

MARCH 21, 1951:

Larry Parks

The Committee on Un-American Activities met at 10:35 a.m. in room 226, Old House Office Building, the Honorable John S. Wood (Chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives John S. Wood (Chairman), Francis E. Walter, Clyde Doyle, James B. Frazier, Jr. (appearance as noted in transcript), Harold H. Velde, Bernard W. Kearney, Donald L. Jackson, and Charles E. Potter.

Staff members present: Frank S. Tavenner, Jr., Counsel; Thomas W. Beale, Sr., Assistant Counsel; Louis J. Russell, Senior Investigator; William A. Wheeler, Investigator; John W. Carrington, Clerk; and A. S. Poore, Editor.

MR. TAVENNER: The Committee on Un-American Activities has succeeded to a marked degree in exposing Communists' infiltration into labor organizations, with the result in many instances that the organizations have rid themselves of Communist domination and influences, and that the Congress has been informed of many important facts as the basis for legislative action. I need only remind you that the testimony of Matthew Cvetic virtually destroyed, for the time being at least, the power and influence of the Communist Party in western Pennsylvania. Then there have been many witnesses who have told this Committee of the circumstances under which they were duped into joining the Communist Party, the Communist Party activities observed by them while they were members, and the reasons for their breaking with the party. This has required courage, but, in so testifying, they have performed a service of inestimable value to their country and should receive the plaudits of their fellow citizens.

The hearing today is the first of a series designed by the Committee to accomplish the same results in the entertainment field as have been accomplished in labor and other fields. It is hoped that any witness appearing during the course of these hearings, who made the mistake of associating himself or herself with the Communist Party, will have sufficient courage and loyalty to make an honest disclosure of all they know about Communist Party activities. Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to call, as the first witness, Mr. Larry Parks.

MR. TAVENNER: Are you represented by counsel, Mr. Parks?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I am. My counsel is Mr. Mandel.

MR. TAVENNER: Will counsel identify himself?

MR. MANDEL: Louis Mandel, 1501 Broadway, New York City. In the

light of the testimony that Mr. Parks will give here, he has prepared a statement that he would like to read at this point. I think it is a proper background to the testimony he will give and be very enlightening to the Committee as his testimony unfolds. May he read that statement?

MR. WOOD: At the conclusion of his testimony, if he desires to read the statement that has been presented to the members here, he will be given that privilege, or he can put it in the record, as he desires.

MR. MANDEL: I would, in fairness to the witness, urge very strongly that he be permitted [to read the statement], because there is a connecting link to what he will testify, here in this statement. And I think, in proper consideration of the witness and what he will do, this opportunity ought to be given to him. I urge it very strongly.

MR. WOOD: Proceed, Mr. Tavenner.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Parks, when and where were you born?

MR. PARKS: I was born on a farm in Kansas. I suppose the legal town would be Olathe. That was the closest town.

MR. TAVENNER: Will you relate briefly to the Committee the details regarding your educational background?

MR. PARKS: I moved when I was quite small to Illinois. I attended the high school in Joliet, Illinois, and I also attended and graduated from the University of Illinois, where I majored in chemistry and minored in physics. I sometimes wonder how I got in my present line of work.

MR. TAVENNER: What was the date of the completion of your work at the university?

MR. PARKS: 1936.

MR. TAVENNER: Now, what is your present occupation?

MR. PARKS: Actor.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Parks, I believe you were present when I made a statement as to the purpose of this series of hearings.

MR. PARKS: Yes, I was present, and I heard you.

MR. TAVENNER: There has been considerable testimony taken before this Committee regarding a number of organizations in Hollywood, such as the Actors' Laboratory Theater. Have you been connected in any way with any of those organizations?

MR. PARKS: I have.

MR. TAVENNER: Will you state the names of those organizations which you have been affiliated with? To aid you, I will hand you the list.

MR. PARKS: (*looking at sheet of paper containing list*): Well, most of them I'm not familiar with. I'm familiar with the Actors' Laboratory.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, did you hold any official position in that organization?

MR. PARKS: For a time I was sort of honorary treasurer of this organization.

MR. TAVENNER: Was that in 1949 and 1950 or when was that?

MR. PARKS: Well, I can't recall the exact date.

MR. TAVENNER: Will you proceed?

MR. PARKS: I believe that I for a time was a member of the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions.

MR. WOOD: We will have to ask the photographers to not block the view.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you recall whether or not the Progressive Citizens of America was the outgrowth or successor to what was known as the Hollywood Democratic Committee?

MR. PARKS: I believe that's true.

MR. TAVENNER: Were you a member of it?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I was.

MR. TAVENNER: Did you hold any official position in the organization?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't believe so. Not that I recall.

MR. TAVENNER: What other organizations listed there were you affiliated with?

MR. PARKS: What do you mean "affiliated with"?

MR. TAVENNER: Well, either by way of membership or by way of aid and support.

MR. PARKS: Well, I don't—

MR. TAVENNER: And if you aided in any way by entertainment.

MR. PARKS: Those two are the only ones that I can think of at the moment. Perhaps if you could refresh my memory I would appreciate it.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, were you affiliated with the Civil Rights Congress in any manner?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't believe so.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, did you appear at any meeting of that organization to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: It's quite possible that I did.

MR. TAVENNER: According to the *Evening Star*, of Washington, D.C., November 3, 1947, you are reported to have been one of the speakers—

MR. PARKS: As I say, it's quite possible at that particular time—

MR. TAVENNER: —at a reception given Gerhart Eisler. Do you recall that?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever being at a reception for Gerhart Eisler. To the best of my knowledge, I have never seen him. When I was in Washington last time I attended many meetings and many receptions. I'm not familiar with the names of these. If you ask me if I was at this reception, it's quite possible that I was. What the name of it is I can't recall at this time, and I probably didn't know at that time.

MR. TAVENNER: Now, referring back to the Actors' Laboratory, of which you were an officer—you were the treasurer, I believe?

MR. PARKS: In name I was treasurer, yes.

MR. TAVENNER: What do you mean by stating that you were treasurer "in name"?

MR. PARKS: Well, this was more of an honorary position than an active one. My job as the treasurer was to sign a batch of checks, and that's the extent of my knowledge of the money matters of the Lab.

MR. TAVENNER: Will you tell the Committee whether or not there were, to your knowledge, Communists in these various organizations, particularly those that you were a member of?

MR. PARKS: I think that I can say yes to that.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, who were these Communists?

MR. PARKS: There were people in the Actors' Lab, for instance. This, in my opinion, was not a Communist organization in any sense of the word. As in any organization, it has all colors of political philosophy. I know nothing about who belonged, other than myself, to the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions. This I won't say because I don't know. There were Communists attached to the Lab.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, were there Communists attached to these other organizations which you say you were a member of?

MR. PARKS: This I'm not familiar with. I don't know. I don't know who else was a member of them besides myself.

MR. TAVENNER: You do not recall who were members of those other organizations?

MR. PARKS: I think that that is the gist of my answer, yes.

MR. TAVENNER: But you do recall that at the Actors' Laboratory there were members of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: That's true.

MR. TAVENNER: Did those Communist Party members endeavor to obtain control of the activities of the organization and of its various offices?

MR. PARKS: No, the Lab was a school for acting and sort of a showcase for actors. I left the Lab because I was in favor of forming a permanent repertory theater. It was felt by the majority of the Lab that they wanted it the way it was, as a school.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, what was your opportunity to know and to observe the fact that there were Communists in that organization?

MR. PARKS: I knew them as Communists.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, what had been your opportunity to know them as Communists?

MR. PARKS: May I answer this fully and in my own way?

MR. TAVENNER: I would like for you to.

MR. PARKS: I am not a Communist. I would like to point out that, in my opinion, there is a great difference between being a Communist, say in 1941, ten years ago, and being a Communist in 1951. To my mind this is a great difference and not a subtle one. It is also, I feel, not a subtle difference to be a member of the Communist Party and being a Communist. I do not

believe in my own mind that this is a subtle difference either. I would furnish you with—I guess you would call it an allegory [analogy?] as to what I mean, so that you will see why I say it is not a subtle difference. The President of this country is the head of the Democratic Party. There are many people who call themselves Democrats. There are certain Southern Democrats, for instance, that do not follow the aims and platform of the Democratic Party, yet they are called Democrats. They, in my opinion, are Republicans really.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, now, that could be said and a similar analysis could be given of the Progressive Party or any other party, but let us—

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. TAVENNER: —confine ourselves to the question of Communism—

MR. PARKS: Yes. Well, I'm drawing an [analogy?] allegory.

MR. TAVENNER: —rather than speaking in terms of [analogy?] allegory.

MR. PARKS: Well, I felt that it was necessary, so that you could see that this is not a subtle difference, you see.

MR. TAVENNER: No, I think the Committee can understand by speaking plainly—

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. TAVENNER: —and to the point—

MR. PARKS: I'm trying to.

MR. TAVENNER: —on Communism.

MR. PARKS: As I say, I am not a Communist. I was a member of the Communist Party when I was a much younger man, ten years ago.

MR. TAVENNER: I wish you would tell the Committee the circumstances under which you became a member of the Communist Party, if you left the Communist Party, when you did it and why you did it.

MR. PARKS: Being a member of the Communist Party fulfilled certain needs of a young man that was liberal in thought, idealistic, who was for the underprivileged, the underdog. I felt that it fulfilled these particular needs. I think that being a Communist in 1951 in this particular situation is an entirely different kettle of fish, when this is a great power that is trying to take over the world. This is the difference. I became a Communist—

MR. TAVENNER: In other words, you didn't realize that the purpose and object of the Communist Party was to take over other segments of the world in 1941? But you do realize that that is true in 1951?

MR. PARKS: This is in no way an apology for anything that I have done, you see, because I feel I have done nothing wrong ever. Question of judgment? This is debatable. In 1941 the purposes, as I knew them, fulfilled simply—at least I thought they would fulfill as I said before—a certain idealism, a certain being for the underdog, which I am today, this very minute. This did not work out. I wasn't particularly interested, after I did become a member, I attended very few meetings, and I petered out the

same way I drifted into it. I petered out about the latter part of 1944 or 1945.

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MR. TAVENNER: Let me see if this information in the Committee files would be of any value in refreshing your recollections: That your Communist registration card for the year 1944 bore the number 46954 and for the year 1945 the number 47344. Does that happen to refresh your recollection?

MR. PARKS: No, sir, it doesn't, because to the best of my recollection I never had a Communist Party card.

MR. TAVENNER: Now, do I infer that shortly after 1945 or, say, in 1946 you became disillusioned about the Communist Party and withdrew as a member?

MR. PARKS: As I said before, to the best of my recollection it was in 1944 or 1945.

MR. TAVENNER: But by 1946, at least, you had definitely broken with the Party?

MR. PARKS: That is correct.

MR. TAVENNER: Have you participated in any Communist Party activities since that date, 1946?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever having participated in a Communist Party activity since that time.

MR. TAVENNER: Now, will you state to the Committee where you first became a member of the Party?

MR. PARKS: In Hollywood, California.

MR. TAVENNER: Who recruited you into the Party?

MR. PARKS: Well, a man by the name of Davidson, I believe.

MR. TAVENNER: What was Davidson's first name and what was his position?

MR. PARKS: I don't remember his first name. I haven't seen him for ten years, and I do not know what his position was.

MR. TAVENNER: Where did he live? Do you know?

MR. PARKS: This I have no idea.

MR. TAVENNER: What was his occupation?

MR. PARKS: This I do not know either.

MR. TAVENNER: Can you give us some descriptive data of the individual?

MR. PARKS: Average-looking man, young, dark hair.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, what were the circumstances under which you met?

MR. PARKS: Well, this is hard for me to recall, too.

MR. TAVENNER: Was it at a meeting in your home or where?

MR. PARKS: Well, as I say, I really don't remember. I'm being as honest as I know how.

MR. TAVENNER: I just wanted you to give the Committee what information you recall about how you got into the Communist Party.

MR. PARKS: As I told you, I was a good deal younger than I am now, about twenty-five, with certain liberal tendencies, idealism.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, did you seek this individual out, or did he seek you out?

MR. PARKS: Well, I certainly didn't seek him out. It's hard for me to say whether he sought me out.

MR. TAVENNER: Did others counsel you in regard to your uniting with the Communist Party before you were recruited by this individual by the name of Davidson?

MR. PARKS: No, I did it of my own volition.

MR. TAVENNER: Were you assigned to a Communist Party cell?

MR. PARKS: I was.

MR. TAVENNER: What was the name of that cell, and where was it located?

MR. PARKS: Well, it had no name that I know of. It was a group of people who were Communists, and I attended some meetings with them.

MR. TAVENNER: Well now, you were a member of that particular group from 1941 up to possibly as late as 1945?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. TAVENNER: Will you tell us what you know about the organization of the Communist Party from your own observations during that period of time in Hollywood?

MR. PARKS: Well, I'm afraid that I was a pretty bad member by their lights. I didn't attend too many meetings—maybe ten, twelve, fifteen meetings. And what I really know about the Communist Party is very little. If you will ask me some questions, I would be happy to answer them to the best of my ability.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know whether or not the writers and actors in Hollywood were members of any particular branch or group of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: I know that certain actors were a group that met. This I do know. The other things I do not know.

(Representative James B. Frazier, Jr., enters hearing room.)

MR. TAVENNER: What was the name of the group to which the actors were assigned?

MR. PARKS: Well, no name that I know of. The majority of the members of this particular group were actors.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, were there several groups to which the actors belonged, depending upon the geographical location of the actor?

MR. PARKS: I wouldn't say for certain. I'm not under that impression.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, who was the chairman of the group to which you were assigned?

MR. PARKS: Well, it had no chairman that I know of.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, who was the secretary of the group?

MR. PARKS: This I do not recall either. I don't know if there were any actual officers of this particular group.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, to whom did you pay your dues?

MR. PARKS: To various members. No one in particular that I can recall was the treasurer.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, a person who was responsible for the collection of dues would certainly be performing the duty of a treasurer, even if he did not go by that name, isn't that true?

MR. PARKS: That's very true.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, who were those persons to whom you paid your dues?

MR. PARKS: Well, this is hard for me to answer, too, because the few times that I paid dues, as I recall, were to different people.

MR. TAVENNER: You cannot recall the name of any one individual to whom you paid?

MR. PARKS: No one individual can I recall that I paid the dues to.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, was Communist Party literature distributed to the members at any of the meetings or through any medium?

MR. PARKS: Certain pamphlets were available if you wished to buy them.

MR. TAVENNER: Who was the individual who had charge of the distribution or sale of those pamphlets?

MR. PARKS: This I don't know either, because the pamphlets were there and you could buy them if you wished.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, was there any secret about who was handling the literature of the Party?

MR. PARKS: No secret at all.

MR. TAVENNER: What was the total membership of this cell in which you were a member?

MR. PARKS: I would say that it ranged from as little as five, and I think it went up to maybe, oh, possibly ten or twelve.

MR. TAVENNER: And did the personnel change considerably between 1941 and 1945, or did it consist of the same members during all that period of time?

MR. PARKS: Well, I do know that, as I say, I attended rather irregularly, and at some of the meetings I would see someone that I didn't know, I didn't recognize, and I would never see them again.

MR. TAVENNER: Did speakers or organizers, Communist Party organizers, appear before your group from time to time—people from the East, let us say?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever seeing anyone from the East, as you say, or any "big shot," if you will allow me to put it that way.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, are you acquainted with V. J. Jerome?

MR. PARKS: To the best of my knowledge, I have never met the man.

MR. TAVENNER: Have you ever seen him in Hollywood?

MR. PARKS: I don't believe I have even seen him. I would not recognize the man if he walked into the room.

MR. TAVENNER: Are you acquainted with Lionel Stander?

MR. PARKS: I have met him.

MR. TAVENNER: Have you ever attended a Communist Party meeting with him?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever attending a Communist Party meeting with this Lionel Stander.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know whether or not he is a Communist Party member?

MR. PARKS: No.

MR. TAVENNER: Are you acquainted with Karen Morley?

MR. PARKS: I am.

MR. TAVENNER: Is she a member of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: Well, counsel, these— I would prefer not to mention names, if it is at all possible. I don't think it is fair to people to do this. I have come to you at your request. I will tell you everything that I know about myself, because I feel I have done nothing wrong, and I will answer any question that you would like to put to me about myself. I would prefer, if you will allow me, not to mention other people's names.

MR. WALTER: Do you take the same position with respect to the obvious leaders of the Communist movement?

MR. PARKS: I do, because I don't know any of the leaders of the Communist movement.

MR. WALTER: Of course, you do know who was active in the movement in California?

MR. PARKS: No, I only know the names of people who attended certain meetings that I attended, and these were not active, big leaders of the Communist Party.

MR. WALTER: Who directed the meetings that you attended?

MR. PARKS: The meetings consisted mainly of—we were in a war then—discussions of how the war was going, current events, problems of actors in their work. It was more of a social occasion than a stereotyped kind of meeting. Does that answer your question, Congressman?

MR. WALTER: It's an answer.

MR. PARKS: Hmm?

MR. WALTER: It's an answer.

MR. PARKS: Well, I would like to answer your question, if you're not satisfied with that answer.

MR. WALTER: What I am interested in knowing is who directed the activities that this group were engaged in.

MR. PARKS: And I repeat again that no one to my knowledge directed any kind of activities.

MR. POTTER: Who would call the meetings together?

MR. PARKS: Well, I don't really know.

MR. POTTER: Did you have a set, scheduled meeting once every month or once every week, or was it upon the call of some individual?

MR. PARKS: Well, as I recall, various individuals would call. I don't believe that there was any set—

MR. POTTER: Certainly it wasn't run by mental telepathy.

MR. PARKS: No. I didn't say that. I say certain individuals would call, and, to the best of my knowledge, there was no set schedule of meetings.

MR. POTTER: Somebody had to issue a call?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. POTTER: Did you ever issue a call for your cell to get together?

MR. PARKS: No, I didn't.

MR. POTTER: Then, somebody would have to tell you when the meetings would take place and where they would take place, is that not true?

MR. PARKS: I would get a call from a member of the group and they would say, "Well, let's have a meeting tonight, tomorrow night."

MR. KEARNEY: Were the meetings always held at the same place?

MR. PARKS: No, they were not.

MR. KEARNEY: Were they held in halls or in your own homes?

MR. PARKS: These were held at homes.

MR. KEARNEY: Did you ever have any meetings at your own home?

MR. PARKS: Never.

MR. KEARNEY: Where were some of the meetings held?

MR. PARKS: These were people like myself, small-type people, no different than myself in any respect at all, and no different than you or I.

MR. KEARNEY: Where were some of these meetings held?

MR. PARKS: As I say, these were held in various homes in Hollywood.

MR. KEARNEY: Can you name some of them?

MR. PARKS: Well, as I asked the counsel and as I asked the Committee, if you will allow this, I would prefer not to mention names under these circumstances: That these were people like myself who—and I feel that I—have done nothing wrong ever. I mean along this line. I am sure none of us is perfect. Again, the question of judgment certainly is there, and even that is debatable, but these are people—

MR. WOOD: Just a moment. Do you entertain the feeling that these parties that you were associated with are likewise guiltless of any wrong?

MR. PARKS: This is my honest opinion: that these are people who did nothing wrong, people like myself.

MR. WOOD: Mr. Parks, in what way do you feel it would be injurious to

them, to divulge their identities, when you expressed the opinion that at no time did they do wrong?

MR. PARKS: If you think it's easy for a man who has—I think I have worked hard in my profession, climbed up the ladder a bit. If you think it's easy for me to appear before this Committee and testify, you're mistaken, because it's not easy. This is a very difficult and arduous job for me for many reasons. One of the reasons is that as an actor my activity is dependent a great deal on the public. To be called before this Committee at your request has a certain inference, a certain innuendo that you are not loyal to this country. This is not true. I am speaking for myself. This is not true. But the inference and the innuendo is there as far as the public is concerned. Also as a representative of a great industry—not as an official representative—but as an actor of the motion-picture industry that is fairly well known, in that respect I am a representative of the industry. This is a great industry. At this particular time it is being investigated for Communist influence.

MR. WOOD: Don't you think the public is entitled to know about it?

MR. PARKS: Hmm?

MR. WOOD: Don't you feel the public is entitled to know about it?

MR. PARKS: I certainly do, and I am opening myself wide open to any question that you can ask me. I will answer as honestly as I know how. And at this particular time, as I say, the industry is—it's like taking a pot shot at a wounded animal, because the industry is not in as good a shape today as it has been—economically, I'm speaking. It has been pretty tough on it. And, as I say, this is a great industry, and I don't say this only because it has been kind to me. It has a very important job to do to entertain people, in certain respects to call attention to certain evils, but mainly to entertain, and in this I feel that they have done a great job. Always when our country has needed certain help, the industry has been in the forefront of that help.

MR. TAVENNER: You are placing your reluctance to testify upon the great job that the moving-picture industry is doing or can do?

MR. PARKS: On the question of naming names, it is my honest opinion that the few people that I could name, these names would not be of service to the Committee at all. I am sure that you know who they are. These people I feel honestly are like myself, and I feel that I have done nothing wrong. Question of judgment? Yes, perhaps. And I also feel that this is not—to be asked to name names like this is not—in the way of American justice as we know it, that we as Americans have all been brought up, that it is a bad thing to force a man to do this. I have been brought up that way. I am sure all of you have. And it seems to me that this is not the American way of doing things—to force a man who is under oath and who has opened himself as wide as possible to this Committee—and it hasn't been

easy to do this—to force a man to do this is not American justice.

MR. WOOD: Well, I am glad, of course, to give considerable leeway to the range of your statement, because I for one am rather curious to understand just what the reasons are in your mind for declining to answer the question.

MR. PARKS: I'm not declining. I'm asking you if you would not press me on this.

MR. WOOD: I'm not going to press the point, unless other members of the Committee wish to.

MR. POTTER: Are any of the members in the particular Communist cell that you were in, to your knowledge, still active members in the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: I can't say this, Congressman, because I have divorced myself completely. I have no way of knowing this at all. I know what I think inside: My opinion is that ninety-nine per cent of them are not.

MR. POTTER: If you knew people in Hollywood that were identified with the Party then, would you be reluctant to cite their names if they were active members at the present time?

MR. PARKS: I would be reluctant on only one score: that I do not think that it is good for an American to be forced to do this. Only on this score. But I feel that a man—the people that I knew—it is my opinion that they are not members of the Communist Party at this time. This is my opinion only. If they are, they shouldn't be.

MR. POTTER: If you had knowledge of a man who committed murder, certainly you wouldn't be hesitant to give that information to the proper authorities?

MR. PARKS: That is correct.

MR. POTTER: Now, I assume that you share the belief that we share, that an active member of the Communist Party believes in principles that we don't believe in, in overthrowing our Government by force and violence. Now, you say you would readily give information concerning a man you have knowledge has committed murder. Wouldn't you also give information to the proper authorities of a man you knew or a woman you knew or believed to be working to overthrow our Government by force and violence?

MR. PARKS: I will say this to you: If I knew a man that committed murder, this is against the law of our land, and I'm not drawing a fine line for my own protection when I say this, I'm not doing this at all. This is a reprehensible thing to do, to commit murder, and I certainly would name him immediately. The other question is—even now it is not against the law of our land. Do you understand the difference that I mean?

MR. POTTER: So when we are drafting men to fight Communist aggression, you feel that it is not your duty as an American citizen to give the

Committee the benefit of what knowledge you might have?

MR. PARKS: I think that there is a difference, Congressman, between people who would harm our country and people who in my opinion are like myself, who, as I feel, did nothing wrong at the time—

MR. POTTER: I'm not questioning that point, when you say that people like yourself may be misguided, or because of faulty judgment were members of the Party. But you don't believe today that anyone can be naïve enough to be an active member of the Communist Party and not know what he's doing?

MR. PARKS: That is correct. That is what I believe.

MR. POTTER: For that reason I can't see your consistency in saying you won't name someone who you know today is an active member of the Party.

MR. PARKS: But I do not know anyone today that is an active member of the Party.

MR. POTTER: If you did know, you would tell?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I think I would.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Parks, it seems to me that your argument in substance is this: that this Committee should investigate Communism but not find out who is a Communist.

MR. PARKS: No, counsel, that is not my—

MR. TAVENNER: In the final analysis, isn't that your argument?

MR. PARKS: No, this is not my argument at all.

MR. TAVENNER: You are taking the position that it is not important to find out who may be in Communism in Hollywood—

MR. PARKS: No.

MR. TAVENNER: —rather than for this Committee to determine what its obligations are under the statute which created it to investigate Communism?

MR. PARKS: No, counsel, I didn't say this at all.

MR. TAVENNER: But isn't that the result of your argument?

MR. PARKS: No, counsel, what I say is that the few people that I knew at that time are people like myself who are as loyal to this country as you.

MR. TAVENNER: And if every witness who came before this Committee were permitted to take that position, then the extent of the investigation that this Committee could conduct would be limited entirely by the attitude of the witness, wouldn't it?

MR. PARKS: But I told you the circumstances surrounding my small activity with the Communist Party, you see, and this makes quite a difference.

MR. TAVENNER: In your judgment?

MR. PARKS: Not only in my judgment. I know—at least inside of myself—that these people were like myself, and the most that you can accuse them of is a lack of judgment. I say none of this in apology for what I did, because a young man at twenty-five, if he's not a liberal, if he is not full of

idealism, is not worth his salt. And if you make a mistake in judgment like this, I don't particularly, myself, believe that it is serious.

MR. TAVENNER: Yes, but if every witness who took the stand before this Committee would be the final judge of when a thing was serious and when it was not, and the Committee would be limited accordingly, how could this Committee carry out its statutory duty?

MR. PARKS: But I'm asking you as a man, having told you and opened myself to you, that—

MR. TAVENNER: And I'm only asking that you see the other side of it.

MR. PARKS: I do see the other side.

MR. TAVENNER: Now you have placed Hollywood on a very high pedestal here.

MR. PARKS: I have.

MR. TAVENNER: But there has been testimony here involving the scientific professions, persons in Government, persons in numerous industries, and I take it that there is no preference of any kind that should be allowed to your profession over that of the scientific professions or any other calling in life.

MR. PARKS: That is true. But I have told you and, as I say, opened myself as wide as I know how. What little I know, as you can judge for yourself, as I told you, and it's the truth, I was probably the poorest member of the Communist Party that has existed, and the few people that I knew, you probably know their names. I can see no way that this would be of additional help to this Committee. And, counsel, I am sure that you realize that if this was really consequential, I would do it, but you must realize the position.

MR. TAVENNER: Pardon me?

MR. PARKS: I say you must realize that, as inconsequential as I was in it, the few people that I knew, that it is very distasteful to me to be forced into that position.

MR. TAVENNER: I recognize that. There certainly can be no difference in opinion about that. It is a distasteful position to be in.

MR. PARKS: And I—

MR. TAVENNER: And you have avowed here that because of the difference in the situation with regard to the Party now from what it was in 1941 you have withdrawn, because you now understand the purposes of this organization which you joined years ago. Now, if you would be equally frank with regard to other people who are connected with this organization, then this Committee would be permitted to function in line with the statutory duty that rests upon it. And, therefore, I am going to ask you who it was who acted as secretary of this group.

MR. PARKS: And I can honestly say to you that I do not know, to the best of my remembrance.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know Elizabeth Leech?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever meeting an Elizabeth Leech.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know a person by the name of Elizabeth Glenn?

MR. PARKS: No, to the best of my knowledge, I do not know any person by that name.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know a person by the name of Marjorie Potts?

MR. PARKS: To the best of my knowledge, I do not know anyone by the name of Marjorie Potts. I don't recall ever meeting these people.

MR. TAVENNER: Now, do you know Karen Morley?

MR. PARKS: I do.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Karen Morley a member of this group with you?

MR. PARKS: And I ask you again, counsel, to reconsider forcing me to name names. I told you that I was a member only for a short time and at that particular time, in my opinion, the people I knew were like myself. I don't think that this is really American justice, to force me to do this, when I have come to you three thousand miles and opened myself as I have.

MR. WALTER: Mr. Chairman, may I ask counsel a question? How can it be material to the purpose of this inquiry to have the names of people when we already know them? Aren't we actually, by insisting that this man testify as to names, overlooking the fact that we want to know what the organization did, what it hoped to accomplish, how it attempted to influence the thinking of the American people through the arts? So why is it so essential that we know the names of all of the people?

MR. PARKS: May I answer your question?

MR. WALTER: No, I am directing my question to counsel.

MR. TAVENNER: Although there is information relating to some of these individuals, some of them have evaded service of process, so that we cannot bring them here. That is one point. Another is that this Committee ought to be entitled to receive proof of information which it has in its files. There would be no way to really investigate Communist infiltration into labor without asking who are Communists in labor. And the same thing is true here in Hollywood.

MR. WALTER: But isn't it far more important to learn the extent of the activity, and what the purpose of the organization actually was, than to get a long list of names of bleeding hearts and fools, suckers, hard-boiled Communist politicians? I don't know as it makes too much difference. As long as we have a witness anxious to cooperate in carrying out what I conceive to be our purpose, I think the rest is all immaterial.

MR. TAVENNER: As to the various organizations, that was the subject of the testimony of about twenty witnesses or more here.

MR. WALTER: May I ask this witness a question, Mr. Chairman?

MR. WOOD: Yes, Mr. Walter.

MR. WALTER: Were you instructed to attempt to influence the thinking

of the American people through various exhibitions on the stage or on the screen? Was that the purpose of your organization?

MR. PARKS: I was never instructed at any time to do this, and I think that if you are a follower of the motion-picture industry—if you go to the movies is what I mean—it is almost evident that this was not done in pictures.

MR. WALTER: Well, was it talked about? Was it the purpose of the Communist organization to attempt to set up a hard core in Hollywood that would slant pictures and performances so as to influence the thinking of the American people?

MR. PARKS: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Congressman. As I say, I was with a small group of actors, but, as a person who is close to the industry, I think that this is almost an impossibility. If you are familiar—you probably aren't—with the making of pictures, first of all it's impossible to do this as an actor. I was never asked to do it. It was never discussed. A script that is written is the important thing about making a picture. You can only make a stinker if you have a poor script.

MR. WOOD: On that point, wouldn't it be true that the writer of that script is in a position to very decidedly slant—

MR. PARKS: I really don't believe that this is true. There are, I think, on the average about four hundred pictures [per annum?] made in Hollywood, approximately. I don't know the exact number. This is divided up among a number of studios. A script passes through usually—and unfortunately—through too many hands. My opinion is that a script should be written by one man and directed by the same man. But this happens hardly ever. It passes through several writers, usually. They think if one man is good for jokes, they put him in for jokes, and another man, if they want a tear-jerker, they will assign him to that particular portion of it. It goes to an associate producer, a producer, the heads of the studios. I think you are familiar with the men that are the heads of the studios in Hollywood, and it is my studied opinion that this is an impossibility.

MR. WOOD: And didn't happen?

MR. PARKS: I do not believe that this has ever happened.

MR. WOOD: Now, you're leaving a very decided impression on my mind that there was no attempt to influence the character of the pictures that emanated from the studios that your group was connected with, that there was nothing off-color about the conduct of any of the people that belonged to it. Then, how could it possibly reflect against the members of this group for the names to be known, any more than it would if they belonged to the Young Men's Christian Association?

MR. PARKS: You cannot find one picture that has been slanted adversely, deliberately. Again, a man can make a mistake in judgment, Congressman. Now, to answer your last question, I feel as I do about it because myself I am a good example. As I said before, it's not easy, personally, for

me to be here. Anybody who thinks it is is out of their mind. Over and above that, it is doubtful whether, after appearing before this Committee, my career will continue. It is extremely doubtful. For coming here and telling you the truth. You see, there were other things open to me that I could have done. But, feeling that I have not done anything wrong, I will tell you the truth. There were other things that were open to me that I could have done, and I chose not to do them.

MR. WALTER: Actually, the producers, particularly in recent years, have been very careful to examine scripts so that they would not be slanted. Is that not the fact?

MR. PARKS: I think that this is correct.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Parks, have you any knowledge of the extent to which the movie industry, if it has, has made a conscientious effort to clean out any subversive influence in the industry either on the part of the actors or otherwise? Are you conscious of any fixed determination since 1946?

MR. PARKS: Yes, this is common knowledge.

MR. DOYLE: Well, is it part of your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: When I say "common knowledge" I mean mine, yours, everybody's. Everyone knows there has been a conscious effort to be absolutely free of any kind of Communism.

MR. DOYLE: May I ask this? A few minutes ago you said you were for a time honorary treasurer of one of these two groups that you stated you believed you were a member of. I think you said the extent of your duty as honorary treasurer was to sign a batch of checks.

MR. PARKS: That's right.

MR. DOYLE: To whom were those checks written or for what purpose?

MR. PARKS: Well, these were written to pay the office help, the secretaries, the clean-up man, the teachers, electric company, the utility bills, bills for lumber and paint for scenery, et cetera.

MR. DOYLE: What secretaries? How many secretaries and what office help for what organization?

MR. PARKS: For the Actors' Lab.

MR. DOYLE: How many secretaries did you have?

MR. PARKS: Well, it varied from none to one to, at certain times, when a show was being given and tickets were being mailed out to—I don't really recall—possibly three, four.

MR. DOYLE: Now, with reference to the cell which you said you attended some twelve or fifteen times, to the best of your recollection—

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. DOYLE: Was that attendance spread over from 1941 to 1945?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: Inclusive?

MR. PARKS: That's—

MR. DOYLE: I think you said your attendance averaged from five to twelve or fifteen.

MR. PARKS: Well, as I recall, it averaged from five, ten, twelve, in that—

MR. DOYLE: Were the majority of those in attendance men or women?

MR. PARKS: I had never thought about it. I suppose equally divided.

MR. DOYLE: Did you recognize at each meeting at which you were in attendance some actors and some actresses?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: About what proportion of the attendance, when twelve or fifteen were in attendance, were members of the actors' or actresses' group?

MR. PARKS: Well, when I say twelve, this as I recall—I'm using this number. I don't recall the exact number. I think that probably was the largest meeting. And these were all in the acting profession.

MR. DOYLE: Then, am I to understand that the entire attendance was, as far as you knew, members of the actors' profession?

MR. PARKS: I believe that this is true.

MR. DOYLE: Was this one cell limited to members of the actors' profession?

MR. PARKS: I believe it was limited to that.

MR. DOYLE: And I think you said you more or less had a social affair. Did you have refreshments?

MR. PARKS: Yes, we did. Coffee. Well, I'm serious when I say that. Coffee, doughnuts.

MR. DOYLE: Did the cell have dues?

MR. PARKS: It did.

MR. DOYLE: How much were the dues?

MR. PARKS: Well, I'm not, I don't think, a stingy man, but I'm known as a close man with a dollar. And, to the best of my knowledge, during the short time I was connected with this organization I could not have contributed more than fifty, sixty dollars.

MR. DOYLE: You mean you were connected with this one cell from 1941 to 1945, inclusive, yet you only paid a total of fifty or sixty dollars in those four years?

MR. PARKS: Well, the dues, as I recall, when you weren't working were about seventy-five cents a month, as I recall, and if you were working I think you paid some percentage. I didn't.

MR. DOYLE: To what organization did you pay the dues as a member of the cell?

MR. PARKS: I gave them to—right at the meeting.

MR. DOYLE: In check?

MR. PARKS: No, I believe I gave them in cash.

MR. DOYLE: Did you get a receipt for it?

MR. PARKS: No.

MR. DOYLE: Didn't ask for one?

MR. PARKS: Didn't ask for it.

MR. DOYLE: You mentioned that the cell members during the war discussed how the war was going. What did you mean by that?

MR. PARKS: Well, at that particular time, this was the major topic of conversation for most people in the country, and this was certainly true of myself and the actors that were at these particular meetings.

MR. DOYLE: Were there ever any resolutions submitted to the cell for consideration and action? I mean, were ever any communications read to you in the meeting from any other segment of the Communist Party? Did you ever listen to any communications read to you in any cell meeting those four years? If so, what?

MR. PARKS: I honestly cannot say that I ever heard any such communication. I don't believe so.

MR. DOYLE: Well, did anyone ever give you a report of any kind on Communist Party activities in those four years at any of these cell meetings? If so, what report? Weren't you interested in the progress of the Communist Party? Didn't anyone send you reports or give you an oral report?

MR. PARKS: Well, I think that certain things were mentioned at some of these meetings, that a certain number of people had been approached as far as our particular group was concerned, and this was about the extent of it.

MR. DOYLE: Basing this question on the fact that you deliberately laid the groundwork that you were idealistic, liberal, and progressive at the age of twenty-five, and so forth, and that is perhaps one reason you joined the Communist Party, or at least you gave it as one reason for your joining it—

MR. PARKS: No, that *is* the reason.

MR. DOYLE: Now, you made an effort—didn't you?—as a member of the cell—didn't that cell make efforts to increase its own membership in Hollywood?

MR. PARKS: I personally, to the best of my knowledge, never made such an effort.

MR. DOYLE: No, but you heard reports of what was being done by the cell?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: Well, what reports were given as to the activities of the cell?

MR. PARKS: Well, I don't remember. It's been a long time, as I told you.

MR. DOYLE: Well, now, you notice, Parks, I'm deliberately avoiding at this time asking you names of any other person.

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. DOYLE: I am assuming you want to be helpful to the Committee and tell the activities of the cell that you were in.

MR. PARKS: That's correct, and I am doing this.

MR. DOYLE: Now, manifestly, the cell was trying to increase its membership, wasn't it?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: And you were a member of the cell?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: You testified that you heard reports—

MR. PARKS: Well, as I say—

MR. DOYLE: —of what the cell was doing to increase its membership.

MR. PARKS: Well, you're really going a bit further than I said, Congressman.

MR. DOYLE: Well, you go as far as you honestly can and tell us what activities the cell participated in to increase its membership.

MR. PARKS: Well, I think that certain members of the group approached people about becoming a member of the Communist Party. I myself never did this.

MR. DOYLE: Well, names were submitted of other prospective members in your presence, were they not? Names of prospective members were read off, or possibilities were read off, weren't they?

MR. PARKS: It's possible that this was done.

MR. DOYLE: Well, was it done?

MR. PARKS: As I say, it's been a long time.

MR. DOYLE: Well, was any difference in philosophy between Communism and our form of government ever discussed in the cell? What did you discuss, besides drinking coffee?

MR. PARKS: Well, we didn't discuss drinking coffee, we just drank it. As I told you, at that particular time, the war was going on, and this was of major importance to every American, and was the major topic of conversation. Then, the discussions also had to do with conditions of actors—how we could get more money and better conditions.

MR. DOYLE: Well, was it discussed among you that you could get more money as a member of the Communist Party than you could just being a plain Democrat or Republican?

MR. PARKS: No, this was never discussed, to my knowledge.

MR. DOYLE: What was the Communist Party membership in this cell going to do for you in Hollywood? What were the benefits of it? Why did you join the cell? What did you get out of it or hope to get out of it?

MR. PARKS: As I told you, as a young man of twenty-five, with ideals and a feeling for the underdog, I felt that this was a legitimate political party, like you would join the Democrats or Republicans. I felt that this was the most liberal of the political parties of the time. All of this time I was a registered Democrat. I still am. And I have voted, from that time and

before it, the straight Democratic ticket, because this was the practical thing to do. The other was an idealistic thing.

MR. DOYLE: About how many years were you in that cell before you began to be disillusioned?

MR. PARKS: Well, "disillusion" is not the exact word that I would choose.

MR. WOOD: Do I understand from that answer, sir, that you are not yet disillusioned about it?

MR. PARKS: No, no. Don't bend it. It was a question of lack of interest, of not finding—you may call it disillusionment if you want—not finding the things that, as a young man with those particular feelings, I thought I would find.

MR. DOYLE: Were most of the twelve or fifteen occasions on which you attended in 1941, 1942, and 1943? Or were most of them in 1944 and 1945?

MR. PARKS: I began to work more, and when I worked I didn't go. It would be hard for me to say. I do know that it just petered out like a spent rocket.

MR. DOYLE: Of course, you were well acquainted with some of the members of the cell?

MR. PARKS: Could I just explain one other thing when I say "when I worked I didn't go"? If you know anything about an actor's work, it goes from six in the morning till seven-thirty, eight at night, and when you do work you really don't have much time for anything else. And I have finished my forty-first picture in ten years. And this means I have been working pretty hard.

MR. DOYLE: I greatly respect the dedication of you artists to your profession and the diligence with which you work at it. Now, let me ask this further question: You, of course, in these four or five years, became acquainted with some of the members of the cell?

MR. PARKS: That's correct.

MR. DOYLE: Now, did you ever discuss the fact that you were becoming less satisfied? That you didn't find in the Communist Party membership that which you had hoped?

MR. PARKS: I believe that I did.

MR. DOYLE: With men or women?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall.

MR. DOYLE: Did they agree with you or did they disagree with you?

MR. PARKS: Well, as I recall, many times people agreed with what I felt. This is one of the reasons that I feel as I do about the people that I knew. I don't recall anyone giving me a really serious argument about the way I felt.

MR. DOYLE: While you were a member of that cell from 1941 to 1945,

did it come at all clearly to you that the Communist Party was part of an international conspiracy against our form of government?

MR. PARKS: No, not while I was a member of that particular group.

MR. DOYLE: Did you, while a member of that cell, come to the conclusion that the Communist Party program was aimed at world domination?

MR. PARKS: Not at that particular time, I did not.

MR. DOYLE: When did you come to that conclusion, if at all?

MR. PARKS: Well, I think the way most everybody has come to that conclusion, with the recent and not so recent events in the history of the world, in the history of our country.

MR. WOOD: General Kearney.

MR. KEARNEY: Mr. Parks, I cannot understand your lack of interest in the Communist Party, when, from your own testimony, no member of the Communist Party ever appeared at any of the meetings attended by yourself and spoke.

MR. PARKS: I don't understand the question. Would you repeat it?

MR. KEARNEY: Well, you testified some few minutes ago that no member of the Communist Party ever spoke before any of the meetings that you attended.

MR. PARKS: No, I don't believe I said this.

MR. KEARNEY: That is my strong recollection of your testimony.

MR. PARKS: What I said, that to my recollection no—I think I used the words "big shot."

MR. KEARNEY: Well, were there members of the Communist Party who appeared at your meetings and spoke to your group?

MR. PARKS: We were all at that particular time members of the Communist Party.

MR. KEARNEY: I mean from other cells outside of your own.

MR. PARKS: There was one instance that I do recall when this did happen.

MR. KEARNEY: Can you give his name?

MR. PARKS: Again I wish you would not press me.

MR. WOOD: I will state for the benefit of the members: We are going to take a recess for lunch, at which time I ask the Committee to assemble back in the room for the purpose of determining this matter of policy. After we resume, the witness will be advised what the disposition of this Committee is with reference to his apparent disinclination to answer questions.

MR. VELDE: You stated that you now believe that the Communist Party of the United States is a subversive organization. Is that true?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I do.

MR. VELDE: But at that time that you went into the Communist Party, you felt that it was not a subversive organization?

MR. PARKS: That is quite correct.

MR. VELDE: Well, do you now know that at the time you belonged to the Communist Party it actually was a subversive organization—at that time?

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MR. PARKS: I think a great change has occurred in this particular organization. That is my opinion.

MR. WALTER: In other words, you feel that the “do-gooders” have gotten out of it and there is nothing remaining now except the hard-boiled politicians?

MR. PARKS: I would say that in substance I agree with this.

MR. VELDE: Mr. Parks, how could you possibly know how other members of your particular cell felt about the purposes of the Communist Party organization?

MR. PARKS: Well, during the war a common purpose united all of the people of this country—practically all of the people of this country.

MR. VELDE: I don't think you are answering my question, Mr. Parks. I realize your reluctance in telling the membership of your organization.

MR. PARKS: Would you repeat the question then?

MR. VELDE: We had a witness down here last year, Lee Pressman, who was likewise reluctant to answer questions concerning his association with members of his own Communist Party cell, but eventually he did, and the Committee received his testimony, and it did the Committee a lot of good to realize that he would give the testimony. We realize that is true, and I understand your reluctance, but I think you will agree that the Committee is a legally organized committee and has a function.

MR. PARKS: I agree with this perfectly.

MR. VELDE: And as such it has the right to inquire as to the names of members of the Communist Party during the past.

MR. PARKS: This is your right.

MR. TAVENNER: I would like to ask just one or two questions. Mr. Parks, you are no doubt acquainted with Mr. Samuel G. Wood, a motion-picture producer and director?

MR. PARKS: Well, I'm quite— If this is the man that died a year or two ago, I'm an admirer of his work as a director. I don't believe I have ever met him.

MR. TAVENNER: But you know of whom I am speaking?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I do. Sam Wood? Right?

MR. TAVENNER: Yes. Now he testified as follows: “The Laboratory Theater, I think, is definitely under the control of the Communist Party. Any kid that goes in there with American ideals hasn't a chance in the world.” Do you agree with his statement?

MR. PARKS: I disagree with it emphatically.

MR. TAVENNER: But do you agree that Mr. Wood is a man of honor and integrity?

MR. PARKS: But I disagree with this emphatically.

MR. TAVENNER: But do you still feel that, in light of that testimony, you should be the judge as to whether or not you testify as to who were connected with the theater—

MR. PARKS: At no time did I say that I was to be the judge. I was explaining my position to you. I have opened myself to you. And I am asking you gentlemen to be the judge, because this is not my duty here. I am a witness.

MR. TAVENNER: But you see there is a vast difference, apparently, between your opinion of the activities of that organization and the opinion of others.

MR. PARKS: Well, let me tell you then about the activities of this organization, and then you form your own opinion. This I think would be the only fair thing to do.

MR. TAVENNER: Proceed.

MR. PARKS: The activities of the Lab I think were admirable. I didn't happen to agree with certain of the objectives from a professional point of view. This was my disagreement. The work of the Lab I think has been very fine. I feel that the Actors' Lab as a training ground for actors was probably the finest of its kind, with the finest courses and the finest directors. It had the cream of the talent appearing on its stages and for the Army. I personally, for instance, appeared in three shows that we toured all over the Army camps, like *Three Men on a Horse*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Kiss and Tell*. They had the greatest casts. You couldn't possibly have afforded these kinds of casts on Broadway. No producer could be this rich. Because these people from the bits to the starring parts were giving of their time. These are the reasons. I think the record of the Lab speaks for itself. I can't prove to you that it was a good acting school—this is impossible—but, in my opinion as an actor, this was a fine acting school.

MR. TAVENNER: I am not questioning the skill of the group.

MR. PARKS: Now, if you go down the list of the plays and the classics and the modern plays that the Lab has done, everything from Shakespeare and before, playwrights of all countries, this is the only way I think that you can judge the worth of an organization like this.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, do you agree that it was the purpose of the Communist Party to exert an influence through the professionals in Hollywood in the advancement of the cause of Communism?

MR. PARKS: No, I cannot agree with this at all.

MR. TAVENNER: Are you acquainted with the “Report on the National Convention in Relation to Cultural Movement” by V. J. Jerome, delivered in 1938?

MR. PARKS: No, I am not.

MR. TAVENNER: Well, let me read this paragraph to you:

. . . The party increasingly cherishes and values specific qualities that the professionals bring into our midst. Gone is the day when we just took a professional comrade and assigned him to do nondescript party work. We say, on the contrary, "Comrades, you have something specific to give. You have the general contributions to make, in your loyalty, in your dues payment, your attendance, and your various duties and tasks to perform. But you have also a different contribution to make, whether you are a writer, a film artist, a radio performer. We need this no matter how valuable you are to the party on the picket line, and if in your turn you do not contribute, you would not really be valuable to us." . . .*

Doesn't that indicate to you a very definite plan on the part of the Communist Party to use its cells in the advancement of its program in Hollywood as well as elsewhere?

MR. PARKS: That would be my impression from listening to you read that.

MR. JACKSON: Mr. Parks, why in your opinion were you solicited for membership in the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: Well, I imagine I wasn't working at the time, so it was not from a standpoint of getting any kind of working actor. I imagine that it was because I was young and probably, as I said, idealistic, and my views on the underprivileged and the underdog were probably known at the time, and I imagine that this was the reason.

MR. JACKSON: You think it had nothing to do with your potentialities as an actor? That you were solicited just as someone down on Skid Row might have been taken into the Party?

MR. PARKS: Well, I hope it wasn't quite to that extreme, but at the time—I started to say, "I hate to admit it," but I really don't—I was not considered to have much talent as an actor by many people.

MR. JACKSON: You say that today you are entirely out of sympathy with the Communist philosophy and with its outward manifestations in recent years.

MR. PARKS: I certainly am. I think that any power that is trying to, in my opinion, take over the world in this manner is wrong.

MR. JACKSON: I think a concomitant of that would be, then, that in case of armed conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union you would bear arms in defense of the United States?

MR. PARKS: Without question.

MR. WOOD: We will take a recess at this time until two thirty.

* Full text in Louis J. Russell's testimony above, pp. 226-233. —E.B.

Afternoon Session

MR. WOOD: The Committee will be in order. Let the record show that the members present are: Messrs. Walter, Doyle, Frazier, Velde, Kearney, Jackson, Potter, and Wood.

MR. MANDEL [counsel for the witness]: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Parks would like to talk to the Committee about the question of naming names. He would appreciate it if the Committee would hear what he has to say on the subject.

MR. WOOD: I thought he expressed himself pretty fully this morning. We are taking a good deal of time on this hearing. I think counsel has a few more questions. Maybe they will bring out what he wants to say.

MR. MANDEL: What he has to say, I think, is very pertinent at this point. I don't think we can judge it until he says it. It will only take him three minutes or so to say it. In view of the fact he has cooperated so completely with the Committee, I think he should be granted three minutes to say what he has to say. Then he is willing to be guided by the Committee.

MR. WOOD: I see no objection to it. Make it as brief as you can, Mr. Parks.

MR. PARKS: I will, Mr. Chairman. To be an actor, a good actor, you must really feel and experience, from the top of your head to the tip of your toes, what you are doing. As I told you, this is probably the most difficult morning and afternoon I have spent, and I wish that if it was at all possible—you see, it is a little different to sit there and to sit here, and for a moment if you could transfer places with me, mentally, and put yourself in my place . . . My people have a long heritage in this country. They fought in the Revolutionary War to make this country, to create this Government, of which this Committee is a part. I have two boys, one thirteen months, one two weeks. Is this the kind of heritage that I must hand down to them? Is this the kind of heritage that you would like to hand down to your children? And for what purpose? Children as innocent as I am or you are, people you already know . . . I don't think I would be here today if I weren't a star, because you know as well as I, even better, that I know nothing that would be of great service to this country. I think my career has been ruined because of this, and I would appreciate not having to—Don't present me with the choice of either being in contempt of this Committee and going to jail or forcing me to really crawl through the mud to be an informer. For what purpose? I don't think this is a choice at all. I don't think this is really sportsmanlike. I don't think this is American. I don't think this is American justice. I think to do something like that is more akin to what happened under Hitler, and what is happening in Russia today. I don't think this is American justice for an innocent mistake in judgment, if it was that, with the intention behind it only of making this country a better place in which to live. I think it is not befitting for this Committee to force me to make this

kind of a choice. I don't think it is befitting to the purpose of the Committee to do this. As I told you, I think this is probably the most difficult thing I have done, and it seems to me it would impair the usefulness of this Committee to do this, because God knows it is difficult enough to come before this Committee and tell the truth. There was another choice open to me. I did not choose to use it. I chose to come and tell the truth. If you do this to me, I think it will impair the usefulness of this Committee to a great extent, because it will make it almost impossible for a person to come to you, as I have done, and open himself to you and tell you the truth. So I beg of you not to force me to do this.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Parks, there was a statement you made this morning which interested me a great deal. This is what you said: "This is a great industry"—speaking of the moving-picture industry—"and I don't say this only because it has been kind to me. It has a very important job to do, to entertain people, in certain respects to call attention to certain evils, but mainly to entertain." Now, do you believe that the persons who are in a position to call attention to certain evils ought to be persons who are dedicated to the principles of democracy as we understand them in this country?

MR. PARKS: I certainly agree.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you believe, on the other hand, that the persons who are in those responsible positions should be people who are antagonistic to the principles of democracy and our form of government, and who are members of a conspiracy to overthrow our Government?

MR. PARKS: Most assuredly I don't.

MR. TAVENNER: Then what is your opinion as to whether or not members of the Communist Party should be in positions of power and influence in the various unions which control the writing of scripts, the actors, and various other things which we have mentioned during the course of this hearing relating to the great industry of the moving pictures?

MR. PARKS: I thought I had made myself clear. I certainly do not believe that those people should be in any position of power to be able to direct this.

MR. TAVENNER: Then we will ask your cooperation, before this hearing is over, in helping us to ascertain those who are or have been members of the Communist Party. Mr. Parks, it is generally recognized that the Communist Party must raise money by various methods. Will you tell us what you know of the methods by which money was raised to promote the purposes of the Communist Party while you were a member?

MR. PARKS: I don't believe I can help you on this because I really don't know.

MR. TAVENNER: Did you take any part in fund-raising campaigns which were engineered by the Communist Party or by organizations known to you to be Communist-front organizations?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall at the moment. This is like asking a man what he did in 1941, and he says, "I don't remember." If you say to him, "Did you go fishing up on the Oregon River?" he will say, "Yes, yes, I did." If you would accommodate me in this way perhaps I can answer your question.

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MR. TAVENNER: I am merely asking what you know about the raising of Communist Party funds.

MR. PARKS: At the moment I don't recall knowing anything about it. As I just told you, I have appeared in many benefits over the past few years for many organizations, and if you could be more specific perhaps I could be more specific. I am not trying to avoid the question.

MR. TAVENNER: I have no trick question here through which I am attempting to lead you into denial of something we know about.

MR. PARKS: I have come here and have been as open and aboveboard as I can. I think the testimony will bear me out. I am willing to help you all I can if you could be more specific. As I told you, I have appeared at many benefits over many years.

MR. TAVENNER: As far as you know, were any of these fund-raising benefits conducted for the benefit of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall any at the moment. But again I say, I have been to many benefits over many years.

MR. TAVENNER: At the beginning of the afternoon session, you made a statement which I cannot let go by without challenging it. You said you were subpoenaed here because you were a star. Mr. Parks, you were subpoenaed here because the Committee had information that you had knowledge about Communist Party activities and that you had been a member.

MR. PARKS: All I meant was that I know nothing of any conspiracy that is trying to overthrow this Government. You know this even better than I. And my point was that if I was working in a drugstore I doubt whether I would be here.

MR. TAVENNER: We have had many people before this Committee who have been engaged in very menial forms of making a livelihood, and that will be so in the future.

MR. PARKS: Please don't take that in the wrong spirit, because it was not meant in the wrong spirit.

MR. TAVENNER: I did not fully understand your reference to the possible destruction of your career by being subpoenaed here. You did not mean to infer by that that this Committee was bringing you here because of any effect it might have on your career?

MR. PARKS: No, I didn't infer that at all. What I meant, and what I said, was that because of this, in my opinion, I have no career left.

MR. TAVENNER: Don't you think that that question might be influenced to some extent by the fullness of the cooperation that you give the Committee in a situation of this kind?

MR. PARKS: I have tried to cooperate with the Committee in every way that I feel that I can, but I think the damage has been done. This is my personal opinion.

MR. JACKSON: Don't you think that more than the damage that possibly has been done you by this Committee—which, after all, is an expression of the will of the American people and operates under the mandate of the people—don't you think the great damage occurred when you became a member of an organization which has been found to advocate the overthrow of every constitutional form of government in the world? Is this Committee more to blame than your own act in affiliating with that organization?

MR. PARKS: As I told you, Congressman, when I was a good deal younger than I am now, ten years ago, I felt a certain way about certain things. I was an idealist, I felt strongly and I still do about the underdog, and it was for these reasons that this organization appealed to me. I later found that this would not fulfill my needs. At that time, this I don't even believe was a mistake. It may have been a mistake in judgment. This is debatable. But my two boys, for instance—I would rather have them make the same mistake I did under those circumstances than not feel like making any mistake at all and be a cow in the pasture. If a man doesn't feel that way about certain things, then he is not a man. I do not believe that I did anything wrong.

MR. JACKSON: You say, Mr. Parks, that your association at best was haphazard, and, in your own words, you are afraid you were not a very good Communist.

MR. PARKS: That is correct.

MR. JACKSON: Upon what do you base the opinion that the people whose names you have in your possession probably have severed their relations with the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: In my opinion, the few people that I knew are people like myself and feel the way that I do.

MR. JACKSON: Well, of course, that is merely your judgment of the matter. Have you discussed their Party affiliations with those with whom you were affiliated in the Party?

MR. PARKS: I have not. But these people I knew, and this is my honest opinion. You know these people. You know them as well as I do.

MR. JACKSON: I will point out to you that in a recent case [Presumably that of Hiss. —E.B.] here in Washington some of the highest officials in Government testified to their honest belief that a man with whom they had been associated had never been a member of the Communist Party and in no way constituted any threat to our institutions, but every man who reads

the newspapers knows how fallacious that opinion was. I merely point out that after all, in all good faith, you might be wrong as to the present status of membership in the Communist Party of some people whose names you evidence hesitancy about disclosing.

MR. PARKS: These men you speak of did not act as informers in any sense of the word. I told you about these people. You know who the people are. And I have told you my opinion of them. And I have told you that I think to force me to do something like this is not befitting this Committee. I don't think the Committee would benefit from it, and I don't think this is American justice to make me choose one or the other or be in contempt of this Committee, which is a Committee of my Government, or crawl through the mud for no purpose. Because you know who these people are. This is what I beg you not to do.

MR. JACKSON: That is also problematic, Mr. Parks. I know who they are, maybe you are entirely right, but I still think it is within the province of the Committee to determine how far they will go.

MR. PARKS: I am asking the Committee not to do it. I am not setting myself up as a judge. I am asking you to judge.

MR. VELDE: I think you are wrong in assuming we know all of the activities in which you were engaged and all the people you were engaged in those activities with. I am satisfied you are wrong in that, and possibly you could furnish us with a lot of information we do not have, and I feel sure you would be willing to do that to serve the best interests of the United States, of which you are a citizen.

MR. PARKS: I have told you, to the best of my ability, of my activities.

MR. WOOD: We will ask at this time to [make a] break in the testimony of this witness. I request that he not leave the jurisdiction of the Committee until later this afternoon.

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The Committee on Un-American Activities met in executive session at 4 p.m. in room 226, Old House Office Building, the Honorable John S. Wood (Chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives John S. Wood (Chairman), Francis E. Walter, Clyde Doyle, James B. Frazier, Jr., Harold H. Velde, Bernard W. Kearney, Donald L. Jackson, and Charles E. Potter.

Staff members present: Frank S. Tavenner, Jr., Counsel; Louis J. Russell, Senior Investigator; William A. Wheeler, Investigator; Thomas W. Beale, Sr., Assistant Counsel; and A. S. Poore, Editor.

MR. WOOD: Mr. Parks, at the conclusion of the morning session, the Committee had a meeting, and it was the unanimous expression of the members of the Committee that we were going to seek your further cooperation in an executive session for further testimony that will not be publicized until such time, if at all, as the Committee itself may deem expedient.

It may never happen, but it is only fair to say to you that it is in the discretion of the Committee at any time to make public any information that you may see fit to give in this executive session. Until such time, if it does happen, it will be kept in the confidential files of the Committee. With that statement, counsel will now propound additional questions.

MR. MANDEL: Is it the intention of the Committee that unless he answers these questions in private—that is, in executive session—they intend to cite him for contempt of this Committee?

MR. WOOD: The Committee makes no threats.

MR. MANDEL: We haven't approached it as a matter of threat. Just to clear his thinking so that he is fully informed in his own mind of the consequences of following that path.

MR. WOOD: Counselor, the Committee did not discuss that phase of it. It is entirely possible, if Mr. Parks placed himself in the position here of being in contempt of Congress, that the Committee may request a citation for that purpose. On the other hand, it may not. I cannot speak for the Committee. Does that answer your question?

MR. MANDEL: No, not quite. I would like to spend another minute on it. In view of Mr. Parks's general attitude of being cooperative—and everyone easily understands here what is motivating him—he feels so bad about what he has to do, and if he thought there was any chance that you would elicit from him information that was important to you, he would very gladly give it to you. It is only saving that little bit of something that you live with. You have to see and walk in Hollywood with that. You have to meet your children and your wife with it, and your friends. It is that little bit that you want to save. Although I don't want to ask the Committee to commit itself, in fairness to Mr. Parks, he may have to sacrifice the arm with gangrene in order to save the body. Even though he doesn't like it, he will walk around the rest of his life without an arm. I realize the purposes of this Committee, and our attitude has been one of cooperation. We want to go right through with that. Now, if that is going to be the penalty that he eventually will have to pay, then I have to help him think a different way. I have to urge him a different way. His honest and sincere opinion is that what he is going to give you will only eat up his insides and you will get nothing, no more than you have today. This is a conviction of this man.

MR. WOOD: Mr. Attorney, the Committee has to be the judge of what information has pertinency and relevancy. It can't take the opinions of other people. I have tried to be frank about it, and the Committee is very anxious—I think you will agree—to be considerate of this man. The Committee is in no sense responsible for the position he finds himself in, but we are responsible for the position we find ourselves in.

* * *

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Parks, are you acquainted with an effort made to raise funds for the *New Masses* magazine, which was in the form of a party held at the home of Frank Tuttle on June 8, 1945?

MR. PARKS: No, sir, I don't recall any such party at Frank Tuttle's house. I was at his house, I believe, only once, and as I remember it there were maybe two or three people, and it was purely a social evening. This is the best of my recollection.

MR. TAVENNER: I have just learned there are two Frank Tuttle's in Hollywood. Are you acquainted with that fact?

MR. PARKS: No. I only know one Frank Tuttle, who is a director in Hollywood.

MR. TAVENNER: He is the one that I had reference to.

* MR. PARKS: That is the one that I was acquainted with. I don't know whether he is out there now.

MR. TAVENNER: Did you attend a meeting of a cultural group of the Communist Party at the home of Hugo Butler?

MR. PARKS: I have been to Hugo Butler's house twice, I think. One was on a matter of—I believe I read a script of his. The other time, to the best of my recollection, was a party given for—as I recall, it was given for the people who had come before your Committee in 1947. This is the best of my recollection. I don't recall ever going to a party for—what was it? *New Masses*?

MR. TAVENNER: No. This party that I am speaking of now did not necessarily have anything to do with *New Masses*. This is a different meeting that I am referring to now at the home of Hugo Butler. It is alleged to have taken place on January 3, 1945.

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall going there for a party at that time at all. I am being very honest when I say that. As I say, I know where he lives, and I think I have been there twice.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Hugo Butler a member of the Communist Party, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: No, sir, I have no knowledge of Hugo Butler at all being a member.

MR. TAVENNER: Did you ever attend a Communist Party meeting at which he was present?

MR. PARKS: Not to my recollection.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Frank Tuttle a member of the Communist Party, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: This, counsel, I do not know. I don't believe I have ever heard that. I don't believe that I have ever, to the very best of my knowledge, ever attended any meeting of such a nature with Frank Tuttle.

MR. TAVENNER: Who were the members of the cell of the Communist Party to which you were assigned during the period from 1941 on up to the time you disassociated yourself from the Party about 1945?

MR. PARKS: This is what I have been talking about. This is the thing that I am no longer fighting for myself, because I tell you frankly that I am probably the most completely ruined man that you have ever seen. I am fighting for a principle, I think, if Americanism is involved in this particular case. This is what I have been talking about. I do not believe that it befits this Committee to force me to do this. I do not believe it befits this Committee or its purposes to force me to do this. This is my honest feeling about it. I don't think that this is fair play. I don't think it is in the spirit of real Americanism. These are not people that are a danger to this country, gentlemen, the people that I knew. These are people like myself.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Chairman, if the witness refuses to answer the question, I see very little use in my asking him about other individuals.

MR. WOOD: The witness, of course, has got to make up his own mind as to whether he will or will not do it. It isn't sufficient, as far as this Committee is concerned, to say that in your opinion it is unfair or un-American. The question is: Do you refuse to answer or will you answer it?

MR. MANDEL: At this point I would like to ask the Chairman whether he is directing the witness to answer.

MR. WOOD: The witness has been asked. He must answer or decline to answer.

MR. MANDEL: I think a little more is needed. He must be directed to answer, and if he refuses to answer, just merely asking him and not going beyond I don't believe under law is sufficient. I think he has to be directed and told, "You have got to answer."

MR. WOOD: I don't understand any such rule, but, in order to avoid any controversy, I direct the witness to answer the question.

MR. PARKS: I do not refuse to answer the question, but I do feel that this Committee is doing a really dreadful thing that I don't believe the American people will look kindly on. This is my opinion. I don't think that they will consider this as honest, just, and in the spirit of fair play.

MR. JACKSON: Mr. Chairman, might I interpose at this point? Mr. Parks, we are, each one of us, individually responsible to the American people. I think that our concept of our responsibility is a thing which we ourselves are fully conscious of. That determination must rest with the individual members of the Committee and the Committee as a whole. I, for one, resent having my duties pointed out to me.

MR. PARKS: I am not pointing the duty out.

MR. JACKSON: The inference is that we are doing something which is un-American in nature. That is a personal opinion of yours, and I merely think that it should be in the record. We have accountability for which we must account and for which we must answer.

MR. WOOD: The witness has said he doesn't refuse to answer, so I assume he is ready to answer.

MR. MANDEL: I think the Committee and the individual members of the Committee are all seeking within themselves to do the right thing. There is no question about that. I think, in the same spirit, no one can, with the heritage that Mr. Parks has to uphold, think that he isn't as loyal as any member of this Committee, and that he has to do the right thing as we Americans in our elections do and choose. Of course, when the final gong goes down, he intends, as he indicated, to respect the will of this Committee, but, I think justly, he reserves the right to talk to you gentlemen and possibly persuade you to think differently.

MR. WOOD: The Committee took the view, sir, that perhaps there might be some merit in your contention if we were still in an open hearing, but we are not. It is an executive session.

MR. MANDEL: I realize that, and I want to thank the Committee for this consideration. I think it should have been done first before we started here, but this session is a very private session or executive session, which is very considerate of the Committee, and the record should so state. May I have a minute to talk to Mr. Parks?

MR. WOOD: Yes. You may retire if you like.

MR. MANDEL: I make this request of the Committee: I want no promise from you, but just as a matter of finding what is the sportsmanlike attitude, that what he gives you will not be used in that way if it can be helped, without embarrassing these people in the same position he finds himself in today.

MR. WOOD: Nobody on this Committee has any desire to smear the name of anybody. That isn't of benefit to this Committee in the discharge of its duties. I think all of the American people who have viewed the work of the Committee dispassionately and impartially will agree with that.

MR. MANDEL: The reason I asked is because, in the struggle that Mr. Parks is going through, I think the internal struggle would go a little lighter having that statement from you.

MR. TAVENNER: If you will just answer the question, please. The question was: Who were the members of the Communist Party cell to which you were assigned during the period from 1941 until 1945?

MR. PARKS: Well, Morris Carnovsky, Joe—

MR. TAVENNER: Will you spell that name?

MR. PARKS: I couldn't possibly spell it. Carnovsky, Joe Bromberg, Sam Rossen, Anne Revere, Lee Cobb. 2

MR. TAVENNER: What was the name?

MR. PARKS: Cobb. Gale Sondergaard, Dorothy Tree. Those are the principal names that I recall. 3

MR. TAVENNER: What was the name of Dorothy Tree's husband? Was it not Michael Uris?

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. TAVENNER: Was he a member?

MR. PARKS: Not to my knowledge.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know whether Michael Uris was a member of any other cell of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't know this at all.

MR. TAVENNER: I believe he was a writer, was he not, as distinguished from an actor?

MR. PARKS: I think he was a writer, yes.

MR. TAVENNER: The persons whose names you have mentioned were all actors?

MR. PARKS: Yes, that's correct.

MR. TAVENNER: Can you recall the names of others who were at one time members of that cell?

MR. PARKS: That's about all I recall right now.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Howard Da Silva a member?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't believe that I ever attended a meeting with Howard Da Silva.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Howard Da Silva a member of the Communist Party, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: Not to my knowledge.

MR. TAVENNER: Was Roman Bohman [Bohnen?] a member?

MR. PARKS: Yes.

MR. TAVENNER: He is now deceased, I believe.

MR. PARKS: He is dead.

MR. TAVENNER: Was James Cagney a member at any time?

MR. PARKS: Not to my knowledge. I don't recall ever attending a meeting with him.

MR. TAVENNER: Was he a member of the Communist Party, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever hearing that he was.

MR. TAVENNER: Sam Jaffe?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever attending a meeting with Sam Jaffe.

MR. TAVENNER: Was he a member of the Communist Party, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall any knowledge that Sam Jaffe was ever a member of the Communist Party.

MR. TAVENNER: John Garfield?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever being at a meeting with John Garfield.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you recall whether John Garfield ever addressed a Communist Party meeting when you were present?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall any such occasion.

MR. TAVENNER: Marc Lawrence, was he a member of that cell?

MR. PARKS: I believe he was. I wouldn't say with certainty. I believe so.

MR. TAVENNER: What is there in your memory that leads you to believe that he was a member of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: Well, as I told you, I didn't attend very many meetings, and I believe I recall that he was there. I don't swear to it.

MR. TAVENNER: Was it during the early part or the latter part of your membership that you have that recollection of him?

MR. PARKS: Well, this I couldn't say. I really don't remember.

MR. MANDEL: May I suggest to counsel, in view of the general feeling of the witness—I don't mean to rush you, but this whole thing being so distasteful—I wonder if we can proceed a little faster so he doesn't suffer so much while this is going on.

MR. TAVENNER: I want him to be accurate on it. I purposely do not want to rush him into answering about matters as important as these.

MR. MANDEL: I didn't mean that. I am just trying to be considerate of the man's feelings, doing something that—

MR. TAVENNER: I asked you this morning about Karen Morley. Was she a member of the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: Yes, she was.

MR. TAVENNER: Was she in this particular cell that you have described?

MR. PARKS: Yes, she was.

MR. TAVENNER: Richard Collins, were you acquainted with him?

MR. PARKS: I know Richard Collins. He was not to my knowledge a member of the Communist Party.

(At this point Representative Clyde Doyle left the hearing room.)

MR. TAVENNER: Did Communist Party organizers from the State of California appear before your committee from time to time?

MR. PARKS: Not to the best of my recollection. I don't believe I ever met any of them or ever saw any of them.

MR. TAVENNER: Were lectures given at any time or study courses given in your cell in which persons outside of your cell took part?

MR. PARKS: The only one that I recall at this time was a talk by John Howard Lawson.

MR. TAVENNER: What was John Howard Lawson's connection with the Communist Party?

MR. PARKS: I don't really know.

MR. TAVENNER: Fred Graff, was he a member of this group?

MR. PARKS: The name doesn't ring a bell at all.

MR. TAVENNER: Georgia Backus?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever being at a meeting with Georgia Backus.

MR. TAVENNER: Meta Reis Rosenberg?

MR. PARKS: I don't believe I know the lady.

MR. TAVENNER: Robert Rossen?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever being at a meeting with him.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know whether he was a member of your cell, even if you were not in a meeting with him?

MR. PARKS: No. To the best of my knowledge, I have no information at all.

MR. TAVENNER: Philip Loeb?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall I know the gentleman at all.

MR. TAVENNER: Lloyd Gough?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I believe he was a— I saw him at a couple of meetings.

MR. TAVENNER: Sterling Hayden?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever being at a meeting with Sterling Hayden.

MR. TAVENNER: Will Geer?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever being in a meeting with Will Geer.

MR. TAVENNER: Victor Killian, Sr.?

MR. PARKS: Yes, I recall that he attended at least one meeting.

MR. TAVENNER: Victor Killian, Jr.?

MR. PARKS: I don't believe I am acquainted with the gentleman at all.

MR. TAVENNER: Lionel Stander?

MR. PARKS: I have met him. I don't recall ever attending a meeting with him.

MR. TAVENNER: Andy Devine?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever attending a meeting with Andy Devine.

MR. TAVENNER: Edward G. Robinson?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever attending a meeting with Edward G. Robinson.

MR. TAVENNER: Mr. Chairman, I think nearly all of these people have either been subpoenaed or we have tried to find them. Some of them unquestionably are attempting to avoid service. Do you know Hester Sondergaard?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever meeting her. I believe that is Gale Sondergaard's sister.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know whether she is married?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't.

MR. TAVENNER: Francis Edwards Faragoh?

MR. PARKS: No.

MR. TAVENNER: Vera Caspary?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't believe that I know the woman.

MR. TAVENNER: Madeleine Carroll?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall ever attending a meeting with Madeleine Carroll.

MR. TAVENNER: Was she a member of this group, to your knowledge?

MR. PARKS: I have no knowledge of that.

MR. TAVENNER: Gregory Peck?

MR. PARKS: I have no remembrance of ever attending a meeting with Gregory Peck.

MR. TAVENNER: Humphrey Bogart?

MR. PARKS: I don't recall ever attending a meeting with Humphrey Bogart.

(At this point Representative Donald L. Jackson left the hearing room.)

MR. WALTER: I think you could get some comfort out of the fact that the people whose names have been mentioned have been subpoenaed, so that if they ever do appear here it won't be as a result of anything that you have testified to.

(At this point Representative Bernard W. Kearney left the hearing room.)

MR. PARKS: It is no comfort whatsoever.

MR. TAVENNER: Do you know of any other person now whose name comes to your recollection?

MR. PARKS: No, I don't recall anyone else.

MR. TAVENNER: I think that is all, Mr. Chairman.

MR. POTTER: I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Parks's testimony has certainly been refreshing in comparison with the other witnesses that we have had today.

MR. WOOD: I am sure you reflect the sentiments of the entire Committee. We appreciate your cooperation. You are excused.

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(By order of the Committee the following letters are being included in the record at this point:*)

July 23, 1953

HON. HAROLD VELDE,

*Chairman, House Committee on Un-American Activities,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN VELDE:

I have your letter of July 17, and it was so good to hear from you.

Pursuant to your suggestion, I'm enclosing a sworn copy of the letter I sent you and also authorize you and your Committee to release the testimony I gave you in executive session.

Again let me take this opportunity to thank you for your consideration, I remain

Respectfully,
LARRY PARKS

* "This point" is 1953, because the testimony given in executive session was not released till then. —E.B.

(Sworn letter mentioned by Larry Parks in his letter dated July 23, 1953:)

July 15, 1953

HON. HAROLD VELDE,
Chairman, House Committee on Un-American Activities,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CHAIRMAN VELDE:

After careful consideration, I wish to file a clarifying statement of my point of view on the Communist problem with your Committee. In rereading my public testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, I am now convinced that it improperly reflects my true attitude toward the malignancy of the Communist Party.

If there is any way in which I can further aid in exposing the methods of entrapment and deceit through which Communist conspirators have gained the adherence of American idealists and liberals, I hope the Committee will so advise me. Perhaps some of the confusion now apparent to me in my testimony before your Committee can best be explained by the fact that I was the first cooperative witness from Hollywood to appear before your Committee and at the time I was under really great strain and tension. Upon reflection, I see that I did not adequately express my true beliefs—beliefs which have even deepened and strengthened since my appearance.

Above all, I wish to make it clear that I support completely the objectives of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. I believe fully that Communists and Communist intrigues should be thoroughly exposed and isolated and thus rendered impotent.

In the light of events which have transpired since I appeared as a witness before your Committee, it is crystal clear that no one who really believes in a progressive program for humanity can support any part of the Communist program. No true liberal can doubt that Soviet Communism constitutes as grave a threat to the rights of man today as once did Hitler Fascism. The most recent attack by the Soviet Army on unarmed German workers makes it crystal-clear that their interest in labor is only to increase their power.

Liberals must now embrace the cause of anti-Communism with the same dedication and zeal as we once did that of anti-Nazism. The enemy is the same though the labels have changed.

It is my conviction that to assist your Committee in obtaining full information about the Communist Party and its activities is the duty of all who possess such evidence. Certainly, if I were to testify today I would not testify as I did in 1951—that to give such testimony is to “wallow in the mud”—but on the contrary I would recognize that such cooperation would help further the cause in which many of us were sincerely interested when we were duped into joining and taking part in the Communist Party.

My statement about not wanting my sons to become “cows in the pas-

ture” obviously needs clarification. The thought I really meant to convey was that my sons should not become indifferent to the plight of the people less fortunate than themselves. It is my conviction that through sympathetic understanding and aid to the repressed peoples, we Americans cannot only best represent American traditions but also effectively aid in combating the false power of Communism. I want my sons to participate fully in the search for democratic answers to the continuing threat of totalitarianism—Communist or Fascist. To that end, I will do all within my power as one who once was duped but has since learned the hard way about the guileful traps which Communism can set for an unwary idealist or liberal.

I sincerely hope the Committee will publish the statement of my militant anti-Communist beliefs at the earliest possible date.

Sincerely,
LARRY PARKS

The early 1950s—the McCarthy era—had different effects upon different people: character is fate. Propelled against his will into bearing witness against Communists, Larry Parks came to believe one should willingly bear witness against Communists. This shift was called “repentance” in that period, and quite without irony: we shall find certain people, below, complaining that Arthur Miller was not “repentant.” Sterling Hayden, for his part, repented his *anti*-Communism. Readers of the testimony here will have a shock when they open his autobiography—*Wanderer* (New York, 1963)—and find that two of the three people to whom it is dedicated are Rockwell Kent and Warwick M. Tompkins, “Sailormen, Artists, Radicals.” On page 371, we find:

You know, I don't know why I got out of the Party any more than I know why I joined. I could say a lot of things about those people I knew in the Party—and you know something? It would all be good.

I'd like to take a two-page spread in the *Hollywood Reporter* and in *Variety* and I'd let go the goddamnedest blast, let people know who the real subversives are. I wrote this out last night: “You loud-mouthed self-styled patriots in this business had better wake up. . . . You think those people are trying to subvert your precious Hollywood? They're not. They happen to believe in planned social order. They look up to Russia as the leader of the world socialist movement. . . . Now you people allegedly believe in free competition. You want the world to follow in our footsteps, so you invest million of bucks all over hell and go on trying to influence people. Yet when the socialist world does this you scream Foul.”

And on page 378, again remarks addressed by the narrator to his psychoanalyst:

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First published in 1971 by The Viking Press, Inc.
625 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022

Published simultaneously in Canada by
The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited

SBN 670-70165-3

Library of Congress catalog card number: 71-124318

Printed in U.S.A.

Page vii constitutes an extension of this copyright page.

THIRTY YEARS OF TREASON

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*Excerpts from Hearings
before the House Committee
on Un-American Activities,
1938-1968*

Edited by Eric Bentley

NEW YORK / THE VIKING PRESS

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