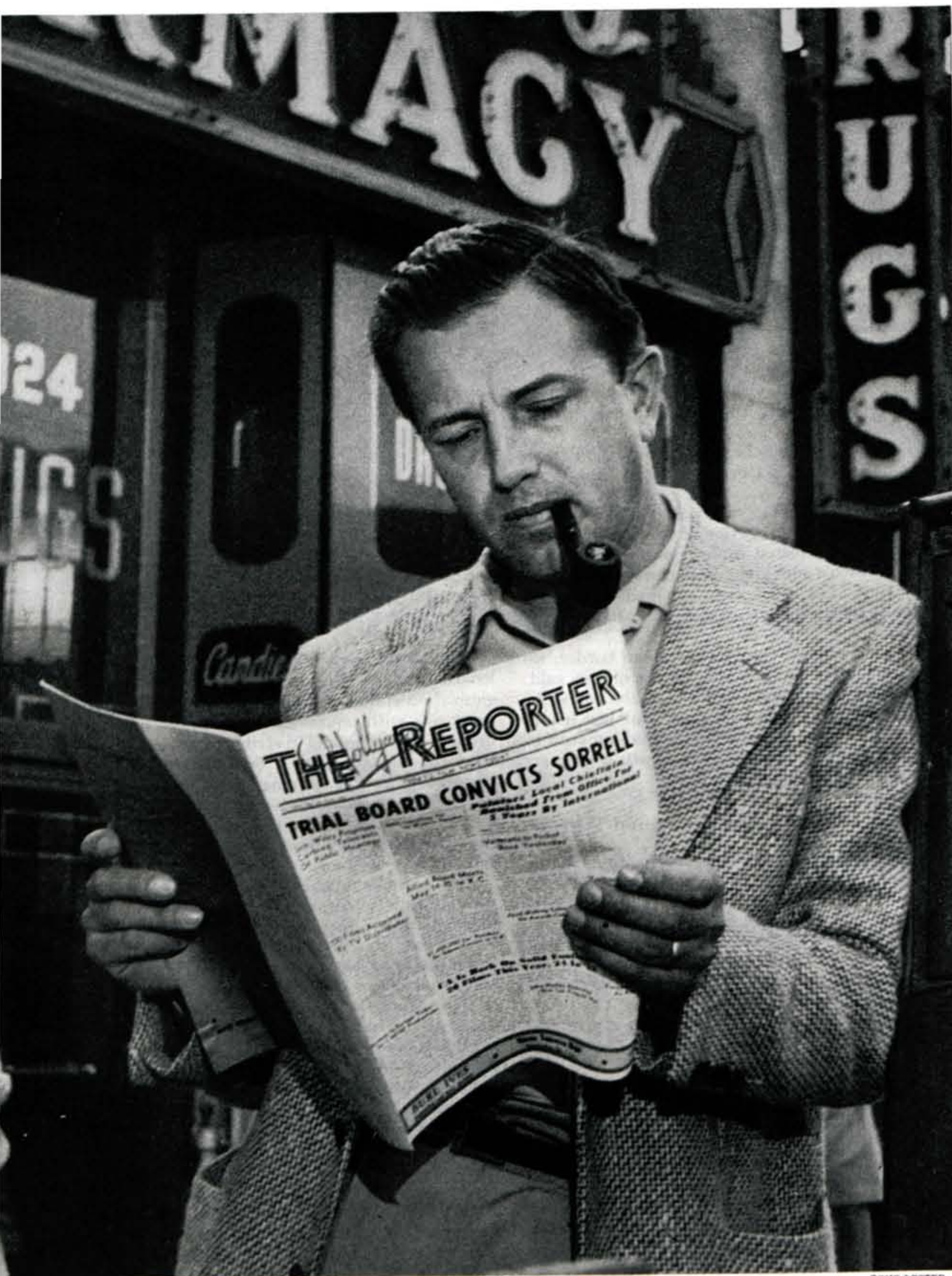


# What Makes a Hollywood Communist?

By RICHARD ENGLISH

Edward Dmytryk started with nothing, rose to earn \$2500 a week as a movie director before he was forty. Yet he became a communist. Here is the case history of what he now knows was his personal tragedy.



Edward Dmytryk is forty-two years old. His past is brilliant, his present clouded, his future unknown. He joined the Communist Party in the spring of 1944, went to jail for contempt of Congress in 1950.

VERY seldom can a man point to the exact minute at which his whole life changed. But on the afternoon of October 29, 1947, Edward Dmytryk, then thirty-nine and earning \$2500 a week as one of Hollywood's top directors, rang down a curtain on his own life far more dramatic than any in the twenty-four pictures he had directed up to that time. In ten short minutes he appeared before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and, having refused to answer whether he was then or had ever been a communist, he was excused from the stand and promptly cited for contempt.

Edward Dmytryk was the seventh witness to defy the committee at those Washington hearings and, with three others, was to become one of the Hollywood Ten. The Ten were soon to become slightly more famous than the picture industry itself, their appearances at rallies having all the hoopla usually found only at Hollywood *premieres*. Now, having served his sentence for contempt of Congress, Dmytryk is back in Hollywood, a man with a brilliant past, a clouded present and an unknown future.

The first of the Hollywood Ten to admit he was ever a communist, Edward Dmytryk, now forty-two and living quietly in a small apartment with his wife and nineteen-month-old son, has reached the point of no return. His awareness of this is shown in his very tenseness. Five-seven and a husky 170 pounds, he is a compact man in a lumberjack shirt and brown trousers, a small cleft in his chin, and the brown hair and eyes that are part of his Ukrainian descent.

"Actually," he said, pacing the floor, "I passed the point of no return a long time ago. But I was a communist. I joined in the spring of 1944 and dropped out of the party late the next fall. And I never broke completely with them until I was in jail. Though I was no longer a party member, I stood with the Ten on my own personal convictions about civil liberties. And when we lost, I couldn't say anything until after I had served my time. I wouldn't have wanted it to appear that I was trying to escape any consequences of my original stand."

Upstairs the baby was crying, and he looked after his wife, Jean Porter, as she went up the stairs. A small brown-eyed blonde, her own career as an actress has been in a rather gray limbo from the day he was convicted. For a moment he hesitated, then said soberly, "Breaking off like this takes more courage than going to jail. Then I was carried along by a tide—a lot of good people felt that the hearings had been aimed more at blacklisting all Leftists in pictures than at investigating party membership. But they didn't know what they were backing. I learned more about communism in the three and a half years I was one of the Ten than I ever learned when I was actually a party member. And it's no good."

## He Learned About Communism the Hard Way

"THE time has come now when even the fellow traveler must get out. They're like the waxy capsule that protects the tubercle—dissolve that waxy covering and you could kill tuberculosis in no time. And that's what you have to do with communism. I know. I've been there." Grimly, he picked up a pipe and looked around for tobacco. Then, quietly, "I know now that you can't aid a communist front in any way without hurting your own country. The Hiss conviction, the Judith Coplon trial, they all show that no matter how small a fraction of the party is guilty of espionage, the responsibility is on the whole party, and anyone who supports it."

The feelings that make Dmytryk talk now may supply the answer to a question that has been tearing Hollywood apart ever since those fateful Washington hearings. The day eight prominent writers and two directors, John Howard Lawson, Dalton Trumbo, Albert Maltz, Alvah Bessie, Samuel Ornitz, Herbert Biberman, Dmytryk, Adrian Scott, Ring Lardner, Jr., and Lester Cole went to jail for contempt of Congress, the picture business received a black eye from which it has not yet recovered. The public wanted to know what made a Hollywood communist, and Hollywood couldn't tell them.



"There isn't any simple answer as to what makes one," Dmytryk said slowly. "When I was in the party I'd guess there were perhaps 150 'intellectual' communists in the picture business. By that I mean men who work with their heads, the creators. And the 'intellectual' communists don't run to pattern either in actions or in the motives that cause them to become commies. The only thing I learned was this: the same ideals that take a liberal into the Communist Party take him right back out again."

Determined not to be regarded as either a dope or a dupe who did not know what he was doing, Dmytryk moves restlessly around the cluttered living room of his apartment. There, in a crowded room with rice-cloth walls are his books and jazz records, the bar bells with which he works out three times a week, doing 140-pound presses. Daily Variety and the Hollywood Reporter are on a coffee table, mute reminders of the business in which he was so prominent a figure. "It's not just one thing that gets you interested in communism," he said slowly. "It's where you came from, what you be-

lieve in, the way you feel about people. It's all those things put together."

To show you that Dmytryk's story which I am telling here may be more than a superficial analysis of what makes a Hollywood communist, I might explain that I have been a motion-picture writer for fifteen years. For two years I was on the executive board of the Screen Writers' Guild, having been one of a group which defeated the far-Left elements, and was the third and last editor of the Screen Writer Magazine, succeeding Dalton Trumbo and Gordon Kahn, who were both called up before the Washington hearings, although only Trumbo testified. With that background, I know something of Dmytryk's past as well as his career.

Dmytryk's childhood was not a particularly happy one. He was born September 4, 1908, in Grand Forks, British Columbia. His father, Michael, was a Ukrainian truck farmer who worked winters in the local copper smelter. Eddie was the second oldest of four sons. Harold, the first-born, is a successful businessman. Arthur, the third-born and

to whom Eddie feels the closest, is a laborer. William, the youngest, is now a major in the USAF, stationed in England.

While he is not now a member of any church, Dmytryk's family was Catholic. But any formal religious training ended with the death of his mother at the age of thirty-three in Northport, Washington, a lead-mining town. Left with four small boys on his hands, his father moved the family to San Francisco, where he became a motorman. His father soon married a Protestant and moved on to Los Angeles, where he again worked on streetcars. Although he leans backward in talking of his father, who died in 1946, it is obvious that Eddie had little affection for the man who raised his family on strictly European ideas.

While Dmytryk was in grade school he and his brother Arthur became one of Professor Terman's Group. Professor Terman, one of the developers of the Stanford-Binet tests for intelligence, selected what he called "1000 Gifted Children" in 1920. All had a base I.Q. of at (Continued on Page 147)



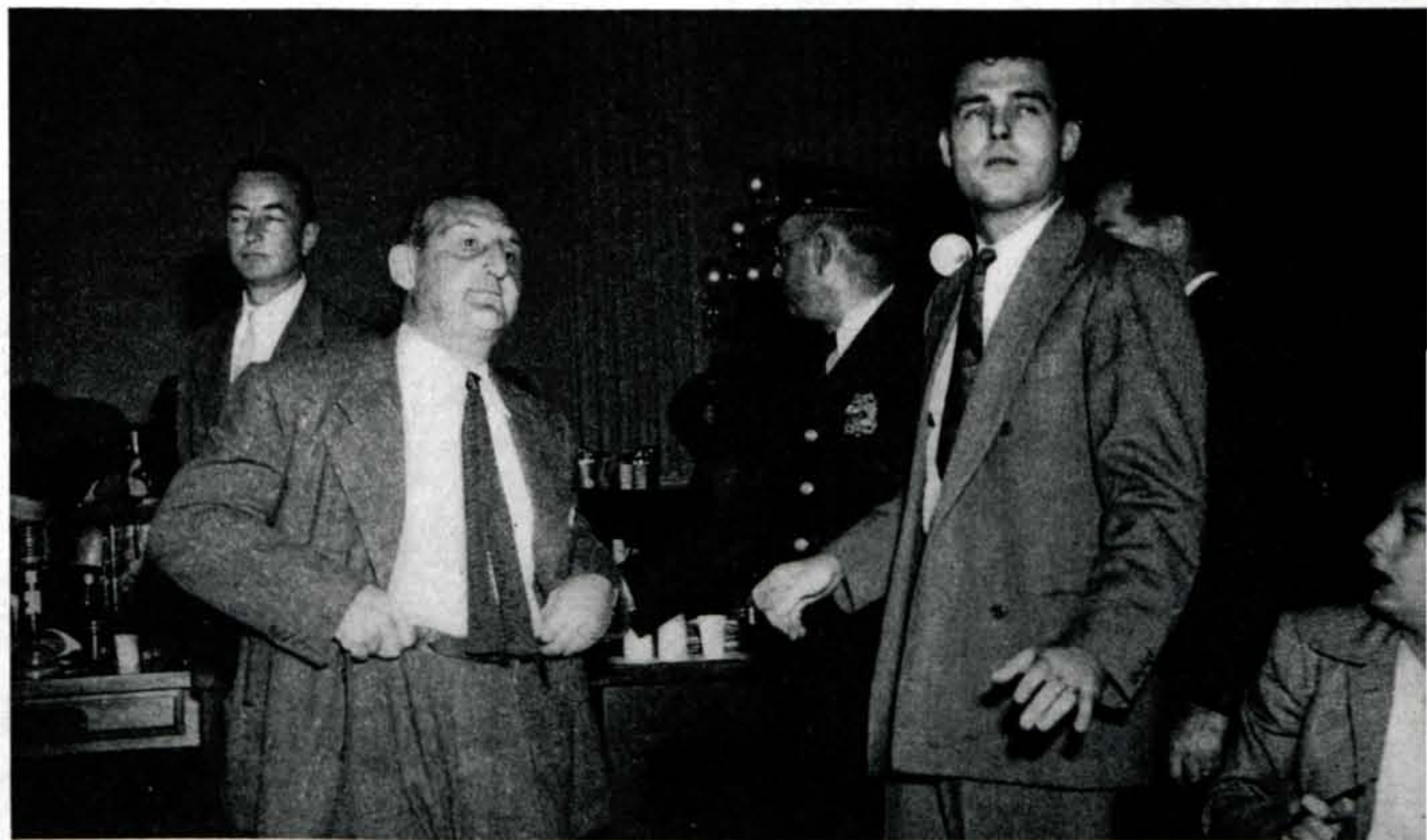
INTERNATIONAL  
Before the Un-American Activities Committee, Dmytryk refused to say if he was a communist.



INTERNATIONAL  
At the 1947 inquiry into Hollywood communism, a group of movie players supported the Hollywood Ten. Among them were Danny Kaye, Evelyn Keyes, June Havoc, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.



INTERNATIONAL  
Gary Cooper, a "friendly witness," testified that he had found communist ideas in movie scripts.



INTERNATIONAL  
John Howard Lawson (left), here being removed from the stand for refusing to answer the critical question at the congressional inquiry, usually had the last word in disputes among Hollywood Reds.



## WHAT MAKES A HOLLYWOOD COMMUNIST?

(Continued from Page 31)

least 140 and Terman has charted their progress through life. Later, at the Mill Point, West Virginia, Federal prison camp, where Dmytryk served his time, he was to score the highest I.Q. ever made at that honor camp.

When he was fourteen Eddie ran away from home. After an investigation of conditions there, the juvenile authorities paid his room rent while Eddie worked his way through Hollywood High School. Harry C. James, a Los Angeles man interested in boys' work, took an interest in him and persuaded Paramount studios to give Dmytryk a job after school. The six dollars a week he earned as an errand boy kept him in lunch money and clothes. "They made that job for me," he said. "I never forgot it."

Graduating from high school with straight A's, Dmytryk passed the stiff entrance examinations to Caltech. He went one year there, making his frosh numerals in football, basketball, track and baseball. But at the end of his freshman year he knew he wanted to make pictures his career instead of the field of science, and he went back to Paramount.

At nineteen he became a studio projectionist, and he became a full cutter at twenty-one. He was well-liked and regarded as something of a boy wonder. In 1932 he married Madeleine Robinson, of Los Angeles, and has a boy, ten, by that youthful marriage. At the age of thirty-one he became a director at Paramount, the goal he had

always had his eye on. "That was 1939," he said. "I got my citizenship, became a director, everything."

Starting with B pictures, Dmytryk's rise was gradual until, after also working for Monogram and Columbia, he moved to RKO and hit the jack pot with Hitler's Children. His career shot up then as he made such pictures as Tender Comrade; Murder, My Sweet; Back to Bataan; Cornered and Cross-fire. In eight years and twenty-four pictures, including eleven for RKO alone, his salary had climbed from \$250 a week to \$2500 a week. And during that time he had become a communist.

He was a success in the industry of his choice, he had an outstanding reputation for so young a man and he was making pictures with the social significance he thought so important. On the debit side, his first marriage ended in an unhappy divorce in 1947. And, regardless of actual party membership, his association with communists on certain grounds continued until last September, and only now is publicly ended.

"I know it doesn't add up," he said slowly, "but everybody goes into communism seeking different things. I thought this was the best country in the world, but that we could still do better. I know it sounds unrealistic—and is—but I was trying to help people as I had been helped. And you just can't do it alone, or through charity either. I know how I felt about charity myself. So you decide things have to be done on a scientific basis, so that people are really taken care of all the time. So then you begin hearing about systems. With me it was Marxism."

By 1942 Dmytryk was widely known in the movie industry for "wanting to make honest pictures about people" and was ripe for communistic indo-

ctrination along those lines. "Late that year," he said, "a kid, a reader at the studio, asked me to lecture at the League of American Writers about cutting. It was the first time I had ever talked about a subject that I was vitally interested in and, in talking, I found that I had developed new theories that were of great practical advantage to me as a director. Until then there wasn't any place in Hollywood where the professionals could really get together and talk over their trade. I didn't know then, just talking about cutting, that the league had anything to do with communism."

Dmytryk was talking more urgently now. "That was the first step," he said, "talking in a private home to about ten people. Then the People's Educational Center was formed, and I was asked to take over a class on cutting. All kinds of people taught there and most of them were not commies. But I did become aware that the PEC was being run by communists, and instead of being shocked, I thought they must be my kind of people. This was in the love-feast days, and being a communist then didn't stop you from being an American. But at any rate, I liked what I had seen so far, both as an individual and as a director. I was thinking about the advancement of picture learning as much as I was about politics."

The third step came early in 1943, when Dmytryk became part of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization. "This, too, was a communist front, though that word wasn't in use then. They wrote skits for the USO, propaganda speeches for the war effort, and again there were seminars on cutting, music, such as we'd had at PEC, but now on a much larger scale. By now I had decided I liked the way they did things, and I wanted to know more about communism."

In the spring of 1944 Edward Dmytryk joined the Communist Party just as it dissolved into the Communist Political Association, a result of Stalin's officially ending the Comintern. A writer who was to be one of the Ten made a recruiting pitch at a home in the San Fernando Valley and another member of the Ten passed around membership applications. Dmytryk was one of three recruits to join that night.

"This is where it gets rough," he said slowly. "Nowadays, if you admit being an ex-communist, everyone expects you to be able to trot out all sorts of secret plans and big names bent on high treason. But if it was going on then, it certainly wasn't in the neighborhood groups I attended. In all, I attended seven or eight group meetings of from fifteen to twenty people, and they spent most of their time wrangling over the new by-laws and things like that. It was all directed on a propaganda plane, writing speeches and trying to elect candidates favorable to communism—things like that."

"While I also attended a couple of fraction meetings where they were working on local race-prejudice angles, I was never asked to do any particular job, largely because I hadn't been fitted into any assignment yet. In a lot of ways I was a bad communist from the start. I began to suspect that the ideals that had first attracted me were going to remain just that. While there was a lot of talk about equalities, there was damn little action. It ended up I never did pay any dues, though I did make contributions out of what money I happened to have on me whenever the hat was passed. But I never went for their 'tithing.'"



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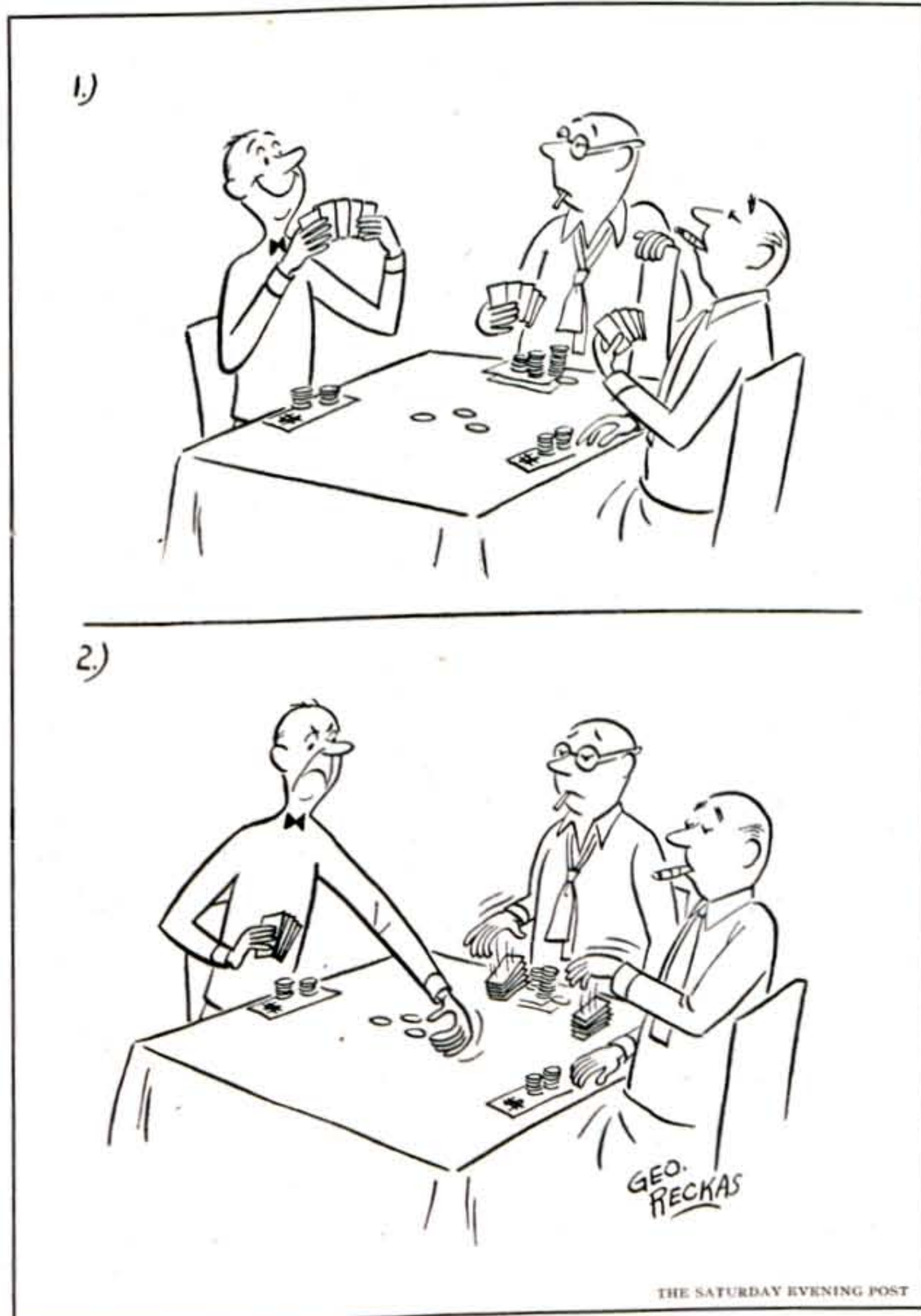
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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST





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with their knives.



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and took a year  
Before they made  
a phrase appear.



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The one thing the communists were always after was to get Hollywood members to contribute 10 per cent of their gross pay and Dmytryk believes that Hollywood contributed far more money than any other group its size in this country. That he never contributed to this tithing himself is borne out by his business manager's records. "Actually," Dmytryk said, "if it hadn't been for the hearings and what followed, this wouldn't have been an important phase of my life. I was already beginning to doubt their sincerity. And what really upset me was what the party tried to do to a picture of mine."

RKO purchased a story that was ultimately released as *Cornered*, starring Dick Powell. Dmytryk and Adrian Scott—also one of the Ten—were assigned to it as the director and producer, respectively. The story was that of a Canadian flier who, bent on revenge for his wife's death, trails the Nazi who killed her to Buenos Aires. "John Wexley wrote the first script," Dmytryk said, "and when I saw it I just didn't like it. While his script was highly antifascist, I didn't so much object to its sentiments as to its wordiness and generally uncinematic treatment."

"Consequently I suggested to Adrian Scott that we put another writer on it. I wanted it made more dramatic and I wanted to cut the wordiness too. He agreed and a second writer came on and did a bang-up job. I shot the picture, and as far as I was concerned, that was that. But meanwhile John Wexley had protested the credits on the script, and a Screen Writers' Guild arbitration committee found against Wexley. Now, with the picture about to be released, John Wexley called Adrian Scott and insisted that the three of us have a meeting regarding the story."

"The meeting was held at my apartment. Adrian and I felt of course that it was going to be a last beef about the credit decision. But when Wexley walked in, he had two communist screen writers with him. They came right to the point, charging that by changing Wexley's script, we had actually made a profascist picture. This angered both Adrian and me."

"Wexley insisted on a second meeting, and this, too, was held at my apartment. This time Wexley arrived with the two communist writers plus John Howard Lawson, who was the last word in such matters. We then got Albert Maltz—also a member of the Ten—in to argue our side. He did this so ably that the meeting ended in a stalemate. All that came of it was my disillusionment in some important members, and thus in the party."

But the repercussions had only started. Maltz felt so keenly about the matter he wrote a piece for *New Masses* entitled, *What Shall We Ask of Writers?* Appearing February 12, 1946, it defended writers' freedom of thought. For this heresy Maltz was promptly taken to task by the *Daily Worker* and on April 7, 1946, he accepted the party discipline, completely recanting in the *Worker* with an article entitled *Moving Forward*.

The meeting with Maltz was late in the fall of 1945. While he retained his Leftist friends, there is no record of his participation in the party after that time, aside from his name still appearing on various "fronts." During the next two years he was to make three pictures and, having parted from his wife, was to fall in love with Jean Porter, who had played in one of them.

But in September, 1947, the House Un-American Activities Committee,

trying to prove communist infiltration of the picture business, served nineteen subpoenas on Hollywood Leftists, of whom Dmytryk was one. The committee was already highly unpopular with Hollywood liberals, who feared that its real aim was Government censorship of all motion pictures. As Dmytryk said, "A lot of people besides the commies were anxious to appear before it, if only to challenge it on constitutional grounds."

The formal hearings started in Washington on October 20, 1947, complete with all the lights and microphones that normally make up a Hollywood superproduction. The committee had selected fourteen "friendly witnesses" to appear first. The "friendly witnesses," who attempted to show there had been a communist infiltration in Hollywood, included such stars as Gary Cooper and Robert Taylor, and the press had a field day. A number of pictures were cited as "examples" of how communist writers and directors had tried to slip a loaded message to the public, but, ironically, *Cornered* was never mentioned.

The charges of the "friendly witnesses" so steamed up Hollywood liberals that they rushed right into the newspapers themselves. This was accomplished by a junket of top stars and writers who, banded together as The Committee for the First Amendment, chartered a plane and flew back to Washington, loudly decrying both the intent of the hearings and the testimony of the "friendly witnesses." The press really had a ball then, as Lauren Bacall wrote a feature story for a Washington paper, protesting such an investigation. Danny Kaye made speeches and Humphrey Bogart, who was later to regret publicly the whole thing, contributed his views of the committee.

By October 27, 1947, the stage was all set for the dramatic appearance of the nineteen "unfriendly witnesses."

"We had been holding daily conferences in Washington hotels," Dmytryk said, "and we had decided each of us was to make up his own mind how to testify. And all of us came to the conclusion we would refuse to answer certain questions on constitutional grounds. On that basis we felt we could then take the committee into court and win there. I felt strongly that the First Amendment protected me on a point of privacy."

But any sympathy that had accrued to the "unfriendly witnesses" because of the hearsay allowed earlier in the hearings was quickly dissipated, once the witnesses actually took the stand. The Ten went right down the line refusing, with the exception of Lawson and Dmytryk, even to answer whether they belonged to the Screen Writers' or Screen Directors' guilds. Lawson and Dmytryk answered the question on their guild affiliations largely because it was already a matter of record.

Dmytryk's brief testimony ended when it became apparent he was pursuing the same line as the other witnesses. The chairman, J. Parnell Thomas, promptly excused Dmytryk from the stand and recommended that he be cited for contempt. Dmytryk's testimony in the 549-page report subsequently released by the committee is barely three and a half pages. Another three pages records the testimony of various investigators as to Dmytryk's communist-card numbers and his membership in six communist "fronts." That afternoon, of course, Dmytryk had no idea that J. Parnell Thomas would soon be in a Federal prison him-

self for taking "kickbacks" from his employees. All Dmytryk knew was that he himself was in trouble.

The hearings abruptly ended with the testimony of only eleven of the nineteen "unfriendly witnesses," the eleventh witness, Berthold Brecht, answering the sixty-four-dollar question by denying he was ever a commie. Congress backed up the committee, finding all ten in contempt of Congress on November 24, 1947. Upset at this publicity, three days later the studio heads issued a joint statement that they would forthwith discharge any of the Ten until he had acquitted or purged himself of contempt and declared under oath that he was not a communist. As a result, Dmytryk and Scott were promptly fired by RKO under the "morals" clause found in all long-term contracts. They, in turn, promptly brought civil suits for damages against RKO. The suits are still pending.

"While I knew at least seven of the Ten were communists," Dmytryk said, "I stayed with the group because of my own personal convictions. I was very angry at first, feeling I had been wronged as an individual, and I went along wholeheartedly in the fight. I was asked to rejoin the party then, but that I wouldn't do. I wanted to fight on civil liberties alone."

The Ten's immediate concern was to rally public opinion to their side. This was done by the writing of pamphlets, Gordon Kahn's book, *Hollywood on Trial*, organizing appearances before fellow-traveler groups throughout the country, setting up committees to help raise money for their defense, and making a short subject of the Hollywood Ten, showing the men with their families and at a round-table discussion.

Dmytryk married Jean Porter at Ellicott City, Maryland, on May 12, 1948, and now, seated beside him on the divan, small and quiet in her gray lounging pajamas, she said, "We were already going together when all this trouble started, and I asked Eddie about it. He told me he had belonged back in 1945, and that while he wasn't a communist any more, he couldn't just walk out on them." Her voice is light and, in a way, childlike. "It didn't make any difference to me because I knew the kind of a guy he really was. But it made a difference to some of my friends. They told me I should quit going with him, that it would hurt my career, and when all the headlines came out, they—well, sort of just disappeared."

Although Dmytryk had earned \$137,000 in 1947, he was almost flat broke. He had made an expensive divorce settlement with his first wife and now the Government found him \$27,000 in tax arrears. Borrowing on his insurance policies and almost everything else, he squared his bills and started looking for a job. With his career so abruptly ended in Hollywood, he went to England with his wife in the summer of 1948. He said, "I made expense money and that was about all by directing two pictures there in the next eighteen months. But going to England was still the best thing I ever did."

In England he had no communist friends, and he said, "I was completely out of that circle of isolation that forms around all fellow travelers. I had been so busy with my career at home that I hadn't realized how I had gradually sealed myself off from outside thoughts and influences. And the people I met abroad, living much closer to communism than we do, see it more clearly for what it really is. One thing that hit me



was when Oksana Kosenkina jumped out of the Soviet consulate in New York rather than be sent back to Russia. That really made me think.

"When you're away," he said slowly, "you realize how much your country means to you. I really found that out the day the French embassy in London called me and said they had a subpoena there, wanting me to appear as a witness at the Victor Kravchenko trial in Paris." (Kravchenko, the author of *I Chose Freedom*, had sued a Paris communist newspaper, *Les Lettres Françaises*, for saying his book, exposing conditions in Russia, was untrue, and was to win nominal damages in his action.) "This commie paper wanted to use me as a witness to show there was persecution in America as well as Russia. I really got mad then at the communists wanting to exhibit me in a case in which there was absolutely no grounds for my appearance. It was completely callous, wanting to use me to prove that Russia was right in contrast to America, and completely disregarding the fact I am an American. That was definite proof that communists place the party above any country except Russia, and that no communist can ever possibly be a loyal citizen. Whatever my personal beef was, I was certainly not going to air any dirty linen in a foreign country and I turned the subpoena down cold."

While Dmytryk was in England, John Howard Lawson and Dalton Trumbo were tried and convicted, and appealed. The eight other members of the Ten waived trials at that time, stipulating that they would abide by the Supreme Court decision in the Lawson and Trumbo cases. A decision was expected at any time, and so Dmytryk and his wife returned to Hollywood in August, 1949.

"After you've been away," Dmytryk said, "your eyes are really clear, and what hit me first was the way the psychoanalysis craze had hit the Holly-

wood communists. All of them were trying to solve the contradictions in their thoughts and the way they lived, trying to reconcile themselves to present-day conditions. The second thing that got me was the way the Ten were being turned into martyrs, another Scottsboro case. It was like everything else the commies do; they will go into a lynch case, for example, but instead of trying to help the Negroes, what they are really after is to use the incident to stir up still more trouble. The Negroes don't matter; they're just a means to an end. And that had happened with the Ten. When I left, it had basically been a good civil-liberties case. Now it was being used as a spearhead against all attacks on communism.

"People like Thomas Mann, Linus Pauling and Carey McWilliams had been attracted to the cause of the Ten, and now I saw them being used time and again for other purposes. By dialectic extension, the party was trying to make our case apply to all communist cases, such as the eleven party leaders who were tried in New York, and the Bridges case in California. I promptly got into my own fights with the Ten, wanting to keep it just a civil-liberties case, but the group always insisted and always won out, and it got so a statement was never issued without bringing in the question of peace and whatever else happened to be in the current party line."

He hesitated, then said slowly, "The hardest thing I had to live with was the realization that they were trying to protect communism in this country by invoking the Constitution and civil liberties, things that wouldn't last five minutes if the commies ever took over." For the only time his voice was low, "This was on my conscience constantly."

On May 29, 1950, the Supreme Court refused for a second time to review the Lawson and Trumbo convictions, and on June ninth, Lawson and

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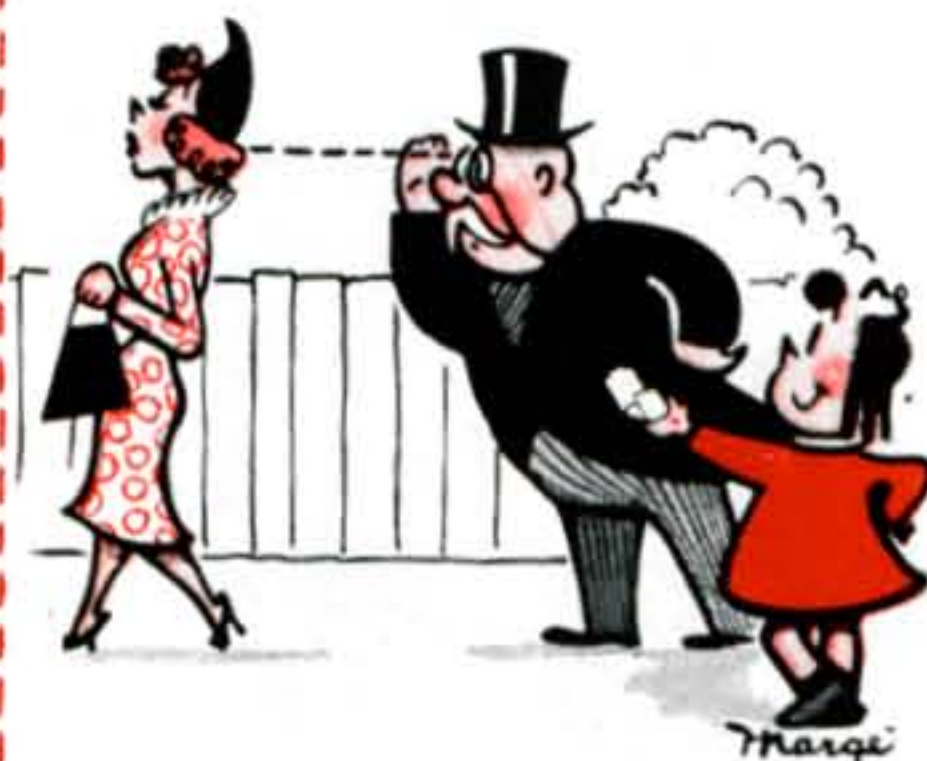
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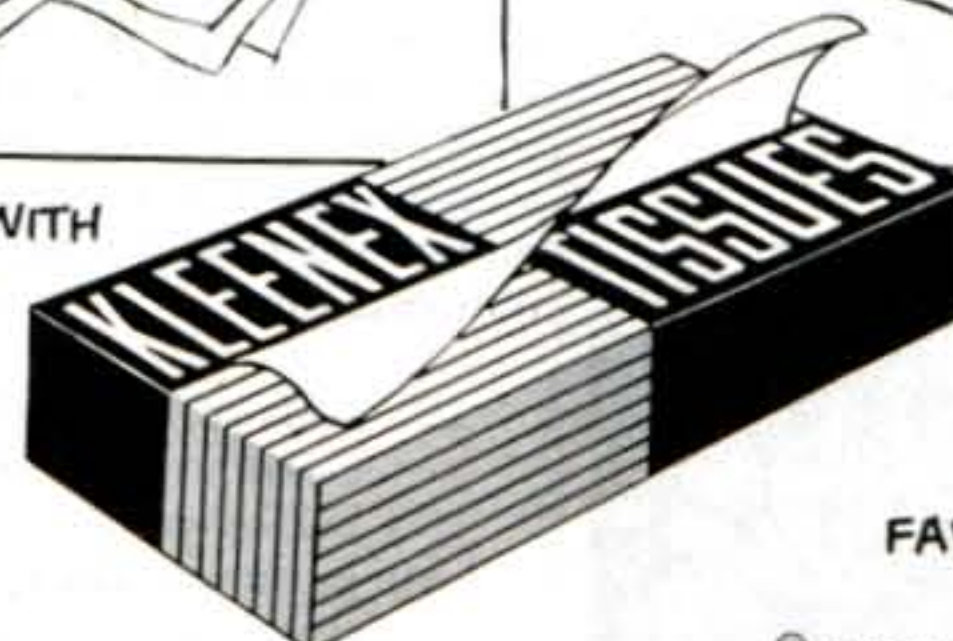
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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Trumbo went to jail. Dmytryk, who had refused to tour with the Ten in their last money-raising campaigns, flew back to Washington and on June 29, 1950, had a perfunctory formal trial. Judge Keech sentenced him to six months in Federal prison and a \$1000 fine, and remanded him to the District of Columbia jail the same day, where Dmytryk drew a bootlegger as his first cellmate.

The war had just started in Korea and it was the big subject of conversation among those of the Ten in that Washington jail. Walking back and forth during their exercise periods, they hashed it over, always insisting it was the South Koreans who had attacked the North Koreans.

"It was utterly insane," Dmytryk said. "We were in jail, we had no way at all of knowing what was going on, and yet a judgment favorable to communism and unfavorable to us was made right then. This showed me for the last time their conditioned thinking; that there was no independence of thought, there couldn't be. I was really through then." His voice tightened, "All that Russian peace talk, things I had once believed in, had just been a blind to disarm the Western world."

With Albert Maltz he was transferred to Mill Point Prison Camp on July 17, 1950. There, where he was assigned a job as a garage clerk in a camp largely devoted to logging and sawmill operations, Dmytryk kept getting madder. "Finally," he said, "when the Chinese entered the war, I swore to an affidavit before Superintendent Thie-

man." The affidavit, while reiterating his feelings that he had been right on constitutional grounds, stated his loyalty to this country and ended with the statement that, at the time of the hearings, he was not a Communist Party member.

Albert Maltz pleaded with him not to issue the statement. "He used the clincher they always have on ex-communists," Dmytryk said slowly. "He said, 'People won't believe you anyhow; they'll think that if you were once a communist you're always one, and Hollywood will be as afraid of public opinion as it ever was.' And maybe he's right. But I had to have it off my chest. The only reason I didn't admit then that I had ever been a communist was that I wanted to wait until I had put it all together in my mind, all the things that took me into the party and back out again."

Released November 15, 1950, after serving four months and seventeen days as a result of time off for good behavior, Dmytryk returned to Hollywood to pick up his unknown destiny. While only one independent producer has shown a nervous interest in having him direct a picture at some future date, the communists had already started their local smear campaign. At Lucey's Restaurant one of them explained away Dmytryk's affidavit, saying, "You know the inside on that, don't you? He made a deal with the producers that he was to start work at MGM at \$5000 a week the minute he got out, if he would just sign that affidavit."

Quietly, Dmytryk said, "While, like any guy, I hope I go back to work one of these days, that isn't why I'm talking now. If I made a certain reputation, I'm stuck with it. But a guy has to speak out now. It's fellows like myself that give the party its strength and its camouflage. If they'll walk off now, the rest won't be hard to handle."

What his future is in the picture industry is not yet known. There are those who feel that, communist or not, he was far too individualistic to have ever had any importance in the party. This checks with available records and Dmytryk's own story. The more moderate elements seem to feel that he will bear watchful waiting, and that's all. Those on the Right have a violent distrust for any ex-communist and are insistent such people must continuously purge themselves with a steady "disinfecting process." No one knows what that may be.

In that quiet apartment Dmytryk tries to forget those things by working on a screen play. The phone rings very seldom, and he said, a bit wryly, "That's what happens when you cut yourself off. In breaking clean, a lot of the people who were closest to you are gone too. This isn't like Alcoholics Anonymous. The ex-drunks help each other. They know that awful loneliness a man gets—so there's always that phone, somebody to call when it gets rough. Maybe that's the answer for a lot of people who are trying to quit, sort of an Ex-Communists Anonymous." He smiled faintly, watching his wife. "It's an idea, anyway."

## THE KREMLIN'S BILLION-DOLLAR STOOGES

(Continued from Page 29)

personnel." The forms and the uniforms, it turned out, were genuine, but stolen. The household goods were found to be chocolate and cigarettes, the drivers Austrian.

After weeks of investigation, the organizers of the fake transport were traced to Soviet-ruled Prague. It also was found that they had worked the same stratagem dozens of times before—only the uniforms had differed. Sometimes they had been American.

Coffee is brought over the border in wine barrels, cigarettes in bundles of rags, and narcotics in hollowed-out religious books. Cars have double floors and trucks secret compartments large enough to hold a \$1000 profit in tea.

In September, "Charley With the White Hairs," a notorious French counterfeiter, was arrested by the Paris police. They found millions of marks, dollars and francs stacked up high in his printing shop, ready to be shipped into Germany in the water tank of a locomotive—as other millions had been sent before.

Ships, with their many partitions and multiple bottoms, are the customs inspectors' grief the world over. The heavy barge traffic on Germany's many waterways supplies an ideal transport for smugglers. A barge that had slipped in from the Soviet zone at night, but was detected when fire broke out in its galley, disgorged a fine hodgepodge of contraband:

225 rolls of newsprint for the West German communist press  
190 ladies' panties (dark blue)  
40 pairs of United States nylon stockings

235 boxes of communist propaganda material  
40,000 pounds of coffee  
3 boxes of Meissen china  
5000 pairs of rayon stockings  
26 optical instruments

Still another variety of smuggling goes on along the Belgian border, through Germany's "hole in the West." There the city of Aachen lies close to a border that winds through extensive woodlands. Tens of thousands of people make a career out of smuggling. They work in carefully organized bands and are often armed and protected in military fashion by advance and rear guards.

In this region of a few dozen miles of border country, customs police made about 40,000 arrests last year—each arrest averaging six pounds of coffee. "Those figures look fine on paper," one customs guard said, "but for every pound we catch, at least fifteen pounds escape us."

There is no trick of the trade that the smugglers haven't learned. Methods differ, and so do the smugglers. But whether they are the small professionals of Aachen, homeless DP's, members of the occupation forces, the poor fanatics of the Communist Party or the big-time organizers, the result is the same.

Vast sums of money which should be used for the reconstruction of Germany go into private pockets. And large amounts of vital materials go to the Soviets when they should be available for the defense preparations of the West. Some "independent" smugglers have no connection with the Soviets. But they help Moscow by their operations.

Though the Russians do not control the whole weird world of Germany's black market, they are fast increasing their holdings. They are now responsi-

ble for well over half of its activities, German officials estimate. Their control varies from direct operation to distant manipulation. Sometimes the chain of command is so tenuous that the man doing the job doesn't even know he is working for the Politburo.

The growth of the Soviets' contraband organization is particularly remarkable, since at first, after the war, the Russians had little to do with the orgy of illicit trading in ruined Germany. Then, the black market was just a legacy of the war—like the weeds that spread in the rubble of the devastated cities.

The Germans' main interest was to keep alive by hook or by crook. The occupying powers had their hands full. The new German customs forces were unarmed, often corrupt and totally insufficient in numbers. Above all, they were permitted little authority over non-German nationals.

That was the era when a whole nation danced, not around the golden calf, but around a packet of cigarettes and a handful of coffee. Which visitor to Frankfurt does not recall the official American barter market, the *Handlungszentrale*, whose roaring trade went on just outside the American compound? German housewives brought their valuables to the *Zentrale* and received American cigarettes, coffee, soap or candies in return. Two packages of cigarettes bought a fine camera, worth \$100 or more, and a fine antique coffee table could be had for four packs. In those days anybody who had access to American and British supplies could amass a small fortune. And many did.

Gradually the occupation forces tightened their regulations. Allied citizens were required to submit to customs examination. More self-government was granted to the Germans. Their customs service improved.



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Then came the Korean conflict—and a sudden realization of how valuable contraband runners had become to the Soviets. July, 1950, saw the formation of a Tripartite Customs and Frontier Inspectorate. The German frontier guards were increased to 30,000 men. In August, the city of West Berlin was ordered to start traffic inspection between Berlin and the Soviet Zone. The absence of such control had been one of the more damaging factors of Germany's underground trade—little was done until large amounts of steel alloys and other vital materials had passed through Berlin into Soviet hands.

Next, the Bonn government took action against a number of West German big shots engaged in illegal exports into the Soviet zone. This action, incidentally, brought to light the astonishing inducements offered by the Soviets to wealthy West Germans who could not be tempted with mere cash.

When the Soviets had occupied Eastern Germany, their "Trophy Commission" had shipped the contents of the world-famous museums and art galleries of Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Breslau, Danzig and Königsberg and of manor houses, castles, palaces and private homes, to the Soviet Union. The Tass Agency once put at 920,000 the works of art removed by the Soviets. This was a great understatement, as we now know.

Many art treasures have found lodging in Soviet museums and in the villas of party functionaries. Others, however, have been and are being used to grease the palms of the more discerning among the Soviets' Western European suppliers of vital materials. Thus a great Watteau from the Dresden gallery found its way into Switzerland. Greek statues, works of great baroque painters such as C. D. Friedrich, paintings by Menzel and Lenbach, prints by Rembrandt and Dürer are now in private hands in Germany and neighboring countries.

As long as the German black market had been largely a matter of importing

coffee and cigarettes and of exporting antiques, jewelry and other valuables, the German authorities had been persistent in demanding stronger Allied controls. But the tables are turning in Germany.

Now it's the Allies who are worried, and the Germans who have to be prodded. Thus, in November, the High Commission had to write to Chancellor Adenauer expressing "distress about the substantial leak of critical manufactures into the Soviet zone." Another warning followed in December. "We feel," it went, "that the flow of strategic materials from Western Germany to the East makes a substantial contribution to the communist bloc's war potential."

The more the Western powers have restricted the shipment of war supplies to the Soviets, the more the Soviets have made use of Germany's illegal channels. The credit for this goes largely to two men: Karl Maron, the tough former boxer who is chief of the People's Police, and Zaisser Gometz, head of the secret police and erstwhile Red general of the Spanish civil war. As soon as these two were entrusted with the Soviet zone's Operation Contraband, their agents began combing Western Germany for the most enterprising black-market operators there.

"We offer you asylum in East Berlin," the Russians said, in effect, to the racketeers, "police protection, technical assistance, plenty of business. We guarantee you more cash than you've ever made before. Let's team up."

At first the new partnership worked fine. It set up dummy firms in Western Europe to act as agents. Secret members of the German Communist Party were planted among the new customs police of the West. A group of former officers of the German Army was trained to contact West German industrialists.

To their delight, the professional smugglers found that business with Western Germany was booming. They



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also discovered that the Soviets' own zone offered prime opportunities to engage in black marketing. Before long, the Soviet-protected racketeers were running a side show of their own in the Soviet zone. It was a particularly lucrative business—since the Russians didn't know about it and there was no sharing of the spoils.

Inevitably, the Russians discovered that they were being double-crossed. On July 3, 1950, the People's Police, in a mass raid, seized the black-market headquarters. They arrested all and sundry, and carted away vast stores of contraband.

The effects were felt throughout Western Europe. Black-market prices shot up like a fever curve. Those private smugglers who had survived the growing Soviet competition now had a clear field. Their trade mushroomed into even greater prosperity.

Russian need for Western Germany's black-market supplies must have been urgent, for the People's Police showed an unheard-of leniency toward the arrested racketeers. The men were released after a few weeks and set up in a new and better headquarters on Berlin's Spittelmarkt. But on last November nineteenth, Gen. Zaisser Gometz had to crack down on his over-enterprising partners again. This time the break was final. Those who had been most active in "independent" black-market activities were either expelled from the Soviet zone or bundled off to Soviet concentration camps.

Moscow took no more chances. A new organization was set up as part of the East German Ministry of Trade. It was made as watertight a bureaucracy as possible.

It takes two to make a deal. And without the willing co-operation of the German public, without their eagerness to buy black-market coffee, cigarettes or stockings, there could have been no black market. The reason for this is as simple as it is compelling: smuggled goods are cheaper than the legally imported ones.

Coffee, for instance, costs fifty-five cents, or 2.30 German marks a pound on the world market. To this basic price the West German government adds customs duties and taxes amounting to a whopping 370 per cent. By the time the wholesaler and grocer have taken their profit, the German housewife has to pay more than fourteen marks for the pound that costs 2.30 marks in Amsterdam. That is a prohibitive price in a country of coffee drinkers where the monthly wage of an industrial worker averages under 300 marks.

Since the smuggler pays neither duty nor taxes, he can sell his coffee at eleven or twelve marks and still make a huge profit. The situation is the same with tea and cigarettes.

"At the legal price, my husband and I can't afford more than two cups of coffee a day," the wife of a university professor told me. "By buying on the black market we have a few cups extra for Sunday afternoon or if the professor has to work late at night. And I don't think that makes me a criminal."

Other inducements to smuggling are provided by the wide gap between the exchange rates of the two German marks—one issued in Western Germany and the other in the communist zone.

The rate has fluctuated anywhere around seven East to one West mark. As an example of what this means, let us take a look at the smuggling operation in women's stockings. When

Germany was split into four zones in 1945, 83 per cent of her hose industry fell under Soviet control. As a result, women's stockings are scarce and expensive in Western Germany, while the Soviets have an oversupply of a "luxury" they usually frown upon.

Now a pair of good rayon hose costs one East mark in the Soviet zone—that is 0.15 mark in West money. But a few miles away in Western Germany, the same pair sells for ten West marks. Thus a smuggler's truckload of 50,000 pairs costs him 7500 and brings him 500,000 West marks—a tidy profit in any currency.

Of course, there is a limit beyond which it doesn't pay the Russians to bring stockings into Western Germany. Too many stockings would bring the black-market prices down. The same is true for cameras, Meissen china and other Soviet-zone products. Likewise, it pays the Russians to restrict their shipments of coffee and American cigarettes into Germany.

That is where the "independent" smuggler comes in. His cut-rate competition has at times been serious. But he cannot match the powerful technical assistance the Russians can give their smugglers. Consequently, he is the first to feel the pinch of the improving Allied and German customs control.

The German customs force will soon reach 40,000 men. Telewriters and a radio communication system as well as motorcycles have been added to their equipment. A drastic tightening up of control procedures is directed mainly against the misuse of transit shipments.

On the Allied side, too, the war against the smugglers is being fought with a new determination. You may never have heard of Furth-in-the-Forest in Bavaria or of Sgt. Bill Lee, or the 7751st MP Customs Unit. But the three have a very important bearing on what is happening on Germany's Eastern frontier. Through Furth on the

Czech border goes a railroad line connecting Western Europe with Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Balkans. Twice a day, a train decorated with the Soviet star arrives with produce from behind the Iron Curtain. Just as often a couple of trains enter from Western Germany, destination East.

Until a few months ago, the calm of the endless Bavarian forest was scarcely disturbed. The trains came and left quietly. Now and then, a few tourists would watch as rail cars carrying what looked like heavy armor plating, rumbled East.

Then, in September, Sergeant Lee, of the 7751st MP Customs Unit, moved into a little room in Furth station. On that day Furth lost its idyllic peace. Not that Sergeant Lee is a noisy man. On the contrary. When he says "No," he says it quietly. But the one word is enough to send Czech officials shouting "Fascist saboteur!" to make the wires hum between Furth and Bonn, and to bring high American brass in for inspection.

For Sergeant Lee's "No" means that yet another shipment of strategic supplies has failed to get behind the Iron Curtain. Already his veto has stopped a complete radio station, trainloads of steel tubing, electronic instruments, chemical products and armament steel from reaching Red Prague. In Furth, at least, the border is no longer wide open. Soviet contraband runners have had to move elsewhere.

Gradually the holes in Germany's frontier are being plugged. It is uphill work. As the Russians find it increasingly difficult to obtain critical supplies, they will strive their hardest to keep the dark channels of Germany open. Nor will they give up their attempt to undermine Western Germany. But the chances are that sometime in 1951 a good many German night clubs and luxury hotels will have to close down. When that happens, the Russians will have lost another battle on the European front.

THE END



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST