time was running
22 out because the American public was beginning to think
23 about America and beginning to think against this kind
24 of thing that has been going on in the motion picture
25 industry and I cite as an illustration what Paul Robeson
26 has been up against and what Charlie Chaplin has been up

50 1 against and what Mrs. Lewis was up against when she
2 talked before the children at the Western High School
3 in Washington D.C. I thought that was what you meant
4 by time running out that the American public was waking
5 up, and if they continue to wake up the motion picture
6 industry will suffer as a result of it.

7 MRS. ROGERS: Of course we have been patient for
8 five years and now the motion picture industry will take
9 it on the chin. But that is an isolated case. It is
10 always good copy.

11 I talked to a young boy the other night. He
12 said, "I am anti-Communist, I guess, but what am I anti-
13 to? Will you tell me?"

14 I said, "Look, if I were a banker and going to
15 hire a new teller I wouldn't take him downstairs and
16 show him \$9,999,000 of counterfeits. I would show him
17 the real thing, because they will come at us in another
18 way; they will come from underground. Of course, pic-
19 tures are one of their biggest mediums of propaganda."

20 MR. THOMAS: Unfortunately, Mrs. Rogers, our time
21 is running out.

22 MR. McDOWELL: I have a question I would like to ask,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 MR. THOMAS: Just a second. Mr. Ginsberg is outside.
25 We have been sticking to the hour, and our time is up.

26 MRS. ROGERS: I would like to tell you about another

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1 picture.

2 MR. THOMAS: All right, Mr. McDowell.

3 MR. McDOWELL: You said in your opening statement,
4 Mrs. Rogers, somewhere along the line that you became
5 concerned and worried about how fast they were pouring
6 in.

7 MRS. ROGERS: Yes.

8 MR. McDOWELL: Do you mean Left Wingers pouring in?

9 MRS. ROGERS: To the motion picture business.

10 MR. McDOWELL: The motion picture business?

11 MRS. ROGERS: Into RKO.

12 MR. McDOWELL: And that is all?

13 MRS. ROGERS: I think they picket RKO. Of course
14 they picket all of the studios, but they picket RKO
15 because one of the big leading Communists had written
16 the story that won Figner the Academy Award and that was
17 Dalton Trumbo.

18 Nunnally is a funny Red. He is a Red until it
19 hurts him and then he is no longer a Red. You never quite
20 know where Nunnally is. I don't believe he works with
21 them. In fact, he has been known to say some biting
22 things about it and make fun of them.

23 MR. THOMAS: You were going to talk about another
24 picture.

25 MRS. ROGERS: That was "Tender Comrade."

26 MR. THOMAS: That was done by RKO?

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MRS. ROGERS: That was done by Ginger Rogers at RKO. I was up building a ranch. This is also Dalton Trumbo writing. This is an interesting case. It can't be told in a minute because the making of it and all of that -- I came home from the ranch to read the script and we had quite an interesting evening, my child and myself. I pointed out where it was Left and what had to be done. Of course she stood with me in many things I said, although many times she didn't know the deal. There were such phrases as "share and share alike," which is democratic. I said, "Now, let's analyze it." Then when Ginger refused to say it, they put it in the mouth of some other girl. Then Ginger finds it was in the film. It was directed by Dmitryk who is also an avowed Communist. He says he is. He thinks everybody else ought to be killed.

MR. THOMAS: When was that?

MRS. ROGERS: It was made during the war because it is about girls all living together who work out here at the aircraft, assembly girls, you know. They all go together for a house. Their husband are all across at war. In one scene Ginger finds she is going to be a mother, so everybody is in the living room sewing for the new expected baby. And in this scene which you got the whole sequence of she said to the girls, "If something is the matter with your teeth would you go to a

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1 dentist?" She said, "Yes, I would." "If something
2 was the matter with your car would you take it to a
3 garage?" "I would."

4 She said, "So when my child is born -- I know
5 nothing about raising a child -- when it is born I will
6 give it unto the hands of people who will know how and
7 specialize in it and then I will see him weekends and
8 things like that and go on working."

9 I pointed out to Ginger that was part of the
10 Communist plan and they wanted to introduce it into this
11 country to tear down the family.

12 So she just X'd it out. Dalton put up a little
13 fight. He would look at me and I would look at him and
14 he knew what it was about.

15 MR. STRIPLING: I think, Mrs. Rogers, you have been
16 very helpful to the Committee. You are certainly aware
17 of what is going on.

18 MRS. ROGERS: I had another scene about Dalton. He
19 was out on a limb. I took the heat off of him where even
20 Communists wouldn't have anything to do with him.

21 MR. THOMAS: Any more questions, Mr. McDowell?

22 MR. McDOWELL: No.

23 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, do you have any more
24 questions?

25 MR. STRIPLING: No.

26 MR. THOMAS: Mrs. Rogers, we apologize for having to

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1 break in this way, but we have a schedule to follow.

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4

5 HENRY GINSBERG,

6 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

7

8 MR. THOMAS: Mr. Stripling, your witness.

9 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Ginsberg, will you state your
10 full name and present address?

11 MR. GINSBERG: Henry Ginsberg, 918 North Whittier
12 Drive, Beverly Hills.

13 MR. STRIPLING: When and where were you born, Mr.
14 Ginsberg?

15 MR. GINSBERG: I was born in New York City in 1897.

16 MR. STRIPLING: What is your present occupation?

17 MR. GINSBERG: I am the executive producer and
18 general manager of Paramount Picture Studios.

19 MR. STRIPLING: How long have you been active in
20 Hollywood?

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21 MR. GINSBERG: I have been here sixteen years.

22 MR. STRIPLING: Before you came to Hollywood what was
23 your business?

24 MR. GINSBERG: I was in the motion picture business
25 in New York. I have been in the picture business for
26 thirty-two years. I came from Distribution in the East.

1 MR. STRIPLING: Mr. Ginsberg, this is a Sub-Committee
2 of the Full Committee on Un-American Activities of the
3 United States House of Representatives. They are sitting
4 here for the purpose of receiving any testimony or in-
5 formation concerning alleged Communist or Fascist infil-
6 tration or influences within the motion picture industry.
7 Therefore, if there is any information which you would
8 like to give the Committee or any views which you would
9 like to express which would assist the Committee in
10 approaching this problem in an instructive or an objective
11 way, why, the Sub-Committee would appreciate it very much.
12 You can either make a statement, or if you desire we will
13 ask you questions. The Sub-Committee is here in the
14 nature of laying the groundwork for determining if there
15 is any basis to the charges which have been made and
16 the requests to the Full Committee which have been re-
17 ceived as to Communist influences within various phases
18 of the motion picture industry. So if you will just go
19 right ahead.

20 MR. GINSBERG: I will just answer one thought there.
21 It is impossible for me to speak about the industry at
22 large for the simple reason that my work is such that
23 I mind my own business pretty well and I mind the business
24 of Paramount. Presently I am not engaged in any activity
25 outside of Paramount. I am not active in the Producers
26 Association, nor am I active in any type of work within

1 the business, that is, with respect to any type of
2 organization. Under the circumstances I can only speak,
3 as I say, for Paramount, and it would be my preference
4 that you ask some specific questions and I might be
5 able to deal with them much better.

6 MR. STRIPLING: All right, sir. From the evidence
7 and testimony which we have received here, Mr. Ginsberg,
8 it indicates that the source of Communist propaganda
9 which might appear in pictures emanates from the script
10 writers. In other words, a person who writes a script
11 might interject a few lines. For example, in the picture
12 "Song of Russia," we had here this morning Mr. Robert
13 Taylor who said it was his opinion that the picture from
14 the outset purported to reveal the Soviet Union and
15 Communism in a different light than he understood it,
16 and that he objected to taking the lead in it. I saw
17 the picture "Song of Russia" and there was little doubt
18 in my mind that the parallel and comparison it drew
19 that it would be classified other than open Communist
20 propaganda. On the other hand, we have been told here
21 of pictures that contain only one line or one scene.

22 Now, is it true or is it your opinion that the
23 script writer is the vehicle for the Communist propaganda
24 if it does exist?

25 MR. GINSBERG: Yes. Well, because it is the basis of
26 all writing, whether he be a script writer or the follow-in

1 form of writing. That can be the part basis. It may
2 have a great deal to do with the type of picture made
3 by the studios. I joined Paramount seven years ago in
4 February. I came into Paramount as general manager. I
5 brought Buddy de Silva in who is our executive producer.
6 I know Buddy's thinking pretty well. If there was any
7 tendency along those lines it would be watched pretty
8 carefully. To my knowledge, and I have seen all of the
9 rushes which were the work of the previous day's action
10 on sets along with the man. I personally have because
11 I occupy this position as over-all studio head. With
12 the few men I have around me who are pretty decent and
13 stable American citizens, nothing has come to our atten-
14 tion, that is, so far as our lot is concerned. I have
15 no means in the engagement of writers or authors for
16 determining what their ideologies are or are not.

17 MR. THOMAS: Why do you say you have no means?

18 MR. GINSBERG: I have no means in this sense: There
19 has been no presentation directly of any people that we
20 have engaged, to me directly.

21 MR. THOMAS: But don't you check up on a writer
22 before you take him on?

23 MR. GINSBERG: We check in this way. We can sense
24 their conduct. It is a pretty difficult thing to check.
25 Generally speaking, our lot is pretty clean when it
26 comes to who they are and what they are. There may be

1 some operating that I don't know anything about. It
2 is my impression, based on what I understand of the
3 subject, that in many respects they may not be directly
4 members of a party; they may be members of a front
5 organization, and then it is a question to what extent
6 they are liberal or what.

7 MR. THOMAS: They may not be a member of the Party
8 or a Communist sympathizer.

9 MR. GINSEBERG: They may be sympathizers, but it is
10 difficult to determine. I have no basis in my function
11 to do anything about it unless applied to the producer's
12 body or somebody trying to stamp this out, I have no
13 means of determining other than by their conduct. We
14 run a pretty good lot. The management is pretty close
15 to its people, generally speaking. It is a pretty com-
16 pact lot. We haven't an overly excessive amount of
17 executives, and we feel pretty well the things taking
18 place with regard to our people are pretty clean. The
19 only basis I have with respect to my associates and
20 knowing of them is looking over the shooting and the
21 scripts because you have the producer in there who is
22 a protective measure all the time and you have your
23 director, and I have found our crowd a pretty decent
24 crowd. As I say, the element can be there.

25 MR. THOMAS: Would you know whether or not it was
26 there?

1 MR. GINSBERG: Well, there are different ways of
2 determining a condition. There are different ways of
3 determining it. You can often determine it by conduct.

4 MR. THOMAS: That is right, but here is what I mean.
5 We had a witness who came before the Committee the other
6 day who said that while there were just a few pictures,
7 a very few pictures, that you might say were out and out
8 Communist propaganda films, there were however more films
9 where we will say there were five minutes of infiltration
10 in those pictures, and those are the lines that the
11 Communists or Communist sympathizers put into the picture.

12 MR. GINSBERG: I appreciate that.

13 MR. THOMAS: We asked this witness to name some films
14 and it just happened that at least two of those films
15 were made on your lot. One he named and the first one he
16 named was "Two Years Before the Mast." Another one he
17 named was "A Medal For Benny." I don't know whether I
18 have the whole list or not. Another one he named was
19 "Is There a Searching Wind?"

20 MR. GINSBERG: "Searching Wind" was made by Hal
21 Wallace. He has a unit on our lot.

22 MR. THOMAS: 1946. He named probably fifteen pictures
23 in all. I wasn't in the room when he named the last one.

24 MR. GINSBERG: Those two were specific Paramount pic-
25 tures, "Two Years Before the Mast" and "A Medal For Benny."
26 They were made on our lot approximately three or three

1 and a half years ago when Buddy was executive producer
2 and I was general manager of the studio. I don't know
3 whether you know about it, but he supervised the content
4 of those scripts and Buddy is above question. That is
5 No. 1.

6 No. 2, from my standpoint -- I am talking
7 about who constituted those pictures -- it would have
8 to be pointed out to me just like anything else -- you
9 can be so close to something you don't see it and the
10 outsider might see it.

11 Then it is a matter of a person's conception.
12 "Two Years Before the Mast" is an extremely successful
13 picture. It was held possibly two or two and a half or
14 three years and it was released early this year.

15 But "A Medal For Benny" was released a number
16 of years ago. It was written by Frank Butler, a man
17 whom I have known for sixteen years. He worked with me
18 when I first came out here to the Hal Roach Studio. He
19 had been with Paramount and came over to Roach with me
20 and came back later. He went to Paramount when I went
21 back there. He is one of the fine writers in the business.
22 He wrote the script of "Going My Way" for Leo McCarey.
23 He is one of the fine outstanding writers in the business
24 and a man closely associated with me as executive assistant
25 in the direction of pictures. He wrote that script for
26 "A Medal For Benny" under the supervision of Buddy. The

1 producer of the picture is a boy named Paul Jones.
2 Even though he is leaving the company during the coming
3 week he is all right. The director of the picture is
4 Irving Pichel. There has been talk about Irving Pichel
5 from time to time. I have no evidence or proof that
6 Pichel does follow the line. I assume that the man
7 appears to be a liberal. He is in a number of organiza-
8 tions, whether stupidly or otherwise I can't answer that.
9 Pichel is what we term a free lance director. He is
10 not a regular on our lot. In those days our deal with
11 him was about two pictures a year. He hasn't done anything
12 on our lot for better than a year now. He is making pic-
13 tures elsewhere. You see, there are two types of direc-
14 tors, one that makes his home on the lot and is with
15 you as a regular employee and is a member of your firm,
16 and the other is the one who comes in occasionally.

17 MR. THOMAS: Is the chart available?

18 MR. STRIPLING: No.

19 MR. GINSBERG. I am analyzing this "A Medal for Benny".
20 Those are the elements that were around there. There was
21 very little for the director to do because there were
22 three or four strong elements around the picture. There
23 was never any question about Pichel in those days. This
24 goes back two or three years ago.

25 "Two Years Before the Mast" has had a terrific
26 circulation in this country, comparably speaking. The

1 other was not a successful picture by the way. Two
2 "Years Before the Mast" was written by a fellow named
3 Seden Miller who is a writer in the business. He has
4 enjoyed a good reputation and has been with Warner Bros.
5 for years. He came with us about four years ago as a
6 writer-producer. He is more effective perhaps as a writer
7 than as a producer. The picture was made during the
8 period of de Silva's day when, as I say, there was a
9 very strong leaning in the proper direction. It was
10 directed by Mr. Farrar, who is as far away from these
11 things as he possibly can be, and in the direction of a
12 picture pretty well controls the content of the picture
13 and often changes the content. I mention that picture
14 based upon the report. I don't know what could be in
15 there.

16 MR. THOMAS: Supposing you did find a writer or a
17 director in your employ who followed the Communist line
18 or was a joiner of a lot of Communist front organizations,
19 what would you do about it?

20 MR. GINSBERG: Well, here is my philosophy if I may
21 express it. You see, in the conduct of an organization
22 such as ours, I am an employee of the corporation. These
23 are my own personal views and I have not expressed them
24 very much, but there is no governing body or governing
25 law preventing the engagement of anybody that follows
26 democratic thinking. I mean they are American citizens

1 and it has always been my feeling of the term --

2 MR. THOMAS: You don't mean to say following the
3 Communist line is following the democratic line?

4 MR. GINSBERG: No. I am trying to get to that point
5 in a minute.

6 MR. THOMAS: Yes.

7 MR. GINSBERG: I am speaking in this respect,
8 and it is my feeling and perhaps my belief, or let's
9 put it this way, it is my feeling and this is exactly
10 what I do in certain circumstances, if the people work-
11 ing for us will give us an honest day's work predicated
12 on organization, thinking, and fulfill the obligations
13 for the corporation they have fulfilled properly their
14 obligation. If they are following other ideologies
15 not consistent with democratic principles, it is natural
16 to assume they are being distracted from their work and
17 cannot give a day's work and cannot work there.

18 MR. THOMAS: Have you had any such cases?

19 MR. GINSBERG: Not of any material significance,
20 to my knowledge. During our last strike, and there has
21 been comment that a lot of the writers did not appear,
22 nevertheless they crossed that picket line or they didn't
23 work there.

24 MR. THOMAS: Have you let any one person go as a
25 result of following the foreign ideology?

26 MR. GINSBERG: Well, not based on following a foreign

1 ideology because I have never had evidence of it. I
2 have had the FBI come to me three years ago in connection
3 with some one in our writing department, but I never saw
4 any evidence of it. That was something called to my
5 attention which we watched very carefully.

6 MR. THOMAS: You probably saw that statement from
7 Russia by Yuri Zhukov in connection with the American
8 moving picture industry?

9 MR. GINSBERG: No.

10 MR. STRIPLING: Let him read it.

11 MR. THOMAS: This has a Moscow date line of May 12,
12 taken from the newspaper Culture and Life. Commentator
13 Yuri Zhukov wrote that American producers were cooperating
14 with the State Department and monopoly capital to glut the
15 world market with films giving a distorted, sweetened
16 picture of life in the United States. Zhukov, however,
17 praised one American film "The Best Years of Our Lives."

18 That is an AP dispatch from Moscow. It appeared
19 two or three days ago.

20 MR. GINSBERG: Yes.

21 MR. THOMAS: What is your opinion of that statement?

22 MR. GINSBERG: Well, again it gets down to the question
23 of whether this isn't another form of propaganda or a way
24 to keep us off balance. I don't know. I have seen "The
25 Best Years of Our Lives."

26 MR. THOMAS: Why do you think the Russian made that

1 statement right now?

2 MR. GINSBERG: We are just talking generally now.
3 Do you think it could be possible in view of action
4 taken by the American citizens today with respect to
5 their conduct of Russia and everything that goes with
6 it and the conduct of the Communists? That could be
7 possible.

8 MR. STRIPLING: What is your opinion of "The Best Years
9 of Our Lives"?

10 MR. GINSBERG: I think it is one of the most impor-
11 tant and one of the finest contributions made. That is
12 my personal feeling.

13 MR. STRIPLING: I would like to ask about a few
14 specific things in the picture. You say you saw it.

15 MR. GINSBERG: Yes.

16 MR. STRIPLING: Don't you think that the banker,
17 so to speak, was put in a rather bad light?

18 MR. GINSBERG: Well, now, that you bring it up, it
19 might be construed that way. It gets down to a basis of
20 intent. We all make errors.

21 MR. STRIPLING: Yes.

22 MR. GINSBERG: It gets down to a question of intent.

23 MR. STRIPLING: They made a pretty bad stinker out
24 of the banker. Don't you remember? Do you remember the
25 scene?

26 MR. GINSBERG: Yes, I remember the boy coming into

1 the bank and the principal, the collateral, and things
2 like that.

3 MR. STRIPLING: What about the scene where the
4 veteran was discharged, Dana Andrews, when he was dis-
5 charged and went into the airlines to get transportation
6 home and he was denied a ticket, but in the same scene
7 an officer got one?

8 MR. GINSBERG: Well, I don't know but what that
9 might be reaching a little bit too far. I can only look
10 at the people who made the picture. I usually look into
11 intent, and it never occurred to me that way. Really it
12 didn't. This is another man's picture, Sam Goldwyn's
13 picture. I have known him for many years. We do not
14 socialize or anything of that character. I met Bob
15 Sherwood on one or two occasions, but I don't know his
16 philosophy. He wrote the script. I assume there were
17 some others in there. For instance, director Wylie
18 enjoyed a fine war record and I know him.

19 MR. STRIPLING: But Mr. Ginsberg, everybody concedes
20 this propaganda is very subtle. It is not something
21 that hits you in the face. There are a certain number
22 of scenes in this picture which I assume are excellent --
23 I enjoyed it very much -- but nevertheless I don't think
24 that the motion picture industry ^{is} serving the best interests
25 of the United States by consistently depicting the banker
26 as being no good and politicians as being crooks and the

1 big airlines as only catering to the rich and shunting
2 veterans aside, and the chain drug store of not doing
3 anything for the veteran but giving him his job back
4 of soda jerking, all of which are not according to the
5 facts.

6 MR. McDOWELL: Have you read the book "Two Years
7 Before the Mast"?

8 MR. GINSBERG: I read it many years ago. You see
9 the script was written and owned by a man named Miller
10 in collaboration with some one else and we took it over
11 because Miller was working with us at the time.

12 MR. McDOWELL: You may not recall it if you have
13 not read it for a good many years.

14 MR. GINSBERG: Oh, many, many years ago.

15 MR. McDOWELL: It was a rather gentle book about
16 adventures at sea of Mr. Dana when he was away two years
17 on a trip. The objections made to us about the original
18 story were that it had been perverted. The captain of
19 the ship, according to the novel, was apparently a
20 pretty fair man. The owners of the ship came aboard
21 before it left to see if they had enough food and every-
22 thing of that kind. They had a long dry spell and some
23 of them got sick and somewhere along the line they ran
24 out of green stuff which kept them from getting scurvy.
25 This is in the original book. Then the captain contacted
26 another boat and transferred food to his boat which helped

1 the men out. The picture showed normally the reverse
2 situation all the way through, including holding of
3 the ship out of port and continuing the misery of the
4 sailors aboard in order to arrive on a certain day so
5 that their market would be much better. That was pointed
6 out to us by that critic of the play yesterday.

7 MR. GINSBERG: Well, it is a strange thing. Just
8 as I say, we are discussing "The Best Years of Our
9 Lives." I saw the picture here. I also happened to
10 be with friends in Phoenix and I saw it in Phoenix the
11 opening night. Now, that never occurred to me. Accord-
12 ing to the reaction of the public it was a great con-
13 tribution. I think among the principal things in the
14 picture was the thought that you had a boy in there who
15 had been in the service and he made a terrific contribu-
16 tion to American thinking, the boys who were hospitalized
17 and who lost limbs, and here was a boy who lost two arms
18 and used those hooks. To me that was terrifically good
19 because it showed the great progress of medicine.

20 MR. THOMAS: Was that the paratrooper?

21 MR. GINSBERG: I don't know. In "The Best Years
22 of Our Lives" he was the boy with no hands.

23 MR. THOMAS: Wasn't he the paratrooper in the war?

24 MR. GINSBERG: I don't know his background. The
25 boy's name was Russell. He had been in the service, of
26 course, and lost his arms in service.

1 MR. STRIPLING: Yes, the actor was an actual
2 cripple.

11 MR. GINSBERG: Yes, but he was not an actor, you
12 know.

13 MR. THOMAS: That is the picture that has been show-
14 ing recently. Incidentally, that boy and my son were
15 in the same parachute regiment. He knows him well.

16 MR. GINSBERG: Is that so?

17 MR. THOMAS: Yes. He was with him when he was
18 injured.

19 MR. GINSBERG: Where they picked that boy up I don't
20 know. He is not a professional actor. But that to me
21 was the outstanding thing of that picture.

22 MR. THOMAS: He was very good, no question about that.

23 MR. GINSBERG: I feel definitely, gentlemen, there
24 is one principle that I absolutely adhere to. I don't
25 feel that a Communist has a right to accept any kind of
26 American money unless they follow the American principle,
 and I don't think we have a right to support anybody
 who destroys the American principle. But by the same
 token I believe we can look at certain pictures, whether
 they are ours or some one else's. I don't think that
 applies only to the motion picture industry. It applies
 to everything, to our own personal conduct, and where
 the intent is right and the understanding is wrong.
But I took "The Best Years of Our Lives" as a whole and

1 I think it is the best picture.

2 MR. THOMAS: May we recess for just a minute? -

3 (A short recess at this point.)

4 MR. McDOWELL: We will resume the testimony, Mr.
5 Reporter. I have no questions.

6 MR. GINSBERG: In further answer to the question
7 on "The Best Years of Our Lives," it oftentimes gets
8 down to the point of intent. You brought up two points
9 in the picture which never occurred to me. I saw the
10 picture here as I said and I thought it was a terrific
11 contribution, so much so that it was one of those things
12 which I wished had gone on a little longer. I saw it
13 also in Phoenix, Arizona. I happened to be there two
14 months later and the reaction was absolutely marvelous.
15 The people I met at Phoenix and with whom I saw it,
16 none of them were in the picture industry, with the
17 possible exception of Ned Debony who is associated with
18 RKO. We had Monseigneur Casey associated with a diocese
19 in Chicago. I have never seen people rave about it as
20 they did. The outstanding thing in that picture and the
21 important contribution, as I said, was this boy with the
22 hooks. I honestly never saw such a picture.

23 MR. STRIPLING: I know, Mr. Ginsberg, but don't you
24 agree if motion pictures continue to degrade the pro-
25 fessions or institutions, I mean for example, Congress --
26 I have seen very few pictures in which a politician or

1 Congress has ever been given credit for being anything
2 but crooks.

3 MR. McDOWELL: Or drunks.

4 MR. STRIPLING: That certainly is no contribution
5 to Americanism. That is exactly the kind of thing the
6 Communists seek to get over and that is exactly the kind
7 of thing that pleases the Soviet Union. ▶

8 You said you could not exercise any too much
9 discretion, so to speak, in the employment of a writer.
10 In other words, a man comes to you at his face value.

11 MR. GINSBERG: No. They enjoy a certain reputation
12 in the business. They are not new people.

13 MR. STRIPLING: You are familiar with Donald Ogden
14 Stewart, aren't you?

15 MR. GINSBERG: Yes.

16 MR. STRIPLING: Is he employed by your firm?

17 MR. GINSBERG: Not since I have been there.

18 MR. STRIPLING: Well, assume that he is employed now
19 by MGM -- we will just assume that -- if MGM were to
20 release him would you have any objection to employment
21 Donald Ogden Stewart?

22 MR. GINSBERG: Well, let me put it this way to you.
23 I made the statement before when I said oftentimes they
24 are mixed up in all of these different organizations
25 and they are so busy in those organizations and with
their ideologies, whatever they are. I have no evidence

1 what he is or isn't other than a few things I may have
2 heard from time to time. But I will put that beside the
3 point. I don't know what Donald Ogden Stewart has done
4 in this business from the standpoint of picture writing
5 that would warrant me to engage him. I don't see any
6 contribution he has ever made in picture writing.

7 MR. McDOWELL: You take into consideration the
8 fact his talent is not sufficient and you would not employ
9 him, is that right?

10 MR. GINSBERG: Yes. I find if they are active in
11 many, many things usually their talent pays for it. Don't
12 you see? That is the principle upon which I go. After
13 all, we are making a few points here and that is beside
14 this particular question.

15 Now, you spoke of depicting congressmen or
16 other people in public office unfavorably from time to
17 time. Well, no matter by what means that is done or
18 isn't done that is also the responsibility of the manage-
19 ment of the studios. I think that gets down to a prin-
20 ciple of the industry's responsibility in a discussion
21 and they should place it on a table before the industry.
22 Those particular questions are the things that they should
23 discuss that are not having the care and attention paid to
24 them that they should have. It may not have any relation-
25 ship to writing. It may have a relationship to carelessness
26 because motion pictures are made by a number of

1 people. The writer is supervised by a producer to
2 a point. It depends on the strength or weakness of
3 the director. Then there is the manager and executive
4 producer, and finally management. And our scripts do
5 clear through the so-called Code Office and are often-
6 times called to our attention, the objectionable features
7 which do not agree with the Code.

8 MR. STRIPLING: Don't you think the easiest and
9 quickest way to eliminate any Communist influence in
10 the motion picture industry or in any other industry
11 is by the payroll route? In other words, if a man is
12 dropped from the payroll and is discharged or taken out
13 and removed, then he is not in a position to exercise
14 that influence? We have had testimony here in the case
15 of a very prominent writer whose Communism I don't think
16 there is any question about and we asked this person who
17 was an executive why this particular man was not removed
18 from the studio. He said for the simple reason if he
19 did that he feared another studio would hire him at an
20 increase in salary.

21 MR. GINSBERG: That is not the answer. As far as
22 I am concerned that is not the answer. Suppose I did
23 fire him. It is a matter of what my principles are and
24 not what the entire principles of everybody are unless
25 these things become an industry problem.

26 MR. STRIPLING: Do you think the motion picture

1 industry has been sufficiently vigilant about this
2 question in the past eight years? Do you think that
3 all of the pictures that have been produced and released
4 by the motion picture industry have been clear of any
12 Communist taint.

6 MR. GINSBERG: I am not trying to avoid the ques-
7 tion, nor did I preface my remarks by saying I con-
8 centrated on my own obligation which is true, but
9 inasmuch as I have followed no activities in the busi-
10 ness and inasmuch as I have not studied this problem
11 and how it affects others, only how it affects us --
12 I am not prepared to answer some of these questions
13 you have asked me. Some of these pictures I haven't
14 seen that you have called my attention to, but I have
15 tried to explain the two pictures that were made at
16 our studio. I explained it by those who were associated
17 with us. One man came in as a director, came in as a
18 free lance director, and has been mentioned in connec-
19 tion with certain activities.

20 Keeping on the subject, it is a very strange
21 thing getting into another activity. Just about at the
22 outbreak of the war I organized the motion picture in-
23 dustry in connection with bond selling which was the
24 first time anything of the kind was done whereby the
25 whole industry became a part of an activity. In order
26 to make it effective I made it the Treasury Department

1 within the industry where we were the appointees of
2 the Treasury Department. It was the first time an
3 organization was set up whereby the union, guilds and
4 every one became part of an activity. I had in mind a
5 so-called over-all board of directors. There were three
6 labor leaders. I don't deal with labor in our business.
7 Frank Freeman deals with it as it pertains to some por-
8 tion of the industry and Paramount. I had on the board
9 three labor leaders, Cooper, Carruthers and another fel-
10 low, Herb Sorrell, about whom you have heard quite a bit
11 of talk. Then I had a fellow Lester Cole from the
12 Screen Writers' Guild. He worked for us for some time
13 ago. He has not worked for us in recent years. I have
14 heard certain things about him, but I know nothing.

15 MR. STRIPLING: You know nothing?

16 MR. GINSBERG: I know nothing about him at all.
17 I have heard their names mentioned. They worked so con-
18 scientiously, everybody. They were real hard workers.
19 There was nothing about their conduct or otherwise that
20 you could say was wrong.

21 MR. STRIPLING: That was during the war, Mr. Ginsberg?

22 MR. GINSBERG: That was during the war.

23 MR. STRIPLING: I thought it was during the war.

24 MR. GINSBERG: That is the only contract I have had
25 where people's names have been mentioned specifically and
26 definitely and during the war it probably lost its force

1 and effect.

2 MR. STRIPLING: During the war the relationship
3 between the United States and Russia was such that it
4 was the line of the Communists at that time to render
5 every cooperation possible. There were no strikes dur-
6 ing the war. Here is how it seems to me that if the
7 motion picture industry does not make an effort itself
8 to see that Communist propaganda films are not produced
9 then you are going to bring down upon you the wrath of
10 the American people on a question of this kind to the
11 point that one day somebody is going to produce a pic-
12 ture which will be open propaganda like "Mission to
13 Moscow" or "Song of Russia." There is no question about
14 it. You will have the American Legion and Veterans of
15 Foreign Wars, and this one and that openly picketing the
16 theatres and booing in the theatres just as you have right
17 now with Paul Robeson in Dayton, Ohio and Albany, New
18 York where auditoriums have been denied him. Whether
19 or not that is a good thing for our country I don't know,
20 but that is what is happening. We had in Washington
21 recently a demonstration in a school against a woman
22 who got up and made a pro-Communist speech. There are
23 other things of that kind and I can very well see as
24 this pendulum swings away to the right that people will
25 become aroused and if they have these kind of pictures
26 in the moving picture theatre and two or three people

1 get up and holler, "This is a Communist film," that
2 everybody identified with the film is going to suffer.

3 MR. GINSEBERG: No question about it.

4 MR. STRIPLING: Whether it is a star or a producer --
5 and if the industry takes no steps to do anything about
6 it they are certainly taking a gamble.

7 MR. GINSEBERG: I think the record of Paramount has
8 been pretty clean in that connection. The two pictures
9 you mentioned I gave you the background and history of.
10 Then there are other things which I have seen from time
11 to time which the alert man on the outside might see and
12 the man on the inside might not see.

13 MR. STRIPLING: Do you have any suggestions to the
14 Sub-Committee making its report to the Full Committee?

15 MR. GINSBERG: Well, my suggestion to you would be
16 this, based upon your earlier remarks with regard to the
17 depicting of some of our representatives of American
18 institutions, which to me is a very important factor
19 aside from this particular issue and which may be a
20 part of it, I would like to see a representative body
21 of your Committee along with a representative body of
22 the motion picture industry sit down around a table and
23 thresh out those problems of mutual responsibility
24 through our producers' association and representatives
25 within the business that discussion should make us cog-
26 nizant of the problems and should not become a witch hunt

1 which you say it is not. If it is predicated on that
2 kind of reasoning and thinking maybe those values that
3 we all seek can be attained and it might be the solution,
4 that instead of groups within the industry battling one
5 another they should try to discover that something which
6 is in existence and yet can be only eradicated by good
7 planning and thinking, not alone for conditions exist-
8 ing at the moment, but for general conditions in the
9 future, because if we fight among ourselves we will
10 destroy ourselves from within, and the thing to do is
11 to build ourselves from within and not to destroy our-
12 selves. That would be my suggestion. This is the first
13 time I was ever called into a meeting of this kind where
14 we had a discussion of this kind. There are other very
15 representative men in this business and I feel if you
16 got a group of your people and we would sit down and
17 talk the thing back and forth as to our mutual problems
18 we would arrive at some solution.

19 MR. STRIPLING: What the Committee needs is an over-all
20 picture as to how to approach this thing because there is
21 no point in this Committee or another committee getting
22 out sensational headlines about Communism in Hollywood --
23 it is always open season on Hollywood, so to speak --
24 but here they are trying to get back to the Full Committee
25 a suggestion of the best way to approach it. In other
26 words, whether it is true or not, nevertheless a large

1 number of people are convinced or they have a very
2 deep suspicion that Communism has succeeded in entrench-
3 ing itself in the motion picture industry.

4 MR. GINSBERG: I don't agree with it.

5 MR. STRIPLING: I say they believe it, and that is
6 evidenced by the fact that we get hundreds and hundreds
7 of letters. We get more letters asking the Committee to
13 8 investigate Hollywood than we do any other thing. Now,
9 what is the basis for it? I don't know. But if this
10 Committee can get the facts and the cooperation of the
11 motion picture industry and come out in a hearing or
12 in a report and make it clear just what the situation is,
13 it will alleviate the whole thing.

14 MR. GINSBERG: Let me ask you this, through your
15 different agencies, -- this has undoubtedly been stated,
16 this entire question in Hollywood -- I don't know the
17 extent of Communism within the motion picture industry,
18 but I can't believe and I have no evidence and I may be
19 completely wrong. We may have our share of good and bad
20 just as every other industry or any other type of
21 organization, but we happen to be in the limelight.

22 MR. STRIPLING: That is correct.

23 MR. GINSBERG: We happen to be a business of great
24 glamour. A statement made in our business will perhaps
25 reach the press quicker than a statement made in the
26 aviation industry or any other kind of industry, so

1 naturally we are vulnerable. I appreciate that, and
2 a rotten apple among a thousand may look like a thousand
3 rotten apples. But here is an industry which during the
4 war effort I think created more in every possible situa-
5 tion and in every possible way without one cent of
6 profit, and in the majority of instances at a loss or
7 no profit whatsoever. I think we made a great contribu-
8 tion than any other industry in this war with regard to
9 the war effort.

10 MR. STRIPLING: I don't think any one questions
11 that at all, Mr. Ginsberg, but you must realize the
12 moving picture industry is a terrific medium of propa-
13 ganda, probably the biggest medium that we have with
14 the possible exception of the newspaper. Just to give
15 you an example. Mrs. Rogers preceded you as a witness.
16 She told about the activities of Clifford Odets in RKO.
17 She said that she was convinced that Odets was a Communist.
18 From our records there is little question but that he is
19 a Communist. All right. He was brought in. He wrote the
20 script. He later directed the picture. He produced
21 it and so forth. He brought in the background music
22 for this particular picture "None But the Lonely Heart,"
23 a fellow named Hanns Eisler to compose the background music.
24 All right, Hanns Eisler is a Communist. He is a very
25 important Communist. His brother is described by J. Edgar
26 Hoover as the most important Communist in the United States,

1 as a representative of the Comintern. We have heard
2 testimony from Hanns Eisler and there is no question
3 about where he stands. Certainly that is one concrete
4 example of what can happen in a picture. Here you have
5 a man who directed and produced the picture who is a
6 Communist. He brings in a man who composes the back-
7 ground music and he is a Communist. Now, if those two
8 prominent people are Communists you can bet your life
9 there are a few here and there connected with it.

10 MR. GINSBERG: In the organization, that is true.

11 MR. STRIPLING: That is not a healthy situation.

12 MR. GINSBERG: If you look into some of these
13 organizations at the time certain types of people are
14 employed and then look at the management during that
15 period it was pretty weak. At RKO the studio may have
16 been in a weakened position. But take any solid manage-
17 ment of any prominence whatsoever, it builds around it
18 men who are pretty standard in thinking, men who have
19 the American principle and understanding, and by intuition,
20 instinct and experience you feel and sense things that
21 are wrong. You can feel it. You might not be able to
22 claim that a particular person was a member of the Party,
23 but you sense it. You cannot turn around and sue a man
24 because he is a Party member. I don't know Clifford Odets
25 other than by reputation, but he struts into a place as
26 a result of a great show he put on in radio or having come

1 from the stage, and he comes out here and he probably
2 earns more money than he did in the East. A lot of
3 them do. While they are broke they are Communists,
4 but give them \$10,000 and they become capitalists. A
5 man like that will come out here and feel his oats and
6 feel stronger than some of the people working for him,
7 but that cannot happen in a strong organization unless
8 there is friction within the place.

9 My concrete suggestion is that a group on both
10 sides get together and discuss it openly in a frank
11 manner with the proper kind of thinking.

12 MR. STRIPLING: I think that is a very good sug-
13 gestion.

14 MR. GINSBERG: And I think you will go quite far.

15 MR. STRIPLING: I think that is a very good sug-
16 gestion. Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions
17 except to thank Mr. Ginsberg for his appearing here. I
18 believe he has made a very frank presentation of his
19 position for his company. If every one were as sure as
20 Mr. Ginsberg we would not have any trouble.

21 MR. GINSBERG: I may be sure on what I sense and
22 feel. I may have some people in our place -- I explained
23 the two pictures that were made, and our company takes
24 full responsibility. Our intent was right, and if there
25 was something in there that was wrong it was most un-
26 fortunate. You are dealing with the American public.

1 In the picture "Two Years Before the Mast" I told you
2 of the different characters and you know something of
3 their background. That picture is one of the outstanding
4 gross pictures, money pictures. I only mention money
5 in connection with it to show the number of people who
6 see it.

7 MR. STRIPLING: But in the case of "Two Years Before
8 the Mast" it does not follow the story.

9 MR. McDOWELL: I discussed that while you were out.

10 MR. GINSBERG: That is right, but you see, "Two Years
11 Before the Mast" was made many years ago, but oftentimes
12 stories are changed. In this business we have been
13 accused of that before.

14 MR. STRIPLING: That is all.

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16 (Adjournment was taken to
17 Thursday, May 15, 1947, at
18 10:00 a. m.)

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I, Byron Oyler, Official Court Reporter,
do hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true
and accurate transcript of the testimony given at the
time and place aforementioned.

DATED at Los Angeles, California, this 19th
day of May, 1947.

Byron Oyler
Official Court Reporter.